

# OFFICIAL FEEDBACK FORM

<b>DIALOGUE DATE</b>	Monday, 5 July 2021 21:37 GMT +02:00
<b>DIALOGUE TITLE</b>	Building Healthier, Sustainable and Equitable Food Systems for a Better Malawi
<b>CONVENED BY</b>	Honourable Lobin C. Lowe, Minister of Agriculture, Ministry of Agriculture, Malawi
<b>DIALOGUE EVENT PAGE</b>	<a href="https://summitdialogues.org/dialogue/39720/">https://summitdialogues.org/dialogue/39720/</a>
<b>DIALOGUE TYPE</b>	Member State
<b>GEOGRAPHICAL FOCUS</b>	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

100

## PARTICIPATION BY AGE RANGE

0-18

12

19-30

85

31-50

27

51-65

4

66-80

80+

## PARTICIPATION BY GENDER

66 Male

34 Female

Prefer not to say or Other

## NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS IN EACH SECTOR

42 Agriculture/crops

4 Fish and aquaculture

11 Livestock

1 Agro-forestry

13 Environment and ecology

2 Trade and commerce

10 Education

Communication

2 Food processing

Food retail, markets

2 Food industry

Financial Services

6 Health care

Nutrition

25 National or local government

Utilities

Industrial

5 Other

## NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS FROM EACH STAKEHOLDER GROUP

8 Small/medium enterprise/artisan

Large national business

Multi-national corporation

10 Small-scale farmer

6 Medium-scale farmer

Large-scale farmer

7 Local Non-Governmental Organization

7 International Non-Governmental Organization

Indigenous People

8 Science and academia

Workers and trade union

Member of Parliament

14 Local authority

52 Government and national institution

Regional economic community

4 United Nations

1 International financial institution

Private Foundation / Partnership / Alliance

Consumer group

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 Excellency Dr Lazarus McCarthy Chakwera appointed Honourable Lobin C. Lowe, Minister of Agriculture as the National Convenor of the Malawi National Food Systems Dialogue. 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. Furthermore, the task force appointed a curator, note taker and facilitator to help in carrying out the dialogue process. The regional and district dialogue sessions aimed at capturing voices from local stakeholders starting from Blantyre City. This report focuses on the Southern Region Dialogue sessions that were conducted from 5th to 8th July 2021. The report also takes into consideration the specific issues that came out from the sub-regional dialogues conducted in Mulanje, Mwanza and Nsanje districts. The dialogues were held through a face to face approach. In total 100 people participated with 41 people attending the dialogue in Blantyre, 32 people in Mwanza, 21 people in Mulanje and 26 people in Nsanje. The representation was from different sectors, including the public sector e.g. Ministries of Agriculture and Natural Resources, the academia, development partners, non-governmental organizations, food producers, processors, consumers, women, youths and health experts. The regional dialogues were held with financial support from the Government of Flanders and the United Nations. The dialogue was officially opened by the Convenor representative in the Southern Region. Afterwards through presentations, breakout sessions and plenary, participants discussed the current situation and challenges, drivers, opportunities, enablers, game changing priorities and actions to transform food system for Malawi based on the five action tracks from a regional perspective.

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

**Act with Urgency:** The Malawi Government recognize the urgency of sustained and meaningful action at all levels to achieve the 2030 SDGs and the recently launched national Malawi 2063 Vision. 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 will attend the Pre-Summit in Rome in July 2021 and the national dialogue provided content to be used for the event. **Be Respectful:** The national dialogue ensured genuine discussions without undue influence of any kind. The diversity of stakeholders that included youth and women 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 maximize outcomes on the 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 such as the SDG processes, AU 2063 agenda, the Malabo declaration and the Malawi 2063 vision. **Build Trust:** The dialogue put in place a conducive environment in the groups and during plenary sessions that promoted trust and this increased motivation for stakeholders to participate fully. 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?

- **Think global but act local:** The regional dialogues provided an opportunity for location-specific engagement with diverse stakeholders on issues that are emanating from the global level to spur local actions. Hence, the facilitator needed to ensure that participants understand that the global issues have local significance and that local voices are also critical in shaping the global agenda.
- **Appreciate location-specific game changers:** The experiences at the regional and sub-regional levels revealed the need to be cautious and cognizant of specific location-specific game changers that would need to be driven by local resources and decentralized development plans.
- **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 needed 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.** At the regional level, involvement of key political and government leadership was key to ensure commitment for decentralized structures to embrace the dialogues and be ready to implement actions thereof.
- **Be as inclusive as possible:** The participation from government officials, academia, private sectors, food system actors, and civil society organizations including youth and women was key to a national dialogue process as it motivated interest and participation in the dialogue.
- **Be clear on expectations and objectives during the dialogue session.** The facilitator of the dialogue dedicated some time to highlight the objectives and expectations of the Dialogue, and outlined the outcomes expected of the dialogue sessions.

# 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 regional dialogue was held under the theme “Building healthier, sustainable and equitable food systems for a better Malawi”.

The objective of the dialogue was to 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 from local voices at the regional level

Based on the guidelines, the dialogue was centred on the five action Tracks underpinning Food Systems and making Summit Dialogues:

- Action Track 1 – “Ensuring access to safe and nutritious food for all” – participants examined whether all Malawian’s 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” – dialogue participants had conversations about what the key issues affecting healthy and sustainable food consumption were 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” – participants explored inequalities within the Malawian food systems.
- Action Track 5 – “Building resilience to vulnerabilities, shocks, and stresses” – the dialogue examined actions to ensure the resilience of the Malawian Food System.

The Convenors’ representative also emphasized the need to analyse the food systems issues in consideration of existing national policies and strategies including the national aspirations enshrined in the Malawi 2063 Vision.

### 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 and their causes/drivers

1. Low productivity and production of diversified and nutritious foods:
  - a) Climate change – floods, dry spells, drought and erratic rains;
  - b) Low adoption of improved agricultural technologies and irrigation; and
  - c) Handout syndrome or overdependence of relief after climatic shocks.
2. Seasonal availability of foods
  - a. High post-harvest losses;
  - b. Inadequate knowledge in processing techniques or technologies; and
  - c. Limited winter food production systems. Use of residual moisture and wetland crop production.
3. Poor utilization of food
  - a. Limited knowledge on how to integrate some food in the diet.
4. Unstable prices of foods
  - a. No competition among the buyers.
  - b. Currently there are no auction markets for livestock
5. No value addition of foods
  - a. Limited skills on value addition particularly among small-scale producers; and
  - b. Lack of facilities to enable value addition despite having a lot of citrus fruits.

### Action Track #2: Shifting to sustainable consumption patterns

#### Current Challenges and causes/drivers

1. Consumption of unsafe foods
  - a. Inadequate inspectorate services on livestock products, especially the open markets for meat;
  - b. Lack of adherence to Good Agriculture Practices (GAP) i.e. there is rampant abuse of veterinary drugs and/or pesticides; and
  - c. Inadequate Good Hygienic Practices (GHP). Increasing industrial waste in rivers flowing through Blantyre city and downstream districts.
2. Inadequate access to nutritious food leading to malnutrition including stunting
  - a. Limited knowledge on types of nutritious food, food budgeting, food processing, food preparation and utilization;
  - b. Rapid urbanisation is also leading to poor feeding habits for both urban and rural dwellers;
  - c. Cultural and religious beliefs that limit consumption of some nutritious foods; and
  - d. Inadequate food availability and distribution at other times of the season.
3. Low use of indigenous foods
  - a. Climatic challenges like dry spells that affect production of wild indigenous foods;
  - b. Loss of indigenous knowledge, especially in food preparation; and
  - c. Perceptions that indigenous foods are of the poor and of low nutrient quality.
4. Over reliance and dependency culture on the government-handouts e.g. Chikwawa and Nsanje districts
  - a. Natural disasters e.g. floods and droughts which always attract government and partners' relief response actions.

### Action Track #3: Boosting nature-positive food production

#### Current challenges and causes/drivers

1. Poor industrial and domestic waste management resulting in pollution
  - a. Peoples' negligence e.g. vandalism of sewer lines especially in the City of Blantyre, dumping of plastics etc.;
  - b. Inadequate enforcement of the city by-laws but also the Environmental management and act and regulations; and
  - c. Limited resources for waste management.
2. Poor management of agricultural pesticides and chemicals
  - a. Increased use of pesticides in containing pests like fall army worms;
  - b. Increased use of chemical, some of which are persistent in food and also affect water sources; and
  - c. Negligence to adhere to safety measures especially on withdrawal periods and consumption of horticultural produce.
3. Destruction of natural environment due to poor agricultural practices
  - a. Failure to adopt best practices of managing agricultural production is leading to challenges like soil erosion and siltation of rivers;
  - b. Deforestation as a result of increased demands for energy, timber etc;
  - c. Cultivating along the riverbanks due to land scarcity and conflicting land use policies; and
  - d. Land degradation due to population growth, overgrazing, monoculture e.g. unsustainable farming practice (continuous use of farmland).
4. Climate change/ change in rainfall patterns
  - a. Prolonged dry spells, flash floods and heavy winds due to climate change;
  - b. Cutting down trees and leaving bare land;
  - c. Over harvesting of natural resources e.g. overfishing and trees; and
  - d. Unsustainable development practices e.g. brick burning and use of timber in infrastructure development.

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

#### Current Challenges and causes/drivers

1. Inequitable access to land
  - a. Culturally land is owned by women but controlled by men;
  - b. The limited land available is rented out to others and sold out worsening the situation; and

- c. Most land in Thyolo and Mulanje is under estate use for tea production.
- 2. Undiversified income sources
  - a. Lack of innovativeness on marketing; and
  - b. Social set up favours men over women in terms of education e.g. education investment in families are bent towards men than women.
- 3. High unemployment rate among the youth
  - a. Many of the youth in migrate to South Africa; and
  - b. High level of school drop-out among girls and related teen pregnancies, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic.

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

**Current challenges and causes/drivers**

- 1. Natural disasters
  - a. The floodplain of Malawi (Lower Shire) is mostly affected with floods and dry-spells. Cyclone Idai also recently affected the livelihoods in the region.
- 2. Land shortage
  - a. Increase in population and unfair land tenure arrangements have led to low crop and livestock production, conflicts and wrangles over land and gender based violence.
- 3. Pests and diseases Infestations
  - a. High incidences of Fall army worm have mostly affected the region especially the in lower shire.

**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 - 1/8

### 1 Action Track #1 Outcomes

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

1. Availability of institutions and structures that focus on agriculture production;
2. Extension structures and service are available across the country;
3. An opportunity of accessing quality inputs from government and NGO
4. Subsidized inputs from government;
5. Clean banana suckers from agriculture production units; and
6. Supply of farming inputs on credit from NGOs such as One Acre Fund.

The major enablers identified under Action Track # 1 were as follows:

1. Availability of regulatory services in the district;
2. On-going national drive to change some of the negative cultural practices;
3. Irrigation policy that is promoting winter and wetland crop production to maximize production;
4. Marketing and export strategies that is focusing on improving markets for agricultural commodities;
5. Horticultural strategies that is promoting value addition; and
6. Multi-sectoral approach to food and nutrition (policies and strategies).

### 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 - 2/8

### 2 Action Track # 2 Outcomes

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

1. Availability of skilled government workers e.g. environmental inspectors, nutrition officers, Health surveillance assistants;
2. Availability of diverse and nutritious food types across the region;
3. Existence of processing companies e.g. dhal from pigeon peas factory in Phalombe district;
4. Availability of governance structures and government extension service systems e.g. community structures dealing with issues of nutrition;
5. There is very high potential for citrus and livestock production in both Mwanza and Neno districts;
6. Diversified production (crop and animal) is possible because the districts have a lot of potential land for production of either of the enterprises;
7. Gender programming encouraging men and women to participate in nutrition related issues (not just regarded as a woman issue); and
8. Growing interest among traditional leadership and other stakeholders on issues of nutrition education.

The enablers that can allow the country to advance sustainable consumption included:

1. Existence of infant and child feeding strategy – recipe books;
2. Availability of the food and nutrition policy and strategies that promote 6 food groups;
3. Gender strategy;
4. Food budget guidance; and
5. Existence of health personnel to provide information on good hygienic and sanitary practices.

### 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 - 3/8

### 3 Action Track # 3 Outcomes

The opportunities identified under Action Track # 3 were as follows:

1. Good weather for production of wheat, potatoes and citrus fruits;
2. Existence of agriculture extension services that can facilitate: Increased adoption of new technologies by farmers – farmers are receptive to innovation and learning – across the value chains; and availability of call in services to access information related agricultural production (Toll free lines).
3. Abundant water - perennial rivers for both irrigation and power generation e.g. Mkulumadzi, Shire and Mwanza rivers;
4. Distribution of subsidized farm inputs that can be extended to irrigation (winter cropping) agriculture;
5. Very favourable weather conditions conducive for a variety of crops especially horticultural and other cash crops while the lowlands are suitable for livestock production;
6. Ongoing developmental programmes such as the Shire valley transformation project that offers an opportunity for increased learning, production and income generation;
7. Solar powered farms are an opportunity for increased power generation and electrification of rural and urban areas;

Enablers identified included the following:

1. Availability of conducive government policies, regulations and by laws at all levels;
2. Existence of agriculture research stations e.g. Bvumbwe Research Station, Kasinthula Fisheries Station;
3. Government setting of minimum prices and licensing of agro-dealers;
4. Government and development partners have interest to assist farmers in value addition; and
5. Farm managed natural regeneration program underway through Forestry Department including availability of village forest areas to be used for afforestation.

### 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 - 4/8

### 4 Action Track # 4 Outcomes

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

1. High potential for tourism e.g. the mountain, wildlife, tea estates, Lengwe and Majete National parks. These can be used as main sources of economic diversification;
2. Availability of other infrastructures e.g. warehouses at community level where buyers can keep their goods before transporting to processing sites or markets;
3. High youth population as source of labour and innovation;
4. Proximity to an international border with Mozambique which allows cross border movement of food items into and out of Malawi in times of hunger; and
5. Potential mining and energy opportunities in the Kirk Range e.g. gold in Thambani, coal in Kamwamba, bauxite on the Mulanje mountain as well as hydroelectric power stations along the Shire River.

Enablers that can support the attainment of the opportunities include:

1. Main road network and railway is there to support transportation, these however will need rehabilitation and upgrading;
2. Trade policies and laws. Food systems traders are given a warrant to source food outside the country (Mozambique);
3. Liberalized economy that allows for free trade; and
4. Readily available markets for mining products.

### 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 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 - 5/8

### 5 Action Track # 5 Outcomes

The opportunities under Action Track # 5 were as follows:

1. Availability of skilled environmental inspectors and other officers e.g. extension workers, forestry officers etc.;
2. Availability of institutions that focus on environment management, climate change and disaster preparedness;
3. Availability of funds in decentralized structures such as the District Development Fund;
4. The already existing farming culture;
5. Availability of enthusiastic and committed local leaders; and
6. Availability of tree stumps- high probability of regeneration.

The enablers under Action Track # 5 were as follows:

1. Existence of conducive policies, by-laws at all levels with support from local leaders e.g. environmental management, irrigation, disaster preparedness policy, forest by-laws that control the use of forest land and its products
2. Local governance structures;
3. There is an improved saving culture among communities through Village Savings and Loan (VSLs);
4. Good road network although with poor road infrastructure needing attention; and
5. One stop border post at Mwanza that can increase trade and economic activities in the border district.

### 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
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	Human rights	✓	Governance
✓	Women & Youth Empowerment	✓	Trade-offs
		✓	Environment and Climate

## OUTCOMES FOR EACH DISCUSSION TOPIC - 6/8

### 6. Crosscutting Game Changing Priorities

The Southern region dialogue session combined the game changing priorities across all the five action tracks as follows:

#### 1. Enhance food quality transformation and standards

- o Enhancing regulatory services and capacity in key ministries such as Ministries of Health, agriculture and trade, district councils, community structures, institutions such as the Malawi Bureau of Standards (MBS);
- o Increasing collaboration of different stakeholders (to ameliorate overlap of roles among different regulators), including consumers;
- o Develop a National Food Safety policy to address all the food safety issues identified;
- o Recruiting more officers to strengthen food inspectorate services;
- o Overcoming corruption by regulatory service providers;
- o Sensitisation of food producers and consumers on food safety and nutrition e.g. introduction of nutrition education at primary school level; and
- o Adoption of nutrition labelling as a mandatory requirement.

#### 2. Increasing agricultural productivity across all value chains

- o Develop a legal framework (legislation) for District Agricultural Extension Services System (DAESS) structures to ensure adherence to food safety and other related food system issues;
- o Construction of mega irrigation schemes tapping on abundant water bodies and perennial rivers;
- o Intensive nutrition education targeting communities through community radio, frontline workers and non-conventional platforms for promotion of diversified diets;
- o Re-introduce dip tanks and veterinary services in rural areas;
- o Provide conducive working environment for extension workers by providing vehicles, good housing etc.;
- o Promoting innovative extension approaches on food budgeting and good agriculture practices; and
- o Extending the subsidy program to winter or wetland cropping.

#### 3. Enhance value addition and processing

- o Promotion of small-scale food processing companies for milk, pineapples (fruit juices) avocado pears (oil), tomato, sweet potatoes, Pigeon peas (dhal);
- o Improve dry and cold production and marketing infrastructure to improve storage and processing; and
- o Support value addition and processing facilities managed by cooperatives.

#### 4. Improve market systems and structures

- o Introduce structured markets and promote contract farming;
- o Enhance business knowledge and access to market information;
- o Introduce supply chain financing mechanism to mitigate shocks; and
- o Revitalize ADMARC so that they facilitate structured markets for both inputs and crop produce.

#### 5. Mind-set Change

- o Culture - full recognition of local leadership e.g. chiefs to influence mind set change via awareness & enforcement;
- o End corruption;
- o Diversification of food production and consumption; and
- o Promote family planning.

#### 6. Promote alternative sources of energy

- o Rural electrification program; and
- o Access to solar and wind power.

### ACTION TRACKS

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### KEYWORDS

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## OUTCOMES FOR EACH DISCUSSION TOPIC - 7/8

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) based on the regional dialogues.

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

1. Empower local leaders on land tribunal issues especially in Thyolo and Mulanje districts;
2. Finalize the national Food Safety Policy;
3. Phase out handouts and train people to be independent;
4. Promote improved, climate smart technologies and mechanization to enhance productivity and reduction of post-harvest losses;
5. Enforcement of existing policies that can trigger food systems transformation;
6. Promote family planning to reduce overpopulation and land pressure;
7. Enhance research in food systems;
8. Increase the minimum wage;
9. Government should exempt taxes on essentials e.g. milk, salt, sugar etc.; and
10. Youth empowerment: soft loans for the youth enterprises, internships, youth innovation awards, coaching and mentoring.

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

1. Include nutrition education in primary school curriculum;
2. Introduce new investments in the agricultural sector and agro processing industry e.g. loans for final food processing, soft loans for agricultural initiatives. Invest in large scale irrigation schemes and ensure that they are functional with private sector and community collaboration;
3. Enhance social behaviour change to address issues related to nutrition i.e. encourage consumption of certain types of food (crabs, mice);
4. Invest in livestock and aquaculture development including rearing of non-convention animals i.e. rabbits, quails, guinea pigs;
5. Increase use of bio-fortified varieties and breeds;
6. Incentivising workers at grass roots levels from different sectors. i.e. rural electricity, housing, portable water, road infrastructure and reliable networks;
7. Promote public private partnerships to accelerate transformation of food systems;
8. Promote alternative non-farm income sources and empowerment of youth with start-ups and private sector involvement;
9. Provision of incentives to farmers to adopt Good Agricultural Practices (GAPs) that are environmentally friendly; and
10. Ensure market systems and structures that work for farmers including reviving ADMARC, institute market innovation centres, among others

### ACTION TRACKS

- ✓ Action Track 1: Ensure access to safe and nutritious food for all
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## OUTCOMES FOR EACH DISCUSSION TOPIC - 8/8

### 8. Cross cutting outcomes: Productive partnerships

The regional 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 region has several partners working in the food systems including NGOs both local and international, faith-based organizations, farmer-based organizations including cooperatives, government departments, private sector players and other food industry players but they rarely work together let alone share lessons and best practices. This was linked to lack of proper coordination at regional and district level including between and among ministries, departments and agencies of the government despite existing structures in the decentralized system of governance.

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 for a coordinated approach at the regional and district level to ensure location-specific coordinated actions. Some noted that in most cases, other sectors leave just 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 just but to mention a few 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:

1. Strengthen networking platforms for all actors in different sectors to enhance collaboration and partnership;
2. Utilize existing research facilities such as Bvumbwe Research Station in Thyolo district in collaboration with extension services to disseminate new crop varieties and animal breeds;
3. Leverage Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) to foster dissemination and sharing information among food systems actors. Strengthen information sharing among stakeholders e.g. a database as a repository is supposed to be developed that all stakeholders can use;
4. Enhance implementation of key outputs of forums on similar thematic areas to ensure that there are actions and accountability systems in place on the game changers agreed upon such as:
  - a. Engaging with various stakeholders/experts including local authorities to take dialogues outcomes as part of the district plans; and
  - b. Institutionalizing food systems e.g. a task force at decentralized structures has to be established, which is multi-sectoral in nature and include private sector stakeholders to continue the dialogues post UNFSS in September 2021.

### 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

## AREAS OF DIVERGENCE

Increased use of pesticides vs pollution: The issue came out based on the understanding that there has been increased use of pesticides due to the infestation of Fall Armyworm and increased cultivation of horticultural crops in the Southern Region. Even as much as it is important to ensure high productivity of the crops, other participants noted that this puts lives at risk if those pesticides are not handled and used properly. For instance, the withdrawal times on vegetables are not adhered to thereby leading to unsafe consumption of foods and pollution in general.

Handouts in form of relief items vs empowerment: The issue of handouts as a social protection measure came out strongly in the Southern Region because of the frequent occurrence of natural disasters. It was noted that communities are used to getting relief items. For instance, there are communities in Chikwawa district that are affected by floods every year and these communities are not willing to relocate to other areas. This has become a political issue as well. Additionally, the dialogue felt that these relief items will, in the long run, increase dependence on government as communities are not willing to be innovative and empowered to graduate from such relief programs.

Conflicting extension messages: Technical misguidance and conflicting extension messages i.e. one crop per piece of land against the message of crop diversification. This was noted as an issue that happens especially amongst NGOs and at times between different sectoral ministries where different guidelines or messages are given to farmers thereby rendering them confused.

Indigenous foods vs improved varieties: The is need to embrace and consume indigenous food varieties as a major source of nutritious foods and not only focus on the so-called modern/improved varieties came out in the Southern Region dialogues. The promoters of the indigenous food varieties noted that such foods have high nutrition status and are resilient to climate change whilst those championing improved varieties were considering mostly the high yielding and resilient varieties such as drought resistant varieties of maize.

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