

# OFFICIAL FEEDBACK FORM

<b>DIALOGUE DATE</b>	Tuesday, 14 September 2021 13:00 GMT +01:00
<b>DIALOGUE TITLE</b>	ICAN and SUN CSN UN Food System Summit Independent Dialogue - Gender equality, a key driver to enhancing food systems and good nutrition
<b>CONVENED BY</b>	International Coalition for Advocacy on Nutrition (ICAN) and Scaling Up Nutrition Civil Society Network (SUN CSN)
<b>DIALOGUE EVENT PAGE</b>	<a href="https://summitdialogues.org/dialogue/30133/">https://summitdialogues.org/dialogue/30133/</a>
<b>DIALOGUE TYPE</b>	Independent
<b>GEOGRAPHICAL FOCUS</b>	No borders

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

100

## 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?

We organised this dialogue in respect of the Principles of Engagement of the UN Food Systems Summit, by ensuring that the topic discussed and the panel presentations contributed to the vision of the Summit, promoted sustainable food production and consumption policies and practices that strive to protect and improve the health and well-being of individuals, and embraced multi-stakeholder inclusivity.

### HOW DID YOUR DIALOGUE REFLECT SPECIFIC ASPECTS OF THE PRINCIPLES?

The Dialogue focused mainly on nutrition and gender equality in food systems transformation through a rights-based approach. The Principles of Recognizing complexity, Embracing multi-stakeholder inclusivity, Complementing the work of others, and Building Trust were greatly reflected in the Dialogue as the panelists and participants were invited to contribute to the following objectives: 1) Promote good nutrition for women and girls, both as a critical pathway for resilience to COVID-19 recovery and to realize the fundamental human right to health and nutrition. 2) Catalyze support and understanding of the human right to safe, affordable, and nutritious foods and grow momentum for policy reform and coordinated health and food sector actions to accelerate progress towards the WHA targets to propel the nutrition agenda forward into 2021 and beyond, with women and girls at the center. 3) Inform Members States on how health and food systems work together to deliver good nutrition for all and inspire them to step up to the 2021 Year of Action agenda and announce bold, SMART commitments to women and girls' nutrition at UNFSS and N4G Summit. Moreover, the principle of multi-stakeholder inclusivity was embraced by a diverse set of panelists, including: Terry Otieno, youth leader from Kenya; Kazi Zebunnesa Begum, Bangladesh SUN Country Focal point, Ministry of Health and Family Welfare; Inger Ashing, CEO of Save the Children International and member of the Scaling Up Nutrition Movement Lead Group. As a well as diverse set of moderators experienced in bringing different perspectives in an inclusive way: Boitshepo Bibi Giyose, Senior Advisor food and nutrition security at NEPAD Agency; Saskia Osendarp, Executive Director Micronutrient Forum; Mike Khunga, SUN Youth Leader for Nutrition and member of the SUN Civil Society Organisation Nutrition Alliance in Malawi; Asma Lateef, Policy and Advocacy Lead, SDG2 Advocacy Hub. Simultaneous interpretation into French and Spanish was provided to guarantee an inclusive participation from different parts of the world.

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

We encourage all Dialogue Convenors to be mindful of diversity and inclusivity principles, ensuring the most vulnerable groups are meaningfully engaged in key processes and discussions that affect them particularly. We also invite Dialogue Convenors to ensure good governance and accountability are central to the discussions so that commitments are followed up on and connections made with other milestones such as the COP26 and processes such as the N4G commitment making registry.

# 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

The Independent Dialogue with the International Coalition for Advocacy on Nutrition (ICAN) and Scaling Up Nutrition Civil Society Network (SUN CSN) co-organised a constructive multi-stakeholder dialogue between civil society, youth, Government, UN and the Private sector focusing on nutrition in women and girls, through three key pillars: women and the 1000 days window, human rights and accountability, and women as economic actors. The focus and agenda of the event were curated with the participation of and inputs from all the different constituencies. We set up a moderated panel session in plenary about the importance of addressing malnutrition amongst women and girls to support sustainable food systems, health, people and planet, followed by three breakout groups focusing on the selected cross-cutting themes related to women and girls' nutrition. Facilitators of the breakout rooms were encouraged to create a safe, positive and engaging space allowing the different voices and perspectives to be heard. This meant in some occasions managing participants who tended to dominate the conversation to allow others to speak, ensuring different viewpoints to emerge in a meaningful way. The diversity of participants coming from different countries, socio-economic backgrounds, organisations and of different ages brought a multi-faceted approach to the discussion, including on the root causes of and solutions to address gender inequality and malnutrition from one context to another. The discussions underlined the complexity of these two interlinked issues, unearthing the need to address them in a multi-pronged and context-specific way. However, while one solution doesn't apply to all, participants overall concurred to the urgency of addressing the issues concurrently and came up with consistent recommendations which are aligned between themselves, as well as with those shared by ICAN and SUN CSN in advance of the dialogue (see joint advocacy resource SEIZING MOMENTUM: Amplifying Nutrition at the UN Food Systems Summit, available at: [https://thousanddays.org/wp-content/uploads/Seizing-Momentum-Amplifying-Nutrition-at-the-UN-Food-Systems-Summit\\_FINAL.pdf](https://thousanddays.org/wp-content/uploads/Seizing-Momentum-Amplifying-Nutrition-at-the-UN-Food-Systems-Summit_FINAL.pdf))

# 4. DIALOGUE FOCUS & OUTCOMES

## MAJOR FOCUS

The UN Food System pre-Summit in July and Summit in September are key pledging moments along the N4G Year of Action and offer timely opportunities for Member States and other duty-bearers to announce new financial and policy commitments to help close the \$8.7 billion annual gap that remains to drive progress against the 2025 World Health Assembly targets. The tragic consequences of malnutrition in women and girls are entirely preventable, and we have the evidence and tools to advance good health and nutrition in women and girls, and empower communities to prosper. The emerging solution proposals coming out of the UN FSS action tracks 1 and 2 that support ending anaemia, breastfeeding support, and promoting women's leadership in food systems must be coordinated through both health and food systems to deliver effective impact for women and girls who are the most at risk of being malnourished.

The UN Food Systems pre-Summit represented a key milestone in generating momentum towards the upcoming major pledge-making moments. Yet, while civil society recognises the efforts made in bringing gender and nutrition on the agenda, the opportunity to reinforce the linkages between the two issues and how to effectively address them through integrated health and food systems, was greatly missing. This needs to be addressed at the UNFSS itself, with major commitments stemming from the discussions, and proper alignment to the Nutrition Accountability Framework and commitment mobilisation towards N4G.

For that purpose, the International Coalition for Advocacy on Nutrition (ICAN) and the Scaling Up Nutrition Civil Society Network (SUN CSN) convened a multi-stakeholder dialogue welcoming duty-bearers and key stakeholders across health and food sectors representing governments, civil society, and donors to this UN FSS Independent Dialogue who presented the multi-sectoral and double-duty nutrition actions to support SMART commitments towards the 2021 Nutrition Year of Action. The event convened a panel of a range of experts, advocates, and commitment-makers to discuss the coordinated solutions for delivering better nutrition and health for women and girls to realize the human right to good health and nutrition.

Each breakout room examined the relevant Action Tracks of the Summit and links between the levers of change. The discussions in breakout rooms specifically focused on the following points:

1- Women and the 1,000 days window,

The role of good nutrition for women  
Building better political and social environments to support good nutrition  
Opportunity to link in game changing solutions around breastfeeding and anaemia

2- Human Rights accountability,

Reporting and accountability frameworks  
Outcomes of UNFSS and delivering on commitments  
Links with right holders - e.g. Educating smallholder farmers on their rights

3- Women as economic actors.

Good nutrition and empowering women  
Education/health outcomes of women and girls  
Opportunity to link game changing solution around women's leadership in food systems  
Women smallholders - prioritising their nutritional needs, support them in growing, selling nutritious foods, and their agency  
Investing in women-run SMEs/cooperatives in the food systems

## 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

Overall, speakers and participants agreed to the need for elevating the role of nutrition and gender equality as key levers in the food systems transformation equation across the UNFSS agenda. Good nutrition requires a healthy and diverse diet that derives from healthy soils and biodiverse terrestrial and ocean ecosystems. Gender equality requires transformation in the power imbalances affecting women and girls, equitable service provision (food, health, education, etc.), and an end to harmful traditional and cultural practices, coupled with an enabling policy and legal environment where women and girls have agency of their choices and a space to exercise their rights. Orienting our food systems towards delivering good nutrition, and changing our mindsets in favour of women and girls, is thus healthier, more equitable and more sustainable for both people and the planet: a clear win-win across all agendas and a must-do to put all countries back on track to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals by 2030.

More specifically, breakout group discussions unearthed specific challenges and recommendations as summarised below:

### 1- Women and the 1,000 days window:

The first breakout room discussed the importance of the 1,000 days window for women's nutrition. They agreed on the health benefits of breastfeeding for women and children, and on the need to empower women, by making accessible all the information and scientific knowledge they need to make the best-informed decisions for themselves and their families, according to their own circumstances.

The group also discussed social norms and behaviour change, and the common challenges, including the lack of accessibility of information at the community level, lack of translation, misinformation spread across social media and marketing that contradicts the value of breastfeeding in the 1,000-day window. The group specifically recommends governments to promote enabling environments for allowing women to make the best-informed decisions for their own health and for their families.

### 2- Human right and accountability:

The second breakout group discussed the need for an effective accountability mechanism to track countries' progress in the realisation of human rights, as part of their commitments to enhance food systems. It has been agreed that many countries have unfortunately not sufficiently promoted, fulfilled and realised the right to adequate food, and that nutrition interventions are often confused with tackling hunger. Malnutrition and hunger affect countries in many different ways: the groups discussed how overnutrition, undernutrition and anaemia affect populations differently.

The group agreed that the existing accountability mechanisms, such as the Universal Periodic Review (UPR), are not sufficiently used to track progress on the right to adequate food, and are not adapted for being used at a country level. The lack of integration of human rights in the agenda of the UN Food System Summit was often mentioned.

The group agreed that the affordability and availability of nutritious food, as well as the social and economic underlying causes of malnutrition and hunger, are the main issues to be solved, to achieve the realisation of the right to adequate food. The violation of farmers' land rights and the issues of commercialisation and profits of nutritious food, which are not being shared appropriately with farmers and producers, have been raised as fundamental concerns that governments and the UN Food System Summit should address.

### 3 - Women as economic actors:

The third breakout group discussed the barriers and solutions to women's agency over their economic choices and perspectives, and the impact on nutrition.

Participants covered issues faced by women when it comes to providing nutritious foods for their community and family, exacerbated by the impact of COVID-19. Women compose the majority of smallholder farmers and remain the most malnourished, which in turn affects their economic activity. In some contexts, women are not empowered or given the right to access income-generating activities or to manage household budgets. Cultural practices were also largely discussed as preventing women and girls playing a key role in decisions and productive assets. The other common challenge mentioned is the unequal access to education, disproportionately affecting girls who are still largely responsible for household chores and victims of harmful traditional practices such as child marriage. Lastly the lack of spaces for women to participate in decision-making processes at any level was also seen as a major barrier.

The group agreed on common solutions and recommendations, to be tailored according to context. These can be found in section C.

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## OUTCOMES FOR EACH DISCUSSION TOPIC

Recommendations:

### 1 Women and the 1,000 days window

Educating women and youth on micro-enterprise opportunities in the food systems, technology and access to microfinance with educative resources

Establishing climate-smart agro hubs that assist women smallholder farmers and women/youth food system entrepreneurs to produce high-quality foods for their local community ; and increase their own incomes and agency

Enhancing nutrition education for women, including on the 1,000 days window, regardless of their level of education, as a way to sustain nutrition gains and supporting them to address the challenges they may face during this crucial time

Promoting and providing breastfeeding support

Strengthening collaboration between health systems and social protection interventions; and aligning nutrition health and social protection policies with food systems transformation to promote adequate nutrition

Maintaining a balance between information from public health and commercial channels by involving women in the development of public health interventions at the community level

Foreign aid and donors should always ensure that their interventions have the best possible understanding of the needs and cultural contexts of communities they work with

Engaging men and boys in conversations addressing social and cultural norms preventing women to achieve a good nutrition status, and in the co-design of programs

Learn from successful behaviour change campaigns to effectively address perceptions, and invest in formative research

### 2 Human right and accountability

Government's food system policies should make nutritious food more affordable and available to everyone instead of focusing only on ending hunger

Governments should ensure that nutrition education is implemented at a national level

Adolescent girls' access to key nutrition information and services should be considered in the UNFSS

The rights of land owners should be addressed as part of the Summit's game changing solutions

Commitments at the UNFSS should come with an accountability mechanism allowing civil societies to track progress made by governments, especially on human rights

The private sector should respect the right to adequate food, by providing more transparent information on the content of their products

More precise international legal instruments should be established to ensure that countries understand hunger and malnutrition, and what policy and interventions are needed to tackle them

Existing accountability mechanisms, such as the Universal Periodic Review, should be adapted to country level and should ensure that countries are held accountable to report progress against fundamental rights in food systems

### 3 Women as economic actors

Create a safe and meaningful space for women and girls to engage in policy discussions and demand their rights through platforms at national and decentralised levels, including in governments and parliaments

Protect children from entering the workforce. Most child labor happens in the agriculture sector so it is vital that children, particularly girls, are protected from exploitative labor practices and incentivised to go to school

Create viable career opportunities for young people, especially girls, including in the agriculture sector, to ensure sustainable food systems offer fair living incomes

Raise awareness among men and boys for them to challenge social norms and champion gender justice

Back gender-transformative awareness raising activities with accurate scientific research and data

Promote traditional agricultural practices, with women at the heart of decision making, in the face of undue influence from large agricultural companies selling seeds and GMOs at competitive prices to the detriment of traditional agro-ecological practices

Put the policy and legal systems in place to enable women farmers to access land, to safely sell their products, to access capital for investment in agriculture, and to challenge cultural norms. This would in turn encourage sustainable investments benefiting the economy at large.

Provide a meaningful space for civil society to represent the voices of the most vulnerable groups

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## AREAS OF DIVERGENCE

In general, participants to the dialogue concurred on the challenges and solutions to promoting nutrition and gender equality. However divergences of views emerged between countries and contexts given these issues are very context-specific and dependent on local/national policies and traditional/cultural practices.

For instance, maternity and breastfeeding policies differ from one country to another and therefore require a different response. The same applies to local regulations and cultural practices affecting women and girls' nutrition (e.g. child marriage, education accessible to boys only or banned for pregnant girls, access to land policies, etc.)

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# ATTACHMENTS AND RELEVANT LINKS

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## ATTACHMENTS

- **Event invitation**  
[https://summitdialogues.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/09/SUN-CSN\\_ICAN-joint-UNFSS-Dialogue- Gender-equality-a-key-driver-to-enhancing-food-systems-and-good-nutrition\\_.pdf](https://summitdialogues.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/09/SUN-CSN_ICAN-joint-UNFSS-Dialogue- Gender-equality-a-key-driver-to-enhancing-food-systems-and-good-nutrition_.pdf)

## RELEVANT LINKS

- **Recording of the Dialogue**  
[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Aab9Lml\\_TA0&feature=youtu.be](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Aab9Lml_TA0&feature=youtu.be)