

OFFICIAL FEEDBACK FORM



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| DIALOGUE DATE | Wednesday, 21 September 2022 10:00 GMT -04:00 |
| DIALOGUE TITLE | Faith Dialogue Informing the White House Conference on Hunger, Nutrition, and Health |
| CONVENED BY | Steve Chiu; Buddhist Tzu Chi Foundation |
| GEOGRAPHICAL FOCUS | National |
| DIALOGUE EVENT PAGE | https://goodfooddialogues.com/dialogue/51960/ |

The outcomes from the Dialogues will be of use in developing the pathway to a healthier and hunger-free America. Each Dialogue will contribute in three distinct ways:

- Direct submission to the White House in advance of the Conference on Hunger, Nutrition, and Health (for events and feedback received prior to the July 15th deadline)
- Published as public facing and searchable documents on the Good Food Dialogues website
- Rolled into a final report that synthesizes the feedback, ideas, and challenges shared throughout all the Good Food Dialogues. This report will not only be submitted to the White House but will also be used to inform a movement for change well beyond the White House Conference.

1. PARTICIPATION

TOTAL NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS

45

PARTICIPATION BY AGE RANGE

0 0-18 10 19-30 10 31-50 11 51-65 5 66-80 1 80+

PARTICIPATION BY GENDER

13 Male 24 Female 0 Non-binary 0 Prefer not to say or Other

PARTICIPATION BY RACE

0 American Indian or Alaska Native 6 Asian
9 Black or African American 0 Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
18 White

PARTICIPATION BY ETHNICITY

5 Hispanic or Latino 33 Not Hispanic or Latino

NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS IN EACH SECTOR

| | | | | | |
|---|-------------------------|---|-----------------|----|----------------------|
| 3 | Academia/education | 1 | Agriculture | 1 | Economic empowerment |
| 2 | Environment and ecology | 0 | Finance | 0 | Food consumer |
| 0 | Food distributor | 0 | Food production | 0 | Food processing |
| 2 | Food retail | 1 | Government | 4 | Healthcare |
| 0 | Health insurance | 5 | Hunger | 0 | Livestock |
| 4 | Nutrition | 4 | Public Policy | 10 | Other |

NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS FROM EACH STAKEHOLDER GROUP

| | | | |
|---|-------------------------------|----|------------------------|
| 2 | Academic/Expert | 2 | Advocate |
| 0 | Corporation | 5 | Community Organization |
| 3 | Direct Service Provider | 0 | Farmer/Food Producer |
| 0 | Financial Institution | 0 | Impacted Individual |
| 0 | Logistics provider | 22 | Non-Profit |
| 2 | Policy Maker (current/former) | 0 | Small business |
| 1 | Student | 0 | Supplier |
| 1 | Other | | |

2. PRINCIPLES OF ENGAGEMENT

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

We reached out to a diverse audience of stakeholders engaged in work at the intersection of faith communities and food systems to participate in the dialogue, and used Chatham House Rules. The Principles of Engagement are in line with the work and values of those who participated in the dialogue. We also began the dialogue with an overview of the outcomes of input for the White House Conference that was compiled by Bronx Health REACH, to build on the work of others.

HOW DID YOUR DIALOGUE REFLECT SPECIFIC ASPECTS OF THE PRINCIPLES?

The dialogue reiterated and reflected the principles in that there was a need identified to create a long-term plan but also act now in the present; and be respectful of different cultures, religions, people in different economic situations, as well as the natural environment. The dialogue embraced people from faith communities and government sector alike, as well as people of different economic and racial backgrounds. The dialogue sought to build on existing efforts and provide a space for innovative new thinking, rather than duplicating existing efforts. It also sought to build trust and communication about the dialogue outcome will be shared back with the dialogue participants in order to continue to build and maintain trust.

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

These are important principles that can help ensure everyone's voice is heard and appreciated, and will help the dialogue be fruitful and successful.

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 dialogue explored input on the first three pillars of the White House Conference on Hunger, Nutrition and Health from a faith perspective.

Guiding questions included:

Pillar 1:

- How do we move past emergency food towards food security, food justice and food sovereignty?
- What are innovative solutions being implemented to improve food access, especially those coming from faith communities and people of faith?
- What are creative solutions for reducing food waste so that food can be used to feed the hungry instead of being thrown out?

Pillar 2:

- What are examples of faith-based healthcare institutions implementing Food as Medicine programs?
- What are the challenges?
- How could the federal government be supportive of overcoming these challenges?

Pillar 3:

- In what ways are faith communities empowering people to make and have access to healthy choices, demonstrating the interconnectedness between the health of people and planet?
- What are the barriers to expanding these efforts that the federal government could help remove?

WHITE HOUSE CONFERENCE PILLARS

- ✓ 1. Improve food access and affordability
- ✓ 2. Integrate nutrition and health
- ✓ 3. Empower all consumers to make and have access to healthy choices
- 4. Support physical activity for all
- 5. Enhance nutrition and food security research

KEYWORDS

- ✓ Nutrition
- ✓ Healthcare
- Technology
- ✓ Environment and Climate
- Human rights
- ✓ Food Security
- ✓ Economic Empowerment
- Data & Evidence
- Finance
- ✓ Innovation
- ✓ Policy

MAIN FINDINGS

We had a productive dialogue with stakeholders from various faith communities, government sectors and economic/racial backgrounds. The specific barriers identified are:

1. Certain communities continue to have limited food access to healthy foods and food in general. Black, Indigenous, and Latinx People Of Color (BILPOC) and poorer communities continue to have decreased food access to healthy foods compared to White and wealthier communities. This racial and socioeconomic divide perpetuates inequality in the food system.
2. Subsidies currently promote “commodity crops” that are not associated with healthy foods and are contributing to increased greenhouse gas emissions. This is leading to a continuous influx of unhealthy, processed foods into the market and our local food systems that are not based on evidence-based nutrition guidelines and research in the medical and healthcare community.
3. Local farmers do not have adequate access to market opportunities to sell their produce, especially those from BILPOC communities. Due to historical and current systemic inequalities, these farmers are limited in land rights and then in scaling up their food production to perform in larger markets. Local communities then become dependent on these larger markets. This current model also leads to abuses against farmworkers.
4. Education programs, including school, higher education and community-level programs, do not have sufficient nutrition education where consumers are educated enough about healthy food options, particularly acknowledging cultural foods. Consumption behaviors are increasingly based on limited education and misinformation being disseminated which inherently limits the consumer’s ability to make informed decisions.

Some innovative solutions suggested were:

1. Remove nutrition policy standards from the USDA given its competing interests as the regulators of subsidies to food producers and agricultural businesses. Working with healthcare professionals, including dietitians, and the CDC, we can update guidelines for healthy, nutritious foods. These guidelines should be unbiased, evidence-based and completely separate from corporate influences.
2. Future governmental policies should also encourage farm sharing programs, cooperatives and local economic models where farmers can provide food to local businesses, houses of worship, schools, hospitals within their communities to decrease reliance on larger food systems that lead to inequities in the food system and more greenhouse gas emissions. This can also ensure attention to cultural foods that are important to local communities.
3. Expand collaboration between food distributors and corner stores to purchase healthier foods at bulk prices as they serve a critical role in their local communities.
4. Create a comprehensive map of food sources in the world where we can identify other food sources to protect communities from economic and climate shocks (taking into account geopolitics)

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OUTCOMES FOR EACH DISCUSSION TOPIC - 1/3

Pillar 1 breakout:

- Address food waste in the US
- Implement unbiased nutrition education at all federal, state, local/community levels and educational levels
- Use Faith-based sites/communities as an access site for healthier food options and practices in the community as well as in education programs
- Ensure quality food is delivered to food banks
- Increase healthier food options in hospitals, schools, food pantries, shelters
- Improve incentives and programs that have already been benefiting farmers, low-income communities, and communities of color
- Remove barriers to government benefit participation
- Property owners can convert more land and space into community gardens. Also, community gardens can ensure participation is accessible for all community members.
- Create more cultural understanding about halal/kosher foods and expand access to these options
- Create economic opportunities for those participating in food pantries. Some people are selling food from food pantries, which shows an additional need for money, not just food.
- Provide more support for faith communities on the frontlines who are serving those in need.
- Expand free school lunch nationwide for all students
- Promote foraging/gardening as a way of increasing active engagement in the food system.
- Create and expand opportunities for food pantry participants to get to know the producers of their food
- Create new spaces for consumer education, i.e. the Food Network
- Create a "Farm Corps"
- Add food and nutrition education into teacher education programs, and make it a requirement for all schools.
- Promote more creative ways of growing food such as from an apartment, balcony, etc.
- Create more urban/rural collaborations around food
- Utilize underused land and government properties as distribution centers and educational spaces.
- Strengthen collaborations between government agencies
- Connect with national/international/state and local faith-based associations and their conferences for sharing/connecting on food systems changes.
- Expand the Justice 40 Accelerator

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OUTCOMES FOR EACH DISCUSSION TOPIC - 2/3

Pillar 2 breakout:

- Increase communication between faith/indigenous groups and main players in the food system
 - Improved education standards: we need to reconnect nutrition with health education.
 - Get nutrition policy out of the USDA: nutrition policy should be housed under a health agency
 - Increase subsidies to Black/Brown/Indigenous farmers as an economic policy, such as supporting BILPOC farmers such as through Farm Share programs.
 - Support coordination in regional food systems, so coordination is not only dependent on the state
 - Connect more with places of worship as they are untapped assets that are already connected to communities
 - Continue to implement the child tax credit, like during the pandemic to help with child and family food insecurity
 - Create a comprehensive map of food sources in the world, that takes into account the geopolitics.
 - Redefine who are food experts and include religious leaders into this
 - Update government nutrition standards
 - Improve guidelines for food insecurity identification in healthcare, etc.
 - Send adequate grant opportunities to local faith communities
 - Get the healthcare system to understand food as medicine.
 - Support faith-based communities in addressing nutritional practices in houses of worship.
 - Ensure that hospitals and schools are not serving/selling heavily processed foods
 - Remove stigma from breastfeeding in places of worship.
 - Expand initiatives to support mothers in faith-based communities on best practices for breastfeeding
 - Ensure better nutrition standards and food quality standards for people given emergency food
 - The school system is a huge potential intervention point for addressing food insecurity in low-income communities.
- However, we must ensure that students are not receiving processed food that will impact students' performance, well-being, and behavior.
- Utilize media platforms to change the view of youth on healthy food
 - Revamp crop insurance / commodity price supports to diversify fruit and vegetable production which can be more profitable than commodity crops

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OUTCOMES FOR EACH DISCUSSION TOPIC - 3/3

Pillar 3 breakout:

- Provide access to capital for farmers who want to go organic
- Realign and harmonize currently misaligned incentives which currently undercut healthier food systems. Tax producers of unhealthy foods rather than consumers.
- Faith communities can become more engaged in advocating for policies, creating legislative strategies for multi-decade success as well as acting now.
- Inform consumers of health risks of food and beverage products, and lift up alternatives. Acknowledge faith values and meeting people where they are as key for re-education.
- Create more local spaces where community members re-learn how to cook
- Lift up examples of local businesses sourcing foods locally
- Subsidize healthier alternatives
- Encourage banks to invest in organic natural foods.
- Increase the minimum wage. Consider switching to a Self-Sufficiency Standard.
- Support creating markets for faith communities that grow food on church-owned property for example
- Bring solutions from faith communities to scale and then government policies can help amplify solutions.
- Food banks should also empower people to grow their own food.
- Promote more gender equity in agriculture.
- Faith groups can help to counter disinformation.
- Change ordinances and codes and reverse systemic redlining of communities which prevents communities from growing their own foods.
- Address environmental pollutants in environmental justice impacted communities so food does not absorb the pollutants
- Collaborate with churches that own land to open up use of their land for gardening, farming, and growing food to teach to empower people.
- Provide incentives for white churches to do reparations, working cross-culturally and inter-religiously. Fund religious interaction.
- Identify houses of worship as education, mobilization and organizing spaces
- Expand collaborations between food distributors and corner stores to increase access to affordable healthy foods in communities
- Design solutions with community at the center rather than implementing solutions from the top-down

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AREAS OF DIVERGENCE

One of the breakout discussion groups held divergent views about the importance of plant-based/vegan and vegetarian diets. There is consensus that the American diet should have less animal products, but the degree to which strict plant-based diets are promoted vs. "reducetarian" diets which encourage fewer animal-based products (but not necessarily cutting them out completely) should be promoted. This is an area that could use further discussion rather than it shutting down conversation. We should be able to raise awareness about the benefits of plant-based diets and incentivize these foods, while providing society (consumers and producers) the opportunity to gradually transition away from such high intake of animal-based products. According to the EAT Lancet report (<https://eatforum.org/eat-lancet-commission/eat-lancet-commission-summary-report/>), North Americans consume 638% of what is an ecologically sustainable level of red meat to have in production/consumption.

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ATTACHMENTS AND RELEVANT LINKS

ATTACHMENTS

- **Faith Dialogue Informing the White House Conference on Hunger, Nutrition and Health - Detailed Summary Report**
<https://goodfooddialogues.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/09/Faith-Dialogue-Informing-White-House-Conference-detailed-summary-report.docx>