

# A Snapshot of Food-Based Dietary Guidelines Implementation in Selected Countries

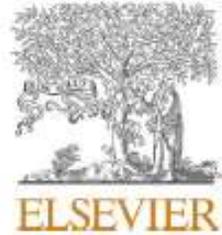
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of the United Nations**

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### A snapshot of food-based dietary guidelines implementation in selected countries

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Food education  
Food systems approach

#### ABSTRACT

Governments use food-based dietary guidelines (FBDGs) to outline what constitutes a healthy diet to guide their population. The potential of FBDGs to align national food-related policies and programmes is increasingly recognized but information on FBDG implementation is scarce. We conducted a key informant survey in 27 countries. Several types of implementation activities were identified within various sectors and settings, although there were few examples from low- and middle-income countries. Most countries had an official body responsible for implementation, but a strategy/plan for implementation and budget allocation were less common, and very few collected monitoring and evaluation data. We argue for a food systems approach that involves sectors beyond nutrition and health in the development and implementation of FBDGs, to facilitate the alignment of policies that aim to promote healthy eating.

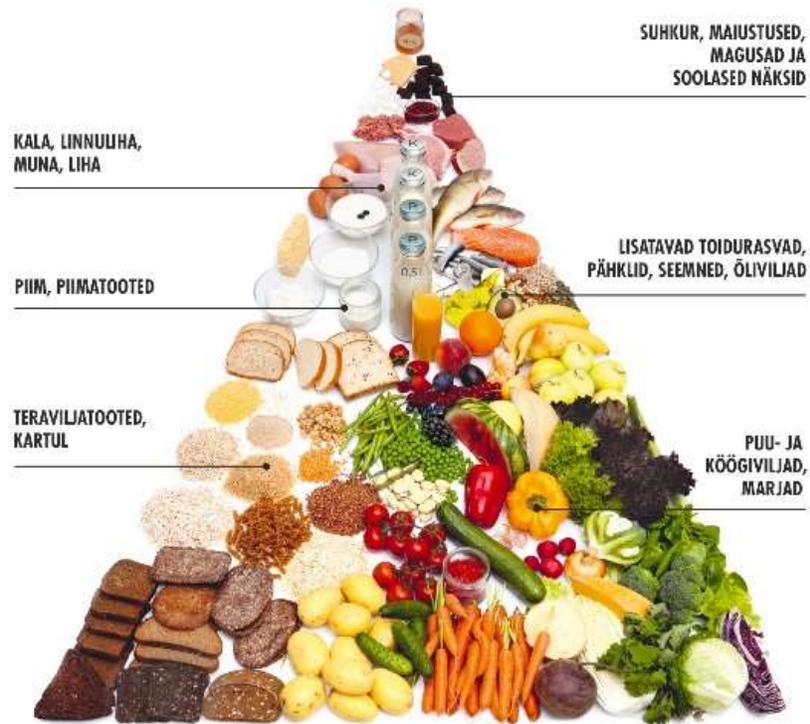
# Why dietary guidelines?

- Healthy diet - setting. Differ from one country to another.
- Traditional role: to inform consumers - food and nutrition education
- Potential to “*inform and guide policymaker actions not simply to inform or encourage individuals*” – GLOPAN 2020



# What is the reality?

## TOIDUPÜRAMIID SOOVITUSLIK EESTI ELANIKU NÄDALA TOIDULAUD

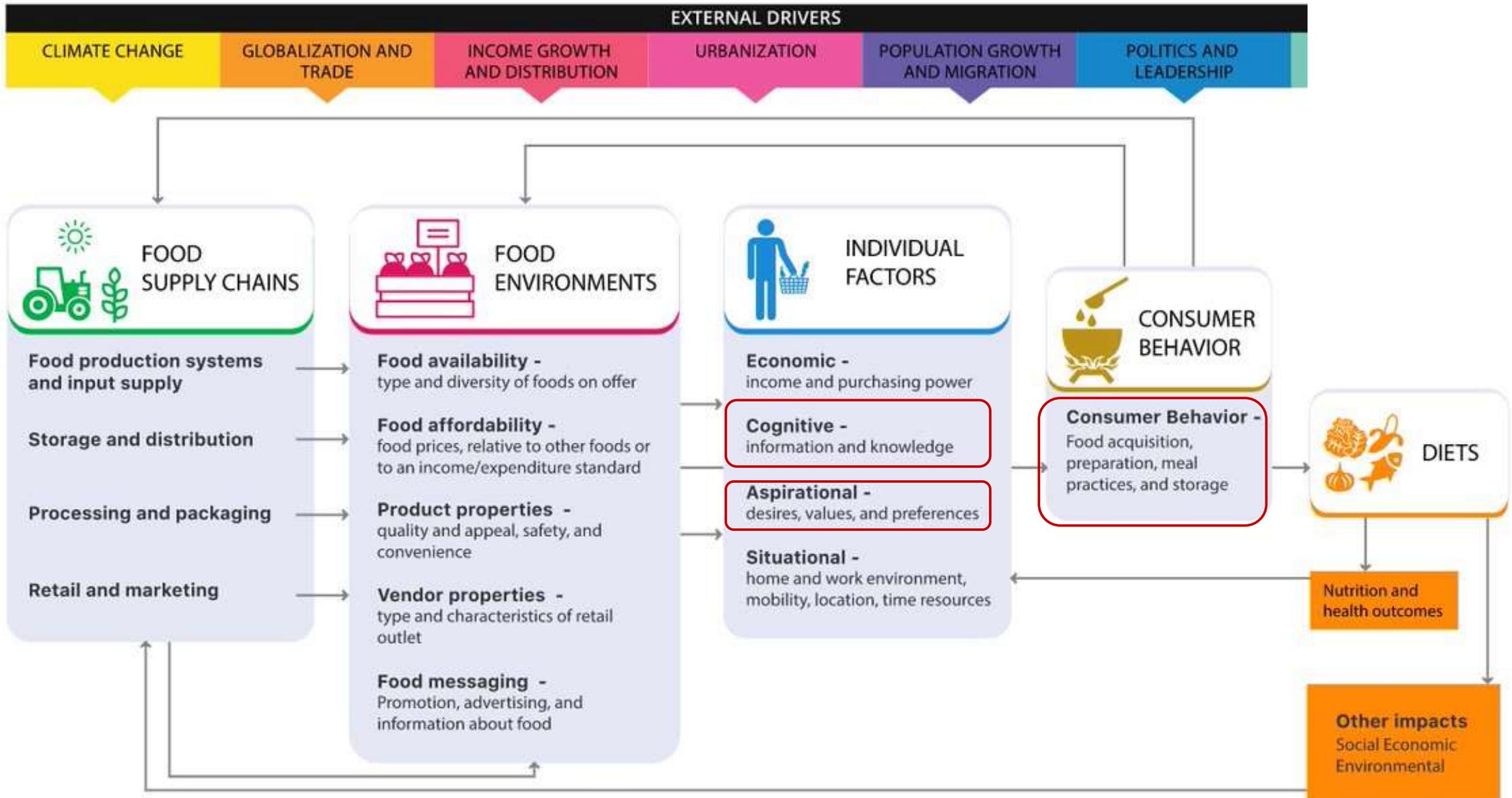


Nädala näitlikud toidukogused 2000 koali energiasvajaduse korra

## RAHVASTIKU TOITUMISE UURING: TEGELIK EESTI ELANIKU NÄDALA TOIDULAUD



Keskmiselt 2000 koali tarbinud inimese nädalane toidukogus.



ADAPTED FROM: HLPE (2017). NUTRITION AND FOOD SYSTEMS. A REPORT BY THE HIGH LEVEL PANEL OF EXPERTS ON FOOD SECURITY AND NUTRITION OF THE COMMITTEE ON WORLD FOOD SECURITY, ROME, ITALY.

# Other elements that reduce the efficacy of dietary guidelines?



Limited engagement of sectors and stakeholders



Evidence base not comprehensive or up to date



Limited transparency



Over-emphasis on disseminating messages and graphics



Lack of robust monitoring and evaluation



# How are countries actually implementing

## Terminology:

**Dissemination:** Activities that aim to inform the public about the FBDG messages using different channels (e.g. videos, songs, websites) and communication materials (e.g. leaflets and posters).

**Implementation:** Strategies that embed FBDGs in national policies and programmes, and apply and activate them in different sectors (e.g. health, agriculture, education) and settings (e.g. schools, communities and workplaces).

# What we did

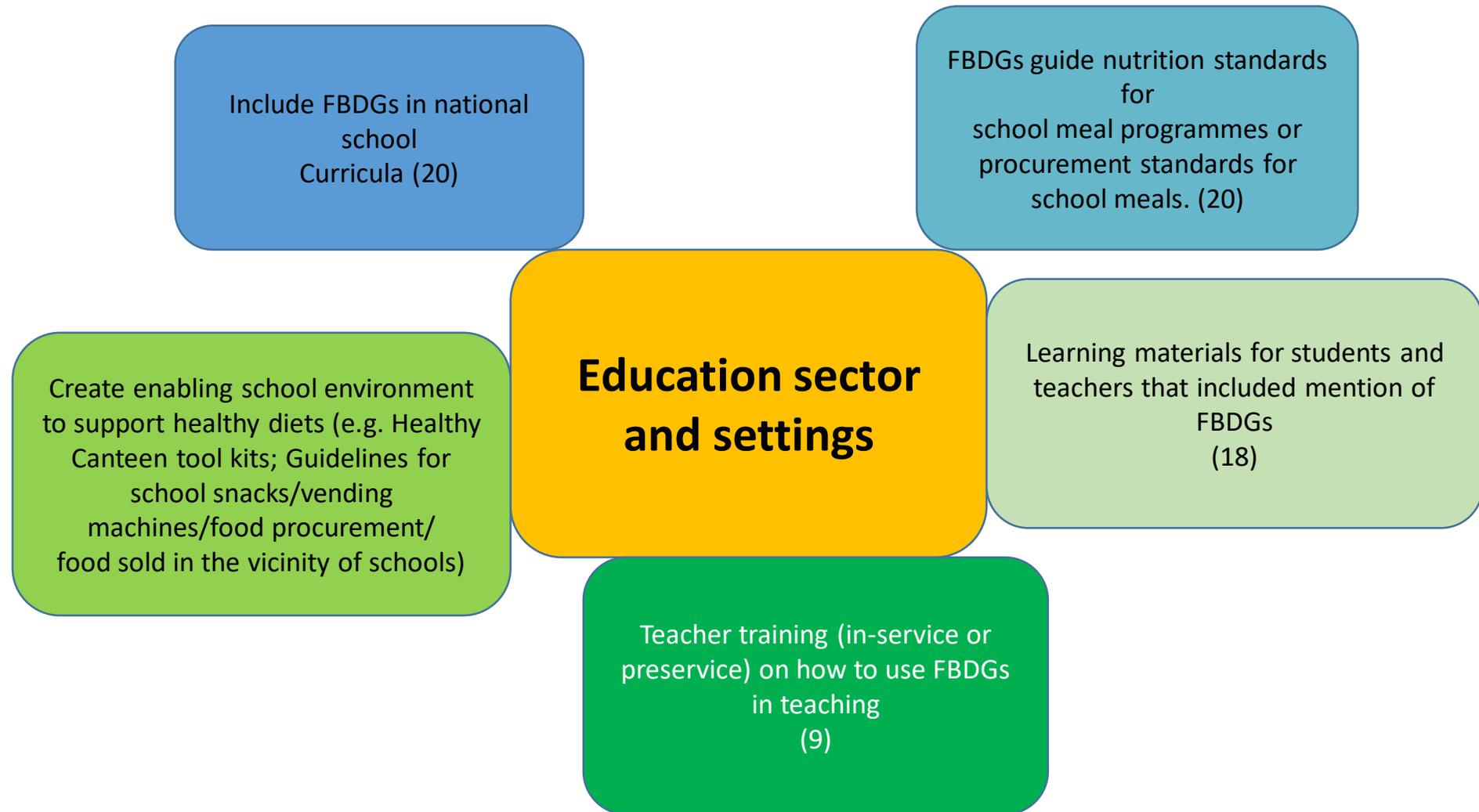
**A Literature review** (Web of Science, Pubmed, Scopus) in English + grey literature and references cited. Findings from the literature review shaped questions to be asked of key informants in different countries.

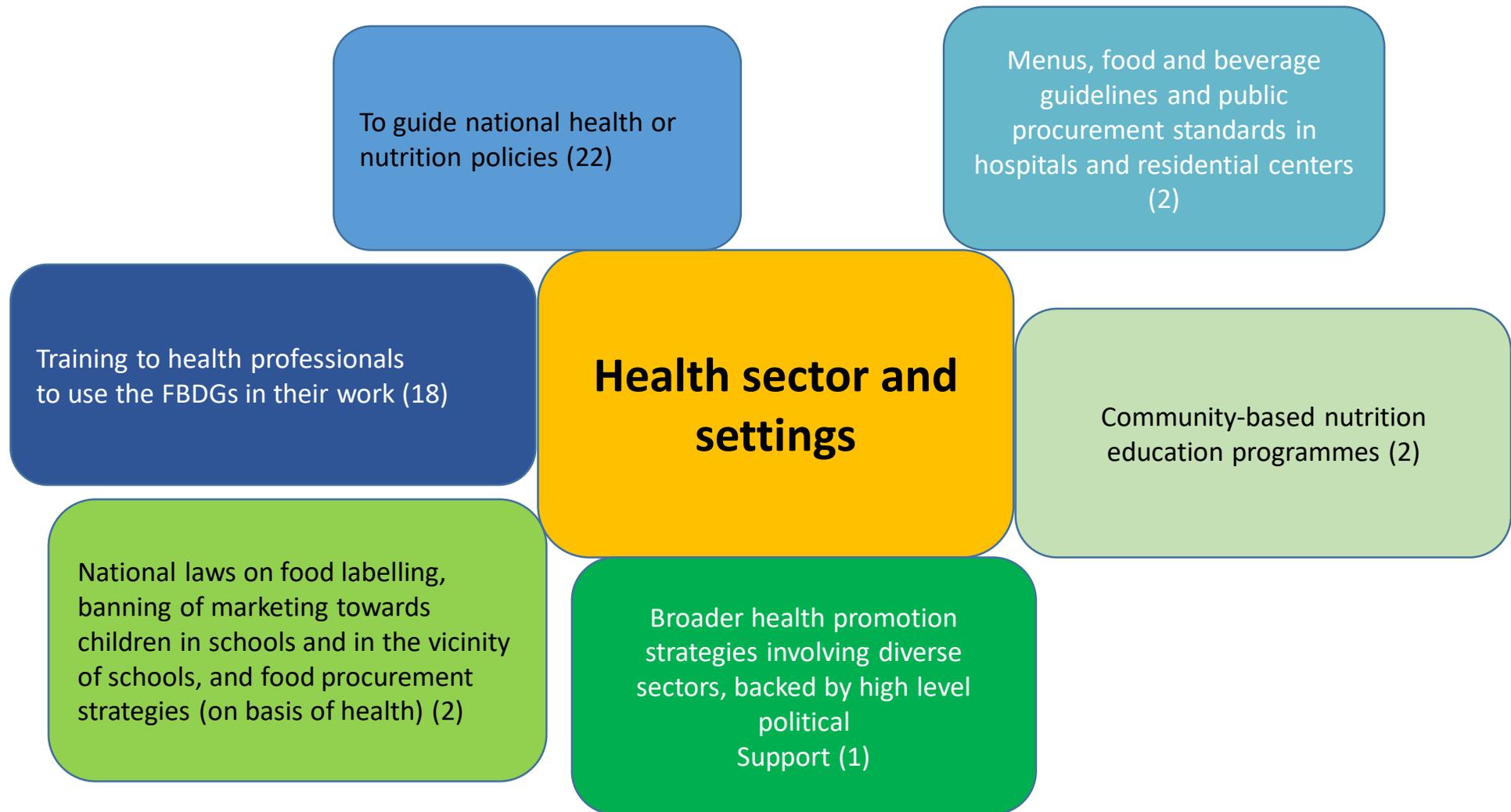
**Key informant Survey** covering 27 countries from different geographical areas (but mainly UMIC/HICs). Responses from 41 Key informants from different sectors.

Criteria for selecting key informants were: key informants for previous FAO FBDGs surveys; experts who attended FAO workshops on development and implementation of the FBDGs; country focal points of the FBDGs; authors of published articles identified from the literature review.

# Findings: Status of FBDGs implementation

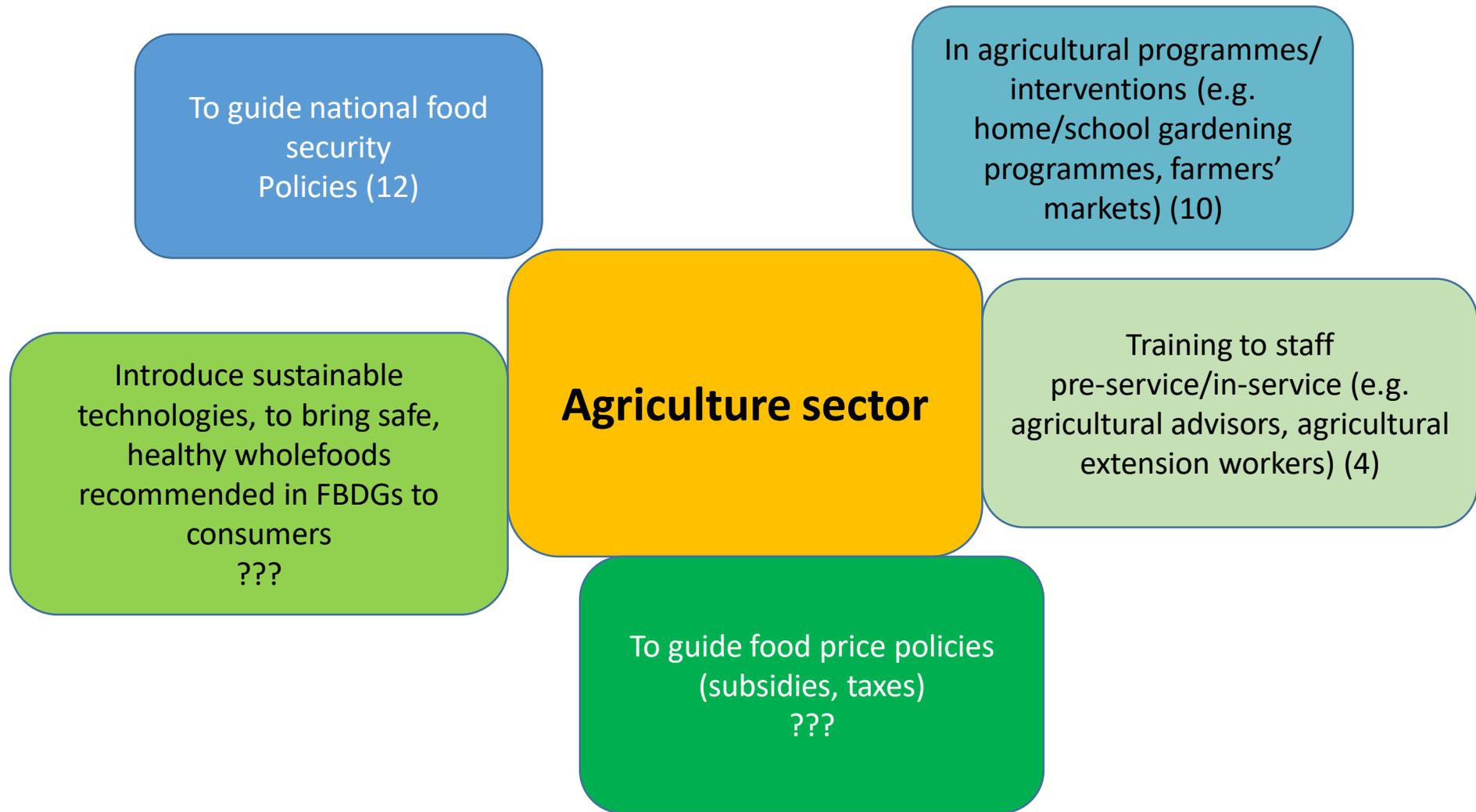
- 24/27 countries reported having an official body responsible for implementation
- Majority MoH
- 14 had implementation strategy/plan
- 11 had budget allocated for both implementation and dissemination;
- 7 reported having M&E for FBDGs implementation/ dissemination programmes.

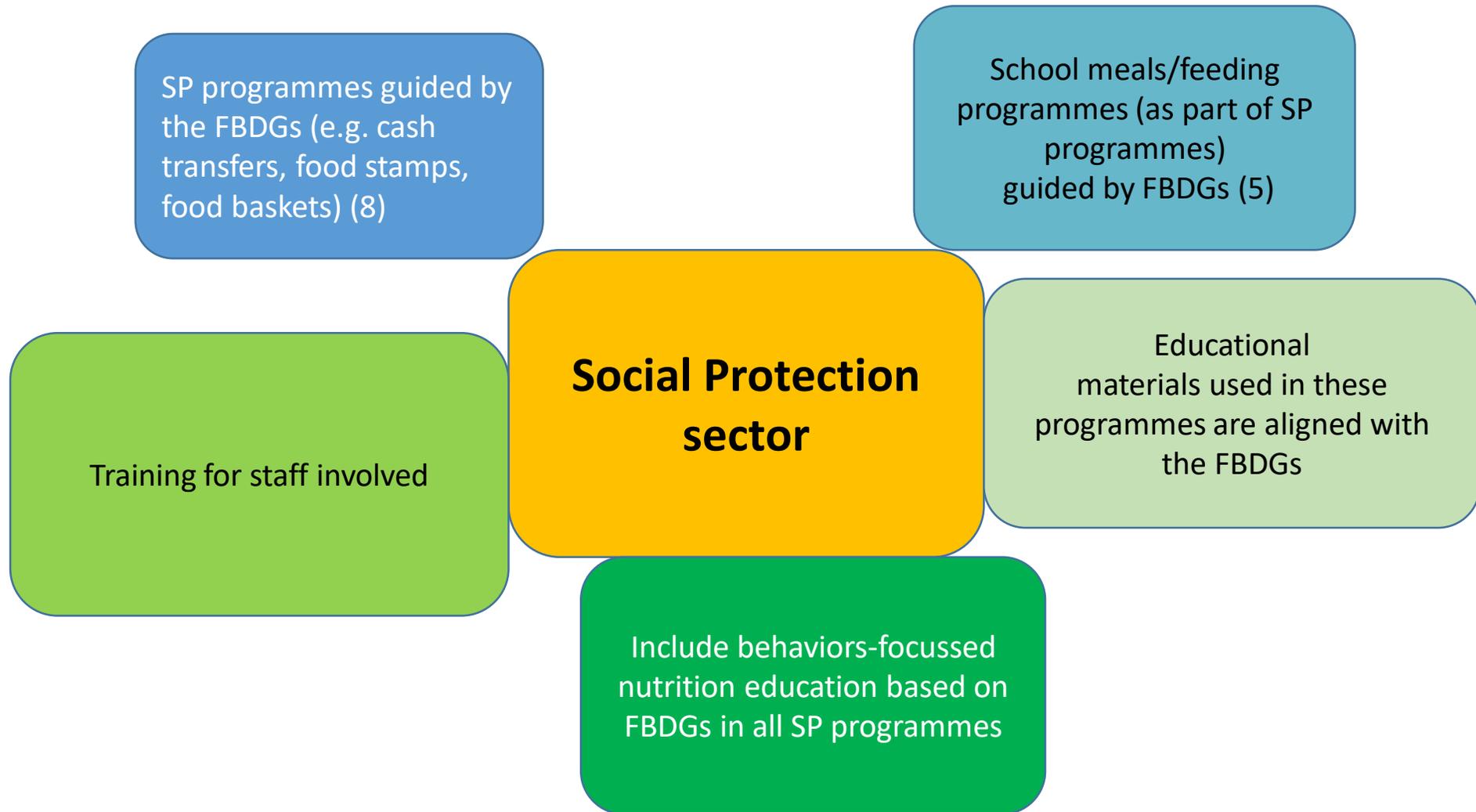




Country	Health workers	Midwives	Nurses	Nutritionists	Physicians	Other professionals e.g. care workers, physiotherapist etc.
Afghanistan						
Brazil						
Chile						
Costa Rica						
Finland						
Germany						
Grenada						
Guyana						
Iran						
Malaysia						
Malta						
Norway						
Qatar						
Republic of Korea						
South Africa						
Sri Lanka						
Sweden						
USA						

Fig. 3. Health professionals receiving in-service or pre-service training on how to use the FBDGs in their work.





# Implementation by the private sector/food industry

- Food industry, restaurants or caterers have activities promoting the FBDGs or have used them to guide their practices (16)
- Some actions to comply with country legislation (mandatory, not voluntary)
  - Food reformulation to conform to the FBDGs;
  - Food labelling according to criteria guided by FBDGs;
  - Promotion or advertising of foods recommended in the FBDGs.
- Denmark Danish Wholegrain Partnership: public/private partnership promoting FBDGs message “Choose wholegrains”. Retailers and food industry partners promote novel wholegrain products.
- Brazil: FBDGs guide the improvement in nutritional quality of processed foods based on voluntary agreements and gradual reduction of *trans*-fat and sodium.
- Chile: law to regulate food labelling & marketing. FBDGs one of the criteria to set standards.
- Brazil & Chile: integrated FBDGs to guide the regulation of advertising foods high in sugar, fat and sodium directed at children.
- Front-of-pack labelling guided by the FBDGs or supported by mention in the FBDGs: Chile (Stop Signs), Uruguay, the Nordic Keyhole used in Sweden, Denmark, Norway and Lithuania, Finland (Heart Symbol), traffic lights used in the UK, and the National Strategic Partners Initiative with ChooseMyPlate in USA.

# Use by Civil Society Organizations

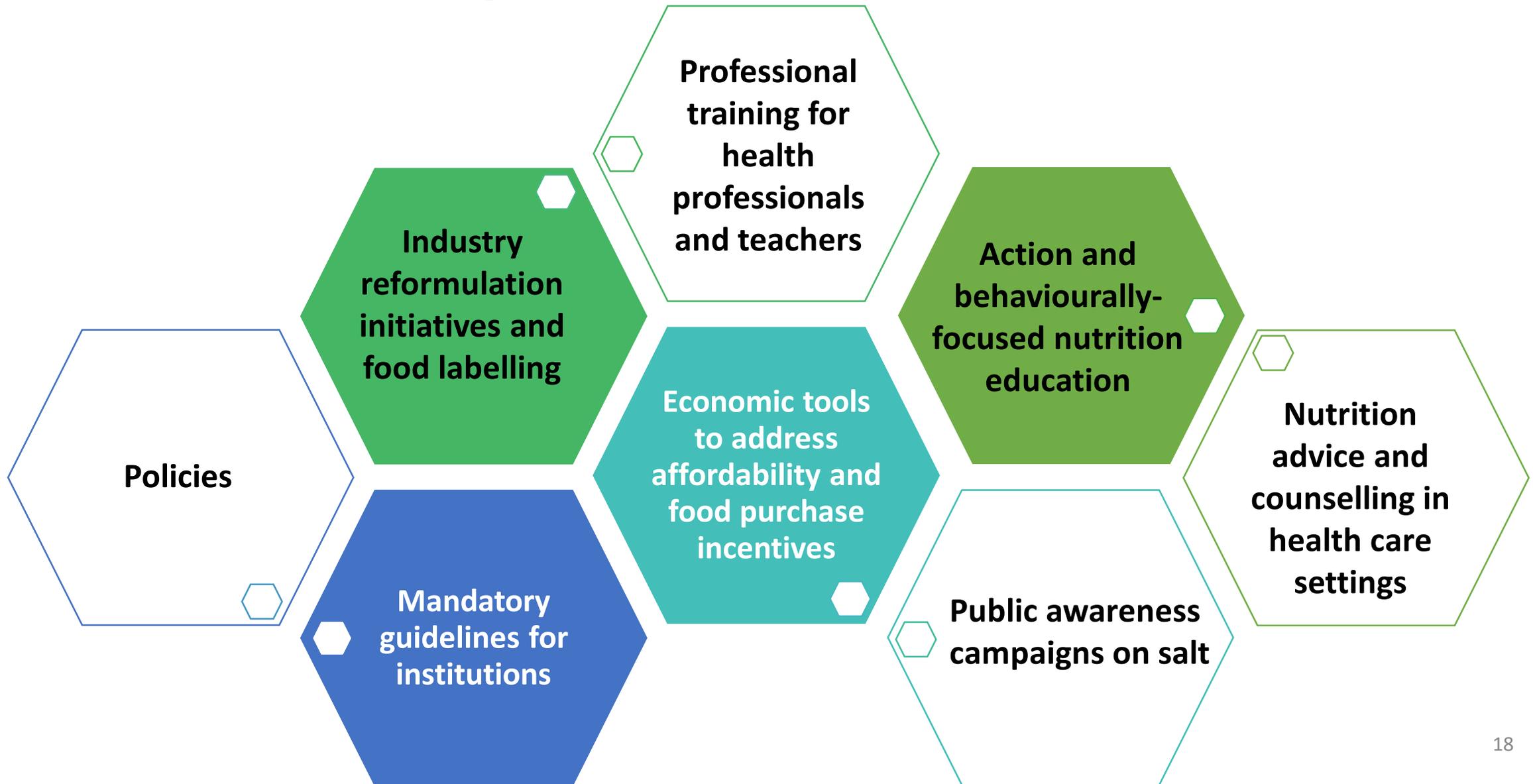
- CSOs including NGOs use the guidelines, although mostly for dissemination activities.
- Frequently mentioned organizations: cancer, diabetes and heart associations.
- Malaysia: “Nutrition Month Malaysia (NMM)” (led by Nutrition Society of Malaysia) - FBDGs are disseminated through educational materials
- The Brazilian Institute for Consumer Defence disseminates the Brazilian Dietary Guidelines and promotes events such as debates.
- In Denmark, Finland and Iceland, the Cancer Society and diabetes and heart associations take part in the private/public partnerships as well as advocacy initiatives.
- (USA: very many NGOs use the FBDGs, too numerous to list.)

# Dissemination in mass media and social media

Question focused on dissemination activities that allowed interaction with the public, to promote the FBDGs

- Mass media campaigns (16 countries)
- Interactive social media campaigns with online discussions and posting of seasonal recipes (Denmark, Netherlands)
- Professional dietary advice aligned with FBDGs provided via Facebook (Iceland)
- Brazil: online course “Real Food” on healthy diets with Celebrity Chef and a leading Public Health researcher. (Videos on principles of the Brazilian Food Guide and how to apply them in cooking, a blog site, recipes and cook books guided by the FBDGs)
- Social marketing campaigns to promote the FBDGs and Nordic Keyhole using FB, Instagram, Twitter and YouTube (Denmark, Norway, Finland, Iceland)
- Costa Rica: the "Pongale vida" both implementation dissemination activities (e.g. targeting teenagers on FB page of the MoH with messages on healthy eating and FBDGs).
- Radio, TV programmes and news articles to promote the FBDGs (India, Belize and Guatemala)
- FBDGs publicized by the MoH Facebook page (10 countries)
- Qatar: Brochures, billboards and cinema commercials to disseminate the FBDG messages

# Example from Finland: a multipronged approach to implementing FBDGs



# Barriers reported, to implementing FBDGs

- Lack of resources (financial and human).
- Poor collaboration/ ownership among sectors
- Conflicting interests (e.g. food and agriculture policies oriented to market economy, industry lobbying, mass media and marketing)
- People's attitudes (e.g. traditional beliefs, lack of interest).

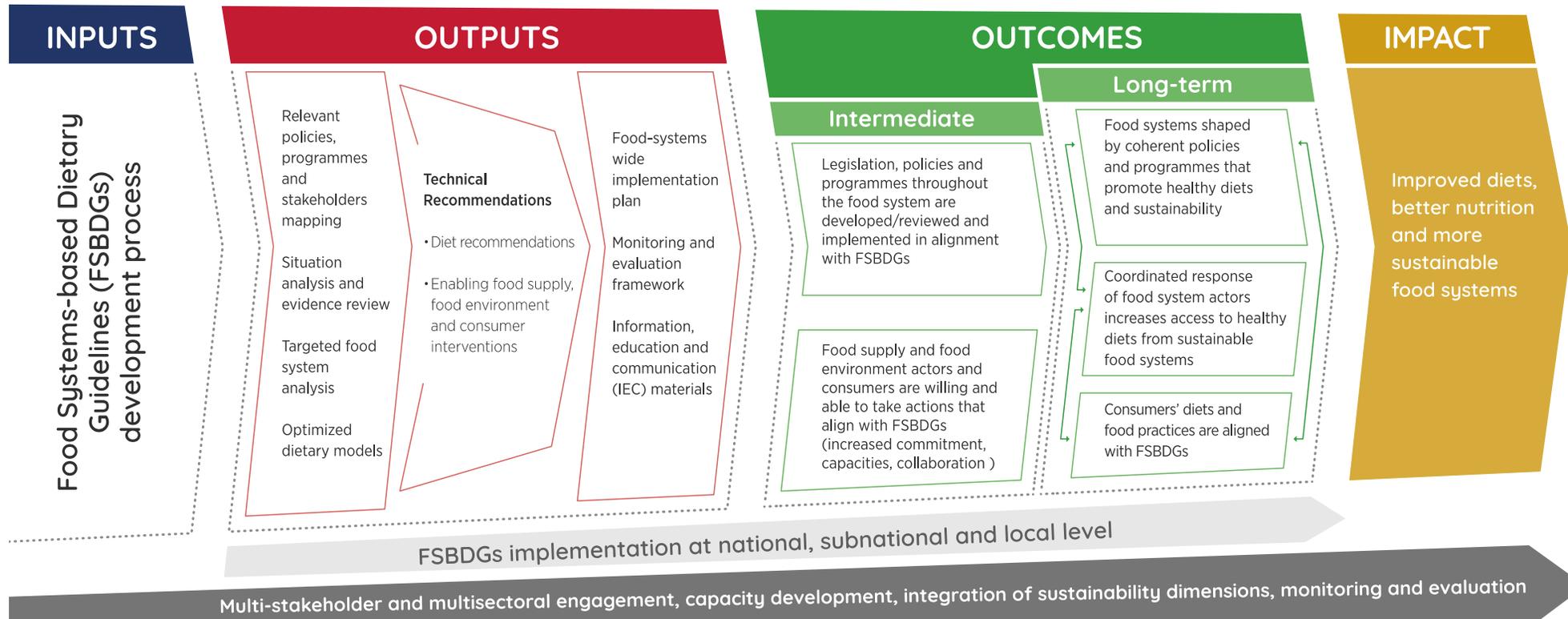
# What is needed?

- FBDGs development using a food systems approach => FAO new food-systems based dietary guidelines methodology (FSBDGs), forthcoming
- Cross sectoral implementation of FBDGs (to inform policies; help shape food environments; & educate individuals)
- Urgent need for foods and meals that are nutritious while being convenient and affordable => clear guidelines to engage the food industry in FBGDs implementation
- Good planning (implementation strategy incl. communication strategy & advocacy strategy - different sectors and levels of implementation - clear roles and responsibilities, timelines and funding sources; socio-ecological framework)
- Funding, budget allocations
- Capacity development of those who use the FBDGs in their work
- M&E

# FAO's upcoming methodology



## THEORY OF CHANGE



### ASSUMPTIONS

- Political will and commitment of relevant entities to support the development or revision of the FSBDGs and to implement them
- Sufficient and continuous human and financial resources and time allocated to develop, revise and implement the FSBDGs
- There is an enabling environment for multisectoral and multidisciplinary collaboration and coordination to jointly develop, revise and implement the FSBDGs across the food system
- There is openness and willingness to undertake the process in a transparent way, with clear principles of engagement and with continuous monitoring and evaluation
- FSBDGs will influence directly and coherently the goals and instruments of national food-related policies, investments and action plans across the food system





Food and Agriculture Organization  
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# Thank you!

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# Implementation of the Ethiopia FBDGs

October, 2022

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**Strengthening the MS and development of joint  
FBDGs Implementation Plan**



**Development and validation of Information,  
Education and Communication Kit/SBCC Materials**



**Pilot Implementation and Scaling-up**



# EXPECTED RESULTS

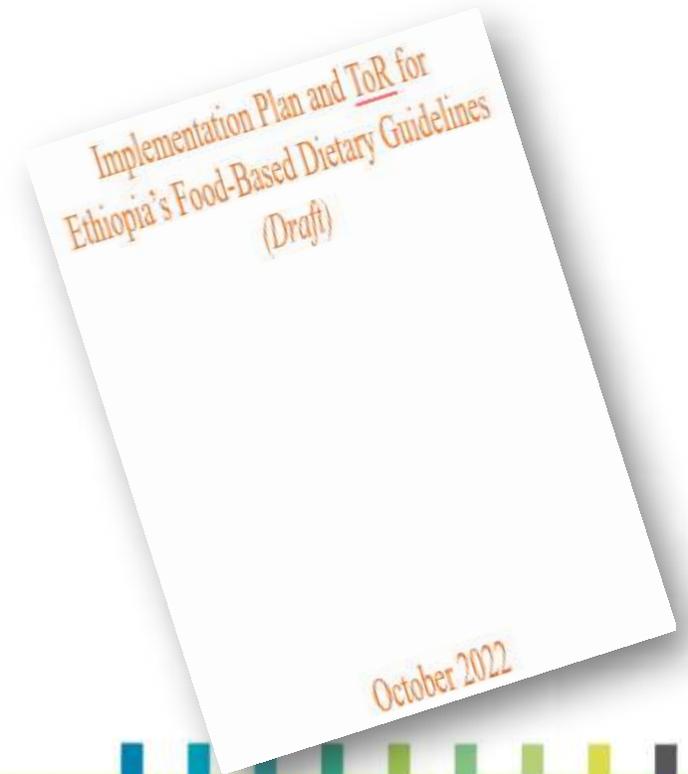
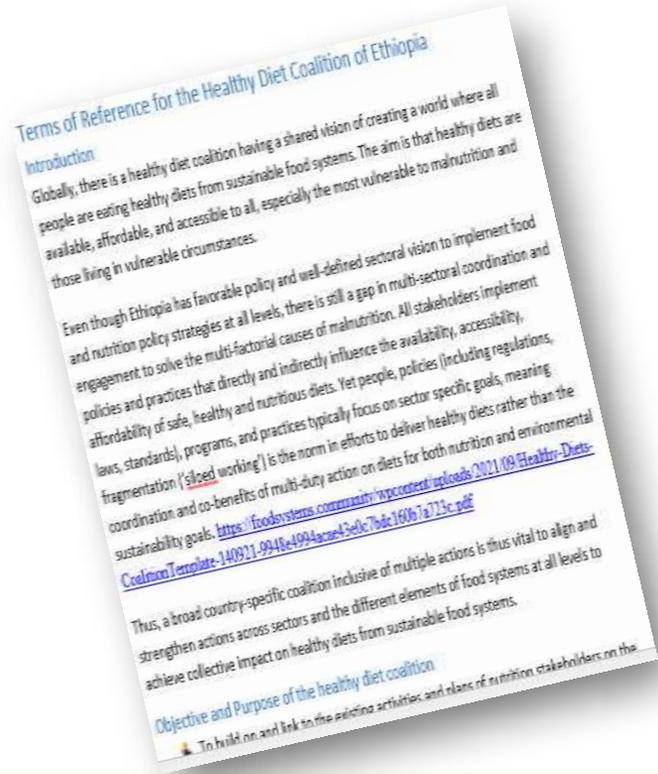
**IMPACT:** Contribute to healthy diets from sustainable food systems at population level in the selected **pilot areas**.

**OUTCOME:** Enhanced country capacities to coherently integrate and use the Eth-FBDGs within national FNS, SD, EFS and other related policies, programs and priorities, for greater effectiveness and to embrace a coordinated and MS approach for FBDGs implementation at all levels.

Indicator	Target	Means of Verification
A multi-sectoral FBDG implementation plan implemented in at least 2 sectors (MoA, MoH)	Action plans for each sector	Action plans for each sector
No of individuals trained from different entities	Individuals from d/t entities	No of people completed training to implement FBDGs
Multi-sectoral FBDGs implementation capacities strengthened; no of institutions from d/t sectors	2 (at least one in each sector)	FBDGs integrated into the work plans of these institutions



# Strengthening the MS and development of joint FBDGs Implementation Plan



**OUTPUT 1:** A multi sectoral, multilevel **FBDGs implementation plan**, (based on FAO's principles of effective FBDGs implementation practices), is built, consolidated and validated for Ethiopia.

### **Indicators:**

- Capacity needs assessment for FBDGs implementation conducted
- No of MS coordination teams/platforms established/strengthened
- A multi-sectoral FBDG implementation plan endorsed
- MS FBDG implementation capacities strengthened/8 MS joint planning meetings/

### **Means of verification**

- Assessment and field reports



- Establishing/strengthening MS committee /national & regional
- Organizing a series of meetings on FBDGs implementation planning
- Conducting **rapid capacity needs assessment**/checklist gender issues
- Supporting national implementation plan and FBDG sectoral action plans
- Conduct supporting activities to promote FBDGs implementation
- Consolidating, revising & validating implementation plan thru Workshops
- Launching and promoting FBDGs implementation plan - (Drafted)
- Identifying M&E key indicators.



# Development and validation of Information, Education and Communication Tool Kit IEC/SBCC Materials



**OUTPUT 2:** An innovative, targeted and complementary FBDGs IEC tool kit and materials are developed and validated for at least one of the prioritized sectors, through collaborative partnerships, behavioral-based approaches and according to the FBDGs implementation plan.

### **Indicators:**

- FBDGs IEC/BCC material developed and validated
- Capacities for developing and rolling out IEC/BCC material strengthened
- Skill and knowledge for targeted trainees from d/t entities at all levels

### **Means of verification**

- Advocacy and training materials that support the IEC material,  
Number of trained people develop and test



- Adapt, develop /organize IEC/BCC materials
- Pretest IEC/SBCC materials (in the selected areas)
- Translate IEC/BCC materials to local languages (3 languages)
- Conduct training at all levels (MS, Federal-kebele levels..HEW, AEW,...)
- Coordinate publication process and roll out:
  - ✓ Launching FBDGs IEC kit or materials through publications and multimedia outputs (e.g., manual, advocacy videos, press releases, research papers)



# Piloting FBDGs Implementation and Scaling-Up



**OUTPUT 3:** Capacities of individuals and organizations in the prioritized sectors are strengthened to mobilize resources and effectively implement, evaluate and revise **FBDGs implementation interventions**, actions and materials, inline with the national FBDGs theory of change and implementation plan.

### Indicators:

- Governance structure/s strengthened (MoH and MoA)
- Capacities on coordination, resource mobilization, monitoring are strengthened

### Means of verification

- Action plans/report in each sectors and Reports



- **Selection of pilot areas**
  - MoA, FAO and EPHI selected 3 pilot areas considering:
    - ✓ **Operational feasibility, existing structure, nutritional problems, stability, and other factors.**
      1. Amhara region, Debere Elias Woreda
      2. Oromia region, Shashemane Woreda
      3. Sidama region, Wondogenet Woreda
- **Developing a joint activity plan for pilot districts**
  - MoA and EPHI drafted an activity plan for 3 pilot Districts



- **Carry out pilot implementation** in 3 pilot districts in 3 regions with MoA with input/Interventions
- **Strengthening governance structure** in pilot areas/thru meetings
- **Monitoring and follow up of capacity development initiatives** using a joint check list
- **Monitor and follow up** on the implementation using indicators
- **Rolling out advocacy** at targeted regions and at national



- **Scaling-up the implementation at large - (2024)**
- **Identify research gaps** and prioritize research agendas on diet, diseases, malnutrition and the food system
- **Generate evidence;** briefing papers, reports, publications, and advocacy materials related to diet improvement
- **Overall technical and financial support:** FAO, WUR and other partners
- **Documentation and regular revision**





**Thank you**

