

OFFICIAL FEEDBACK FORM

DIALOGUE DATE	Thursday, 24 June 2021 14:00 GMT +01:00
DIALOGUE TITLE	Ceres2030 Deep Dives into the Nexus of Food Systems, Climate Change & Nutrition in Nigeria
CONVENED BY	DR. ANDREW KWASARI Senior Special Assistant to the President on Agriculture
DIALOGUE EVENT PAGE	https://summitdialogues.org/dialogue/29345/
DIALOGUE TYPE	Independent
GEOGRAPHICAL FOCUS	Nigeria

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

20

PARTICIPATION BY AGE RANGE

0-18

19-30

31-50

51-65

66-80

80+

PARTICIPATION BY GENDER

Male

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 organised in collaboration with the Senior Special Assistant to the President on Agriculture, Office of the Vice President of Nigeria and invited a variety of different stakeholders, including members of government, civil society and donor groups to attend in order to maximise multi-stakeholder inclusivity. The diversity of voices was crucial to the aim of this independent dialogue in seeking feedback on the food system policies and interventions that currently exist and work towards promoting healthier diets within an environmentally sustainable and culturally appropriate framework. Not only did this incorporate the Principle of embracing multi-stakeholder inclusivity, but also ensured the Principle of complementing the work of others was reinforced in the organisation of the Dialogue by ensuring the sharing of information, perspective and experiences amongst a wide variety of stakeholders. Further, this Dialogue was organised to include extensive breakout room sessions to embody the Food Systems Summit principle of recognising complexity as this encouraged dialogue between members of the agriculture, health and nutrition communities in an attempt to create space to recognise the importance of working collaboratively, and not in silos, to achieve sustainable food systems transformation.

HOW DID YOUR DIALOGUE REFLECT SPECIFIC ASPECTS OF THE PRINCIPLES?

This Dialogue aimed to stimulate dialogue amongst members of the agriculture, climate, and nutrition communities on the best policies and interventions to achieve food systems transformation and move towards healthier diets in a sustainable and climate-friendly manner. In so doing, it reflected the Principles of recognising the complexity of food systems transformation and the principle of complementing the work of others, in attempting to highlight the potential of cross-cutting interventions and policies. Additionally, by facilitating this cross-cutting discussion, the Dialogue reflected the principle of embracing multi-stakeholder inclusivity and the importance of incorporating a range of perspectives into the discussion surrounding sustainable food systems transformation. Ultimately, in its aim of seeking inputs to the most effective roadmaps towards healthier diets and sustainable food systems transformation, this Dialogue reflected a strong commitment to the aims of the UN Food Systems Summit, specifically in striving to be “forward-looking, foster new connections, and enable the emergence of ways to move forward collectively and creatively, embracing the entire scope of opinions”.

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

No

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 was an exploration of the nexus of food security, nutrition and climate change in Nigeria with a specific view to receiving inputs on reasonable steps towards a food system transition pathway to healthier diets in Nigeria. Specifically, the focus of the Dialogue was to receive inputs and feedback from stakeholders on proposed context-sensitive healthy diets, what they view to be the criteria and consideration for healthier diets and food system transformation, and the possible interventions and policies to achieve this based on their prior experience and opinion on potential opportunities.

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

One of the main areas of discussion in the Dialogue was the conception of a “healthier” diet, the current policy frameworks regarding nutrition in Nigeria and the challenges that exist with regard to their implementation. Here, the main finding was a need to enhance stronger interaction and coherence between State and federal policy creation and implementation for a concerted effort to embrace a multi-sector approach to nutrition. A second main finding was an agreement that whilst addressing malnutrition as a major issue facing Nigerians, the international community’s trend to move past caloric intake towards healthier diets represents a worrying trend which ignores massive issues regarding food availability.

The second main area of discussion focuses on the interventions that could address the challenge of increasing availability of food (production-side interventions) and for the consumption of “healthier” diets. One of the main findings here was a need to increase agricultural research on the food system. Only with improved data on the food system can effective interventions be implemented to create a sustainable food system transformation in Nigeria. Other findings included an identification of the possibility of increasing social protection, the consumption of biofortified crops, and the delivery of nutrition education, especially when provided with consideration to cultural and seasonal variation.

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OUTCOMES FOR EACH DISCUSSION TOPIC - 1/2

Healthier diets

The first discussion topic in the Dialogue centred around the conception of a “healthier” diet and dietary composition in Nigeria. The first issue that was raised was the complicated nature of Nigeria’s Food-Based Dietary Guidelines such that they cannot be easily communicated to people. Moreover, Nigeria is currently experiencing a triple burden of malnutrition (food insecurity, micronutrient malnutrition, overweight and obesity status rising). This has very significant costs, especially over time, as the rising malnutrition rates increase the need for healthcare to the non-communicable diseases (NCDs) which result from poor diet.

Participants also highlighted the considerable issues regarding the design and implementation of nutrition policy due to the state/federal system. The federal level cannot force states to adopt a policy but effort has been made to call council level meetings which have the state organs present in order to encourage them to implement and domesticate nutrition policies at the state level, for example policies regarding nutrition-sensitive agriculture, cassava and orange-fleshed sweet potatoes. A further problem in implementation and policy design has arisen due to the siloed nature of thinking on nutrition, with it widely considered to be a health issue as opposed to an issue warranting a multisectoral approach. Therefore, in order to strengthen the concept of healthier diets in Nigeria coherence between state and federal policy needs to be made, as well as a concerted effort to embrace a multi-sector approach.

Furthermore, whilst Nigeria is undoubtedly facing extensive challenges in policy design and implementation, there is also considerable diversity within the large, complex country exacerbating these problems. Specifically, the concept of healthier diets speaks more to the urban population who tend to experience a higher level of accessibility to food compared to the rural population whose problems often focus on a lack of access to food, as opposed to which types of food they are eating. Participants therefore raised concerns with the trend within the international community to move past caloric intake towards healthier diets, without addressing this massive ongoing issue of food shortages.

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OUTCOMES FOR EACH DISCUSSION TOPIC - 2/2

Challenges and Interventions

The second discussion topic of the Dialogue centred around the challenges that exist in Nigeria's transition to a sustainable food system and the interventions that can be introduced to support the transition.

Participants agreed that the food system in Nigeria is fragile with serious output challenges in both primary and secondary production, which are further complicated by climate change, land use, greenhouse gas emissions, desertification, human conflict, and other factors. However, whilst all participants agreed that Nigeria has a long way to go in terms of efficiency of the food system and infrastructure (for example, the lack of roads in rural areas preventing farmers moving food to the market), there was extensive discussion on the areas and avenues of potential progress in Nigeria. An example of this is the change in aquaculture which is bringing significant opportunities for production and food consumption patterns, with benefits for food security.

More specifically two distinct challenges were raised in Nigeria. The first highlighted area of intervention in Nigeria raised by participants focused on how much food people are eating. In certain areas of Nigeria, the focus needs to remain on increasing caloric intake as people are unlikely to focus on what they are eating and nutritious diverse consumption if they are not eating enough. In this regard, several potential interventions were raised by the participants. The first was an increase and repurpose of social protection programs both to ensure sufficient access to food but also to provide more nutrition knowledge and benefits. The second was programmes to increase consumption of biofortified crops at household level and encouraging households to produce nutrient dense crops which would have benefits both for dietary diversification and access to micronutrients. The third was an increase in agricultural research to improve the data on food systems in Nigeria so that interventions can be appropriately targeted, and funding effectively used. Currently, there are massive disparities in global funding and agricultural research with the primary focus being on grains, maize and soybean compared to fruits and vegetables. A further highlighted potential intervention in this regard is the increase in capital flows to SMEs that have innovative ideas in providing healthier and more sustainable food.

The second area of intervention which participants raised as crucial to sustainable agricultural transformation in Nigeria centres around nutrition education and a focus on what types of food people are eating. Specifically, attention needs to be paid to appropriate dietary education, tailored across different groups and with a focus on what is culturally and seasonably available. Whilst in part this is about increasing households' assets and income so as to increase the affordability of nutritious foods, it is also about increasing the capacity of institutions which provide nutrition education. One potential area of innovation that was raised by participants was the role of institutional buying programs, such as prisons and schools, whose shift in food purchasing can cause value chains to react, leading to different availability of food for the institutions but also potentially for others in the local areas.

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AREAS OF DIVERGENCE

One area of divergence occurred within the Dialogue over the extent to which priority in the Nigerian food system transformation should be given to issues of value chains and production, or whether the focus should be on mass scale nutrition education. Ultimately, participants seemed to agree that both were major issues and areas of intervention to promote sustainable food systems in Nigeria but the comparative importance of one or the other depended significantly on the context, for example North/South, rural/urban divides. It was deemed that in urban areas nutrition education could have a large positive impact whereas in rural areas potentially the focus needed to remain on production and value chains to ensure sufficient caloric access to food, before the focus migrated to dietary diversification and “healthier” diets.

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