



Global Panel  
on Agriculture  
and Food Systems  
for Nutrition

# Food Systems Policy Tool



A tool to help governments  
deliver healthier diets and  
sustainable food systems

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Foreword

---

Global Panel members

---

Introduction

---

How to use this Tool

---

The Global Panel Food  
Systems Policy Tool

---

Annex A

Options for Step 1: Setting a  
clear objective for diet quality,  
delivered sustainably

---

Annex B

Options for Step 2: Understanding  
consumer perceptions

---

Annex C

Options for Step 3: A conceptual  
model of food systems

---

Annex D

Options for Step 4:  
Prioritising actions

---

Annex E

Options for Step 5: Creating  
a cooperative climate

---

Annex F

Options for Step 6: Ensuring  
actions are long-term and  
sustainable

---

Annex G

Examples of achieving diet  
quality in different settings

---

[Foreword](#)

---

[Global Panel members](#)

---

[Introduction](#)

---

[How to use this Tool](#)

---

[The Global Panel Food Systems Policy Tool](#)

---

[Annex A](#)

---

[Options for Step 1: Setting a clear objective for diet quality, delivered sustainably](#)

---

[Annex B](#)

---

[Options for Step 2: Understanding consumer perceptions](#)

---

[Annex C](#)

---

[Options for Step 3: A conceptual model of food systems](#)

---

[Annex D](#)

---

[Options for Step 4: Prioritising actions](#)

---

[Annex E](#)

---

[Options for Step 5: Creating a cooperative climate](#)

---

[Annex F](#)

---

[Options for Step 6: Ensuring actions are long-term and sustainable](#)

---

[Annex G](#)

---

[Examples of achieving diet quality in different settings](#)

# Foreword



Two decades into the 21st century, there are still millions of individuals, especially women and children, who lack basic foods, or suffer from deficiencies of essential vitamins and minerals. To compound this, many more millions are over-consuming unhealthy diets, leading to obesity and diet related non-communicable diseases, such as diabetes and cardiovascular disease.

These multiple forms of malnutrition come from poor quality diets, driven by food systems which are not sustainable and not fit for purpose. Moreover, climate change, increased competition for natural resources, and population growth, particularly in urban areas, will add further pressure on our food systems and our ability to produce the foods needed for high-quality diets in the future.

A fundamental transformation of our food systems is therefore required. One that demands collaborative, international action. As part of the global action on climate change, food systems also need to be reconfigured, so they better support both human and planetary health.

Governments have to be front and centre in driving this change. Coordinated action across the whole of government and their partners is needed to create an enabling and supportive political environment, which encourages individuals, organisations and businesses to produce, sell and consume foods which are safe, affordable and nutritious, from sustainable food systems.

However, for those in government and other organisations who have taken on the responsibility for repositioning food systems so that they provide better nutrition whilst making them more sustainable, the task can be complex and challenging. The wealth of excellent evidence and information available can be difficult to navigate and prioritise. The Food Systems Policy Tool developed by the Global Panel on Agriculture and Food Systems for Nutrition is one tool that can help support this process.

We hope that policymakers and those responsible for delivering policy will find this tool helpful in preparing plans which will transform food systems in ways which promote greater diversity, availability and affordability of healthy diets, as they strive to secure health, social and economic prosperity.

Finally I would like to thank Professor Corinna Hawkes who created the original concept of this Policy Tool and to Global Panel Consultant, Dr Darren Hughes, who led on its subsequent development.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'John Beddington', written in a cursive style.

**Sir John Beddington**  
Chair of the Global Panel

# Global Panel members



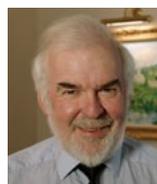
**John Beddington**  
(Co-Chair) Former United Kingdom Government Chief Scientific Adviser



**Shenggen Fan**  
Chair Professor at the China Agricultural University, and former Director General, International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI)



**Celso Moretti**  
President, Brazilian Agricultural Research Corporation (Embrapa)



**Tom Arnold**  
Former Director General, Institute of International and European Affairs (IIEA)



**Agnes Kalibata**  
President, Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa (AGRA)



**Srinath Reddy**  
President, Public Health Foundation of India



**Akinwumi Adesina**  
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Senior Adviser, Non-resident, to the Center for Strategic and International Studies Global Food Security Project



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**Sandy Thomas**  
Director, Global Panel on Agriculture and Food Systems for Nutrition



**Patrick Webb**  
Technical Advisor

## Technical Advisor

Foreword

Global Panel members

Introduction

How to use this Tool

The Global Panel Food Systems Policy Tool

Annex A

Options for Step 1: Setting a clear objective for diet quality, delivered sustainably

Annex B

Options for Step 2: Understanding consumer perceptions

Annex C

Options for Step 3: A conceptual model of food systems

Annex D

Options for Step 4: Prioritising actions

Annex E

Options for Step 5: Creating a cooperative climate

Annex F

Options for Step 6: Ensuring actions are long-term and sustainable

Annex G

Examples of achieving diet quality in different settings

---

[Foreword](#)

---

[Global Panel members](#)

---

[Introduction](#)

---

[How to use this Tool](#)

---

[The Global Panel Food Systems Policy Tool](#)

---

[Annex A](#)[Options for Step 1: Setting a clear objective for diet quality, delivered sustainably](#)

---

[Annex B](#)[Options for Step 2: Understanding consumer perceptions](#)

---

[Annex C](#)[Options for Step 3: A conceptual model of food systems](#)

---

[Annex D](#)[Options for Step 4: Prioritising actions](#)

---

[Annex E](#)[Options for Step 5: Creating a cooperative climate](#)

---

[Annex F](#)[Options for Step 6: Ensuring actions are long-term and sustainable](#)

---

[Annex G](#)[Examples of achieving diet quality in different settings](#)

# Introduction

## Background

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The Global Panel on Agriculture and Food Systems for Nutrition has developed a Food Systems Policy Tool to support the delivery of national nutrition strategies. It is designed to help bridge the policy gap between those who create food, nutrition and agricultural policies and those responsible for implementing those policies.

The tool builds on the Decision-Making Tool from the [Global Panel's Foresight report, \*Food Systems and Diets: Facing the Challenges of the 21st Century\*](#) (Section 7.4, p. 109 ). It has also been updated in 2021 to incorporate new thinking in a second Foresight report from the [Global Panel: \*Future Food Systems: for people, our planet and prosperity\*](#) (2020). This update suggests ways to consider the difficult trade-offs which policymakers may need to resolve when balancing different policy priorities including nutrition and health, sustainability, jobs and economic growth. It provides more detail about how a cooperative climate for change can be fostered; and it also provides checklists of priorities for policy makers to consider.

The tool is not designed to be prescriptive or indeed universal, but instead, it provides a framework designed to stimulate country-level dialogue and support the development of realistic public and private sector actions. It is also designed to support a more coordinated approach to ensuring food systems are delivering sustainable, accessible and affordable high-quality diets for all.

The unique property of this tool is that it is not simply about 'nutrition'. It certainly addresses malnutrition in all its forms, but in the broader context of climate change, environmental deterioration, human health, and diet quality. As such it is designed to complement other tools as part of a suite of options which policymakers and their partners may wish to employ.

It can also help better coordinate action, by bringing together people, policies and programmes from the many different sectors which make up sustainable food systems. It does this by following a 'whole of government' food systems approach, using the food system as a framework to support the multi-sector collaborative action required to deliver high-quality diets, as well as supporting other agricultural, health, environmental and economic policies.

While the focus of this tool is on sustainable food systems to improve diets, users should recognise that it has the potential to help deliver multiple government policy priorities and commitments, including many of the Sustainable Development Goals. For example, substantial benefits could be realised in terms of: the health of populations and reduced pressure on healthcare systems; alleviating stresses on the natural environment; jobs and employment, particularly for the poor and women; equity within societies; and economic growth.

## Purpose and audience

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The tool is designed to be used by national and local policymakers and those responsible for implementing policy (practitioners). By working through the tool, they can identify actions required to develop more coherence across their food systems to deliver more sustainable and healthier diets.

There are many existing nutrition-specific and nutrition-sensitive tools which have helped policymakers develop integrated national strategies with political and resource commitments. This tool supports the implementation of these strategies, on the ground.

It comprises actions, guide questions and options which will guide users through a process of examining their existing nutrition strategies through the lens of diet quality and food systems. As such, it can help facilitate dialogue and action plans to mobilise cross-departmental and cross-sector support across food systems. It can also serve as a tool to review and validate these strategies and action plans.

The tool is based on the evidence and recommendations from the Global Panel's Foresight reports and briefs ([glopan.org/resources-documents](https://glopan.org/resources-documents)). These documents are syntheses of the latest scientific data and policy examples from across the world.

*\* section written by Prof Corinna Hawkes, City University London*

---

Foreword

---

Global Panel members

---

Introduction

---

How to use this Tool

---

The Global Panel Food Systems Policy Tool

---

Annex A  
Options for Step 1: Setting a clear objective for diet quality, delivered sustainably

---

Annex B  
Options for Step 2: Understanding consumer perceptions

---

Annex C  
Options for Step 3: A conceptual model of food systems

---

Annex D  
Options for Step 4: Prioritising actions

---

Annex E  
Options for Step 5: Creating a cooperative climate

---

Annex F  
Options for Step 6: Ensuring actions are long-term and sustainable

---

Annex G  
Examples of achieving diet quality in different settings

# How to use this Tool

The Food Systems Policy Tool comprises six steps to enable the user to consider the evidence, data, organisations, policies, regulations, partnerships and programmes relevant to their setting. It should be seen as a framework to support decision making, and the user is not expected to address every option presented. Instead, they should sequentially work through Steps 1 to 6, using the guide questions, actions and associated options to formulate a better understanding of the issue and prioritise actions.

Regarding the mode of application, it is recommended that users adopt a combination of desktop and workshop formats.

## Step 1

It is recommended that this step is led by an independent expert or consultant. They will conduct an initial scoping exercise and engage with community groups and relevant stakeholders (academic, industry, government, civil society), to identify the most feasible diet quality objective. This can be discussed and agreed upon at a meeting or workshop with key policy officials (Workshop 1).

## Steps 2 and 3

These steps should be conducted as a desktop exercise, ideally by an independent consultant. By drawing on internal and external expertise, as well as the options and examples provided in the relevant Annexes, they will produce a background paper and evidence package containing the nutrition situation analysis; food systems-related policies and programmes; and evidence of implementation. The paper could also identify the initial policy options for deliberation.



---

[Foreword](#)

---

[Global Panel members](#)

---

[Introduction](#)

---

[How to use this Tool](#)

---

[The Global Panel Food Systems Policy Tool](#)

---

[Annex A](#)

---

[Options for Step 1: Setting a clear objective for diet quality, delivered sustainably](#)

---

[Annex B](#)

---

[Options for Step 2: Understanding consumer perceptions](#)

---

[Annex C](#)

---

[Options for Step 3: A conceptual model of food systems](#)

---

[Annex D](#)

---

[Options for Step 4: Prioritising actions](#)

---

[Annex E](#)

---

[Options for Step 5: Creating a cooperative climate](#)

---

[Annex F](#)

---

[Options for Step 6: Ensuring actions are long-term and sustainable](#)

---

[Annex G](#)

---

[Examples of achieving diet quality in different settings](#)

# How to use this Tool *continued*

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## Step 4

The background paper and evidence package from Steps 2 and 3 should form the basis of a second meeting or workshop (Workshop 2), which aims to agree on a list of prioritised cross-government actions. Where possible, actions should be SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant and Timebound) with clear ownership and governance.

This step should make use of existing multi-sector, cross-disciplinary coordinating groups and include key individuals who are responsible for programmes on, for example, food; health; agriculture; education; planning; social affairs; gender; children; technology; trade; welfare, the environment; infrastructure; transport; energy, water and sanitation.

It should also aim to incorporate individuals and organisations linked to the delivery of Sustainable Development Goal commitments, those linked to the delivery of the World Health Assembly and other regional targets (e.g. Malabo Declaration) the UN Decade of Action on Nutrition, the UN Food Systems Summit (UNFSS), and the Nutrition for Growth Summit (N4G 2021).

A workshop would also benefit from high level-political support (through an opening address or written statement), as well as presentations on the background paper, the policy tool and the concept of food systems and diets more generally. These can provide an excellent framing to the workshop, emphasising the role of sustainable food systems, healthy diets and nutrition in contributing to national development aims.

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## Step 5

This step can be an extension of Workshop 2 or conducted as a separate desktop exercise. The aim is to establish a process, with governance arrangements and allocated responsibilities, for coordinating the policy actions and interventions agreed in Step 4. The use of existing multi-sector governance frameworks should be prioritised.

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## Step 6

During this step, it is recommended that the process reverts to a desktop exercise with an independent consultant drafting a report that includes the list of actions from Steps 4 and 5, each with a responsible owner from the relevant government department. It should identify barriers to adopting change, as well as long-term risks (e.g. climate change effects and food price volatility). Formal plans to monitor and measure impact should also be included.

The report should aim to demonstrate cross-departmental support for a more coordinated approach to ensuring food systems are delivering sustainable, accessible and affordable high-quality diets for all. It should be ratified at a final meeting or workshop (Workshop 3).

Ideally the report will have cross-Ministerial signatories and be formally published. A high-profile individual to champion the report is also recommended.

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## Further support

The Global Panel Secretariat and other in-country experts who have been involved in the development of the tool can provide support to help guide this process and design the workshops: [secretariat@glopan.org](mailto:secretariat@glopan.org)

The Global Panel's Policy Handbook and briefs also provide useful background information to support the process: [glopan.org/resources-documents](https://glopan.org/resources-documents)

# The Global Panel Food Systems Policy Tool

STEP	ACTION	GUIDE QUESTIONS	PROCESS	OPTIONS
1	Set a clear diet quality objective	<p>Are the concepts of 'quality diets' and 'sustainable food system' well understood across government?</p> <p>Are you clear which diet challenges are the most important to address? Have you identified policies in government departments which could support this diet quality objective?</p>	<p>An independent expert conducts an initial scoping exercise drawing in expertise from relevant sectors.</p> <p>The most feasible diet quality objective is ratified at a meeting or workshop (Workshop 1).</p>	Annex A
2	Understand consumer perceptions	<p>Have you identified the main consumer issues related to the diet quality objective set in Step 1, e.g. availability, affordability, appeal?</p>	<p>Steps 2 and 3 are conducted together.</p>	Annex B
3	Review the role of the food system	<p>Have you identified the main parts of the food system responsible for the diet quality objective set.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Agricultural production</li> <li>• Food storage, transport and trade</li> <li>• Food transformation</li> <li>• Consumers and the food environment</li> <li>• Food retail and provisioning</li> </ul>	<p>The expert engages with community groups and relevant stakeholders (academic, industry, government, NGOs) to develop a background paper and evidence package.</p> <p>The paper contains the nutrition situation analysis; food systems-related policies and programmes; and evidence of implementation.</p> <p>This paper may contain initial policy options for deliberation.</p>	Annex C-G
4	Prioritise actions	<p>Have you collaborated with partners across government to agree a priority list of actions?</p>	<p>The evidence package, paper and initial policy options are debated at a meeting or workshop (Workshop 2).</p> <p>Prioritised cross-government actions are agreed.</p>	
5	Create a cooperative climate	<p>Is there a process, with governance arrangements and allocated responsibilities, for coordinating the policy actions and interventions in Step 4?</p>	<p>Existing multi-sector governance frameworks are explored with a view to building in the Actions agreed in Step 4.</p>	
6	Ensure actions are long-term & sustainable	<p>Have you identified the long-term risks and barriers to adopting change?</p> <p>Have you developed a process to monitor progress and impact of the priority actions in Step 5, with appropriate risk management</p>	<p>An independent expert drafts a report which is agreed and ratified at a final meeting or workshop (Workshop 3). It should be formally published, with ministerial backing and a high-profile champion.</p>	

---

Foreword

---

Global Panel members

---

Introduction

---

How to use this Tool

---

The Global Panel Food Systems Policy Tool

---

Annex A

Options for Step 1: Setting a clear objective for diet quality, delivered sustainably

---

Annex B

Options for Step 2: Understanding consumer perceptions

---

Annex C

Options for Step 3: A conceptual model of food systems

---

Annex D

Options for Step 4: Prioritising actions

---

Annex E

Options for Step 5: Creating a cooperative climate

---

Annex F

Options for Step 6: Ensuring actions are long-term and sustainable

---

Annex G

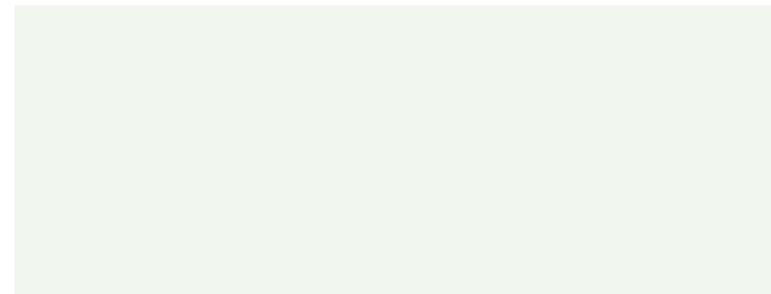
Examples of achieving diet quality in different settings

# Setting a clear objective for diet quality, delivered sustainably

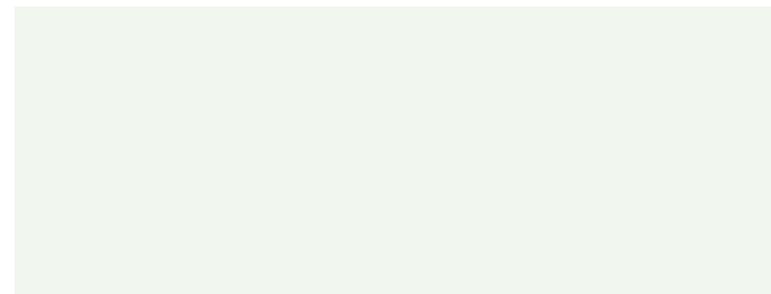
i

## Review how nutrition strategies and action plans take account of the wider food system

Do your existing nutrition policies, strategies and programmes account for the wider food system when reviewing the nutrition situation of your population, building on other independent reports?



Have you considered a policy mapping exercise which reviews all food systems-related policies and programmes and evidence of implementation?



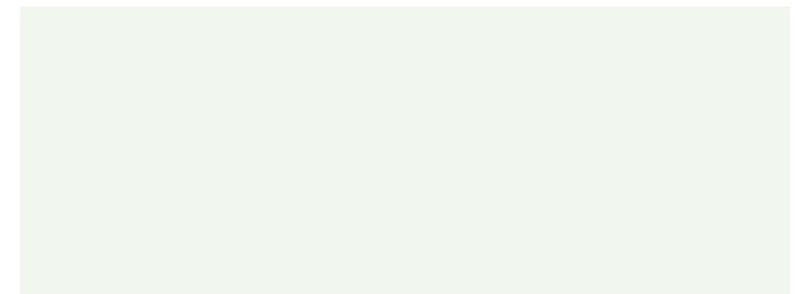
ii

## Develop an understanding of the importance of food systems

Are you familiar with the parts of the food system where policy change is required? For reference:

Food systems are comprised of all the processes involved in keeping us fed: growing, harvesting, packing, processing, transforming, transporting, marketing, consuming, and disposing of food. A food system is essentially made up of 3 parts: food supply, food environments and consumers ([Annex C](#)).

1. Food supply extends beyond agriculture, to include all activities in food production, storage, transportation, trade, transformation and retailing.
2. Food environments play an important role in influencing diets because they provide the choices from which people make decisions about what to eat, e.g. price and availability. It is the interface between consumers and the food system.
3. Consumers are an important part of food systems. They eat the food produced by the system and, in so doing, influence what the system produces.



Foreword

Global Panel members

Introduction

How to use this Tool

The Global Panel Food Systems Policy Tool

Annex A

Options for Step 1: Setting a clear objective for diet quality, delivered sustainably

Annex B

Options for Step 2: Understanding consumer perceptions

Annex C

Options for Step 3: A conceptual model of food systems

Annex D

Options for Step 4: Prioritising actions

Annex E

Options for Step 5: Creating a cooperative climate

Annex F

Options for Step 6: Ensuring actions are long-term and sustainable

Annex G

Examples of achieving diet quality in different settings

## Setting a clear objective for diet quality, delivered sustainably *continued*

iii

### Develop an understanding of high-quality, healthy diets

Are you familiar with the concept of a healthy diet? For reference:

1. Healthy, or high-quality diets are those that eliminate hunger, are safe, reduce all forms of malnutrition, promote health and are produced sustainably i.e. without undermining the environmental basis to generate high-quality diets for future generations.
2. While there is no universal 'diet quality index', there is general agreement on what a high-quality diet should include, i.e. a diversity of foods which are safe and provide levels of energy appropriate to age, sex, disease status and physical activity as well as essential micronutrients.
3. The WHO has also issued [guidance](#) of what comprises a 'healthy diet' on the basis of its scientific reviews of the evidence.

iv

### Understand the evidence of current and future trends in diets and food systems for your region of responsibility

Do you have partners in academia, civil society, and the private sector to help identify and collate the best available diet data and evidence on current and future trends in diet (both global and national)?

Have you considered utilising the WFP Fill the Nutrient Gap Tool, or other relevant tools, to see if there are any specific nutrients or target groups that need to be prioritised?

Do you need to commission new research and the collection of surveillance data?

Can policy implementation proceed, irrespective of the data quality, with a view to commissioning further research at a later date?

Foreword

Global Panel members

Introduction

How to use this Tool

The Global Panel Food Systems Policy Tool

Annex A

Options for Step 1: Setting a clear objective for diet quality, delivered sustainably

Annex B

Options for Step 2: Understanding consumer perceptions

Annex C

Options for Step 3: A conceptual model of food systems

Annex D

Options for Step 4: Prioritising actions

Annex E

Options for Step 5: Creating a cooperative climate

Annex F

Options for Step 6: Ensuring actions are long-term and sustainable

Annex G

Examples of achieving diet quality in different settings

## Setting a clear objective for diet quality, delivered sustainably *continued*

v

### Set a clear diet quality objective

Have you consulted colleagues from academia, civil society, and the private sector to identify which of the diet challenges should be prioritised?

Are these diet quality challenges clearly linked to climate change objectives through the food systems?

Is an impact assessment available, showing which diet challenge has the greatest impact on health, social welfare, or the economy?

If a WFP Fill the Nutrient Gap or other similar analysis has been conducted, can you build on its stakeholder network, data, and analysis?



NEXT: [Annex B: Understanding consumer perceptions](#) >

Foreword

Global Panel members

Introduction

How to use this Tool

The Global Panel Food Systems Policy Tool

Annex A

Options for Step 1: Setting a clear objective for diet quality, delivered sustainably

Annex B

Options for Step 2: Understanding consumer perceptions

Annex C

Options for Step 3: A conceptual model of food systems

Annex D

Options for Step 4: Prioritising actions

Annex E

Options for Step 5: Creating a cooperative climate

Annex F

Options for Step 6: Ensuring actions are long-term and sustainable

Annex G

Examples of achieving diet quality in different settings

# Understanding consumer perceptions

**i**

## Understand consumer evidence

Is there existing evidence from consumers on the barriers to them selecting sustainable, healthy diets, from your current programmes?

Is your consumer evidence robust enough to make an informed decision?

If not, are there any global data or evidence from countries which could act as a good proxy?

**ii**

## Engage with community groups

Have you engaged with community groups?

Can you get obtain to their knowledge, insights, and data?

Can you create a collaboration to utilise their existing networks for new research?

---

[Foreword](#)

---

[Global Panel members](#)

---

[Introduction](#)

---

[How to use this Tool](#)

---

[The Global Panel Food Systems Policy Tool](#)

---

[Annex A](#)

---

[Options for Step 1: Setting a clear objective for diet quality, delivered sustainably](#)

---

[Annex B](#)

---

[Options for Step 2: Understanding consumer perceptions](#)

---

[Annex C](#)

---

[Options for Step 3: A conceptual model of food systems](#)

---

[Annex D](#)

---

[Options for Step 4: Prioritising actions](#)

---

[Annex E](#)

---

[Options for Step 5: Creating a cooperative climate](#)

---

[Annex F](#)

---

[Options for Step 6: Ensuring actions are long-term and sustainable](#)

---

[Annex G](#)

---

[Examples of achieving diet quality in different settings](#)

## Understanding consumer perceptions *continued*

iii

### Engage with academic and private sector partners

Are there academic and industry partners who are conducting consumer research?

Can you obtain access to their knowledge, insights, and data?

Can you create a collaboration to utilise their existing protocols and networks for new research?

Do you have a specific goal for better collection and monitoring of data on dietary habits, particularly on the supply and consumption of fruit and vegetables?



NEXT: [Annex C: A conceptual model of food systems >](#)

Foreword

Global Panel members

Introduction

How to use this Tool

The Global Panel Food Systems Policy Tool

Annex A

Options for Step 1: Setting a clear objective for diet quality, delivered sustainably

Annex B

Options for Step 2: Understanding consumer perceptions

Annex C

Options for Step 3: A conceptual model of food systems

Annex D

Options for Step 4: Prioritising actions

Annex E

Options for Step 5: Creating a cooperative climate

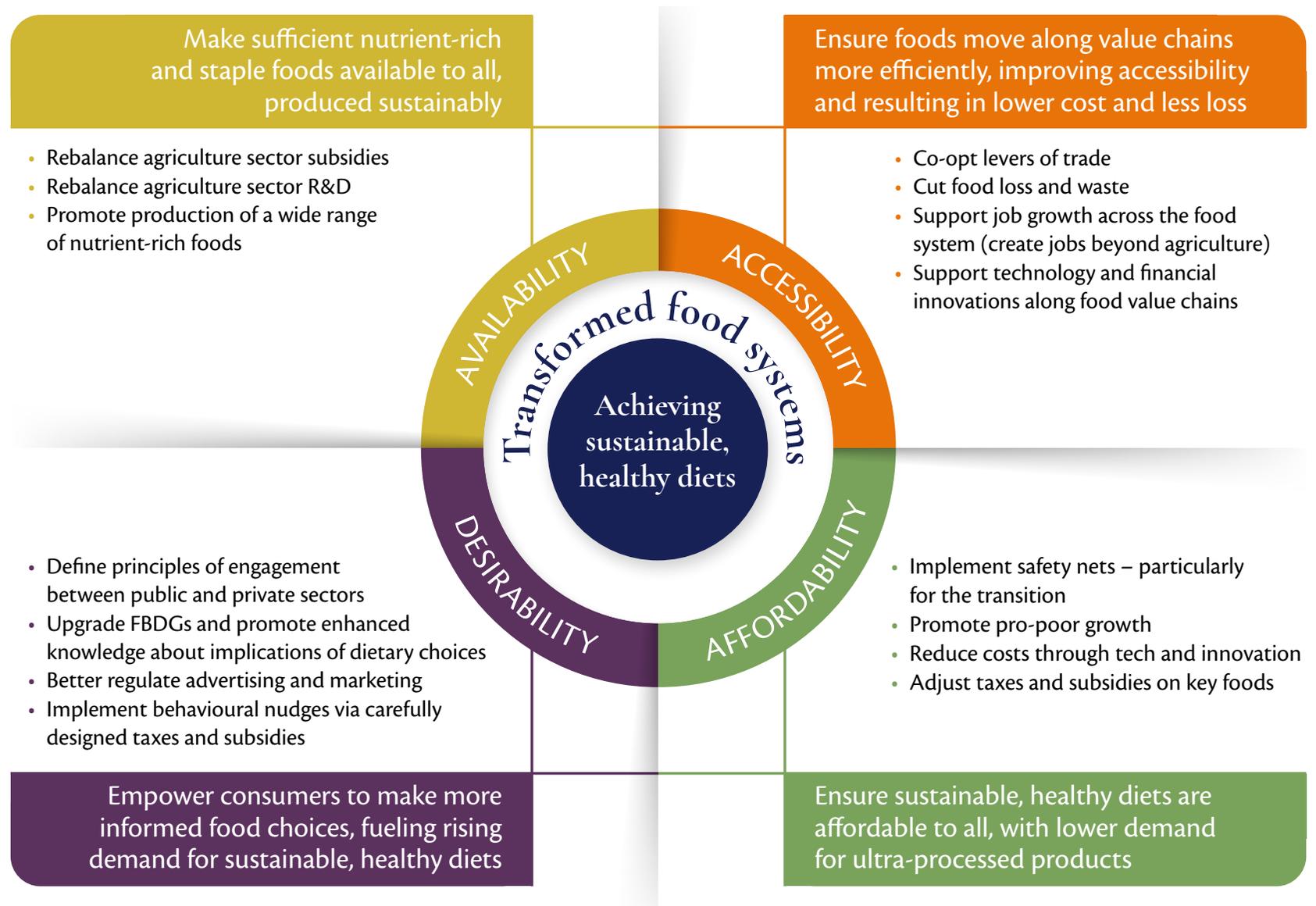
Annex F

Options for Step 6: Ensuring actions are long-term and sustainable

Annex G

Examples of achieving diet quality in different settings

# A conceptual model of food systems



Foreword

Global Panel members

Introduction

How to use this Tool

The Global Panel Food Systems Policy Tool

Annex A

Options for Step 1: Setting a clear objective for diet quality, delivered sustainably

Annex B

Options for Step 2: Understanding consumer perceptions

Annex C

Options for Step 3: A conceptual model of food systems

C.1. Food production

C.2. Storage, transport and trade

C.3. Food transformation

C.4. Consumers and the food environment

C.5. Food retail and provisioning

Annex D

Options for Step 4: Prioritising actions

Annex E

Options for Step 5: Creating a cooperative climate

Annex F

Options for Step 6: Ensuring actions are long-term and sustainable

Annex G

Examples of achieving diet quality in different settings

## A conceptual model of food systems *continued*

### C.1. Food production

i

#### Re-examine publicly funded research priorities

Is publicly funded research too focused on increasing yields of existing staples (cereal grains, roots, tubers) or of highly profitable agricultural commodities?

Is there enough research on increasing the diversity of nutrient rich foods (such as fruits, certain vegetables, whole grains and legumes)?

How can the research agenda be adapted to make nutrient rich foods more available and affordable?

ii

#### Consider the use of bio-fortified crops

Have you considered the use of bio-fortified crops as one component of your solution?

What are the barriers to their adoption and how can you remove these?

Have you read the arguments for biofortification presented by the [Global Panel and Harvest Plus?](#)

Foreword

Global Panel members

Introduction

How to use this Tool

The Global Panel Food Systems Policy Tool

Annex A

Options for Step 1: Setting a clear objective for diet quality, delivered sustainably

Annex B

Options for Step 2: Understanding consumer perceptions

Annex C

Options for Step 3: A conceptual model of food systems

C.1. Food production

C.2. Storage, transport and trade

C.3. Food transformation

C.4. Consumers and the food environment

C.5. Food retail and provisioning

Annex D

Options for Step 4: Prioritising actions

Annex E

Options for Step 5: Creating a cooperative climate

Annex F

Options for Step 6: Ensuring actions are long-term and sustainable

Annex G

Examples of achieving diet quality in different settings

## A conceptual model of food systems *continued*

### C.1. Food production

iii

#### Provide provisions for smallholder productivity

Is there provision for smallholder productivity, through farm and off-farm income, to purchase nutrient-rich foods and access to relevant health care and education?



iv

#### Consider input subsidies

Are current input subsidies too focused on supporting the agricultural economy, whilst having little effect on diet quality? Can subsidies, or other initiatives, be focused on reducing transaction costs for farmers to adopt more diverse and nutritious crops?

Have you seen other examples of good practice, e.g., vouchers to allow farmers to obtain certain kinds of seeds or fertilisers in Afghanistan and Nigeria?

Are there crop insurance schemes which protect against food price volatility risks or extreme climatic events?

Foreword

Global Panel members

Introduction

How to use this Tool

The Global Panel Food Systems Policy Tool

Annex A

Options for Step 1: Setting a clear objective for diet quality, delivered sustainably

Annex B

Options for Step 2: Understanding consumer perceptions

Annex C

Options for Step 3: A conceptual model of food systems

C.1. Food production

C.2. Storage, transport and trade

C.3. Food transformation

C.4. Consumers and the food environment

C.5. Food retail and provisioning

Annex D

Options for Step 4: Prioritising actions

Annex E

Options for Step 5: Creating a cooperative climate

Annex F

Options for Step 6: Ensuring actions are long-term and sustainable

Annex G

Examples of achieving diet quality in different settings

## A conceptual model of food systems *continued*

### C.1. Food production

v

#### Include a diet quality component in agricultural extension systems

Could extension programmes that promote crop diversification (as part of integrated pest management and/or climate change adaptation strategies) also present opportunities for promoting dietary diversification?

Could extension programmes include elements of training, linking food and nutrition?

Are they decentralised and farmer-led?

vi

#### Align land and resource access policy with diet quality

Do policies on land and resource access also help meet your diet quality objective?

Can marginalised and vulnerable smallholders (especially women) be given the power to invest in nutritious and diverse crops?

Have you seen good examples from other countries, e.g. Bolivia's and Madagascar's increased access to land for indigenous communities and smallholder farmers?

Foreword

Global Panel members

Introduction

How to use this Tool

The Global Panel Food Systems Policy Tool

Annex A

Options for Step 1: Setting a clear objective for diet quality, delivered sustainably

Annex B

Options for Step 2: Understanding consumer perceptions

Annex C

Options for Step 3: A conceptual model of food systems

C.1. Food production

C.2. Storage, transport and trade

C.3. Food transformation

C.4. Consumers and the food environment

C.5. Food retail and provisioning

Annex D

Options for Step 4: Prioritising actions

Annex E

Options for Step 5: Creating a cooperative climate

Annex F

Options for Step 6: Ensuring actions are long-term and sustainable

Annex G

Examples of achieving diet quality in different settings

## A conceptual model of food systems *continued*

### C.1. Food production

vii

#### Align agricultural initiatives on sustainability and climate change with diet quality

Are you aware of the many innovations that simultaneously enhance food systems whilst supporting the climate change agenda?

In adapting to climate change, have you considered including maize, peanuts, beans, and rice varieties that are more resistant to the water or heat stresses that may arise from climate change?

viii

#### Consider urban food production

To what extent can, and does, urban food production play a role in strengthening diet quality?



Foreword

Global Panel members

Introduction

How to use this Tool

The Global Panel Food Systems Policy Tool

Annex A

Options for Step 1: Setting a clear objective for diet quality, delivered sustainably

Annex B

Options for Step 2: Understanding consumer perceptions

Annex C

Options for Step 3: A conceptual model of food systems

- C.1. Food production
- C.2. Storage, transport and trade
- C.3. Food transformation
- C.4. Consumers and the food environment
- C.5. Food retail and provisioning

Annex D

Options for Step 4: Prioritising actions

Annex E

Options for Step 5: Creating a cooperative climate

Annex F

Options for Step 6: Ensuring actions are long-term and sustainable

Annex G

Examples of achieving diet quality in different settings

## A conceptual model of food systems *continued*

### C.1. Food production

ix

#### Take measures to reduce food loss and waste

Are you aware that reducing loss and waste of nutritious foods would yield substantial benefits not only for human health, but for global economies and the natural environment? At least 14% of food is lost before it reaches retail and 17% is wasted by retail and consumers, leading to huge worldwide economic losses per year.

Nutrient-rich foods such as fruits, vegetables, seeds, nuts, dairy products, meats, and seafood are particularly susceptible to losses throughout the food system.

What practical steps for nutrient retention can be taken within the food system, focusing on perishable, nutritious foods, and all parts of the food system, including consumer behaviour?.

Can public and private infrastructure be improved for well-functioning and efficient food systems, for example efficient, storage, cold chain, and processing infrastructure?

How can you encourage innovation to protect nutrients? Innovative technologies have great potential to protect nutrients from farm to fork?

Have you considered a policy to educate all food systems stakeholders to on food loss and waste?

Foreword

Global Panel members

Introduction

How to use this Tool

The Global Panel Food Systems Policy Tool

Annex A

Options for Step 1: Setting a clear objective for diet quality, delivered sustainably

Annex B

Options for Step 2: Understanding consumer perceptions

Annex C

Options for Step 3: A conceptual model of food systems

- C.1. Food production
- C.2. Storage, transport and trade
- C.3. Food transformation
- C.4. Consumers and the food environment
- C.5. Food retail and provisioning

Annex D

Options for Step 4: Prioritising actions

Annex E

Options for Step 5: Creating a cooperative climate

Annex F

Options for Step 6: Ensuring actions are long-term and sustainable

Annex G

Examples of achieving diet quality in different settings

## A conceptual model of food systems *continued*

### C.2. Storage, transport and trade

i

#### Develop trade policies that support sustainable food systems and healthier diets

Are you aware that including dietary objectives into trade policy can yield important benefits for economic, health and social development?

Have you considered the balance of economic gains from the trade of foods which do not support high quality diets, against the economic losses from poor health and inadequate nutrition? For example, for processed and ultra-processed foods?

Have you considered how trade policy measures that promote sustainable production of nutritious foods for high-quality diets can make substantial contributions to reducing greenhouse gas emissions?

Can you give priority to trade policies that help specifically increase the availability and therefore reduce the price of nutrient-rich foods to benefit those on low incomes?

How can incentives and relative prices be shifted in ways that support higher consumption of nutrient-rich foods to help provide a sustainable, healthy diet?

How can food trade policies be formulated to manage price volatility and risks associated with climate change? For example, resisting the imposition of export restrictions at times of sharp food price spikes, and looking instead to lowering tariffs and VAT to encourage trade flows?

To what extent have you considered informal trade?

Can you circumvent the risks of trade agreements with strong investor protection by aligning nutrition-focused trade policies with WTO rules, as well as using domestic policy rather than trade policy to address some diet quality issues?

---

Foreword

---

Global Panel members

---

Introduction

---

How to use this Tool

---

The Global Panel Food Systems Policy Tool

---

Annex A

Options for Step 1: Setting a clear objective for diet quality, delivered sustainably

---

Annex B

Options for Step 2: Understanding consumer perceptions

---

Annex C

Options for Step 3: A conceptual model of food systems

- C.1. Food production
- C.2. Storage, transport and trade
- C.3. Food transformation
- C.4. Consumers and the food environment
- C.5. Food retail and provisioning

---

Annex D

Options for Step 4: Prioritising actions

---

Annex E

Options for Step 5: Creating a cooperative climate

---

Annex F

Options for Step 6: Ensuring actions are long-term and sustainable

---

Annex G

Examples of achieving diet quality in different settings

## A conceptual model of food systems *continued*

### C.2. Storage, transport and trade

ii

#### Align nutrition and environmental protection with agricultural trade policies

Have your agricultural trade policies paid enough attention to positive or negative nutritional implications?

Do policies encourage the importation of ultra-processed foods?

Are trade barriers adversely affecting the consumption of nutrient-rich foods (nutritious animal-based food, vegetable and fruit products) or exacerbating climate change?

Do your contingency plans for food price shocks include a diet quality component?

Do trade restrictions, framed in terms of phyto-sanitary and health reasons, need to be re-examined from a nutrition-sensitive or an environmental sustainability perspective?

How do trade policies support improved local production of a diverse variety of nutritious foods, including fruits and vegetables?

Foreword

Global Panel members

Introduction

How to use this Tool

The Global Panel Food Systems Policy Tool

Annex A

Options for Step 1: Setting a clear objective for diet quality, delivered sustainably

Annex B

Options for Step 2: Understanding consumer perceptions

Annex C

Options for Step 3: A conceptual model of food systems

C.1. Food production

C.2. Storage, transport and trade

C.3. Food transformation

C.4. Consumers and the food environment

C.5. Food retail and provisioning

Annex D

Options for Step 4: Prioritising actions

Annex E

Options for Step 5: Creating a cooperative climate

Annex F

Options for Step 6: Ensuring actions are long-term and sustainable

Annex G

Examples of achieving diet quality in different settings

## A conceptual model of food systems *continued*

### C.2. Storage, transport and trade

iii

#### Create infrastructure to support healthy food consumption

Does the relevant infrastructure available help or hinder the consumption of nutritious foods, and environmental protection?

What can be done to protect perishable (and often nutrient-rich) foods?

What aspects of transport, electrification or cold storage require specific attention?

iv

#### Influence agribusiness policy to promote sustainable and healthy diets

Do your agribusiness policies have incentives to promote healthy diets and sustainable food systems?

Do your agribusiness policies allow farm and other businesses to respond to demand for sustainable, healthy diets?

---

Foreword

---

Global Panel members

---

Introduction

---

How to use this Tool

---

The Global Panel Food Systems Policy Tool

---

Annex A

Options for Step 1: Setting a clear objective for diet quality, delivered sustainably

---

Annex B

Options for Step 2: Understanding consumer perceptions

---

Annex C

Options for Step 3: A conceptual model of food systems

C.1. Food production

C.2. Storage, transport and trade

C.3. Food transformation

C.4. Consumers and the food environment

C.5. Food retail and provisioning

---

Annex D

Options for Step 4: Prioritising actions

---

Annex E

Options for Step 5: Creating a cooperative climate

---

Annex F

Options for Step 6: Ensuring actions are long-term and sustainable

---

Annex G

Examples of achieving diet quality in different settings

## A conceptual model of food systems *continued*

### C.2. Storage, transport and trade

v

#### Create infrastructure to support the consumption of sustainable, healthy diets

Do food price policies restrict the consumption of foods deemed to be nutrient poor whilst encouraging the consumption of healthy diets?

Do they include consumer subsidies or price ceilings for foods conducive to sustainable, healthy diets?

Can you learn initiatives in from other countries, e.g. Indonesia's Food Security Council or India's Right to Food Act?

Can you impose taxes which increase prices or restrict access to foods deemed to be low in nutrients or which adversely affect the environment?

Can programmes subsidise foods for key target groups, including women and children?

---

Foreword

---

Global Panel members

---

Introduction

---

How to use this Tool

---

The Global Panel Food Systems Policy Tool

---

Annex A

Options for Step 1: Setting a clear objective for diet quality, delivered sustainably

---

Annex B

Options for Step 2: Understanding consumer perceptions

---

Annex C

Options for Step 3: A conceptual model of food systems

- C.1. Food production
- C.2. Storage, transport and trade
- C.3. Food transformation
- C.4. Consumers and the food environment
- C.5. Food retail and provisioning

---

Annex D

Options for Step 4: Prioritising actions

---

Annex E

Options for Step 5: Creating a cooperative climate

---

Annex F

Options for Step 6: Ensuring actions are long-term and sustainable

---

Annex G

Examples of achieving diet quality in different settings

## A conceptual model of food systems *continued*

### C.3. Food transformation

i

#### Give consumers the right information to help them choose sustainable, healthy diets

Is product information, such as labelling, available and enforced?

Are there targeted media campaigns or educational initiatives aimed at raising awareness about sustainable, healthy diets?

Are communities aware of existing public programmes on nutrition and climate change?

Is nutrition formally included in school curricula (aimed at enhancing informed dietary choices)?

Do policies also promote greater consumer demand for, and access to, fresh and nutrient dense products?

- Foreword
- Global Panel members
- Introduction
- How to use this Tool
- The Global Panel Food Systems Policy Tool
- Annex A  
Options for Step 1: Setting a clear objective for diet quality, delivered sustainably
- Annex B  
Options for Step 2: Understanding consumer perceptions
- Annex C  
Options for Step 3: A conceptual model of food systems
  - C.1. Food production
  - C.2. Storage, transport and trade
  - C.3. Food transformation
  - C.4. Consumers and the food environment
  - C.5. Food retail and provisioning
- Annex D  
Options for Step 4: Prioritising actions
- Annex E  
Options for Step 5: Creating a cooperative climate
- Annex F  
Options for Step 6: Ensuring actions are long-term and sustainable
- Annex G  
Examples of achieving diet quality in different settings

## A conceptual model of food systems *continued*

### C.3. Food transformation

ii

#### Extend the reach of nutrient-rich, more sustainable reformulated products

Are you working with the private sector to reduce the levels of ingredients deemed by the WHO as being injurious to health (including excessive salt, free sugars, trans-fats), while also limiting portion sizes?

How can you encourage the private sector to invest in new technologies to produce, store and transport nutrient-rich foods, e.g. fruit, vegetables, dairy, nuts and legumes, using more environmentally responsible methods?

Which channels of legislation can you use?

iii

#### Encourage the marketing and promotion of healthy, high-quality diets that are good for the planet

How are you working with industry to establish ways to promote sustainable, healthy diets whilst maintaining profits?

How do you maximise social media networks, commercial networks and information flows to promote and market nutrient-rich foods, particularly in urban environments?

Which channels of legislation can you use?

Foreword

Global Panel members

Introduction

How to use this Tool

The Global Panel Food Systems Policy Tool

Annex A

Options for Step 1: Setting a clear objective for diet quality, delivered sustainably

Annex B

Options for Step 2: Understanding consumer perceptions

Annex C

Options for Step 3: A conceptual model of food systems

- C.1. Food production
- C.2. Storage, transport and trade
- C.3. Food transformation
- C.4. Consumers and the food environment
- C.5. Food retail and provisioning

Annex D

Options for Step 4: Prioritising actions

Annex E

Options for Step 5: Creating a cooperative climate

Annex F

Options for Step 6: Ensuring actions are long-term and sustainable

Annex G

Examples of achieving diet quality in different settings

## A conceptual model of food systems *continued*

### C.3. Food transformation

iv

#### Restrict advertising and promotion of ultra-processed foods which do not protect the environment

How are you working with industry to establish acceptable norms and specific limits to the marketing of ultra-processed foods to children and adolescents?

Which channels of legislation can you use?

Can you learn lessons from other countries who have successfully adopted advertising legislation, e.g. Chile, South Korea, Mexico, Denmark and Latvia?

Do you have full implementation of the International Code of Marketing of Breast-milk Substitutes?



Foreword

Global Panel members

Introduction

How to use this Tool

The Global Panel Food Systems Policy Tool

Annex A

Options for Step 1: Setting a clear objective for diet quality, delivered sustainably

Annex B

Options for Step 2: Understanding consumer perceptions

Annex C

Options for Step 3: A conceptual model of food systems

- C.1. Food production
- C.2. Storage, transport and trade
- C.3. Food transformation
- C.4. Consumers and the food environment
- C.5. Food retail and provisioning

Annex D

Options for Step 4: Prioritising actions

Annex E

Options for Step 5: Creating a cooperative climate

Annex F

Options for Step 6: Ensuring actions are long-term and sustainable

Annex G

Examples of achieving diet quality in different settings

## A conceptual model of food systems *continued*

### C.3. Food transformation

V

#### Consider fortification of foods

Are fortification programmes part of your current strategy?

Are you monitoring compliance and coverage?

Do they target appropriate micronutrient deficiencies?

Have new ways to process and package nutrient-dense but affordable complementary infant foods been considered?

Are they working and sustainable?

Do you continue to rely on imported fortified products?

- Foreword
- Global Panel members
- Introduction
- How to use this Tool
- The Global Panel Food Systems Policy Tool
- Annex A  
Options for Step 1: Setting a clear objective for diet quality, delivered sustainably
- Annex B  
Options for Step 2: Understanding consumer perceptions
- Annex C  
Options for Step 3: A conceptual model of food systems
  - C.1. Food production
  - C.2. Storage, transport and trade
  - C.3. Food transformation
  - C.4. Consumers and the food environment
  - C.5. Food retail and provisioning
- Annex D  
Options for Step 4: Prioritising actions
- Annex E  
Options for Step 5: Creating a cooperative climate
- Annex F  
Options for Step 6: Ensuring actions are long-term and sustainable
- Annex G  
Examples of achieving diet quality in different settings

## A conceptual model of food systems *continued*

### C.3. Food transformation

vi

#### Ensure food safety standards support high-quality diets

Does your national strategy cover naturally occurring moulds, e.g. aflatoxin, in the food supply?

Are there procedures in place for better on-farm management of crops, as well as optimal drying and storage?

Do your quality and safety standards have any unintentional negative effects on nutrition?

Where, if necessary, can you obtain the right expertise to revise quality and safety standards to support higher quality diets?

Are regulations backed up by effective monitoring, transparent standards and remediation?

---

 Foreword

---

 Global Panel members

---

 Introduction

---

 How to use this Tool

---

 The Global Panel Food Systems Policy Tool

---

 Annex A

---

 Options for Step 1: Setting a clear objective for diet quality, delivered sustainably

---

 Annex B

---

 Options for Step 2: Understanding consumer perceptions

---

 Annex C

---

 Options for Step 3: A conceptual model of food systems

---

 C.1. Food production

---

 C.2. Storage, transport and trade

---

 C.3. Food transformation

---

 C.4. Consumers and the food environment

---

 C.5. Food retail and provisioning

---

 Annex D

---

 Options for Step 4: Prioritising actions

---

 Annex E

---

 Options for Step 5: Creating a cooperative climate

---

 Annex F

---

 Options for Step 6: Ensuring actions are long-term and sustainable

---

 Annex G

---

 Examples of achieving diet quality in different settings

## A conceptual model of food systems *continued*

### C.3. Food transformation

vii

#### Work with the private sector to reformulate products to make them more nutritious and better for the environment

Can the private sector voluntarily remove or replace certain ingredients (e.g. sugar, salt and trans fat) or incorporate 'health-promoting ingredients' and bio-active compounds into foods (e.g. vitamins, 'healthier' fats, plant extracts, fibres, flavonoids, probiotics and prebiotics)?

If voluntary options are not working, what are your regulatory routes?

Can these reformulated products be linked to environmental standards?

Is the private sector engaged in policy dialogues, product reformulation, and the removal or reduction of certain ingredients (such as sodium, sugar and trans fats)?

Do you need to take specific action on the production and sale of ultra-processed foods which are typically high in trans fat, salt and/or sugar, whilst depleted in dietary fibre, protein, micronutrients and other bioactive compounds?

---

 Foreword

---

 Global Panel members

---

 Introduction

---

 How to use this Tool

---

 The Global Panel Food Systems Policy Tool

---

 Annex A

---

 Options for Step 1: Setting a clear objective for diet quality, delivered sustainably

---

 Annex B

---

 Options for Step 2: Understanding consumer perceptions

---

 Annex C

---

 Options for Step 3: A conceptual model of food systems

---

 C.1. Food production

---

 C.2. Storage, transport and trade

---

 C.3. Food transformation

---

 C.4. Consumers and the food environment

---

 C.5. Food retail and provisioning

---

 Annex D

---

 Options for Step 4: Prioritising actions

---

 Annex E

---

 Options for Step 5: Creating a cooperative climate

---

 Annex F

---

 Options for Step 6: Ensuring actions are long-term and sustainable

---

 Annex G

---

 Examples of achieving diet quality in different settings

## A conceptual model of food systems *continued*

### C.3. Food transformation

viii

#### Build effective public-private partnerships

How are you encouraging investments in food sector SMEs, allowing them to access loans to invest in food products which enhance dietary diversity, quality and sustainability?

Can you create a climate whereby the private sector has confidence to invest and take risks in delivering more nutritious foods (better property rights and enforcement, and reduction of import barriers, and burdensome regulations) which are also good for the environment?

How can you incentivise private companies to improve the quality of food products?

Can you work with insurance companies to manage risks with developing, producing and selling more nutritious foods from sustainable food systems?

What is the process by which you build trust to ensure that engagement with for-profit companies, to promote universal access to sustainable, healthy diets, is underpinned by core principles of transparency and accountability?

Can you influence interest rates on productive loans, to improve infrastructure in ways that permit improved inter-seasonal access to certain perishable foods?

How are you overcoming barriers for businesses to invest in nutrient-rich foods, such as lack of technical capacity, or lack of access to other inputs (e.g. technology, business services, food ingredients)?

What specific action is required for small- and medium- sized enterprises to meet food safety and quality standards, and to gain access to credit and to market information?

Foreword

Global Panel members

Introduction

How to use this Tool

The Global Panel Food Systems Policy Tool

Annex A

Options for Step 1: Setting a clear objective for diet quality, delivered sustainably

Annex B

Options for Step 2: Understanding consumer perceptions

Annex C

Options for Step 3: A conceptual model of food systems

- C.1. Food production
- C.2. Storage, transport and trade
- C.3. Food transformation
- C.4. Consumers and the food environment
- C.5. Food retail and provisioning

Annex D

Options for Step 4: Prioritising actions

Annex E

Options for Step 5: Creating a cooperative climate

Annex F

Options for Step 6: Ensuring actions are long-term and sustainable

Annex G

Examples of achieving diet quality in different settings

## A conceptual model of food systems *continued*

### C.4. Consumers and the food environment

i

#### Consider fiscal measures to promote consumption of sustainable, healthy diets

Have you considered taxing less nutritious foods and simultaneously subsidising nutrient-rich foods?

Are there other ways to increase the consumption of nutritious foods through subsidies?

Can you learn lessons from initiatives in other countries, e.g. the Mexican government sugar tax and the USA “Healthy Incentives” retail programme?

Do fiscal incentives and disincentives influence farmers and food supply chains to pay more attention to nutritious crops such as fruits and vegetables, pulses, seeds and nuts?

ii

#### Develop better food labelling practices

Can you help consumers make informed decisions either by providing nutrient content, or by using interpretative labels (graphics, symbols or colours) on foods, related to the nutrient content and a ‘sustainability’ environmental standard?

Can you include new forms of digital technology, such as “SmartLabel”, developed to facilitate access to detailed information on food and beverage products?

To what extent can provision of information on nutrient content be made mandatory or how can you increase voluntary participation?

How are you working with the private sector to avoid any unintended consequences?



---

Foreword

---

Global Panel members

---

Introduction

---

How to use this Tool

---

The Global Panel Food Systems Policy Tool

---

Annex A

Options for Step 1: Setting a clear objective for diet quality, delivered sustainably

---

Annex B

Options for Step 2: Understanding consumer perceptions

---

Annex C

Options for Step 3: A conceptual model of food systems

- C.1. Food production
- C.2. Storage, transport and trade
- C.3. Food transformation
- C.4. Consumers and the food environment
- C.5. Food retail and provisioning

---

Annex D

Options for Step 4: Prioritising actions

---

Annex E

Options for Step 5: Creating a cooperative climate

---

Annex F

Options for Step 6: Ensuring actions are long-term and sustainable

---

Annex G

Examples of achieving diet quality in different settings

## A conceptual model of food systems *continued*

### C.4. Consumers and the food environment

iii

#### Refine and implement social protection policies

Do social protection programmes include a diet quality and environmental component?

Are there cash transfer and voucher schemes which encourage the purchase and consumption of key foods or require participation in health or nutrition educational services and programmes?

Have you considered food vouchers to protect purchasing power of low-income individuals?

Are there existing income subsidies that could be adapted to incorporate healthy dietary choices?

iv

#### Add high-quality foods to schools and workplace schemes

Is there a process to make high-quality foods more available and affordable in public facilities, including schools, hospitals, prisons and administrative institutions?

Can private organisations also improve the food environment within workplace settings?

Can you include cash transfers to schools, so they can purchase fresh food locally?

Do you have workplace health promotion programmes, e.g. grants for workplaces to invest in health promotion such as that used in the Singapore health promotion programme?

Foreword

Global Panel members

Introduction

How to use this Tool

The Global Panel Food Systems Policy Tool

Annex A

Options for Step 1: Setting a clear objective for diet quality, delivered sustainably

Annex B

Options for Step 2: Understanding consumer perceptions

Annex C

Options for Step 3: A conceptual model of food systems

C.1. Food production

C.2. Storage, transport and trade

C.3. Food transformation

C.4. Consumers and the food environment

C.5. Food retail and provisioning

Annex D

Options for Step 4: Prioritising actions

Annex E

Options for Step 5: Creating a cooperative climate

Annex F

Options for Step 6: Ensuring actions are long-term and sustainable

Annex G

Examples of achieving diet quality in different settings

## A conceptual model of food systems *continued*

### C.4. Consumers and the food environment

V

#### Educate consumers to make healthier dietary choices, which promote more sustainable food systems

Do you have a programme to educate consumers to make healthier dietary choices which are routinely assessed?

Can you increase investment to implement well-designed interventions on nutrition and climate change education?

Can you better integrate nutrition and sustainable food systems education into all available national services?

Are educational approaches evidence-based, multi-sector and multi-component?

Can you enhance school curricula with regard to dietary choices and nutrition, and encourage local initiatives such as school gardens?

Foreword

Global Panel members

Introduction

How to use this Tool

The Global Panel Food Systems Policy Tool

Annex A

Options for Step 1: Setting a clear objective for diet quality, delivered sustainably

Annex B

Options for Step 2: Understanding consumer perceptions

Annex C

Options for Step 3: A conceptual model of food systems

- C.1. Food production
- C.2. Storage, transport and trade
- C.3. Food transformation
- C.4. Consumers and the food environment
- C.5. Food retail and provisioning

Annex D

Options for Step 4: Prioritising actions

Annex E

Options for Step 5: Creating a cooperative climate

Annex F

Options for Step 6: Ensuring actions are long-term and sustainable

Annex G

Examples of achieving diet quality in different settings

## A conceptual model of food systems *continued*

### C.4. Consumers and the food environment

vi

#### Promote behaviour change

Do you have investment in strategies for behaviour change, notably in social and behaviour change communication approaches (SBCC)?

Have you considered mounting culturally tailored public awareness campaigns?

Can you strengthen capacity and training for practitioners in health, nutrition and behaviour change?

vii

#### Integrated approaches to school feeding programmes

Do school feeding programmes benefit local farming communities and stimulate local markets to produce and sell diverse, nutritious and sustainable foods?

Do they empower vulnerable groups, enrich the community and generate jobs?

Can they provide an important buffer during food shortages, or food price spikes?

Foreword

Global Panel members

Introduction

How to use this Tool

The Global Panel Food Systems Policy Tool

Annex A

Options for Step 1: Setting a clear objective for diet quality, delivered sustainably

Annex B

Options for Step 2: Understanding consumer perceptions

Annex C

Options for Step 3: A conceptual model of food systems

- C.1. Food production
- C.2. Storage, transport and trade
- C.3. Food transformation
- C.4. Consumers and the food environment
- C.5. Food retail and provisioning

Annex D

Options for Step 4: Prioritising actions

Annex E

Options for Step 5: Creating a cooperative climate

Annex F

Options for Step 6: Ensuring actions are long-term and sustainable

Annex G

Examples of achieving diet quality in different settings

## A conceptual model of food systems *continued*

### C.4. Consumers and the food environment

vii

#### Integrated approaches to school feeding programmes (*continued*)

Are school meals consistent with current national dietary guidelines and formulated to increase emphasis on nutritious ingredients?

Do policies facilitate local and regional procurement and diversification of foods for schools?

Are there predictable national budget allocations to support these integrated school feeding activities?

Is there an effective inter-sectoral mechanism for managing such programmes (including monitoring and evaluation)?

Are you promoting consumption of more nutritious school meals by integrating with nutrition education, community involvement, school gardening, training and technical support?

Can you learn from other examples of successful implementation of school feeding programmes, e.g. Brazil's Food Purchase Programme (Programa de Aquisição de Alimentos), or the Home Grown School Feeding Programme adopted by NEPAD?

Foreword

Global Panel members

Introduction

How to use this Tool

The Global Panel Food Systems Policy Tool

Annex A

Options for Step 1: Setting a clear objective for diet quality, delivered sustainably

Annex B

Options for Step 2: Understanding consumer perceptions

Annex C

Options for Step 3: A conceptual model of food systems

C.1. Food production

C.2. Storage, transport and trade

C.3. Food transformation

C.4. Consumers and the food environment

C.5. Food retail and provisioning

Annex D

Options for Step 4: Prioritising actions

Annex E

Options for Step 5: Creating a cooperative climate

Annex F

Options for Step 6: Ensuring actions are long-term and sustainable

Annex G

Examples of achieving diet quality in different settings

## A conceptual model of food systems *continued*

### C.4. Consumers and the food environment

viii

#### Collect better data on the quality of food environments

Are you developing metrics and reporting data on the quality of food environments?

Is there close monitoring of the range and quality of foods in the food environment?

How can you best use the International Network for Food and Obesity/Non-communicable Diseases Research, Monitoring and Action Support (INFORMAS) and the Global Individual food consumption Tool (FAO/WHO/GIFT)?

How can you engage the food industry to utilise its metrics, as part of their reporting on corporate social responsibility or corporate governance?



Foreword

Global Panel members

Introduction

How to use this Tool

The Global Panel Food Systems Policy Tool

Annex A

Options for Step 1: Setting a clear objective for diet quality, delivered sustainably

Annex B

Options for Step 2: Understanding consumer perceptions

Annex C

Options for Step 3: A conceptual model of food systems

- C.1. Food production
- C.2. Storage, transport and trade
- C.3. Food transformation
- C.4. Consumers and the food environment
- C.5. Food retail and provisioning

Annex D

Options for Step 4: Prioritising actions

Annex E

Options for Step 5: Creating a cooperative climate

Annex F

Options for Step 6: Ensuring actions are long-term and sustainable

Annex G

Examples of achieving diet quality in different settings

## A conceptual model of food systems *continued*

### C.5. Food retail and provisioning

i

#### Engage the informal and formal retail sector

Do you have specific strategies to engage the informal and formal retail sector?

Are you taking specific action to address higher and lower income groups, e.g. those with lower incomes who cannot benefit from supermarkets' food variety and nutrient content in frozen, preserved or packaged items?

Is there specific action on ultra- processed foods (in particular sweet, sugary and/or salty packaged snacks), particularly in the informal sector?

Do your policies have a restrictive approach to the informal food sector which focuses on regulation and control, at the expense of access and affordability of foods which contribute to a sustainable, healthy diet?

How can investments and interventions to improve informal market infrastructure (i.e. adequate water and sanitation, regular refuse collection and provision of sheds and storage facilities) support your diet objectives?

Are there plans to ensure the avoidance of any illegal activity in retail, e.g. relating to food safety, legitimacy and ability to trade?

---

Foreword

---

Global Panel members

---

Introduction

---

How to use this Tool

---

The Global Panel Food Systems Policy Tool

---

Annex A

Options for Step 1: Setting a clear objective for diet quality, delivered sustainably

---

Annex B

Options for Step 2: Understanding consumer perceptions

---

Annex C

Options for Step 3: A conceptual model of food systems

- C.1. Food production
- C.2. Storage, transport and trade
- C.3. Food transformation
- C.4. Consumers and the food environment
- C.5. Food retail and provisioning

---

Annex D

Options for Step 4: Prioritising actions

---

Annex E

Options for Step 5: Creating a cooperative climate

---

Annex F

Options for Step 6: Ensuring actions are long-term and sustainable

---

Annex G

Examples of achieving diet quality in different settings

## A conceptual model of food systems *continued*

### C.5. Food retail and provisioning

ii

#### Clarify retail challenges in urban environments

Are you clear on the specific retail challenges in urban environments?

What can you do to channel the increased wealth of urban dwellers to consume and access foods that increase diet quality and reduce the consumption of ultra-processed foods, whilst also maintaining high environmental standards?

Can you capitalise on urban consumers' willingness to pay a premium for food quality assurance?

How can you counterbalance urban dwellers' need for convenience foods versus the sale of foods that contribute to a sustainable, healthy diet?

Is there a plan to focus on the urban poor, who frequently rely on 'street foods', which are cheap, quick, convenient and tasty, but are often nutrient poor?

How can you maximise the unique opportunities in urban environments, to improve diets, e.g. access to a greater diversity of fresh foods and processed foods with health benefits?

NEXT: [Annex D: Prioritising actions](#) >

Foreword

Global Panel members

Introduction

How to use this Tool

The Global Panel Food Systems Policy Tool

Annex A

Options for Step 1: Setting a clear objective for diet quality, delivered sustainably

Annex B

Options for Step 2: Understanding consumer perceptions

Annex C

Options for Step 3: A conceptual model of food systems

- C.1. Food production
- C.2. Storage, transport and trade
- C.3. Food transformation
- C.4. Consumers and the food environment
- C.5. Food retail and provisioning

Annex D

Options for Step 4: Prioritising actions

Annex E

Options for Step 5: Creating a cooperative climate

Annex F

Options for Step 6: Ensuring actions are long-term and sustainable

Annex G

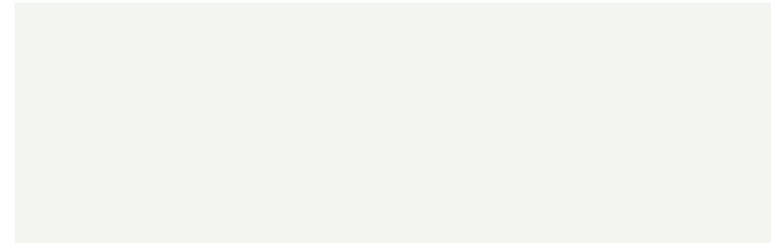
Examples of achieving diet quality in different settings

# Prioritising actions

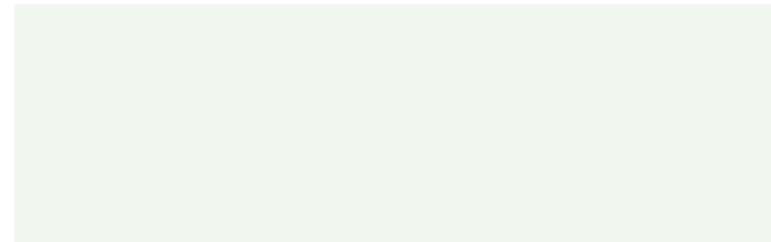
i

## Address trade-offs

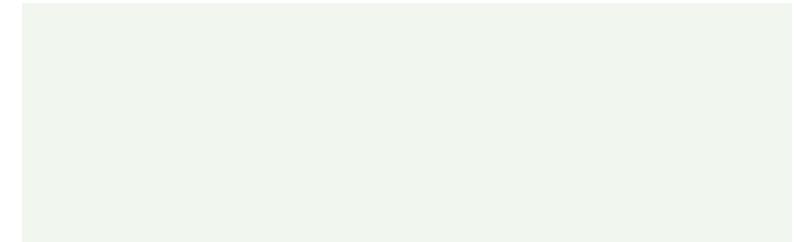
How to allocate scarce resources between addressing the different forms of malnutrition (undernutrition, micronutrient deficiencies, or overweight and obesity) which may affect a population simultaneously?



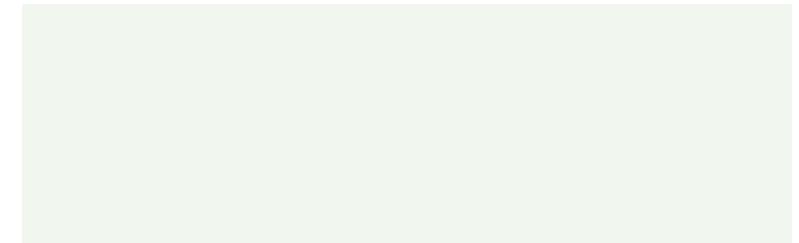
How to strike a balance between investing in agriculture versus other jobs in rural communities? To what extent should inward investment in the food system be encouraged, at the risk of exploitation of natural resources and possibly repatriating nutrient-rich food production by the investing companies? Greater in-country food output and self-sufficiency, versus increased trade in food commodities which might support national-level food security and diversity in the food supply?



How to address potentially competing policy imperatives? For example: support for 'cheap staples' versus supporting higher intake of nutrient-rich foods; agriculture for exports versus domestic goals; fiscal policies that promote the profitability of companies versus the affordability of sustainable, healthy diets for citizens; productivity goals in agriculture versus efficiency targets for sustainability.



How to balance priorities between avoiding coronavirus-led debt default in the short-term and investing in the steps required for longer-term food system transition?




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Foreword

---

Global Panel members

---

Introduction

---

How to use this Tool

---

The Global Panel Food Systems Policy Tool

---

Annex A

Options for Step 1: Setting a clear objective for diet quality, delivered sustainably

---

Annex B

Options for Step 2: Understanding consumer perceptions

---

Annex C

Options for Step 3: A conceptual model of food systems

---

Annex D

Options for Step 4: Prioritising actions

---

Annex E

Options for Step 5: Creating a cooperative climate

---

Annex F

Options for Step 6: Ensuring actions are long-term and sustainable

---

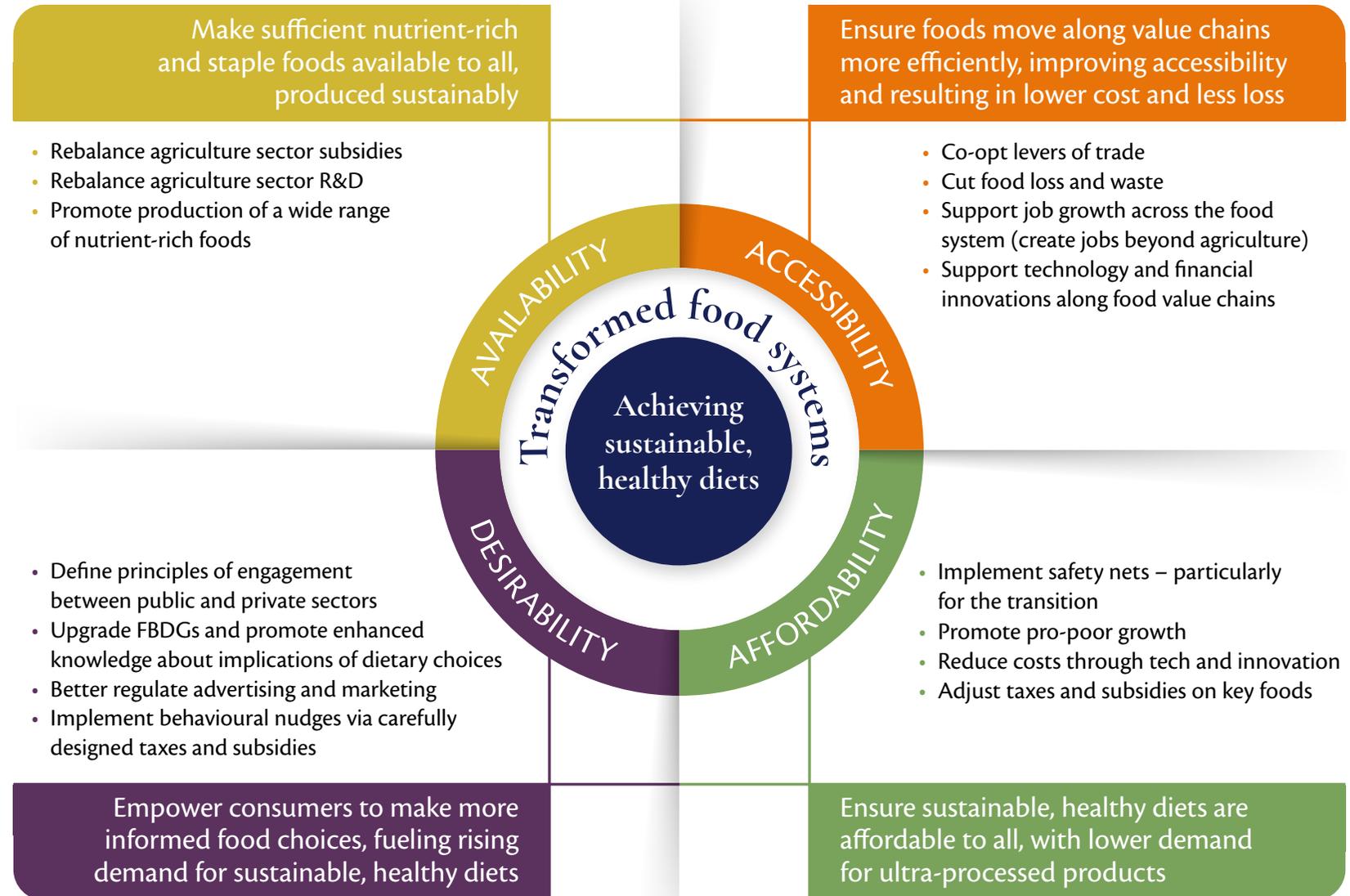
Annex G

Examples of achieving diet quality in different settings

## Prioritising actions *continued*

ii

A checklist for priority actions to transition food systems towards sustainable, healthy diets



Foreword

Global Panel members

Introduction

How to use this Tool

The Global Panel Food Systems Policy Tool

Annex A

Options for Step 1: Setting a clear objective for diet quality, delivered sustainably

Annex B

Options for Step 2: Understanding consumer perceptions

Annex C

Options for Step 3: A conceptual model of food systems

Annex D

Options for Step 4: Prioritising actions

Annex E

Options for Step 5: Creating a cooperative climate

Annex F

Options for Step 6: Ensuring actions are long-term and sustainable

Annex G

Examples of achieving diet quality in different settings

## Prioritising actions *continued*

iii

### A checklist of priority actions for different classes of stakeholder

1. Existing global development targets (eg. the Sustainable Development Goals and the Paris Agreement on Climate Change) should be built on so they embody the goal of sustainable, healthy diets for everyone as a shared objective – recognising this goal as a key enabler for progress on diverse agendas equality such as economic growth, climate change, the environment and job creation.
2. Planetary and dietary challenges need to be addressed simultaneously, since they are so fundamentally interlinked.
3. Donor agencies need to support low and middle income countries (LMICs) to ensure that the transition of food systems is socially and ethically just.
4. Governments in countries at all stages of development need to resolve policy distortions which could fundamentally impede change – or even drive food systems in the wrong direction.
5. Relevant ministries (e.g., agriculture, healthy, transport infrastructure, environment) need to work together to implement policies to realign production systems so that they support healthy diets in sustainable ways.
6. Major trans-national businesses and local SMEs must work closely with the governments on clearly articulated common agendas to deliver sustainable, healthy diets.
7. Policy makers in relevant government departments need to prioritise building resilience of food systems – COVID-19 has highlighted their current deficiencies and vulnerabilities.
8. Civil society advocacy groups and citizens need to play their part. The former have a major role in leveraging change in businesses operating across food systems and holding policy makers to account, and the latter have considerable influence to drive change through their purchasing power.
9. Policy makers in relevant ministries should creatively target actions which can create multiple 'wins' across health and sustainability. Opportunities need to be sought throughout food systems – from farm to fork.
10. Leaders and decision makers should capitalise upon global opportunities to agree to new commitments for making food systems more resilient, and diets that are sustainable and healthy (eg. UNFSS, N4G).

---

 Foreword
 

---

 Global Panel members
 

---

 Introduction
 

---

 How to use this Tool
 

---

 The Global Panel Food Systems Policy Tool
 

---

Annex A

 Options for Step 1: Setting a clear objective for diet quality, delivered sustainably
 

---

Annex B

 Options for Step 2: Understanding consumer perceptions
 

---

Annex C

 Options for Step 3: A conceptual model of food systems
 

---

Annex D

 Options for Step 4: Prioritising actions
 

---

Annex E

 Options for Step 5: Creating a cooperative climate
 

---

Annex F

 Options for Step 6: Ensuring actions are long-term and sustainable
 

---

Annex G

Examples of achieving diet quality in different settings

## Prioritising actions *continued*

iv

### A checklist of priorities for managing the transition of food systems

1. Seek multiple benefits or 'wins' across all policy and investment decisions.
2. Do no harm – ensure that any transition process is carefully calibrated and monitored with a view to protecting the those most at risk of harm, both during the transition and after.
3. Invest in strengthening institutions and capacity building – evidence-based policy decisions will be critical to managing an effective transition process: one that leaves no-one behind, does not harm what is working well in today's food systems, and optimises efficiency and other gains.
4. Be transparent in decisions on how, where, and when to act – and avoid closing off options for the future. Strategies and implementation plans need to be flexible.
5. Implement change based on evidence and transparent expectations.
6. Establish feedback mechanisms – to allow for real-time adjustment to policy and process. Flexibility will always be important, without losing sight of agreed goals.
7. Implement bundles of measures which promote pathways toward multiple wins. This is preferable to one-at-a-time actions that only tackle individual problems in isolation.



NEXT: *Annex E: Creating a cooperative climate* >

Foreword

Global Panel members

Introduction

How to use this Tool

The Global Panel Food Systems Policy Tool

Annex A

Options for Step 1: Setting a clear objective for diet quality, delivered sustainably

Annex B

Options for Step 2: Understanding consumer perceptions

Annex C

Options for Step 3: A conceptual model of food systems

Annex D

Options for Step 4: Prioritising actions

Annex E

Options for Step 5: Creating a cooperative climate

Annex F

Options for Step 6: Ensuring actions are long-term and sustainable

Annex G

Examples of achieving diet quality in different settings

# Creating a cooperative climate

i

## Ensure key stakeholders are aligned in their support for the goal of sustainable, healthy diets for all

Has the national leadership prioritised the goal of sustainable, healthy diets for all, and tasked relevant ministries?

Have steps been taken to ensure relevant ministers and policymakers across government recognise the importance of sustainable healthy diets for all – not just in terms of feeding the population, but also in delivering their own policy interests – whether they relate to health, jobs, economic growth, educational attainment and the health of the natural environment?

Have relevant ministries across government all 'signed up' to play their part in delivering sustainable, healthy diets for all?

Do companies in the food sector recognise the essential role they need to play and are they prepared to work with government on a common agenda to achieve this?

NEXT: [Annex F: Ensuring actions are long-term and sustainable >](#)

Foreword

Global Panel members

Introduction

How to use this Tool

The Global Panel Food Systems Policy Tool

Annex A

Options for Step 1: Setting a clear objective for diet quality, delivered sustainably

Annex B

Options for Step 2: Understanding consumer perceptions

Annex C

Options for Step 3: A conceptual model of food systems

Annex D

Options for Step 4: Prioritising actions

Annex E

Options for Step 5: Creating a cooperative climate

Annex F

Options for Step 6: Ensuring actions are long-term and sustainable

Annex G

Examples of achieving diet quality in different settings

# Ensuring actions are long-term and sustainable

i

## Identify and address impediments to action

What are the long-term risks and barriers to adopting change?

Which policies across government are conducive to the transition of food systems and which risk impeding action, or even driving action in the wrong direction? How might those policies be updated?

Which policies might be rebalanced to promote progress – for example relating to subsidies of the agriculture sector or to specific foods, or the balance of research resources?

ii

## Establish appropriate governance and oversight

Is there a process, with governance arrangements and allocated responsibilities, for coordinating the policy actions and interventions in Steps 4 and 5 – with appropriate risk management?

Have monitoring processes been put in place to measure progress, and to assess which actions work well, and which less so – enabling the plan for the transition to transformed food systems to be adjusted over time?

Foreword

Global Panel members

Introduction

How to use this Tool

The Global Panel Food Systems Policy Tool

Annex A

Options for Step 1: Setting a clear objective for diet quality, delivered sustainably

Annex B

Options for Step 2: Understanding consumer perceptions

Annex C

Options for Step 3: A conceptual model of food systems

Annex D

Options for Step 4: Prioritising actions

Annex E

Options for Step 5: Creating a cooperative climate

Annex F

Options for Step 6: Ensuring actions are long-term and sustainable

Annex G

Examples of achieving diet quality in different settings

## Ensuring actions are long-term and sustainable *continued*

iii

### Ensure the transition to transformed food systems can be sustainably resourced

Is there a clear vision for the costs of the transition process and who would resource each of the steps?

Do the planned transition steps fully leverage the resources of other stakeholders – including donors, the private sector, international funds and finance facilities?

Is full use being made of actions that are cost-neutral, or nearly cost neutral? These might include the rebalancing of subsidies, or expenditure on research. Influencing the nutrient content of meals already provided in institutional settings may also be relatively low cost.



NEXT: Annex G: Examples of achieving diet quality in different settings >

Foreword

Global Panel members

Introduction

How to use this Tool

The Global Panel Food Systems Policy Tool

Annex A

Options for Step 1: Setting a clear objective for diet quality, delivered sustainably

Annex B

Options for Step 2: Understanding consumer perceptions

Annex C

Options for Step 3: A conceptual model of food systems

Annex D

Options for Step 4: Prioritising actions

Annex E

Options for Step 5: Creating a cooperative climate

Annex F

Options for Step 6: Ensuring actions are long-term and sustainable

Annex G

Examples of achieving diet quality in different settings

# Examples of achieving diet quality in different settings

## Example 1. Local level diet quality example in an urban setting



Foreword

Global Panel members

Introduction

How to use this Tool

The Global Panel Food Systems Policy Tool

Annex A

Options for Step 1: Setting a clear objective for diet quality, delivered sustainably

Annex B

Options for Step 2: Understanding consumer perceptions

Annex C

Options for Step 3: A conceptual model of food systems

Annex D

Options for Step 4: Prioritising actions

Annex E

Options for Step 5: Creating a cooperative climate

Annex F

Options for Step 6: Ensuring actions are long-term and sustainable

Annex G

Examples of achieving diet quality in different settings

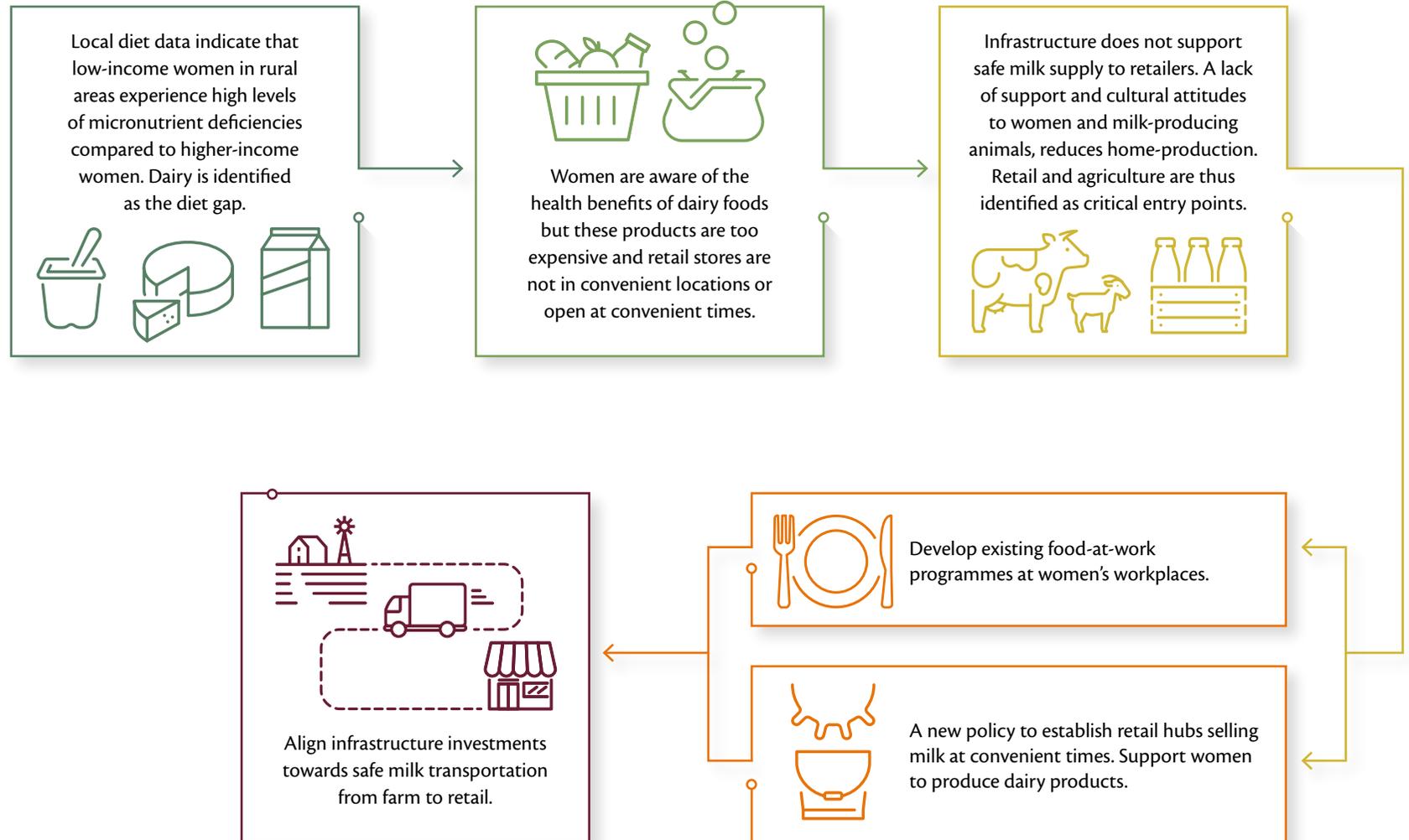
Example 1. Local level diet quality example in an urban setting

Example 2. Local level diet quality example in a rural setting

Example 3. National level diet quality example

## Examples of achieving diet quality in different settings *continued*

### Example 2. Local level diet quality example in a rural setting



Taken the Global Panel's Foresight Report: *Food systems and diets: Facing the challenges of the 21st century*, section written by Prof Corinna Hawkes

- Foreword
- Global Panel members
- Introduction
- How to use this Tool
- The Global Panel Food Systems Policy Tool

- Annex A
- Options for Step 1: Setting a clear objective for diet quality, delivered sustainably

- Annex B
- Options for Step 2: Understanding consumer perceptions

- Annex C
- Options for Step 3: A conceptual model of food systems

- Annex D
- Options for Step 4: Prioritising actions

- Annex E
- Options for Step 5: Creating a cooperative climate

- Annex F
- Options for Step 6: Ensuring actions are long-term and sustainable

- Annex G
- Examples of achieving diet quality in different settings

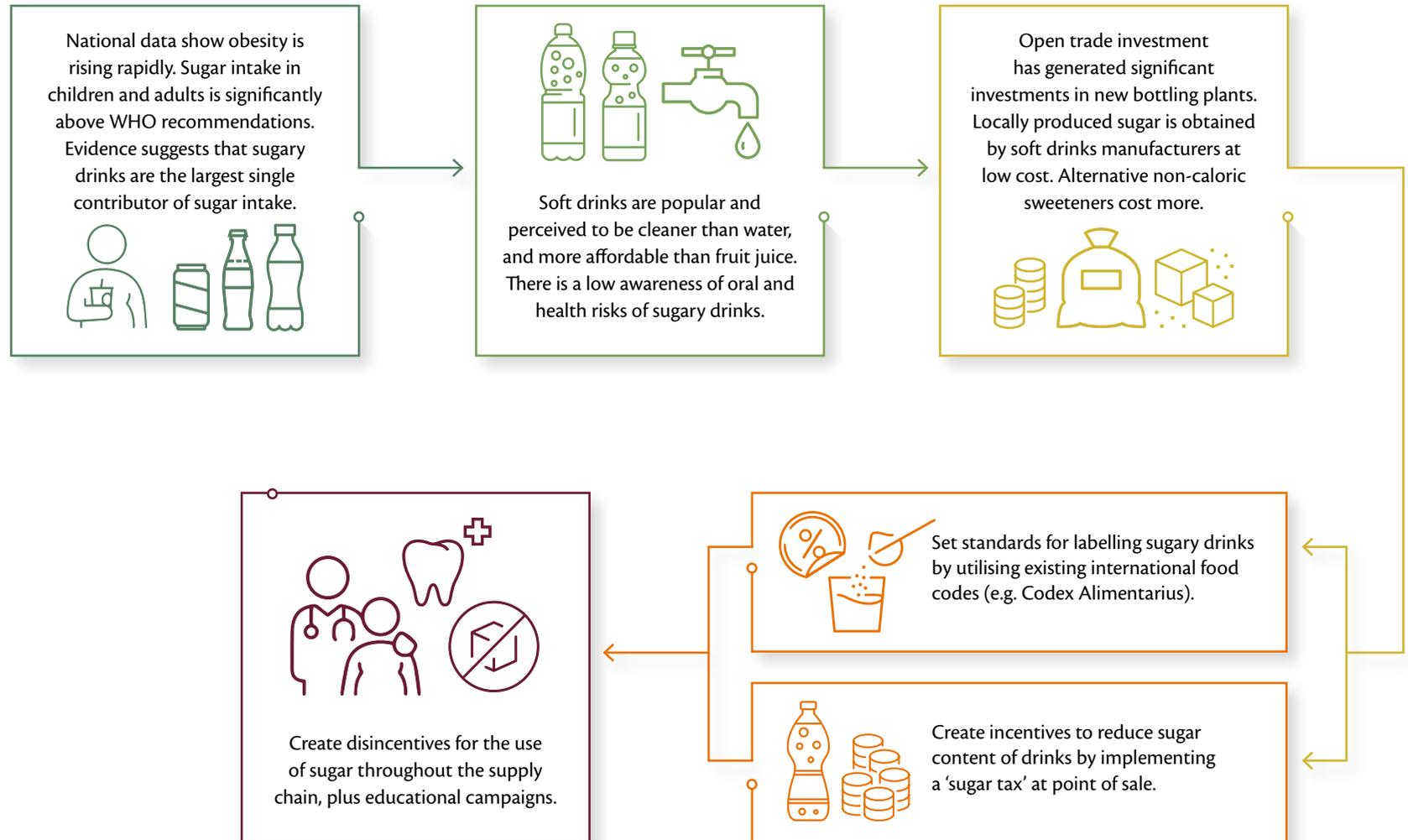
Example 1. Local level diet quality example in an urban setting

Example 2. Local level diet quality example in a rural setting

Example 3. National level diet quality example

## Examples of achieving diet quality in different settings *continued*

### Example 3. National level diet quality example



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Foreword

Global Panel members

Introduction

How to use this Tool

The Global Panel Food Systems Policy Tool

Annex A

Options for Step 1: Setting a clear objective for diet quality, delivered sustainably

Annex B

Options for Step 2: Understanding consumer perceptions

Annex C

Options for Step 3: A conceptual model of food systems

Annex D

Options for Step 4: Prioritising actions

Annex E

Options for Step 5: Creating a cooperative climate

Annex F

Options for Step 6: Ensuring actions are long-term and sustainable

Annex G

Examples of achieving diet quality in different settings

Example 1. Local level diet quality example in an urban setting

Example 2. Local level diet quality example in a rural setting

Example 3. National level diet quality example