FOOD SYSTEMS GOVERNANCE AND THE PUBLIC SECTOR
AN OVERVIEW

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SUMMARY

The public sector plays a crucial role in transforming food systems through leadership, structures, and processes like policies and budgets as well as the extent to which it enables a whole-of-society approach. Understanding public-sector governance is thus fundamental to designing and implementing food systems transformation initiatives. This working paper provides an overview of public sector governance at the country level, with a food systems lens.

Public governance models vary across countries, and understanding these is vital for addressing challenges and trade-offs and leveraging opportunities in food systems. Local governments, including city governments, have close relationships to the daily lives of residents and landscapes. This makes them key players in bringing together multiple stakeholders, implementing locally relevant solutions, and strengthening capacity through sharing best practices, tools, and lessons learned via city-to-city networks. In a similar way, global food systems-related fora can provide opportunities for national, sub-national, and local governments to enhance the evidence base on food systems transformation and shape wider food systems outlooks.

Inclusion and equity are cornerstones of a just transformation across all the socio-ecological elements and relationships that are part of the food system. This encompasses fostering local agency and providing a legitimate space for diverse perspectives on knowing and being a part of food systems involving different stakeholders, including vulnerable and marginalised groups like low-income households, women, youth, and indigenous communities. Good governance principles and food systems governance guidelines can further support collaboration and effective and just transformation. Further exploration is needed into governance relationships between urban and rural governments, communities, and the intersection of food systems with other systems like climate and formal and informal economies.

KEY MESSAGES

- Understanding the public governance models of different countries is vital for addressing challenges and trade-offs, and leveraging opportunities in food systems.
- Local and city governments and communities are key to locally led, contextual food systems transformation.
- Effective engagement with a diversity of local, sub-national, national, regional, and global stakeholders, including vulnerable and marginalised communities, nurtures sustained and just food systems transformation.
- City-to-city networks and regional and global food systems-related fora are resources and spaces within which governments can share evidence, views, best practices, tools, and lessons learned.

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BACKGROUND AND OBJECTIVE

Through structures and processes, food systems need to be actively steered by leaders towards just and sustainable outcomes (1). This encompasses commitments to the right to food, access to healthy diets, economic development and livelihoods, and appreciation of food culture, within Earth system limits (2,3,4). Leveraging re-imagined food relationships between people and the environment, through innovation, creativity, technology, coordination, and participation is fundamental to sustainability and social and ecological resilience. Efforts to influence sustainable food systems transformation through food and nutrition policies and the delivery thereof involves complex positive and negative trade-offs. These can span different scales, from local to national, regional, and global. Trade-offs need to be considered between food system elements[1] as well as across the many other systems that intersect with the food system, like climate, biodiversity, freshwater, energy, economy, societal networks, and knowledge (4,5,6).

Food systems governance pertains to the structures, rules, institutions, stakeholders, and "norms which determine the functioning of the food system" (1). **It is about processes and networks of stakeholders that shape and should be included in shaping decision-making and activities from production and gathering food to its distribution, consumption, and waste management** (8,9,10). Governance that fosters agency and inclusive and equitable engagement is key to accelerating locally owned, contextually relevant, and sustained food systems transformation (2, 9,11). This is viewed as a cornerstone to a whole-of-society, food systems governance approach. With a world increasingly defined by polycrisis and urbanisation and where approximately 75% of present day urban and peri-urban populations experience moderate to severe food insecurity, approaches to food systems governance will significantly influence socio-economic and environmental outcomes (2, 9, 12). Given the complexity of food systems and their intersections with other systems, explicit identification of barriers and co-design of potential solutions across governance areas is fundamental.

Local and city governments are recognised as having the opportunity through their mandates and close relationships with communities to co-design innovative and locally meaningful solutions, convene stakeholders across sectors, leverage local food systems knowledge, and be agile in response to changing conditions (9). Within their governance administrative areas, food environments[2] are a key space for transformative interventions related to places where people sell, advertise, talk about, and purchase food. Local and city governments are also key to promoting effective, efficient, and quality food system relationships between urban and rural communities - expanding

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[1] 'A food system gathers all the elements (environment, people, inputs, processes, infrastructures, institutions, etc.) and activities that relate to the production, processing, distribution, preparation and consumption of food and the outputs of these activities, including socio-economic and environmental outcomes' (7).
[2] Food environment: "a critical place in the food system to implement interventions to support sustainable diets and address the global syndemic of obesity, undernutrition, and climate change, because the food environment contains the total scope of options within which consumers make decisions about which foods to acquire and consume'. It has physical, socio-ecological and economic dimensions around availability, accessibility and promotion of food (13).

across territories and country borders. Reasons for this include the increasing influence of urbanisation on urban and rural diets towards less healthy consumption choices, the rapid growth of urban communities, widening social inequalities especially within cities, climate change, shifts in land use, and public health challenges (9,14,15,16).

Historically, collective societal challenges like food and nutrition insecurity have been addressed through mechanisms of 'global governance' (17). Under globalisation, food systems became increasingly interdependent and connected through flows of resources and capital or networks of stakeholders (17). The collective nature of these challenges led to the formation of supranational institutions such as the United Nations Committee on World Food Security and Nutrition, and the Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations, where countries, scientists, experts, and civil society set the agenda for tackling global hunger and food and nutrition security. Global partnerships, frameworks, networks, and agreements, such as the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals, New Urban Agenda, Climate and Biodiversity Conferences of the Parties (CoPs), International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI), Urban Food Systems Coalition, World Organisation of United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG), Milan Urban Food Policy Pact, and the One Planet Network further connect agendas, help shape interventions, provide inter- and trans-disciplinary evidence bases for policy, and bring stakeholders together to solve collective problems (12).

Understanding governance is fundamental to understanding, designing and implementing food systems transformation initiatives. As such, this working paper provides an overview of public sector governance at the country level, with a food systems lens. Public governance encompasses political will and leadership, formulation of policy, interpretation policy into delivery, administration and approaches to participation, accountability and transparency.

While this paper focuses on the public sector, the authors acknowledge that the public sector is only a part of food systems governance. Successful sustainable outcomes require inclusive and equitable engagement with, and actions of, many formal and informal leaders in the private sector and civil society, including food businesses, traditional food market committees, and community initiatives like food gardens and food banks.

UNDERSTANDING HOW A COUNTRY IS GOVERNED

SCAFFOLDING OF PUBLIC SECTOR GOVERNANCE

Knowing the structure of how a country is governed is essential to understanding the way in which food systems governance is operationalised and optimised. Governance is effected through policy formulation and the coherent and coordinated interpretation of policy into delivery via strategy, plans, budgets, participation, rule of law, accountability, transparency, public and private partnerships, and increasingly public, philanthropic, and/or wider civil society partnerships. A country's political orientation and constitution provide the overarching frame for structures of government, governance processes, and

the social contract[3] between government and communities - an example is South Africa's public governance model (Box 1)[4]. The basis on which government is legitimated is detailed within this frame (for example, election procedures, duration of electoral terms, as well as the relationship between and obligations of elected officials versus appointed government administrators.)

Policy is typically led by elected officials and political parties and, to a greater or lesser degree depending on the country, involves the engagement of 'wider' civil society. During elections, parties' election mandates signal key policy directions and emphases that respective parties wish to pursue, should they and their representatives be elected to lead the government. Appointed officials are employees in the engine of government administration. They include heads of departments, managers, researchers, clerks, and public-sector community workers. These officials support the interpretation of policy into plans and implementation thereof. Where countries' constitutions enable scrutiny and oversight of public policy performance, elected and key appointed officials critically review this. Ideally, this is also part of a reiterative learning process in the policy cycle. Additional legislation and governance processes support the interpretation of a constitution in ways the guide practice. For example, legislation and processes associated with public finance and management, municipal systems and assets, and co-operative governance across government tiers. Medium and long- term national development plans and regional and international agreements, such as the Sustainable Development 2030 Agenda, often span two or more of a country's electoral terms, which usually last four to five years.

BOX 1. SOUTH AFRICA'S GOVERNANCE FRAME AND FOOD SYSTEMS

While each country has its own form of governance, many republican and/or democratic countries share similar characteristics. The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996, provides insight into the design of a multi-party system of a democratic government's overarching governance frame. This constitution presents founding provisions, such as the recognition of human dignity and rights, equity, the rule of law, and universal suffrage as part of good governance elements of 'accountability, responsiveness and openness'. It also details, amongst other areas, the structure and obligations of three tiers of government in terms of national, provincial, and local, as well as co-operative governance and financial arrangements. Food systems components cut across this constitution. For example, sub-sections of Chapter 2 Sections 24, 27, and 28, respectively, recognise the right/s to an environment that can 'secure ecologically sustainable development and use of natural resources while promoting justifiable economic and social development', to 'sufficient food and water', and of every child to basic nutrition. (19)

[3] Social contract: an agreement between communities and 'rulers' which sets out rights and obligations of each 'party'. (18)

STRUCTURE AND FUNCTION OF GOVERNMENT

Governance has multiple scales or tiers of authority, distributed from national to local governments as well as across regional and global fora (e.g., the African Union, European Economic Union, and UN General Assembly) (Figure 1). It also involves multiple stakeholders and sectors such as agriculture, fisheries, health, energy, water, and transportation. Countries are led by a form of unitary, federal, or hybrid version national government, under which at least one sub-national[5] tier is positioned (20). In the federal system, including confederations, the federal government is an arrangement between the ('national') government and self-governing federal 'states', which have a great degree of autonomy. The federal government has overarching competence in areas like a country's monetary system, foreign policy, and defence (21). This authority is distributed over different sized geographical and administrative areas and further underscores the governance challenges associated with the world becoming increasingly urban.
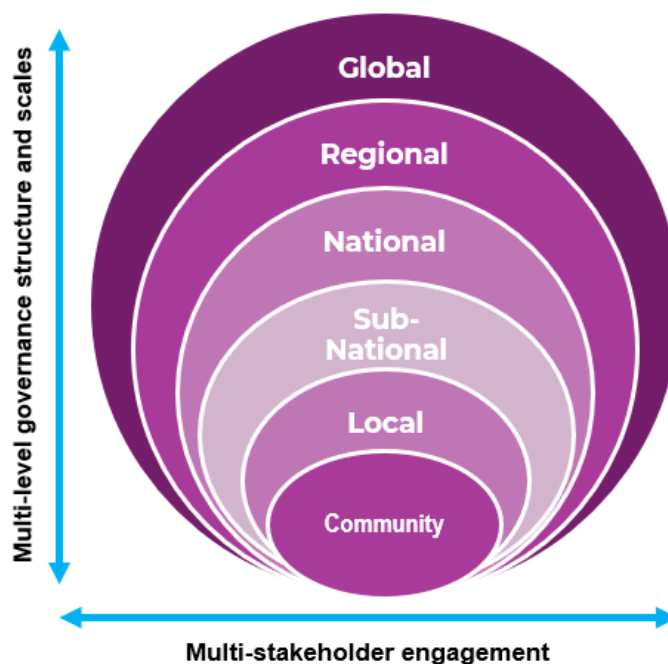

Figure 1. Conceptualisation of multi-level (tier) governance structures and scale and stakeholder engagement (by authors)

VERTICAL GOVERNANCE

Vertical governance refers to the roles and responsibilities as per structured tiers or levels of government, from national to local and widening beyond countries to regional and global fora. Specific to each country, these tiers may be differently defined and labelled; there may be varying number of tiers, and they may also include sub-tiers. Within countries, government tiers are hierarchical, with national government providing overall leadership (20). Table 1 presents a range of governance forms across five selected African and Asian countries. Notably, municipalities (local government) tend to be larger

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[5] The literature and how international development organisations and institutions use sub-national, local, and city government terminology varies. Sub-national can refer to the tier immediately below national government but can also refer to all the tiers below national government or all those up to the tier of local government. Local government can either refer to all the forms of local government from municipalities to urban and rural administrative areas or to local government and city government, with the latter considered a unique part of local government.

in Africa, Asia, and the Pacific than those in other global regions (20,21). These regions, particularly sub-Saharan Africa, South-eastern Asia, and Southern Asia, also experience the highest rates of moderate and severe food insecurity in the world (9). The examples of Kenya and Mozambique (Table 1) illustrate how constitutions can be amended to enable the establishment of further tiers of sub-national government with greater degrees of autonomy, roles, and responsibilities. In Mozambique, municipalities are increasingly viewed as vital for inclusive socio-economic development and the management of climate-resilient investments (22).

National governments play a role in connecting local and grassroot governance of food systems to global food system governance (23). For example, support or guidance from national governments are important factors for ensuring the capacity of local municipalities to develop and implement holistic food and nutrition plans (24). The presence of strong national food policies, strategies, or plans can help guide the development of local food plans and ensure their longevity through changes in government (23, 25). Alignment to national strategies or plans can mean greater access to the resources, technical expertise, and capacity of national governments.

A key challenge for local governments, including city municipalities, is a lack of resources (human and financial) and inadequate recognition of the important role this level of government plays in delivering national and local agenda and international commitments like Nationally Determined Contributions (i.e., commitments to reduce climate impactful emissions per country). Despite this, in recent years there has been an increase in some city governments' efforts to transform urban food environments using governance tools within their administrative mandate. This is evidenced within the widening membership of city governments in city networks like United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG)[6], which represents approximately 70% of the global population via government representation, and the Milan Urban Food Policy Pact (MUFPP), which since its launch in 2015 has grown to 270 signatory cities worldwide.

At time of writing this paper, a total of 621 food transformative city government best practices, from 270 cities in 80 countries have been shared through the MUFPP network[7]. These best practices span six thematic areas: governance, sustainable diets and nutrition, social and economic equity, food production, food supply and distribution, and food waste (Figure 2). A growing number of real-world cases illustrating how cities across the world, in diverse contexts, are striving and learning to transform their food systems are

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[6] UCLG: https://uclg.org/about-us/ (26)
[7] MUFPP: www.milanurbanfoodpolicypact.org (27)

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Table 1. Forms of government: A selection of African and Asian countries that are unitary states with multi-party political systems

Country	Republic of Benin	Republic of Kenya	Republic of Mozambique	People's Republic of Bangladesh	Republic of Indonesia
Elections	**Every 5 years. Last election/s: Parliamentary : January 2023; Presidential: April 2021.**	**Every 5 years. Last election: August 2022.**	**Every 5 years. Last election: Municipal: October 2023; General: October 2024.**	**Every 5 years. Last election/s: Parliamentary: January 2024.**	**Every 5 years. Last election/s: General elections February 2024; Regional heads: November 2024 (of governors, vice-governors, regents, vice-regents, and mayors and vice-mayors).**
Government structure	Decentralised. **Two tiers: National and Municipal.**	Decentralised. **Two tiers: National and County.** Local government - in the form of cities, municipalities and townships institutions -are not official sub-national governance tiers. These are established and tasked by county governments as per the Urban Areas and Cities Act of 2011.	Decentralised. **Four tiers: National, Province, District, and Local (municipalities).** Following the revision of the constitution in 2018, Mozambique has been in the process of realising decentralised governance regarding sub-national tiers. Article 272 of the Constitution notes that these sub-national government entities are 'subject to the administrative supervision of the State'.	Decentralised. **Three tiers: National (with administrative divisions), Districts (and sub-districts), Local.** Bangladesh has a parallel system with national government divisions and a sub-national tier structure. The sub-national structure comprises districts, sub-districts as well as an urban and rural local government structure that includes several sub-tiers. Sixty-four districts are located across eight national government administrative divisions.	Decentralised. **Four tiers: National, Province, Regencies and Cities, and Village/s.**

Country	Republic of Benin	Republic of Kenya	Republic of Mozambique	People's Republic of Bangladesh	Republic of Indonesia
Sub-national Tiers	Municipalities 77 municipalities (or communes). Three have special status: Porto-Novo (political capital), Cotonou (economic capital) and Parakou.	Counties 47 county governments and a council of county governors (one per county). There are two types of counties: a) combined urban and rural area counties, which include numerous local government forms as established under previous legislation; b) city counties (Nairobi City County and Mombasa County). a) 4 _City governments_ Nairobi (capital), Mombasa, Kisumu, and Nakuru. b) **55 municipalities**	Provinces 10 provinces plus the capital, Maputo which has provincial status (11 provinces total). Districts 154 districts. Municipalities (a_utarquías_) 53 Municipalities (governing cities and towns). Four different types defined by form of internal structure and responsibilities. For some administration and electoral requirements, districts and municipalities are divided into sub-tiers.	Districts 64 districts (_zila parishad_) 492 sub-districts (_upazilla parishads_) Local Government _urban_ 12 city corporations and 328 municipalities (_pourashavas_). The urban sub-national government leads the wider local government tier in terms of authority. _rural_ three sub-tiers: 64 districts, 492 sub-districts, and 4554 union of villages (_union parishad_). Special status: 3 hill regions called _hill district parishad (_Bandarban, Rangamati and Khagrachari).	Provinces 34 provinces of which 5 have special status with largely autonomous rule: Aceh (follows Islamic Sharia Law), Jakarta Capital City Region[8], Yogyakarta (Sultanate system), Papua and West Papua. Regencies and Cities (_kabupaten_ and _kota_) 416 regencies and 98 cities (total 514). Regencies encompass urban and rural areas and are differentiated from cities based on population size and economic status. Village (_kampung_, if groups of villages, _desa_). 83,813 villages. Village leaders tend to be appointed in urban areas and elected in rural areas. Sub-tier: neighbourhood associations.

Notes: This table provides a broad overview of countries governance systems noting that these countries are examples of different forms of republics (28). Examples: Indonesia is a presidential representative democratic republic i.e. the president is both the head of state and of government; Bangladesh has a Westminster form of a democratic republic with a president as head of state who is elected by parliament and who in turns appoints the prime minster (whose party holds the legislative majority in parliament). Over the past 25 years, several countries have moved from centralised to decentralised forms of government; with several in the process of fully implementing this.

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[8] As Jakarta is sinking, the Indonesian parliament recently approved relocating the capital to Nusantara on the island of Borneo.

accessible on the Food Action Cities web platform (29).

Several cities, like Sao Paulo, Guelph, Amsterdam, and Porto are adopting circular food systems perspectives to reduce food loss and waste while also promoting sustainable and diverse food production, livelihood opportunities, and responsible consumption (30).

Horizontal governance

Horizontal governance operates within government,

Figure 2. Distribution of 621 MUFPP city best practices across 6 categories[15]

between public-sector departments and entities, as well as referring to the engagement by government with non-state stakeholders in various forms, from public-private partnerships to multistakeholder engagement. In Kenya, for example, a structure for horizontal cooperation between counties was established via the County Resource Development Bill of 2021. This bill facilitates the creation of internal regional economic blocs based on shared geographies between counties with a view to promoting more effective trade and economic development (21). As such, this has important implications for food systems governance. Furthermore, horizontal cooperation between Kenya's county legislative entities is facilitated by the County Assemblies Forum. An example from Mozambique is The National Association of Local Governments of Mozambique (A*ssociação Nacional dos Municípios de Moçambique*). This body promotes horizontal cooperation between municipalities, many of which were recently established, as well as vertical governance through its advocacy for municipal agendas with central or national government (21).

Different countries and fora view non-state stakeholders with varying degrees of legitimacy and forms of participation. Food governance at the local level tends to be more collaborative, with a greater opportunity to engage with diverse stakeholder experiences and to co-develop creative and locally relevant solutions (17, 31). This contrasts with national and global scales, which often engage in food governance in more abstract and general terms (23). With more than half of the world's population residing in urban areas, cities have become key sites of transformation for both food and sustainability challenges (9,32). The challenges facing local food systems are unique, and governance approaches may vary significantly. However, best practices and successful policy interventions can often be relevant and inspiring for other localities and be modified or adapted to suit their contexts. The development of partnerships or networks of local food policy councils/platforms facilitates sharing best practices and can also encourage critical questioning of local food system configurations (32).

GOOD GOVERNANCE AND GUIDING PRINCIPLES

'Good governance' is a concept associated with business and overarching public-sector governance frameworks. While no definitive conceptualisation of good governance exists,
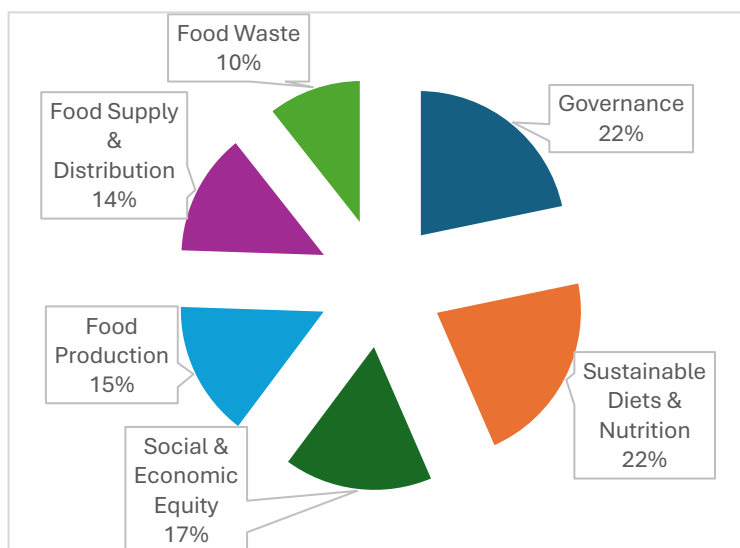
it is widely recognised as encompassing accountable governance that is respectful of human rights. Several common principles are recognised, such as those detailed in The Council of Europe's 12 good governance principles (e.g., participation, representation, openness and transparency, rule of law, sustainability, human rights, and accountability) (33). These principles provide an evaluative framework for the appraisal and award of the European Label of Governance Excellence to high-performing local authorities. Good governance principles can contribute to more efficient and effective governance processes. However, in terms of just sustainable food systems transformation, more specific address of inclusive and equitable principles, underpinning efforts to ensure that all people have affordable access, at all times, to sufficient, healthy, and culturally appropriate diets, is needed. While not replacing the need for good governance, the food systems governance guidelines shared in a United Nations Food Systems Summit 2021 policy brief offer direction, underpinned by human rights, recognition of different forms of knowledge, technology, and evidence, including indigenous knowledge, and care for the Earth's ecosystems (34) (See Annex 1).

JUST TRANSITIONS AND FOOD SYSTEMS TRANSFORMATION

Just transitions are about 'leaving no-one behind' or 'bringing the whole of society along', especially as efforts to realise the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals intensify against the backdrop of social, economic, and environmental polycrisis. Socio-economic and environmental justice is integral to (food) systems transformation (35). This is about more than sharing the burden and the benefits (distributive justice) of this transition, which involves trade-offs within and between social, economic, and environmental sustainability dimensions. Governance plays a key role in mediating these trade-offs. Current literature refers to four areas of justice: the aforementioned distributive justice as well as recognitional (who is affected?), procedural (are all voices able to participate and be heard?), and restorative (how to compensate for harm done?) (36). Just transitions may look different in different contexts, integrating these different dimensions/ areas of justice. It is important to understand the underlying values of 'justice' in different contexts to understand the consequences of just transitions as well as different stakeholders' contributions to just transitions (37).

Public-sector food systems governance for the mediation of just transitions requires addressing inclusion and equity. In this respect, governments have an important role to play in convening and leading multiple stakeholders, across multiple geographical and administrative areas, sectors, and levels of government. Notably, providing the conditions for justice and realising it involves more than the public sector. A whole of society participatory approach benefits from a diversity of empowered voices, attention to different barriers vulnerable and often excluded communities may face to effective participation, and access to information and sharing of learnings to help make informed decisions (32). Emerging examples of practical implementation of just food transformation governance approaches include:

- **United Kingdom**: Bristol City's 2022-2032 Food Equality Strategy, which involves working together as One City with multiple sector stakeholders to realise the vision of a city where all residents can access nutritious food according to their needs and cultural preferences and who have the knowledge and resources to make informed decisions around food and the environment (38);

- **USA**: Baltimore City's Food Equity Advisors, who represent the diversity of city residents and who work together to facilitate the design and implementation of equitable, local food policies (39);
- **Tanzania**: Mbeya's Food Smart City Platform (Swahili name: Jukwaa la Usalama wa Chakula Mbeya) is led by the Tanzania Chamber of Commerce, Industry and Agriculture and City Council and brings together farmer associations and agri-businesses, government, and non-government organisations for food systems transformation and address of challenges such as food safety and access to fresh, healthy foods (40).

The empowerment and involvement of women, youth, and communities in 'decision-making and policy development at every level of governance' enhances their political and socio-economic status (14). Consequentially, if these groups are effectively involved, they have the potential to influence food systems through governance - locally and at scale. There is a need to address the material differences and inequity between people at the local level and between places at national, regional, and global levels (41). Furthermore, indigenous communities, like the Sami people and Bushmen, have unique forms of governance and experiences of food systems. Their voices have struggled to be heard and have space in national and global fora. Additionally, indigenous communities' knowledge and ways of knowing about their food systems need to be more widely accepted as legitimate methods and evidence; the potential of this should be explored when considering innovation in food systems knowledge and governance mechanisms elsewhere in the world.

Multistakeholder platforms (MSPs) or mechanisms are useful tools in the design of coherent and effective development plans (1,23). These platforms are characterised by the engagement of diverse stakeholders to explore potential solutions related to governance and to share knowledge and experiences (42). Multi-tier governance tools involve different levels of government and can involve different scales of private-sector entities and wider civil society, including academia. Within tiers and often between two local or higher-level tiers of governance, multiple stakeholders can also engage as part of horizontal governance. Box 2 provides an example of an MSP focused on food security and nutrition in Bogor, Indonesia.

There are many competing views on how food systems should be governed. However, it is increasingly recognised that stakeholders within the food system should 'learn about each other's perspectives and about interdependencies in [food] systems and develop conducive relations and trust' (43). These processes may be encouraged by bringing stakeholders together in a platform. Frameworks such as the MUFPP can be useful in fostering city-to-city alliances, and 'cross-fertilising knowledge and experiences to accelerate the transformation of urban foodscapes' (44).

BOX 3. BOGOR CITY, INDONESIA AND STREET FOOD VENDORS: REGIONAL 2025 -2030 FOOD SECURITY AND NUTRITION ACTION PLAN

In 2023/4, as part of GAIN's continued technical support for implementing Indonesia's national food systems pathway, it advocated for the inclusion of street food vendors, via their associations, in Bogor city's stakeholder engagements. These engagements aimed at enhancing access to safe, healthy food for all residents. This then led to the opportunity for the city to include street food vendors as part of their contributions to the development of the 2025-2030 Regional Action Plan for Food and Nutrition (RAD-PG).

This plan is a five-year strategic tool developed at the provincial and city/regency levels to guide local governments in planning and budgeting for food- and nutrition-related policies and programmes. It is informed by regional data and defines specific, measurable, and relevant targets to be achieved by 2030. The plan, overseen by the Regional Development and Planning Agency (BAPPERIDA) in Bogor city, involves the creation of a multistakeholder platform comprising government and non-government stakeholders.

Thirty-five stakeholder groups from Bogor were engaged in workshops to better and more inclusively inform the design of the RAD-PG's stakeholder platform. This included various city government departments, such as the Departments of Food Security and Agriculture, Health, Cooperatives and MSMEs, Trade, and Industry, Education, Environment, Food and Drug Agency, Food Distribution and Logistics, and Regional Bogor City Enterprise for Markets, and local organisations, together with non-government representatives from the city's consumer association, street food vendor associations, and youth groups (RISE Foundation and Gen-Re).Workshops focused on four strategic objectives: increasing the (i) availability and (ii) accessibility of diverse, nutritionally balanced, and safe food; (iii) increasing the utilisation of food and nutrition services; and (iv) strengthening food and nutrition governance.

For the first time in Indonesia, street food vendors were recognised as integral to the food system. Notably, 30% of registered street food vendors are women, however, women leading street food vendor associations is rare. Furthermore, despite community participatory mapping endeavours in Bogor's 13 street vendor operating zones, identifying groups of women vendors who support each other in some way has been elusive. The involvement of street food vendor leadership in the RAD-PG development process provided rich insights into the routines, opportunities, and challenges faced by street food vendors. This has greatly enhanced the development of the regional action plan's Integrated Standard Operating Procedures, which aims to guide more inclusive and equitable collaboration between government and other stakeholders via the mechanism of a multistakeholder platform.

The Bogor city Food and Nutrition Action Plan is set to be finalised by March 2025 and will be incorporated into the city's 2025-2030 Medium-Term Development Plan. It will also be formalised as a mayoral regulation when the new mayor takes office in February 2025.

CONCLUDING COMMENTS

The public sector plays a key role in effectively governing food systems, which requires active leadership and a whole-of-society approach to drive meaningful, innovative, and sustainable transformation. Inclusion and equity are important conditions of decision-making, investment, and action necessary for just and locally owned food systems transformation. Part of this involves adopting wider perspectives of food culture and ways of learning about food systems and evidence forms, empowerment of marginalised groups like women and youth, and better recognition of indigenous communities while managing positive and negative trade-offs across various scales (local, national, global) and between different socio-economic and environmental elements of the food system.

Models of public governance vary by country, and understanding these models and the context is vital for navigating opportunities and challenges including lock-ins and trade-offs in food systems. In an increasingly urban world under pressure from polycrisis, city (local) governments are essential leaders and partners in locally meaningful food system solutions. These governments can convene diverse stakeholders, leverage local knowledge, foster agency and respond quickly to changing conditions in food systems. However, globally, the role of local government is under-recognised; local governments are also challenged by a lack of capacity and human and financial resources. At the same time, city-to-city networks and horizontal cooperation across local and other geographical scales and governance levels offer many pathways for sharing best practices, tools, systems connections, and lessons learned for food systems transformation. Global policy discourses around food security, nutrition, climate, and biodiversity create a similar opportunity at the global level. Moreover, good governance (as broadly conceptualised) and food systems governance guidelines offer practical tools to support vertical and horizontal governance processes and facilitate just transformation.

Understanding food systems governance design and practice when involving relationships between urban and rural local governments and diverse communities, across territories and borders, and in different socio-economic and environmental contexts is an important area to further explore. This includes networks of different sized towns and cities, connections between the formal and informal food system, as well as intersections of food systems with other systems like climate.

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ANNEX I: UNFSS FOOD SYSTEMS GOVERNANCE PRINCIPLES

The food systems governance principles, proposed during the United Nations Food Systems Summit (2021) are:

'1. Uphold peoples' right to food and nutrition.

2. Ensure the conservation, protection, and restoration of the health and integrity of the Earth's ecosystems including through sustainable healthy food production and consumption based on ecologically sound methods within planetary boundaries, while ensuring resilience to future crises.

3. Ensure the protection of the climate system from the harmful impacts of food systems and enable food systems as well as people to adapt and increase resilience to climate change.

4. Ensure intergenerational, gender, and socio-economic equity so that our current way of food production and consumption does not compromise the ability of future generations or marginalized populations to achieve their own right to food and to secure their livelihoods.

5. Ensure agency so that all can fully participate and prosper from food systems...

6. Leave no one behind, ensure access to safe and nutritious food, end poverty, hunger, and malnutrition in all their forms and dimensions with a focus in particular on the needs of the poorest and most vulnerable.

7. Do no harm and ensure that transformation pathways, food system actors and stakeholders prevent and mitigate any negative impact on the environment and health of affected populations.

8. Ensure that the economic, social, and technological initiatives related to food systems occur in harmony with nature and are inclusive, building upon Indigenous, farmer, and local traditional knowledge as well as the best available scientific information in all implementation decisions.

9. Ensure urgent, timely, effective, and complementary humanitarian responses to crises are linked to development interventions, so as to strengthen food systems.' (34)
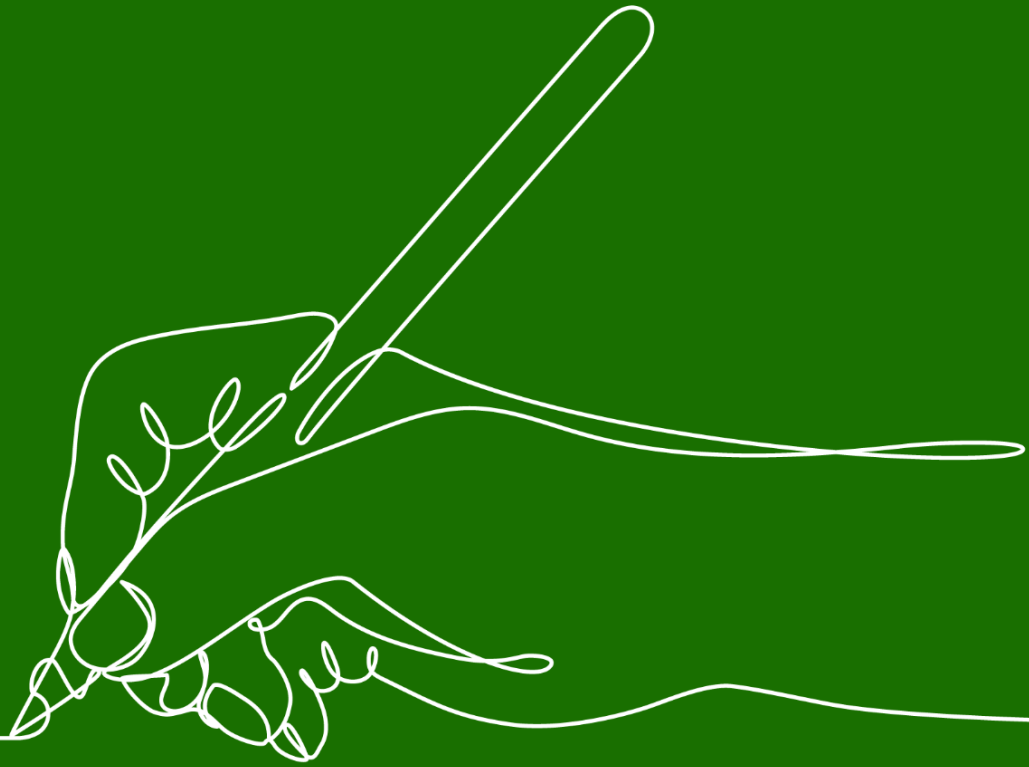
ABOUT GAIN

The Global Alliance for Improved Nutrition (GAIN) is a Swiss-based foundation launched at the UN 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 more nutritious food for all people, especially the most vulnerable.

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