

OFFICIAL FEEDBACK FORM

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| DIALOGUE DATE | Monday, 28 June 2021 09:30 GMT +12:00 |
| DIALOGUE TITLE | Transforming Kiribati Food System in the Atoll Setting |
| CONVENED BY | Mrs. Kinaai Kairo - Director of Agriculture & Livestock |
| DIALOGUE EVENT PAGE | https://summitdialogues.org/dialogue/34162/ |
| DIALOGUE TYPE | Member State |
| GEOGRAPHICAL FOCUS | Australia, China, Fiji, Indonesia, Kiribati, Malaysia, New Zealand |

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



PARTICIPATION BY GENDER



NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS IN EACH SECTOR



NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS FROM EACH STAKEHOLDER GROUP



2. PRINCIPLES OF ENGAGEMENT

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

A virtual meeting was organized inviting stakeholders for the Food and Nutrition Security Policy to form part of a Technical Working Group (TWG) for the preparatory work for the Kiribati Food Systems Dialogue. This TWG comprised all Government Ministries, private sector, civil societies, and faith-based organizations having a direct and indirect role in the Food System. The agenda of this first preparatory meeting was on how to conduct the dialogue within a limited timeframe and budget. Only a few stakeholders attended the meeting. So with consensus of the Secretariat comprised of most senior staff of the Agriculture and Livestock Division, a new format agreed is as follows: The dialogue will be a 5 day duration starting on Day 1 with the TWG to finalize the programs for the week. Day 2, a dialogue on Action Tracks 1 and 2 (Nutrition and Diet) being grouped together. Day 3 on a dialogue for Action Tracks 3 and 5 on Environment and Resilience while Action Track 4 on Equitable Livelihood stands alone on Day 4. Day 5 will be the Plenary where game changing solutions identified be prioritized and presented to the Plenary for adoption. The dialogues for the 3 groupings took place on June 29 on AT 1 and 2, June 30 for AT 3 and 5, and July 1 for AT 4. Each dialogue group presented the situations. Results from studies/programs undertaken on ATs were presented as they revealed the very real situation. ATs 1 and 2 showed a grave unhealthy I-Kiribati population. ATs 3 and 5 posed a vulnerable deteriorating environment with limited mitigating strategies in place, there is hope that with the nation's will, sustaining the environment and ecosystem is possible. As for AT 4; good to note that Government is providing safety net programs but the issue of misusing such safety nets programs is something that government should focus on. The breakout sessions in each AT(s) provided opportunity to get game-changing solutions for each issue discussed and priority setting them based on practicality. These are presented on July 2 together with booth displays.

HOW DID YOUR DIALOGUE REFLECT SPECIFIC ASPECTS OF THE PRINCIPLES?

The dialogue for ATs 1 and 2 reflected a high mortality rate among children aged between 0-5, high rate of NCDs cases and also a high rate of anemia among women. The diet of the people also reflected a high caloric intake but with hardly any vegetable and fruits. The local supply of locally produced foods especially the green foods is very low. The blue food though is readily available is becoming very expensive like the green local foods that the people opt for more convenient and cheaper imported foods that are less nutritive in value. The local supply value chain requires immediate actions and the need for fortified grains is a must for food imports. ATs 3 and 5 reflected a degrading environment and an increasing vulnerability to the impacts of climate change if nothing is done. Good management of resources and building resilience of the people is the key reflected to be of value. AT 4 reflected that there is safety net provision for vulnerable groups of people by government however the misuse of such benefits is highly prevalent, therefore Government needs to come up with strategies ensuring such funds are well used accordingly to support people's health needs.

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

Caring for the Food System is really caring for the people. The mortality and growth rate of any nation reflects well the quality of food system in that nation. The Kiribati Vision 20 is focusing on the I-Kiribati person in his/her atoll setting - specifically on his/her health and education. Health and education are therefore, in this context, tightly connected and once fully supported and embraced in the Food System then Kiribati or any nation, in similar context with Kiribati, will grow healthy and will be able to strive forward in generations to come. Let all actors in the Food System be united and work together to move Kiribati forward as a healthy and wealthy nation!

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

Kiribati saw it best and cost effective to pair up the 4 Action Tracks: Nutrition and Diet, Nature and Resilience, while letting the Livelihood Track stand alone on its own. The 5 key actors (Agriculture, Fisheries, Nutrition, Commerce, and National Disaster Office) also named here as a Technical Group saw the linkages and some overlaps between the 2 pairs and so they agreed to focus on them. It was also perceived that the standalone Track - Livelihood - would serve as the optimum goal if all gaps in the paired Action Tracks are identified and practically solved.

The Technical Group therefore divided itself into 3 major working groups of Action Tracks - Nutrition and Diet (Agriculture, Nutrition, Commerce and Fisheries), Nature and Resilience (Environment, National Disaster, and Agriculture), and Livelihood (Agriculture, Fisheries, Nutrition, Environment, and Commerce). These 3 working groups put together their resources - information and data in order to present the current situation in each Action Track and at the same time to see the issues and challenges faced and then to recommend best ways forward that would be compatible with other pathways from other 2 groups.

The ultimate focus therefore is to enable all actors in the Food System to recognize themselves and to see the value of their roles. At the same time, the focus is to unite these actors and direct them to pathways that would transform the Food System - pathways that would meet the ambitious UNSDG Targets and pathways that would foster the health of the I-Kiribati person and enrich his/her livelihood in his/her fragile atoll setting.

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 main findings of the National Dialogue are listed below with their concise details:

(1) Nutrition and Diet: The high cases of NCDs and mortality rate of children under 5 are the major national concerns and was agreed that the Ministry of Health is not the only Ministry to deal with issues related to poor nutrition, NCDs, and premature deaths of children under 5 years. This is the shared role of all key actors in the Food System - all Ministries are therefore encouraged to be more proactive in factoring Nutrition in their their programmes and Ministerial Plans. Changing the mindset of the people is the major challenge especially in changing the eating habit and diet of the people - requiring all actors to come up with a way forward to change this in their respective programmes.

It was also agreed in the National Dialogue that Nutrition is well factored and included in the school curriculum for the Primary school level through to senior level. Teaching healthy foods to the young children as source of good health and productive life is lacking and this needs to be strengthened immediately. Internalizing the value of eating health green and blue foods amongst the young is the key for healthy future of the country.

Also the Dialogue saw the Church as the one closest to the people. It can move its communities and people so more consultations with the church-based groups is seen urgent so church leaders can also include healthy food values in their church and social teachings and programmes - and to move their members into healthy activities and taking healthy foods.

Fisheries and Farming activities in the outer islands need to be adequately supported by Government. The provision of farming materials, equipment or tools, fishing gear and capacity building need to be more regular and more proactive, the access to freight levy assistance need to be reviewed so more green and blue produce be covered and more farmers and fishermen can easily access the fund. Also the transport of produce from outer islands need to be synchronized where possible so both the farmers and fishermen can be adequately served rather than each having their own transport arrangements. Other online marketing strategies need to be quickly developed so produce or fish delivery can be done online.

Also the food import needs to be properly managed and controlled with incentives given to local producers to trade off those imported foods. In this way the imports will be regularly reviewed and reduced as local production increases.

For fisheries, more capacity building is needed in the area of cooking edible varieties of seaweed so abundant in Kiribati, value adding of fish products including transshipped fish in order to reduce the high imports of canned fish. Food processing of pandanus and other vegetables like breadfruits need to be pursued immediately. More support needs to be stepped up towards coconut virgin oil and toddy sugar productions, egg, chicken and piggery operations.

(2) On the Nature and Resilience Tracks, the National Dialogue also agreed to employ new climate smart farming technologies with the active leadership of the Agriculture and the technical and financial support of the Global Green Growth Institute and with the active involvement of NGOs. The harsh atoll conditions of the islands in Kiribati - compounded with the impacts of climate change would benefit much from this climate smart techniques after a number of successful trials. This technique therefore need to be quickly disseminated to the farmers and also to be trialed to mangrove planting in coastal eroded areas. To be included in the capacity building is the making of compost so home organic waste can be meaningfully utilized to clean home areas and to grow more healthy foods. The training on preparation of foods from traditional food crops needs to be advocated and included in the school curriculum as well.

(3) To strengthen the livelihood of the people of Kiribati; all players of the abovementioned activities need to work closely than ever.

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OUTCOMES FOR EACH DISCUSSION TOPIC

From the main findings presented above, these are the outcomes and directions to be undertaken:

- (1) Ministry of Education to work on the Nutrition curriculum suitable for Kiribati students in the primary and secondary levels. The Global Green Growth Institute to also assist in this exercise;
- (2) Ministries of Agriculture and Fisheries to work closer than ever to serve their farmers and fishermen associations - providing them with the needed materials, equipment, gear, training, and transport logistics so they can produce and catch more and their produce can reach the Tarawa market in a timely and organized manner. The same Ministries to make better marketing plans for the fishermen and farmers so their catch and produce are better preserved and sold at a reasonable price;
- (3) The Ministry of Finance (Statistics Office) and Ministry of Commerce in close consultations with the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries to review the Special Levy Act with purpose of incorporating more healthy green and blue food and improving trade from outer islands - making access to the fund easier to farmers, fishermen and retailers;
- (4) The Ministry of Commerce and National Statistics office to work closer with the Ministries of Agriculture and Fisheries to check on local production capacity and to make necessary adjustments to the import level of imported foods. The right incentives to be devised to encourage local productions and to reduce import level on certain foods. This is a big exercise that needs to be worked out in close consultation with the Chamber of Commerce (Private Sector) especially in the identification of food items to be controlled in this import review exercise and in obtaining their cooperation, support and understanding;
- (5) Ministry of Health to set a standard and strict nutrition and basic hygiene regulation to food vendors in the public and in schools and in restaurants;
- (6) Tuna pouching to go ahead as early as possible to make best use of the transshipped reject tuna from DWFNs vessels and to end the ongoing unfair competition with the artisanal fishermen. This will also help cut imports on tinned fish;
- (7) Fisheries to go ahead in value-adding of fisheries products like seaweed, fish snacks and jerkies;
- (8) Fruit processing to be revived with special focus on vitamin-A rich pandanus fruit. Other fruits will be included;
- (9) A Food System Task Force to be established after the Global Food Summit in September this year and to be comprised all actors in the Food System including church-group leaders and the Ministry of Education and to be supported financially by the Government. Cabinet Paper on this to be prepared by MELAD and submitted to Cabinet after the Summit.

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AREAS OF DIVERGENCE

Potential areas of divergence are listed below:

(1) Trade-offs on certain imported foods. The private sector have large role in understanding this. For example the importation of canned and plastic-packaged foods from Asia needs to be in English not just on the outside package but in the inner smaller packages as well as in ingredients for noodle salts and oils. Those food staff not meeting this requirement will be banned from the country;

(2) On limiting the imports of certain food items where they can be locally produced, again the private sector needs to understand and support this. Certain food items like tinned fish, vegetables, eggs, cooking and fragrance oils, drink-sweeteners like 'pop-ups', 'cool-c' with variety of flavours, animal feeds, needs to be evaluated against the local production capacity. There are local producers in the areas of vegetable farming, poultry and piggery, coconut virgin oil and body oils, toddy sugars with various flavours. The idea is to provide the right level of incentive to those local suppliers who can meet the set targets aimed at reducing the imports. The exercise is a painstaking one and needs a lot of care to ensure food security in the country is not affected in any way;

(3) The Ministry of Fisheries needs to slowly handover its local fish marketing activities in order to pour more support and technical capacity to the private sector and fishermen associations;

(4) Chemical fertilizers will continue to be banned to protect Kiribati fragile atoll environment and to ensure that all local production are organic;

(5) Local produce market structure needs to be properly regulated to ensure the competitiveness of the local production against the imported vegetables. Farmers and vegetable vendors who now sell produce at very high and unreasonable prices need to understand this while financial and technical support from Government keeps flowing to areas that it will maximize production and mobilization of produce;

(6) Changing the mindset of the people is the main challenge and Government needs to intervene in certain areas like restricting the sales of unhealthy foods to school children and serving imbalanced foods in restaurants and banning the importation of super fatty foods. The Church based groups need to also 'preach' these in their outreach to their members and schools need to teach these values to students.

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