

# OFFICIAL FEEDBACK FORM

<b>DIALOGUE DATE</b>	Thursday, 22 July 2021 09:00 GMT +00:00
<b>DIALOGUE TITLE</b>	Moving Forward With Nutrition Programming In Liberia
<b>CONVENED BY</b>	Monique Cooper-Liverpool
<b>DIALOGUE EVENT PAGE</b>	<a href="https://summitdialogues.org/dialogue/34533/">https://summitdialogues.org/dialogue/34533/</a>
<b>DIALOGUE TYPE</b>	Independent
<b>GEOGRAPHICAL FOCUS</b>	Liberia

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

50

## PARTICIPATION BY AGE RANGE

0-18

4

19-30

41

31-50

5

51-65

66-80

80+

## PARTICIPATION BY GENDER

30 Male

20 Female

Prefer not to say or Other

## NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS IN EACH SECTOR

15 Agriculture/crops  
Fish and aquaculture  
Livestock  
Agro-forestry  
Environment and ecology  
Trade and commerce

Education  
Communication  
Food processing  
Food retail, markets  
Food industry  
Financial Services

23 Health care  
Nutrition  
4 National or local government  
Utilities  
Industrial  
5 Other

## NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS FROM EACH STAKEHOLDER GROUP

Small/medium enterprise/artisan  
Large national business  
Multi-national corporation  
Small-scale farmer  
Medium-scale farmer  
Large-scale farmer  
11 Local Non-Governmental Organization  
24 International Non-Governmental Organization  
Indigenous People  
Science and academia

Workers and trade union  
Member of Parliament  
Local authority  
4 Government and national institution  
Regional economic community  
4 United Nations  
International financial institution  
Private Foundation / Partnership / Alliance  
Consumer group  
5 Other

## 2. PRINCIPLES OF ENGAGEMENT

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

1. Demonstrated multi-stakeholder inclusivity by creating diverse breakout groups representing various perspectives on nutrition. Groups were both in-person and virtual assigned based on considerations of their subject matter expertise, gender, organizations and geographic locations. - The urgency of the need to act on nutrition and elevate nutrition programming was amplified in the opening speeches - including from the Government minister presenting stark statistics and reminders about SDG targets. - The need to act was also highlighted using key data from the Nutrition Call to Action to design ambitious, forward-looking discussion statements. - Opening speech of the Minister of Agriculture as head of Liberia UNFSS Committee and lead National Convener demonstrated Liberia's commitment to the Global Summit in September 2021. She outlined dates for the National Dialogue as 4 - 12 August, 2021 - Facilitators were selected from different organizations and representative stakeholder groups - international agencies, local civil society alliances and international NGOs - Trust and a safe dialogue space was created by outlining the importance of Chatham House Rules in a plenary session which preceded breakout discussions where facilitators further reinforced the rules. - Respect was fostered within the broader plenary group and the discussion groups by defining the guiding principles of engagement for the conversations at the beginning. - Facilitators also specifically encouraged participants to feel comfortable disagreeing with others as all perspectives will be documented

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

- Dialogue reflected COMMITMENT to the Summit through the presence and opening by the Minister of Agriculture. The connections between the Independent Dialogue, National Dialogue and Global Summit were outlined and supported through several statements by the Curator. - Being RESPECTFUL was also clearly reflected throughout the Dialogue at several instances. The hybrid (in-person + virtual) nature of the dialogue led to slight delays assigning virtual participants to breakout rooms. Facilitators were informed of the challenges and they communicated to virtual participants who remained respectful and patient. Groups which reported back differing views amongst participants also indicated those views were shared using respectful words, focusing feedback on the message and not the person. - MULTI-STAKEHOLDER INCLUSIVITY was strongly reflected through the rich diversity of our in-person and virtual participants. Stakeholders included senior government technicians on Nutrition, heads of civil society alliances, leaders of rural-based NGOs, United Nations, bilateral donor agencies, international NGO country representatives and program staff working on areas of nutrition, WASH, agriculture and food security.

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

Ensuring ALL 7 principles are integrated into the planning of the Dialogue event truly helps to capture the spirit of the efforts to build a global story on the future of food systems. Conveners should consider candidates for critical roles such as the Curators, Facilitators and Notetakers based on their existing demonstration of the principles in their ongoing individual work. This helps ensure those with key roles in designing discussion topics, identifying potential participants and capturing the critical feedback - is all done with a genuine commitment to ALL 7 principles. Conveners should also remind those with key speaking/enabling roles should consistently re-state key words of the 7 principles of engagement. Using any local expressions which convey the same sentiments may also be worthwhile to ease acceptance and internalization by the participants.

# 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

The dialogue's key focus was to

- (i) highlight the urgency for adequate and sustained investments in nutrition in Liberia in order to meet national development agenda targets outlined in the Pro-Poor Agenda for Prosperity and Development as well as the Sustainable Development Goals; and
- (ii) amplify the voices rural people living in poverty, especially women farmers and entrepreneurs working in remote areas, on this topic of nutrition and ensure their inclusion in the Global Dialogue Summit.
- (iii) ensure a multi-stakeholder & inclusive approach to consultations in Liberia ahead of the Global Summit Dialogue

### 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

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

## MAIN FINDINGS

1. Data and Evidence remains critical to assess progress against the Pro Poor Agenda for Prosperity and Development and SDGs.
2. Must invest in a SMART Survey.
3. Need national & sub-national coordination structure for nutrition interventions (across sectors and partners)
4. A government-led multi-sectoral national strategy for nutrition - through a collaborative effort
5. Increased involvement of legislative actors in advocacy & budget allocations
6. Need to reduce domestic household burden on women and increase their economic empowerment
7. Increasing Government expenditure on targeted nutrition interventions
8. Importance of partners providing coordinated support towards Government's prioritized actions
9. Partners coordinate on advocacy for Government's consideration of policy priorities

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

## **OUTCOMES FOR EACH DISCUSSION TOPIC - 1/4**

STUNTING REDUCED TO 20% IN LINE WITH THE PRO-POOR AGENDA FOR PROSPERITY AND DEVELOPMENT:

Actions that are urgently needed:

1. Scale-up advocacy on exclusive breastfeeding for babies and importance of nutrition for nursing mothers.
2. Government increased spending on nutrition-related programs through community healthcare initiatives
3. Expanding availability of local seeds for household gardening as dietary supplement
4. Establish a multi-sectoral coordination structure at national and sub-national level to elevate the importance of nutrition
5. Increase advocacy within Government - including elected legislative officials
6. Pursue an integrated approach to advocacy, including linkages between WASH, women's empowerment and nutrition
7. Expand preventative measures against malnutrition and programs creating awareness on food fortification and micro-nutrients.
8. Increased accountability of Government for existing and subsequent commitments to nutrition

Who should take these actions:

1. Government has the primary responsibility to fund nutrition programs and drive advocacy
2. International and local NGOs should align programming to complement Government's efforts in view of resource constraints.
3. Local elected officials (Legislature) have a responsibility to increase budget allocations in their fiscal oversight role.

Ways in which progress could be assessed:

1. Reduction in malnutrition and stunting rates
2. Increase in first 1000 days of life indicators
3. Uptake in exclusive breastfeeding for up to 6 months
4. Improved Human Development Indices for Liberia

Challenges that might be anticipated as actions are implemented.

1. Difficulty with behavior change on dietary and consumption habits for people living in extreme poverty with access to meagre finances
2. Financial constraints and limited fiscal envelope may lead to continued underfunding of nutrition interventions.
3. Limited ability to hold multiple government stakeholders and NGO partners accountable for inactions towards scaled up nutrition programming.

## ACTION TRACKS

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## OUTCOMES FOR EACH DISCUSSION TOPIC - 2/4

### NUTRITION AS THE FOCUS OF FOOD SECURITY IN LIBERIA

Views on actions that are urgently needed:

1. Enabling policy to guide public consumption towards more nutritious foods through behavior change
2. Behavior change communications for people in hard-to reach areas with increased awareness of nutrition for health outcomes and nutritious foods.
3. Re-imagine the role of transportation systems in the focus on the availability of nutritious foods in remote, rural areas.
4. Increased advocacy for nutrition focus from multiple sectors - ex: Agriculture, Food Security, Reproductive Health and WASH
5. Increased advocacy and behavior change around redistributing burden of food production, processing and preparation on women - women's empowerment.

Who should take these actions:

1. Government was identified as the lead to act in a way that demonstrates the urgency and prioritization of nutrition. Particular mention of the need for increased capacities for coordination of nutrition-focused efforts at the sub-national level.
2. Civil society organizations - local NGOs and community based organizations working with farmers in remote areas should increase advocacy around the importance of nutrition
3. International and Local NGOs supporting government on policy formulation should also take lead roles in advancing these actions.

Ways in which progress could be assessed:

1. Progress on coordination can be addressed through all partners in nutrition having a decentralized shared policy framework and plan for nutrition interventions.
2. Reduction in costs of nutritious foods
3. Improved indices on hunger index studies, malnutrition rates and stunting.
4. Increased consumption of locally grown foods and produce - also requires tracking of annual production quantities
5. Reduced reliance on imported staple foods such as rice

Challenges that might be anticipated as actions are implemented:

1. Continued rural to urban migration may further advance the current rate of agriculture labor leaving rural areas.
2. Slow pace of Government's fiscal decentralization to finance sub-national interventions.
3. Transportation difficulties in remote, rural areas to access communities for increased outreach to populations
4. Difficulty of farmers and agro-entrepreneurs to transport produce and moving nutritious food to markets
4. Limited availability of storage facilities for storing crops and produce at rural markets.
5. Differing perspectives on the role of women in household nutrition

## ACTION TRACKS

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## OUTCOMES FOR EACH DISCUSSION TOPIC - 3/4

### WOMEN AS CHAMPIONS OF HOUSEHOLD NUTRITION IN LIBERIA

#### Actions that are urgently needed:

1. Perception change of cooking and household chores as a woman's duty vs providing nutritious meals in partnership with spouse for the improved health of the whole family.
2. Involve men at household and community level to understand the importance of nutrition, of the woman's role in providing nutritious food for children and family, and the value of nutrition for health outcomes.
3. Media engagement as part of a focused perception change awareness campaign to introduce notions of healthy, nutritious food available from existing farming and gardening.
4. Using women entrepreneurs to engage in dialogues with other women regarding roles in the home and the importance of nutritious food for family diet, provide positive reinforcement for modified norms of household roles, and serve as role models for women nutrition champions.
5. Enable men to be perception change agents given their more frequent/present role in policy decision-making spaces.
6. National government driven investment in locally produced foods
7. Promoting climate smart agriculture to increase resilience and yields of harvest and reduce the food production burden on women.
8. Establishment of a national agency to coordinate nutrition interventions.

#### Who should take these actions:

1. Government should create an enabling environment to empower women in their roles as household nutrition champions
2. NGOs should increase awareness of the importance of women in changing nutrition outcomes in the home
3. Individual family members and community members should feel that nutrition is their individual responsibility for the outcomes of their young children and family members.
4. Male family members should be enlightened about the importance of burden food gathering and preparation on women and supporting her to provide improved nutrition for the family.
5. Universal acceptance of nutrition as a human right which should be championed by Government.

#### Ways in which progress could be assessed:

1. Reduction in women and child malnutrition, anemia and underweight statistics
2. Increased local production and consumption of locally-produced food.
3. Increased land access, titles/rights for women
4. Women's involvement in household decision-making beyond domestic chores (eg. financial decisions)

#### Challenges that might be anticipated as actions are implemented.

1. Difficulty with accepting perception change of women's roles from men, older women, community leaders and authorities.
2. Building a critical mass of men and women to drive behavior change around roles of women
3. Continued low enrollments for girls limits access to nutrition education and awareness and exposure to become nutrition household champions

## ACTION TRACKS

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<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Women & Youth Empowerment	<input type="checkbox"/>	Trade-offs
<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	Environment and Climate

## **OUTCOMES FOR EACH DISCUSSION TOPIC - 4/4**

### GOVERNMENT IS A STRONG AND DYNAMIC LEADER IN NUTRITION PROGRAMMING

Actions that are urgently needed:

1. Government needs to review its overall nutrition strategy to ensure it captures the urgency
2. Establish an integrated, multi-sectoral strategic approach to nutrition, specifically inclusion of hygiene awareness.
3. Increased awareness raising for legislative officials to reinforce advocacy for action by ministries and agencies
4. Government action to incentivize importation of nutritious foods
5. Increased funding of nutrition-related interventions by Government to demonstrate commitment to nutrition.
6. Intensify nutrition and education awareness in school curriculums beginning in primary schools, through to university in order to effect behavior change.
7. Collaboratively develop standards to fortify locally produced staple products - especially rice and cassava
8. Establishment of a decentralized agency focused on nutrition to drive coordinated actions towards nutrition interventions
9. Intensify efforts to strengthen the value chain inputs for diversified local food crops - especially rural storage and processing facilities & farm to market access

Who should take these actions:

1. The Executive Branch of government as the policy and implementing arm should drive the shift in urgency towards nutrition. Their action is needed to create the enabling environment and lead with accountability for partners to support their priorities and interventions.
2. The elected officials in the Legislature should increase their level of oversight and advocacy on nutrition through their roles in national budget allocation and approval.
3. International and local partners supporting the priorities of Government
4. Inclusion of other sector lead agencies collaborating with Ministries of Health and Agriculture as lead agencies on nutrition and food security.

Ways in which progress could be assessed:

1. Increased national and agency budget allocations to direct nutrition-related interventions
2. Articulation of an integrated, multi-sectoral nutrition strategy
3. Established local food standards for food fortification and safety
4. Increased local production and processing of diversified food crops
5. Improved statistics on women and child malnutrition, anemia and stunting
6. Improved educational attainment

Challenges that might be anticipated as actions are implemented

1. Competing policy and political priorities with limited available fiscal resources
2. Coordination amongst donors and implementing partners, as well as within government across ministries and agencies.
3. Implementing decentralized activities and coordination in view of existing budgetary constraints

## ACTION TRACKS

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## AREAS OF DIVERGENCE

One of the Four Discussion Groups documented an area of divergence around perceptions of household consumption inequality.

In discussing nutrition as the focus of food security in Liberia, participants in one group held divergent views on whether men's (HH head) household consumption is prioritized over women's household consumption in rural, remote areas - particularly poor households sharing meagre amounts of food. Some participants held the view that the consumption amounts for men are always higher - given the most nutritious foods available (eg: protein) rather than offering them to children or women in home to improve their nutrition outcomes. Other participants held the view that there is no discrepancy in household consumption and that men and women have access to the same amounts of food in the home as evidenced by weight gain in women.

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# ATTACHMENTS AND RELEVANT LINKS

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## ATTACHMENTS

- **Nutrition Call to Action**  
<https://summitdialogues.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/07/Nutrition-Call-To-Action.pdf>
- **Liberia Independent Dialogue Plenary**  
<https://summitdialogues.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/07/Liberia-Dialogue-Plenary.jpeg>
- **Liberia Independent Dialogue Minister's Address**  
<https://summitdialogues.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/07/Liberia-Dialogue-Ministers-Address.jpeg>
- **Liberia Independent Dialogue Breakout Session**  
<https://summitdialogues.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/07/Liberia-Dialogue-Breakout-Group-1.jpeg>
- **Liberia Independent Dialogue Banner**  
<https://summitdialogues.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/07/Liberia-Independent-Dialogue-Banner.jpeg>