

# OFFICIAL FEEDBACK FORM

DIALOGUE DATE	Wednesday, 7 April 2021 13:05 GMT +00:00
DIALOGUE TITLE	Food System Summit Dialogues , The Gambia
CONVENED BY	Hon Amie Fabureh ,Minister of Agriculture
DIALOGUE EVENT PAGE	<a href="https://summitdialogues.org/dialogue/24714/">https://summitdialogues.org/dialogue/24714/</a>
DIALOGUE TYPE	Member State
GEOGRAPHICAL FOCUS	Gambia (Republic of The)

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

800

## PARTICIPATION BY AGE RANGE

8	0-18	200	19-30	320	31-50	240	51-65	32	66-80	0	80+
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## PARTICIPATION BY GENDER

520	Male	280	Female	0	Prefer not to say or Other
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## NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS IN EACH SECTOR

160	Agriculture/crops	8	Education	16	Health care
40	Fish and aquaculture	16	Communication	40	Nutrition
160	Livestock	80	Food processing	24	National or local government
16	Agro-forestry	80	Food retail, markets	0	Utilities
72	Environment and ecology	32	Food industry	8	Industrial
48	Trade and commerce	0	Financial Services	0	Other

## NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS FROM EACH STAKEHOLDER GROUP

40	Small/medium enterprise/artisan	0	Workers and trade union
0	Large national business	1	Member of Parliament
0	Multi-national corporation	7	Local authority
325	Small-scale farmer	39	Government and national institution
325	Medium-scale farmer	0	Regional economic community
0	Large-scale farmer	3	United Nations
50	Local Non-Governmental Organization	0	International financial institution
0	International Non-Governmental Organization	0	Private Foundation / Partnership / Alliance
0	Indigenous People	2	Consumer group
2	Science and academia	0	Other

## 2. PRINCIPLES OF ENGAGEMENT

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

The Gambia Food System Dialogues were three in nature: regional, national and independent. To help guide the process of the dialogues, a tool was developed to conduct key informant interviews, focus group discussions and town hall meetings. The questions in the tool were tailored and reflected characteristics of the various dialogues. The country is divided into 5 Regions and 2 Municipalities. The Regions are: West Coast, Lower River, North Bank, Central River and Upper River Regions, and, the Municipalities are Kanifing Municipality and the Banjul City council. A Dialogue was organized in each region and Municipality. For each Dialogue 50 participants were invited. The selection of the invitees was based on representation of actors across the value chain of all food-related enterprises (input dealers, growers, processors, traders, transporters, storage, exporters, food industry and consumers). The criteria ensured equal representation among crop, livestock and value addition actors. In addition to the regional dialogues, national dialogues were also organized. There were 4 thematic areas; namely, 1) ensure access to safe and nutritious food for all and a shift to sustainable consumption patterns, 2) boost nature-positive production and equitable livelihoods, 3) build resilience to vulnerabilities, Shocks and Stresses, and 4) encourage participation of the private sector. The participants were selected across ministries, departments and agencies, private sector, Non-government organizations, the UN agencies and civil society that are implied in the national food systems. In addition, an independent dialogue was organized. The invitees were the representatives of farmer-based organizations belonging to the umbrella National Coordination of Farmer Associations Gambia (NACOFAG). At the end of the various dialogues, the outcome of the discussions was compiled, analysed, synthesized, sorted and articulated in a single draft document which was subjected to a national validation.

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

The FFSD process in The Gambia was conducted in the most professional way which complied to a large extent to the principles of the global FSSD. After the Convenor was named, a Steering Committee was created and a Curator and 2 facilitators named to assist the Convenor in her task of organizing the national dialogues. The SC planned the Dialogues, built the budget for supporting the activities and was responsible for all logistics involved. The Convenor working with SC created an Advisory Committee comprised of her fellow Ministers responsible for Environment, Fisheries, Finance, Trade and Health. The AC also included the UN Resident Coordinator, The Country Directors of FAO and WFP, The Vice-Chancellor of the University of The Gambia, The Secretary General and Head of the Civil Service and the Curator of the Dialogues. The AC is supposed to advise the Convenor and to approve of the draft and final pathway document. At the beginning a maiden ad-hoc group chaired by the Convenor established 1) the Action Track themes around which the national dialogues took place, 2) identified the Chairpersons of the various national Action Tracks and 3) approved a roadmap or plan of action to completing the dialogues and formulating the national pathway. The Regional Governors, regional directors of agriculture (both crops and livestock) were immediately contacted and committed to the process. The regional directors (crops and livestock) were assigned to select the participants to the regional dialogues respecting the FSSD principles of inclusivity among all the stakeholders of the food system. The food system being so complex we invited the men, women, youth, food processors, traders, marketers, producers, transporters, restaurant owners, environmentalists, health personnel, nutritionists, politicians and traditional communicators. During the dialogues and the validation workshop, the Chairpersons and meeting moderators ensured all participants had a chance to speak and be heard.

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

First, one should identify a good team (dedicated, committed) as a steering committee around the convenor and free them or reduce their other official duties as much as possible. The steering committee should meet regularly and in constant touch with the Convenor. The membership should come from the executive (Office of The President), UN partners (FAO & WFP), representative of Farmer Organizations and Ministries implied in the food system. The participants in the dialogues should include stakeholders from across the food value chain. One should utilize the decentralized offices (Regional Governors, Regional Directors of technical departments involved in the food system). The Chairpersons of the Action Tracks (Thematic Working Groups) in the national dialogues should be carefully selected. They should be good communicators, fair and balanced. Finally, we advise that the selection of the participants in the dialogues be as inclusive as possible taking into consideration all the possible actors (youth, women and civil society organizations and disadvantaged groups) in the food system. The dialogue process should be adequately resourced financially and there should be a timely flow of information across all levels of the organization.

# 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

Describe in under 4,200 characters including spaces  
In The Gambia, our focus was on all the Action Tracks. We recognized the need to consult stakeholders from around the country and the stakeholders in each of the Action Tracks.  
We conducted dialogues in all regions, along the Action Tracks and an independent dialogue.  
i) The Gambia is divided into 7 regions (5 administrative regions and 2 municipalities) and we conducted a dialogue in each region.  
ii) All 5 Action Tracks of the FSSD were equally treated but we had them regrouped according to common linkages among some of them: Action Tracks 1&2 were merged into one Thematic Working Group (TWG); Action Tracks 3&4 were merged in a second TWG; Action Track 5 was treated alone in a third TWG.  
iii) The Independent Dialogue was organized by the apex body of farmer organizations called National Coordination Organization of Farmer Organizations Gambia (NACOFAG).  
iv) We added Private Sector participation in a fourth TWG.

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

## MAIN FINDINGS

### 1) Increase access to land, financing and other productive resources that specifically target women and youth.

The women form more than 50% of the farming population and in some regions, they are the major producers of vegetables, rice and groundnuts. Despite their numbers and their key contribution to agricultural production they are seriously disadvantaged in that they lack access to key production factors and inputs, particular land, finance and technical know-how. Women in the Gambia, for social, religious and cultural reasons, do not own land and can only inherit land from their mothers. Consequently, women in the Gambia, lack the opportunity to have land which they can present to the bank as a co-lateral to obtain bank loans. It is therefore imperative to increase their access to land and finance if their production is to increase.

### 2) Increase in the efficiency and effectiveness of the health delivery system

There is a conspicuous inadequate access to quality health services especially in rural Gambia. This has led to high under 5, infant and neo-natal mortalities. This has led to serious ramifications on production and productivity of the nation's food systems. In 2018, it was estimated that the country lost an equivalent of about GMD3.956 billion due to child undernutrition, which represented 5.1 percent of the GDP (COHA Report, 2020).

### 3) Sustainable exploitation of the country's natural resource base.

There has been remarkable degradation of the country's resource base over the years. Deforestation, overfishing in our waters and inappropriate fishing nets, the poisoning of marine life, land degradation, frequent bush fires are some classical examples. Some of the adaptive measures undertaken to mitigate the degradation on the country's resource base include sensitization on bush fire control measures, encourage agroforestry, regulating fishing and fishing nets, creation of appropriate policies. There is an alarming rate of wanton felling of indigenous and protected tree species. Bad agricultural practices on slopes have seriously aggravated soil and water erosion resulting in loss of topsoil and decline in soil fertility.

### 4) Increase food production by 100%

According to the national statistics the country produces about half of the national annual food needs. There is urgent need to gradually increase food production over the next ten years leading to national food and nutrition self-sufficiency which is in-line with the attainment of SDG 2 target 3. Agricultural production can also be boosted if Gambians consume locally produced, safe and quality foods. Increase in production can also happen if the school feeding program, hospitals and the security services source their food needs from the local farming community. Production can further be increased by reducing vulnerabilities of the livelihoods of the population through building resilience of food systems through climate-resilient agricultural practices and social protection interventions.

### 5) A harmonized and better coordinated policy environment that directedly or indirectly affect food systems

The effective coordination of relevant policies on food systems remains the major issue in the attainment of the SDGs by 2030 in relation to the National Food Systems. Existing policies should be reviewed and dovetailed to ensure and cater for equity, justice, empowerment and sustainability for all.

### 6) More private sector involvement in the food systems.

The private sector is a key player in ensuring food safety as it underlies the entire food system. The majority of foods are produced, handled, processed, distributed, and sold by the private sector, and thus, their responsibility to ensure that products are nutritious and safe for consumption. In view of the above, increased private sector support and involvement is integral in achieving the set goals in the SDGs in relation to food systems.

### 7) Government to fulfil its international fiscal obligations.

In line with the call for globalization of resources for the enhance of National Food Systems, it is important for The Government to honor its commitments to national and international agreements/treaties such as the Malabo Declaration in committing 10% of public expenditure to agriculture.

The Right to Food is a long-standing international human right to which many countries are committed according to the UN Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, CESCR, 1999. It is the right to feed oneself in dignity and the right to adequate food.

National and Regional Food Reserves is part of building resilience to vulnerabilities, shocks and stresses which may be caused by natural or manmade disasters. The Economic Community of West African States has adopted a policy requiring regional reserves by ECOWAS and national food reserves by the Member States.

## ACTION TRACKS

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## KEYWORDS

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

## OUTCOMES FOR EACH DISCUSSION TOPIC

1) Increase access to land, financing and other productive resources that specifically target women and youth.

Actions:

- a) The government must make specific and deliberate policy decisions (legislative and regulatory) targeting women and youths which grant them ownership of land for cultivation or to conduct agribusiness enterprises. The land can serve as collateral to give them access to finance.
- b) The agricultural loan interest rate in The Gambia is too high. It must be lowered to a single digit and loans should be discounted over multiple years with a minimum of 3 years. A grace period of 6 months for crops and 12 months for livestock should be given before repayment on the loan capital should start.
- c) The government should fast-track the establishment of an agri-business bank and a risk support facility, both of which are being formulated.
- d) Priority needs to be given to projects and programmes that will promote women and youth participation, eg, rice, vegetable and small ruminant projects tend to benefit women and youths.
- e) Promote gender equity with particular attention paid to youth participation throughout the food value chain.

2) Increase in the efficiency and effectiveness of the health delivery system

Actions:

- a) Government and the private sector should increase access and improve health service delivery including Primary Health Care in the rural areas.
- b) Government should put in place strategies to systematically train and retain qualified personnel.
- c) Government should promote and enhance Private Sector investment in health service delivery, especially in the rural areas.
- d) Mainstream food-based nutrition and household food security into sectoral policies and plans.

3) Sustainable exploitation of the country's natural resource base.

Actions:

- a) Mainstream conservation agriculture in ANR policies and enact soil and water regulations.
- b) Combat Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated (IUU) fishing. Review and enforce the fisheries regulations and practice the Maximum Sustainable Yield concept. Re-negotiate all fishing agreements in favour of sustained economic growth.
- c) Enforce forestry regulations to curb illegal logging and transportation of foreign timber through Gambian territory for export. Promote community forest management concepts and non-timber forest enterprises.

4) Increase food production by 100%

Actions:

- a) Promote climate smart agriculture through the use of i) irrigation (drip and surface) to encourage year-round production and crop production intensification and ii) integrated farming systems (crops, livestock and aquaculture). Less than 4% of the cultivable area in The Gambia is irrigated. Tens of thousands of irrigable lands can be made available for lowland production if salt intrusion in the second half of the River Gambia is controlled. The government should consider construction of an anti-salt bridge on the river somewhere ecologically feasible.
- b) Promote mechanization along the entire food value chain. About 30% of the cultivable land is not cultivated. Mechanization of pre and post-harvest activities will reduce drudgery and time, increase cultivation of larger areas, and will also reduce postharvest losses.
- c) Promote consumption of safe and nutritious diets, biofortified foods and mineral and vitamin supplements for all
- d) Promote home grown school feeding (HGSF) program and contract farming. The HGSF increases retention of the girl-child in school which curbs early child marriages and closes the education gap between boys and girls. When all the children are well fed, early child development (ECD) is guaranteed, and the child cognitive development is advanced.
- e) Promote access to markets for agricultural produce
- f) Empower agricultural, food and nutrition security research and development
- g) Strengthen national laboratory capacity for food testing (Sanitary and Phyto-Sanitary system strengthening)
- h) Establish a robust early warning system to natural disasters and strengthen and the National Disaster Management Agency for rapid intervention, saving lives and restoration of lost livelihoods.

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✓	Women & Youth Empowerment		Trade-offs
		✓	Environment and Climate

## AREAS OF DIVERGENCE

- 1) a) conflict between forestry and farmlands, 2) conflict between farmers and wildlife (hippopotamus) 3) conflict between farmers and livestock and 4) shifting land use patterns
- 2) Middlemen role between growers and markets
- 3) Conflict in policies affecting food systems

A few areas of divergence emerged during the Gambian dialogue. The most important divergences were related to conflicts between various uses of land and those who use land. 1) The stakeholders from the forestry and food production value chains could not agree on the expansion of agricultural lands through destruction of forests. Also, 2) rice growers in the CRR complain about hippopotamuses invading and destroying their fields. They want the hippos killed but the animals are protected species in The Gambia. So, there is continuous push and pull between the agriculture and wildlife departments. Another 3) controversial area is the rapid take over of real estate developers of agricultural land for residential purposes especially in the 2 regions: namely, Kanifing Municipality and West Coast region.

There was a divergence within the horticulture value chain. The growers that are far from the big urban markets sell their produces through middlemen called 'Gyenda Jai'. These middlemen often shortchange, delay payments to the growers or even disappear with the growers' money.

A final divergence is related to policy conflicts affecting the food systems in the Gambia. The policies adopted by various ministries of agriculture and trade are often in conflict. The Ministry of Trade is responsible for Common External Tariffs and for the Investment Codes. The Ministry of Agriculture often require certain value chains protected to encourage growth and investment. Often, the two ministries do not align their schedules.

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