

2023
REPORT

FOOD DIALOGUES

ADVANCING FOOD SECURITY AND ADAPTATION

Photo Credit - Concern Worldwide USA

HOSTED BY SURGE AFRICA IN PARTNERSHIP
WITH CAFS



INTRODUCTION

In an effort to promote discourse around climate adaptation as it relates to food security and sustainable agriculture, Surge Africa in partnership with Community Action for Food Security (CAFS) hosted a two-part dialogue on food systems.

Through an inclusive and robust discussion with practitioners and experts in the field, the program aimed to provide insight into the challenges faced by agricultural systems, explored new adaptation strategies, and promoted collaboration and knowledge exchange among stakeholders to promote thinking around sustainable food production and access.

The program centered its focus on addressing critical issues surrounding collaborative strategies needed to achieve food sovereignty and disaster management for food systems. The pressing concerns of food security in the face of climate change necessitate urgent action. The impacts of global warming on agricultural systems pose significant challenges, demanding adaptation strategies for both sustainable food production and access.

The virtual food dialogues aimed to promote food sovereignty by empowering communities to take charge of their food systems, fostering resilience against climate-induced threats. To achieve this, we brought together experts, stakeholders, and policymakers to discuss and find solutions to various challenges affecting agricultural practices, food production, and sustainable development.

In doing so, we hope the program will serve as a platform for comprehensive engagement, enabling participants to contribute to discourse around sustainable agricultural development, food sovereignty, and improved food security outcomes.

The thinking that shaped the food series cuts across the following:

Knowledge Sharing: Facilitate knowledge sharing and exchange of best practices, innovative solutions, and research findings among participants, with a focus on sustainable agricultural practices, effective flood and rain programs, weather-resilient farming techniques, and successful policies for enhancing food security.

Collaboration and Networking: Foster collaboration and networking opportunities among participants, including policymakers, researchers, agricultural experts, and representatives from relevant organizations and institutions, to promote cross-sectoral cooperation and collective action in addressing food security challenges.

Solutions and Recommendations: Generate actionable solutions, policy recommendations, and practical strategies to address the highlighted issues, taking into account local contexts, socio-economic factors, and the specific challenges faced by communities striving for food security.

Collaborative Strategies for Sustainable Agriculture

The first dialogue in the series made emphasis on the importance of biodiversity and resilience in achieving sustainable agriculture. The session advocated for a holistic approach that considers aspects beyond production, such as supply chains, and the vital inclusion of women and youth. Additionally, adaptation financing was underscored as crucial.

Angela Reithuber who is a Program Officer at Ban Ki-Moon Centre for Global Citizens emphasized the pivotal role of women and youth in agricultural development, highlighting the necessity of their active involvement.

She also acknowledged the need for international institutions to work with local ones in order to facilitate grassroots action and decision-making that is data driven. She also mentioned accessing finance as a key barrier to addressing intervention gaps.

She wrapped her session by recognizing the huge gap that exist between policy & policy makers, and recipients on ground - citing the need for institutions and stakeholders to work together on sensitive issues as such.

On the other hand; Karen Nekesa, the co-chair's the Alliance for Food Sovereignty in Africa (AFSA) 'Agroecology for climate action working group' centered her discussion around the triple burden of malnutrition, unsustainable practices, social inequalities, and cultural negligence within the food system.

The narrative challenged misconceptions around African foods and farming, and highlighted the value of agroecology and cultural preservation.

Karen emphasized how policy frameworks across various sectors, including agriculture, food safety, public health, and nutrition, profoundly shape the food systems we experience, accentuating the need for comprehensive and integrated approaches.



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THE FOOD DIALOGUES HIGHLIGHT THE URGENT NEED TO ADAPT TO CLIMATE CHALLENGES, EMPHASIZING HOLISTIC APPROACHES THAT TRANSCEND CONVENTIONAL AGRICULTURAL SOLUTIONS, WHILE ALSO PROPOSING CONCRETE ACTIONS FOR BUILDING RESILIENT AND SUSTAINABLE FOOD SYSTEMS.

IT EXPLORES THE NARRATIVE OF AFRICAN FOODS AND FARMING, EMPHASIZING THE IMPORTANCE OF AGROECOLOGY AND PRESERVING CULTURAL VALUES. IT CHALLENGES MISCONCEPTIONS AND HIGHLIGHTS HOW CLIMATE CHANGE-INDUCED HUNGER PROFOUNDLY AFFECTS HUMAN PRODUCTIVITY, EMPHASIZING THE INTERCONNECTEDNESS OF FOOD SECURITY, CLIMATE CHANGE, AND HUMAN WELL-BEING

ADVANCING FOOD SECURITY AND ADAPTATION

Climate-Resilient Agriculture and Disaster Management

The second dialogue in the series focuses on the intricate dynamics of climate resilience and disaster risk management within agricultural food systems. It delves into climate resilience and disaster risk management, with a primary focus on identifying opportunities for adaptation within agricultural food systems.

The dialogue comprehensively addresses a wide array of challenges, spanning from resource depletion, shifting climate patterns, to the ever-fluctuating dynamics of the market. Emphasis is placed on understanding the imminent threats that climate change poses to agriculture and food systems.

Additionally, it explores existing paradigms within agriculture and food systems, while also highlighting future actions necessary for promoting sustainability within these crucial sectors. The session stresses the need to broaden the scope of climate adaptation, encompassing not only agricultural solutions but also holistic approaches to the entire food system. It advocates evidence-based decision-making, utilizing experiences accumulated over time, incorporating climate finance, enhancing genetic and agronomical agricultural practices, and blending various adaptation strategies.

The discussion also encompasses the design of innovative financial mechanisms, increased support for climate-smart agricultural strategies, and the amplification of climate information services.

Furthermore, the session dives deep into the intricate interplay between these challenges and the profound impact of climate change, presenting adaptive measures aimed at establishing resilient and efficient food systems. The session concludes by proposing future actions, including enhanced collaboration among key stakeholders, augmented government investments, digital scaling for monitoring agricultural commodities, and the integration of climate knowledge into secondary and tertiary educational curricula.

Dr. Saheed Olaide Jimoh, an associate editor of the African Journal of Range and Forage Science at University of Wyoming stressed the significance of proactive financial investment, entrepreneurship and climate knowledge generation and services in climate adaptation to avert impending challenges.

Engagement Highlights

1

ON BUILDING RESILIENT FOOD SYSTEMS - SEED DIVERSITY, SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE & DISASTER RISK REDUCTION (DRR)

Participants contributed a range of valuable insights on this topic. They emphasized the crucial importance of preserving traditional seeds and highlighted the Surge Africa seed bank project as a notable example. To mitigate post-harvest losses, participants advocated for increased financial support in food preservation initiatives. The discussion further delved into the significance of conducting awareness campaigns, fostering community development, and providing capacity-building training to facilitate the promotion of seed diversity. The participants recommended collaboration with research institutions to accumulate data and effectively disseminate information, thus underscoring the need for comprehensive efforts to enhance seed diversity and bolster climate resilience in food systems.

3

ON DISASTER MANAGEMENT: TACKLING LIVELIHOOD AND ECONOMIC RISKS IN A CHANGING CLIMATE

Participants emphasized strategies to ensure proper livelihood and adaptation amidst climate change-induced disasters. Key points included the necessity of training farmers in modern adaptive techniques for sustainable food systems, advocating for the adoption of improved crop varieties resistant to drought and other climatic challenges, and highlighting the importance of securing adequate funds to support effective disaster management initiatives. This discussion underscored the importance of equipping agricultural communities with the knowledge, resources, and financial support needed to navigate the impacts of a changing climate on livelihoods and economies.

2

ON SUPPLY CHAINS, MOBILITY, VALUE CHAINS, AND ACCESS

Participants emphasized various strategies for this goal. They highlighted the need to develop robust infrastructure and storage silos as crucial steps to reduce post-harvest losses and maintain nutritional quality.

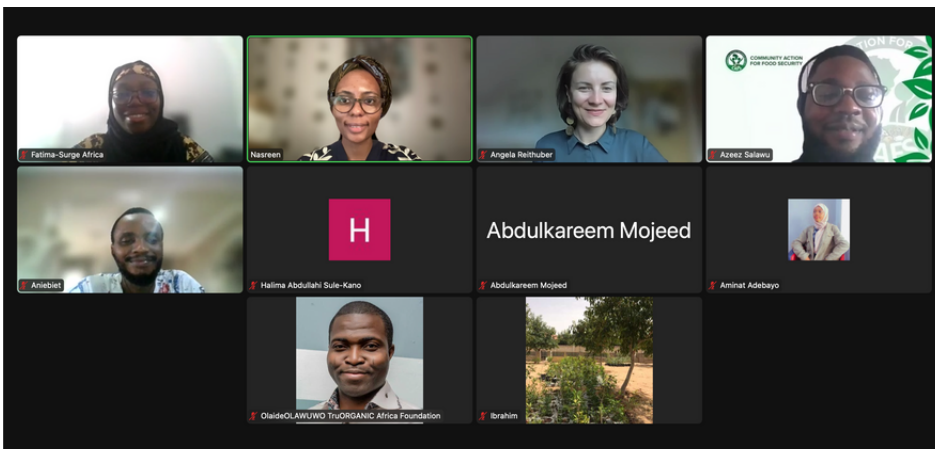
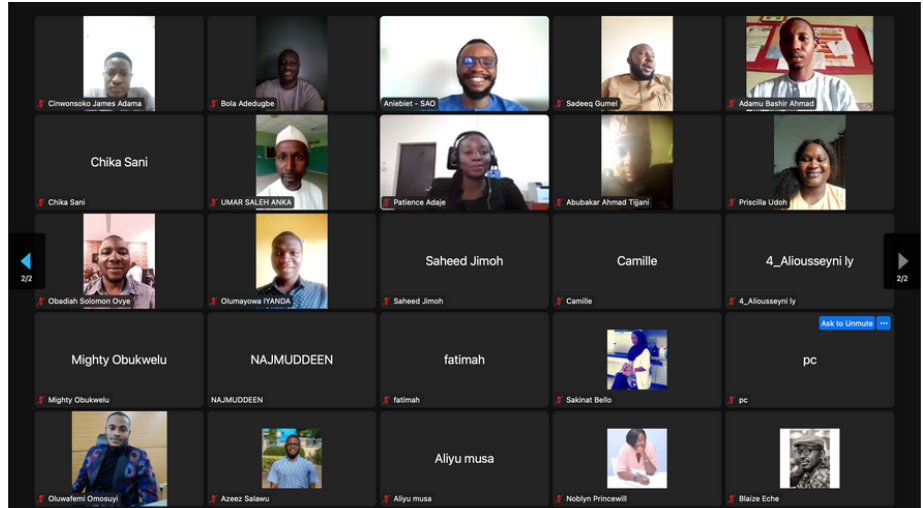
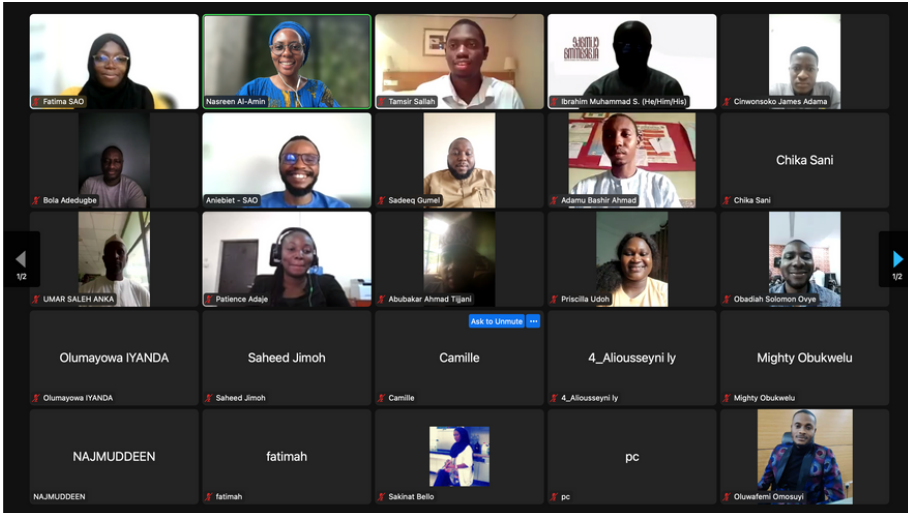
The discussion also revolved around the significance of educating farmers about modern agricultural practices, including genetically modified organisms (GMOs), and the benefits they can bring.

Additionally, participants stressed the value of forming partnerships with organizations specialized in guiding farmers in effective food processing and preservation techniques. This dialogue underscored the multifaceted approach required to ensure the preservation of nutritional value throughout the supply chain and enhance food security.

4

ON SCALING RESILIENT AGRICULTURE: EXAMINING INDIGENOUS PRACTICES & EMERGING POLICIES

Participants highlighted the significance of indigenous ideology and practices in establishing sustainable food systems. They underscored the synergy between traditional and modern practices for enhanced resilience, such as integrating indigenous pest management techniques with contemporary approaches. Participants also recommended building trust-based relationships between researchers and rural communities by delivering on promises, ensuring reliable information exchange. This dialogue emphasized the importance of blending traditional knowledge with modern strategies to foster resilient agricultural systems.



Recommendations

Based on the insights gained from the series, the following recommendations were put forward

STRENGTHEN CLIMATE ACTION AND PRIORITIZE FOOD SECURITY MEASURES:

This diversified strategy is required to strengthen climate action while emphasizing food security measures. This involves coordinating initiatives to lower greenhouse gas emissions and improve climate resilience with plans to guarantee everyone has access to enough food that is both safe and nutrient-rich. This dual strategy acknowledges the link between the effects of climate change on food production and the need to strengthen agricultural resilience to ensure the security of food supplies in a changing climate.

ENHANCE INSTITUTIONAL ARRANGEMENTS AND INCLUSIVITY IN AGRICULTURAL ACTIVITIES:

Restructuring the organizational structures that govern agriculture while ensuring that a diverse range of stakeholders, including smallholder farmers and marginalized communities, actively participate in and benefit from agricultural initiatives are required to improve institutional arrangements and inclusivity in agricultural activities. This strategy attempts to improve agricultural operations, support environmentally friendly methods, and open doors to greater economic and social involvement in the industry

PROMOTE COLLABORATION, KNOWLEDGE SHARING, AND STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT:

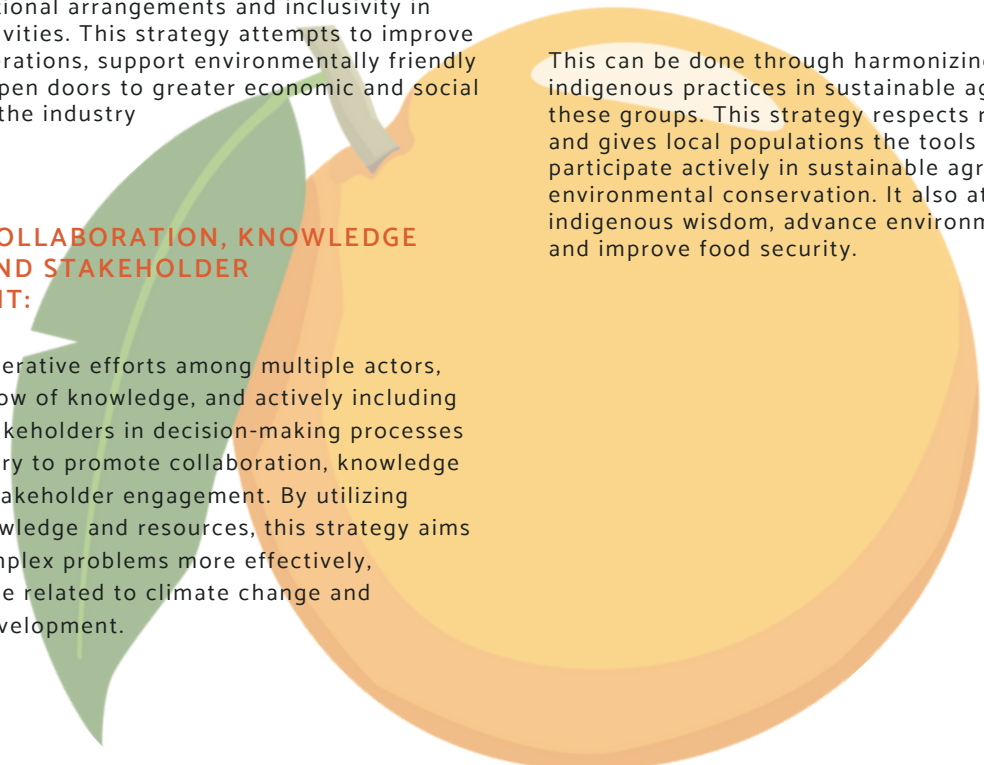
Fostering cooperative efforts among multiple actors, allowing the flow of knowledge, and actively including all relevant stakeholders in decision-making processes are all necessary to promote collaboration, knowledge sharing, and stakeholder engagement. By utilizing communal knowledge and resources, this strategy aims to address complex problems more effectively, especially those related to climate change and sustainable development.

IMPLEMENT ADAPTIVE MEASURES TO ENSURE RESILIENT AGRICULTURE AND DISASTER MANAGEMENT:

Putting in place techniques that allow agriculture to survive the effects of climate change and successfully manage and respond to crises is a key component of implementing adaptive measures for resilient agriculture and disaster management. This method should place a high value on adaptability and readiness, guaranteeing that farming methods and disaster response plans may be modified to account for changing environmental factors. It will also help to reduce the vulnerability of agricultural systems and improve the ability to mitigate and recover from unfavorable events.

ENGAGING LOCAL COMMUNITIES THROUGH HARMONIZING AND KNOWLEDGE SHARING OF INDIGENOUS PRACTICES OF SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE:

This can be done through harmonizing and sharing indigenous practices in sustainable agriculture with these groups. This strategy respects regional traditions and gives local populations the tools they need to participate actively in sustainable agriculture and environmental conservation. It also attempts to maintain indigenous wisdom, advance environmental stewardship, and improve food security.



The Food Dialogues: Advancing Food Security and Adaptation is hosted as part of Surge Africa's Resilience Program. This Dialogue is part of a broader effort to promote discussion with practitioners and CSOs around the need to drive governance change at both grassroots and institutional level to ensure food security and food sovereignty are prioritized alongside climate adaptation goals.

**HOSTED BY SURGE AFRICA ORGANISATION IN PARTNERSHIP WITH
COMMUNITY ACTION FOR FOOD SECURITY (CAFS)**

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