

OFFICIAL FEEDBACK FORM

DIALOGUE DATE	Monday, 29 March 2021 19:30 GMT +03:00
DIALOGUE TITLE	Arab Regional Food Systems Dialogue
CONVENED BY	Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia, Food and Agriculture Organization, World Food Programme (WFP), World Health Organization (WHO), International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) and the Arab Organization for Agricultural Development
DIALOGUE EVENT PAGE	https://summitdialogues.org/dialogue/7089/
DIALOGUE TYPE	Independent
GEOGRAPHICAL FOCUS	Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon

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

247

PARTICIPATION BY AGE RANGE

0-18

19-30

31-50

51-65

66-80

80+

PARTICIPATION BY GENDER

130 Male

112 Female

5 Prefer not to say or Other

NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS IN EACH SECTOR

12 Agriculture/crops

14 Fish and aquaculture

0 Livestock

9 Agro-forestry

19 Environment and ecology

Trade and commerce

21 Education

10 Communication

Food processing

4 Food retail, markets

26 Food industry

5 Financial Services

13 Health care

Nutrition

52 National or local government

Utilities

3 Industrial

58 Other

NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS FROM EACH STAKEHOLDER GROUP

Small/medium enterprise/artisan

Large national business

Multi-national corporation

Small-scale farmer

Medium-scale farmer

Large-scale farmer

Local Non-Governmental Organization

20 International Non-Governmental Organization

Indigenous People

19 Science and academia

Workers and trade union

6 Member of Parliament

Local authority

41 Government and national institution

Regional economic community

90 United Nations

International financial institution

Private Foundation / Partnership / Alliance

12 Consumer group

59 Other

2. PRINCIPLES OF ENGAGEMENT

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

The Dialogue was organized according to the set principles of engagement of the summit. An introduction set the scene for participants presenting the summit vision, objectives, and the current status of the Dialogues. In the first part of the Dialogue, High-level speakers emphasized on importance of holding dialogues in various forms to enable discussion, and exchange of ideas between variety of stakeholders aiming to present all proposals for actions to achieve sustainable food systems in the Arab region to the United Nations Food Systems Summit. International and National Speakers provided feedback on dialogues and region challenges after which an open discussion session was set. The dialogue modality allowed for active participation of stakeholders where participants provided solutions and actions either through direct intervention or by writing in the chat box. Organizers simultaneously copied all proposals into the interactive online platform called "Mural" to make them graphically visible for all to see and comment on.

HOW DID YOUR DIALOGUE REFLECT SPECIFIC ASPECTS OF THE PRINCIPLES?

Holding the Dialogue virtually necessitated the use of different approaches for engaging participants during the zoom session. English and Arabic translation were provided throughout, and the Dialogue conveners encouraged active participation. The session was recorded thus making it available for all participants. It also used the "Mural" application which allowed participants to see input simultaneously while being discussed. Many were also given a chance to provide input directly from the floor or in the chat box in relation to questions on action tracks. A diverse range of stakeholders were brought together to consolidate regional views, perspectives and experiences regarding pathways and potential actions for equitable and sustainable food systems transformation and support the implementation of the SDGs within the context of current realities.

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

It is recommended to present the Summit objectives and vision and action tracks with some facts and evidence-based information linked to the action track at the beginning of the session. This may promote further intervention from participants especially if these facts are related to the region/country. Using an application that is visual and allows direct input from participants showed to be efficient in collecting further views and addressing hot issues that may arise such as identifying responsibilities for each game changer proposed and prioritizing issues based on relevance

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

Owing to COVID-19 restrictions, the dialogue was organized as a 90-minute online meeting using the Zoom platform. The dialogue modality allowed for active participation of stakeholders using a combination of tools including an interactive online platform "MURAL" where participants were invited to write their proposals live in the chat while broadcasting. Time was allocated for active discussions and interaction. The Arab Regional Food Systems Dialogue was divided into three main parts: Part I Presented background information about the food system summit in general and the three types of dialogues and processes. It also provided a review of the selected five action tracks and the expected outcomes of the summit. Countries were also encouraged to hold national dialogues to participate either in the Pre- Summit happening in July, or in the Summit happening in September 2021. Part II Presented regional perspective on food systems and main drivers affecting food security within the context of the Arab region. An overview of regional legislations and country examples were addressed pre- and post- COVID-19. This session highlighted the need for Dialogue especially in terms of building resilience of agricultural production systems especially for small holder farmers in response to crisis in the region. Youth representative also gave a perspective of the youth priorities in terms of food systems. Part IV opened the floor for oral discussions in relation to the actions in addition to use of an interactive online discussion platform MURAL to allow participants to identify game changing solutions. Organizers copied what was written in the chat box and what is was being discussed.

4. DIALOGUE FOCUS & OUTCOMES

MAJOR FOCUS

Participants were invited to propose actions and identify actors responsible for implementing these actions taking into consideration cross cutting issues including climate change, innovation, women, youth, and finance. As a result, game changing actions were proposed on each of the four identified issues related to the action tracks namely ensuring access to safe and nutritious food for all, shifting to sustainable consumption pattern, boosting nature-positive production at sufficient scale, advancing equitable livelihoods and value distribution. The main outputs and messages from the two regional dialogues held earlier on March 9 and 11 for Arab youth and Arab stakeholders were also presented.

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 game changing actions identified across each of the four issues that were discussed include:

1. Call for all stakeholders to work together for implementing game changers. They all share the responsibility to shift food systems and change the rules of the game to achieve sustainable food security and nutrition for all.
2. Develop and adopt a regional guiding legislation about importance of having strategic stocks of essential commodities, whether food or non-food commodities so that it contributes to setting a safety percentage of these necessary commodities to avoid any shortages and crisis as witnessed during the Covid-19 pandemic.
3. Establishment of an Arab Centre for Food Security, that includes brings together Arab initiatives and that can provide appropriate financing through development and investment funds.
4. Below are the key messages emanating from the dialogue. These messages, along with other regional processes' outcomes undertaken in the Arab Region (Arab Youth and Arab Stakeholders Dialogues), will be included, in a dedicated document that organizers will be submitting to Secretariat of the Food Systems Summit. The document will present pathways and key propositions for sustainable Arab food systems
 - (a) Need for improved coordination and cooperation as transformation is a shared responsibility that involves partnerships among all sectors of society and transparency is a prerequisite for the success of those partnerships.
 - (b) Adoption of a food systems approach that acknowledges inter-system and intersectoral linkages and the multiple outcomes of the food system: food security and nutrition, environmental, social and economic.
 - (c) Development of an evidence-based decision-making process by collecting, analysing, and sharing food system data and scientific analysis for the purpose of supporting the transformation process.
 - (d) Adoption of a context-specific approach to food systems resilience and sustainability at individual, household, social class and regional levels, taking into account shocks and stresses.
 - (e) Addressing issues of inequalities associated with gender, age and marginalization, especially but not exclusively those relating to the food system and that impinge on food security and nutrition and equitable, sustainable and resilient livelihoods including equal pay for equal job, access and ownership of resources, and forced child labor.
 - (f) Providing incentives for the adoption of nature-friendly technologies, entrepreneurs, climate smart agriculture, with special focus on the water, food and energy nexus as main derivatives for agricultural development and food security in the region
 - (g) Building capacities to adapt to climate change encourages use of renewable energy for food production and processing and using modern and appropriate technologies throughout the food systems value chain.
5. The resulting document and meeting report to be shared with member countries to guide and support the national dialogues when undertaken.

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OUTCOMES FOR EACH DISCUSSION TOPIC - 1/4

Ensuring access to safe and nutritious food for all

- Monitor the quality of the raw materials involved in the production process (basic and secondary materials)
- Support the inclusion of fish in the food and nutrition program
- Monitor local markets in terms of food quality and compliance with standards of healthy food
- Establish micro-scale food production systems in cities and villages distributed among the population and including the entire agriculture chain
- Support civil society organizations in food systems and encouraging related projects
- Increase collaboration between Arab countries especially those with common issues and establish mechanism between countries that aid in establishing a food security fund that supports food baskets
- Develop food banks and food-for-work programs
- Secure strategic Arab stocks that are not subjected to political tensions and establish an Arab food security center
- Improve government support for food factories (large and medium) such as stockpiling raw materials and considering them initial parts of strategic food storage
- Develop policies that control the food market and form regional operations unit that reports movement of the global stockpile of major food commodities and global price expectations
- Create data centers that provide advice to food industries in Arab region
- Implement an Arab regional strategy to ensure food safety
- Launch the International Year of Food Security to raise awareness and develop solutions
- Promote consumption of traditional food
- Initiate technical, administrative, and marketing units for food factories, that can prepare food industry managers and provide quality control
- Provide resources, consultations, and education to farmers and livestock keepers on how to maintain healthy and proper production. Further enhance training and specializations related to agriculture
- Establish an emergency committee during crises
- Encourage adoption of health standards and environmental labels, especially data related to product life-cycle analysis during the various stages of procurement, supply, storage and distribution

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OUTCOMES FOR EACH DISCUSSION TOPIC - 2/4

- Enable dialogues with all the actors to reach healthy food systems
- Reconsider the freedom of children to choose and buy their meals before going to school
- Support production of high-quality homemade food while ensuring their affordability and promote local food production and traditional ways and educating consumers about the importance of supporting local products
- Propose a World Nutrition Day
- Increase consumer awareness and motivate and enable them to make good and healthy choices through social media, training and educational workshops, and providing offers on health products
- Raise awareness among media workers of the importance of healthy food
- Raise awareness among media workers of importance of healthy food and building on consumers' interests and perceptions of nutritional risks to change their food behavior
- Set up appropriate educational programs, courses and group activities targeting children and youth to changing consumer behavior, and use social media to achieve this goal
- Prepare a national action plan to develop sustainable consumption and production systems
- Exchange experiences and success stories and educate consumers and producers to move towards sustainable consumption and production patterns.
- Review national social protection programs, and replicate successful experiences from other countries
- Establish laws to ensure product quality, impose quality control and penalties on violators, and apply food taxes
- Ensure the establishment of an institutional framework concerned in transforming food systems into sustainable and healthy consumption and production systems and developing legislations that contribute to accelerating this transformation.
- Enhance the role of health institutions in raising consumers' awareness of the need to change their unhealthy
- Enhance food integration departments, where each department coordinate among its members to address the quantitative or qualitative food shortage under the supervision of the United Nations as technical support.
- Provide financing to private institutions on projects that adopt sustainable production systems and establish new consumption behaviors that take into account the requirements of sustainability and waste reduction
- Increase investment in innovation and logistics systems such as climate-smart agriculture and improve post-harvest operations, infrastructure, packaging and cooling centers to reduce food waste and loss.

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KEYWORDS

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<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Innovation	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Data & Evidence
<input type="checkbox"/>	Human rights	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Governance
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<input type="checkbox"/>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Environment and Climate

OUTCOMES FOR EACH DISCUSSION TOPIC - 3/4

- Reclaim and rehabilitate agricultural lands, encourage good management of resources and increase efficiency of resources used, especially ground and surface water and agricultural lands through the use of modern technology
- Enhance provisions related to technology transfer and capacity building included in the UN Climate Change Agreement
- Improve skilled professional and provide the necessary infrastructure
- Enhance the role of research and encourage scientific agricultural studies to solve problems of agricultural production, especially applied research
- Improve regional cooperation in scientific research, Arab partnerships, and exchange of capabilities according to the comparative advantage of agricultural production
- Promote genetic improvement programs for quantitative and qualitative production
- Endorse national campaigns on environmental challenges, and include in the education curriculums and disseminate pioneering experiences in agriculture and food processing
- Establish pilot projects that improve water and energy use and reduce pollution to support countries in crisis and with funds from World Bank, Green Climate Fund and FAO
- Support entrepreneurial projects and grant provision for youth initiatives
- Implement educational program on leadership in the field of agriculture and specializations related to urban agriculture
- Provide support for vehicles transporting crops and reduce transportation costs and provide qualified warehouses designated for storage and packaging
- Develop local plant varieties and animal breeds to increase production and productivity
- Develop post-harvest services through improving packaging, grading, transportation, storage, and manufacturing
- Enhance information availability on capabilities and provide a modern and up-to-date database
- Expand the use of digital solutions such as e-commerce platforms
- Reduce industrial costs by reducing taxes imposed on food factories and inviting them to exploit the largest available percentage of production capacity, adopting special prices for fuel (especially electricity) and supporting use of renewable energy equipment
- Find working storage for Arab food factories in the manufacture of grains, sugar, oils, and edible fats, dairy, red meat, production of broiler chicken and table eggs

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<input type="checkbox"/>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Environment and Climate

OUTCOMES FOR EACH DISCUSSION TOPIC - 4/4

- Provision of financing mechanisms
- Focus specializations in universities based on qualifications and available resources
- Create youth leadership positions
- Encourage self-production and educating consumers about the importance of supporting local products
- Improving practical education on agriculture in communities, homes and buildings so that everyone can produce food
- Strengthen effective social protection networks based on sustainable financial resources and enhance the concept of social security through the preparation and support of the food basket and food banks
- Integrate social justice in the distribution and allocation of agricultural resources (land and water)
- Implement digital solutions such as e-commerce platforms, digital payments and simple digital technologies to enable smallholders to access data and knowledge to make timely and informed decisions and to connect them directly with markets and finance
- Focus on vulnerable groups, especially small farmers through providing support and financing and introducing modern technologies that increase productivity and production and improve their income.
- Integrate disaster risk reduction considerations into sustainable development strategies and policies to mitigate losses.
- Support animal breeders
- Activate the role of food cooperatives
- Resolve local and regional conflicts and alleviate the effects of wars, disasters and political sanctions to shift focus on productivity rather than conflicts
- Provide basic services in the countryside and enhance the methods and tools of rural finance so that the rural producers can enter the countryside and engage in production
- Support agri-food microfinance projects such as microfinance banks
- Facilitate access to agricultural lands for young women
- Promote and support women and youth participation in value chains by providing capital and financing mechanisms to invest in agriculture, as well as creating job opportunities and developing needed skills such as negotiation and project management.
- Use of modern technology, creating appropriate conditions for rural employment, and ensuring the sustainability of supply chains for various agricultural products.
- Review national legislations and regulations and integrate environmental protection policies adapting to climate change and limiting its effects, in line with the economic and social conditions of each Arab country.

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✓	Women & Youth Empowerment		Trade-offs
		✓	Environment and Climate

AREAS OF DIVERGENCE

The participants were knowledgeable of the main challenges in the region and stressed on the need to have urgent action and implementation.

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ATTACHMENTS AND RELEVANT LINKS

RELEVANT LINKS

- **Arab Regional Food Systems Dialogue**
<https://www.unescwa.org/events/arab-regional-food-systems-dialogue>