

OFFICIAL FEEDBACK FORM

DIALOGUE DATE	Wednesday, 14 April 2021 19:00 GMT -04:00
DIALOGUE TITLE	Challenges and Opportunities to Transform the Food System - McGill University
CONVENED BY	Sourour Harfouche, McGill University Global Food Security Club
DIALOGUE EVENT PAGE	https://summitdialogues.org/dialogue/29430/
DIALOGUE TYPE	Independent
GEOGRAPHICAL FOCUS	Canada

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

46

PARTICIPATION BY AGE RANGE

0-18

44

19-30

31-50

51-65

2

66-80

80+

PARTICIPATION BY GENDER

6 Male

40 Female

Prefer not to say or Other

NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS IN EACH SECTOR

12 Agriculture/crops

Fish and aquaculture

Livestock

Agro-forestry

5 Environment and ecology

Trade and commerce

Education

Communication

Food processing

Food retail, markets

Food industry

Financial Services

Health care

29

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

46 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?

This was a youth-led Dialogue, which took advantage of existing student organizations at McGill University, and student groups at other Montreal area universities. The McGill Food Security Club provided the leadership in organizing the Dialogue and mobilizing youth participation. Two McGill faculty members, Professor Chandra Madramootoo and Professor Leroy Phillip, provided support and feedback to the student organizer group. The Dialogue was organized around the 5 Action Tracks. The event was advertised by e-mail and social media; prospective participants were required to register in advance, indicating their preference for contributing to a specific Action Track. The Dialogue was conducted virtually (via Zoom) over a three-hour period, on April 14, 2021 from 7-10pm EST. There were 5 planning meetings prior to conducting the Dialogue. At the opening of the Dialogue, a 30-minute plenary session preceded 5 breakout sessions, each of which dealt with an Action Track. There was an additional breakout session, conducted in French for francophone students; this session dealt with Action Track 1. Each breakout session had a moderator and rapporteur. At the end of the 5 breakout sessions, each rapporteur presented the highlights of the discussion. In a spirit of openness and inclusivity, all participants were encouraged and permitted to fully share their views.

HOW DID YOUR DIALOGUE REFLECT SPECIFIC ASPECTS OF THE PRINCIPLES?

We used the Action Tracks to set the framework for the Dialogue but encouraged participants to be unconstrained by current understandings of the food system, and to envisage the transformations needed for a sustainable future food system. The students came from diverse disciplines that included human nutrition, animal and plant sciences, bioresource engineering, environmental sciences, business management, and law. The Dialogue took advantage of this diversity in academic background and experience and encouraged the students to engage in multidisciplinary thinking about the food system. Students recognized that urgent reforms are required to better food systems globally. Many proposed short-term and long-term solutions regarding agricultural techniques, education, ethics, funding and international relations. Students also acknowledged that systemic shifts take time, yet the Global Community must begin a sustainable transition now. Accordingly, students believe bottom-up policies are an empowering vehicle of change, embracing multi-stakeholder inclusivity. They also discussed the complexity of a sustainable food system transition. Students from various programs have a unique vision of the global food system. Additionally, students find that culturally appropriate interventions are essential to respectful interactions.

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

Advice to Dialogue Convenors: a) encourage and place emphasis on grassroots participation to maximize input to the Dialogue; b) foster youth self-confidence and ownership of the process throughout the entire Dialogue.

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

1. The entire Dialogue was curated and moderated by the student groups. 2. The senior academics (2) who participated in the Dialogue did not overshadow the contributions of the students. 3. The President of the McGill Food Security Club, who also serve as “student organizer” of the Dialogue, summed up the success of the Dialogue in the following words: “There were only positive feedbacks from our discussion on Wednesday. It was, for sure, a very successful event! It also gave us hope in our future leaders, seeing how involved and passionate the youth is in creating changes in our current food systems”. 4. All voices were heard throughout the Dialogue thereby ensuring inclusivity of viewpoints; this is reflected in the summary reports of each breakout session, 5. There was no suppression of divergent views.

4. DIALOGUE FOCUS & OUTCOMES

MAJOR FOCUS

We developed the following 3 central questions to guide discussions across all 5 Action Tracks of the Dialogue:

1. What are the innovations in science and technology that you see improving the sustainability of our current food systems by 2030? You can think about all points along the entire value chain from food production and processing, to marketing and sales, to consumption and health outcomes (eg. food type, post-harvest losses and food waste, storage, distribution, nutrition, and dietary patterns).

2. The current structures, policies, and systems (in the broadest possible terms) are perhaps the root causes of today's unsustainable food systems. What transformations do you envisage being required to make the fundamental changes needed for the "food world" of the future?

3. Who are the key stakeholders that would need to be mobilized and become more prominent (than currently prevails) to allow the above innovations and transformations to materialize?

These questions were designed to prompt discussions about food system transformation and identifying levers of change. The following themes are examples of levers of change identified during the Dialogue:

- Food waste; crop and diet diversity; consumer awareness of healthy eating; healthy food marketing; improved food labelling and packaging for consumer education;
- Advanced technologies, food ethics and GMOs;
- Urban agriculture- home gardening, community gardens; community food sharing
- Food forests; respect for indigenous and cultural food habits;
- Food subsidies and government regulation.

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

Action Track 1

- Need for more accountability & responsibility by companies profiting from the current food system
- Enhanced consumer awareness of food system sustainability and healthy eating
- Need for Public policy enforcement of livable wage for healthy eating and sustainable living

Action Track 2

- Shifts to more localized food production
- Nutrition education of consumers
- Government incentives and subsidies for production and market access to local foods
- Production disincentives for unhealthy foods
- Aligning consumption with seasonality of produce
- Diet diversity and culturally appropriate food systems
- Youth education and awareness of food waste and recycling

Action Track 3

- Enhanced government regulations (of food marketing?)
- Changes in ethics and economics of environmental sustainability
- Rights-oriented food system
- More localization of food production and supply
- Governmental support programs for diversified food production
- Emphasis on food system resilience and skills training
- Free trade and agriculture

Action Track 4

- Including women and more minorities in the food chain
- Community gardens
- Access to fresh local food
- Reduce food waste- incentives
- Food education for consumers
- Shifts to plant-based rather than animal-based farming
- Public-private partnerships
- Fair trade
- Incentives to localize food production
- Encourage basic living wage
- Knowledge sharing

Action Track 5

- Change in marketing language; • Nutri-score (nutrition label that converts nutrition value into a 5 letter code)
- Vertical agriculture
- Diversification in agriculture
- Make farming more popular among youth

ACTION TRACKS

- ✓ Action Track 1: Ensure access to safe and nutritious food for all
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OUTCOMES FOR EACH DISCUSSION TOPIC - 1/5

Action Track 1

- Mobilization of people and communities
- Changes in the food industry (reduce consumption of ultra-processed foods)

ACTION TRACKS

- ✓ Action Track 1: Ensure access to safe and nutritious food for all
- Action Track 2: Shift to sustainable consumption patterns
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OUTCOMES FOR EACH DISCUSSION TOPIC - 2/5

Action Track 2

- Youth engagement
- Commitment of government institutions
- More involvement of medical & health care community
- Responsible land ownership and land utilization
- Changes in school cafeterias and supermarkets
- Enhanced corporate social responsibility

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

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OUTCOMES FOR EACH DISCUSSION TOPIC - 3/5

Action Track 3

- Engage all society
- Strong political leadership

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

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OUTCOMES FOR EACH DISCUSSION TOPIC - 4/5

Action Track 4

- More active role of Governments in ensuring equitable livelihoods for small holder farmers
- Food affordability for consumers

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

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OUTCOMES FOR EACH DISCUSSION TOPIC - 5/5

Action Track 5
Strengthening public-private partnerships

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

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AREAS OF DIVERGENCE

A major area of divergence was the perceived conflict between traditional livestock production (especially ruminants) in terms of its large environmental footprint and the health implications of high levels of meat consumption. There was a high level of advocacy for a more plant-based diet and for cell- cultured meat.

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ATTACHMENTS AND RELEVANT LINKS

ATTACHMENTS

- **Breakout session - Action Track 1**
<https://summitdialogues.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/Action-Track-1-UN-Food-Systems-Summit-2021.docx>
- **Breakout session - Action Track 2**
<https://summitdialogues.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/Action-Track-2-UN-Food-Systems-Summit-2021-2.docx>
- **Breakout session - Action Track 3**
<https://summitdialogues.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/Action-Track-3-UN-Food-Systems-Summit-2021-3.docx>
- **Breakout session - Action Track 4**
<https://summitdialogues.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/Action-Track-4-UN-Food-Systems-Summit-2021.docx>
- **Breakout session - Action Track 5**
<https://summitdialogues.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/Action-Track-5-UN-Food-Systems-Summit-2021-1.docx>
- **Breakout session - Action Track 1 (French)**
<https://summitdialogues.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/UN-Food-Systems-Summit-2021-Action-Track-1-FR.docx>