

# A Strategic Roadmap for HealthyFoodAfrica (HFA)

Deliverable 1.1. | HealthyFoodAfrica



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# Summary

HealthyFoodAfrica (HFA) aims to increase the resilience of food systems and to link food production to nutrition performance, thereby increasing the range and quality of food products for a healthy diet. This strategic roadmap aims at co-creating a collective understanding of the common goals of the joint work and of the way ahead. It is meant to orient partners about the way forward and to coordinate the main steps in our joint work programme.

The document introduces the main components of the project and how they are connected. The sequencing of activities and stakeholder engagement are presented as critically important in the implementation of HFA. Interactions, iterations, feedback loops and coordination play a vital role in the required processes. The roadmap clarifies the steps to be taken and how they build on each other. The last section is dedicated to the important question of achieving transformational impact. To maximise project impact, attention will need to be paid to encouraging actual innovation in food chain governance, technologies, and business models. Other important measures for fostering transformational impact are extracting and disseminating lessons learnt, building capacities, stakeholder engagement from the initial stages of the project, and, above all, paying attention to policies that enable promising and scalable governance arrangements.

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<sup>1</sup> R = Report, P = Prototype, D = Demonstrator, O = Other

<sup>2</sup> PU = Public, CO = Confidential, only for members of the consortium (including the Commission Services)

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# 1. Introduction

## 1.1 Background

HealthyFoodAfrica (HFA) aims to **increase the resilience of food systems and to link food production to nutrition performance**, thereby increasing the range and quality of food products for a healthy diet. To achieve this, it engages with farmers, food processors, retailers, civil society organisations (CSOs), policymakers and local experts, and helps them create and test innovative technologies, practices and governance arrangements that contribute to a more sustainable, resilient and healthy food system. HFA is implemented 10 Food System Labs (FSLs) in 10 cities and 6 countries in Eastern, Western and Southern Africa. Each lab will bring together local stakeholders – farmers, entrepreneurs, businesses, and policymakers. All project activities are grounded in these 10 FSLs.

The **co-creation of a strategic roadmap** for HealthyFoodAfrica (Task 1.1) is a central element in WP1 'Co-creating transdisciplinary pathways'. WP1 is led by Tzruya Calvão Chebach and Amit Ashkenazy (Mentes Visíveis, MV). The process of co-creating the strategic roadmap is led by Karlheinz Knickel (University of Helsinki, team John Sumelius), and supported by MV, MAK and Luke. All thematic WP leaders and co-leaders, and FSL leaders, play a significant role in the related discussions. The delivery of the roadmap (Deliverable D1.1) is scheduled for September 2020 (Month 4), and an updated version is to be delivered in September 2021 (Month 18).

This strategic roadmap (D1.1) is meant to orient partners about the way forward and to coordinate the main steps in our joint work programme. At the same time, it kicks-off a discussion process that will lead to an updated version to be finalised in September 2021. The follow-up process includes a cross-analysis of the FSL level visions contained in all FSL plans (once they have been coordinated with thematic WPs; see Section 3), as well as an online workshop and a joint project-level visioning exercise.

## 1.2 Objectives of the strategic roadmap

This strategic roadmap aims at:

- Co-creating a collective understanding of the common goals of the joint work and of the way ahead (a joint vision), as well as of the transdisciplinary and stakeholder engagement processes that are vitally important in HFA.
- Improving our understanding of the different components of the HFA project and their linkages (FSLs, Thematic WPs and Supporting WPs).
- Explaining and amplifying the importance of connecting the work in the Food System Labs (FSL) with the thematic work (Thematic WPs) (see Section 2.3).
- Improving our understanding of the role of the three Supporting WPs (WP1, WP7, WP8) (see Section 2.4).

A roadmap clarifies steps to be taken in a complex process, the sequencing of activities, and responsibilities. In the following we explain how the activities planned by FSLs and the thematic analyses should come together. In the discussion, we refer to the many subsystems and issues that play a role in connecting sustainable production with healthy nutrition. More importantly, we discuss how desirable changes can be enabled, and how transformational impact can be achieved.

The shared understanding that the roadmap wants to achieve will allow us to produce implementation plans for the main components of the project that maximise mutually beneficial relations between them. The roadmap is in this sense strategic and in line with the overall objective of the project. At the same time, it is important to note that the more detailed conceptual and analytical frameworks will be elaborated by thematic WP co/leads in Task 1. They are not meant to be part of the roadmap.

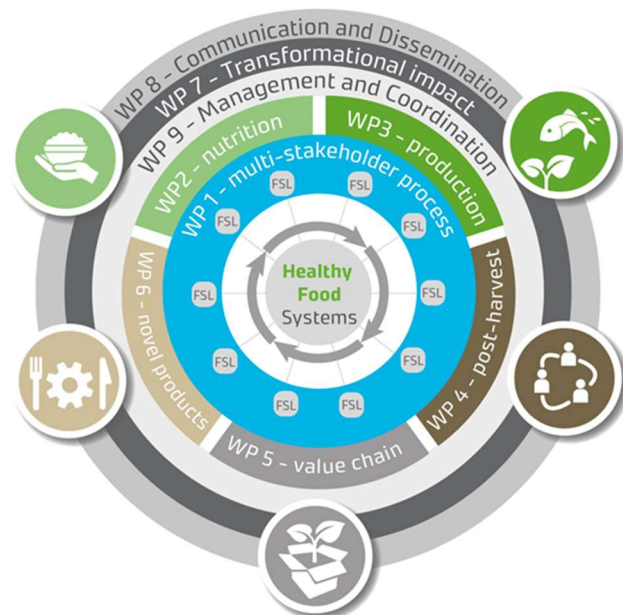
## 2. The main components of the project and how they are connected

The following three main components are central in the implementation of HFA (Figure 1):

- 10 localised Food System Labs (FSLs);
- Thematic work in 5 broad areas (WPs2-6);
- 3 supporting WPs (WPs1, 7 and 8).

Figure 1

(Source: HFA/Luke 2020)



The role of these different components and connections between them are discussed in the following sections.

## 2.1 Localised Food System Labs (FSLs)

Each of the 10 FSLs aims at reconnecting sustainable food production with (urban) food consumption and healthy diets. In the joint FSL work we address the related (local) food system challenges and ways to address them.

All 10 FSLs have the same goal, but their status quo, priorities, and therefore also the trajectories they want to pursue and steps to be taken in HFA (that is FSL-level visions and work plans) will differ.

Each FSL has unique local knowledge and expertise, and it provides a space for experimentation, innovation, transformation, application of knowledge and co-learning, and thus the formation of new, collective insights.

The **basic idea of co-learning in HFA** is that no matter what these trajectories and steps to be taken are, they will mean learning among all involved, and they will facilitate higher project level learning. Activities build on previous and ongoing activities, and experiences and thus promote cross-learning. They are driven by the practice partners in the FSLs with researchers being in a supporting and facilitating role (Figure 2).

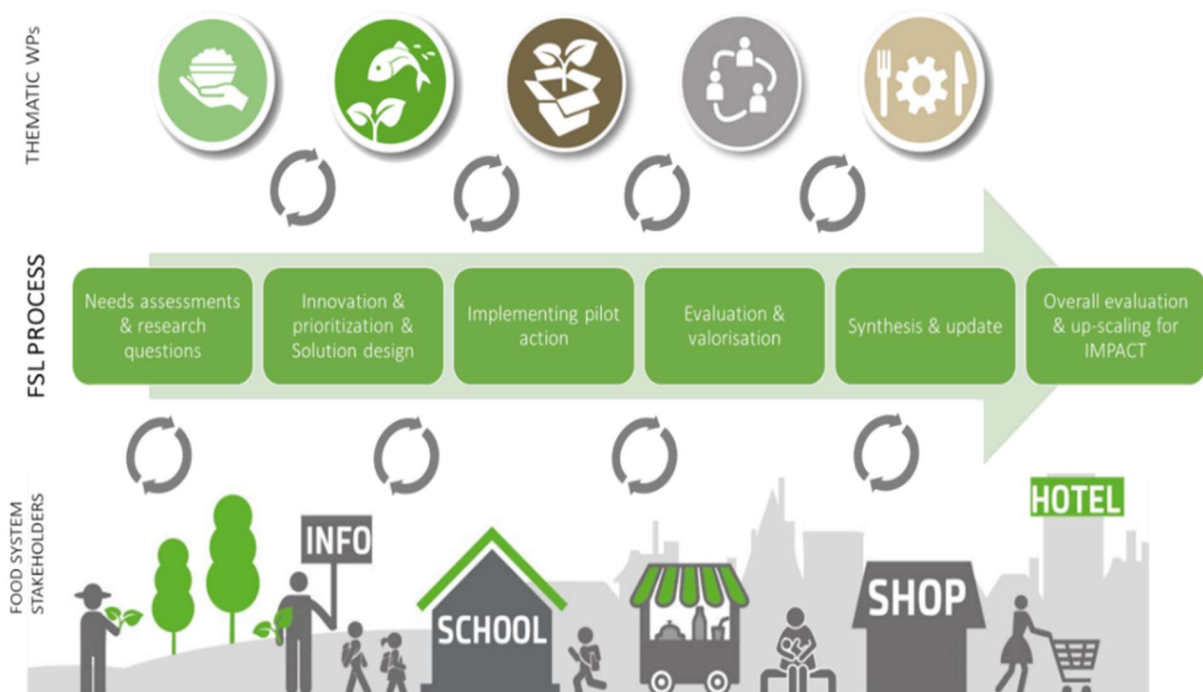


Figure 2

(Source: HFA/Luke 2020)

## 2.2 Thematic work in five broad areas

The work in the 10 FSLs is supported by 5 Thematic WPs. The two main functions of the Thematic WPs is a) to provide targeted scientific support to FSLs, and b) to foster across-FSL learning related to these themes.

The close interaction between FSLs and Thematic WPs is explained in more detail in Section 2.2. But let us first have a look at the five thematic areas.

The five broad thematic areas coincide with five Work Packages (WPs):

- **Food consumption and healthy nutrition (WP2).** The goal of WP2 is to contribute to a mainstreaming of healthy dietary patterns in 10 cities in Eastern, Western and Southern Africa. Key issues are identifying the context factors (including socio-economic, climate and health/Covid19 related) affecting food choice and dietary patterns; understanding the determinants of changes in food environments, food choices and dietary patterns; and, raising awareness for and fostering of a sustainable transformation of consumption habits.
- **Sustainable production of healthy and nutritious food products (incl. aquaculture) (WP3).** The goal of WP3 is to promote sustainable production of healthy and nutritious food products through resource-efficient, climate-resilient production systems. Our focus will be on those food legumes and vegetables, fish and aquaculture, small livestock and integrated farming systems that play a significant role for the particular FSL. Key issues are the specific challenges in current production systems that the FSLs are confronted with, as well as strategies for more sustainable, diverse, resilient and climate-smart food production systems and strategies.
- **Post-harvest innovations, new technologies and processes, food waste, food safety (WP4).** The goal of WP4 is to increase the efficiency of agri-food chains, improve food safety and minimise food waste. Related innovations in post-harvest technologies, packaging and processing will be identified and promoted. Where relevant and needed, technologies will be further developed, and innovative remedial options tested.
- **Sustainable performance of agri-food chains and innovative governance arrangements (WP5).** The goal of WP5 is to create more equitable and sustainable agri-food chains through innovative governance arrangements that strengthen the links between and empower local food chain actors in providing consumers with sustainable, healthy, nutritious and affordable food products. Focus is on small and medium-sized farms and those food processors and retailers that matter in connecting these farms to consumers. Key issues are factors contributing to an efficient functioning of chains, and of the position of small- and medium-sized farms and the related food processors, as well as innovative governance arrangements which empower small and medium farmers and food processors.

- **Novel, nutritious food products (incl. use of local agro-biodiversity), associated tools and processes (WP6).** WP6 is to foster innovation in novel, sustainable and nutritious food products and test associated tools and processes, including the use of local under-utilised agro-biodiversity. A summer school for students and entrepreneurs will support the identification of innovative agri-business products and business models. Key issues are the innovation capacity of project partners, food entrepreneurs and SMEs in developing novel products and business models for nutritious and healthy foods, as well as understanding the potential of new products, processes and business models in contributing to a more sustainable food system.

It is important to note that not all FSLs need to cover all thematic areas: Coverage reflects the particular status quo and priorities of a FSL (see **Figure 3**).



**Figure 3**  
 (Source: HFA/Luke 2020)

In consideration of the main expectations related to and ambition of the HFA project, all FSLs are asked to contribute to WP2 (diets) and WP3 (production). All other thematic WPs (WP4, WP5 and WP6; see Figure 3) were chosen by FSLs based on their specific interests.

- All thematic WPs have the same basic structure:
- Review of existing studies and experiences, and of related analytical frameworks, indicators and tools
  - Accompanying FSLs in status-quo analysis and action planning
  - Providing guidance during implementation, including on data collection and co-assessment
  - Analysis across FSLs, identification of good practice, and synthesis of learnings

In the following sections, we discuss what these basic structure means in more practical, process terms.



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## 2.3 Connections between FSLs and Thematic WPs

There is **no hierarchy** between FSLs and Thematic WPs. This means that neither are below or above the other. Both, FSLs and WPs can and should proactively reach out to each other in the spirit of true and equal partnership. It is all project partners common goal to make the connections between FSLs and Thematic WPs as synergistic as possible:

- FSLs provide a space for experimentation and joint learning, they ensure the grounding of all analyses in real-life situations, and they create real-life impacts.
- Thematic WPs support this experimentation with their specific expertise, and they ensure project-level innovation and learning (by comparing experiences across FSLs).

Thematic WP leads are central in **synchronising FSL activities for their WP**, providing guidance and **encouraging innovation**.

The connections between FSLs and Thematic WPs are **two-way**, and the interactions between the two, and sequencing of activities and iterations or feedback loops matter tremendously (see Section 3 on interactions and sequencing).

**Thematic WP leads can only plan and finalise their own work once they have carefully checked all FSL plans that are to contribute to the thematic analysis.**

They then need to discuss and agree with FSL leads on the common theme-level issues, questions and goals, as well as FSL-specific aspects that are worth following up.

Thematic WPs are not meant to pursue field experiments, data collection and analyses independent from FSLs.

These brief explanations illustrate already very clearly that **interactions, iterations and feedback loops are critically important**.

The related processes are discussed in Section 3. But before we come to this, we will have a look at the role of the three supporting WPs.

## 2.4 The role of the three supporting WPs

Three supporting WPs aim at improving our collaboration, enhancing the functioning of all project activities, and maximising the transformational impact of our joint work – including beyond the boundaries of the project.

The three supporting WPs are:

- **Co-creating a transdisciplinary framework and roadmap (WP1)** (the co-creation of the strategic roadmap and this paper are part of WP1): WP1 is guiding and facilitating the way we work. This comprises the process, the transdisciplinary tools we use, and the interactions. The aim is to foster cross-fertilisation and co-learning, and to facilitate the application of a reflexive approach. WP1 is also, whenever and wherever needed, supporting capacity building related to transdisciplinary methods and the facilitation of multi-stakeholder processes. The related possibilities include bilateral counselling, the organisation of training courses, and providing advice regarding useful resources on the web.
- **Transformational impact, scalability and exploitation (WP7)**: The related activities and analyses aim at maximising the sustainable impact of the project by encouraging – at the level of the FSLs – self-propelling processes that will in turn lead to wider uptake of approaches, technologies, business models and policies. The work includes providing support to FSL teams in the process of creating pathways for change, and in effectively engaging with policymakers. Related to that, WP7 will guide FSLs in the organisation of Policy Platforms in each country (see also **Section 4**). At the project level and in close collaboration with WP8, WP7 identifies and promotes the most promising initiatives emerging from the FSLs and explores options to link micro level (initiatives and governance) to macro level (policy development).
- **Communication and dissemination (WP8)**: The WP8 team from Luke works closely with all other WPs and FSLs in compiling the most promising results and supporting the development of material for communication, dissemination, and awareness-raising.

WP8 is important as it supports all FSLs and WP teams in all communication activities. More importantly, it is to foster the project's wider impact. The related strategic communication and dissemination activities are to raise awareness beyond the study areas on key aspects of a sustainable food system and healthy nutrition. The 10 FSLs are used to illustrate what this means in practical terms. WP8 also connects HFA with other platforms, networks, actors and projects. Particular attention is paid to EU-Africa networks, and specially the EU-Africa Research and Innovation Partnership on Food and Nutrition Security & Sustainable Agriculture (FNSSA) (see Figure 4).

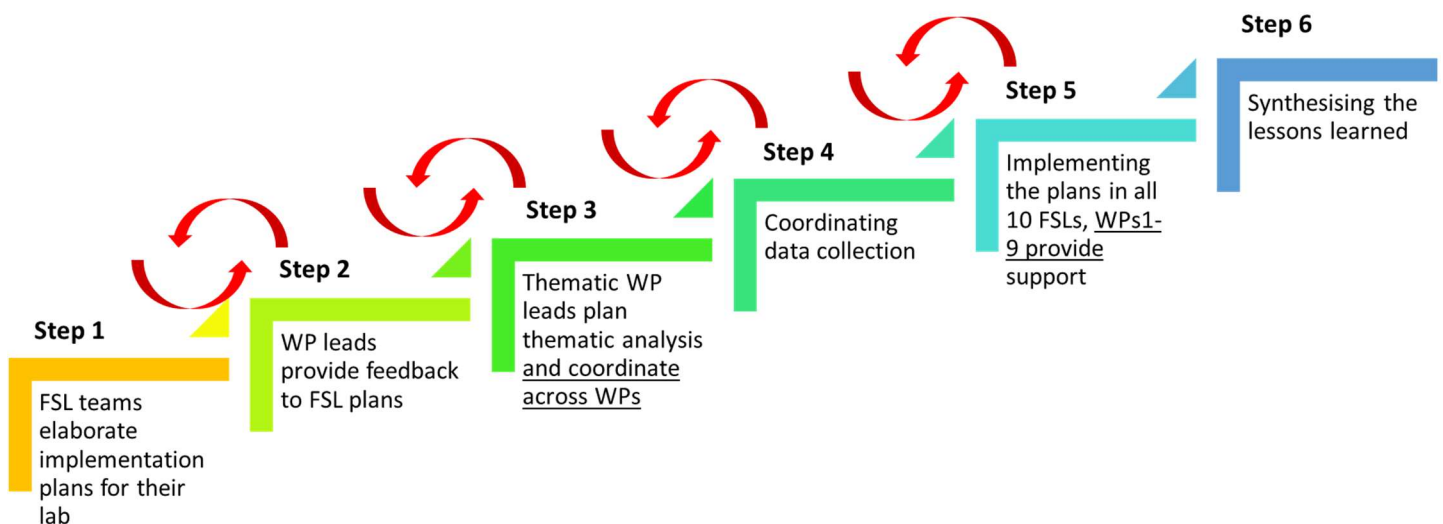
**Figure 4**  
(Source: HFA/Luke 2020)



### 3. Sequencing of activities

In the implementation of HFA, timing, exchanges, iterations and coordination play a vital role in the required processes. The main steps to be taken are the following:

- Step 1: FSL teams elaborate draft implementation plans for their lab (15-Sept-2020).
- Step 2: WP leads provide feedback to FSL plans (30-Sept-2020)
- Step 3: Thematic WP leads plan their thematic analysis and coordinate with their FSLs and across thematic WPs (31-Oct-2020).
- Step 4: Thematic WP leads coordinate data collection with their FSLs, and across thematic WPs (30-Nov-2020)
- Step 5: Implementing the plans in all 10 FSLs, WPs1-9 providing backstopping (from Dec-2020 to
- Step 6: Synthesising the main lessons learned, and planning follow up in the 10 FSLs.



**Figure 5**  
Sequencing of activities and feedback loops

It is important to note that the process in HFA tends to be incremental and iterative with important feedback loops. The success of HFA therefore depends very considerably on information sharing and continuous coordination. This allows to build and foster synergies in our joint work. WP1 is facilitating the process; and WP7 making sure that things are planned towards achieving transformational impact.

Three tools have been provided by WP1 (MV, MAK) in this initial phase (Steps 1-4):

- A Google form aims at taking stock of **planned FSL and WP activities**. The stock taking is to help harmonise activities across WPs and FSLs and to enable all involved to identify possible synergies, thereby making sure that everyone's activities are accounted for. See: <https://forms.gle/w3NM2wnxjgQnGRpf8>
- A form to gather information from HFA partners on **plans regarding indicators**. The project indicator tab is named "Project indicators". See: [https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1rOf00jBV9-fHCPI2cn5dFq-\\_2POPV1zqO511VXSjcDw/edit?usp=sharing](https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1rOf00jBV9-fHCPI2cn5dFq-_2POPV1zqO511VXSjcDw/edit?usp=sharing).
- A **Wixsite** provides a short presentation of all FSLs as well as a Common Room that offers access to project tools, partner expertise, and additional resources. It provides a space for sharing insights and progress in the FSLs and WPs and it create new opportunities for collaboration.: <https://hfawix.wixsite.com/website> (password: HFA2020)

Both tools increase transparency and support the much-needed coordination processes. MV facilitates discussions between FSLs and WPs, as needed. A key factor in the successful use of the three tools is that the MV team is supporting partners and actively guiding processes. At the same time it is important to note that the responsibility for task implementation, deliverables planning and actual delivery clearly remains with each FSL and WP lead team.

### **3.1 Step 1: FSL teams elaborate draft implementation plans for their lab**

FSL teams elaborate draft implementation plans for their lab.

Plan elaboration involves

- Taking stock, this includes a mapping of the specific food system, of the current situation, the needs and the gaps, as well as of available data and relevant policy and institutional factors;
- FSL level visioning which is the FSL team – together with key stakeholders and decision-makers – picturing the connections between food production and healthy nutrition in 4-5 years' time;
- FSL level analysis of the enablers and barriers to innovation, and identification of the concrete steps to be taken (including the who, what and when);
- Identifying FSL level data needs and (impact) indicators that seem suitable from the perspective of those engaged in the FSL;
- Clarifying the connections with thematic WPs in terms of a) the support needed, and b) what the FSL activities can contribute to the thematic analysis.

The main tool for elaborating more detailed implementation plans is the common template that has been filled in by all FSL teams during proposal development. FSLs should have in the last weeks

- Revisited this template, checked planned activities, and related stakeholder engagement and data collection (starting with the information you know you will need);
- Discussed it with local partners, completed and updated the information the plans;
- Added a more detailed resource and time planning for the envisaged activities.

A sufficiently detailed **description and mapping of the specific food system** (including information on available data and the policy and institutional context) is an essential step in the planning. The mapping will help to identify and characterise the local resources, production structures and systems, processing, formal and informal markets, commerce and trade, regional consumption patterns and trends, consumer-producer relations, and the relations between farms, food businesses and the up-and downstream sectors.

FSL teams are encouraged to engage from early on with WP leads to get input in this process.

All implementation plans with the key questions and specific objectives for each FSL are available on the project's Wixsite: <https://hfawix.wixsite.com/website> (password: HFA2020)

### **3.2 Step 2: WP leads provide feedback, FSL teams finalise their plans**

The FSL draft implementation plans will be reviewed, and feedback provided by

- WP1 leads on the planned use of transdisciplinary approaches and the related needs for support, as well as the envisaged data collection;
- WP2 leads on the questions raised on nutritional aspects and healthy nutrition, and the suggested ways forward;
- WP3 leads on the questions raised on sustainable food production, and the suggested ways forward;
- WP7 leads on the suggested ways forward in respect of planned engagement with stakeholders and policymakers, and achieving transformational impact;
- All other thematic WP leads that are relevant for the respective FSL on the questions raised and the suggested ways forward.

When reviewing FSL plans, WP leads can start gathering ideas and elaborating their intentions for the thematic analysis they are leading.

Thematic WP leads then consult with FSL teams discuss their plans for the thematic analyses and agree on the common ground. This includes agreement on common indicators and data collection. All FSLs are then, based on the feedback received, finalising their implementation plans. WP leads support the finalisation of the plans (as demanded by FSL teams).

All implementation plans with the key questions and specific objectives for each FSL are available on the project's Wixsite: <https://hfawix.wixsite.com/website> (password: HFA2020)

### **3.3 Step 3: Thematic WPs leads finalise their thematic analysis planning**

The leaders of thematic WPs are then – based on the finalised FSL plans - finalising their own plans for their thematic analysis. This entails:

- Reviewing previous studies in their specific thematic area and identify suitable approaches, methods and indicators. WP leaders are encouraged to engage from early on with their WP teams (i.e. all engaged in the different Tasks of a WP).
- Thematic WP leads checking and elaborating further the connections across thematic WPs. MV will monitor and facilitate this process (see Section 4.1).
- Based on the review and the FSL plans, prepare a **more detailed planning for their thematic analysis**. This planning includes;
  - Key research questions
  - The related indicators, methods, data needs and timelines (note that data will need to be collected in conjunction with FSL activities and in close cooperation with FSL teams) (see Step 4)
  - The way forward towards producing the outputs (deliverables) from the specific thematic WP
  - The related support offered to FSL teams (which includes joint workshops, necessary trainings, etc.)

All of the above corresponds with the basic structure for Thematic WPs and the related tasks in the DoW.

Most important is that the planning by thematic WPs builds as much as possible on the (updated) implementation plans received from FSLs. WP leaders are encouraged to engage from early on with all researchers involved in their WP as well as relevant FSL teams.

All plans for the thematic analyses are available on the project's Wixsite: <https://hfawix.wixsite.com/website> (password: HFA2020)

### **3.4 Step 4: Coordinating data collection and coverage of related costs**

In connection with Step 3, thematic WP leads discuss and agree with FSL teams what kind of data collection is possible and meaningful in FSL activities.

Regarding data collection, it is of utmost importance to strike a good balance between common, comparable data for all FSLs and specific additional data for local needs and challenges. That partners agree on what data are meaningful to be collected for both FSLs and thematic WPs, and are really needed, is vital.

Thematic WP leads provide guidance to FSL teams on data collection and discuss with FSL leads what is feasible and meaningful in view of specific local contexts and innovation challenges. **Some data collection will be done using the person months budget line, other have explicit budget lines for enumerators. But this is just in a couple of cases. In other words, actual data collection must be agreed on a case to case basis in the spirit of partnership and collaboration.** The project management team can support the related decisions.

Once agreed, thematic WP leads need to put forward and agree with FSL leads on meaningful methods for data collection etc. Generally, it will be important to ensure that approaches, methods and data collected are sufficiently meaningful for all involved.

Guidelines on how indicators should be designed are provided by the MV team that is also coordinating the compilation of the common indicators set.<sup>3</sup>

The coordination of data and indicators comprises both, the coordination between FSLs and thematic WPs, and the coordination between thematic WPs. As much as possible, HFA is using existing data and minimises the amount of new data to be collected (this also in view of the limited resources available for data collection).

### **3.5 Step 5: Implementing the plans in all 10 FSLs, backstopping by WPs**

Step 5 kick-starts the new and additional work in all FSLs (piloting, experimenting).

A vital role in implementation is played by smallholders, local producers in general (incl. aquafarmers), and local agri-food businesses, especially food SMEs (i.e. practice partners). All of them have a function in providing local markets with healthy and affordable products. The same actors as well

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<sup>3</sup> A dashboard for city-region food systems adapted to our 10 FSLs could be an option. See for example: <http://www.foodsystemsdashboard.org/>. Other relevant work includes the CRFS indicator framework (<http://www.fao.org/in-action/food-for-cities-programme/toolkit/crfs-assessment/indicator-framework/en/>) and the monitoring framework developed for the Milan Urban Food Policy Pact <http://www.fao.org/3/ca6144en/CA6144EN.pdf>



as consumers benefit from an effective and functioning local agri-food chains. The ways other actors participate in project activities, depends on the specific context, goals and workplan. Possibilities range from more permanent Innovation Platforms to more targeted forms of engagement. However, that key stakeholders and policymakers participate in the process, plays a key role in achieving transformational impact.

Practice partners will play a vital role in piloting and experimenting as well as the related co-learning processes. All innovations will be co-developed with relevant stakeholders to be applicable to local needs and appropriate for the local context. Cyclic iterations between action and reflection allow for continuous improvements and targets for better-performing agri-food and nutritional initiatives.

All project participants in HFA are encouraged to develop and experiment with new ideas and approaches. Examples are:

- new contractual arrangements and more effective strategies in targeting local, national and international markets,
- innovative governance arrangements, for example, mechanisms that lower the dependency on oligopolistic actors and provide direct links between producers and consumers;
- development of new products, and new and innovative ways of processing local foods,
- new tools and technologies for better post-harvest handling and to guarantee food safety
- improved logistics, better delivery mechanisms and improved packaging.

All engaged in FSL activities will simultaneously build their capacity to develop and manage sustainable food systems and to innovate in processes, products and marketing strategies.

A visualisation on how the collaboration between FSLs and WPs functions and more detail on foreseen exchanges with some first examples will be added based on the feedback received from partners.

### **3.6 Step 6: Synthesising the lessons learned, and planning follow up in the 10 FSLs**

The integration of findings in HFA takes place at three main levels:

- FSL level focused on achieving transformational impact (i.e. new food chain governance arrangements established, new post-harvest technologies adopted, or capacities enhanced for adopting a more systemic perspective in such initiatives);
- thematic WP level dedicated to gaining deeper insights in key focus areas; and
- project-level focussed on lessons learned and achieving overarching project goals.

Cross-cutting comparative analyses will extract and synthesise the lessons learnt, thereby fostering impact beyond the 10 FSLs and countries directly involved. Cross-cutting comparative analyses

will normally be led by thematic WP leads, but also FSLs can cooperate and lead comparative analyses.

Attention throughout HFA will be paid to the identification of key success factors, the characterisation of favourable governance arrangements and the role of enabling conditions.

## 4. Achieving transformational impact

To maximise project impact, attention will be paid to encouraging actual innovation in food chain governance, technologies, and business models (see Step 5). Other important measures for fostering transformational impact are extracting and disseminating lessons learnt, building capacities, stakeholder engagement from the initial stages of the project, and, above all, paying attention to policies that enable promising and scalable governance arrangements.

Related to project implementation, four cross-cutting aspects appear critically important:

- Focus on innovations
- Fostering self-propelling processes
- Encouraging and enabling gender sensitivity in all work
- Connecting micro-level findings with macro-level policy development

In respect of our goal of achieving transformational impact, the WP7 team is to shortlist 5-10 impact indicators (socio-economic, environmental, resilience) . How these are going to be assessed, how transformational impact can be measured and in how far the common indicators framework can be used, are questions that the WP7 team will discuss with all partners.

### 4.1 Focussing on innovations

Innovation is a key term that appears throughout this roadmap: innovation in food chain governance, technologies, novel, sustainable and nutritious food products, business models, etc. Three examples illustrate why it is critical for the success of HFA to focus on innovations:

- Governance arrangements play a significant role in the functioning of food systems. Innovative governance arrangements (WP5), for example, can help to reconnect more diverse food production systems (WP3) with consumers and healthier diets (WP2).
- Product and process innovations (WP4) might play a critical role in reducing post-harvest losses but also in new food chain arrangements (WP5).
- Novel, nutritious food products (WP6) can be particularly important in healthier diets (WP2), and there is an obvious connection with product and process innovations (WP4).

The same examples show that we need to move beyond (thematic, disciplinary, sectoral, institutional, etc.) silos and established routines. To actively seek and work with the connections across thematic WPs will – inevitably – lead us to innovative approaches. During the implementation of the project and in project meetings, we will regularly revisit the question of the connections across thematic WPs and of the innovativeness of our activities.

## **4.2 Encouraging self-propelling processes through stakeholder engagement**

HFA succeeds if we manage to build effectively on, and enhance, the activities implemented in the 10 FSLs. The project is in this respect about encouraging self-propelling processes, i.e. embedding the work in adequate local multi-actor and governance processes, and adding new elements to these processes. Attention is paid to finding new ways to involve consumer associations, food SMEs and entrepreneurs, etc.

Engaging stakeholders in all FSL activities is important for the success of HFA. Throughout its implementation, FSL teams in particular will need to engage with local, regional and national stakeholders to strengthen the linkages between knowledge generation, policy decisions and changes on the ground. An initial mapping of key stakeholders, their priorities, their roles, power relations and their needs will support the elaboration of effective engagement strategies. Continuous dialogue among practitioners, researchers, government officials, private sector, NGOs, farmers associations, etc. will help to achieve consensus on knowledge gaps, the research needed, findings and implications for implementation and enabling policy frameworks.

The capacity of all involved to innovate and learn plays a key role in this. Dynamic co-learning relationships between research and practice, and the strengthened innovation capacity among consortium partners and stakeholders involved in the 10 FSLs are factors that will directly foster impact.

Scalability and the potential for wider uptake of approaches, technologies and business models are other key questions that we will consider from early on. The chances for a maximum exploitation of project results increases with both, active stakeholder engagement in the project and the capacity to innovate and learn, including from each other, i.e. across the 10 FSLs as well as across the thematic WPs.

WP7 will together with all partners and key stakeholders develop a scaling strategy that will be based on the experiences in the 10 FSLs and the new insights on best practices from the analyses conducted by the five thematic WPs. The goal of this strategy will be scaling-up and multiplication of best practices through relevant agricultural and food system platforms and networks.

## **4.3 Ensuring and enabling gender sensitivity in all work**

Of major importance for HFA is the role of women as key agents of change to agriculture, food systems and nutrition. Women's influence on the livelihoods, nutrition and health of their households is enormous. But women tend to be underrepresented in local institutions and governance mechanisms, and they have fewer opportunities to influence relevant decision-making processes.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> See for example Chaya, M. S. (2019) Women as Key Agents of Change to Agriculture, Food and Nutrition. <https://farmingfirst.org/2019/07/women-as-key-agents-of-change-to-agriculture-food-and-nutrition/>

HFA teams should pay particular attention to creating an enabling environment for women integration and empower them to become agents of change.

Luke will together with MAK (co/leaders of T1.5) offer gender-related trainings and conduct a gender-proofing of all work plans (FSL, Thematic WP), approaches, methods and tools and a regular follow up ensuring gender integration.

#### **4.4 Connecting micro-level findings with macro-level policy development**

HFA connect actors from across the supply chain for joint actions to achieve viable transformation. Most actions are located in municipal and regional settings, connecting consumers and producers, urban and rural dwellers.

At the same time, there might also be connections with national and cross-national food systems, and connections with other local initiatives across Africa that we can try to explore.

In all FSLs, the enablers and barriers to innovation within and across food system activities are identified. The same applies to the best practice analysis and identification of key success / failure factors in Thematic WPs 2-6. On this basis, intervention points for decision-makers in the private and public sectors can be identified. Closely related is the engagement with public-sector decision-makers, regulatory bodies, levy boards etc. at the relevant levels in all activities.

An ongoing deliberative policy dialogue will enable policy insight and experimentation from the onset of the project to ensure the feasibility of innovations proposed as well as is targeted policy engagement. Where possible the FSL teams will, supported by the WP7 team, build upon and reinforce existing policy processes. The involvement of policymakers in foresight work and policy dialogues will support upscaling and transformational impact.

## Appendix 1: Some key definitions

**Food system:** Food systems are commonly conceptualized as the organization of production, processing, distribution and consumption of food. HFA is very much about City Region Food Systems (CRFS). A CRFS approach is defined by FAO as aimed to foster the development of resilient and sustainable food systems within urban centres, peri-urban and rural areas surrounding cities by strengthening rural-urban linkages.<sup>5</sup>

A food system approach also provides the analytical basis for assessing the outcomes of food system activities on the environment, economy and society (Ericksen 2008; Ingram 2011; GECAFS 2014) (Figure 5).

The use of a food systems perspective in HFA allows to simultaneously consider the diverse activities, actors, challenges and interrelations that make up food systems. It also helps to address all four dimensions of FNS (see below) and the connections between them. Using interdisciplinary methods in combination with a systems perspective, it will be possible to develop innovations that span multiple domains, levels and actors.

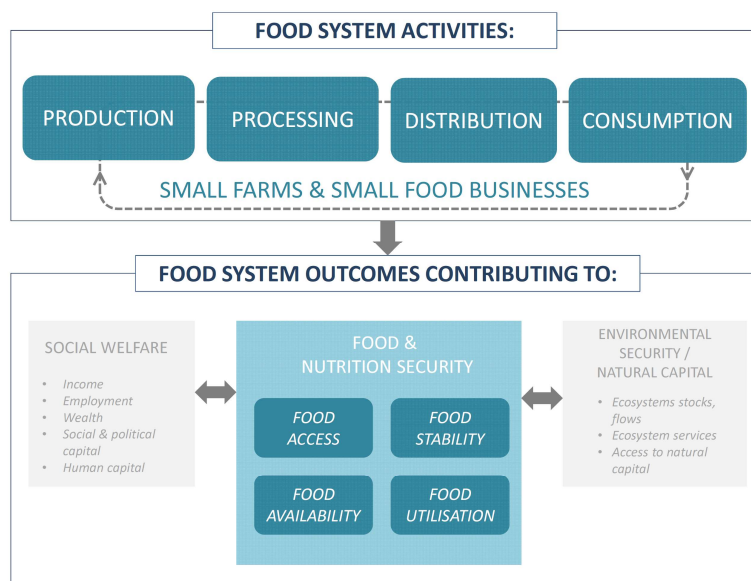


Figure 5

(Source: ICCAM/U Évora, 2018)

**Food and Nutrition Security (FNS):** According to FAO, FNS is achieved when all people, always, have physical and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food to meet their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life (WFS 1996). FNS is widely recognised as having four components: the availability of nutritious and safe food, food access (including affordability), food

<sup>5</sup> <http://www.fao.org/in-action/food-for-cities-programme/approach-old/crfs/en/>

utilisation, and food stability (WFS 1996). To date, most attention has focused on food availability, i.e. increasing the production of food. This in turn is commonly envisaged through the intensification of production on large-scale farms, through implementing technological advances and achieving economies of scale (EC 2014). What is often neglected is food access, especially for low-income groups (HLPE 2013). Closely related with that is the significant role that small farms can play in local food systems related to food access and utilisation, social value and the resilience of the population in the face of systemic shocks (e.g. climate change, commodity price fluctuations). Small farms, with their intrinsic embeddedness in local communities, food systems and markets, play in many regions a vital role in food access and utilisation as well as social value and the resilience of parts of the food system to systemic shocks (e.g. climate change, commodity prices fluctuations) (IAASTD 2009). FAO (2014) concludes that they "*can be protagonists of bottom-up food security strategies, if they are enabled to do so*".

**Governance:** Governance comprises all processes of governing – whether undertaken by the government of a state, by a market or by a network – over a social system and whether through the laws, norms, power or language of an organized society. In HFA, governance arrangements relate to the regulation and functioning of food systems, chains and networks. Others concern the organisation of small farms and other small and micro-sized food businesses. In HFA, we will analyse governance systems as well as support frameworks. An assessment of governance frameworks related to food chains can guide policy development and is aimed at enhancing the functioning, sustainability and resilience of food systems.

**Healthy and sustainable diets:** Diets with low environmental impacts which contribute to food and nutrition security and to healthy life, for present and future generations. Sustainable diets are protective and respectful of biodiversity and ecosystems, culturally acceptable, accessible, economically fair and affordable, nutritionally adequate, safe and healthy, while optimising natural and human resources (FAO, 2012).

**Sustainability and resilience:** These are two linked concepts that are of utmost importance considering climate change and rising inequalities; they are guiding principles of this project. Resilient food systems can resist, absorb, accommodate to and recover from the effects of a negative change in a timely and efficient manner (see for example Ingram, 2011). Our approach draws upon Darnhofer (2014) and Ashkenazy et al. (2018). It covers: (i) the buffer capability (the ability to assimilate a perturbation without a change in structure or function); (ii) the adaptive capability (the ability to adjust in the face of changing external drivers and internal processes); and (iii) the transformative capability (the ability to adapt alternatives and possible futures). Relevant indicators include purely environmental (e.g. greenhouse gas emissions and land use), socio-economic (e.g. fair wages) and cultural, and resilience (e.g. unemployment duration following unexpected weather event) to integrated ones (e.g. institutional capacity building).

**Systemic:** Systemic means affecting the whole of something. Systemic describes what relates to or affects an entire system, e.g. a food system. Systemic changes to the way an organisation operates have an impact on the entire organisation, including its most basic operations. Related to HFA, a shared vision and collective understanding will help to address the challenges affecting African food systems in a *systemic* fashion. For example, a systemic issue – such as a lack of local food processing capacity – affects the entire (regional, local) food system, it therefore is systemic.

**Transdisciplinary processes:** A transdisciplinary process calls for relating both knowledge and values from practice in science as well as for developing and utilising science knowledge in and for practice. A transdisciplinary approach integrates expertise and experience from several different disciplines with professional expertise and experience. For a successful project implementation in HFA, we will work across disciplines, and we will work together closely with practice partners. The actors involved in the project come from civil society, enterprises, research, intermediaries and policy.

**Transition Management:** Transition Management encompasses the use of a multi-actor approach that embodies all relevant values and beliefs, and a medium to long-term perspective, within which short-term objectives can also be identified. For HFA, Transition Management is particularly valuable because it focuses on learning at the individual, organisational and institutional level, using experiments that identify the potential success of different pathways. Its founding in learning by doing, doing by learning<sup>10</sup> captures the central concept of the project.

## Appendix 2: Some helpful references

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## Appendix 3: Planned outputs of HFA

The outputs planned for HFA are significant and we need to keep them in mind in our work planning:

- 10 Food System Labs in six countries established/strengthened (1-2 per country).
- At least 10 innovations in food production systems (incl. crop production, fishing and aquaculture, livestock and integrated farming systems) fully deployed.
- A minimum of 7-8 pilot actions on equitable food supply chain governance validated and upscaled.
- A minimum of 3 novel food products for local consumption and export piloted.
- 30 experts trained on application of an adaptive systems approach to food system transformation.
- Training material elaborated; about 1,200 advisors, developers and facilitators reached in the 6 countries.
- Education material on healthy nutrition elaborated; about 150,000 target audience reached in the 10 cities.
- Sets of at least 10 Policy Briefs and 20 Practice Briefs on pathways to sustainable food system transformation.