

OFFICIAL FEEDBACK FORM

DIALOGUE DATE	Friday, 3 December 2021 15:00 GMT +08:00
DIALOGUE TITLE	Malaysia and Singapore Food Systems: How to Keep Singaporeans Healthy with Good Nutrition
CONVENED BY	Unilever Food Solutions
DIALOGUE EVENT PAGE	https://summitdialogues.org/dialogue/48707/
DIALOGUE TYPE	Independent
GEOGRAPHICAL FOCUS	Singapore

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

50

PARTICIPATION BY AGE RANGE

0-18

19 19-30

28 31-50

3 51-65

66-80

80+

PARTICIPATION BY GENDER

27 Male

23 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

2 Education

Communication

Food processing

3 Food retail, markets

33 Food industry

Financial Services

1 Health care

Nutrition

National or local government

Utilities

Industrial

11 Other

NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS FROM EACH STAKEHOLDER GROUP

3 Small/medium enterprise/artisan

Large national business

31 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

Government and national institution

Regional economic community

United Nations

International financial institution

Private Foundation / Partnership / Alliance

16 Consumer group

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 with a poll question to find out more about the behavioral changes from the pandemic and subsequently sharing the key statistics of Singaporean's health status. Panelist also shared some of the initiatives that the organization is practicing before discussing on the possible collaborations to achieve a healthier nation. 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 how organizations from different industries can play a role in promoting nutritious food to the nation. Panelist also shared the obstacles that they encounter, and some strategies to overcome the hurdles. 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 views and questions.

4. DIALOGUE FOCUS & OUTCOMES

MAJOR FOCUS

The survey conducted between 2019-2020 has shown that the number of chronic diseases in Singapore has rose compared to the last survey in 2017. The number of Singaporeans suffering from diabetes has increased to 9.5%, while 1 in 3 Singaporeans have hypertension and 4 in 10 have high blood cholesterol. Unfortunately, obesity rate across all age group has also risen, while majority were contributed by the male population.

The focus of this independent dialogue seeks to understand the awareness of Singaporeans towards good nutrition and how the stakeholders in various industries can contribute towards building a healthier nation (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 poll results, majority of the respondents pointed out that they have increased usage of food delivery platforms and a substantial number of audiences also practices cooking at home during the pandemic.

Manufacturers pointed out that there is a surge in demand for products to improve personal hygiene and healthier foods, along with supplements. Nutritional supplements continue to be a fast-moving product during this period and consumers are constantly searching for food items that can increase their immunity, such as Vitamin C. Plant-based products has also become a trend as there is an increasing number of individuals who wants to be healthier and consuming in a sustainable manner. While food delivery is on the rise, many Singaporeans began cooking their meals as they get inspirations from social media platforms. This is also aligned with the poll results.

Some of the food operators have already began emphasizing on nutritious food before the pandemic. While many may have put on weight during the pandemic, there is another group of people who started practicing a healthier lifestyle. Many realized the importance of nutritious food and there is an increased demand for vegetables, grains and plant-based food. However, there might still be a lack of food knowledge among Singaporeans. For instance, fruits are often perceived to be healthy but excess sugary fruit juices in actual, is not favorable to the body.

The government took a well-rounded approach to bring the population towards a healthier nation. Food programs are targeted at children to adults and the seniors, specifically. For instance, food programs target at seniors emphasizes on increasing calcium and protein intake. The government also works with the manufacturers of packaged food to introduce the Healthier Choice Symbol program (HCS), which is widely recognized by the public. Moreover, the government also offers grants to food manufacturers and food operators to promote the research and development on nutritious food and encourage them to offer healthier food options. To reduce the sugar intake among Singaporeans, the government will be introducing new regulatory measures for pre-packed sugar-sweetened beverages which includes a grading system and advertisement restrictions.

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OUTCOMES FOR EACH DISCUSSION TOPIC

Food manufacturers have been working on offering nutritious products to the consumers. By ensuring that the nutritional values of the products adhere to the global standards, consumers can make better choices and have a positive impact to both their health and well-being. The company emphasizes heavily on plant-based products since it promotes a sustainable consumption pattern.

Some of the food operators have proven that nutritious food can remain to be tasty. The in-house dietitian can work closely with the Chef team to tweak both the ingredients and the recipe to ensure that the dishes meet the dietary requirements of the consumers. Food operators are encouraging consumers to consume less animal protein, to move towards a plant-forward diet by replacing them with plant-based protein. However, this must be performed progressively since the population has been accustomed to animal protein. A good way to introduce plant-based protein is to incorporate them into local dishes since they are more widely acceptable.

It is challenging for manufacturers to reduce the nutrients of concerns such as sugars and fats because of the limitations in the current technology. These nutrients have chemical properties that contributes to the food item. For instance, sugar allows ice cream to have its structure. Manufacturers will need the support from external parties to continue to offer nutritious food to the local community. Partnerships are essential to make this positive change. Partnerships can also be in the form of training to educate other food operators in promoting nutritious food.

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AREAS OF DIVERGENCE

The government programs aim to inculcate healthy dining from young. By increasing the accessibility of healthy food in school, students can start the habit of healthy consumption. Through offering grants, the government incentivizes businesses to reformulate their products and menu in attempt to increase the accessibility of nutritious food to the nation. By adopting the government initiatives, food operators can rethink and innovate new menu to excite its consumers.

While 'Work from Home' has become the new norm and snacking at home becomes inevitable, food manufacturers can help the consumers in the portion control by ensuring that the products meet the nutritional standards. Food operators can review the current recipes and substitute the ingredients with other sources that are higher in nutritional content.

With the increase in demand for quick meal options, the fast-food chains have been growing substantially. Even though they are often perceived to be 'less nutritious', they can still be consumed moderately by selecting the correct combination. Fast-food operators can also offer more options for the consumers such as pairing with food items such as salad for a set meal.

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