

OFFICIAL FEEDBACK FORM

DIALOGUE DATE	Tuesday, 2 February 2021 20:00 GMT +08:00
DIALOGUE TITLE	Public food procurement and service: school meal examples in China
CONVENED BY	Good Food Fund (CBCGDF), UNFSS-AT2 China Action Hub
DIALOGUE EVENT PAGE	https://summitdialogues.org/dialogue/2449/
DIALOGUE TYPE	Independent
GEOGRAPHICAL FOCUS	No borders

The outcomes from a Food Systems Summit Dialogue will be of use in developing the pathway to sustainable food systems within the locality in which they take place. They will be a valuable contribution to the national pathways and also of interest to the different workstreams preparing for the Summit: the Action Tracks, Scientific Groups and Champions as well as for other Dialogues.

1. PARTICIPATION

TOTAL NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS

34

PARTICIPATION BY AGE RANGE

0 0-18

11 19-30

20 31-50

3 51-65

0 66-80

0 80+

PARTICIPATION BY GENDER

14 Male

20 Female

0 Prefer not to say or Other

NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS IN EACH SECTOR

Agriculture/crops

Fish and aquaculture

Livestock

Agro-forestry

Environment and ecology

Trade and commerce

6 Education

3 Communication

4 Food processing

Food retail, markets

1 Food industry

Financial Services

2 Health care

Nutrition

National or local government

Utilities

Industrial

18 Other

NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS FROM EACH STAKEHOLDER GROUP

2 Small/medium enterprise/artisan

Large national business

1 Multi-national corporation

Small-scale farmer

Medium-scale farmer

Large-scale farmer

7 Local Non-Governmental Organization

4 International Non-Governmental Organization

Indigenous People

7 Science and academia

Workers and trade union

Member of Parliament

Local authority

2 Government and national institution

Regional economic community

2 United Nations

International financial institution

Private Foundation / Partnership / Alliance

1 Consumer group

8 Other

2. PRINCIPLES OF ENGAGEMENT

HOW DID YOU ORGANIZE THE DIALOGUE SO THAT THE PRINCIPLES WERE INCORPORATED, REINFORCED AND ENHANCED?

We organized the group discussions based on existing good practice examples - one practice example for each group discussion. Before the Dialogue, we identified good examples and invite the organizations that are associated with it, asked them challenges they are facing and which other stakeholders they believe would be helpful for them to improve their practice, so that we ensure that these stakeholders are also invited to the conversation. In this way, the discussions are action oriented, real challenges are addressed and collaborations are built. We made a manual and sent it to all the participants before the Dialogue so that they are all informed with: 1) the background of UNFSS and the role of Dialogues; 2) the principles of engagement; 3) the topic of the Dialogue and the practice examples to be discussed - their goals, experience, lessons learnt and challenges; 4) how they can convene a Dialogue.

HOW DID YOUR DIALOGUE REFLECT SPECIFIC ASPECTS OF THE PRINCIPLES?

Act with Urgency: We first identify existing good practice examples and then invite relevant stakeholders to the group discussions to ensure that the outcome are actionable and replicable. **Commit to the Summit:** Group chat (on WeChat) of all the participants is created so that we regularly follow up the Summit process with them. **Recognize Complexity:** We identified three school meals practice examples, with very different settings and challenges which reflect complexity. One in rural China addressing malnutrition, one in a public university addressing healthy eating and one Meatless Monday campaign in a private secondary school. **Embrace multi-stakeholder inclusivity:** In every group discussion, there is a diversity of stakeholders. **Build Trust:** While the plenary session and one of the group discussions of this Dialogue were livestreamed (with consent from the participants) which helped the Dialogue reach over 240 thousand audience, the other two group discussions were not livestreamed because the participants wished to have a safe space to speak more freely.

DO YOU HAVE ADVICE FOR OTHER DIALOGUE CONVENORS ABOUT APPRECIATING THE PRINCIPLES OF ENGAGEMENT?

Please see above.

3. METHOD

The outcomes of a Dialogue are influenced by the method that is used.

DID YOU USE THE SAME METHOD AS RECOMMENDED BY THE CONVENORS REFERENCE MANUAL?

Yes

No

4. DIALOGUE FOCUS & OUTCOMES

MAJOR FOCUS

How to improve school meals to achieve one health (human-animal-planet)?

1) In rural areas: address malnutrition (and hidden hunger), improve food diversity, reduce over-dependence on pork and promote plant proteins, support local and smallholder producers

2) In cities: promote plant-forward healthy eating, promote animal welfare (eat less but better meat)

Please see the attachment for more background information on the three practice examples and the specific challenges they face.

ACTION TRACKS

- Action Track 1: Ensure access to safe and nutritious food for all
- Action Track 2: Shift to sustainable consumption patterns
- Action Track 3: Boost nature-positive production
- Action Track 4: Advance equitable livelihoods
- Action Track 5: Build resilience to vulnerabilities, shocks and stress

KEYWORDS

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Finance | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Policy |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Innovation | <input type="checkbox"/> Data & Evidence |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Human rights | <input type="checkbox"/> Governance |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Women & Youth Empowerment | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Trade-offs |
| | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Environment and Climate |

MAIN FINDINGS

1. Make joint efforts to nourish a campus culture for promoting food literacy

In many schools and universities, we see students rush into the crowded canteens during the short lunch break to grab something to eat, many of them choose unhealthy foods high in calories that can quickly bring satisfaction. To address the challenge, leadership, educators, chefs, nutritionists, all staff and students, and even parents should strive to nourish a culture in which the interwoven pleasures of cooking and sharing healthy food become an integral and memorable part of the campus culture.

Keystone Academy not only makes reference to environmental awareness twice in its Mission, but also actively explores what that means with a number of initiatives to engage students and enable behavior change. In 2019, it seems to be a sudden decision for the school to go completely vegetarian every Monday, but most of the teachers and students embraced the journey, as environmental consciousness has long been a part of the campus culture.

2. Shift the mindset of meal-offering from pursuing variety and quantity to improving the nutritional quality

The standardized dish library of Zhejiang University's smart cafeteria has recorded information on 3,000 dishes, and the variety of dishes is amazing. Many schools are also pushing the envelope to meet the diverse tastes of their students. Discussion participants mentioned the idea of introducing standardized, measured nutritional combo meals that revolve around local, seasonal, plant-based ingredients, with each cafeteria's culinary team and nutritionist taking full advantage of their talents and creativity to lead the menu changes. The number of nutritional combo meals in each cafeteria should not be large but can present different dining styles so that the menu is not repetitive, this might be a path worth exploring. The popularity of healthy dishes should be used as a criterion for healthy competition among different cafeterias, with corresponding incentive mechanisms.

3. Promote Chefs' Leadership

It is always agreed that there are only two kinds of food in the world: delicious ones and the contrary. Participants all believed that chefs should play a critical role in promoting healthy and sustainable food.

It requires scientific and systematic training for chefs. Moreover, participants also emphasized the importance of opening up career development channels, the opportunity of title evaluation, and a favorable policy for household registration for future chef leaders.

4. Raise Students' awareness of the true cost of food

Based on the existing nutrition and health perspective, expanding monitoring dimensions of the intelligent system to fully utilize its scientific, accurate and transparent information, can raise students' awareness of the true cost of food and the benefits of healthy eating from all aspects. Thus, they can be nudged to better eating habits.

5. Utilizing behavioral interventions to effectively guide dietary habit change

Behavioral science can also provide many ideas to guide healthy eating through food education and advocacy. For example, the widespread application of the "Nudge" principle can have a multiplier effect. In recent years, some experience has been gained from experiments and studies, for example, discussion participants mentioned

- Direct substitution with products that mimic meat, such as plant-based meats.
- Placing healthy dishes in easier-to-reach places when laying out dishes. For example, in a buffet, place plant-based dishes at the front of the pick-up line.
- List plant-based dishes at the front of the menu.
- When naming dishes, be sure to make healthy dishes appetizing. A common misconception is that nutritious meals are often named with an emphasis on benefits such as "healthy" and "low-cal" while undermining the appeal of the dish itself in terms of taste.
- By the same token, avoid using labels like "vegetarian". Studies have shown that feel-good, planet-friendly, direct protein and sun-powered are all good choices to convey the same meaning.

The role of role models should not be overlooked either. When the Good Food Fund visited Google's corporate headquarters during the 2019 Food Leadership Forum, they found that four of the five main courses in their employee cafeteria lunch buffet were made entirely from plant-based ingredients. According to Yale's annual report, 85 percent of the options in their student cafeteria are vegan. Inviting lectures from leading experts in the field also helps to convince students of the concept of healthy eating.

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OUTCOMES FOR EACH DISCUSSION TOPIC - 1/6

The Sunshine School Meal Data Platform (hereinafter referred to as the “Data Platform”) was established by the China Development Research Foundation in May 2015. It has covered 13 provinces, 100 counties, more than 9,200 schools, and over 3.5 million students around the country. The data platform monitors and analyzes recipes, purchase prices of ingredients, the quantity of purchase, the quantity of consumption, and the number of people to eat, which increased the transparency of the use of dietary subsidy funds and the quality of local policy implementation, transformed the local government’s concept of governance, and improved the nutritional conditions of rural students obviously.

According to the standards from China’s Dietary and Nutrition Guidebook for Rural Students, nutritional meals in most monitored counties have met students’ basic needs in general, meat intake has reached a sufficient amount but heavily relies on pork. Other nutrition problems include critically low intake of legumes and beans, too much salt and fat, calcium and vitamin-A deficiency, and so on. More diversified food sources are necessary to safeguard students’ nutrition when they still face the risk of hidden hunger when the quality of food they eat does not meet their nutrient requirements.

Participants in the discussion suggested that the Data Platform should add local small-scale supplier databases for nearby township schools to choose from. Through accurate digital governance, it can open the access for small farmers and achieve the organic combination of standardization and flexibility of procurement mode. Of course, this depends on the preconditions such as information and communication technology as well as the concept of local governance.

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	Human rights	✓	Governance
	Women & Youth Empowerment		Trade-offs
			Environment and Climate

OUTCOMES FOR EACH DISCUSSION TOPIC - 2/6

Participants in the discussion repeatedly stressed the importance of building a local food system that not only helps local economic development but also enhances resilience to the uncertainty of environmental change. In the local food system, the value of local ingredients can be maximized. For example, it was mentioned in the discussion that in the arid northern part of Shanxi province, every family has soybeans in their yard. Soybeans grow very easily and can be made into a variety of soy products, enriching recipes. It can also be made into soy milk as a substitute for milk. Even soybean yogurt can be fermented to become a sweet product for children. In addition, planting soybeans has the effect of fixing nitrogen and improving soil fertility. By making full use of local ingredients for innovation, we can better maintain the quality of nutrition and avoid problems such as excessive processing and packaging contamination of foreign foods.

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OUTCOMES FOR EACH DISCUSSION TOPIC - 3/6

To produce diverse and high-quality ingredients locally and to establish a more balanced supply and demand system requires a lot of effort and more costs. Without the participation of multiple parties in society, it is difficult to truly realize this vision. Under the coordination of local governments, it is crucial to establish a joint construction mechanism involving schools, parents, farmers, cooperatives, companies, and social organizations. From the perspective of ensuring the quality of school meals for their children, parents should be important supervisors and beneficiaries at the same time. The localized food system also helps to create employment locally, so that children are no longer left behind.

The participants mentioned many practical models, such as the combination of school farming, localization teaching, and work-study, courtyard economy, family farms, To develop a model of ecological agriculture and mutual support among communities.

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OUTCOMES FOR EACH DISCUSSION TOPIC - 4/6

With the implementation of the Sunshine School Meal Program, the malnutrition rate of students has dropped significantly. However, the "double burden" has begun to appear meanwhile. The overweight and obesity rate of students has gradually increased. In terms of this increasingly difficult challenge, on the basis of the above discussion on building a localized food system, the participants in the discussion mainly contributed their experience from the perspective of how to systematically improve the nutritional level of chefs and carry out food education for students. For example, the development of online courses, while linking with local chef associations and cooking schools, combining online and offline to empower chef groups in a manner of from point to the area. "Food Rainbow Spell" uses gamification to establish the most direct connection between children's minds, food, and nature, and at the same time provides an intuitive and easy reference for chefs to purchase diverse ingredients which are rich in multiple nutrients.

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OUTCOMES FOR EACH DISCUSSION TOPIC - 5/6

The participants also had an outlook on how to mobilize the whole society to participate in it widely. For example, through the crowdsourcing model, professional organizations set up a framework and invite practitioners from all over the country to fill in the information to form an open-source toolkit of "School Meal Operation Guide", which will identify the problems that may be encountered in each link and the corresponding The solutions are collected so that locals and even students can understand.

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OUTCOMES FOR EACH DISCUSSION TOPIC - 6/6

The participants generated more new ideas across groups after the panel discussions. The “Buy One Donate One” model of some social enterprises mentioned by the participants in the discussion of Sunshine School Meal reminded the host of another case, which connected the Sunshine School Meal and Monday’s “Ecological Diet Day” on group discussion. In this case, if a consumer shares a vegetarian meal on a review website, the website will donate one dollar to poverty alleviation. If this method is applied in the two cases group discussion, it will establish a connection between the public’s awareness of the problems of excessive consumption and food shortages in the food system, create encouragement for the public to transform into sustainable diets, and at the same time it helps poverty alleviation nutritional improvement business to dig out commercial resources.

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AREAS OF DIVERGENCE

There was a conversation about what should be the focal point of the dialogue, one of the speakers wants to make sure we put more emphasis on Poverty Alleviation and Child Development, however, many other participants believe that supporting small-scale farmers and the local community should also be included in the discussion, and we need to look at the solutions from the perspective of food systems. For example, the procurement standards of the produce and food products in the Sunshine Meal program are quite high, which excludes almost all local small-scale farmers. The speaker said that Child Development is the priority in the program, so a higher standard is perfectly justified, and we wouldn't be able to fix all problems at once. In the meantime, most participants insisted that a systematic approach is crucial in any food system-related challenges and isolated solutions are definitely not the best.

The other one is when a particular participant brought up Animal Welfare related topics in the school meal procurement process, most of the speakers at the dialogue weren't familiar with the ideas of the Animal Welfare Project, and there were no considerations being made on AWP in the current school meal programs. Many program coordinators at the dialogue agreed that this should be an area to further examine and discuss in the future.

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ATTACHMENTS AND RELEVANT LINKS

ATTACHMENTS

- **Dialogue Manual**
https://summitdialogues.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/Manual-for-FSS-Dialogue_China-Action-Hub_Feb.pdf