

PEMBA, MOZAMBIQUE

NOURISHING FOOD PATHWAYS FOR LOCAL FOOD SYSTEMS TRANSFORMATION

At the local level, the Nourishing Food Pathways programme strives to facilitate inclusive food systems governance and mobilise local agency to transform urban food environments, advancing access to food security and safe, healthy diets for all.

This Global Alliance for Improved Nutrition's (GAIN) pathways initiative is active in the intermediary cities of Pemba (Mozambique), Arusha (Tanzania) and Bogor (Indonesia).

THE CHALLENGE

In Mozambique, at a cost of USD 3.6 per person per day, 93% of people cannot afford a healthy diet.¹ Pemba, a strategic port city in Cabo Delgado province, is one of Mozambique's most vulnerable cities, with food insecurity and access to healthy diets challenged by climate shocks – from droughts to successive cyclones – as well as conflict and poor public health.

The city is home to long-time residents and a flux of internally displaced people, with most struggling to earn an income and access sufficient sustenance and nourishment. Pemba city government's public finance and human resources are stretched beyond capacity resulting in challenges such as meeting the expanding demands for basic services, infrastructure investments and climate resilience planning.

THE INTERVENTION

Local food markets that are governed and directly or indirectly managed by Pemba's city government are thriving hubs of nourishment, livelihoods and local economic development, and community social relations. These markets are microcosms of Pemba's food environment, connecting long and short food value chains and registered and unregistered vendors with urban consumers.

Despite challenges ranging from widespread poverty, to inadequate basic service provision and infrastructure such as WASH, ice and cold rooms and roofs, managing registered and unregistered vendors, and poor food hygiene and safety practices, these markets are strategic places of opportunity for inclusive, equitable and just food systems transformation in ways that are locally meaningful and facilitate resilience, sustainability and enhanced access to safe, healthy diets. GAIN works with leadership from the city government and primarily leaders from Alto Gingone Market - including women vendor representatives, many of whom are from savings groups as well as groups of internally displaced women vendors. Together stakeholders, policies and governance mechanisms are identified, vulnerable voices included, and multistakeholder pathways platforms established and operationalised to facilitate local agency, decision making and inclusive food systems governance.

¹ SFAO, IFAD, UNICEF, WFP, & WHO. (2023). The State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World 2023. Urbanization, agrifood systems transformation, and healthy diets across the rural-urban continuum. Rome, FAO. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.4060/cc3017en>

THE IMPACT

Pemba's city government and market multistakeholder pathways platform has chosen to initially prioritise localising Mozambique's 'Sustainable food and nutrition security' national food systems pathway. Key to mobilising city government and market stakeholders' agency and inclusive food systems governance with respect to this priority pathway, has been to: gather and share different forms of knowledge about the food system; review market governance structures and functions; appraise the city government's interpretation, as a signatory city, of the Milan Urban Food Policy Pact framework; capacitate leadership with knowledge about ONENutrition and operationalisation of gender and social inclusion in food systems governance; and track platform agendas.

3 Key Takeaways:



Restructuring of the male only market committee (in progress) to achieve a better gender balance and representation of the variety of produce vendors. The plan is to have 7 women as part of the 12 member committee i.e. raising representation to 58%.²



Targeted activities: capacitation of an interdepartmental city government food coordinator, co-design of a municipal food strategy, and applying a gender lens across governance.



Institutionalising the pathways platform further to ensure long-term, inclusive engagement, expanding the variety and scale of stakeholders involved, and to integrate food systems into the city's resilience plan.



WAY FORWARD

Pemba city government continues to expand its resources through innovative public and private partnerships and philanthropic partnerships including investment in climate smart, food market infrastructure.

These partnerships need to be embedded in Pemba's inclusive food systems transformation framework. Key to this is ensuring that city government and market leaders are champions of transforming Pemba's food environment, are effectively mobilised as agents of food systems transformation through access to evidence, enhanced capacitation such as nutrition, food hygiene and safety and reduced food waste knowledge and skills, participation in the pathways platform and transparent sharing of activities and performance thereof.



RECOMMENDED CITATION

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² Councilor Meeting. (2025). Governance indicators with gender insights – Feedback. 4 September 2025. [Personal communication].