

OFFICIAL FEEDBACK FORM

DIALOGUE DATE	Wednesday, 19 May 2021 20:10 GMT +02:00
DIALOGUE TITLE	Building healthier sustainable and equitable food systems for a better Malawi
CONVENED BY	Honourable Lobin C. Lowe, Minister of Agriculture, Ministry of Agriculture, Malawi.
DIALOGUE EVENT PAGE	https://summitdialogues.org/dialogue/39706/
DIALOGUE TYPE	Member State
GEOGRAPHICAL FOCUS	Malawi

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

93

PARTICIPATION BY AGE RANGE

0-18

30

19-30

50

31-50

13

51-65

66-80

80+

PARTICIPATION BY GENDER

66 Male

27 Female

Prefer not to say or Other

NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS IN EACH SECTOR

48 Agriculture/crops

1 Fish and aquaculture

1 Livestock

Agro-forestry

Environment and ecology

Trade and commerce

2 Education

4 Communication

Food processing

Food retail, markets

Food industry

Financial Services

2 Health care

4 Nutrition

30 National or local government

Utilities

Industrial

Other

NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS FROM EACH STAKEHOLDER GROUP

Small/medium enterprise/artisan

Large national business

Multi-national corporation

8 Small-scale farmer

Medium-scale farmer

Large-scale farmer

8 Local Non-Governmental Organization

7 International Non-Governmental Organization

Indigenous People

6 Science and academia

Workers and trade union

1 Member of Parliament

Local authority

31 Government and national institution

Regional economic community

12 United Nations

7 International financial institution

3 Private Foundation / Partnership / Alliance

Consumer group

2 Other

2. PRINCIPLES OF ENGAGEMENT

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

Ahead of the United Nations Food Systems Summit (UNFSS) to be convened by the United Nations Secretary General in September 2021, the State President of Malawi, His Excellence Dr Lazarus McCarthy Chakwera appointed Honourable Lobin C. Lowe, Minister of Agriculture as the National Convenor of the Malawi National Food Systems Dialogue. This was done in consonance with the guidelines for the United Nations (UN) member states dialogues to ensure robust, inclusive and coordinated dialogue series with the utmost government leadership and commitment. To ensure effective, holistic and seamless dialogues, the Convenor constituted a multi sectoral Task Force chaired by the Directorate of Planning in the Ministry of Agriculture, as an apex coordination mechanism. The Taskforce comprised UN Agencies such as the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), Civil Society Network of Malawi (CISANET), Malawi Confederation of Chambers of Commerce and Industry (MCCCI), Farmers Union of Malawi (FUM), Donor Committee on Agriculture and Food Security (DCAFS) and other development partners such as the Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa (AGRA) and International Fund for Agriculture Development (IFAD) to work collaboratively without leaving any one behind. Furthermore, the task force put in place a curator, note taker and facilitator to help in carrying out the dialogue processes. The inaugural dialogue session was held on 19th May 2021 at Bingu International Convention Centre in Lilongwe with financial support from the United Nations and AGRA. The dialogue was held through a hybrid approach involving both face to face and virtual attendance. In total, 93 people physically coming from different sectors attended the national dialogue. The dialogue was officially opened by the Convenor. The Secretary of Agriculture, Erica Maganga and the UN Resident Coordinator, Marrie Torres also delivered remarks during the opening session. Afterwards participants were engaged through breakout group sessions and plenary.

HOW DID YOUR DIALOGUE REFLECT SPECIFIC ASPECTS OF THE PRINCIPLES?

Act with Urgency: The Malawi Government recognize the utmost urgency of sustained and meaningful action at all levels to reach the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the recently launched Malawi 2063 Vision to be implemented through the 10-year implementation plans. The dialogues will also inform the upcoming 10-year implementation plan of the national vision and the review of the National Agricultural Policy (NAP) and the National Agricultural Investment Plan (NAIP). **Commit to the Summit:** The Government of Malawi is committed to contributing to the vision, objectives and the final outcomes of the Food Systems Summit as a member of the UN. The Convenor attended the Pre-Summit in Rome in July 2021 and the national dialogue provided content used for the event. **Be Respectful:** The national dialogue ensured genuine discussions without undue influence of any kind. The diversity of stakeholders included youth and women who were given equal opportunities to speak and engage freely in framing the future of food systems. **Recognize Complexity:** The task force acknowledged that food systems are complex, and are closely connected to, and significantly impact upon, human and animal health, land, water, climate, biodiversity, the economy and other systems, and their transformation requires a systemic approach. **Embrace multi-stakeholder inclusivity:** The participation of multi-stakeholders, working across the food system from production to consumption ensured that no one is left behind and maximized outcomes on the intersectionality of different sectors. **Complement the work of others:** The dialogue was held with recognition that issues related to food systems are being addressed through several other global, regional and national governance processes. **Build Trust:** The dialogue put in place a conducive environment in the groups and during plenary sessions that promoted trust and increased motivation to participate by being evidence-based. The dialogue was curated and facilitated in a way which creates a “safe space” and promotes trust, encouraging mutual respect.

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

The Convenor of Malawi’s National Food Systems Dialogue would like to share the following with other Dialogue Convenors (especially those who are yet to undertake their Dialogues) as follows: • Pre-dialogue engagements are crucial: Engage as organizers on the nature and expectations of the dialogue, as well as the Dialogue Principles of Engagement prior to the event. The invitations to the delegates also need to make clear the expectations and outcomes to be achieved during the dialogue session. • High level government leadership and commitment is a key driver for serious participation of all stakeholders. The appointment by the Head of State of the National Convenor showcased political will and commitment from the Government which has put agriculture as a priority area and a key pillar in the Malawi 2063 Vision. • Be as inclusive as possible: The participation from government officials, academia, private sectors, food system actors, and civil society organizations including youth and women is key to a national dialogue process as it motivates interest and participation in the dialogue. • Be clear on expectations and objectives during the dialogue session. The facilitator of the dialogue should dedicate time to highlight the objectives and expectations of the Dialogue, and outline the outcomes expected of the dialogue sessions. • Ensure submission of official feedback forms as soon as possible after the dialogue: It is important for organizers to have the required background information for the ‘Official Feedback Form’ recorded via the online registration process and to upload on the Summit gateway as soon as possible in order not to lose perspectives and ensure that your dialogues are informing the synthesis reports at the global level.

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 Malawi's inaugural dialogue was held under the theme "Building healthier, sustainable and equitable food systems for a better Malawi".

The national dialogue session was the first in a series of many regional and district specific dialogues that were held in the country henceforth. The objective of the dialogue was to share information on the UNFSS and reflect on the status of Malawi's food systems, identify challenges and constraints, potentials and opportunities, and game-changing solutions and ideas for its transformation, including defined roles and responsibilities.

Based on the guiding remarks of the Convenor, the dialogue covered all areas of the food systems and were organized around the five Action Tracks of the Food Systems Summit Dialogues:

- Action Track 1 – "Ensuring access to safe and nutritious food for all" – participants examined whether all Malawians currently have access to safe and nutritious food. If not, what is it that makes it difficult for Malawians to access safe and nutritious food?
- Action Track 2 – "Shifting to sustainable consumption patterns" – participants had conversations about what are the key issues affecting healthy and sustainable food consumption in Malawi.
- Action Track 3 – "Boosting nature-positive production at scale" – participants examined how Malawi's food production systems can be transformed to ensure sustainable food and nutrition security for the people.
- Action Track 4 – "Advancing equitable livelihoods" – explored inequalities within the Malawian food systems.
- Action Track 5 – "Building resilience to vulnerabilities, shocks, and stresses" – participants examined actions to ensure the resilience of the Malawian food system.

The Convenor emphasized the need to link the dialogue sessions with existing national policies and strategies such as the Malawi 2063 Vision which has a pillar that focuses on "agricultural productivity and commercialization".

The Secretary for Agriculture noted that the Malawi's food systems touch every aspect of human existence. She therefore encouraged delegates to focus the discussion on what would be a well-functioning food systems that have the power of bringing families, communities and nations together since if that fails, there could be disorder threatening education, health and economic outcomes.

The Secretary further noted that rising incomes, rapid urbanization and growing middle classes lead to strong adjustments in dietary preferences and consumer behaviour and require public and private investments for improved food market integration. Therefore, she concluded with acknowledgement that increasing agro-food production has not reduced malnutrition levels. Therefore, the dialogue outcomes and recommendations need to feed into the new National Agricultural Policy (NAP) and the National Agricultural Investment Plan (NAIP).

The presentations from session 2 provided context, noting that the landscape and mapping analysis of institutions, players, and policies will provide information useful for the prioritization of actions/interventions and policies to build a food system that deliver healthy and sustainable diets.

Therefore, consensus was reached that the national dialogue is not a parallel, stand-alone process rather it is building on existing structures and it is not duplicating past efforts. It was noted that the dialogue process would be underpinned with clear principles such as (i) ensuring that sustainable healthy diets for all is the basic vision, (ii) considers food system transformation as the long-term process, (iii) takes a systems approach to this challenge, (iv) adopts an iterative approach, considers national governments as the lead in all matters of governance, (v) takes a supportive and co-creative rather than prescriptive approach, (vi) build on existing structures when feasible, (vii) create new ones only when necessary, (viii) embrace both evidence and innovation, (ix) proactively address frictions related to facts, interests, and values, and (x) approach the challenge with an attitude of learning, humility, and optimism.

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

Action Track #1: Ensuring safe and nutritious food for all

Current challenges

- Low agricultural production and productivity;
- Limited food and diet diversification with too much emphasis on maize and high cost of nutritious food, especially animal source foods;
- Food safety challenges mostly due to lack of national level food safety policy, standards and regulations;
- Limited coordination across the sectors on food security, nutrition and food safety (no delivery mechanism to enable this); and
- Limited training programmes in food and nutrition in primary schools that has resulted in high rate of malnutrition especially among under 5 years of age.

Drivers

- Gender inequalities persist in accessing safer and health foods including incidences of gender based violence and abuse;
- Policy bias towards crops, specifically maize production with very little on livestock and fisheries;
- Lack and inconsistency of NAP implementation and investments e.g. no alignment of the budget to the National Agriculture Investment Plan despite the agriculture budget being over 10% of the overall national budget;
- Masking of nutrition under agriculture that result into limited utilisation of processed food and lack of agriculture nutrition programmes in the national education curriculum;
- Lack of food safety standards and legislation;
- Unequal intra-household food distribution and mind-set towards foods e.g. Resistance to behaviour change with regard to production and consumption of nutritious foods;
- Lack of nutrition sensitive safety nets and social protection programs; and
- Limited linkages between agriculture extension messages and nutrition messages.

Action Track #2: Shifting to sustainable consumption patterns

Current Challenges

- Lack of a comprehensive definition of sustainable consumption;
- Limited use and consumption of indigenous foods because these are deemed inferior though highly nutritious;
- High food waste and pollution;
- Low dietary diversification;
- Low accessibility of some food types in some parts of the country; and
- Increased post-harvest food losses.

Drivers

- Uncoordinated actors in the food systems space;
- Misconceptions and myths surrounding indigenous food types despite the high nutritive value;
- Lack of knowledge in value addition and modern post-harvest management technologies that result in food waste and losses;
- Poor road infrastructure to reach out to most parts of the country affecting supply and distribution of diverse food options; and
- Capacity challenges in enforcement of food safety standards by the Malawi Bureau of Standards (MBS).

Action Track #3: Boosting nature-positive food production

Current challenges

- Poor soil and water management practices;
- Limited access to inputs such as seedlings for afforestation and agroforestry initiatives;
- Weak interventions to manage flora and fauna and their interaction thereby endangering biodiversity; and
- Over-reliance on rain-fed agriculture has resulted in low productivity and production including fluctuation and seasonality of production.

Drivers

- Policy incoherence, contradictions and weak coordination in the environmental management and agricultural sectors;
- Low awareness by actors on effective nature based practices that lead to sustainable production systems;
- Poor land management and soil conservation measures;
- Challenges with market access and linkages, for example input markets; and
- High poverty and unemployment levels.

Action Track # 4 Advancing equitable livelihoods of people involved in food systems

Current Challenges

- Women and youth are marginalized in the agri-food systems, in particular, on access to land;
- Limited access to productive resources by women. Despite that women are the custodian of productive resources like land (in the south and central regions), they don't have control since decisions regarding land use are dominated by men;
- Limited access to financial opportunities. There are structural barriers associated with smallholder farmer access to finances; and
- Limited investment in processing, marketing and value addition that creates employment and boosts the economy.

Drivers

- Lack of policies to enhance equitable access to productive resources by all;
- Limited focus on the value chain approach which focuses on the food systems towards processing, value addition and marketing of end products;
- Unconducive land laws, hence the need for thorough review to address land tenure through titling; and
- Market failures: There are no marketing incentives and low enforcement of minimum prices.

Action Track # 5 Building resilience to vulnerabilities, shocks and stresses

Current challenges

- Production challenges include low productivity due to low technology use, fragmented land size, low access to quality inputs and high pests and disease infestation; climate change challenges that lead to floods and droughts; and high lending costs/bank interest rates for farmers and these discourage to access financing;
- Processing challenges included limited technology adoption, low energy availability and high post-harvest losses; and
- Distribution challenges included poor road infrastructure, poor storage facilities, long distances to access inputs and outputs points, and high cost of transport.

Drivers

- Poor road infrastructure;
- Degraded habitats due to deforestation and wanton cutting down of trees;
- Poor storage facilities;
- Long distances to access inputs and outputs points and high cost of transport; and
- Destroyed biodiversity that has led to loss of local indigenous fo

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

OUTCOMES FOR EACH DISCUSSION TOPIC - 1/7

Action Track #1 Outcomes

The opportunities for Action Track #1, to ensure safe and nutritious food for all were identified as follows:

- Strong donor support that can be fully utilised by the new government in Malawi that is promoting change of mind-set;
- Availability of diverse local foods;
- Existence of a digital technology strategy can also advance positive outcomes of the food system. Technology needs to be used to harness information distribution;
- New agricultural technologies are available (climate smart agriculture, new varieties and seeds);
- Existing policies and strategies to address safer and healthy foods;
- Social programmes which are in place can be expanded to support diversified production and nutrition itself by looking for support in critical areas;
- Nutrition education system in place including care group model useful to disseminate information;
- There are nutrition teams, with a lot of capacity and competence from national to district and local level to support nutrition sensitive programs; and
- With regard to research, there is a huge amount of data, evidence that need to be put at the disposal of policy makers, private sector to understand the landscape better.

Game Changing Priority Actions

The game changing priority actions under Action Track # 1 were as follows: (i) promotion of bio-fortified crops for sustainability, (ii) supporting nutrition education in communication for social behaviour change towards production of diversified food and diets, (iii) coordination, linking extension and research (whereby research findings ought to reach and transform the household), (iv) allowing nutrition frontline workers to translate messages from production to consumption and they should be visiting household more often to strengthen existing social and behaviour change communication interventions, (v) promotion of food safety and hygiene practices across the food system that will entail development of food safety policy, standardisation and enactment of food safety legislation, (vi) enhancing production, food processing and marketing to ensure that there is increased access to safe and nutritious food, (vii) supporting communities to develop community driven solutions, (viii) enhancing public private partnership for effective markets for good distribution and better access to safer and health foods and (ix) ensuring that there is adequate budget allocation towards food systems aligned priorities that promote diet diversification.

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 - 2/7

Action Track # 2 Outcomes

The opportunities identified towards shifting to sustainable consumption patterns were as follows:

- Availability of natural resources that can be used to advance food system goals such as consumption of indigenous foods;
- The political will and this needs to come together with citizen empowerment;
- There are various/diverse stakeholders working in the food sector that need to be coordinated to enhance sustainable consumption patterns.

Enablers that can allow the country to advance sustainable consumption included:

- ICT Infrastructure;
- Road networks/Infrastructure;
- Investment in machinery and equipment for processing;
- Capacity development/human capital efforts in food systems; and
- Private sector engagement and interest to invest in value addition, processing etc.

Game changing priority actions

The game changing priority actions under Action Track #2 were as follows: (i) Policy review and foster implementation (cross cutting across various levels, that is, ICT, markets or private sector engagement), (ii) invest in technologies/innovations for value addition, (iii) enhance knowledge levels/sensitization on food systems, nutrition, health and education system, (iv) promote post-harvest handling and management practices, (v) establish National Waste Management Strategy on food systems, (vi) support access to agri-finance (by private sector, NGO sector and small-holder farmers) to enable them invest in food systems, (vii) invest in agrobiodiversity especially protection of indigenous seeds/crops, and (viii) improve food safety standards – enforce policies and regulating standard through the Malawi Bureau of Standards (MBS)

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

OUTCOMES FOR EACH DISCUSSION TOPIC - 3/7

Action Track # 3 Outcomes

The opportunities identified under Action Track # 3 to boost nature positive production were as follows:

- Robust policy framework in the environmental management sector;
- Fairly good political will;
- Space to review and enact new legislation is always available;
- Availability of unused land and water for irrigation;
- Youthful population that can be exploited in nature positive production systems
- Increased public private investment;
- Data is also available from different research efforts to drive nature positive production; and
- Space to promote biodiversity

Enablers identified included the following:

- International markets;
- Local expertise;
- Strong network of traditional leaders;
- Availability of farmer organizations;
- Private sector innovation; and
- Potential for value addition.

Game changing priority actions

The game changing priority actions under Action Track #3 were (i) enhance soil, land and water management, (ii) increase availability and access to seed technologies, (iii) enhance integrated pest management, (iv) invest in irrigation infrastructure, (v) zoning or ecological preferences for crops, (vi) ensure a just and equitable land tenure system, and (vii) promote agriculture diversification.

ACTION TRACKS

<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
<input type="checkbox"/>	Action Track 4: Advance equitable livelihoods
<input type="checkbox"/>	Action Track 5: Build resilience to vulnerabilities, shocks and stress

KEYWORDS

<input type="checkbox"/>	Finance	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Policy
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Innovation	<input 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Environment and Climate

OUTCOMES FOR EACH DISCUSSION TOPIC - 4/7

Action Track # 4 Outcomes

The opportunities that were identified under Action Track # 4 included the following:

- Refocusing our policies and re-alignment to the new development blueprint (Malawi 2063 Vision) through the 10-year implementation plan;
- Institutions like National Planning Commission (NPC) should steer the government machinery to align all development activities towards nationally agreed priorities;
- Availability of political will to transform food systems at all levels of governance
- United Nations Food System Dialogue (UNFS) offers an opportunity to realign the National Agriculture Policy (NAP), National Agriculture Investment Plan (NAIP) and other agri-food systems policies;
- Review of the Land Act of 2016 provides an opportunity to address issues affecting access to land by women, youth and vulnerable groups for equitable livelihoods; and
- Stakeholders and fora should advance the issue of equity in food systems.

Enablers that can support the attainment of the opportunities included:

- Institutional capacity building;
- Policy and technical support;
- Co-resource mobilization;
- A shared vision that is inclusive; and
- Investment in bottom-up research approaches.

Game Changing Priority Action # 4

The game changing priority actions under Action Track # 4 included (i) improve productivity of small-scale farmer production systems since they promote health, climate-smart, nutrition-sensitive production, (ii) adopt diverse and appropriate improved farming practices and techniques to increase sustainable food production and productivity; (iii) promote practices that protect the biodiversity of Malawi's indigenous and traditional foods, and natural regeneration of trees, (iv) reduce destructive farming activities such as farming in river banks that destroy natural resources (v) invest in large scale irrigation systems by government and the private sectors as rain-fed agriculture cannot sustain the food production, (vi) increase incentives to make agriculture attractive (branding) especially to the youth, (vii) increase investment in agricultural research including refining the research agenda, increasing funding and capacitating the National Research Council of Malawi so that it is able to lead and regulate research in Malawi and (viii) the need to expedite the Land Act review process to enhance sustainable land use management

ACTION TRACKS

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

	Finance	✓	Policy
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		✓	Environment and Climate

OUTCOMES FOR EACH DISCUSSION TOPIC - 5/7

Action Track # 5 Outcomes

The Opportunities to enhance resilience include:

- A lot of attention towards climate change mitigation and adaption measures by the development partners and appropriate policies;
- Availability of information through digital technologies to the vulnerable populations such as digitized and real time climate information services;
- Existing social protection and safety net programs that also contribute to acquiring of productive assets;
- Availability of programs focusing on climate change adaptation and mitigation measures by both public and civil society; and
- Existing programs on Covid 19 as one of the major shocks affecting production and productivity.

Enablers include:

- Availability of social protection programs;
- Availability of disaster management mechanisms to respond to different shocks and stresses faced by communities including floods and droughts, among others; and
- Donors readiness to support emergence interventions.

Game Changing Priority Actions # 5

The game changing priority actions under Action Track #5 covered issues at production level including (i) promoting crop diversification, (ii) use of integrated rural approaches that cut across sectoral boundaries, (iii) increasing adoption of modern agriculture technologies, (iv) strengthening advisory services across all sectors, (v) strengthening farmer organisations, and (vi) land consolidation.

At processing level, the game changers were (i) provision of reliable, sustainable and clean energy, (ii) increased resource allocation to processing, (iii) improving postharvest infrastructure, and (iv) enhancing fortification of foods. For distribution, game changers included (i) establishing structured markets, (ii) supporting Micro, Small and Medium enterprises (MSMEs), and (iii) establishing special trade agreements with emerging economies and regional blocks. Finally, on consumption, the participants proposed enhancing nutritional education and diversified diets.

ACTION TRACKS

<input type="checkbox"/>	Action Track 1: Ensure access to safe and nutritious food for all
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KEYWORDS

<input type="checkbox"/>	Finance	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Policy
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<input type="checkbox"/>	Human rights	<input type="checkbox"/>	Governance
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<input type="checkbox"/>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Environment and Climate

OUTCOMES FOR EACH DISCUSSION TOPIC - 6/7

Cross cutting outcomes: Changes to be made within 3 and 10 years

This section provides areas that have to be considered in the short term (3 years) and medium term (10 years).

The participants recommended that in the first 3 years, the nation should focus on the following actions:

- Capacity development of farmer organizations and cooperatives;
- Investments in climate smart agricultural technologies;
- Digitization and privatization of the extension system;
- Enhancing coordination through the National Planning Commission under a unified vision for Malawi on food systems;
- Promoting nutrition sensitive agriculture;
- Investing in irrigation of nutritive and commercial crops; and
- Investing in machinery and equipment for value addition.

In terms of expectations of the food systems in the next 10 years, the participants at the dialogue identified the following areas:

- Promoting positive mind-set or behavioural change towards safe and healthy foods;
- Promoting nutrition inclusive and sensitive food systems
- Industrialisation and processing of food products, going beyond exporting of raw materials;
- Enhancing food safety through legislation and investments in food safety laboratories (domesticating global food standards);
- Improving gender transformative approaches across the value chains to ensure that women can participate and benefit in the food systems;
- Increasing private sector involvement and enhance commercial farming
- Enhancing resilience of food systems and livelihoods;
- Strengthening agricultural financing mechanisms including creation of the Agriculture Development Bank;
- Exploiting the youth demographic dividend in the food systems e.g. create employment opportunities, enhance innovation opportunities for young people to be involved across the value chain functions;
- Strengthening the land tenure system through the review of the land laws; and
- Adoption of improved technologies to enhance crop and livestock productivity.

ACTION TRACKS

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KEYWORDS

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OUTCOMES FOR EACH DISCUSSION TOPIC - 7/7

Cross cutting outcomes: Productive partnerships

The national dialogue also explored how stakeholders can work well together for collective action and forge powerful partnerships towards transformations of food systems. The participants noted that currently, the country has several partners working in the food systems but they rarely work together and share lessons and best practices. This was linked to lack of proper coordination at country level between and among ministries, departments and agencies of the government.

The participants noted that the opportunities, enablers and recommendations to transform food systems are multi-sectoral in nature, hence deliberate efforts need to be put in place to improve coordination. Some stakeholders noted that in most cases, some sectors leave the Ministry of Agriculture to handle all issues surrounding food systems when other ministries such as those responsible for nutrition, environment and climate change, infrastructure development, energy and trade are at the core of an efficient food system.

As such, the participants explored and suggested mechanisms that will allow stakeholders to work together for a collective action and forge powerful partnerships as follows:

- Develop common results framework. It was noted that there is a comprehensive monitoring and evaluation framework being developed under the Malawi 2063 Vision that could be leveraged among other existing frameworks;
- Develop sustainability and exit strategy especially for program and projects;
- Establish holistic coordinating structure for food systems so that all stakeholders and actors can work together towards a transformed food system agenda;
- Enhance intra- and inter-ministerial coordination in the public sector;
- Enhance cooperative's information to improve value chain functions;
- Strengthen dialogue sessions with involvement of all Ministries and stakeholders; and
- Strengthen the linkage of the grassroots and the central levels for policy harnessing, coherence and enforcement.

ACTION TRACKS

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- ✓ Environment and Climate

AREAS OF DIVERGENCE

The Affordable Input Program (AIP) was a contentious issue with some participants thinking that the subsidy is a necessary evil that meets the nation's food self-sufficiency goal. For example, in the current season, the yields are at the highest levels compared to the average of the last five years. On the other hand, other members felt that AIP is a social protection instrument that has outlived its life span and the nation needs to graduate from it despite all the positive restructuring it has gone through over the years. However, AIP needs to diversify beyond being maize-centric to other crops such as legumes and include livestock so that it contributes fully to Action Track #1 in providing safer and healthy foods. Other views bordered on its negative on the agricultural sector budget vote since some critical services such as research and extension suffer low allocations despite that the overall agricultural budget is able to meet the Malabo target of 10% of the national budget.

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