

OFFICIAL FEEDBACK FORM

DIALOGUE DATE	Wednesday, 16 June 2021 10:00 GMT +08:00
DIALOGUE TITLE	Youth and Sustainable Food Systems in Mongolia
CONVENED BY	European Union Delegation to Mongolia
DIALOGUE EVENT PAGE	https://summitdialogues.org/dialogue/27874/
DIALOGUE TYPE	Independent
GEOGRAPHICAL FOCUS	Mongolia

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

55

PARTICIPATION BY AGE RANGE

0-18

40

19-30

15

31-50

51-65

66-80

80+

PARTICIPATION BY GENDER

20 Male

35 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?

For the organization of the Dialogue, the handbook for independent dialogues was used, adapting it to the local context. To contribute to the vision, objectives and final outcomes of the Food System Summit, the dialogue was structured around the 5 Action Tracks, using the same thematic tracks that the National and sub-national dialogues were focusing on. The purpose for this was to complement and further enhance the work that was being undertaken through the Member State Dialogues in the country to feed in to the Government's policy-making and planning, to contribute to the outcomes of those dialogues to the Global Food Systems Summit, as well as to inform future programming and project implementation of the European Union, FAO and other donors and implementing partners. This purpose was also outlined prior and during the event to the participants, who were, thus, more engaged and committed to the discussions. The dialogue was open to the wider public, and particularly to youth from all 21 provinces of Mongolia and the capital city from different backgrounds (private sector, civil society, academia, international organisations, government, non-affiliated individuals).

HOW DID YOUR DIALOGUE REFLECT SPECIFIC ASPECTS OF THE PRINCIPLES?

Recognising the complexity of food systems, during the opening of the dialogue a presentation was made to explain the different aspects of food systems that would be discussed, contextualising it to adapt to the local youth audience. A poll was organized also to capture this complexity and trigger the thematic discussions. The facilitators and note-takers of the three thematic sessions were trained prior to the Dialogue to understand the principles of engagement and the context of the dialogue. Given their expertise in the area, they managed to bring in guiding questions that triggered many exchanges and ideas, which further showcased the interconnectedness of food systems and impact to different areas of nature, life, and economy, and why the sustainability and transformation of food system is key and requires a systemic approach. In addition, to ensure inclusivity and have everyone bring in their diverse perspectives, simultaneous sign language interpretation was available, as well as Mongolian-English simultaneous interpretation.

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

Understanding well the principles of engagement and communicating them further to the facilitators, participants is key to ensure that the dialogue is contributing to the local context and the Global Food System Summit, that there are complementarities and synergies created, and that the dialogue is inclusive and transparent, with a purpose. Participants' understanding of why this Dialogue is needed, can really increase the level of engagement not only during the dialogue but also after it.

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 Dialogue focused on 3 main areas:

- 1) Ensuring access to safe and nutritious food
- 2) Advancing equitable livelihoods and value distribution
- 3) Boosting nature-positive food production

In each of these thematic areas/sessions, the youth audience was invited to express their views on the key challenges faced in the food systems in Mongolia, the primary reasons for those challenges, and solutions that could have a transformative impact including also active youth involvement, as well as what must be done in the next 10 years for the food systems sustainability and transformation and the stakeholders to be involved and engage into this.

In more details the questions discussed in the 3 thematic sessions:

Thematic session 1:

- What are the key challenges faced in the food system of Mongolia in ensuring access to safe and nutritious food for all, especially youth, and improving the health, nutrition, and well-being of the population?
- What are the primary reasons for excessive food consumption (food waste) and unhealthy food consumption habits? What shall be done to transfer knowledge, understanding, and habit to reduce food waste and introduce healthy and sustainable food consumption? What solutions can you propose?
- What must be done in the next 10 years to ensure food safety and security? To achieve the above goal, which stakeholders of the food system must establish mutually beneficial partnerships and how to cooperate?

Thematic session 2:

- What are the obstacles in increasing the youth involvement in business revenue generation and job creation within the food and agricultural product value-added network of Mongolia? Are youth interested in working food and agricultural sector? What are the main challenges faced by young entrepreneurs within the food value chain? (value chain means: food production, processing, sales, and consumption)
- What are the reasons behind youth migration from the rural areas? Why youth uninterested in the agricultural sector? How to ensure the participation of youth, women, and vulnerable groups? What are your solutions?
- What do you expect in 10 years concerning the poverty level, job creation, and food safety of Mongolia? To ensure the above goals, what must be done by the stakeholder to ensure a mutually beneficial partnership, and how to cooperate?
- Youth expectations. What does the youth expect from the food system in the future?

Thematic session 3:

- Is the current practice of food and agricultural production environmentally friendly? How the climate change and environmental transportation are impacting populations and producers? How are the present level and use of natural resources? What are the challenges faced in the development of domestic food production?
- What are the reasons for the lack of local food production development? Why youth refrain from food production? What recommendations, initiatives, and actions are implemented to support domestic food production? What solutions can you propose for Mongolian food producers to build capabilities to overcome climate change, shock, and stress?
- What measures shall be implemented by the Government of Mongolia in the next 10 years to support nature-positive local and domestic production?/concentrate on solutions that do not require financial sources/. What activities shall be implemented and mutually beneficial partnership established between the stakeholders of the food system to achieve the above goals?
- Youth desire. What is the youth expectation of the food system's future?

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

Participants in the Youth dialogues expressed that there are the following pressing problems regarding the main three areas of discussion:

- Due to the underdevelopment of the logistics network for food value addition chains intermediate traders, referred to as "change", make more profit than producers.
- Following and applying standard requirements is not enough at all stages of food value addition chains.
- Due to malnutrition issues among young people, obesity and excess weight are observed, which negatively affects their health.
- Children accept insecure and unhealthy food in schools and kindergartens.
- By-products of animal origin are thrown away without use and a lot of waste is generated during harvesting and from packaging, which has a negative impact on the environment.
- Due to the lack of a standard of quality of life in rural areas, young people have a meager opportunity to live there quietly and satisfied and run a food business.
- When running a start-up food business to create value, young people spend most of the money on building infrastructure and therefore face financial hardship.
- Young people who want to do business in the food industry face political obstacles from government agencies.
- Start-up business face difficulties with entering the market along with big, already well established competitors and the business opportunities are not supported by the government. The government policies treat equally the start-ups and the big businesses which result in failure of the start-ups.

To tackle the mentioned issues in the food sector youth proposed the following actions:

- Expansion of production and consumption of such foodstuffs of general consumption as flour and flour products;
- Opening in rural areas of the specialized market "Market for organic food products" and creating the possibility of expanding the consumption of organic food;
- Increasing the knowledge of stakeholders at all stages of the food chains about the standard requirements of food production and consumption, food security and nutritional value and proper nutrition, and intensification of work to convey information and agitation and training to them, using modern marketing methods;
- To instill in the population the habits of sorting waste and garbage from food and food packaging and create appropriate conditions for this;
- Ensuring investment support for the creation of enterprises for processing livestock by-products and enterprises for processing food waste in rural areas;
- Improving the results of organizations for professional control over the quality of food products and transparent information about this to the public;
- Formation of a favorable environment and infrastructure for the life and work of young people in rural areas, the use of incentive levers such as providing them with housing benefits and the issuance of a wage supplement;
- Supporting start-up investments of young people who run agricultural, food production and business and expanding work on the dissemination of production, technological and innovative knowledge;
- Supporting the initiatives of youth involved in food production and business, on cooperation and to accustom them to the culture of creating collective value;

ACTION TRACKS

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OUTCOMES FOR EACH DISCUSSION TOPIC - 1/3

Key challenges faced in the food systems of Mongolia in ensuring access to safe and nutritious food for all, especially youth, and improving the health, nutrition, and well-being of the population:

- In every stage of the value-added chain, starting from the farmers/herders, the standards tend to be overlooked. Enforcement of standards is weak, and stakeholders' knowledge is low. Some standards are also outdated and not in line with the international benchmark.
- Due to limited types and choices of food products in rural areas, malnutrition is commonly encountered.
- Child obesity under five years old is becoming common in Mongolia. Children consume unhealthy food at schools.

Primary reasons for excessive food consumption (food waste) and unhealthy food consumption habits:

- Large quantity of animal intestines and byproducts; Large volume of food packaging; Although waste is sorted, there are no recycling facilities in the rural areas; Although animal intestines are processed, production capacities are insufficient; Large quantity of post-harvest vegetable waste.

How to transfer knowledge, understanding, and habit to reduce food waste and introduce healthy and sustainable food consumption:

- Sort food waste;
- Disseminate information and knowledge on sorting waste to citizens and organizations;
- Increase waste recycling capacity in the rural areas;
- Enhance animal intestines and byproduct processing capacities in the rural areas;
- Prolong vegetable shelf-life;
- Establish a food waste recycle system for restaurants;
- Define standards on sugar contents of the food products and increase requirements on imported products;
- Transparently inform the public of the results of the inspections conducted by the professional inspection agencies (eg. conclusions on the use of food coloring in whole grain bread);
- Enlarge the packaging size of the milk and dairy products (e.g. enlarging the package contribute to reducing the waste quantity);
- Significantly increase the food sector production. Establish new start-ups in the agricultural sector and provide support.
- Establish a logistics network for the food sector;
- Improve knowledge among the entities/individuals involved of the value-added chains, and organize trainings;
- Necessary to establish "Organic markets" in rural areas (increase nutrition-rich products) and disseminate knowledge and information on healthy food and meals to the rural population;
- Essential to promote healthy and proper food habits by conducting promotion and research in this field
- Assist youth in engaging in organic agricultural production. Organize trainings among youth on transferring knowledge and skills to operate production facilities.

What must be done in the next 10 years to ensure food safety and security:

- Amend the food and nutrition recommendations of Mongolia;
- Transform the food system of Mongolia with the assistance of professionals;
- Increase taxes on unhealthy food;
- Enforce standards on all entities/individuals involved in the value chains;
- Increase use of fortified consumer food products;
- Strengthen the quality control over imported products;
- Reduce pastureland overgrazing;
- Improve training quality of the professionals of the processing industry;
- Disseminate information on reading and using the product labels to the public;
- Establish fair and transparent information flow for the consumer;
- Educate the public on food and nutrition.

To achieve the above goal, which stakeholders of the food system must establish mutually beneficial partnerships and how to cooperate:

- Ministry of Health, Ministry of Labour and Social Protection, Ministry of Food Agriculture and Light Industry, Ministry of Environment, National Development Agency, General Agency for Specialised Investigation, Customs organization; Government organizations and research institutions; Logistics companies; Processing factories; Consumers; Local administration; Herders/farmers; Education institutions at all levels (schools, colleges, universities, institutes, TVET);
- Ensure feedback and cooperation among stakeholders;
- All stakeholders must monitor the enforcement of specialised inspection agencies

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
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- Action Track 5: Build resilience to vulnerabilities, shocks and stress

KEYWORDS

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|-------------------------------------|---------------------------|-------------------------------------|-------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Finance | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Policy |
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| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Women & Youth Empowerment | <input type="checkbox"/> | Trade-offs |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Environment and Climate |

OUTCOMES FOR EACH DISCUSSION TOPIC - 2/3

Key challenges:

- Most of the initial investments for the food factory, processing, and value creation are spent on the infrastructure, limiting the potential of focusing on product quality. Most of the capital is spent on fixed assets and infrastructure.
- There is an increased dependency by producers and newcomers in the sector on politics as a means to overcome certain challenges.
- Domestic production is dependent on the mining sector. There is no clusterization of the food processing sector and there is lack of human resources.
- There are strong doubts concerning the quality of local food production.
- Insufficient production of nutritious and safe food products.

Reasons behind youth migration from the rural areas? Why youth uninterested in the agricultural sector?

- The agricultural sector is principally dependent on the environment;
- Low capital capacity and high requirements on financing;
- Irregular production revenue due to the short production cycle of the agricultural sector;
- Rural politicization;
- Youth misperception of the easy urban life;
- Quality of life and living standards (eg infrastructure challenges, such as sanitary systems) are inadequate in the rural areas, and self-sufficient living conditions in the rural areas are not enabled also due to low incomes;
- Low interest to work in the agricultural sector due to the lack of professional recognition;
- The sector is principally dependent on the environment, weather and climate, which are subject to high risks; thus, youth are less motivated to invest and be engaged in the sector;
- Lack of knowledge on the projects and programs amongst the small enterprises to obtain financial support;
- Lack of knowledge and experience of agricultural production and technology;
- Domestic products are mostly overpriced. Limited channels/points of sale for agricultural products, and no other options other than selling underpriced or to speculators.

How to ensure the participation of youth, women, and vulnerable groups?

- Provide incentives on start-up investment for youth in the food production sector;
- Provide government support in the production sector;
- Necessary to implement 5G technology in the countryside to enable self-development opportunities;
- Disseminate knowledge and information on agricultural production;
- It is important to develop various types of cooperatives;
- Establish new sales channels, focus on establishing an integrated sales network;
- Most importantly, the farmers must unite, creating an advantage of clustered business, e.g, some focus on warehouse services and the others produce products;
- NGOs disseminate information and organize training on creating the clustered business structure;
- Create food production infrastructure to produce products that preserve nutrition, in the well-ventilated environments and clusters, by establishing business incubators and industrial parks;
- Promote and introduce the importance of cooperatives and joint efforts for youth;
- Increase opportunities to participate in projects and programs;
- It is recommended to focus on the agricultural sector as one of the economically significant industries and establish a favorable environment to improve the sectoral image;
- Support domestic production by establishing an export and import control system;
- Focusing on food safety means protecting national security.

What do you expect in 10 years concerning the poverty level, job creation, and food safety of Mongolia?

- Successfully implement middle, short and long term national goals;
- Focus on creating hygienic food production in the agricultural sector and small and medium-sized enterprises;
- Offer business loans dedicated to specific production;
- Develop non-traditional industrial technologies in the production sector;
- Reduce deficiencies in the healthy food supply in the remote area.

To ensure the above goals, what must be done by the stakeholder to ensure a mutually beneficial partnership, and how to cooperate?

- Give preference to public interest over personal gains;
- Establish a professional ethical council;
- Develop food production franchising.

ACTION TRACKS

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KEYWORDS

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

OUTCOMES FOR EACH DISCUSSION TOPIC - 3/3

Is the current practice of food and agricultural production environmentally friendly? How the climate change and environmental transportation are impacting populations and producers? How are the present level and use of natural resources? What are the challenges faced in the development of domestic food production?

- People produce a large amount of food waste;
- Weak policy support on food quality;
- Weak implementation of food law, policy, and resolutions;
- Low rate of using food waste for fertilization;
- Low rate of domestic and local vegetable production;
- Plant growth has deteriorated due to climate change;
- Environmental pollution due to waste;
- Youth refrain from food production due to the lack of support programs and financial support;
- Weak infrastructure development in 21 aimags;
- Bank loan interest rates are high;
- Youth knowledge on food production is insufficient;
- Water consumption demand is high in farming;
- No waste recycling plants;
- Although organic food law has been adopted, its enforcement is unsatisfactory. The cost of organic food is high.

What are the reasons for the lack of local food production development? Why youth refrain from food production?

- The great hindrance for SMEs is the same standard imposed on large and SME producers;
- Low vegetable consumption amongst the population;
- No government support on vegetable procurement;
- People tend to procure cheap vegetables from other countries;
- Uncontrolled use of pesticide;
- Extensive government benefits influence the lack of human resources for operating production
- Support to SMEs is not always channeled to the right sector, and the businesses in need.

What recommendations, initiatives, and actions are implemented to support domestic food production? What solutions can you propose for Mongolian food producers to build capabilities to overcome climate change, shock, and stress?

- Provide government support in vegetable procurement;
- Separate requirements set for SMEs and large producers;
- It is essential to adjust the pesticide use;
- Reduce waste and use environmentally friendly packaging;
- Focus on youth participation and contribution in food production;

What measures shall be implemented by the Government of Mongolia in the next 10 years to support nature-positive local and domestic production?/concentrate on solutions that do not require financial sources/.

- Implement a summer internship program for high school students to practice in the food production sector
- Cooperate with the science institutions, supporting and implementing the outcomes of scientific research and advanced technologies;
- Sort waste and establish recycling factories;
- Enable meat and dairy product sales opportunities to reduce the speculators' involvement;
- Address issues of substandard food matters in food laws and regulations;
- Establish a factory to produce compost food waste;
- Train citizens the culture to reduce and sort waste and disseminate relevant information;
- Government shall support youth willing to operate domestic food production by developing infrastructure in 21 aimags;
- Get accustomed to using cloth bags.

What activities shall be implemented and mutually beneficial partnership established between the stakeholders of the food system to achieve the above goals?

- Government entities;
- High schools;
- Science institutions;
- Private sector;
- Civil Society Organizations'
- Citizens.

Youth desire. What is the youth expectation of the food system's future?

- Develop a comprehensive food system;
- Produce dairy products, meat produces, and vegetables domestically;
- Develop a cluster of the food production system;
- Grow fruits and berries domestically and supply local demand;

-Improve enforcement of government policy and resolutions, and ensure correlation;
-Prevent the production of genetically modified food products and have the possibility to identify them;
-Advance the development of biotechnology in the food sector.

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<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Women & Youth Empowerment	<input type="checkbox"/>	Trade-offs
<input type="checkbox"/>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Environment and Climate

AREAS OF DIVERGENCE

In all the three thematic discussions there was not really areas of divergence. Participants were aligning their views and concerns in relation to the key challenges, triggers, suggested solution and recommendations for the way forward.

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