



# Youth Leadership Initiative

Supporting young people to  
become leaders for fairer food  
systems



# A handbook to invest in youth leadership

**Since the United Nations Food Systems Summit (UNFSS), young people have shown the kind of leadership qualities that are crucial for moving the food systems agenda forward and inspiring others.**

If we want to see change, we **must** support this burgeoning youth movement to maximize their contributions. Many young people are already working on their own projects and bring with them a wealth of knowledge and ideas. Investing in youth leadership development will shape the raw skills they already possess, while also positioning food systems transformation as a collective responsibility.

This facilitator handbook provides activities and inspiration to support young people to elevate, collaborate and act for healthier, just and more sustainable food systems through youth-led collective action.

# What does it mean to be a food systems leader?

To support young people to develop their leadership practices we use a learning approach which is adapted from the Kolb's experiential learning model. This approach is centered on experiences and requires the learner to do something to learn, rather than just memorise information.



## Leadership from within

Youth leaders have a strong sense of who they are and where they come from. Encouraging them to use their personal experience in leadership practice helps them see their place in the wider community.



## Leadership from others

Youth leaders understand that leadership is not a solitary activity. They collaborate towards a common vision and understand how to work with a wide diversity of people.

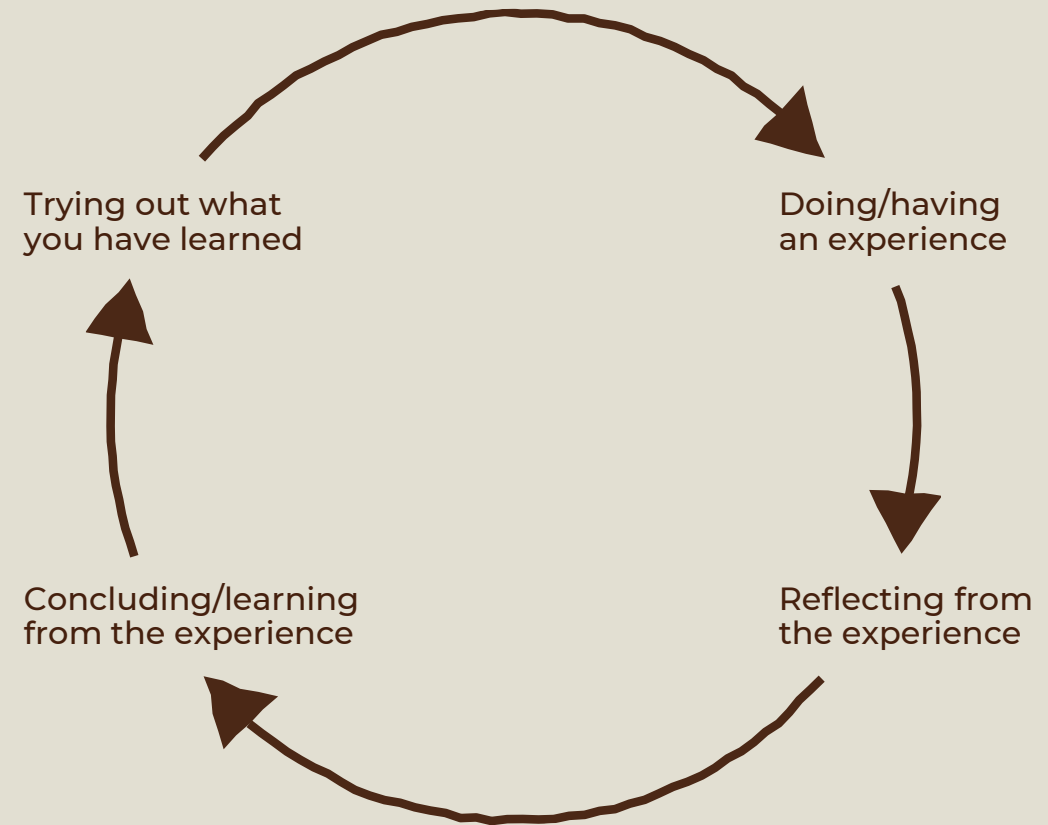


## Leadership structures

Youth leaders have a deep understanding of food systems and how to influence the structures that underpin them.

# Our experiential learning method

To support young people to develop their leadership practices we use a learning approach which is adapted from the Kolb's experiential learning model. This approach is centered on experiences and requires the learner to do something to learn, rather than just memorise information.



# What you'll find inside

This handbook provides you with a structured plan and sessions to support youth to lead collective action and contribute to national food systems pathways or global spaces. This handbook contains two sections to provide you with end-to-end support.



## Community building

Facilitating youth leadership development and fostering a sense of community.



## Youth leadership towards collective action

Improving knowledge and skills, and ability to lead collective action to contribute to national food systems pathways.

# Guide to icons

These icons are used throughout the handbook to guide you through the content.

## Leadership approaches



Leadership from within



Leadership from others



Leadership from structures

## Handbook sections



Community building



Youth leadership towards collective action

## The core ingredients



Understanding food systems



Influence & change in food systems



Collective action

## Other icons to help guide you!



Activity



Skills\*



Time\*

\*The colours of these icons will vary depending on what theme it sits under

# Community building

This section will help you facilitate youth leadership development and fostering a sense of community among youth leaders.



# Tips to build a community

This section should give you all the knowledge and confidence you need to effectively facilitate youth leadership development. You'll find lots of practical tips and tools.

1. **Creating a safe space**
2. **Container building**
3. **Icebreakers**
4. **Facilitating discussions**
5. **Learning by doing**
6. **Reflection exercises**
7. **Fostering connection**





# 1. Creating a safe space

To help create a safe, caring and inclusive environment for all our youth activities, care should be paid to two main areas:

## Safeguarding

We strive to make all youth activities a safe and caring environment for all young people, especially those below the age of eighteen years. Safeguarding is the action we can take to promote the wellbeing of young people and protect them from harm. There are a few steps that you should consider:

Pssst!

If participants are under 18  
ask their parents/caregivers

## Accessibility & Inclusion

All people are different and not everyone's differences are obvious. There is no one list of rules to follow to create the conditions for every young person to access the activities and feels included. Ask yourself key questions about your group and adapt the space and activity accordingly.

# Safeguarding

There are a few practical steps that you should take to make your youth activities a safe and caring environment for all young people.

## 1. Safeguarding policy

Familiarise yourself with [GAIN's safeguarding policy](#) which aims to promote and ensure the safeguarding of Vulnerable Persons directly served by GAIN and its partners. All partners are expected to have their own safeguarding policy or follow GAIN's policy.

## 2. Risk assessment

Conduct a [risk assessment](#) especially if the event you are facilitating involves young people travelling.

## 3. Consent form

Ask participants to fill in a [consent form](#), or if they are under 18 ask their parents/caregivers.

## 4. Medical form

Ask participants to fill in a [medical form](#) (if relevant), or if they are under 18 ask their parents/caregivers.

# Accessibility & Inclusion

All people are different and not everyone's differences are obvious. There's no one list of rules to follow, so instead ask yourself some questions about the group to understand the differences within:

- Are there a mix of genders?
- Does anyone have physical access needs?
- Is anyone from a family that's struggling with money/food?
- What cultures are represented in your group?
- Is anyone neurodiverse or have mental health struggles?

**Pssst!**

Answering these will help you adapt the space and activities accordingly.

# 2. Container building

Think of your sessions as creating a container – a safe space where participants can share and plan. There are three steps at the start of the programme that can support a strong start to container building.

## 1. Share Expectations

Ahead of the first session ask participants what they expect to get from this programme. This helps tune in to each other and get a clear sense of where everyone's coming from. By establishing a common starting point, it will help ease the transition into the experience for everyone.

## 2. Collectively Define a Group Agreement

Ask participants to share what they need from you and each other to feel comfortable contributing and working towards the goals they shared earlier. You should ensure that every participant has a clear understanding of what they're agreeing to.

## 3. Treat Group Agreements as a Living Entity

The agreements aren't just spoken about in the first session then forgotten for the rest of the programme. They're a description of the expected behaviours and interactions of all involved and can be revisited at any time and, if required, reassessed.



# Making group agreements

## Materials needed



Flipchart paper



Pens



Online whiteboard



Sticky notes

## Instructions

Divide the chart paper or online whiteboard into a table with three columns titled: fears, hopes, needs.

1. Give each participant a sticky note and ask them to write a hope about the programme then crumple up the sticky note and throw it in the middle.
2. Each participant picks up a different sticky note and reads a someone else's hope to the group. Whilst the fears are being read aloud, record them on the flip chart paper.
3. Repeat the process for the second and third columns to their fears.
4. Ask the group these questions and fill in the 'needs' column:
  - What do you need from this group to work towards your hopes?
  - What do you need from this group to lessen your fears?
  - What do you need to feel comfortable in this space?
5. Ask if anyone has anything else to contribute and if everyone agrees with what's written down.
6. Once there are no more comments, get everyone to sign the paper and explain that this is a living document to be returned to throughout the year.

# 3. Icebreakers

An icebreaker is a fun activity that helps learn names, build connections, develop understanding around issues, or get people moving and engaged. Aim to do an icebreaker at the start of each session, encouraging participants to lead if possible.

## 5 Ingredients

Give the group five pictures of different vegetables and ask them to create a story about them. They may choose to share their favourite recipe or a favourite memory connected to it. This works best in small groups.

## My favourite recipe

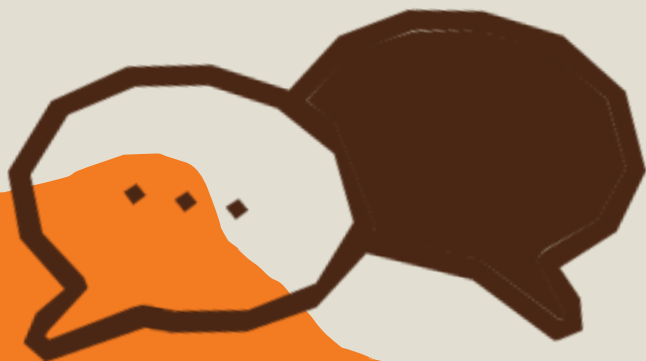
Ask the group to think of their favourite recipe or meal, taking in turns to share with the group.

## What's in a name

Ask each participant to tell a story about their name - the meaning, why they were given it, how to pronounce it, or whether they even like it! This is a great exercise to do early on..

## Create a playlist

Ask each participant to bring a song for the group playlist and explain why they're recommending it. You can use different songs as warm-ups at the start of sessions or during breaks.



# Icebreakers

## Three things in common

Participants split into groups of 4 or 5 and each group must find three things they have in common with each other. The stranger the better

## Two truths & a lie

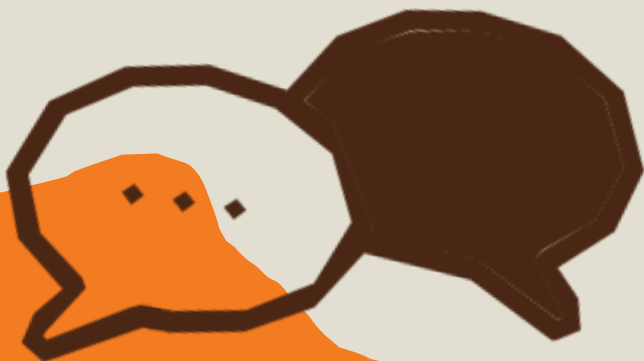
Participants split into groups of 4 or 5 and share three facts about themselves, but one of them is a lie. Everyone has to guess which is the lie.

## The moo-off

Ask for two volunteers to stand in the middle of a circle. They take it in turns to moo like a cow (the more method acting the better!) and the first player to laugh is eliminated.

## Shake it off – 8, 4, 2, 1

Participants stand with a bit of room between each person. Instruct everyone to shake our right hand, left hand, right leg, and left leg 8 times. Then 4. Then 2. Then 1. Get everyone to count out loud and end with a big jump!



# 4. Facilitating discussions

If youth leaders feel heard and understood in a group dynamic, they'll be more motivated to get involved in group discussions, making each session more productive. Asking constructive questions can facilitate productive discussions:

## 1. Ask constructive questions

### Objective questions

Establish facts and understanding about what has just been shared.

- What did you learn from the video?
- What pieces of information did the presenter talk about?
- What words, phrases, or pieces of data stand out?

### Interpretive questions

Give discussions personal significance.

- What have we learned so far?
- What does this mean for us?
- How might this affect our work?

### Reflective questions

Reflect on what has been shared.

- What did you find new or refreshing?
- What feels most challenging or worries you?

### Decision questions

Encourage the group to move towards collective decisions.

- What do we need to start, stop, or continue doing?
- What has to happen first, second, third?





# Facilitating discussions

It's down to every member to ensure all participants can share their opinions. Some people don't realise they're taking time away from others, so challenge your participants to notice how much 'airtime' they're occupying.

## 2. Airtime

**It can be useful for the facilitator or trainer to regularly repeat:**

"If you notice yourself taking up a lot of airtime, step out of the conversation for a while, or write your thoughts down. If you notice yourself under-contributing, step in and challenge yourself to take up more airtime."

**Avoid shaming those who are speaking a lot. Show encouragement and gratitude for their participation with phrases like:**

1. "I'm seeing a lot of the same hands today, I'd love to hear from some different voices"
2. "I'm going to give folks some time to think about this before I hear from the room"
3. "I'm loving your enthusiasm, and have noticed you've answered three times already. Let's hear from others.."



# 5. Learning by doing

The experiential learning approach is centred on experiences and requires the learner to do something rather than just memorise information.

## **Make sessions active. Don't just talk.**

Where possible, instead of using an informational presentation, consider different interactive exercises which allow participants to reflect, engage in the session theme and explore answers themselves.

Learning by doing creates a richer experience and is more likely participants will remember the lessons. A key part of this approach is you, the facilitator, surrendering an element of control and having faith that the group will discover the answers for themselves.



# 6. Reflection Exercises

Each session should end with a reflection. These allow participants to process what they've learnt, as a group and individually. Here are some examples:

## One Word Check-out

Share a one word answer to one of these questions:

- How do you feel right now?
- What animal/fruit represents how the session went for you?
- What did you enjoy most about the session?

## Traffic lights

Share how your day has gone as traffic lights:

- Red - A challenge you experienced, or something you didn't enjoy.
- Amber – Something that was uncomfortable or challenging, but you're looking forward to learning more.
- Green – a highlight, success or something positive that happened.

## One-to-one conversations

Ask participants to break into pairs and discuss how they found the day, take it in turns to share what they learnt and if anything in particular inspired them.

## Reflection Journal

Ask the group to spend 5-10 mins quietly journaling, offering prompts like:

- Did today meet your expectations? How did today make you feel?
- Who did you meet today that had an impact on you?
- What have you learnt from today that inspired you?

# 7. Fostering Connection

Building connection and community doesn't just happen during sessions. What happens in between sessions is just as important.



## Special joining announcement

Planning an announcement for new youth leaders will make them feel special right from the off.



## WhatsApp groups

A great place for informal discussions to organise activities and share successes. WhatsApp Communities help organise different groups under one umbrella. Make sure to ask youth leaders for their consent before adding them and don't share photos without permission. Sensitive information should never be shared via WhatsApp.



## A monthly newsletter

This can be an important tool for youth leaders past and present to stay connected to current activity, through sharing relevant opportunities, news or articles.

# Youth leadership towards collective action

This sections includes the programme flow and session ideas to help youth leaders improve their knowledge and skills, and ability to lead collective action.



# Planning considerations

## Materials needed



Session plan template (tool 1)



Youth leadership survey (tool 2)

## How to deliver the youth leadership programme (Tool 1)

- **Start by putting together a delivery plan.** Think about the sequencing of sessions, which you'll deliver in person and online, and how much time to dedicate to each section. Use the session plan template (Tool 1) to help you plan each individual session.
- **This guide is designed to be used flexibly**, with each facilitator selecting the most relevant exercises for them and adding your own content and expertise.
- Activities in this guide are **suitable for groups of 20 - 30 young people**.
- **Adapt the delivery of each theme** based on the group, context, time and mode of delivery you have available.
- **Additional skills sessions** should accompany each stage.

# Delivering the programme

The youth leadership programme is designed to be delivered in five stages. There are three core themes, an opening and closing session. Recommended timings are provided for each stage.



Kick off session

🕒 1 x 60 min session



Understanding Food Systems

🕒 2-3 x 90 min sessions



Influence & change in food systems

🕒 4 x 90 min sessions



Collective action

🕒 4-6 x 90 min sessions



Closing session

🕒 1 x 60 min session

# The core ingredients



## Understanding food systems

- Introduces the idea of leadership
- Ensures the group has a shared understanding of what food systems are and how their work or interests fit within them.



## Influence and change in food systems

- How policy change is made at a local, regional and global level and the key people that influence change.
- Introduces key food systems process including the National Food System Pathways.



## Collective action

- Brings to life the skills youth leaders have learnt so far, working as a group to create a campaign that identifies an issue to tackle, people to engage and an action to make it happen together.



# Kick-off session

Pssst!

See the community building guide for ideas on exercises for this kick-off session.

Before starting the thematic sessions, make sure you've run a kick-off session to help the group get acquainted. This is also an opportunity to introduce GAIN or ACT4FOOD, the Youth Leadership Programme and leadership spheres.

## Youth Leadership Programme Survey (Tool 2)

This should be conducted at the beginning and end of the Capacity Building sessions. We can use the results to understand the youth leaders' starting point and see how much the youth leaders gain from the programme.

The survey measures the youth leaders' confidence, connection, knowledge and capacity at the beginning and end of the programme. Make sure that each youth leader completes the same survey twice, once during the first session and once during the last session.

During the first session ask the youth leaders for their consent before conducting the survey and let them know its purpose. If your session is online you could conduct the survey as a poll using Microsoft or Google forms. If your session is in person, make copies in advance.



# Kick-off session

## How to fill out the survey

### Start:

Ask the youth leaders to write down their initials, country and day of birth on the survey and to answer the questions. Keep these surveys.

### Finish:

Ask the youth leaders to write down their initials, country and day of birth on the survey and to answer the questions.

### Survey Scoring:

The surveys will be scored to help determine how much youth leaders feel they've improved their confidence, connection, knowledge and capacity at the beginning of the programme compared to the end. Input the survey results using the survey score sheet (in Excel). Each answer has a fixed score and you'll need to add up the number of points each youth leader has.



Theme 1:

# Understanding food systems



# Theme overview

Session 1:  
**Your Leadership Journey  
So Far**

Session 2:  
**Unpacking the Food System**

Session 3:  
**Theme Reflection**



## Leadership Focus

The section and the content most connects with 'leadership from within' in our leadership framework.



## Skills

- Systems thinking
- Storytelling
- Leadership skills



## Time

- 2-3 sessions of 90 minutes each



# Your leadership journey so far

## Materials needed



Paper



Crayons/markers/pens

## Quick intro

We've all chosen to take part in a leadership journey around food systems. Here we reflect on what led you here. Taking the time to reflect on your own leadership journey helps build your confidence as a leader and is a key part of being able to inspire others.

## Learning goals

Participants have reflected on their leadership journey and what has led them to food systems work.



# Your leadership journey so far

Pssst!

Rivers of life can be done in as little as 20 minutes, or as long as 1.5 hours.



## Activity 1

EXERCISE

**Rivers of life**

## Activity 2 [Optional]

EXERCISE [Optional]

**Invite a speaker**

# Rivers of life

What has called you to be a leader?

## Draw

Offer people a large piece of paper and crayons/markers/pens and ask them to draw a river. The river should reflect their life experiences. Think about the fast-moving times in your life and the challenges or rocks that you moved through. Use the metaphor to its fullest—maybe there are offshoots, rapids, waterfalls, or still times in ponds, etc.

## Share

Encourage people to share their rivers, either in small groups (takes less time) or in the whole group (takes more time).



# Invite a speaker

What does being a leader mean to you and how do you practise leadership?

## Speaker

Invite a GAIN staff member, or another leader in the food system space, to share their own river of life.

## Reflect

As they talk, write down the type of leadership practices that they use and how they practise the three areas of leadership



Leadership from within



Leadership from others



Leadership structures





# Unpacking the food system

## Materials needed



Cameras/  
phones



Paper



Crayons/pens/  
markers



Screen to  
watch a video



'What are  
food systems'  
pamphlet

## Quick intro

The food system is vast, with many layers – there are many people and activities involved in food being grown to reaching our plates. These exercises will help deepen understanding of the food system and how they are critical for ensuring food and nutrition security, people's livelihoods and environmental sustainability.

## Learning goals

1. Participants have an understanding of what we mean when we talk about 'food systems'
2. Participants can link their own interests and work to food systems and begin to explore which part(s) of the system they want to focus on.

**Pssst!**

\*Materials will vary depending on the activities you do. This list includes materials for all activities.

# Unpacking the food system

## Activity 1

EXERCISE OPTION 1

**From my food system to  
our food system**

or

EXERCISE OPTION 2

**My own plate**

## Activity 2

EXERCISE

**What are food systems?**

**Pssst!**

For Activity 1, choose one of either exercise, details on next slides.

# From my food system to our food system

Using Photovoice youth leaders will reflect on and document their own understanding of food systems using cameras. During the session the group will then use all members' photos to co-create a powerful food systems story. If youth leaders do not have access to cameras, you can also ask them to draw pictures.

## Snap

Ahead of the session ask youth leaders to take 3-5 photos that they feel show food systems or a part of them. The photos should be a personal reflection of youth leaders' role and journey in food systems.

## Share

During the session, divide up the youth leaders into small groups of 3-4 people. Give each youth leader two min to show and tell their group their food systems story.

## Story

Each group will then bring together all the members' photos and co-create a story about food systems.

## Discuss

Bring back all the groups together. Each group will share their story and the facilitator will use the key takeaways to facilitate a discussion. Looking at the photo series:

- What do you think about when we say 'food system'?
- Do you think makes up our food system?
- What are common themes across the stories?

# My own plate

Ask participants to describe or draw or use a photograph of two meals that they ate this week.

## Now consider

- Who grew this food?
- Where was it grown?
- What was the journey the food went on to reach your plate?
- Why did you choose this meal to eat & what makes you want to eat it?
- Was the food easy to get?
- How much does it cost?

## Discuss

Looking at your food place

- What do you think about when we say 'food system'?
- Do you think makes up our food system?
- What are common themes across your experience?



# What are food systems?

Choose one of options as an information source and then facilitate a discussion.

## 1. Speaker

Invite a food systems expert (GAIN staff or external) to share their work and how they define food systems

## 2. Read

Act4Food's pamphlet: [What are food systems?](#)

## 3. Watch

Ndidi Okonkwo Nwuneli's TED talk on [The future of the food ecosystem](#)

## 4. Visit

A fun and interactive place that the youth leaders feel show what food systems are to them ( e.g. a market or farm).

## Discuss

Reflect on how your group photo stories or my plate include the elements of a food system that are discussed in your chosen information source. What was similar? What was different?

# Theme reflections

At the end of the Understanding Food Systems theme, participants should take time to reflect on what they have learnt. This can be done individually by offering people time to journal or through conversations in pairs.

## Prompts for theme reflections or conversations

1. What is something new I've learnt about food systems that I didn't know before?
2. What area am I inspired to learn more about? What do I feel more passionate about? What area of the food system would I like to change?
3. What have I learnt about myself and my leadership journey so far?



## Theme 2:

# Influence & change in food systems



# Theme overview

Session 1:

**Who influences the food system?**

Session 2:

**Key processes that influence the food system**

Session 3:

**How can you influence food systems**

Session 4:

**Theme reflection**



## Leadership focus

‘Leadership with Others’ and ‘Leadership Structures’



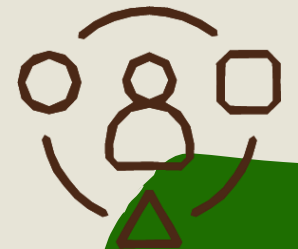
## Skills

- Collaboration and stakeholder mapping
- Understanding influence
- Policy analysis
- Public speaking (additional session)



## Time

Up to 4 sessions of 90 minutes each





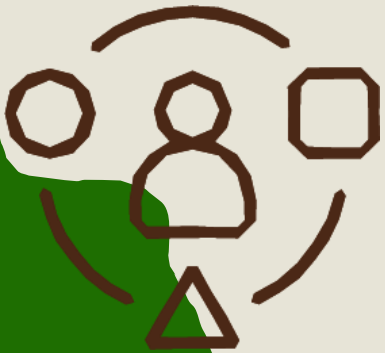
# Who influences the food system?

## Quick intro

This introduces the people, organisations and groups who have influence our food system and are affecting change.

## Learning goals

Participants can identify different groups that influence change in food systems.



# Who influences the food system?

## Activity 1

EXERCISE

**Looking around us**

## Activity 2 [Optional]

EXERCISE [Optional]

**My favourite food changemaker**



# Looking around us

## Who makes decisions in the food system?

1. Start with a discussion question 'who makes decisions in the food system?' reflecting on what was learned in 'Understanding Food Systems'.
2. As the discussion takes place, ask the youth leaders to write down the names of individuals or groups who make decisions in the food system.
3. Divide the participants into 5 groups and give them a name. Ask them to reflect on:
  - What positive influence does this group have on food systems?
  - What negative influence does this group have on food systems?
  - How do young people interact with this group?

**Pssst!**

My favourite food changemaker is an optional activity!

## My favourite food changemaker

1. Ask each person to talk about a food changemaker they admire - they can even bring a photo.
2. Explain to the group who they are and why you admire them. What makes them successful in their efforts?

# Key processes that influence the food system

## Materials needed



Key processes that influence the food system presentations

## Quick intro

This section helps focus on three formal processes and organisations that influence the food system – select those that are most relevant to your group. You can also choose to develop your own content about a process that is more relevant to your group.

## Learning goals

1. Participants learn about UNFSS & UNFCCC, national pathways and/or national & regional food system influencers.
2. Participants can identify different groups that influence change in food systems.

# Key processes that influence the food system

## Activity 1

EXERCISE OPTION 1

**Deliver a presentation**

or

EXERCISE OPTION 2

**Invite a speaker**



# Key processes that influence the food system

Choose a process and then a delivery mechanism.

## Key processes

1. The United Nations Food Systems Summit (UNFSS) and the Implementation of National Pathways.
2. The United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and the Conference of the Parties (COP).
3. Commercial forces that shape what we eat.

## Presentation

Prepare and present one of the key processes presentations. Adapt these presentations to your context and include details about national activities.

## Speaker

Invite a food systems expert to talk about their experience and ask them to share their work.

This is a good opportunity to invite the national coordinator or someone else working on the food systems pathways.

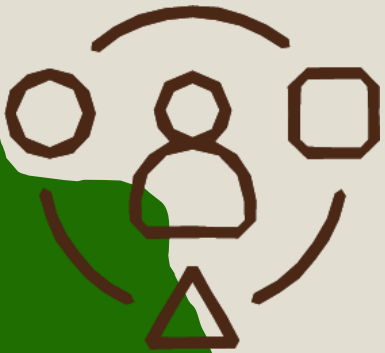


# Key processes that influence the food system

## Discussion

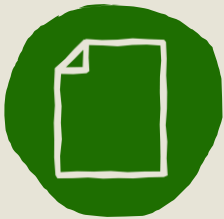
For each of the key processes, ask the group which organisations, people or groups they think has the most influence over food systems.

- Who are the most powerful groups/people and why?
- Who is missing from the conversation?
- What role do young people play in these processes? What role can you play?
- Are there any topics that were discussed that interest you or you feel really passionate about?



# How can you influence the food system

## Materials needed



Paper



Crayons/markers/pens

### Pssst!

Pen & paper for each person,  
for their own quiet reflection

## Quick intro

There is strength at every level of the food system to influence change. One way to think about it is through building power in a positive way, which builds our confidence and empowers those around us. This exercise helps consider different ways power shows up in the food system and shows youth leaders they also have power within the group to lead transformational change.

## Learning goals

1. Participants will consider the different types of power and influence that exists within food systems who who holds that power
2. Participants will reflect on their own skills and the power their have within themselves to be changemakers and leaders



# How can you influence the food system

**Ask each youth leader to answer the questions about the difference they can make & the power they have**

FORM OF POWER	EXPLANATION	ANSWER FOR YOURSELF
Power Over	This is the 'traditional' view of power. These are decision makers who have authority – or power over things or people. We might have this power if we run a group, are a manager, or chair meetings.	When do you have power in food systems? From what you have learnt about the food system, which are the most important organisations or people that you will need to influence?
Power With	This is where so much of our strength comes from. It is the power we get through collaborating and building relationships and is based on respect. You might have power with groups you work with.	What people, groups or organisations can help you create change within the food system? Who can you work with? Who are your allies?
Power To	This is the power to make a difference. It is knowing that we all have the power to shape and change the world. It is the skills and capacities we have that can help us make the change we want to see.	What skills do you have that you can contribute? What skills would you like to develop?
Power Within	This is linked to our self-worth and self-knowledge. You might find strength and power in your values, communities, hobbies, prayer, or spirituality.	What makes you feel strong personally?

# Theme reflections

At the end of the Influence and Change in Food Systems theme, participants may wish to take time to reflect on what they've learnt during this module. This can be done individually by offering people time to journal or through conversations in pairs.

## Prompts for theme reflections or conversations

1. What is something new I have learnt that I didn't know before?
2. What area am I inspired to learn more about?
3. What have I learnt about my role and how it fits with others in this work?



Theme 3:

# Collective action



# Theme overview

In this theme, participants will identify how they can work effectively and lead a collective action together, by following three key stages. Support the youth leaders to fill in relevant parts of the planner as they move through the exercises.

## Part 1: Issue

Helps youth leaders to identify the issue they will work on and the collective goal of their campaign



## Leadership focus

‘Leadership with Others’ and ‘Leadership Structures’

## Part 2: People

Focuses on the people that youth leaders will engage with and the people that they want to influence.



## Skills

- Mobilising support
- Understanding social change
- Reaching and engaging audiences
- Designing collective action

## Part 3: Action

Explores the spaces, the action and what youth leaders do individually and collectively.



## Time

3-6 sessions of 90 minutes each



# Introducing collective action

## Materials needed



Collective action  
planner print outs  
(tool 3)



Screen to show  
videos

## Quick intro

To introduce youth leaders to the idea of collective action and get inspired about other initiatives.

## Learning goals

- To learn about collective action and how Act4Food can use it to influence change.
- To understand how change happens and how movements grow.
- To set expectation about how the youth leaders will lead collective action campaigns.

# What is collective action?

Collective Action is about coming together around a specific issue, to take action for change. Let's start to think about what we mean by Collective Action.

Before you begin introduce your group to the idea of Collective Action and how they will work together to design and then take collective action for a shared goal. It's also a chance to answer any questions the group have about collective action.

## Share

Share this quote with the group.  
"Never underestimate the power of a small group of committed people to change the world. In fact, it is the only thing that ever has."  
~ Margaret Mead

## Discuss

Ask everyone to think of a group of people they admire or are inspired by, from today or in the past, who have taken action to create change. Ask people to share their ideas with the group.

As they share their ideas, ask the group to discuss:

- What issue the group was trying to change.
- What people the group engaged to support the campaign and what people they had to influence to make change.
- What actions the group took to be successful.

[If the group need some inspiration use the case studies shared later in the collective action sessions]

# Introducing collective action

## Activity 1

EXERCISE OPTION 1

**How to build a  
movement**

or

EXERCISE OPTION 2

**Campaigns to  
inspire us**

**Pssst!**

Choose one of either exercise,  
details on next slides.



# How to build a movement

What do successful movements look like? And how do you build one?

1. Watch the following videos to inspire your groups.
2. Discuss each one, asking the group: what do these videos teach us about engaging people to support your cause?

## Watch

[How to start a movement](#) TED Talk

This short, funny video shows how movements get started and why they need both leaders and followers.

## Watch

[3 lessons on starting a movement from a self-defense trailblazer](#) TED Talk

At 16, Rana Abdelhamid started teaching self-defense to women and girls in her neighborhood. Almost 10 years later, these classes have grown into a global grassroots network call Malikah.



# Campaigns to inspire us

1. Break into groups and give each information about an inspiring campaign.
2. Ask the group to list the actions used and why they were successful.
3. Ask each group to share their findings back to the rest
4. Using the lessons from these examples, make a list of what makes a good campaign action.

## Examples

Here are some examples, although we'd encourage you to find more in your own country:

1. [Pimp My Carroça, a Movement in Brazil to Respect Independent Waste Collectors](#)
2. [Anti-FGM caravan embarks on 7,400-mile campaign to end cutting in Africa](#)
3. [How a gentle protest with hand-embroidered hankies helped bring higher wages for retail employees](#)
4. [The teenager combating climate change with his football](#)
5. [#AchchaiKaChatkara - celebrating unsung heroes](#)

# Planning your collective action

The group will work together to create a collective action strategy. They might decide to make one strategy or they may make 2-3 strategies in smaller groups\*. To design the collective action strategy, they'll work through exercises around the three key elements.

## Issue

This section is about identifying the issue to work on and a specific change (or goal) to achieve. It will require using their knowledge of the food system and digging deeper into country's national pathways or Actions4Change for inspiration of what to focus on.

## People

This section helps to identify the people and organisations to engage and influence to make the change - from other young people and youth groups, to local community organisations and coalitions.

## Action

This section focuses on the actions to make the change focusing on three different types of action

1. Advocacy actions
2. Communication actions
3. Community awareness actions.

**The Collective Action Planner (Tool 3) will help give the youth leaders a 360 degree view of their collective action. Fill it in as you work through the sessions in this theme.**

**\*If the youth leaders decide to work on more than one collective action. Separate them into groups after the 'Agreeing on the collective action issue'.**



# Theme 3: Part 1

# Issue



# Issue

## Materials needed



Paper



Crayons/markers/pens



Collective action  
planner print outs  
(tool 3)



Screen to show  
videos

## Quick intro

Making change takes time, and one action won't fix everything. Every action is a valuable stepping stone that adds up to larger change over time.


Part 1 helps youth leaders identify a specific change they'd like to see, and the issue and goals that can make it a reality. Relevant recent campaigns will provide valuable inspiration, alongside the learnings from #ActionsforChange or National Food Systems Pathways.

Use the [Food Systems Dashboard](#) to dig deeper into the chosen issue, diagnose the problem that needs addressing and decide what solutions could resolve it.

What follows are some exercises to help focus on an issue and gain consensus - select the one that feel most helpful and be prepared to engage in a few rounds of discussion to get buy-in from everyone.

## Learning goals

Participants can identify a focus issue and specific goal for their collective action and construct a clear narrative around it.



**In 'part 1' you will fill in the 'chosen issue' and 'specific goal' sections of the Collective Action Planner.**

# Issue

## Activity 1

EXERCISE OPTION 1`

**Identifying priority areas for change:** National pathways

or

EXERCISE OPTION 2`

**Identifying priority areas for change:** Actions for change

## Activity 2

EXERCISE

**Agreeing on the collective action issue**

## Activity 3

EXERCISE

**Defining the collective action goals**



# Identifying priority areas for change

## National Food Systems Pathways

1. Revisit your country's National Pathways and the government priorities. Reflecting on what you have learned about food systems and how change happens, discuss which areas you feel you can contribute to as a group.
2. List the National Pathway key priorities and ask youth leaders put a dot next to areas you are passionate about, then the areas you have most influence to change, then the areas you are already working on.
3. Once you have identified 1-2 priority areas, discuss:
  - What are the most important changes?
  - Why does that change matter? Who will benefit most?
  - Who is able to make change? What are young people most able to do to make change in that area?
  - Can that change happen in individual, community or public spaces?



# Identifying priority areas for change


## ACT4FOOD: Actions 4 Change

1. Revisit the [Act4Food's Actions4Change list](#) and/or watch Act4Food's [What are the Actions 4 Change?](#) video. Reflecting on how change happens, discuss which areas you can contribute to as a group.
2. List the 10 actions, put a dot next to the ones you're passionate about, then the actions you have most influence to change, then the actions you are already working on.
3. Once you have identified 1-2 priority areas, discuss:
  - What are the most important changes?
  - Why does that change matter? Who will benefit most?
  - Who is able to make change? What are young people most able to do to make change in that area?
  - Can that change happen in individual, community or public spaces?



# Agreeing on the collective action issue

It's important to focus on just 1-2 issues for Collective Action. Use the 'nominal group technique' to build consensus as there may be many different ideas in the group.

  
**Have you remembered to fill in the 'chosen issue' section of the Collective Action Planner?**

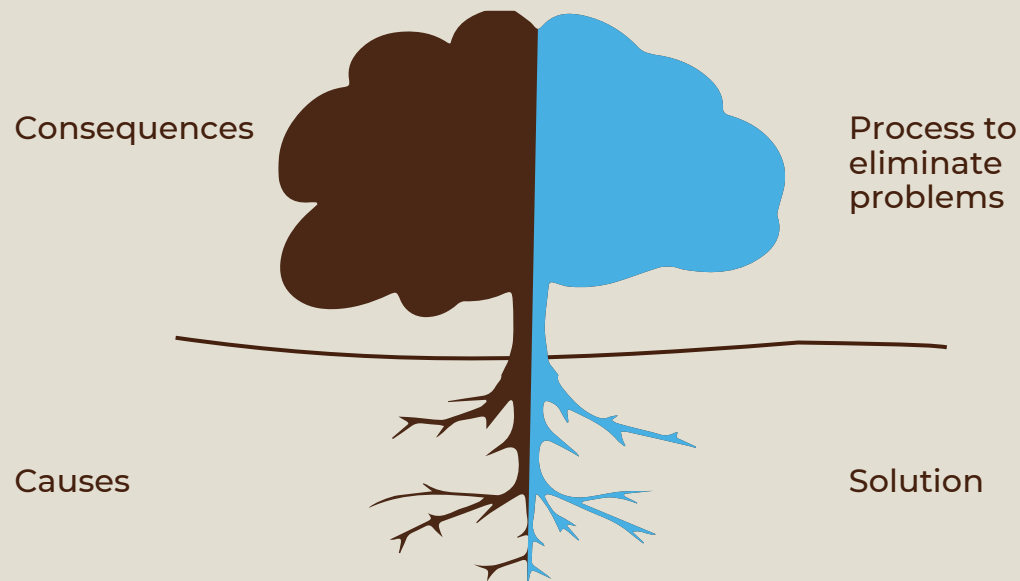
## Reaching consensus on your collective issue

1. Each person takes 5-10 mins to write down the issue and goal they'd like to put forward for the Collective Action.
2. Invite everyone to silently put their idea on a flipchart.
3. Everyone takes it in turns to present their idea. Others can ask questions to clarify meaning. Once everyone has presented:
  - Vote on which ideas to remove
  - Group ideas into categories
  - Reword ideas if the creator agrees
4. With the remaining ideas, score them from 1-5 based on the questions below:
  - Very clear: What exactly are you going to achieve?
  - Possible: Could this actually happen?
  - Doable: Do you have the time, skills and ability to make it happen?
5. Your top two ideas will become the issues for your collective action.




# Defining the collective action goals

A problem and solution tree will help you turn your issue into specific and achievable goals. The tree can be made on a flipchart or using sheets of paper stuck to the wall/floor.



## From problem to solution

1. Write a problem statement relating to your selected issue on the trunk of your tree.
2. On the left by the roots write down the underlying causes of the problem. It's useful to keep asking 'but why?' to identify the causes.
3. On the left by the branches, write down some consequences of the problem.
4. Turn your problem into a solution, by rewriting the trunk as a goal/vision.
5. On the right by the roots, write down what solutions there are to resolve your problem. It's useful to keep asking 'what if' to identify solutions.
6. On the right by the branches, write down what you need to do to achieve this solution.
7. Select 2-3 solutions and turn them into your campaign goal.

 Have you remembered to fill in the specific goal section of your Collective Action Planner?

## Theme 3: Part 2

# People



# People

## Materials needed



Paper



Crayons/markers/pens



Collective action planner (tool 3)

## Quick intro

Part 2 focuses on the people and organisations that youth leaders want to engage and influence to make change - from other young people and youth groups, to local community organisations and coalitions.

Start by reflecting on the community of support around us that can be mobilised - that'll be the lowest hanging fruit. As we work through the exercises, refer back to the issue and people most able to help make that change.

## Learning goals

Participants can identify the individual strengths in the group and the people they'd like to reach and engage in their campaign.

**In 'part 2' you will fill in the people section of the Collective Action Planner.**



# People

## Activity 1

EXERCISE OPTION 1

**Working well together:**  
Building a strong team

or

EXERCISE OPTION 2

**Working well together:**  
Using our skills

## Activity 2

EXERCISE

**Who to engage and who to influence**



# Working well together

## How to build a healthy team

This is your group's chance to understand each other more and start to build a supportive environment for working together for your collective action. Use the Health Monitor activity to assess your team against the eight attributes most commonly found among healthy teams. At the end, you'll identify strengths to exploit as well as challenge areas to grow. Follow these instructions to run the activity.

<https://www.atlassian.com/team-playbook/health-monitor>



# Working well together

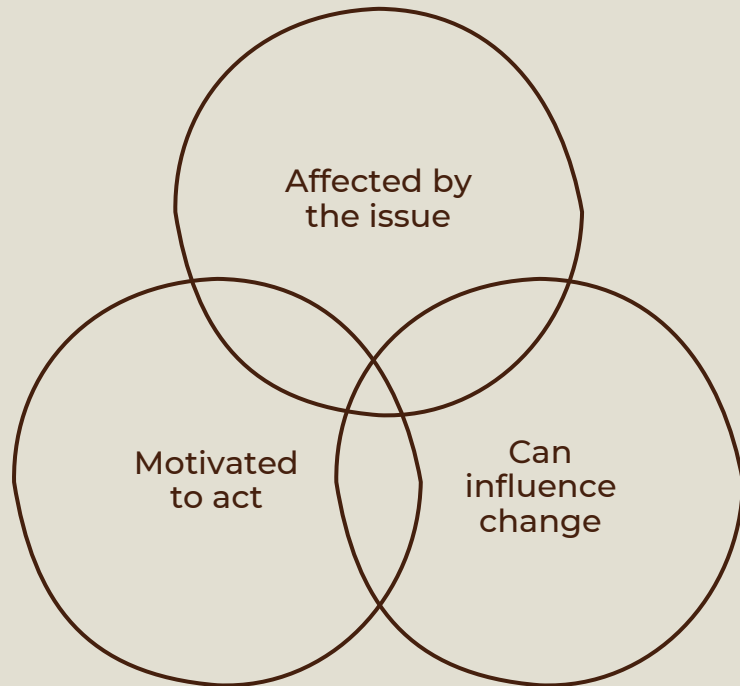
## Using our skills

Use this exercise to identify the skills your group has that might be useful for collective action and identify any skills you'd like more training to develop.

1. Everyone in the group writes down three skills they have that might be useful for collective action (e.g. design social media, copywriting, public speaking, understanding, policy etc).
2. Each person takes it in turns to share their three skills.
3. The group reviews the skills they have as a team and discusses how they could use these skills during their collective action and identify any other skills they'd like to develop.



# Who to engage and who to influence



This will help you identify the people that you want to engage and influence with your collective action.

1. Draw three overlapping circles on a big piece of paper.
2. In small groups, write one individual/group for each circle and place the post-it notes in the relevant positions
  - Audience: who is affected by the issue? Who do you want to reach through your Collective Action?
  - Allies: Who is motivate to act? Who supports the issue you are working on?
  - Influence: who can influence or change the situation?
3. Step back and discuss which groups will be most important to work with (engage) and who will be most important to reach (influence) with your action.
4. Prioritise three groups from each circle for your collective action.

**Have you remembered to fill in the people section of your Collective Action Planner?**



## Theme 3: Part 3

# Action





# Action

## Materials needed



Paper



Crayons/markers  
/pens



Action ideas  
handout (tool 4)



Collective action  
planner (tool 3)



Post-it notes



Collective action  
activity template  
(tool 5)

## Quick intro

Actions are crucial for making change. Well-chosen actions can build momentum behind our work, bring more awareness to the issue we're campaigning about and mobilise more people.

- Adapt the action ideas handout (tool 4) to include key national and global moments happening over the next six months.
- Let youth leaders know if there is funding available for their actions and how they can apply for funding.
- Use the action activity template (tool 5) to plan individual activities.
- Decide how you will track the youth leaders' actions.

## Learning goals

Participants complete their collective action planner, by identifying the advocacy, communication and community activities to undertake.

**In 'part 3' you will fill in the action and 'what does success look like' section of the Collective Action Planner.**



# Action

## Activity 1

EXERCISE

**Introducing actions**

## Activity 2

EXERCISE

**Generating actions**

## Activity 3

EXERCISE

**Planning actions**

## Activity 4

EXERCISE

**Measuring actions**



# Introducing actions

## What are impactful collective actions?

1. Start by sharing the three different types of action: advocacy, communications and community awareness.
2. Now pick one of the case studies (overleaf) from other collective action campaigns related to climate and environment or ending female genital mutilation. Or find case studies more relevant to your context.

## Discuss

- What actions did the groups in the articles take? How many advocacy, communications and community actions can you identify in the stories?
- Which actions were local, national and global, and how did they support each other?
- What were the most impactful actions in the campaigns, and what made them successful?
- Which actions could you learn from and adapt in your own campaigning work?



# Introducing actions

## [Case studies]

Ask the group to read the following articles. You can break into smaller groups, and give each 1 article to read so they have different ideas to bring back.

### The campaign to end FGM

1. [American survivor of female genital mutilation calls on US to take action](#)
2. [Anti-FGM caravan embarks on 7,400-mile campaign to end cutting in Africa](#)
3. [Michael Gove agrees to write to schools over female genital mutilation](#)
4. [FGM: Ban Ki-moon backs Guardian's global media campaign](#)
5. [5 Activists Leading the Fight Against Female Genital Mutilation in Africa](#)

### Youth Climate & Environment Campaigning

1. [School climate strikes: 1.4 million people took part, say campaigners](#)
2. [Inspiring youth leadership in tackling environmental challenges in Kenya](#)
3. [Young people just got a louder voice on climate change — and could soon be shaping policy](#)
4. [Climate activist Vanessa Nakate: 'I was ready for anything'](#)

# Generating actions

Now it is time to brainstorm the collective actions we might take.

## Action idea brainstorm [Part 1]

1. Start by revisiting your collective action planner of the issue they want to focus on, the change they want to make and the people they need to engage and influence to make that change.
2. Give the group the Action Ideas handout (Tool 4) with ideas for advocacy, comms and community awareness actions.
3. Share with the group any key national or global moments or opportunities that they should be aware of and let the group know if there is any funding available for their actions.



# Generating actions

Select one of the exercises below. Based across the three types of actions ask the group to ideate actions to engage and influence people to make their desired change.

## Action idea brainstorm [Part 2]

### RAPID BRAINSTORM

1. Give everyone post-it notes to write down as many ideas as possible in 5 or 10 mins. No idea is a bad idea! Write each idea on a different post-it. Everyone should have a big pile with ideas at the end.
2. Divide a large flip chart into three parts: advocacy, communications, community awareness. Ask everyone to add their 3 favourite ideas to a board so everyone can see.
3. Discuss the ideas together and create a shortlist of actions.

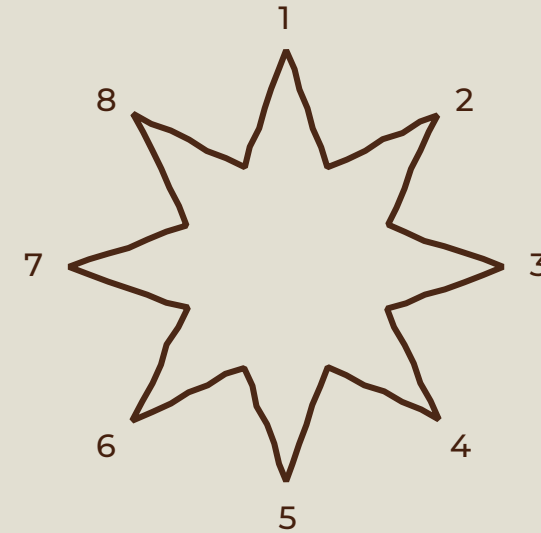
### ROUND ROBIN

1. Sit in a circle, explain the exercise then give everyone some quiet time to think before you start.
2. Divide a large flip chart into three parts: advocacy, communications, community awareness. Have one person taking notes.
3. Once you're ready, ask one person to share an idea for action. Do not discuss the idea at this stage. Carry on until you've completed the circle, and everyone has contributed an idea before anyone can contribute a second idea or discuss any of the ideas.
4. Discuss the ideas together and create a shortlist of actions.

# Planning actions

## Selecting and prioritising actions

Once we've come up with our shortlist of action ideas - selecting the right actions and the order is important. This tactic star\* will help you think through which actions the group should prioritise and in which order.



## Discuss

Discuss each side of this tactic star in relation to your top actions. It will help you to link your actions back to the issue and people sections of your collective action. Use the action activity template to plan your activity (tool 5).

**Have you remembered to fill in the action section of your Collective Action Planner?**



- 1. Achieving our specific goal:** Will this action take you closer to achieving your goal?
- 2. Narrative:** Are we telling a story through this action? Does it explain 'why' this matters?
- 3. People we are aiming to influence:** Who will this action influence?
- 4. People we are aiming to engage:** Will this audience reach the people we are trying to engage?
- 5. Allies:** Will this action help us build partnerships?
- 6. Action logic:** Does this action make sense? Will people 'get it' without you having to explain?
- 7. Building the strength of your group:** Does this action use your strengths? Will it help you attract new members?
- 8. Is this an advocacy, comms or community action?** What kind of action is this?

# Measuring actions

It's important to measure our success and learn from our actions, so we can continue to build and grow our campaign.

1. Discuss the success you want to achieve through your collective action campaign – use the column on the left to inspire you.
2. Discuss how you will measure this success – use the column on the left to inspire you.

## Measuring success (Part 1)

THE SUCCESS WE WANT TO ACHIEVE	SELECT HOW YOU WILL MEASURE THIS SUCCESS
1. Increase public awareness:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Social media (likes, reach etc)</li> <li>• Media mentions (e.g. appearances in articles and social media posts)</li> <li>• People that you reach through actions</li> </ul>
2. Influencing policy makers or decision makers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Meetings/discussions with decision makers</li> <li>• Decision makers that mention the campaign</li> </ul>
3. Influencing key food systems processes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Young people who attend events.</li> <li>• Speaking opportunities.</li> <li>• Youth representation in committees or working groups</li> <li>• Position statements.</li> </ul>
4. Increasing partnerships and allies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• More allies and partnerships built to support you as a group</li> <li>• The number of youth advocates that join your campaign</li> </ul>



# Measuring actions

It's useful to reflect on your actions during their implementation and when you have completed them.

**Have you remembered to fill in the 'measuring success' section of your Collective Action Planner?**



## Measuring the Impact & Learning for the Future (Part 2)

Reflective questions you can use to help guide conversation:

- What did we set out to achieve?
- What happened?
- Was there a difference in what we expected to happen and what happened?
- What are we proud of - as a group, as an individual?
- What did we learn?
- From our experience, what advice would we give to the next cohort of youth leaders?

# Supporting action implementation

The youth leaders will need help from GAIN and partners to implement their actions. Agree and discuss the support you will offer them and your expectations from them.

## Tracking actions

Once the youth leaders have their actions for their collective action campaign, decide how you will track their progress.

- Put all actions into a calendar or timeline so everyone knows what actions are planned and when.
- Agree on how often you will check in about their actions – and how – WhatsApp, email, calls, in-person.

## Supporting implementation

Decide what support GAIN and partners will give to youth leaders and communicate this openly with them.

- Communicate if budget is available and the mechanism to apply. Use a participatory budget approach if possible.
- Facilitate access to government decision makers, civil society organisations and other stakeholders.



# Closing session



# Overview

## Materials needed



Paper



Crayons/markers  
/pens



Youth leadership  
survey

## Quick intro

The closing session is an opportunity to reflect on what the youth leaders have learnt, and the skills they've gained. In this session they'll think about their leadership journey, share their leadership story using the art of 'public narrative', and inspire others to inspire others. Before finishing the session, the youth leaders should complete the Youth Leadership Programme Survey.

# Closing session

## Activity 1

EXERCISE

**Your public narrative**

## Activity 2

EXERCISE

**Youth leadership  
programme survey**



# Your public narrative

A public narrative draws on personal experience but it is not about telling your life story. Public narrative is an exercise of leadership, motivating others to join you in action on behalf of a shared purpose. There are three steps to build a public narrative.

## A story of now

What action do you want people to take with you, why is this action important and what would the world look like if you're successful?

## A story of us

Connect with people based on shared values or ideals, helping them see that they should also care about your mission or campaign.

## A story of self

Help people understand you, your values and motivations for doing the work, to make your mission personal, relatable and more likely to galvanise others to join you.

**In the closing session you will fill in the narrative section of the Collective Action Planner.**



# Your public narrative

## Developing your own public narrative

1. Work through each of the three sections in the table
2. Spend 5-10 mins drafting a short paragraph for each section, using the questions as guides.
3. Partner up and take it in turns to share one of the sections.
4. Give each other feedback and redraft your sections.
5. Continue to seek out opportunities to share your draft public narratives with others, and use the feedback to continually develop yours.



# Your public narrative

## STORY OF NOW

- What is the challenge you're calling on people to change?
- What is the action you want people to take with you?
- How can they begin now?
- What will the world look like if you achieve the change you're seeking?
- Why is this action important or urgent?

---

## STORY OF US

- Who are you calling on to join you?
- What values or aspirations do they share with you that will motivate them to action?
- What stories do you share that can express these values?
- What experiences do you share that show why you should act together?

---

## STORY OF SELF

- Why do you care about this issue or change?
- Was there a moment or experience that made you care about this issue?
- Can you share an example where you overcame a challenge, and made a choice that demonstrates your values? What did it make you feel? What did it teach you?
- What stories can you share that will enable others to “get you” and why you do this work?





# Youth leadership programme survey

The Youth Leadership Programme Survey (Tool 1) should be conducted at the beginning and end of the Capacity Building sessions. We can use the results to better understand the youth leaders' starting point, see how effective the activities are and how much the youth leaders gain from the programme.

## How to fill out the survey

### Start

Ask the youth leaders to write down their initials, country and day of birth on the survey and to answer the questions. Keep these surveys.

### Finish

Ask the youth leaders to write down their initials, country and day of birth on the survey and to answer the questions.

# The end

“This handbook been produced through GAIN’s Nourishing Food Pathways programme which is jointly funded by:”



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