

OFFICIAL FEEDBACK FORM

DIALOGUE DATE	Tuesday, 9 November 2021 10:00 GMT +03:00
DIALOGUE TITLE	Empowering small-scale rice and vanilla farmers in Madagascar: identifying effective communication tools for knowledge exchange and livelihood support
CONVENED BY	-Dr. Estelle Raveloaritiana, Sustainability, Agriculture & Technology Lab (SAT Lab), Westlake University, China/ MBEV, University of Antananarivo, Madagascar; - Prof. Thomas C. Wanger-Guerrero, SAT Lab - Westlake University, China
DIALOGUE EVENT PAGE	https://summitdialogues.org/dialogue/44044/
DIALOGUE TYPE	Independent
GEOGRAPHICAL FOCUS	Madagascar

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

30

PARTICIPATION BY AGE RANGE

0-18

19-30

31-50

51-65

66-80

80+

PARTICIPATION BY GENDER

Male

Female

Prefer not to say or Other

NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS IN EACH SECTOR

Agriculture/crops

Fish and aquaculture

Livestock

Agro-forestry

Environment and ecology

Trade and commerce

Education

Communication

Food processing

Food retail, markets

Food industry

Financial Services

Health care

Nutrition

National or local government

Utilities

Industrial

Other

NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS FROM EACH STAKEHOLDER GROUP

Small/medium enterprise/artisan

Large national business

Multi-national corporation

30 Small-scale farmer

Medium-scale farmer

Large-scale farmer

Local Non-Governmental Organization

International Non-Governmental Organization

30 Indigenous People

Science and academia

Workers and trade union

Member of Parliament

Local authority

Government and national institution

Regional economic community

United Nations

International financial institution

Private Foundation / Partnership / Alliance

Consumer group

Other

2. PRINCIPLES OF ENGAGEMENT

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

The independent dialogues were organized to bring together farmers representatives from different locations in Madagascar. We explicitly chose farmers representatives rather than different stakeholders as the small-scale farmers are often not heard within the food system actors. The dialogue gave them opportunities to make their voices heard on the issues that are pressing them most. Through the group discussions, participants had the opportunities to exchange with their peers and understand their state of the art on climate-related issues.

HOW DID YOUR DIALOGUE REFLECT SPECIFIC ASPECTS OF THE PRINCIPLES?

Throughout the dialogues, the participants showed their commitment to foster a connection and combine forces to tackle and overcome their common issues and achieve their common goals, sustainable production and improved livelihoods. The discussion and exchanges reflected the mutual respect of their diversity as they saw it as an opportunity to learn rather than obstacles. With the facilitators and moderators, we committed to allowing everyone to speak freely and safely, and share their opinions within the group discussion as well as during the discussion outcomes' summary.

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

Organizing events with small-scale farmers and motivating them to engage in discussions requires patience and understanding for their perspectives and help them to relate the topic into their daily life so that everyone is on the same ground. It is critical to create an inclusive and supportive environment where everybody is encouraged and empowered to voice opinions freely. For the convener, it's important to relate to participants regardless of educational or professional background and support bringing their opinions forward and motivate them to share their concerns related to their livelihoods in an unrestricted way.

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

Smallholder farmers in developing countries like Madagascar are the backbone of food production and the most vulnerable to exacerbated climate impacts. However, many research findings to support farmer livelihoods are unable to provide practical solutions, mostly because the knowledge does not reach small-scale farmers. This is often due to a lack of understanding farmer issues, communicating through the wrong channels, or not providing the knowledge needed. As a consequence, weak policies have been persisting which perpetuate unsustainable agricultural practices, causing harm to the environment, and making it difficult to mitigate severe hunger and poverty among smallholders farmers.

For our dialogues, we convened representatives of rice farmers from the central part of Madagascar in Antananarivo and representatives of vanilla and rice farmers from the north-eastern in Antalaha. The overall aim was to understand the issues that smallholder farmers are facing along with their needs to solve these issues. To have more targeted discussions, we focused on climate change impacts on crop management, yields, and livelihoods. With two separate workshops, we specifically aimed to i) identify their issues and knowledge needs and ii) the communication tools to best deliver this knowledge and to exchange with scientists, farmers and other stakeholders in food systems.

To achieve these goals, we divided the dialogues into two topics: 1) issues and knowledge needs and 2) communication and technology.

In the first part, the participants discussed the main issues related to climate impacts on crop production and livelihoods. With all the identified issues, we then help them to formulate the knowledge they require to solve the identified and the most pressing issues.

In the second part, we aimed to understand the most effective way to contact the farmers and to disseminate the knowledge they need as identified during the first part to become more resilient to climate change and to improve their livelihoods. They also discussed the potential communication and knowledge transfer between farmers.

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

Based on the exchange during the dialogues, we found that both Rice and vanilla farmers in Madagascar are severely affected by climate change impacts. However, the impact of climate change varies from one community to another depending on the location. Nonetheless, the impacts are all related to the reduction of the yields in both crops when we asked the participants to do a retrospective for the last 5 to 10 years. Furthermore, the yield decreases have then impacted livelihood with an increase in hunger and poverty for many households based on the discussion outcomes of the representatives. With the various issues mentioned by the farmers' representatives, their needs in terms of knowledge were also reported and they reiterate the urgency of these needs to solve the most pressing issues they have. Overall, the knowledge needs are mainly related to the agricultural techniques that can help them to mitigate the impact of climate change, preferably through in-person training.

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OUTCOMES FOR EACH DISCUSSION TOPIC

Topic 1: Challenges related to climate changes and needs in terms of knowledge to solve the issues

During the first part of the dialogues, we guided the farmers to discuss and exchange about the issues related to climate change that they are commonly facing. For rice farmers, all the participants reported that the agricultural calendar, more specifically, the growing season calendar has been changed. This has therefore made it difficult for them to know when to start planting seeds for instance. Moreover, participants also reported that the increasing heat and the lack of rain have made soil drier, the seeds are not growing as usual, and pest pressure has increased, which reduces their yields. In terms of livelihood support, faced with drought, farmers often lack support in terms of equipment or materials that can help them for instance for irrigation. Moreover, they are lacking financial support or assistance during the lean season or when the year is very unproductive (e.g. extreme drought or severe flood and no yield at all).

For vanilla cultivation, farmers also encounter problems related to climate namely drought or heavy rain, affecting pest pressure and plant physiology. In addition, Often drought decreases the soil quality quickly and reduces yield within a short time. In sum, extreme changes in the weather threaten vanilla plants in many different ways from pest to disease and the fragility of the liana and all these affect the quantity and the quality of their yield in general. Besides climate-related issues, vanilla farmers also are facing issues caused by environmental degradation. In this sense, farmers reported that for instance loss of forests has affected the vanilla plantations, in general, as they perceived the soil quality has deteriorated rapidly and the kind of pests that diseases that are damaging their crops are increasing rapidly.

Faced with these challenges, farmers discussed and shared their needs in terms of knowledge to overcome the issues themselves. In overall farmers reported their needs in terms of techniques and materials that can help them to become more resilient to the effect of climate change at the same time maintain or even increase yields.

Topic 2 : Communication and knowledge transfer channels

Amongst a plethora of information, almost all farmers reported that they have an internet network where they live. However, the actual use of the internet remains a luxury that many farmers cannot afford. This is mainly due to the cost of equipment (e.g. smartphones) and the cost of internet bundles per se. Indeed, Madagascar is one of the countries where the internet is highly expensive. Nonetheless, few participants said that few farmers use the internet occasionally but not enough to get the information or knowledge they need. In general, the most effective way to communicate directly with farmers and for researchers to pass on knowledge or findings to solve the problems mentioned above is through phone calls and face-to-face meetings at the local level.

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<input type="checkbox"/>	Action Track 1: Ensure access to safe and nutritious food for all
<input type="checkbox"/>	Action Track 2: Shift to sustainable consumption patterns
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Action Track 3: Boost nature-positive production
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Action Track 4: Advance equitable livelihoods
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Action Track 5: Build resilience to vulnerabilities, shocks and stress

KEYWORDS

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

AREAS OF DIVERGENCE

ACTION TRACKS

- Action Track 1: Ensure access to safe and nutritious food for all
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KEYWORDS

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| <input type="checkbox"/> Finance | <input type="checkbox"/> Policy |
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| <input type="checkbox"/> Women & Youth Empowerment | <input type="checkbox"/> Trade-offs |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> Environment and Climate |

ATTACHMENTS AND RELEVANT LINKS

ATTACHMENTS

- **List of participants**
<https://summitdialogues.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/12/List-of-participants.docx>

RELEVANT LINKS

- **The Knowledge Transfer project - SEA Lab - Westlake University - China**
<https://www.tomcwanger.com/about-3-5>