

# OFFICIAL FEEDBACK FORM

<b>DIALOGUE DATE</b>	Wednesday, 30 June 2021 10:00 GMT +12:00
<b>DIALOGUE TITLE</b>	Nauru's Food System Dialogue- 'A bottoms-up approach to food system transformation'
<b>CONVENED BY</b>	Marissa Cook
<b>DIALOGUE EVENT PAGE</b>	<a href="https://summitdialogues.org/dialogue/39998/">https://summitdialogues.org/dialogue/39998/</a>
<b>DIALOGUE TYPE</b>	Member State
<b>GEOGRAPHICAL FOCUS</b>	Nauru

The outcomes from a Food Systems Summit Dialogue will be of use in developing the pathway to sustainable food systems within the locality in which they take place. They will be a valuable contribution to the national pathways and also of interest to the different workstreams preparing for the Summit: the Action Tracks, Scientific Groups and Champions as well as for other Dialogues.

# 1. PARTICIPATION

## TOTAL NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS

## PARTICIPATION BY AGE RANGE

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

## PARTICIPATION BY GENDER

18 Male 35 Female Prefer not to say or Other

## NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS IN EACH SECTOR

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

## NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS FROM EACH STAKEHOLDER GROUP

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

## 2. PRINCIPLES OF ENGAGEMENT

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

This dialogue brought together more than 50 participants that represented actors from across the local food systems. A broad range of stakeholders were invited to the dialogue that ranged from producers, retailers, civil society, environmental groups, government departments, state-owned enterprises, and other actors in the food sector. During the dialogue participants were divided into groups representative of the established action tracks. To capture wide experiences and contributions, participants were strategically placed in groups that coincided with their expertise or reflected their background in relation to their role within the local food system. Measures were taken to also include underrepresented stakeholders and 'non-experts' in each group to allow the sharing of new and diverse perspectives during the discussions. Divergent views were important to address the complexity of the local food system. Recognizing the complexity of the issue, The Chantam House Rule applied throughout the discussions in the break-out group to reinforce and create a safe space for the exchange of ideas so that novel ideas and solutions could be generated. Participants were further reminded that mutual respect must be adhered to and that this involved listening intently and being opened to contrasting views/opinions. Throughout the dialogue facilitators moderated the discussions and encouraged participants to actively engage and contribute their views. At the end of the dialogue session, all the participants were merged into one group to have a 'reflection session' where they were presented with a summary of the contributions made throughout the day and were allowed to share any further inputs/takeaway messages from the dialogue.

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

To address the challenges and vulnerabilities of the local food systems in Nauru a multi-stakeholder approach was organized. • Act with urgency, embrace multi-stakeholder inclusivity, recognize complexity: To initiate the dialogue participants were presented with an 'ice breaker' that allowed them to share specifically the role that they play within local food system and to further highlight a single challenge they face with their respective groups. This allowed participants to be recognize their role in the food system and recognized the interconnectedness of the food systems. Facilitators then used the inputs from the icebreaker to further explain to the wider group how food systems relate to all the 17 SDG's and stressed the urgency to get back on track to achieve the 2030 target. • Commit to the Summit, Be respectful: The topics discussed in each break-out group were discussed in four groups and developed on the basis of the 5 action tracks of the FSS, also integrated was the priorities of Nauru's Sustainable Development Strategy- 2019-2030 (NSDS). The NSDS is linked to UN agenda 2030 and the SDGs was used as a reference framework. In this national strategy four of the development goals directly related to food systems as highlighted below: • Development of domestic food production for food security. • Enhance resilience against the impacts of climate change that is inclusive of rehabilitating and restoring degraded land. • Access to quality education, both formal and non-formal. • Provision of enhanced social and infrastructure and utilities services This was integral in the design of the dialogue in order to link national priorities with the achievement of all SDGs since food systems are an essential lever that have a transversal impact both nationally and globally.

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

It is especially important use method/format of dialogue that is conducive to diversity and inclusion- with particular attention to actors with differentiated backgrounds e.g public servants, community-based organization, grass root representatives. Communication is very helpful to ensure effective stakeholder engagement and participation. Therefore, where possible, facilitators and participants should be encouraged to communicate in the native language or local vernacular and provide translation where necessary to allow fair and interactive value to the dialogue session.

# 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

In preparation for the Food System Summit in September 2021, the government of Nauru organized a Member State dialogue at the national level to engage actors across the local food stems to have the opportunity to contribute to the FSS by discussing their roles within the food system, highlight challenges, vulnerabilities and reflect on novel forms of joint action to shape the pathway to a sustainable food system by 2030.

This exploratory dialogue attempted to holistically analyse the challenges that exist in the local food systems in Nauru in order to raise awareness and propose new forms of joint actions that are drawn from a 'bottoms up approach'. Constituting to the core of the dialogue, the 5 actions tracks were used to develop and topics and prompt questions that are the most relevant to Nauru's food system – specifically pertaining to: Consumption patterns/Diet, Nutrition, Food Security (Agriculture & Fisheries), Livelihoods and Resilience to Climate Change. Reference was also made in the discourse to Nauru's National Sustainable Development Strategy (NSDS) that is linked to UN agenda 2030 and SDGs. In this national strategy four of the development goals directly related to food systems.

Overall, this event was the first step in the process of the multi-stakeholder National FSSD of Nauru, which provided a unique opportunity to discuss the current state of the local food system and the importance of raising ambition to get back on track by 2030. In the second stage of the dialogues, on 13 August 2021, a more in-depth discourse will be led to draw solutions at the local level and discuss possible commitments from different stakeholders.

### 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

- a. Legislative and Policy Frameworks- there is lack of policies and legislative frameworks that positively support the local food system. For the policies that do exist, there is poor enforcement that often leads to non-compliance. Additionally, policies are often misplaced or non-complementary e.g., Food Security, Environment, Health & Nutrition. The 'top down' approach to policy implementation is also a hindrance to achieve the goals that support the country's national priorities. Consequently, participants have suggested for public policies to be complemented by a more social approach through regular consultation with communities in order to improve local food systems.
- b. Paucity of data/Lack of awareness - better dissemination of knowledge related to sustainable and healthy diets should be integrated into school curricula (both theoretically and practically). Generally, the importance of eating nutritious food and maintaining a healthy lifestyle is often overlooked due to the lack of information or education readily available to the public. Outreach programmes are in place, but there is also a lack of capacity and resources required to maintain these initiatives directed to vulnerable groups (elderly, expectant mothers, disabled, people living with NCD's) to improve awareness.
- c. Effective uptake of information-There is ongoing work by the Public Health sector but the overall impact is challenged by the cultural stigmatization of 'healthy food' and lack of access to better dietary systems. Consumer preferences are also negatively influenced by the abundance of unhealthy imported food that is far more affordable than healthy food options.
- d. Lack of investment in local fisheries sector - remains untapped to improve food production locally. Scaling up investment is needed at the sub-national level in order to support the livelihoods of smallholders in the fisheries sector and to boost domestic food production. Some potential priorities for the Fisheries sector lie in job creation, food security and nutrition.
- e. Lack of resources and support for 'local champions' within the food system- Small- scale growers and fishermen play a central role in the sustainability of the local food system, but many do not have the means to invest in the market or adapt new technologies needed to produce food. Access to financing or micro-loan schemes to promote private sector engagement remains a major challenge to improve domestic food production.
- f. Cultural and Livelihood Shift- the loss of traditional knowledge continues to lead to the decay of community practices and values that maintained the sustainability of food systems in the past. This decline in the passing down of traditional knowledge has inhibited the younger generation to incorporate healthier practices into their dietary and nutritional regimen.
- g. Nauru's largely cash-based economy- has led to the abandonment of subsistence living and there is a general lack of interest in horticulture/small scale agriculture. There are few incentives or opportunities in the market to use agriculture and fisheries as a viable livelihood option.
- h. Land Availability/ Land degradation- Nauru's history of mining has led to the exploitation over 80% of natural vegetation. The central plateau of the island now remains fallow with no potential to grow food or to accommodate housing. Due to the increase in competition for land resources at present the demand for housing often takes precedence over the use of land for investment in food security.
- i. Resilience and Climate Readiness- Climate change mainstreaming fails to be consistent with complementary policies that support the sustainability of the food system. There are no existing early warning systems for extreme weather events, there is also the lack of innovation in agriculture practices that promote resilience e.g., introduction of resilient crop varieties, soil health management, agroforestry. Additionally, no recovery strategy against shocks has been defined i.e no strategic food reserve to buffer the impact of shocks related to shipment delays, disaster events, Covid- 19.
- j. Waste Management- there is a need to reduce emissions from diets by preventing food loss and waste. Waste management is outsourced, and the system lacks the technology and innovation to efficiently reduce and recycle waste.

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## OUTCOMES FOR EACH DISCUSSION TOPIC - 1/3

- Nauru is heavily reliant on food imports. The supply of processed food is higher than that of healthier food options.
- Healthy foods are away more costly than unhealthy processed food that is imported (cost of living in Nauru is excessively high and household income is generally low).
- Social welfare is also not sufficient since healthier food options tend to be expensive (There is support for the elderly and disabled but no support for single parents).
- No price control of goods- food prices fluctuate weekly, no food regulations in place.
- Fish is a healthy food option but not enough is available locally. In addition, there is competition on the market with imported fish. Fisheries sector does not produce enough blue foods to contribute to supply the local demand a healthier diet. (There is no definitively organized fisher's association).
- Very costly to fish at times especially where there is shortage of fuel in country.
- Lack of awareness on the benefits on the importance of developing to healthier consumption patterns. People live very sedentary lifestyles that also contribute to the prevalence of NCD's.
- Food labelling not read by consumers (even more so for people living with disabilities).
- Most of the soils in Nauru are thin and sandy. More fertile areas exist in Buada district. Overall, there is not enough land to plan since land availability is already an issue and people prioritize building houses on available land rather than to plant food to sustain their diets. Most of the population now relies on food shipped into the country by sea or air.
- Changes in traditional food culture that has led to an unhealthy dietary shift. During economic downturn people would partake in subsistence agriculture.
- General consumer preferences have led to poor diet habits that has passed down to the younger generation (based on choice and affordability, quality vs quantity). Consumer preferences have also been highly influenced by social media and the internet. Air freighted fast food is becoming a popular choice of food (McDonald's).
- In addition to poor diet, now after years of unhealthy lifestyles the younger generation is now genetically disposed to NCD's (diabetes and high blood pressure).

### Solutions

- Improved dissemination of knowledge and awareness raising both theoretically and practically.
- Issues related to sustainable food systems and sustainable diets should be integrated into education curricula.
- Food labelling is required to (e.g., labels on sustainability for imported items) sensitize the public and positively influence consumer preference.
- Stronger commitment at political level is required to promote healthier lifestyles e.g better policies and welfare systems
- Some participants also suggested revising the Nauruan Food Pyramid, in order to go beyond its currently exclusively nutritional approach and to integrate local foods and the three dimensions of sustainability.
- Catering in schools and hospitals should be reviewed so as to provide healthy meal options.
- Support of local growers and fishermen in order to improve domestic food supply e.g microloan schemes, providing a local facility to sell produce (centralize market), market incentives, farmer training initiatives.

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## OUTCOMES FOR EACH DISCUSSION TOPIC - 2/3

### Political, economic and territorial factors

- Policies are essentially 'window dressing' and noncompliance remains a huge challenge. The enforcement of policies rest upon the government but has not at all been effective.
- Land is privately owned in Nauru and only Landowners can decide what their land will be used for. Currently housing is being prioritized over planting food.
- Completion with local businesses mainly owned by Chinese merchants – there is no price control.
- Income level influences access to food- there is a disparity between what expat vs local salaries. Most locals do not earn high levels of income therefore accessibility to healthy food is an issue due to cost.
- The economy of Nauru has been in flux for many years and is largely a cash-based economy. People livelihoods have had adapt to when there is abundance vs shortages. When the economy is performing well there is higher incomes and availability of food vs when there is a downturn there is very low income and shortages of food.
- There is no investment in food systems by the government. It is very difficult to boost further investments because it is heavily political.
- While gender has no influence, economic disparities due to income affect how people are able to engage in the food system (affects both consumption and production).

### Infrastructure & Technology

- Water storage/catchment units need to be increase because people have enough water for household needs but not necessarily enough to support kitchen gardens.
- Regular shipment of sea and air freighted goods – currently no goods are coming into the country from Fiji due to Covid. Therefore, population is highly dependent on-air freighted goods that is more expensive than goods shipped by sea.
- Market is not conducive to local produce goods- no centralized market or retail outlet for locally produced goods.
- Lack of infrastructure to produce food – nurseries, fertilizers, farming equipment, composite facilities
- Lack of technology & education to encourage food production – aquaponics, hydroponics.
- Biggest losses of food come from storage and preserving food

### Food Supply Chains

- Minute amounts of goods produced in country (main fish and coconut). Some families practice subsistence agriculture and get food from their kitchen garden to supplement their diet but still have to purchase food from the store to feed their families since it is not sufficient (e.g meat, milk, rice etc).
- Most food are imported into the country and therefore is very susceptible to shocks that cause disruptions along the food chain.

### Solutions

- Enforce existing legislations, policies and activities to reduce waste, protect biodiversity and promote sustainable practices (Litter Act, Environment & Climate Change Act) and start a campaign to implement the 3 R's (reduce, reuse and recycle).
- Establishment of a centralize market for growers to sell produce and have a fair market share.
- As a part of a building strategy for the Housing Scheme government should require landowners to plant native trees on their land.
- Local native plants should be planted by different groups as a part of a nationwide campaign that involve government, private sector, community-based organizations etc.
- Governments should lease or purchase land to use for agroforestry and agricultural practices.
- A centralize storage are to preserve food properly is also needed. All supermarkets/store should be required to reduce prices after food is deemed no longer fresh. This is also required for household and the management of food and sewage waste
- Outreach campaign specifically targeting landowners to educate on sustainable land management practices that promote food and water security.
- Training and capacity building programmes to improve financial literacy to ensure sustainability of livelihoods generated by local food systems

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## OUTCOMES FOR EACH DISCUSSION TOPIC - 3/3

### Production

- Covid-19- caused disturbances to food supply chain (affects local food availability and distribution of foods)
- Drought- inhibits food production due to the availability of water and stability of soils
- Limited resources in Nauru- equipment, fertilizer, pig feed.

### Distribution

- Transport and logistics- disruption of food distributions channels brought about by covid. Delayed shipment and broken machinery at the port often delays distribution.
- Early warning systems are non-existent.

### Consumers

- Cost of healthy food options far supersedes cheaper unhealthier options. Limited availability of healthy food on the market. Rice is the most cost efficient and is staple to the Nauruan diet that consume this in large quantities.
- Generally, participants are unaware of the policies and legislation governing food systems.

### Solutions

- Awareness programmes- teach growers/communities to plant incorporating smart agricultural techniques, development of a local almanac for planting, use of gray water for plants, creation of nurseries and field schools to teach planting to the general public, Environment Day campaign to plant trees, revision of school curriculum to incorporate climate change.
- Importation of seedlings that can withstand weather variation and climate in Nauru -cassava, potato, taro, dragon fruit.
- Infrastructure- expedite work on port project so this allows for efficient distribution of goods and reduce the cost of imported food
- Investment in new and innovative technology- aquaponics, improved water catchment systems to combat drought
- Improvement of warning systems- implementation of meteorological warning systems for improved disaster risk preparedness for farmers, warning sirens, emergency texts, establishment of safety and evacuation zones, utilization of Community liaison officers for enforcement.

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## AREAS OF DIVERGENCE

### Areas of Divergences

- Policy and Institutional Framework- Participants agreed that the measures are to be put into place in the form of stronger regulations and policies to transform food systems. However, others argued that efforts should be focused on awareness raising and public outreach that focuses on personal responsibility in order to generate action and not to rely on governments and/or donor funded programmes to initiate change.

- Healthy and Sustainable Diets – While many participants acknowledged that there is a need to increase awareness on healthy lifestyles, others objected that even with the dissemination and uptake of this information by the public the main challenge is the being able to afford healthy food options due to the exorbitant costs of imported food in Nauru.

- Price control of Goods- This was identified as one of the major influences to purchasing decisions for Nauruans. Participants acknowledged that Nauruans spend most of their income on food, and that consumers are restricted to purchase healthier options due to high prices that fluctuate regularly. Others objected that consumer preferences are largely influenced by social media the internet and the availability of cheaper imported goods e.g snacks and sugar drinks that are way cheaper than healthier options e.g. Fruits and vegetables.

- Overall, despite contrasting views majority agreed that bottom up and top-down processes along with initiatives at the regional and national level are all factors that are necessary to generate sustainable patterns of actions.

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