

OFFICIAL FEEDBACK FORM

DIALOGUE DATE	Friday, 26 February 2021 16:00 GMT +02:00
DIALOGUE TITLE	Empowering women and youth to better contribute to transforming food systems in Malawi
CONVENED BY	Youth Enterprise Services (YES) Malawi
DIALOGUE EVENT PAGE	https://summitdialogues.org/dialogue/5560/
DIALOGUE TYPE	Independent
GEOGRAPHICAL FOCUS	Malawi

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

20

PARTICIPATION BY AGE RANGE

0-18

7

19-30

12

31-50

51-65

1

66-80

80+

PARTICIPATION BY GENDER

3 Male

17 Female

Prefer not to say or Other

NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS IN EACH SECTOR

2 Agriculture/crops

Fish and aquaculture

2 Livestock

Agro-forestry

Environment and ecology

1 Trade and commerce

1 Education

Communication

Food processing

Food retail, markets

Food industry

1 Financial Services

1 Health care

Nutrition

2 National or local government

Utilities

Industrial

10 Other

NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS FROM EACH STAKEHOLDER GROUP

2 Small/medium enterprise/artisan

Large national business

Multi-national corporation

Small-scale farmer

2 Medium-scale farmer

Large-scale farmer

5 Local Non-Governmental Organization

1 International Non-Governmental Organization

Indigenous People

3 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

2 Private Foundation / Partnership / Alliance

Consumer group

3 Other

2. PRINCIPLES OF ENGAGEMENT

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

The independent dialogue began and closed with presentations on and about on-going initiatives that highlighted promising innovations to transform the food system. Both presentations provided space for participants wanting to engage partnerships and collaboration to reach out after the dialogue. Prior to the opening presentation, the concept of Food System was explained succinctly and simply, to ensure all participants have the same level of understanding.

HOW DID YOUR DIALOGUE REFLECT SPECIFIC ASPECTS OF THE PRINCIPLES?

Commitment to the Summit and acting with urgency: Participants were encouraged to explore the Summit web page and various resources and to participate as much as possible. In addition the independent dialogue was organised as a means to have local voices heard as part of contributing to the global summit. Respectfulness: All participants listened attentively to the inputs of others, including listening to views that differed from their own. Recognizing complexity: The dialogue ensured that participants were from multiple disciplines and various levels within those disciplines, in recognition of the complex nature of even local food systems. This allowed for the identification of actions across the food system - at various levels and to be led by different stakeholders. Embracing multi-stakeholder inclusivity: Invited participants were carefully selected to include a diverse range of actors from various disciplines and stakeholder groups. Building on the work of others: The dialogue opened and closed with presentations highlighting the work of others that showed promising innovations, with participants encouraged to reach out after the dialogues to presenters to explore connections. Building trust: All conclusions from the dialogue are shared via this feedback form and conclusions are not attributed to a single individual but curated and consolidated as an outcome of the dialogue. This 'safe space' approach is a core of Youth Enterprise Services (YES) Malawi and align

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

Ensure participants have access to the Summit resources, so that they appreciate the approach and principles. This also helps participants to understand the importance of dialogue and that local actions can and will contribute to the overall Summit outcomes and actions.

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 YES Malawi Independent Dialogue brought together women and youth from Malawi engaged in agriculture and the food system. This included Malawian youth and women engaged in farming and agribusiness, policy makers from both the agriculture and health sectors, agricultural researchers and scientists and youth still in education.

The dialogue built upon the practical work of Youth Enterprise Services (Yes), and highlighted the pervasive challenges hindering youth and women from fully contributing to transformation of the food system into one that is sustainable. Participants then engaged in discussing game changing solutions focus on a key question: How can the youth and women, in Malawi, be empowered today to ensure access to safe and nutritious food for all in the future?

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 main finding of the Youth Enterprise Services (YES) Malawi independent dialogue is that no single solution, especially on its own is a panacea to the challenges faced by youth and women in the food system. However there are game changing solutions that can go far in empowering youth and women to effective actors in transforming food systems, these include:

1. Increased access to affordable tech solutions. Current cost for access to the internet and to technological based solutions in the developing world is prohibitive. Youth and women cannot leverage technology to overcome many of the challenges they face because these are expensive.
2. Establish local information hubs that provide up to date and emerging information, in the relevant vernacular language for communities, practitioners, and traditional authorities on all various aspects of food systems and for various players (farmers, agri-SMEs, consumers, field practitioners).
3. Need for more tailored finance that is responsive to the unique needs of youth and women in developing context food systems.
4. Strong political will that facilitates the implementation of all these solutions above and which works towards putting in place a policy environment that enables creativity and the implementation of solutions that are practical and tangible.

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OUTCOMES FOR EACH DISCUSSION TOPIC - 1/3

YES Malawi discussion topic 1: How can youth and women be empowered today to ensure access to safe and nutritious food for all in the future?

Participants views are provided below:

1. Advocacy: Field practitioners should carry out massive awareness campaigns to understand the gap of women and youth exclusion in the food system;

2. Practitioners, government and private sector stakeholders should provide information to women and youth to build their knowledge and capacity to enable them to better engage in the food system. This should be with the aim of changing mindsets and equipping them with knowledge and skills to effectively participate in the food system;

3. Government should make deliberate efforts to incentivize women and youth to participate in the food system. This can be done in various way:

- Legal frameworks should have a special focus on women and youth smallholder farmers for example in Malawi this can mean enforcement of the Cooperative Act to ensure the effective engagement of women and youth
- Government should set up institutions to govern the marketing of agricultural products
- Ensure the financial inclusion of women and youth
- Government should monitor integration of the operating framework of state and non-state actors as disintegration leads to contradicting [agricultural advisory] messages at grassroots level
- Promote the engagement of women and youth in seemingly simplistic innovations such as backyard vegetable farming and home Irrigation farming, which for the poorest members of society can be very empowering.

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OUTCOMES FOR EACH DISCUSSION TOPIC - 2/3

YES Malawi discussion topic 2: What actions need to be taken in the next 3 years to ensure the empowerment of women and youth for better participation in the food system?

1. Government support needed in various areas:

- Setting up business incubation schemes for women and youth
- Review existing relevant policies and ensure that youth and women roles / challenges in food systems are mainstreamed, which should the strengthening of youth and women groups and the deliberate provision of income earning opportunities for them.
- Establish special loan facility for youth and women agri-entrepreneurs, but ensure effective management, accountability and impact.

2. Development practitioners and local organisations (such as YES Malawi) to facilitate the creation of cooperatives among women and youth in the food system for better financial inclusion

3. Financial institutions to develop youth focused finance packages, such as those with lower interest rates, non-traditional collateral and re-payment terms that are contextualized to the type business that women and youth are engaged in the food system.

4. Women, youth, all participants and citizens: need to play our part for a radical mindset shift. Children should be trained and groomed by families to have a better understanding of the food system and what actions they and all can take (at the local level) for resilience and sustainability. Local organisations (such as YES Malawi) need to work with community groups, traditional leaders and families to make information available and to create tools that families can tap into, tools should be relevant and in the vernacular to allow understanding.

5. Government/private sector/ Academia and Research/ private entities (such as YES Malawi): Work collaboratively to develop, market and make available low cost technologies or the mechanization of agriculture and other processes within the food system. this will make engagement in food systems attractive for youth and less tedious for all including women (involved in the primary production stage).

ACTION TRACKS

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|-------------------------------------|--|
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OUTCOMES FOR EACH DISCUSSION TOPIC - 3/3

YES Malawi discussion topic 3 (Off-line): How to empower youths and women in Food Systems in relation to Health?

1. Conduct action based research as an entry to programme planning and design on food and nutrition programs targeting youth and women
2. Involve youth and women in the design and targeting of all food security and nutrition action plans. this should include the provision of education about the links between nutrition and good health for individuals, groups and their families and food systems
3. Develop local food security networks to discuss and share information on food systems and nutrition and the role of youths and women.
4. Need for good leadership and political will to have youth and women empowerment programs.
5. Need for changes to policy, legislation and planning in order to:
 - protect girl children from teen marriages and pregnancies
 - safeguard and increase women's access to, and control over, incomes and other resources
 - enhancing women's and youth and women's participation in microfinance facilities
 - explore creative approaches to reduce women's time constraints e.g. provision of improved water supply
 - increase women's involvement in decision making at all levels

ACTION TRACKS

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AREAS OF DIVERGENCE

One solution provided for youth and women to better engage in the food system was the lowering of standards or the contextualization of standards for food products / agricultural produce. Some felt this would limit the ability of agribusinesses from the country to effectively engage in regional and global food systems that have set standards that all must adhere to in order to have their goods enter those markets.

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ATTACHMENTS AND RELEVANT LINKS

RELEVANT LINKS

- **Youth Enterprise Services (YES) Malawi**
<https://maleytata.wixsite.com/youthppf>