

Insights on GAIN's N4G Private Sector Event on Nutrition: Everyone's Business

Introduction

On March 27th and 28th, 2025, France hosted the Nutrition for Growth Summit (N4G) in Paris. Launched in 2013 in London, N4G is a flagship international conference aimed at securing concrete political and financial commitments to combat malnutrition in all its forms. N4G brings together governments, international organizations, philanthropies, businesses, NGOs and other key stakeholders at a global and regional level to elevate nutrition as a key development agenda and accelerate progress against malnutrition.

The Global Alliance for Improved Nutrition (GAIN) played an active role in the Paris N4G Summit. Alongside the Access to Nutrition Initiative (ATNi) and the Paris Peace Forum (PPF), GAIN co-facilitated the Private Sector Working Group (PSWG) in the lead-up to the Summit. This group fostered open dialogues between public and private sector actors on priority areas for tackling malnutrition. These conversations took place during a series of pre-Summit events.

On March 26, GAIN, ATNi, and PPF hosted a high-level event titled *Private Sector and Nutrition*, which brought together over 170 representatives from both public and private sectors. The event aimed to prioritize multi-sectoral collaboration and reinforce the business case for nutrition through joint action. It served as a platform to highlight and celebrate public and private sector commitments made under the N4G framework, building on the outcomes of pre-Summit dialogues and other global initiatives focused on private sector engagement in nutrition.

The discussions reflected on the progress since the 2021 Tokyo N4G Summit, examined persistent challenges, and underscored the importance of achieving meaningful impact by 2030. Key themes included the need for coordinated efforts, enabling regulatory environments, enhanced accountability and monitoring, and better alignment of strategies across sectors.

The event featured a morning plenary session with keynote speakers, followed by afternoon breakout sessions organized around thematic areas. These interactive panels offered participants the opportunity to exchange insights, engage with leading voices in the field, and explore practical pathways to scale up impact.

Insight 1: From Silos to Synergy: Building Healthier Food Environments Through Collaboration

As emphasized throughout the event, speakers reiterated the vital role of the private sector in addressing malnutrition. Businesses are uniquely positioned to understand the mechanisms, risks, and opportunities that influence how nutrition can be advanced through market-driven solutions. It was widely acknowledged that defeating malnutrition requires stronger alignment and collaboration among stakeholders across sectors such as governments, businesses, investors, and civil society alike.

During two engaging panel sessions, speakers shared real-world strategies and best practices illustrating how the private sector is stepping up to meet the challenge of malnutrition. Government and investor representatives also highlighted concrete examples of successful collaborations, showcasing how cross-sector partnerships can deliver tangible results.

Collaboration between governments and private sector actors was presented as essential for shaping healthier food environments. Panelists emphasized that national and regional programs that integrate sustainability, affordability, and nutrition into food offerings can help populations shift toward healthier diets. In addition, they discussed how behavioral change strategies, such as nudging techniques, can be used as effective marketing tools and key indicators of progress. A central theme was the importance of supporting all stakeholders with practical approaches that make nutritious foods more affordable and accessible. Regulation, too, was highlighted as a driver for healthier consumer choices.

Several panelists representing governments from different continents shared inspiring examples of public-private partnerships that led to improved nutrition outcomes, such as enhanced maternal and infant nutrition. These successful initiatives often paved the way for further innovation - like the development of diagnostic tools and mobile applications to help frontline health workers plan and deliver services more effectively.

Despite these encouraging examples, participants pointed out that there remains a gap in understanding food businesses within the public health and nutrition community. For businesses to maintain long-term engagement, they need clear roadmaps and objectives, along with strong government leadership to provide appropriate incentives. While some companies may struggle to fully align with the N4G Principles of Engagement, especially those with less healthy product portfolios, they can still make meaningful contributions.

Finally, participants stressed that cross-industry collaboration is essential to breaking down silos and expanding the overall impact of nutrition efforts. Both governments and businesses must work together to drive the behavior change necessary to improve global nutrition.

Insight 2: Financing the Fight Against Malnutrition: A Call for Broader Investment

While cross-sector collaboration emerged as a cornerstone for impactful nutrition strategies, speakers also underscored a critical enabler of such partnerships: access to finance.

Participants emphasized that the lack of financing for nutrition-focused business initiatives remains a major barrier to progress. Even the most promising collaborations and innovative solutions cannot scale without adequate investment. Small and medium enterprises (SMEs) hold significant potential to drive impact but are often constrained by limited access to capital. This financial gap restricts their ability to grow operations, hire skilled staff, and invest in the equipment needed to produce and distribute more nutritious food.

Additionally, panelists noted that while microfinance can provide a starting point, it often falls short when companies seek larger investments to grow. Participants stressed the need to change investor mindsets by recognizing the broader value of investing in nutrition. They urged the development of appropriate metrics that go beyond financial returns to capture social and environmental impact, thereby making the case for more meaningful investment in nutrition-focused enterprises.

Examples were shared of existing programs that support farmers' cooperatives in collaboration with food processors. However, it was also noted that current financial support mechanisms are often too narrow, only covering specific needs like agricultural supplies. There was a clear call for more diverse and flexible funding models to unlock the private sector's full potential in the fight against malnutrition.

Insight 3: Business commitments and the launch of the Paris Declaration

The morning panel session also provided a platform for several companies to publicly announce their nutrition commitments, which they had registered on the [N4G commitment platform](#). These commitments came from a diverse range of actors, including business networks, individual companies, SMEs, international organizations, and investors. They focused on a variety of key areas, such as addressing micronutrient deficiencies, empowering agri-food actors, unlocking financing for nutrition initiatives, certifying healthy, safe, affordable products for low-income earners and students, and investing in companies that prioritize healthy nutrition.

In addition to these announcements, the *Paris Declaration on Business and Nutrition 2030* was officially launched during the same session. The Declaration lays the foundation for ongoing dialogue and urges all stakeholders to seize critical opportunities for investment, transparency, and stronger partnerships. It represents a significant milestone in business engagement for nutrition and supports the

development of a more robust nutrition economy. Ultimately, the Paris Declaration serves as a strategic roadmap to guide multisector action in the fight against malnutrition.

You can find the full Paris Declaration on Business and Nutrition [here](#).

Insight 4: Scaling Nutrition Solutions Through Collective Dialogue

During the afternoon breakout sessions, participants gathered in smaller groups to discuss key topics and share their insights on how to advance healthier and more nutritious food systems globally.

A central point raised was that food fortification and protein diversification are effective approaches to improving public health and strengthening food system resilience. Participants noted that scaling these solutions requires business innovation that is aligned with national nutrition strategies and policy frameworks. They emphasized that the success of large-scale food fortification (LSFF) depends on supportive policies, clear regulatory pathways, and public investments that help shape consumer behavior and incentivize private sector action. As with other areas of discussion throughout the event, collaboration among all stakeholders was highlighted as a critical enabler.

In addition, participants discussed the potential of Workforce Nutrition Programs (WFN) as a solution to promote healthier diets. These programs benefit not only the health of employees but also improve business outcomes through increased productivity and long-term organizational success. For nutrition to be successfully integrated into workplace policies, participants stressed the importance of strong public-private partnerships, as well as capacity building, advocacy, and supportive policy mechanisms.

Finally, participants highlighted the value of south–north regions cooperation to support MSMEs within food systems. Establishing trade partnerships between regions was identified as a key strategy to drive scalable solutions, foster knowledge exchange, and strengthen networking among stakeholders across different geographies.

Insight 5: Innovations for Nutrition Through Financing Mechanisms and Digitalization

The breakout room sessions also provided a space for participants and panelists to discuss the pressing challenges faced by farmers, entrepreneurs, and small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in the nutrition and food systems space.

Once again, financing barriers emerged as a central issue. Farmers, in particular, face difficulties accessing both finance and land - challenges that are often worsened by

climate and political shocks. Participants emphasized the need for public support to help farmers transition toward more sustainable agricultural practices. To facilitate this transition, they called on governments to introduce taxes and financial incentives that can offset short-term costs, and on retailers to support shifts in consumer behavior toward healthier and more sustainable choices. Carbon markets were discussed as a potential tool to encourage climate-smart agriculture, but concerns were raised about the low price of carbon and the lack of systems adapted to smallholder farmers.

In addition, participants explored innovative financing mechanisms that could help de-risk investments in nutrition and strengthen the business case for private sector engagement. They highlighted the importance of learning from successful food investment models to unlock private financing. Many agreed that technical assistance is critical - not only to de-risk investments but also to build the capacity of businesses to grow and scale.

The discussion also turned to the role of data systems and digitalization in advancing global nutrition and food security. Participants noted that more robust data systems are essential for enabling smarter decision-making and more effective program implementation. Digital platforms were seen as powerful tools to improve data accessibility and usability - helping to better target, monitor, and evaluate national nutrition programs. Ultimately, digital innovation was framed as a key driver of nutrition-focused solutions that prioritize equity, impact, and sustainability across food systems.

Conclusion:

The high-level event *Private Sector and Nutrition: Everyone's Business* underscored the pivotal role the private sector plays in combating malnutrition. Throughout the day, speakers and participants highlighted how businesses - through innovation, services, and technology - can contribute meaningfully to improving global nutrition.

Discussions consistently emphasized the need for stronger financing mechanisms and enhanced multi-sectoral collaboration, particularly through public-private partnerships. A key moment of the event was the launch of the *Paris Declaration on Business and Nutrition 2030*. The Declaration serves as a powerful call to action and a shared roadmap to accelerate progress in the nutrition space.

The event closed on a strong note of collective responsibility. As we move forward from this summit, there is a clear expectation that the commitments made - along with the principles outlined in the Paris Declaration - will translate into tangible actions. Together, they can help mobilize decision-makers globally to build healthier, more equitable, and more sustainable food systems for all.

