

# Taking a Food Systems Approach to Policymaking: A Resource for Policymakers



Food systems have enormous potential to support healthy diets and nutrition while advancing livelihoods and protecting the planet. In response to this opportunity, policymakers and program planners have become increasingly interested in adopting comprehensive, multisector policies to improve the broader food system, but *what does it mean* to take a food systems approach (FSA), and *how* can policymakers do so? These resources attempt to answer these questions.

## APPROACH / METHODS

### Evidence Review

*Considerations for policy designers to achieve multiple benefits across the food system*

#### Identify potential benefits and risks in 5 areas

1. Cash & food transfers
2. Food safety
3. Road & transport infrastructure
4. Agricultural extension
5. Land tenure

#### ...on 5 outcomes

1. Diets & food environments
2. Agricultural production
3. Livelihoods
4. Gender equality
5. Environmental sustainability



### Brief Series

*Detail how to make policy decisions to implement a food systems approach*

#### Brief I. Taking a Food Systems Approach to Policymaking: What, How, and Why

Articulates what a food systems approach is and why it is valuable for policymakers

#### Brief II. Managing Stakeholders and Identifying Policy Entry Points

Explains how to identify relevant stakeholders, use multistakeholder mechanisms to bring them together, and identify entry points for action

#### Brief III. Developing a Shared Agenda

Shares tools & methods to guide policy decision-making, assess policy coherence, and mitigate and manage conflicts

#### Brief IV. Costing and Financing

Discusses the cost and financing implications of a food systems approach

### Advisory Group

14 global and country-level stakeholders provided strategic input at multiple stages to inform and validate the resources.

## FINDINGS / INTERPRETATIONS

- An FSA requires policymakers to consider that any single policy raises the potential for *risks* that can make food systems less nutritious, sustainable, and equitable—but it also holds the potential for *benefits* that can improve food system outcomes.
- Mapping relevant stakeholders and defining their responsibilities within the FSA are crucial to promote sustained collaboration and develop a shared agenda with entry points for action.
- Implementing an FSA may incur costs related to coordination and knowledge management, capacity building, and evidence generation, advocacy, and dissemination, but it is also likely to open new financing opportunities.

