

2021

NORMAN E. BORLAUG
INTERNATIONAL
DIALOGUE

OCTOBER 20-22

GAINING MOMENTUM: FOOD SYSTEMS TRANSFORMATION *in the* DECADE OF ACTION



Twenty-twenty brought many challenges to and opportunities for working in the [Decade of Action](#) towards the [UN Sustainable Development Goals](#). Communities worldwide faced unprecedented barriers to meeting food security needs with at least [20 countries on the brink of famine](#), highlighting the importance of global collective action. As we continue to move forward in this decade of action towards the UN Food Systems Summit and other global convenings, we have the opportunity to **gain momentum** as never before. We recognize that we cannot ‘reboot’ the system, but must **transform** food systems to right inequitable structures.

This pivotal year offers milestones for international collaboration. The International Borlaug Dialogue follows the UN Food Systems Summit (FSS) and the 48th Committee on World Food Security while **building forward** for COP26 and the Nutrition for Growth Summit, to gain momentum in the Decade of Action. Country commitments and Coalitions of Action adopted during the UN FSS will be highlighted during the Borlaug Dialogue, reaching additional audiences and widening opportunities for partnership.

**SOLUTIONS
MUST BE
INNOVATIVE,
COMMITMENTS MUST
BE BOLD
AND COLLECTIVE
ACTION MUST BE
SYSTEMATIC**

FORMAT

The 2021 International Borlaug Dialogue (October 20-22), will be offered in a hybrid format. Through a series of **live and virtual components**, registrants will hear from leaders and champions, dive into interdisciplinary subjects and interact with new and familiar partners and colleagues. Each day, we will offer various sessions - **panel discussions, roundtable sessions, side events and workshops** designed for deeper exploration.

Participants will connect through a dynamic, virtual platform. *The Dialogue will also offer limited, in-person opportunities through an early registration process, in accordance with travel and public health provisions anticipated for later in 2021.*





RATTAN LAL

Professor, School of Environment and Natural Resources

THEMES

Transforming food systems action will result in multifaceted achievements that address numerous vulnerabilities simultaneously, including building forward from a historical focus on increased agricultural productivity to achieving a sustainable, equitable and nourishing food system. The interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary nature of food systems calls for interventions that are *collaborative, innovative and evidence-based*. Centering human and planetary health, gender equity and youth participation at every stage is essential for comprehensive and impactful change.

Given the momentum being built in the Decade of Action, this year's International Borlaug Dialogue will spotlight *several focal areas* critical in food systems transformation. These focal areas provide framing themes for the Borlaug Dialogue, but other topics and critical issues will be explored.



RESEARCH & INNOVATION

Transforming food systems requires a strong evidence base for policy action, alongside great strides in accessible innovations. Through Research and Innovation, we must prioritize the affordability of safe, nutritious diets, which remain out of reach for a huge swath of the global population. Research advancements must continue to improve agricultural production dramatically, while innovation expands the capacity to enhance all aspects of food systems.

Topics include:

- Evaluating the momentum of **climate-smart** and **nature-positive** food production innovations that sustain the planet.
- Addressing the need for adoption of practices, research and innovations to **reduce costs** significantly for safe, nutritious diets, particularly for women and children in the first 1,000 days of life.
- Exploring modern **digital applications** and **artificial intelligence technologies** which are increasing information accessibility for all farmers, especially smallholders.
- Featuring innovative **gene-editing technologies** such as CRISPR and others.



GENDER EQUITY & EQUITABLE LIVELIHOODS

Achieving gender equity requires building momentum for further action. One of the most significant ways to uplift all genders is through equitable access to the resources needed due to the disproportionate impacts of COVID-19. Transformed food systems will promote the agency of historically disenfranchised populations and advancing Equitable Livelihoods.

Topics include:

- Discussing the **power-shifting potential** of community-based capital, market access mechanisms, and **land ownership and reclamation**.
- Examining the impact and growth of financial models and services, such as **digital and financial literacy**, for women's education and women working in food systems.
- Exploring the potential of community-based capital and **market access mechanisms**, such as small and medium loans and cooperatives, in empowering marginalized peoples.
- Highlighting the need to alleviate the disproportionate **household burdens on women**, especially with nutrition, in order to improve maternal and child health outcomes.

NUTRITION-SENSITIVE FOOD SYSTEMS

The commitment to build safe, affordable, nutrition-sensitive food systems remain central to global food security deliberations. The link between nutrition and health has been **magnified during the COVID-19 pandemic**. Nutrition must be elevated within food production priorities to achieve multiple wins in food security, including gender equity, natural resource conservation, diverse cultural contexts and poverty alleviation.

Topics include:

- Considering adaptations needed to transition to food systems that include increased **healthy dietary patterns**.
- Examining how healthier diets can be improved and accessed through **affordability and biofortification**.
- Discussing responsibilities and opportunities of many stakeholders, especially in the **public and private sectors**, to increase the production, affordability and consumption of safe, nutritious foods.
- Analyzing the **nutrition-environment nexus**, particularly in the **diversification of protein sources** such as pulses, legumes, aquatic foods, insects, soy, and other plant-based proteins, in addition to conventional livestock.



CONTACT

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