

Global Framework for Action

Using public food procurement as a strategic driver of sustainable food systems



One planet
handle with care



One planet
procure with care



One planet
eat with care

Global Framework for Action

*Using public food procurement as a
strategic driver of sustainable food systems*

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Glossary

Sustainable Public Food Procurement (SPFP)

A strategic approach to public procurement whereby governments use their purchasing power to source food in a way that delivers positive social, economic, and environmental outcomes, including improved nutrition, support to local economies, and reduced environmental impact.

Public Food Procurement (PFP)

The process by which public institutions, such as schools, hospitals, prisons, and other public entities, purchase food to deliver meals or food-related services, often at scale and with the potential to influence food systems.

Sustainable Public Procurement (SPP)

A process whereby public organizations meet their needs for goods, services, and works in a way that achieves value for money on a whole-life basis while generating benefits for society and the economy and minimizing environmental damage.

Food Systems

The full range of actors, activities, and processes involved in the production, processing, distribution, preparation, and consumption of food, and the outcomes of these activities, including socio-economic and environmental impacts.

Sustainable Food Systems (SFS)

Food systems that ensure food security and nutrition for all in a way that does not compromise the economic, social, and environmental bases needed for future generations.

Healthy Diets

Healthy diets promote health, growth and development, support active lifestyles, prevent nutrient deficiencies and excesses, communicable and noncommunicable diseases (NCDs), foodborne diseases and promote wellbeing. They are adequate, moderate, balanced and diverse.

Smallholder Producers and Family Farmers

For the purpose of this Framework, the terms *smallholder producers* and *family farmers* are used interchangeably to refer broadly to family-based agricultural producers operating at small scales across diverse territorial and socio-economic contexts. Family farming encompasses agricultural, forestry, fisheries, pastoral, and aquaculture production systems that are managed and operated by a family and predominantly reliant on family labor, including both women's and men's labor. Recognizing the diversity of national realities, no single definition based on farm size or land area is applied in this Framework, and countries may adapt the terminology according to their own institutional and policy contexts.

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Executive Summary

Public Procurement accounts for 13–20% of GDP and nearly USD 9.5 trillion in global spending¹. As such, SPP is a powerful lever for market transformation, sending demand signals that can accelerate the uptake of sustainable solutions across key sectors. By shaping demand in the food sector, governments can influence what food is produced, how it is produced, and who benefits from its production and distribution².

Sustainable Public Food Procurement (SPFP) enables *governments* to simultaneously advance nutrition, support inclusive economic development, and reduce environmental impact. When strategically designed and implemented, SPFP can create stable markets for smallholders, promote sustainable agricultural practices, and improve access to nutritious, culturally appropriate food.

This Global Framework for Action provides a practical and flexible roadmap to operationalize SPFP through three core principles and a menu of priority actions

under each. These principles address the key systemic dimensions required for transformation:

- Establishing coherent governance, policy, and regulatory frameworks.
- Strengthening demand-side institutional capacity.
- Strengthening supply-side capacities for inclusive participation in sustainable public food procurement.

Co-developed through a multi-stakeholder process with the technical guidance of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), and the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), under the 10YFP and its One Planet Network, the Framework supports governments in designing context-specific roadmaps that align public food procurement systems with national sustainability priorities and the Sustainable Development Goals, particularly SDG 12.7.

¹ OECD. Public Procurement Performance. OECD Public Governance Policy Papers. 2023. https://www.oecd.org/en/publications/public-procurement-performance_0dde73f4-en.html. World Bank. Global Public Procurement Database. 2020. <https://www.worldbank.org/en/news/feature/2020/03/23/global-public-procurement-database-share-compare-improve?utm>.

² FAO, Alliance of Bioversity International and CIAT and Editora da UFRGS. 2021a. Public food procurement for sustainable food systems and healthy diets. <https://doi.org/10.4060/cb7960en>

1. Context and rationale

1.1 The food sector: direct impacts on nutrition and sustainability

The food sector directly influences people's health and well-being by supporting physical and cognitive development, reducing disease risks, and enhancing productivity. Promoting good nutrition enables individuals, families, communities, and States to achieve stronger social and economic outcomes.

Although progress has been made in recent years, hunger, malnutrition and inequality persist. In 2024, hundreds of millions of people still faced food insecurity, and while the cost of a healthy diet declined slightly, billions remained unable to afford adequate nutrition, particularly women and rural populations in low- and middle-income countries. At the same time, food systems continue to place immense pressure on natural resources, driving greenhouse gas emissions, biodiversity loss, and pollution, while using most of the world's freshwater and land, and wasting more than a billion tonnes of food each year³.

Shaping how food is produced and consumed is therefore essential to supporting better nutrition, stable livelihoods, sustainable agricultural productivity, and the protection of ecosystems.

1.2 A global response: sustainable production and consumption through public procurement

Public spending through procurement represents approximately 13-20% of global gross domestic product (GDP)⁴. Because of its scale and governments' capacity to align policies across sectors and engage multiple stakeholders, Sustainable Public Procurement (SPP) serves as a key tool to promote sustainable consumption and production patterns, as recognized in the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) (Box 1).

Box 1. Sustainable Public procurement and the Sustainable Development Goals

The SDGs recognize SPP as a key strategic component of the global effort toward sustainable consumption and production. SDG Target 12.7 specifically promotes the adoption of "public procurement practices that are sustainable, in accordance with national policies and priorities." This target enables governments to align public spending with their development objectives and international sustainability commitments.

³ According to FAO's "The State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World 2025", in 2024 between 638 and 720 million people faced hunger and an estimated 2.3 billion people experienced moderate or severe food insecurity. Only one in three children aged 6–23 months and two in three women of reproductive age meet minimum dietary diversity. The cost of a healthy diet reached USD 4.46 (PPP) per person per day in 2024 and the number of people unable to afford a healthy diet declined slightly, from 2.76 billion in 2019 to 2.6 billion in 2024. According to UNCCD's "The Global Land Outlook" and UN-Nutrition's "Nutrition and the environment – Nurturing people, protecting the planet", current food systems account for up to 34% of global greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, 60% of terrestrial biodiversity loss, 70% of freshwater withdrawals and 80% of all land-use change globally, while also contributing to water, soil, and air pollution.

Additionally, UNEP's Food Waste Index Report 2024 states that 1.05 billion tonnes of food are wasted worldwide yearly, representing up to 10% of total GHG emissions.

⁴ OECD. Public Procurement Performance. OECD Public Governance Policy Papers. 2023. https://www.oecd.org/en/publications/public-procurement-performance_0dde73f4-en.html. World Bank. Global Public Procurement Database. 2020. <https://www.worldbank.org/en/news/feature/2020/03/23/global-public-procurement-database-share-compare-improve?utm>.

1.3 The power of sustainable public food procurement (SPFP) as a policy tool to foster sustainable development

Growing evidence shows that SPFP has the potential to positively influence both food production and consumption patterns⁵ and is recognized by governments as a strategic policy tool to generate social, economic, and environmental benefits for producers, consumers, and local communities⁶.

Public food procurement initiatives can take different forms, including the provision of food and food-related services in schools, hospitals, prisons, military facilities, childcare centres, and universities, elderly care centres, public offices, and other public institutions. They may also include social protection and food assistance programmes, such as in-kind

transfers involving the distribution of food assistance to families in need, social restaurants, and food provision in shelters.

When governments shape their demand for food by considering **what** is purchased, **from whom**, and **how it is produced**, they can guide suppliers towards more sustainable practices, support their gradual development, and promote their participation in public markets. They can also guide consumers toward healthier and more sustainable diets rooted in cultural habits and local and regional food availability. In this way, public procurement can help shift food production and consumption patterns⁷ in ways that reflect each country's priorities and conditions.



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⁵ FAO, Alliance of Bioversity International and CIAT and Editora da UFRGS. 2021a. Public food procurement for sustainable food systems and healthy diets. <https://doi.org/10.4060/cb7960en>; FAO, Alliance of Bioversity International and CIAT and Editora da UFRGS. 2021b. Public food procurement for sustainable food systems and healthy diets. <https://doi.org/10.4060/cb7969en>

⁶ UNEP's "2022 Global Review on Sustainable Procurement" highlights that "food and catering services" have risen from 11th to 2nd place among government priorities for sustainable public procurement since 2017. <https://www.unep.org/resources/report/2022-global-review-sustainable-procurement>

⁷ Swensson, L.F.J. and Tartanac, F. 2020. Public food procurement for sustainable diets and food systems: the role of the regulatory framework. *Global Food Security*, 25: 100366. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.gfs.2020.100366>.

1.4 Driving impact: advancing sustainability goals through food procurement

Promoting sustainable food consumption and production patterns through sustainable public procurement requires an integrated approach that advances social, economic, and environmental objectives together: Healthy ecosystems sustain

productive agriculture and stable livelihoods; fair and inclusive economies expand access to nutritious food and sustainable investment; and resilient communities are better prepared to face climate and market shocks.

SPFP allows governments to put this integrated approach into practice through purchasing decisions with the potential to create positive outcomes across the food system⁸, such as:

- Healthier diets through improved availability and accessibility of nutritious, safe, diverse and culturally appropriate foods.
- Increased income and stronger local economies by creating diversified and stable markets for smallholder suppliers and vulnerable producers – including women, youth and Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities (IPLC) – and by encouraging investment in diversified production and sustainable practices.
- Strengthened environmental sustainability, contributing to government efforts and commitments⁹ on climate change mitigation, biodiversity conservation, the prevention of deforestation, and the efficient use of natural resources, including by prioritizing agroecological, organic or other sustainable production practices, promoting climate-friendly menu design and reducing food loss and waste.

- Reduced chemical pollution and improved environmental and human health through procurement-driven shifts toward low-input, agroecological, non-synthetic, and non-toxic food production systems that avoid the use of synthetic fertilisers and pesticides¹⁰.

Sustainable public food procurement can generate a wide range of social, economic, and environmental outcomes. The specific priorities pursued will depend on each country's context, objectives, resources, and institutional capacities. Governments should consider both synergies and potential trade-offs when selecting and implementing actions, ensuring that procurement approaches are tailored to national needs and priorities.

⁸ FAO, Alliance of Biodiversity International and CIAT and Editora da UFRGS. 2021a. Public food procurement for sustainable food systems and healthy diets.

⁹ International sustainability-related commitments that Sustainable Public Food Procurement can support countries in meeting can include the [Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework](#), [UNEA Resolution 4/1 \(2019\) – Innovative Pathways to Achieve Sustainable Consumption and Production](#) and [UNEA Resolution 5/11 \(2022\) – Enhancing Circular](#)

[Economy](#), and Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) [12.3 – Ending Food Waste](#), [12.7 – Promoting Sustainable Public Procurement](#), [13 – Climate Action](#), [14 – Life Below Water](#) and [15 – Life on Land](#).

¹⁰ GEF, Financing Agrochemical Reduction and Management (FARM). 2026. <https://www.thegef.org/projects-operations/projects/10872> ; UNEP, Global Framework on Chemicals - For a Planet Free of Harm from Chemicals and Waste. 2023. <https://www.unep.org/resources/global-framework-chemicals-planet-free-harm-chemicals-and-waste>.

2. Supporting the strategic design and implementation of SPFP under a holistic approach

For the implementation of sustainable public food procurement strategies several elements need to work together. These can be grouped into three interrelated areas: (a) establishing an enabling governance, policy and regulatory environment to guide sustainable procurement practices, strengthen coordination and support accountability; (b) strengthening demand-side capacities by equipping public buyers with the knowledge, tools and guidance needed to plan and implement procurement processes that integrate sustainability considerations and engage with local markets and suppliers; and (c) strengthening the supply side by identifying and addressing barriers that prevent potential suppliers, particularly smallholder producers and SMEs, from accessing public procurement markets, complying with administrative, technical and sustainability requirements, and benefiting from broader technical assistance and rural development support.

2.1 Establishing an enabling environment for SPFP

A strong enabling environment is the foundation of SPFP.¹¹ When policies, laws, and institutions are not aligned, it becomes difficult to use public procurement as a tool to advance sustainability goals. Weak governance, unclear responsibilities, and fragmented regulations can create confusion and slow progress. An enabling environment helps overcome barriers such as:

- Lack of alignment between procurement policies and broader food systems or sustainability strategies.

- Inconsistent or outdated legislation that limits the practical application of sustainability criteria.
- Poor coordination among agencies and limited accountability for implementation.

Once the governance, policy and institutional foundations are in place, efforts can focus on strengthening demand and supply capacities to make SPFP work in practice.

2.2 Building stronger public capacity on the demand side

Public buyers play a central role in planning, purchasing, and managing food procurement¹². They translate sustainability objectives into action through strategic procurement decisions and practices. However, weak institutional capacity, limited resources, outdated procedures and insufficient operational tools can derail procurement processes and limit the integration and impact of sustainability considerations. Common demand-side barriers include:

- Insufficient staff capacity or technical skills to manage complex procurement processes and align procurement practices and procedures with broader sustainability objectives.
- Outdated systems, lengthy procedures, unfavourable payment conditions, and weak monitoring mechanisms.

¹¹ FAO, Alliance of Bioversity International and CIAT and Editora da UFRGS. 2021a.; Swensson LFJ, Tartanac F. 2020. Public food procurement for sustainable diets and food systems: the role of the regulatory framework.

¹² WHO. 2022. *How together we can make the world's most healthy and sustainable public food procurement.*

<https://www.who.int/europe/publications/i/item/WHO-EURO-2022-6178-45943-66333>; FAO and WFP. 2026. Operationalizing school meal nutrition guidelines and standards through procurement – A guidance manual. <https://doi.org/10.4060/cd9608en>;

- Menus and school food nutrition guidelines and standards that are not aligned with the local contexts, and that do not address sustainability considerations.
- Limited practical guidance, tools or sample criteria to support the integration of sustainability considerations into procurement processes.
- Limited understanding of market dynamics and weak communication between public buyers and suppliers.
- Poor coordination among public agencies, leading to fragmented or inconsistent actions
- Weak organization and bargaining power among producers, limiting collective marketing and participation in open bidding processes.
- Lack of information regarding public procurement opportunities.
- Insufficient coordination between support programs and targeted producers, leading to misalignment in capacity development, technical assistance, and procurement schedules.

2.3 Strengthening the supply side to enable participation.

Producers, especially smallholders, often face difficulties in accessing public markets and complying with procurement and sustainability requirements.¹³ These challenges limit their ability to participate effectively in public procurement and are often linked to barriers such as:

- Low and/or inconsistent production volumes, making it difficult to meet procurement volumes and schedules.
- Challenges in meeting food safety, quality, and sustainability standards, including certification costs as well as difficulties in meeting eligibility or participation requirements that are often not aligned with the characteristics of smallholder suppliers.
- Limited access to finance, infrastructure, and logistics, including credit, storage, transport, and timely payments.

¹³ Kelly, S. and Swensson, L.F.J. 2017. Leveraging institutional food procurement for linking small farmers to markets: Findings from WFP's Purchase for Progress initiative and Brazil's food procurement programmes.
FAO

<https://openknowledge.fao.org/handle/20.500.14283/i7636e>; Brooks, J., Commandeur, D. & Vera, E. 2014. *Inclusive procurement and transparency: Connecting smallholder farmers to school feeding*. SNV. https://www.snv.org/assets/downloads/i/191310/497f053338/snv_pg-hgsf_learning_document_-_inclusive_procurement_and_transparency.pdf

3. Global Framework: Country-specific roadmaps for SPFP implementation

In response to growing interest and demand for technical assistance and policy guidance on SPFP, UNEP, host of the Secretariat for the 10-Year Framework of Programmes on Sustainable Consumption and Production, commissioned and collaborated with, FAO to conduct baseline research, stakeholder mapping activities and identify and prioritize actions for the development of a Global Framework for Action for SPFP.

Developed through a two-year participatory process with governments, procurement practitioners, producers, civil society organizations, and development partners, and drawing on lessons from diverse contexts, the Global Framework for Action consists of 3 principles and 14 actions. They serve as a flexible reference to help policymakers design country-specific roadmaps to integrate social, economic and environmental priorities into public food procurement under a holistic approach.



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3.1 Principles and actions ‘menu’

Governments are encouraged to establish the pathways for SPFP implementation by selecting and adapting actions from all three principles considering their context and priorities, while ensuring that objectives across all dimensions of sustainability are addressed and periodically reviewed.

Principle 1: Establish coherent governance, policy, and regulatory frameworks to enable sustainable public food procurement

This principle focuses on establishing the enabling environment for sustainable public food procurement. It emphasizes the importance of coherent governance, policy and regulatory frameworks to guide implementation, strengthen coordination across sectors and levels of government, and support the integration of social, economic and environmental objectives into procurement systems.

Actions for Principle 1

A1. Build multi-sector collaboration and strengthen linkages between public food procurement and the broader sustainable public procurement agenda.

Recognizing public food procurement as part of the broader sustainable public procurement agenda is important to reinforce both agendas, promote a systems-based approach, and support the development of coherent policy and regulatory instruments. Strengthen these linkages and promote multisector coordination across relevant sectors (including health, nutrition, agriculture, environment, social protection and inclusion, among others), and levels of government. This may include establishing new, or strengthening existing, interministerial working groups, integrating sustainable public food procurement into national sustainable public procurement plans, and linking public food procurement initiatives, including school feeding programmes, to broader sustainable public procurement processes.

A2. Establish multi-level governance mechanisms at national, sub-national and local levels.

Effective sustainable public food procurement requires strong coordination across different levels and sectors of government so that objectives, action plans and implementation processes are aligned with local realities. Establish multi-level coordination mechanisms and clear decision-making roles across government levels to support coherent adaptation, implementation and accountability. This may include formal coordination platforms and institutional arrangements that clarify responsibilities and help address implementation challenges.

A3. Develop a clear vision and objectives for public food procurement within the sustainable public procurement framework with a multi-stakeholder approach.

Strategic alignment and a common sense of purpose are essential to guide action, foster ownership, and ensure coherence across stakeholders. Establish a clear vision and shared objectives for sustainable public food procurement through a multi-stakeholder approach that helps identify priorities and address potential gaps or trade-offs. This may include engaging relevant public institutions, civil society, producers’ organizations and other stakeholders in policy design and planning processes.¹⁴

A4. Assess, and where needed, revise legal frameworks and procurement practices to ensure the necessary tools are in place to pursue social, economic and environmental objectives through SPFP.

Strong legal and regulatory frameworks are essential to embed sustainability into procurement. Aligning procurement and sustainability objectives enables implementation across institutions, supports the integration of good practices, and reduces legal risks, while providing procurement officers with the necessary instruments to operationalize sustainability objectives. This may include the possibility to apply award criteria beyond price, related to quality and

¹⁴ For an example of guidance on establishing multi-stakeholder collaboration within the food systems context, see: UNEP, FAO and UNDP. 2023. *Rethinking our food systems: A guide for multi-stakeholder collaboration*. <https://doi.org/10.4060/cc6325en>

sustainability considerations; use reservation or preferential schemes for targeted suppliers, when allowed by the national legal frameworks, adopt alternative procurement methods more suited to smallholder participation; consider the application of contract lotting; and align participation and advertising requirements to enhance accessibility. Methodologies, such as the one developed by the Food and Agriculture Organization, can serve as useful instruments in this process.¹⁵

A5. Develop and implement monitoring and evaluation systems to track the performance of SPFP initiatives against the social, economic and environmental objectives.

Monitoring and evaluation systems are important to measure progress, capture lessons learned and support evidence-based decision-making. Develop and implement systems with clear and measurable indicators, regular data collection and mechanisms to inform policy adjustments and resource allocation. These systems should also facilitate information-sharing across government levels and procurement actors to strengthen coordination and support continuous improvement.¹⁶

Principle 2: Strengthen demand-side capacity to operationalize sustainable public food procurement

This principle focuses on how public institutions, through public buyers, can turn sustainability commitments into effective procurement practices. It emphasizes strengthening the knowledge, capacities and tools of public buyers so they can understand and integrate sustainability objectives into procurement processes, including by understanding and connecting with smallholder producers and SMEs. By strengthening the knowledge, tools and processes that guide purchasing decisions, governments can support the consistent and effective integration of sustainability considerations across procurement systems.

Actions for Principle 2

A6. Provide instruments to support the assessment of supply capacities against procurement objectives (**market readiness analyses**).

Understanding what the market can realistically offer is essential to ensure that procurement processes do not include products or requirements that are unavailable or impractical, or that may unintentionally create barriers to entry for local and smallholder suppliers. This includes understanding the seasonality of agricultural production and variations linked to production cycles, climatic conditions, and territorial characteristics. Provide public buyers with the instruments needed to assess supply-side potential against procurement needs and sustainability requirements. This may include agricultural censuses, national surveys, databases, and supplier registration systems that support market readiness analyses. These instruments, complemented with those mentioned in Action 7, can help public buyers assess the feasibility of introducing new sustainability criteria, including whether a phased approach may be needed, without excluding local and smallholder suppliers.

A7. Create and/or promote mechanisms to support the engagement of smallholder suppliers in public procurement

The effective engagement of smallholder producers and SMEs in public food procurement depends not only on supply capacities, but also on the availability of mechanisms that help public buyers identify these potential suppliers, promote knowledge exchange and mutual learning on current and future demand and supply conditions and connect them with

¹⁵ For examples of legal and policy assessments conducted by FAO in the context of school food procurement and the methodology used, see: FAO. 2019. *Aligning public procurement rules and practices to support the implementation of home-grown school feeding (HGSF) initiatives: The case of Ethiopia*. <https://openknowledge.fao.org/server/api/core/bitstreams/66dbfb94-2764-467f-8d59-7a58027c32e2/content> and; FAO. 2020. *Aligning public procurement rules and practices to support the implementation of home-grown school feeding (HGSF) initiatives: The case of Senegal*. <https://openknowledge.fao.org/server/api/core/bitstreams/cdfcb0f6-884e-485d-915e-6987d9f962b8/content>.

¹⁶ For an example of broad guidance on developing monitoring and evaluation systems for sustainable public procurement, see: Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) 2021. *Monitoring & Evaluation of Sustainable Public Procurement: Practical considerations for establishing an M&E framework*. GIZ. [Monitoring%20%26%20Evaluation%20of%20Sustainable%20Public%20Procurement.pdf](#)

procurement opportunities.¹⁷ Create and/or promote mechanisms that facilitate engagement and improve communication between supply and demand actors. This may include family farmer registries¹⁸, supplier databases, market dialogues, matchmaking events and other instruments that supports the proactive and regular dissemination of procurement opportunities to smallholder producers and SMEs.

A8. Promote menus based on context-specific nutrition guidelines and standards that ensure nutritious meals and incorporate social, economic and sustainability objectives.

Nutrition guidelines and standards help translate nutrition and broader sustainability objectives into actual food items and quantities to be purchased. Promote context-specific nutrition guidelines and standards, involve public buyers in their formulation where appropriate, and support them in understanding how these tools inform practical menus, portion quantities, product quality requirements and sustainability specifications for procurement planning.¹⁹

A9. Develop and disseminate criteria, linked to effective verification instruments, to support the integration of environmental and/or social and economic objectives into public food procurement.

For sustainability objectives to be operationalized through procurement, they need to be translated into specific and verifiable criteria, including technical specification, selection and award criteria. These criteria need to be drafted strategically, taking into account specific market conditions. It is also important to ensure that their application does not create unnecessary barriers to entry for smallholder producers and SMEs, or excessive administrative burdens. Develop and disseminate sample criteria, together with practical guidance and tools to support their strategic drafting and application in public food procurement.²⁰

A10. Develop and disseminate guidance and tools to support the integration of social and environmental considerations into public food procurement (e.g. national or regional school food procurement guidelines).

The integration of sustainability considerations into procurement requires practical guidance that helps public buyers translate policy objectives into operational decisions. Develop and disseminate guidance and tools to support public buyers in incorporating social and environmental considerations into procurement processes. This may include national or regional food procurement guidelines, templates, as well as other operational tools that support the consistent application of sustainability objectives in procurement practice.²¹

A11. Assess procurement officers' capacity needs to implement sustainable public food procurement strategies, according to countries policies and priorities.

A clear understanding of the knowledge and capacity gaps faced by public buyers is necessary to identify priority areas for support and to ensure effective implementation. Assess the main knowledge and capacity gaps related to the implementation of sustainable public food procurement strategies according to the country's policies and priorities, including in relation to the engagement of local smallholder producers and SMEs. This may include structured interviews, questionnaires, validation meetings or workshops with public buyers and relevant stakeholders.²²

¹⁷ From the demand side, knowledge exchange and mutual learning can help public buyers better understand local market conditions, adapt procurement strategies and requirements accordingly, and broaden the pool of potential suppliers, including smallholder producers and SMEs. From the supply side, they can help suppliers to better understand current and future public food demand - including the adoption of new sustainability requirements -, enabling them to plan and adapt accordingly and respond more effectively to procurement opportunities. For an example of how market dialogues can promote knowledge and mutual learning in the school food procurement context to, see: FAO and WFP. 2026. *Operationalizing school meal nutrition guidelines and standards through procurement – A guidance manual*. Rome. <https://doi.org/10.4060/cd9608en>

For an example of a methodology for the design and implementation of family farming registers, see: FAO, 2025. *Design and implementation of family farming registers – Guide for policymakers*. <https://doi.org/10.4060/cd1636en>.

¹⁹ For an example of a methodology for developing nutrition guidelines and standards in the school food procurement context, see: FAO and WFP. 2026. *Developing holistic nutrition guidelines and standards for school meals – A global methodology*. For broader guidance on nutrition criteria and related policy development see WHO. 2021. *Action framework for developing and implementing public food procurement and service policies for a healthy diet*. <https://iris.who.int/server/api/core/bitstreams/0a18bf5f-b4d2-4b6e-9c70-4a75c2d8abe8/content>

²⁰ For an example of sample sustainability criteria see: European Commission: Joint Research Centre. 2025. *Criteria for Sustainable Public Procurement (SPP) for Food, Food services, and Vending machines*. <https://data.europa.eu/doi/10.2760/0895877>.

²¹ For an example of a global guidance focused on school food procurement, see: FAO and WFP. 2026. *Operationalizing school meal nutrition guidelines and standards through procurement – A guidance manual*. <https://doi.org/10.4060/cd9608en>

²² A forthcoming FAO methodology, *Rapid Diagnostic and Capacity Needs Assessment Methodology for Strengthening Smallholder Participation in Sustainable Public Food Procurement Systems*, provides an example of an assessment tool for sustainable public food procurement. The methodology includes demand- and

A12. Design and implement capacity development plans, including training programmes and peer-to-peer networks for procurement officers.

Addressing identified capacity gaps and promoting continuous capacity development are essential to strengthen the ability of public buyers to implement sustainable public food procurement in practice. Design and implement targeted capacity development plans to strengthen their awareness and capacities to integrate sustainability considerations into procurement processes, including the engagement of smallholder producers and SMEs.

Principle 3: Strengthen supply-side capacities for inclusive participation in sustainable public food procurement

This principle focuses on enabling suppliers, particularly smallholder producers and SMEs, to participate effectively in SPFP processes. It emphasizes strengthening their technical, organizational, and financial capacities so they can meet procurement requirements while improving their own performance.

A13. Assess local and smallholder suppliers' capacity needs linked to participation in public food procurement processes.

Understanding the barriers faced by smallholder producers and SMEs are essential to design support measures that respond to real constraints and strengthen their access to public market opportunities. Assess the main barriers preventing them from participating effectively in public food procurement processes, including administrative, technical and sustainability-related requirements. This may include structured interviews, questionnaires, validation meetings or workshops with smallholder producers, producer organizations and relevant stakeholders.²³

A14. Design and implement capacity development plans, building on existing technical assistance initiatives, to strengthen smallholder suppliers' ability to access public food procurement markets and comply with new requirements.

Addressing barriers linked to participation in procurement processes is essential to strengthen the ability of smallholder producers and SMEs to access public food procurement markets. Design and implement targeted capacity development plans to help them progressively comply with administrative, technical and sustainability requirements and engage effectively in procurement processes. These efforts should be complemented by linkages with existing technical assistance and rural development programmes that address broader production, post-harvest, organizational and commercialization challenges beyond procurement procedures alone.

3.2 Applying the Framework to develop tailored country roadmaps

The Global Framework for Action recognizes that not all actions can be implemented at the same time. Governments, particularly in low- and middle-income countries, often operate with constrained budgets, limited staff capacity, insufficient infrastructure and competing priorities. Implementation therefore requires careful considerations of available resources, budgetary implications and the potential trade-offs between costs and sustainability objectives.

Rather than prescribing a single pathway, the Framework supports a progressive and sequenced approach, enabling countries to engage with the 3 principles and 14 actions according to their priorities, capacities, institutional readiness, existing initiatives and strategic objectives.

supply-side modules to identify capacity gaps, procurement practices and barriers affecting the participation of smallholder producers in public food procurement systems.

²³For a possible example of a methodology intended to support the assessment of suppliers' capacity needs linked to participation in public food procurement processes, refer to the forthcoming FAO methodology mentioned in note 19.

The actions presented should be selected, prioritized and undertaken through a stepwise and participatory process:

Step 1. Multi-stakeholder consultation

Convene multi-stakeholder subnational and/or national consultations to map existing policies, initiatives and practices, and to build a shared understanding of priorities, entry points and constraints.

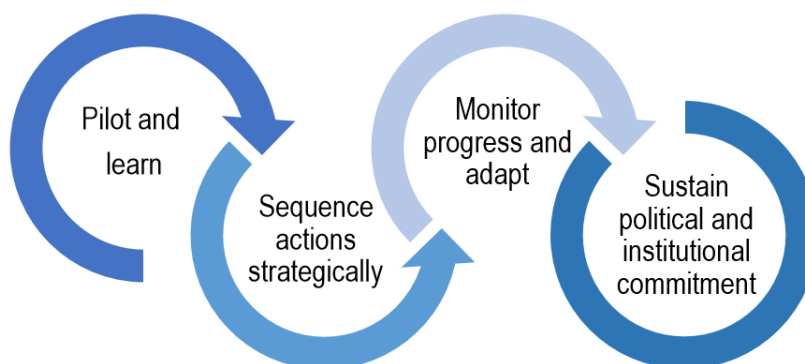
Step 2. Identification of priorities and roadmap development

Based on the consultation outcomes, identify country-specific priorities and co-develop a context-specific SPFP roadmap, using the 14 Actions as a flexible reference.

Step 3. Implementation of selected priorities

Implement selected priorities through a progressive, sequenced approach, starting with feasible entry points and scaling up as capacities, resources, and institutional conditions develop. Effective implementation requires attention to four interconnected dimensions:

Figure 1. Four interconnected dimensions for effective implementation



- **Pilot and learn:** Where possible, begin with bounded pilots, such as a single institution, municipality, or product category, to test sustainability criteria, supplier engagement mechanisms, and procurement procedures before broader rollout. Pilots generate practical evidence, build institutional confidence, and allow for course correction with lower risk.
- **Sequence actions strategically:** Governance and regulatory actions (Principle 1) generally need to precede or accompany demand- and supply-side capacity actions (Principles 2 and 3), as legal clarity and institutional mandates enable procurement officers and suppliers to act with confidence. Within each principle, prioritize actions that unblock the most significant barriers identified during the consultation process.
- **Monitor progress and adapt:** Use the monitoring and evaluation systems established under Action 5 to track implementation against defined indicators, capture lessons learned and identify where adjustments are needed. Monitoring should cover process indicators (e.g. number of procurement processes incorporating sustainability criteria), output indicators (e.g. share of procurement value sourced from smallholder suppliers), and where feasible, outcome indicators (e.g. dietary diversity among target beneficiaries, income change among participating producers).
- **Sustain political and institutional commitment:** Evidence from country experiences consistently shows that SPFP initiatives are most durable when embedded in formal policy and budgetary processes, rather than dependent on individual champions or time-limited project funding. Efforts should therefore include periodic

reporting to senior decision-makers, integration into national food, agriculture, and procurement strategies, and mechanisms for multi-stakeholder accountability.

Taken together, these steps can help countries to move progressively from policy to action, while ensuring coherence with national and subnational realities and supporting the integration of social, economic and environmental objectives into public food procurement systems.

4. Resources

Recognizing that access to practical resources is essential to support implementation, this Framework is accompanied by a collection of tools, guidance documents, case studies, and examples of good practices submitted by participating countries and partner organizations. These resources are intended to help governments translate the Framework's principles and actions into practice, while providing inspiration from experiences across different contexts and stages of implementation.

The compilation is not exhaustive and will be periodically updated on One Planet Network's website to reflect new knowledge, emerging practices, and additional contributions from countries and stakeholders. Resources are available [here](#).

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