Action Track Discussion Starter

Action Track 1 – Ensure Access to Safe and Nutritious Food for All

1. Introduction

This action track will aim to deliver zero hunger and improve levels of nutrition, enabling all people to be well nourished and healthy. It will develop game changing solutions for (1) accelerating hunger reduction, (2) making nutritious foods more available and affordable and (3) making food systems safer.

2. What outcomes are we trying to achieve?

Hunger: We need a food system transformation that will get us from 690m hungry (currently) to, say, <350m hungry by 2030. SOFI 2020 says business as usual at 2030 is 840m and could be exacerbated to 909m by COVID 19. So what is an ambitious but not ridiculous goal? 350m is probably too ambitious, but if food systems really can be transformed, who knows? In any case the target number probably does not matter too much in as much as we need to look for a very significant improvement on 840m at 2030.

Affordability of Healthy Diets: SOFI 2020 says 3 billion cannot afford healthy diets. This is extraordinary. Can we get this to 2bn or lower by 2030?

Stunting: Here food systems provide only one input. Health systems, care time allocation, WASH, they are also really important. Can the GNR provide us with an assessment of what an ambitious but realistic goal is for 2030 (the WHA targets are only for 2025)? The WHA target for stunting is 100m, and currently the number of stunted kids (145m) is going down by 3m a year, but this will only get us to 130m by 2025 and 115m by 2030. We need a 2030 stunting target of, say, 50m to galvanise us. Wasting is currently 47m and projected to increase to 55m due to COVID-19 (Headey et al. Lancet 2020). How can we get this below, say, 25m by 2030?

Safe Food: Foodborne diseases caused an estimated 600 million illnesses and 420,000 premature deaths in 2010 according to WHO. This number is likely to grow as food value chains elongate and food systems modernise while regulation and incentives fail to catch up. We need safer food (and we need a 2030 food safety target) and we need food systems that can guarantee that.

3. Key trade-offs and synergies

A trade-off and synergies table for Animal Source Foods (ASF) was developed in a recent paper (see below). We need to (1) fill out this kind of evidence matrix for low, middle and high income countries for ASFs and (2) we need these matrices for staples and non-staple plant foods, also by country income group. This would be an excellent global public good produced by the Scientific Group to guide and link actions for all ATs.

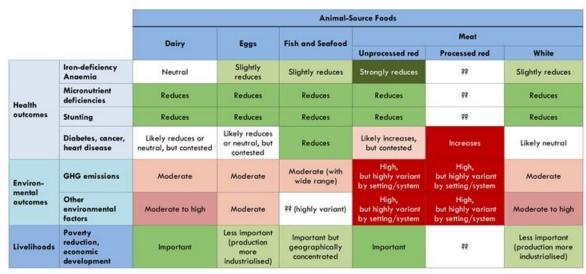|		Dairy	Eggs	Fish and Seafood	Unprocessed red	Processed red	White
					Meat		
Health outcomes	Iron-deficiency Anaemia	Neutral	Slightly reduces	Slightly reduces	Strongly reduces	??	Slightly reduces
	Micronutrient deficiencies	Reduces	Reduces	Reduces	Reduces	??	Reduces
	Stunting	Reduces	Reduces	Reduces	Reduces	??	Reduces
	Diabetes, cancer, heart disease	Likely reduces or neutral, but contested	Likely reduces or neutral, but contested	Reduces	Likely increases, but contested	Increases	Likely neutral
Environmental outcomes	GHG emissions	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate (with wide range)	High, but highly variant by setting/system	High, but highly variant by setting/system	Moderate
	Other environmental factors	Moderate to high	Moderate	?? (highly variant)	High, but highly variant by setting/system	High, but highly variant by setting/system	Moderate to high
Livelihoods	Poverty reduction, economic development	Important	Less important (production more industrialised)	Important but geographically concentrated	Important	??	Less important (production more industrialised)

Figure 6. Summary of the health, environmental, and livelihood dimensions of ASF production and consumption. Source: authors' interpretation of the literature cited in this paper.

Screenshot

4. What needs to be done?

<u>Hunger:</u> The SOFI of 2017 makes it clear that it is the countries which are experiencing conflict on top of fragility where hunger is rising and rising the fasted. Regionally all the hunger increases are projected to be in Africa. So we need a strategy for countries that are not fragile and without conflict and those that are fragile and experiencing conflict. Agricultural transformation is likely to be the main action in the former and some combination/synergy of social protection/ humanitarian programmes/link to food systems in the latter. We also need a special focus on Africa: the % of global hunger in Africa has increased from 24% in 2004-2006 to 36% in 2017-19 (SOFI 2020).

<u>Availability and Access to Nutritious Foods:</u> Here, we are relying on two sets of actions (1) things that help optimise existing solutions (public and private sectors) within the current set of "system settings". By system settings we mean incentives from policy, investors, consumers, civil society. And (2) actions to change the "system settings" e.g. policy repurposing, new investor incentives towards nutritious foods, more consumer demand for nutritious foods, civil society activism around demanding more affordable nutritious foods. New system settings help

scale existing solutions and create space and incentives for new solutions. We need from the SG a study that says what impact can we have on the 3bn number if we decrease the price of nutritious foods by, say, 20% by 2025. And we need a consensus definition of healthy diets and safe nutritious foods. Several exist.

Wasting and Stunting: Essentially it is affordable nutritious foods for very young children that are the key contribution from food systems, plus new ways of incentivising breastfeeding at the system level (link with gender and AT4). Work from IFPRI shows that the price of nutritious foods is critical for stunting. Wasting is closely linked to poverty

Food safety. It would be good if our work proposed some significant reductions in the GBD associated with unsafe foods. Business as usual means that as food systems evolve from traditional foods will become more unsafe as value chains lengthen, more intermediaries get involved, more processing is undertaken and higher prices received. Regulatory systems, incentives and capacities will lag. What is the base line and what is the reasonable 2030 target?

A set of game changers needs to the developed, championed and committed to which will achieve these results. A Countdown to 2030 Annual report could serve as a strong commitment mechanism, run by the 5 AT lead organisations.

Overview of domains in which we look for game changers

The prevailing assumption of AT 1 is that "game changers" can change the rules of the game or they can change the way we operate within the current rules of the game. We want to get a good balance between (a) actions that can change the rules of the game (the food system settings) to allow more impactful and new actions to be generated and scaled and (b) actions that can optimise food and nutrition outcomes within current settings. True transformation will come from both but cannot happen without actions in the first group. An example of such a framework is outlined below.

Looking for game changing solutions	By (1) fundamentally changing settings or by (2) optimising within current settings				
	Policy	Investment incentives	Innovation incentives	Civil society pressure	Consumer pressure (AT2)
1. Hunger Reduction	• Agric investment • Extension • Livelihood promotion	• Agri-food facilities	•	•	•

		• Social Protection				
2.	Nutritious Food Access	• Public Procurement • Fiscal incentives • Public R&D • Public Campaigns	• Stock Exchanges • N3F facilities • ESG	• Pitch competitions	• Campaign for Affordable Good Food	•
3.	Food Safety	• Standards • Testing • Enforcement	•	•	• Food safety campaigns	• Consumer demand for provenance

5. Evidence

If we only stick to actions for which we have rigorous evidence from one or more countries, we will have only a limited set of recommendations to make. We will need to be imaginative and creative in both generating and honing new actions as well as figuring out how to unblock the scaling of known solutions that have a good track record but have not been implemented widely for various political, institutional or capacity reasons. When proposing actions (existing or new) we need to show they are plausible (have a sound pathway to impact/theory of change), are feasible (have been tried somewhere or we can spell out what is needed for implementation) and have some evidence behind them (graded from gold star causality to theoretical plausibility).

6. Context specificity

We need to ground the game changing actions at the country level. This is where the hard work of design, implementation, impact and tradeoffs are generated and experienced. Ideally good to see 8-10 countries where all ATs converge, but that may not be possible.

Context can be geographic, by income, by conflict/non, or by food system typologies. The Food System Dashboard (www.foodsystemdashboard.org) has developed one such typology, building on 2017 HLPE, so this could be a starting point.

Cities are also a potential context-fixing approach.

Action Track Chair: Lawrence Haddad, GAIN
Vice Chair: Godfrey Bahiigwa, African Union Commission
Youth Vice Chair: Janya Green, 4-H
UN Anchor Organization: Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO)

12 October 2020