

GAIN'S STRATEGY 2023-2027



This note provides a short narrative account of GAIN's new Strategy, and how we will work and assess its impact

BACKGROUND AND RATIONALE

The world has changed significantly since GAIN's current strategy was launched in 2017. Climate change, Covid-19, and the war in Ukraine have had devastating effects on people. But the global agenda has also tilted towards GAIN's vision and goals.



The most vulnerable are bearing the brunt of these crises. Hunger numbers have increased by more than 150 million, and infant and child malnutrition is projected to increase significantly in the absence of intensified action (stunting by two million, wasting by 10 million). The number of people suffering from micronutrient malnutrition is likely to be closer to three billion than the two billion number we have used for decades. Over three billion people cannot afford a healthy diet, and inflation is going to make these numbers worse before they get better.

Despite this grim backdrop, there are reasons for optimism. The world came together to deliver a powerful response to Covid-19. The collective condemnation of the invasion of Ukraine has also been the dominant theme. Resources to meet the short-term hunger and malnutrition needs have ramped up, although the picture for the medium- and long-term response is less clear at this time.

As COP27 showed, the world's leaders are beginning to take climate adaptation and loss and damage much more seriously, even if progress on emissions reductions has arguably stalled. At COP, food is rising up the agenda as a part of the solution. Overall, multilateralism is alive and kicking, stronger than many expected.

Within many national governments, there has been a shift in favour of thinking in terms of the idea of food systems, giving food actions, interventions, and policies licence to deliver multiple wins in nutrition, hunger, climate, biodiversity, livelihoods, and resilience. Over 100 countries have generated food system pathways, many of which are well developed and seek to crowd in the private sector and private philanthropies, new and old. We know these are just starting points and face many challenges, but different policy goals around food are on the agenda, and different questions being asked in 2022 than were asked in 2017.

The private sector and philanthropies are becoming more comfortable and effective in coalescing around initiatives such as the [ATNI-led Investor Coalition](#), the [Stronger Foundations for Nutrition](#), the GAIN-led [Zero Hunger Private Sector Initiative](#) and models such as the [GAIN-Incofin Nutritious Food Financing Facility \(N3F\)](#). Private investors are also directing their firepower to changing corporate performance towards healthier diets, and developing a better link between products and public health outcomes.

Our data, knowledge, evidence of what to do have never been stronger. Examples include:

- The Independent Panel on Climate Control (IPCC), the Global Burden of Disease (GBD) reports and FAO's State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World are solidifying our understanding of national and global trends.
- The African Union's Biennial Review which tracks African food system commitments, and the annual Global Nutrition Report which has a new accountability framework for delivery of commitments
- The Initiative for Climate and Nutrition (ICAN) which emerged from COP27 and is advancing nutrition and food systems as key to tackling global warming
- The Harvard/GAIN/Gallup Global Diet Quality already conducting surveys in 40 countries, and will over the next few years provide near real time information on trends in diets in 100+ countries
- With partners, our Food System Dashboard and the Countdown to 2030 initiatives are benchmarking food systems transformation and linking it to action

In summary, there is growing recognition that our food systems need to change if we are to get back on track to ensure the world's population has the nutritious food it needs, in a sustainable way.

And GAIN is well situated in this space, being a deliberate connector between food systems and nutrition, and a deliberate connector between the public and private sectors. The demand for our ideas, programmes, initiatives, partnership has never been higher.

The chart below sets out some of our impacts for 2017-2022 in numbers, and the types of change we are working are illustrated in [20 stories of impact](#). We seek to build on this success and take it to the next level.

Improved Nutrient Available

1.2 billion people reached through **large scale fortification**

120 million people reached with **biofortified crops**

Improved Nutrient Rich Food Acquisition

225,000 people in Kaduna State, Nigeria, **more likely to acquire eggs** due to the "Eggs Make Kids" **demand creation interventions**, even during COVID-19 lockdowns

Improved Safe Food Infrastructure

Millions of consumers in Bangladesh, Ethiopia & Tanzania, benefitted from **cleaner, safer wet food markets** during COVID-19

Stronger SMEs Supplying Safe Nutritious Food

Over 1000 **small and medium enterprises** (SMEs) in Africa supported with TA and finance to supply safe and nutritious food

More Financial Resources for Food Systems

\$500m committed by 50 companies for high impact interventions for hunger reduction via the Zero Hunger Private Sector Pledge

Improved Diet Quality

Diet quality of 500,000 children under 5 improved through the BADUTA programme in Indonesia using **Emo-Demo behaviour change**, adverts & caregiver counselling

Diet diversity of 30,000 women tea pickers in India significantly improved through Seeds of Prosperity **behaviour change** programmes in India

Lowered Risk of Anaemia

Risk of anaemia rates significantly reduced for 10,000's of women workers in 20 ready made garment factories in Bangladesh via **improved foods, iron folate supplements & behaviour change**

5 million children under 5 in Bangladesh, reached with **micronutrient supplements** via market mechanisms, significantly **reducing the risk of anaemia**

GUIDING PRINCIPLES ON HOW GAIN CAN HAVE A BIGGER IMPACT, 2023-2027

Over the past year, over 200 inputs were provided into the new Strategy from partners, donors, experts, and staff. The fundamental question we asked was, “How can GAIN have a bigger impact?”.



From this process, we identified five headline goals:

- 1** **A stronger focus on healthier diets.**

This represents a shift in emphasis from the current strategy, going beyond improving access safe and nutritious food to increase access for all to healthier diets, especially for those most at risk of poor nutrition. This means concentrating our different programmes throughout the food system and working with strategic partners who can complement gaps. In addressing this outcome, we will increase our focus on disincentivising the consumption of foods that are considered unhealthy, such as ultra-processed foods which can crowd out healthier foods. We will maintain our focus on activities beyond the farmgate, not working directly with the farmers and growers, but partnering with them via organisations who are much stronger in this domain.
- 2** **More attention to vulnerability and resilience.**

We will focus on protecting those most at risk to shocks, including individuals living on \$3.20 or less per day. We are developing a new programme to influence the design of social protection programmes to improve access to safe and nutritious foods and healthier diets. In addition, we will focus more on neglected and underutilised nutritious crops, and on local value chains to diversify the types of crops available to consumers. We will increase finance to SMEs that cannot weather shocks as well as large companies.
- 3** **Strengthening environmental protection while advancing nutrition.**

We will design and implement our nutrition work so that it advances other important goals, especially climate and environmental. We want to accelerate advancement of nutrition outcomes beyond business as usual. The UN Food Systems Summit highlighted the potential of food system action to advance multiple goals simultaneously and the nature of trade-offs that might hold back nutrition advancement. Our work on gender and environment in particular will be strengthened greatly and we will mainstream food safety throughout our programmes.



We have set new targets of improving the access of 1.5 billion people to nutritionally enhanced foods and improving the access of 25 million people to healthier diets - measured by a diet diversity metric we have developed and had independently validated.

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Bigger impact.

We will radically scale the impact of our work as never before. We will develop larger, more integrated programmes whenever possible, because they have bigger impact and attract increased attention from potential public and private sector actors who can help replicate them. We will design the programmes with this scalability in mind, looking for opportunities to amplify their impact via government policy, markets, partnerships, and knowledge. Our evidence-based policy work will increase our engagement, voice and credibility and facilitate the scaling of our programmes and the programmes of others by contributing to a more enabling environment for healthier diets. Finally, we will explore diversifying, modestly, our geographical footprint beyond Africa and Asia to diversify the food systems we work in.

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Continuous organisational development

We will continue to invest in country offices. This makes GAIN's country and regional influence stronger, distributes leadership and decision-making throughout GAIN leading to better decision-making, and builds capacity closer to where programmes are developed, both within GAIN and in local partners. We will seek to ensure our organisation grows steadily and gets stronger, in accordance with our impact aspirations. We will do this in several ways, including to:

Diversify and nurture the next generation of leadership and talent within GAIN

Diversify and amplify the public voice of GAIN

Diversify our funding sources

Ensure our systems safeguard our staff and stakeholders yet are sufficiently nimble for a growing organisation.

We will be mindful of ensuring our staff's workload is at sustainable levels and that working at GAIN continues to be fulfilling. We have refreshed our values to signal the kinds of behaviour we want to see from all staff, every day: passion for the mission, embracing equity, diversity and inclusion, innovation in solving problems, integrity, teamwork (with partners and within GAIN), and humility. And one principle that encapsulates both what we do and how we do it is enhanced gender equity. We have been steadily improving our organisational performance when it comes to gender equity as measured by the external Global Health 50/50 scores. But we aim to go further in this next period, doing more, in all our programmes, to empower women, improve their nutrition status and measure diet quality improvement outcomes by gender.

THE NEW STRATEGY: WHAT AND HOW



OUR VISION

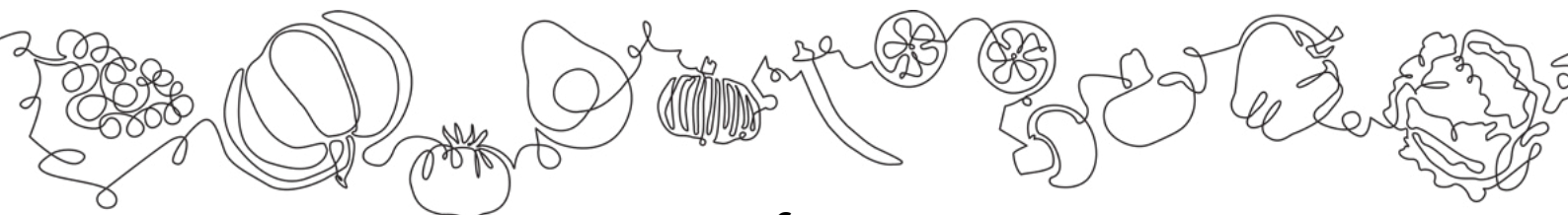
Healthier diets for all people, especially the most vulnerable, from more sustainable food systems.

OUR MISSION

Improve the consumption of healthier diets for all, especially the most vulnerable, by improving the availability, affordability, desirability, and sustainability of nutritious and safe foods, and reducing the consumption of unhealthy and unsafe foods.

TOP LINE SMART TARGETS

By 2027, we will improve the access of 1.5 billion people to nutritionally enhanced foods and we will improve the access of 25 million people to healthier diets.



OUR SIMPLIFIED THEORY OF CHANGE

Our simplified theory of change reflects five tiers of action and performance. Tiers 1-3 relate to what we will do, 4 and 5 to how we will go about doing it.



Our top line goal is to improve the consumption of healthy diets. Sometimes this may be achieved by increasing the consumption of individual nutritious foods, but, ideally we want to improve diet quality as assessed in a more rounded way (for example via our new 29 question [Diet Quality Questionnaire](#)) and will design our programmes to do more of the latter than the former, wherever possible.

Second, we will aim for bigger impact. To achieve this, we have three strategic objectives:

1. we will design programmes that focus on improving the consumption of safe and nutritious foods, but which also attempt to improve other outcomes that are important in their own right and which are enabling for nutrition improvement, such as adapting to climate change, generating livelihoods for those on low incomes, promoting women's empowerment, and building food system resilience. This will require us to develop protocols that assess potential impacts of programmes on nutrition as well as on the other dimensions and which help us decide on a go/no go decision
2. we will ensure we implement these programmes well, on time, on budget, with appropriate course corrections based on timely and reliable monitoring systems we will put into place

3. we will aim to develop larger and more integrated projects and programmes, as they can achieve greater impact, and we will build scalability into these projects, whatever their size, so they are more likely to be scaled by policy, markets, partners, and knowledge (and narratives).

Third, we will continue to invest in increasing our influence within food systems, to strengthen the enabling environment for actions that improve the consumption of healthier diets whether through our programs or through the work of others. We will do this through the tried and tested trio of engagement, evidence, and public voice. We need to engage with decision makers to develop relationships of trust, to understand their priorities, how they make decisions and when the opportunity to influence them presents itself. We need to use and generate evidence to design better action, show we are not ideological

and to share what we have learned so others can act on these learnings. On public voice, our messages, findings and results need to be heard by the right people in the right way at the right time and we need to keep investing in our reputation as a thought leader with something useful to say.

Fourth, we need an organisation that delivers its programmes on time, on spend, and that recruits, and nurtures a motivated and talented workforce, has efficient and greener operating systems, has a large, long and diverse funding pipeline, robust corporate finances, and inclusive and effective decision-making processes. All with an eye on leaving the organisation stronger in 2027 than it was at the beginning of the strategy in 2023.

Finally, we need a set of values that gives us an

identity, serves as a compass to how we want to conduct ourselves and reminds us of what is important to us in delivering impact. We have retained passion for our mission, a focus on innovation, and the essential nature of teamwork, and have added (a) equity, diversity, and inclusion (EDI), (b) acting with integrity and (c) acting with humility.

We have been investing in EDI intensively these past three years as we believe it is intrinsically important, and leads to better decisions and a workplace where more people feel they belong. Acting with integrity is essential because we have such a wide range of stakeholders, and we also want to respect planetary boundaries. We also feel humility is vital in not over-promising to our stakeholders, respecting the contributions of our partners and in interacting with those whose lives we aim to improve.

Our Goal and how to meet it: 5 Tiers of Action



WHAT DOES SUCCESS LOOK LIKE BY 2027?

We have tried to encapsulate the top 10 achievements that would represent success by 2027 and which we hold ourselves accountable to achieve.

They are:



- 1** A portfolio of world class programmes that demonstrate impact, and have contributed to shaping national food system pathways around healthier diets from more sustainable food systems for vulnerable consumers, including
 - **Improving the consumption nutritious food of 1.5 billion people**
 - **Improving the consumption of healthy diets of 25 million people**
- 2** Greater influence within the food system policy space, with a strong reputation for showing how nutrition can be advanced, while improving other key outcomes reflected in the SDG2 (Zero Hunger) and its successor goals
- 3** A more diverse set of country programmes that are more influential in their countries, regions and globally, and contribute significantly to strengthening national institutions and local partners
- 4** Leadership in a creating and validating a new set of globally-recognised tools which measure current diet quality, track food systems transformation, and aid national planning
- 5** Upscaled new global and national financing mechanisms which target SMEs in food systems
- 6** The greenest nutrition organisation in existence: operationally and programmatically
- 7** A cadre of diverse, talented leaders throughout the organization that have been recruited, developed, and retained, who reflect the global nature of GAIN and will secure its future. Overall, staff that are motivated, talented, and think GAIN is a fantastic place to work
- 8** A more diverse and larger resource mobilisation pipeline
- 9** Continued strong governance mechanisms
- 10** Our values, lived demonstrably and consistently

FINALLY...

We want GAIN to be a beacon, inspiring and helping others to see where we should all be heading on nutrition; a spotlight, showing what works and does not work to get there; and a mirror, helping all stakeholders to be more accountable for their ambition, impact, and commitments to attain the vision. In short, **we want better nutrition: for all, and especially those most at risk and most vulnerable to the effects of poor nutrition.** This strategy will help us realise these aspirations.



Healthier Diets
For All