

# Building Sustainable, Inclusive and Resilient Food Systems in African LDCs

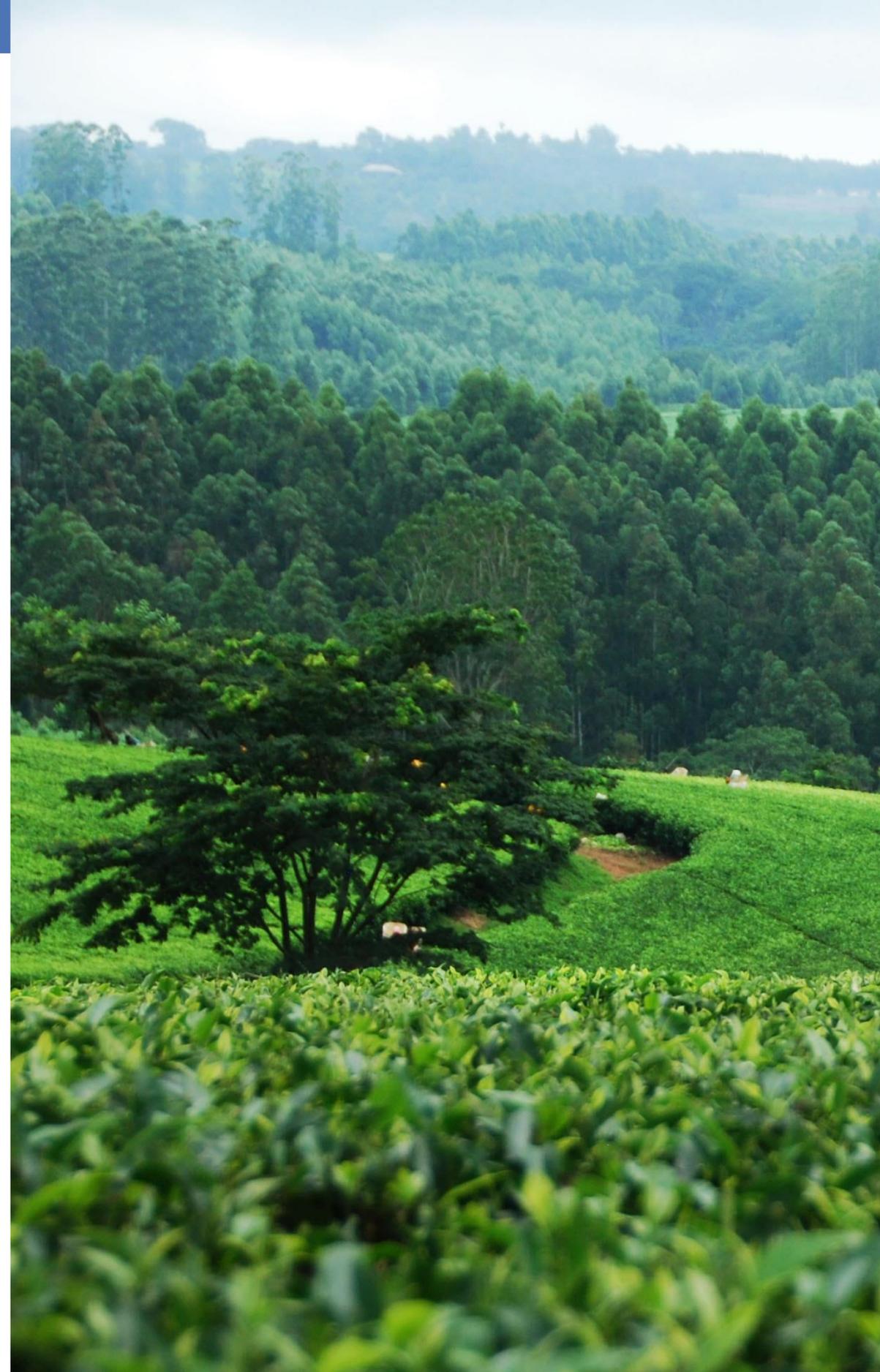
**Africa Regional Review Meeting on the  
Implementation of the Istanbul  
Programme of Action for the Least  
Developed Countries (LDCs)**

**25 February 2021**

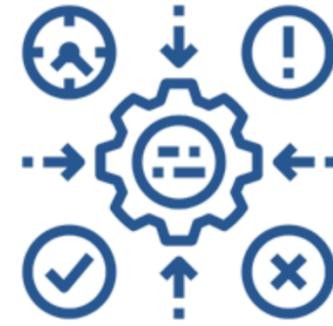
**MAXIMO TORERO CULLEN**  
CHIEF ECONOMIST, FAO



Food and Agriculture  
Organization of the  
United Nations



# TABLE OF CONTENTS



## Context

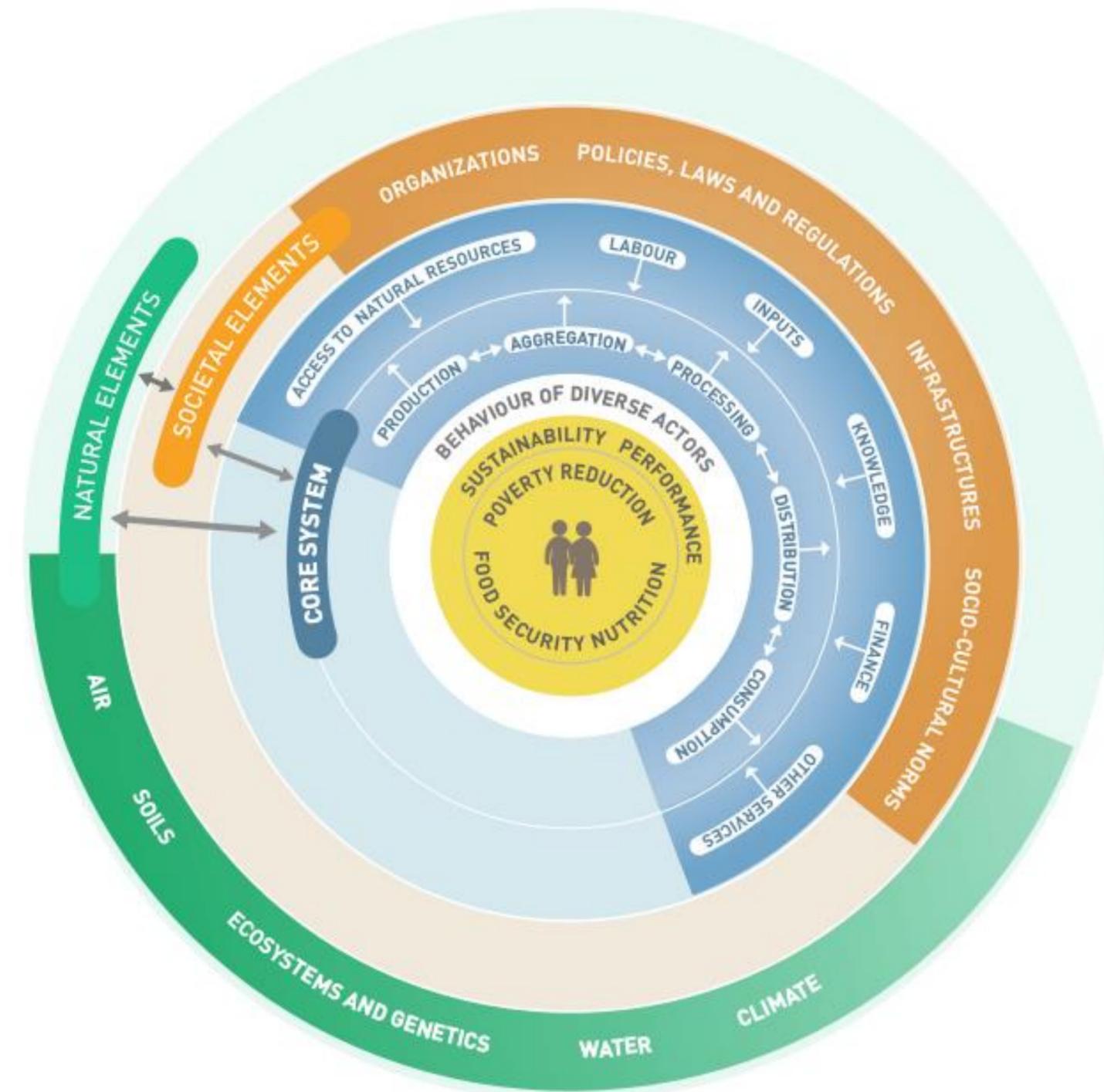
- Relevant Analytical Frameworks
- Actions & Recommendations
- Concluding remarks





## Agri-Food Systems

- A food system delivers food security and nutrition for all in such a way that the economic, social and environmental bases to generate food security and nutrition for future generations are not compromised
- As such an agri-food systems' approach needs to encompass the wide range of public and private sector actors, as their interdependent activities and institutions are responsible for driving the success of agri-food systems.
- Sustainable – Inclusive - Resilient





## AGRI-FOOD SYSTEMS NOT DELIVERING

**Hungry, undernourished people:** 690 mill. in 2019,

**Stunting among children:** Unacceptably high

**Micronutrient deficiencies:** Harm over two billion

**Healthy diets:** Not affordable for 3 bill. people

**Obesity:** At more than 800 million people

**Unsafe food:** Affects ca. 1 in 10 people

**High food loss and waste:** 14% lost and significantly being wasted

**Environmental destructions:** To land, water, sea and atmosphere

**Poverty:** >80% extreme poor live in rural areas and work in agriculture

**Inequality:** increasing in nearly half of the countries in the world



## PANDEMIC

1

Hunger might have increased by an additional 83 to 132 million people globally in 2020 due to COVID-19

## LDCS

2

LDCs will pay the largest toll, being most vulnerable to the effects of the pandemic

## ACCESS

3

Limited access to agricultural inputs

## LABOR SUPPLY

4

Disruptions in labor supply for labor-intensive products

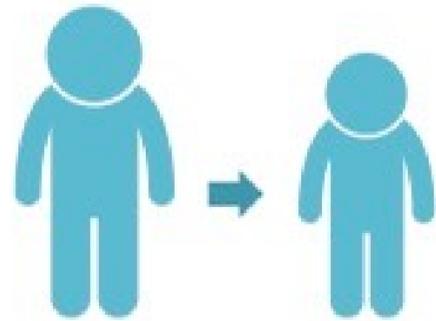
## COMMODITY MARKET

5

Impact on the global commodity market on local currencies



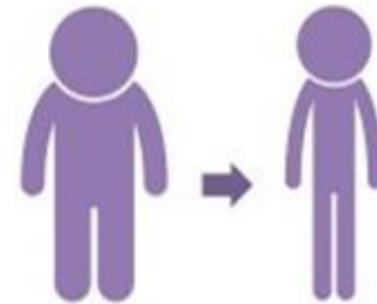
## COVID-19 Impact on Nutritional Outcomes



### Childhood stunting

- Additional **2.6 million** chronically malnourished children by 2022
- Reverse the decreasing curve for the **first time in 3 decades**

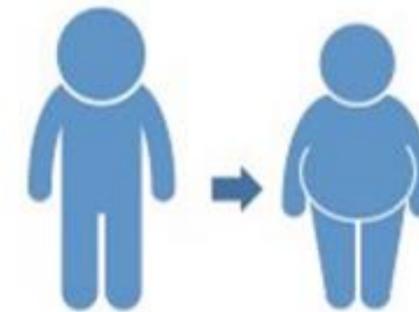
*United Nations initiative fighting chronic malnutrition through innovation (UNITLIFE).2020*



### Childhood Wasting

- **6.7 million** additional children under 5 could suffer from wasting
- **10,000** additional child deaths per month

*LANCET. 2020*



### Childhood Obesity

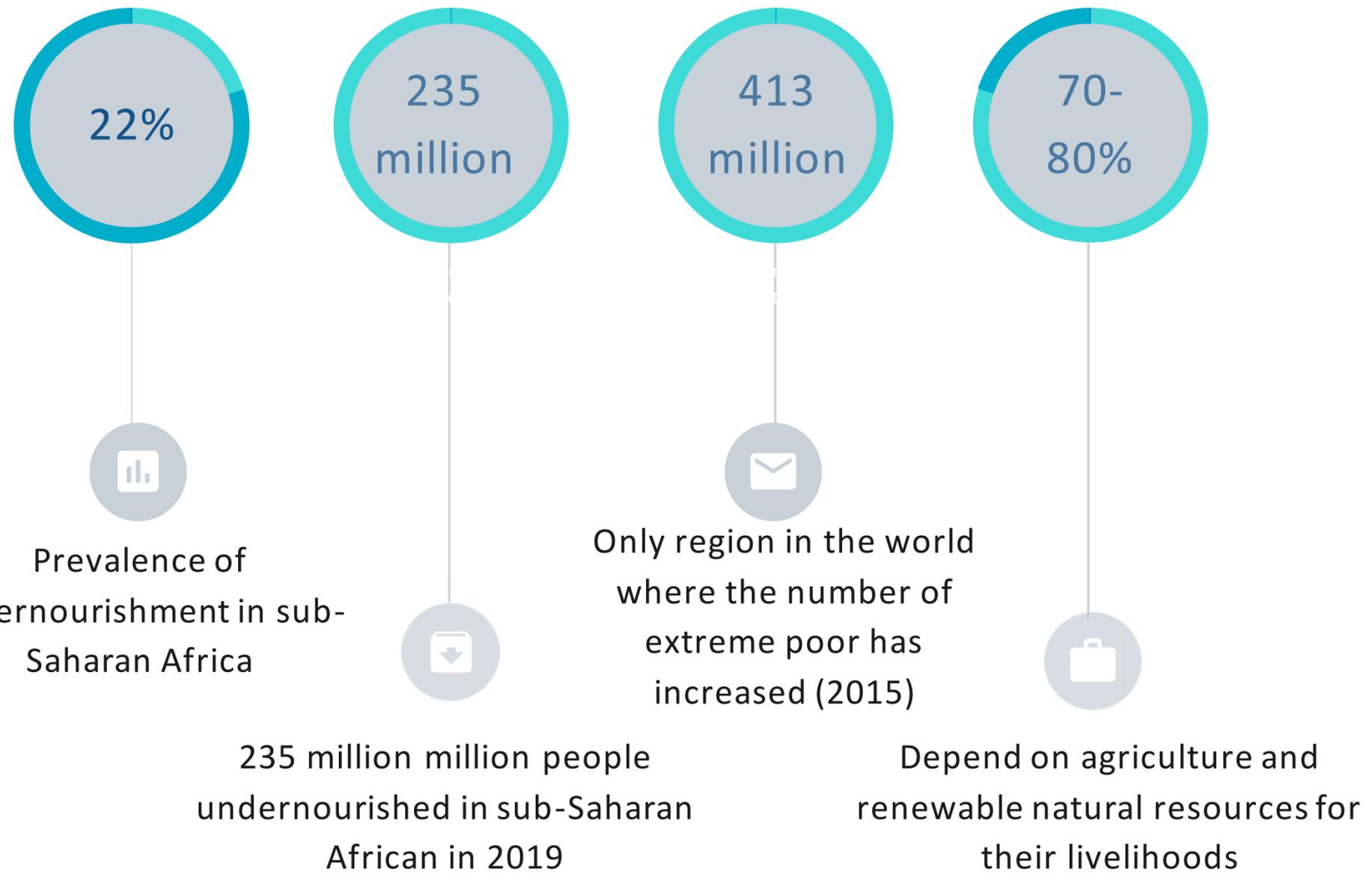
- **Childhood obesity worsen** due to negative impact on diet and physical activity
- Obesity is associated with **higher lethality**

*Obesity. 2020  
LANCET. 2020*

Source: UNITLIFE. 2020. IMPACT OF COVID-19 ON MALNUTRITION [online]. [Cited 20 February 2021]. <https://www.unitlife.org/impact-of-covid-19-on-malnutrition>; Headey D, Heidkamp R, Osendarp S, et al. Impacts of COVID-19 on childhood malnutrition and nutrition-related mortality. *Lancet*. 2020;396(10250):519-521. doi:10.1016/S0140-6736(20)31647-0; Pietrobelli, Angelo et al. "Effects of COVID-19 Lockdown on Lifestyle Behaviors in Children with Obesity Living in Verona, Italy: A Longitudinal Study." *Obesity* (Silver Spring, Md.) vol. 28,8 (2020): 1382-1385. doi:10.1002/oby.22861; Kass DA, Duggal P, Cingolani O. Obesity could shift severe COVID-19 disease to younger ages. *Lancet*. 2020;395(10236):1544-1545. doi:10.1016/S0140-6736(20)31024-2.



## Principles of sustainable food value chain development





## FAO COVID-19 Response and Recovery Programme : Seven Key Priority Areas



**Global Humanitarian Response Plan**



**Data for Decision Making**



**Economic Inclusion and Social Protection to Reduce Poverty**



**Trade and Food Safety Standards**



**Boosting Smallholder Resilience for Recovery**



**Preventing the Next Zoonotic Pandemic**



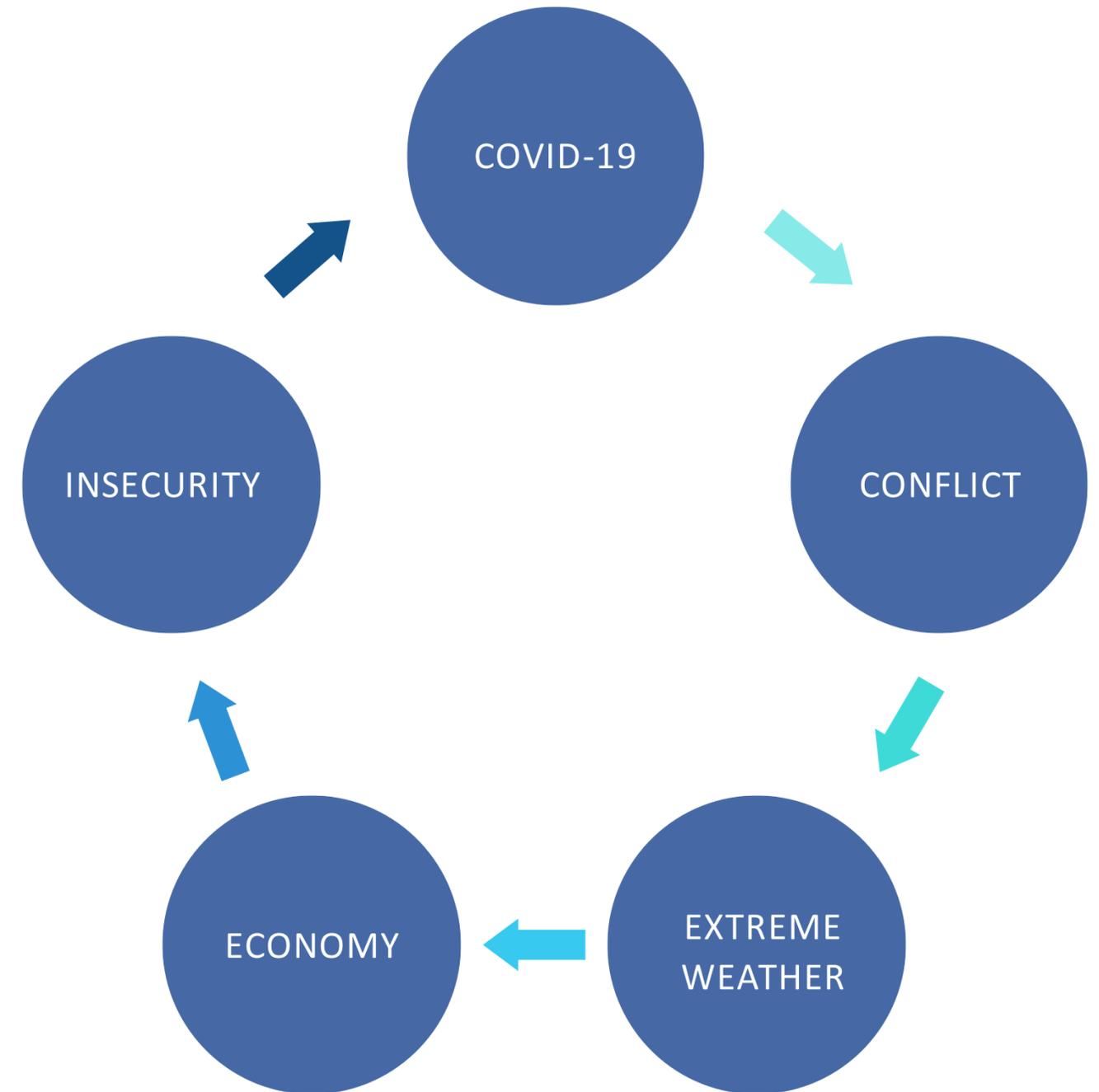
**Food Systems Transformations**

The Response and Recovery Programme is designed to proactively and sustainably address the socio-economic impacts of the pandemic. In line with the UN approach to “build back better,” and in pursuit of the Sustainable Development Goals, it aims to mitigate the immediate impacts of the pandemic while strengthening the long-term resilience of food systems and livelihoods.



## Challenges on African LDCs Food Systems: COVID-19

The situation may be even more worrisome when looked at from the short-term perspective of acute food insecurity, as the COVID-19 pandemic emerged at a time when the international community was discussing record-high levels of acute food insecurity.





## Challenges of Food Systems in African LDCs

1

RAPID GROWTH IN INCOMES AND URBANIZATION

Transforming African food systems and giving rise to new opportunities along the value chain

2

UPGRADING PHYSICAL AND SOCIAL INFRASTRUCTURE

Improve livelihoods today and boost future capacity to create wealth

3

BOLSTERING VULNERABLE GROUPS

Social protection, skills development and training will contribute in agricultural transformation will help these groups.

4

BETTER DATA

Better understanding of exclusion and vulnerability will help target interventions

**BENEFITS OF GROWTH ARE SHARED EQUALLY**

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

---



- Context

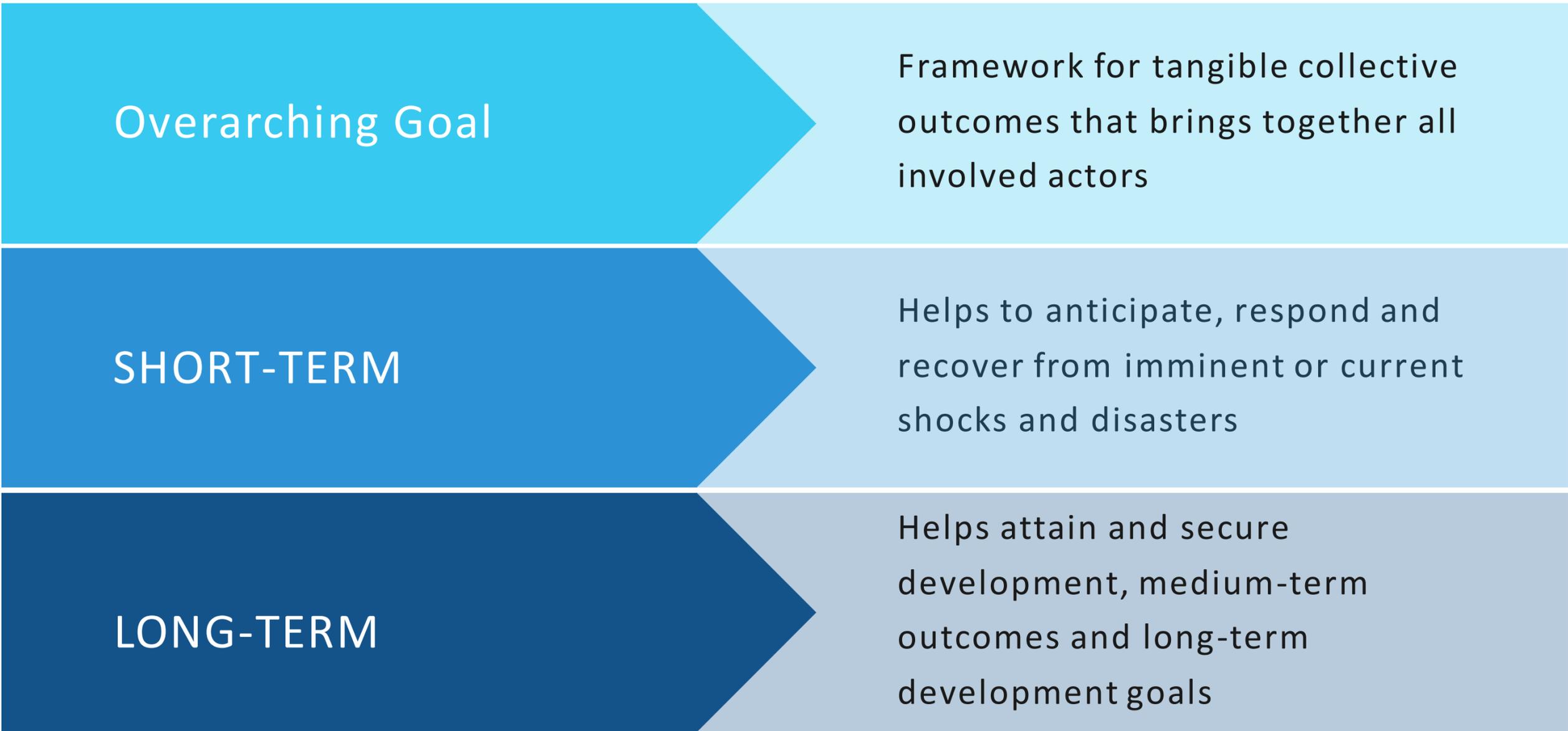


- Relevant Analytical Frameworks
- Actions & Recommendations
- Concluding remarks





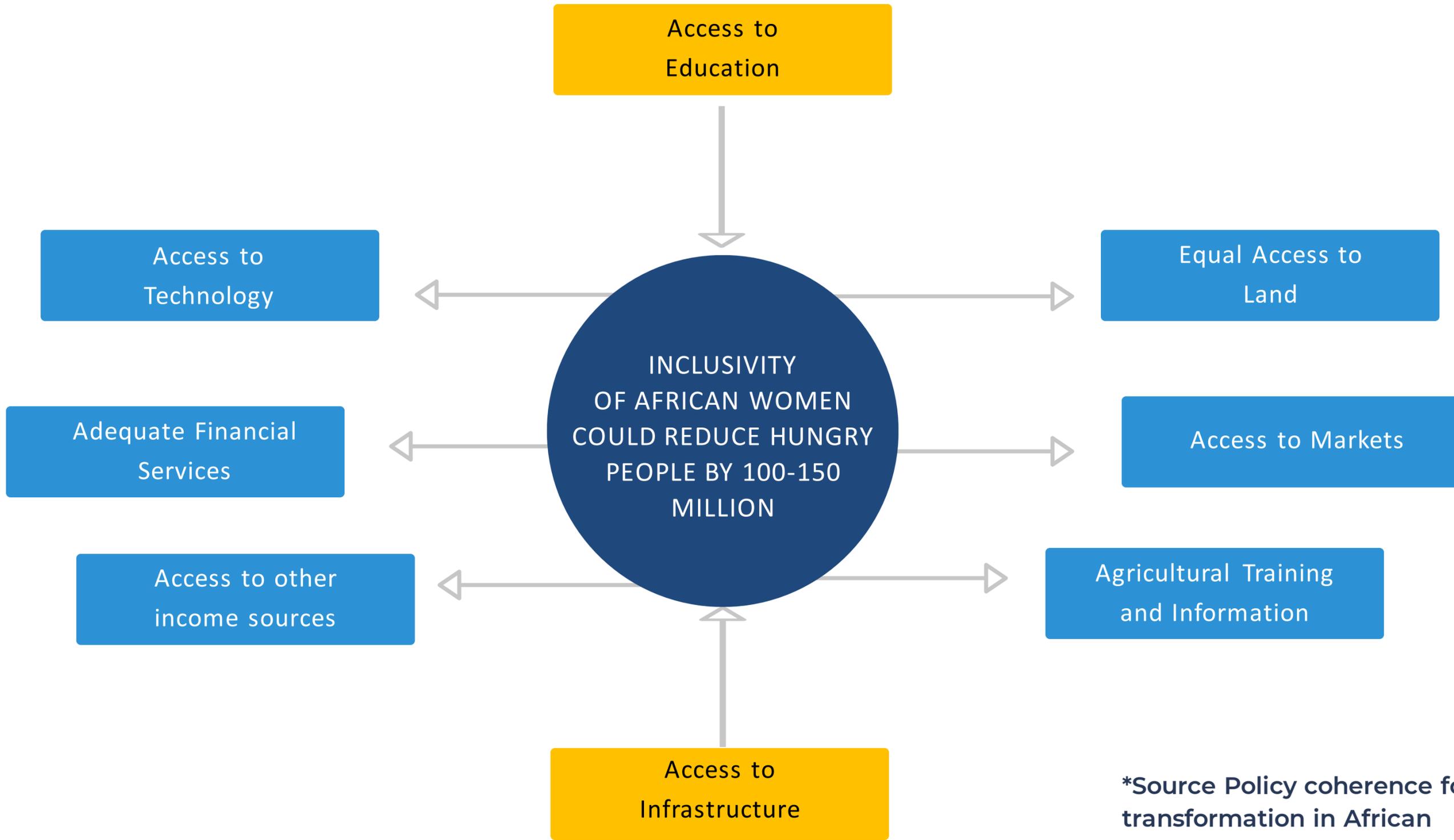
## Resilience





# Relevant Analytical Frameworks

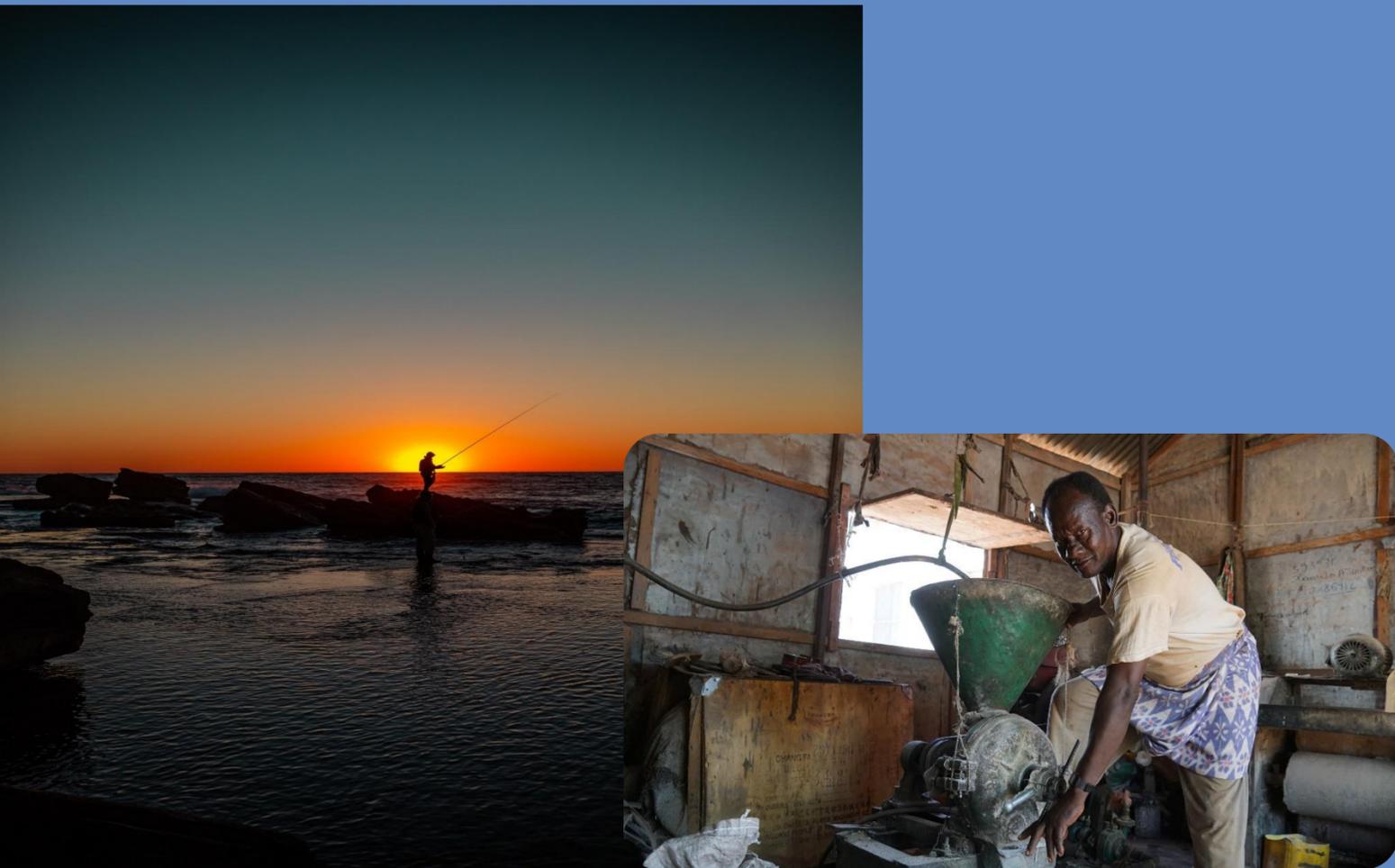
## Inclusivity



\*Source Policy coherence for agricultural transformation in African least developed countries (LDCs)

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

---



- Context
- Relevant Analytical Frameworks
- Actions & Recommendations
- Concluding remarks





## INCLUSION

Address inclusion at global policy level, using awareness of inequality as basis for the need for large-scale investments in research, innovation, technology and infrastructure to build inclusive food systems.

## NATIONAL TO LOCAL

Action at national level so that the local context—including the status of specific populations, economic structure, and cultural norms—can shape inclusive food systems and improve diets.

## MARGINALIZED POPULATIONS

Tailor food system policies so that they create opportunities for marginalized people while addressing key

## EARLY DETECTION

Identify the needs of marginalized people early on, and give them a voice in research and policy- and program-design processes

## RECOGNITION

Recognize the contributions that excluded people already make to food systems with their time and labor through policies that empower them to secure more equal benefits.





## AgrInvest Initiative: Success Story

**KEY FACTS**

- **Contribution**  
USD 2.5 million
- **Duration**  
2 years (2019-2021)
- **Resource partners**  
Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation of Italy
- **Countries**  
Burkina Faso, Ethiopia, Kenya and the Niger

©FAO/ Luis Tato

### IMPACT

To reduce food insecurity and to foster employment and income generation.

The project aims at developing an approach to attract SDG-aligned investments in agri-food systems that may be replicated in other developing countries and regions with similar impacts.

### OUTCOME

More inclusive, efficient and sustainable agri-food systems.

This outcome is to be achieved by creating a framework for coordinated action by different food system stakeholders to transform agri-food systems into viable mechanisms for sustainable development. Actions may include partnerships, policy dialogue and SDG-aligned investments.





## Sustainable Food Value Chain Development



Returns to Asset  
Owners



Wage Incomes



Benefits to  
Consumers



Tax Revenues



Impacts on  
Environment

Economic

Social

Environmental

The ultimate objective of SFVCD is to contribute significantly to a broad-based improvement in the welfare of a society, for both current and future generations.



**A broad array of infrastructure investments along the entire food value chain, specifically targeted to nutritious foods, are needed to reduce losses and waste and improve efficiencies**

**Inadequate food storage and limited food preservation capacity**

**Improve technology and infrastructure in handling, storage, processing**

**Inadequate market infrastructure**

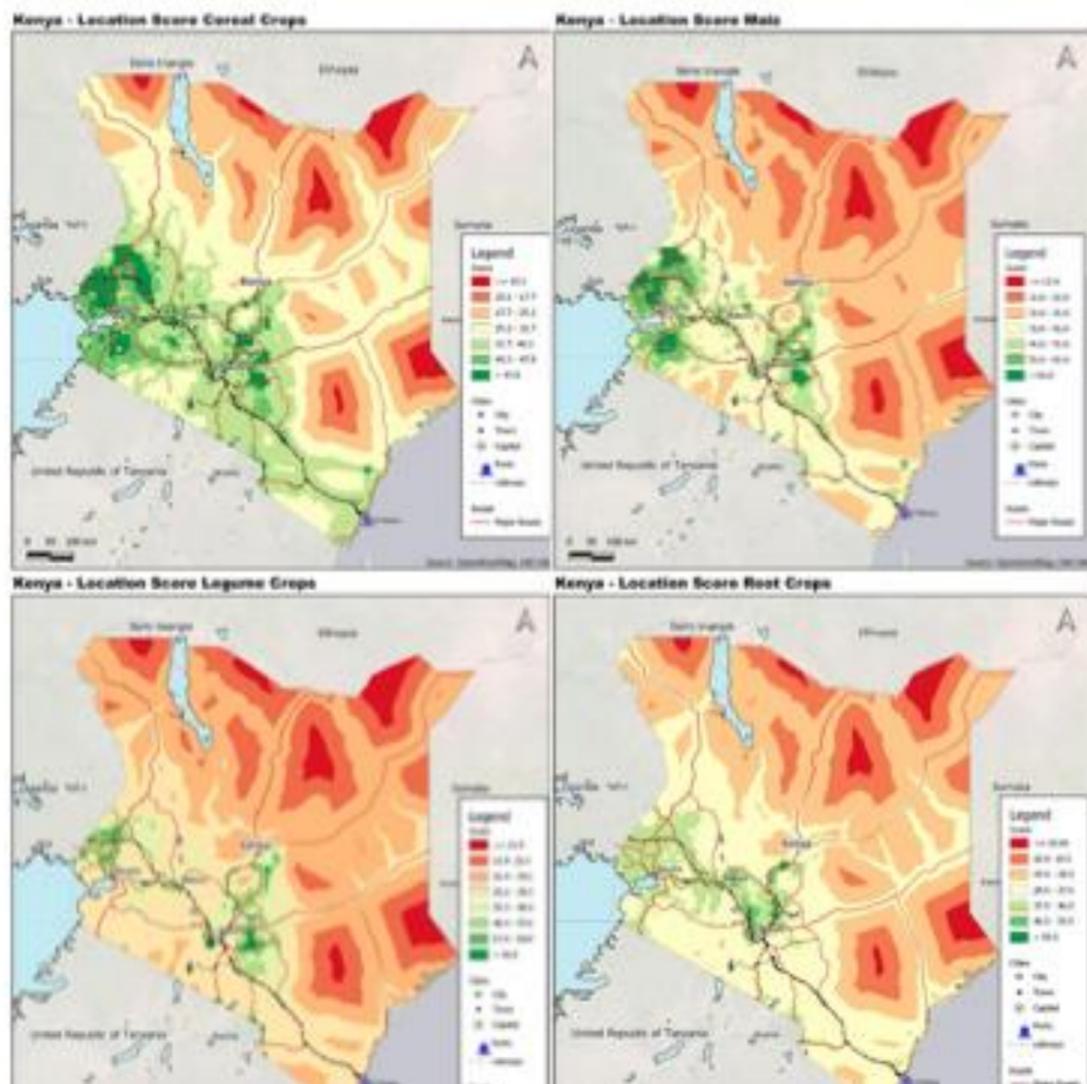
**Invest in improved storage, processing and preservation**

**Limited processing technology**

**Invest in agriculture production infrastructure**



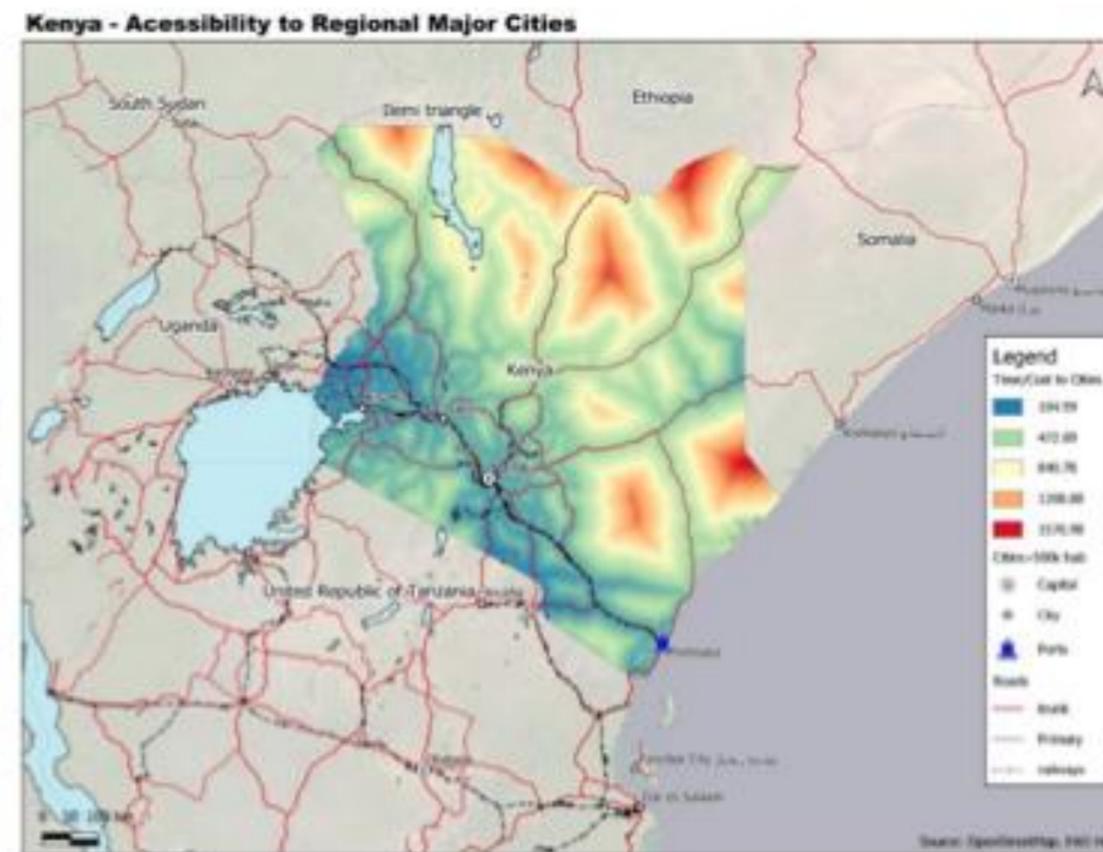
## GIS analysis in support of FS transformation



Background layers:

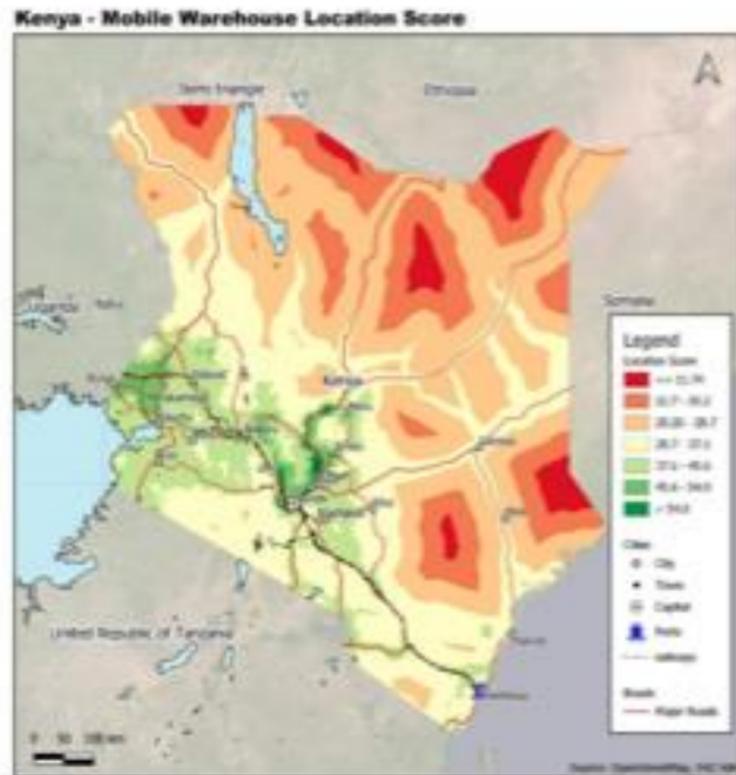
← Production (cereals, maize, legumes, roots and tubers)

Transport infrastructure →

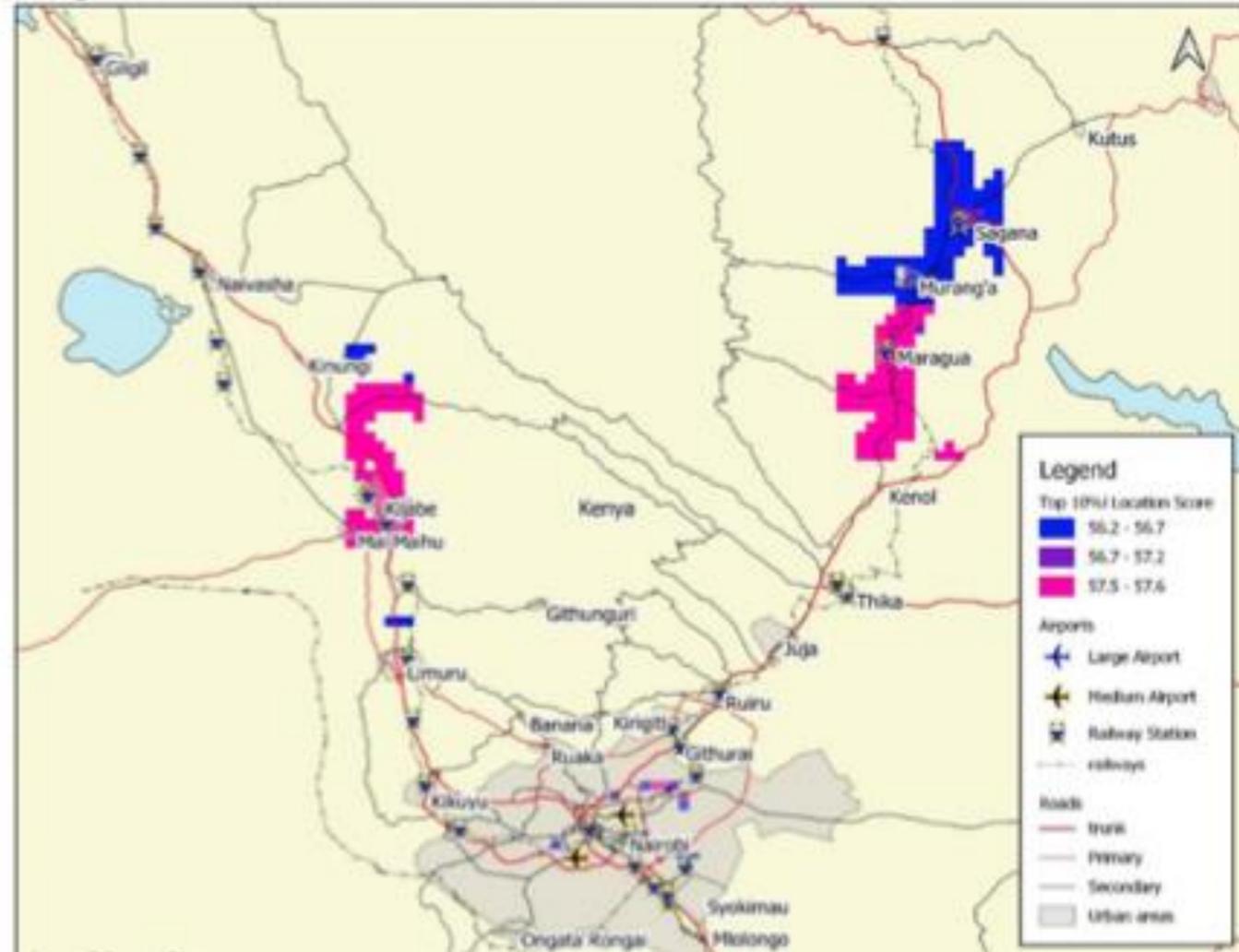




## Recommended locations: Kenya



**Kenya - Final Mobile Warehouse Location**





**Policies and public investment in infrastructure are also critically important in addressing the other key drivers behind hunger**



**Climate-proof infrastructure solutions**

**Repair of damage infrastructure from climate-related disasters**

**Repair of damage infrastructure from conflict**

**Infrastructure investment in conflict areas with greater stability**



# TABLE OF CONTENTS

---



- Context
- Relevant Analytical Frameworks
- Actions & Recommendations



Concluding remarks





## Future Steps For Sustainable Food Systems in African LDCs

- Food system policies can be tailored to both address the challenges and seize new opportunities
- Ensuring inclusive capacity building for vulnerable groups to benefit from innovations such as healthy value chains and the information and communications technology revolution
- Territorial approaches, such as agro-industrial parks and incubators, can cost-efficiently provide rural areas with services and support development of the middle segments of the agri-food value chain
- Policymakers and program designers can similarly ensure that excluded people are represented in all stages of policy and intervention design, implementation, and evaluation, as well as in decision-making institutions
- If we continue to pioneer new ideas, we can design food systems that consider the different trade-offs to build back better.





# THANK YOU

---



Food and Agriculture  
Organization of the  
United Nations

