

# OFFICIAL FEEDBACK FORM

<b>DIALOGUE DATE</b>	Friday, 30 July 2021 14:30 GMT +03:00
<b>DIALOGUE TITLE</b>	How To Unlock Positive Change In Ethiopia's Food System
<b>CONVENED BY</b>	Chandapiwa Olesego Sisila, Piera Mattioli, Patricia Lay, Janica Solis, Faustina Ningá, Janina Peter
<b>DIALOGUE EVENT PAGE</b>	<a href="https://summitdialogues.org/dialogue/33623/">https://summitdialogues.org/dialogue/33623/</a>
<b>DIALOGUE TYPE</b>	Independent
<b>GEOGRAPHICAL FOCUS</b>	Ethiopia

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

### PARTICIPATION BY AGE RANGE

0 0-18      8 19-30      10 31-50      51-65      66-80      80+

### PARTICIPATION BY GENDER

6 Male      14 Female      Prefer not to say or Other

### NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS IN EACH SECTOR

1	Agriculture/crops	3	Education	1	Health care
0	Fish and aquaculture	3	Communication	2	Nutrition
0	Livestock	1	Food processing	0	National or local government
1	Agro-forestry	0	Food retail, markets	0	Utilities
2	Environment and ecology	3	Food industry	2	Industrial
1	Trade and commerce	0	Financial Services	0	Other

### NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS FROM EACH STAKEHOLDER GROUP

4	Small/medium enterprise/artisan	0	Workers and trade union
0	Large national business	0	Member of Parliament
3	Multi-national corporation	0	Local authority
1	Small-scale farmer	0	Government and national institution
0	Medium-scale farmer	1	Regional economic community
0	Large-scale farmer	0	United Nations
3	Local Non-Governmental Organization	0	International financial institution
3	International Non-Governmental Organization	0	Private Foundation / Partnership / Alliance
0	Indigenous People	3	Consumer group
2	Science and academia	0	Other

## 2. PRINCIPLES OF ENGAGEMENT

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

-We made sure to invite a diverse set of participants -The curator reminded everyone to be respectful, embrace diversity, actively listen & act according to these principles -Our facilitators were briefed in advanced, everyone had the training, so they could make sure to incorporate the principles in each of our discussion groups

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

-Even though, we had some opposing views, everyone was recognized and treated respectfully -We followed a multi-stakeholder approach, inviting everyone involved "from farm to fork" -We built new connections, complemented each other's work and will keep discussing

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

Make sure to always remind everyone of the principles.

# 3. METHOD

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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

To understand the relationship between poverty and malnutrition in Ethiopia, we are hosting an 'Independent Dialogue' on "How To Unlock Positive Change In Ethiopia's Food System".

With 13 Million children under the age of five living in Ethiopia<sup>1</sup>, one in twenty of these children dies before even reaching this age<sup>2</sup>, meaning 650.000 children don't get to celebrate their fifth birthday. Reasons range from malnutrition, poor sanitation and hygiene to contaminated water, amongst others. Following the Acumen Academy's Systems Practice course for nine weeks, our team developed a simplified systems map to grasp and visualize the interconnections of different challenges: poverty in rural, local communities, education, malnutrition in children, agriculture and the role of governments and big corporates, all being part of the Ethiopian food system.

Before sharing our findings with the UNFSS, this open Summit Dialogue shall serve to validate the map and build on it by bringing in diverse ideas and perspectives from international stakeholders, like:

Next-generation innovators and systems thinkers, entrepreneurs, farmers, scientists, public and private sector representatives, civil society representatives, activists, financial sector representatives, chefs, as well as individuals outside of the food and agriculture industry.

### 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

### 1st Focus Topic: Courageous leaders and social enterprises

As many projects and initiatives implemented by NGOs and the government focus too little on education about food and nutrition, families and communities continue to lack this important knowledge on how to feed themselves for improved health. This is a result of "only" focusing on malnutrition instead of investigating deeper into the root causes of malnutrition and health problems which are also: hygiene, infrastructure, such as water and sanitation.

Because they see the need for intervention towards more education about food and nutrition in Ethiopia, courageous leaders create initiatives towards solving this social issue. Through these initiatives, communities feel empowered to lead and create a change. It increases the interdependence and self-sufficiency of the communities. People from the communities become aware of their own power and fight for their rights, not letting themselves be suppressed and overpowered by the government and corporations. This leads to an increase of powerful leadership and a change not only in communities but also in government institutions. More people take action.

These projects aimed at behavioral change at community level lead to the growing # of social businesses, civic society and community-led programs that become enablers in the nutrition sector.

The social businesses made a huge change in terms of several topics: It increased projects based on human-centered research and encouraged the involvement of the communities and religious organizations. It makes such progress in giving awareness to the public. It creates more partnerships and opportunities for self-help groups, civil society orgs, and community-led programs. Social sector grows stronger and can apply pressure on the government to improve action on nutrition. It increases the opportunities for the social businesses within the food and nutrition sector that results in adequate projects and policies being implemented. The market for social businesses is scaling and people are becoming more aware of it and joining the action.

One of these successful projects is VitaBite, a social enterprise with a SMS recipe program that tackles behavioral change approaches in the local communities on food nutrition. VitaByte is only one of the thousands of social projects that tackles food nutrition in Ethiopia focusing on behavioural change.

### 2nd Focus Topic: Education and Resources

When first researching on the topic about malnutrition in Ethiopia we set the intention to find out more about its relation to education. It seems to be a topic that is often missed out when it comes to malnutrition in children and adults alike. Even when resources can be provided, many people lack concrete knowledge on how to eat to nourish their bodies in a healthy way. In addition to this, some cultures or religions restrict options for healthy nourishment, which can especially be dangerous for children.

People must be educated on what to eat and how to eat, they must gain awareness of the cause and effects that food has on their bodies and their health.

Education on the topic of food and nourishment also includes enabling communities to grow their own food and in this case, enabling diverse agriculture instead of mono-cultures.

Organisations focusing on food and nutrition must become more aware of the effects that education can have on the topic of mal-nutrition, they must also start to tackle that problem more systematically instead of in silos by simply providing food to the local people. The approach must change towards education and empowerment, otherwise those people will forever depend on aid-agencies.

### 3rd Focus Topic: Gender & Politics

A misunderstanding of the bigger picture and the true root causes of people being in states of malnutrition results in projects and interventions that are not effective. As a consequence, people lose trust in government and non-governmental organisations and their "solutions" implemented in the local communities.

With a reduced level of trust comes a reduced level of openness in sharing information which again limits the interventions to be effective.

Governmental as well as non-governmental organisations must work together with the local communities, involving all people to find solutions that suit them for a thriving and sustainable future; this includes open discussions and learning from and with the local communities. The focus point Gender & Politics is directly related to education, asking for a systemic approach instead of focusing on just providing food providing people with skills, tools and knowledge to become independent and outgrow external help to ensure their livelihoods.

## 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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✓	Action Track 4: Advance equitable livelihoods
✓	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 - 1/3

### 1st Focus Topic: Courageous leaders and social enterprises

#### (1.1) Empowering local communities to take leadership

We believe in the power of "stand up & act". But how can we encourage people to do so? How can we make people realize they actually have power to promote change, especially in countries where they are used to just listening and following? People don't recognize the power they have – but they have so much more knowledge than people who come from the outside with the intention to help - and knowledge is power. So how can we ensure they know their rights to stand up?

#### (1.2) Social entrepreneurship - new ways of solving malnutrition

How can we engage the private sector in Ethiopia in the fight against malnutrition? How do mothers get the knowledge about nutritious food? How can we create a system of sharing knowledge? Can midwives be the champions of sharing knowledge? Or people of authorities? Who can local communities trust?

There is little to no support for small social businesses in Ethiopia. Founders experience difficulties to find loans, especially in the starting phases. Besides the lack of funding opportunities, founders are also lacking knowledge and network. The existing policies are challenging, it is hard to get the right licence to produce food, for example. „What made us continue throughout the years was the feedback we get from our customers and how it is helping them“, says Melat, founder of VitaBite Nutrition.

One approach for a solution, taken from other countries and contexts, is leveraging existing organizations and partnering up.

#### (1.3) Human-centered design - understanding the culture

Before you design a solution for someone, you need to understand your target group. Working towards solving malnutrition in the favelas of Rio de Janeiro, Danielle Marques, product owner at IBM and Amani fellow, partnered with a community association acting against food insecurity for years into Rio das Pedras, one of the biggest favelas of Brazil. The goal: teach recipes to people taking full advantage of food. "If you teach something that is not aligned with the food culture, they won't cook it or buy the idea", says Danielle, "As a consequence, they won't trust the initiative or they will not incorporate in their lives". Vegetarian recipes, for example, were not accepted by some households in this favela as eating meat is seen as a privilege and a sign of a "proper meal". You have to be aware of the culture of the local community – understanding the culture is key and local leaders are a trustable source to provide that knowledge.

No matter where we want to work, from Brazil to Ethiopia, a human-centered approach is the way to go. How did it work for Melat in the Ethiopian communities she wanted to understand? For her research, Melat went from home to home to study the eating culture. She went to local markets to study food availability as well as prices. From there, she started thinking about how to enrich the diets. Introducing new diets to local communities is very hard and critical.

#### (1.4) A conducive environment for innovation - leading the change

There are only around 10 companies producing nutritious food for relief as private businesses in Ethiopia. Similar to nutrition education, there are only a few individuals who write books and provide information on the topic. There needs to be a lot more. It all comes down to having a conducive environment for innovation, the government plays a big role there.

The good news is: there are courageous leaders in the (food) system, creating change step by step. Melat was part of forming "Social Enterprise Ethiopia", a network of social Enterprises working to create a more conducive ecosystem for social enterprises. Even though it is not focused on nutrition, the network supports entrepreneurs solving social issues overall. They tweak the system in different ways. In 2019, they co-hosted the Social Entrepreneurship Forum. Currently, they are working on policy reform, capacity building and creating a networking ecosystem.

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## OUTCOMES FOR EACH DISCUSSION TOPIC - 2/3

### 2nd Focus Topic: Education and Resources

- For projects to be more effective communities must be involved in the whole process and seen as protagonists instead of being talked down to
- Connect financial resources with education → enable people to grow their own food and educate them on what to eat → do keep in mind supply and demand of the market
- Smallholder farmers know their problems/challenges but the system itself is broken and as such they don't have the resources to find better solutions for themselves → Ask: How can we better empower them?? (instead of seeing and treating them as victims)
- Education on the "right" diet (depending on the country) → value the food that can already be found/grown in the country and make it more diverse
- Problem of chemical industry/fertilizer companies coming into the country and telling people what and how to grow food → agriculture gets mono-culture → where there was a diverse variety of fruits and vegetables in the past, now they only grow one or two kinds of grains and big parts also get exported (profit first culture) → policy makers and industry leaders must be involved and become aware of the problems they create (if it's not on purpose → problem of corruption!)
- It's important to bring in diversity and permaculture → again, educate policy makers and industry leaders in systems thinking and lead them to understand the interconnections of the whole system and pros and cons of their actions
- Get away from the "doing something instead of nothing" approach without understanding positive AND negative effects → get away from the linear understanding and get into systemic understanding of the problems and solutions → it's about a mindset shift from working in silos to working in systems
- Mind local culture: in some countries (in Kenya f.ex.) eggs are only given to boys/men → caregivers/families must be educated about the negative effects this can have on the girl's health
- When implementing new ideas or projects, make sure to know who to involve (stakeholder analysis) and who to educate where and how → bring awareness to the systemic point of view → make sure to also educate people working for governments, NGOs and donors → complex problems/projects need systemic approaches
- Know/define the desired and the ultimate impact, create environment for continuous learning and change while keeping vision/north star
- Challenge mental models from short term success to medium and long term success and benefits

### ACTION TRACKS

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|-------------------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/>            | Action Track 1: Ensure access to safe and nutritious food for all      |
| <input type="checkbox"/>            | Action Track 2: Shift to sustainable consumption patterns              |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Action Track 3: Boost nature-positive production                       |
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| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Action Track 5: Build resilience to vulnerabilities, shocks and stress |

### KEYWORDS

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|-------------------------------------|---------------------------|-------------------------------------|-------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/>            | Finance                   | <input type="checkbox"/>            | Policy                  |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Innovation                | <input type="checkbox"/>            | Data & Evidence         |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Human rights              | <input type="checkbox"/>            | Governance              |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Women & Youth Empowerment | <input type="checkbox"/>            | Trade-offs              |
|                                     |                           | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Environment and Climate |



## OUTCOMES FOR EACH DISCUSSION TOPIC - 3/3

### 3rd Focus Topic: Gender & Politics

-Aim on funding projects with a focus on women → they tend to spend more time and money on food, the family and the community as a whole

-When working with women make sure to involve men in the learning process as gender models, culture and religion can be complicated to deal with and even have negative effects on women and the whole family

-Teach diverse sets of skills to men and women for them to contribute to the family income

Establish early childhood development centers for children to be educated about food, nutrition and even farming at an early age

-Involve all age groups in the solution finding process - the youngest and the oldest, combine traditions and new ways of thinking to make change and transitions available and acceptable for all

-Women are the main caregivers - how can we empower men, how can they contribute towards a more inclusive society and a mindset shift from men not taking care of children to also playing a role as a caregiver → start campaigns about gender stereotype issues

-Train healthcare workers in educating people about healthy food and eating habits for the communities

-Think of visual campaigns as sometimes language can be a barrier in Ethiopia

-Limit the power and influence of big corporations in the country, especially when it comes to buying resources, creating mono-cultures or destroying the local markets

-Example projects for inspiration:

Home

<https://fourthway.co.uk/better-coffee-farming/>

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## AREAS OF DIVERGENCE

-Small farmers, SMEs and consumers are often missing from the discussion (we all talk on their behalf, but they are not 'in the system' to join these sorts of discussions. They also do not have time!)

-Consumer preferences and actions are contradicting each other: Two examples would be wanting to eat only local food, but have it available all year round, as well as asking for the highest quality food, but not willing to pay a premium for it.

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# ATTACHMENTS AND RELEVANT LINKS

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## ATTACHMENTS

- <https://summitdialogues.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/07/Graphic-recording.jpg>