

OFFICIAL FEEDBACK FORM

DIALOGUE DATE	Monday, 8 March 2021 10:00 GMT +06:00
DIALOGUE TITLE	Second Sub-National Dialogue in Barguna
CONVENED BY	Khaja Abdul Hannan
DIALOGUE EVENT PAGE	https://summitdialogues.org/dialogue/25564/
DIALOGUE TYPE	Member State
GEOGRAPHICAL FOCUS	Bangladesh

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

50

PARTICIPATION BY AGE RANGE

0-18

19-30

31-50

51-65

66-80

80+

PARTICIPATION BY GENDER

41 Male

9 Female

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

Education

Communication

Food processing

Food retail, markets

Food industry

Financial Services

Health care

Nutrition

National or local government

Utilities

Industrial

Other

NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS FROM EACH STAKEHOLDER GROUP

Small/medium enterprise/artisan

Large national business

Multi-national corporation

Small-scale farmer

Medium-scale farmer

Large-scale farmer

Local Non-Governmental Organization

International Non-Governmental Organization

Indigenous People

Science and academia

Workers and trade union

Member of Parliament

Local authority

Government and national institution

Regional economic community

United Nations

International financial institution

Private Foundation / Partnership / Alliance

Consumer group

Other

2. PRINCIPLES OF ENGAGEMENT

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

The Dialogue was organized to solicit inputs and insights for the Food Systems Summit through gaining an understanding about the district itself and how its several aspects are affecting the pathways to food system transformation, along with challenges that are contributing to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The Dialogue brought a diversity of stakeholders from the Government Departments, Semi-autonomous and Autonomous Organizations, Private Sector Organizations, Business networks, Civil Society Organizations, and Grass Root level Representatives– working across the food system from production to consumption. The Convenor and the team went through detail preparation for convening the dialogues to reflect that the outcomes were incorporated and enhanced during the Sub-National Dialogue. While organizing the dialogue, the Convenor along with the core team had engaged different government ministries and departments into the process. Ministry of Food is leading the process in Bangladesh, but it has simultaneously engaged the Department of Agricultural Extension, Department of Livestock Services (DLS), Bangladesh Food Safety Authority (BFSA), and directorate of national consumer rights protection. Together with that, participation and engagement of other relevant stakeholders, for example, farmers/ producers, food processors, farm owners' associations, vendors, restaurant owners, retailers, consumers' associations, small entrepreneurs, and public service providers, High-school level youth representatives, teachers, have been ensured. The dialogue emphasized on the fact that, local level service providers and govt. authorities need to be equally committed and accountable along with central government bodies to practice and contribute to the vision, objectives and the final outcomes of the Food Systems Summit and foresee a long terms plan to ensure food and nutrition security and food safety for all.

HOW DID YOUR DIALOGUE REFLECT SPECIFIC ASPECTS OF THE PRINCIPLES?

In terms of Being Respectful, the four working groups facilitated during the Sub-National Dialogue focused on nutritious and safe food, with a broad lens ranging from production to consumption as well as vulnerabilities and inclusion. As a result, the linkages with other tracks were also discussed and covered during the working group facilitation. The respected guests of the Sub-national Dialogue addressed mass awareness and accountability of all level to be key area for improvement in terms of ensuring safe and nutritious food. In Recognising Complexity and Embracing Multi-stakeholder Inclusivity, Government Departments, Semi-autonomous and Autonomous Organizations, Private Sector Organizations, Business networks, Civil Society Organizations, and Grass Root level Representatives highlighted the significance of working coordination as well as make people aware of what they consume and how the food can be safe. In addition, imperfect supply chain, lack of cold storage facility, farmers not getting proper price of the crops they produce due to a unstructured practice of business led by the middle men, lack of safe water supply, poor irrigation and dredging system, lack of adequate initiatives to protect local fish as well as promote local and seasonal crops and fruits, gradually decreasing agricultural land and at mass level, climate change effects and result of frequent natural disasters were some other areas highlighted as few of the challenges in the way of ensuring safe food consumption. Participants emphasized the importance of mass level awareness range from duty bearers to consumers as the prime measure to reduce food unsafety. Alongside, being accountable and responsible from own side as a citizen would be highly appreciated and should be in practice, promoting climate resilient agriculture, developing more inter-departmental coordination, controlled use of fertilizer, pesticides, poultry feed etc. should be active to ensure safe food and value chain cycle.

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

Firstly, the National Convenor of Bangladesh focusing on Action Track 1, recognizes that it is crucial to organize dialogues with participation from multisector and multi-stakeholder agencies, considering the complexity of food system. In addition, it is critical to develop a small working group with multiple stakeholders, including private sector, duty bearers, government departments, grass root level representatives and youth to show the interconnections between the different action tracks. It will create the options to facilitate dialogues on different issues around food system, beyond merely focusing on one action track. The principles of engagement for learning are highlighted in section 2(ii). Though there were challenges but the response, range of participation as well as the feedback, participants gave during the dialogue were really appreciating.

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

dialogue, Action Track-1 i.e. 'Ensure access to safe and nutritious food for all' was considered with a prime importance. However, connections with the other Action Tracks were also considered for the improvement of food and nutrition security situation in Bangladesh. In the group discussion session of the dialogue, the following four thematic areas (discussion topics) were considered: i) Availability of diversified, safe and nutritious Food; ii) Transformation, delivery, access and role of private sector; iii) Consumer behaviors, nutrition and food safety; iv) Climate vulnerability, inclusion and governance. Barguna is a district in the division of Barisal, Bangladesh. It is situated in the southern part of Bangladesh. Barguna's economy is primarily dependent on agriculture. Principal crops include rice and pulses. Jute cultivation was once important, but it gradually lost popularity as a cash crop. Being a coastal district, Barguna has a thriving fishing industry. Produce of the district includes betel leaf, pulses, bananas, betel nut, molasses, marine fish, and shrimp. Total area of agricultural land is 104231 hectares. There is no major industry in this district. A number of small manufacturing industries comprise mostly rice mills, saw mill, soap factory, flour mill, ice factory and pen factory. Majority of the industries are in the sadar area (adjacent areas of district head quarter) and the remaining are in different upazilas (sub-district). Traditional cottage industries such as weaving, bamboo and cane art work, goldsmithing, blacksmithing, pottery, wood work, and tailoring also thrive in rural areas. Barguna has been located as one of the coastal areas of Bangladesh that is being hit by cyclones almost every year. Cyclone season in the Bay of Bengal, mainly occurs pre and post monsoon season, between April- May and October-November and that causes death during a cyclone disaster, due to drowning. Further damage is caused by inundation of low-lying coastal areas, erosion, and damage to soil fertility, crops, fisheries, vegetable etc. as well as loss of buildings and transport networks. Cyclones that make landfall at high tide create higher storm surges and are therefore more destructive.

Considering this geographical reality, to ensure access to safe and nutritious food for all, it is important to include all vulnerable population in the social protection program. Government of Bangladesh has given emphasis to support people affected by the flood, drought, natural disaster, and other adverse climatic events. In addition, it is also important to support people residing in the marginalized and geographically hard-to-reach areas, and families which are economically and socially vulnerable to food and nutrition security. Besides, special training programs for private sector, mass awareness and knowledge building on safe food and food supply chain and agricultural sector rehabilitation and mitigation measures could benefit these vulnerable and excluded people.

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

Covid-19 Pandemic has situation the existing challenges in food supply chain area even worse and more challenging. Food safety as we know is a part of food security; another step of it is- supply chain- from production to consumption. The dialogue tried to find out the existing challenges and effective way forward from country's one of the diversified districts. And key areas indicated that the district still faces difficulties in roads and in modes of communication. It still remains as a big challenge in most of the areas. Due to flood and natural disasters these road have become more unsustainable. Reaching to the communities living in remote places becomes very much difficult. As a result, during disaster or in time of emergency, nutritious food cannot be ensured for people living in these areas. Transportation of food products becomes difficult and uncertain. Situation has become more challenging due to lack of cold storage facility and it is affecting the income of the farmers as well as a good number of crops/ fruits/ vegetables are being wasted in a regular basis. Farmers, due to their geographical locations and lack of network, still depends on the middleman for marketing of the crops they cultivate and produce. These middlemen do not give the farmers the proper price of the crops. In many cases, as we have found from the group discussion during the dialogues that middlemen keep the farmers waiting for selling the products and continue bargaining to buy the products in low price; and at the end of the day farmers are left with no other options but to sell their products in low price as there is not option for preserving or storing the products. Natural disaster in Barguna, undoubtedly is another key challenge people face regularly. Cyclone, flood, river erosion etc. are the most common phenomena that people of Barguna face around the year. River erosion is causing gradually decreasing cultivating lands and there are more. Along with these, lack of awareness among mass number of people is making situation more difficult to overcome. Despite having act and law as well as law enforcement team, percentage of people's practice of consuming safe food is not satisfactory. Lack of knowledge, clear concept about safe food and ignorance are the reason behind this. At the same time, mass people are not accountable and responsible to ensure safe food intake.

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OUTCOMES FOR EACH DISCUSSION TOPIC

1. Availability of diversified, safe, and nutritious food:

Challenges:

Lack of improved technology and management in rearing buffalo; Outbreak of several diseases in poultry that interrupts poultry rearing; Critical use of nets considering Fisheries; lack of local fish species; Inadequate irrigation systems and salinity in agriculture

Way Forward:

Appoint skilled workers at union level for reproduction of livestock and poultry; - Strict implication of Law enforcement Restrict and stop production of nets that are already banned; - Ensure irrigation through the installment of buried pipe; - Cultivate fruits and vegetable using trench system.

2. Transformation, delivery, access, and role of private sector:

-Challenges:

Imported fruits dominates the local markets; Price of crops is a challenge as no specific range is fixed, as a result, farmers do not get proper and right price; Inadequate employment; Local market environment.

Way Forward:

Establishment of storage and improvement of communication system; Fix specific place for farmers in local markets; Cooperative selling system; Build more dams, canal excavation, and drainage management; Improvement of product selling system considering the public health issues; Regional industry establishment (milk, auto rice mill, fisheries etc.); arrangement of livestock's health check- up.

3. Consumer behaviors, nutrition, and food safety:

Challenges:

Lack of awareness on nutrition consumption; Excessive application of pesticides on vegetables; Lack of financial solvency; Lack opportunities of diversified income generating opportunities; Inadequate food processing and preservation system; Lack of safe drinking water in disaster-prone areas; Acute malnutrition among children; Increasing trend of non-communicable diseases ; Outbreak of water-borne diseases such as diarrhea;

Way Forward:

Awareness raising; Market monitoring; Expand of agro-based industries; Regular monitoring of food production and food producing infrastructures; Need more infrastructure facilities to ensure the supply of fresh drinking water; Improvement of economic scenario through multi-sectoral and sustainable professions; Invention of salinity-resilient crops and multi-level use of lands; Integrated agriculture management; Storage system and industry establishment under govt. and non-govt. structures; Increase initiative related to health education.

4. Climate vulnerability, inclusion, and governance:

Challenges:

Long term damage of cultivating lands due to saline intrusion during natural disasters; Crop production hampers due to saline intrusion as the dams are not strong enough to prevent this intrusion and lack of water drainage system; Beneficiary under different social safety-net programs is not organized and irregular as well not maintained; Fishermen face food insecurity due to lack of alternative income generation activities during the time when fishing is declared to be restricted; Losing of assets, households and migration due to climate change and natural disasters; Huge damage causes in fisheries by collecting minnows; Lack of shelter for cattle causes alarming number of death of livestock during disasters; Damage of fisheries due to lack after production fisheries processing; Food supply chain gets damaged during disasters; Ultra- poor and poor people during disaster suffers from food insecurity due to lack of alternative income generating activities.

Way Forward:

Reduce the damage of crops and fisheries through proper water management during disasters; Repair, renovation and construction of dams and sluice gates and strengthen the water dredging system; Install rain water harvesting system for post-disaster safe drinking water supply; Establishment of shelter for cattle Create option of alternative income generating activities for fishermen during fish-catching banning period; Activate 'Emergency Food Bank' for urgent food support during post disaster time; activate early-warning system to minimize post disaster damages; - include social safety-net for income generating for third-gender people and align and merge this plan in central social safety-net programs

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AREAS OF DIVERGENCE

There was no major area of divergence among the participants. All the participants have emphasized on infrastructural development to control floods, cyclone and river erosion, and improvement of flood and cyclone resistant transportation and communication facilities which they think can improve the food production and transportation situation of the area.

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