

OFFICIAL FEEDBACK FORM

DIALOGUE DATE	Friday, 5 November 2021 15:00 GMT +08:00
DIALOGUE TITLE	Malaysia and Singapore Food Systems: Improve Accessibility of Positive Nutrition in Malaysia
CONVENED BY	Unilever Food Solutions
DIALOGUE EVENT PAGE	https://summitdialogues.org/dialogue/43910/
DIALOGUE TYPE	Independent
GEOGRAPHICAL FOCUS	Malaysia

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

76

PARTICIPATION BY AGE RANGE

0-18

16

19-30

57

31-50

3

51-65

66-80

80+

PARTICIPATION BY GENDER

36 Male

40 Female

Prefer not to say or Other

NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS IN EACH SECTOR

Agriculture/crops
Fish and aquaculture
Livestock
Agro-forestry
2 Environment and ecology
Trade and commerce

2 Education
Communication
Food processing
5 Food retail, markets
65 Food industry
Financial Services

Health care
Nutrition
National or local government
Utilities
Industrial
2 Other

NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS FROM EACH STAKEHOLDER GROUP

5 Small/medium enterprise/artisan
Large national business
65 Multi-national corporation
Small-scale farmer
Medium-scale farmer
Large-scale farmer
Local Non-Governmental Organization
International Non-Governmental Organization
Indigenous People
Science and academia

Workers and trade union
Member of Parliament
Local authority
2 Government and national institution
Regional economic community
United Nations
International financial institution
Private Foundation / Partnership / Alliance
Consumer group
4 Other

2. PRINCIPLES OF ENGAGEMENT

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

The independent dialogue was organized to include panelists from a diverse background. This allows participants to learn more about the topic from different perspectives and to understand the importance of positive nutrition. The moderator began by discussing with the panelists on the change in dietary behavior during the pandemic and explore on the possible collaboration that can promote healthy eating to the Malaysians. The intent is to inculcate the urgency to act on the issues now and explore the options available to meet this goal. Participants can also voice their opinion or questions through the chat box.

HOW DID YOUR DIALOGUE REFLECT SPECIFIC ASPECTS OF THE PRINCIPLES?

The dialogue allows us to better understand the challenges from different stakeholders in the food chain as well as to understand some initiatives taken to promote the delivery of positive nutrition to the consumers. Throughout the discussion, there were various methods to tackle the issue, but we deep dived to the topic of partnership.

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

NIL

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 Independent Dialogue was held over Microsoft Teams meeting where we invited professionals from various industries to share their views on this topic. The dialogue was promoted over several platforms, both internally and externally. Apart from the UN Summit Dialogue webpage, the independent dialogue was shared through the company website, Facebook page and Instagram. This is to amplify the importance of this topic to all our stakeholders. During the dialogue, only the Moderator and the Panelists are screened while the chat box remains open for participants to express their thoughts and questions.

4. DIALOGUE FOCUS & OUTCOMES

MAJOR FOCUS

Improving the individuals' nutrition has been highlighted globally and is one of the keys to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (Good health and well-being). Obesity has become a common issue in Malaysia where 50% of the adults and more than 15% of the children are either overweight or obese. Moreover, one in five Malaysians are diabetic and three in ten are suffering from hypertension. This is highly correlated to the consumption behavior. For instance, 95% of the Malaysian adults are not consuming enough fruits and vegetables and 80% of them are also exceeding the sodium intake daily. Of course, the sugar that was consumed was also beyond what is recommended by the WHO.

The focus of this independent dialogue seeks to understand the term 'positive nutrition' and the key approaches that different stakeholders in the food chain can do to incorporate the valuable nutrients into the consumers' diet. (Action Track 1)

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

From the Nutrition Society's point of view, dietary pattern of the Malaysians have changed through the COVID-19 pandemic. Although many have seen the negative change in dietary pattern, there are also positive changes in some of the Malaysians' diet. For instance, there is a growing awareness on the importance of nutrition such as consuming more nutritious food to build the immunity system against the external viruses. Some changes in behaviors include preparing meals at home, purchasing healthier food and increase the consumption of fruits of vegetables. However, there are also a group of people who has the knowledge of healthy eating yet choose not to practice it. They tend to prefer staying sedentary, have a high reliance on delivery platform and is often snacking. Lastly, the low-income families may have suffered the most during the pandemic. Jobs were lost and food, in general, no longer seemed to be within reach.

From the Food Manufacturer's point of view, the pandemic has caused an acceleration in areas such as health and nutrition where there are an increasing number of consumers that pays attention to the back-of-pack information such as the ingredients. This group of consumers tend to purchase only food which contains ingredients that they recognize. In general, there is a greater understanding on the 'nutrients of concern' and 'nutrients of interest'. Consumers should be educated with the knowledge to read the nutritional labels to know what they are consuming as it makes an impact to their health.

From the food operator's point of view, the past 1.5 years has been an extremely favorable year for food deliveries companies, especially due to the pandemic. Apart from convenience, food deliveries solved the problem for individuals who cannot cook. As a food operator, the major consideration is to ensure that the food taste good while ensuring it is nutritious. Food operators should look for innovative food solutions and the scalability of production for healthy and nutritious ingredients so that there can be a balance between meeting business goals and making a positive impact to the people and environment.

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

OUTCOMES FOR EACH DISCUSSION TOPIC

The nutrients of concerns (negative nutrients) such as calories, sugar, salt, fats, cholesterol has been a problem in Malaysia for more than 30 years. Although we need to pay attention to these nutrients, it does not mean that they are to be omitted completely. Instead, individuals can still consume them in moderation. However, the responsibility lies beyond the consumers, but also to food operators and manufacturers. An option to manage the nutrients consumed is through the portion size.

Food manufacturers has been working on reducing these “negative nutrients” such sugar and salt content while not compromising on the taste. Food manufacturers should avoid advertising to young children in attempt to increase their consumption. Instead, they should ensure that food items are within the WHO’s dietary recommendation for both the children and adults. They can also explore the fortification of 'positive nutrients' into food items. More attention should be placed on consuming these nutrients, such as dietary fibre, which can be found in fruits, wholegrains, etc. As consumers are selective in their food, countries with an abundance of fruits and vegetables may not equate to a healthy nation. For instance, anemia remains to be a major problem in Malaysia.

Having a balanced diet is crucial and more education needs to be done on the topic of food. Understanding the different nutrients can better help individuals attain their goal being healthy, in a sustainable manner. Government regulations and product labelling can be introduced to help individuals make better choices. Food operators and manufacturers have the responsibility to be transparent and provide the nutritional information for the consumers.

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

AREAS OF DIVERGENCE

Healthy foods are often perceived as expensive and less tasty. However, with food innovation and the chef's culinary skills, healthy food can be nutritious yet tasty. Typically, 30% to 40% of the total cost is derived from the raw materials (ingredients). By going directly to the farms and manufacturers, food operators can potentially keep the cost of these 'healthy' ingredients within their budget. Alternatively, food operators can collaborate with manufacturers to ensure that the dish remains affordable to the consumers. It is worth to note that we should avoid riding on food fads and products with health claims that is are not proven.

As consumers have different perception on the word 'healthy', it is crucial that education must be conducted to impart the nutritional knowledge to the general population. This can be done through a multi-stakeholder engagement and collaboration. They can, and should, start from the younger generation, such as students. By collaborating with schools to offer talks, curriculum and redesigning of school canteen menus to inculcate this practice into a habit. Most importantly, actions must be put into practice on a long-term basis.

As for the lower income group, they may not be willing to purchase premium food items which are perceived to be nutritious. Manufacturers and operators can build an item/dish using a more affordable raw material(s), yet meets the nutrients required by the body.

While there is a difference between what the consumer wants (taste and affordability) as compared to the food operators' (profit), the latter needs to understand that overemphasis on profitability might not be sustainable in the long run. Rather, doing good to the consumers and being customer-centric, is the key to ensure that the business remains sustainable. The challenge is to determine what the consumers want before they even know it themselves. In addition, food items must be packed in a manner that is acceptable to the consumers, both visually and affordability.

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

- | | | | |
|-------------------------------------|---------------------------|-------------------------------------|-------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Finance | <input type="checkbox"/> | Policy |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Innovation | <input 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 |