

OFFICIAL FEEDBACK FORM

DIALOGUE DATE	Wednesday, 21 July 2021 08:45 GMT +12:00
DIALOGUE TITLE	NATIONAL FOOD SYSTEMS SUMMIT DIALOGUE
CONVENED BY	PERMANENT SECRETARY- RITESH DASS- MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE
DIALOGUE EVENT PAGE	https://summitdialogues.org/dialogue/40102/
DIALOGUE TYPE	Member State
GEOGRAPHICAL FOCUS	Fiji

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

215

PARTICIPATION BY AGE RANGE

0 0-18 42 19-30 130 31-50 38 51-65 5 66-80 80+

PARTICIPATION BY GENDER

93 Male 122 Female Prefer not to say or Other

NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS IN EACH SECTOR

64	Agriculture/crops	13	Education	15	Health care
10	Fish and aquaculture	12	Communication	15	Nutrition
9	Livestock	1	Food processing	13	National or local government
4	Agro-forestry	1	Food retail, markets	1	Utilities
10	Environment and ecology	3	Food industry		Industrial
5	Trade and commerce		Financial Services	38	Other

NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS FROM EACH STAKEHOLDER GROUP

16	Small/medium enterprise/artisan		Workers and trade union
7	Large national business	3	Member of Parliament
2	Multi-national corporation	2	Local authority
8	Small-scale farmer	75	Government and national institution
9	Medium-scale farmer		Regional economic community
3	Large-scale farmer	15	United Nations
18	Local Non-Governmental Organization		International financial institution
7	International Non-Governmental Organization	2	Private Foundation / Partnership / Alliance
4	Indigenous People	2	Consumer group
16	Science and academia	26	Other

2. PRINCIPLES OF ENGAGEMENT

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

Following the 5 Action Track Dialogues, the UN FSS pre-summit National Dialogue was divided into 3 day events of three categories beginning from 21st July, 2021. The theme - Pathways for local food system transformation: How to make them more inclusive. Day one event was curated by National Convenor, Permanent Secretary for Agriculture Mr Ritesh Dass who welcomed UN Resident Coordinator Mr Sanakar and Chief Guest Prime Minister of Fiji- Mr Frank Bainimarama who, officially opened Fiji's pre-summit UN FSS national dialogue to show leadership support and Government's commitment in this very important multi-sectoral dialogue. As this was a People's summit, the following speakers engaged were from diverse backgrounds – previous farmer, exporter and business owner Mr Wah Singh, Chief Operating Officer for RB Patel chain of Supermarkets Mr Deepak Rathod, Vuda Piggery Meats owner and Chairman of Fiji Livestock Association Mr Simon Cole and CEO Consumer Council Ms Seema Shandil. A panel of discussion was held amongst these speakers at which participants were allowed to pose comments and questions using the chat function if unable to speak on the virtual platform. The preparatory meetings occurred daily and supporting agencies such as UN RCO's office, WFP, UN FAO, other Government Ministries highlighted principles of engagement ensuring that they're understood and incorporated into the event Agenda. Participants were encouraged to fully utilize the chat function for valuable comments that needed to be considered. The Permanent Secretary for Rural Maritime Development and National Disaster Management officially closed Day 1 event to ensure recognition of multi sectoral participation.

HOW DID YOUR DIALOGUE REFLECT SPECIFIC ASPECTS OF THE PRINCIPLES?

The dialogue ensured that UN FSS seven principles were observed throughout the Pre- summit National Dialogue that the seven (7) Principles of Engagement were observed throughout the dialogue curation process and its preparatory meetings. They were reflected in the Agenda and in careful consideration of participants from diverse backgrounds. The need to act with urgency, commit to the summit, respect for all views and individuals was included in the development of the multi-sectoral preparatory committee meetings, acknowledgement of complexity in our food systems was highlighted by through panel discussions, embrace multi-stakeholder inclusivity was clinched to so that a balanced view from participants was reached amicably, complement the work of others and build trust among participants. This was evident when participants from the areas of science, business, policy, health care and academia, farmers, youth and women organisation, consumer groups, market vendors and environmental activists. The pre-summit provided an opportunity to be innovative, connect with stakeholders and broaden opportunity for partnerships. Build Trust – the dialogues were curated and facilitated in a safe space that promoted trust and encouraged mutual respect for ideas and discussion.

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

The Pre- Summit Principles of Engagement are an important guidance for Fiji in the curation of its national dialogue. The National Dialogue and its Principles encouraged Fiji to think innovatively, transformative and to draw on the wisdom of a diverse group of stakeholders and partners to explore solutions in our food systems, and to help advance Progress on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The Principles were used to guide different stages of Fiji's national dialogue preparatory process and assisted in the identification of participants and stakeholders to ensure inclusivity and diversity. The Principles also assisted in facilitating discussions to ensure that all views were respectfully heard and that any divergent views arising at any stage of the process were taken into consideration and recorded.

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

The UN FSS Pre-summit event was curated through multiple preparatory meetings amongst the various agencies that were in the preparation committee. This included Ministry of Agriculture Policy staff, Ministry of Fisheries staff, Ministry of Health staff, WFP, UNFAO, UNRCO's office, REDDR, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Office of the Prime Minister and Ministry of Economy. The Agenda was developed in agreement with all members of the multi sectoral preparatory committee and observed all the seven principles of engagement. The pre-summit dialogue 2021 was conducted at a crucial time as the country battled its second wave of the COVID-19 pandemic with restrictive measures and lockdowns. This makes this Food Systems Summit even more crucial to Fiji as it enables the country to study the challenges exposed or exacerbated by the COVID crisis and to find transformative solutions to emerge and build back better. This is the first of the three day event held on Wednesday 21st July, 2021. The main goal of the dialogue is "Pathway for local food system transformative perspectives of different stakeholders." Curation and Methodology: As this was a People's summit, this day one event included the engagement of the following speakers who were from diverse backgrounds – previous farmer, exporter and business owner Mr Wah Singh, Chief Operating Officer for RB Patel chain of Supermarkets Mr Deepak Rathod, Vuda Piggery Meats owner and Chairman of Fiji Livestock Association Mr Simon Cole and CEO Consumer Council Ms Seema Shandil. A panel of discussion was held amongst these speakers at which participants were allowed to pose comments and questions using the chat function if unable to speak on the virtual platform. In compliance with country's COVID-19 restrictions, the Fiji national dialogue was a three and a half (3 1/2) session virtually curated on the Zoom platform, using a participatory method of wide, multi-sectoral stakeholder engagement. More than one hundred participants took part in the dialogue that was officially opened by the Hon Prime Minister of Fiji Hon. Frank Bainimarama. This signified a strong commitment from leadership and Government as a whole ensuring openness and forward looking multi sectoral discussions. The platform encouraged participants to use the chat box function for comments, criticism and questions. The session was fully recorded and the panel discussion was immediately carried out with the above stakeholders to ease reference of pathway for local food system transformative perspectives following which there were two questions allowed for each speaker. The moderator for the panel discussion was moderated by Ram Bajkael who was Director Flour Mills of Fiji. The moderator is a motivational speaker and encouraged open respectful dialogue that were built with trust. Participants were impressed by the level of Professionalism and were able to realize their role and its importance in the food system. This was the first time organisations both large and small were represented in the pre-summit dialogue.

4. DIALOGUE FOCUS & OUTCOMES

MAJOR FOCUS

There were a total of three presenters that were engaged on Day 1 of the UN FSS pre-summit event. The resource persons were engaged in the discussion panel which was moderated by motivational speaker and Director of Flour Mills of Fiji – Mr Ram Baejkal. This day one event included the engagement of the following speakers who were from diverse backgrounds – previous farmer, exporter and business owner Mr Wah Singh, Chief Operating Officer for RB Patel chain of Supermarkets Mr Deepak Rathod, Vuda Piggery Meats owner and Chairman of Fiji Livestock Association Mr Simon Cole and CEO Consumer Council Ms Seema Shandil. A panel of discussion was held amongst these speakers at which participants were allowed to pose comments and questions using the chat function if unable to speak on the virtual platform.

The summary of Mr Wah Sing's presentation discussion began with what he believed to be a massive decline in Agriculture resulting from Fiji's reliance on imported Agricultural inputs. Mr Wah Sing claimed that though rehabilitation is taking place they end up in unmitigated decline with pasture for instance. The speaker further stated that policy failures also contribute to the decline in production. Other factors like socio culture factors such as losing market access in Thailand for Ginger is also a contributing factor. However, overseas bilateral agreements can be encouraged to provide preferential spaces for Fiji's Agricultural export commodities/goods. Another concern raised by Mr Sing is the need for us to protect our environment, re-assign local authority areas (enlarge municipal areas), provide more incentives for the rural areas but specifically asked participants to begin in small scale and focus on increasing yields and productivity.

The next speaker Mr Deepak Rathod stated that consumption is subject to demand and supply and Supermarket goods compliment roadside market supplies. However, in the Supermarket, grocery shops would like to mark Green, Orange and Red Zones to signify what foods are good for you and what is not. However, Mr Rathod states that retailers are exploring means of how this improvement can be made easier, what policies need to be made to enable this encouraging people to move towards consuming a more healthy life style. Mr Rathod also stated that healthy choices are more expensive so consumers preference is towards unhealthy choices due to its price. Another tax that exists to signal this preference (for junk food) is sugar tax.

The third presenter is Vuda Piggery Meats owner and Chairman of Fiji Livestock Association Mr Simon Cole. The speaker Mr Cole insisted that the approach that should be undertaken now is targeted at leaving no one behind particularly when 40% of total employees in Fiji directly work in the Agriculture Sector. The Government should in its UN FSS proposal consider more research undertaken is to focus on Livestock and Crops pests and diseases and that there should be more trainings undertaken for these research results (Research on Pests and Diseases). Moreover, presenter Mr Cole stated that livestock farmers are price takers and that there should be some restructure made to support farmers with their livestock sales. The presenter also stated that in Fiji, 20% of livestock losses are through thefts on the farm which could be solved through better structural policies which could also maintain the balance from undersupply to oversupply. Another avenue that could be explored is, broadening or expanding bilateral partnership arrangements such as, Melanesian Spearhead Groups where policies could be developed to allow preferential arrangements where premium could be paid for quality meat. Another factor that needed exploring is the farmers relationship with the market and how it can be provided with incentives and intervention to promote quality and safe crops and livestock products.

The fourth panel discussion presenter is, Ms Seema Shandil whose presentation focus on the challenge of people who have lost their sources of livelihoods due to the pandemic that is, loss of employment, loss of income, not able to afford proper food and nutrition for each meal.

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

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

MAIN FINDINGS

A comprehensive exploration of food systems: The discussion undertaken sought to explore priorities and desirable transformations across the food systems 10 years into the future.

Using the SDG as our compass, discussions findings are that in the future food systems accessibility pathway need to be developed, nutritious aspects including prices of food (affordability) following which every potential stakeholder need to participate in the development of the pathway of action. Suggestions received also considered seed and planting material security and organic food production including continued systems dialogue and regular review for improvement. In Fiji, the ratio of Ministry of Agriculture staff at locality level per farm is 1:1000, the future will need a more focused systematic means of ensuring effective service delivery and access to food and nutrition security. It was further discussed that local produce should be prioritized in the pathway.

Another consideration that needed to be prioritised is the use of Organic agro inputs like organic fertiliser and organic pesticides to improve Crop production. The pathway should prioritise reversing land degradation and maintain sustainable land use activities. In the meantime, Government should provide more intervention for subsistence farms, analysis of food chains to promote self-sufficiency providing opportunities for e-commerce options for all including women, girls and other vulnerable groups. The pathway should also consider regenerative agriculture, resilient crops, establish farmer schools in localities as a means of technology transfer, improve infrastructure and whole chain supply system, development and enhancement of local contemporary recipes, increase taxes on unhealthy food choices (set nutrient targets), government intervention to develop more holistic coordinated approach that is accountable, product target (quantity and quality, type and detail) specific. Priorities should be according to production analysis with an emphasis on reversing land degradation, reducing negative impacts of climate change, sustainable management, improving smart agriculture and biodiversity. The priorities analysis should have an emphasis on protecting small holder to commercial farmers.

The next set of discussions focussed on priority entry points and opportunities for food system transformations. The outcome of these discussions recommended the instituting of; farmer organisation – dairy sector, middle men in the livestock sector, nature's way cooperative – papaya, vegetables, establishment and improvement of Collection centres for milk also distribution centre, Market vendors associations which is an untapped entry point, Sustainably produce green and blue foods through one health approach...actors within the food supply chain, need to acknowledge and value the role of the environment on soil health, oceans and quality and safe foods...start small with farmer and consumer awareness and the analysis of how much it costs a farmer to produce a particular commodity and then put a unit cost for selling the commodity would be a good start.

Main challenges envisaged discussion outcome resulted in the following: Organising of women farmers cluster group distributed by produce type, MOA to focus on women in the agriculture programs, Staff Turnover should ensure smooth transition of work, training needs analysis should be undertaken regularly to identify capacity and capability, collaborative work encouraged between producers and players in the value and supply chain. Agriculture as the new sexy- people are able to provide for their family and make it more lively as the industry as getting older, digitise agriculture, prioritise proper record keeping among farmers, encourage value addition and create market access for sustainable sources of livelihoods, build resilience through inclusive awareness programs, update Agriculture legislations to support, stimulate and harmonise farming business environment that is globally accepted, implement Hazard Analysis Critical Control points or PRP. HACCP should be enforced through each value chain process (ie growing, harvesting, processing, manufacturing, distributing, merchandising to preparing food for consumption).

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✓	Action Track 3: Boost nature-positive production
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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
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OUTCOMES FOR EACH DISCUSSION TOPIC

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KEYWORDS

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

AREAS OF DIVERGENCE

ACTION TRACKS

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KEYWORDS

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