

OFFICIAL FEEDBACK FORM

DIALOGUE DATE	Tuesday, 18 May 2021
DIALOGUE TITLE	Multi-stakeholder platforms for sustainable food systems: scalable game-changing solutions from Dutch expertise and experience
CONVENED BY	Netherlands Food Partnership, Rabobank, Wageningen University & Research, VNO-NCW, Oxfam Novib, Dutch Ministry of Agriculture, Nature and Food Quality and Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs
DIALOGUE EVENT PAGE	https://summitdialogues.org/dialogue/10768/
DIALOGUE TYPE	Independent
GEOGRAPHICAL FOCUS	No borders

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

PARTICIPATION BY AGE RANGE

0-18	7	19-30	44	31-50	35	51-65	2	66-80	80+
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PARTICIPATION BY GENDER

51	Male	43	Female	31	Prefer not to say or Other
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NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS IN EACH SECTOR

12	Agriculture/crops	7	Education		Health care
	Fish and aquaculture	1	Communication	1	Nutrition
	Livestock	1	Food processing	12	National or local government
	Agro-forestry	1	Food retail, markets		Utilities
9	Environment and ecology	13	Food industry		Industrial
2	Trade and commerce	11	Financial Services	55	Other

NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS FROM EACH STAKEHOLDER GROUP

4	Small/medium enterprise/artisan		Workers and trade union
	Large national business		Member of Parliament
6	Multi-national corporation		Local authority
3	Small-scale farmer	14	Government and national institution
1	Medium-scale farmer	1	Regional economic community
	Large-scale farmer	5	United Nations
5	Local Non-Governmental Organization	4	International financial institution
21	International Non-Governmental Organization	6	Private Foundation / Partnership / Alliance
1	Indigenous People		Consumer group
10	Science and academia	44	Other

2. PRINCIPLES OF ENGAGEMENT

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

"Be Respectful": To ensure that during the event participants listened to each other and were open to the coexistence of divergent points of view, we engaged 7 experienced facilitators, one for each roundtable, developed a facilitators' guide, and made sure it was read and understood by all of them. "Recognize Complexity": The dialogue embraced the complexity of food systems by (1) Setting up 7 roundtables on different key elements of food systems (Seed systems, Food Loss and Waste, Digitalisation, Nutrition, Finance, Responsible Business Conduct, and Natural Resources Management); (2) Involving multiple actors from different sectors, constituencies, food systems activities, backgrounds, and nationalities, with different interests and values; (3) Suggesting a few broad and open questions for each roundtable discussion and leaving room for the facilitators to adapt to the issues raised by the participants in relation to the roundtable topic. "Embrace multi-stakeholder inclusivity": The dialogue (1) Was organized by 7 co-convenors, representing 5 different constituencies (financial sector, private sector, civil society, knowledge institute, public sector); (2) Had 4 high-level keynotes from the international sector, national public sector, private sector, and civil society; (3) Had participants from different sectors, constituencies, food systems activities, backgrounds, and nationalities to enrich the dialogue and make it inclusive; (4) Each roundtable discussion was kick-started by 2 presentations of successful multi-stakeholder platforms on the respective roundtable topic. These presentations were selected to showcase as many voices as possible, capturing diverse cultural, professional, and gender-specific perspectives. "Build Trust": (1) The curator and facilitators were briefed via specific guides to make sure they generated a "safe space" and promoted trust, encouraging mutual respect; (2) Chatham House rules were applied; (3) The conclusions emerging from the Dialogues that are shared in the feedback and other media are not attributed to single individuals.

HOW DID YOUR DIALOGUE REFLECT SPECIFIC ASPECTS OF THE PRINCIPLES?

"Act with Urgency": One of the objectives of the event was to "recommend concrete elements on how to integrate working through multi-stakeholder platforms (MSPs) within the Areas of Collective Action proposed by the UN". With this, we urged the participants to come up with concrete "solutions" and recommendations on how MSPs can foster food systems transformation, and also give concrete recommendations for scaling up, based on lessons learned from existing MSPs on 7 key food systems-related topics. "Commit to the Summit": (1) We used the FSD format for this event to empower stakeholders to participate in the preparation of the Food Systems Summit. (2) We included in the objectives of the event "add value to the UN FSS 2021 preparatory processes, both in the Netherlands and internationally" and worked hard under tight deadlines to make sure we could organize this event timely, before the Dutch national Food Systems Dialogue in June 2021, the UN Pre-Summit in July 2021, and the UN Food Systems Summit in September 2021. (3) We designed the roundtable sessions set-up (a guide to facilitators, leading questions, etc.) to make sure the dialogue was forward-looking, fostered new connections, and enabled the emergence of ways to move forward collectively and creatively, embracing the entire scope of opinions. "Complement the work of others": This dialogue aims to add value to (1) The 15 Action Areas defined by the UNFSS 2021, in particular the Governance one, cutting across all five action tracks; (2) The Dutch national Food Systems Dialogue in June 2021; (3) The UN Pre-Summit in July 2021; (4) The UN Food Systems Summit in September 2021. Additionally, this dialogue brought together key experts and practitioners in the field of MSPs working on sustainable food systems (WUR, UNDP, Oxfam Novib, Rabobank, etc.) to build on their own work on multi-stakeholder platforms. It provided an opportunity (keynotes and roundtable discussions) to share promising innovations, connect stakeholders, and broaden partnerships to transform food systems for the common good.

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

(1) Invite participants from different sectors, constituencies, food systems activities, backgrounds, and nationalities to enrich the dialogue and make it inclusive. (2) Make sure you have the needed capacity to follow up after sending the invitations, to make sure a good mix of participants attends the dialogue. If you have different roundtables, make sure this balance is also achieved for each roundtable. (3) Make sure your curator and facilitators are properly briefed, using the guides and tools provided in the FSD platform, and emphasize their role to create an atmosphere of trust and engagement during the event and the roundtable discussions. (4) Make sure Chatham House rules are announced and applied. (5) Share the concept note and the agenda of the event with the participants before the Dialogue, to allow everyone to prepare and be involved during the dialogue discussions. (6) Make sure you consult with different and diverse stakeholders to decide on the leading questions for the dialogue and the relevant sub-topics. (7) Consider having thought-provoking opening pitches in

each roundtable to kick-start discussions. In this dialogue, we had 15 presenters from a wide variety of constituencies presenting 15 multi-stakeholder platforms experiences related to the 7 roundtable topics defined (2 presentations per roundtable, 3 for the roundtable on Natural Resource Management). This catalyzed interesting discussions on challenges, solutions, and recommendations for scaling up multi-stakeholder platforms for each roundtable topic. (8) Ensure sufficient time for meaningful discussion during the roundtables. Often we're inclined to squeeze in too many presentations and/or contributions which sometimes comes at the expense of time for proper discussion. (9) Ensure you fully understand existing issues and topics of contention with regards to the theme discussed, and have a full overview of the state of play and actual actors that need to be at the table and the potential complementarity and contrast of their contributions and stances.

3. METHOD

The outcomes of a Dialogue are influenced by the method that is used.

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

Yes

No

4. DIALOGUE FOCUS & OUTCOMES

MAJOR FOCUS

There is a growing recognition that complex and multi-dimensional issues such as achieving sustainable food systems require innovative, cross-sectoral, and holistic approaches, pooling together the resources, knowledge, and perspectives of different stakeholders. Participants concur that collective stakeholder engagement is indispensable to bring about the policy changes and investments required to achieve sustainable food systems.

The Netherlands is well-positioned to contribute to the preparations for the UN Food Systems Summit with innovative evidence-based proposals of “game-changing” initiatives in the agri-food sector, based - amongst others - on its rich experiences with multi-stakeholder collaboration. The Dutch are engaged in many public and private partnerships in and with many different countries and stakeholders in the field of food and water management and climate mitigation. The so-called Dutch Diamond approach, in which government, business, civil society, and knowledge institutions work together is known for this.

Multi-stakeholder collaboration is widely recognized as a key “game-changing solution” to achieve sustainable food systems, cutting across the 5 action tracks defined for the UN FSS 2021.

This independent dialogue was convened by the Netherlands Food Partnership, Rabobank, Wageningen University and Research, the Confederation of Netherlands Industry and Employers (VNO-NCW), Oxfam Novib, the Dutch Ministry of Agriculture, Nature and Food Quality, and the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

It showcased examples, shared practical recommendations, and discussed opportunities for scaling up multi-stakeholder platforms that can be replicated and scaled up in different parts of the world, focusing on its achievements, challenges, solutions, and contribution to systemic change to reach SDG2.

Specific roundtables were organized on Multi-stakeholder Platforms in the following domains:

- *Seeds systems
- *Food loss and waste
- *Digitalisation
- *Nutrition
- *Finance
- *Responsible business conduct
- *Natural resources management

-Purpose:

*Add value to the UN FSS 2021 preparatory processes, both in the Netherlands and internationally, based on the internationally recognised experience and expertise of Dutch and international partners with Multi-Stakeholder Platforms.

*Recommend concrete elements on how to integrate working through multi-stakeholder platforms within the Areas of Collective Action proposed by the UN.

-Outputs: They will be captured in a format to feed into (1) the Dutch national Food Systems Dialogue in June 2021 (The Netherlands/online), (2) the UN Pre-Summit in July 2021 (Rome/online), and (3) the UN Food Systems Summit in September 2021 (NYC/online).

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 multistakeholder approach is one of the 3 key Dutch priorities for the UNFSS 2021.

In general, participants agree multi-stakeholder platforms (MSPs) are key for SDG2 and the 2030 agenda. Only together stakeholders can address the challenges ahead. Despite the challenges they face, for instance, to level the playing field for each stakeholder to participate and contribute meaningfully, participants agree MSPs can be a good vehicle for the much-needed transitions of food systems, provided they respect a few crucial rules. In this regard, the following suggestions were made for replicating and/or scaling up MSPs working on sustainable food systems:

*Legitimacy and efficiency: Core to viable multi-stakeholder platforms are the interlinked notions of legitimacy and efficiency of the structure and the process.

-Representation and inclusiveness: These are fundamental key pillars to build the trust necessary for legitimacy.

Recommendations raised during the independent dialogue in this regard include (1) making sure from the beginning that all stakeholders affected by the given issue are included and equally represented in the MSP; (2) giving special attention to including minority groups and “unusual suspects” (such as street food vendors, women cooking in markets and other settings).

-Political will: Additionally, participants indicated that a strong political will is crucial for effective MSPs, and can also help to convey legitimacy.

-Ownership: Furthermore, legitimacy relies on the adequacy of the process to engage stakeholders in a meaningful dialogue in which they feel a sense of ownership and the possibility of gaining benefits. This requires transparency, continuous communication, openness, and respect. In this regard, participants highlighted the importance of (1) having an independent convenor; (2) establishing and respecting transparent processes and governance mechanisms in the MSP; (3) defining clear principles, and in particular, making sure human rights are respected, and (4) instead of having a pre-defined agenda and solutions, ownership requires focusing on country, local and community-owned challenges and solutions. A specific call was made during the keynotes for (funding) “donors and global players to “change their behavior to align to country priorities and respect country ownership”.

*Effective collaboration:

-Diversity: Fostering a working relationship based on trust, mutual respect, and open communication also requires an understanding of each other's strengths and weaknesses. Stakeholders bring to MSPs their own mandates, interests, competencies, and shortcomings. Unless these factors are openly acknowledged and processes are in place to facilitate stakeholder discussions and negotiations, effective collaboration will not be achieved. Recommendations in this regard included: (1) setting up continuous learning processes; (2) having a clear and uninterrupted communication strategy, including sharing and celebrating results; (3) building on each other's differences, value those different skills, perspectives and make them work together; (4) recognizing each other's expertise and strengths, and come together to find common ground; and (5) applying the principle of “sufficient consensus” rather than full agreement on every issue to proceed and move on.

-Power relations: Multi-stakeholder platforms have been criticized for failing to address asymmetries and unequal power relations. In particular, the treatment of diverse stakeholders as equals is seen as problematic as it does not recognize the differences in authority, legitimacy, interests, and power of different stakeholders. In this regard, participants indicated the importance of addressing power relations through standards and internal mechanisms and processes for inclusivity, transparency, and accountability.

-Effectiveness and accountability: Additionally, MSPs also raise questions related to the effectiveness and accountability of these kinds of mechanisms. In this sense, the dialogue identified as crucial recommendations: (1) defining clear responsibilities for each stakeholder involved; (2) having a clear shared agenda and goals (with time frame) based on a shared analysis; (3) having internal mechanisms in place to make partners accountable; (4) focus on concrete solutions; (5) monitor and evaluate impact; and (6) invest in (mutual) learning about multi-stakeholder approaches.

-Time and resources: Finally, participants stressed that multi-stakeholder collaboration requires sufficient time and resources. Time to build trust, withstand internal and external changes, align different stakeholders, build their capacity, and organize processes where they can give input, feel connected and committed, and feel confident and empowered to engage in collaborative work. A specific plea was made to move from a siloed funding approach, which still prevails, so that MSPs can address health and planetary challenges together.

Independent MSPs can be a space for constructive and productive deliberation. Participants concurred that multi-stakeholder dialogue in MSPs is useful to make everybody's voices heard, change behaviors, and empower all actors. In other words, the outcomes of MSPs go beyond the concrete solutions adopted.

Multi-stakeholder approaches can be real game-changers to advance food systems transformation. It's important to note however that decisions taken within multi-stakeholder collaborations should be complementary to, and not substitute democratically accountable and rights-based decision making around food.

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OUTCOMES FOR EACH DISCUSSION TOPIC - 1/7

Roundtable 1: Seed systems

The participants identified several challenges that collaborative efforts in this domain are expected to address, starting with empowering smallholder farmers to access and use quality seeds to improve their harvest and business. Two cases of multi-stakeholder collaboration were presented, the story of Seed NL, an MSP initiated by Plantum, the Dutch Ministry of Agriculture, Nature and Food Quality, and the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and the Sowing Diversity = Harvesting Security Programme of Oxfam Novib and partners. One key challenge of multi-stakeholder collaboration initiatives is that they need to have everyone on board, and to be aware of the unequal power relations that might be reproduced in multi-stakeholder platforms (MSPs). Trust building and making sure that all stakeholders invest time is key for lasting results. Often, there is a lack of or only partial evidence informing the design of (seed-related) policies. In addition, there is often incomplete data and a lack of analytical knowledge about project impact, or MSP impact in particular. At the same time, the economic sustainability of projects is of key importance.

Recommendations:

- When implementing MSPs for seed systems in a particular country, a long-term vision needs to be created for the development of the seed sector in that country. As plant breeding is a long-term process, there is a need for long-term thinking and commitment. Funders need to acknowledge and cater for this as well, moving from project-based to longer-term programs-based funding.
- Any collaborative initiative needs to start with an identification of needs, before solving the problem. Also, it is necessary to bring evidence to the table in policy-making and design processes.
- Farmer breeding and seeds systems need to be recognized.
- MSPs must move beyond controversies, building trust by having transparency and accountability mechanisms in place. There should be regular outreach to involved actors, especially farmers, and a neutral convening partner.
- MSPs in developing countries need more and more diverse (Dutch) private sector involvement. Private sector branch organizations such as VNO-NCW and Netherlands Africa Business Council can play an important role herein, whereas possibly the legislative and regulatory bar for Dutch companies to step in should be lowered.
- MSPs and investment by Dutch/international actors in local seed systems need to be aligned with existing national agricultural investment plans.

Cases presented:

Case 1: SeedNL

https://www.nlfoodpartnership.com/documents/218/Seeds_case_1-SeedNL_Slidedeck.pptx.pdf

Case 2: Sowing Diversity = Harvesting Security Programme

https://www.nlfoodpartnership.com/documents/214/The_sowing_diversity_is_harvesting_security_program_Bram_De_Jonge.pdf

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OUTCOMES FOR EACH DISCUSSION TOPIC - 2/7

Roundtable 2: Food loss and waste

After the presentation of two multi-stakeholder platforms focused on food loss and waste (Food Waste Free United, and the Cool Move), the dialogue at this table identified several common challenges. One of them is that it may be difficult to convince participants of the added value of the MSP in the kick-off phase, due to the high costs involved in terms of time, effort, and money. It is also demanding to get all members to commit and follow through on a similar level of actions: some actors may join with enthusiasm at the beginning but then lose interest along the way and will need to be pushed. In particular, public and private collaboration may be challenging if there is no alignment of objectives, and when there are divergences of visions among partners.

In the next three years, working in multi-stakeholder platforms could have the greatest impact if stakeholders get the urgency of the food systems' transition on the table and create momentum. This would imply creating consensus and celebrating successes.

Recommendations:

-Some key conditions need to be in place for a successful MSP, such as having a strong and independent driving group of convenors/facilitators, and having a shared ambition and agenda, which creates a sense of community and participation in a joint social impact initiative.

-Additionally, it needs to be clear what's in it for partners in the MSP, and a clear set of incentives needs to be there, such as the ability to create synergies by working with partners that complement each other.

-It is also important to create ownership especially among local actors - this is not easy, and will take time and energy - and to ensure political commitment to allow all actors to meaningfully engage. This entails setting robust standards for transparent engagement, to allow less powerful actors to be involved and give them a clear mandate. It is crucial to grasp opportunities for the alignment of powerful players with less powerful actors.

-A clear scaling strategy is necessary to scale successful MSPs (also as a visual, based on an integrated view of the value chain), as well as identifying and engaging scaling partners. Such scaling strategy needs to follow a regional or national/local approach, as there is no one scaling strategy that applies to all.

-Another key aspect for well-functioning MSPs is to provide quality information and data along the whole value chain, to improve measuring, monitoring, and learning.

-To develop effective MSPs there is a need to guarantee the long-term funding, also for facilitation, and the (overhead) cost of a professional coordinating team.

-Creating peer exchange networks between partnerships working towards the same goal can help to share learnings and scale-up.

Cases presented:

Case 1: Food Waste Free United

https://www.nlfoodpartnership.com/documents/213/Multi-stakeholder_platform_working_on_halving_food_loss_and_waste.pdf

Case 2: The Cool Move

https://www.nlfoodpartnership.com/documents/219/FLW_case_2-Rabobank_The_cool_move.pptx.pdf

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OUTCOMES FOR EACH DISCUSSION TOPIC - 3/7

Roundtable 3: Digitalisation

This roundtable discussion was informed and inspired by two examples of multi-stakeholder platforms: Auxfin Burundi and Digifarm. The dialogue continued identifying challenges and opportunities of working in MSPs in this domain. They may help create more collaboration and alignment in the digital-for-agriculture sector, with the potential to tackle the often seen duplication of efforts. In this sector, competition between MSP partners may hamper data sharing and co-creation of digital solutions, and limit cooperation to foster the interoperability of systems. Open source for example is seen as a dilemma: it may contribute to the adoption of innovations at scale, but it can also limit the financial sustainability for the creators. The latter is a challenge in this sector: much of the infrastructure for digital solutions still needs to be built up, so large investments by (big) players are necessary, with the resulting need to earn back the cost.

Recommendations:

- Multiple actors working on digitalisation in agri-food should take responsibility to develop this sector further to deliver on food security outcomes. They can grasp opportunities to improve the performance of this sector through cooperation.
- The Netherlands should invest in digitalisation as a contribution to food security, and Dutch actors can share their broad experience in this domain with LMIC actors.
- Stakeholders working on digitalisation and mainstream organisations need to capitalize on their differences. Introducing technology and creating infrastructure is only one aspect, adoption of digital tools by farmers requires cooperation between different actors.
- MSPs in digitalisation can learn from each other and from collaborative platforms in other domains. They may particularly benefit from dedicated support to balance interests and powers. As new partners are introduced to address challenges of MSPs, balancing interests is needed.
- When there is competition around sharing data or open/closed source code, a middle way can be found by sharing some types of data or working with partly open/closed source. It is not all or nothing.
- Actors active in the digital-for-agriculture domain need to document how food security benefits from digitalisation.
- Digital industry standards of world regions should be aligned. Common standards and regulations can improve the enabling environment by creating a bigger playing field for digital for agriculture actors to scale and cooperate more easily.

Cases presented:

Case 1: Auxfin Burundi

https://www.nlfoodpartnership.com/documents/212/UMVA.a_Digital_Food_Systems_Service_platform_Yannick_Chokola_Roundtable_Digitalization.pdf

Case 2: Digifarm

https://www.nlfoodpartnership.com/documents/216/DigiFarm_Sieka_Gatabaki_Roundtable_Digitalization.pdf

ACTION TRACKS

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OUTCOMES FOR EACH DISCUSSION TOPIC - 4/7

Roundtable 4: Nutrition

Improving nutrition security requires a systemic approach, which combines for example creating demand with improving the enabling environment and the supply of nutritious foods. This makes it more complex and is why it is not always easy to deliver outcomes at the level of improved diets (i.e. which are more diverse, safe, healthy, and affordable). But it is also why working through a multistakeholder approach is promising. These were among the findings of a recent evaluation of nutrition PPPs commissioned by the Netherlands Working Group on international Nutrition (NWGN), the preliminary outcomes of which were shared during this independent dialogue. The other successful example presented was the Vegetables for All project in Tanzania, an initiative that benefited from the complementarity between its partners: Rijkzwaan, TAHA, Rabobank, World Vegetable Centre, ICCO, WUR, and GAIN, who collaborated in a whole vegetable chain approach from seed to stomach. Currently, some of the instruments used in international cooperation are not (yet) designed to achieve these systemic outcomes or to take such systemic approaches, which may make (potential) coalitions risk-averse and slow down progress.

Recommendations:

- When developing food and nutrition security initiatives, 'nutrition' should not be considered as a theme to choose, but rather as a topic that needs to be mainstreamed.
- Approaches need to be about food AND nutrition security to prevent that it is food OR nutrition security.
- Financing and investment for nutrition needs to be enhanced.
- National and international donors and impact investors should improve on the conditions of their instruments, i.e. being more explicit on the nutrition outcomes they intend to achieve.
- Monitoring and evaluation must pay attention to potential trade-offs that could occur as a result of project selection criteria: some criteria for effectiveness may limit the inclusion of certain farmers or consumers.
- It is important to manage expectations of public-private collaboration for nutrition. In some cases, this may imply lowering certain expectations if some are not realistic.
- Communication about healthy diets and nutrition with different stakeholders in different parts of the world could benefit from clearer messaging, and from integration as part of broader approaches.

Cases presented:

Case 1: Evaluation PPPs in Food and Nutrition Security

https://www.nlfoodpartnership.com/documents/220/Nutrition_case_2-NWGN_Evaluation_PPPs_in_FNS.pdf

Case 2: Vegetables for All project in Tanzania

https://www.nlfoodpartnership.com/documents/221/Nutrition_case_1-GAIN-Veg4all.pptx.pdf

ACTION TRACKS

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OUTCOMES FOR EACH DISCUSSION TOPIC - 5/7

Roundtable 5: Finance

The dialogue started with the presentations about the Agri3 Fund and the case of Cooperative Development in the Chilean Food and Agriculture sector, based on the Dutch diamond approach. Among the challenges identified in this group was that time, effort, and money are usually required but not always available to develop ambitious ideas to start an MSP initiative. Also, a challenge is the different language and corporate culture which different stakeholder groups represent - e.g. bankers vs civil society vs government. Smallholder farmers are too often deemed to not yet be “relevant” players in food systems and are hence overlooked in policies, sustainable transformation, and finance. Moreover, the difference of power within the multi-stakeholder platforms might hinder the voice of smaller players. This implies that multi-stakeholder initiatives in this domain need to proactively address communication, trust, and alignment challenges, fostering continuous engagement and knowledge sharing. Working with neutral academic and knowledge institutions may help tackle the lack of trust, if applicable. It is also important to build a core team, and a delivery unit.

In addition, these initiatives also need to carefully balance and deliver on various development impact domains, including economic, social, and ecological sustainability. This needs a clear vision and a common policy: ‘SMART’ objectives, concrete data, and a delivery model. It also needs investment in resourcing through manpower and funding.

Recommendations:

- To build a multi-stakeholder platform that incorporates or focuses on finance, it is important to involve specific key stakeholders: commercial banks, who have a local infrastructure; public and private investors; clients (traders, aggregators, producers, farmers), governments (local, global), academic institutions, NGOs.
- Clear roles have to be defined, and every stakeholder should have a stake in the MSP governance.
- Ensure there is a business case for each of these MSP partners, be it through impact, financial returns, changing practices, and/or others.
- Explore innovative financing mechanisms like blended finance, and simultaneously build knowledge and capacity through technical assistance allowing research engagements and sectoral analysis.
- MSPs working on finance for SFS should take into account that digitalisation and sustainability are two key trends that are becoming more and more important for involved stakeholders and customers.
- Use a local sector approach and/or landscape perspective to present common themes like regulatory improvement or to identify the sustainability agenda, developing research, and finding sustainable business cases.
- Share learnings within and beyond the MSP (i.e. with other MSPs and sector actors) to drive further change.
- As many organizations tend to work in silos, MSPs may require a change in operating models individually and not only collectively.
- Agility and diversity are important too: In changing circumstances, use the capacity of different organizations to create solutions and create value opportunities.

Cases presented:

Case 1: Agri3 Fund

https://www.nlfoodpartnership.com/documents/222/Finance_case_1-Rabobank_Agri3.pptx.pdf

Case 2: Cooperative Development in the Chilean Food and Agriculture sector

https://www.nlfoodpartnership.com/documents/217/Chilean_use_case_Smallholder_framers_as_part_of_food_chain.pdf

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OUTCOMES FOR EACH DISCUSSION TOPIC - 6/7

Roundtable 6: Responsible Business Conduct

The dialogue started with presentations about the global partnership for the True Price of food, which plans to deliver a global measurement standard, an open-source benchmark database, scientific foundations, a policy toolbox, and support for SMEs and farmers. The other MSP example on responsible business conduct presented was RSPO, a not-for-profit that unites stakeholders from the 7 sectors of the palm oil industry: oil palm producers, processors or traders, consumer goods manufacturers, retailers, banks/investors, and environmental and social non-governmental organisations (NGOs), to develop and implement global standards for sustainable palm oil.

The roundtable identified the challenge for multi-stakeholder platforms to systematically engage rural communities and bring in their perspectives. Experience shows that it is necessary to have the involvement of (local) governments to build political will, while businesses also need to be part of the conversation. It is important to realise that when working with different stakeholders results will never be perfect and to be aware that there may be power asymmetries between businesses and other stakeholders. It is key to build trusted coalitions and share knowledge.

Another challenge is to have a long-term perspective as well as good incentives, which are more than just having a (future) profit and are based on real problems. Finally, there is a need to effectively link multi-stakeholder platforms' work in (potential) LMIC markets with work in OECD markets.

Recommendations:

- For MSPs to be effective, both businesses and local communities need to be engaged from the beginning, as well as representatives of the government. All relevant stakeholders are needed to generate a successful initiative, develop incentives for action, and build political will.
- MSPs on Responsible Business Conduct should include aspects of certification, standards, verifiability, shared accountability, incentives, living wages, as key ingredients for a multistakeholder approach to be successful.
- Co-create new visions and stories about what is "sustainability". Internalising external costs in prices will also provide new incentives for the farmers directly; while it will be motivational for them to know additional money will be spent on projects (e.g. restoring biodiversity).
- Ensure an equitable share of costs and benefits.
- Promote access to information for everyone, in particular for people at the beginning of the value chain, by applying, for example, open-source principles.
- Improve land governance, by adhering to land tenure rights, including the gender dimension, as a framework.
- Bring in the local voices - Focus on the vulnerable (e.g. legal aid) and include the community. Invest in empowering local representatives and other stakeholders, if needed to balance power asymmetries.
- Don't shy away from the elephant in the room: the critical perspective, also among friends, is needed for a successful MSP.
- Global partnerships and coalitions are needed for scaling up MSPs.
- Learn from others, share best practices, and act fast. Crises can create opportunities for multi-stakeholder collaboration.

Cases presented:

Case 1: True Price of food

https://www.nfoodpartnership.com/documents/223/CSR_case_1-Trueprice.pptx.pdf

Case 2: Roundtable on Sustainable Palm Oil

<https://rspo.org/about>

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

OUTCOMES FOR EACH DISCUSSION TOPIC - 7/7

Roundtable 7: Natural Resources Management

The dialogue started with the presentation of three cases of multi-stakeholder platforms focusing on natural resources management: (1) the Cisdoma land-use efficiency case for organic pepper small-holder farmers in Vietnam, (2) Rikolto's case of sustainable landscape management to save the lake Maslago, which feeds Nicaragua's cities, and (3) the IDH Sourceup case, a multi-stakeholder coalition promoting sustainable intensification while reducing deforestation and generating income in Mato Grosso, Brazil. The group identified several challenges of working in multi-stakeholder platforms, starting with the management of power dynamics. From the beginning, issues such as who takes the initiative to start the MSP, if it was born from a specific interest, and the common concern that provides an entry point for collaboration, influence the MSP dynamics and outcomes. Additionally, the scalability of often small initiatives is considered a risk, as is the quality of data available to and from different stakeholders. The role and involvement of the government - at all levels - needs careful attention. Finally, another challenge is the sustainability of multi-stakeholder platforms beyond projects and programs. Exit strategies are often an afterthought, and even if local actors can take over, additional resources are often no longer available.

To address those challenges the participants stressed the importance of a holistic approach - integrated landscape management, which involves a whole region and all stakeholders. The leadership and participation of all actors are key in that approach, as is the use of validated methods and tools and neutral facilitation.

Recommendations:

- All MSPs need to have a clear purpose and respond to a clear need. They are not an end in itself or the answer to everything.
- MSPs should be designed in such a way that they could be changed or dissolved. Scaling is not always necessary.
- There is a lot of experience, also at the micro-level. Lessons and experiences need to be documented and shared.
- At the actor level, the participation of actors should be needs-based. To involve all actors, the leadership and participation of local actors through a holistic approach can be facilitated using integrated landscape management.
- The neutral facilitation can be organised for example using an online platform: actors can be connected to each other; companies can be connected to their clients.
- The government needs to put a strong effort in scaling up, supporting the connections, and different actions. Their support is essential.
- It is crucial to look beyond the value chain mentality and understand the system and system dynamics.
- Additionally, we should work towards solutions; and we need the right stakeholders to find these solutions; in agriculture, this is often through multi-stakeholder collaboration. "We need to work as coalitions of change, agents of change that take actions!"

Cases presented:

Case 1: Sourceup case in Mato Grosso, Brazil

https://www.nlfoodpartnership.com/documents/224/NRM_case_1-IDH_-PPI_landscape_approach.pdf

Case 2: Land-use efficiency case in Vietnam

https://www.nlfoodpartnership.com/documents/215/Land_use_efficiency_smallholder_farmers.pdf

Case 3: Sustainable landscape management in lake Maslago, Nicaragua

https://www.nlfoodpartnership.com/documents/211/MASLAGO_Saving_the_lake_that_feeds_Nicaragua_Fausto_Rodriguez_Roundtable_Digit_dpNuyvj.pdf

ACTION TRACKS

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- ✓ Action Track 5: Build resilience to vulnerabilities, shocks and stress

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AREAS OF DIVERGENCE

Most discussion groups did not generate explicit areas of divergence, though it became clear across the seven tables that these areas existed and are part of the challenge of developing effective multi-stakeholder initiatives. Several groups stressed that divergence is important, as it broadens perspectives, and surfacing and appreciating differences is a key step towards becoming an effective MSP.

The key areas of divergence that emerged during the dialogue are as follows:

-Different actors have different views on how successful the various multi-stakeholder platforms have been. These different perspectives have been voiced during the dialogue sessions and were the background against which recommendations for success were made.

-Participants realised that they may have different expectations on the effectiveness of a multi-stakeholder initiative. Some of them indicated that some initiatives, which have been initiated from The Netherlands for example, may not be responsive to the needs and perspectives of the less powerful food systems actors in Africa or Asia, even when its design is of good quality and the Dutch or international actors involved have the proper expertise and experience.

-Funding instruments that have been created to facilitate public-private collaboration in the agrifood sector are considered innovative and helpful by some, whereas others find them too bureaucratic or hard to work with.

-Some participants indicated they missed the discussion on access to land - as a crucial discussion to have.

-Multi-stakeholder platforms risk being just 'talk shops' for some, who are reluctant to engage in them if there is no concrete action and if they don't see a clear benefit or added value for them.

-While some participants think we shouldn't "impose" top-down blueprint solutions but develop local solutions, others think that solutions that have already proven successful in a given context can be scaled up and replicated in other settings.

-Some participants called for more attention to end 'siloes' thinking and to working in a more integrated manner.

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ATTACHMENTS AND RELEVANT LINKS

ATTACHMENTS

- **Concept note - Independent dialogue - Multi-stakeholder platforms for sustainable food systems**
<https://summitdialogues.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/180521-Concept-Note-Independent-Dialogue-MSPs-for-SFS.pdf>
- **Agenda - Independent dialogue - Multi-stakeholder platforms for sustainable food systems**
<https://summitdialogues.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/180521-Agenda-Independent-Dialogue-MSPs-for-SFS.pdf>

RELEVANT LINKS

- **More information:**
<https://www.nlfoodpartnership.com/>