

OFFICIAL FEEDBACK FORM

DIALOGUE DATE	Thursday, 22 July 2021 08:30 GMT +12:00
DIALOGUE TITLE	National Food Systems Summit Day 2
CONVENED BY	Permanent Secretary -Mr Ritesh Dass- Ministry of Agriculture
DIALOGUE EVENT PAGE	https://summitdialogues.org/dialogue/40151/
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

179

PARTICIPATION BY AGE RANGE

0 0-18 35 19-30 113 31-50 27 51-65 4 66-80 80+

PARTICIPATION BY GENDER

68 Male 111 Female Prefer not to say or Other

NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS IN EACH SECTOR

58	Agriculture/crops	12	Education	10	Health care
14	Fish and aquaculture	5	Communication	16	Nutrition
11	Livestock	0	Food processing	14	National or local government
4	Agro-forestry	0	Food retail, markets	0	Utilities
9	Environment and ecology	1	Food industry	0	Industrial
0	Trade and commerce	1	Financial Services	24	Other

NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS FROM EACH STAKEHOLDER GROUP

14	Small/medium enterprise/artisan	0	Workers and trade union
7	Large national business	2	Member of Parliament
2	Multi-national corporation	1	Local authority
7	Small-scale farmer	66	Government and national institution
7	Medium-scale farmer	0	Regional economic community
0	Large-scale farmer	12	United Nations
17	Local Non-Governmental Organization	0	International financial institution
5	International Non-Governmental Organization	2	Private Foundation / Partnership / Alliance
2	Indigenous People	4	Consumer group
14	Science and academia	17	Other

2. PRINCIPLES OF ENGAGEMENT

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

The Fiji National Food Systems Dialogue was held virtually over three days with the overall theme of discussion on “Pathways for local food system transformation”. The dialogue was curated by the Fiji Ministry of Agriculture (MoA), led by the Fiji Convenor, the Permanent Secretary for Agriculture, Mr Ritesh Dass. Technical support for the dialogue was provided by the UN Food and Agricultural Organisation (FAO) and the World Food Programme (WFP) offices in Suva, Fiji. Recognizing and observing the UNFSS Principles of Engagement, a series of highly consultative, inclusive, preparatory meetings were held in the lead-up to the dialogue with key government ministries and partners such as the Ministry of Fisheries, Ministry of Health and Medical Services, Ministry of Forestry, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Ministry of Agriculture. The preparatory meetings developed the dialogue themes, agenda, framed questions and topics for discussion, developed group reporting templates to focus and guide group discussions during the dialogue. The theme for Day 2 focused on “Pathways for local food system transformation: How to make them more inclusive” and the programme was officially opened by the Minister for Fisheries, Mr Semi Koroiavesau while the closing remarks was made by the Permanent Secretary for Environment and Waterways, Mr Joshua Wycliffe. The preparatory meetings highlighted the Summit’s Principles of Engagement and ensured that they were understood and incorporated into the format of the dialogue agenda and the identification of participants. In addition to this, participants were sent a URL to register online where they were required to read and agree to the Principles before being able to register. This ensured that everyone read and understood the Principles and committed to the SDGs before participating in the Dialogue. A group of 179 stakeholders participated in the Dialogue from diverse, multi stakeholder backgrounds consisting of government ministries, civil society, international and regional agencies by the participants listing and data.

HOW DID YOUR DIALOGUE REFLECT SPECIFIC ASPECTS OF THE PRINCIPLES?

As highlighted above, the Fiji National Food Systems Dialogue ensured that the UNFSS seven Principles of Engagement were observed throughout the dialogue curation process and its preparatory meetings. They were reflected in the development of the dialogue agenda and in the careful selection of participants from a diverse range of stakeholders. The need to (i) act with urgency, (ii) commit to the Summit and show (iii) respect for all views and individuals were highlighted throughout the dialogue preparatory process, and were endorsed by stakeholders during the dialogue as well. The (iv) acknowledgement of complexity in our food systems was highlighted, particularly in the context of Fiji and the Pacific, where the food we eat not only brings together as families and communities – it also connects us back to the land and sea, where our food is traditionally sourced from. Transformation therefore, would require a systemic multi-stakeholder approach, taking into account the fragility of our food systems and unique vulnerabilities to factors such as climate, environment, biodiversity and food safety challenges etc. (v) Embrace multi-stakeholder inclusivity (vi) Complement the work of others – This was reflected in the diverse group of 179 participants who were part of the multi-stakeholder national dialogue - from areas of science, business, policy, healthcare and academia, farmers, youth and women’s organisations, consumer groups and environmental activists. The dialogue provided an opportunity to ‘think outside the box’ and share innovative thinking, connect stakeholders and broaden partnerships. (vii) Build trust - The dialogues was curated and facilitated in a way to ensure a “safe space”, promote trust and encourage mutual respect for ideas and discussion.

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

The Summit Principles of Engagement served as important guidance for Fiji in the curation of its dialogues across all the three days. The Principles encouraged Fiji to think innovative, 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). In addition, the Principles were used to guide different stages of Fiji’s 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 heard and respected and that any divergent views arising at any stage of the process were taken into consideration, listened to with respect 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

4. DIALOGUE FOCUS & OUTCOMES

MAJOR FOCUS

The Fiji National Food Systems Dialogue on Day 2 – “Pathways for local food system transformation: How to make them more inclusive” was held virtually on July 22nd, 2021 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.

Curation and Methodology – In compliance with the country’s COVID-19 restrictions, Day 2 of the Fiji National Food Systems Dialogue was virtually curated on the Zoom platform and created a lot of participatory method of wide, multi-sectoral stakeholder engagement. In addition, interaction and platforms such as Zoom chat box were busily engaged to crowdsource questions from participants throughout the duration of the four-hour dialogue. One hundred and seventy-nine participants took part in the dialogue that was officially opened by the Minister of Fisheries, Mr Semi Koroilavesau. Participants represented government ministries, development agencies, UN agencies, civil society, international institutions, Pacific regional agencies, farmers, women’s groups, youth groups, international NGOs and academia. Prior to the dialogue, participants received the following from the Secretariat: (i) Invitation to participate in the dialogue (ii) Dialogue Agenda (iii) Reporting template identifying questions and topics for discussion groups

Dialogue Format for Day 2

- Registration of participants (online in advance and on the day itself)

- Welcome address

- Official opening address by the Minister of Fisheries

- Introduction to the dialogue (Video on the Summit by Dr Agnes Kalibata)

Presentations on Day 2 - “Pathways for local food system transformation: How to make them more inclusive.”

- Food systems transformation, that boost opportunities for women and youth participation across different elements

- The role of food environments on healthy diets

- Women Inclusiveness- Inequity in food systems

- Young people our future - key to transforming Fiji’s food systems

- Blue Food

Questions to speakers

Discussion groups focussed on different themes where discussions were reported and recorded by rapporteurs;

Breakout Session 1- Women’s Inclusiveness in the Food System

- Question 1: What are the desirable transformations across the food system for women in 10 year’s time?

- Question 2: Main entry points and opportunities to enhance women’s participation in food system?

- Question 3: Main barriers/challenges limiting women’s participation in food system?

- Question 4: What are other vulnerabilities relevant for food system transformation that have not been considered

Breakout Session 2 - Youth Transformation

- Question 1: What are the desirable transformations across the food system for youth in 10 years’ time?

- Question 2: Main entry points and opportunities to enhance youth participation in the food system?

- Question 3: Main barriers/challenges limiting youth participation in the food system?

- Question 4: What are other vulnerabilities relevant for food system transformation that have not been considered?

Breakout Session 3 - Rural Communities and Informal Settlements

- Question 1: What are the desirable transformations across the food system for rural communities and informal settlements in 10 years’ time?

- Question 2: Main entry points and opportunities to enhance rural communities and informal settlements participation in the food system?

- Question 3: What barriers/challenges do we foresee in the implementation of these measures?

- Question 4: What are other vulnerabilities relevant for food system transformation (availability/access to land, COVID-19) that have not been considered?

Participation and Engagement – Through crowdsourcing, zoom chat, zoom breakout discussion groups, plenary reports/discussions and presentations. Group reporting templates were also shared with participants to review following the dialogue to allow them the opportunity to include any information that may have been missed out by rapporteurs

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 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 |

MAIN FINDINGS

“Pathways for local food system transformation: How to make them more inclusive.”

a) Food systems transformation, that boost opportunities for women and youth participation across different elements
The Basa exchange concept is based on Fiji can Feed Fiji. This is a return to the traditional trading systems where the concept of “solesolevaki” is employed by rural and remote communities in the Western part of Fiji by coming together to supply fresh root crops, fruits and vegetables to boost nutritional needs for those in lockdown and containment zones and support each other during these difficult times. This Basa exchange also promote circular economy where funding comes from the aid sector, crops are purchased from the community at village gate and shared to those who are in containment and lockdown areas. At the end of the day, this community goes to small shops in town or in their communities to buy things that they need, supporting of social circular economy during this pandemic. Through the growth of e-commerce and wholesale export opportunities, critical progress is made in establishing new markets to maintain market access during this pandemic.

b) The role of food environments on healthy diets

In a recent research carried out by USC and FAO FIRST Programme, they found that there has been changes to diets, in both rural and urban populations in Fiji. This research also found that there was a high availability of ‘unhealthy’, or highly processed/nutrient poor foods around schools e.g 80% of outlets sold sugar sweetened beverages, 60% sold lollies and very few outlets sold fruits and vegetables. Vulnerable groups esp children need attention and there is a need for multisectoral engagement and collaboration of all the school stakeholders.

Some school interventions have worked in other countries such as; use of clear and accurate dietary guidelines/school meal standards, monitoring and sustainability of guideline implementation + sustainability of the program, better outcomes when interventions are based on scientific evidence and facilitate access to healthy + appealing meals and snacks, replacement of highly processed foods with healthier alternatives, focus on fruit has better outcomes, social inequalities must be addressed, environment surrounding schools is important.

A few entry points for intervention may include a comprehensive school feeding program, establish nutrition standards for boarding school meals, establish adequately resourced support, monitoring, enforcement and reporting mechanisms to promote their implementation. Consider opportunities for school food and nutrition initiatives to promote nutrition, economic and environmental outcomes. Increase awareness of the Fiji food and health guidelines for healthy living (in schools and communities) and develop simple messages for children and parents. Progress draft regulations to control the marketing of foods and non-alcoholic drinks to children.

c) Young people is our future- key to transforming Fiji’s food systems

In transforming Fiji’s food system, we need to start now if we want to get it right with the future. In the past few months during the UN Food System Summit, we heard the important role of stakeholders including the private sector in transforming our food systems. We need all the voices to be heard - the most affected farmers, fishers, women and girls, youths and indigenous people, to be at the centre of the discussion. Education and awareness is critical for our young people from young age, efforts to strengthen training of our traditional leaders for land owing unit for the protection of our biodiversity, change the mindset of our youths that push to white/bluecollar jobs and relegate farmers and fishers jobs.

National efforts to transform our food systems must include voices of young people and genuine efforts to meaningfully engage them, who brings with them innovative ideas and solutions. Together with digital technologies and community best practices for our young generation we can catalyse efforts to improve some of the challenges around data collection, monitoring and enhancing multi-sectoral coordination. Private sector support for our young entrepreneurs is also important in the area of food security and food systems.

d) Transformation Pathway of Local Blue Food System

Diversity of blue food resources - finfish, shellfish and seaweeds. Value addition and preservation of functional blue foods are some of the pathways to transform blue foods. In Fiji, research into seaweeds (nama) for beauty products and shellfish-sea urchins for processing and scoping for market access has been carried out. Other student research has been done on Sea weeds (Climate Change, Carrageenan & Agar) and Ciguatera Fish Poisoning.

Some of the suggested transformative approaches to blue food is the determination and extraction of bioactive compounds e.g. Omega 3 – from seafoods and applications in food processing and value-adding and anti-oxidant compounds – e.g. anti-cancer. Determination and extraction of other functional compounds – carrageenan, gelatin, pectin and agar. Determination of blue functional foods with identified markets, where participation of women and youth could be enhanced e.g. sea urchin and sea grapes processing. Functional Blue Foods could be the game changer in this Food System Transformation Approach for the Pacific Ocean Island Communities.

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OUTCOMES FOR EACH DISCUSSION TOPIC

Women transformation

Fiji has a delicate food system where women come last. Women should not only be treated as beneficiaries but be given equal opportunities and awareness should be done to men on the critical role women play in society especially when they make up majority of workforce in Agriculture (farm level).

Traditional structure is a barrier where there is a lack of participation from women in important decision-making issues such as land, property rights, finance, education, farming, family, food, culture and other social norms. Land tenure decision making is dominated by men. Women are natural food gatherers but we never value as important because it is part of women's role in Fiji.

Digital inclusion of rural communities add value to the food supply chain. It will open avenues for entrepreneurship and promotion of products that different villages specialize in. Being digitally inclusive helps women use digital platforms for health, education, entrepreneurship and vital information for productive farming for planning, financial management and marketing skills.

Financial management should be designed according to the need of farmers. Women drive a critical role in accessing finance. Rural women lack the capacity and knowledge of value adding to transform the food system effectively using fresh foods around them. Creating short videos is recommended to assist these women.

Government to take the leading role to ensure less advertisement of unhealthy foods and more on healthy foods. More participation of women in food safety, training and implementation in the community settings, food wastes from schools, households and markets to be put to good use such as animal feeds.

In coastal areas, most coastal fisheries are operated by women and there is a need for financial assistance, training, market opportunities and promote value adding, more collaboration with researchers, government and NGO and financial institutions. Enhance participation by targeting whole rural communities especially women and youths to ensure they understand what we want to do.

Youth Transformation

A key barrier for youth participation particularly in the pacific is social and cultural dimensions. Need to better understand the aspirations of the youths, differentiated by gender, class, ethnicity and other forms of differences, to enable sustainable food systems - through regular engagements as dialogues or think tanks and incorporate these into institutional planning for government agencies and organizations.

Encourage and develop leaders in the community that actively include youths in the food systems such as Nayarabale Youths are encouraged to plant village land and were able to sell crops worth \$66,000.00. Raising awareness amongst youth on the importance of growing your own foods and empowering them to take up ideas that are practical to them.

Education programs through technical institutions on food systems curriculum specifically developed to address the challenge of increased literacy and capacity in the food systems and get champions to show Youths how we can promote Youth involvement. Food Science and Technology has been marketed, thoughts have been placed on how we can entice Youths to join Food Science and Technology.

Rural Communities and Informal Settlements

Communities need to take ownership of initiatives in the food systems and to ensure that roles and responsibilities can be clearly understood by all to allow sustainability. Recognize community local/traditional knowledge and include new approaches to complement this knowledge.

Human resource is an ongoing issue while capacity and interest is a huge challenge. Sustainability of programs is a challenge due to limited resources - more complex food and value adding systems, lack of funding support and lack of community collaboration in policy formulation.

Gap assessment in rural and informal settlement participation in food system is to enable us to look at vulnerability through an intersectional lens (e.g. gender, ethnicity, economic status, (dis)ability). Adhere to what already works well in communities, promote a participatory approach e.g.

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AREAS OF DIVERGENCE

Women

Unhealthy candies are sold at school canteens since they are appealing to children, however, the same candies could be produced using fructose as substitute of sucrose. Other countries use other substitute for sucrose such as coconut sugar etc, so lot of scope in these areas as well

Sugar which has for decades tied up good agricultural land and the same land could be used to feed Fiji if government could revisit the international agreements on sugar.

Equitable livelihoods, building resilience to vulnerabilities, shocks and stress. COVID restrictions including border closure has left women with less choice but to sell produce cheaply from nearest town where food prices are high in the supermarket.

Youth

Government has an important role to play in encouraging young people to participate in redesigning our food systems - whether by making agriculture more appealing through new technologies or making the system financial rewarding. Perhaps run a Food System Game Changer campaign? But it needs to be appropriate and practical and also needs to be evaluated.

Rural Communities and Informal Settlements

Land issues in informal settlement can be a concern, since it's difficult for women to acquire land as an asset and access to most government led initiatives requires ownership of land and women and minority groups in rural communities lose out on such opportunities.

Informal settlements need better organised landscape but people don't have landscaping knowledge. Trees usually need more time to grow than crops and technical knowledge on soil rehab, food forestry systems, processing methodology, product development & marketing is required.

Access to soil improvement resources. Sand is often mentioned to use for drainage improvement, but the sand would need to be mined from rivers, thereby degrading the river ecosystems ... Fiji doesn't have things like perlite readily available!

Availability and accessibility of arable land and basic agricultural inputs for communities in rural areas and informal settlement that plays a major role in ensuring food security for women and households in the communities.

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