

# Vegetables for All



## About GAIN

The Global Alliance for Improved Nutrition (GAIN) is a Swiss-based foundation launched at the United Nations in 2002 to tackle the human suffering caused by malnutrition. Working with governments, businesses and civil society, we aim to transform food systems so that they deliver healthier diets for all people, especially the most vulnerable.

Headquartered in Geneva, Switzerland, GAIN has offices in countries with high levels of malnutrition: Bangladesh, Ethiopia, India, Indonesia, Kenya, Mozambique, Nigeria, Pakistan, and Tanzania. To support work in those countries, we have representative offices in Denmark, the Netherlands, the United Kingdom, and the United States.



## Healthier Diets for Kenya

GAIN has been contributing to improving the nutritional status of Kenyans since 2010, with an initial focus on supporting the Government of Kenya to introduce the fortification of maize flour, wheat flour and edible fats/oils. Since then, we have diversified our programmatic work to integrate various efforts into a food system approach that links access and demand for nutritious safe food.

GAIN's work in Kenya is focused on improving the accessibility and consumption of nutritious safe food for everyone, especially the most vulnerable to malnutrition, in a sustainable way. We are improving nutrition for all by catalysing food systems transformation.

### WE FOCUS ON POSITIVE CHANGE



#### AVAILABILITY-

We support SMEs that supply nutritious safe food with technical and financial assistance to increase the availability of nutritious safe foods.



#### ACCESSIBILITY

Even when available, nutritious safe food is often inaccessible for most of the malnourished population. We work to fix that by working jointly with last mile vendors and distributors.



#### AFFORDABILITY

We seek to introduce new business models to drive the commercialisation of nutritious safe foods, making them less expensive.



#### DESIRABILITY

Nutritious food is not always to everyone's taste. We seek to generate demand for safe nutritious food and healthy diets by encouraging responsible consumer choices.

## Vegetables for All Project

Vegetables for All is a Dutch Government-funded five-year project that aims to improve dietary diversity for 1.1 million urban and peri-urban Bottom of the Pyramid (BoP) consumers by increasing consumption of vegetables in alignment with global guidelines for vegetables. The project is being implemented in five counties; Nairobi, Kiambu, Machakos, Nakuru and Mombasa, and targets families with children aged 3-12 in the lower income group, Living Standard Measure (LSM) 3-7, earning USD 1.9 to 3.2 a day.

The project conducted a consumer survey to understand the drivers of vegetable purchases and build a strategy around their needs. The study concluded that purchases are driven by three consumer expectations: freshness, proximity to the vegetable seller, and safety. The desire to consume more vegetables was driven by taste and variety. Variety was constrained by price and seasonality while taste was driven by familiarity and availability of specific vegetables. While vegetables were generally regarded as positive, consumers discussed a tension between buying vegetables to fill a hungry stomach vs. vegetables as a source of enjoyment.

Further formative work revealed that a creative strategy and brand may be able to position vegetables as a desirable food and change current perceptions of vegetables being a "poor man's food". This informed the design of the Food *Fiti* brand. *Fiti* is Kenyan slang for good, fine and fit.

## Why Vegetables?

The project will focus on dark green leafy, vitamin-A rich and other vegetables. Recent preliminary data from the Global Diet Quality Project revealed that 65% of Kenyans consumed green leafy vegetables. Over the last 15 years, vegetable consumption has remained stagnant at 100-130g/per person/day, well below the recommended 400g of fruits and vegetables by the WHO, despite a 46% increase in GDP. Preparatory work conducted for this project revealed that improving vegetable consumption in the next 5 years is feasible if we address six systems elements related to improved access, demand and enabling environment for vegetables (Nicholson and Monterrosa, 2021).



The six systems elements are:

1. Vegetable safety
2. Vegetable freshness at the point of purchase
3. High prices of vegetables during the dry season
4. Low availability during the dry season
5. Consumer awareness
6. Taste preference



Vegetables are well suited to improve overall dietary patterns because vegetables are used as ingredients in dishes or as accompaniments to starchy staples, legumes, and animal-source foods (Gido et al., 2017). The promotion of vegetables presents opportunities to motivate wider changes in diet or consumption patterns. Enhancing the demand for vegetables and encouraging their consumption can lead to improved nutrient intakes, and thus improved dietary quality, and contribute ultimately to addressing micronutrient deficiencies.



## Geographic Focus

The project is being implemented in Nairobi, Kiambu, Machakos, Mombasa and Nakuru Counties. These five urban and peri-urban counties were selected based on the following criteria: i) existing and established relationship with county-level officials, ii) high-density areas with target population who could be reached by the Food Fiti Zones (FFZs), and iii) potential partners and organisations working to improve access to vegetables already working in these counties.

## Intervention – Food Fiti Zones

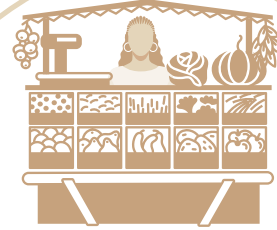
Food Fiti Zones (FFZs) are the last mile/point of purchase integrated solution offered by the Food Fiti brand to deliver the consumers' expectations on freshness, safety, proximity, variety, and taste. At the heart of the FFZ is the mama mboga, specifically women with a semi-permanent stall, who has a loyal and frequent customer base and from where our consumption study found most consumers purchased vegetables. The FFZs include other small retailers that sell vegetables to the target audience including local retail supermarkets and traditional markets. Other community services, such as schools and churches, are considered relevant stakeholders in the FFZs due to their ability to communicate brand messages and influence consumption. The FFZs have been conceived as a catchment area around low-income estates in urban and peri-urban areas. A FFZ covers a minimum of 1,000 households and the project will establish at least 1,000 zones thereby reaching a total of 4.7 million low-income consumers.



## Project Activities



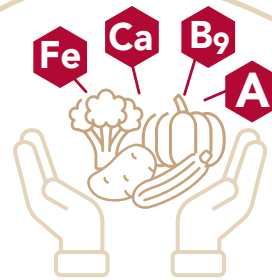
Create partnerships with private actors and organizations who employ different models at various levels and support sourcing of vegetables from **Good Agricultural Practices** compliant suppliers to increase all-year availability of safe vegetables in target markets.



**Increase access to safe vegetables by supporting Last Mile Vendors (LMVs)** i.e mama mbogas, aggregators, local supermarkets, markets and linking them to approved suppliers. The support will include branding and training.



Strengthen existing **food safety and traceability** mechanisms for vegetables.



**Improve consumers' willingness** to purchase vegetables and make choices based on benefit criteria through conducting promotional activities.



**Create an enabling environment** to support the access and demand project activities as well as address rules and incentives, and information flows across vegetable system actors (private sector, government officials, consumers).

### GAIN Kenya

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