

On hope and knowledge sharing

“The dream is for communities across the world to show solidarity, and to support each other.”

Global Dialogue Participant

The Global Dialogue became an opportunity for participants to share practical knowledge with each other.

Participants expressed the importance of connecting with others across the world working on similar things. The Indonesia¹⁸ group shared that “the emergence of global-local collaboration” gives them hope. Similarly, the group from Canada shared that they got hope from “having met the Philippines group in the other side of the world and promise to amplify their struggles at COP26.”

Exchanges within the Global Dialogue also gave participants ideas of what could come after the event.

Milpa Alta, Coastal Kenya and Scottish participants spoke about the importance of “having networks and connecting with others to scale up” and to work together on sharing messages like “declarations about why Indigenous food systems are good for people and for nature.”

Local agroecological practices Exchange: Milpa Alta, Mexico and Highlands, Scotland

One of the producers from the Highland group looking to plant corn on his own farm was really interested to “get tips from the experts in corn production in México”. The group from México gave practical advice to the Highland group, sharing how they use a traditional planting method called ‘milpa’ where cintli (maize in Nahuatl) is planted with other crops that are mutually beneficial for each other. The Highland grower shared a very similar system that they call ‘Companion Planting’. However, they reflected that ‘Companion Planting’ in Scotland is much less common as it is “less efficient at a larger scale”, whereas in Mexico, the ‘milpa’ exists across the country, and the crops that compose it are the staple ingredients of the Mexican diet.

The group from Milpa Alta emphasised: “It is very important to us that the knowledge we have of how to produce crops is not kept only for ourselves; we want to share it in order to create food sovereignty.”

Groups Stellenbosch, Johannesburg and Bandung agreed that having the opportunity to share their own examples and hear about other strategies and projects from around the world “helps people feel more connected and less alone in their struggles, particularly in the face of climate change.” It also inspired them to implement different methods.

Establishing Support Networks Exchange: Johannesburg South Africa and Oyo State, Nigeria

Participants in Johannesburg and Oyo State found that they faced similar challenges and opportunities and that working together could be mutually beneficial:

“There is strong rationale for establishing a platform to enable the sharing of knowledge, solutions and skills between grassroots and small-scale, sustainable farmers in different regions of Africa by looking at how food that is currently imported from other regions of Africa could be grown locally.”

To put this in practice they spoke about the possibility of a farmer from Nigeria visiting Johannesburg to train and support local farmers to grow a crop that has previously only been imported from Nigeria. The same farmer could learn about a crop that is typically imported from Johannesburg. This could reduce food miles, support sustainable farming in both regions and increase local employment and resilience.

Furthermore, the group from Johannesburg stressed the importance of having a space where they could speak with others about water management:

“Irrigation cannot be left out if we are going to have enough water to produce food production... We are located very close to a river, but we are failing to draw water from the river sustainably.”

Many participants found knowledge sharing across geographies as a source of hope, a way to learn from each other and a pathway to support food systems in becoming more resilient and sustainable.



7 Hills Ceilidh Band leads traditional Scottish dance