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## SUMMARY

This report summarizes the discussions and outcomes from the first Fort Portal Food Systems Lab (FSL) phase IV workshop, held on the 27th November 2020 at Kalya Courts, Fort Portal City. The workshop was organized by Kabarole Research and Resource Centre (KRC) with financial support from Hivos and Health Food Africa, under the theme; **“Improving nutrition in Uganda by strengthening the diversity, sustainability, resilience and connectivity of Food Systems”**.

The workshop was attended by 70 (45 male and 25 female) key stakeholders in the food systems including Kabarole District Local Government and Fort Portal Tourism City Authority, Fort Portal City Member of Parliament, farmers, private sector, nutritionists, researchers, media, chef alliance, artists, members of the Coalition of the Willing (CoW), Street Food Vendors Association, religious and cultural leaders, Sustainable Diets for All(SD4ALL) partners(Slow Food, Food Rights Alliance and VEDCO) and other members of Civil Society(CSOs).

The workshop aided to mobilize collaborative synergy amongst food system actors into working groups on the different work packages of the Food System Lab Phase IV. This process adopted the Coalition of the willing approach. The formed working groups will help expand the existing C.o.W food systems actors.

## ACRONYMS

C.o.W	Coalition of the Willing
CSO	Civil Society Organizations
DCAO	Deputy Chief Administrative Officer
DNAP	District Nutrition Action Plans
FRA	Food Rights Alliance
FSL	Food Systems Lab
HFA	Health Food Africa
IIED	International Institute for Environment and Development
INGO	International Non-Governmental Organization.
KRC	Kabarole Research and Resource Centre
MP	Member of Parliament
NARO	National Agricultural Research Organization
NCDs	Non communicable Diseases
NDP	National Development Plan
NGO	Non-Governmental Organizations
OWC	Operation Wealth Creation
SD4ALL	Sustainable Diets for All
SNAPs	Sub-County Nutrition Action Plans
UNBS	Uganda National Bureau of Standards
VEDCO	Volunteer Efforts for Development Concern
WP	Work Package

## I.0. BACKGROUND

Since 2015, KRC in partnership with HIVOS and IIED have been implementing the Food Change Lab to study the food systems in Kabarole District and creating platforms for multi-stakeholder forums to debate critical issues affecting the food system in the District. This has been possible through generating evidence using the food diaries to influence practices and policies towards inclusive and sustainable diets. Key achievements registered in the past 3 phases of the Food Change Lab include among others; influencing the review of the Kabarole District Production and Environmental Management Ordinance of 2006, supporting the development and implementation of Nutrition Action Plans at District and Sub-county levels and formation of consumer agencies (Coalition of the Willing-C.o.W, Orugali consumer group, Food Ambassadors, Chef Alliance and Vendors' Association) to spearhead citizen led advocacy activities on healthy diets.

In October 2020, KRC received additional funding from HIVOS to support the implementation of the Food Systems Lab phase IV, focusing on influencing the Food Systems in Fort-Portal Tourism City and its rural hinterlands.

The Food Systems Lab will focus on achieving four specific objectives as follows;

1. To gain an improved understanding of the determinants of current dietary patterns and barriers to healthier and more sustainable diets
2. To influence sustainable production and consumption of healthy and nutritious food products
3. To reduce food losses and increase food safety
4. To influence local policies, regulations and plans to respond to the sustainable food system demands in the emerging city

### Objectives of the FSL workshop

1. To share the achievements and lessons learnt from the previous Food Change Lab phases and introduce the next phase (the Food Systems Lab phase IV) to the stakeholders
2. To form working groups(Operational teams) and identify key priority areas of concern for consideration in the rollout of FSL phase IV



## 2.0. WORKSHOP FACILITATION

1. The workshop was facilitated by Ms. Kanyiginya Violet, a PhD Candidate and former Program Coordinator of the Food Change Lab at KRC. She was assisted by Mr. Bernard Bwambale, the Nutrition Advocacy Officer at KRC and Mr. Mohammed Ahamed Shariff-Executive Director, KRC.

### 2.1. Ground setting

As part of self-introductions, participants were asked to identify themselves with a particular type of food item while mentioning its nutritional value. This was intended to trigger reflections on the food system and introduce to participants to the different pillars of the food system.

Participants engaged in more discussions in smaller groups to reflect on; availability of the food in the region in terms of production and market, constraints of the food items, ways of preservation and processing as well as identifying any opportunities around that particular food. The foods given to the participants for discussion were also exhibited.



Figure 1: Exhibition stalls

Participants enjoyed the session as they explained the foods in their groups mentioning their nutritional values, production lines, the challenges in getting the foods and opportunities in processing. The following are some of the reflections and discussions from the groups;

#### **Pawpaw (*Ipapaali*)**

The pawpaw locally known as “ipapaali” is a protective fruit containing Vitamin C, antioxidants and fiber. It is good for eyesight, boosts immunity and helps in digestion. It is eaten as salad and Juice and it's locally available in the region.

#### **Pineapple (*Enanansi*)**

The fruit is locally available and Contains Vitamin C, enzymes and oxidants that suppresses cancer cells. This can be eaten as a salad after fatty meals, fresh juice. Its skin can be cooked, and juice extracted. It can also be processed into wine.

### **Millet (Oburo)**

Millet is a cereal that is rich in Calcium, potassium, and iron. It can be dried in the sun or on fire for preservation. It is consumed after being grinded. Eaten as a whole meal (kalo), porridge (on fire, or fermented) it is good for blood formation and circulation and recommended for women and children. Millet is no longer commonly grown in Tooro communities.

### **Cassava (Muhogo)**

It is a common root tuber grown in most parts of the country with high levels of energy. Can be eaten as a meal when steamed, as a snack when fried and dried for preservation which later can be processed into flour for meals, porridge, snacks and starch. It has variety of species that are used for different purposes.

### **Carrot**

It's a vegetable that is known to be difficult to grow, it is mostly grown in Kenya and has a variety of species. It is good for eyesight due to its vitamin A and used as a spice in sauce, salad and juice, flavor.



Figure 2: Locally available and processed food-photo by KRC

### **Hibiscus**

Grown locally though not common, it's rich in phytochemicals that help in lowering High Blood Pressure; it is also rich in iron. It can be dried and processed into powder for preservation.

### **Beans (ebihimba)**

Readily available in markets, though beans have a challenge of price fluctuations. Can be cooked fresh from the garden or dried then cooked as sauce. Can be preserved when dry, crushed into powder and cooked as *Firinda* for Tooro culture. Beans are good for weaning children at six months. The major challenges with beans are seasonal factors.



## 2.2. Welcoming Remarks

*Figure 3: Mr. Shariff Ahmed the Executive Director of KRC Uganda giving opening remarks to participants at the first FSL workshops*

Mr. Mohammed Ahamed Shariff the Executive Director of KRC welcomed all participants to the First Food System Lab (FSL) workshop. He thanked all the stakeholders that have walked the journey with Kabarole Research and

Resource Center (KRC) throughout the previous phases of the Fort portal Food Change Lab programme.

He recognized the presence of all dignitaries including the Sustainable Diets for all (SD4ALL) partners (Slow Food Uganda, VEDCO, and Food Rights Alliance); the DCAO, and all the Food lab frontrunners to the workshop. Their interventions were much appreciated in promoting sustainable diets in Kabarole District. In his remarks, Mr. Shariff echoed to participants about the FSL and emphasized that the workshop is a platform that provides opportunities for understanding the actual meaning and implementation of the Food Systems' concept, the key stake holders involved and their roles in the food system. Mr. Shariff appreciated the support of HIVOS for the support in implementing another phase of the Food Change Lab. He further highlighted that the workshop would identify stakeholders and group them per Health Food Africa (HFA) work packages (WP) for delivery on the food systems Lab objectives. He urged participants to continue with the discussions and reflections on the availability of healthy food and then wished participants fruitful deliberations.



### 2.3. Opening Remarks by the Kabarole Deputy Chief Administrative Officer (DCAO)

Mr. Tukwaya Alex welcomed everyone to the workshop and re-echoed the high malnutrition rates in Kabarole District amidst plenty of food production. With high production of food in Uganda, emphasis should be put on production and marketing of variety of healthy and nutrient dense foods so as to curb the problem of malnutrition in all its forms and the emerging non communicable diseases (NCDs) resulting from unhealthy diets.

He commended KRC Uganda with its partners HIVOS and HFA for focusing on the food system with an emphasis on nutrition. Mr. Tukwaya illustrated a human being as a computer when it comes to feeding, "what you eat is what you look like", i.e. *garbage in garbage out*. He urged participants to make use of the information shared during the workshop and disseminate information gained widely to other people especially the main actors in the food system for a holistic approach in attainment of sustainable, resilient, healthy, inclusive food systems and improved nutrition for all. The DCAO noted that there is a pressing question at the ministry of health on whether there should be increase in the number of doctors or nutritionists.

He said that with good nutrition at individual and household level, poor performance at school, stunted growth, wasting, underweight, obesity and overweight as well as Non Communicable Diseases (NCDs) associated with unhealthy diets such as hypertension, diabetes and cancers would drastically reduce in the population.

He then called upon KRC Uganda to continue the drive on promotion of indigenous food products and implementation of the Kabarole



Figure 4: Kabarole District Deputy Chief Administrative officer-Mr. Tukwaya Alex giving FSL workshop opening remarks

District Nutrition Actions plan (DNAP), the Sub-county Nutrition Action Plans (SNAPs) 2021-2025 as well as the District Food Security and Environment ordinance.

He appreciated the government's efforts through Operation Wealth Creation (OWC) and National Agricultural Research Organization –NARO –in availing seedlings to farmers. He however requested that the FSL through KRC should continuously advise the farmers on the nutritious, healthy and safe foods to be produced, marketed and consumed by the population. The DCAO also urged that farmers must be linked and supported with the right inputs for, resilient and sustainable production.

He asked the participants to be open minded and discuss exhaustively about the food system, urging them to make nutrition and food safety a priority for their own health, families and Uganda at large.



## 3.0. PRESENTATIONS

Different presentations had been prepared for the day and they took different forms such as videos and PowerPoint presentations to keep participants engaged and alert as follows;

### 3.1. Understanding the Sustainable Food Systems

Mr. Shariff introduced this session with a 4 minutes short video explaining the Food System concept. The video illustrated the need to change the food system, food system limitations, such as malnutrition, consumption of less diverse, fatty and sugary food, food waste and pressure on natural resources and climate change, how to transform the food system including bringing all stakeholders together.

Mr. Shariff supplemented to the video with a presentation in which he emphasized the global context on the challenges in the food system. As of 2018, 821 million people worldwide suffered from hunger due to insufficient energy intake and an estimated 2 billion people did not consume adequate nutrients. At the same time, 2 billion people consumed excess calories and were overweight or obese. He noted that research has revealed that about one-third of all food produced is wasted at different points of food handling. With concern, he noted that the prevalence of diet-related non communicable diseases has been increasing at an alarming rate. With the raising population, there is need for food systems that respond to economic and socio-cultural shocks, dealing with stagnating rural economies and tackling the depletion of natural resources, while addressing climate change challenges.

This implies that we need a food system that can economically empower people, enhance food security and prevent all forms of malnutrition and minimize further environmental degradation.

#### The Food Systems Approach



Figure 5:  
Mr. Shariff  
explaining the  
sustainable  
Food system  
concepts  
to the FSL  
Workshop  
Participants  
-Photo by  
KRC.

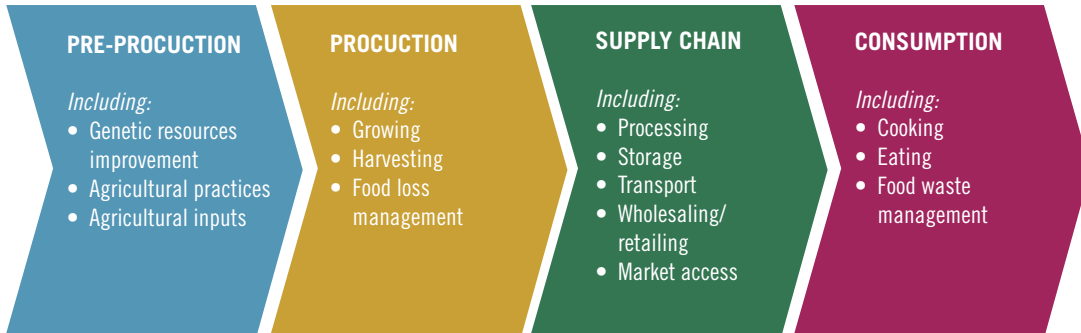


Figure 5: parts of the food system

Shariff noted that studies have shown that for food security to be sustainable the production must increase by at least 70% and must supply both adequate calories and nutrients to ensure food and nutrition security.

In his presentation, Shariff noted that the Food system starts right away from pre-production to consumption of the final food product as shown in the illustration above to explain the key components of the food system.

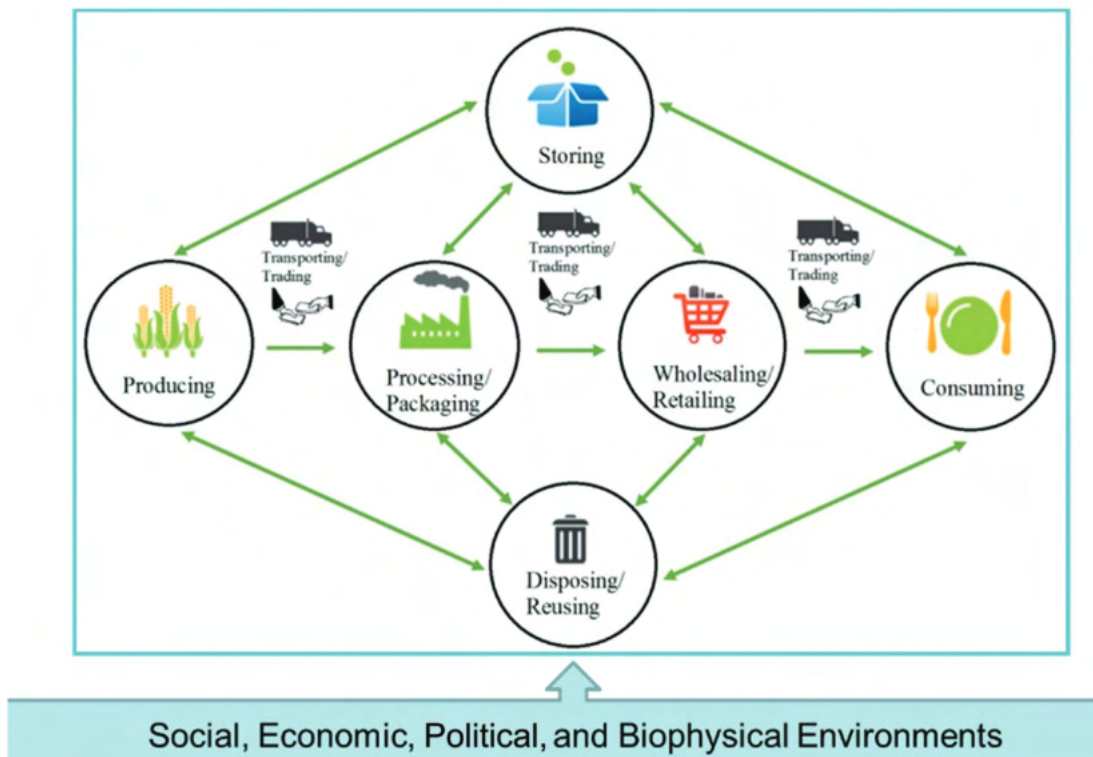


Figure 6: Interaction of the food system components

The food system also takes into consideration elements of food wastage as a lot of food is lost during harvesting, transportation, processing, storage, food preparation (cooking) and on the plates during consumption.

The Food System is therefore an interaction of the different food actors in food production, processing, transportation, marketing, consumption and disposal. Mr Shariff warned that the nutritional challenges would increase if the food system itself is not tackled in a holistic approach.

**The Food system Actors;** Mr. Shariff therefore reechoed the urgent need for different actors to work together to achieve an entire food system's goal. He called upon the stakeholders including:

The government, CSOs, NGOs, Farmers, Business communities, Food vendors, Food processors, International Non-Governmental Organizations (INGOs), media, artists, Marginalized groups, Research institutions, Food suppliers, Food Distributors, Catering institutions and Consumers.

He concluded by informing participants that that the Fort portal FSL phase IV will be implemented with focus on understanding the key challenges of the entire Food Systems together with the relevant actors.



Figure 7: FSL workshop participants tour indigenous food exhibition stalls-Photo by KRC



### 3.2. Achievements and lessons learnt from the previous Food Change Lab phase III

Ms. Violet Kanyiginya made a presentation about the previous phase of the Fort Portal Food change lab (Phase III). According to Violet, the Food Change lab was implemented from 2015 to June 2020 with an objective of influencing diets of the rural and urban households in Kabarole district. Violet noted that Kabarole District has for long been known as the major food basket of the region supplying food to the neighboring cities and towns as well as other neighboring countries such as Rwanda and Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) yet it suffers the highest burden of stunting in Uganda among children under five years at 40.6%.



*Figure 8: Ms. Violet Making a presentation of the previous Food change Lab (Phase III)-Photo by KRC*

It is against this backdrop that KRC Uganda in partnership with HIVOS and IIED came up with the Fort Portal food change lab to address some of these issues. The overall goal of the Food change Lab phase III was to contribute to a more conducive policy environment and laws which makes the region's food systems more inclusive, sustainable, diverse, healthy, acceptable, green and affordable foods to all. Violet commended the previous phase of the Food Lab for the tremendous work and highlighted some of the key achievements of the last food lab phase as follows:

Research conducted during the Food Change Lab III informed and influenced plans, policies and programs at local level such as Kabarole District Nutrition Action Plan and sub county Nutrition Action Plans as well as the Kabarole District environment and food security ordinance.

The Food Change Lab phase III also resulted into formation of platforms such as Coalition of the willing (COW), food ambassadors, Chef Alliance, vendors' association and the Orugali consumer group to advocate for healthy diets at household and community level. These have been at the front line of improving the healthy diets in the district.

The Food change Lab worked closely with the media to air the Chef program disseminating healthy diets and safe food preparation methods. The programme has influenced behavioral and practice change. Many restaurants in Fort Portal adopted indigenous recipes on their menus.

She noted that the Food Lab continuously engaged women and youths because they are key food system actors. Violet said the new FSL would adopt the coalition of the willing methodology to implement the Work Packages. It's key to mention, the lessons learnt during the phase III implementation of Food Lab are the building blocks for phase IV of the Food Systems Lab.

### 3.3. Highlights of SD4ALL Partners' work

KRC implemented the SD4ALL program under the Food Change Lab and worked closely with other partners under the SD4ALL umbrella including Slow Food Uganda, Food rights Alliance and VEDCO. The facilitator invited each partner to briefly give an overview of the work they have been implementing under the SD4ALL program.

#### 3.3.1. The Food System Solution Platform Project by Slow Food Uganda.

Mr. Kiwagalo who represented Slow Food Uganda gave highlights of the Food System Solution Platform (FSSP) Project implemented in Buikwe district, funded by HIVOS/IIED under the SD4ALL program that ended in August 2020.

The FSSP focused on influencing policies and citizens practices to increase consumption and production of diverse indigenous food in Buikwe district. The project worked with citizens and local government to ensure they influence the current citizen practices and policies to ensure that people access food, which is acceptable, affordable and enjoyable. The main objective of the project was to create an enabling legal and policy environment for improved food and nutrition within Buikwe District.



Figure 9: John Kiwagalo project coordinator at slow Food Uganda presenting on the FSSP

The project had exciting achievements since its inception, key among others were;

- ⊙ Buikwe District food nutrition and environment management ordinance 2019 was enacted
- ⊙ Food Communities were brought together and had an advocacy agenda which was to endorse production and consumption of diverse healthy diet.
- ⊙ Establishment of seed banks in the communities of Buikwe district. Indigenous seeds are now embraced by communities and preserved through local seed banks.
- ⊙ The Street food Vendors were officially recognized and registered by the Lugazi municipality.

### 3.3.2. Integrated agriculture sector investment planning for improved indigenous food system- Food Rights Alliance (FRA).

Mr. Jude Sebuliba of FRA presented the integrated agriculture sector investment planning for improved nutritious, healthy and diverse diets program implemented by FRA with funding from HIVOS. The project aimed at creating platforms, spaces for multi stakeholder engagement on protection, preservation and consumption of indigenous foods as a measure of promoting food and nutrition security. The project focused on ensuring collaboration with grass root partners to advance local voices to national level policy processes in relation to protection and promotion of indigenous foods. FRA mainly worked at the national level to provide evidence about the importance of indigenous food system. He attributed the success of their project to KRC Uganda that reached out to other parts of the country where FRA could not reach.

FRA among other achievements has joined thematic groups in developing the new agriculture development plan; reviewed the National Development Plan (NDP) II and participated in development of NDP III; Participated and contributed to the different joint sector reviews for the ministry of Agriculture. Mr. Jude attributed the achievements to the partnership with government and other CSOs.

### 3.3.3. Improving the lives of small holder farmers through production of indigenous vegetables by VEDCO

Ms. Sarah Nabeti introduced VEDCO's work that aims improve the lives of small holder farmers. She commended KRC's collaboration with VEDCO in the phase III of the Food Change Lab. She said that VEDCO has been implementing a project in Gulu District focusing on local seed producers providing marketable quality indigenous vegetable seeds and increased access and production of diverse indigenous vegetable seeds as well as developing and reviewing existing seed and food policies that support promotion of indigenous vegetable seeds.

The program aims at enhancing citizen engagement for sustainable diets. According to Sarah, the project supported 600 (149 Males and 451 Females) direct beneficiary households. She also noted that 60 acres of vegetable gardens were established by the community members with 2,467kgs of vegetable seed produced and 1,802 kgs sold for household incomes. Sarah indicated that indigenous vegetable seed access increased from 18% to 92% in 2019 in Gulu district due to the contribution of this project and the consumption of indigenous vegetables increased from 20% to 85%.

From the project implementation, VEDCO learnt that the involvement of local leaders in advocacy is paramount in achieving goals. The engagement of value chain actors in production of local vegetables is key to the project sustainability.



### 3.4. Introduction to the Food Systems Lab by the nutrition advocacy officer, KRC

Mr. Bernard Bwambale introduced the participants through the Fort portal FSL phase IV. In his presentation, he highlighted that following the previous achievements of the Fort Portal Food Change Lab phase III, KRC received another funding from HIVOS for supporting the Fort Portal Food Systems Lab phase IV.

The Project will be for a period of 54months 2020-2024 and that it will be implemented through the Fort portal Food System Lab.

The specific objectives of the Fort Portal FSL phase IV were presented as below;

1. To gain an improved understanding of the determinants for current dietary patterns and Barriers to healthier and more sustainable diets.
2. To influence sustainable production and consumption of healthy and nutritious food products.
3. To reduce food losses and increase food safety.
4. To influence local policies, regulations and plans to respond to sustainable food systems demands in the emerging Fort portal city.



*Figure 1 | Mr. Bwambale Bernard presenting an introduction to the Fort portal FSL phase IV.*

#### 3.4.1. The Health Food Africa (HFA) and the FSL

Bernard stressed that the HFA project through the Fort portal FSL will among other goals aim at the following:

- ⊙ Increase the resilience of food systems, and to link food production to nutrition performance, thereby increasing the range and quality of food products for a healthy diet.
- ⊙ Connect actors from across the supply chain for joint actions to achieve viable transformations in municipal, regional, national and cross-national food systems, connecting consumers and producers, urban and rural dwellers, and local initiatives across Africa.
- ⊙ The project is action-oriented, and will build on existing networks and initiatives in Africa, facilitating a structured process to experimentation and scaling-up of new approaches by local actors in the food system through a Food System Lab structure and methodology.
- ⊙ The lab will bring together local stakeholders – coalition of the willing, farmers, food vendors, entrepreneurs, processors, businesses and policymakers.

- ⊙ HFA will promote innovation in supply chain governance, food products and technologies, as well as supporting educational approaches, capacity building and food policy development.
- ⊙ With the support of local and European experts, the lab will tackle particular locally relevant food system challenges, from consumer awareness to sustainable production, local food diversity, improved post-harvest technologies and food safety.
- ⊙ HFA will connect actors from across the supply chain for joint actions to achieve viable transformations in municipal, regional, national and cross-national food systems, connecting consumers and producers, urban and rural dwellers, and local initiatives across Africa.
- ⊙ The Food System Lab will focus on parts of the local food system that require action and that have the potential to generate the nutritional and health impacts, as well as providing a significant learning potential.
- ⊙ The lab will serve as a deliberative space which allows researchers, practitioners and policymakers to develop lasting relations, common understanding and innovations that will go on beyond the timeframe of the project.
- ⊙ Practice partners will cooperate with scientific partners to elaborate and test food system innovations.



Figure 12: Orugali women group serving the workshop Participants indigenous healthy food for lunch.

### 3.4.2. The key thematic areas of the Fort Portal FSL phase IV

- ⊙ Nutrition and consumption i.e. what is the nutritive value of the food consumed.
- ⊙ Sustainable production
- ⊙ Post-harvest technology
- ⊙ Agro food chain governance
- ⊙ Innovative food products and processes

The thematic areas are grouped into 4 work packages to which participants will be called on to contribute given their field of expertise.

Mr. Bwambale took the participants through the HFA project work packages (WP) that the Fort Portal Food System Lab will associate with during the project implementation as shown below;

**1. “Food consumption and healthy nutrition | Improving nutrition and health through transformation of consumption patterns towards sustainable healthy diets”;** He noted that this WP will involve the following;

- ⊙ Qualitative measurements of nutrients adequacy, and dietary, diversity scores.
- ⊙ (What are people eating in their households and how best can we help them to get a healthier diet?)
- ⊙ Collection and analysis of primary and secondary data on food consumption, food choices and dietary patterns. (Research on how people are eating and the choice of their food etc.)
- ⊙ Online consultations and awareness raising measures
- ⊙ High-level analysis of the determinants of uptake and factors that foster transition towards sustainable diets

**2. “Sustainable food production | Strengthening sustainability, resilience and diversity of food production systems to produce healthy and nutritious food”;** under this WP the following will be done;

- ⊙ Participatory and indicator based analysis of the sustainability of food production system
- ⊙ Production systems research and development
- ⊙ Sustainability indicator modeling

**3. “Post-harvest technology and food safety | Developing innovative post-harvest technologies to improve food safety and reduce food waste”.** This WP will involve;

- ⊙ Participatory and indicator based, identification of current post harvest, reduce food waste and food safety issues.
- ⊙ Identification further development and piloting of relevant technology and processes.
- ⊙ Participatory and indicator based core assignments and validation of new technology and post benefit analysis.

**4. “Transformational impact, scalability and exploitation | Pathways for exploitation and scalability to maximize sustainable impact”.** This will include;

- ⊙ Improving Nutrition and Health
- ⊙ Sustainable production of healthy and nutritious food products.
- ⊙ Increased efficiency of agri-food chains and improved food safety
- ⊙ Maximizing sustainable Impact.

Bernard reminded participants that the work packages will be implemented jointly with stakeholders who are present in the workshop.



## 4.0. PLENARY



Figure 13: Panelists responding to questions of participants during the FSL workshop-Photo taken by KRC.

Following the presentations, participants were invited to ask questions, give any comments and provide any additions to the presentation and on any matters of the food system in the region.

Some of the key questions included the following;

### 4.1. The Discussion table

#### Question one:

“ There has been an increasing number of herbal medicinal concoctions and beverages on market what is your comment on their impact to the consumers’ nutrition and health?

#### Response:

All products on market must first be certified by the Uganda National Bureau of Standards (UNBS) to meet the standards for human consumption. If these products are not regulated, the private sector can do anything as long as they have the local market.

It's therefore key to sensitize the community about reading the labels on the products before using them.

It's also important to advocate for UNBS to have regular checkup of the food products on market to ensure that they meet the standards for human consumption. The district and city health inspectors should take-up this issue seriously so as to ensure the food safety and human rights issues.

It was also noted that some of these products have wrong messages such as the “***This herbal product cures 100 diseases***” and thus need to continuously provide the masses with the right information. However the intervention requires a multi-sectoral approach since one entity cannot work independently.’

### Question two:

“As the local NGO what have you put in place or done to sensitize the food vendors and the rest of the actors in the food system on the best ways to preserve the food?”

### Response;

Food vendors in Fort portal city have been organized into Food Vendors Association through which KRC has been able to support them with messages on food safety as well as advocated for them an opportunity to sell food on the streets.

Through this association, guidelines to follow during food vending have been developed that are geared towards food preparation, preservation and safety.

KRC has been able to link and support other stakeholder farmers in value addition trainings that enabled them to start processing wine and juice from banana this was done to ensure value addition to the food as well as supporting them in achieving certification from UNBS.

KRC has previously and will continue sensitizing masses on optimal methods of food preparation through the Orugali groups and chef programs on radio and television as well as radio talk shows.

During the phase IV of the FSL, KRC will conduct food analysis tests in trying to understand the safety of the food on the streets.

### Question three:

**“ We are noticing an increase in population as the city emerges, how is the population pressure and land fragmentation affecting Food systems and nutrition socially and economically?”**

#### **Response;**

The land as a natural resource remains the same irrespective of the rise in population. This is worsened by the emerging of cities as they need to develop in terms of infrastructure which actually takes the biggest portion of land during development.

Population rise usually leads to land fragmentation which leaves majority of the people with smaller portions of land for cultivation of food resulting into minimal production of food for yet a bigger population which in the long run leads to reduction of the food served and this may result into cases of under nutrition.

On the other hand, due to limited land for food production, many low income earners in cities end up opting for fast and junk foods as well as highly processed foods which are high in fat and sugar that in the long run result into overweight and or obesity due to their over consumption.

### Question four:

**“ There has been an observation that when advocating and promoting cultivation of indigenous foods, local farmers tend to prefer agrochemical farming to agro-ecology; what is the advice on this matter?”**

#### **Response;**

Many farmers may opt for agrochemical farming to agroecology due to the faster results from agrochemical without contemplating on the health threat that the chemicals may cause especially if the chemicals are inappropriate. The food Lab shall however opt and promote more of agroecology than agrochemical farming for resilient and sustainability as well as food safety issues.

The food system lab will provide a platform for discussions with the agricultural sector to sensitize the masses on the appropriate chemicals for use during food production, processing and post-harvest handling so as to meet the needs of the population with focus on health.



### Question five:

**“ Is it part of your agenda to include the animal/fish section in the food system lab, because to my observation, the FSL focuses on crop nutrients alone?**

### Response;

The food system involves both crops and animals as they complement each other. So what we are doing is to promote small animals like rabbits, fish, and birds etc. which are very good for agro ecological as you can use their urine in the gardens and are very nutritious that can supplement on the diets.

## 4.2. Key Comments and observations from the participants

1. There is an observation that the food sold by the vendors may not be safe due to the environment under which they prepare and sell food with focus on lack of sanitary areas such as latrines, washrooms and preparation of food in open spaces. In the same line the packaging materials used by vendors are mainly polythene which is unsafe to pack hot food. The FSL will be a platform to advocate for safe spaces for food vending and providing solutions to the challenges faced by the vendors.
2. Fort Portal is now a tourism city and this is an opportunity to develop the food systems so that people can gain multiple from their ventures.
3. As women play a key role in food system, the FSL should provide a platform to promote and support the fight towards ending Gender Based Violence (GBV) against women at household levels.
4. There is a lot of food and nutrient losses during food preparation and thus need for community sensitization on food handling during cooking.

## 4.3. Formation of working groups for the work packages

Following the presentation on the phase IV of the FSL and on work packages, the facilitator led participants to the formation of the working groups guided by the Coalition of the willing approach.

The formed groups will expand the existing C.o.W. Participants willingly joined the groups as per the work package of their interest. The groups were briefed and taken through the following guiding questions;

### Guiding questions;

1. In line with your work package, assess the current situation and highlight the key issues that affect the food system that require intervention by the FSL.
2. List the possible actions and rank them to get the most key 3 priority actions for the next 6 months to address the key issues identified above.
3. Indicate time frame, responsible persons to achieve the planned actions.

## 5.0. PLENARY II

Participants identified key challenges affecting the Food system and nutrition and suggested key actions to be done. This was done in their groups categorized per work package as shown in the table below;

Work package	Key Challenges	Activity/ Action
<p><b><u>Work Package 2</u></b></p> <p>Improving nutrition and health</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>⊙ Community nutrition Knowledge gap.</li> <li>⊙ Need for capacity building of health workers and community structures on nutrition.</li> <li>⊙ Lack of recent evidence (research) on nutrition status of children in Fort portal.</li> <li>⊙ Shortage of Nutritionists Officers across board and in government structures.</li> <li>⊙ Gap between what is prioritized in homesteads for use and sell (all is sold with none left at home).</li> <li>⊙ No nutrition center specific for management of over nutrition and its effects.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>⊙ Use Radio sensitization programs.</li> <li>⊙ Conduct community dialogues in different village settings on issue of Nutrition and health.</li> <li>⊙ Visual aids: Use of drama groups and artists for creating awareness in communities.</li> <li>⊙ Use of food SACCOS which the coalition of the willing had established in phase III.</li> <li>⊙ Build capacity of health workers and community structures such as VHTs and health extension workers on nutrition.</li> <li>⊙ Conduct research on common determinants of poor nutrition and research on the current nutrition status.</li> <li>⊙ Need for a nutrition center to cover the gap for over nutrition.</li> </ul>



Work package	Key Challenges	Activity/ Action
<p><b><u>Work Package 2</u></b></p> <p>Sustainable production of healthy and nutritious food products.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>⊙ Poor quality seeds: this affects the quality of production.</li> <li>⊙ Production of monotonous food crops</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>⊙ Carry out farmers or end user needs assessment to identify enterprises to be worked on.</li> <li>⊙ Conduct Survey on determinants and barriers of production of variety of food crops.</li> <li>⊙ Forming farmers groups or identifying existing groups to work with.</li> <li>⊙ Linkage of farmers to quality seeds and farm inputs.</li> <li>⊙ Training / capacity building of different farmers in their different activities based on their needs.</li> <li>⊙ Needs assessment report or decision support group.</li> </ul>
<p><b><u>Work Package 3</u></b></p> <p>Increased efficiency of agri-food chains and improved food safety</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>⊙ Poor harvest handling: How this chain is being affected when they don't have the means (machines) of processing to improve the produce.</li> <li>⊙ Safety: Food contamination affects the health of consumers.</li> <li>⊙ No existing data on food safety in the region.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>⊙ Solution would be certification of product on market: When food is produced market should be there.</li> <li>⊙ Need for a study on the food safety in the region.</li> <li>⊙ Inspection of the food products and processing systems to ensure they meet the standards for human consumption.</li> <li>⊙ Link processors to UNBS for certification of the products.</li> </ul>
<p><b><u>Work Package 4</u></b></p> <p>Maximizing sustainable impact</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>⊙ Lack of baseline survey for nutrition and food value chains.</li> <li>⊙ Lack of by-laws hence policies are not working in some sub counties.</li> <li>⊙ Sub county action plans; they do not own the action plans</li> <li>⊙ Funding gap to process bylaws.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>⊙ Engage communities to identify the gaps.</li> <li>⊙ Curtail that by building capacity in developing processes of forming bylaws.</li> <li>⊙ Solved by networking and collaboration with partners to help have this goal realized.</li> <li>⊙ Disseminate all action plans to all stakeholders at sub counties, parishes and VHT level.</li> </ul>

## 6.0. WAY FORWARD

The participants were urged to sustain this discussion and advocate for better food systems. Follow-up meetings will be conducted for each work package to first track progress.

The participants were also encouraged to implement the actions noted from the working groups and be able to have some activities and results that shall be reported in the follow up FSL workshop that will be conducted in April 2021.

All stakeholders need to work together. A possibility will be sought to link the Uganda work packages to other global work packages working on food systems.

## 7.0. CLOSING REMARKS

Hon. Rwabuhinga Richard the District Chairperson for Kabarole District and a Food Ambassador congratulated KRC upon successfully completing the first three phases of the food change lab and embarking on the fourth phase. He said the first three phases would be used as building blocks for the success of Fourth Phase.

He was glad that the fourth phase of the FSL will mainly be focusing on the entire food system that will address and emphasize sustainable production, consumption, processing nutritious foods as well as food safety of the processed foods for the people. In his remarks the District Chairperson expressed his appreciation to the FSL because it addresses a bigger challenge of our time especially where we have 40.6% of our children below



*Figure 14:  
Participants  
having lunch of  
the indigenous  
foods-Photo by  
KRC*



5 years having stunted growth. He added that as a region we do not lack the food, although the production and consumption have mismatched. This he attributed to lack of information, i.e. you have food but do not know how/when to eat it and parents who sell off all food at during bumper harvest, leaving families starving.

As a food Ambassador in the Fourth Phase, he invited KRC and all stakeholders to work with government to ensure people get the full knowledge of what and when to consume what quantities of food.

He challenged the youths to step into the production sector instead of leaving the elderly to produce the food for them.



*Figure 15: LC V presenting workshop closing remarks*

Hon. Rwabuhinga also called upon the academia to join KRC in investing in more research and disseminating the findings with relevant stakeholders.

He revealed that government has plans to develop the Kyembogo industrial park and he hoped that the phase four of the Food System lab would enable them to stick to sustainable production, processing, and sustainable consumption.

Hon. Richard committed to work with KRC, and integrate some of its work plan into District's development plans.

## 8.0. THE LAUNCH OF THE FOOD SYSTEMS LAB PHASE IV

Hon. Alex Ruhunda, the Fort Portal Tourism City Member of Parliament, officiated the launch of the FSL phase IV.

Hon. Ruhunda gave an inspiration speech at the launch hailing the value of research and information in driving the food system agenda. 'Life is about striving for how much knowledge you can gather before you join the creator', he mentioned.

He challenged participants to concentrate on research as a way of find solutions to complex societal problems.



Figure 16: Variety of healthy Indigenous foods exhibited during the FSL workshop-Photo by KRC

He added that the unfortunate part is that people do not see themselves as researchers but rather actors and implementers.

Africa may not promote great personalities but can produce serious knowledge and be competitive.

He congratulated KRC for having consistently pursued food nutrition programming for a long time. Hon. Alex said many parents take their children to church for prayer when they are stunted or are not performing well in class, yet the solution is in good nutrition, so called for mass community awareness on nutrition and its effects.

He noted it was his honor to unveil the fourth phase of the fort portal food lab program in the beautiful, Fort Portal Tourism City and he said that healthy food should be one of the major interests of all stakeholders. Hon. Alex He officially launched the Food System Lab Phase IV by imploring participants to do business by marketing and branding the healthy food they have.



Figure 18: Hon  
Ruhunda officially  
launching the FSL  
phase IV-Photo by  
KRC.



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