REPUBLIC OF ZAMBIA

Office of the Vice President

Theme: Embracing a Transformative and Sustainable Food Systems in Zambia

A Consolidated Outcomes Report

on

The Member States and Independent Food Systems Dialogues

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AT	Action Track
CSO SUN	Civil Society for Scaling UP Nutrition
EU	European Union
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organisation
FISP	Farmer Input Supply Programme
FSP	Farmers Support Programme (Social Cash Transfer (SCT),
GIZ	Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit
IAPRI	Indaba Agricultural Policy Research Institute
IFAD	International Fund for Agriculture Development
MoA	Ministry of Agriculture
MCTI	Ministry of Commerce, Trade and Industry
MoF	Ministry of Finance
MFL	Ministry of Fisheries and Livestock
MoH	Ministry of Health
MNDP	Ministry of National Development Planning
NFNC	National Food and Nutrition Commission
OVP	Office of the Vice President
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNFSS	United Nations Food Systems Summit
USAID	United States Aid for International Development
WEP	Women Empowerment Programme
WFP	World Food Programme
WHO	World Health Organisation

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The United Nations Food Systems Summit (UNFSS) is a call by the United Nations Secretary General to world leaders and all other key food systems players. It is supposed to stimulate transformative actions as part of the Decade of Actions aimed at achieving all the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by 2030. Zambia joined this call in 2020 and a roadmap for undertaking broad based country consultations on the Food systems was launched by Her Honour Mrs. Inonge Mutukwa Wina, the former Republican Vice President on 19th May 2021 in Kafue District of Lusaka province.

The implementation of the roadmap was led by the National Convenor from Office of the Vice President working with a technical committee which was made up of technical staff from ministries including Health, Agriculture, Fisheries and Livestock, National Development Planning; and other institutions including the Indaba Agricultural Policy Research Institute (IAPRI), the National Food and Nutrition Commission (NFNC). The technical committee was supported by technical staff from the UN Resident Coordinator Office and UN agencies (FAO, IFAD, UNICEF, WFP and WHO).

To kick start implementation of the roadmap a Food System Assessment was developed with support from FAO and EU and the recommendations were validated during a national virtual meeting in July 2021 and its recommendations also informed the member states' sub national and national dialogue, as well as independent dialogues. The sub-national and national dialogues were held from 16th August to 13th September 2021 in the 8 districts and 6 provincial centres (Mansa, Chinsali, Chipata, Choma, Mongu and Solwezi) that were selected from the three agro-ecological zones. The dialogue process involved stakeholders from across the entire food system from production, distribution, processing and consumption.

Zambia adopted all the five action tracks, and the dialogues were guided with key questions on all the five action tracks and revealed that Zambia's food systems are complex, multidimensional and highly interconnected. Major challenges were identified for each Action Track (AT):

Under Action Track 1 -**Ensure safe and nutritious food for all:** the major challenges included: (i) lack of awareness on safe and nutritious foods characterised by low production of diversified and nutritious foods, (ii) low availability and affordability of healthy and nutritious foods, (iii) high dependence on rain-fed agriculture production, and (iv) low-income levels affecting affordability of safe and nutritious food;

Under Action Track 2 **Shift to healthy and sustainable consumption patterns:** the major challenges included: (i) high prices for sustainably produced foods manifested by unhealthy and unsustainable consumption patterns of cheaper food options, (ii) limited diversity in production and supply of nutritious foods and (iii) limited value addition and utilization, high food wastage and unregulated enabling environment for food;

Under Action Track 3 **Boosting nature-positive food production:** the major challenges included: (i) degraded natural environment that limited nature positive food production characterised by rampant burning of fields and deforestation, (ii) inadequate capital among small holder farmers and local small-scale enterprises to invest in nature positive production such as organic farming, conservation farming, hydroponics and (iii) limited knowledge among farmers on nature-positive production and natural resource management.

Under Action Track 4 **Advancing equitable livelihoods of people involved in food system:** the major challenges included: (i) persistent inequalities that affected the income earning potential and engagement of the vulnerable groups, (ii) inadequate financial services and information especially in rural areas, (iii) limited access and ownership of land, agricultural assets, and income by vulnerable groups, and (iv) limited access to income/capital to start-up economic activities and inappropriate or poor targeting of developmental interventions; and

Under Action Track 5 **Building resilience to vulnerabilities shocks and stresses:** the challenges included: (i) limited resilience to systemic vulnerabilities, shocks and stresses that have been occurring in the country at large and in the disaster prone districts compounded by challenges posed by COVID-19. (ii) These were characterised by weak early warning systems, (iii) slow adoption of climate smart agriculture and other climate adaptation measures**.**

In addressing these challenges, a number of both short and long term recommendations were proposed:

Under action Track 1: key recommendations included:(i) support and strengthen market linkages and transportation opportunities as well as rehabilitate or build new roads (ii) enhance capacity in extension to support adoption of irrigation technologies and (iii) promotion of alternative livelihoods among low-income groups.

Under action Track 2: key recommendations included:(i) provide tax and non-tax-incentives to lower cost of inputs (ii) strengthen market linkages for locally available nutritious foods and (iii) conduct research and development on production, processing, preservation, marketing, packaging and storage of indigenous/traditional foods.

Under Action Track 3: the major recommendations included: (i) upscaling traditional leadership-led community practices that support nature positive production and natural resource management e.g. regulation on burning, gathering of fruits, caterpillars etc., (ii) develop financial incentive mechanism for small holder farmers and local small-scale enterprises practicing nature positive production complimented by financial literacy (iii) use lead farmers and other community champions to lead nature positive production.

Under Action Track 4: the major recommendations included: (i) increase innovative market information platforms, (ii) support advancement of community and private sector led lending opportunities that are affordable to low-income groups especially vulnerable groups (youths, women, differently abled), and (iii) develop and implement multisectoral monitoring and supervision mechanisms of development programmes and

Under Action Track 5:the major recommendations included: (i) upscale weather-based index insurance to provide relief in the event of prolonged dry spells/droughts and floods particularly for smallholder farmers, (ii) review the current early warning system and response framework for more coordinated and effective multisectoral approach, and (iii) review and realign the roles of DMMU to be equally responsive to resilience building in addition to emergency response, including hosting of a common repository for information sharing.

There are cross cutting areas that were identified to be critical towards achieving healthier and sustainable food systems. These would create an enabling environment at all levels of the food value chain which is a crucial component in achieving food systems change. An enabling environment for change can be social networks, political, natural environment, economic and regulatory. Key environmental enablers in the food

system include: (i) Public Investments (ii) Policy (iii) Institutional, (iv) Human capital and (v) Resilience towards pandemics.

In terms of the Public investment enabler, investment in agricultural sector has remained low and in fact declined from 9.4% of GDP in 2017 to 3.7% in 2020 with a slight increase to 6.7% 2021. Zambia therefore needs to invest at least 10% of GDP to agriculture according to the Maputo Declaration.

In terms policy environment, stable agricultural and food market and trade policies have been identified as major driving factors to transitioning to a more sustainable food system. Zambia will need to ensure stable trade policies on agricultural input and output markets to enable availability of affordable agricultural inputs as well access to efficient output markets.

In terms of institutional environment, Zambia has supportive regulatory frameworks which are not fully implemented. To achieve this, there is need for supportive institutions to ensure regulations on various activities throughout the food value chain are in place and operationalized.

In terms of human capital: Knowledge and competences, skilled and available experts around the food value chain is good ingredient to transform food systems. There is therefore a need to have diverse and appropriately skilled labour in the food systems value chain

Strong resilience to drought, flood and pandemics such as COVID-19 and any other pandemics should be built across all food system elements (environment, people, inputs, processes, infrastructures, and institutions) and activities from production, processing, distribution to preparation and consumption of food and waste management. This would mitigate such effects as movement restrictions which directly affect food trade and consumption.

Finally, there is need for a coordination and implementation mechanism across the food system for improved outcomes such as one that has been demonstrated for nutrition interventions led by the NFNC.

1. 0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the United Nations Food Systems Summit

The United Nations Secretary General, António Guterres will on 23rd September, 2021 convene a World Food System Summit to be held in New York, USA. The Summit is part of the Decade of Actions aimed at achieving all the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by 2030. The Summit aims to curb damage to the environment and wildlife from what's on our plates and tackle hunger made worse by the COVID-19 pandemic and climate-heating emissions from agriculture and food waste. The Summit will recommend actions needed for a comprehensive transformation of the global food systems in attaining the SDGs amid the COVID-19 pandemic and climate change challenges. The Summit seeks to awaken the world on the need to work together in transforming the way the world produces, consumes and thinks about food. Further, it is also a solutions summit that will require everyone to take action to transform the world's food systems. Therefore, the fundamental goal of the Summit is to put these issues firmly on the global political agenda.

Guided by five Action Tracks, the Summit will bring together key stakeholders from the fields of science, business, policy, healthcare and academia, as well as farmers, women and youth organizations, consumer groups, environmental activists, and other key stakeholders.

The Summit process aims to achieve the following outcomes:

(1) Generate significant action and measurable progress towards the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The Summit will succeed in identifying solutions and leaders, and issuing a call for action at all levels of the food system, including national and local governments, companies and citizens;
(2) Raise awareness and elevate public discussion about how reforming our food systems can help us all to achieve the SDGs by implementing reforms that are good for people and planet;
(3) Develop principles to guide governments and other stakeholders looking to leverage their food systems to support the SDGs. These principles will set an optimistic and encouraging vision in which food systems play a central role in building a fairer, more sustainable world.
(4) Create a system of follow-up and review to ensure that the Summit's outcomes continue to drive new actions and progress. This system will allow for the sharing of experiences, lessons and knowledge; it will also measure and analyze the Summit's impact.

The Summit was announced by the UN in December 2019. Zambia was invited to the Summit early 2021. In order to facilitate a coordinated preparation to the Summit, the UN asked member states to nominate a high-level individual from within the government to convene a series of member state national and sub-national dialogues as part of the Food Systems Summit process. The national convenor would be responsible for organizing the Food Systems Summit Dialogues programme in their country. Further they are responsible for ensuring the Dialogues contribute to a pathway to sustainable food systems through engaging a broad range of stakeholder groups.

To ensure dialogue outcomes are inclusive, the Secretary to the Cabinet appointed, the Office of the Vice President (OVP) as National Dialogue Convener; Ministry of Agriculture as Curator; and National Food and Nutrition Commission (NFNC) as secretariat. To facilitate smooth and coordinated preparation, a Technical Committee Comprising Government line ministries and development partners was constituted. Committee membership was drawn from the Ministry of Agriculture, Ministry of Fisheries and Livestock, Ministry of National Development Planning, Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Commerce, Trade and Industry, the UN Resident Coordinator Office and UN agencies (FAO, IFAD, UNICEF, WFP and WHO), bilateral organizations including GIZ, USAID, EU, and Irish Embassy, and Civil Society for Scaling UP Nutrition, as well as the Academia.

1.2. Country Context

Zambia is a landlocked and land-linked country situated in southern Africa, with a land mass of 752,816 $km^{2.}$ The country has an estimated population of 17.88 million people of which 56.7 percent residing in rural areas and 43.3 percent residing in urban areas. The female population accounts for 51.9 percent and 49.1 percent represent the male population. The population is projected to be at 23.58 million by 2030[1]. The country shares its border with eight countries; Angola, Botswana, Malawi, Namibia, Mozambique, Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Tanzania and Zimbabwe, that serve as an expanded market for exports. The country is endowed with natural resources including minerals, forests, water resources and wildlife, among others. Zambia is experiencing a large demographic shift and is one of the world's youngest countries by median age which puts pressure on the demand for jobs, health care and other social services, as well as the food system.

Agriculture is one of the key priority sectors in achieving sustainable economic growth, reducing poverty and elimination of hunger in Zambia. About 80 percent of the rural population directly or indirectly depends on agriculture for their livelihood. The sector employs about 70% of the labour force and is by far the main source of income and employment for the Zambian people especially women who constitute 65% of the rural population. During the past ten years, the overall contribution of agriculture, forestry and fishing to the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) has been declining with 2.7 percent in 2020 with a share of, agriculture being, 1.7 percent, forestry and logging, 0.5 percent and fishing and aquaculture, 0.5 percent as indicated in Table 1 below.

Table 1: Contribution of Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing to GDP

Item	Year (GDP as a percent)				
	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Agriculture, forestry and fishing	6.2	4.0	3.3	2.9	2.7
Agriculture	5.1	2.8	2.4	1.7	1.7
Forestry & Logging	0.6	0.6	0.6	0.7	0.5
Fishing & Aquaculture	0.5	0.6	0.4	0.4	0.5

Source: ZAMSTATS, 2020

The agricultural sector in Zambia mainly comprises crops, livestock and fisheries. There are three broad categories of farmers namely; small scale, medium and large scale. The small-scale farmer category is dominated by subsistence producers of staple foods with occasional marketable surplus. More than 90 percent of the staple food in the country is produced by small scale and medium scale farmers. They produce crops such as maize, millet, rice, sorghum, cassava, sweet potato, soybeans, horticultural produce and groundnuts, among others. They also produce commercial crops such as cotton, sunflower, tobacco, sugar and coffee. These farmers are fragmented and vulnerable to the impacts of climate change and COVID-19 pandemic which have worsened the existing challenges that include low production and productivity, and inadequate financing. In recent years, Zambia has made positive strides in enhancing its food system as indicated by:

(1) Continued increase of agricultural production driven by land expansion, adoption of improved seed varieties and sustainable land preparation methods.

[1] CSO (2013), 2010 Census of Population and Housing; population and Democratic Projections 2011-2035

(2) A well-developed seed system in Zambia, which remains among the largest exporters of seed in Africa and is accredited by Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD).
(3) Attaining and maintaining the status of net surplus producer and exporter of maize in the region and positive agricultural trade balance
(4) Continued rise in production of oilseed crops (e.g., soybeans, groundnuts, and sunflower among others) as a response to growing demand for stock feed in the country and the region
(5) Improving trend in nutritional status of children under 5 years since 2000/2001 and decreasing prevalence of undernourishment between 2009 and 2018.
(6) A good score on World Bank's Enabling the Business of Agriculture (2019) ~ 64/100

However, there are challenges to ensuring sustainable food systems in the country:

(1) Declining and low level of agriculture contribution to GDP (3% in 2019, down from 9% in 2010).
(2) The agricultural sector, with its low level of value added, accounting for 49% of the workforce shows low productivity (how is this positive, considering the contribution of agriculture to GDP?)
(3) Persistent high rural poverty levels, with the latest estimate of 76% as of 2015
(4) Agricultural production diversification remains low due to continued maize-centric policies
(5) High malnutrition levels, particularly in children, with 35% children being stunted
(6) Territorial and socio-economic inequities between urban and rural regions, in terms of infrastructure and provision of basic services, as well as across gender
(7) High deforestation rates driven mostly by agricultural land expansion, charcoal production, and timber extraction, all of which threaten biodiversity and compromises the country's climate change mitigation potential.
(8) Heavy reliance on rain-fed agriculture production system makes Zambia's food system increasingly vulnerable to climate shocks. Food security and nutrition remains a challenge; so the country is not on track to

meeting the 2014 AU Malabo Commitments (and the SDGs on food and hunger) According to the latest Demographic and Health Survey Report 2018, the anthropometric indices among children namely, **stunting, underweight and wasting** have reduced by 5%, 3% and 2% in last 5 years and stood at 35% for stunting, 12% for underweight and 4% for wasting respectively.

To help enhance food systems sustainability, Zambia should consider formulating and implementing policies that aim to:

- Promote agricultural diversification away from maize to include other crops and food commodities
- Promote consumption of healthy foods and improve availability of nutritional information
- Improve provision of basic services and infrastructure, particularly in rural areas
- Create incentives for rural investment in agricultural production and value addition
- Promote adoption of climate smart agricultural practices to build resilience of food production

An another aspect that is worth noting is the possible impact of weak food system which can be linked to various outcomes such as hunger and malnutrition. Zambia's hunger status as measured by the Global Hunger Index is rated as serious (GHI 2021). The cost of a nutritious diet increased in under 18 months with over 53% non-affordability due to high food prices and impact of covid19 global pandemic. (NFNC, WFP 2021).

In terms of malnutrition, Zambia is experiencing triple burden i.e. undernutrition, micronutrient deficiency and overweight among children, adolescent and women (ZDHS 2018. According to the latest Demographic and Health Survey Report 2018, the anthropometric indices among children stand at 35% for stunting, 12% for underweight and 4% for wasting. As per the DHS 2013-14,

16.4 percent adolescent girls and 10 percent women age 15-49 years were undernourished, having <18.5 BMI. On the other had twenty-three percent of women and 8.6 percent adolescent were overweight or obese. The percentage of women who are overweight or obese has increased steadily over the last decade. Anaemia is another major public health problem among women and children in Zambia. An estimated 58% of children under five were anaemic, with the highest prevalence of 77% amongst children less than 24 months old. One-third of adolescent girls were anaemic.

2.0 THE ZAMBIAN NATIONAL FOOD SYSTEMS DIALOGUE PROCESS

2.1. Process for Undertaking Dialogue

The roadmap that was developed by the technical committee for undertaking broad based country consultations on the Food systems was launched by Her Honour the former Republican Vice President on 19th May 2021 in Kafue District of Lusaka province.

As a precursor to the main UNFSS to be held in September 2021, a virtual and in-person Pre-summit event was held in Rome, Italy (26th to 28th July 2021) to set tone for main Summit. Her Honour the former Republican Vice President Ms M. Wina gave a statement on status of food systems citing the impact of covid 19 and climate change on Zambia's food systems.

Implementation of the roadmap was made possible with financial and technical support from the UN Resident Coordinator Office and UN Agencies (FAO, IFAD, UNICEF, WFP and WHO), bilateral organization (the European Union and GIZ). Implementation of the roadmap commenced with the Food Systems Assessment that was undertaken between April and June 2021 with support from FAO and the European Union. This was followed by a virtual national validation workshop that was held on 21st July, 2021 to mainly stimulate discussions on food systems transformation in Zambia; obtain additional insights on key sustainability questions and levers/entry points; get national/multistakeholder participation in the discussion on food systems transformation; and to provide inputs to the food system dialogue process.

Member state dialogues were delayed due to restrictions imposed because of Covid 19 in 2020/21 2nd and 3rd waves as well as general elections in 2021. The National Convener, with support from the National Food and Nutrition Commission as secretariat and the Curator from Ministry of Agriculture articulated how the national and subnational dialogues would be undertaken over the period 16th August to 13th September 2021.

The first step involved development of dialogue facilitation guides around the 5 action tracks to help manage the national and subnational level dialogues (18th to 20th August 2021). This was undertaken by the technical team comprising government staff (from ministries including Health, Agriculture, Livestock and Fisheries, National Development Planning), Indaba Agricultural Policy Research Institute (IAPRI) and the NFNC. These were supported by technical staff from the UN Resident Coordinator Office and UN Agencies (FAO, IFAD, , UNICEF, WFP and WHO).

The one-day orientation was held on 23rd August 2021 for national level technical and media staff from line ministries, NFNC, IAPRI and the UN System using the dialogue facilitation guides. After the orientation, subnational dialogues were undertaken between 1st to 8th September, 2021.

District level dialogues were conducted simultaneously on 7th September in 8 districts selected from the three agro ecological zones of Zambia. Two to three days prior to the district dialogues, the national level

facilitators oriented the selected technical staff from line ministries and media institutions at district and provincial level. Soon after orientation, national and subnational technical staff held interviews with stakeholders while the media staff gathered views and opinions on food systems from the general public through radio and walk in interviews. Outputs from these interviews were synthesised with focus on challenges, solutions and opportunities under each of the 5 action tracks. These were presented during the district dialogues for validation.

Participants of the district dialogues included district level senior government ministries management and technical staff, representatives from Civil Society Organisations and NGOs, Project management and technical staff linked to Food systems in the district. Below is the table showing selected districts by three agro-ecological zones.

Zone 1		Eastern (Petauke)		
Zone 2a	Eastern (Chipata)		Southern (Choma)	
Zone 2b	Western (Mongu)			
Zone 3	Luapula (Kawambwa)	*Provincial dialogue will be in Mansa*	Muchinga (Chinsali)	Northwestern (Solwezi)

Six (6) provincial dialogues were also held simultaneously on 8th September, 2021. Outputs from the district dialogues were presented and validated as well as widening scope to cover provincial perspective. Participants included provincial level stakeholders from government departments, Civil Society Organization, Food and Nutrition Project staff, Business associations, and cooperating partners existing in the province.

Considering time limitation, district and provincial dialogues were held simultaneously both physically and virtually with National Convener, FAO Experts and NFNC presenting virtually while the National level facilitators that went to the 8 districts managed the physical interactions while observing COVID 19 guidelines. National Convener officially opened the meetings giving contexts for the dialogues while FAO Experts shared deeper information on the 5 action Tracks while NFNC presented the roadmap and expected outputs from the dialogues.

Based on outputs from the member state subnational and independent (Academia and CSO) dialogues, a national dialogue was held on 13th September. The national dialogue intended to achieve the following:

- Enhanced understanding on the UN Food systems summit
- Share outputs and approaches that emerged from the in- country independent and sub national dialogues with potential for widespread application
- Identification of options for collective action that will contribute to national pathways towards sustainable food systems
- Identification of opportunities to make the pathways practical, and action oriented based on sound policies, partnerships and commitments.

The national; dialogue was held both virtual for wider participation and a small number for face-to-face interaction in Lusaka. The workshop was attended by participants from government line ministries, cooperating partners, Academia and CSOs.

A consolidation workshop was held from 14th to 18th September 2021. Participants included selected national level technical staff from MoA, MFL, NFNC, Civil Society Organisation and UN Agencies (FAO, WFP, and WHO). Using outputs from the Food Systems Assessment, the independent and member state national and subnational dialogues, a draft consolidated Zambia's pathways on sustainable, resilient, and equitable foods systems towards 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development was produced.

The NFNC as secretariat officially submitted the draft on Zambia's pathways on, sustainable, resilient and equitable foods systems document to the national Convener at Office of the Vice President on 21st September 2021.

2.2. Focus for the Dialogues

Throughout the dialogue process the National Convener reminded stakeholders to the apply the **Principles of Engagement** of building trust, respectfulness, urgency, recognizing complexity, complementing the works of others and embracing multi-stakeholder inclusivity in order to come up with practical and actionable solutions for the 5 Action Tracks. Dialogues were guided to identify real challenges that needed to be addressed in order to define the country's quest for transformed sustainable, resilient and equitable foods systems towards 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The dialogues adopted to address all the five action tracks and worked around the guidance for each action track as indicated below:

1. Action Track # 1: Ensure safe and nutritious food for all

This action track will work to end hunger and all forms of malnutrition and reduce the incidence of non-communicable diseases, enabling all people to be nourished and healthy. This requires that all people at all times have access to sufficient quantities of affordable and safe food products. Achieving this means increasing the availability of nutritious foods, making food more affordable and reducing inequities in access to food. The three main strands on this action track are (i) reducing hunger and inequality, (ii) increased access to nutritious food and (iii) safe food.

2. Action Track # 2: Shift to healthy and sustainable consumption patterns

This action track will work to build consumer demand for sustainably produced food, strengthen local value chains, improve nutrition, and promote the re-use and recycling of food resources, especially among the most vulnerable. This action track recognizes that we need to eliminate wasteful patterns of food consumption; and it also recognizes that we need to facilitate a transition in diets towards more nutritious foods that require fewer resources to produce and transport.

3. Action Track # 3: Boosting nature-positive food production

This action track analyses challenges and issues as regards the interface between food production and the environment taking into consideration how production processes can help take care of the environment. This will work to optimize environmental resource use in food production, processing, and distribution, thereby reducing biodiversity loss, pollution, water use, soil degradation and greenhouse gas emissions. In the pursuit of this goal, the action track aims at deepening understanding of the constraints and opportunities facing smallholder farmers and small-scale enterprises along the food value chain. It will also strive to support food system governance that realigns incentives to reduce food losses and other negative environmental impacts. Outcomes under this action track revolve around three areas of (i) protecting natural

ecosystems against new conversions for food and feed production, (ii) managing sustainably existing food production systems to the benefit of both nature and people and (iii) restoring and rehabilitating degraded ecosystems and soil function for sustainable food production.

4. Action Track # 4: Advancing equitable livelihoods of people involved in food system

The action track will work to contribute to the elimination of poverty by promoting full and productive employment and decent work for all actors along the food value chain, reducing risks for the poorest, enabling entrepreneurship and addressing the inequitable access to resources and distribution of value. Action Track 4 will improve resilience through social protection and seek to ensure that food systems 'leave no one behind'. The major outcome areas include (i) building agency: building consciousness, confidence, self -esteem and aspirations and knowledge, skills and capabilities, (ii) changing relations: the power relations through which people live their lives through intimate relations and social networks including market negotiations and (iii) transforming structures: discriminatory social norms, customs, values and exclusionary practices including laws, policies and services.

5. Action Track # 5: Building resilience to vulnerabilities shocks and stresses

This action track will work to ensure the continued functionality of sustainable food systems in areas that are prone to natural disasters and also promote actions to protect food supplies from the impacts of pandemics. The ambition behind this action track is to ensure that all people within a food system are empowered to prepare for, withstand, and recover from instability. The action track also aims to help people everywhere participate in food systems that, despite shocks and stressors, deliver food security, nutrition, and equitable livelihoods for all. The action track has a three pronged fully integrated focus on food systems as follows: (i) being equitable and inclusive (*economic resilience*), (ii) producing broad based benefits for all people (*social resilience*), and (iii) generating positive and regenerative impacts on the natural environment (*environmental resilience*).

3.0. OUTCOMES OF THE DIALOGUES

This section highlights a synthesis of outcomes from the multistakeholder dialogues held at district, provincial and national levels. It presents the major challenges, determinants/drivers, opportunities and proposes transformative practical actions the country needs to invest in order to achieve and sustain food systems related to the five Action Track 5.

3.1. Action Track #1: Ensuring safe and nutritious food for all

Current Challenges and Drivers/Causes

1) Inadequate awareness on safe and nutritious foods.

The various consultation indicated that there is inadequate awareness on the importance of safe and nutritious foods amongst the population. This is linked to several reasons which includes inadequate information in existing communication strategies such as Healthy Diet and the National 1000 days Communication Strategy. A specific example is the food safety issues that could be enhanced to address information gaps. Delivery of nutrition education to the public is also generally inadequate.

Other challenges include under utilisation of available communication channels such as social media, schools and communications units in line ministries such as National Agriculture Information Services

(NAIS). Furthermore, the media is poorly sensitized on importance safe and nutritious foods and therefore are unable to promote access to information despite existing opportunities in the various media platforms.

There is a generally lack of information on how to diversify and make value chains nutrition sensitive and commercially viable. Information on basic food processing and utilization exists, but coverage is very low and not integrated within the routine extension services to enable small scale farmers to adapt it. For this reason, ensuring that producers, processors and consumers are well informed on the relevant information to contribute to ensuring safe and nutritious food is key.

2) High dependence on rain-fed agriculture production.

There is high dependence on rain fed production in most communities and low investment in irrigation technologies among small scale farmers. This is linked to the high cost of irrigation equipment and ineffective extension that results in low adoption of irrigation technologies coupled with inadequate technical capacity in irrigation and inadequate information on crops that can be irrigated.

There is also under utilisation of existing water bodies where they exist to expand the period of farming at lowest cost by digging furrows. This is all linked to inadequate extension services and information on the know-how. With rainy season that is less than half year, this dependence has a significant impact on the production capacity of small-scale farmers.

3) Inadequate collaboration among stakeholders

There is inadequate collaboration amongst stakeholders supporting the food and nutrition sector. A solution in process has been the enactment of the Food and Nutrition Act of 2020. This Act has provided a framework for coordination amongst line ministers and other stakeholders. The Act has also strengthened the National Food and Nutrition Commission's mandate to provide oversight to the sector and this role is complemented by the Food and Nutrition Coordinating Committee to that will be chaired by Secretary to Cabinet. However, the Act is yet to be operationalised and therefore affecting effectiveness of collaboration amongst stakeholders.

The sector has also been implementing the National 1000 Most Days Programme whose coverage increased form 13 districts in phase 1 (2014-2018) to 42 districts in second phase (2019-2023). However, the multisectoral approach that is enhancing coordination at district level is only 36 % of the districts which is too low to achieve the desired impact nationally.

4) Inappropriate use of pesticides, herbicides, drugs and antibiotics

There exists inappropriate use of pesticides, herbicides, drugs and antibiotics amongst farmers. This is mainly due to inadequate knowledge among farmers and inappropriate aims of increasing profit. Specific examples are the use of growth hormones to shorted duration of growth. This is further exacerbated by the lack of harmonized standards and systematic monitoring and enforcement mechanism/framework on application of pesticides, herbicides and antibiotics.

5) Low income levels affecting affordability of safe and nutritious food

Generally, the small-scale farmers and majority of the poor in both urban and rural areas have low income levels that affect affordability of safe and nutritious food. This is linked to limited alternative livelihood sources, low agricultural production and productivity and poor markets to facilitate the distribution of food from surplus to deficit areas.

This limitation can further be contextualized in the limited promotion of value addition in food processing and utilization which limits opportunities for diversifying income and at the same time decreases access to diverse foods.

6) Low appreciation of indigenous foods

There is low appreciation of indigenous foods amongst the general population. This is linked to inadequate awareness and understanding of their value and lack of incentives to promote production, processing, distribution and their consumption. In certain instances, there is stigmatization around the consumption of indigenous foods especially amongst school going children in relation to what is packed in their lunch boxes. Existing strategies and platforms have not scaled up the coverage and content to bring knowledge to a desired level.

7) Lack of awareness of food safety standards and limited enforcement

There is lack of awareness of food safety standards which is linked to limited roll out and enforcement for existing legislation. Support to ensure effective enforcement has not been prioritized by the responsible institutions and staff such as Environmental Officers in the local councils and health facilities. This support is characterized affected by inadequate transport and fuel to ensure mobility and lack of fund to support testing and analysis of food samples.

In addition, the basics such as nutrition information on food products including product labelling are inadequate such that consumers are unaware and not bale to demand for these standards.

Generally, the limited incomes tend to skew choices of consumers to focus on food availability rather than food safety.

8) Inadequate investment in aquaculture and livestock production: Investing in aquaculture plays an important role in enhancing food security and nutrition, mainly through consumption and income. However, there is inadequate of investment in this area and finding from the dialogues showed that the following issues have hampered the investment in this sector:

- *Lack of access to affordable finance*: Literature has shown that *lack of access* to mainstream *financial* services constrains the ability to build wealth and generally live a financially secure life. A study by Tom Liyanda in Access to finance: SME perceptions of financial service providers indicated that almost half (49 percent) perceive access to credit as a major obstacle to their business operations.
- *Little information on investment returns in aquaculture*: The participants reported that there is a lack of knowledge and skills to build the sector. It is worth noting that increased fish consumption for example among the poor could help reduce the high prevalence of chronic and acute malnutrition.
- *Low investment in agricultural development (at 3.7% in 2020 against a 10% target based on Maputo Declaration)*:There is need by government to be more strategic in using existing resources, in terms of either subsidies or investments to support or stimulate substantial economic growth. Further government needs to leverage investments from the private sector and to explore other funding arrangements, including working closely with their development partners to secure large grants and low-interest loans.

9) Limited support to small-scale sector development and markets (credit-leasing mechanization, microfinance, organic fertilizer development, post-harvest technology, diversification, value addition, and clean energy),

The major contributing factors to this include inadequate political commitment; competing national priorities; dwindling of national budget; high percent of the budgetary allocation to FISP and FRA; inconsistencies in market policies affecting medium and small scale farmers; poor loan repayment culture and; agriculture mostly perceived to be a risky venture**.**

10) Inadequate support to private sector in food processing, preservation and storage to invest particularly in the rural areas:

The limiting factors as gathered in the dialogue included, little or few aggregators leading to low quantity of products secured; high cost of food processing plant and equipment; high cost of doing business; underdeveloped infrastructure; and very low productivity to attract investment.

11) Poor targeting of agricultural interventions

These are necessitated by the interactions of various inadequacies among them, inappropriate design of programmes such as FISP and FSP; weak M&E system to inform policy and programming; lack of clear strategies of various programmes; pressure to report on quick results; absence of common and integrated beneficiary register for all relevant programmes as well as unharmonised farmer (crops, livestock, fish) categorizations.

12) Poor road network, long distances to markets.

Literature has shown that **t**he road network as well as long distances to markets across the country especially in the rural areas poses great challenges to most farmers to sell their produce. Good road network is of great impact on Agricultural development as it effectively connects suppliers of farming inputs to the farmers and allows for timely delivery of inputs. On the part of farmers, a good road network brings about cost effectiveness, preservation of perishable produce, easy access to farm inputs and access to markets.

13) Inadequate knowledge on food production, processing, preservation, utilization, food safety as well as value addition technologies.

This mainly leads to food losses experienced throughout the food chain. Literature shows that food loss reduces the incomes of producers, especially smallholder farmers, which negatively impacts their households' well-being, making them more vulnerable/less resilient. Further, food loss can also drive toward environmental damage.

14) Poor access to water and sanitation services.

Poverty is a huge barrier to access to water and sanitation and as such**,** more people lack access to clean water. Clean water is vital for good nutrition and health of the population. The 2018 ZDHS shows that in Zambia, 72 percent of households have access to an improved water source. Access however is more predominant in urban areas at 92 percent compared to 58 percent households in rural areas. In addition, Thirty-three percent of the population has basic sanitation services, 41 percent in urban areas compared to 28 percent in rural areas.

16) Low diversity in production (crop, livestock, and fish)

The main drivers of low agricultural diversification as reported from the dialogue include, limited access and high cost of inputs; high dependence on commercial seed producers; inappropriate technologies and cultural and religious beliefs. This is also supported by findings by the study by Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) that indicated that low agricultural diversification on the food system in Zambia is closely associated with poorly developed supply chains for most commodities other than maize for which policy and institutional efforts are mainly focused.

Opportunities for Action Track # 1

During the dialogues, a number of opportunities were highlighted that the country can leverage on to ensure access to safe and nutrition for all is achieved. These are as follows:

Social Behaviour Change Communication (SBCC) Strategies

The existence of various SBCC strategies offers an opportunity for enhancing awareness creation on the importance and need to produce safe and nutritious foods. Example of such includes Healthy Diet Campaign, and the National 1000 Most Critical Days Programme. In addition, the existence of various line ministry communications units such as National Agriculture Information Services (NAIS) in agriculture offers platforms for reaching consumers and farmers.

Further, Innovations such as E-Extension within Ministries of agriculture and Livestock and Fisheries also offer great potential for reaching farmers and stakeholders in the value chain on relevant information to enhance access to safe and nutritious foods for all. In the private sector, the existence of several community radio stations across the country that provide tailor made information in the local language also offers a good platform for dissemination of information.

Awareness and enforcement on food safety

The presence of various laws that support promotion of food safety including Food Safety Act No 7 of 2019, Fisheries Act No 22, of 2007, SI No 48 of 2006 further, provide the good platforms to enhance awareness. This is also supported by other institutions that provide support to the regulatory framework such as Zambia Environmental Management Agency **(**ZEMA) and units in line ministries including Health, Agriculture and Fisheries and Livestock.

The existence of registered agro-dealers also offers an opportunity to channel information on rational use and consequences of in-appropriate use.

Coordination structure and systems

The existence of coordination platforms and institutions offers the opportunity to enhance coordination of stakeholders within the food and nutrition sector. These platforms include line ministry Technical Working Groups (TWGs) as well as Cooperating Partners Groups. In addition, the new Food and Nutrition Act has facilitated a creation and strengthening functions of the Permanent Secretaries Committee on Nutrition and National Food and Nutrition Commission. Further, the multisectoral programmes such as the National 1,000 Days Programme is improving the coordination at all levels.

Existence of Social Protection Programmes

There are various social protection programmes that government has put in place to boost production that ultimately contributes to access to safe and nutritious foods. These Programmes include **Farmer Input Support Programme (**FISP) and empowerment programmes for women and youth. Other opportunities exist in programmes such that promotion of agroforestry products. In addition, the existence of cooperating partners and NGOs that have been supporting livelihood programmes offers opportunities for enhancing livelihoods of small-scale farmers and other poor segment of the population

The SAMRT Zambia programme that enhance the use of IT to improve service delivery through programme monitoring has the potential to enhance the monitoring of programme such as FISP and FSP that have a rather weak monitoring.

Existing capacity in line ministries and stakeholders to support the production, processing and utilization of safe and nutritious foods

Government has well trained human resource with great capacity to support the production, processing, and utilization of safe and nutrition foods. The existence of the structures like that of the Extension service in Ministry of Agriculture and Nutrition unit in Ministry Health is likely to impact positively.

Proposed Transformative Actions

Table 1: Proposed short- and long-term transformative actions under Action Track 1

Challenges	**Short term Actions - within 3 years**	**Long term Actions-within 10 years**
1. Lack of awareness on safe and nutritious foods.	• Design and implement a comprehensive social behaviour and communication strategy using the life cycle approach	• Increase investment to support implementation with focus on improving coordination among stakeholders, capacity building for media personnel and broadening platforms for dissemination of key messages for safe and nutritious foods • Support and strengthen market linkages and transportation opportunities as well as rehabilitate or build new roads. • Provide adequate trainings farmers and consumers in food production, processing, preservation, food safety and utilization of locally available nutritious foods. • Promotion of sustainable food diversification and consumption patterns in both urban and rural areas. • Subsidize the agriculture inputs and provide affordable loans to farmers with clear weaning strategy • Promotion of access to WASH interventions
2. High dependence on rain-fed agriculture production	• Enhance capacity in extension to support adoption of irrigation technologies. • Create a fund to support development and	• Increase number of dams and irrigation infrastructure and Investment in irrigation infrastructure using low-cost technologies.

	dissemination of irrigation technologies. • Incentivise supply and use of irrigation technologies	
3. Inadequate collaboration among stakeholders	• Fast track the operationalization of the Food and Nutrition Act to allow for effective coordination and collaboration	• Provide resources to facilitate effective implementation of the Food and Nutrition Act
4. Inappropriate use of pesticides, herbicides, drugs and antibiotics	• Harmonize standards and ensure systematic enforcement and monitoring mechanism/ framework on application of pesticides, herbicides and antibiotics	• Provide adequate training in food safety, Good Agricultural Practices and the use of pesticides, herbicides, drugs and antibiotics among especially among small scale farmers
5. Low income levels affecting affordability of safe and nutritious food	• Support and strengthen market linkages and transportation opportunities as well as rehabilitate and build new roads	• Upscale social protection programmes with appropriate targeting of beneficiaries • Promote alternative livelihoods among low income groups • Improve agricultural production and productivity among small scale farmers with a focus on diverse crops, short cycle livestock and fish
6.Low appreciation of indigenous foods	• Upscale SBCC to popularize the consumption of indigenous foods	• Create incentives to promote production, distribution and consumption of indigenous foods
7. Lack of awareness of food safety standards as a result of limited roll out and enforcement	• Upscale SBCC raise awareness on food safety standards	• Increase investments in food safety to enhance enforcement.
8. Inadequate investment in aquaculture and livestock production	• Prioritize known drivers of agricultural development and growth (R&D, Extension, Irrigation, etc.) • Promote financial literacy • Facilitate provision of affordable loans • Create an agricultural lending bank •	• Encourage participation of private sector investment in agriculture • Prioritize investment in R&D, Extension, Aquaculture, Livestock, Market linkages, Innovation • Increase budgetary allocations and releases of funds for agricultural development • Government should walk the talk on making agriculture a driver of the economy • Promotion of the credit guarantor scheme and attractive
9. Low investment in agricultural development (at 3.7% in 2020 which increased to 6.7 percent in	• Provide incentives to attract more producers and aggregators particularly in the rural areas	• Reduce the cost of doing business e.g. by streamlining licensing

2021 against a 10% target based on Maputo Declaration).	• Promote innovative marketing systems like warehouse receipt and forward marketing • Provide incentives in form of tax and non-tax to reduce the cost of processing plant and equipment	• Support development of out-grower schemes to provide raw materials for processing based on agro ecological potential • Promotion of the credit guarantor scheme and attractive insurance schemes
10. Limited support to small-scale sector development and markets (credit-leasing mechanization, microfinance, organic fertilizer development, post-harvest technology, diversification, value addition, and clean energy) 11. Inadequate support to private sector in food processing, preservation and storage to invest particularly in the rural areas	• Establish improved processing and preservation infrastructure with the necessary technologies at all levels of the food systems value chain. • Facilitate provision of affordable loans Provide incentives to attract more producers and aggregators particularly in the rural areas • Promote innovative marketing systems like warehouse receipt and forward marketing • Provide incentives in form of tax and non-tax to reduce the cost of processing plant and equipment • Reduce the cost of doing business e.g. by streamlining licensing • Establish improved processing and preservation infrastructure with the necessary technologies at all levels of the food systems value chain • Support development of out grower schemes to provide raw materials for processing based on agro ecological potential	• Encourage participation of private sector investment in agriculture • Create an agricultural lending bank
12. Poor targeting of agricultural interventions	• Redesign FISP to make it more effective and efficient	• Strengthen M&E system to inform policy and programming

	• Improve the targeting of FISP to make it more effective • Establish a common and integrated beneficiary register for all relevant programmes • Harmonise farmer (crops, livestock, fish) categorizations	
13. Poor road network, long distances to markets.	• Upscale rehabilitation and building of build new roads.	
14. Inadequate knowledge on food production, processing, preservation, utilization, food safety as well as value addition technologies	• Provide adequate trainings in food production, processing, preservation, food safety and utilization of locally available nutritious foods especially among small scale farmers and urban poor households	
Poor access to water and sanitation services.	Upscale interventions of increasing access to clean water and sanitation especially in rural areas.	
Low diversity in production (crop, livestock, and fish)	• Invest and promote biodiversity conservation - beyond hybrid seeds especially the protection of indigenous seed systems through the establishment of community seed banks	• Improve agricultural production and productivity among small scale farmers with a focus on diverse crops, short cycle livestock and fish

3.2 Action Track #2: Shifting to sustainable consumption patterns

Current Challenges and Drivers

1) **High prices for sustainably produced foods:** High prices were cited as a key barrier to shifting consumption patterns.
    - High cost of inputs that are required to produce foods sustainably. Examples of the inputs include energy (electricity/fuel) and machinery for production.
    - Low quantities of foods on the market as a result of low production by farmers.
    - Reduced purchasing power parity as a result of high inflation rates.

2) **High post-harvest losses and food waste**: A lot of food is wasted at all levels of the value chain from farm to fork and this was highlighted by the dialogue at National, Provincial and District level. The drivers for these losses and waste were cited as follows:
    - Inadequate processing, preservation and storage at household and commercial level.
    - High costs resulting in limited utilization of post-harvest management technologies such as hermetic storage bags, metal silos, sorting and grading equipment.
    - Limited knowledge of processing, preservation, packaging and storage at household and commercial level.
    - Inadequate cold chain facilities to transport perishable products.
        - Limited knowledge on food processing and preservation and storage resulting from inadequate investment in research, training and expertise on food processing, preservation and storage techniques.
        - .
        - Poor beneficiary targeting of processing, preservation and storage interventions was also cited as a reason for the slow progress in arresting food losses and waste. Most small scale farmers are not able to successfully implement food processing, preservation and storage operations at a commercial level and yet they are often the target of these interventions.

3) **Limited market information on healthy foods at all levels of the value chain**: Having market information on healthy foods can help consumers to make healthier food choices. Unfortunately, such information was said to be limited due to lack of market data collection and dissemination systems; inadequate dissemination of information on effects of non-healthy foods as well as inability to utilize various platforms for information sharing.

4) **Inadequate knowledge on nutritious and healthy foods**: Most of the consumers do not have adequate knowledge on nutritious and healthy foods due to weak delivery of nutrition education. This was attributed to inadequate funding and limited social behavior change communication coverage on healthy diets.

5) **Inadequate utilization of traditional foods:** Traditional foods are an important component of sustainable diets and food systems and yet the dialogue indicate that these foods are not adequately utilized due to the following factors:
    - Low appreciation of traditional foods by consumers as a result of lack of promotion of these foods by extension staff compounded by the absence of a government policy and limited research and development on traditional foods.
    - Poor marketing and packaging of traditional foods as well as the presence of improved, high yielding exotic varieties which are well packaged and marketed.

6) **Low dietary diversity and meal frequency for all, especially for vulnerable groups such as women and children**: The ZDHS (2018) indicates that only 23 percent of children aged 6 – 23 months meet the minimum acceptable diets level. This reality was echoed in the dialogue was attributed to low availability of diverse foods, low-income levels and limited knowledge on diverse diets.
7)
8) **Unsustainable harvesting of food**: The dialogue revealed that some foods like fish and non-wood forestry products are not sustainably harvested due to a number of factors including limited knowledge on sustainable harvesting methods, difficulty in enforcing regulations that promote sustainable harvesting practices and limited alternative livelihoods.

9) **Difficulty in enforcing legislation to control sugary, salty and fatty foods:** The high consumption of sugary, salty and fatty foods is a driver to increased non-communicable diseases such as diabetes,

hypertension and cancers. Non availability of regulations to control marketing of sugary, salty and fatty foods.

Opportunities for Action Track # 2

- Presence of natural water bodies, abundant pastureland and forestry resources to boost production of local nutritious foods
- Existence of policy on crop diversification can help in ensuring production of diverse foods
- Demand for sustainably produced foods such as village chickens, sorghum, and millet.
- Skills and labor is available to produce some basic equipment locally
- Increase in demand for the safe storage facilities for use at community and commercial level
- Availability of skills for developing efficient market information platforms
- Availability of processing and preservation business opportunities
- Opportunity to reuse wasted food as organic manure and as a substrate for biogas
- Existence of School Health and Nutrition Guidelines
- Availability of local seeds for nutritious food e.g. cow peas, bambara nuts,
- Presence of institutions such as Zambia Bureau of Standards, Citizen Economic Empowerment Commission, Consumer Competition and Protection Commission
- The existence of agricultural subsidy programmes like E-voucher (FISP)
- Presence of 1000 Most Critical Days Programme II, Enhanced Small-holder Agribusiness Promotion Programme and other similar programmes that promote healthy diets
- Community radio stations to market the farm produce.

Transformative Actions

Table 2: Proposed short- and long-term transformative priorities under Action Track 2

Challenges	**Transformative actions (short term-within 3 years)**	**Transformative actions (Long term-within 10 years**
High prices for sustainably produced foods.	• Provide tax and non-tax-incentives to lower cost of inputs • Create policy direction to control inflation and explore emerging markets	• Invest in local production of inputs currently being imported • Improve production and productivity by investing in farm power and mechanization.
High post-harvest losses and food waste.	• Introduce tax and non-tax incentives for post-harvest technologies like pics bags, silos and refrigeration facilities as well as agro processing equipment. • Promote local and low-cost food processing, preservation and storage technologies to appropriate target groups with a focus on regional competitive and comparative advantage • Improve extension services on processing, preservation and storage • Strengthen vocational and technical training on food	• Promote public private partnerships in processing preservation and storage with a focus on strategic small to large scale processing and aggregating/storage facilities in regions with comparative and competitive advantage in order to improve food aggregation, storage and processing. • Revamp farmer training centers and equip them with appropriate training facilities • Have tailor made processing interventions for subsistence, small scale, emerging and

	processing, preservation and storage technologies • Increase R&D on low-cost food processing, preservation and storage technologies in fruits and vegetables, fish and meat products • Upscale biogas technology to recycle food waste and invest in research to explore other low-cost alternatives • Facilitate affordable financing for food processors • Carry out a post-harvest loss analysis of fruits and vegetables such as mangoes, tomatoes and develop strategy for reducing wastage.	commercial farmers and processors. • Expand markets that can buy and industries that can process perishable products.
Inadequate production and utilization of indigenous traditional foods	• Create incentives to promote production, distribution and consumption of indigenous/traditional foods • Upscale SBCC to popularize the consumption of indigenous/traditional foods	• Conduct research and development on production, processing, preservation, marketing, packaging and storage of indigenous/traditional foods •
Low dietary diversity and meal frequency for all, especially for vulnerable groups such as women and children.	• Upscale SBCC on maternal infant and young child feeding complemented by use of labor-saving technologies with a focus on locally available foods in order to ensure availability of diverse foods • Strengthen market linkages for locally available nutritious foods.	• Promotion of sustainable food diversification and consumption patterns • Increase financial support for high value crops, fisheries and livestock production
Unsustainable harvesting of food e.g fish and non-wood forestry products	• Allocate enough resources for enforcing regulations on sustainable fish harvesting practices	• Introduce community-based management in natural water bodies coupled with alternative livelihoods based on the agro ecological zone potential
Weak control measures on over consumption of sugary, salty and fatty foods	• Introduce SIN tax on sugary, salty and fatty foods • Finalize and disseminate the Food Based Dietary Guidelines (FBDGs) • Conduct SBCC on over consumption of sugary, salty and fatty foods.	• Strengthen food policies, regulation and regulatory bodies • Engaging processors and the hospitality industry on the need to produce healthier through methods such as the Good Food Logo.

3.3. Action Track # 3: Boosting nature-positive food production

Current Challenges and Drivers/Causes

1) Poor farming practices and burning of fields, deforestation

Information gathered during the dialogues reveal that poor farming practices, coupled with burning of the fields and deforestations in general have persistently been a challenge. This has resulted in over-exploitation of natural resources; encroachment into natural forests and other protected areas is destroying the genetic bio-diversity. This problem is exacerbated by the following drivers:

- Long standing cultural embedded ways of food production in most regions of the country
- Limited understanding of the practice on the environment. This is partly attributed to ineffective Extension Services
- Poor enforcement of tree cutting and burning of forest regulations

2. Inadequate capital among small holder farmers and local small-scale enterprises to invest in nature positive production such as organic farming, conservation farming, hydroponics

Smallholder farmers are a key to ending hunger and transformation of the national Food systems. but they are increasingly facing barriers to profitability due to inadequate financial muscle. Many smallholder farmers are locked into low yields (Garrett et al. 2017) and this was attributed to:

Limited or no collateral to help farmers acquire adequate resources for sustainable production

- Lack of financial incentives for farmers practicing nature positive agriculture
- Complicated bank processes, compliance requirements and general customer costs for most financial institutions are not favourable to service small holder farmers.

3. Limited knowledge among farmers on nature-positive production and natural resource management.

There is a significant and persistent disconnect in the knowledge and advisory systems required to support nature-positive production and build the capacity of actors. There is no doubt that the scientific knowledge is tremendous, but the integration with the knowledge of farmers, consumers and citizens is vastly unsatisfactory in Zambia. The time delay between the implementation of system-oriented practices and the resulting benefits, such as yield increases and stability, is an additional obstacle for farmers to adopt new methods. This was linked to the following reasons:

- Inadequate extension services and that nature-positive production is not sufficiently well integrated
- Weak linkage between environmental studies and agricultural production, processing, distribution, and utilization in the school curriculum

4. Inappropriate use of fertilizers, pesticides, herbicides and drugs.

Producing nutritious food and restoring nature requires that we bridge traditional and scientific knowledge to identify locally managed solutions to the linked challenges that plague people and ecosystems. Modern-day farmers are used to fast acting techniques such as fertilizers, pesticides, drugs, ploughing, irrigation and in-field burning of crop residues, in line with short-term investment-profit cycles of today's economy. The dialogues identified the following factors to be responsible for the inappropriate use of fertilizers, pesticides, herbicides and drugs.

- Limited knowledge among farmers on the use of fertilizers, pesticides, herbicides and drugs.
- Lack of harmonized standards and systematic enforcement and weak monitoring mechanism/ framework on application of pesticides, herbicides and antibiotics

5. Use of poor-quality roughage for livestock resulting in greenhouse gas emissions especially methane

There is a direct link between greenhouse gas (GHG) emission intensities and the efficiency with which producers use natural resources. For livestock production systems, nitrous oxide (N2 O), methane (CH4) and carbon dioxide (CO2) emissions, the three main GHG emitted by the sector, are losses of nitrogen (N), energy and organic matter that undermine efficiency and productivity. Zambia has not been spared from this increasing problem because of the use of poor-quality roughage for livestock. Some of the reason for this practice are the following:

- High cost of fodder on procurement and other logistics
- Limited knowledge on type of fodder, production and usage
- Limited land, labour and other resources to support production of fodder
-

6. Low adoption of nature positive production

The increasing pressure on agricultural production systems to achieve global food security and prevent environmental degradation necessitates a transition towards more sustainable practices. Below are the drivers that have resulted in low adoption of nature positive production:

- Limited knowledge on production practices and the need to do so
- Cultural embedded ways of food production e.g. Chitemene
- Inadequate access to capital
- Lack of financial incentives for farmers practicing nature positive agriculture
- Limited land, labour and technology to support nature positive production

7. Unsustainable Capture Fishing practices

These have been perpetuated by the following drivers:

- Poor enforcement of regulations of fishing methods e.g. Fisheries Act Number 22 of 2011
- High poverty and hunger levels

Opportunities for Action Track # 3

The following are some of the opportunities associated with track number 3:

- Abundant arable land and water bodies (lakes, rivers and swamps);
- presence of extension officers under agriculture, fisheries and livestock in some camps as well as forestry officers;
- Some infrastructure for bulking commodities and providing livestock services (dipping, spraying, vaccinations);
- Presence of media houses (community radio stations, social media, ZANIS, NAIS) in the districts;
- Presence of COMACO and MCDP SUN-II Programmes to learn on best practices;
- Good trunk road network
- Availability of Agro and Agro-vet outlets

Transformative actions

A strong and efficient agriculture sector will remain critical for meeting the Zambia's ambitions and commitment to poverty reduction, household food and nutrition security and inclusive economic growth. This will in turn contribute to transformation of the food systems in the country. Based on the identified challenged, the following transformative actions are proposed:

- Implement a holistic, or systems-oriented approach to address the complexity of food and other production systems in different ecologies, locations and cultures in the country
- Create an enabling environment for building natural resource management capacity among the various stakeholders to shape NRM policy in partnership with public and private sectors
- In line with international trends, Zambia will pursue the implementation of Good Agricultural Practices (GAP) as a minimum standard across all production systems to be adhered to by small producers and private enterprises.
- Increase investment and funding in research and development and extension to underpin agricultural innovation, farmers and producers need to be upskilled in various forms of implementations

Table 3: Proposed short- and long-term transformative priorities under Action Track 3

Challenges	Transformative actions (short term-within 3 years)	Transformative actions (Long term-within 10 years
1. Rampant burning of fields and deforestation	• Upscale traditional leadership-led community practices that support nature positive production and natural resource management e.g. regulation on burning, gathering of fruits, caterpillars etc. • Promote agroforestry and use of integrated farming systems where the waste from an enterprise is used as input to another	• Strengthen extension services to prioritize capacity building of farmers on nature-positive production and natural resources management • Promulgate legislation to address nature friendly practices
2. Inadequate capital among small holder farmers and local small-scale enterprises to invest in nature positive production such as organic farming, conservation farming, hydroponics	• Develop financial incentive mechanism for small holder farmers and local small-scale enterprises practicing nature positive production complimented by financial literacy • Deliberate policy to subsidize inputs for nature positive production in the redesigning of FISP	• Increase investments in local production of agricultural inputs to lower the cost of doing business
3. Limited knowledge among farmers on nature-positive production and natural resource management.	• Use lead farmers and other community champions to lead nature positive production • Upscale E-Extension through mass and social media platforms	• Reduce the farmer to extension worker ratio (1 to 40) • Increase budgetary allocation and releases to extension services • Review of school curriculum to strengthen linkage between

	• Capacity building of extension staff on a continuous basis complimented by re-orienting pre-service staff	environmental studies and agricultural production, processing, distribution and utilization in the school curriculum • Introduce agriculture education as early as pre-school • Upscale production Units in schools and higher learning institutions
4. Inappropriate use of fertilizers, pesticides, herbicides and drugs.	• Harmonize standards and ensure systematic enforcement and monitoring mechanism/ framework on application of pesticides, herbicides and antibiotics • Promote use of organic alternatives (Appears also in AT 1)	• Provide adequate training in food safety, Good Agricultural Practices and the use of pesticides, herbicides, drugs and antibiotics among small scale farmers and other users in the food systems
5. Use of poor-quality roughage for livestock resulting in greenhouse gas emissions especially methane and 6. Low adoption of nature positive production	• Enabling investments in fodder production • Engage medium and large scale farmers and private sector in fodder production and create demand for fodder among small livestock producers • Develop financial incentive mechanism for small holder farmers and local small-scale enterprises practicing nature positive production complimented by financial literacy •	• Increase investments in local production of agriculture inputs to lower the cost of doing business • Introduce agriculture education as early as preschool Upscale production Units in schools and higher learning institutions
		•
7. Unsustainable Capture Fishing practices	• Provide alternatives based on regional community management schemes on capture fishing and complement it with alternative livelihoods based on regional potential e.g. rice farming, aquaculture. (Fisheries Act Number 22 of 2011)	• Upscale monitoring and surveillance through provision of equipment

3.4. Action Track # 4: Advancing equitable livelihoods of people involved in food systems

This section presents issues relating to Action Track 4 in terms of key challenges, causes/drivers, opportunities, and ideas for transformative solutions/priorities to advance equitable livelihoods. The dialogues focused on how inequalities in access and utilization of resources and power imbalances including gender, limited infrastructure is consistently constraining the ability of food systems to deliver poverty reduction, wealth creation and sustainable and equitable livelihoods.

Current Challenges and Drivers/Causes

1. **Poor access to markets, financial services, and information especially in rural areas:**

The dialogues noted that access to markets, financial services and information especially in rural areas remains poor. It was noted that the financial services and credit facilities are skewed towards urban areas. The major causes were identified as follows:

- Poor rural infrastructure such as bridges, roads, bulking centre and Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs);
- Limited or no collateral means makes it difficult for small scale farmers to access credit to support small business and enterprisesdevelopment from financial institutions; and

Complicated bank processes, compliance requirements and general customer costs needed makes it lucrative for most financial institutions.

2. **Limited access and ownership of land, agricultural assets, and income by vulnerable groups such as women and youths:** The dialogues observed that there is limited access and ownership of land, agricultural assets, and income by vulnerable groups such as women and youths. These inequalities have affected the income potential and engagement of the vulnerable in economic activities. The result is increased vulnerability of the vulnerable groups mainly the women, youth, elderly and differently abled individuals among others. The major causes identified were:
    - Culture barriers to women ownership of land: Unequitable and limited access to and control over productive assets such as land, finance, and labour especially for women, youth and the physically challenged. Culturead religious beliefs further perpetuate gender bias towards men in ownership and control overassets. There is also male dominance over social and economic decision-making processes and this results in limited participation and benefits for women in household and community development programs;

3. **Limited access to income/capital to start-up economic activities:** The dialogues noted that access to income or capital start up and engage in economic activities continue to be a critical great challenge. It was noted that most Zambians have limited income and access to capital to actively engage in various economic activities.

    The major underlying factors included:
    - High cost of borrowing/credit makes it difficult for small scale farmers and small business enterprises to access credit to expand their agriculture activities and businesses. This means that small scale and small business enterprises cannot expand their production and business ventures significantly.
    - Financial illiteracy characterises most citizenry especially in rural areas. Almost 30 years since the country reverted to a free market economy, Zambia lacks a financially literate population to drive economic activity. High levels of financial illiteracy means most citizens are not aware of various financing, how to access them and furthermore repayment modalities.

4. **Inappropriate/poor targeting of developmental interventions:** The dialogues noted that targeting of beneficiaries in most development and social protection programmes in Zambia remains largely poor. This increases inequalities and generation poverty as vulnerable groups are likely to remain in extreme poverty.The major causes/drivers were identified as follows:

- Poor monitoring of development programmes like FISP implies that programme/project implementation is not tracked routinely and this results into failure of development programmes to meet intended goals and maximise benefits to communities; and
- Poor beneficiary categorisation affects desirable returns of programme benefits and results into increased inequalities of beneficiaries in project/programme implementation regions.

Opportunities for Action Track # 4

- Zambia's Vision 2030 (2006-2030) aims to transform Zambia into a prosperous middle-income nation and create a "strong and dynamic middle-income industrial nation that provides opportunities for improving the well-being of all, embodying values of socio-economic justice." The vision has the potential to open the economy, create wealth and create an enabling environment for sustainable alternative livelihoods and integral social economic development.

- There is political will to transform economy. This is evident in the first Presidential address of His Excellency Hakainde Hichilema in the first session of the 13th National Assembly in which he stated that his government will focus on creating a United, Progressive and Equitable Zambia which will enable restoring economic Growth and safeguard livelihoods for all Zambians.

- Existence of rural infrastructure such as bridges, roads, bulking centres and ICT will maximize available market systems and reduce cost of doing business. Bulking centres, warehouses/sheds exist at community level for aggregation and storage before transporting to processing sites or markets.

- Existence of the platform for Chiefs and Traditional Issues makes it easier to continuously engage traditional leaders in addressing cultural bottlenecks associated with allocation and ownership of land by women and other vulnerable groups

- Existence of Department of National Development Planning has the potential to enhance equitable livelihood opportunities and consolidate existing synergies through coordinated multisectoral planning, implementation, monitoring and supervision of development programmes.

- Availability of social protection, safety nets and economic enhancement development programs like Farmers Support Programme (FSP), Social Cash Transfer (SCT), Women Empowerment Programme (WEP), among others, that target vulnerable groups such as women, youths and the elderly.

- Steady growth in the financial sector has seen an increased number of microfinance institutions and informal community-based credit structures that have the potential to finance small scale entrepreneurships.

- Inclusion of financial literacy programmes in financial institutions operational frameworks provides an opportunity for more financial education. With increased financial literacy, the population is bound to benefit from the various financial services and credit to ensure expansions of production and businesses to ensure sustainable livelihoods; and

Transformative actions

This section provides the proposed transformative and systemic solutions/priorities to address the challenges and advance food systems transformation with focus on Action Track 4.

Table 4: Proposed short- and long-term transformative priorities under Action Track 4

Challenges	Transformative actions (short term-within 3 years)	Transformative actions (Long term-within 10 years
1. Poor access to markets, financial services and information especially in rural areas	• Upscale rehabilitation and construction of rural infrastructure • Increase innovative market information platforms	• Upscale rehabilitation and construction of rural infrastructure
	• Support land documentation of small-scale holders to ensure they have Title Deeds	
	. • Strengthen the advocacy function of farmer commodity associations on access to financial inclusions of farmers • Promote financial literacy initiatives for farmers and small businesses • Promote alternative livelihoods according to regional potential •	Promote alternative livelihoods according to regional potential
2. Limited access and ownership of land, agricultural assets, and income by vulnerable groups such as women and youths.	• Continuous engagement of traditional leadership on land allocation for women and the youth • Continue raising advocacy to traditional leadership to allocate more land to vulnerable groups	
3. Limited access to income/ capital for start-up for economic activities	• Support advancement of community and private sector led lending opportunities that are affordable to low income groups especially vulnerable groups (youths, women, different abled)	
4. Inappropriate/poor targeting of developmental interventions e.g. technology dissemination, FISP	• Develop and implement multisectoral monitoring and supervision mechanisms of development programmes • Redesign development programmes to improve targeting • Harmonise database of beneficiaries	

3.5. Action Track # 5: Building resilience to vulnerabilities, shocks and stresses

The multisectoral consultative dialogues facilitated at various levels provided the country an opportunity for an in-depth analysis and understanding of the vulnerabilities, shocks and stresses including emerging challenges such as COVID-19 that has hindered achievement of sustainable food systems due to restricted movements, changes in consumer demand, closure of food facilities, restricted food trade policies and financial pressures in the food supply chain. The dialogues have resulted in practical cross sectoral transformative recommendations to build resilience.

Current Challenges and Drivers/Causes

(a) Recurring droughts, floods, pests and diseases (human, livestock, crop)

The dialogues brought to the fore the fact that like many developing nations, Zambia is inundated with multidimensional hazards and risks that impede its development. Climatic hazards such as prolonged dry spells, droughts, floods, extreme temperatures, pests and diseases have in recent years increased in frequency and severity. These shocks have been exacerbated by economic shocks resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic. The key causes/drivers identified by the dialogues were as follows:

- ***Change in climate*** has resulted in unreliable rainfall patterns, prolonged dry spells, floods, increased pests, and diseases which has negatively affected agricultural production and food security negatively affecting the adaptive capacity of individuals and communities.
- ***Deforestation*** as people clear land for settlements and agriculture including the production of charcoal and fuelwood as an energy source. The uncontrolled clearing of forests has led to land degradation.
- ***Unsustainable land use practices*** involving improper traditional farming practices which do not use soil and water conservation techniques including overgrazing.
- ***Inadequate extension services*** due to limited investment in both financial, human resource and human capacity in combating pests and diseases.
- ***Weak early warning system***

The dialogue synthesis noted that even though early warning systems exist they are fragmented and therefore does not garner a holistic response plan. Even when information is available it is not easily shared among stakeholders. There has been more emphasis on emergency response actions to disasters than resilience building. The emphasis on response to protracted emergencies has exacerbated vulnerabilities of individuals and communities by not inculcating resilience. The identified key drivers/cause were:

- ***Uncoordinated sectorial early warning systems*** continues to hamper a coordinated response
- ***Inadequate focus on resilience building and early warning*** making the current emergency response skewed towards humanitarian action and less on resilience building. This has resulted in disproportionate investment in humanitarian interventions without strengthened resilience building exposing the poorest and the most vulnerable populations to increasing hazards and risks
- ***Inadequate human capacity and technology to collect and collate early warning information at sector and national level*** prevents accurate forecasting and simulation of disaster related events as well as development of appropriate response actions.

- ***Weak implementation of the vulnerability assessment framework*** which does not cover all types of calamities (focuses more on drought, floods and cholera outbreaks). It is done once a year defeating the purpose of a surveillance systems and is not able to support early warning and action as well as resilience building. The framework is not harmonised to provide guidance on data collection, collation and synthesis of information.

(b) Slow adoption of climate smart agriculture and other climate adaptation measures

- ***Culture*** influences continued use of traditional farming practices resulting in low production, productivity and resilience among smallholder farmers.

Opportunities for Action Track #5

- *Existence of the 2016 National policy on Climate Change* which provides the framework for coordinated response to climate change issues among stakeholders, giving guidance on how the Zambian economy can grow in a sustainable manner.
- *Ministry of Finance – Climate Change Secretariat, National Adaptation Plan 2021-2023*- Existence of entities and policy documents that facilitate the implementation of climate change interventions.
- *Existence of the Disaster Management and Mitigation Unit and support structures at national, provincial, district and community levels* – which coordinates and implements actions before, during and after disaster outbreaks.
- *Existence of Meteorological department* – to provide and disseminate rainfall forecasts to inform development of sector plans or strategies.
- *Presence of humanitarian and development partners* – providing financial and technical support to humanitarian and development programmes.
- *Programmes and interventions implemented by the government and partners* –being implemented in the country such as Pilot Programme for Climate Resilience, Transforming Landscapes for Resilience and Development in Zambia, Zambia Integrated Forest Landscape Project.
- *Presence of community radio stations* to facilitate quick and sustained information dissemination.

Transformative actions

Table 5: Proposed short- and long-term game changing priorities under Action Track 5

Challenges	Transformative actions (short term-within 3 years)	Transformative actions (Long term-within 10 years
Recurring droughts, floods, pests and diseases (human, livestock, crop**).**	• Roll out formation of village food banks particularly in disaster prone areas. • Increase investment in coordinated surveillance for pest control and management activities. • Upscale weather-based index insurance to provide relief in the event of prolonged dry spells/droughts and floods particularly for smallholder farmers.	• Support and promote agricultural diversification/alternative livelihoods to build resilience. • Invest in small scale irrigation technologies. • Support smart agricultural practices and production technologies such as hydroponics including zero tax exemptions on equipment. • Upscale social protection interventions in communities with appropriate targeting across vulnerabilities in the three agro ecological zones. Enhance capacity of community seed producers for legumes, vegetables, grains, tubers, and vines.
Weak early warning systems.	• Review the current early warning system and response framework for more coordinated and effective multisectoral approach. • Provide sufficient human capacity, technology and equipment to collect and collate early warning information at sector and national level. • Harmonise standards/procedures for collecting data, analysing, and reporting among stakeholders.	• Review and realign the roles of DMMU to make it equally responsive to resilience building in addition to emergency response including housing a common repository for information sharing.
Slow adoption of climate smart agriculture and other climate adaptation measures	• Continued Social Behaviour Change and Communication to promote adoption of climate smart agricultural practices. • Improve natural resources management.	• Continued Social Behaviour Change and Communication to promote adoption of climate smart agricultural practices.

4.0 ENABLING ENVIRONMENT FOR CHANGE

Achieving healthier and sustainable food systems can be challenging given the diversity of actors and the environments influencing their operations. A poor environment may arise from systems failure which includes weak unstable trade policies, enforcement of regulations, conservative social norms, weak or inexistent institutions, and inadequate networks, knowledge and competences. Creating enabling environment at all levels of the food value chain is a crucial component in achieving food systems change. An enabling environment for change can be social networks, political, natural environment, economic and regulatory.

Public investment. Government investment in agricultural sector has remained low and in fact declined from 9.4% of GDP in 2017 to 3.7% in 2020 with a slight increase to 6.7% 2021. Zambia needs to invest at least 10% of GDP to agriculture and specifically to the key drivers of growth, such as research and development, training and extension, rural infrastructure (such as feeder roads, communication etc.), while mainstreaming environmental sustainability and climate resilience in the implementation of programmes and activities to transform the food system.

Policy Environment: Policy plays an important role in creating an environment in which food system actors can optimize their outcomes. Specifically, stable agricultural and food market and trade policies have been identified as major driving factors to transitioning to a more sustainable food system. Zambia will need to ensure stable trade policies on agricultural input and output markets to enable availability of affordable agricultural inputs as well access to efficient output markets.

Institutional environment: Zambia has supportive regulatory frameworks, which if implemented can promote and support the food systems transforming. To achieve this, there is need for supportive institutions to ensure regulations on various activities throughout the food value chain are in place and operationalized.

Human Capital: Knowledge and competences: Skilled and available experts around the food value chain is good ingredient to transform food systems. For example, in agriculture, agricultural experts particularly in extension and research and development is critical to support change in food systems. Changing practices can positively enhance transformation of the food systems as such Social Behavioral Change Communication remains critical at all levels of the food value chain.

Strong resilience to drought and COVID-19: Building resilience to drought and pandemics including Covid-19 and any other pandemics is required across all food system elements (environment, people, inputs, processes, infrastructures, and institutions) and activities from production, processing, distribution to preparation and consumption of food and waste management. COVID-19 has had impact in the whole process from production to consumer and disposal. Movement restrictions are among the direct effect of COVID-19 on food trade and consumptions.

Coordination

Success in implementing the identified actions requires effective coordination, backed by improved monitoring and evaluation of progress towards the objectives. On nutrition interventions, Zambia has made progress by coordination of interventions and activities at national, provincial, district and sub-district levels, led by the NFNC. There is a need to develop similar coordination and implementation mechanisms across the food system for improved outcomes.

5.0 CONCLUSION AND NEXT STEPS

Even though Zambia has generated the Transformative Actions that are supposed to guide defining the food systems pathways, dialogues with the Private Sector are yet to be undertaken as such need to be considered. These are a set of stakeholders that play a major role among some of the value chain steps. Therefore, even as we contribute to the UN Food Systems Summit in September 2021, work will continue until the pathways are agreed upon by various stakeholders before actualisation. The government's ministries, civil society organisations, UN System, academia and researchers with the general public that participated in the dialogues, and all provided valuable information based on their perspectives of our food systems. This showed that our food systems can be transformed to better provide sustainable, equitable and resilient food systems towards attaining the vision 2030 and the 17 Sustainable Development Goals.

The transformed FS will also help Zambia achieve its 2030 developmental vision of becoming a prosperous middle-income country which is centred on seven key basic principles: (i) sustainable development; (ii) upholding democratic principles; (iii) respect for human rights; (iv) fostering family values; (v) a positive attitude to work; (vi) peaceful coexistence; and (vii) upholding good traditional values.

Indeed, the dialogues identified key challenges which affect the food systems in the country. The drivers or causes and the opportunities to leverage on to address those challenges across the five action tracks were identified together with the transformative actions that have been proposed for implementation at both national and subnational level with focus on the vulnerable and poor segments of the population. The proposed transformative actions will succeed if the country embraces all stakeholders and beneficiaries Without leaving anyone behind.

As way forward after the summit, there is need for further consultation especially with the private sector involved in the food systems. This will result in a Strategic national food system pathways document that can be translated into practical and doable actions. This will also call for enhanced coordination among different stakeholders at all levels with clearly defined roles and commitments.

The dialogue outcomes are already seen to be aligned and contributing to the Zambia's economic development Vision 2030. It is desired that the proposed transformative actions for the food systems will also align, inform and contribute to the Eighth National Development Plan and other sectoral policies and strategic plans

Lastly political will and commitment to support implementation of the transformative food systems pathways will be needed especially to put in place sound policies and programmes to help deliver the long-term commitment (10+ years) that is able to attract funding and investment for implementation. In this regard key stakeholders will be requested to make commitments and to collaborate with the Government of Zambia to actualise the transformative national food pathways.

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