

Understanding Moments of Change in Food Systems Transformation:

Examples from around the World



Prepared as a contribution to the
United Nations Food Systems Summit +4



A man wearing a wide-brimmed straw hat and a plaid shirt is juggling three mangoes. He is smiling and looking upwards. The background is a blurred green forest. There are several small, semi-transparent square boxes of different colors (blue, orange, green, red) scattered across the image.

**“Food system acceleration is now
the name of the game.”**



**Dr Ibrahim Mayaki, African Union Special Envoy,
at the launch of the Comprehensive African
Agricultural Development Programme (CAADP)
Kampala Declaration**



Contributors to this report

ACF: The Alliance of Champions for Food Systems Transformation (ACF) is a strategic coalition of ambitious countries working together to transform food systems. Signatories to the Alliance commit to driving systemic change, taking a 'whole of government' approach and inspiring others to go further, faster, to deliver better outcomes for people, nature, and climate.

BMZ/GIZ: Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH is a service provider in the field of international cooperation for sustainable development and international education work. GIZ is an implementing organization of the German Development Cooperation on behalf of the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) as main commissioning party.

FAO: The Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) is a specialised agency of the United Nations that leads international efforts to defeat hunger. Our goal is to achieve food security for all and make sure that people have regular access to enough high-quality food to lead active, healthy lives. With 195 members - 194 countries and the European Union, FAO works in over 130 countries worldwide.

FOLU: The Food and Land Use Coalition (FOLU) is a global community of change-makers that works to transform food and land systems to unlock a net-zero, nature-positive world, while also ensuring social justice and food security for all. Guided by evidence and science-based solutions, FOLU builds a shared understanding of these challenges and opportunities, empowering farmers, policymakers, businesses, investors, and civil society to unlock collective action at scale.

GAFFSP: The Global Agriculture and Food Security Program (GAFFSP) is a multilateral financing and partnership platform dedicated to improving food and nutrition security worldwide. Since 2010, GAFFSP has pooled over \$2.4 billion in donor funds and provided financial and technical resources – grants, technical assistance, concessional loans, blended finance, and advisory services – to demand-driven projects along the food chain.

GAIN: The Global Alliance for Improved Nutrition (GAIN) is a Swiss-based foundation launched at the United Nations in 2002 to tackle the human suffering caused by malnutrition. Working with governments, businesses, and civil society, we aim to transform food systems so that they deliver healthier diets for all people, especially the most vulnerable.

SUN: The Scaling Up Nutrition (SUN) Movement leads a global effort to combat malnutrition, which is a major cause of child deaths and a barrier to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals. By aligning resources with country needs, SUN supports the development of strategic nutrition initiatives, promotes integrated solutions across sectors, and amplifies countries' voices in international advocacy, making a tangible impact in the fight against malnutrition.

WFP: The World Food Programme (WFP) is the United Nations' food-assistance branch and the world's largest humanitarian agency. WFP delivers life-saving food during crises like conflicts, disasters, and displacement. Beyond immediate relief, it supports long-term solutions—enhancing nutrition for women and children, running the world's largest school-meal programmes, bolstering smallholder farmers, and helping communities build resilience to climate and economic shocks.

WRI: The World Resource Institute (WRI) works to improve people's lives, protect and restore nature, and stabilize the climate. As an independent research organization, we leverage our data, expertise, and global reach to influence policy and catalyse change across systems like food, land and water, energy, and cities.

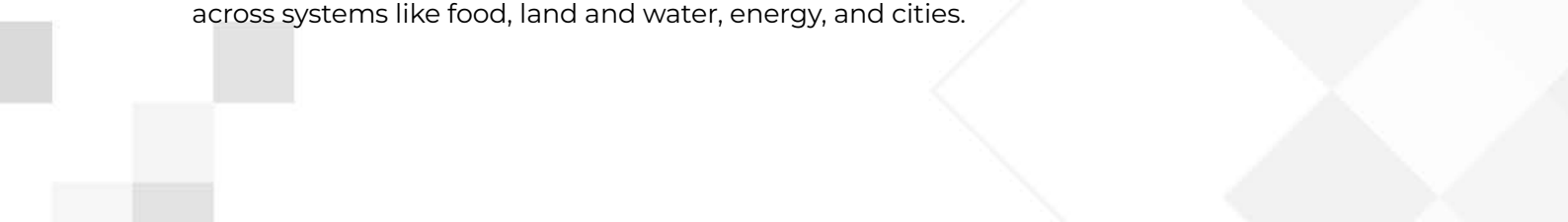




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Executive Summary

Four years on from the UN Food Systems Summit, how well are we progressing in transforming food systems so that they reduce hunger, increase access to healthy diets, reduce climate emissions, improve climate resilience, create good jobs, and nurture the environment? The numbers tell a mixed story. According to the Food Systems Countdown Initiative, itself a creation of the UNFSS, only 20 of 42 global food system indicators are trending positively (1), with none fast enough to meet 2030 SDG goals. These numbers are important but inevitably reliant on data that are 2–3 years out of date.

As a complement, this report brings us many new qualitative examples of food system transformation. They are a partial antidote to the rather gloomy numbers. The examples are distilled from the experiences of a group of organisations working at the country level, often together, in close partnership with governments and local organisations and therefore they represent only parts of the picture. But the snapshots are highly revealing. They uncover “moments of change”. Sometimes the moments are obvious: a policy change, a resource reallocation, a shift in strategy. But often they are hidden in plain sight: the new committee that can make better decisions, the new data available to assess trade-offs between ministries, the coming together of private and public sectors in new ways.

These moments are provided from the perspective of the partner organisations who contributed to them and as such they serve as a supplement to the formal UNFSS+4 report from the UN DSG’s office which summarises food system transformation perspectives from member states. These collaborators work hand in hand, on a day-to-day basis with government officials, partnering with them to convert policy priorities into impactful and investible actions, mobilise finance, co-create implementation capacity, and track progress. Food system transformation is hard, but the rewards are great if it can be attained. These organisations know the difference between grand words and the hard graft of implementation, when policy is disconnected from reality, and how easily progress can be disrupted by external events.

We organise the moments of change around the six calls to action from UNFSS+2: integration, inclusive governance, investing in data and science, participatory design and implementation, engagement with businesses, and accessing new finance sources. And there are many moments of change to celebrate. The success factors behind these moments of change are clear. Data are needed to get from opinions to evidence based decisions. Decision-making processes that are inclusive, yet decisive. Policies that are aligned with policy objectives, not arrayed against them. Budgets that support objectives rather than undermine them. The creativity to find new ways of funding food system change. The imagination to align and overlap business and food system goals. But perhaps the most important factor is trust. The trust to share, to be humble, to be open and to collaborate.

We are going to need to summon all these factors in greater quantities as we move towards UNFSS+6 because, as the African Union Special Envoy on Food Systems, Dr. Mayaki, stated so memorably in Kampala in January 2025 at the CAADP meetings, “acceleration is now the name of the game”. The organisations behind this report could not agree more, and we commit to redoubling our efforts as partners with the governments who are striving to achieve this great transformation of food systems to accelerate us towards the SDGs.



Introduction

Four years have passed since the UN Secretary-General convened the first UN Food Systems Summit (UNFSS) in 2021, sparking a global movement to transform food systems for healthier, more equitable, and sustainable outcomes.

Since then, 155 countries have nominated Member State Dialogue Convenors, and over 120 have developed pathways outlining priorities and action plans for food system transformation (UNFSS+2 [report](#)). The 2023 UNFSS+2 in Rome confirmed Food Systems Transformation as a key mechanism for political and societal change, including achieving the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Over these four years, development partners and national institutions—collectively the [Ecosystem of Support](#) (EoS)—have worked with governments to turn pathway priorities into action. The EoS provides technical, financial, and coordination support, helping identify policy gaps, evidence needs, and facilitating collective efforts. Acting as knowledge brokers, they bridge country-level challenges with global platforms and funding to advance transformation.

As the UNFSS+4 in Addis Ababa approaches, it is time to review progress and draw lessons from national transformation journeys. Whilst progress is slow and must accelerate, initiatives like the Food Systems Countdown Initiative (FSCI) highlight many positive developments. Food systems transform when a series of actions reach a pivot point—moments of change—where political will, budgets, external factors, and societal demands align to shift how a country's food system operates, including its purpose, rules, and power structures. Some moments are obvious, while others subtle, but all point to significant long-term impact. Identifying, understanding, sharing, and celebrating these moments is vital.

Complementing the UN Secretary-General's detailed progress report, this paper highlights moments of change and the stories behind them from organisations within the EoS. These partners work collaboratively across issues, regions, and countries. Their examples were carefully selected and reviewed for relevance and rigor.

Organised around the UNFSS+2 calls to action (See Box A), this paper offers a snapshot rather than an exhaustive overview of progress observed by the EoS. From these perspectives, diverse successes and cross-country trends emerge. Each country's transformation is unique, but these stories aim to inspire action by sharing positive steps that others can learn from.



Moments of Change Across the Six Calls to Action

In July 2023, UN Secretary-General António Guterres introduced six calls to action (Box A) during the UNFSS+2. These were intended to accelerate and guide national and global efforts to ensure food systems become more sustainable, inclusive, resilient, and equitable for present and future generations. The following sections are organised around each of these calls, providing examples of moments of change, noting key national partners and the EoS that worked together to achieve progress.

Box A. Six Calls to Action

The six calls to action from the UN Food Systems Summit+2 urge leaders to prioritise the transformation of food systems by:

-  **Integrating food systems strategies into all national sustainable development policies to address nutrition, health, climate, and livelihoods inclusively;**
-  **Establishing inclusive, multi-stakeholder governance for coordinated and long-term action;**
-  **Increasing investment in research, data, innovation, and scientific expertise;**
-  **Strengthening participatory design and implementation at the local level, especially involving women, youth, and Indigenous communities;**
-  **Boosting business engagement and accountability, particularly through public-private partnerships; and**
-  **Securing access to both short- and long-term concessional financing, investments, budget support, and debt restructuring to sustain progress.**



CALL TO ACTION 1

Incorporating food systems strategies into all national policies for sustainable development, for people's livelihoods, nutrition, and health, for economic growth, climate action and nature, and to address post-harvest losses, leaving no one behind.

Call to Action #1: Food System Strategies into Policy

National policies must be deployed to reinforce and implement food system strategies. Since UNFSS+2, many countries have progressed in developing their pathways, implementation strategies, and action plans. A crucial next step is to incorporate these priorities into, for example, long-term development policies, food and nutrition policies, climate and biodiversity policies, or agriculture policies. Integrating food systems into national plans showcases a government's dedication to their pathways, alignment of priorities, and willingness to commit financial resources towards food system transformation.

Incorporating food system priorities into existing national policies is not necessarily simple. It may require better governance and alignment of incentives across ministries and levels of hierarchy; the generation of evidence around new priorities; and the inclusion of voices that have previously been unheard or disregarded.

The EoS works in support of formal policy development and implementation processes. At the request of national convenors and government partners, the EoS can leverage their experience to help strengthen and accelerate the inclusion of food system priorities into national policies and development plans. Below are excellent examples of progress made by countries that are codifying food systems transformation into their national policies.

Albania: Using agritourism as a strategic lever for food system change

In recent years, Albania has strategically positioned agritourism as a pathway to transform food systems, by revitalising rural economies and bridging rural-urban divides. Faced with youth out-migration, ageing farming populations and fragmented infrastructure, the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development (MARD) supported by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) adopted a systems approach to identify high-impact, interlinked solutions. Through inclusive national and local dialogues, agritourism emerged as a priority entry point offering multiple co-benefits: entrepreneurial diversification, youth employment, sustainable farming practices, and strengthened market links between cities and remote areas.


“



I think agritourism resolves this problem of shortening up the chain. This makes it much more sustainable because money goes directly where it should go: to the producer. Fair compensation motivates the women I work with not go away from the valley, raise their kids, and lead a better life.

**Elona Bejo, Founder,
Grand Albanik family farm and guesthouse, Albania**

To start, MARD and partners convened stakeholders to develop a roadmap for inclusive agritourism development as a lever for food systems transformation. FAO, in close partnership with a national agrifood policy expert, provided technical inputs to the design of the roadmap to ensure it integrates the priorities of several sectors and promotes alignment across existing policies, while promoting participation by a wide variety of stakeholders. The stakeholders represented diverse sectors – including tourism, agriculture, local governments, culinary



schools, and microfinance institutions – and stakeholders from different coastal, mountainous, and internal regions, who are often unheard in centralised policy debates. Collaborating with the Rural Association Support Programme, concrete actions were catalysed – including agribusiness and youth upskilling on sustainable agricultural practices and marketing, foster business networks, facilitate participation in rural market fairs and study tours to promote innovation and knowledge exchange. As a result, in 2023, MARD established a dedicated agritourism unit, which has since supported joint policymaking with the Ministry of Tourism and Environment. These efforts helped shape the National Tourism Strategy 2024–2030, a new Tourism Law, and the “Mountain Package” initiative, promoting sustainable development in Albania’s mountain areas and supporting migrants and residents to invest in their ancestral lands.

More recently, Albania launched a EUR 250 million Investment Fund for Rural Development to stimulate green and inclusive growth in agritourism, fisheries and rural innovation, using risk-sharing mechanisms to encourage commercial bank lending to small and medium-sized enterprises. Together, these investments reflect how integrated, people-centred, localised approaches can unlock shared prosperity, sustainability, and resilience across agrifood systems.

Key National Partners: Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development; Ministry of Tourism and Environment


EoS Partners: FAO, UNRC

Brazil: Turning evidence into action for regenerative farming

In early 2024, Brazil’s Ministry of Agrarian Development (MDA) collaborated with FOLU Brazil to answer a simple but important question: how can public policy best support family farmers to adopt regenerative, climate-smart practices? To answer this question, 25 MDA policies were assessed, analysing not only their written content but also their maturity, execution, and real-world impact. The MDA played a central role in reviewing the shortlist and, by May 2024, Vice-Minister Fernanda Machiavelli had selected the National Programme for Productive Forests (PNFP), as the policy with the highest potential for impact.

At the time, PNFP was only a draft policy. Joint work between FOLU Brazil, the Ministry of the Environment, and the MDA ensured the PNFP’s final text strategically aligned with Planaveg 2.0, Brazil’s revised National Plan for the Recovery of Native Vegetation. This alignment gave the PNFP the political legitimacy it needed to move forward and guaranteed a coherent policy environment where restoration efforts across ministries work in lockstep, not in silos.

By March 2025, there had been significant progress: a formal decree was issued, a structured implementation plan was elaborated for the state of Pará, and dedicated funding was secured. FOLU Brazil supported the implementation plan by conducting a comprehensive territorial analysis of 21 settlement areas, evaluating agroforestry potential, market accessibility, and the availability of necessary inputs to identify the most promising sites. The funding, introduced by the MDA in collaboration with the Ministry of the Environment and Climate Change and the National Bank for Economic and Social Development, was part of an



initiative named *Restaura Amazônia*, which allocated approximately BRL 450 million from the Amazon Fund. Additionally, the MDA is still structuring further funding opportunities with other institutions, such as *Caixa Econômica Federal*.

FOLU Brazil continues to collaborate with the MDA to implement the PNFP, which aims to scale regenerative agricultural practices among family farmers, supporting 30,000 families in restoring 30,000 hectares of degraded land.

Brazil provides an excellent example of how, with evidence, food system priorities can be integrated into policy and how, with alignment and political backing, those policies can be used to raise funds for action.

Key National Partner: Ministry of Agrarian Development (MDA), Ministry of the Environment and Climate Change, the National Bank for Economic and Social Development, Union of Family Farming and Solidarity Economy Cooperatives

EoS partner: FOLU Brazil (co-hosted by WRI Brazil and Systemiq)

Cambodia: Embedding food systems thinking into policy and practice from national plans to local action

In 2022, Cambodia's Multisectoral Food Security and Nutrition (FSN) strategy was improved by integrating food systems across key policy areas at both national and subnational levels. Led by the Royal Government of Cambodia through the Council for Agricultural and Rural Development (CARD), this marked a pivotal shift in Cambodia's food and nutrition policy. Moving beyond a narrow focus on agriculture and health, the government strengthened multisectoral governance of food systems, notably through the establishment of provincial multisectoral working groups on FSN. These structures have since been scaled nationwide, enabling coordinated responses and securing sustainable financing and technical capacity.

CARD, with support from partners, facilitated collaboration with research institutions, UN agencies, embassies, and the private sector to embed food systems thinking into national policy frameworks. These efforts are reflected in Cambodia's 3rd National Strategy for FSN (2024–2028), which integrates the UNFSS roadmap and combines targeted sectoral actions with cross-cutting priorities across food, health, climate, and the wider economy.

Cambodia took a systems approach, now considering food-related issues in sectors including health, nutrition-sensitive agriculture, social protection, education, and trade. This is evidenced by the introduction of supportive legislation (e.g., food fortification and restrictions on marketing of unhealthy foods near schools), the development and dissemination of food-based dietary guidelines, and the strengthening of monitoring and evaluation tools across agriculture, health, and governance sectors.

At the subnational level, CARD, with support from partners, has championed the integration of FSN into commune investment plans, improved health and agricultural services, and expanded the roles of Commune Agriculture Officers to lead community-driven food and nutrition initiatives through capacity development and digital tools. These officers provide extension services on FSN and nutrition-sensitive agriculture to farmers in the community, while collecting

nationwide agricultural data. This enables the government to make data-driven national strategic decisions, policies, and laws within the FSN and agricultural sectors.

Key National Partner: Cambodia's Council for Agricultural and Rural Development (CARD)

EoS Partners: BMZ/GIZ, ACF, SUN

Costa Rica: Shifting from export agriculture to sustainable food systems

Costa Rica's integration into global markets from the 1980s incentivised producers to intensify agricultural production for export. This intensification degraded the environment, leading to a growing awareness and urgency to address environmental challenges. Since then, Costa Rica has achieved notable milestones, including becoming the first tropical country to reverse deforestation and producing the world's first carbon-neutral coffee.

Since the 1990s, Costa Rica has progressively embedded environmental sustainability into its national policies, including the National Policy on Sustainable Production and Consumption 2018-2030, which incorporates a chapter on the sustainability of agrifood systems, and the Agri-environmental Agenda towards 2030. More recently, in the context of the UN Food Systems Summit, Costa Rica developed its National Pathway Towards Sustainable and Healthy Agrifood Systems. The document builds on existing sectoral and cross-sectoral strategies and is led by the Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock, with technical support from the FAO.



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The pathway outlines a series of goals and actions that address various elements and outcomes of food systems, including value chains, economic development, environmental sustainability, and food and nutrition security. Each action is linked to at least one implementing partner, existing budgetary commitments, and progress indicators. Every four to six months, the technical committee meets to monitor implementation, discuss bottlenecks and brainstorm potential synergies among implementing partners. The pathway has added value by identifying gaps in existing policies – such as the lack of clear indicators, implementation plans and evaluation mechanisms – and by linking previously fragmented goals to the

transformation of food systems. A responsible body, indicators and assigned budget enables more effective monitoring and accountability.



The transformation towards more sustainable, healthy, equitable and resilient agrifood systems requires coordination between the government, public sector and private actors to jointly promote actions that improve livelihoods, generate greater social cohesion and safeguard environmental sustainability for future generations, leaving no one behind.

Allegra Baiocchi,
UN Resident Coordinator in Costa Rica

Costa Rica's experience illustrates how strong public leadership, combined with transparent participatory processes, interdisciplinary collaboration, and targeted investments, are critical enablers of food systems transformation.

Key National Partner: Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock

EoS Partner: FAO

Ethiopia: Using policy coherence to strengthen food systems

Ethiopia is among the first countries to pilot a new Policy Coherence Diagnostic Tool designed by AKADEMIYA2063 and GAIN to support food systems transformation. Coherence across sectoral policies is a key challenge faced globally. Policy shifts in one sector can either reinforce or undermine progress in another. The diagnostic tool helps governments identify where different aspects of six core policy areas—agriculture, health, environment, trade, social, and economic/industrial/monetary policies—are at odds with key food systems outcomes.

In Ethiopia, the diagnostic was implemented in close collaboration with government stakeholders, enabling a structured assessment of how current policies align—or conflict—with national goals around hunger reduction, healthier diets, women's empowerment, and climate mitigation.

The results revealed a mixed picture (see figure 1). Many of Ethiopia's agriculture policies were found to align well with food security and gender equity goals, for example by supporting access to inputs for women farmers or investing in staple crop productivity. However, some of these same policies conflicted with climate change mitigation objectives, such as those promoting mechanisation without parallel efforts to reduce greenhouse gas emissions (2).

Health policies in Ethiopia also generally supported hunger reduction and improved nutrition. Still, they showed room for improvement in integrating climate mitigation—for example, through promoting dietary shifts toward lower-emission foods—and in strengthening gender-responsive health services.

Environmental policies, while essential for sustainability, were found to have potential trade-offs with diet quality. Water-use restrictions, for example, may inadvertently limit access to fruits and vegetables. The trade policy area showed the most significant incoherence. High tariffs and non-tariff barriers on staple crops

and agricultural inputs risked increasing food prices, while import barriers on nutritious foods and lack of regulation on unhealthy ones (high in salt, sugar, or fat) could undermine nutrition goals (2).

Figure 1: Coherence between Ethiopia's Policies and Key Food System Goals

		Agriculture	Health	Environment	Trade	Social	Industrial, Economic & Monetary
Zero Hunger	Increased supply of main staples						
	Affordable prices for main staples						
Climate Resilience	Adaptation						
	Climate change mitigation						
Healthy Diets	More nutritious food consumption						
	Less unhealthy food consumption						
	Reduction of Food Loss & Waste						
Decent Work	Adequate wages for food system workers						
	Effective nutrition-sensitive social protection						
	Empowerment of Women & Girls						
LEGEND		Highly Coherent	Somewhat coherent	Neither coherent nor incoherent	Somewhat incoherent	Highly incoherent	Not assessed
Policies reviewed in this sector were very much in line with achieving this goal				Policies reviewed in this sector were generally not in line with achieving this goal			

Ethiopia's experience illustrates how tools like the Policy Coherence Diagnostic can support evidence-based decision-making, revealing where trade-offs exist and helping to prioritise and sequence policy reforms. By breaking down silos and highlighting synergies and contradictions, the diagnostic process can guide governments toward more integrated, effective, and accountable approaches to food systems transformation.

Key National Partners: Ministry of Agriculture, Ministry of Health, Ethiopia Agriculture Transformation Agency

EoS Partners: AKADEMIYA2063 and GAIN

Indonesia: Food systems as a strategy for national development

In 2023, Indonesia's National Development Planning Agency (BAPPENAS) began drafting the National Long-Term Development Plan (RPJPN 2025–2045), a critical policy framework that guides government investment and policy direction over the next two decades. BAPPENAS also spearheads Indonesia's engagement with the UNFSS. Prior to the 2021 UNFSS, Indonesia developed its Sustainable Food Systems Roadmap (2020–2030), which evolved into the national food system transformation pathways and directly informed the RPJPN. The plan requires commitment across government and presidential approval.

While the RPJPN draft emphasised food security and economic resilience, additional priorities—such as local food-based diets, ecoregion-specific planning, and the role of aquatic foods—required stronger evidence and political backing to be included. To help shape the narrative and secure broader policy alignment, multi-stakeholder dialogues (including technical meetings and public webinars) were organized, engaging over 1,500 participants from government, academia, civil society, and development partners.

In September 2024, the RPJPN was enacted as Law No. 59/2024, officially recognising food system transformation as a national development priority. This milestone was followed in February 2025 by the issuance of Presidential Decree No. 12/2025 on the RPJMN 2025–2029, detailing Indonesia's mid-term development plan and embedding key food system priorities such as food diversification, nutrition-sensitive policies, and food loss and waste (FLW) reduction.


Key National Partners: Indonesia's National Development Planning Agency, Ministry of Health, National Food Agency, Ministry of Agriculture, Ministry of Marine Affairs and Fisheries, Ministry of Social Welfare, Ministry of Home Affairs, National Population and Family Planning Agency, Coordinating Ministry for Economic Affairs, Ministry of Environment and Forestry, Subnational governments, Gadjah Mada University, Universitas Indonesia, WAIBI

EoS partner: GAIN, FAO, WFP, UNICEF, UNDP, WHO

Rwanda: From agricultural transformation to food system transformation

In December 2024, Rwanda launched its Fifth Strategic Plan for Agriculture Transformation (PSTA5), a comprehensive five-year roadmap aimed at building resilient and sustainable agri-food systems from 2024 to 2029. A clear pivot from the traditional agriculture development plan, PSTA5 focuses on modernising agriculture through climate-smart practices, enhancing food security, improving nutrition, and boosting economic growth (3).

One of the strengths of PSTA5 is its clarity on resourcing and on actions that different stakeholders can take forward. For government, the strategy calls for continued leadership in land use planning, regulatory frameworks, food safety systems, and core infrastructure investments including irrigation and rural feeder roads. They are also tasked with scaling up nutrition sensitive programmes. For the private sector, from whom 43% of investment is expected, there are major opportunities in agricultural processing, logistics, digital agriculture, and export value chains. The strategy seeks compelling social returns including greater food self-sufficiency, reduced stunting, and jobs in processing, logistics, trade and services, particularly for women and youth.



PSTA5 highlights a significant shift towards integrating nutrition into its national agricultural strategy. This shift driven by strong leadership from the Ministry of Agriculture and Animal Resources (MINAGRI). MINAGRI, with support from technical partners, spearheaded the integration of nutrition into the PSTA5 Theory of Change, ensuring its alignment with broader food systems transformation goals. Three key consultation workshops were convened—including a technical session and a Director Generals' consultation—to gather input and build consensus across governance levels, ultimately strengthening nutrition's role in the final strategy. Throughout the process, partners provided technical guidance, contributed evidence such as the economic cost of inaction on nutrition during a high-level Knowledge Seminar, and supported the mainstreaming of nutrition across PSTA5's strategic pillars.

While PSTA4 laid the groundwork for transforming Rwanda's agriculture into a more market-oriented and sustainable sector, PSTA5 builds upon this foundation by introducing innovative approaches to enhance resilience, inclusivity, and sustainability in the agri-food systems. The shift reflects Rwanda's commitment to addressing emerging challenges and aligning with the global food system agenda.

Key National Partner: Ministry of Agriculture and Animal Resources (MINAGRI)

EoS Partners: GAIN, ACF, FAO, IFAD, WB



CALL TO ACTION 2

Establishing food systems governance that engages all sectors and stakeholders for a whole of society approach, combining the short and long term.

Call to Action #2: Engaging the Whole of Society

It is impractical to expect any one government ministry to identify and manage the kaleidoscope of trade-offs that stem from food systems policies. Multiple departments of central and local government, many institutions, a broad range of stakeholders, and several scientific disciplines are involved. The multiple domains and topics that are related to food systems pathways usually fall under the legal mandates of different ministries, rendering the multisectoral coordination more difficult. While agriculture, livestock, fish, climate, biodiversity, land, and finance play central roles, nutrition, health, social security, water, local development, and livelihoods are also vitally important. At the same time, roads, energy, enterprises, or social protection have direct links to food systems pathways and priorities. New or redesigned governance structures that allow for and necessitate continual review, collaboration and feedback from all involved are vital for food systems transformation.

This is no simple task. The political economy of almost any government, often defined by cross-departmental competition for stretched resources, overlapping (sometimes even conflicting) mandates, and disparate spheres of patronage and influence, make the task complex and imperfect (4). But with political will – and, crucially, the necessary architecture and financial incentives in place, we have seen that it can be done. The following stories show how different countries are grappling with their existing structures and finding innovative solutions and more systematic ways of working together.

Benin: Building momentum through inclusive dialogue

Benin's experience illustrates the power of convenings to accelerate progress in a short period of time. In 2023, the government had produced two food system dialogue reports, neither of which fully addressed all five pillars of the UNFSS pathways. To bridge this gap, the National Convenor led efforts to organise an additional stakeholder consultation aimed at developing a more inclusive, comprehensive report aligned with all five action tracks (5). The consultative workshop brought together perspectives from across society, including government representatives, civil society, investors, NGOs, food producers, and consumer associations.

The momentum generated by the workshop extended into follow-up engagements with over forty experts from a wide range of public and private organisations working in food and nutrition. Recognising the value of continued collaboration, the National Convenor established a dedicated Food System Task Force. Chaired by the National Convenor and supported by the Director of Food and Nutrition, the task force includes twelve experts from institutions such as UN agencies, GAIN, the Dutch Embassy, and other national stakeholders. Its mission is to guide the process and ensure coherence throughout the food systems pathway.

By 2024, Benin had produced a national dialogue report that successfully incorporated all five action tracks of the UNFSS. The next steps involve developing a comprehensive Food System Strategy and integrating it into Benin's upcoming 10-year agricultural plan.



Key National Partners: Ministry of Agriculture, National Agency for Food and Nutrition, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Environment

EoS Partners: Dutch Embassy, GAIN, Shamba Centre, World Food Programme, Fund for Agricultural Organisation

Cameroon: Institutional innovation without disruption

Cameroon provides an example of how an effective institutional setting can facilitate inter-ministerial coordination and accountability without the need to establish new entities. Building on existing governance structures, the country expanded the mandate of the SND30 (National Development Strategy – 2020-2030) Sub-Commission of the Rural Sector to serve as the coordinating body for its national Food Systems Pathway. This strategic move helped embed food systems transformation into an established intersectoral platform.

To further strengthen collaboration, the National Convenor requested five key ministries to formally designate focal points for each of the seven Food System Hub coalitions Cameroon is a member of: Zero Hunger, School Meals, Humanitarian Development and Peace (HDP) Nexus, Agroecology, Social Protection, Sustainable Livestock, and Resilient Local Food Supply Chains. These designated focal points now meet regularly and report to the Convenor, fostering a cross-ministerial network that supports coordinated food systems planning and implementation well beyond the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development.

Cameroon has also demonstrated leadership in aligning national priorities with global initiatives to mobilise additional resources. As a frontrunner in the Convergence of Agendas—integrating food, climate, biodiversity, and nutrition goals in line with the COP28 UAE Declaration—the country recently launched a Convergence Action Blueprint focused on three priority areas: the rice value chain, agroecological production, and import substitution. Cameroon is also participating in global platforms such as the Science-Policy-Society initiative under the UNFSS Hub and the One Planet Network Sustainable Food Systems Programme.

To track its progress on the Food Systems Transition Pathway, Cameroon is developing national food systems accountability mechanisms based on the 50 indicators from the Food Systems Countdown Initiative. This effort will inform the upcoming baseline report *The State of Food Systems in Cameroon in 2024*, to be presented at the UNFSS+4 Stocktaking Summit. The monitoring and evaluation initiative will help track progress both on the national pathway and in alignment with broader regional efforts, including the CAADP Kampala process.

Key National Partners: Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development, Ministry of the Environment, Protection of Nature and Sustainable Development and Ministry of Livestock, Fisheries and Animal Industry

EoS Partners: WFP, FAO and BMZ /GIZ

Ethiopia: Mobilising media for food system transformation

The Government of Ethiopia articulates a ‘Whole of Society’ approach to food systems transformation, recognising that their strategy will only be successful if all citizens have a broad awareness and a sense of ownership of the transformation agenda (6). Subsequently, the Government of Ethiopia nominated the Food System Transformation Secretariat, in collaboration with GAIN, to lead efforts to socialise the Ethiopian food systems pathways among national and subnational stakeholders. The Secretariat decided that media would be the first group of stakeholders to socialise on Ethiopia’s food system transformation, as journalists and media professionals play a crucial role in shaping public discourse, informing policymakers, and influencing consumer behaviours.

In 2024, a series of engagements in Addis Ababa brought together journalists, media practitioners, and government communication officers to examine the role of media in shaping Ethiopia’s food system. These sessions fostered a deeper understanding of critical issues such as climate change, malnutrition, and the need for cross-sectoral coordination to achieve food system resilience.

Participants also gained hands-on experience in storytelling, digital communication, and evidence-based messaging—tools that enabled them to report more effectively on food system transformation. The initiative led to concrete results: several journalists began producing in-depth articles, facilitating radio discussions, and integrating food system topics into official government communications.

One notable outcome came from the Fana Broadcasting Corporation. Following the training, their journalists launched a targeted media campaign that integrated food systems themes into multiple national programmes. This included segments on food safety and nutrition featured on the popular shows Alem Shemach and Letenachin, as well as a televised panel discussion on post-harvest loss, and a special feature aired during the African Union Summit titled “How Many Times Should Africa Worry About Food Security?”—a creative broadcast that blended policy dialogue with music to captivate and inform public audiences.

Following the training, a dedicated platform for media professionals focused on food system transformation was established. This platform facilitates the exchange of critical food system transformation knowledge, promotes continuous capacity building, and strengthens the role of media in advancing public awareness of food system issues.

Key National Partners: Food System Transformation Secretariat

EoS Partner: GAIN

Ireland: Turning multi-stakeholder dialogue into action

During the 1990s, Ireland's agrifood sector rapidly evolved, becoming a global leader in food safety and traceability, and entering high-value agrifood markets in the European Union, North America, and Asia.


The transformation of Ireland's agrifood system has been driven by a combination of factors, including domestic and international policy initiatives and investments. A key enabler has been Ireland's history of social partnership, where collaborative negotiations between the government, employers and trade unions have shaped public policy and fostered collective progress.

Every five to ten years, a multistakeholder committee is convened, facilitated, and chaired by the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine (DAFM) to develop the country's national agrifood strategy. This committee includes representatives from farmers, fishers, foresters, processors, civil society, public sector agencies, and academia. Despite changes in government, the process has successfully seen the development of back-to-back strategies over the last three decades, with the integration of lessons adapted in each strategy cycle to ensure continuous improvement.

Once a strategy is approved, an action plan is drawn up by DAFM, with actions linked to one or more organisations. These are primarily public bodies such as DAFM, the Agriculture and Food Development Authority (Teagasc), the Irish Food Board (Bord Bia) and the Environmental Protection Agency. Actions are tied to milestones, while progress is monitored by High Level Implementation Committees, involving chief executive officers of the public organisations, which meet regularly.



©Bord Bia



With a civil society participation index rating higher than Northern Europe, Ireland offers valuable lessons in how strong leadership, paired with inclusive stakeholder dialogue, can drive effective transitions in national agrifood systems. Co-designing solutions with industry, knowledge institutes and citizens and leveraging a rolling strategy process have proven effective in aligning public and private actors, fostering cross-sector collaboration, and enabling continuous learning and policy refinement. However, challenges related to nutrition and environmental sustainability persist, such as high rates of obesity and high nitrogen concentration in rivers and lakes driven by agriculture. This highlights that, while inclusive governance can effectively steer agrifood system transformation, bold measures are needed to address complex challenges.

Key National Partners: Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine, the Agriculture and Food Development Authority (Teagasc), the Irish Food Board (Bord Bia) and the Environmental Protection Agency

Nigeria: Building understanding and ownership of food system planning at the State level

Sub-national governments are key implementers of national food systems strategies. In Nigeria, the state Houses of Assembly have responsibility for their state's budget appropriation and oversight, but for many state legislators, emerging food system transformation ideas are often complex or unfamiliar.


To address this gap in understanding and encourage state and local ownership of food system transformation, GAIN collaborated with the House of Representatives Committee on Nutrition and Food Security to convene a retreat with Speakers of the 36 State Houses of Assembly in May 2024. The retreat aimed to equip legislators with the capacity to advance nutrition and food security through legislative action at both national and state levels. A key outcome was the resolution to establish Committees on Food and Nutrition in all Houses of Assemblies of the 36 states and a National Legislative Network on Nutrition and Food Security. These bodies, now operational, are working to build capacity, strengthen policy advocacy, enhance coordination between federal and state legislators, and drive effective implementation of nutrition and food security policies.

Key National Partners: House of Representatives Committee on Nutrition and Food Security, State Houses of Assembly

EoS Partners: GAIN, FAO, UNICEF, CARE, AGRA, GIZ, WFP, IFAD

A multi-country initiative where countries share, support and inspire: The Alliance of Champions for Food System Transformation

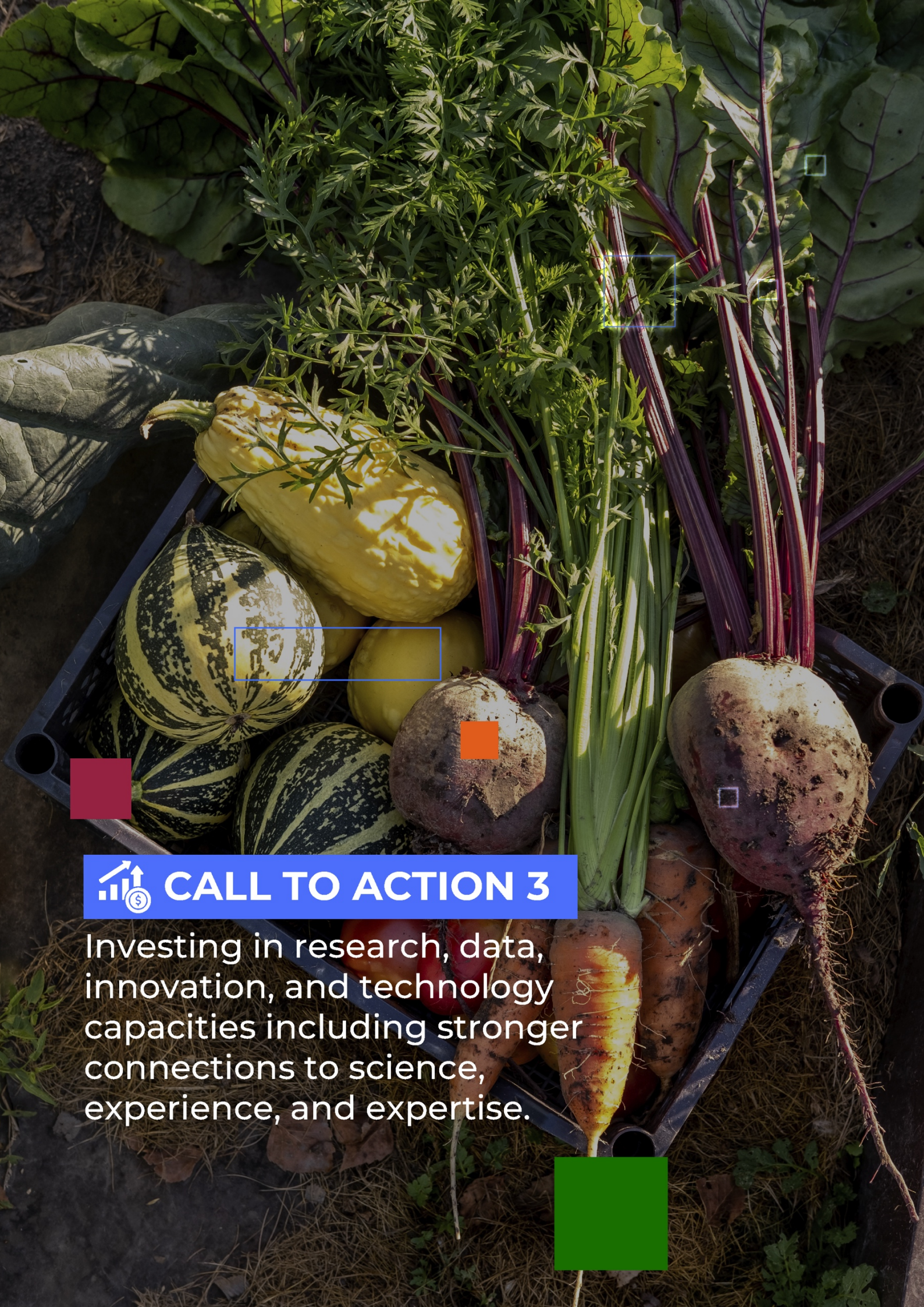
The Alliance of Champions for Food System Transformation (ACF) has been working with its founding member countries to highlight, promote and where possible, mobilise a supportive ecosystem drawing on technical, diplomatic, and financial assistance that might be available. Developed through intensive consultation with the food systems community and validated by CGIAR, ACF's ten Priority Action Areas (7) invite members to deploy an explicitly systems-wide framework, engaging the 'whole of government' as they make their national plans inclusive of food systems. It is this focus on policy coherence that is one of the ACF's



guiding principles. Three of the ACF's founding members – Cambodia, Sierra Leone, and Norway – illustrate how this has been approached.

- In Cambodia, the national Technical Working Group for Food Security and Nutrition is explicitly tasked with bringing together a range of Ministries alongside development partners to agree and identify priorities, tackle trade-offs and mobilize resources. Amongst other things, this has enabled the development of a more coherent revised national nutrition strategy. By spotlighting this on the international stage, the Alliance plays an important role in socialising learning, whilst also helping accrue internal political capital for further action.
- In Sierra Leone, President Bio declared agriculture and food security a priority for his second term in office in 2023. A Presidential Council was formed, tasked with delivering the government's flagship Feed Salone program. The Council provides a dedicated forum for elevating cross-cutting issues affecting program delivery to the highest political level. By coordinating the development, implementation and monitoring of both policy and investment, bringing multiple ministries together alongside the private sector, civil society, farmers and the finance community, the Presidential Council is 'whole of government' working in action.
- In Norway, through annual policy dialogues with farming unions, the government has established a 'bottom up' participatory approach to policy making that is designed to better meet farmer needs while involving agricultural workers more directly in the consideration of trade-offs. For the many other governments – especially those in the global north – that are looking for more constructive ways to engage farming groups, Norway's approach offers valuable lessons.

EoS Partners: ACF, SUN



CALL TO ACTION 3

Investing in research, data, innovation, and technology capacities including stronger connections to science, experience, and expertise.



Call to Action #3: Knowledge and Technology Investment

Whether to identify challenges or design new solutions, countries need more data, evidence, and innovation to guide their transformation journey. This section showcases new tools and technologies that are helping countries assess their food systems, align budgets to priorities, and capture evidence of progress.

Cambodia: Digitalising food systems data and knowledge

Backed by strong political commitment, Cambodia's rapid digitalization has been accelerating, including a shift from limited data to targeted, evidence-based digital governance. The Royal Government of Cambodia, in partnership with BMZ/GIZ, has institutionalised and is scaling three digital tools to enable data-driven governance and institutional digital capacity at all levels of government:

- **Farmbook App** (Ministry of Agriculture): This enables Commune Agriculture Officers to collect holistic real-time farming data along the value chain, informing national strategies, and supporting evidence-based decision-making at the national and subnational levels. Officers note the app's versatility saying, "the data combines different important actors, like farmers, input suppliers, and market demand" to provide a comprehensive overview of value chains and their markets.
- **Nutrition Counselling Apps** (Ministry of Health): These support health providers, village health groups, and families with a) counselling and b) child growth tracking. A midwife in a small health centre mentions that *"the app makes it easier to provide nutrition counselling to women. It helps women to see and understand the information during the counselling and strengthens the quality-of-service delivery."*
- **Nutrition Budget Monitoring Tools** (CARD): These improve budget and activity tracking, thereby increasing transparency of FSN-related public spending at all levels.

Each of these tools help to fill evidence and data gaps and inform strategies, guidelines, and policies, to improve consistency in the quality of services offered in the health and agriculture sectors. These tools embody a broader shift toward data-driven governance and long-term digital capacity building.


Key National Partner: Royal Government of Cambodia

EoS Partner: BMZ/GIZ

Indonesia: A Country-Owned Food System Dashboard Linked with Village-Level Vulnerability Mapping

Indonesia's Food System Dashboard (FSD) exemplifies how country-led, data-driven platforms can accelerate national commitments to nutrition, sustainability, and resilience. Developed in 2022 through a partnership between the Ministry of National Development Planning (BAPPENAS) and GAIN, the FSD is designed to capture Indonesia's rich ecological and socio-economic diversity. Built for decentralization, it incorporates data from national to village levels across 34 provinces and 514 districts, supporting more localised and evidence-informed decision-making.

In 2024, a major breakthrough strengthened this data ecosystem: the 2025 update of the Food Security and Vulnerability Atlas (FSVA). Spearheaded by the National Food Agency (NFA) with technical support from partners, the FSVA integrates over



89 updated indicators, introduces predictive modelling and Small Area Estimation (SAE) techniques, and uses village-level data from over 83,000 villages. For the first time, FSVA includes indicators on food price volatility, food reserves, food safety, and dietary diversity, enabling precise diagnosis of local food insecurity hotspots and better targeting of stunting reduction, village fund allocation, and rural development.

In June 2024, BAPPENAS officially took over management of the FSD, integrating new features such as dual-language support and advanced data visualizations. Simultaneously, FSVA data began integration into the FSD platform (DSPI) to support unified food system intelligence. This digital convergence ensures cross-sectoral planning, real-time monitoring, and localised responses to food challenges.

More than 200 government officials, local planners, academics, and civil society representatives were trained on ways to use the Dashboard through regional outreach workshops. Importantly, FSVA 2025 and the FSD have been acknowledged in the National Action Plan for Food and Nutrition and are actively used by provincial governments in food and nutrition planning.

Key National Partners: BAPPENAS, National Food Agency (NFA), Ministry of Health, Ministry of Villages, Ministry of Home Affairs, Ministry of Agriculture, Ministry of Social Welfare.

EoS Partners: GAIN, WFP, FAO, IPB University, University of Indonesia

Nigeria: the power of data to change laws

Sometimes, the gathering and dissemination of data has unexpected outcomes. This was the case in Nigeria, one of the leading countries in developing and institutionalising a national Food Systems Dashboard (FSD) (Box B). The Nigeria FSD, developed through close collaboration between the government and partners, consolidates critical food systems data into a single platform, enabling policymakers to better understand, diagnose, and respond to food system challenges at national and state levels. In 2024, Nigeria's FSD was significantly expanded – from 99 to 150 indicators – enhancing its capacity to guide policy and planning across multiple sectors. The Dashboard now plays a key role in monitoring issues including diet affordability, through the integration of the Cost of a Healthy Diet (CoHD) indicator using data from the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS).

As a critical food system indicator, continual monitoring of the CoHD across all 36 states is useful to both public and private stakeholders. Data shows that in 2022, 79% of Nigeria's population could not afford a healthy diet (8,9). In January 2024, NBS began publishing monthly bulletins on the CoHD using retail food price data. These bulletins were then used by labour organizations to persuade the government to more than double the minimum wage. In August 2024, President Bola Ahmed Tinubu approved the minimum wage increase from N30,000 to N70,000. This is an excellent example of how evidence can support policy change.

Another important application of Nigeria's FSD was seen with Nigeria's leadership adapting the Food Systems Countdown Initiative (FSCI) indicators for Nigeria's context. Led by the Federal Ministry of Budget and Economic Planning (FMBEP) and supported by partners, the process of adapting FSCI to Nigeria's needs identified and aligned the 50 global indicators with local priorities. Nearly half (23)



The Food Systems Countdown Initiative, led by the same four organisations as the FSD, is a separate collaboration of over 65 food systems scientists from across sectors, disciplines, and continents that undertook an extensive consultative process to select a set of 50 priority indicators for monitoring food systems transformation. These indicators are available on the Global Dashboard, alongside an additional 250 indicators that provide key context and added information.

of the global FSCI indicators with state-level data are already available in Nigeria's FSD and the rest of the indicators from Nigeria's adapted FSCI framework will be added, allowing the NFSD to work in tandem with the FSCI framework to track national progress across nutrition, resilience, livelihoods, and governance themes.

This dual monitoring approach has been important to Nigeria as it applies a rigorous, science-based food systems monitoring framework that has been validated at the global level to Nigeria's context to monitor national efforts towards food systems transformation for

better nutrition, health, livelihoods, environment, resilience, and food systems governance. The combination of the FSD and the FSCI effectively showcases Nigeria's progress on the global scale, attracting additional investment and partnership opportunities.

Key National Partners: Federal Ministry of Budget and Economic Planning, Federal Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security, Federal Ministry of Health and Social Welfare, National Bureau of Statistics

EoS Partners: Columbia University, Cornell University, FAO, GAIN, BMZ/GIZ

Box B. The Food Systems Dashboard – Innovation with Data

The [Food Systems Dashboard](#) (FSD) is a comprehensive data platform led by GAIN, Columbia Climate School, Cornell College of Agriculture and Life Sciences, and FAO that aims to make food systems data accessible for decision makers. At the global level, the Dashboard brings together 300 indicators from over 40 sources that span the entire food system.

In 2024, a competition was held for FSD users to submit stories of using the Global and Country FSDs and their impacts. Over 50 submissions were received, with five finalists chosen. Three are described here:

- A statistician from BPS (Statistics Indonesia) analysed the FSD data to create a new food security index and pinpointed food insecurity hotspots.
- A medical doctor used data from the Bangladesh FSD to increase community awareness on the importance of adequate antenatal folate intake and advocate for increased dietary diversity to improve birth outcomes.
- A researcher in Ethiopia is exploring how the FSD could be used to develop new Food Systems Based Dietary Guidelines that integrate food affordability, availability, and sustainability.



Pakistan and Nigeria: Advancing evidence through the Diet Quality Questionnaire (DQQ) to inform policy

The Diet Quality Questionnaire (DQQ) is a rapid, low-cost, and validated tool designed to assess population-level diet quality. In just five minutes, it can generate insights into adherence to healthy diet recommendations, risks of inadequate micronutrient intake, and risks of noncommunicable diseases (NCDs) such as heart disease and diabetes. One of its indicators, the Minimum Dietary Diversity for Women (MDD-W), measures whether women consume at least five out of ten defined food groups and is a globally validated proxy for adequate micronutrient intake. In early 2025, MDD-W was adopted as an official Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) monitoring indicator, underscoring the critical role of dietary diversity in achieving global nutrition targets.


The DQQ has been adapted for more than 140 countries for both youth/adults (ages 15+) and infants and young children (ages 6–23 months). It has been deployed in 94 countries through the Gallup World Poll and is increasingly being used by national and subnational governments to inform food systems and nutrition policy.

In Nigeria, the DQQ is being integrated into national survey systems alongside other food systems indicators. One subnational assessment across three states combined DQQ data with food environment data, analysing access to markets, fruits and vegetables, and unhealthy food vendors across rural and urban contexts. This assessment revealed significant gender-based differences in food environment interactions and diet quality and, surprisingly, found that dietary patterns were similar in both rural and urban areas—with widespread consumption of food prepared outside the home. These findings have reshaped assumptions about rural diets and are now informing policy updates, including a 2025 review of Nigeria's National Policy on Food and Nutrition. Additionally, DQQ data are being linked with food production and diet cost data to identify undersupplied food groups and inform strategies to improve access to affordable, healthy diets.

In Pakistan, the DQQ is playing a pivotal role in strengthening the country's ability to generate actionable diet data for policy design. Jointly led by the Pakistan Agricultural Research Council (PARC) and GAIN, the DQQ has been adapted to reflect the country's diverse food environments. It is now used to assess nutrient adequacy and healthy diet affordability to guide agriculture, social protection, and fiscal nutrition policies.

A major milestone has been the institutionalisation of the tool through training of federal and provincial experts from the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics, provincial bureaus, WFP, and private-sector partners. PARC has also secured public funding to expand DQQ implementation in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province, demonstrating strong national ownership. As use of the DQQ expands, it is becoming central to Pakistan's efforts to track SDGs, promote healthy diets, and inform evidence-based policymaking at both national and subnational levels.

Together, these country examples illustrate the growing recognition of the DQQ as a foundational tool for nutrition-sensitive food systems transformation.



Key National Partners: Pakistan Agricultural Research Council (PARC)/ Ministry of National Food Security & Research (MoNFSR), Pakistan Bureau of Statistics, Provincial Bureaus of Statistics, Government of Nigeria

EoS Partners: FAO, Harvard University, GAIN, Gallup, WFP, WHO, UNICEF Pakistan
SUN Secretariat



CALL TO ACTION 4

Deepening joined-up participatory design and implementation inclusive of women, young people and Indigenous peoples at the local level, with knowledge sharing, cross-sector programming, multi-stakeholder partnering, context and place-based actions, stronger and more diverse production, and mutual accountability.



Call to Action #4: Inclusion and Accountability

Food systems touch almost every corner of society, yet decisions around their future often lie in the hands of a few. While young people are strongly affected by the failings of current food systems, they often lack meaningful decision-making power. Other stakeholders, including farmers, small businesses, food market vendors and even local authorities often have little say in decisions that affect their food systems – nevertheless they are expected to implement priorities decided at a national or federal level. Gender adds an additional layer of marginalization. In too many contexts, girls have limited agency over lifelong decisions such as schooling, marriage, and childbearing – all of which have deep nutritional and economic impacts. In much of sub-Saharan Africa, traditional food markets are dominated by female vendors, yet their interests are often overlooked in male-dominated governance structures.

To build equitable and effective food systems, we must deepen joined-up, participatory design and implementation that empowers and incorporates the voices of women, youth, and Indigenous Peoples, especially at the local level. This is not only the right thing to do, but also a path to more innovative solutions and active participation in their implementation. By integrating local knowledge and unique perspectives, we can foster new ideas and mutual accountability for more inclusive, responsive, and sustainable food systems. The following stories showcase the benefits of embracing an inclusive food system transformation ethos.

Bangladesh: Empowering youth for food systems transformation

In 2024, over 100 youth leaders participated in Food Systems Youth Leadership Training offered by GAIN in collaboration with relevant ministries of the Government of Bangladesh in 2024. They developed their knowledge of pertinent issues, their policy engagement skills, and improved their ability to deliver collective action. More than 15 youth-led collective action projects, including those memorably titled Nourishing Garden in the Yard and Mushroom Cultivation Meets Nutrient Deficiency, were successfully implemented. These collective action projects directly engaged over 4,000 youth and adolescent community members, showcasing the impact of youth-driven initiatives in food systems transformation.

One collective action project called PUSHTI Canteen was promoted at the Festival of Youth in February 2025. The PUSHTI Canteen project provides students with nutritious khichuri (a rice and lentil dish) for just 10 taka (under 10 US cents) at secondary schools. The Deputy Commissioner of Lalmonirhat praised the program, stating: *“The PUSHTI Canteen is a model initiative that ensures nutritious food for students and has the potential to bring about positive change. I encourage the headteachers of participating schools to implement this initiative successfully and advocate for its expansion to other educational institutions.”* The session concluded with the Deputy Commissioner announcing the expansion of the “PUSHTI Canteen” programme to three new schools.

Bangladesh provides a good example of how youth are bringing innovative ideas to the table and actively participating in food system transformation.

Key National Partners: Food Planning and Monitoring Unit of Ministry of Food (FPMU), Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Department of Youth Development
EoS Partners: GAIN, SUN Youth Network Bangladesh, Bangladesh Youth Mock Parliament.



Colombia: Developing participatory roadmaps for food system change

Valle del Cauca, a highly biodiverse department in western Colombia with fertile lands and coastal ecosystems, faces major food systems challenges: land concentration, biodiversity loss, overexploitation of natural resources, and food insecurity. Over 70% of the department's food is imported, and its agriculture is dominated by just three products, particularly sugarcane, considering it provides 75% of national production. This contributes to low dietary diversity, ecosystem degradation, and deep inequality. Some 80% of land is held by only 11% of landowners.

A recent analysis of the department revealed hidden costs of USD 3 billion annually from health impacts, pollution, GHG emissions, biodiversity loss, and food waste. Tackling these challenges requires stronger coordination, long-term commitments, innovative financing, and shared governance.

To address this, a participatory roadmap for food systems transformation was developed involving over 300 stakeholders from public and private sectors, academia, and civil society. It began with a comprehensive diagnosis across four axes: biodiversity and restoration, regenerative agriculture, agrifood markets, and nutrition/food loss. The roadmap prioritises three action pillars: (i) regenerative marine and continental landscapes, (ii) efficient, equitable supply chains and markets, and (iii) conscious, healthy consumption. These are underpinned by cross-cutting strategies in governance, education, innovation, behaviour change, and financing.

Local communities played a central role, sharing traditional knowledge and co-creating solutions with scientists. This collaboration fostered a shared vision for long-term change, including the creation of a network for regeneration. Notably, the region also launched Colombia's first agroecology policy to promote sustainable practices.


The Valle del Cauca case exemplifies how integrating local knowledge, science, and inclusive governance can unlock systemic food system transformation aligned with biodiversity and climate goals.

Key National Partners: Agrosavia, Departamento Valle del Cauca, Federación Nacional de Cafeteros de Colombia, Universidad Javeriana, ICESI University, World Food Program, FAO, Cavasa, The Nature Conservancy, Cenicaña, Universidad de San Buenaventura, Universidad Nacional de Colombia

EoS Partners: FOLU Colombia (hosted by Grupo E3), Bioversity-CIAT, CGIAR

Mozambique: Women market vendors help to shape city food system pathways

The port capital city and district of Pemba, in north-eastern Mozambique, offers an example of how cities are localising and implementing national food systems pathways. In 2023, in line with Mozambique's National Pathways strategy, the Pemba city government mapped its local food system with a focus on Alto Gingone market—an important social, economic, and cultural hub which serves as the main food market for businesses and city residents. This mapping exercise identified a selection of key stakeholders, including city governance leaders, market leaders



and women market vendor groups; and outlined the local food systems governance framework.

A series of consultations were held with the city government, the Alto Gingone market committee, representatives from women vendor groups, and market committee members and market masters from Muxara and Eduardo Mondlane city markets. These consultations aimed to localise the national pathway strategy, identify priorities, and ensure the voices of market stakeholders, especially informal food system actors, were reflected in decision-making processes. These dialogues made stakeholders aware of and helped them better understand how they are part of the national pathways, built trust and laid the groundwork for establishing a collaborative space to continue engagement on food system needs.

In 2024, Pemba officially launched its co-designed food system pathways platform. Anchored in government and market stakeholder-defined visions, principles, the platform identifies local food system priorities and works to align them with broader national commitments. Central to the platform's agenda is market vendor leadership including women's participation. Gender and social inclusion inequities persist in market settings—often manifesting as unequal access to decision-making and resources. Notably, the platform comprising city government representatives and market vendor leaders have committed to embedding gender inclusion as a cross-cutting theme.


Platform meetings are continuing in 2025, with women vendor leaders playing a key role in guiding the platform's direction. Their direct experience with markets and the food environment—along with their central roles in household food security, nutrition, and socio-economic resilience—makes them vital contributors. Plans are underway to raise awareness of the recently adopted *Codex Guidelines for Food Hygiene Control Measures in Traditional Markets for Food*, including the rollout of a practical checklist tool. Additional efforts include facilitating inter-provincial learning exchanges between market committees and establishing a Market Monitoring and Evaluation Committee. This committee will enable continuous feedback and help resolve tensions between government authorities and market stakeholders through structured conflict resolution.

Key National Partners: Pemba city government, Alto Gingone Market Committee, Women Market Vendor (informal) group leaders, and Muxara and Eduardo Mondlane Market representatives

EoS Partner: GAIN, Milan Urban Food Policy Pact, World Union of Wholesale Markets – SIMAB, ICLEI City Food

Pakistan: Embedding food system thinking and understanding in university education

Pakistan recognises the importance of youth empowerment and their inclusion in food systems transformation as nearly 63% of the country's population is under the age of thirty. In 2024, Pakistan established the SUN Youth Network (SYN), integrating GAIN's Youth Leadership Initiative to empower youth in policy engagement. To build food system capacity of the next generation of Pakistan's leaders, the National Agriculture Education Accreditation Council under the Higher Education Commission worked to integrate principles of food systems



transformation and nutrition education into existing undergraduate, graduate and postgraduate programmes in agriculture, food sciences, and related disciplines.

In 2024, the food system curriculum was accredited, with ten universities adopting the course on food system transformation. In parallel, the Prime Minister's Youth Programme is working with partners to strengthen the National Youth Council, which works to ensure youth are empowered and actively engaged in the development of Pakistan's National Adolescent Policy. The initiative focuses on strengthening youth leadership, amplifying youth voices in food system decision-making, and fostering their engagement in policy processes.

Key National Partners: National Agriculture Education Accreditation Council (NAEAC) and Higher Education Commission (HEC), SUN Secretariat-Pakistan, National Youth Council

EoS partners: GAIN, SUN Youth Network

South Sudan: [The LukLuk hub, bringing government and community together](#)

In the challenging context of fragile and conflict affected states, collaboration is essential. South Sudan provides an example of a community approach to address hyper-local food system challenges, and it is showing great promise. Located in rural South Sudan, where 87% of the population is experiencing moderate to severe food insecurity, the LukLuk facility has become more than a malnutrition treatment centre – it is a hub for nutrition, knowledge, and community (10). Supported by WFP in partnership with Action Against Hunger, SUN and UNICEF, the nutrition facility in LukLuk is a thriving example of integrated nutrition-based services. The facility provides comprehensive treatment and prevention services for malnutrition, focusing on children under five, as well as pregnant and breastfeeding women.

When a mother or child comes to the centre, they are screened for malnutrition and immediately referred for care, receiving support that saves lives and builds long-term health. But the facility doesn't stop at clinical care. It takes a more holistic, people-centred approach to malnutrition by also training women in basic farming techniques and enabling their participation in regular cooking demonstrations which share how to prepare nutritious meals using local ingredients while building skills, community, and confidence.

At the core of the facility's success is the Mother-to-Mother Support Group—a powerful engine of community outreach and collective action. Women are trained to conduct malnutrition screenings in their home neighbourhoods, encouraging families to access services early. They lead by example, raising awareness, connecting households to care, and extending the reach of the facility far beyond its walls. Together, the support group has started a communal garden to feed their families, while surplus crops are sold to local retailers and the nearby school. Recognising the need for financial independence, the women have also formed a Village Savings and Loan Association, allowing them to access credit for essential needs like school fees, health care, and household expenses.

“

A lot has changed in my health and my children's health. My children and I used to be wasted, but now we are healthy.

Abung Ajek Malueth,
Member of Mother-to-Mother Support Group | Lukluk, Kuajok, Warap State ⁽¹⁰⁾.

The result is not an average government-run health centre. LukLuk is a community hub, a learning space, a small-scale economy, and a source of dignity and hope. It represents what is possible when governments work hand-in-hand with communities and how combining health, agriculture, education, and financial inclusion can transform lives and strengthen systems.

Key National Partners: Republic of South Sudan, Village Savings and Loan Association

EoS Partners: SUN, WFP, UNICEF, Action Against Hunger



CALL TO ACTION 5

Promoting increased engagement of businesses, including through public private partnerships, to shape the sustainability of food systems and establish and strengthen accountability mechanisms, recognising their centrality for food systems.



Call to Action #5: Private Sector Engagement

The private sector includes a diverse set of actors: investors (individual and institutional), businesses (large and small, food and non-food) including farmers, and financial institutions. Between them there are significant amounts of private sector finance in the food system, but too little of it is aligned with food system goals other than commercial return; important as that is for employment and public finance generation. Current incentives are not strong enough, or the costs are too high, for sufficient private sector resources to be directed towards non-commercial food system goals that are needed to bring long-term benefits for people and planet.


As countries develop and implement their food system pathways, businesses need to be engaged, incentivised and held accountable for their actions in the food system. This requires new approaches and roles, innovative business models and collective bargaining. Here we share stories from countries and initiatives that are finding the intersection between social and economic incentives, raising their standards and proving that the business case for healthier, more sustainable food systems does exist.

India: Nourishing ESG standards for food system transformation

Globally, environment, social and governance (ESG)-driven assets have grown significantly, making up half of the world's managed financial assets by 2020 (USD 40.5 trillion) (11). This growth presents an opportunity to redirect financial flows towards improving nutrition in low- and middle-income countries (LMICs) through ESG investment strategies and increased government involvement. The evolving ESG regulatory landscape in India, coupled with recent mandates from the Securities and Exchange Board of India to the top 1,000 listed companies, provides an opportune moment to accelerate integration of nutrition metrics into ESG in India. Given ESG covers such a broad range of areas, the initiative is first focusing on workforce nutrition to develop initial, industry-agnostic metrics.

Building on this momentum, the Indian Institute of Corporate Affairs (IICA), GAIN and ATNi, with support from the Ministry of Corporate Affairs, co-hosted three consecutive national consultations. These high-level convenings brought together senior representatives from the Securities and Exchange Board of India, the Food Safety and Standards Authority of India, International Labour Organization and over 50 corporate participants to deliberate on embedding workforce nutrition as a measurable and reportable component under the 'Social' pillar of ESG. Drawing from IICA's baseline research and global ESG benchmarks, these discussions laid the groundwork for institutionalising nutrition as a formal metric in sustainability disclosures.

Complementing these national efforts, a global consultation was organised in collaboration with IIM Mumbai, engaging a broad spectrum of stakeholders—from investors and private sector companies to representatives from the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare. The stakeholders deliberated on the strategic importance of workforce nutrition and assess global interest in aligning it with corporate performance and ESG priorities. These collaborative efforts culminated in the development of a white paper and a set of draft voluntary reporting indicators aligned with India's Business Responsibility and Sustainability Report framework.



In a promising move toward adoption, 20 companies have already volunteered to pilot the workforce nutrition disclosures in 2025. The draft indicators — covering areas such as access to healthy meals, breastfeeding support, nutrition-friendly policies, and food safety practices — will now be released for public consultation. Feedback from stakeholders will inform the finalization of these metrics, ensuring their relevance, practicality, and impact as India advances toward integrating nutrition into responsible business conduct.

These robust ESG conversations with businesses in India around the case for workforce nutrition – how better diets at work translate into improved productivity, retention, and organizational performance – is transforming into a call to action to integrate nutrition into corporate reporting frameworks.¹

Key National Partners: Ministry of Corporate Affairs, Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI), Indian Institute of Corporate Affairs (IICA), Impact4Nutrition (UNICEF-Led Platform), Institute of Chartered Accountants of India (ICAI), the Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI), Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (MoHFW), PHD Chamber of Commerce and Industry (PHDCCI)

EoS Partners: ATNi, GAIN

Indonesia: Food Loss and Waste – bad for business, worse for nutrition, disastrous for the environment

Food loss and waste (FLW) in Indonesia is not just an environmental issue—it's a national development challenge. FLW not only accounts for up to 7.3% of the country's annual GHG emissions and 4–5% of national GDP losses (IDR 213–551 trillion), but it also undermines food and nutrition security. Recovering the food currently lost could nourish 29–47% of Indonesia's population annually (12).

To tackle this, Indonesia's National Development Planning Agency (BAPPENAS) developed the National Roadmap to Reduce Food Loss and Waste by 75% by 2045. This milestone policy used circular economy principles to create political momentum and is now aligned with broader sustainability agendas.

A key partner in the design of the Roadmap has been JP2GI (Indonesia Post-Harvest Loss Alliance)—a multi-stakeholder platform initiated in 2018 by GAIN, bringing together private sector actors, government agencies, NGOs, and academia. Originally focused on reducing post-harvest fish losses, JP2GI has grown into a national force working with businesses to advancing FLW policy, supporting innovations in cold chain infrastructure, fish-based product development, and community-based solutions.

JP2GI played a central role in contributing business and community perspectives as well as engaging stakeholders in the development of the roadmap. Its advocacy has extended to supporting a Presidential Decree on Food Rescue, backed by Indonesia's National Food Agency and partners, aiming to systematize food redistribution to schools and communities in need.

¹ These include the Business Responsibility and Sustainability Report, the Global Reporting Initiative, and the Sustainability Accounting Standards Board.



By giving public and private stakeholders a shared platform to address the economic, environmental, and nutritional impacts of food loss and waste, JP2GI has contributed to raising the issue on Indonesia's political agenda—paving the way for stronger coordination and long-term commitment to action.

Key National Partners: Ministry of Health, Ministry of Marine Affairs and Fisheries, Cold Chain and Fishery Associations and the Indonesian Fishery Products Processing, Production and Marketing Association, JP2GI, Indonesia's National Food Agency

EoS Partners: GAIN, Global Cold Chain Alliance

Kenya: Using children's TV to embed healthy diet messaging

Akili Network is proving, through Akili TV, that media isn't just entertainment - it's a powerful institution for food systems transformation. Reaching over 13 million children and families each week, Akili is transforming food culture through purposeful, entertaining content that embeds key messages on nutrition, health, and safety into culturally relevant storylines, characters, and music. As Kenya's first and only broadcaster to implement a protective advertising policy, Akili sets industry-leading standards by banning the promotion of foods high in fat, sugar, and salt on Akili TV. Through its membership in Kenya's Food Culture Alliance, Akili leverages a strategic multiplier effect—gaining access to proven tools, shared resources, and cross-sector collaborations with other key cultural institutions in Kenya that significantly amplify its impact on shaping healthier preferences and perceptions for children and families.

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Children's entertainment shapes culture profoundly. At Akili, we're using this power to build lifelong healthy habits - that's why we implemented Kenya's first protective advertising policy against unhealthy foods. When we nurture children's values, we transform families and communities from the ground up. And with the Food Culture Alliance, we can transform individual efforts into collective change, exponentially expanding Akili's ability to shift behaviours and norms at scale.

Jeff Schon,
Co-founder and CEO of Akili Networks

Akili TV is a great example of business-led food system transformation, proving that media can be both commercially viable and nutritionally transformative when built on authentic partnerships and accountability.

Key National Partners: Akili TV, Food Culture Alliance

EoS Partners: GAIN, EAT, Global Business School Network



A multi-country initiative to boost jobs and nutrition within the workforce: Workforce Nutrition

Workforce Nutrition Programmes (WFN) offer solutions to malnutrition among working populations, including employees and supply chain workers. About 60% of people spend one-third of their adult lives at work, making workplaces central to improving nutrition and wellbeing. WFN interventions including Healthy Food at Work, Nutrition Education, Breastfeeding Support, and Nutrition Focused-Health Checks have been implemented globally and across sectors, demonstrating significant success and impact. From anaemia reduction among women and sick day reduction among workers, to increased dietary diversity and productivity, WFN programmes can help shift food systems to deliver greater sustainability, resilience, and nutrition. Box C shares three success stories.

Box C. Examples of Workforce Nutrition Programme Successes Across Sectors

Garment Factory: Bangladesh's Ready-Made Garment sector makes up over 84% of exports and mainly employs women, many of whom face malnutrition—37% have anaemia (13). A WFN pilot program reduced anaemia by 12–32% among factory workers. A more comprehensive WFN programs including nutritious mid-day meals, combined with weekly iron-folic acid supplements, peer-led nutrition education, on-site fair price shops, and a community nutrition intervention hub were implemented across factories in Dhaka and Chittagong divisions. By 2024, it reached 45,547 workers and 34,000+ family members, showing how better diets in a key export sector can shape supply-chain practices and boost productivity.

Tea Communities: Tea supports millions of rural livelihoods, but many workers face undernutrition due to poor diets. In Assam, Kenya, and Malawi, GAIN, the Ethical Tea Partnership, and leading tea companies implemented WFN programs. These included Healthy Line Shops, women-led nutrition outreach, cooking demos, fortified lunches, and farmer training. From 2020–2023, 734,075 people were reached, improving dietary diversity by 28% in Assam, 35% in Malawi, and 10% in Kenya.

Global Agri-business: The Workforce Nutrition Alliance supports private sector businesses in achieving private-sector-driven food system transformation. For example, with support from the Alliance, Olam Agri – a leading agribusiness company - is integrating nutrition into its global employee welfare and ESG strategy. By doing so, Olam Agri influences food supply chains and smallholder farming practices worldwide.

Work is also underway to integrate workforce nutrition into global policy. Research led by the International Labour Organization (ILO) and GAIN has assessed how nutrition is integrated into global Occupational Safety and Health (OSH) regulations and recently found that despite its importance, nutrition is missing from these safety frameworks. These findings are now informing advocacy efforts to mainstream nutrition into OSH instruments. If adopted, this integration could reach billions of people participating the global labour force.

EoS Partners: GAIN, ILO, Consumer Goods Forum (CGF), ATNI, World Benchmarking Organisation, Institute of Development Studies, Ethical Tea Partnership (ETP), Unilever, JDE Jacobs Douwe Egberts, the Republic of Tea, Taylors of Harrogate, Ringtons, Wollenhaupt, Bigelow, Reginald Ames, VF Corporation, and Auchan Foundation



A multi-country initiative to show companies how they can do more to reduce hunger: The Zero Hunger Private Sector Pledge

The **Zero Hunger Private Sector Pledge (ZHP)**, a pillar of the Zero Hunger Coalition which emerged from UNFSS Action Track 1 (ensure access to safe and nutritious food for all), exemplifies a mechanism that enables companies and investment funds to align their investments with commitments by donors and governments to achieve zero hunger. Companies that join the Zero Hunger Private Sector Pledge commit to invest in at least one of 90 countries with interventions that can help marginalised populations and small-scale producers benefit through training and resources (empower the excluded), encourage sustainable practices that are economically viable (on the farm) and reduce post-harvest losses (food on the move). These are based on the priority countries and intervention areas determined by the Ceres2030 project to be those where investment will have the greatest impact in achieving SDG 2 (Zero hunger).

To date, the Zero Hunger Private Sector Pledge has secured pledges from 87 companies spanning 51 countries and totalling USD 643 million. It is supported by 13 implementing organisations across the UN, civil society and the private sector. In 2024 a strategic decision was taken to focus on generating pledges from Small and Medium Scale Enterprises (SMEs). A key enabler of this change in strategy was the onboarding of AUDA-NEPAD which works through national structures with private sector entities in Nigeria and Malawi to secure pledges. The ZHP has also expanded to focus on pledges that reduce levels of malnutrition.

EoS Partners: AUDA-NEPAD, GAIN, Zero Hunger Coalition



CALL TO ACTION 6

Ensuring access to short and long-term concessional finance, investments, budget support and debt restructuring.

Call to Action #6: Funding and Budgeting

As countries develop, continue to refine, and implement their food system transformation pathways, many will need significant investment. Mobilising finance for a resilient, sustainable, and equitable food system is a central priority and a considerable challenge. This section shares stories of countries and initiatives that have identified and prioritised financing opportunities for healthier more sustainable food systems.

Kenya: budget tracking to increase allocations towards improving nutrition

Reviews of government spending can help identify gaps in financing for key food system priorities. To support this analysis, a consortium of partners is working with governments to apply the Financial Flows to Food Systems tool (3FS), a diagnostic developed by IFAD and the World Bank to help countries track and understand how domestic and development financing is being allocated in pursuit of different food systems outcomes. 3FS helps to identify gaps and redundancies particularly across sectoral budgets and to understand the extent to which financing is coherent with sectoral policies.

3FS was piloted in Kenya at the national level and then at the county level where the analysis led to immediate changes in the budget allocation. In 2024, three sub-national governments (Nairobi, Nyandarua, and Nakuru with populations totalling more than seven million) had the opportunity to review their expenditure data from previous years to help design their new sub-national Nutrition Action Plans. In collaboration with local governments, the counties were introduced to the two financial tracking tools—the Ministry of Health’s Nutrition Financial Tracking Tool (NFTT) and the 3FS, which was adapted for sub-national use. GAIN provided technical training to county officials on the 3FS tool, enabling them to map nutrition investments across the food system, identify gaps, and prioritise impactful interventions. By integrating NFTT’s detailed tracking into the broader 3FS framework, the three counties were able to see expenditure data across sectors such as health, agriculture, water, and education. This dual-tool strategy allowed for a more holistic analysis of financial flows and revealed opportunities to improve coherence and efficiency in nutrition financing. The budget analysis also provided critical insights into funding patterns and areas needing strategic investment.

With the results from the financial tracking, stakeholders across departments such as health, finance, and agriculture, engaged with the tool’s findings and informed the development of investment cases for nutrition to provide an evidence-based rationale to increase and optimise funding for nutrition interventions. Examples of investment cases included the recruitment of Agri-Nutrition officers and dietetics officers; support for school feeding programmes through the supply of fortified blended flour, and community nutrition awareness campaigns. The combination of historical expenditure data and investment cases helped guide budget allocation in the sub-national Nutrition Action Plans, which resulted in an 8% increase in funding budget allocations in all three counties for nutrition the following fiscal year.

Key National Partners: Ministry of Health, Ministry of Agriculture sub-national governments of Nairobi, Nyandarua, and Nakuru

EoS Partners: AGRA, GAIN, IFAD, World Bank, FAO

Morocco: mobilising investment for integrated action to deliver win-wins

In 2021, Morocco began to shift from fragmented, production-focused investments to a systems-based approach that recognises the interconnections between health, livelihoods, climate resilience and food security. This change was spearheaded by the Ministry of Agriculture, home of the 2021 UNFSS National Convenor. Ministry officials and the convenor were able to prioritise cross-sectoral coordination and inclusive, participatory governance as core pillars of food systems transformation.

Recognising that real change requires collaboration across ministries and sectors, Morocco invested in an inclusive, multisectoral process to build its first integrated food systems roadmap. Working closely with the UNFSS National Convenor, FAO contributed to drafting the roadmap and its governance mechanism through policy analysis and convening policymakers across sectors. This roadmap drafting process brought together priorities from diverse national strategies – including Generation Green 2020–2030, the National Nutrition Strategy, and the National Strategy for Waste Reduction and Valorisation – and placed a strong emphasis on green, inclusive growth. Women and youth empowerment were key to driving forward this transformation.

In 2024, Morocco formalised its governance efforts by establishing the National Committee for Food Systems Transformation (CNTSA), bringing together four core ministries and a wider ecosystem of support including civil society and academia. While still state-led, this marks an important institutional step towards joined-up decision-making, laying the foundations for long-term, systemic change.

This coordinated effort helped shift the investment logic from a narrow focus on productivity to a systems approach. Drawn in by the country's multisectoral priorities and co-created roadmap, the World Bank helped catalyse a USD 250 million investment portfolio designed to deliver system-wide outcomes – reducing food loss and waste, supporting healthy diets, fostering productive alliances, promoting circular economy solutions and multisectoral governance.



Everyone wants to leave fossil fuels behind; everyone wants their people to be healthy and well-nourished. But how do we navigate these multiple agendas? One way to do this is to leverage food systems transformation: telling the other ministries and sectors that, if we coordinate our efforts, this transformation can be an accelerator of your agenda. It is key to work together, without overcomplicating governance.

Redouane Arrach,
Secretary-General, Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries, Rural Development, Water and Forests of Morocco and UNFSS National Convenor

Morocco's experience shows that patient, long-term investment in cross-sector coordination and stakeholder alignment around national strategies can more effectively mobilise financial investments and action to address multiple priorities in complementary, integrated ways.

Key National Partners: Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries, Rural Development, Water and Forests; National Steering Committee for Food Systems Transformation

EoS Partners: FAO, World Bank

Sierra Leone: translating policy into investible projects

As a founding member and co-chair of ACF (Alliance of Champions for Food System Transformation), Sierra Leone has been working to implement President Bio's flagship programme, **Feed Salone**, to foster sustainable, inclusive development through food systems transformation. One of the most common and significant challenges that Sierra Leone – like so many others – faces when financing its food system strategies is the translation of policy proposals into investible project pipelines. The ACF secured technical assistance funding from AGRA to help Sierra Leone develop this pipeline.

The Government commissioned an Africa-based impact consultancy, AXUM, to identify catalytic investment opportunities for Sierra Leone's food system aligned with the government's six key strategic pillars: reducing imports of key staples, boosting export earnings from agriculture, creating jobs and generating income, alleviating hunger and malnutrition, and improving climate resilience.

Identified opportunities were ranked with respect to a) perceived need, b) levels of government support, c) investor interest, and d) replicability. AXUM then worked with the government and the private sector to develop detailed investment plans, which the government subsequently shared with potential funders.

This work has helped Sierra Leone secure pledges for investment of over USD 1 billion in funding for Feed Salone since its launch, with much earmarked to boost agricultural productivity and support the provision of critical infrastructure.

Key factors contributing to these promising pledges were Feed Salone's leadership by President Bio himself, a focus on population groups with lowest incomes (including labourers and smallholders), the vital need to reduce the costs of food imports, an emphasis on partnering with the private sector; and strong cross-government collaboration aided by a Presidential Council on climate change, renewable energy, and food. The government also focused on making investment opportunities attractive to implementing partners by advancing policy and structural reforms, improving market facilities, and developing essential infrastructure, such as the roads needed to access sites for increased private investment.

Key National Partners: Office of the President. Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security; Ministry of Finance; Ministry of Lands; Ministry of Local Government; Ministry of Environment and Climate Change; Ministry of Trade and Industry; Ministry of Health; Ministry of Education; Ministry of Fisheries and Marine Resources; Ministry of Communication, Technology and Innovation; National Revenue Authority; Rural Finance Network; Environmental Protection Agency; Bank of Sierra Leone

EoS Partners: ACF, AGRA, AXUM, FOLU, SUN

A multi-country initiative to finance underserved food entrepreneurs: GAFSP's Business Investment Financing Track

As countries shift their national priorities toward healthier, more sustainable food systems, investors need to follow their lead. Hosted by the World Bank Group, [the Global Agriculture and Food Security Program](#) (GAFSP) is creating new financing windows to do just that. GAFSP is a financial intermediary fund that recognises that access to finance is critical for both smallholder farmers and early stage agrifood businesses in low-income countries (LICs) to meet local and regional food demands. Blended concessional finance initiatives – financial support that is offered at below-market rates – can be transformative, but these have only accounted for a fraction of the private capital mobilised by Official Development Assistance in recent years.

Launched in October 2024, [the Business Investment Financing Track \(BIFT\)](#) is a new financing window within GAFSP's multilateral financing and partnership platform that aims to scale up catalytic finance for underserved agricultural entrepreneurs in LICs. These include smallholder farmers, producer organizations, innovative start-ups, and micro, small, and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs) that are showing high potential and ready to transition into their next phase of growth.

The BIFT is managed by GAFSP's partner multilateral Development Finance Institutions (DFIs)². These act as project sponsors and co-investors, responsible for proposing projects centred on strategic partnerships with private sector actors (impact investors, financial institutions, fund managers, agribusiness companies), as well as producer organisations, governments, civil society organisations, and other development partners. The BIFT offers long-term, repayable concessional financing to match the DFIs' own contribution and help de-risk further private investment. This offers the BIFT the potential to earn income and return principal, which can form the basis of renewable funding for future investments. Alongside this, the BIFT offers non-repayable grants for technical assistance, advisory services, and incentives.

Through this financing window, GAFSP is able to steer large volumes of private and climate finance towards the adoption of more productive, sustainable and climate-smart agricultural practices; as well as infrastructure and technologies that increase productivity, climate resilience, and economic opportunities across local and regional value chains, especially for nutritious foods. For example, performance-based incentives built into financing could be designed to encourage farmers to invest in diverse food crops, healthy soils, biodiversity conservation, and ecosystem services.

Developing more inclusive capital markets in LICs through opportunities such as GAFSP's BIFT can help the most vulnerable communities in the food sector – including smallholder farmers, women, and youth – make transformative investments that strengthen their own livelihoods as well as the resilience of agrifood value chains.

EoS Partners: AfDB, ADB, IDB, GAFSP, IDB Invest, IFAD, FAO, WFP, World Bank, IFC

² DFI partners include the African Development Bank (AfDB), Asian Development Bank (ADB), IDB Invest, International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), and International Finance Corporation (IFC).

A multi-country initiative to get credit to SMEs supplying nutritious food: the Nutritious Food Financing Facility

Launched in December 2023, the [Nutritious Foods Financing Facility](#) (N3F) is an impact fund complemented by a technical assistance facility that aims to improve access to safe and nutritious foods among local consumers in sub-Saharan Africa – thereby improving the quality of their diets, and ultimately helping to reduce levels of malnutrition. A joint venture between GAIN and Incofin, N3F is a specialised ‘niche impact fund’, focused specifically on addressing malnutrition in this region. It is unique in several ways: N3F focuses on nutrition, on domestic markets, and through its investments, N3F aims to prove that nutrition is investable and attract additional capital to invest in nutrition.

In 2024, N3F provided long term patient financing as well as working capital totalling over USD 4 million to five SMEs. The SMEs supported by N3F financing and complementary technical assistance operate in various segments (inputs, processing, distribution) of different nutritious value chains (fish, poultry, fruits and vegetables, legumes and fortified cereals) from four countries (Kenya, Rwanda, Senegal, and Zambia).

In 2024, Wellspring and USAID developed a Nutrition-Lens Investing Framework and Screening Tool, leveraging and simplifying the N3F’s screening guidance. The framework aims to assist DFIs, funds, and donors to evaluate opportunities for nutrition impact when investing in private sector firms. It aims to increase both the quality and volume of nutrition impact generated by the impact investing community by providing clear guidance on what constitutes a “nutrition investment”.

EoS Partners: GAIN, Incofin, USAID, Wellspring



REFLECTIONS AND FOUR STEPS TO ACCELERATE FOOD SYSTEM TRANSFORMATION



Reflections

As these examples show, an impressive amount of progress has been made all around the world across different facets of the food system. It would be impossible to share all the achievements, but this collection of stories provides insights into what is working for countries of varying regions, sizes and economic development.

Food system transformation journeys depend on country context and national priorities, but from the perspective of organisations engaging with and supporting national processes through the ecosystem of support (EoS), successful structures, levers and trends are surfacing.

The changes highlighted here – large and small moments of change – illustrate countries driving food systems change in five major ways:

Describing, diagnosing, and deciding

Firstly, countries have described, diagnosed, and decided what action to take by either a) promoting intersectoral, more inclusive decision-making – as in the case of Brazil's analysis of policies to identify the most impactful support for farmers adopting regenerative agriculture; or by using and investing in data and tools, such as 3FS in Kenya and the collection and analysis of diet quality data in Nigeria.

Leveraging the private sector

Secondly, they have recognised the importance of strengthening or creating engagements between public and private sectors to drive private sector actions to benefit people on a large scale. The work to incorporate nutrition into ESG standards in India or the efforts of the Workforce Nutrition Alliance in Asia and Africa are examples, as is the Zero Hunger Private Sector Pledge.

Accessing finance

Thirdly, countries are finding creative ways to access finance to fund food systems transformations. On a smaller scale, businesses are too, while partners are working hard to find new ways to channel funds of the magnitude needed to deliver meaningful improvements in people's nutrition. Sierra Leone's work securing funding for its Feed Salone initiative, or Morocco's experience generating investment around national cross-sector strategies are examples.

Building functioning collaborations between partners

Fourthly, with a wide ecosystem of different stakeholders working towards universal goals, forging and leveraging connections can be very useful – for instance GAIN Indonesia's organisation of advocacy gatherings in support of BAPPENAS; or BMZ/GIZ's facilitation of government collaboration with research institutions, UN agencies, embassies, and the private sector in Cambodia.

Building trust

The fifth factor is cross-cutting, crucially important, and often underestimated – building trust. In each example highlighted above, trust between different actors (see box D for four types) has enabled the progress seen.

Box D. Examples of building trust across different actors

- **Trust between government ministries:** Food systems foster collaboration across government ministries, with tools like 3FS and the Policy Coherence Diagnostic Tool helping to identify policy gaps and align priorities through open dialogue.
- **Trust between government and constituents:** A Whole of Society approach relies on trust and inclusion of diverse citizen voices, supported by initiatives like the SUN Youth Network and tools such as Inclusive Pathway Platforms to co-create solutions with policymakers.
- **Trust between government and businesses:** While governments and businesses tend to work to a set of objectives that don't fully overlap, building trust can help to better align incentives that the government organises to drive businesses to better deliver socially beneficial outcomes.
- **Trust between support ecosystem and government:** The EoS builds trust with national convenors and government stakeholders by consistently showing up as a collaborative, well-prepared partner who delivers on commitments and shares evidence to foster mutual empowerment. This requires a collaborative, responsive approach backed by insights, consistent support through tools like the Food System Dashboard to build shared ownership of the food systems agenda. Facilitating connections with other countries, coalitions, initiatives, and funding sources are tried and tested ways to continue to build trust between governments and implementing partners, as we can see in Cameroon with the seven coalitions and five ministries involved.

The way forward

Governments around the world have grown more aware than ever of how fundamental food system transformation is to human progress. They recognise it means feeding and nourishing the world; creating jobs and reducing poverty; supporting a thriving natural environment free from catastrophic climate change; building social resilience to shocks – the stuff of human and planetary wellbeing.

Unfortunately, this transformation is happening much too slowly. The Food System Countdown Initiative reports that only 20 of 42 food system indicators are moving in the right direction, with none moving fast enough to meet their targets (1). The sluggish progress has been explained by many factors. Food system change is not easy. It requires data to spotlight challenges and opportunities. It requires policies to pull in the same direction to achieve countries' food systems transformation priorities. It requires knowledge of how investment and government budgets are currently allocated to food systems. It requires decision making mechanisms that bring multiple perspectives to the table and can translate priorities into financeable actions. It requires investors to finance those actions.

And yet, in spite of the proliferation of actors working in support of government-led food systems transformation agendas, weak collaboration and cooperation persists in country and globally. The recent upheavals in debt, aid, and trade compound the challenges and together these features conspire to undermine efforts to act at greater speed and scale.

Four Key Steps to Accelerate Food System Transformation

First, those organisations – like the contributors to this report – working to support food system transformation on the ground, need to work together more. To share knowledge, tools and learnings, co-construct solutions, share resources, and set the tone for collaboration. In this way the EoS can partner with governments more effectively to turn high level priorities more rapidly into impactful and investable actions – nationally and sub-nationally. Food systems transformation is much more likely to come from collaboration than competition.

Second, governments and the private sector need more effective, consequential engagement. Too often the attempts to do this fail because the two sets of actors involved – those from public and private sectors – have a poor understanding of each other's motives and desires, hold unrealistic expectations of one another, or vie for dominance at the expense of social wellbeing. What becomes increasingly clear is the vast need to turn smaller aid flows into sustainable food system change by leveraging overwhelmingly larger private sector resources.

Third, DFIs at the global, regional, and national levels have to step up. They are a powerful link between the public and private sector because they engage with both on a routine basis. Their funding has been relatively protected from the aid cuts. Unfortunately, they have not tended to prioritise food system transformation (14) – largely because food systems consist of smaller units (smallholder farms, SMEs, consumers) than other systems like energy, and DFIs struggle to lend small amounts of money. Also, the metrics of food system change are perceived to be more complex a proposition to monitor – compared for instance to indicators like emissions reduced, or kilometres of roads created(15).

Fourth, the food systems transformation feedback loops are weak. Whether or not current efforts to fundamentally transform food systems are paying off or not remains largely unknown. We have the [FSCI data](#), but they are only as recent as the databases they draw from. Many of the organisations represented here receive invitations to partner to establish monitoring systems, so the demand is there. Where is the capacity to meet that demand?

To address these issues a wide range of partners – the UN, international and national NGOs, regional bodies, DFIs, and donors – are working out how they can collaborate to construct a Food Systems Transformation Accelerator to respond more quickly to countries' food systems transformation requests and to accelerate transformation.

Food system transformation is happening. The examples listed in this paper highlight moments of change, key moments on the transformation pathway. Countries want more of them. They want them more joined up. And they want them to happen faster. The partners and their networks who stand behind this report also stand ready to partner with governments to make that a reality.

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