

OFFICIAL FEEDBACK FORM

DIALOGUE DATE	Tuesday, 30 March 2021 09:00 GMT +07:00
DIALOGUE TITLE	SUN Civil Society Alliance Cambodia's food system dialogues
CONVENED BY	HE Sok Silo, Secretary General, Council for Agricultural and Rural Development
DIALOGUE EVENT PAGE	https://summitdialogues.org/dialogue/7957/
DIALOGUE TYPE	Member State
GEOGRAPHICAL FOCUS	Cambodia

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

78

PARTICIPATION BY AGE RANGE

0 0-18 22 19-30 46 31-50 10 51-65 66-80 80+

PARTICIPATION BY GENDER

41 Male 37 Female Prefer not to say or Other

NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS IN EACH SECTOR

14	Agriculture/crops	11	Education	30	Health care
2	Fish and aquaculture	3	Communication		Nutrition
1	Livestock	2	Food processing	6	National or local government
2	Agro-forestry		Food retail, markets	1	Utilities
2	Environment and ecology		Food industry		Industrial
	Trade and commerce	3	Financial Services		Other

NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS FROM EACH STAKEHOLDER GROUP

2	Small/medium enterprise/artisan	1	Workers and trade union
1	Large national business		Member of Parliament
	Multi-national corporation		Local authority
8	Small-scale farmer	6	Government and national institution
	Medium-scale farmer	1	Regional economic community
	Large-scale farmer	3	United Nations
22	Local Non-Governmental Organization		International financial institution
32	International Non-Governmental Organization		Private Foundation / Partnership / Alliance
1	Indigenous People	1	Consumer group
	Science and academia		Other

2. PRINCIPLES OF ENGAGEMENT

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

The dialogue was organised by the SUN Civil Society Alliance (CSA) specifically to collect more views from local and international NGOs so as to more deeply embrace multi-stakeholder inclusivity and also to secure more participation of women. By working through the SUN CSA, there is a strong element of trust from the members and this is expected to lead to greater commitment to the dialogues on the part of civil society. The involvement of high level government officials in the opening helps also build trust on the part of government that the dialogue is open and constructive.

HOW DID YOUR DIALOGUE REFLECT SPECIFIC ASPECTS OF THE PRINCIPLES?

Introduction by senior representative of the SUN CSA and by senior representatives of government encouraged trust and respect for all parties and emphasised the importance of listening to the whole diversity of views, Participants were reminded that it is possible for us to disagree in the dialogues without be disagreeable. Facilitators were careful to ensure that different viewpoints did not dissolve into arguments back and forth and that the participants respected one another's rights to express their views without need for contradiction by other participants. The whole process reflected adherence to these principles.

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

Allow ample time for the discussion sessions and the information shared will be rich in detail and diversity of ideas.

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 Vision for Sustainable Food Systems for Cambodia and how to achieve that vision.

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

Points were raised to address all action tracks and these different tracks are well suited for organising the result into a roadmap. The ideas for developing the vision and the roadmap included points relating to each of the tracks. Access to safe and nutritious food for all Cambodians at all times was a key concern. The suggestions relating to production were strongly oriented around the protection of smallholders interests and local production, promoting consumption of local produced food with supporting argument that this food is of better quality and safety. It was recognised that more information and a supportive environment were need to guide production, processing and marketing to be profitable and sustainable in other dimensions both environmental and cultural. There was support for existing regulations, with suggestions that enforcement should be increased and that new legislation of regulations may be required to protect producers and consumers. Improved livelihoods for farmers and small enterprises are widely supported, with many responsibilities directed to government and for greater investment on the part of the private sector. It was recognised that the sustainable food system must be profitable for the private sector, or they will not find be supportive. Social protection was also recognised as an important tool in providing for the most vulnerable, especially in the context of the COVID Pandemic. Climate change is acknowledged as an ongoing threat to the food system, noting that farmers are not receptive to reduced returns or higher cost of climate smart technologies because they are living under short term pressures to survive.

The participants widely supported multi-sectoral collaboration and the existence of multi-stakeholder platforms to unify the efforts of Government, Civil Society and other development partners. They were particularly concerned that these efforts must extend to the sub-national level where the implementation of policies and plans is most challenging. The participants were concerned that the funding of CSOs is becoming more challenging, whereas their role is more exacting and even more relevant under current conditions.

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OUTCOMES FOR EACH DISCUSSION TOPIC - 1/7

Topic 1: A VISION FOR SUSTAINABLE FOOD SYSTEMS FOR CAMBODIA.

- The vision for 2030 should consider all three main components of the food system, the food chain (processing, packaging, distribution, markets and recycling and composting), the food environment, and consumer behaviour. A multi-sectoral approach is needed.
- By 2030, we should see an end to hunger and achieve food security. The system should provide food access year round for all people.
- Promote sustainable food production, more diversified production and a smarter agriculture system should be more helping farmers to be resilient to the climate change.
- Supporting local production as local products don't really compete with imported products. Food should be locally grown and people should have the capacity to grow these foods so it benefits their community. This also depends on geography and scale, so people need to know what's feasible in their context, and how they can source things needed from nearby communities. Market systems need to be more connected (e.g. producer associations, active linkage of supply chain etc.).
- Overall, ensure quality for consumers. Need to ensure the quality of products that are going to market and the population has access to safe food – they know what they are buying and they know it is safe. It also needs to be affordable.
- Increase the nutritional value of foods and ensure consumers are more aware of its importance. Production of more sustainable and nutritious foods, we need more legumes/nuts so more people will eat them. Increase the diversity of foods locally produced and available (yams, nuts, legumes). Help to make all stakeholders aware of the importance of food systems for production and healthy diets. Education about food, why it is important to eat different types of food and how they can support local people.
- Take into account the political economy, resource allocation decisions, implementation mechanisms and funding when shaping the food system. Food security and nutrition policy making should be matched by good practice. Need to talk about emerging problems – realize the current policies for changing diets, COVID-19 recovery and economic growth
- Profits and affordability of the foods will drive the food system of the future. Education is important but if farmers do not profit by growing healthier foods, they won't be grown.
- Monitor the quality and safety of food exports and imports
- Restore infrastructure to support food production and distribution including roads and irrigation systems.
- Recycle food waste instead of lowering food prices or throwing food away
- WASH is an important element of agriculture and food safety to protect food from contamination.
- Nutrition is linked to so many topics, so partnership between organisations to cover the different thematic aspects of nutrition will continue to be an important aspect of food systems into the future.

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OUTCOMES FOR EACH DISCUSSION TOPIC - 2/7

WHAT WORKS ABOUT OUR CURRENT FOOD SYSTEM? WHAT ASPECTS DO WE WANT TO KEEP?

- Resources for land, forest, water are limited so we need to keep a focus on natural resource conservation.
- 2nd National Strategy for Food Security and Nutrition – is good for the food system. Promotes food linkages and planning. Drivers include who's linked in to implementation.
- Current policy and strategy show twin tracks – strategy framework is cross cutting and multi-sectoral.
- There are coordinators at the local and district level for market linkages who could be attached to existing cooperatives. They earn commission from their sales, so they are paid by the coop. It is a self-sustaining mechanism that could be considered for scale-up.
- Social protection programming can help contribute to accessibility of nutritious foods. We can make social protection more nutrition-sensitive.

There is good link between government and civil society for establishment of PWG-FSN and roll-out of the sub-national coordination platforms nationally. This will be good to improve FSN in Cambodia.

- Local food systems should be protected. Family farms contributes to income across the country so this should be protected. Keep families and communities involved in the food system. Continue to support and strengthen local farmers first – diversify among local farmers first.
- Current strength is engaged and strong civil society on the topic. There are two positives at the local level right now: 1) knowledge of people. When they go to the market they are looking and asking for local products. These products can be more expensive than imports but they are considered to be safe and organic. 2) the government creating more projects to boost food security at MAFF and MoC to boost food availability.
- Forming agricultural cooperatives among local producers is a big positive. Agricultural cooperatives under MAFF are well organised and connected at the community level. If we could build the capacity of these and their connections to MFI it would build on what is existing and improve what is available.
- Projects like ASPIRE and AIM (MAFF, MoC and IFAD) focused on markets linkages and smaller weekend markets to sell these products. Previous projects have been successful and it would be great to see more.
- To strengthen, need to work with both buyers and producers, and link them together. If we can coordinate farming contracts it creates mutually beneficial supply partnership for necessary goods. Now we are working on matching buyers at local and provincial level to learn what buyers want to buy and the characteristics of it, then connect them to farmers. Agricultural cooperatives are useful for this. There are also informal groups in the community that can be engaged. Farming contracts would help people to know what they need to grow and guarantee a steady income.
- Think about education levels – and the role of social media for education, even in low literacy places
- There can be effective response to harmful marketing – example of breastmilk substitutes

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OUTCOMES FOR EACH DISCUSSION TOPIC - 3/7

WHAT DOES NOT WORK WELL IN THE CURRENT FOOD SYSTEM?

- Need to think about transportation and distribution of food. Farmers don't always know where to share their products. Create an enabling environment for low cost transportation options to allow farmers to reach other provinces or districts.
- Build on the current system and strategy and expand distribution and transportation linkages at local/subnational level.
- Farmers often consider climate smart techniques to be more time and labour heavy. So they may turn to other options like improved seed. The success of different techniques like types of compost and fertilisers depended on the area and what the farmer had access to.
- Agriculture techniques training is mainly focused on the national manual. For the indigenous people, there are local foods that need to be preserved/conserved. This is not included in any training manual. We should research this and consider the creation of a manual for indigenous foods. There isn't enough documentation on how these foods are used for nutrition/dietary needs in indigenous communities either.
- Tackle the problem of highly processed foods flooding the market. Cambodia is 10-15 years behind on this front, so it's an opportunity to slow down that change.
- Food production focuses on profit not nutrition or sustainability of it
- How to educate farmers beyond what is trendy and to encourage diversified production
- We need to increase access to food – regardless of living in rural or urban area
- Need systems to control the quality of the product, especially food safety and improve the market for chemical-free products

ACTION TRACKS

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OUTCOMES FOR EACH DISCUSSION TOPIC - 4/7

WHAT WILL WE DO FOR FOOD SAFETY?

- Need to strengthen enforcement of consumer protection laws, which are endorsed by the King. Build awareness what the consequences of not following the law would be.
- The laws regulating breastmilk substitute supplies need to be enforced across the country
- Looking into how to increase shelf life of processed foods without sacrificing nutrition. Need to also build education on safe packaging
- Labelling is important
- Improving agriculture production with quality and safety. Increasing awareness of rural people on nutrition and promoting vegetable and fruit production for household consumption to reduce migration and increase access to safe food. Ensuring all means to monitor local production and increasing education on health and safety food.
- WASH education is a large part of food safety. Where to get water? How to clean produce before going to market? However there are not enough materials to advocate for this at the community level with farmers. Having these would be very helpful.
- Food safety needs to be sensitized from national to sub-national levels. For example, unsafe food is still available and can be found at schools in rural areas.
- Imported products need to be checked on quality.
- Food safety needs to be considered to ensure safe food and good health of people and creating markets for agricultural products.
- Providing training on food production and encouraging people to apply the techniques.
- Raising awareness of food systems in Cambodia such as packaging and food processing. Involve youth in raising awareness on food systems.
- Ensuring food hygiene such as washing hand before food preparation.
- Effective promotion of healthy diets and food safety to youth.

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OUTCOMES FOR EACH DISCUSSION TOPIC - 5/7

Topic 2: HOW TO ACHIEVE THE VISION?

- Education and consumer awareness for improving eating habits, behaviour change and healthy eating. Awareness raising about healthy diets, eating a variety of vegetables and meat in moderation to strengthen the immune system in order to prevent non-communicable diseases as well as other diseases and maintain a healthy lifestyle.
- People need to eat healthy diets but they also need to make sure it is safe
- Promoting and supporting exclusive breastfeeding for babies in the first six months and complementary feeding for children aged from 6 months with continued breastfeeding up to 2 years or beyond.
- Promote sustainable and effective food production chain. Include actions toward zero waste through reducing the use of plastic, recycle food waste (Reuse, reduce, recycle). Maintain good waste management through correct storage and disposal.
- Expanded irrigation systems are needed for increasing food production.
- Food production training and guidelines for farmers.
- Building networks among producers, processors and retailers and providing technical guidelines (food processing, recycling foods, food hygiene are current gaps).
- Food fortification should be highlighted. Foods should be fortified before being supplied to the community.
- Looking at food supplies that go through the social protection system is important to make sure the ID Poor are adequately supplied and that children particularly aren't slipping in malnutrition. In situations like COVID-19, the poor are among the first people affected
- Expanded school feeding program, particularly among remote communities. MoEYS should integrate food safety and nutrition, healthy diets, BMI calculation and school wash program into the school curriculum. There should be hand washing station, gardens and kitchen at school. Enforce the guidelines from school health department, especially directive No 18 of MoEYS.
- There should be investment in public awareness through media/advertising campaigns.
- Need for strengthened healthcare and increased funding. There is prioritisation among Health Centres to only give RUTFs to SAM children, rather than MAM due to budget restrictions.
- Drink clean drinking water, live cleanly and maintain good hygiene. Promote behaviour change to other stakeholders using top-down approach. Start from ourselves and become a good example in order to influence others
- Public policy must have one shared goal and stakeholder advocacy is very crucial for financial support. Second NSFSN is the main strategy for doing this. We cannot apply implementation without NADP (mid-term review?) for sustainable implementation in Cambodia. Decentralization of the strategy is critical.
- Need to continue coordination and focus on working together for implementation (subnational authority, various ministries, NGOs, INGOs, UN actors, private sector, etc.). Need to coordinate and look for resources (human and financial) to implement policies, strategies and action plans. Also need to look at political, cultural and economic aspects to ensure food availability at all times.

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OUTCOMES FOR EACH DISCUSSION TOPIC - 6/7

WHAT KIND OF TOOLS CAN WE USE? GOVERNANCE AND FINANCE

- Need to build a country road map.
- Identify key stakeholders within the government.
- CARD should coordinate among different ministries.
- Need greater participation across the country and need to get the private sector included into these conversations early and productively.

GOVERNANCE (laws and regulations, markets, social protection, community)

- Multi-stakeholder commitments are required to achieve the vision.
- Enforcing existing laws and making amendments to law to support the vision.
- Supporting local products to motivate producers and reduce migration.
- Ensuring genuine products with proper labels and food certificates.
- Raising awareness of food safety directive to sellers before imposing penalty.
- Developing mechanisms and strengthening food monitoring by officials.
- Encouraging positive involvement from the private sector and all stakeholders to promote the food systems vision .
- Institutionalising nutrition into national and sub-national planning and budgeting is important. Capacity building for commune councilors on food systems leadership. Mol is a key stakeholder.
- Forming clusters of producers in the commune/sangkat ensure markets for agricultural products.
- Civil society should work closely with the government on evidence-based advocacy. Evidence should be disaggregated by province/area, nutrition issue etc. and should address budget. Necessary to know current budget figures to advocate for increased spending.
- Success in the community is mainly based on civil society interventions. As funding is scarce and interventions are becoming more limited, we should advocate to donors for more funds for civil society to continue our roles and responsibilities
- Strengthening the effectiveness of Sub-decree 133 implementation for regulation of BMS. Can build on the experience with breastmilk substitutes and apply learnings to other products
- Use a participatory guarantee system (PGS) based on trust between producers and consumers as an effective local quality control mechanism.
- Examine ways to ensure communities and enterprises are benefiting from the one product/one village (OVOP) scheme.
- Supporting social welfare to ensure everybody has access to food.

FINANCE (taxes, subsidies, profits, incentives)

- Incentives such as subsidies, low interest loans or market linkages to encourage farmers to grow nutritious foods
- Make use of tax deductions to encourage processing and value adding
- Need to shift the belief that private sector already has incentive through their profit motive. Discuss this more with private sector, particularly related to processing
- Multisectoral collaboration to promote local products
- Provide clear definitions for incentives.
- A more protective policy for the domestic market would help to protect local products. There is also a need for increased food safety governance/verification on imported products.
- Preventing food imports and reducing price of imported agricultural inputs.
- Setting up export associations to ensure fair price for local products.
- Savings groups work well, but there is a need for the commune to be involved to support the sustainability of these services.
- There is a need for more research and investment. Stakeholders cooperating and sharing information is especially important.

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OUTCOMES FOR EACH DISCUSSION TOPIC - 7/7

WHAT KIND OF TOOLS CAN WE USE? (DATA, CULTURE, INNOVATION, EMPOWERING WOMEN AND YOUTH)

DATA (informed decision making, targets and indicators, M&E)

- Need baseline data and indicators from country road map
- Need a good management system
- Data utilization and analysis, as well as dissemination of results, is an opportunity for growth.
- Developing production plans to meet market demand.

CULTURE (education, tradition, religion, festivals)

- Culture needs to be considered more around these interventions, including culture around education, information-sharing etc.
- There are big differences between different ethnic communities and this needs to be recognised, rather than a single approach to all communities. There needs to be more research to understand their food systems and approaches.
- Develop technical guidelines for indigenous foods and techniques, creating a record of what is currently preserved through oral traditions and practices.

INNOVATION (technology, new knowledge, new ways of working)

- Water system needs to be included, not just the food system
- New apps create linkages between farmers, suppliers and markets, as well as information on disease, best practices etc. Potential for model farmers to be supplied one smartphone for communities to be able to access this.
- An app addressing adaptation to climate change is needed, video based, produced by farmers for farmers and shared on Facebook.
- Social media is a hugely useful tool for sharing information and creating market linkages.
- Knowledge and information management – a lot of information is available but sometimes specific linkages are hard to make within the food system
- Lots of innovation coming out of agricultural schools – but they don't have access to finance for scaling up. Expand programs that promote funding to nascent ideas.

EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN AND YOUTH (equitable access to resources, knowledge and decision making, and ensuring the youth dividend).

- Provide equal access to knowledge and training related to food security and nutrition especially for women and young people.
- By intentionally addressing and involving women we see an increase in household income, women's leadership, create best practices and have great progress with cooperatives.
- Address gender inequity in access to knowledge and decision making in farming, whilst respecting cultural norms and minimizing conflict.
- Youth don't want to take over the family farm. This is a challenge.
- Youth Nutrition Champions have had great results working on food systems and healthy diets. Youth are highly engaged and interested, and have many great ideas. They enjoy the topic and we should continue with this enthusiasm and continue to engage them, particularly at the decision-making level. Very important to have at sub national level too.
- Organizing food system forums with the focus on youth.
- Need to build training on traditional foods and cooking into nutrition education
- Competitions are useful for encouraging youth to join and promote innovation
- Keeping communication to change social and individual behaviors. Developing regular campaigns to raise awareness of the public on food systems via social media.

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AREAS OF DIVERGENCE

These relate mostly to the discrepancy between the desire to promote local production by restricting import and the idea that Cambodian producers should have greater access to export markets. These ideas are in conflict with the economics of trade and regional agreements. The ideas can also conflict with consumer interests if the net result is domestic price increases. The objective is to promote local production and provide markets for local producers. Fears of food safety or lack of safety for imported foods are used as justification and are easily inflamed. Evidence is important for making decisions and we need to examine the national interest in terms of international relations and consumer demand.

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