



# United Nations Food Systems Summit

## Action Track 4: Advancing Equitable Livelihoods

### Potential Game Changing & Systemic Solutions for the UN Food Systems Summit

### An Initial Compilation

*Submitted to the UN Food Systems Summit Secretariat*

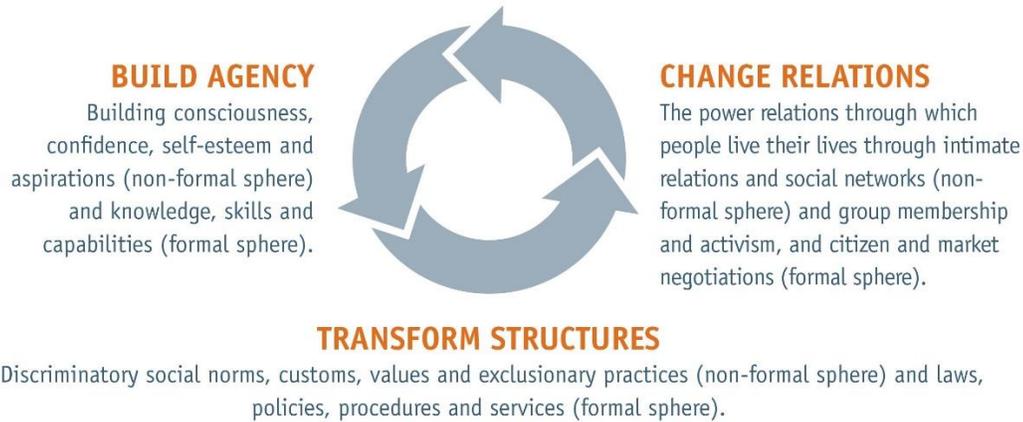
**DISCLAIMER:** *This paper presents merely an initial set of ideas submitted to the UNFSS Secretariat by AT 4 (i.e., the first 'wave' of ideas): additional solutions will continue to be developed over the coming months, in close collaboration with relevant stakeholders. Moreover, the ideas presented here are far from final: they will continue to be developed further and contextualised, again through active stakeholder engagement through a second wave of consultations. Finally, while these ideas are emerging from an interactive and collaborative process, Action Track 4 is a diverse and broad group, containing varied perspectives and opinions: inclusion of a solution here should not be interpreted as an endorsement of that idea on behalf of all Action Track 4 members or their institutions.*



## A. Introduction

### **Goals of Action Track 4**

Advancing equitable livelihoods requires building agency of the underrepresented -- those that lack the space or the enabling environment in which to exercise their power and rights. It implies protecting and strengthening the capacities and the knowledge, resilience, and innovation that they possess. Changing power relations in food systems is also critical and requires changes both in formal spheres (market negotiations, group membership, etc.) and in non-formal spheres.



The shift involves transforming structures, including confronting social norms and practices that are embedded in structures that systematically privilege some groups over others, marginalizing the poor. We must confront the inherent barriers within institutions and policies, with the aim of achieving lasting change so that food systems can lead to equitable, sustainable livelihoods, rather than just temporary or seasonal increases in opportunities. Within food systems, this transformation means adjustments to regimes that regulate access to, use of and control over resources, especially those defining land distribution, labour division, and decision-making power.

Central to advancing equitable livelihoods in food systems are the nearly 500 million small-scale food producers who often work in fragile and vulnerable terrestrial and aquatic ecosystems. Their production choices, technologies, natural resource management, and market links to value chains determine not only the sustainability and resilience of their livelihoods and their capacity to overcome poverty and food insecurity, but also the diversity of food that will be available to their communities and to consumers and the prices they will pay. Equally, the choices made by consumers and the processors, wholesalers and retailers who supply them with food, affects the opportunities available for small-scale producers. But livelihoods in food systems also include wage labour and business along food value chains, and international migrant workers who often have less access to services or support due to their different citizenship status.

The role and potential of the agricultural private sector (corporations, small- and medium- sized enterprises, small businesses, women self-help groups etc.), also needs to be recognized and leveraged to improve equitable access to livelihoods. The private sector holds the potential to generate much-needed investment in agriculture and food systems and ensure responsible and culturally appropriate supply chains that can benefit small-scale producers, workers and consumers. However, irresponsible



and inappropriate business and financial sector operations can undermine this potential. Responsible investments in food and agriculture require the proactive engagement and commitment of all partners. It is imperative that global financial institutions and organizations cooperate towards responsible investment in agri-food value chains.

Barriers that hamper access to financing for the private sector also need to be addressed. Increasing investment and access to finance is critical to achieve rural transformation, especially for small-scale food producers and rural micro, small and medium agri-food enterprises. In this context, public finance can play an important role in supporting rural transformation and investment in food systems, mitigating risks and attracting more private investment.

### ***Whose livelihoods***

Discussing food systems means going beyond the classical value chain approach. It is important to consider the multifunctionality of food and agriculture systems. AT4 had to identify the most vulnerable actors in food systems both in urban and rural areas, with a view to ensuring their human and labour rights and promoting their livelihoods. When dealing with livelihoods in agriculture and fisheries, the work must not be limited to production but also production of non-agricultural commodities. AT4 seeks to address how food systems contribute to sustainable development involving a combination of economic, social and environmental issues.

The workforce in agriculture, fisheries and food production whose livelihoods need to be improved to ensure equity and social justice are:

- **Agricultural workforce** comprises an estimated 1 billion farmers (self-employed) and waged, employed agricultural workers.
- **Farmers** - smallholders/family farms to large commercial farms, plantations.
- **Waged agricultural workers** employed on farms and plantations in crop, livestock, dairy, aquacultural and non-food crop production 300-500 million workers. Migrant, women, indigenous, youth, rural/urban. Full-time, part time, seasonal, casual, temporary, piece rate workers.
- **Fishers/fisherfolk** - marine and freshwater.
- **Food processing/manufacturing workers:** Food manufacturing including beverages; Animal food manufacturing; Grain & oilseed milling; Sugar & confectionary product manufacturing; Fruit & vegetable preserving & specialty food manufacturing; Dairy product manufacturing; Seafood product preparation & packaging; Bakeries; Other food manufacturing; Animal slaughtering & processing; Animal slaughtering; Meat processed from carcasses; Rendering and meat by product processing; Poultry processing including slaughtering.
- **Transport/distribution workers:** handling and delivering raw food products, semi-processed and processed food products including riders.
- **Supermarket/shop and market workers:** handling packaged, canned foods and fresh foods when serving customers and filling shelves.
- **Food preparers/servers:** - restaurants, cafes, hotels, conference centres, catering companies, canteens in schools & factories, street food vendors.



## B. Action Track 4 - Process to generate game changing solutions

### **Process for generating solutions**

Extensive consultation with a diverse scope of actors has enabled AT4 to compile the ‘first wave’ of solutions as presented in this document. The exchanges allowed AT4 to take stock, build on lessons learnt, share best practices, and foster collective ownership of a common transition towards equitable food systems. A majority of the solutions presented in the first wave were sourced from ideas that derived from the following series of AT4-led consultations: Member States Consultations (7 Oct 2020, 27 Jan 2021), Public Forums (1 Dec 2020, 1 Feb 2021) through a meeting with the private sector (8 Feb 2021), and from the online survey, which ran until 1 February 2021. Senior leadership from the Committee on World Food Security and its High-Level Panel of Experts also reviewed solutions to ensure that the existing global guidance was considered throughout. Members of the AT4 Leadership Group also consulted with their networks, through national and regional dialogues, to profile the concerns of the often underrepresented across food systems, as well as meeting bilaterally with all those who requested. Due to the widespread consultation required, solutions to be finalized for submission in ‘wave two’ include from indigenous peoples, and from fish workers. Numerous solutions continue to be submitted for consideration and will be evaluated as gaps from the first wave are being resolved.

## C. Snapshot: Action Track 4 Game-Changing Solutions - Round 1

### **A. Institutionalizing rights**

1. Strengthen labour regulations by placing people’s dignity and rights at the centre
2. Improve governance of labour markets in food systems
3. Promote ratification and effective implementation of international labour standards
4. Securing land tenure rights for resilient and sustainable food systems
5. Institutionalize and mainstream the anti-discrimination and labour rights of migrant (foreign) workers in agriculture and across the food chain

### **B. Strengthen social dialogue**

6. Establishing or improving social dialogue mechanisms as powerful means of finding common solutions to problems, advancing decent work and social justice
7. Strengthening organization in the agri-food sector

### **C. Building people’s knowledge, practice, and agency**

8. Promote inclusive and sustainable agroecological network chains for small farmers and indigenous communities linked to rural and urban consumers.

### **D. New forms of policy development**

9. Engaging with cities and local governments for equitable livelihoods

### **E. Business and technology**

10. Bridging the digital divide and increasing access to information and services in food systems



11. Commitment by main supermarket chains to buy locally
12. Global matching investment fund for small-scale producers' organizations

#### **F. Equitable Investment and uptake**

13. Invest in the future - making food systems finance accessible for rural people
14. Public Development Bank Initiative to Catalyze Green and Inclusive Food System Investments
15. Change relationships of power in ways that ensure a fair share of resources through the MAC Protocol (Mining, Agriculture, and Construction) Protocol

#### **G. Livelihood support and diversification**

16. Agri-SME Business Development Platform: the first global multi-stakeholder engine for inclusive and equitable agri-value-chains
17. Farmer Field and Business Schools

#### **H. Extending social protection coverage to all**

18. Social protection in coherence with agri-food systems related sectors
19. Integrating Gender Transformative Approaches for Equity and Justice in Food Systems
20. Living incomes and wages in value chains for small-scale farmers and agricultural workers

## **D. Details: Action Track 4 Game-Changing Solutions - Round 1**

### **S.1. Strengthen Labour Regulations by Placing People's Dignity and Rights at the Centre**

#### **1. What, in brief, is the solution?**

The solution is a rights-based framework for regulations that is intersectional and includes labour rights, social protections, incorporates UN human rights conventions, builds people power, and challenges any forms of neo-colonisation of Indigenous peoples. An increased focus on agency and on sustainability as core dimensions of food security and nutrition, as called for by the HLPE (2020) can help frame the importance of labour regulations in food systems.

First and foremost, international labour and human rights instruments must be ratified and incorporated into domestic regulations. This includes adoption of the 12 ILO Fundamental Rights Conventions and of other Conventions which are specifically relevant for food systems. These are ILO Convention No. 184 on Safety and Health in Agriculture (2001) (as agriculture, including fishing, is one of the three most dangerous occupations in which to work in terms of fatalities, serious injuries and occupational disease); ILO Convention No. 188 on Work in Fishing (2007); ILO Convention No. 190 on Violence and Harassment (2019); ILO Convention Nos. 97 and 143 on Migrant Workers; ILO Convention No. 105 on Abolition of Forced Labour (1957); ILO Convention No. 182 on Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention (1999); ILO Convention No. 138 on Minimum Age for Employment (1973); ILO Convention No. 100 on Equal Remuneration (1951); ILO Convention No. 122 on Employment Policy (1964); ILO Convention No. 111 on Discrimination (Employment and Occupation, 1958); ILO Convention No. 81 on Labour Inspection (Industry and Commerce, 1947); ILO Convention No. 129 on Labour inspection (Agriculture, 1947); ILO Convention No. 87 on Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organize (1948); ILO



Convention No. 98 on the Right to Organize and Collective Bargaining (1949); and ILO Convention No. 144 on Tripartite Consultation.

The International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families must also be ratified and the Convention for Elimination of all Forms of Racial Discrimination (CERD) must be meaningfully incorporated into all labour provisions. Discrimination in food production issues must be understood from an intersectional perspective considering indigeneity, race, gender, sexual identity, class, religion and other markers listed in the Convention for Elimination of all Forms of Racial Discrimination. Special attention must be made to precarious immigration status of foreign migrant farm workers and their residence status must be regularized.

All labourers in the food system must have guaranteed rights to: adequate food of good nutritional quality, be paid a living wage, direct employment (especially for migrant workers), social protection, freedom of association and collective bargaining, decent health and safety conditions in workplaces, for workers to remove themselves from danger, regular hours of work and avoidance of excessive overtime, paid sick leave (especially during isolation and quarantine during health crises), and importantly, protection by government labour inspection services.

Legislation is required for organizing and supporting existing worker associations that focus on wet-market vendors, street food operators, and micro and small enterprises across rural-urban value chains (i.e. in rural communities as well as urban informal settlements, peri-urban areas, etc.). Actors in the informal food economy are vital for creating rural-urban linkages - linking small-scale farms to urban markets - for supporting food security in low-income communities, and for creating livelihood options for low-income women and the working poor. Yet in many places, informal food workers (especially in urban areas) are the target of ongoing state-sanctioned evictions, bribes, confiscations, and harassment.

Secondly, the principles of these Conventions and a rights-based framework must permeate through all agricultural regulations and policies, including certification standards such as the Codex Alimentarius. Currently, the food standards, guidelines, and codes of practices contained in the Codex Alimentarius, developed in part by the FAO, make no mention of labour standards. The purpose of the Codex Alimentarius is not only to promote the health of global consumers but also to ensure fair practices within the food trade. Fair practices within food systems cannot be meaningfully advanced without taking into account the poor labour conditions of food workers.

Thirdly, measures must be put in place to ensure compliance with and enforcement of labour rights standards and regulations at the national and international level. Given the complexity of the agricultural labour, compliance and enforcement must address the intersections of labour, human rights, and food security. Special attention must be given to migrant workers (from outside of the country) so that they have equivalent levels of working and living conditions to domestic workers. As per the suggestions of the UN Special Rapporteur on the Right to Food, the ILO should become a full member of the Committee on World Food Security (CFS), and the outcomes of the FSS should be taken forward and implemented through the CFS. The CFS could make use of ILO's system of "periodic reports" on conventions, which is already in place, to periodically review progress by governments and the social partners on implementing labour conventions, as well human rights conventions, to ensure equitable livelihoods for agricultural/food workers. Representatives of the ILO-CFS committee can contribute to improved human rights monitoring by reporting on the country they are placed in and liaising with domestic law-making bodies to promote improved labour practices and human rights standards.

In addition, there should be mechanisms for monitoring by community groups and networks. Meaningful association and collective bargaining rights should ensure the formation of workers collectives, including those of foreign and migrant workers, and unions who can ensure accountability and enforcement of their rights. Being able to associate meaningfully includes protection from employer reprisals and suppression



of collective resistance. The ILO and other groups have also suggested tools such as a Strategic Compliance Portal and Public Audits that use “bottom-up” solutions to ensure accountability and compliance.

## 2. What problem is it trying to address within food systems?

The United Nations food security framework, and the trade and labour policy which stems from it, has long been lacking robust regulations to protect the rights, livelihoods, and dignity of workers in the agri-food sector. Mr. Michael Fakhri, UN Special Rapporteur on the Right to Food, in his first [report](#) to the United Nations General Assembly acknowledged that the trade regime fails to adequately acknowledge and uphold the human rights of marginalized food workers (including agricultural workers). The conception of food workers includes wage workers as their labour is essential to food production. The reality is that the vast majority of food production is made possible through wage labourers who are given nominal wages and little to no legal protections, meanwhile wealth and power is centralized in a small number of private entities. The current regulations and policies, if any, have created an access to justice crisis for labourers in food systems. The gap created by the lack of regulations, policies and enforcement mechanisms has not only reduced the visibility of labourers in the trade regime but has also further marginalized food workers who are vulnerable to human rights abuses. Addressing the deprivation and denial of human rights is a central component to promoting equality and advancing the livelihood of workers in food systems.

The global threat caused by COVID-19 has highlighted the fragility of our food system and has exacerbated existing inequalities in livelihoods within food systems, particularly for migrant farm workers. The Working Group on Global Food Governance of the Civil Society and Indigenous Peoples’ Mechanism (CSM) for relations with the UN Committee on World Food Security (CFS) reports that “the absence of decent work for the vast majority of those around the world working in agriculture” has been at the heart of the poverty and inequality crisis. Workers, including migrant workers living and working on plantations, on farms of all sizes, in orchards, greenhouses, packing stations, and supermarkets are excluded from basic protective measures, including labour rights, human rights, health safety measures, and social security. As early as 2007, a joint report by the FAO, ILO and IUF pointed out that “a key challenge from these Summits is to ensure full recognition of waged agricultural workers as a distinct occupational group; as workers who have much to contribute to sustainable agriculture, sustainable development and food security in terms of knowledge, skills and experience; and as a social group who must be empowered to tackle the poverty in which many of them live. The right of agricultural workers and small farmers to adequate food and sustainable livelihoods can only be achieved as part of a package of ensuring wider social and political rights.” Waged agricultural workers include permanent workers, casual, temporary or seasonal workers, migrant workers, Indigenous rural workers, and wage-dependent small farmers, across the food chain, from the fields and fisheries to the supermarkets and street vendors.

In addition, the specific concerns of migrant and racialized farm workers, as well as women farmers, requires special attention as they face unique discrimination and disadvantages related to legal status, gender, and disability. The most exploited food workers are often those who are systemically marginalized in societies, socially, politically, and culturally, such as migrant workers, racialized workers and workers belonging to discriminated and indigenous groups, for example, Dalit farm workers in India or workers from Mayan communities in Central America and Mexico. Wage workers, seasonal workers, and women workers are systematically denied legal protections that workers in other industries have and in food system sectors where large and corporate farms and markets dominate.

The profound inequality of power between large corporate interests and labour must be directly addressed. The sustainability of food systems cannot be advanced without the improvement of labour



standards and human rights for food workers. Mr. Fakhri has illustrated this notion best in maintaining that “the fulfilment of the right to food for one cannot come at the expense of another”.

### 3. How can this solution address that problem (theory of change)?

Robust policy and regulation reform is required in order to advance access to justice for food workers. The primary systemic access to justice barriers that food workers are faced with include a) lack of adoption of international human rights and labour standards in the legislation b) lack of enforcement of the standards in the domestic system and c) lack of collective bargaining rights and discouragement of worker organization, which in turn leads to d) a lack of knowledge of their rights and entitlements e) precarious employment or legal status which has a chilling effect on bringing forward complaints where rights have been deprived or denied, f) the egregious power imbalance between labourers and employers which further marginalizes food workers, g) overly complex and bureaucratized dispute resolution mechanisms and h) the lack of accountability among state actors and the prevalence of impunity of employers and corporate interests. The first step to address the access to justice crisis for food workers is to increase access for labourers to rights and entitlements under the law. Secondly, the power imbalance, and the precarious working conditions that directly flow, must be counteracted with policy and regulation reform which requires that employers are accountable to uphold the human rights and dignity of food workers. Lastly, collective organization, public and international audits, and dispute resolution mechanisms can be reimagined to center the voice of food workers by creating avenues for food workers to demand protection without fear of reprisal. Implementation on a domestic scale must be closely observed to align strengthened labour standards on a global scale. Labour policy reform can create more effective social dialogue between labourers and employers by empowering labourers at the grassroots level to organize and advocate on their interests.

## S.2. Improve Governance of Labour Markets in Food Systems

### 1. What, in brief, is the solution?

- *Institutionalise rights*: A key solution in strengthening labour market governance and institutions is to ensure that waged agricultural workers’ labour rights (as human rights) are respected and guaranteed, namely the right to:

- be paid a living wage.
- direct employment (not through labour contractors), including migrant workers.
- decent health and safety conditions in workplaces, including the right to remove themselves from danger without loss of employment.
- regular hours of work and avoidance of excessive overtime.
- paid sick leave (especially if workers with COVID-19 are to isolate, if necessary, rather than going to work to earn money).
- freedom of association and collective bargaining.
- social protection.
- be protected by government labour inspection services.
- adequate food of good nutritional quality.

An increased focus on agency and on sustainability as core dimensions of food security and nutrition, as called for by the HLPE (2020) can help frame the importance of labour rights in food systems.



- *Coordinate with Ministries and Parliamentarians and civil society:* FSS should work to strengthen labour market governance and institutions in association with national Ministries of Labour and Agriculture, Parliamentarians, the Rome-based agricultural agencies, and the ILO. Where appropriate, labour laws governing the agricultural/food sectors should be modernised, including inclusion of clauses on determining the employment relationship. Labour markets should include access for workers and farmers to employment advisory services which can now also be provided via digital technology. The newly adopted Voluntary Guidelines for Food Systems and Nutrition (VG-FSyN) can provide guidance for country level policy (CFS, 2021).

- *Improve access to the labour market:* This is essential since often labour is the only asset possessed by the poor and working class in the food sector. This includes increasing employment opportunities (that are regulated by labour laws) and earnings through minimum wage laws. Employment opportunities and higher levels of employment and earnings for women are especially critical for empowerment and food security. The deportability of foreign migrant labour creates a vulnerability in the labour market that needs to be addressed through regularisation of citizenship/immigration status.

- *Eliminate child labour while ensuring competitiveness of small-scale agriculture:* Improving labour market governance also requires eliminating child labour in agriculture, while addressing the competitiveness issues for agriculture, since children are often used as traditional free or low-paid labour allowing small-scale rural agriculture to remain competitive. The competitiveness of small-scale rural agriculture can be improved through government procurement schemes for commodities produced by wage labourers and small farmers, debt forgiveness and small farmer investment policies, and rural banking systems.

- *Regulate the contractor relationship:* As the earlier FAO/ILO report found “the most serious problem is that of labour hired through or by contractors”. Labour contractors manage the recruitment, transport, and management of waged agricultural workers, including foreign migrant workers. Contractors in the food sector must be regulated. As a result of abuses by labour contractors, as especially revealed by the COVID-19 pandemic, direct employment of workers in meat factories is now a legal requirement in Germany. Labour contractors must be licensed by the government, apply labour laws, and be subject to periodic inspection by government labour inspection services. Workers employed in a labour gang by a labour contractor must have proper contracts of employment.

- *Include agricultural wage workers in land reform:* Agricultural and food sector workers have virtually been excluded from land reform, and therefore, from the potential benefits of productive agriculture. This needs to be rectified.

- *Involve agricultural workers’ unions and grassroots collectives in land reform and all policy reforms:* The bargaining power of the precarious labour market in agriculture must be reinforced through special protections for collectives, unions, other forms of organisation, and imposing standards for collective bargaining. Grassroots organizing and unionization amongst food workers must be promoted. NGOs and international organizations such as the ILO which will also reinforce labourers’ bargaining power. Capacity building of worker unions and collectives will lead to a deeper understanding of the policies, instruments, arrangements and options in land reform and redistribution and will empower workers to seek to improve their labour conditions as beneficiaries of land reform. Additionally, networks and alliances can be built between waged agricultural workers, including foreign migrant labour, and small farmers through their



trade unions and producer organisations. This will also tackle systemic racialization and social and cultural marginalisation that pervades agricultural labour since it provides solidarity across power differentials. Trade unions can also manage savings and credit cooperatives as done in Tanzania and Uganda.

- *Policies for decentralized economies:* In addition to strengthening labour regulations, there is also a need for policies that promote and strengthen local decentralized economies. Such local decentralized economies have the advantage of simultaneously cutting down the distance between producers and consumers and reducing our dependence on fossil fuels. Such local decentralized economies will lead to local-level job creation while strengthening local production and consumption. It will highlight women's role in society and address discrimination against marginalized groups. Availability of sustainable livelihood also plays a key role in providing dignity, food security, and economic security to households.

## 2. What problem is it trying to address within food systems?

Well-functioning labour markets in food systems are essential for poverty reduction for smallholder farmers, waged agricultural workers, and other food workers but labour market governance and institutions remain weak, undermining the achievement of equitable livelihoods.

Rural and urban labour markets in food systems take many forms and involve many different types of employment relationships. Food systems labour markets offer employment in both agricultural and non-agricultural sectors to skilled and unskilled labour, in self-employment and wage labour. Although wage labour is often thought of in the context of large commercial farms, plantations, or cash-crop systems, there is also an active labour market in the small-scale agriculture sector, comprised especially of women farmers, women sharecroppers, and daily and seasonal workers.

An estimated 1.1 billion people are engaged in agriculture. This includes some 300-500 million waged workers, many of whom depend on wage from jobs on plantations or large commercial farms, including aquacultural farms. Their employment can vary from full-time, casual, to seasonal and their wages are often based on piece rate work. Many of them are migrant workers from another country. Many are employed via or by labour contractors. On average, women agricultural workers form 20-30% of the waged workforce and their numbers are rising as a percentage of the workforce in most regions. In addition, large numbers of casual, temporary and seasonal workers are engaged by small and larger-scale growers.

Rural and urban labour markets tend not to function well because labour market governance and institutions are usually weak and have little capacity to directly address factors determining supply or demand for labour. Rural labour markets are largely marketing for unskilled labour where supply comes from workers with little formal education or training. The prevalence of casual labour and child labour contributes to low productivity, low wages, and weak bargaining capacity. Where small family farms predominate, much of the supply of labour is from small farmers and their families who need to supplement the income obtained from their own holdings by hiring out their labour.

Labour markets in food system are characterised by the labour monopsony (single buyer) of large corporations; rural poverty; the property inequality among rural households; seasonality, precarity, and insecurity employment; low income and indebtedness; high risk/hazardous and backbreaking nature of agricultural labour; and the demand for labour in irrigated and unirrigated agriculture, fisheries and across the food chain for ensuring food security and competitiveness in international food trade. Workers are also commonly exempted from laws protecting other workers, especially rights to collective bargaining and to health and safety. The weakness of the labour markets governance regime and the lack of human rights monitoring creates greater precarity amongst food workers who are unable to exercise their rights



and therefore continue to work in labour conditions where their livelihoods, health, well-being and even lives are threatened.

Trade liberalization and capital flows have made livelihoods in the food system even more precarious as large farms and corporations get better access to markets, can make profits in the input-intensive sector through depressing wages, by holding smallholder farmers to contract farming, and can take advantage of specific, political, economic and cultural factors (such as societal marginalisation, rural poverty, low labour power, social controls, using foreign migrant labour, etc.) to structure the local labour market. The present global restructuring of the economy and the commercialization of agriculture has led to the adoption of labour-displacing mechanization and new technologies for producing less labour-intensive crops. This has led to thousands of landless people, subsistence farmers, and wage labourers displaced and unable to sustain their livelihoods and a neo-colonisation that perpetuates and extends colonial economic and social structures.

Changes in the structure of the labour market and in the organization of work demand a new framework to understand the employment relationship. False self-employment, false subcontracting, the establishment of pseudo-cooperatives, false provision of services, and false company restructuring disguise the employment relationship. Further, precarious immigration and citizenship status of foreign migrant workers also lead to forms of employment relationship that traditional contract and employment laws and policies are unable to respond to.

The central concern that emerges in the context of the governance of labour markets in food systems, is the lack of human rights monitoring and accountability where labour standards are breached. Enterprises are able to take advantage of the low socioeconomic status of food workers, and the vulnerabilities of migrant workers, to continue to deny food workers their human rights and use monopolistic practices with impunity. Law enforcement, labour inspection, and compliance with international labour standards, among other things, are currently lacking in the international food systems labour market. Governing institutions of the international food systems labour market, such as the International Labour Organization, and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), have yet to meaningfully capitalize on its resources and capacity to improve labour standards and monitor compliance of private and public entities that rely on the labour of food workers. But the solutions also have to address governance in general and unique concerns such as property inequality among rural households; centralization of agricultural land ownership; inter-generational occupational change; rural-urban and foreign migration; the competing demands for labour in various sectors; insecurity, unemployment and seasonality of employment; and the geographical and political isolation of the rural poor through environmental controls.

### **3. How can this solution address that problem (theory of change)?**

Making rural and urban labour markets more effective pathways out of poverty is a major policy challenge that remains poorly understood and sorely neglected in policymaking. Well-functioning agricultural labour markets are essential for poverty reduction for both smallholder farmers and waged agricultural workers but require game-changing solutions to address market failures.

Improving the governance of labour markets can only be accomplished with policy and institutional reform which centres the voice of food workers and empowers them to collectively organize and enforce their human rights. Thus, it is recommended that the bottom-up approach is taken so that the governance of food systems incorporates a true understanding of the diverse interests and concerns of food workers.

### **S.3. Promote Ratification and Effective Implementation of International Labour Standards**



### 1. What, in brief, is the solution?

Achieving sustainable food systems that deliver food security and nutrition for all, while limiting negative environmental impacts and promoting decent work and sustainable livelihoods for workers and producers along the food supply chain, will require a strong focus on social standards, in particular the ratification and effective implementation of international labour standards. While agriculture and related sectors remain a significant source of employment and livelihoods in many developing and emerging economies, jobs in the sector are often characterized by significant decent work deficits, including informality, poor working conditions, lack of labour and social protection, and low and irregular incomes. A growing body of research indicates that compliance with international labour standards can facilitate improvements in productivity and economic performance, creating an enabling environment for building agency of the workforce towards more equitable livelihoods. Therefore, addressing decent work deficits and upholding and protecting labour rights in the agri-food sector, through ratification and effective implementation of relevant labour standards, in addition to being an important objective in itself, is key to facilitating agricultural growth and inclusive food systems, with potential significant multiplier effects on other sectors.

### 2. What was/were the source(s) from which this solution emerged?

The rural economy, and the agricultural sector in particular, have been globally challenged by persistent and often structural gaps that obstruct a rights-based approach to development, the promotion of full and productive employment, and the possibility of equitable livelihoods. The ILO has combatted these challenges through its Decent Work Agenda, with a critical focus on standards and rights at work in the rural economy. The focus has been to bolster national policies and laws with international labour standards that have specific relevance to promoting dignity and rights enshrined in fundamental principles and rights at work, fostering development and productive employment, and reducing poverty.

### 3. What problem is it trying to address within food systems?

While international labour standards are increasingly recognised as central to ensuring a rights-based approach to development and providing an enabling environment for improved productivity and performance, their application in agriculture and related sectors remains weak, contributing to severe decent work deficits and gaps in labour protection for the workforce. In many developing and emerging economies, agri-food workers often endure inadequate working conditions and lack effective protection due to significant gaps in coverage and barriers to ratification and implementation. ILO estimates that 8 out of 10 working poor live in rural areas and the majority of them are engaged in agriculture. Two-thirds of the extreme poor are in agriculture.<sup>1</sup> According to the latest ILO estimates, globally 152 million children, aged between 5 and 17, are subject to child labour, with 70.9% of them in agriculture.<sup>2</sup> Forced labour, too, remains prevalent in many rural areas, especially among migrant agricultural workers and victims of trafficking. In general, many jobs in the sector lack significantly in quality and are among most hazardous, unprotected and poorly remunerated. Some 170,000 agricultural workers are killed in work-related accidents each year, which means that they run twice the risk of dying on the job compared to workers in other sectors. Millions more suffer injuries in workplace accidents involving agricultural machinery or poisoning by pesticides and other agrochemicals.

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<sup>1</sup> ILO: World Economic and Social Outlook 2016: Transforming jobs to end poverty, (Geneva 2016), p. 11.

<sup>2</sup> ILO: Global estimates of child labour: Results and trends, 2012-16, Geneva, 2017.



#### 4. Why is addressing that problem important for achieving the goal of your working group?

Advancing equitable livelihoods in the agri-food sector will not be possible without addressing decent work deficits and labour protection gaps endured by its workforce. This will require ratification of relevant international labour standards and their effective implementation. This starts with the promotion of the fundamental principles and rights at work (i.e. the elimination of child labour, forced labour, discrimination in employment, and the promotion of freedom of association and the right to collective bargaining) as enabling rights and goes beyond into all international labour standards related to specific employment and labour issues, specific categories of workers, or specific sectors and subsectors.<sup>3</sup>

#### 5. How can this solution address that problem (theory of change)?

The integration of international labour standards in the discussions and conclusions of the Food Systems Summit should contribute, *inter alia*, to: strengthening the commitment of governments to address national challenges which prevent the ratification of relevant ILO Conventions and to improve the enforcement of national laws through better labour administration and labour inspection systems; improving national and cross-border social dialogue; promoting policy coherence, strengthening international partnerships and scaling up the implementation of development cooperation programmes on the promotion of the ILO's Decent Work Agenda in agriculture and related sectors; and improving enterprises' access to ILO resources and guidance on international labour standards and human rights due diligence. These developments in turn should lead to: increased ratification and implementation of international labour standards relevant to decent work in the agri-food sector; improved compliance with labour laws by enterprises; improved access to rights and to legal remedies for workers; and global policy coherence on decent work in the agri-food sector.

#### 6. Why does this solution align to the definition and criteria for a 'game changing solution' developed by the Summit?

The Decent Work Agenda with all its dimensions (i.e. rights at work, productive employment, social dialogue and social protection) is increasingly recognized as an effective instrument for fighting poverty and hunger, and offering a basis for a more just and stable framework for global development. And, while there are a number of international labour standards that are of direct relevance to the sector, many of which have been widely ratified, in most countries, their application has remained limited. Given that poverty remains a predominantly rural phenomenon, with the majority of the poor engaged in agriculture, promoting decent work and rights at work in the rural economy will be key to creating agency for the people in the workforce, towards advancing equitable livelihoods. It will have a particularly important effect on groups vulnerable to socio-economic risks and will contribute to promoting gender equality and women's empowerment in the sector. For instance, women make up a significant share of workforce in the sector. However, their jobs are often time- and labour- intensive, marked by gender-based norms and discrimination, informal arrangements and poor levels of remuneration with little or no access to social protection. In this context, integration of international labour standards in the Food Security Summit can

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<sup>3</sup> In addition to fundamental ILO conventions (i.e. the Forced Labour Convention, 1930 (No. 29) and the Protocol of 2014; the Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organise Convention, 1948 (No. 87); the Right to Organise and Collective Bargaining Convention, 1949 (No. 98); the Equal Remuneration Convention, 1951 (No. 100); the Abolition of Forced Labour Convention, 1957 (No. 105); the Discrimination (Employment and Occupation) Convention, 1958 (No. 111); the Minimum Age Convention, 1973 (No. 138); and the Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention, 1999 (No. 182)), international labour standards that have direct relevance to the agro-food sector and the rural economy include, among others: the Labour Inspection (Agriculture) Convention, 1969 (No. 129); the Right of Association (Agriculture) Convention, 1921 (No. 11); the Plantations Convention, 1958 (No. 110); the Minimum Wage Fixing Convention, 1970 (No. 131) and the the Minimum Wage Fixing Machinery (Agriculture) Convention, 1951 (No. 99); the Rural Workers' Organisations Convention, 1975 (No. 141); Safety and Health in Agriculture Convention, 2001 (No. 184); the Social Protection Floors Recommendation, 2012 (No. 202).



catalyse a shift in favour of a robust, normative framework of compliance for stakeholders for systemic change in shaping sustainable food systems. Promotion and ratification of international labour standards will further improve global policy coherence, create a level-playing field for governments and enterprises, improve access to rights and legal remedies for workers, and discourage the ‘race to the bottom’. While ambitious, the proposed solution is actionable and sustainable, and can achieve significant impact at scale, with a critical contribution to advancing equitable livelihoods and sustainable transformation of food systems.

### **7. Existing evidence supporting the argument that this solution will work, or at least achieve the initial outcomes**

Numerous ILO initiatives, policy-related work, and development cooperation projects focusing on addressing decent work deficits in the agri-food sector and advancing workers’ right through the promotion of ratification and implementation of labour standards of particular relevance to the sector and/or its specific sub-sectors.

### **8. What is the current and/or likely political support for this idea?**

There is a widespread political support for the ILO’s Decent Work Agenda, including ILO Conventions, as reflected in the Sustainable Development Goal 8, which aims to “promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all”. In this context, the proposed solution will make an important contribution to achieving SDG8 and in particular targets 8.5 on “full and productive employment and decent work for all women and men, including for young people and persons with disabilities, and equal pay for work of equal value”, 8.7 on the elimination of forced labour and child labour, and 8.8 on the protection of labour rights and promotion of safe and secure working environments for all workers.

The private sector, which has a major influence on the implementation of SDG 8, is also increasingly recognizing the critical role of labour standards, in particular on productivity and trade, and integrating the labour dimension into human rights due diligence. Labour standards are also progressively being included in internal codes of practice and private certification schemes.

### **9. Are there certain contexts for which this solution is particularly well suited, or, not well-suited.**

Well-suited for all countries but in particular those with large rural economies and agri-food sectors.

## **S.4. Securing Land Tenure Rights for Resilient and Sustainable Food Systems**

### **1. What, in brief, is the solution?**

Secure land tenure rights for and with people, responding to the needs and protecting the rights of those who live on and from the land in achieving and strengthening food security and food systems.

Recognizing the inherent link between secure land for and with people urges respecting, protecting, and strengthening the land rights of women and men and communities particularly of those who are vulnerable and marginalized, to ensure that no one is deprived of the use and control of the land on which secure food systems are built upon.

### **2. What was/were the source(s) from which this solution emerged?**

AT4 Leadership group discussion



### **3. What problem is it trying to address within food systems?**

The unequal land distribution and lack of tenure security of people who live on and from the land face adverse impact to plan, invest, and produce food undermining their productive contribution to balanced and sustainable food systems.

A recent study conducted by the International Land Coalition together with its members reveals that the top 10 percent of the rural population captures 60% of agricultural land value, while the bottom 50% only control 3. Titled “Uneven Ground”, the study found that land inequality directly threatens the livelihoods of an estimated 2.5 billion people involved in smallholder agriculture, as well the world’s poorest 1.4 billion people, most of whom depend largely on agriculture for their livelihoods. This upward trend of land inequality partly stems from the increased interest from corporate and financial actors, such as investment funds, in agricultural land investments. As corporate and financial investments grow, ownership and control of land becomes more concentrated and increasingly opaque.

Today, the largest 1 percent of farms operate more than 70 percent of the world’s farmland and are integrated into the corporate food system, while over 80 percent are smallholdings of less than two hectares that are generally excluded from global food chains. Despite this growing inequality and marginalisation, smallholder farmers contribute to 70 percent of the world’s food. They often operate in lack of tenure security and recognition for their contribution and are subject to numerous threats and vulnerabilities including land grabbing, force evictions, and adverse effects of climate change. The COVID-19 pandemic brought into the light the reliance on local food systems and role played by small holder farmers in feeding people. The insecure access to land and dispossessions undermines this positive role and contribution that are resilient, equitable, and sustainable in contexts that they operate.

### **4. Why is addressing that problem important for achieving the goal of your working group?**

Competition for land has never been greater. The world faces rising population numbers, rapid urbanization, climate change, declining soil fertility and an increasing demand for food and fuel security. All these build pressure on land. In many jurisdictions, competing land uses and increasing demand are sources of conflicts, debates, harassments, marginalisation, and discrimination. Weak land governance and inefficient management of natural resources compound these issues. Poor rural people – especially women, youth, indigenous peoples and other marginalized groups and local communities – typically have weak or unprotected tenure rights. This means in present circumstances and trends, they risk losing access and control over land, often the only asset they have to secure their livelihoods.

Access to land is key to building sustainable local food systems and tackling poverty. When smallholder farmers have secure land rights, they are more willing to invest in the land and can use it to access credit. Land ownership also gives them more incentives to improve farming techniques and manage their land sustainably with a positive contribution to local food systems. This provides opportunities to diversify their incomes and improve their family’s well-being. Secure land tenure is a safeguard against threats of losing their land to any entity claiming a stake over their land.

With secure land rights, rural women and the local communities gain a higher capacity to contribute to local food supply chains. This provides them a significance in society and community matters. Land tenure security makes societies more stable, with less conflict and more opportunities for locally driven investments.

In essence, food security and poverty reduction cannot be achieved unless issues of access to land, security of tenure and the capacity and autonomy to use land are addressed. Recent food security crises in Africa have revived the debate on whether current land tenure systems constrain farmer innovations and investments in agriculture. Both direct and indirect linkages between land tenure and food security are suggested.



## 5. How can this solution address that problem (theory of change)?

The following table visualises how actions towards strengthening land tenure and equitable access to land can lead to sustainable and resilient food systems.

Inputs	Outputs	Outcomes	Impact
<p>Including local communities and vulnerable and marginalised groups in decision making processes and taking their input on board in relation to the land that they live on and from.</p> <p>Investments into identifying drivers of land inequality</p> <p>Investing on well-functioning land registries</p> <p>Raising awareness among key stakeholders on the important role that local communities play in food systems and building consensus</p> <p>Action to enact right to information laws and/or their effective implementation</p> <p>Building social and political pressure to support resilient and</p>	<p>People-centered land policies, frameworks, and governance structures</p> <p>Land Policies addressing causes of land inequality</p> <p>Laws and regulations to improve greater transparency of the actions of powerful players</p> <p>Enactment of laws and regulations to make large scale land investors accountable</p> <p>Increased contribution from women, IPs and local communities in land governance</p> <p>Facilitated dialogues between local communities and corporations</p> <p>Open democratic approach to land governance and administration</p>	<p>Strengthened land ownership and control over land by women, men, IPs, and local communities including pastoralists and fisherfolks</p> <p>Secure and transparent land distribution</p> <p>Increased productivity from the land contributing to food security</p> <p>Protection for national agricultural production from international markets and commodity prices</p> <p>Higher productivity from land investments</p> <p>Equal power relationship and higher bargaining power among vulnerable community to secure their land rights</p>	<p>Sustainable food systems contributing to food security among local communities</p> <p>Reduced conflicts</p> <p>Higher degree of public trust among local communities</p>



<p>sustainable food production particularly focusing on small scale producers and family farmers</p> <p>Creating space for CSOs to operate independently</p>	<p>Use of the knowledge of local communities in food production</p> <p>Increased accountability in land investment and locally driven investment in seed and genetic stock, appropriate storage and processing technologies</p>	<p>Increased access to local markets</p> <p>Greater autonomy for local communities in land and food reliance independent from corporate production systems</p>	
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The impact mentioned in the above table could only happen under the following assumption:

- Democratic governance framework of a country which facilitates transparent and accountable processes
- Adequate investment (financial, human etc.) by key stakeholders recognising the importance of secure land tenure in building sustainable food systems
- There is a political will to act
- Barriers for effective participation of local communities and CSOs are addressed

Further the trajectory of inputs to impact is subject to the following risks:

- Public officers working in collusion with private sector to undermine the right to land of IPs and local communities
- Government not recognising the role the civil society play in development
- Increased corruption in the public sector
- Inadequate investment on issues relating to land and food systems
- Increased conflicts in societies which close avenues for constructive engagement of communities in development work
- Unaddressed and unmitigated risks of climate change
- Development processes followed by governments only heeding to the interests of corporations and other business entities

## **6. Why does this solution align to the definition and criteria for a ‘game changing solution’ developed by the Summit?**

Small scale farmers contribute to 70% of food in the world today. These farmers evidently played a significant role during the COVID-19 pandemic, as a key source of the local food supply chain. Nevertheless, worldwide, women, IPs, and local communities often face threats in accessing, having ownership, and claiming rights of the land they live on and with. For example, according to the Global Witness, the international anti-corruption organization, 212 people were killed in 2019 for peacefully defending land and standing up to the destruction of nature.



Recognizing the right to land and its inextricable links in building food security and sustainable food systems is a key pillar in achieving a number of sustainable development goals in the 2030 Agenda including eradicating poverty and hunger, achieving gender parity, combating climate change, and building peaceful and sustainable societies. Securing peoples' land is the foundation of building equitable livelihoods opportunities of people securing their human dignity and respecting their human rights. The Voluntary Guidelines on the responsible governance of tenure of land, fisheries and forests in the context of national food security (VGGT) promote responsible governance of tenure of land, fisheries and forests, with respect to all forms of tenure to achieve food security. They serve as a reference and set of principles for country level strategies and policies. The CFS Principles for Responsible Investment in Agriculture and Food Systems – known as RAI – acknowledge that the starting point for defining how responsible investment in agriculture and food systems can contribute to food security and nutrition is the recognition and respect for human rights. They are a set of ten principles that apply to all types and sizes of agricultural investment including fisheries, forests and livestock.

### 7. What is the existing evidence supporting the argument that this solution will work, or at least that it will achieve the initial outcomes described above?

Evidence	Sources
Better land tenure, among other things, has proven to improve food security and increase investment in children education and health.	Meinzen-Dick R. (2009) Property Rights for Poverty Reduction?'. DESA Working Paper No. 91, December 2009. <i>DESA Working Paper No. 91</i> . New York, USA: United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs.
Only 19% of the arable lands are occupied by smallholder farmers, but smallholder farmers make up 94% of the world's farmers, preserving 95% of agricultural biodiversity and producing 70% of the world's food.	<a href="http://www.agrowingculture.org/home/efficient-agricultural-system/">http://www.agrowingculture.org/home/efficient-agricultural-system/</a>
90 percent of fishers are small-scale operators, which account for half of the capture fisheries production in developing countries.	<a href="http://www.fao.org/news/story/en/item/1195811/icode/">http://www.fao.org/news/story/en/item/1195811/icode/</a>
Forests managed by Indigenous Peoples and local communities store 37.7 billion tonnes of carbon - more than the world's 2013 emissions of CO2 from fossil fuel combustion and industrial processes.	<a href="https://www.int-res.com/abstracts/cr/v77/n2/p91-97/">https://www.int-res.com/abstracts/cr/v77/n2/p91-97/</a>
Countries where women lack any right to own land have on average 60% more malnourished children.	OECD Development Centre, At Issue: Do Discriminatory Social Institutions Matter for Food Security? 2012



<p>In Nepal, the devolvement of state forests into community control in the 1970s slowed deforestation and led many local communities to safeguard and restore communal forests and watersheds.</p>	<p><a href="https://www.iccaconsortium.org/">https://www.iccaconsortium.org/</a></p>
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### 8. What is the current and/or likely political support for this idea?

The 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda, where all member states to the UN have agreed to achieve by 2030, includes four key land targets and indicators. (and many more on a broader scale). Followings are the key land related targets and indicators in the Sustainable Development Goals:

Goal	Target/Indicator
<p>Goal 1: Eradicating Poverty</p>	<p>1.4: By 2030, ensure that all men and women, in particular the poor and the vulnerable, have equal rights to economic resources, as well as access to basic services, <b><u>ownership and control over land</u></b>, and other forms of property, inheritance, natural resources, appropriate new technology and financial services, including microfinance.</p>
<p>Goal 2: Zero Hunger</p>	<p>2.3: By 2030, double the agricultural productivity and incomes of small-scale food producers, in particular women, indigenous peoples, family farmers, pastoralists and fishers, <b><u>including through secure and equal access to land</u></b>, other productive resources and inputs, knowledge, financial services, markets, and opportunities for value addition and non-farm employment.</p>
<p>Goal 5: Achieving Gender Equality</p>	<p>5.a: Undertake reforms to give women equal rights to economic resources, as well as <b><u>access to ownership and control over land</u></b> and other forms of property, financial services, inheritance and natural resources, in accordance with national laws.</p>



Goal 15: Life on Land	15.3: By 2030, combat desertification, <b>restore degraded land</b> and soil, including land affected by desertification, drought and floods, and <b>strive to achieve a land degradation-neutral world</b>
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State parties are expected to report on these land related targets in their voluntary national reviews to the SDG High Level Political Forum.

### 9. Are there certain contexts for which this solution is particularly well suited, or, not well-suited.

This solution particularly focuses on recognizing the individual land tenure rights of women, IPs, local communities, pastoralists and fisher folks. It has a global application in relation to land rights of women and territorial focus running across the globe in relation to the other categories. Majority of these communities live in developing countries or least developed nations and in areas with high burden of foodborne disease in relation to sub-Saharan Africa.

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[1] Family farmers, small-scale farmers, indigenous peoples, pastoralists, rural communities

[2] [https://d3o3cb4w253x5q.cloudfront.net/media/documents/2020\\_11\\_land\\_inequality\\_synthesis\\_report\\_uneven\\_ground\\_final\\_en\\_spread\\_low\\_res\\_2.pdf](https://d3o3cb4w253x5q.cloudfront.net/media/documents/2020_11_land_inequality_synthesis_report_uneven_ground_final_en_spread_low_res_2.pdf)

[3] <https://www.landcoalition.org/es/newsroom/new-report-reveals-land-inequality-worse-we-thought-and-fueling-other-inequalities/>

[4] <https://www.ifad.org/en/land>

[5] <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/index.php?page=view&type=400&nr=465&menu=35>

[6] International Land Coalition and Oxfam: *Uneven Ground: Land Inequality at the heart of unequal societies*,

[https://d3o3cb4w253x5q.cloudfront.net/media/documents/2020\\_11\\_land\\_inequality\\_synthesis\\_report\\_uneven\\_ground\\_final\\_en\\_spread\\_low\\_res\\_2.pdf](https://d3o3cb4w253x5q.cloudfront.net/media/documents/2020_11_land_inequality_synthesis_report_uneven_ground_final_en_spread_low_res_2.pdf)

[7] *Does not necessarily imply a single large intervention as opposed to enabling multiple small actions*

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## **S.5. Institutionalize and Mainstream the Anti-Discrimination and Labour Rights of Migrant (Foreign) Workers in Agriculture and Across the Food Chain**

### **1. What, in brief, is the solution?**

Using a right-based anti-discrimination and labour rights framework including greater access to open work permits and permanent residency for migrant (foreign) workers in agriculture and across the food chain. In doing so, labour and other protections will be strengthened, and food security overall will be achieved taking into account the most marginalized persons in the food sector, including subsistence



farmers, women, Indigenous persons and socially and culturally racialized persons. In this context, migrants refer to those who have crossed state borders and not those who are internal migrants.

Robust policy and regulation reform is required in order to advance access to justice for migrant/foreign food workers. The primary systemic access to justice barriers that food workers are faced with include a) lack of adoption of international human rights and labour standards in the legislation b) lack of enforcement of the standards in the domestic system c) lack of collective bargaining rights and discouragement of worker organization e) precarious employment or legal status which has a chilling effect on bringing forward complaints where rights have been deprived or denied, f) the egregious power imbalance between labourers and employers which further marginalizes migrant/foreign food workers, g) overly bureaucratized avenues to status resolution mechanisms, and h) the lack of accountability among state actors and the prevalence of impunity of employers and corporate interests.

The first step to address the access to justice crisis for migrant/foreign food workers is to increase access for labourers to rights and entitlements under the law. However, rights and entitlements are often mediated by citizenship status and cannot be meaningfully accessed by those with foreign status. For example, right to family life is enshrined in international law and in the constitutional law of several countries. Yet, migrant workers are denied this basic right. In countries where health and safety and employment laws extended to all workers, irrespective of status, migrant workers in the food sector still labour and live in deplorable working conditions because they fear employer reprisal and deportation if they lose their jobs. There is no loss of income support for workers once they go back to their countries, even when they are eligible for compensation or access to social rights and assistance, which is predicated on citizenship. Hence, institutionalizing rights for migrant workers must have a policy for regularization of status and work permits that are not employer controlled. The regulatory changes must address exploitation and debt servitude brought about by contractors and recruiters, often with knowledge of employers. Labour inspection must be prioritized. Inspections should be extended to housing (since they are often housed at the workplaces and farms). The power imbalance, and the precarious working conditions that directly flow must be counteracted with reform which requires that employers are accountable to uphold the human rights and dignity of food workers.

Secondly, racism and anti-discrimination, with special protections for migrant workers, must be mainstreamed across all food sector policies.

Third, special programs must be initiated to provide support to the workers pre- and post- migration, so that workers have knowledge of their rights and feel protected enough to avail of them. These programs must aid the workers and protect them from exploitation by contractor and recruiters; provide housing and educational help; and skills and language training. In recent years, legal and policy interventions have been developed, at a national level, in order to prevent labour exploitation, to foster transparency in supply chains, and address some of the structural factors which produce migrants' vulnerability, such as isolation and lack of the access to social services. Other practices have promoted a different agricultural production model by creating models of alternative and short supply chains. Certifications should include treatment of migrant workers. National campaigns to raise awareness at all levels to condemn the social acceptability of abusive and xenophobic practices in the agricultural sector, with special concern to women workers, have to be a part of this solution. Training programs for members of trade unions, NGOs, labour inspectors, lawyers, law enforcement agencies, and judicial authorities on racialized, citizenship, and gendered aspects of labour exploitation would be part and parcel of a systemic response. These need to be mainstreamed and institutionalised at an international level.

Lastly, strengthened collective organization, and migrant policy can be reimaged to center the voice of food workers by creating avenues for food workers to demand protection without fear of reprisal.

Implementation on a domestic scale must be closely observed to align strengthened labor standards on



a global scale. Labour policy reform can create more effective social dialogue between labourers and employers by empowering labourers at the grassroots level to organize and advocate on their interests. The role of trade unions must be strengthened so that migrant workers can be included. Innovative forms of collective organization in the form of worker collectives must be encouraged. These worker collectives can collaborate with small farmer collectives to strengthen food security overall.

## **2. What was/were the source(s) from which this solution emerged?**

Addressing discrimination in labour markets can only be accomplished with policy and institutional reform which centers the voice of food workers and empowers them to enforce their human rights. As early as 2001, a joint submission by the ILO, IOM, and OHCHR to the World Conference Against Racism, titled “International Migration, Racism, Discrimination and Xenophobia”, pointed out how the migrant workers are specifically employed in dirty, dangerous and difficult (3D) jobs such as plantations, large corporate farms, and food processing, that often many citizen workers do not want to engage in. The discrimination results in inadequate regulations and enforcement of basic labour and human rights and is invisibilised by their “foreigner” status.

The principle of equal treatment of migrants in matters of employment has been enshrined in several ILO Conventions and Recommendations. The 1949 Convention No. 97 concerning Migration for Employment proscribed discrimination against immigrants in respect of nationality, race, sex, or religion in matters of remuneration, allowances, hours of work, overtime, holidays with pay, minimum age, restrictions on home work, apprenticeship and training, membership in trade unions and benefits of collective bargaining, accommodation, social security (subject to some limitations), employment taxes, dues or contributions, and legal proceedings. The ILO’s 1975 Migrant Workers Convention No. 143 detailed the rights of migrant workers to family reunification, to preserving national and ethnic identity and cultural ties with their countries of origin, and to free choice of employment after two years of lawful residence for the purpose of employment. The 1990 International Convention for the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of their Families provides a comprehensive legal framework for protection of migrants and also points out their vulnerability to xenophobic hostility that sets a barrier to their accessing justice. The Convention demands that migrant workers be seen not as economic entities but as social entities.

During the pandemic, the situation of migrant/foreign workers in agriculture in several countries demanded quick responses. For example, Italy’s Minister of Agriculture called for a regularization of migrant workers, which means granting them permanent residence. Meanwhile in Tunisia, the government suspended visa expiry dates and confirmed financial aid specific for migrants. Germany is instituting policies to examine sub-contractors in the meat industry to address the concerns around living and working conditions of food workers.

## **3. What problem is it trying to address within food systems?**

Migration is a reality in the food sector in all countries given the seasonality and labour intensiveness in agriculture and the mass production mechanisms in food systems that push labour wages down. This results in millions of workers (including subsistence farmers) crossing borders to work in other countries to earn their livelihoods. The “foreign” status of the workers increases their precarity as they live and work in exploitative, unregulated conditions, isolated without their families, and in a status popularly called “permanently temporary”. Circular and seasonal migration results in their workers living and working in foreign countries for a large percentage of their working life, particularly vulnerable to human rights abuses. Many of the workers migrate as a result of Indigenous displacement and are often



of different ethnicity and race in the foreign country. Thus, their exploitation is a result of the intersections of poor labour regulations, xenophobia, and racism.

Currently, the precarity of foreign/migrant food workers without security of legal status creates a significant access to justice barrier. The reality is that migrant workers are often treated as “second-class citizens” which is most evident when taking into account recent events where migrant workers in agriculture and food processing have not been afforded the same health and safety protections during the COVID-19 pandemic.

#### **4. Why is addressing that problem important for achieving the goal of your working group?**

Central to promoting the equitable livelihoods in food systems is protecting the dignity and rights of migrant/foreign food workers, who currently form an essential labour force in the sector.

#### **5. How can this solution address that problem (theory of change)?**

The lens of anti-discrimination will help global policymakers better understand how and why migrant/foreign food workers face deprivation of human dignity. Anti-discrimination scholars have conceptualized the precarity of migrant agricultural laborers as new world enslavement. In other words, justice is the most inaccessible for those who are at the greatest risk of harm from discrimination. The ways in which migrant/ foreign food workers are vulnerable to the loss of their status and livelihood severely impedes their capacity to exercise their rights.

#### **6. Why does this solution align to the definition and criteria for a ‘game changing solution’ developed by the Summit?**

It is critical that the Food Systems Summit has acknowledged the central role that food workers play in promoting sustainable food systems. Shedding light on the unique discrimination and access to justice barriers faced by foreign/migrant food workers could help mobilize policy reform and action by governments to tackle these barriers by ensuring greater legal protection. Discrimination is at the heart of reforming labour conditions and protecting the human rights of laborers. Private and public stakeholders must collaborate on how to reform the industry in a way that will centre the equitable livelihood and dignity of migrant/foreign food workers.

#### **7. Existing evidence supporting the argument that this solution will work, or at least achieve the initial outcomes?**

There have been several initiatives across the world. Studies show how improving organization in the agri-food sector and capacity building of migrant workers’ organizations and cooperatives has resulted in significant positive outcomes. Countries which have options of regularization of status and less restrictive work permits also have fewer human and labour rights violations than states with most restrictive immigration systems.

#### **8. What is the current and/or likely political support for this idea?**

The initialization of anti-discriminatory practices and greater labour protections for migrant/ foreign food workers is directly in line with Sustainable Development Goal 8, which aims to “promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all”. More specifically, this solution advances Goal 8.8 on the protection of labour rights and promotion of safe and secure working environments for all workers. Some of these initiatives lack a grounding in anti-discrimination, addressing the vulnerabilities brought about by their “foreignness”, which is the key value added by this solution.



### 9. Are there certain contexts for which this solution is particularly well suited, or, not well-suited.

This solution is well-suited for all countries and in particular those with large rural economies and agri-food sectors. There is especially a need for anti-discrimination policy in global food systems as a result of the corporatization of agriculture, which will also benefit women and other communities. In order to advance the human rights and dignity of all persons, decolonial and anti-discriminatory approaches to food systems labour reform is needed and should be respected everywhere.

## S.6. Establishing or Improving Social Dialogue Mechanisms as Powerful Means of Finding Common Solutions to Problems, Advancing Decent Work and Social Justice

### 1. What, in brief, is the solution?

Social dialogue, which includes all types of negotiation, consultation or exchange of information between or among representatives of governments, employers and workers on issues of common interest relating to economic and social policy, is an important means of improving working conditions, including workers' safety and health, productivity and wages, and social security. Social dialogue, which is based on consensus-building and democratic involvement of the main stakeholders, contributes to more efficient design and implementation of policies that advance equitable livelihoods and sustainable development. An increased focus on agency and on sustainability as core dimensions of food security and nutrition, as called for by the HLPE (2020) can help frame the importance of social dialogue as expression of "collective agency" in food systems.

Effective social dialogue in the agri-food sector can help ensure stable labour relations and boost productivity and quality of work life. It can contribute to collective bargaining, which plays a crucial role in reaching consensus on issues of concern to workers and employers and in raising awareness about their rights and obligations. Conditions that facilitate constructive social dialogue in agriculture and the rural economy include the existence of strong, independent and effective organizations of rural and agricultural workers and employers; willingness and commitment of all parties; and an enabling legal and institutional framework.

The proposed solution is therefore to **promote the establishment of new and improving the functioning of existing social dialogue mechanisms, and enhancing collective bargaining and negotiation, as platforms for giving plantation workers and small-scale producers a voice in social and economic development and ensuring that development is inclusive.**

Social dialogue can take place at various levels, including global, regional, national, sectoral, inter-professional, company and workplace. The establishment of forums that bring together representatives of government, trade unions, employers' associations and may include other key stakeholders and organizations such as cooperatives, small business associations, as well as women's groups, peasants' or indigenous peoples' organizations have proven to be an effective way of jointly designing and implementing common strategies to promote decent work in the agri-food sector and economic development.

### 2. What was/were the source(s) from which this solution emerged?

With many years of experience in this area, the ILO has been supporting social dialogue between government, employers and workers as a unique and effective means for promoting decent work in different sectors of the economy, including the agri-food sector. Over the past years, a number of successful initiatives have emerged that have demonstrated the effectiveness of social dialogue to addressing employment and labour challenges in the agri-food sector. In particular, the ILO has been



supporting the establishment and functioning of *multi-stakeholder dialogue forums*, which bring together ILO tripartite constituents – governments, employers’ and workers’ organizations – and all other important actors (e.g. NGOs, academia, private compliance schemes, etc.) to jointly formulate effective strategies to promote decent working conditions, competitiveness and compliance in specific agri-food sectors on decent work in the agri-food (plantations) sector.

This process starts with a participatory diagnostic exercise on working conditions in that specific sector. Using an innovative methodology, it covers a wide range of issues, from the fundamental principles and rights at work (i.e. child labour, forced labour, freedom of association and collective bargaining, and non-discrimination in employment) to such topics as recruitment, employment relationships, wages, occupational safety and health, maternity protection, working hours and holidays. Based on the opportunities and challenges presented in the diagnostic report, national tripartite constituents and other key stakeholders develop and adopt a plan of action through social dialogue. The process offers stakeholders a transparent assessment of the actual situation in the specific sector and an opportunity to jointly develop and implement strategies to address challenges. The approach, which helps mobilize governments, companies, plantation owners and workers to improve working conditions and productivity, drives competitiveness and creates a world in which “no one is left behind”, has been successfully implemented in a number of countries and sectors, including Indonesia (palm oil sector) and Malawi (tea sector).

*Local Employment Partnerships* (LEPs) is another innovative ILO approach to promote employment and decent work at local/rural level through local social dialogue platforms. Through the LEPs, local development policies and related investments are developed to generate jobs, support the MSMEs, promote formalization and ensure income support to vulnerable groups in the rural communities. Particular attention is paid to inactive women and youth, low-skilled, and return migrants. The LEP approach provides integrated solutions to promote decent work in the rural economy, offering real employment policies and active labour market measures, as well as catalysing investments and building capacity of local stakeholders. For example, the approach has recently been implemented in one of Moldova’s regions, led by local partners, under the aegis of territorial tripartite commissions for consultation and collective bargaining, contributed to the creation and formalization of more than 200 jobs, and the launch and expansion of 72 businesses in sectors with job-creation potential (agri-food and rural non-farm). Furthermore, two cooperatives in the field of honey and hard cheese production were developed to enhance productivity and income prospects of small farmers, following the support provided in setting up collective business models. The approach was unanimously praised by national and local stakeholders for its effectiveness in providing locally devised solutions regarding employment and formalization.

### **3. What problem is it trying to address within food systems?**

While there is a widely accepted view that social dialogue is essential for achieving effective, equitable and mutually beneficial outcomes for governments, employers, workers and wider society, and workers in agriculture and related sectors are often excluded from the process and scope of social dialogue at all levels. Given that decent work deficits are particularly severe in the sector and that a large part of its workforce is constituted of groups vulnerable to socio-economic risks, such as women, youth, children, indigenous peoples and migrants, this matter warrants careful and immediate attention. Despite notable progress achieved in promoting social dialogue in different countries and sectors in recent years, in many countries, legal and practical challenges for social dialogue in and on agriculture and related sectors remain numerous and pervasive. In many countries, agricultural and rural workers continue to face difficulties in exercising their right to freely form or join organizations of their choosing due to legislative or implementation gaps. Low literacy and education levels, as well as poverty, informality and poor



working and living conditions exacerbate the barriers in access to rights that many agricultural and rural workers may already face. Women and migrant workers often face additional challenges in participating in unions. Limited organization and voice among rural workers and employers prevent them from engaging in social dialogue and influencing legislation, and policy and decision-making process that could contribute to advancing sustainable livelihoods and food systems.

#### **4. Why is addressing that problem important for achieving the goal of your working group?**

Social dialogue forums can provide effective mechanisms for identifying challenges that exist in the sector, and for elaborating solutions necessary for promoting equitable livelihoods and sustainable development.

#### **5. How can this solution address that problem (theory of change)?**

The inclusion of issues relating to social dialogue in the agri-food sector in the discussions and conclusions of the Food Systems Summit should contribute, *inter alia*, to: increasing awareness among all stakeholders about the effectiveness of social dialogue mechanisms/platforms as a means to discuss problems facing the sector and identify common sustainable solutions; strengthening the commitment of governments to promote social dialogue through the creation of an enabling environment and institutional frameworks; promoting policy coherence, strengthening international partnerships and scaling up the implementation of development cooperation programmes that use social dialogue to address decent work and other deficits facing the sector; and strengthened commitment and willingness of businesses to engage in social dialogue. These developments in turn should lead to: the establishment of new and improved functioning of existing social dialogue mechanisms at various levels (international, national, sectoral, local or enterprise) that enable workers and employers to constructively discuss and identify solutions; increased participation of rural and agricultural organizations of workers and employers as well as other relevant stakeholders in discussions and policy-making processes that affect their work and life; and progress in addressing decent work challenges facing the sector thereby promoting its sustainability and growth. At the workplace/enterprise level, it can contribute to improved productivity; a harmonious working environment beneficial for management and workers; reduction of absenteeism; and fewer conflicts and sustainable solutions to challenges at workplace.

#### **6. Why does this solution align to the definition and criteria for a ‘game changing solution’ developed by the Summit?**

While social dialogue is widely recognized as an effective means for finding sustainable solutions for employment and labour challenges facing countries, regions or specific sectors, its use in the agri-food sector has remained limited. With recent successful examples of applying social dialogue to promote quality jobs and decent work in the sector, if acknowledged as such in the discussions and conclusions of the Food Systems Summit, this solution could have a positive impact on advancing decent work in the sector and reversing the trends of prevailing working poverty, informality, low productivity, and labour rights violations. Multi-stakeholder dialogue forums have proven to be effective in promoting consensus and sustainable solutions on systemic challenges facing specific sectors and, in this context, constitute ambitious yet concrete means of advancing decent work, equitable livelihoods and sustainable transformation of the agri-food sector. The proposed forums, aiming at bringing together all key stakeholders, will be particularly important for giving voice to groups of workers vulnerable to socio-economic risks, including, among others, women, migrant workers, indigenous peoples, youth and contribute to building their agency towards equitable livelihoods.

#### **7. Existing evidence supporting the argument that this solution will work, or at least achieve the initial outcomes**



Numerous ILO initiatives, policy-related work and development cooperation projects focusing on addressing decent work deficits in the agri-food sector through social dialogue, including those described in section 2.

### **8. What is the current and/or likely political support for this idea?**

There is a widespread political support for the ILO's Decent Work Agenda, including ILO Conventions, as reflected in the Sustainable Development Goal 8, which aims to “promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all”. In this context, the proposed solution will make an important contribution to achieving SDG8 and in particular targets 8.5 on “full and productive employment and decent work for all women and men, including for young people and persons with disabilities, and equal pay for work of equal value”; 8.7 on the elimination of forced labour and child labour; and, 8.8 on the protection of labour rights and promotion of safe and secure working environments for all workers.

### **9. Are there certain contexts for which this solution is particularly well suited, or, not well-suited.**

Well-suited for all countries and in particular those with large rural economies and agri-food sectors.

## **S.7. Strengthening Organization in the Agri-Food Sector**

### **1. What, in brief, is the solution?**

Promoting policies and action that support the establishment, growth and functioning of rural workers' organizations and guarantee the rights of freedom of association and collective bargaining of all workers, building the capacity of cooperatives and other membership-based organizations of farmers, and empowering producers to organize into formal associations.

### **2. What was/were the source(s) from which this solution emerged?**

Over many decades, the ILO has been implementing programmes and initiatives aimed at strengthening the capacity of unions to improve outreach, organization and collective action, and to meaningfully participate in social dialogue and advocate for their members. Successful interventions have also been conducted in the agri-food sector, with positive results.

### **3. What problem is it trying to address within food systems?**

In many countries, agricultural and rural workers continue to face obstacles arising out of legislation or practice when it comes to organizing in trade unions and exercising their rights to freedom of association and collective bargaining. Upholding workers' rights to organize and bargain collectively can contribute to effective industrial relations and social dialogue, which in turn will help ensure all other rights and reduce social auditing costs in the supply chain. Discriminatory practices and legislative or administrative obstacles (such as restricted ability of workers to establish organizations in accordance with their terms and needs, due, for example, to requirements for minimum membership or funds) often impede the right of workers to establish and join trade unions. In some countries, agricultural and rural workers are specifically excluded from certain laws such as those specifying minimum wages, paid sick leave, union membership or social security. In other countries, labour protection legislations (e.g. employment injury benefits or insurance schemes) may exclude or inadequately protect certain categories of workers such as casual, daily or migrant workers. Seasonality in agriculture may also leave many workers out of union membership and collective bargaining. As a result, there are relatively few agricultural trade union members compared to the total number of workers in the sector.



While small-scale producers and farmers can be instrumental in improving rural livelihoods and enhancing food security, they are often unable to make this important contribution due to the lack of organization, which prevents them from realising economies of scale and increase market power.

#### **4. Why is addressing that problem important for achieving the goal of your working group?**

Strong, independent and effective organizations of rural workers and employers is a prerequisite to enabling rural communities' participation in economic and social development. They ensure that rural people's voice is heard in the elaboration and implementation of law and policy that directly affects their work and life, thereby contributing to sustainable livelihoods and inclusive development.

Cooperatives and producer organizations can:

- increase the bargaining power of smallholder farmers to ensure they capture a fair share of the value, leading to higher price yields, and can secure better prices for agricultural inputs
- pool together resources, knowledge and information to upgrade productive capacities and enhance their members' technical and entrepreneurship skills
- act as intermediaries or guarantors for borrowing by members, or through credit and loan arrangements among members, which may help their members move up the supply chain, and help give youth a lower risk
- help farmers to adopt grades and standards that enable them to capture a greater proportion of the value added of their produce helping their members comply with food safety or other industry requirements
- stimulate knowledge sharing, adoption of new technologies, training and improvements in such areas as agronomic practices; agribusiness management; post-harvest management, thereby also contributing to reducing food waste and food loss
- promote formalization and provide access to related benefits
- be particularly beneficial for vulnerable groups such as migrant and youth workers in gaining access to finance, and productive resources and participation in policy-making and democratic processes, including in leadership positions
- contribute to gender equality and women's empowerment by providing economic opportunities to women leading to increased incomes and an increased say in household decision-making
- Address labour related issues (e.g. child labour, forced labour, discrimination). For example, given that the majority of cooperatives, producer and farmer associations operate in agriculture, where 71 percent of child labour is found, they can: ensure that their own business operations and their supply chains are child labour free; engage in community mobilization and awareness-raising campaigns among their members and within the communities where they operate; provide guidance and community leadership, and contribute to the planning and delivery of health, educational and other basic social services in their communities; promote livelihoods opportunities and the use of appropriate technologies as means of increasing income of their members; provide collective voice and negotiation power for their members with the public authorities in securing a range of economic and social rights including services such as child care; and stimulate decent youth employment opportunities through training and education programmes.

#### **5. How can this solution address that problem (theory of change)?**



The proposed solution, which entails action aimed at improving legislation, in line with the 1998 ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work and other relevant ILO standards<sup>4</sup>, and formulating policies and interventions aimed at strengthening organization in the agri-food sector, should enable agricultural workers to exercise their fundamental right to freedom of association and collective bargaining, thereby helping to secure decent conditions of work and contribute to stable labour relations in a sector and, ultimately, to a successful transformation of food systems. Cooperatives and producer organizations will help to empower smallholder producers, providing them with improved economic conditions as well as a collective voice and power to defend their interests. They will improve small-scale producers' access to markets, including high-value markets (such as niche organic products) and technology, and connect them to enterprises further up the supply chain, shortening the supply chain in some cases. They will also help generate income and employment for their members and provide an avenue for other enterprises and service providers to reach an otherwise inaccessible smallholder sector. The ILO Recommendation on the promotion of cooperatives, 2002 (No. 193) defines cooperatives as autonomous associations of persons united voluntarily to meet their common economic, social, and cultural needs and aspirations through a jointly owned and democratically controlled enterprise.

#### **6. Why does this solution align to the definition and criteria for a 'game changing solution' developed by the Summit?**

The Food Systems Summit's acknowledgement of the critical contribution that the organizations of rural and agricultural workers, employers and farmers, as well as cooperatives and producer associations could make in building sustainable and resilient livelihoods and building sustainable food systems will be a crucial game changer. A strong emphasis on the issue in the discussions and conclusions/outcomes document of the Summit could help to generate a commitment and action by governments to tackle barriers to organizing in the agri-food sector and develop relevant legislation and integrated national policies that promote the establishment, growth and functioning of rural and agricultural workers' organizations and guarantee the rights of freedom of association and collective bargaining of all workers. It could also lead to policy and action, including concrete initiatives at the country level, aimed at promoting the establishment and growth of cooperatives and farmer organizations.

#### **7. Existing evidence supporting the argument that this solution will work, or at least achieve the initial outcomes**

Numerous ILO initiatives, policy related work and development cooperation projects focusing on improving organization in the agri-food sector and capacity building of workers' organizations and cooperatives.

#### **8. What is the current and/or likely political support for this idea?**

There is a widespread political support for the ILO's Decent Work Agenda, including ILO Conventions, as reflected in the Sustainable Development Goal 8, which aims to "promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all". In this context, the proposed solution will make an important contribution to achieving SDG8 and in particular targets 8.5 on "full and productive employment and decent work for all women and men, including for young people and persons with disabilities, and equal pay for work of equal value"; 8.7 on the elimination of forced labour and child labour; and 8.8 on the protection of labour rights and promotion of safe and secure working environments for all workers.

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<sup>4</sup> These include, among others: the Right of Association (Agriculture) Convention, 1921 (No. 11); the Plantations Convention, 1958 (No. 110); the Rural Workers' Organisations Convention, 1975 (No. 141).



## 9. Are there certain contexts for which this solution is particularly well suited, or, not well-suited.

Well-suited for all countries and in particular those with large rural economies and agri-food sectors.

## **S.8. Promote inclusive and sustainable agroecological network chains for small farmers and indigenous communities linked to rural and urban consumers**

### 1. What, in brief, is the solution?

Support the transition of 10 value chains in 50 countries towards solutions based on agro-ecological principles. This should rely on a strong inclusion of small farmers and indigenous communities, and be achieved by enhancing the quality and relevance of services supporting the production, transformation, distribution, promotion and market access of agroecological products.

### 2. What was/were the source(s) from which this solution emerged?

Among the possible pathways to transform agricultural and food systems, agroecology is a nature-positive approach strongly supported by farmer organizations, researchers, civil society, innovative private firms, and a coalition of donors and countries. The HLPE report (2019)<sup>5</sup> highlights the importance of agroecology and innovative approaches (regenerative agriculture, nature based-solutions, organic agriculture or agroforestry). FAO provides principles to define agroecological approaches based on technical and social criteria<sup>6</sup>.

The thinking related to agroecology is: (i) there is an urgent need to design more resilient and sustainable farming systems and value chains especially by enhancing and making use of ecological processes and biological diversity (at crop, farm and territorial level), (ii) solutions need to take into account the needs of the actors (farmers and value chain actors) and the type of farming, and should encompass scientific and local knowledge, as well as new technologies (improved varieties, digital tools, etc.), (iii) partnerships with actors are key for co-designing both technical innovations and organizational innovations, with a need to strengthen actors' capacity to innovate, (iv) there are no standard solutions and the solutions have to be adapted to local situations, and (vi) the metrics of success are based on footprint analysis.

### 3. What problem is it trying to address within food systems?

To promote agroecology at scale there is a need to enhance the quality and relevance of services supporting the agroecological production, transformation and distribution and to strengthen access to markets for agroecological products. The solution addresses these two dimensions (services and markets) in sensitive areas (e.g., the Sahelian Zone in relationship with the Great Wall Initiative for example) and specific value chains (e.g., cocoa).

### 4. Why is addressing that problem important for achieving the goal of your working group?

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<sup>5</sup> HLPE 2019. Agroecological and other innovative approaches for sustainable agriculture and food systems that enhance food security and nutrition. A report by the High Level Panel of Experts on Food Security and Nutrition of the Committee on World Food Security, Rome <http://www.fao.org/3/ca5602en/ca5602en.pdf>

<sup>6</sup> FAO. The 10 elements of agroecology guiding the transition to sustainable food and agricultural systems, <http://www.fao.org/3/I9037EN/i9037en.pdf>



Ensuring robust and fair-priced markets for agroecologically-produced products would support the livelihoods of small-scale farmers and indigenous communities, create decent jobs across the value-chain, and strengthen the ecological resilience of local food systems, based on local values and norms.

### **5. How can this solution address that problem (theory of change)?**

Agroecology is already implemented by small farmers in many situations in all the continents (developing countries, OECD countries, etc.). It has been proven effective to produce healthy food and preserve natural resources. However, there is an urgent need to scale agroecological services to achieve the SDGs. For example, Andhra Pradesh State plans to involve 2 million farmers in agroecology<sup>7</sup>.

First, scaling agroecology requires the development of innovative services. Agricultural advisory services – such as public-sector agriculture extension systems – need to support collective action with multi-stakeholder approaches, such as cooperatives, as well as individual entrepreneurs and small start-ups. Support is needed so that these organizations can integrate agroecological technical and social dimensions. Agroecology also requires services for the provision of bio-inputs, seeds and access to finance. Bio-technologies (for activating soil fertility, composting waste, bio-pesticides, etc.) would be useful as would digital tools that facilitate the management of local knowledge, exchanges and learning or ensure support the traceability and marketing of agroecological products. Significant public investment is also needed to support research on agroecological production methods as well as mechanisms to enhance local knowledge exchanges and learning (e.g., farmer-to-farmer field schools).

Second, agroecology cannot develop at scale without access to markets that recognize and value products obtained from agroecology. Interventions to promote certification of products and processing are important, which can draw from numerous experiences: promotion of Geographical Indications within national frameworks, development of sustainability standards from the public or private sector with third-party certifications or participatory certifications, the rise of labels and private brands supporting sustainable approaches, etc. However, these certifications must take into account the principles of agroecology and balance the economic, social and environmental dimensions of sustainability. In addition, they must be coupled with other mechanisms to be effective and ensure real changes in production and marketing practices (training, fair and inclusive distribution of value added, support for producers' income, control of fraud, etc.). Short supply chains should be encouraged in particular to allow better promotion of local products and to ensure diversified and quality nutrition for local consumers (e.g., public food procurement programs such as Brazil's National School Feeding Program). Funding assistance is also needed via all possible financial tools (loan, subsidy, blending), and should support producers alongside a network of small processing and marketing companies.

### **6. Why does this solution align to the definition and criteria for a 'game changing solution' developed by the Summit?**

This solution is about change at scale by ensuring equitable livelihood opportunities for millions of small-scaled and indigenous farmers in the establishment of 10 value chains and 50 countries. Past experience and scientific evidence demonstrates the feasibility of scaling up agroecology, while agroecology is inherently about sustainability from both an environmental and social perspective. Furthermore, committing significant public and international investment in scaling up fair markets focused on

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<sup>7</sup> TMG (2020) Systemic Challenges, Systemic Responses. Innovating Adaptation to Climate Change through Agroecology. Working Paper. <https://globalsoilweek.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/12/Systemic-Challenges-Systemic-Responses.pdf>



agroecology would be a true department from existing practice which has tended to invest in industrialized forms of agriculture.

### **7. Existing evidence supporting the argument that this solution will work, or at least achieve the initial outcomes**

A large amount of scientific evidence and experience in the field provides strong support for scaling up agroecology (see the annex for references).

### **8. What is the current and/or likely political support for this idea?**

There are numerous coalitions of actors who have long-supported agroecology at different levels, from local to global scales, including member states in Europe, countries in other continents, international grassroots networks and organizations, and research alliances. Some groups (countries, firms, associations) are clearly against agroecology and support high-input industrial agriculture and other Green Revolution approaches, in relationship with some elements of the private sector which invest in and profit from these technologies. Upcoming CFS PR-AEAOIA and encourage their uptake as part of this solution. The upcoming CFS Policy Recommendations on Agroecological and other Innovative approaches can provide guidance at country level, and their uptake can be part of this solution.

### **9. Are there certain contexts for which this solution is particularly well suited, or, not well-suited.**

The solution is well suited in contexts where family farms are dominant in the agricultural sector or in regions where the Green Revolution paradigm does not work or would cause irreparable environmental and economic harm (e.g., degraded areas, areas with high climatic risks, land without irrigation, and places with significant endemic agri-biodiversity, places where farmers are severely indebted).

## **Annex - Synthesis papers review**

- Smith OM, Cohen AL, Rieser CJ, Davis A, Taylor JM, Adesanya AW, Jones MS, Meier AR, Reganold JP, Orpet RJ, Northfield TD. 2019. Organic farming provides reliable environmental benefits but increases variability in crop yields: a global meta-analysis. *Frontiers in Sustainable Food Systems*, 3:82. DOI: [10.3389/fsufs.2019.00082](https://doi.org/10.3389/fsufs.2019.00082)
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- Piñeiro V, Arias J, Dürr J, Elverdin P, Ibáñez AM, Kinengyere A, Opazo CM, Owoo N, Page JR, Prager SD, Torero M. 2020. A scoping review on incentives for adoption of sustainable agricultural practices and their outcomes. *Nature Sustainability*, 3:809-820. DOI: [10.1038/s41893-020-00617-y](https://doi.org/10.1038/s41893-020-00617-y)
- D'Annolfo R, Gemmill-Herren B, Graeub B, Garibaldi LA. 2017. A review of social and economic performance of agroecology. *International Journal of Agricultural Sustainability*, 15(6):632-644. DOI: [10.1080/14735903.2017.1398123](https://doi.org/10.1080/14735903.2017.1398123)
- Valencia, V., Wittman, H., & J. Blesh. (2019). Structuring markets for resilient farming systems. *Agronomy for Sustainable Development* 39: 25.

## **S.9. Engaging with Cities and Local Governments for Equitable Livelihoods**

### **1. What, in brief, is the solution?**

Develop a framework for inclusion of urban and rural at-risk populations. Raising awareness and strengthening capacity of local actors so they understand human rights and vulnerability, can contribute to identify vulnerable livelihoods and relevant local-specific issues, and facilitate appropriate response. This can be done via joint training-cum-planning and/or practice-based knowledge management.

This requires specific support in terms of networking and capacity building to promote inclusive and functional territories linking urban and rural communities, and, in particular, the mainstreaming of urban-rural linkages in social protection plans; to help local authorities and subnational actors to take the lead in overcoming existing social, economic and environmental inequalities while also leveraging the comparative advantages of the flows of people, goods and services across the urban-rural continuum; to embed human rights-based approaches in all policy instruments and actions to ensure that development initiatives and processes do not negatively affect anyone's human rights and livelihoods across the urban-rural continuum; and to strengthen urban-rural linkages to overcome conflict, recognize cultural diversity and reduce inequalities and strike a balance in measures and social protection programmes affecting men and women, and different age and socio-economic groups across the urban-rural continuum.

It is therefore important to 1/ ensure meaningful participation by people, local institutions and communities across the urban-rural continuum as well as spaces and mechanisms to engage in political dialogue and planning processes for women, Indigenous Peoples, children, youth, elders, persons with disabilities, slum dwellers, smallholders and the forcibly displaced and others at risk of being left behind,



2/ build capacity to empower vulnerable groups in urban, peri-urban and rural communities to engage in integrated territorial governance, and 3/protect and respect local and indigenous cultures. Concretely:

- Addressing disparities and integrate public services across urban and rural contexts, such as education and training, access to food and water, health services, and connectivity.
- Integrating issues of health, migration, food imports, climate change and conflict with job creation and funding for ecosystem services across urban and rural contexts.
- Promoting interculturality to design solutions that can be useful across all cultures.
- Delivering more spatially and socially equitable services and reduce the barriers to quality public social services for all socio-economic groups.
- Reviewing, adapting and using locally relevant legal and legislative instruments and methods to develop inclusive development plans.

## **2. What was/were the source(s) from which this solution emerged?**

Member of AT4 Leadership Group but based on extensive multi-actor work on sustainable urban food systems and urban rural linkages for integrated development (see 7).

## **3. What problem is it trying to address within food systems?**

While urbanization has been recognized as a powerful force in support of economic growth and poverty reduction, it is equally true that poverty is rapidly urbanizing. Multi-dimensional crisis are affecting vulnerable households in both rural and urban areas and accelerating migration in search of more sustainable livelihoods.

The relation of culture to migration, mobility and displacement is critical for social protection and resilience, and is a key factor in the design of appropriate strategies and interventions.

Cities and local governments are in the frontline when facing socio-economic disparities and should be recognized as key players in leaving no one behind. Cities (including small and intermediary cities) and local governments have a triple role to play: 1/ they can engage with, learn from and support relevant actors from different sectors (including civil society, private sector and academia) in participatory planning, implementation and monitoring of livelihood strategies and action at territorial level; 2/ they can link with central government and relevant national and global actors and initiatives; and 3/ they can exchange information with and mutually support with cities and local governments facing similar challenges.

Being closer to the ground, they have an understanding of local complexity and have generated significant concrete experience which is rarely linked to global and national debates on equitable livelihoods (in particular in the wake of COVID-19). They are best able to improve operations, monitoring and evaluation, and doing something concrete.

The COVID-19 pandemic has obliged municipalities from one day to the other to face dramatic livelihoods challenges, and upscale and innovate social protection interventions in collaboration with civil society and private sector. This experience can provide a useful basis for integrated strategies for more resilient and equitable livelihoods.

## **4. Why is addressing that problem important for achieving the goal of your working group?**

To enhance resilience to multi-dimensional crisis and operationalise the SDG agenda at the local level.

## **5. How can this solution address that problem (theory of change)?**



If rights of all stakeholders are reflected and respected in all policies, programmes and interventions, this will address existing inequalities, prevent future ones and reduce urban-rural economic, social and environmental disparities.

### **6. Why does this solution align to the definition and criteria for a ‘game changing solution’ developed by the Summit?**

Governance for sustainable development is the key challenge if we want to change the game and come together. Technology and innovation can only contribute to sustainable food systems if they support the locally relevant combination of economic, social and environmental approaches.

### **7. What do you think are the key actions required to address this solution? Please mention the implementation approach for 3 levels, if appropriate: Public policies (Policies, Legal provisions, Economic leverages), Corporate actions and Civil Society actions?**

Identify ongoing territorial processes in different bioregions to broaden and build upon existing experience and resources.

Organise local planning workshops (government, civil society, private sector and academia) to harmonize existing activities, discuss local challenges and set up an ad hoc working group on sustainable food systems to enhance synergies and collect lessons learned.

Strengthen and articulate relevant horizontal networks within bioregions to identify guiding principles for adaptation at local level in similar territories.

Ensure articulation of territorial and global processes to enrich policy dialogue and enhance appropriate support for sustainable territorial development.

### **8. What is the current and/or likely political support for this idea?**

- Milan Urban Food Policy Pact <https://www.milanurbanfoodpolicypact.org/>
- Urban Rural Linkages for Integrated Territorial Development <https://urbanrurallinkages.wordpress.com/>
- Localizing the SDGs <https://www.local2030.org/about-us.php>

### **9. Are there certain contexts for which this solution is particularly well suited, or, not well-suited.**

Good governance is needed everywhere but it would be useful to organize the necessary joint action learning at the territorial level according to bioregions in order to address similar natural resources management concerns and exchange locally relevant experience. Food Systems actors should build upon mapping by environment actors, e.g. <https://images.app.goo.gl/TVBQubjrnYqTziam6>.

## **S.10. Bridging the Digital Divide and Increasing Access to Information and Services in Food Systems**

### **1. What, in brief, is the solution?**

- Ensure that digital infrastructure is available in rural areas to ensure their connectivity.
- Ensure that the voice of marginalized people and their needs regarding lack of connectivity and enabling infrastructure is reflected in the planning of a comprehensive territorial digital strategy. Workers organizations of women workers, rural workers and informal workers should be included to understand the actual ground realities and issues.



- Ensure socially equitable access to quality digital services for vulnerable communities and marginalized groups (in particular small-scale producers and workers, informal food vendors and caterers, migrants and Indigenous people) and public and private actors interacting with them. The strategy can include a variety of components such as local digital platforms to connect consumers and caterers (in particular urban) to local farmers, and to enhance their right to health, safety and environment; access of small-scale producers and workers to data and data analytics (including on markets and weather); provision of digital extension services and services for inclusive finance. Complemented by targeted information and communication and appropriate training and support.
- The strategy will be closely associated with local policies related to social protection, poverty alleviation and livelihoods support as well as crisis management initiatives.
- The development and implementation of the strategy will require a multi-level coalition of government sectors (agriculture, education, social protection, health, labour), private sector companies, training institutions, international entities and civil society (including non-governmental organizations), investment in digital skills development and development of appropriate products.

## **2. What was/were the source(s) from which this solution emerged?**

Private Sector Mechanism, UN HABITAT, IFAD

## **3. What problem is it trying to address within food systems?**

Addressing multidimensional poverty and promoting equitable livelihoods in both rural and urban areas is a critical dimension of food systems transformation. Governments and all stakeholders must tackle the varying layers of disadvantages faced by rural and urban poor populations, including chronic poverty and hunger, lack of access to health care, lack of infrastructure, schools and telecommunications connectivity and lack of information on resilient and sustainable food and agriculture practices in the efforts towards sustainable livelihoods and effective consumer-producer partnerships.

The whole world is in the middle of a digital revolution. Access to information and communications technologies (ICTs) in both urban and rural areas is growing rapidly. Digital approaches can fundamentally change access to and provision of all the above services. But progress is uneven in geographic and socio-economic terms and in many areas, women and youth have less access to smartphones and digital services.

The COVID-19 pandemic brought in the weaknesses of present food systems and highlighted the need for access to technology and digital connectivity for all, in particular the rural and urban poor, both as consumers (e-commerce, teleworking, online learning, dealing with social distancing, etc.) and as producers/workers. A wide strategic response to the crisis that encompasses practically every aspect related to the safety and livelihoods of local populations, such as health, social protection and solidarity networks, education, shock resilience, economic empowerment, and many more will contribute to more equitable livelihoods.

## **4. Why is addressing that problem important for achieving the goal of your working group?**

Technology and innovation from e-enterprises will help institutions and marginalized population groups by putting information, services and finance at their fingertips to strengthen their livelihoods and quality of life.

## **5. How can this solution address that problem (theory of change)?**

Bridging the digital divide is essential to address local socio-economic inequalities and ensure functional urban-rural linkages for inclusive territorial development. This cannot be limited to digitalization of value chains.



## **6. Why does this solution align to the definition and criteria for a ‘game changing solution’ developed by the Summit?**

Ensuring digital access will contribute to all action tracks and empower marginalized population groups in both rural and urban areas, facilitating exchange of information and organization, and access to finance, investments, infrastructure, markets, e-commerce and social services. Strengthening access across the food system will have a quantifiable impact in the opportunities created, livelihoods generated and investments created. Bridging the urban-rural digital divide will contribute to rebalancing territorial development by generating and strengthening economic and social opportunities in small and intermediary cities and neighboring rural areas. The reverse migration (away from cities) generated by the COVID-19 crisis could provide an opportunity to revisit local food systems.

## **7. Existing evidence supporting the argument that this solution will work, or at least achieve the initial outcomes?**

At the WEF 2021 an alliance was launched the EDISON alliance . “The EDISON Alliance cultivates meaningful partnerships between leaders in government and industry during a multi-year journey to enhance the case for rapid digital development. We do this by building a “network of networks” to identify and scale new and existing strategies, projects and initiatives leveraging connectivity as a key lever across the Sustainable Development Goals.” It would be important to link with that and ensure complementarity to avoid duplication of efforts.

## **8. What is the current and/or likely political support for this idea?**

Most developing countries have digital strategies and are pursuing an agenda for digitalization so it is likely to garner a lot of political support.

## **9. Are there certain contexts for which this solution is particularly well suited, or, not well-suited.**

This initiative can be applied globally. While progress in digital access is uneven among countries, lack of access to digital connectivity is closely associated with socio-economic disparities and/or geographical remoteness.

### **S.11. Commitment by Main Supermarket Chains to Buy Locally**

#### **1. What, in brief, is the solution?**

A global commitment by main global supermarkets’ chains operating in the Global South, to source, by 2030, at least 1/3 of the net value of its fresh products supplies from local small-producers (directly or via coops or farmers’ groups).

#### **2. What was/were the source(s) from which this solution emerged?**

The solution is inspired by the recommendations draw on the outcomes of the [CFS High-Level Forum on Connecting Smallholders to Markets](#), and particularly on tis recommendations **#18** (*‘promote short food supply chains that enable smallholders to obtain a better income from their production’*) and **#24** (*‘facilitate smallholders’ capacity to increase their bargaining power and control over their economic environment, and participation in food value chains by acting collectively’*) and also on the [CSM Analytical Guidelines on Connecting Smallholders to Markets](#).

The solution is also grounded on existing evidence, referenced in hyperlinks along this document, as well as in other sources, including, inter alia:

- Anderson, C. et all (2013)- [Following up on smallholder farmers and supermarkets](#)



- Dannenberg, P. (2013)- [The rise of supermarket chains and the challenges for small-scale farmers in South Africa](#)
- Emongor, E. (2009) - [The impact of South African supermarkets on agricultural development in the SADC](#)
- Zonin, V.J. (2014)- [Supermarket chains and small farmers in Africa: A new look from the perspective of New Institutional Economics](#)

The HLPE Issues paper on COVID-19 and its impact on food security and nutrition has evidenced how, in the context of COVID-19, territorial markets, short supply chains and local distribution networks can enhance resilience of food systems.

### 3. What problem is it trying to address within food systems?

The last decades have shown that the rash diffusion of [formal modes of retailing into developing countries](#) has threatened the livelihood of many smallholders who fail to adapt to retailers' standards. In [Latin America, South Asia, Sub Sahara Africa](#) and elsewhere, urban consumers are increasingly shopping their food supplies in this way, instead of via street merchants and informal small-scale food stores. This [change in the food supply networks reflects](#) in an increasing integration and control by the large retailers. Suppliers of large retail companies are expected to meet wide-ranging requirements, in terms of quality, reliability and volume, that most local small-scale farmers cannot meet. [Sourcing from smallholders presents numerous challenges](#): productivity and crop quality are often low; smallholder suppliers may lack knowledge on how to mitigate social and environmental impacts; and poor farm management skills and lack of aggregation reduce smallholders' ability to achieve scale. Hence, they become less competitive, and retailers will privilege import foodstuffs of producing from larger farmers and agribusinesses.

In fact, [limited access to agricultural markets by smallholder farmers](#) in rural areas represents one of the most important challenges confronting policymakers in developing countries. [Supermarkets will continue with international expansion](#) whether smallholders are ready or not.

### 4. Why is addressing that problem important for achieving the goal of your working group?

A sustainable future for smallholders and family farmers/producers is one in which their incomes and living standards rise, so that current and future generations see smallholding as viable and attractive.

Small farmers in the Global South risk being swept out of agriculture by a wave of supermarket expansion unless they can participate in the new market. If we don't help small farmers tap into the supply game and become players in this new market they will be left on the sidelines. To stay competitive, farmers have to supply larger volumes per client and transaction. Smallholder farmers, with few economies of scale, poor knowledge of the markets and limited investment in inputs or infrastructure, are often squeezed out. Compounding problems of scale are supermarkets' own stringent private standards and aggressive business practices.

### 5. How can this solution address that problem (theory of change)?

Global, regional, and large national supermarkets' chains operating in the Global South (Africa, Latin America South and South East Asia, Maghreb and Middle East) will voluntarily solemnly, and publicly commit to exercise preferential sourcing at least 1/3 of the net value of its fresh products supplies (fruits, vegetables, dairy, milk, fish, etc.) from local small-producers by 2030.



#### Main activities proposed:

- **#1.** A detailed draft of the Commitment, defining all the specific elements, will be produced by an international independent commission. E.g. ‘sourcing ‘from small-producers’ shall be understood as sourcing from small-scale farmers and/or business structures that aim to share value with farmers and workers, and that guarantee a living wage or income of the farmers, such as cooperative groups, SMEs or women’s collective enterprises’. The dissemination and uptake at country level of the CFS policy Recommendations on Connecting Smallholders to Markets can be used as the basis for the development of the Commitment.
- **#2.** A relevant International Organization (such as the CFS Secretariat, or the FAO) will operate as main sponsor of the initiative, inviting large global supermarkets and other big food retailers to adhere to the Commitment. The intention will be to get as many adherences as possible, so the Commitment will become self-regulated (or so-called ‘soft legislation’) for the entire sector, everywhere.
- **#3** The sponsor, via a third-party mechanism, will monitor the adherence by the signatories to the principles agreed in the Commitment, as well as the pathway towards accomplishing the target.
- **#4** The supermarkets will put forward, themselves, the means and ways to reach the target, undertaking the necessary investments. It will likely require a combination of these or similar activities:
  - Helping **organizing cooperatives** and/or other forms of effective associations in order to be able to meet the scale and volume needed to supply the supermarket.
  - Establishing **credit schemes** for the farmers or their organizations to obtain the technology needed to be able to meet the quality and safety standards demanded by the supermarket
  - Promoting **contract farming** schemes (agricultural production being carried out on the basis of an agreement between the buyer and farm producers) and/or similar arrangements
  - Facilitating **knowledge dissemination** to place farmers in a stronger position to increase productivity and quality.

#### Main assumptions:

- **The majority of the large supermarkets will sign the Commitment**- this way, the Commitment will not have a significant direct or immediate impact in terms of modifying the competitiveness of any of the signatories, because they all will adhere to the same policy, and face the same constraints and advantages.
- **Supermarkets will be ready to invest, in order to accomplish the commitment.** Some supermarkets are already investing on corporate social responsibility. Adhering to this commitment will provide to all of them a unified framework to focus current CSRs resources to be more targeted-driven. Although the level of investment required to fulfil the target will likely exceed the current levels of CSR, it will also bring several opportunities to the supermarkets. By adhering to the Commitment, supermarkets will ensure reliability of the supply and ensure more resilient value chains (shorter value chains).
- **The demand of fresh food in the Global South will continue expanding**, so despite this commitment, the current market size for current suppliers other than small-scale farmers (e.g. exports, large farmers) will not necessarily be affected – this, in principle, should reduce the risk of opposition by these market players towards the proposed solution.



## 6. Why does this solution align to the definition and criteria for a ‘game changing solution’ developed by the Summit?

- **Impact potential at scale.** The initiative will be global, implemented in dozens of countries where large supermarkets operate. It is anticipated that a significant critical mass of large supermarkets will be initial signatories of the Commitment, and that soon it will become a standard practice for the entire industry. The number of small-scale farmers that will benefit from this initiative, and increase thanks to these new market opportunities and the investments the industry will require to undertake to ensure it fulfilled the target, can be estimated, at least, in 3% of the total number of small-scale farmer global, i.e. **15 millions of small-scale farmers** and their families. Beyond income improvements, the initiative will also contribute to healthier and more diverse diets, GHG emissions reductions (shorter value chains, hence, less transportation) and other social and environmental impacts.
- **Sustainability.** The solution is highly sustainable- it does not require a complex institutional arrangements. Experience demonstrates that smallholders and territorial markets are in many respects better equipped to deal with global challenges , such as increasing climate and price shocks.
- **Actionability.** The main driver of this process is **commitment**, and there is sufficient evidence evince that the idea will get traction, especially because it will be proposed as commitment by the entire supermarket sector, so it will not modify the competition status quo.

## 7. Existing evidence supporting the argument that this solution will work, or at least achieve the initial outcomes?

Evidence shows that **there is a huge opportunity supermarkets in the global South to further link small-scale farmers with supermarkets:**

- Despite the perception that supermarkets in the Global South already substantially source from small-scale farmers, surveys from [India](#) and elsewhere indicate very low market penetration. Hence, there is a great deal of opportunity for expanding these kinds of linkages between small-scale farmers and supermarkets.
- There is abundant evidence that **small-scale farmers, if they get the right support, can link with the supermarkets**, and that small-scale farmers’ cooperatives can allow their members to aggregate their produce, supporting marketing and a stronger bargaining position with supermarkets.
- Evidence from [Vietnam](#) suggests that farmers’ collective action plays a crucial role in the supply of supermarkets in that country. Supermarket development in Vietnam has benefited from innovations brought on by public support and farmer initiatives to meet new consumer demands.
- Evidence from [Madagascar](#) demonstrates that smallholders’ micro-contracts, combined with farm assistance and supervision programs **can help the farmers fulfil the complex quality requirements and safety standards of the supermarkets**. Small farmers that participate in these contracts have higher welfare, more income stability and shorter lean periods.
- [Analysis by Oxfam](#) suggests that **it is entirely possible for small-scale farmers and workers to earn a living income in supermarket supply chains**. Supermarkets and other supply chain actors would need to invest only a marginal amount to close the gap between prevailing and living incomes or wages in comparison to the end consumer price.



## 8. What is the current and/or likely political support for this idea?

There is currently high political support for initiatives to improve the equitable access of small-scale farmers to supermarkets' value chains, including e.g. policy frameworks in the **Global North** economies, particularly in Europe, conducive to promote that type of farmers/supermarket links:

- In response to the growing interest in short food supply chains, in 2009, [France](#) started promoting, via various incentives, an action plan to foster and develop farms whose output could be marketed through local supermarkets and other short food supply chains.
- The current [EU rural development policy](#) puts emphasis on short food supply chains. Producers wishing to involve themselves in local supermarkets can benefit from several measures co-financed by the European Union.

In the **Global South**, although these policies currently rarely exist, there is a widespread recognition by governments of the high toll that small-scale farmers have to overcome to sale their produce to supermarkets on fair conditions, and a high political interest on potential drivers for change, e.g. voluntary commitments by supermarkets.

## 9. Are there certain contexts for which this solution is particularly well suited, or, not well-suited.

- The solution is particularly well suited for geographical contexts where a significant portion of the small-scale farmers are already operating in the markets via cooperatives and other business-oriented groups, , such as most of **Latin America, South East Asia, South Asia, the Middle East and Maghreb, the Caucasus**, and certain countries in **Sub-Saharan Africa** like **Ethiopia** or **Kenya**. However, it will also apply to countries with a less small-scale farmers integration/organization; where in fact, the solution can operate as a trigger to accelerate process towards farmers' market-cooperation.

## S.12. Global Matching Investment Fund for Small-Scale Producers' Organizations

### 1. What, in brief, is the solution?

To establish a Global Trust Fund is established, with a total capital of e.g. USD 3 Billion, to provide demand-driven matching grants for initial capital/quick of investments by cooperatives, SMEs and other smallholders business-oriented groups who are seeking for investment to growth or expand productivity and quality

### 2. What was/were the source(s) from which this solution emerged?

This solution is grounded on the CFS policy recommendations for Investing in smallholder agriculture for food security (CFS 40, 2013), which stated that:

‘To realize the full potential of smallholder agriculture, there is a need to reduce or eliminate the constraints that limit its investment capacity. The first objective is to support investments by smallholders themselves, but their capacity to do so depends on other related investments in collective action, private initiatives and in public goods.’

It is also grounded on the CFS Principles for Responsible Investment in Agriculture and Food Systems (RAI) and builds on the CFS Policy Recommendation on How to increase food security and smallholder sensitive investments in agriculture. It also refers to the CFS-HLPE Report on Investing in smallholder agriculture (2013). The HLPE Report on Multi-stakeholder partnerships to finance and improve food systems (2018) provides valuable guidance.



It also builds on the CSM's Vision for 'Responsible' Agricultural Investment'

'States must mobilize public investments and public policies in support of small-scale food producers and workers. Small-scale food producers, workers and their organizations must be meaningfully involved in the formulation, implementation, monitoring and review of these investments and policies'.

The solution also emerged from the various successful experiences in recent years, supporting small farmers' to gain economies of scale and get access to long-term capital investments my matching grants, such as the EU's ENPARD program in the Republic of Georgia, that has been providing funding for investments in agricultural value chains. The project envisages the provided matching grants to cooperatives, small and SMEs and, rural entrepreneurs or municipalities, and the investment is divided between the matching contribution (paid by the beneficiary), and the matching grant. There are also several other successful experiences supported by other donors (WB, IFAD, USAID, IFC) and governments in Ethiopia, Rwanda, Peru, and many other countries

### 3. What problem is it trying to address within food systems?

Small-scale producers and rural coops SMEs have always faced real difficulties in accessing the funding they need to grow their businesses. With COVID-19, their situation could become even more precarious without necessary support.

- Most investments in smallholder agriculture are realized by **smallholders themselves**. This occurs through different modalities but mostly through labour investments to enlarge and improve the resource base, and to a lesser extent through personal savings and remittances from family members that are used for the acquisition of new, additional resources. However, these investments are limited since domestic needs receive priority when food, health or education expenditures are at risk.
- **Public investments** in and for agriculture have fallen considerably since the 1980s. It is now widely recognized that agriculture has been neglected at both the national and international levels. Many agricultural banks (mostly linked to, and supported by, the state) have disappeared.
- Meanwhile, larger **enterprises** mostly oriented at agro-exports have been favoured, while the smallholder sector, mainly (although far from exclusively) producing for the domestic market, has been neglected.

Prior to the COVID-19 crisis, the demand of \$240 billion far exceeded the available supply of about \$70 billion, leaving a funding gap of roughly \$170 billion. About 70 per cent of the demand of approximately 270 million small producers in Latin America, sub-Saharan Africa, and South and South-East Asia was unmet.

### 4. Why is addressing that problem important for achieving the goal of your working group?

Smallholders constitute the majority of farm families in the world and their contributions to household, national and global food security are monumental. Smallholder agriculture is the foundation of food security in many countries and an important part of the socio/economic/ecological landscape in all countries. With urbanization, integration and globalization of markets, the sector is undergoing great transformations that are often against the interests of smallholders, and that are neither inevitable nor a matter of chance, but of social choice. Investment for agriculture and especially for smallholders is



acknowledged to be an absolute necessity, especially as the majority of the hungry people in the world are, paradoxically, small farmers. Investing in rural SMEs, coops and agri-businesses is essential to spur productivity, improve incomes and livelihoods and importantly create jobs, in particular for the youth.

### 5. How can this solution address that problem (theory of change)?

A Global Fund will be established, with contributions from governments, multilateral banks, foundations and other potential donors. The Fund, to be managed by IFAD or another experienced International Organization, will define financial envelopes for different countries in the Global South, and will provide matching grants for capital investments by agriculture cooperatives, SMES and other business oriented small-scale farmers' groups.

A [matching grant](#) is a one-off, non-reimbursable transfer to project beneficiaries. It is based on a specific project rationale for particular purposes and on condition that the recipient makes a specified contribution for the same project.

The investments will be focused on underserved segments of agribusiness value chains focusing on farmer organizations, financial intermediaries and agribusiness SMEs. It particularly targets commercially viable ventures that can help create employment, in particular for youth and women, and improve rural livelihoods. The fund also prioritizes climate-smart projects that promote sustainable production.

The Fund will mainly focus on

- **Agricultural supply farmers' cooperatives an, SMES and other groups**, in order to aggregate purchases, storage, and distribution of farm inputs for their members. By taking advantage of volume discounts and utilizing other economies of scale, supply groups bring down the cost of the inputs the members purchase from the group compared with direct purchases from commercial suppliers.
- **Agro-food processing/marketing groups**: A farm does not always have the means of transportation necessary for delivering its products to the market, or else the small volume of its production may put it in an unfavourable negotiating position with intermediaries and wholesalers. The farmers' group can act as an integrator, collecting the output from members, sometimes undertaking manufacturing and processing, and delivering it in large aggregated quantities downstream through the marketing channels.

The investments will follow, amongst others, the following criteria:

- They shall ensure the economic sustainability and business-oriented functioning of the group, including preparation of business' plans, training and capacity building on business management and administrative investments
- They must contribute to and be consistent with the progressive realization of the right to adequate and nutritious food for all.
- They shall ensure protection of eco-systems and environments.
- They must ensure decent jobs, respect workers' rights and adhere to core labour standards and obligations as defined the International Labour Organization (ILO).
- They have to ensure decent incomes, livelihoods and equitable development opportunities for local communities, especially for rural youth, women, and indigenous peoples.
- They must respect and uphold the rights of small-scale food producers, indigenous peoples and local communities to access, use and have control over land, water and other natural resources.



All investments must respect the rights of indigenous peoples to their territories and ancestral domains, cultural heritage and landscapes, and traditional knowledge and practices.

- All investments must respect women's rights and prioritize women empowerment.

These Matching grants are introduced in response to market failures and distortions, but their main risk may have distortive effects of their own. Distortive effects may arise from: Promoting non-viable or non-feasible enterprises or business activities; substituting savings with external grants; crowding out financial institutions and/or private investment. Possible distortive effects should be identified during the design of the Fund

## 6. Why does this solution align to the definition and criteria for a 'game changing solution' developed by the Summit?

- Impact potential at scale. The initiative will be global, implemented in at least e.g. 20 countries. It can be estimated that capital investment of USD 3 Billion would allow 150,000 one-time investments of an average of 10,000 USD per investment, benefiting 300,000 farmers' groups (coops, SMEs, informal business -oriented farmers' groups, etc) and some 6,000,000 small-scale producers and their families (average 20 members' per group). With a 1:1 ration for the co-investment, a further USD 3 Billion would be mobilize.
- Sustainability. The idea is for these matching grants to be a one-time kick-off investment for the farmers' group capitalization/expansion. It would be approved on the basis of business plan (that the fund management would support producing, via an external third party). The business plan should confirm the viability of the business. The investments will need to be environmentally sustainable and promote agroecological practices and climate-smart investments, as well as diet diversification, resilience and women empowerment.
- Actionability. There are various similar schemes already in place, implemented by IFAD and other donors- although none of this scale. A light management structure would be created for managing the fund globally. At country level the fund would be managed by designated national authorities under third party supervisory and control mechanisms.

## 7. Existing evidence supporting the argument that this solution will work, or at least achieve the initial outcomes

Matching grants to support capital investments by small scale farmers have increasingly been used in the context of international development by multilateral and bilateral institutions, including IFAD and the WB. Although initially confined to public goods investments, they are being used more and more to finance productive assets and investments by communities' coops and other groups.

Evidence world-wide suggests that a considerable share of the farmers' groups that participated in such grant programs have used the received grants mainly in improving production technology and incorporating innovative methods of production, processing, and marketing.

## 8. What is the current and/or likely political support for this idea?

Many countries are realizing that matching grants can compensate for the absence of suitable term and investment finance and to stimulate investment and business activity where the intended beneficiaries operate under severe constraints (e.g. insufficient equity) or where the innovations have higher risks or unpredictable profits.



In this regards, various countries have set matching grant schemes, e.g. in Rwanda, the Rural Investment Facility is a grant program under the Rwandan Ministry of Agriculture and Animal Resources to provide incentives for financial institutions and entrepreneurs to finance productive investments in agriculture. Working capital and operating costs do not qualify. Individuals, farmer associations, cooperatives and corporate bodies borrowing from a licensed financial institution are eligible for support.

### **9. Are there certain contexts for which this solution is particularly well suited, or, not well-suited.**

The solution is best suited for countries where access to financial capital for investments by small-scale farmers is severely constrain – which includes most of the countries Global South.

## **S.13 Invest in the Future - Making Food Systems Finance Accessible for Rural People**

### **1. What, in brief, is the solution?**

The solution is a Global platform for digital rural finance, with 3 pillars: 1) an Innovation Fund with catalytic capital to support the development of new digital finance products, services, and business models designed for inclusive access among rural people; 2) a Technical Assistance Hub providing capital and expert support to build the capacity of rural financial service providers shifting to digital solutions and to technology providers with new business models to test for inclusion and sustainability; and 3) a Global Knowledge Hub offering a repository of good practices and convening learning events around enabling policy and regulations, digital financial literacy, consumer protection, and partnerships.

### **2. What was/were the source(s) from which this solution emerged?**

Google Form database.

### **3. What problem is it trying to address within food systems?**

Poor or no access to financial services results in economic disempowerment, marginalization, vulnerability to shocks, and limited investment capacity among hundreds of millions of people living in rural areas in emerging countries – notably women and youth and people living in poverty. Given that agriculture represents a core pillar of food systems, and that rural smallholder farmers are both the most numerous among agricultural producers and a large share of people living in poverty, inclusive rural finance is an important precondition for transformative agricultural investments as well as for access to decent incomes and to healthy diets. The HLPE Report on Multi-stakeholder partnerships to finance and improve food systems (2018) provides valuable guidance on partnerships to catalyse finance in agriculture and food systems.

Digital products and services, along with digital delivery systems for finance, have become increasingly widespread across sectors in the past several years. This experience shows that digital finance can solve a number of factors that make traditional financial products and services too costly to manage for many financial service providers, and the process of accessing finance also less costly and burdensome for rural women and men. However, digital technology per se is not a panacea nor a predictor of inclusive impacts. In rural areas, in particular, poor digital and financial literacy, incomplete or unreliable coverage of mobile connectivity, and lack of cash-out points all limit the potential impact of digital products or delivery channels.

The solution aims to accelerate the design of effective and inclusive services and products through dedicated funding and by aggregating learning and knowledge resources, as well as to build the capacity



of different actors (notably financial institutions, technology innovators, and mobile companies) to work together to develop and adopt digital solutions on a large scale.

#### 4. Why is addressing that problem important for achieving the goal of your working group?

Access to finance as a key component of economic empowerment, which is the goal of the working group.

#### 5. How can this solution address that problem (theory of change)?

The theory of change behind this initiative can be summarized as follows.

##### Assumptions/rationale

- large un-met demand for financial services among rural people, and particularly so among women, young people and people living in poverty;
- traditional financial services typically find it too costly and/or risky to “bank” rural people, especially in the lower market segments;
- fintech and digital financial services are currently dynamic and expanding sectors, and have demonstrated potential to reach rural people in various contexts;
- however, there remains a large gap in knowledge base, financial sources, and capacity to design and deploy digital finance that has held back its adoption and limited its potential impact on rural women and men.

##### Inputs

- A coalition of digital, financial and agricultural actors spanning the public and private sector. This includes Public Development Banks (leveraging the agriculture cluster facilitated by IFAD at the FiC Summit), fintech companies, impact-oriented private investors and commercial banks at the forefront of developing green and inclusive investment products, agri-business companies such as aggregators, processors and value adding companies and digital services companies (telecom);
- Grants and catalytic finance (e.g. matching grants, pay-for-success mechanisms, other) for the innovation fund;
- Matching grants or other cost-sharing finance for the technical assistance facility;
- A pool of technical experts supporting the knowledge hub and facilitating capacity building and/or training of trainers for capacity building to FSPs, regulators, or tech companies.

##### Outputs

- Innovation funding for the design or testing of new business models and new financial products and services, with a specific learning agenda and metrics for “inclusion” and “impact”, to be allocated on a continuous or periodic manner through a competitive process (e.g. calls for proposals via regional or global windows, challenges and award mechanisms);
- Technical assistance support (training, advisory support, facilitated access to peer-to-peer or on-job learning) and partnership facilitation support to be provided on a cost-sharing basis upon demand;
- Industry convenings, thematic conferences, ad-hoc workstreams on themes of relevance to the ecosystem (e.g. periodic reviews and analyses of data on the state of digital rural finance, digital rural finance maps, regulatory “best practices”, etc.).

##### Outcomes



- More (soft) finance available to innovators and to financial institutions to develop and roll out innovative models.
- Financial institutions and financial tech innovators have a common reference point for good practices and technical know-how.
- The international community has a clear reference point to drive forward the agenda of digital rural finance.

#### Impact

- Economic empowerment of rural people living in poverty
- Economic empowerment of rural women
- Economic empowerment of rural people with disabilities
- Economic resilience of rural households

#### **6. Why does this solution align to the definition and criteria for a ‘game changing solution’ developed by the Summit?**

The initiative is intended to have global scale of impact (first criterion), to build on large unmet demand for finance in rural areas as well as continuing trends towards digitalization of market transaction and of a range of services that are important for both urban and rural people (key for both feasibility and sustainability). It is also intended to build on existing initiatives and capabilities among different actors, as mentioned above (important for both feasibility and sustainability).

#### **7. Existing evidence supporting the argument that this solution will work, or at least achieve the initial outcomes described above?**

Evidence about the impact of digital finance in terms of rural financial inclusion can be found in the studies conducted by CGAP, the MIX, and others in recent years. The evidence for the combination of innovation fund, technical assistance, and knowledge hub as three interconnected components builds but also expands on the experience of initiatives like convergence – the pre-eminent global network, repository of knowledge, and source of design funding and match-making advisory support for blended finance – or the GAVI – which includes innovative finance mechanisms and support to country level healthcare and immunization systems as well as a repository of data and analytical sources. Such examples show the importance of mutually reinforcing dynamics connecting knowledge and best practices to innovation funding and capacity building, in a continuous loop, without which the effectiveness of the solution would be more limited.

#### **8. What is the current and/or likely political support for this idea?**

There are no political opponents to the idea, nor (to the author’s knowledge) vocal political supporters. There are a number of initiatives and platforms that work on digital finance, some of them with a focus on agriculture, which could be involved in fine-tuning its design and eventually getting it off the ground. These include the Global Partnership for Financial Inclusion, the SME Finance Forum (which has a strong component focused on Fintech and a newly established Community of Practice on agriculture), IFAD ICT4D initiatives, the GSMA AgriTech programme, CGAP, and the MIX Inclusive Fintech 50 initiative, inter alia.

#### **9. Are there certain contexts for which this solution is particularly well suited, or, not well-suited.**

The solution is currently more easily implementable in contexts where there is sufficient on-grid or off-grid electricity infrastructure and mobile telephone coverage. Over time, however, one of the effects of



having a robust Global Platform working towards digital rural finance penetration is likely to be accelerating the identification of cost-effective solutions also in these areas, driven by likely increases in demand for digital services across geographical areas.

## **S.14. Public Development Bank Initiative to Catalyze Green and Inclusive Food System**

### **Investments**

#### **1. What, in brief, is the solution?**

The solution is a global platform of national, regional and international public development banks (PDBs), designed to strengthen capacity across this diverse community of financial institutions to invest and catalyse green and inclusive investments in agriculture and across food systems.

The platform has three main components, namely: a forum of PDBs (including the agriculture cluster of PDBs formed at the 2020 Finance in Common Summit), a global multi-donor facility for technical assistance to PDBs and other financial institutions, and a digital platform for knowledge sharing and for impact assessment and mapping of PDBs' own and associated investments.

#### **2. What was/were the source(s) from which this solution emerged?**

This solution emerged from conversations within the SAFIN network and IFAD. It builds on the agriculture cluster of PDBs formed around the 2020 Finance in Common Summit hosted by France, and on relevant research on knowledge and capacity gaps among financial service providers with respect to catalysing investments in sustainable agriculture and agri-SMEs. Inter alia, members of the cluster have identified specific knowledge and capacity gap areas – e.g. around how to access climate finance, how to better support climate adaptation and nature positive investments in agriculture, how to digitize their services and internal processes, and other areas – that the solution could prioritize for the content of its digital platform. It also complements current thinking within the Finance Lever about mobilizing commitments for investment into food system transformation among the Multilateral Development Banks (MDBs), which are part of the PDB community.

#### **3. What problem is it trying to address within food systems?**

The initiative responds to a three-fold problem, namely:

- Various types of impediments limiting PDBs' ability to deploy finance into sustainable agriculture, agri-SME and smallholder finance, and other green and inclusive food system investment areas, which in turn impacts negatively on the volume and amount of finance available for these critical investments;
- limited capacity among many PDBs (particularly national and local) to access public green and climate finance or to mobilize “green” investment capital from the market, e.g. through the design of appropriate instruments (such as green bonds) or programmes;
- lack of alignment around shared metrics and/or shared reporting and learning from the impact of finance for agriculture and food system investments, whether in environmental terms (e.g. on biodiversity) or in terms of inclusion (e.g. smallholder farmers, youth, women), resilience (e.g. climate adaptation) or nutrition.

#### **4. Why is addressing that problem important for achieving the goal of your working group?**

Public Development Banks – national, regional, and international, including the Multi-lateral Development Banks (MDBs) – have unique roles to play with respect to financing food system transformation, given



their counter-cyclical responsibilities and the public good components of their mandates. While very diverse in form, mandate, and capabilities, PDBs generally share these important characteristics. Second-tier institutions and regional and MDBs also have pivotal roles in facilitating access to finance, de-risking capital, and knowledge among other financial service providers. As such, addressing the capacity to provide and catalyse finance for food system investments across this group of actors as well as their capacity to monitor and learn from the impact of these investments, can be catalytic and a “game changer” for the whole financial ecosystem, globally and also at the country level. Leveraging the different types of capabilities that MDBs often have compared to national PDBs, especially those of smaller size, would help achieve this objective of capacity building in a sustainable manner. The HLPE Report on Multi-stakeholder partnerships to finance and improve food systems (2018) provides valuable guidance on partnerships to catalyze finance in agriculture and food systems.

### 5. How can this solution address that problem (theory of change)?

- **Impact potential at scale.** The platform will be global, allowing for a critical mass of commitments and financial mobilization capacity to be targeted, as well as for cross-country and cross-regional learning and standardization of impact assessment metrics and approaches. The aggregate financial assets of the global PDB community are very large (over \$11.2 trillion according to data shared at the Finance in Common Summit in 2020). Altogether, Agri-PDBs account for almost two-thirds of the formal financing for agriculture.<sup>8</sup>
- **Sustainability.** The global community of PDBs have expressed commitment to aligning to the Paris Agreement and the Sustainable Development Goals at the Finance in Common Summit in 2020, and the MDB community has expressed such commitment in different forums since the launch of the 2030 Agenda. This commitment provides the foundation for the sustainability of this initiative and ensures that it will continue to be relevant in the coming years, as the Paris Agreement and 2030 Agenda remain in place and pending their full realization. In concrete terms, sustainability of the three components of the platform will depend on different factors. For the forum component, continuity of commitment among PDBs and availability of new experiences to share and learn from will be key, as will the existence of one or more champions and facilitators of the forum. For the facility, demand for capacity building support and adequate financial and technical resources will be essential. Finally, enabling regulatory measures allowing PDBs to align around metrics and approaches for impact assessment and effective digital platform design will be key to the sustainability of the third component.
- **Actionability.** The platform can build on existing forums (notably the Finance in Common process, IDFC, and MDB forums), making the first component particularly easy to realize. The capacity building facility and shared reporting models can be modelled around existing experiences and structures (e.g. regional agricultural and rural credit associations or RACAs, the African Digital Financial Inclusion facility, and others), which have proven to be viable.

### 6. Why does this solution align to the definition and criteria for a ‘game changing solution’ developed by the Summit?

The theory of change behind this solution is that by: a) strengthening the capacity and tools that PDBs have to **deploy finance** in investments conducive to food system transformation, and b) strengthening

<sup>8</sup> [https://isfadvisor.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/04/inflection\\_point\\_april\\_2016.pdf](https://isfadvisor.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/04/inflection_point_april_2016.pdf)



their capacity and tools **to mobilize finance** from other sources for such investments, there is a high probability of c) a larger share of PDB assets going into these investments, d) other financial institutions (e.g. commercial banks or MFIs) aligning around similar investment models for sustainable food system impact, and ultimately, e) more private capital being invested for food system transformation.

The assumptions of the solution are the following:

- PDBs play a pivotal role in the context of financial ecosystems around food and agriculture and are thus a key entry point for game-changing action;
- There is scope to strengthen the alignment of PDB portfolios and investment approaches to the 2030 Agenda and Paris Agreement, including in relation to food and agriculture;
- PDBs like other financial institutions often face high transaction costs and risks when engaging in food and agriculture, and especially so with small-scale clients or clients with limited physical assets or credit history (agri-SMEs, smallholder farmers, small women entrepreneurs or youth);
- PDBs often lack instruments to appraise investment opportunities in alignment with environmental, social, and nutrition-related metrics relevant to food system transformation, and hence experience difficulties in accessing climate finance resources;
- PDBs often lack appropriate financial products to serve clients in food and agriculture, including financial products that can help them transition to more sustainable models (e.g. climate adaptation investments);
- Effective funding of the SDGs will require a high degree of awareness of the challenges of transitions at stake, both at the level of managers and of staff of PDBs;
- Digital instruments appear indispensable for reducing transaction costs and risks and help align and report against common standards of impact;
- There are economies of scale possible in addressing capacity gaps in the PDB community from a global standpoint and gains to be made in better connecting the different types of expertise and capabilities of MDBs to those of national and local PDBs.

### **7. Existing evidence supporting the argument that this solution will work, or at least achieve the initial outcomes?**

In the lead-up to the Finance in Common Summit, IFAD, in partnership with AFD, convened a cluster of agricultural and rural development banks to discuss how to leverage the particular role of PDBs to foster a shift to more sustainable and resilient food systems. A joint outcome document (or 'joint declaration') was produced that highlights actions and priority focus issues for PDBs to accelerate progress on the SDGs and Paris Agreement through investments in sustainable, inclusive food systems. The document notes the need for continued dialogue and sharing of information and good practice.

Focus areas have recently been confirmed through a recent survey conducted by IFAD among the PDB group, as noted: (1) advancing last mile financial inclusion; (2) developing a climate-resilient portfolio and/or accessing climate finance; (3) PDB financial risk management tools; (4) digitalizing product offerings and product delivery; and (5) improving PDB governance. The results of the survey and the earlier declaration show the will of these institutions to progress together on these fronts, which this initiative would concretely contribute to, with PDBs as key contributors as well as beneficiaries.

### **8. What is the current and/or likely political support for this idea?**



The world is going through a difficult period, due to the COVID-19 pandemic which is weakening food supply chains, especially in developing countries, where farmers remain among the poorest. At the same time, the risks generated by climate change, and by the loss of biodiversity, are growing every day. A major effort in the field of agricultural development must therefore be agreed upon and supported by the international community. In the agricultural development ecosystem, finance is recognized as a major element, and more as a catalyst for many economic, social and environmental objectives. There is therefore little doubt that the mobilization of Agri-PDBs and a strengthening of their capacity, individually and as a system, would not receive the political support of heads of state and government, as well as benefitting from possible support from the Finance in Common Summit and/or the current G20 Presidency, which is likely to host the second edition of this Summit.

### **S.15. Change relationships of power in ways that ensure a fair share of resources through the MAC Protocol (Mining, Agriculture, and Construction) Protocol**

#### **1. What, in brief, is the solution?**

The MAC Protocol (Mining, Agriculture, and Construction) to the 2001 Cape Town Convention improves access to and costs of finance for companies/family farms/collectives to purchase/lease modern MAC equipment in countries that adopt the Protocol. Collective advocacy for accelerated adoption by national governments would accelerate large-scale economic benefits (an estimated \$30 billion in GDP gains per year), mostly in developing countries where access to affordable capital is constrained (an estimated \$23 billion in GDP gains per year), per a 2018 economic assessment: <https://www.unidroit.org/english/documents/2018/study72k/1808-final-mac-protocol-ea.pdf>.

#### **2. What was/were the source(s) from which this solution emerged?**

Member of AT4 Working Group, Multi-dimensional Welfare and Access, representing UN member state (United States). The Cape Town Convention is overseen by UNIDROIT (International Institute for the Unification of Private Law), an independent, intergovernmental organization based in Rome.

#### **3. What problem is it trying to address within food systems?**

Inequality and power imbalances – at household, community, national and global levels – are consistently constraining the ability of food systems to deliver poverty reduction and sustainable, equitable livelihoods.

#### **4. Why is addressing that problem important for achieving the goal of your working group?**

Address the legal, institutional and market constraints to the realization of equity within food systems, such as ensuring that the laws, norms and regulatory mechanisms coupled with the capacity of institutions and communities to implement them are adequate. Ensuring that international convention and treaty obligations related to equity and rights are enshrined in national legal frameworks and that mechanisms for application of the law or dispute settlement are functioning, accountable and accessible to marginalized groups.

#### **5. How can this solution address that problem (theory of change)?**

The Protocol will apply to MAC equipment accounting for approximately \$100 billion a year of international trade. The MAC sectors tend to operate with less capital equipment in countries with poorer



access to credit. This constrains productivity, profits and economic growth. The MAC Protocol will improve access to finance and reduce credit risk by removing some of the key uncertainties around asset recovery in the event of default or insolvency, as well as providing clear priority rules. It should enable more buyers to access credit and/or to borrow on better terms, whether that means lower interest rates, longer loan duration or higher loan-to-value ratios. (MAC Protocol Economic Assessment: <https://www.unidroit.org/english/documents/2018/study72k/1808-final-mac-protocol-ea.pdf>). Theory of Change depicted on page 9: <https://www.unidroit.org/english/documents/2018/study72k/1808-final-mac-protocol-ea.pdf>):

**Immediate Actions:** Ten additional states should sign on and ratify the agreement in each of the next five years. As of January 20, 2021, five states have signed the MAC Protocol (Nigeria, Gambia, Paraguay, Congo (Republic of), and the United States); none have ratified it. The MAC Protocol will come into force once five states have ratified it. As a comparator, 82 states and the European Union have adopted the 2001 Cape Town Convention on International Interests in Mobile Equipment (<https://www.unidroit.org/status-2001capetown>), which forms the legal basis of the MAC Protocol. 79 states and the EU have already adopted the Aircraft Protocol to the Cape Town Convention (<https://www.unidroit.org/status-2001capetown-aircraft>).

**Near-term Inputs:** The most immediate and direct effects of the policy change will be in the credit market for MAC equipment. In countries that undertake to reform their secured transactions laws and where equipment needs

currently exceed availability due to financial constraints, the anticipated effects of the policy change are (Economic Assessment, page 41):

- an increase in the overall volume of credit available;
- a reduction in the cost of secured debt relative to unsecured debt and in absolute terms; and
- a switch from unsecured credit to lower cost secured credit.

**Mid-term Outcomes:** An increase in both the stock and quality of equipment in countries that have implemented the MAC Protocol should help to boost productivity and output in their MAC sectors as well as creating new business and employment opportunities both directly and indirectly in domestic supply chains (Economic Assessment, page 41). Financial institutions may gain confidence to lend to underserved populations and agricultural enterprises, including family farmers and cooperatives, that seek increased efficiencies by integrating modern agriculture equipment valued at \$20,000 or more. Increased data generated by modern MAC equipment can help farmers plant, harvest, market, and sell their products, while operation and maintenance of modern MAC equipment can generate new “off-the-farm” employment in rural areas (see Scientific Group paper pages 6-7).

**Risks:** If deployed towards unsustainable ends, more efficient equipment for use in the mining, agricultural, and construction sectors could accelerate depletion of natural resources. This could be exacerbated through a possible crowding out of available loans to other sectors and non-registrants.

## **6. Why does this solution align to the definition and criteria for a ‘game changing solution’ developed by the Summit?**

Access to credit is a key constraint to agriculture-led economic development. Access to credit will be more crucial than ever as the world strives to “build back better” from COVID-19. Widespread adoption of the



MAC Protocol, according to the 2018 Economic Assessment, would generate \$30 billion or more in annual development gains. The 2006 Aircraft Protocol to the Cape Town Convention, although covering a smaller and far less diversified class of moveable assets, generates far more per year. In addition, much MAC equipment can be used across MAC sectors, contributing to improved sustainability through data-driven operations in the agricultural, construction, and mining sectors. This scalable solution therefore offers ample benefits against the non-financial costs (the bureaucratic and legal work required to accede to an international commercial treaty) to UN member states. The MAC Protocol improves access to the best available agriculture equipment; it does not impose new obligations on food systems actors that do not wish to acquire new MAC equipment. Promotion of the MAC Protocol can be combined with other Summit outcomes targeting women or youth, family farms or cooperatives, or other populations and/or enterprises, to ensure that gains are equitably distributed.

### **S.16. Agri-SME Business Development Platform: the first global multi-stakeholder engine for inclusive and equitable agri-value-chains**

#### **1. What, in brief, is the solution?**

The solution is an Agri-SME Business Development Platform (BDP) to connect diverse cross-sector actors engaged in strengthening agri-SMEs and provide multiple services that better leverage and align their collective resources – to maximise collective impact. Building on existing initiatives and a wealth of experience and insights generated by well-placed but disparate stakeholder groups, the key functions of this BDP will be:

1. A toolbox of resources for agri-SMEs to enhance their investment-readiness and bankability (building on work by AGRA, CFI and SCOPEinsight)
2. A digital financial discovery function for agri-SMEs and investors to learn about each other (building on work by WBCSD)
3. A suite of assessment and training resources and material for Entrepreneur and Business Development Services as well as a network of local businesses who can help implement (building on work by the Agripreneurship Alliance, TechnoServe, GFRAS, and Nourishing Africa, and SCOPEinsight's Local Expert Network)
4. A suite of reference documents for agri-SME investor performance metrics, due diligence, and impact tracking and reporting (building on work by the Collaborative for Frontier Finance and CSAF)
5. A learning community for agri-SME finance, with an active learning and outreach programme (building on work by the SAFIN network)

#### **2. What was/were the source(s) from which this solution emerged?**

The solution is an evolution from the cumulative but to-date disparate efforts of a number of key stakeholder groups (some of whom are listed above). It brings together and builds on existing work across critical groups of actors: development finance, entrepreneur and enterprise support organisations, multi-lateral agencies, private sector and investors/donors.

The design of this solution has been informed by a series of dialogues over the last 6 months including a Bold Action for Food as a Force for Good dialogue on The Role of SMEs in strengthening food systems and equitable livelihoods on 12 November 2020 hosted by the FAO, WBCSD, GAIN, SUN, Agripreneurship Alliance and the WFP, as well as on a dialogue among members of the SAFIN network held on 11 January 2021. This ongoing dialogue has yielded a sense of overall direction that is captured in points 1-555 above.



This solution 1) reflects the escalating and cross-Action Track dialogue and momentum around the key role of agri-SMEs in a sustainable food system and 2) is a practical application of two of AT4's priority agendas on strengthening agency and multi-dimensional welfare.

### 3. What problem is it trying to address within food systems?

This solution speaks directly to the problem statement outlined in AT4 Discussion Starter: 'Food system transformation that does not address inequalities and specific vulnerabilities risks reinforcing and deepening inequalities and undermining the resilience of food systems'.

Agri-SMEs are the economic backbone of virtually every economy in the world. They generate most of the new jobs created, help diversify a country's economic base, promote innovation, delivers goods and services to the bottom of the pyramid and can be a powerful force for **integrating woman and young people** into the economic mainstream. Agri-SMEs play a critical role as commercial small and medium-scale farming enterprises, providers of jobs on and off farm, service providers to small farmers and other rural and urban groups, off-takers from small farmers and suppliers to

larger agribusiness. Some of them are embedded in the supply chains of larger agribusinesses and critical to a stable and transparent supply.

It is widely acknowledged, therefore, that agri-SMEs are critical players in a sustainable food system. However, often referred to as 'the hidden middle' (also referred to as 'the missing middle') the value they bring and their specific needs are often overlooked. To shift the economics so that the socio-economic and/or environmental value of agri-SME lending is captured, innovative partnerships and comprehensive approaches are essential.

The solution will address the problem in 3 ways:

1. Convene, align and leverage the complementary efforts, resources and roles of different influential actors, working around key synergy points (e.g. digital tools, bankability and impact metrics, etc.);
2. Improve the visibility of the landscape of agri-SME support initiatives tools and resources, facilitating the avoidance of duplication and the engagement of new actors and supporters of the agenda;
3. Accelerate learning among initiatives and actors about what works and what needs improvement, ultimately enabling all of them to deliver greater value to agri-SMEs and to investors.

### 4. Why is addressing that problem important for achieving the goal of your working group?

This solution contributes to both "Strengthening Agency" by supporting smaller and medium sized enterprises, which are the backbone of virtually all rural economies, yet a sector to-date overlooked and under-provided for. It also contributes to "Multi-dimensional Welfare and Access" by directly building more equitable value distribution through strengthening the smaller, yet essential, players in the agricultural value chain.

Two of the priority groups for the AT4 Working Groups are women and youth, both of whom are positioned to benefit directly from agri-SME business development.

### 5. How can this solution address that problem (theory of change)?

To-date there has been a collective failure to recognise the different drivers that a range of stakeholder groups have in strengthening agri-SMEs, to identify their strengths and specific role or responsibilities and



coalesce around a shared goal. This has resulted in a fragmented approach that is not able to best align, or leverage, extensive intel experience and resources.

This new Platform puts the agri-SMEs at the centre of the solution and positions relevant partners as delivering discrete and necessary tools and functions according to their network and expertise. This solution tackles the key barriers to strengthening agri-SMEs by:

- Mitigating perceived investment risk and expanding the pool of interested investors, by aligning around shared performance metrics and showcasing to investors where agri-SMEs are embedded in structured supply-chains with secure off-takers from ‘blue-chip’ companies
- Improving the visibility of agri-SME investment opportunities by providing a bespoke digital platform for them to post information about their enterprises and funds requested
- Signposting for agri-SME’s sources of technical assistance, business service development, innovative technology
- Over time contributing to the essential shift in the economics of ‘unprofitable’ agri-SME lending by integrating the socio-economic and/or environmental value of impact generated

## 6. Why does this solution align to the definition and criteria for a ‘game changing solution’ developed by the Summit?

This proposed solution fits particularly closely to the following 3 criteria:

- Have positive effects on ensuring equitable livelihood opportunities, advancing human health, and regenerating environmental integrity, with focus on youth, women, marginalized and disabled populations. *Agri-SMEs are widely recognized as a very effective conduit to engage these communities in value-chains.*
- Be implementable at a sufficient scale to reach a large portion of the population with clear, timely and verifiable outcomes that produce significant impacts by 2030. *This solution has high impact potential at scale and actionability due to the number of well-established and global expert players already committed and representative of the key groups of actors needed with buy-in and ‘skin-in-the-game’.*
- Promote gender equality and women’s empowerment in food consumption and production systems. *Agri-SMEs are widely recognized as key to addressing gender equality and women’s empowerment.*

## 7. Existing evidence supporting the argument that this solution will work, or at least achieve the initial outcomes?

There is extensive evidence that supports the evidence base on which this solution is designed and its strong chances of success, including:

- The Smallholder and Agri-SME Finance and Investment Network (SAFIN), a network of 48 institutions (including IFC, Aceli Africa, Rabobank, GAFSP etc) across the landscape of agricultural finance, who address strategic issues and knowledge gaps and foster innovative solutions to address common challenges.
- Progress made over the last 6 months with the WBCSD Agri-SME Digital Finance Platform and informed by *The role of agribusiness in strengthening rural livelihoods* independently prepared by the School of Global Studies and IIED.
- Nourishing Africa knowledge and resources for and from members across 36 out of the 54 countries (with a target of 54 by end-2021) working to ‘attract, empower, equip, connect and



celebrate over 1 Million dynamic and innovative young entrepreneurs who will drive the profitable and sustainable growth of the African agriculture and food landscapes’.

- FAO Agribusiness Incubation and Acceleration trainings (2020) and country-level focus e.g. launch of the Zambia Agri-PPP (December).
- Scope Insight’s Assessment Tools built from thousands of assessments that clearly link agri-SME professionalism with business as well as development outcomes.
- One Young World’s focus on young leaders generating social impact and spotlight on SDG2 Zero Hunger.
- The new AGRA SMESMESME-resource bank <https://agrif.org/dealroom/sme-resource-bank/launch-of-the-sme-resource-bank-for-investment-readiness/>.

### **8. What is the current and/or likely political support for this idea?**

The urgency of building more Equitable Value Distribution across food and agri value-chains is gaining in profile and momentum. The World Food Programme’s latest ‘State of Nutrition and Food Security in the World’ report estimates that the pandemic will add over 100 million people to the total number of those undernourished worldwide and the World Bank estimates that a further 100 million people will be living in extreme poverty – both by the end of 2020. Our collective efforts to achieve the Global Goals related to poverty, food security and inequality have been significantly set back. The impacts of COVID-19 have been indirectly socially and economically devastating and have seriously exacerbated these inequalities. Agri-SMEs need urgently to be transformed into thriving enterprises to alleviate extreme poverty and hunger (SDG 2) as well as stable and transparent agricultural supply-chains. There is also a direct link between agri-SMEs and the high profile political agendas relating to climate resilience.

Partners whose current efforts could contribute to and benefit from synergies provided by the platform include (but are not limited to):

- Smallholder and Agri-SME Finance and Investment Network (SAFIN)
- FAO
- Agripreneurship Alliance
- AGRA (Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa)
- World Business Council on Sustainable Development’s Global Agribusiness Action on Equitable Livelihoods Project
- One Young World (the global forum for young leaders)
- SCOPEinsight
- Private Sector Mechanism of the CFS

### **9. Are there certain contexts for which this solution is particularly well suited, or, not well-suited.**

This solution has broad application given the nature of agribusiness value-chains, prevalence of smaller actors and widespread urgency for equitable value distribution. In order to prioritise, key impact areas where the greatest investment and contribution are needed could be women and youth. Geographically the priority regions will be the key growing regions of Latin America, Sub-Saharan Africa and South-East Asia.

### **S.17. Farmer Field and Business School**



### 1. What, in brief, is the solution?

The solution is called Farmers Field and Business School (FFBS); a participatory, women-focused training and extension approach that helps farmers build skills necessary to increase production, access markets and sell at competitive prices; collaborate with each other and other stakeholders; and engage in beneficial and efficient decision making. It also transforms the status and recognition of women by providing the support they require to be successful farmers, businesspeople, leaders, and agents of change. It builds on the traditional Farmer Field School (FFS) approach, but integrates sustainable agriculture practices, market engagement, gender and equity, food and nutrition security, group empowerment, and participatory monitoring and evaluation. This integration strengthens results across the spectrum of food and nutrition security and gender equality.

### 2. What was/were the source(s) from which this solution emerged?

The FFBS approach emerged as a solution to women's equitable participation in agriculture through equal access to productive resources including agriculture extension advisory and market services as an alternative to the conventional FFS<sup>9</sup> approach. It is designed to influence multiple levers of change (per CARE's Gender Equality Framework), like building agency (building consciousness, confidence, self-esteem, aspirations, knowledge, skills and capabilities), changing relations (the power relations through which people live their lives through intimate relations, social networks, group membership and activism, and citizen and market negotiations) and transforming structures (discriminatory social norms, customs, values and exclusionary practices (non-formal sphere) and laws, policies, procedures and services (formal sphere). FFBS was piloted in six countries (Mali, Malawi, Ghana, Tanzania, Bangladesh and India) and proved to be effective in helping women small-scale farmers improve their productivity, ensure their household's food and nutrition security, enhance their livelihoods and challenge and transform social and gender norm barriers.

### 3. What problem is it trying to address within food systems?

As an integrated gender transformative extension advisory service approach, FFBS addresses problems related to access to productive resources, markets, nutrition, and gender relations. This is a flexible model that can be tailored to different contexts and age groups and builds on local knowledge, skills, and abilities to address among others: women's inequitable access to services in food systems; gender-based discrimination or the denial of women's rights, insecurity,<sup>10,11</sup> and discriminatory social and gender norms; women's time constraints, reduce duplication of efforts by different development actors by working with existing groups including VSLAs, producer groups, self-help groups that already have established social capital and governance mechanisms. FFBS uses adult learning principles to offer practical lessons even to those with limited literacy.

### 4. Why is addressing that problem important for achieving the goal of your working group?

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<sup>9</sup> The standard FFS approach is typically gender-light or neutral. It does not have an explicit outreach focus to female farmers, who are often underserved by extension, and it tends to focus primarily on teaching new and improved production techniques, with little attention to business skills or market-oriented production

<sup>10</sup> FAO (2019). *State of Food Insecurity and Nutrition in the World*.

<sup>11</sup> FAO (2011). *The State of Food and Agriculture: Closing the Gender Gap for Development*.

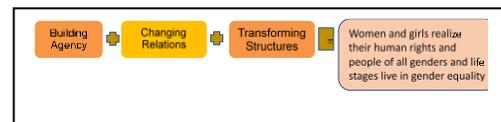


Ensuring women's equitable engagement in food systems helps ensure women's right to food, water and nutrition security and brings about gender equality and a means to achieving food and nutrition security and alleviating poverty. Despite the significant role that women play in agriculture and the amount of time they spent on agricultural production; agriculture continues to be a male-dominated field with less value to women's contributions. As such, women are usually not the primary targets of extension services. In the 97 countries assessed by the FAO, female farmers only received 5% of all agricultural extension services. Worldwide, only 15% of those providing these services are women. Just 10% of total aid provided for agriculture, forestry and fishing goes to women<sup>12</sup>. Women's limited access to extension services and its consequences needs to also be understood in economic terms. The reduced agricultural productivity of women due to gender-based inequalities in access to and control of productive and financial resources costs Uganda USD 67 million, Malawi USD 100 million, and Tanzania USD 105 million every year.

Closing the gender gap in agricultural production could lift as many as 119,000 people out of poverty in Uganda, 238,000 people out Malawi, and 80,000 people in Tanzania each year<sup>13</sup>. All these makes addressing gender inequality in food system not only important but also essential.

### 5. How can this solution address that problem (theory of change)?

Foundationally, FFBS is predicated on CARE's Gender Equality Framework, driving change in three inter-related change domains of building agency, changing relations, and transforming structures. With intentional focus on women small-scale farmers, FFBS builds women's agency by imparting knowledge and skill in improved agriculture, market, nutrition, communication, planning skills, equitable control over productive assets and income, and building their confidence and promoting positive images of women as farmers, entrepreneurs, and leaders. In addition, power relations in households, marketplaces, and collectives are questioned, challenged, and transformed to enable equitable workload-sharing and caregiving practices and encourage the engagement of male champions, change agents and collectives to challenge repressive gender and social norms. To create an enabling environment for women farmers, FFBS pushes to transform structures through demanding and promoting equitable land, property, resource laws and practices, making extension services and market structures responsive to women's needs and interests and transforming inequitable gender and social norms.



### 6. Why does this solution align to the definition and criteria for a 'game changing solution' developed by the Summit?

The FFBS is a one stop platform to address extension, production, markets, gender, nutrition and monitoring and evaluation for small-scale producers, especially women and youth. It is effective in integrating these multiple components, with trainings tied to the seasonal cycle, ensuring that activities are done in real time without requiring extra commitments from already time-constrained women farmers. It builds on existing groups such as VSLAs, producer groups, and self-help groups that already

<sup>12</sup> FAO (2012). *The Female Face of Farming: Access to Extension Services*. Retrieved from <http://www.fao.org/gender/resources/infographics/the-female-face-of-farming/en/> on 5/20/20

<sup>13</sup> UN Women and WB (2015). *The cost of the gender gap in agricultural productivity*. Retrieved from <http://documents.worldbank.org/curated/en/847131467987832287/pdf/100234-WP-PUBLIC-Box393225B-The-Cost-of-the-Gender-Gap-in-Agricultural-Productivity-in-Malawi-Tanzania-and-Uganda.pdf> on 5/20/20



have established social capital and governance mechanisms, but also presents a great platform to develop constructive relationships between farmers, extension agents, researchers, markets and other stakeholders. When adapted to the youth, it is effective at mentoring champions (change leaders, agripreneurs, etc.) to challenge stereotypes of youth roles in the agriculture sector and encourage young women and men to reimagine their livelihoods in agriculture. It is low cost hence scalable even in resource constrained contexts. It promotes gender equality and women's empowerment in food consumption and production systems. It is implementable at a sufficient scale to reach a large portion of the population with low cost.

## 7. Existing evidence supporting the argument that this solution will work, or at least achieve the initial outcomes?

Evidences show that FFBS is resulting in improving not only crop yields and income for small-scale farmers especially, women farmers, but also is instrumental in enhancing women empowerment and nutrition for their households. Following results were recorded in CARE's Pathways, a multi-country program (in Bangladesh, India, Malawi, Tanzania, Ghana, and Mali) which implemented FFBS:

**Increase in the number of empowered women:** The number of empowered women according to CARE's women empowerment index – a variation of the Women's Empowerment in Agriculture Index – more than doubled in Ghana and Tanzania. Similarly, women's empowerment scores increased an average of 14 points for Mali and Tanzania, and 6 points for India, Ghana, and Malawi.

**Increased yields:** Due to increased yields, farmers were able to produce an extra 537,498 metric tons of food than they would have had with traditional practices.

**Higher farm incomes:** Over the life of the project, income from farming went up between 40 and 165%. Women farmers were able to mobilize \$7,240,676 in income from improved yields and better marketing.

**Increased household nutrition:** In India and Malawi, there were significant increases in dietary diversity and women were also able to access more diverse diets within the family.

**Increase in Women's decision-making power:** Women's ability to influence household decisions about assets increased by about 25 percentage points—with the highest impact in Mali at 37 percentage points.

Another project in Burundi where CARE implemented FFBS indicates:

**Increase in the number of empowered women:** The proportion of women who were empowered rose to 68% from baseline to end-line.

**Increased yields:** Overall, the amount of rice produced increased by 74.7%.

**Higher wealth:** The households improved their wealth by 12.8 percentage points over the project period.

**Increased household nutrition:** Household dietary diversity score (HDDS) increased from 5.1 at the baseline to 5.4 at the end-line. Food diversity among women increased by 3%.

## 5. What is the current and/or likely political support for this idea?

The relationship between gender equality and women's empowerment, and food systems is now underscored by all the actors involved in food systems at local, regional, and global levels. The centrality of women and youth as a game changing impact group for food systems if properly supported is now mainstream. Significant interest by actors involved in agricultural advisory and extension services



(research institutes, universities, producers' organizations, NGOs and governments etc.) to take this and similar models to scale. The CFS-HLPE Report on Investing in smallholder agriculture (2013) and the related CFS recommendation provide background and guidance for country level policy. The ongoing CFS workstream on gender is the process leading policy convergence on women's empowerment in food systems. The forthcoming CFS-HLPE report "Promoting youth engagement and employment in agriculture and food systems" specifically addresses the importance of knowledge, training and education for youth and women.

#### **6. Are there certain contexts for which this solution is particularly well suited, or, not well-suited.**

FFBS provides a flexible model that can be tailored to a variety of different contexts and builds on local knowledge, skills, and abilities. It would be interesting to see how FFBS is applied in conflict settings.

### **S.18. Promoting Social Protection in Coherence with Agri-Food Systems Related Sectors**

#### **1. What, in brief, is the solution?**

The solution promotes the expansion of social protection, in coherence with agri-food systems related sectors in order to boosting economic growth; enhancing the productivity of families and supporting them to diversify their source of income; achieving food security and nutrition, and building the resilience of poor rural families. It also focuses on accelerating the progressive realization of nationally defined social protection floors that guarantee at least essential health care and basic income security to all, including the poor, food-insecure, and workers in the informal economy.

#### **2. What was/were the source(s) from which this solution emerged?**

Social protection has been recognized as a critical strategy for poverty reduction and inclusive growth. Evidence coming from country-level impact evaluations shows that social protection, when associated to agricultural sectors, can generate a broad range of impacts: boosting economic growth; enhancing the productivity of families and supporting them to diversify their source of income; achieving food security and nutrition, improving natural resource management, and reducing child labour and building resilience. The CFS-HLPE Report on Social Protection for Food Security (2012) was a seminal contribution in making this link and informed the CFS Policy Recommendation on Social Protection for Food Security.

Social protection is also a fundamental human right. The right to social security is enshrined in several human rights instruments, including the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, other international and regional human rights treaties, as well as international social security standards, such as the ILO Social Security (Minimum Standards) Convention, 1952 (No. 102), and the Social Protection Floors Recommendation, 2012 (No. 202). Evidence suggests that social protection can help realize other economic, social and cultural rights, including the right to adequate food, clothing and housing and the rights to education and health, all of which are essential to the realization of human dignity (Sepúlveda and Nyst 2012; Morlachetti 2016). Moreover, beyond its explicit inclusion in the goal of ending poverty in all its forms under Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) target 1.3, the role of social protection is also recognized in the realization of other SDGs, in particular ending hunger (target 2.1), achieving universal health coverage (target 3.8), achieving gender equality (target 5.4), promoting decent work and economic growth (target 8.5), reducing inequalities (target 10.4) and promoting peace, justice and strong institutions (target 16.6).



### 3. What problem is it trying to address within food systems?

Currently about half of the world's population – and more than three quarters of the world's poor population – live in rural areas. Inequalities between urban and rural areas remain significant. The share of rural inhabitants in developing countries who live in extreme poverty (defined as living on less than \$1.9 per day) is almost three times higher than in urban areas. While the share of agriculture in most national economies is not predominant, it still represents an important source of livelihoods for one third of the world's population and about three quarters of the rural population living in extreme poverty, making it a critical sector for poverty reduction. However, agriculture is also associated with high levels of labour market informality and higher exposure to risks of all nature. Rural populations face higher risks of poverty, including working poverty, malnutrition and hunger, poor health, work-related injuries, natural disasters and climate change, and social risks such as child labour and social marginalization, among others. With low and irregular incomes and a lack of social support, many rural inhabitants are spurred to continue working when sick, often in unsafe conditions, thus exposing themselves and their families to additional risks. Further, when experiencing income losses, they may resort to harmful coping strategies, such as the distress sale of assets, taking on predatory loans or engaging in child labour.

As agri-food systems become more concentrated and globalized, there is a risk that challenges such as ensuring access to safe, nutritious and healthy diets, preserving the environment or including the large numbers of extreme poor people who live in rural areas in the process of rural transformation will be exacerbated. Indeed, vulnerable and poor segments of society continue to face enormous barriers to participate in value-chains and become increasingly dependent on dominant actors. This is especially true for poor women and youth, indigenous peoples, smallholder farmers, small scale fishers and herders, including pastoralists. As the modernization of agriculture remains dominated by large producers, poor and vulnerable rural populations are left with little choice but to migrate to urban and peri-urban areas to seek alternative sources of income, accelerating the dependence on remittances in the areas of origin and opening the doors for the ageing and feminization of agriculture, and the use of child labour. Moreover, the current pattern of existing agri-food systems, combined with the higher frequency of natural disasters due to climate change, is not contributing to transform rural areas in an inclusive manner. Against this backdrop, the COVID-19 pandemic has laid bare the fragility of the existing agri-food systems and the need to build back better by, for instance, promoting shorter food supply chains for more inclusiveness and sustainability, when feasible, in certain territories.

Approximately 55 percent of the world's population – as many as four billion people – are not covered by social insurance or social assistance at all, and many more are covered only partially. The large majority of those currently excluded are workers in the informal economy, many of whom workers in agriculture, as well as rural populations. The lack of social protection constitutes a significant challenge for food systems by perpetuating hunger and malnutrition and exposing enterprises and workers in the agri-food sectors to unnecessary risks.

### 4. Why is addressing that problem important for achieving the goal of your working group?

The expansion of social protection systems is one of the targets to end poverty under the 2030 Agenda. Countries have committed to implement nationally appropriate social protection systems and measures for all, including floors, and by 2030 achieve substantial coverage of the poor and the vulnerable. However, more than 70 percent of the global population today is still not covered by social protection and the majority of these people live in rural settings.

There is a strong need to expand social protection to effectively reach men and women involved in the overall food systems in coherence with agriculture, fisheries, livestock, pastoralism and forestry for improving food security, nutrition, natural resource management, economic inclusion and resilience. As



strengthening social protection comes also with the need to empower communities, organizations of producers and cooperatives, it is also a way to reinforce collective actions and the social contract between the governments and their citizens.

The establishment of nationally defined social protection floors as a basic set of essential social guarantees, in cash and in kind, is key to promoting at least basic income security and access to health care, and in facilitating the enjoyment of a number of important economic and social rights by all, including the most marginalized groups. This includes guaranteeing access to social protection of those engaged in the agri-food sector, both in waged and self-employment, and the rural economy at large, the establishment of “one-stop shops” to facilitate access to social security benefits and services, such as health and education, in rural areas, as well as mobile offices and digital services to facilitate access especially in remote rural areas. Social protection mechanisms can be also extended through partnerships with cooperatives and through contract farming (or out-grower schemes).

### **5. How can this solution address that problem (theory of change)?**

Social protection comprises a set of policies and programmes that addresses economic, environmental and social vulnerabilities to food insecurity and poverty by protecting and promoting livelihoods. It can play a protective role in providing means (cash or in kind) to access food and mitigate the impact of shocks. It can have a preventive function in averting deeper deprivation by strengthening resilience against shocks [and stresses] and preventing loss of incomes and assets. It can support the accumulation of resources to sustain livelihoods (e.g. through asset transfers and public works). Social protection can also play a promotive function by directly supporting investments in human resources (nutrition, health, education and skills development) and by reducing liquidity constraints and income insecurity to induce investments in farm and non-farm activities. It can also have a transformative function in the lives of the poor through reorienting their focus beyond day-to-day survival towards investments for future, by shifting power relations within households (as social protection can empower women) and by strengthening the capabilities and capacities of those living in poverty to empower themselves. Beyond its role to improve food security and nutrition, social protection plays a key role in promoting economic inclusion and improving natural resource management. It also helps in improving access to agricultural insurance and reducing child labour. Social protection is an essential element of the food systems transformation by providing dignity and freedom to vulnerable populations.

### **6. Why does this solution align to the definition and criteria for a ‘game changing solution’ developed by the Summit?**

#### **1. Impact potential at scale (including return on investment)**

As mentioned earlier, evidence shows that social protection has a strong return on investments and is an important pillar for promoting the economic inclusion of rural populations involved in food systems. It is also an important pillar for supporting the transition to sustainable agricultural practices. It improves also the access to basic services, such as education, in order to break the intergenerational circle of poverty.

#### **2. Actionability (taking into account politics, capacity, costs)**

Social protection is a right and a major part of the countries in the world committed to expand social protection to all (recommendation 202 related to the social protection floors of ILO). Different funding mechanisms exist and have been identified to scale up the coverage of social protection in different countries. Government capacities have also been reinforced over the years, especially recently in response to the COVID19 pandemic. However, reforms needs to be undertaken at Government level to continue reinforcing the systems and improve the participation of workers and employers involved in the food systems.



### 3. Sustainability (i.e., the ability to keep delivering to 2030 and beyond)

The sustainability of the systems depend largely on the capacities of the Government (human and financial capacities as others). The financing of social protection floors usually relies on a combination of sources, including in particular the extension of contributory schemes to persons with contributory capacity and adapting them as necessary to the situation and needs of rural populations, and complementing them with non-contributory schemes to guarantee a nationally-defined social protection floor. Policy and financing options should be discussed in an inclusive national dialogue, guided by considerations of financial, fiscal and economic sustainability and solidarity at both national and international levels. Many countries over the world show that a universal coverage of social protection can be scaled up, sustainable and actionable. Coherence with agriculture, fisheries, livestock and forestry is necessary and should be promoted to facilitate the transformation of the food systems.

## 7. Existing evidence supporting the argument that this solution will work, or at least achieve the initial outcomes?

Extending social protection to all, including smallholders and micro-enterprises in food systems, as well as waged agricultural workers, many of whom are otherwise often excluded, is essential, as those face high levels of working poverty, vulnerability, malnutrition and poor health and suffer from a lack of labour, and are largely affected by climate related shocks and conflicts. Working conditions are also more difficult in agricultural sectors. Evidence shows that extending social protection:

- Contribute to the promotion of non-discrimination, gender equality and can help address the specific protection needs of disadvantaged groups, for example landless people, casual labourers, migrants, older persons, women, people living with HIV and AIDS, persons with disabilities, members of certain ethnic or religious groups;
- Reduce the vulnerability of rural producers and workers. Social insurance, social assistance and other measures in line with the ILO's Social Protection Floors Recommendation, 2012 (No. 202), which include, among others cash transfers and social health protection that can, together with weather index insurance can improve the productivity of agri-food enterprises, especially when there are temporary drops in their economic activity. They can play a major role in sheltering rural communities from crop failures, injecting finance into cash-starved rural areas and stimulate the creation of infrastructure.

Social protection floors are an essential component of integrated policies to facilitate climate change adaptation and mitigation (protect people and protect the planet).

Besides alleviating economic constraints, evidence of the ability of social protection to foster psychological well-being, thus increasing economic agency and resilience, is extensive. Several cash transfer programs showed positive impacts

on subjective well-being, future perception of quality of life, and improvement in hope and aspirations. This resulted in more proactive behaviour and in an increased propensity to invest in productive assets and in human capital.

Banerjee et al. (2011) studied the impact of an asset transfer worth \$100 to ultra-poor in an impoverished region north of Kolkata, with the results substantially exceeding researchers' expectations in terms of emotional wellbeing and economic behaviour. Handa et al. (2020) analysed data from Zambia CGP and found strong positive impacts on beneficiaries' perceived quality of life, happiness, and expectations for the future. Haushofer and Shapiro (2013) studied the response of poor rural households in Kenya to cash transfers, with beneficiaries showing large increases in psychological well-being and a reduction in stress level.



Social protection interventions, including unconditional and conditional cash transfers and cash-for-work programs, may reduce farmers' liquidity constraints, encouraging greater risk-taking and spending on inputs. Transfers can also facilitate small-scale savings or investment by serving as collateral and so enabling access to credit and agricultural insurance. Lack of insurance and exposure to shocks can drive farmers below a critical asset threshold from which recovery is not possible. In anticipation of such outcomes, poor and vulnerable households may opt for less risky technologies and portfolios. Yet these often generate lower returns, on average, trapping farmers in persistent poverty. In this context, social protection instruments, such as cash transfers, can affect the risk attitudes of farm household members by altering household wealth.

Social protection instruments (cash transfers, public works, school feeding) can have a positive effect on food and nutrition security, which may in turn enhance labour productivity. In the short term, people have greater access to sufficient, safe, and nutritious food to meet dietary needs, which improves health. Nutrition is improved, especially in utero and in other sensitive periods such as early childhood and adolescence, leading to greater cognitive development and ability and thus to greater labour productivity.

### **Specific evidence in fisheries:**

There is a growing body of evidence to support the concept of coherence between fisheries policies and social protection interventions. Coherence between fisheries policies and social protection can support in:

- Improving fisheries-dependent communities management of natural resources: Social protection interventions, such as predictable cash transfers or social insurance can alleviate liquidity constraints faced by poor fisheries-dependent communities, thereby enabling them to invest in fishing technologies and recover from the lost income from bycatch. Social protection interventions, such as cash transfers, public work schemes, Payment for Ecosystem Services (PES), social security mechanisms can attenuate the hardships that fisheries-dependent communities face in complying with these restrictive fisheries policies as well as work in conserving marine biodiversity. In India, within the framework of the FAO Fisheries Management for Sustainable Livelihoods (FIMSUL) project, the Ministry of Fisheries provides welfare support to fisheries management services (FAO, 2017a). In South Africa, coastal communities have benefited extensively from the Expanded Public Works Programme that has put in place short term employment and skills training and provided cash transfers in exchange for employment in clearing alien vegetation, dune rehabilitation and prevention of coastal erosion, fighting fires and cleaning up the coast (FAO, 2017a). Cash transfers are provided in Nicaragua during the closed season for lobster, while short-term subsidies are available in Colombia because of the decrease in territorial sea. Social insurance schemes can have a role to play in mitigating the potential negative socio-economic impacts on natural resources. For example, the National Fishers' Assistance Programme in Paraguay subsidizes fishers who are unable to work during the closed season in the form of a non-contributory transfer (FAO, online). Likewise, in Brazil, the unemployment insurance for small-scale fishers (Seguro Desemprego do Pescador Artesanal) provides a temporary stipend during the closed season for those fishers who are registered to the General Fishing Registry as compensation for the loss occurred, fulfilling the dual purpose of contributing to the income stability of fishers and providing incentives for the conservation of the ecosystem (INSS, online). Fisheries cooperatives or local grass-root institutions in providing social protection interventions may increase participation of the most poor and vulnerable fisheries-dependent communities. In Senegal fisheries cooperatives provide fisheries conditional cash transfers for abstaining from destructive fishing and training programmes to improve the management of the natural resources upon which



the fishing communities depend (FAO, 2017a). Those interventions can also reinforce co-management to improve natural resource management.

- Enhancing fisheries-dependent communities' economic inclusion, diversification and the transition to alternative sources of income: Fisheries and social protection interventions may enhance fisheries-dependent communities' economic inclusion as well as promote diversification of means of livelihoods and the promotion of climate smart agriculture for fisheries production through the development of agro-ecological fish farming harvest and post-harvest techniques as in the case of in Zambia, Seychelles and Guinea (FAO, 2018c). In South Africa, NGOs and academic/research institutions have had various fairly ad hoc projects offering a combination of social protection and fisheries interventions, supporting sustainable fisheries and alternative livelihoods. For example, the Mussel Rehabilitation Project in Coffee Bay provided fisheries-dependent women with inputs to establish a local food garden where they could grow their own vegetables, thus, reducing the harvesting of mussels. Social protection interventions such as cash or in-kind transfers, social insurance, school feeding programmes etc. can directly and indirectly increase access to more diversified and better-quality food. For example, Peru have been working together with FAO to introduce the anchoveta fish into school feeding programmes as well as public procurement process, offering an inexpensive, yet nutritionally valid staple product for children, but at the same time a guaranteed market for small-scale fishers (FAO, 2017e). Fisheries policies can promote the development of grass-root institutions (e.g. fishers' cooperatives, associations and other fisheries-based organizations) necessary for enhancing economic inclusion and developing alternative fishery value chains. While social protection interventions can increase the participation of the poorest and most vulnerable beneficiaries in social networks (e.g. cooperatives, community-based credit associations, mutual societies, etc.), which are important sources of information and knowledge sharing, support during hardship, and sources of lending and credit for business development. The National Aquaculture and Fisheries Authority of Colombia (AUNAP) with FAO's assistance promoted and trained two small-scale fish farming organizations to institute and manage a collectively owned revolving fund, which since then is used both as a source of soft loan credit for working capital, and as an attractive social protection safety net. In Costa Rica, collective insurance for small-scale fishers works through cooperatives and fishers' associations, allowing their members to register and receive state subsidies (Solórzano-Chavez et al., 2016). With the objective to promote the development of fishers' organizations, increasing fishers' participation thus expanding the scope of the insurance.
- Strengthening risk management and resilience affecting fishers and fishing communities: Social insurance plays also a key role in strengthening the resilience of fisheries dependent communities. Mexico developed several micro-insurance programmes against extreme climatic variations to protect small-scale rural producers –including the fisheries sector. Costa Rica, introduced since the 1980s collective insurance for small-scale fishers in case of shocks, allowing the members of cooperatives and fishers' associations to register and receive state subsidies while promoting the development of fishers' organizations to expand the scope of the insurance (Solórzano-Chavez et al., 2016). Peru introduced by the Ministry of Production, the Mandatory Insurance for Small-Scale Fisherman (SOPA) which acts in the form of personal accident insurance and covers the risk of death and bodily harm suffered by independent small-scale fishers including crew and non-crew members (Ministerio de Producción del Perú, online ). Additionally, the General Directorate of Agrarian Promotion offers an insurance policy called “Seguro + VIDA” to independent small-scale fishers and other fishworkers, which covers personal accidents and grants compensation in case of death or total or partial permanent disability. Furthermore, in Morocco, social protection was made an integral element of the fisheries sector development strategy to build resilience against shocks; linking the marketing of catches to the formalization of the fishing profession,



access to health services and social protection contributions (FAO, 2019a). Likewise, the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (MAFF) of Cambodia in partnership with WorldFish Center/FAO is discussing the construction of a shock responsive social protection system as part of its fisheries policies. Additionally, the FAO Global Environment Facility (GEF) funded, Climate Change Adaptation in the Eastern Caribbean Fisheries Sector project (CC4Fish) is seeking to introduce adaptation measures in fisheries management, capacity building of fisherfolk and aquaculturists, insurance schemes, and in-kind equipment delivered as well as implementing an ecosystem approach to fisheries management and mainstreaming of climate change. Lastly, social transfers can safeguard people's welfare and assets and assist them in better managing consumption and income shocks. In South Africa, environmental organizations made conditional cash transfers, disaster preparedness and climate change adaptation training to safeguard fishing communities in cases of climate shocks (FAO, 2017a). After cyclones Sidr and Aila, the Government of Bangladesh provided short-term relief in terms of food, cash, drinking water, medicine, clothing followed by reconstruction efforts through Cash for Work such as building coastal embankments and other physical infrastructure (roads, houses) as well as mangrove afforestation programmes. In addition, the small-scale fishers of the region benefited from the Emergency Cyclone Recovery and Restoration Project to facilitate restoration and recovery and build long-term disaster preparedness. It provided small-scale coastal fishers with improved boats, nets and safety equipment, and technical assistance and training in aquaculture practices. The project also worked on strengthening the Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) capacity of the government and preparing future operations for long-term risk reduction.

#### **8. What is the current and/or likely political support for this idea?**

As mentioned, social protection is a recognized right and a major part of the countries in the world committed to expand social protection to all (recommendation 202 related to the social protection floors of ILO and SDG 1.3). It does also significantly contribute to a broad range of SDG goals, including goals 2, 3, 5, 8, 10, 16 and 17.

#### **9. Are there certain contexts for which this solution is particularly well suited, or, not well-suited.**

Social protection systems have different levels of development and coverage around the world. Some countries have also built their social protection on humanitarian responses, while others on grassroots' organizations. Due to the important of context, the solution will be implemented based on key principles listed in ILO's conventions and recommendations. This solution should be established progressively depending on countries' levels of economic and social development through a wide range of programmes and measures and contribute to the strengthening of national social protection systems. It should be also built following the common objective of building inclusive and sustainable food systems.

### **S.19. Integrate Gender Transformative Approaches for Equity and Justice in Food Systems**

#### **1. What, in brief, is the solution?**

The solution is the systematic integration of gender transformative approaches (GTAs) in food systems interventions. Gender-transformative approaches challenge all development actors (including the private sector) to avoid exclusive focus on the self-improvement of individual women, and rather to transform power dynamics and structures that reinforce inequality. When applied to food systems and considering



the roles and responsibilities that women and men are ascribed or assume, the potential for positive change through gender transformation is unparalleled.

## **2. What was/were the source(s) from which this solution emerged?**

This solution emerged from the many consultations and discussions that AT4 has convened. It also emerged from evidence presented in both the AT4 Science Paper and the Gender Lever Discussion note. Other sources from which this solution emerged include extensive primary literature, international human rights frameworks, and documented case studies.

## **3. What problem is it trying to address within food systems?**

The problem this solution addresses is pervasive gender-based inequality in food systems. Despite the significant roles and responsibilities that women assume and are ascribed in food systems, often unpaid, and in ensuring food security and nutrition at household, community, national and transnational levels, they face systemic disadvantage in accessing productive resources, services and information. There is overwhelming evidence that gender-based discrimination, or the denial of women's human rights, is one of a major cause of poverty and food and nutrition insecurity.<sup>14</sup> Though technical, political, financial and other challenges to equality are many and varied, evidence illustrates that social norms and structural barriers are primary impediments. Discriminatory social norms, practices and roles shape the gendered distribution of paid and unpaid work; limit women's access to assets, productive resources and markets; and undermine the self-confidence and leadership potential of women.<sup>15</sup> They also facilitate exploitation and violence. But the denial of rights and entitlements, through formal and informal institutions and laws, is also central to the problem. There is widespread and systematic institutional discrimination and bias against women in access to assets and services such as – land, credit, education, extension, employment opportunities, mobility, climate and market information, and inputs and technologies. This dual problem of harmful socio-cultural norms and practices and rights denial (now with the amplifying threat of COVID-19 and its differential impact on women from a food security perspective) is global.

## **4. Why is addressing that problem important for achieving the goal of your working group?**

Changing the harmful social relations and transforming unjust structures represents a response to the deep and stubborn barriers that women face in food systems and is necessary to truly advance towards equitable livelihoods. GTAs interpret gender as an issue of social relations as opposed to focusing solely on gender roles and considers that women and men experience different levels of vulnerability for different reasons. This implies that solutions cannot simply target women and ignore more complex and intimate relations and socio-political dynamics.

## **5. How can this solution address that problem (theory of change)?**

A framework that addresses the agency, structures and relations that occupy women's lives assists in understanding the rationale and need for transformative approaches. By building agency (confidence, self-esteem, knowledge, skills and capabilities), changing relations (the power relations through which people live their lives through intimate relations and social networks and through group membership, activism, and market negotiations) and transforming structures

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<sup>14</sup> FAO, 2019, the State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World

<sup>15</sup> CFS, 2017, Forum on Women's Empowerment in the context of Food Security and Nutrition



(the discriminatory social norms, customs, values and exclusionary practices, laws, policies, procedures and services), progress towards gender equality can be made. Our theory of change requires a move beyond the treatment of gender

as an issue between women and men, to address gender as relational, and therefore, dynamic and something that can be transformed. Gender relations and the structures that underpin these, can adjust in response to changes in policy contexts, in labour market signals, in inter- and intra-household understanding, and in household- and community-level needs. Moreover, gender relations involve the exercise of agency, and this tells us that we should focus much more on analysis of contextual factors that mediate gender relations and food and nutrition security.

### **6. Why does this solution align to the definition and criteria for a ‘game changing solution’ developed by the Summit?**

This solution is game changing because women’s ability to participate on equal terms in food systems has preconditions. Globally, women face enormous gender gaps in literacy, labour, nutrition, healthcare, inheritance and other areas where rights are protected. These disadvantages are manifested in women’s inability to engage fully with food systems. For example, women’s access to finance is a critical for growing economic potential and improving food security and nutrition. Access to financial services allows women to procure the inputs, labour and equipment they need for productive activities and is associated with increased confidence and entrepreneurship. Critically, while this solution has multiple models and approaches, it is underpinned by the Right to Food – which protects the right of all human beings to live in dignity, free from hunger, food insecurity and malnutrition. Evidence shows that when women are empowered through education, economic opportunities, access to justice and political participation, they are better able to claim their right to food. Systems, processes, norms or even laws that restrict women’s participation or voice in decision-making diminishes their potential and productivity in food systems. This solution is game changing because amplifying voice increases political representation and drives more responsive governance and accountability.

### **7. Existing evidence supporting the argument that this solution will work, or at least achieve the initial outcomes described above?**

There is extensive and compelling evidence that gender transformative approaches contribute to improved food security, nutrition, equity and other outcomes. A project in Burundi examined the impacts of GTAs, testing a model (‘EKATA’) against a conventional gender approach (‘Gender Light’). The Gender Light model is premised on the capacity of women to take individual actions, without addressing key consciousness-raising and collective action, considered crucial to transformation of social norms and unequal power relations. EKATA, on the other hand, aimed at transforming power relations by fully engaging men in sharing caregiving responsibilities and enabling women to gain control over productive assets and to participate in household decisions. A benefit-cost ratio for EKATA was calculated at 5:1 as opposed to 3:1 for the Gender Light model.<sup>16</sup> There was improved participation of women and men in community activities, and women were more confident speaking in public, and experienced less gender-based violence (and when they did, they had more options for reporting outside of their families). EKATA group members reported shorter periods of food deficit during lean seasons, and women reported greater satisfaction with division of both domestic and agricultural tasks and with access to extension services and inputs. All the women in the EKATA groups considered themselves leaders and rated spousal support as

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<sup>16</sup> Africa Center for Gender, Social Research and Impact Assessment, 2021, Costs and Benefits of Applying a Gender-Transformative Approach in Agriculture Programming: Evaluation of the EKATA Model in Burundi



significant. Research in Tanzania supports this evidence, demonstrating that participatory gender analysis and integration, that builds empowerment pathways from the bottom up – while simultaneously working to influence the social environment in which movement along those pathways can be realized – has positive impact.<sup>17</sup> Further, increases in GDP, crop production, as well as accelerated poverty alleviation associated with closing the gender gap, are accompanied by other social and economic benefits. Women spend a larger share of their income on children’s nutrition, health and education than men, for example.<sup>18</sup> A cluster-randomized controlled trial conducted in Burkina Faso on the effect of women’s empowerment on reducing wasting and improving anemia among children 3-12 months, showed that interventions, particularly spousal communication, contributed to reductions in stunting.<sup>19</sup> A study in Nepal, measuring outcomes against three of the 10 Women’s Empowerment in Agriculture Index (WEAI) indicators, found significant associations between women’s empowerment and increased child nutrition.<sup>20</sup> Women gaining equal access to land, technology, financial services, education and markets in rural areas leads to increases in agricultural production and improved food security<sup>21</sup> and there is a growing body of evidence demonstrating that equitable engagement of women and men in adaptation to climate change and natural resource governance enhances environmental outcomes, soil and water conservation, and productivity.<sup>22</sup> There is also extensive evidence that gender transformative approaches addressing land tenure result in income growth and greater bargaining power for women, and better child nutrition and higher educational attainment for girls.<sup>23</sup> Biodiversity and conservation interventions that adopt gender and social inclusion strategies are associated with increases in dietary diversity.<sup>24</sup>

## 8. What is the current and/or likely political support for this idea?

There is significant, long standing political support for this solution, as evidenced by commitments within the UN Committee on Food Security. The CFS ongoing workstream on gender is the policy convergence process in this area. There is widespread support among governments and development actors in the private and voluntary sector arenas and within the research community that this solution is fundamental both for the realization of rights and for the achievement of the SDGs. The recent CFS-HLPE report (2020) calls to recognise the importance of “agency” for food security and nutrition.

## 9. Are there certain contexts for which this solution is particularly well suited, or, not well-suited.

<sup>17</sup> Galie, A. and Kantor, P., in Njuki, J., *et al*, 2016, Transforming gender and food security in the Global South

<sup>18</sup> UN Women, World Bank, UNEP and UNDP, 2015, The Cost of the Gender Gap in Agricultural Productivity in Malawi, Tanzania, and Uganda. See also WFP, 2020, The power of gender equality for food security: Closing another gender data gap with a new quantitative measure

<sup>19</sup> Heckert, J., *et al*, 2019, Is women’s empowerment a pathway to improving child nutrition outcomes in a nutrition-sensitive agriculture program? Evidence from a randomized controlled trial in Burkina Faso

<sup>20</sup> Cunningham, K., *et al*, 2015, Women’s empowerment in agriculture and child nutritional status in rural Nepal

<sup>21</sup> FAO, 2011, The State of Food and Agriculture: Closing the Gender Gap for Development

<sup>22</sup> CARE, 2019, Gender-Transformative Adaptation: From Good Practice to better policy

<sup>23</sup> Markham, S., 2015, The Four Things You Need to Know about Women’s Land Rights

<sup>24</sup> Skinner, A., *et al*, 2019, Social Outcomes of the CARE-WWF Alliance in Mozambique: Research Findings from a Decade of Integrated Conservation and Development Programming



Considering that the prevalence of inequity in food systems differs across countries, types of households and within households, between women and men, old and young, there is no specific context for which this solution is well suited. The Right to Food and women's rights are universal and indivisible and transformative approaches that drive towards the realization of these rights are thus applicable and important in all contexts. Gender norms are often resistant to change, partly because they are widely held and practised in daily life (because they benefit the gender that already holds the balance of social and economic power). For example, family members, particularly spouses, can facilitate or constrain the expansion of women's opportunities in food systems, depending on their willingness to share domestic work and free women's time for value chain activities, while leaders or institutions can uphold norms and attitudes that limit women's access to market opportunities, information and technologies.<sup>25</sup> Enabling people to understand and challenge the social norms and institutional barriers that create or sustain inequalities between men and women is at the heart of this solution and though this is universal, each context will require differing approaches. The need for contextual understanding is critical, thus making sex- and age-related data management key to success.

## **S.20. Promote living incomes and wages in value chains for small-scale farmers and agricultural workers**

### **1. What, in brief, is the solution?**

Secure sustainable livelihoods for smallholder farmers and agricultural workers by ensuring living incomes, fair prices and fair wages. Consider broader structural constraints to the achievement of a living income including weak social protection schemes, the lack of risk management mechanisms and structural deficiencies that undermine farmers' bargaining power. Help increase farm yields and income resilience in a sustainable manner.

Income and sustainability are closely related. To enjoy sustainable livelihoods, small-scale farmers and workers need to earn sufficient income for a decent standard of living, so they can afford healthy diets, send their children to school, invest in their farms or in off-farm activities, have some savings for unexpected setbacks, retain future generations in farming and allow elders to retire with dignity.

### **2. What was/were the source(s) from which this solution emerged?**

The provision of living incomes is one of the pathways, which is strongly supported by farmers' organizations, civil society, innovative private firms, and a coalition of donors and countries to make our food systems more equitable and sustainable.

In the 'Universal Declaration of Human Rights' Article 23 stipulates that: "Everyone who works has the right to just and favourable remuneration ensuring for himself and his family an existence worthy of human dignity, and supplemented, if necessary, by other means of social protection." Article 25 says that "Everyone has the right to a standard of living adequate for the health and well-being of himself and of his family, including food, clothing, housing and medical care and necessary social services, and the right to security in the event of unemployment, sickness, disability, widowhood, old age or other lack of livelihood in circumstances beyond his control".

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<sup>25</sup> Njuki, J., et al, 2016, Transforming gender and food security in the Global South



A living income is defined as sufficient income to afford a decent standard of living for all household members – including a nutritious diet, clean water, decent housing, education, health care and other essential needs, plus a little extra for emergencies and savings – once farm costs are covered.

The 2017 FAO State of Food and Agriculture report highlights the importance of “leveraging food systems for inclusive rural transformation”. The development of strategies to raise farm gate prices and increase/diversify incomes for farmers is crucial to ensure sustainability and equity in agricultural supply chains. The CFS Principles for Responsible Investment in Agriculture and Food Systems (RAI principles) and the CFS Policy Recommendation on How to increase food security and smallholder sensitive investments in agriculture provide policy guidance.

### **3. What problem is it trying to address within food systems?**

The vast majority of the world farms are small or very small scale. Smallholder farmers produce 70–80% of the world food<sup>26</sup>, are central to conserving crop diversity, and yet are largely poor and food insecure<sup>27</sup>. Smallholder farmers have virtually no control over global market prices, feeble negotiating power, and are at the mercy of price volatility. Prolonged periods of low prices have disastrous effects on farmers’ livelihoods and the long-term sustainability of supply. Farmers producing cash crops destined for international supply chains are usually only getting a thin share of the value added generated.

When trapped in poverty farmers cannot afford to invest in more efficient, productive or sustainable farming methods. They cannot pay workers a decent wage, or worse, they may resort to using children for cheap labour. Some may turn to illegal deforestation or growing illicit crops in an attempt to increase their incomes. Others even abandon their land in search of alternative livelihood opportunities in cities or abroad. Besides, farmers bear most of the risks of losses caused by extreme weather patterns, pests and crop diseases, making their businesses even more vulnerable.

### **4. Why is addressing that problem important for achieving the goal of your working group?**

Ensuring living incomes and living wages is an effective mean to reduce poverty of those furthest behind and has a positive impact on livelihoods, food security, resilience and risk reduction.

### **5. How can this solution address that problem (theory of change)?**

Ensuring living incomes can invert the poverty trap for smallholders.

Sustainable pricing/revenue mechanisms or increased sales on fair trade terms can help ameliorate the distribution of the value added along the supply chains. Possible price mechanisms include agreements between actors at the local/national/international level, government initiatives or state-guaranteed agreements (see the case of coffee and Costa Rica) and trade agreements between countries (market access for smallholder farmers, standards, quality, prices, etc.). Additionally, revenue mechanisms include the diversification of financing sources, prices of agricultural inputs and payments for environmental services (see CAP, Costa Rica experiences with Fonafifo, etc.).

Moreover, the organisation of small-scale farmers needs to be supported and their capacity strengthened. Through better farmers’ organizations, smallholder farmers can engage in collective marketing, achieve economies of scale, learn successful farming techniques and skills, be efficient business partners, share risks and improve their bargaining power. This will allow farmgate prices to increase.

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<sup>26</sup> FAO, 2014. The State of Food and Agriculture 2014: Innovation in Family Farming Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations.

<sup>27</sup> IFAD and UNEP, 2013. Smallholders, food security and the environment.



Additionally, broader structural constraints to the achievement of a living income need to be considered:

- The need for income diversification, public services (education, health), access to markets (for input, output, and capital) and social protection (unemployment insurance and pension schemes) to boost farmers' resilience.
- The need for risk management mechanisms to protect farmers from price volatility or the increasingly unpredictable weather patterns that have resulted from climate change.
- Structural deficiencies that undermine farmers' bargaining power and lead to inequitable distribution of value along the supply chain, including supply chain fragmentation, market imperfections and asymmetrical information, informality and a general failure of farmers' organizations to pool resources and bargain collectively.

Finally, public investments combined with the adoption of sustainable agriculture practices such as agroecology can help increase farm yields and income resilience.

A combination of these mechanisms, adapted to the particularities of each commodity and region, will allow improving small-scale farmers' incomes. This could create a virtuous cycle of outcomes and impacts; mutually reinforcing with other Action Tracks' goals.

#### **6. Why does this solution align to the definition and criteria for a 'game changing solution' developed by the Summit?**

This solution is aligned with the criteria defined by the UN FSS for game changing solution. This proposal is about change at scale by including millions of small farmers across a range of value chains and regions. Experiences and scientific evidences have demonstrated the actionability of this proposal, and living incomes are all about sustainability and equity.

#### **7. Existing evidence supporting the argument that this solution will work, or at least achieve the initial outcomes**

Best practice examples exist and provide evidences for upscaling the adoption of living incomes. There are coalitions of actors supporting the idea of living incomes. One example is the use of 'fair trade' - like labelling. Another is the recent Initiative on cocoa prices launched by Côte d'Ivoire and Ghana that led to an agreement with the cocoa and chocolate industry to create a Living Income Differential (LID) to ensure decent revenue to local farmers. At this stage, it is a US\$400/ton premium paid beyond the price of the cocoa futures markets. Cameroon has also expressed interest to join the initiative. Building on this initiative the European Union engaged in a partnership with Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana and Cameroon to link this price increase to further actions aiming at reinforcing the overall sustainability of cocoa production, and particularly halting deforestation and eradicating child labour in cocoa production.

Other examples include the Costa Rican law dictating the split of the added value in the coffee branch or the "Interprofessions" in France that regroup various actors from producers to distributors in a given value chain. A more historic example is the European Union Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) that in the 1960s guaranteed farmers prices set at a level, which ensured a living income to farmers, who could invest, increase their income and for many, leave poverty.

#### **8. What is the current and/or likely political support for this idea?**



This solution is supported by member states and EU (e.g. for cocoa), international networks and organisation and research alliances. Additionally, the growing importance of CSR gives companies economic incentives to improve the well-being of their workers, suppliers and farmers at all steps of the value chain.

**9. Are there certain contexts for which this solution is particularly well suited, or, not well-suited.**

The solution is well suited for value chains related to products generating high added value (cocoa, coffee, agroecological product, milk, etc.) without transparency to manage the distribution of added value.