

# OFFICIAL FEEDBACK FORM

<b>DIALOGUE DATE</b>	Thursday, 17 June 2021 10:00 GMT +03:00
<b>DIALOGUE TITLE</b>	National Dialogue for Sustainable Food Systems in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia
<b>CONVENED BY</b>	Ms. Arwa Sahal Numan, Food Security Advisor to the Minister, Ministry of Environment, Water and Agriculture, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia
<b>DIALOGUE EVENT PAGE</b>	<a href="https://summitdialogues.org/dialogue/24610/">https://summitdialogues.org/dialogue/24610/</a>
<b>DIALOGUE TYPE</b>	Member State
<b>GEOGRAPHICAL FOCUS</b>	Saudi Arabia

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

81

## PARTICIPATION BY AGE RANGE

0 0-18

3 19-30

65 31-50

11 51-65

2 66-80

0 80+

## PARTICIPATION BY GENDER

69 Male

12 Female

Prefer not to say or Other

## NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS IN EACH SECTOR

12 Agriculture/crops

4 Fish and aquaculture

3 Livestock

1 Agro-forestry

2 Environment and ecology

3 Trade and commerce

11 Education

5 Communication

5 Food processing

12 Food retail, markets

3 Food industry

3 Financial Services

Health care

3 Nutrition

2 National or local government

Utilities

10 Industrial

2 Other

## NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS FROM EACH STAKEHOLDER GROUP

2 Small/medium enterprise/artisan

7 Large national business

10 Multi-national corporation

4 Small-scale farmer

7 Medium-scale farmer

6 Large-scale farmer

Local Non-Governmental Organization

International Non-Governmental Organization

Indigenous People

11 Science and academia

Workers and trade union

Member of Parliament

Local authority

23 Government and national institution

Regional economic community

1 United Nations

1 International financial institution

1 Private Foundation / Partnership / Alliance

1 Consumer group

7 Other

## 2. PRINCIPLES OF ENGAGEMENT

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

The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia National Dialogue was organized by the Ministry of Environment, Water and Agriculture (MEWA) by respecting all the Principles of Engagement framed to guide UN Food Systems Summit. In this dialogue, 79 participants representing governments, science, academia, international organizations (FAO and IFAD), national and multinational corporate sector, farmers (small/medium/large), United Nations, and financial services were invited onsite and online to participate in a meaningful discussion that aimed at making the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia Food System more sustainable and resilient. The high-level opening session emphasized on the urgency, key features of the Kingdom Food System, and their inclusive engagement with multi-stakeholders. The key challenges and future directions were discussed during the four thematic parallel break-out sessions to pave the way to reduce the complexity and transform the local food system under evidence-based decision-making for implementation.

### HOW DID YOUR DIALOGUE REFLECT SPECIFIC ASPECTS OF THE PRINCIPLES?

The National Dialogue for Sustainable Food Systems in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia embraces multi-stakeholder inclusivity across the Saudi food systems, ranging from food produces (farmers), government, industry, academia, agricultural organizations, financial sector, corporate sector, civil society, and research centers. This national dialogue provides an opportunity for the participants to broaden their knowledge and to get updated about the status of various national programs, initiatives and government's urgency to overcome the pressing challenges, and contribute to the achievement of 2030 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) set by the United Nations. In this dialogue, each participant was invited to express their opinion during the discussion session. Small group discussions during the break-out parallel sessions emphasized on the need for trust-building, respect, and share innovative new thinking and approaches to tackle the complexity of food systems.

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

The national dialogue should be in national (local) language to fully engage all the stakeholders so that all the stakeholders could interact easily and share their fair opinion and find the local solution to address global challenges.

# 3. METHOD

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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

### MAJOR FOCUS

The MEWA-led national dialogue focuses on bringing together a wide range of perspectives from the stakeholders ranging from science, industry, policy to the community involved directly and indirectly in the food systems to facilitate the dynamic exchange of knowledge and address interlinkages in the food system.

The dialogue agenda comprised of Opening remarks, followed by one seventy-five minutes first session about the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia Food Systems. The second session was organized in parallel break-out sessions with small groups with different composition of participants under the following four themes covering all the five action tracks of the Summit.

Theme I: Sustainable agricultural rural development in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (10 min presentation + 65 min discussion)

Theme II: Role of innovation and technology in the National Food Systems of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (10 min presentation + 65 min discussion)

Theme III: Saudi Efforts Fighting against Food Loss and Waste (10 min presentation + 65 min discussion)

Theme IV: Empowering women and youth engagement in the Agri-food Systems (10 min presentation + 65 min discussion)

In order to motivate discussions during break-out sessions, participants were encouraged to provide their opinion to overcome the challenges highlighted during the first session in order to develop sustainable, and resilient national food systems. After breakout sessions, participants were reunited to listen each session moderator outcomes for discussion in the presence of all the stake-holders that ultimately led to final concluding remarks.

### 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

- ✓ Finance
- ✓ Innovation
- ✓ Human rights
- ✓ Women & Youth Empowerment
- ✓ Policy
- ✓ Data & Evidence
- ✓ Governance
- Trade-offs
- ✓ Environment and Climate

## MAIN FINDINGS

- Scientific research, modern technologies and cutting-edge innovations attain huge potential to transform the agriculture sector by introducing new farming concepts such as vertical farming, digital agriculture, circular agriculture, seawater farming aquaponics etc., to achieve sustainable agriculture development in drylands. There is a need to scale up and reflect in the policy instrument.
- The FLW is a serious global issue that demands novel practices and innovative approaches. We should actively play our role in fostering and supporting initiatives contributing to the global reduction of FLW as well as the enhancement of food security. There is a dire need to set FLW intermediary targets for each country or region based on value chain specificities. Furthermore, enhance cooperation to develop mechanisms in order to promote coordination between value chain players responsible for interrelated food issues, such as marketing, storage, handling, pro-cessing, quality, and safety must be encouraged at all levels.
- It is of utmost importance to invest in the capacity/capability of the local farmers and infrastructure. Such responsible investments in agriculture are of great potential in meeting the increasing demand for food and rural development.
- It is the need of the hour to benchmark current farming systems through water use efficiency of crop income/mm of rainfall over the cropping sequence in order to devise a realistic system approach to achieve sustainable agricultural development in drylands.
- Bridging the gap between science and policy through collaboration is very much crucial to develop efficient, affordable, and cost-effective solutions/technologies for impactful agricultural transformation.
- A better understanding of the interdependence of Water, Energy and Food (WEF Nexus) is critical for developing policies and innovation that enable a sustainable food system at a global scale, enable resource use efficiency, protect biodiversity and ecosystem services, improve livelihood, empower people, ensure food security and nutrition and optimize sustainable economic benefits. In this regard, there is an urgent need to shift the idea of WEF Nexus from THINKING to ACTING through multi-disciplinary collaboration and close cooperation between companies, knowledge institutes, and government sector.

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## OUTCOMES FOR EACH DISCUSSION TOPIC - 1/5

### Kingdom of Saudi Arabia Food Systems

Food Systems of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia is tightly connected with global food systems. However, biotic and abiotic stresses along with dryland conditions under the implications of climate change adding complexity to our local food production systems. Therefore, KSA food systems are passing through a transition by following a pathway of holistic systems-based approach and coordinated actions to incorporate scientific and technological innovations and best practices into our policy-making. In this session, several dimensions related to the national food production systems and food security strategy and safety were discussed under the presence of multi-stakeholders inclusivity across the Saudi food systems. The most important findings contributing to the entire food supply chain in this session are as follows:

#### 1. Local Food Production:

- Encourage Research & Development for interdisciplinary collaboration to transform agriculture in drylands, which are supporting different types of food production systems.
- Adaptation choices and risk management actions across temporal and spatial scales and contexts will need to build on robust methods of designing, implementing, and evaluating detailed development pathways. Such pathways, yet to be fully elucidated, must strengthen climate-resilience and limit trade-offs between different actors.
- Controlled environment agriculture is the inherent need due to the agro-climatic conditions, and natural resource scarcity. The in-depth research is needed on various aspects to preserve the environment and natural resources enhanced productivity, and sustainably develop them to grow strategic food crops.
- Providing real-time ongoing extension support services to farmers for decision making on individual entities by carefully blending local knowledge with modern science and technology that account for all dimensions of sustainability including environmental, social, and economic.
- Advocating Nature-based solutions to protect ecosystems and biodiversity services for sustainable food system at national and global scale.
- Prioritizing Science-based solutions to enhance resource use efficiency, empower people, and improve livelihood.
- Invest in basic research and its translation into food security outcomes via Government/Private Sector Partnerships as an important component for long-term strategic planning to increase domestic production and foster food self-sufficiency.
- Transboundary pests and diseases are serious threats to food production systems at all levels. The economic damages caused by them are worsening year by year. It is the right time to accelerate global efforts to scale up international response against transboundary plant pests and diseases to secure sustainable food production by avoiding agriculture losses due to Transboundary and Emerging Plant Pests and Diseases.
- Encouraging the compliance of Saudi Good Agricultural Practices (SAUDI G.A.P.) standards to increase consumers' confidence in food safety and traceability.
- Climate-smart practices are important to reduce the meteorological disasters loss by enhancing crop productivity, stabilizing yield, and ensuring global food security and nutrition.

#### 2. Food Supply Chain

- Due to high food import bill, it is the need of the hour to introduce fully integrated international and domestic food and agriculture monitoring system to ensure the provision of food to all parts of the Kingdom, efficiently and effectively, together with an early warning system for low levels.
- Diversification of investment in importing food items bearing in mind the Virtual Water Trade and food value chain efficiency
- Infrastructure development related to the agricultural sector and supporting sectors such as ports, railways, and roads at the level of the Gulf Cooperation Council countries to ensure efficient and smooth flow of goods between them.
- Preparing clear standards and controls for value-added chains, agricultural marketing mechanisms and services, and ensuring that they meet the requirements of the beneficiaries.

#### 3. Consumption

- Campaigns on social media platforms are very important to raise society'

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## OUTCOMES FOR EACH DISCUSSION TOPIC - 2/5

Sustainable agricultural rural development in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

The Sustainable Agricultural Rural Development Program (2018-2025) was mainly launched to target eight sectors including 1) Smallholdings and traditional agriculture; 2) Production, processing, and marketing of Arabic coffee; 3) Beekeeping and honey production; 4) Rose cultivation and marketing; 5) fruit production and marketing; 6) Small-scale fisheries and fish farming; 7) Smallholder livestock production; 8) Rain-fed crops. The mission of the program is to achieve sustainable agricultural rural development in all regions of the Kingdom by strengthening the capacities of small-scale agricultural producers and their cooperatives and rural institutions to enable them to have access to productive resources, agricultural services and markets.

The most important findings of this session are as follows:

- Support and encourage the contribution of productive families and small enterprises in the agricultural sector.
- Providing technical and logistical support to small farmers to grow promising crops such as coffee, roses and tropical fruits, etc., is very important.
- Electronic extension services are critically important for capacity building and evidence-based decision-making about farming.
- It is important to engage International Organization working on rural development for maximum returns.
- The program will ensure sustained access to healthy food, while increasing women's participation in the labour market as envisioned in Vision 2030.
- Organic farming is providing exciting opportunities for rural development by increasing employment, reconnecting consumers with producers, and ecosystem services.
- Rural development is crucial to fight poverty and improve the income level of family farming (FF). It is important to strengthen efforts to support small-family farming by improving their access to education, technology, and market, as rural development is directly linked with global food security. There is a need to empower youth and women because of their catalytic role in rural development.
- R&D should be encouraged and incentivized to identify and deploy high-impact solutions across the value chain. The private sector can also play a key role in identifying commercially viable solutions for family farming. This includes the promotion of affordable technologies and the implementation of integrated innovative practices tailored to the needs of small-scale family farms and producers.

### ACTION TRACKS

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### KEYWORDS

✓	Finance	✓	Policy
	Innovation	✓	Data & Evidence
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## OUTCOMES FOR EACH DISCUSSION TOPIC - 3/5

### Role of innovation and technology in the National Food Systems of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

Modern agricultural practices and cutting-edge agri-tech innovations have enhanced the potential for partnering with farmers to promote sustainable agriculture development. Investment in agricultural technologies to increase crop and animal production is one of the most promising pathways for achieving sustainable agri-food systems and food security. Therefore, it is the right time to focus on the transition in agriculture by investing and adopting on all the available innovative technologies by keeping in mind megatrends and especially focusing our younger generations and women participation to fulfill the needs of future farmers to develop farm technologists instead of farmers.

The most important findings of this session are as follows:

- Research and innovation, policy intervention and educational measures are essential for meeting the five pillars 5P of the SDGs that are people, planet, prosperity, peace, and partnership
- Research should focus on targeted areas focusing on technology and content-specific research. The main focus of research to invent, advance, and further develop local farming techniques.
- Allocating funds to Research and Development to government bodies and private sector to answer various implementation questions to co-create tailor-made approaches, adapted to the local needs of farmers, rural communities, value chains, and consumers.
- The use of ICT technology can help to improve water management, for example, remote sensing technology, to monitor and diagnose the water and nutrient status of crops, and artificial intelligence models. Such technology is very important in determining the water and fertilizer demand of the crop, so as to supply water and nutrients for crops at the appropriate stage, and reduce the luxury consumption of water, and fertilizer and protect the soil and water in the environment.
- Seawater farming and saline agriculture is an exciting opportunity to unleash the potential of these resources for sustainable agriculture development
- The concept of modern farming (Vertical farming, Hydroponic, Aquaponic) should be given priority to research, development and efficient use, and in this regard much research should be done on various aspects to start the cultivation of basic and strategic crops in such farming systems.
- Vertical Farming is a specialized form of growing target crops, however, it is very important to optimize Vertical Farming to local climate and to the local situation from the design of the farm to the harvest of the produce.
- There should be more discussion related to use of food produced through modern technologies, for example, culture meat, and these technologies can be considered a future priority areas of research.
- Water, energy, and food security are key pillars for sustainable food production, human well-being, and rural poverty reduction. A better understanding of the interdependence of Water, Energy and Food (WEF Nexus) is critical for developing policies and innovation that enable a sustainable food system at a global scale, enable resource use efficiency, protect biodiversity and ecosystem services, improve livelihood, empower people, ensure food security and nutrition, and optimize sustainable economic benefits.

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## OUTCOMES FOR EACH DISCUSSION TOPIC - 4/5

### Saudi Efforts Fighting against Food Loss and Waste

Food Loss and Waste is a global problem of enormous economic, environmental, and societal significance contributes to a considerable portion of the global food supply. Its ramifications are part of several United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), both directly and indirectly. In order to tackle food sustainability challenges, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia has launched several initiatives to ensure sustainability in our food system and preserving natural resources. In this regard, Saudi Grains Organization (SAGO) under the umbrella of MEWA launched a national program to reduce Food Loss and Waste based on the evidence of the magnitude of FLW. The first edition of this initiative revealed that overall 33.1 % of the total available food in the Kingdom is lost and wasted during the entire food supply chain that translates into 4.07 million tons of food per year. In this regard, establishing the intermediate targets to achieving SDG commitment 12.3 taking into account each country's specific circumstances will be the way forward to tackle FLW.

The most important findings of this session are as follows:

- There is a need to quantify FLW by individual drivers across the supply chain
- It is important to develop or amend legislative instruments to support the reduction of FLW and setting clear targets in line with SDG 12.3, a roadmap to achieve the desired objectives
- The concept of Circular Economy, which mainly aimed to maximize resource efficiency, and reduce the environmental impacts by waste management hierarchy is pertinent in this context to recover nutrients and energy from wastes.
- The regional and global efforts and awareness events with respect to sharing knowledge, best practices and experiences on FLW prevention activities along the entire food supply chain will help to tackle this growing issue at the country, regional, and global level.
- FLW awareness campaigns were launched on responsible consumption patterns, it is important to maintain continuity.
- Organizing events targeting young people to innovate and develop solutions to reduce food loss and waste.
- The promotion of Food banks concept could help to rescue massive volumes of wasted food as an important element of food waste management strategy.
- FLW is creating opportunities and attractive avenues for science and technology to provide tailored made innovative solutions to curb FLW.

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## OUTCOMES FOR EACH DISCUSSION TOPIC - 5/5

### Empowering women and youth engagement in the Agri-food Systems

In this session, the most important challenges facing the food systems in the Kingdom were discussed (from the point of view of women and youth), and the reasons for the reluctance of young people and women from agriculture, which were represented in many aspects, including problems related to manpower, unfair competition, training and efficiency, and others.

The most important findings of this session are as follows:

- Empowering women and youth and enhancing their role in participating in the food and agricultural supply chain in the Kingdom.
- It is very important to engage youth and women for the development of future sustainable and resilient food production systems.
- Raising awareness and developing capabilities, by conducting training programs for women and fresh graduates through an integrated and flexible methodology.
- Providing financial support to women and youth through the Agricultural Development Fund through long-term soft loans, to encourage investment in the food supply chain.
- Support and enable agricultural associations with youth and women participation in the technical and marketing fields to develop mechanisms for marketing operations locally and abroad.
- Capacity development of the rural youth through vocational training and extension for services to enhance employment outcomes and secure global food security

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## AREAS OF DIVERGENCE

### ACTION TRACKS

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### KEYWORDS

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