

**Table S1: Food sustainability survey questions and public response in the two subalpine Himalayan settlements**

Sl. no.	Questions	Response options (% Respondents voted)						Mean response score (average response)
		Score 0	Score 1	Score 2	Score 3	Score 4	Score 5	
<b>I</b>	<b>Section A: Perception and awareness of food sustainability</b>							<b>2.9</b>
	<u>Subsection1:: Perceptions on economic aspects of food sustainability</u>							
Q1	How would you rate the profit margin and economic viability of current food production system in your area?	Don't know (5%)	Very low (2%)	Low (15%)	Moderate (44%)	High (35%)	Very high (0%)	3.0 (Moderate)
Q2	Is current agricultural yield sufficient to fulfill local food supply?	Don't know (3%)	Not at all (0%)	A little (5%)	Partly (47%)	Mostly (45%)	Fully (0%)	3.3 (Partly)
Q3	What is the scope for local value addition through local processing of food products in your area?	Don't know (8%)	Very low (2%)	Low (29%)	Moderate (45%)	High (16%)	Very high (0%)	2.6 (Moderate)
Q4	Are the need for external inputs and labors adequately met in your area?	Don't know (3%)	Never (0%)	Rarely (23%)	Sometimes (55%)	Often (19%)	Always (0%)	2.9 (Sometimes)
Q5	Are the farmers in your area connected to higher-value export markets?	Don't know (5%)	Never (2%)	Rarely (47%)	Sometimes (45%)	Often (2%)	Always (0%)	2.4 (Rarely)
Q6	What is the prospect of agricultural sector (agro based enterprises, livelihood security and job prospects) for future generations in your area?	Don't know (0%)	Worst (0%)	Bad (34%)	Neutral (45%)	Good (21%)	Excellent (0%)	2.9 (Neutral)
	<u>Subsection 2 :: Perceptions on social aspects of food sustainability</u>							
Q1	Are you involved in any traditional socio-cultural practices related to food production system?	Not sure (0%)	Not at all (26%)	A little (11%)	Partly (34%)	Mostly (26%)	Fully (3%)	2.7 (Partly)
Q2	How would you rate the current food system in terms of animal welfare in your area?	Not sure (2%)	Worst (0%)	Bad (2%)	Neutral (39%)	Good (58%)	Excellent (0%)	3.5 (Good)
Q3	How would you rate the impact of current food system on the socio-cultural tradition of your area?	Not sure (16%)	Worst (0 %)	Bad (45%)	Neutral (27%)	Good (11%)	Excellent (0%)	2.4 (Bad)
Q4	How will you rate your food in terms of health and nutrition for the population of your locality?	Not sure (0%)	Worst (0 %)	Bad (2%)	Neutral (24%)	Good (74%)	Excellent (0%)	3.7 (Good)
Q5	How will you rate your food in terms of affordable price and equal access?	Not sure (0%)	Worst (0 %)	Bad (10%)	Neutral (53%)	Good (37%)	Excellent (0%)	3.3 (Neutral)

<u>Subsection 3 :: Perceptions on environmental aspects of food sustainability</u>								
Q1	How would you rate the impact of food production activities on soil and land condition and vice versa?	Not sure (0%)	Worst (0 %)	Bad (48%)	Neutral (52%)	Good (0%)	Excellent (0%)	2.5 (Neutral)
Q2	How would you rate the impact of food production activities on water quality and supply and vice versa?	Not sure (0%)	Worst (0 %)	Bad (45%)	Neutral (55%)	Good (0%)	Excellent (0%)	2.5 (Neutral)
Q3	How would you rate the impact of food system activities on biodiversity, ecosystem health and services and vice versa?	Not sure (16%)	Worst (0 %)	Bad (18%)	Neutral (61%)	Good (5%)	Excellent (0%)	2.5 (Neutral)
Q4	How would you rate the impact of food system activities on deforestation and vice versa?	Not sure (5%)	Worst (0%)	Bad (23%)	Neutral (68%)	Good (5%)	Excellent (0%)	2.7 (Neutral)
Q5	How would you rate the impact of food system activities in terms of pollution and toxicity and vice versa?	Not sure (0%)	Worst (0 %)	Bad (60%)	Neutral (40%)	Good (0%)	Excellent (0%)	2.4 (Bad)
Q6	How would you rate the impact of food system activities on carbon footprint and climate change and vice versa?	Not sure (11%)	Worst (0 %)	Bad (32%)	Neutral (53%)	Good (3%)	Excellent (0%)	2.6 (Neutral)
Q7	How would you rate the impact of food system activities on energy efficiency and vice versa?	Not sure (21%)	Worst (0 %)	Bad (6%)	Neutral (61%)	Good (11%)	Excellent (0%)	2.5 (Neutral)
<u>Subsection 4 :: Perceptions on Govt. support (policy/ schemes/ training facilities etc.) related to food sustainability</u>								
Q1	How would you rate Govt. effort to promote evidence-based policy for sustainable food system?	Not sure (16%)	Worst (0 %)	Bad (23%)	Neutral (40%)	Good (21%)	Excellent (0%)	2.5 (Neutral)
Q2	How would you rate Govt. effort in encouraging local food production and bolstering public-private collaboration for sustainable food systems development?	Not sure (6%)	Worst (0%)	Bad (13%)	Neutral (47%)	Good (34%)	Excellent (0%)	3.0 (Neutral)
Q3	How would you rate Govt. effort for regulatory framework (e.g. for food quality standards and assurance), institutional set up, subsidies and guarantees, providing access to technology, finance and adequate supply of input system to the farmers?	Not sure (6%)	Worst (0 %)	Bad (32%)	Neutral (52%)	Good (10%)	Excellent (0%)	2.6 (Neutral)
Q4	How would you rate Govt. effort in supporting prevention and mitigation of specific risks (e.g. ill-effect of unsustainable tourism; watershed management for soil and water conservation; waste management system or facilities to prevent food loss; adopting climate resilient technologies;	Not sure (18%)	Worst (0 %)	Bad (24%)	Neutral (45%)	Good (13%)	Excellent (0%)	2.5 (Neutral)

	reducing pollution and green house gas emission etc.)?							
	<u>Subsection 5 :: Public participatory willingness</u>							
Q1	How likely would you raise your demands (relevant to sustainable food systems) to the govt. bodies?	Not sure (2%)	Never (0%)	Rarely (29%)	Sometimes (40%)	Often (29%)	Always (0%)	3.0 (Sometimes)
Q2	How likely would you involve in sustainable food system if adequate facilities and support are provided?	Not sure (0%)	Not at all (2%)	A little (13%)	Partly (37%)	Mostly (29%)	Fully (19%)	3.4 (Partly)
Q3	How likely would you prioritize sustainable food system over other sectors for your own livelihood?	Not sure (0%)	Not at all (0%)	A little (16%)	Partly (42%)	Mostly (32%)	Fully (10%)	3.4 (Partly)
Q4	How likely would you participate in training/awareness programs facilitating local knowledge sharing related to food system?	Not sure (0%)	Not at all (3%)	A little (5%)	Partly (27%)	Mostly (52%)	Fully (13%)	3.7 (Mostly)
Q5	How likely would you participate in outreach programs promoting scientific research/ technical innovation related to food sustainability?	Not sure (5%)	Not at all (0%)	A little (29%)	Partly (40%)	Mostly (24%)	Fully (2%)	2.8 (Partly)
Q6	How likely would you participate in training programs stimulating market demands for sustainable products and linking farmers directly to higher-value markets?	Not sure (5%)	Not at all (3%)	A little (29%)	Partly (24%)	Mostly (29%)	Fully (10%)	3.0 (Partly)
Q7	How likely would you participate in awareness programs on climate change impacts, sustainable diets, environment friendly lifestyle, resource efficiency and ethical consumerism?	Not sure (0%)	Not at all (0%)	A little (15%)	Partly (34%)	Mostly (44%)	Fully (8%)	3.5 (Mostly)
Q8	How likely would you participate in training programs related to capacity building and new technology packages for small holders?	Not sure (0%)	Not at all (0%)	A little (10%)	Partly (24%)	Mostly (52%)	Fully (15%)	3.7 (Mostly)
<b>II</b>	<b>Section B: Local community practices related to food sustainability</b>							<b>3.1</b>
	<u>Subsection 1 :: Food sourcing practices</u>							
Q1	How frequently you depend on local forests, garden or local fisheries product for food?	Not sure (0%)	Never (29%)	Rarely (11%)	Sometimes (35%)	Often (24%)	Always (0%)	2.5 (Sometime)
Q2	How frequently you depend on food products from subsistence farming?	Not sure (0%)	Never (18%)	Rarely (8%)	Sometimes (29%)	Often (45%)	Always (0%)	3.5 (Often)
Q3	How frequently you depend on local market or outsourced food products?	Not sure (0%)	Never (0%)	Rarely (8%)	Sometimes (27%)	Often (34%)	Always (31%)	3.9 (Often)

<u>Subsection 2 :: Choice and rating of food quality</u>								
Q1	Do you check for safety standards, shelf life in the label of purchased processed food products?	Not sure (0%)	Never (31%)	Rarely (19%)	Sometimes (26%)	Often (15%)	Always (10%)	1.4 (Never)
Q2	How will you rate your food in terms of quality and safety?	Not sure (0%)	Worst (0 %)	Bad (0%)	Neutral (42%)	Good (56%)	Excellent (2%)	3.6 (Good)
Q3	How will you rate your food in terms of variety and adequate availability?	Not sure (0%)	Worst (0 %)	Bad (24%)	Neutral (55%)	Good (21%)	Excellent (0%)	3.0 (Neutral)
<u>Subsection 3 :: Food production practices</u>								
Q1	What is the extent of agricultural intensification (commercial farming) in your area?	Don't know (2%)	Very High (2%)	High (60%)	Moderate (34%)	Low (3%)	Very Low (0%)	2.4 (High)
Q2	Is year round adequate agricultural yield consistently maintained in your area?	Don't know (3%)	Not at all (0%)	A little (15%)	Partly (56%)	Mostly (26%)	Fully (0%)	3.0 (Partly)
Q3	Are you aware of the agricultural techniques traditionally practiced in your area?	Not sure (2%)	Not at all (13%)	A little (15%)	Partly (29%)	Mostly (39%)	Fully (3%)	3.5 (Mostly)
Q4	What is the extent of livestock rearing in your area?	Don't know (2%)	Very High (8%)	High (71%)	Moderate (19%)	Low (0%)	Very Low (0%)	2.1 (High)
Q5	Do farmers adopt natural means for pests, weeds and disease control in your locality?	Don't know (8%)	Never (0%)	Rarely (0%)	Sometimes (2%)	Often (52%)	Always (39%)	3.9 (Often)
Q6	Have you noticed the use of synthetic fertilizers, antibiotics or growth hormones by farmers in your area?	Not sure (5%)	Always (2%)	Often (0%)	Sometimes (0%)	Rarely (34%)	Never (60%)	4.6 (Never)
Q7	Is cultivation of local indigenous varieties practiced and encouraged in your locality?	Don't know (13%)	Never (0%)	Rarely (5%)	Sometimes (44%)	Often (32%)	Always (6%)	3.0 (Sometime)
Q8	Are there any technologically advanced agricultural techniques presently practiced in your area?	Don't know (23%)	Never (2%)	Rarely (44%)	Sometimes (31%)	Often (2%)	Always (0%)	1.9 (Rarely)
Q9	Do farmers adopt controllable resource recycling and agro waste management practices in your area?	Don't know (2%)	Never (2%)	Rarely (0%)	Sometimes (15%)	Often (35%)	Always (47%)	4.5 (Always)

<u>Subsection 4:: Post-production practices and marketing</u>								
Q1	Are there any traditional post harvest storage practices in your area?	Don't know (8%)	Not at all (0%)	A little (6%)	Partly (31%)	Mostly (53%)	Fully (2%)	3.6 (Mostly)
Q2	Are there high yielding seed banks maintained in your area?	Don't know (16%)	Not at all (2%)	A little (10%)	Partly (29%)	Mostly (40%)	Fully (3%)	3.5 (Mostly)
Q3	Is there any cold storage facility or other advanced storage technique for harvested crops in your area?	Don't know (23%)	Not at all (77%)	A little (0%)	Partly (0%)	Mostly (0%)	Fully (0%)	0.8 (Not at all)
Q4	Are there any natural technique for food processing and packaging practiced in your area?	Don't know (2%)	Never (0%)	Rarely (16%)	Sometimes (42%)	Often (40%)	Always (0%)	3.2 (Sometime)
Q5	Are there any modern technique for food processing and packaging presently practiced in your area?	Don't know (40%)	Never (3%)	Rarely (29%)	Sometimes (24%)	Often (3%)	Always (0%)	1.5 (Rarely)
Q6	Are there adequate and cost effective food distribution infrastructures available in your area?	Don't know (8%)	Not at all (0%)	A little (6%)	Partly (40%)	Mostly (37%)	Fully (8%)	3.2 (Partly)
<u>Subsection 5 :: Food consumption practices</u>								
Q1	Have you noticed food wastage during consumption in your family?	Not sure (0%)	Always (0%)	Often (0%)	Sometimes (0%)	Rarely (19%)	Never (81%)	4.8 (Never)
Q2	Have you noticed food wastage in your neighborhood or market area?	Not sure (0%)	Always (0%)	Often (0%)	Sometimes (3%)	Rarely (52%)	Never (45%)	4.4 (Rarely)
Q3	Have you noticed food wastage during production, post harvest practices and supply chains?	Not sure (2%)	Always (0%)	Often (0%)	Sometimes (23%)	Rarely (63%)	Never (13%)	3.8 (Rarely)
Q4	Are there any waste management systems or facilities to prevent food loss availed in your area?	Don't know (13%)	Never (0%)	Rarely (11%)	Sometimes (44%)	Often (29%)	Always (3%)	2.9 (Sometime)

**Table S2: Association between food sustainability perception/ practices and various socio-demographic factors as determined by Chi squared analyses**

Sl. no.	Criteria related to food sustainability perception and practices	Socio-demographic parameters	Chi square value ( $\chi^2$ )	df (degree of freedom)	p value
1. a. b. c. d.	Perceptions on economic aspects of food sustainability	Age	41.2	45	0.63
		Gender	17.3	15	0.30
		Education level	42.8	45	0.57
		Socioeconomic status	33.7	30	0.29

e.		Socio-cultural background	50.7	30	<b>0.01*</b>
2. a.	Perceptions on social aspects of food sustainability	Age	32.3	36	0.65
b.		Gender	7.4	12	0.83
c.		Education level	39.7	36	0.31
d.		Socioeconomic status	26.1	24	0.35
e.		Socio-cultural background	38.7	24	<b>0.03*</b>
3. a.	Perceptions on environmental aspects of food sustainability	Age	44.8	45	0.48
b.		Gender	16.7	15	0.34
c.		Education level	53.9	45	0.17
d.		Socioeconomic status	37.2	30	0.17
e.		Socio-cultural background	41.7	30	0.08
4. a.	Perceptions on Govt. support (policy/ schemes/ training facilities etc.) related to food sustainability	Age	44.8	45	0.48
b.		Gender	13.7	15	0.55
c.		Education level	46.5	45	0.41
d.		Socioeconomic status	33.8	30	0.29
e.		Socio-cultural background	36.9	30	0.18
5. a.	Public willingness participatory	Age	71.6	63	0.22
b.		Gender	22.5	21	0.37
c.		Education level	58.3	63	0.64
d.		Socioeconomic status	56.4	42	0.07
e.		Socio-cultural background	63.8	42	<b>0.02*</b>
6. a.	<i>Overall food sustainability perception of the local community</i>	Age	68.6	54	0.09
b.		Gender	15.5	18	0.63
c.		Education level	57.4	54	0.35
d.		Socioeconomic status	33.5	36	0.59
e.		Socio-cultural background	36.2	36	0.46
7. a.	Food sourcing practices	Age	13.0	15	0.60
b.		Gender	13.1	5	<b>0.02*</b>
c.		Education level	15.2	15	0.44
d.		Socioeconomic status	7.7	10	0.66
e.		Socio-cultural background	39.9	10	<b>0.00*</b>
8. a.	Choice and rating of food quality	Age	12.6	18	0.81
b.		Gender	11.7	6	0.07
c.		Education level	31.1	18	<b>0.03*</b>
d.		Socioeconomic status	17.1	12	0.14
e.		Socio-cultural background	14.3	12	0.28
9. a.	Food production practices	Age	56.6	54	0.38
b.		Gender	20.9	18	0.28
c.		Education level	56.1	54	0.40
d.		Socioeconomic status	27.9	36	0.83
e.		Socio-cultural background	43.8	36	0.17

10.a. b. c. d. e.	Post-production practices and marketing	Age	45.1	45	0.47
		Gender	13.2	15	0.58
		Education level	53.6	45	0.18
		Socioeconomic status	32.8	30	0.33
		Socio-cultural background	37.5	30	0.16
11.a. b. c. d. e.	Food consumption practices	Age	25.3	24	0.39
		Gender	10.5	8	0.23
		Education level	20.1	24	0.69
		Socioeconomic status	13.9	16	0.61
		Socio-cultural background	19.7	16	0.24
12.a. b. c. d. e.	<i>Overall food sustainability practice score of the local community</i>	Age	57.4	45	0.10
		Gender	16.6	15	0.34
		Education level	35.6	45	0.84
		Socioeconomic status	25.2	30	0.72
		Socio-cultural background	45.6	30	<b>0.03*</b>
* implies statistically significant association at 5% level of significance (i.e. p<0.05)					