

OFFICIAL FEEDBACK FORM

DIALOGUE DATE	Tuesday, 22 June 2021 08:00 GMT +07:00
DIALOGUE TITLE	Sub-National Dialogue on Developing Sustainable Food Systems in the Northern Vietnam
CONVENED BY	Department of Cooperatives and Rural Development, Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development
DIALOGUE EVENT PAGE	https://summitdialogues.org/dialogue/27771/
DIALOGUE TYPE	Member State
GEOGRAPHICAL FOCUS	Viet Nam

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

150

PARTICIPATION BY AGE RANGE

0 0-18 3 19-30 107 31-50 25 51-65 4 66-80 80+

PARTICIPATION BY GENDER

72 Male 67 Female Prefer not to say or Other

NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS IN EACH SECTOR

66	Agriculture/crops		Education		Health care
4	Fish and aquaculture		Communication	17	Nutrition
11	Livestock	7	Food processing		National or local government
	Agro-forestry	9	Food retail, markets		Utilities
4	Environment and ecology		Food industry		Industrial
	Trade and commerce		Financial Services	21	Other

NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS FROM EACH STAKEHOLDER GROUP

	Small/medium enterprise/artisan		Workers and trade union
	Large national business		Member of Parliament
6	Multi-national corporation		Local authority
3	Small-scale farmer	50	Government and national institution
	Medium-scale farmer		Regional economic community
	Large-scale farmer	5	United Nations
	Local Non-Governmental Organization	1	International financial institution
21	International Non-Governmental Organization	1	Private Foundation / Partnership / Alliance
	Indigenous People		Consumer group
50	Science and academia		Other

2. PRINCIPLES OF ENGAGEMENT

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

Describe in under 2,100 characters including spaces The Sub-national Food Systems Summit Dialogue in Northern Vietnam was successfully organized in Hanoi on 22nd June 2021 as a hybrid event, combining both in-person and virtual participation. In order for the principles of engagement to be integrated, reinforced and enhanced, the committee carefully followed key steps in organizing a food systems summit dialogue. In the preparing step, the program was designed in such a way that three core elements i.e. plenary session with official introduction, dialogue session, and summary session are included. Next, the inclusive and diverse list of participants was made and the pre-reading materials on the food systems summit were prepared. Then, the documents and invitation letter was sent out to invitees well in advance so that they have time to get prepared before attending the dialogue. During the event, the welcome and high-level introduction started, followed by the technical presentation to provide participants with background information on the Northern food systems so that they further go in depth discussion in a smaller group in two discussion sessions, 45 min each. After that, the key findings were summarized by each group facilitator and finally by the curator to cover all convergence and divergence opinions of the participants. To fully catch-up the contribution of all people, after the event the curator and facilitators follow-up with the participants via email to continue collecting their ideas for report completion. To conclude, the summit principles was largely incorporated and boosted up in the food system dialogue in Northern Vietnam.

HOW DID YOUR DIALOGUE REFLECT SPECIFIC ASPECTS OF THE PRINCIPLES?

The Sub-national Food Systems Summit Dialogue (FSSD) in Northern Vietnam was fruitfully organized with more than 160 participants from different sectors of food systems. The Northern Dialogue reflected specific aspects of the principles of engagement as indicated below: 1. Act with urgency: It is clearly recognized by many stakeholders that the current food systems in the North is unsustainable, low resilience to shock, stress, and vulnerabilities. Therefore, all stakeholders agree that we must act together urgently in order to transform the food systems in a positive way. 2. Commit to the summit: The number of participants attending the Dialogue was much higher than our expectation. During the dialogue, they actively contributed their knowledge and experience to the Northern food system characteristics and provided creative and practical solutions toward more sustainable, responsible and transparent systems. After the event, lots of them still followed-up with the organizers to provide their opinions to the report. 3. Be respectful: During the discussion sessions, participants had open discussion, respected each other opinions, accepted the divergent points of view. The initiatives and solutions proposed build on the existing ones and suit to the local context. 4. Recognize complexity: It is recognized that the Northern food systems are complex and involve in many sectors. Therefore, in order to achieve the systematic transformation the organizers invited multiple stakeholders and designed two dialogue sessions with small discussion groups in which they identify actions across the system with potential synergies and trade-offs. 5. Embrace multi-stakeholder inclusivity: The Dialogue brought diverse participants from seven food systems related sectors, from central to provincial governments, agriculture, agri-business community, associations, academia, multilateral organization etc. They work across the food system from production to consumption and raise the voice during dialogue, largely contributing to the system transformation.

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

From our experience, there are some advices given to other dialogue conveners below: - Have curator and facilitators well prepared and trained before the Dialogue - Strictly follow time-frame of the program, especially the dialogue session so that every participant has opportunity to share his/her opinion. - Welcome both convergence and divergence opinions from all participants. - Create a trustworthy, friendly and opened atmosphere for discussion.

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

The Northern region consists of 25 provinces (6 provinces in the Northwest, 9 provinces in the Northeast, and 10 provinces in the Red River Delta) with a total area of approximately 110,000 km²; population: 35 million people, accounting for one third of the country's area and population. In the North, agriculture is identified as one of key economic pillars. However, the production and consumption of food, accessibility to nutritious and safe food for all, and operation of food value chains in the North are still facing to many challenges such as small-scale and fragmented production, out-dated farming methods, un-biosecurity, abuse of plant protection drugs, chemical fertilizers, veterinary drugs, and additives processing etc. In the Northern mountainous areas, the rate of low-income households and children with malnutrition and micronutrient deficiencies is still very high. Furthermore, many locations there have complex topography, sloping land, and frequent experience with extreme climate phenomena such as heavy rains, floods, landslides, causing heavy damage to crops and livestock, seriously affecting people's livelihood. Many food value chains are not sustainable; the linkages between actors are loose, and the flow of information is not transparent.

Therefore, the Sub-National Dialogue on food systems in Northern Viet Nam focus on three themes, corresponding to five Action Tracks exploring the current challenges, opportunities, trade-offs and synergies of the Northern food systems (i) Ensure access to safe and nutritious food for all and shift to sustainable consumption patterns (Action track 1 and 2); (ii) Boost nature-positive production and build resilience to vulnerabilities, shocks, and stress (Action track 3 and 5), and (iii) Eliminate poverty and increase income, advance equitable livelihoods, and value division (Action track 4).

After official welcome by the Chair of the Dialogue Event - Mr. Le DucThinh, Director of Department of Cooperative and Rural Development, Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development, and opening remarks by the international organizations (UNICEF, IFAD, Embassy of Canada, CGIAR), a series of introductory and technical presentations were given to participants namely introduction of the 2021 UN Food Systems Summit given by Mr. Hoang Van Tu, FAO, followed by the key outcomes from 1st National Dialogue by Mr. Rodd Dyer – the regional curator, finally the overview of food systems in the Northern Vietnam: Characteristics, Problems to be solved, Challenges, and Opportunities given by Ms. Tran Thi Dinh, the Northern Dialogue curator.

Once the presentations completed, two dialogue sessions were organized in which the participants were divided into five online discussion groups according to their preferred Themes. Each group was supported by a Facilitator and a Note-taker. First, the facilitator gave a brief introduction and overview of the discussion theme topic and process, and then participants were invited to contribute their opinions, guided by several focus questions.

In the first session, participants explored the questions: What is the current situation, issues, challenges and gaps need to be addressed related to the discussed Themes? In the second session participants explored the questions: What are the initiatives, solutions and actions within the discussed Themes that Northern Viet Nam should take to contribute to the Food Systems to foster rapid and lasting changes.

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

The Sub-national Dialogue on food systems in Northern Vietnam was successfully organized with the participation of diverse stakeholders coming from 25 Northern provinces. The Dialogue created a friendly and trustworthy platform for participants to share the ideas, experiences and knowledge on specific problems and challenges of the Northern food systems and to contribute bold ideas, creative solutions to set a pathway toward more sustainable, responsible, and transparent food systems. In the official plenary session, departments in the central government as well as national and international partners strongly showed their interests and commitment to the food system summit. Then, in the first dialogue session the typical characteristics, challenges and gaps need to be addressed in the food systems in the Northern Vietnam were clarified by active contribution of all participants such as high prevalence of children malnutrition and nutrient deficiency in the remote and mountainous areas, a major problem on food safety, unbalanced nutrition in the diets, unsustainable supply chain operation, low awareness of people on food safety and nutrition, climate change and environmental pollution due to abuse of chemicals and over-exploitation, inefficient and ineffective policy implementation, the invisible role of women in the society etc.

In the second Dialogue session, the participants identified opportunities, solutions, and actions pathways to achieve more responsible, sustainable and transparent food systems in the Northern Vietnam. The solutions could be groups into (i) innovation and technology applied across the entire food systems including labelling, traceability, food safety, product quality, e-commerce, (ii) legal framework and policy implementation to support or control sustainable/un-safe production, (iii) funding distribution to be effective, (iv) environmental protection, and gender equality and social inclusion, particularly most vulnerable groups affected by shocks and stress.

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OUTCOMES FOR EACH DISCUSSION TOPIC - 1/2

Current situation, issues, challenges and gaps need to be addressed in the food systems in the Northern Vietnam. Participants identified various characteristics, issues and problems in each discussion Theme. Several consistent issues and cross-cutting themes were identified, some across multiple Themes (e.g., food safety, communication, climate change, traceability, food labelling). Summary of the problems, vulnerabilities, and gaps for each of the three discussion themes corresponding to five Action Tracks is given below:

Theme 1: Ensure access to safe and nutritious food for all and shift to sustainable consumption patterns

- Food safety is a major issue due to abuse of chemical fertilizers, pesticides, veterinary products, food additives and traditional farming habits;
- Food safety management in the wet markets is still a big challenge while most of foods are purchased in these markets. Traceability for the products in the wet markets is currently almost impossible.
- Rate of children malnutrition and nutrition deficiency in the mountainous areas is high due to low rate of breastfeeding, low nutrition value and diversity of baby foods while the rate of obesity in the big cities increases due to consumption of unhealthy foods.
- Awareness, knowledge, and best practices of the Northern people, especially producers and consumers on food safety and nutrition are still low;
- Capacity of the management authority is still low both quality and quantity;
- Communication on food safety and nutrition is not effective and transparent;
- Implementation of food policies and law is not yet effective;
- Food labeling is not transparent;
- Accessibility to safe and nutritious foods has not yet assured for the entire Northern resident.

Theme 2: Boost nature-positive production and build resilience to vulnerabilities, shocks, and stress.

- Production is unsustainable, focusing on quantity not yet quality
- Small-scale and fragmented production is typical in the North. Lots of producers do not follow technical regulations and standards.
- Small holder farmers face many difficulties to produce safe foods due to lack of investment and low income, limited access to the big markets.
- Lack of young and high quality labour for agriculture production
- Climate change increases natural disasters, floods, and epidemics, causing heavy damage to crops and livestock, seriously affecting people's livelihood.
- Pollution of soil, water, biodiversity degradation due to overuse of chemicals
- Market is unstable due to weak linkage, lack of technology, and pandemic (Covid 19). The most vulnerable actor is producers.
- Lack of supportive policies, especially for small-holder farmers

Theme 3: Eliminate poverty and increase income, advance equitable livelihoods, and value division.

- Many food value chains are not sustainable; the linkages between actors are loose, and the flow of information is not transparent;
- Postharvest and processing technologies are out-dated;
- Infrastructures in the wholesale and wet markets do not meet the standards, thus it is difficult to assure food safety and the food loss and waste are huge;
- Unbalance of food distribution in urban and rural areas;
- Limited involvement of private sectors;
- Unfair competition among enterprises due to lack of information transparency.

ACTION TRACKS

- ✓ Action Track 1: Ensure access to safe and nutritious food for all
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OUTCOMES FOR EACH DISCUSSION TOPIC - 2/2

Describe up to 10 Discussion topics, each in under 4,200 characters including spaces

A summary of the opportunities and solutions identified for each discussion Theme is provided below.

Theme 1: Ensure access to safe and nutritious food for all and shift to sustainable consumption patterns

- High demand on safe and nutritious foods;
- Application of a multidisciplinary approach, combination of both health and agriculture to reduce stunting/malnutrition rates;
- Including the indicator of stunting/malnutrition and food safe into the socio-economic indicators from the commune level up to central level;
- Improvement of household meals by using existing food ingredients;
- Encourage using local food rather than processed foods containing unhealthy substances
- Raising consumer awareness in both rural and urban areas about the importance of food safety and nutrition through education, training, and attractive communication;
- Strengthening the role of consumer protection association;
- Improving communication with simple and attractive images and videos;
- Strictly monitoring food labeling
- Prioritizing policies for healthy and adverse food products
- Establishing the nutrition law

Theme 2: Boost nature-positive production and build resilience to vulnerabilities, shocks, and stress

- Investment in smart agriculture, boosting application of innovative and advanced postharvest and processing technology
- Promotion of biosecurity production, application of standards and regulations in production
- Expanding centralized production areas for specialty products in the localities to meet market demands.
- Promotion of biosecurity production, balance between livestock and crop production
- Political support for strengthening, scaling up and scaling out
- Strengthening surveillance and monitoring systems
- Improving mechanisms and policies to support farmers and cooperatives to be able to access resources for safe production with high product quality.
- Food safety management along the value chain using a risk-based approach
- Investment of infrastructure and equipment for both production areas and lab analysis
- Human capacity improvement for the value chain actors to be sustainable
- Enhancing e-commerce.

Theme 3: Eliminate poverty and increase income, advance equitable livelihoods, and value division

- The legal framework of the food system is internationally integrated;
- Wholesale and retail markets build up a decentralized network for an efficient and equitable distribution of fresh food products;
- Traceability, better information flow by application of digital technology, shared governance
- Improvement of coordination among stakeholders, market linkages
- Sharing risks, better distribution of value and power in the supply chain
- Promoting public-private partnership

ACTION TRACKS

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AREAS OF DIVERGENCE

Describe in under 5,600 characters including spaces

There are some divergent views from the participant inputs are listed as follows:

- The priorities given for policy, food safety, equality and inclusion;
- Balance between safe production and quantity to meet the economic goals;
- The consumer perception on seriousness of microbial and chemical food safety hazard;
- Who are responsible for food safety: government authority, private sectors, and consumers?
- The causes and solutions to improve malnutrition and stunting in children;
- The legal framework is internationally integrated but the policy implementations need to be reinforced.

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ATTACHMENTS AND RELEVANT LINKS

ATTACHMENTS

- <https://summitdialogues.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/Feedback-Form-Northern-Vietnam-Eng-final.docx>