

OFFICIAL FEEDBACK FORM

DIALOGUE DATE	Tuesday, 13 July 2021 09:00 GMT +08:00
DIALOGUE TITLE	NATIONAL FOOD SYSTEMS DIALOGUE IN THE PHILIPPINES
CONVENED BY	Hon. Secretary William D. Dar
DIALOGUE EVENT PAGE	https://summitdialogues.org/dialogue/33153/
DIALOGUE TYPE	Member State
GEOGRAPHICAL FOCUS	Philippines

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

536

PARTICIPATION BY AGE RANGE

59 0-18

104 19-30

203 31-50

94 51-65

76 66-80

80+

PARTICIPATION BY GENDER

220 Male

316 Female

Prefer not to say or Other

NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS IN EACH SECTOR

145 Agriculture/crops

51 Fish and aquaculture

16 Livestock

1 Agro-forestry

8 Environment and ecology

3 Trade and commerce

21 Education

3 Communication

Food processing

1 Food retail, markets

14 Food industry

Financial Services

8 Health care

27 Nutrition

131 National or local government

5 Utilities

1 Industrial

Other

NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS FROM EACH STAKEHOLDER GROUP

28 Small/medium enterprise/artisan

4 Large national business

10 Multi-national corporation

18 Small-scale farmer

Medium-scale farmer

2 Large-scale farmer

39 Local Non-Governmental Organization

16 International Non-Governmental Organization

2 Indigenous People

4 Science and academia

1 Workers and trade union

Member of Parliament

3 Local authority

267 Government and national institution

1 Regional economic community

56 United Nations

1 International financial institution

6 Private Foundation / Partnership / Alliance

3 Consumer group

75 Other

2. PRINCIPLES OF ENGAGEMENT

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

The National Food Systems Dialogue (NFSD) was organized meticulously with careful consideration of the overall goals of the UN Food Systems Summit, the five Action Tracks, and their corresponding solution areas. Prior to the NFSD, subnational food systems dialogues were conducted to gather inputs for the discussions. Several conversations were initiated and conducted in less than two months, considering the urgency of contributing to the achievement of the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Keeping in mind that for endeavors to be successful, they need to be inclusive, the NFSD brought in perspectives from a diverse set of stakeholders from the government, private sector, civil society organizations, gender groups, Indigenous Peoples (IPs), science groups, research and academe, farming and fishing communities, among others. The program was also drafted in consideration of the different players across the Philippine food systems, from production to consumption and even promotions. Prior to the NFSD, there were series of meetings with various government agencies to ensure that the organization of the activity and the facilitation of post-event interventions are distributed among various organizations and government units. This initiative also aimed at building trust among agency representatives involved in the NFSD preparations.

HOW DID YOUR DIALOGUE REFLECT SPECIFIC ASPECTS OF THE PRINCIPLES?

The NFSD clearly reflected the aspects of the UNFSS Principles of Engagement. In terms of commitment to the Summit, its program flow and contents were aligned to the five Action Tracks, to ensure that the final outcomes of the activity will contribute to the UNFSS. With the understanding of the complexities of food systems, breakout groups were setup, allowing various discussions to move beyond agriculture and food productions. The participants of the NFSD plenary and breakout sessions were also carefully selected to ensure inclusivity and adherence to the principles of engagement. Each of the breakout sessions was patterned in support of the five-point Action Tracks, and were spearheaded by identified lead agencies and supported by relevant designated agencies. The need to act with urgency and to work together was also clearly articulated throughout the Program -- from the messages to the mechanics of the breakout sessions. Throughout the activity, recognition of the various accomplishments and critical roles of other groups was evident. With the openness of the participants and their level of engagement during the discussions, the NFSD helped build trust and motivated the participants to unite in transforming the Philippine food system.

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

Results-oriented. Being results-oriented will ensure commitment to the Summit objectives and address the complexities of the food systems. The outcomes of the discussions should be clearly defined even from the planning stages. Keeping these outcomes in mind will help in drafting the most appropriate program flow, target speakers and invitees, contents of messages, and the discussion questions. Reasonable time. While having a sense of urgency is critical in contributing to the achievements of the 2030 SDGs, proper event/dialogue planning is critical. An activity as important as this, which aims to open further discussions and elicit support towards working together, should be organized months in advance. This will ensure that all the agencies and organizations are aligned with the goals of the Summit and the visions beyond the Summit. Collaborative and inclusive approach. The participation of various stakeholders and agencies is paramount to achieve success and promote complementation, inclusivity, and diversity. The representations of vulnerable groups should always be considered as we would need to understand their needs and situations to draft appropriate support and interventions. Consider the appropriate number of people per discussion room. This will ensure smooth flow of discussions and give opportunities for the participants to be heard. A more intimate (smaller number of participants) group will also promote the building of trust and respect as each point may be discussed thoroughly, giving opportunities to various players/perspectives to be elaborated.

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 National Food Systems Dialogue (NFSD) brought together the outputs of the concluded subnational food systems dialogues. The event gathered and validated the ongoing initiatives and initial recommendations that were identified during the said dialogues and other related activities.

The concept of the NFSD was to build on efforts that are already underway and work together on pathways that would lead to sustainable food systems. It highlighted a consensus-building approach to trim down priority interventions and policy actions that will transform the Philippine food systems by 2030.

The NFSD primarily focused on the following outputs and outcomes and resulted in:

1. Increased awareness on the Food Systems Summit goals and objectives, highlighting that it cuts across food systems and covers health, environment, social, agricultural, and even political aspects;
2. Gaining support from various sectors, agencies, and organizations towards contributing to the achievement of the 2030 SDGs;
3. Identified priority strategies, areas of interventions, and lead agencies; and
4. The promotion of the importance of collaborations, inclusivity, diversity, and open communications towards food systems transformations.

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

Generally, the discussions during the NFSD highlighted the following points:

1. There is an increasing support from various agriculture and non-agriculture players to collaborate to improve food systems in the Philippines and address challenges that hinder national growth;
2. Various government agencies are finding more ways to work together to develop and implement wider-scale and long-term solutions. These agencies expressed strong commitment to collaborate with the Department of Agriculture in transforming the Philippine food systems;
3. Collaborations of various sectors, including the livestock, dairy, fisheries, among others are imperative to create resilient and sustainable food systems that are equitable, secure, and that ensures high-quality nutrition for all;
4. Policy reviews and enhancements on laws related to food systems are critical to create a more enabling environment for food systems transformations. Related to this, accreditation/registration guidelines, import and export rules, and fiscal incentives should also be assessed and updated to respond to current demands of the sectors;
5. Agriculture and the rural economy are key sectors for supporting livelihoods in protracted crises;
6. To ensure proper monitoring and evaluation processes, national baselines and periodic assessments should be conducted, specifically on food loss and wastage, for an informed, evidence-based legislation and other actions;
7. Youth engagement programs should be developed to attract more youth to be more involved in interventions related to food, agriculture, environmental protection, and social development;
8. Outside of all the policy proposals and recommendations, pathways should be gender responsive and inclusive (including IPs and other vulnerable groups);
9. Challenges related to land access affect different sectors and responding to these is important to move forward with others points of intervention;
10. Agriculture and farming should more and more be treated as business venture/s even at the farm level to pave the way for increased profits. Agro-entrepreneurship programs should be rolled out to professionalize farmer cooperatives and level up the dignity of farming;
11. Farmer clustering and consolidation does not necessarily mean land title consolidation;
12. Deeper private sector engagement programs are called for to be able to harness resources and expertise, link farmers to institutional buyers, and support infrastructure improvements;
13. The role of communications and awareness campaigns cannot be disregarded in implementing a whole-of-society approach for food systems transformation;
14. There is value in looking at approaches to change mindsets and behaviors especially towards influencing a shift to healthier diets and nature-based productions;
15. Mitigating food loss and food waste concerns requires ecosystem-based interventions and concerns the society as a whole;
16. There is a need to involve the local government units more aggressively to maximize the impact of interventions;
17. Building resilience in the food systems should also prioritize addressing foundational concerns like soil health, water security and climate resiliency, among others. Building resilient yet progressive agriculture and fisheries livelihoods and communities will largely contribute to a sustainable and equitable food systems;
18. The importance of addressing malnutrition was emphasized, as stunting among Filipino children is very high in the country. Interventions related to this will include zero hunger and good health and well-being, among others;
19. Issues confronting the food systems include landslides, soil erosion, sea water intrusion, threat of biodiversity loss, lack of technologies for adaptation, lack of capital to avail of technologies, lack of social protection, insufficient number of post-harvest facilities, power supply interruptions during typhoons, among others; and
20. Heavily mentioned throughout the sessions were the need for gender-aggregated data, access to market, information, and financing, interventions to promote ease of doing business, streamlined quality, import/export, and food safety regulations, and the improvements in post-harvest and storage facilities.

ACTION TRACKS

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

KEYWORDS

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OUTCOMES FOR EACH DISCUSSION TOPIC - 1/5

The discussions during the NFSD breakout session covered a wide scope of possible action items which are summarized below.

Action Track 1: Ensure access to safe and nutritious food for all

Engagement of youth in food systems. This will require: 1) the enactment of the Magna Carta for Young Farmers in Congress; and 2) improving programs that incentivize youth participation in agriculture. More specific interventions could be simplifying the application process and requirements of existing programs, providing livelihood opportunities to graduates of agricultural courses, providing opportunities for free access to lands as entrepreneurs, or matching them with private employers as employees.

Compensate the farmers properly. This can be undertaken through the following: 1) linking farmers to institutional buyers; 2) promoting consolidation and clustering to farmers for them to benefit from economies of scale; 3) providing social protection programs for landless farmers and impoverished fishers; 4) strengthening engagement with LGUs on the provision of technical support to farmers and fishers; 5) speedy implementation of the Agrarian Reform Law through the Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Program (CARP), to provide tenure to small farmers and help increase their productivity; and 6) in the long term, implementing concrete and sustainable market tax and financial policies.

Mitigate post-harvest losses and food wastage. The participants agreed to work on the following action items: 1) establish strategically located post-harvest facilities and infrastructures to extend the shelf life of produce; 2) review the entire permit application cycle to simplify the process and encourage the private sector to invest; 3) maximize the collection and utilization of organic waste; and 4) provide incentives to companies who can collect and process organic wastes into fertilizers.

Enhance the capacity of the public to secure safe and nutritious food. This will cover the following strategies: 1) increase public awareness on food systems and promotion of nutritious foods; 2) enforce existing policies, such as the Milk Code, Bio-fortification, Food Fortification Law and the National Feeding Program; and 3) promote the inclusion of fresh produce in the food pack reliefs distributed during calamities. These food packs should advocate compliance to Nutrition Cluster Recommendations on Healthy and Nutritious Family Food Packs and Sustainable Food Source.

Provide equitable and sustainable food production. 1) Strengthen food, nutrition, and agricultural policies, programs, and fair trade relations, with special attention to the creation and strengthening of food security at all levels; 2) integrate population programs in all development activities related to food systems; 3) include local peace making and development; and 4) properly implement the Organic Act. Moreover, the following interventions were also suggested: enforce international-level standards/practices and quarantine measures on imported as well as local goods; ensure that LGUs give priority to agri-fishery development by allocating at least 10% of their National Tax Allotment (NaTA) to agriculture and fisheries; and include demand-driven agriculture and fisheries in government strategies.

ACTION TRACKS

- ✓ Action Track 1: Ensure access to safe and nutritious food for all
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KEYWORDS

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OUTCOMES FOR EACH DISCUSSION TOPIC - 2/5

The discussions during the NFSD breakout session covered a wide scope of possible action items which are summarized below.

Action Track 2: Shift to healthy and sustainable consumption patterns

Enabling, inspiring and motivating people to enjoy healthy and sustainable options. Priority interventions include 1) Promoting investments through targeted responsible consumer education; 2) strengthening interventions that promote nutrition-seeking behavior; 3) targeting other agriculture sectors to produce healthier crops; 4) crafting policies that will promote and encourage more consumers to patronize locally produced food products; and 5) strengthening of the enforcement, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies on nutrition and food safety. The general public should also be encouraged to shift to healthy food diets and to more sustainable methods of food production. These could be attained by improving consumers' awareness on healthy foods through information campaign and making locally produced food available and accessible.

Slashing food losses and waste. Agreed upon strategies are: 1) improvement in post-harvest processing to reduce food losses, which can be attained through capacity building for farmers and provision of post-harvest facilities; 2) improvement of traceability, handling, processing and packaging, and distribution systems by establishing a national baseline and periodic assessment on food loss and wastage in the country; 3) supporting the Department of Agriculture's advocacy on farm clustering, shifting from household level to community-based organization; 4) establishment of community-based agri-fishery infrastructures will address the need for value adding; and 5) establishment of food banks and capacitating household on food preservation will also prevent food wastage.

Addressing malnutrition. Stunting among Filipino children is very high in the country. Addressing this challenge plays a vital role in transforming the country's food systems to be more resilient, inclusive, competitive and environmentally sustainable, and responsive to the 2030 SDGs. Interventions related to this will include zero hunger and good health and well-being, among others.

ACTION TRACKS

✓	Action Track 1: Ensure access to safe and nutritious food for all
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	Action Track 5: Build resilience to vulnerabilities, shocks and stress

KEYWORDS

✓	Finance	✓	Policy
✓	Innovation	✓	Data & Evidence
	Human rights	✓	Governance
	Women & Youth Empowerment		Trade-offs
			Environment and Climate

OUTCOMES FOR EACH DISCUSSION TOPIC - 3/5

The discussions during the NFSD breakout session covered a wide scope of possible action items which are summarized below.

Action Track 3: Boost nature-positive food production at scale

Promote inclusive nature-friendly production. 1) Highlight the benefits of environment-friendly practices and food production processes; 2) develop eco-friendly technologies that provide concrete and attractive benefits to producers; 3) manage natural resources sustainably; and 4) support the full implementation of sustainable upland development in small island provinces. Aside from these, the following were also recommended as priority interventions: pursue initiatives towards water security and water-use efficiency, implement proper nutrient management, promote the use of environment-friendly machinery and equipment at the farm level, develop and generate a robust database on the extent of degraded soils/farmlands and remaining lands which are available for use for agricultural activities in each province, shifting to agro-ecology/organic agriculture, and implement proper waste management systems.

Empower IPs, fishers, farmers, and communities towards Sustainable Food Production Systems. Priority interventions that were suggested during the session: 1) create awareness on the contribution and importance of IPs in preserving traditional ecosystems and their contribution in food production systems; 2) capacitate IPs to boost their agricultural production with respect to their local cultures; and 3) implement similar DA-FAO-GED projects with actions, interventions, and involvement that helps attain the SDGs. Moreover, providing assistance for upland communities/tenure holders and ensuring support from LGUs through issuance of local policies supportive of this endeavor were also recommended.

Give attention to farmers, and not only on crops, ecosystems and food production systems. Priority interventions should include institutionalizing Global Environment Facilities at the local and national levels, creating monitoring mechanisms for the implementation of sustainable food systems, integrating Management Information Systems in database development, and strengthening support for community involvement and engagement. It is also necessary to continue independent dialogues to: engage farmers, fishers and IPs; institutionalize the Provincial Monitoring Committee; and allocate more budget for monitoring activities.

Achieve economies of scale and factor in Ecosystem Services Valuation for a market-driven, value chain-oriented food system and mitigate post-harvest losses and food wastage along the value chain. Farmers and fishers should be clustered into small organizations or cooperatives, with mechanisms for monitoring of productivity and income within the clusters to be developed. There is a need to develop a more effective business model, where the cooperative can have control on the produce and can effectively manage the clustered farms. Meanwhile, providing fiscal incentives to private firms through improvements in the government's policies on investments should also be prioritized.

Improve the role of SUCs in modernizing, industrializing, and professionalizing Philippine food systems. Support for research and technology initiatives, tools and facilities of state universities and colleges (SUCs), and revisions of the reward system to university researchers who develop technologies should be included in the priority list of the government. SUCs should also initiate close partnership with the DA Regional Offices for better research for development (R4DE) linkages and synergy of relevant agri-fishery initiatives. Other priority interventions include the strengthening of agri-business incubation centers for promising technologies; involvement of the private sector, consumers, and farmers during the early stages of technology development process; and verifications on the private sector adoption and commercialization of the technologies being developed by the SUCs.

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KEYWORDS

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OUTCOMES FOR EACH DISCUSSION TOPIC - 4/5

The discussions during the NFSD breakout session covered a wide scope of possible action items which are summarized below.

Action Track 4: Advance equitable livelihoods and value distribution

Review government regulations on procurement to be able to link farmers and fisherfolk produce/catch. The possibility of transacting directly with farmers through government procurement was heavily discussed. This would entail conduct of a series of consultations with the Government Procurement Policy Board and other relevant agencies on the possibility of easing procurement of relief goods especially if this would be sourced from farmers and fisherfolks. Moreover, market linkage, promoting fair trade, and farmer professionalization were some of the highlighted interventions.

Strengthen micro entrepreneurs and cooperatives. Establishing and strengthening of farmer organizations through capacity building and consolidation and clustering efforts were highlighted. In particular, farmer groups can access support mechanisms such as input supply, credit, machineries, marketing, training and extension support, among others. This is seen as an opportunity to diversify markets for agriculture, forestry and fisheries (AFFs) and eliminate the practice of pole-vaulting or side-selling issues. Doing this would require support not only from national government agencies (NGAs) but also from local government units (LGUs), to harness the full potential of local products.

Invest in improving competitiveness of local farmers and fishers. The following strategies were proposed: 1) capacitate farmers and fishers on technologies and techniques, and entrepreneurship; 2) analyze whether the current rates of farm workers are sufficient for them to avail of basic needs; and 3) remove discrimination in labor by establishing single rate of labor in the regions regardless of industry. Priority should be given to improving working conditions through compliance with general labor standards and establishment of measures that would protect the health and safety of agricultural workers in their work environment. It was suggested that creating opportunities and linkages for increased private sector engagement and putting focus on post-harvest infrastructures should also be prioritized.

Adopting a targeted multi-pronged holistic approach in providing interventions to stakeholders. This policy recommendation can be achieved by: 1) reviewing the need to restructure government programs into one that is targeted, multi-pronged, and adopts a holistic approach; and 2) strengthening strategic communication of available programs especially in the rural areas through various media platforms.

Enhancing land tenure systems towards improved agricultural productivity. This can be attained by supporting policies that promote and secure land tenure of farmers, fisherfolk and IPs, such as the enactment of the National Land Use Act that would institutionalize a holistic, rational and comprehensive land use and physical planning mechanism.

It was also highlighted that the establishment of community seed banks was also seen as a vital component in terms of conserving and protecting traditional crop varieties.

Establishment of a strong market linkage based on the whole-of-society approach. This will necessitate engagement in meaningful and on-the-ground conversations with concerned stakeholders by providing incentives, such as discussion spaces for interactions and participation of key actors in the food system, in particular the most vulnerable groups, and empower them through skills and capacity building that would enable them to address the issues affecting their own communities.

Outside all the policy proposals and recommendations, pathways should be gender responsive and inclusive.

ACTION TRACKS

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KEYWORDS

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✓	Women & Youth Empowerment	✓	Trade-offs
		✓	Environment and Climate

OUTCOMES FOR EACH DISCUSSION TOPIC - 5/5

The discussions during the NFSD breakout session covered a wide scope of possible action items which are summarized below.

Action Track 5: Build resilience to vulnerabilities, shocks and stresses

Reduce existing risks and prevent future risks in the food systems. This will focus on the sustainable use of natural resources and adoption of appropriate technological and economically viable practices through the promotion of community-based, disaster-resilient food systems facilities for sustainable food production, processing, and distribution. Interventions include provision of adequate storage, drying and processing facilities; community-based and multi-sector-supported initiatives and activities; and enhanced support to community-based service providers. Also critical are research for development, and scaling of technologies to raise yields and reduce risks of production failure and development of location-specific technologies and practices. The endeavors should focus on breeding of crop varieties, livestock and fish that are resilient to biotic and abiotic stresses. Priority actions should include the following:

1. Improvement of watershed management;
2. Implementation of soil conservation measures, rain and flood water harvesting; and
3. Introduction and promotion of salt-tolerant crops that would result to sufficient water supply, minimized flood risks, reduced erosion, rich biodiversity and healthy soil.

In terms of food production, farm diversification, value-adding, increased farmer participation in value chains, transforming food production groups into climate-resilient businesses, and increased youth engagements in food systems should be undertaken.

Strengthen disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation and mitigation governance in agriculture and fisheries. Appropriate policies and institutional frameworks, and increased institutional capacities should be in place. It is necessary to develop and implement sector specific policy frameworks, strategies, and plans for disaster risk reduction, climate change adaptation, food safety, and prevention and management of major plant pest and animal disease outbreaks. This would include the adoption of finance-based forecasting for early warning system and to increase investments in public good. Disaster risk reduction (DRR) and climate change adaptation and mitigation (CCAM) in the context of food systems into the Provincial Physical Framework Plan (PPFP) and Comprehensive Land Use Plan (CLUP) should be mainstreamed. Furthermore, the government could work on promoting low carbon facilities and transport adopted to climate change for post-harvest processing and transport.

Enhance and promote knowledge management and early warning systems. Food producers lose much of their harvest due to climate hazard because of their lack of awareness and knowledge on how to use climate information services (CIS) and other information related to disaster and climate risks. Disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation and mitigation information systems should thus, be enhanced in terms of monitoring and early warning systems (EWS) or rapid alert system of multiple threats. Additionally, climate information service needs to be institutionalized at municipal level. Farmers and fisherfolk should similarly be informed and capacitated on the available CIS and technologies. This would entail enhancement of DRR and CCAM information systems.

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AREAS OF DIVERGENCE

The areas of divergence during the NFSD highlighted the need to the following action items:

- Clearly define the difference between the 'consumers' and the 'public'. The discussion arose during the discussion in the breakout group under Action Track 1, specifically on the solution area: Enhancing the capacity of the public to secure safe and nutritious food. The participants did not arrive at an agreement on which of the two words is more appropriate to use for this specific strategy.
- Clearly define the roles of the middlemen or intermediary organizations. There was a feedback on the suggestion to 'eliminate the middlemen'. The critical role of middlemen in the supply chain was also recognized. While it was agreed that there are middlemen who conduct unfair practices, there are still others who implement and advocate for fair trade practices and significantly support the farmers to be linked to the market.

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