

# OFFICIAL FEEDBACK FORM

<b>DIALOGUE DATE</b>	Sunday, 18 July 2021 15:00 GMT +05:45
<b>DIALOGUE TITLE</b>	Nepal Food Systems Discourse: Transforming our Food Systems for the Sustainable Development of the Nation
<b>CONVENED BY</b>	Mr. Ghanshyam Bhattarai, Thought For Food Foundation
<b>DIALOGUE EVENT PAGE</b>	<a href="https://summitdialogues.org/dialogue/33727/">https://summitdialogues.org/dialogue/33727/</a>
<b>DIALOGUE TYPE</b>	Independent
<b>GEOGRAPHICAL FOCUS</b>	Nepal

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

60

## PARTICIPATION BY AGE RANGE

1 0-18      30 19-30      19 31-50      9 51-65      1 66-80      0 80+

## PARTICIPATION BY GENDER

35 Male      23 Female      2 Prefer not to say or Other

## NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS IN EACH SECTOR

10	Agriculture/crops	2	Education	5	Health care
1	Fish and aquaculture	1	Communication	6	Nutrition
2	Livestock	5	Food processing	5	National or local government
3	Agro-forestry	3	Food retail, markets	1	Utilities
6	Environment and ecology	5	Food industry	1	Industrial
3	Trade and commerce	1	Financial Services	0	Other

## NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS FROM EACH STAKEHOLDER GROUP

2	Small/medium enterprise/artisan	2	Workers and trade union
0	Large national business	0	Member of Parliament
1	Multi-national corporation	2	Local authority
4	Small-scale farmer	4	Government and national institution
5	Medium-scale farmer	1	Regional economic community
2	Large-scale farmer	1	United Nations
8	Local Non-Governmental Organization	0	International financial institution
9	International Non-Governmental Organization	5	Private Foundation / Partnership / Alliance
0	Indigenous People	5	Consumer group
9	Science and academia	0	Other

## 2. PRINCIPLES OF ENGAGEMENT

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

All the elements and activities of the dialogue were based on the guidelines given by UJFSS 2021- Conveners Reference Manual. It was held on zoom where a diverse range of stakeholders from different sectors was there. All the participants and facilitators were pre-informed about the Summit, Summit Dialogues, Principles and importance of the dialogue through the mail and virtual orientation program to make the session best out of it. The dialogue was inaugurated by the curator with his welcome note which was followed by a short speech of the Chief Guest Ms Christine (Founder and CEO of Thought For Food Foundation and Advisory Committee of UN Food Systems Summit 2021). After that, there was a main plenary session facilitated by the curator with the 5 speakers named Dr Yamuna Ghale, Dr Abid Hussain, Dr Atul Upadhyaya, Ram Chandra Uprety and Shanta Banskota Koirala representing government bodies, NGOs and INGOs, the Health and Nutrition Sector, Farmers and cooperatives, women and entrepreneurship respectively. The speakers helped our participants to set up a background of Nepal Food Systems by sharing their knowledge, experiences and major challenges/opportunities of our local food systems. The plenary session was followed by a Breakout session where 4 different zoom breakout rooms were allocated with 12-15 participants in a group. Each group was facilitated by a Facilitator. There were a total of 4 facilitators named Ms Sagarika Bhatta, Ms Pralisha Adhikari, Mr Jyoti Acharya and Mr Sampurna Rai. They were also an expert in their fields. The discussion on each room was carried out by considering all the 7 principles of the Summit Dialogues. After the breakout session, the facilitators presented the outcomes of the discussion that happened in their individual rooms. While presenting the outcomes, facilitators were made sure that they included the thoughts and voices of every participant on the specific topics of discussion. The presentation session was followed by summarization along with closing remarks by the curator at the ending of the dialogue.

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

Nepal Food Systems Discourse has been a powerful opportunity to engage meaningfully, explore collectively and emerge resiliently for sustainable food systems. Anyone could be a part of shaping the change and help the country hear all voices of food systems through the dialogue. Nepal Food System Discourse was conducted by applying all the 7 principles. Since the dialogue was based on transforming Nepal Food Systems for the sustainable development of the nation, the dialogue was convened in such a way that it contributes to the UN Food Systems Summit 2021 and defines the pathways to the transformation of local as well as global food systems adding to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The Dialogues empowered and energized the stakeholders to participate in the preparation of the Food Systems Summit. We were able to set the ambience of respect for the thoughts and voices of every actor who participated in the dialogue. It was forward-looking, foster new connections, and enabled the emergence of ways to move forward collectively and creatively, embracing the entire scope of opinions. Since every food systems are complex and connected, the dialogue has been able to cater to all the actors in the same platform to deduce roadmaps for enhancing each system. The Dialogue built on and add value to existing policy processes and initiatives. It has pointed an opportunity to share promising innovations, connect stakeholders, and broaden partnerships to reconstruct sustainable, equitable and resilient food systems for the common good. Similarly, the dialogue followed the principle of building trust with each other. The Dialogues was curated and facilitated in a way that created a "safe space" and promoted trust, boosting mutual respect. The conclusions emerging from the Dialogues that were shared in the feedback and other media is not attributed to single individuals.

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

The success of a Food Systems Summit Dialogue depends in particular on how every person related to the dialogue carries their responsibility. Each role comes with a set of very crucial and critical duties that include several defined tasks. However, a convener is the master of the whole dialogue and the success of the dialogue depends upon how the one forms his/her team. In guaranteeing that dialogue builds on the experience, knowledge, interest and initiatives of participants, the roles of Dialogue Convener, curator and facilitator are especially important. They expand and enrich existing processes and explorations and provide participants with the opportunities to meet and connect with other stakeholders who have different perspectives for addressing the challenges of food systems. Being a convener, I can reckon that a convener should be very capable to manage each activity and related stakeholders very tactfully. The transparency and communication between each members become outmost while executing dialogue. Therefore, a convener must pay attention about the engagement of every elements of the dialogue and need to plan everything beforehand accordingly.

# 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

Nepal Food Systems Discourse (NFSD) was one of the dialogues organized by Thought For Food Nepal (TFF) focused on transforming the local food systems for national development through an immense discussion with multi-stakeholders and youth participants in a common platform. To hear the voice of every actor of the local and national food systems, the dialogue was carried out by involving many farmers, scientists, individual persons, youth, private sectors, civil societies, national governments and a few representatives from global bodies. It was an important avenue for people engagement and a key part of the UN Food System Summit process. Locally based, locally-led and fully adaptable to different contexts, this dialogue had crowdsourced the distinct solutions to strengthen local and national food systems for sustainable development.

Nepal Food System Discourse was totally focused on reinforcing all 4 concerns of Nepal Food Systems by uprooting the status quo. It has been able to explore key drivers, existing challenges and barriers, solutions and ways forward of the food systems. The dialogue was revolved on all 5 action tracks. The Summit's Action Tracks offer stakeholders from a wide range of backgrounds a space to share and learn, foster new actions and partnerships and amplify existing initiatives. Importantly, the Action Tracks are not separate, nor do they sit in siloes. Each Action Track has been designed to address possible trade-offs with other tracks and to identify solutions that can deliver wide-reaching benefits. Based on these 5 tracks mapped down by the UN, the dialogue was taken place on the 5 related themes. These themes were drawn on the expertise of actors from across the nation's food systems. Together, all the participating stakeholders explored how key cross-cutting levers of change such as human rights, finance, innovation, and the empowerment of women and young people can be mobilized to not only meet the Summit's objectives, but also the sustainable, resilient equitable development of the country.

In a nut shell, Nepal Food Systems Discourse aimed to connect a diverse range of stakeholders—including youth activists and Indigenous leaders, smallholder farmers, fishers, scientists and business leaders to identify the most powerful ways to make food systems more sustainable and equitable for all. Most importantly, the dialogue offered youth and experts everywhere the opportunity to contribute directly to the Summit's ambitious vision and objectives.

### 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

The National Food System Discourse came up with a broad discussion about the food system amongst the diverse stakeholders. The plenary session brought about the voices of the experts working in the different sectors of the food system, while the breakout session raised the ground-level issues of the food systems observed and experienced by the participants. The plenary and breakout sessions both came up with many findings and recommendations to improve the food system and ensure food security for all. The major findings are well mentioned below:

- Address and resolve the ground-level issues of the people for sustainable food systems. To build a sustainable food system, it is essential to address the people's problems at the grassroots levels, which are generally left unaddressed.
- Ensure proper coordination between different stakeholders for problem handling. There are various stakeholders engaged in the food systems. There must be good coordination between them for effective and efficient problem handling.
- Promote and implement data-driven farming practices to ensure sustainable food systems.
- Organize different capacity-building programs to capacitate the farmers about the other sustainable practices and modern tools and technologies. There is a lack of awareness and access to modern tools and technologies amongst the farmers.
- Increase opportunities for the people willing to work in the sectors of agriculture. There are not enough opportunities for the people willing to work in this sector.
- Encourage, support, and motivate the farmers and other people working in this sector for better works and continued efforts. The farmers can share their stories of success and failures amongst the other groups, encouraging and motivating them to work.
- Explore and cultivate wild varieties of cultivars and varieties in the agricultural fields as they are more climate-resilient.
- Technically support the indigenous communities for effective and efficient works as many indigenous communities are still deprived of technologies and unable to grow enough as required.
- Develop strong policies for reasonable pricing and marketing. There are many cases where the middle man or the shopkeeper tends to raise the price of the goods than that at which the farmers sell. So, to avoid the farmers' loss, a firm policy or guidelines are to be developed.
- Establish technical ventures to fill the gaps between the consumers and the producers
- Develop an act between the consumers and farmers to minimize the benefits taken by the middle man. The middle man is seen to benefit from the farmers and the consumers; there must be interaction and linkages between consumers and farmers through acts or other ways.
- Build specialized laboratories for testing the soil, crops, and others as required. There is a need for specialized laboratories to conduct the tests as needed and choose the best-suited practices and technologies for the particular area under study and enhance the performances.
- Develop good storehouses to avoid post-harvest loss. There is a lack of well-equipped and facilitated storehouses, which results in huge productivity losses as many harvested crops get damaged.
- Encourage production, cultivation, and distribution of the local seeds at the local levels. In the present situation, many resistant local crop varieties have been replaced by hybrid crop varieties, which in the long term may lead to a food crisis. So, it's high time we start protecting and sustainably conserving the local seeds.
- Develop and implement self-sustaining community development strategies and action plans to minimize dependency and import.
- Develop and implement sustainable packaging rules and laws. Unsustainable packaging practices like the use of plastic are to be avoided as they make many severe impacts on the environment.
- Introduce and use different environmentally friendly tools and technologies. Integrate traditional and indigenous practices along with modern tools and technologies for sustainable practices.
- Promote organic models for use. Organic farmers and organic farming practices are encouraged rather than the inorganic ones, which has hazardous effects on our different environmental and health components.
- Allocate specialized department or authorized person for the responsibility handling and monitoring. There is a lack of monitoring and evaluation in the food system sector like that of other sectors, due to which many issues are unaddressed and unresolved.
- Change the education system so that the people from an early age understand the values and importance of the agriculture and food systems.
- Initiate and ensure farmers' insurance to ensure their safety and security during the period of crisis. Provide allowances or incentives to the farmers for their works from the government, which will encourage them to continue to work.
- Initiate and prioritize research activities under different related issues of the ongoing food system. There is a lack of adequate information and knowledge on other existing and arising issues about the food systems.
- Advocate on the young farmers or youth farmers to ensure youth engagement and participation in the food system sectors. Youths are to be encouraged and motivated to work in the sectors of food systems to bring more innovative and creative ideas.
- Develop penalty systems regarding the price hikes, this will make people think twice before they do anything.
- Create easy access to financial resources to encourage the engagement of more people.

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## OUTCOMES FOR EACH DISCUSSION TOPIC

The discussion was mainly focused on the local and national food systems, revolving around the five action tracks. Firstly, we tried to figure out the food system drivers; producers & consumers are the key elements of the food system & the food system revolves around these two entities. The transition to a food system is rapid for developing countries like Nepal, but very limited analysis linking the food system to its drivers and its consequences exist there. The present food system of Nepal has created a serious question on the ability to make a positive transition. For this, the major outcome was policy priorities are imperative to be institutionalized at all three governments; federal, state, and local levels & need to be concerted to transform the food system. Changing food habits as a part of healthy eating on one hand was leading a millet movement in India. The millet movement made us realize that there is a space to endorse the local, indigenous food of Nepal too. An awareness towards a more nutritious and healthy diet can be endorsed by celebrities & health professionals like doctors which leads to the high acceptability of the product by citizens. Characterization of people based on their poverty status & segregating food distribution channels based on their incomes can be a very good example to ensure food security as exemplified by India can be easily applied in Nepal to uplift the food system. The pandemic of covid-19 made us realize the loopholes in transportation, rural-urban linkages, & as a whole the lack of knowledge in farmers about value addition of products. The example of farmers pouring the milk in the streets demands the government's attention to providing value-added training, equipment to the farmers. The intrusion of western culture, fast food, & lifestyle traditional foods are vanishing due to changes in the food habits of consumers. The overall agriculture system of the nation has been incapacitated. Exporting low price raw materials & importing final products at a high price, consumers are compelled to pay a higher price due to the lack of accountability. Government should come up with people-friendly policies and laws which can help create transparency between them benefiting the farmers more than the middle man. Being dependent on or using technologies does not develop resilience instead increases energy consumption and waste production. The farmers are to be provided with allowances, insurance, & economic support, to encourage them to be engaged in this sector in the long run and for safety. The overall scenario reflects, producers as farmers & investors are most impacted, they are more fragile & vulnerable to any crisis, shocks due to climate events, market value, etc.

Since the majority of the farm-related activities are handled by women, there is ample space to reduce drudgery by actually introducing women-friendly mechanization in farming. Women who work as equally as men are paid less than their male counterparts. Women-led self-resilience mechanization should be implemented by providing them with women-friendly tools and technologies. The food system has 4 key dimensions: look at food security & nutrition, environment, social and economic. Production, consumption, material use, & disposal are four drivers that can impact the environment in the food system. The key drivers are Agrochemicals, no life cycle analysis, population growth, no self-sustaining model, and the relationship between market producer & consumers. The positive impact that our government can make in 3 years is initiating sustainable packaging rules and laws, with green stickers. Introducing environment-friendly technologies, promotion of an organic model of farming, & recognizing the work that does. The involvement of young people & women can be improved by capacity building in entrepreneurship, regenerative agriculture practices. There should be more opportunities for people who wish to work in the food system with easier laws. Promote farmer's work, enterprise and also initiate farmers insurance programs for safety and security in cases like a pandemic.

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## AREAS OF DIVERGENCE

The key focus of The Nepal Food System Dialogue was on the sustainability of the food and agriculture system by the utilization of local products so that SDG- 2030 could be met on a national level. The respondents participating in the dialogue discussed their idea on the improvement of the food system through the active participation of youth and women on a larger scale. They argued the key factor which provoked the failing agriculture system in the country. Some said that the major factor was Foreign Employment while other groups discussed the lack of government policy. For the discussion of fragility within the food system almost all the participants pointed out the lack of proper policy by the government and interference by the middlemen which are causing loss to both farmers and consumers and its result could easily be detected as the problems related to Food Security is constantly rising in major parts of Nepal. While discussing the key drivers for unsustainable food system participants pointed out that: lack of involvement of youth, lack of technologies and proper understanding of agriculture and lack of proper processing facilities within the food system along with copying of the western food habits and continuous practice of traditional farming methods has driven unsustainability within the food system. For the unsustainability in the farming system in the country, other stakeholders pointed out on excessive use of insecticides and pesticides which has harmed both food and the environment. The brief discussion on the impact of COVID in the food and agriculture system resulted in that majority of the problems during this was faced by farmers and to eradicate this government needs to keep a strict eye on the concerned parties by providing them with enough support and resources so that problems related to Food Security would be eradicated in the days to come. One group compared the situation of the food system in Nepal and India during COVID where Local markets took over the market during the COVID-19 crisis and the prevalence of home deliveries was done by small farmers and individuals, there even were innovations in the case of the food distribution system in India, while that in Nepal farmers were the one who suffered the most as the harvested crops could not be delivered to the authorities because of constant lockdown. In regards to minimization of impact on climate change on the food and agriculture system, the majority of the party suggested strict government policy and others suggested the role of youth in these sectors and also added that proper knowledge, guidance and support to the farmers is essential.

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# ATTACHMENTS AND RELEVANT LINKS

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## ATTACHMENTS

- **Proposal of the Dialogue**  
<https://summitdialogues.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/07/Nepal-Food-Systems-Discourse-NFSD-1-min.pdf>
- **Dialogue Structure**  
<https://summitdialogues.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/07/Program-Structure-NFSD.pdf>

## RELEVANT LINKS

- **Facebook Event Page of Nepal Food Systems Discourse [NFSD]**  
<https://fb.me/e/2g6mfCelq>
- **Message by Chief Guest Christine Gould**  
<https://fb.watch/6Z0xVpxS3r/>