

OFFICIAL FEEDBACK FORM

DIALOGUE DATE	Wednesday, 7 July 2021 08:00 GMT -04:00
DIALOGUE TITLE	Interfaith Dialogue on Sustainable Food Systems
CONVENED BY	Andrew Schwartz, Center for Earth Ethics
DIALOGUE EVENT PAGE	https://summitdialogues.org/dialogue/31510/
DIALOGUE TYPE	Independent
GEOGRAPHICAL FOCUS	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

97

PARTICIPATION BY AGE RANGE

0-18

13

19-30

37

31-50

35

51-65

12

66-80

80+

PARTICIPATION BY GENDER

43 Male

42 Female

12 Prefer not to say or Other

NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS IN EACH SECTOR

5 Agriculture/crops

0 Fish and aquaculture

1 Livestock

0 Agro-forestry

6 Environment and ecology

Trade and commerce

12 Education

1 Communication

Food processing

Food retail, markets

Food industry

Financial Services

Health care

Nutrition

National or local government

Utilities

Industrial

68 Other

NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS FROM EACH STAKEHOLDER GROUP

1 Small/medium enterprise/artisan

Large national business

Multi-national corporation

10 Small-scale farmer

Medium-scale farmer

Large-scale farmer

3 Local Non-Governmental Organization

52 International Non-Governmental Organization

6 Indigenous People

5 Science and academia

3 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

1 Consumer group

8 Other

2. PRINCIPLES OF ENGAGEMENT

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

These dialogues are organized by a coalition of Faith Based Organizations (FBOs) who agreed upon an internal set of principles. Those principles included respect for one another's beliefs and traditions. Commitment to elevating human rights. Being open to difference. Resolving conflict through mediated dialogue. Amplifying underrepresented voices.

HOW DID YOUR DIALOGUE REFLECT SPECIFIC ASPECTS OF THE PRINCIPLES?

We consciously chose speakers committed to community development and principles of justice and equity in their work. We committed to multi-stakeholder inclusivity and highlighting the complexity of problems and the solutions. Our dialogues are globally diverse, bring together multiple stakeholders, have multi-faith representation, feature Indigenous voices throughout, and privilege the voices of front line communities.

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

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

Major Focus “Please detail the focus of your Dialogue. For example, it could be (i) a comprehensive exploration of food systems, (ii) an exploration of one of the five Action Tracks or levers of change of the Summit, (iii) examination of links between one or more of the Action Tracks and levers of change, (iv) or another specific theme.”

This Inter-faith dialogue is designed to engage global faith and indigenous communities with the Food Systems Summit processes via co-convened dialogues through shared experience and learning underlining shared values and principles, spirituality and/or beliefs that propel solidarity and mutual accountability with local communities, stewardship of the environment and sustainability of food systems. The objectives of the dialogue are as follows:

Share and discuss different faith traditions around food and food systems;
Discuss how the above shape the different initiatives of different faith communities and faith-based organizations;
Articulate common values around food and raise awareness on the importance of mutual accountability to transform food systems towards sustainability; and
Promote engagement and partnerships between faith-based organizations, indigenous peoples and other actors working on food systems.

The dialogue was divided into three parts;

Part 1 - Faith traditions and shared values in sustainable food systems;

Part 2 - Parallel Breakout Sessions: Deep dive on values around food as well as on accountability;

Part 3 - Feedback and reflections

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

Main Findings “Please share your appreciation of the main findings (or conclusions) that emerged from your Dialogue. For example, your key findings might detail a) the need to establish new connections between certain stakeholders, b) an agreement on actions that stakeholders will take together (expressed as intentions or commitments), c) a decision to explore specific aspects of food systems in greater depth.”

Faith and spirituality are deeply connected to food systems. There is much common ground in religious values, such as the dignity of humans and compassion for others, which drives people of all faiths towards ending hunger.

How we manage food systems can promote equity, justice and adequate and nutritious food distribution or perpetuate hunger, inequity and injustice.

Food systems have profound implications on the quality of our relationships with others and our relationship with our environment with a spectrum of outcomes.

The direction taken in the way Food systems depends very much on the values that undergird it. How we deal with food systems has ethical and moral implications. Faiths point us to values that are not non-negotiable- Truth and respect for life, respecting the other and the Earth.

There was also agreement about misuse of religion by political leaders, corruption, hypocrisy, bribery, lobbying, etc and the way this has negatively impacted food systems.

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OUTCOMES FOR EACH DISCUSSION TOPIC

Building solidarity through faith-based coalitions can be truly transformative; it can work to re-educate consumers or to shift corporations' behaviour (an example was given of an Oxfam and Unilever partnership). Faith has a huge role to play in this because common values bring people together, with a shared impetus towards compassion and transformation of oppressive systems.

Accountability is necessary for the damage that has already been done to poor communities, lower-income countries, and the environment. Yet we must also cultivate compassion, re-educate consumers, increase access to information, support youth farmers, and take concrete actions to hold the agro-industrial complex accountable and to transform global food systems.

Sharing aspect in faith traditions - important in Islam such during Ramadan in sharing of food with each other, an example given also in Yogic farming started in India such as custom of meditating during the farming cycle (over seeds, and segments during the growing process) – these are aspects that have been lost. Similarly in the Christian faith – as shown in the bible miracle story of Jesus multiplying the bread to feed a multitude - sharing is a key aspect which underscores the importance of sharing whatever little you have. Sharing of food from seed to the table; farmers to farmers. Sharing is relevant especially in an individualistic society.

Stewardship in faith – which is also present in traditions ie Judaic for example in the Brahma Kumaris where overconsumption is not a good example of stewardship. We are all stewards of all the materials on the earth. Being steward also carries the responsibility to only take what we need. There is also the intersection of the needs of human and the needs of flora and fauna; protecting these communities is strong in Islam. This stewardship concept has been lost over time, however, replaced by legal private ownership resulting to inequity and inequitable distribution of goods.

Rights based approach, respecting rights of others, respecting diversity. Related to responsibility i.e. in voting and linking it to financing, corruption

Tradition of gift of food even if food is grown or cultivated by human effort - because of the strong sense of “gift of food from the Creator” in the Judaic traditions alongside a sense of responsibility towards food, a sense of gratitude and respect; sense of wonder and gratitude of receiving the gift of food; sense of not wasting food – sanctity of food. Also present in Indigenous cultures and other faith traditions

Value of empathy in faith traditions – if practiced/adhered to can solve the problem of hunger. Empathy among humanity is important because while one community is starving, the other is living in plenty when there's enough production to feed the whole world. The problem is capitalistic living that is detriment of others. This value also relates to global empathy among nations esp during food crises.

All faith groups and indigenous traditions put a high value on production as it is essential for survival – a lot of text on importance of production in growing food, livestock etc.

Huge emphasis on equity – that food is important, thanks given after consumption and everyone has right to access to this food

Where equity is absent, provision to the vulnerable – clear in Judeo-Christian and Islamic traditions, absolute necessity to provide food / access to food to vulnerable groups.

Interconnectedness: all faiths are in this together; all can and should come together; also the power as consumers

Humility – relatedness to the soil; it's the beauty of creation transformed into feeding human.

Love - linked to the golden rule: do unto others as what you would like to do unto you; rule of love, do what love requires.

Gratitude – giving of thanks and offering of food, fundamental. We are now too far removed in food production, and lack connection to the food we eat.

Truth/transparency – need to demand what is contained in our food and where it comes from.

Moral imperative and opposing corruption. There is power in faith community, including the power of voting to effect change in society; what is needed is also the syst

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AREAS OF DIVERGENCE

Rather than areas of divergence, the following areas were mentioned as topics which deserve further exploration. Accountability - what should accountability look like? Awareness and reeducation are just as much a part of the solution as concrete actions could be. Suggestions included public policy changes, cutting subsidies, reparations, consumer boycotts, or pricing changes on products to correlate with their climate impact.

Individual vs collective responsibility and accountability - what should the role of individuals be in accountability? I.e. responsibility and blame on corporations but individuals are accountable as consumers (Mindful consumption of food and avoiding of wastage of food), concept of karma, etc.

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