

# OFFICIAL FEEDBACK FORM

<b>DIALOGUE DATE</b>	Thursday, 3 June 2021 10:00 GMT +06:00
<b>DIALOGUE TITLE</b>	Independent Dialogue on "Women in the Food Systems: The Invisible Indispensable"
<b>CONVENED BY</b>	Ramesh Singh, Country Director, CARE Bangladesh
<b>DIALOGUE EVENT PAGE</b>	<a href="https://summitdialogues.org/dialogue/42006/">https://summitdialogues.org/dialogue/42006/</a>
<b>DIALOGUE TYPE</b>	Independent
<b>GEOGRAPHICAL FOCUS</b>	Bangladesh

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    27 19-30    72 31-50    28 51-65    8 66-80    0 80+

### PARTICIPATION BY GENDER

76 Male    57 Female    Prefer not to say or Other

### NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS IN EACH SECTOR

6	Agriculture/crops	8	Education	10	Health care
4	Fish and aquaculture	5	Communication	28	Nutrition
7	Livestock	5	Food processing	10	National or local government
3	Agro-forestry	8	Food retail, markets		Utilities
5	Environment and ecology	4	Food industry	2	Industrial
2	Trade and commerce	5	Financial Services	21	Other

### NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS FROM EACH STAKEHOLDER GROUP

9	Small/medium enterprise/artisan	4	Workers and trade union
6	Large national business		Member of Parliament
	Multi-national corporation	6	Local authority
	Small-scale farmer	18	Government and national institution
	Medium-scale farmer	4	Regional economic community
	Large-scale farmer	10	United Nations
17	Local Non-Governmental Organization	5	International financial institution
33	International Non-Governmental Organization	9	Private Foundation / Partnership / Alliance
	Indigenous People	4	Consumer group
8	Science and academia		Other

## 2. PRINCIPLES OF ENGAGEMENT

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

The dialogue was organized jointly by BRAC, CARE Bangladesh, UNFPA, UN Women and WAVE Foundation where CARE was the lead for organizing the event. The dialogue was organized with inclusive participation of multi stakeholders at all level like national and international development organizations, policy makers, private sector players, farmers and business organizations, civil society alliance, media platform, etc. The dialogue has created space to share the challenges faced by the actors of different stages of food systems so that the challenges are reflected into policy interventions at national level to achieve the SDGs by 2030. The dialogue created scope to share experiences from each of stakeholders that will complement and reinforce the efforts of each other we are paying for a stronger food systems in future. The dialogue also amplifies the voices of grassroots to fit into wider level policy actions. The joint initiative of the dialogue accelerated the process of engagement to promote innovative and new ideas in food systems for systems level changes.

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

The dialogue was conducted virtually due to COVID and was divided into five breakout sessions to discuss about five thematic areas to focus on specific aspects of food systems- i) Impact of COVID-19 on Women in Food Systems and Agriculture ii) Impact of Climate Change and Shocks on Women across the Food Systems and Resilience iii) Social protection and sustainable livelihoods for women through resilient food systems iv) Young Girls and Women and their SRHR in the context of Food Systems and Climate Change v) Access to Productive Resources for Women in Agriculture as Producers and Farm Laborers. The group discussion brought out a diverse perspectives of government and communities including indigenous practices, science based evidence that enable stakeholders to understand and assess potentials to design policy options.

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

The principles of engagement are found very useful as a set of guiding notes to organize such event with multi-stakeholders participation. The principles of engagement support the organizers to align with the vision and objectives of the summit. So, it has been advised for other Dialogue Conveners to follow and practice the principles at all level of the summit.

# 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

Women play critical roles in ensuring food security and proper nutrition of families. According to the Labor Force Survey (2016-17), women account for nearly half of the work force in agriculture and nearly 3/4th of the rural female work force is engaged in agriculture in Bangladesh. Despite their crucial role in delivering food security, women are common victims to malnutrition, unhealthy food consumptions, lack of accessibility to necessary healthcare services among other crises. It is essential to recognize the position and challenges of women and formulate action plans accordingly to ensure a sustainable and inclusive food system for the society.

This dialogue focused on one of the levers of change of the Summit, which is gender (<https://www.un.org/en/food-systems-summit/levers-of-change>); that elevate gender equality, women's empowerment and the engagement of women across all Action Tracks that includes; women's rights to land; economic empowerment of women in food systems; unpaid care and agricultural labour burden; women's leadership in food systems; access to technologies (including digital); changing norms and addressing institutional barriers; and gender-responsive agricultural and food systems policies.

Women in rural areas of developing countries are at a disadvantage due to the fact that they do not have access to the same opportunities or resources as men owing to stereotype issues based on gender. There is a gender gap as regards access to certain resources such as: land, energy, technology, loans, and pesticides

(<file:///C:/Users/NAZNEE~1.RAH/AppData/Local/Temp/Dialnet-TheRoleOfWomenInFoodSecurity-4229912.pdf>). Similarly in Bangladesh, there is however wage disparity between men and women and gender gap in the nature of employment. And even, in Bangladesh, women farmers face constraints in expanding their production, as they do not have equal rights over land. Property rights of women and girls fall mainly in the domain of family laws. Most of the family laws including Muslim and Hindu inheritance laws are discriminatory against women. Rules and procedures of khas (public) land distribution also often disempower women. As per Khas land management and distribution policy, single women and widows are not eligible to apply for khas land unless they have "an able-bodied son". Only 15.8% of rural land is owned by women; while one-fourth of that land is effectively controlled by them. The ownership ratio of water-bodies by women is also very insignificant

(<https://www.thedailystar.net/round-tables/news/womens-contribution-agriculture-and-access-land-covid-19-and-beyond-2040253>). Women constitute almost half of the agricultural labor force of Bangladesh, but they still do not have official recognition as farmers. As a result, they also do not have access to the various resources and services that they are deserving of Official recognition of women as farmers, with proper means of identification such as agriculture card is required. For decades, there has been wage discrimination between male and female agriculture laborers. Setting minimum wage rates for agriculture labor (with proper grading for different works) should be in place to eliminate such discrimination. Government has introduced agriculture cards to give farmers better access to inputs and other facilities, but women's limited access to these not only denies them access to a wide range of agricultural services, but also depicts the policy level failure to give women farmers the due recognition they deserve. Restructuring of agricultural policies and management is required to bring all women farmers under the coverage of farmers' cards. Private sector partners (banks, mobile financial service providers) can help GoB to enhance such coverage and access.

Experts shared these observations through the discussion during the dialogue and this event will support developing a national vision for the future of women in the food system. This dialogue focused on challenges to discuss and proposed the way forward to mitigate the prevailing gaps.

### 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

The dialogue arranged separate discussions focused around impact of COVID-19 on women in food systems, impact of climate change and shocks on women, social protection and sustainable livelihood for women, young girls and women in Climate Change, food systems and sexual and reproductive health rights, access to productive resources for women in agriculture. The following overall recommendations came out from the dialogue:

- Recognizing women as 'farmer' to ensure access to farm loans, basic services and government incentives/stimulus package
- Women friendly mechanization can help reduce women's workload
- Women friendly transportation can help secure women's mobility.
- Consultation with wider stakeholder groups e.g. non-govt. stakeholders may result in better policy outcome
- Ensuring access of women smallholder farmers or agri-entrepreneurs to COVID-19 Stimulus Package with affordable terms and conditions
- Special Package (Finance and Policy Support) for women entrepreneurs needed to inspire and engage them with advanced stages of agri-value chain (besides the production level)
- Ensuring medical education, sexual and reproductive health rights (SRHR) and food security rights for gender diverse populations like transgender and marginalized populations like sex workers; there should be designated doctors in every hospital to provide basic medical support to this group
- Integration of SRHR needed into strengthening food systems and climate adaptation strategies
- Women rights need to be protected according to the existing Hindu Family Law
- Inject regulation to reduce labor discrimination, increase women's engagement in the commercial business, bank loan for female farmers and other one stop services

### ACTION TRACKS

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## OUTCOMES FOR EACH DISCUSSION TOPIC - 1/5

### Impact of COVID-19 on Women in Food Systems and Agriculture:

#### Challenges:

- Production vs harvest: Changes in market demand forced many farmers not to yield crops from the field. Women dairy and vegetable farmers were badly hit. (CARE survey 2020)
- Volatile market and disrupted supply chain: Women smallholder farmers could not sell major portion of their produce including vegetable, milk due to lockdown in 1st and 2nd phases. Livestock are half sold during the Eid-ul Azha. Women's mobility and access to market further affected. (CARE survey 2020)
- Income erosion and unemployment: 1.08 million jobs were lost. Wage and salary declined from 33% to 49% in major metropolis. (CPD-BILS study 2021)
- Food Consumption: FAO described this "crisis within a crisis" for the malnourished population. Price of staple food increases. Women including poor households have to skip meals. Increased school dropout, child marriage become inevitable,
- Unpaid care work and violence against women: Women burden of UCW along with domestic violence increased amid pandemic (MJF 2020).

#### Recommendation:

- Recognizing women as 'farmer' will provide access to farm loan, basic services and government incentives/ stimulus package.
- Transforming conventional social safety net program into Universal Social Protection in the form of income transfer and health insurance for poor including women headed household/ disadvantaged women.
- Expanding and deepening public food distribution system (PFDS) for rural and urban informal workers and farmers considering nutrition and health needs of women and children. Provisions could be created for home delivery of mid-day meals during school closure.
- Promote rural e-commerce and alternative transportation and supply chain to protect women smallholder farmers/ family farms.
- Initiate 'minimum price support' mechanism to protect the interest of farmers.
- State should recognize care work and undertake initiatives to redistribute the burden of care work.

### ACTION TRACKS

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## OUTCOMES FOR EACH DISCUSSION TOPIC - 2/5

Impact of Climate Change and Shocks on Women across the Food Systems and Resilience :

Challenges:

- Existing policies did not recognize women's roles as farmers.
- Differentiated power relations between men and women undermined their adaptive capacity.
- Women are adversely affected by climate change due to their social roles, economic vulnerabilities, discrimination and poverty.
- Limited access to technology, marketing and presence in the market place due to women-friendly environment.
- Decreases women's food security and protection due to Climate Change
- Inadequate information on women farmers' contribution in the economy/GDP
- Insufficient gender budget and budget expenditure monitoring

Recommendation:

- Tailored-made weather report should be made accessible for women farmers. Also, they should be equipped to undertake appropriate decision through understanding, assessing and analyzing the situation/report effectively.
- More context specific climate-sensitive crop advisory services, easily accessible women-friendly climate-resilient technology, usage of ICT, financial package such as loans, card, insurance etc. should be made available for women farmers to increase overall agricultural activities particularly stemming from female farmers.
- Incorporate women's opinion into various relevant policy planning, formulation and implementation processes.
- Provide an appropriate platform to render women raise their concerns on climate change and agriculture.
- Engage women in the overall food processing, packaging and gaining access to market.

### ACTION TRACKS

	Action Track 1: Ensure access to safe and nutritious food for all
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✓	Action Track 5: Build resilience to vulnerabilities, shocks and stress

### KEYWORDS

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



## OUTCOMES FOR EACH DISCUSSION TOPIC - 3/5

Social protection and sustainable livelihoods for women through resilient food systems

Challenges:

- Women lack ownership of resources and access to inputs and support services
- The COVID-19 pandemic crisis has magnified these challenges and women are struggling to secure food, since production has been affected due to limited availability of agricultural inputs and services as well as labor force.

Recommendation:

- Need to ensure that women have effective land ownership so that they have the necessary decision making power as well as control over the food production system and process
- Need to provide them necessary training, productive resources (e.g. land, loan, technology), marketing facility, information, and technology support;
- Inclusion criteria: according to household service data analysis, some indicators have been -proposed to understand ultra-poor, poor these have been included into directives, there are four pillars in food security these need to be aligned with social security and it should be added & reflected.
- Women friendly mechanization is also required to reduce the work load of women
- Need to create enabling initiatives for securing women's mobility through women friendly transportation.
- The policy makers need to change their thought process and support them appropriately by conducting a consultation along with the NGOs and other organizations
- Indigenous women needs to recognition as farmers and access the relevant services; also get coverage in the social protection programs.

### ACTION TRACKS

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## OUTCOMES FOR EACH DISCUSSION TOPIC - 4/5

### Young Girls and Women and their SRHR in the context of Food Systems and Climate Change

#### Challenges:

- Climate change have severe development and humanitarian consequences:
- Declining agricultural yields and food production and increased poverty is a huge challenges
- Increased poverty and food insecurity driven by climate-related loss of livelihoods will also increase maternal and neonatal morbidity and mortality
- Woman's household roles – more responsibility for obtaining clean water, requiring more time and travel by women and girls
- Menstruating girls without access to water and sanitary facilities at school are much more likely to drop out of school
- Girls no longer in school are at risk of child marriage, especially in economically difficult times

#### Recommendation:

- Research should be conducted on the gaps of and interlinkages between climate change, food systems and SRHR for the women and young girls particularly who live in climate affected coastal areas, slums etc.
- Ensure SRHR and food security in community level for the young girls who are school drop outs or for the girls who are victims of early marriage
- Ensure medical education, SRHR and food security rights for gender diverse populations like transgender, and marginalized populations like sex workers. There should be designated doctors in every hospital for them to give them the basic medical supports
- Digital information and device accessibility should be increased in both rural and urban areas. Every deprived woman in slums and rural area should be trained and motivated to the use of digital information and devices. Ensuring the digital security is also a very important factor to take in consideration.
- Integration of SRHR into strengthening food systems and climate adaptation strategies
- Strengthen individual and community resilience on the issue
- Cross fertilization b/w youth network on SRHR and youth network on climate change and food systems
- Identify potential protection systems (e.g., education) that can help to reduce child marriage, GBV, etc.
- Prepare for growing climate-related displacement, ensuring supports for women and girls and mitigating protection risks
- Need to build strong data systems for climate vulnerability, food systems and adaptive capacity, especially for the women and girls

#### ACTION TRACKS

- |   |  |
|---|--|
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#### KEYWORDS

- |   |                           |   |                         |
|---|---------------------------|---|-------------------------|
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|   |                           | ✓ | Environment and Climate |

## OUTCOMES FOR EACH DISCUSSION TOPIC - 5/5

### Access to Productive Resources for Women in Agriculture as Producers and Farm Laborers

#### Challenges:

- Despite significant contribution, women have no sectoral recognition, they are not counted in the GDP;
- Women have poorer command over productive resources;
- A male worker gets BDT 265 to 352 per day while women get only BDT 182 to 214 for the same work; wage discrimination is a challenge and wage inequality has further aggravated during this COVID-19 pandemic

#### Recommendation:

- To ensure joint ownership both for women and men on khas land. If needed, necessary amendment in the laws and priority for women-headed family in allocation
- Recognition of women farmers in all policies including the Seed Policy
- Ensure participation of women in all national committees including the Food Safety Authority
- Initiatives for implementing Agriculture Policy addressing women farmers
- To ensure land reformation for women's land rights
- To ensure capital support for women for participating in value chain mechanism
- To establish female market corner in those places where women can get access easily and arrangement of women friendly environment (toilet, breast-feeding corner, etc.)
- Provide government facilities (loan, input support, training etc.) for women Agri-producers
- To ensure women participation in market committees
- To increase women participation in commercial agriculture
- Initiatives for abolish the wage discrimination between women and men laborers
- Social awareness and movement are essential for ensuring women rights in land and changing cultural values on women mobility
- Political process on women farmers' rights is essential
- Media should play a crucial role to construct the gender role in the society
- To establish one-stop service centers for women producers/entrepreneurs
- E-commerce regulatory framework should be introduced
- Information should be enriched and available on commercial agriculture
- To work together among relevant all stakeholder (government, non-government, CSOs, commercial sectors, etc.)

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## AREAS OF DIVERGENCE

- Contribution of women in food production and agricultural farming practices should be well recognized which was an extensive debate in the dialogue.
- A diverse range of discussion was taken place in the dialogue about ensured market so that the farmers can sell their produces at better price round the year. This is very crucial and prioritized issue for the farmers' community. The experts shared their views about access to market through facilitating market linkages, community branding of products, collection hub at rural community, etc.
- Safe food production and nutrition awareness and training have been discussed as one of the priority issues
- Financial inclusion – farmers' friendly credit facilities should be ensured to optimize production and the use of appropriate inputs at the right time. Flexible repayment system is a critical factors for the agricultural farming households. Due to collateral and complex formal banking procedures, smallholder farmers are lagging behind to avail formal banking services at rural level.
- A discussion was held on Strengthening the Public Private Partnership (PPP) across the food systems that needs to be considered for a greater impact and sustainability which includes both backward and forward market linkages.

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