



Identifying Platforms for Healthier Diets in Ethiopia and Vietnam

Annex to the Discussion Paper Identifying Platforms for Healthier Diets
A4NH Flagship Programme 1 Food systems for healthier Diets

Sanne Bakker, Marion Herens, Kat Pittore

Identifying Platforms for Healthier Diets in Ethiopia and Vietnam

Annex to the Discussion Paper Identifying Platforms for Healthier Diets
A4NH Flagship Programme 1 Food systems for healthier Diets

Sanne Bakker, Marion Herens, Kat Pittore

This research was funded by The International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI) programme on Food Systems for Healthier Diets (FSHD), part of the IFPRI-led Agriculture for Nutrition and Health (A4NH) phase II (2017 – 2021). (project number 8141708305).

Wageningen Centre for Development Innovation
Wageningen, March 2019

Report WCDI-19-056

Sanne Bakker, Marion Herens, Kat Pittore, 2019. *Identifying Platforms for Healthier Diets in Ethiopia and Vietnam; Annex to the Discussion Paper Identifying Platforms for Healthier Diets; A4NH Flagship Programme 1 Food systems for healthier Diets*. Wageningen Centre for Development Innovation, Wageningen University & Research. Report WCDI-19-056. Wageningen.

Inclusive and sustainable food systems should guarantee consumers availability of, equitable access to and efficient delivery of safe and healthy food requiring interconnectedness between agro-food systems and other (health, education) systems. This requires active networking between multiple stakeholders, engaged in different parts of the food system. The objective of the study was to explore the role of platforms as mechanisms to support the scaling and anchoring of food system transformations for healthier diets. Network analysis was used to visualise relevant platforms, clustering organisations and identifying key connectors (multiple memberships). This Annex to the discussion paper *Identifying Platforms for Healthier Diets* covers two countries; Ethiopia and Vietnam. In Vietnam, seven CGIAR-affiliated platforms were identified, and 8 (sub)national platforms. In Ethiopia, one CGIAR affiliated platform was identified, and 15 (sub)national platforms.

Key words: multistakeholder partnerships, platforms, interconnectedness, food systems, healthier diets

This report can be downloaded for free at <https://doi.org/10.18174/472117> or at www.wur.eu/cdi (under publications).



© 2019 Wageningen Centre for Development Innovation, part of the Stichting Wageningen Research. P.O. Box 88, 6700 AB Wageningen, The Netherlands. T + 31 (0)317 48 68 00, E info.cdi@wur.nl, www.wur.eu/cdi.



The Wageningen Centre for Development Innovation uses a Creative Commons Attribution 3.0 (Netherlands) licence for its reports.

The user may copy, distribute and transmit the work and create derivative works. Third-party material that has been used in the work and to which intellectual property rights apply may not be used without prior permission of the third party concerned. The user must specify the name as stated by the author or licence holder of the work, but not in such a way as to give the impression that the work of the user or the way in which the work has been used are being endorsed. The user may not use this work for commercial purposes.

The Wageningen Centre for Development Innovation accepts no liability for any damage arising from the use of the results of this research or the application of the recommendations.

Report WCDI-19-056

Photo cover: Nam Nguyen (CIAT)

Contents

List of abbreviations and acronyms	5
1 Introduction	7
2 Methodology	9
3 Vietnam	11
3.1 CGIAR related platforms	11
3.2 National platforms in Vietnam	14
3.3 Network mapping	15
3.4 Vietnam synthesis: high potentials	16
4 Ethiopia	17
4.1 CGIAR related platforms	17
4.2 National platforms in Ethiopia	17
4.3 Network mapping	19
4.4 Ethiopia synthesis: high potentials	20
5 Overall synthesis of platform findings	21
5.1 Similarities between platforms Ethiopia and Vietnam	21
5.2 Key differences between platforms Ethiopia and Vietnam	21
5.3 Comparison with 2017 platform identification in Bangladesh and Nigeria	22
References	25

List of abbreviations and acronyms

A4NH	Agriculture for Nutrition and Health
CGIAR	Consultative Group for International Agricultural Research
CIAT	International Centre for Tropical Agriculture
CIRAD	French Centre for Agricultural Research
CIP	International Potato Centre
CoA	Clusters of Activities
CRP	CGIAR Research Program
CSPs	cross-sectoral social partnerships
FP	Flagship Programme
FSHD	Food Systems for Healthier Diets
IFPRI	International Food Policy Research Institute
LMIC	Low- and middle-income countries
MoANR	Ministry of Agriculture and Natural Resources
MoARD	Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development
MSP	Multi-Stakeholder Partnerships
NIN	National Institute of Nutrition
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
WCDI	Wageningen Centre for Development Innovation, Wageningen University & Research
WUR	Wageningen University & Research

1 Introduction

Today, governments, businesses, and civil society groups increasingly realise the importance of food systems to produce and supply diverse, nutritious, and safe foods for healthy and active lives. The International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI) programme on Food Systems for Healthier Diets (FSHD), part of the IFPRI-led Agriculture for Nutrition and Health (A4NH) phase II (2017 – 2021), responds to these worldwide concerns about global diet trends, and the demands from countries for systematic transitions to a more sustainable food system which provides healthier diets. FSHD seeks to contribute to the goal of healthier diets for poor and vulnerable populations through better understanding of food system-diet dynamics and through identifying and enabling innovations in value chains and policies which support the food system. FSHD has a strong focus on building innovative partnerships between researchers inside and outside the Consultative Group for International Agricultural Research (CGIAR), as well as private, public, and civil society actors in national and sub-national food systems in four target countries.

The programme builds upon and expands the research progress from the A4NH Phase I Flagship Programme on Value Chains for Enhanced Nutrition, such as the framework on value chains for nutrition (Gelli et al., 2015) as well as mechanisms for strengthening integration of nutrition into other CGIAR Research Programmes (CRPs) (e.g. work with systems CRPs around nutrition-sensitive landscapes and the small-grants scheme). FSHD will play an important role in building capacity in food systems approaches and in integrating diet, nutrition, and equity concerns through a learning platform, which will draw upon expertise from across A4NH and partners.

The overall objective of this particular study was to explore the role of platforms as mechanisms to strengthen and/or support the processes of scaling up and anchoring food system transformations for healthier diets. The research sought to advise and support the FSHD programme on the most promising ways to strengthen these processes through linking with existing or development of new platforms for healthier diets.

Specific objectives were:

- To identify and describe the existing and potential role of platforms at CGIAR and focus country level (Bangladesh, Ethiopia, Nigeria, and Vietnam), in promoting mainstreaming of healthy and sustainable diet considerations in decisions of actors (producers, food value chain actors, consumers, policy makers) in their food system activities (production, processing, transporting, retailing, waste, food consumption);
- To identify pathways, conditions and bottlenecks for successful use of identified platform activities to scale up sustainable food system innovations and anchor healthy and sustainable diet considerations.

In 2017, platform identification started for two FSHD focal countries, Bangladesh and Nigeria, which was reported as a discussion paper in 2018¹. In 2018, the study team continued the work for Ethiopia and Vietnam. The results for these two countries are reported in this Annex to the discussion paper.

¹ Marion Herens, Bram Peters, Kat Pittore, 2018. *Identifying Platforms for Healthier Diets; Discussion paper; A4NH Flagship 1 Food Systems for Healthier Diets*. Wageningen Centre for Development Innovation, Wageningen University & Research. Report WCDI-18-009. Wageningen.

2 Methodology

Relevant platforms identification began with a web-based search. Starting with a Google search, the following search terms were used: platforms, partnerships, low- and middle-income countries (LMIC), CGIAR, food security, healthy diets. A second level search focused on identifying country specific platforms using the search terms such as; 'country name', 'platforms', 'partnerships', 'networks', 'food security', 'healthy diets'. Additional secondary sources of information (government publications, reports, personal records) known to the authors were also reviewed. The priority of the searching was to try to identify as many platforms as possible, rather than follow a systematic methodology, so researchers also developed their own search terms, building on their knowledge of the types of organisations which might host such multi-stakeholder platforms.

Upon identification of relevant platform initiatives, next steps were:

1. A quick scan, to identify: 1) Do platform aims and objectives touch upon/align with 'healthy diet considerations'; 2) Does the collaborative structure fits the defined conceptualisation of 'MSP'; 3) Is information available on: structure, functions, urgency, linkages and multilevel/scale of operation
2. If all of the above: in depth exploration of platform structures, functions, organisational features, platform discourses and narratives, communication etc. were documented using the analytical grid developed in phase I: for both countries, a distinction was made between the CGIAR-related platform initiatives, and other in-country platform initiatives.
3. Network mapping exercise to highlight platform composition and organisational actors involved, key themes platforms develop around, and linkages across scales. The network mapping was based on the platforms identified in the quick scan. The purpose was to map the Healthy Diets-related platform landscape in Ethiopia and Vietnam, identifying; key clusters (organisational membership); key connectors (organisations with multiple memberships), and key CGIAR-related networks. Not all identified platforms from the quick scan were included in the mapping. Exclusion was due to two reasons: either lack of (complete) information of the members of key platforms; or when platforms were purely made up of individual members.

Additionally, some of the findings were supplemented by personal communication and knowledge of the researchers about current platforms in the country, including discussions with the A4NH focal person and documents available through other projects.

The platform identification process followed the same conceptualization for healthy diets and multistakeholder partnerships (MSPs) as described in the discussion paper reporting on Bangladesh and Nigeria. While the term healthy diet is commonly used, finding a specific definition of what a healthy diet entails presents a challenge, as there is no widely agreed upon definition. For this report we use the definition of diet quality. Diet quality is central to healthy diets and encompasses aspects of both *adequacy* (getting enough of desirable foods or food groups, energy, macro- and micronutrients) and *moderation* (restriction of unwanted foods, food components or nutrients such as fat, sugar, sugar-sweetened beverages, and sodium) (Herforth et al. 2014; Alkerwi 2014). For platforms, the following definition was used; "governed spaces for multisector interactions that bring together actors from different sectors, involving a certain degree of institutionalisation". An exploratory, non-experimental research design was used, comparing platform initiatives in defined settings: the globally connected CGIAR platforms and nationally-based platforms in two countries: Ethiopia and Vietnam.

Based on a web- and desk review, platform initiatives in Ethiopia and Vietnam were described at CGIAR and at country level. Next, by transferring the data into NodeXL sheets, network mapping was done using Gephi network analysis software to visualise relevant platforms relating to healthier diets (size, composition) by clustering organisational membership numbers; to identify key connectors or bridging actors with multiple memberships; and to identify key CGIAR-related platforms and networks.

3 Vietnam

3.1 CGIAR related platforms

In Vietnam, a total of 7 CGIAR related platforms were identified as relevant for FSHD (Table 1). All of them can be categorized as international research consortia.

- CIAT Elucidating Pathways from Agrobiodiversity to Dietary Diversity: A project-based research consortium that is seeking to establish linkages between agro biodiversity and dietary diversity. The project is implemented in Vietnam and Peru. By increasing collaboration, exchange of knowledge and influence mediation among farmers, researchers and other stakeholders, the MSPs created under the project are supposed to 'innovate' and contribute to the 'scaling of innovations'.
- Foodstart+: A multistakeholder research project with the overall goal is to enhance food resilience among poor households in upland and coastal communities of the Asia-Pacific region (including Vietnam, China, India, Indonesia, Pacific islands and the Philippines), through introducing Root and Tuber Crops innovations, primarily within the framework of IFAD investments.
- CIAT Breeding better crops: another multistakeholder research project to deliver superior crop varieties to farmers, which they want and need. The project operates through different research organisations in 3 countries; Thailand, Cambodia and Vietnam.
- A4NH: The CGIAR Research Program on Agriculture for Nutrition and Health, aims to help realizing the potential of agricultural development to deliver gender-equitable health and nutritional benefits to the poor. The consortium is led by the International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI), and managed by a group of four other CGIAR Research Centers and two academic institutions, and brings together the talents and resources of other CGIAR Research Centers plus a wide range of partners, to carry out research activities in at least 30 countries.
- SPEAR: The A4NH's Flagship Research Program Four 'Supporting Policies, Programs, and Enabling Action through Research' (SPEAR), is implemented in 10 A4NH countries, led by the International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI) and combines resources from Bioversity International along with other strategic partners. In Vietnam, the research aims to understand the history, contemporary treatment, and future of nutrition in Vietnam, including policy and practice pertaining to both under- and over-nutrition.
- Common microbial biotechnology platform (CMBP): The (CMBP) of the Vietnam Agricultural Genetics Institute (AGI), the International Center for Tropical Agriculture (CIAT), and the French Center for Agricultural Research for Development (CIRAD), aims to address soil degradation by assessing indicators – measurements – of the soil's quality, health and sustainability. As well as soil analyses, the CMBP performs other types of agro-ecological analyses to help respond to the myriad challenges and aspects of sustainable agriculture.
- MALICA: MALICA collaborative platform aims to strengthen the research and decision capacity on food market analysis and urban/rural linkages of researchers, students, public officials, and private groups in Vietnam and in Laos.

All these initiatives are organised in a programmatic or project-based way.

Table 1 Vietnam CGAIR related platforms

Platform initiative	MSP?	Shared aim	Structure	Urgency	Levels of action
		Core of initiative	# and key members	Reasons	(internat/nat/local)
CIAT Elucidating Pathways from Agrobiodiversity to Dietary Diversity	Multi-stakeholder research project	Establish linkages between agro-biodiversity and dietary diversity in Vietnam and Peru	5 partners Key: CIAT and NIN	NIF*	International
FoodSTART+	Multi-stakeholder research project	enhance food resilience among poor households in upland and coastal communities of the Asia-Pacific region through root and tuber crops	9 partners Key: CIAT	NIF*	International
CIAT Breeding better crops	Multi-stakeholder research project	Superior crop varieties preferred by farmers in Vietnam, Cambodia and Thailand	At least 7 (not all members are specified)	NIF*	International
A4NH	Multi-stakeholder research project	Realizing the potential of agricultural development to deliver gender-equitable health and nutritional benefits to the poor	7 partners	NIF* Helps realize the potential of agricultural development to deliver gender-equitable health and nutritional benefits to the poor.	National

² CGAIR fund donors include Australian Centre for International Agricultural Research; Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, European Commission, FHI360, Global Environment Facility, University of Alberta, The World Bank, and the Gov. of Ireland, the Netherlands, UK, Swiss, Canada, Germany, Mali and the USA.

Platform initiative	MSP?	Shared aim	Structure	Project-based	Led by	Urgency	International
SPEAR	Multi-stakeholder research project	Including policy and practice pertaining to both under- and over-nutrition in 10 A4NH countries	8 partners	Project-based	Led by IPPRI, combining resources from Bioversity International	Understanding large gap between agriculture and nutrition	International
Common Microbial Biotechnology Platform	Research partnership	Soil assessments and other types of agro-ecological analysis to address soil degradation	3 partners Vietnam Agricultural Genetics Institute (AGI), CIAT, and CIRAD	Partnership between different research institutes	NIF*	A general lack of awareness, of the state of the soil's health and quality.	National
MALICA	Collaborative platform	Research and decision capacity on food market analysis and urban/rural linkages of researchers	9 partners Key: CIRAD	Collaborative platform facilitated and hosted by CIRAD	CIRAD	Urbanization and related challenges and opportunities for farming systems	International

* = no information found

3.2 National platforms in Vietnam

The web-based scan yielded a limited number of platforms (8) compared to the other three countries explored in this study (24 in Bangladesh, 21 in Nigeria, and 15 in Ethiopia). This could imply that platforms are less present online, or that websites in Vietnamese have been excluded. An overview of these platforms is shown in Table 2.

Table 2 National platforms in Vietnam

Platform Initiative	Shared aim				
	Improving diet quality	Food security	Food safety	Fighting malnutrition	Other
<i>Donor driven</i>					
Food safety working group			√		Increased competitiveness of Vietnamese food products
<i>NGO/Civil Society driven</i>					
VINASTAS			√		
<i>Emergency response driven</i>					
Central level emergency nutrition working group				√	
<i>Policy driven</i>					
APEC Policy Partnership on Food Security		√			
Technical working group on nutrition				√	
Steering committee of the National Nutrition Strategy (NNS)	√			√	
<i>Research driven</i>					
Scaling-up nutrition-sensitive agriculture (NAS) in Vietnam and Lao PDR					Nutrition sensitive agriculture
<i>Private sector driven</i>					
Nutritional Foods Group					Development dairy industry for nutrition

The Steering Committee of National Nutrition Strategy is the only platform which explicitly describes the aim of the platform using our definition for improved *diet quality*, 'ensuring appropriate and balanced diets' is part of NNS vision for 2030. The focus of most of the other platforms revolved around either fighting malnutrition or promotion of food safety. The latter was to be expected since food safety has a critical challenge faced by the food system in Vietnam (Béné et al. 2018). Consumer protection in relation to food safety is the main concern of VINASTAS. Possibly more civil society driven initiatives around food safety exist but are overlooked as the web-based scan used English search terms and excluded Vietnamese websites.

The Scaling-up Nutrition Sensitive Agriculture Project consortium refer to the persisting high levels of malnutrition in the upland areas as the urgency for their existence. Malnutrition is also the focus of the the Central level emergency nutrition working. This platform collects figures on vulnerable groups in need for nutrition support and coordinates emergency responses during humanitarian crises such as the El Niño induced drought and saline intrusion in 2016.

Most initiatives (n=3) seemed policy driven, some of which with an international angle (f.e. APEC Policy Partnerships on Food Security).

Only one platform is private sector driven and aims to support the public health goals of improving the nutritional wellbeing of Vietnamese people. All members of this platform are private sector stakeholders/players, but the goal is to work with Government, NGO and civil society partners.

3.3 Network mapping

Key Clusters

Based on a network mapping³ of the different platforms in Vietnam some major clusters emerged⁴ (Figure 1). These were the Food Safety Working Group, with 28 members, and the Technical Working Group on Nutrition with 25 members. It should be noted that the Steering Committee of the National Nutrition Strategy is potentially much larger but the full list of members (beyond key organisations) could not be retrieved online. One other relatively large cluster surrounded the APEC Policy partnership for food security, with 21 members, however it is not connected to other clusters. Vietnam joined the SUN movement in 2014, but the web-based scan did not reveal any SUN related platforms.

One of the common themes in the platform landscape in Vietnam seems to be *food safety*, exemplified by VINASTAS as consumer platform and the Food Safety Working Group as a platform to inform food safety policy. The theme *Nutrition sensitive agriculture*, mostly as a research topic, seemed to have several associated platforms; Scaling-up nutrition sensitive agriculture project, A4NH, CIAT Elucidating Pathways from Agrobiodiversity to Dietary Diversity, FoodSTART+ and SPEAR. The third common theme seems to be *nutrition policy*. The Technical working group on nutrition prioritizes policy review and recommendations and the Steering committee of the national nutrition strategy brings together related ministries for successful multisector implementation of the National Nutrition Strategy (NNS).

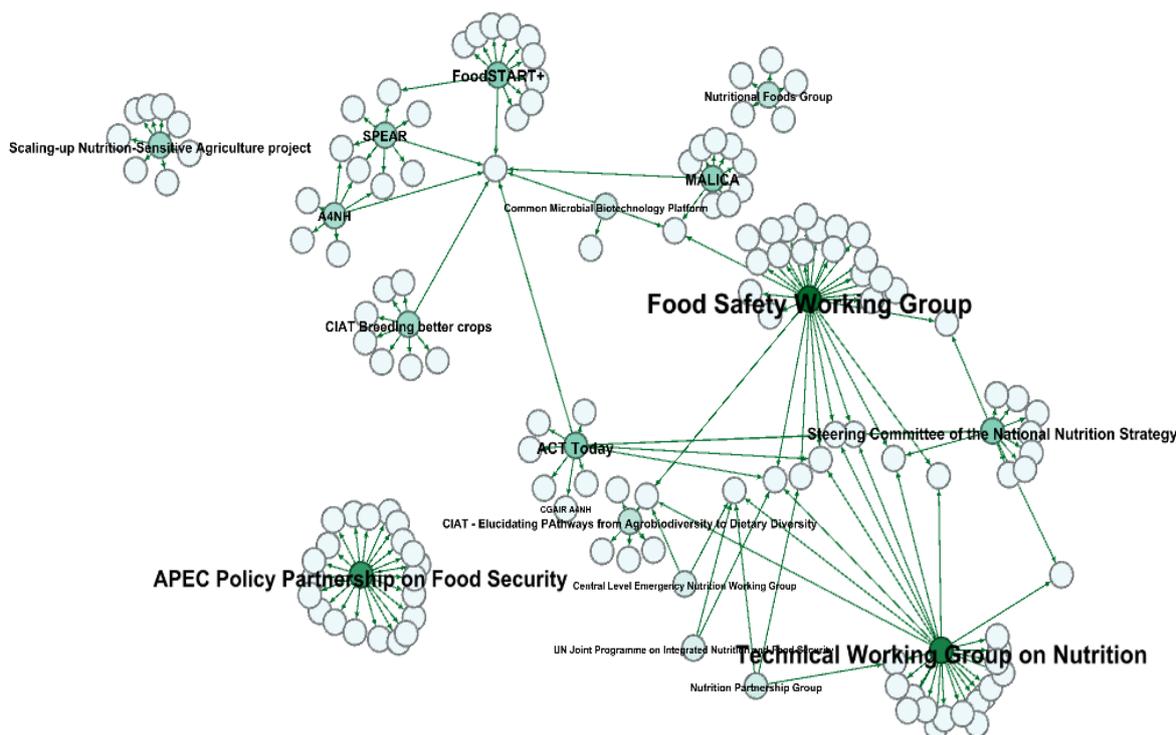


Figure 1 Vietnam Platform mapping

³ As noted in the methodologies section, some platforms were excluded from the network mapping on the basis of there not being any detailed information about specific members, or when the network was purely made up of individuals.

⁴ It should be noted that we called these 'clusters' in this analysis rather than platforms directly: we assume that membership does not equal commitment or active participation. Similarly, we do not presume that these initiatives work in the same way and have the same level of institutionalisation.

Interestingly, only one national business-oriented platform initiative has been seen in this overview. However, this could also be a limitation of searching only English language sites. Where websites on international research project may use predominantly the English language, (local) businesses platforms may prefer to exist in Vietnamese.

Key connectors

A number of organisations are a member of multiple clusters, dubbed 'connectors'. While the connection between a platform and a member does not say whether this member organisation is particularly active or influential, it is relevant to see which organisations could form the linkage with other platforms. In theory, such organisations with multiple memberships thus form a key 'connector' and may pass on information between these clusters.

Figure 2 presents the platform initiatives in connection to members. The major connectors seem to be CIAT, with participation in seven clusters; MoARD, with four; NIN, with four; FAO, with four and UNICEF with four. Two of these connectors are government institutions (NIN and MoARD) and the other three are organisations with a broad mandate to tackle food and nutrition security, encompassing funding and implementation of related development projects.

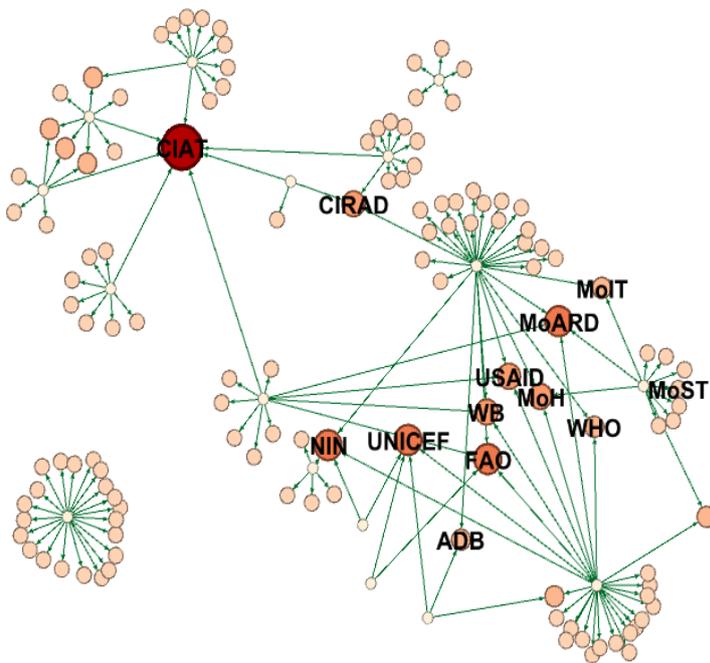


Figure 2 Key connectors between platforms

3.4 Vietnam synthesis: high potentials

Based on the initial platform analysis and network mapping it was possible to identify a number of 'high potential' platform initiatives that may be explored further. This was primarily based on consideration of 5 criteria: adherence to platform definition; focus on healthy diets according using the diet quality definition; level of recognisable organisational structure and a clear lead party; showing linkages across scales (international, national, local); and demonstrating proof of on-going activity (action plans, timelines, products). The platforms identified as high potentials are

- The Food safety working group
- Technical working group on nutrition

The FSWG is co-chaired FAO and National Agro-Forestry-Fisheries quality assurance department, and the TWGN is co-chaired by UNICEF and the NIN. These platforms will be further explored in country, as part of the validation workshop that planned for this study.

4 Ethiopia

4.1 CGIAR related platforms

The web scan could identify only one CGIAR related platform in Ethiopia; the National Information Platform for Nutrition (NIPN). The platform was launched recently (May 2018)⁵. The Ethiopian Public Health Institute (EPHI), as the organisation chairing the Monitoring, Evaluation and Research Working Group of the National Nutrition Programme in Ethiopia, is in charge of running the NIPN, with support from the CGIAR International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI) and the Central Statistical Agency of Ethiopia. The platform is funded by the EU, DFID and the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation.

The NIPN's aim and urgency are around evidence-based decision-making, one of the objectives of the National Nutrition Programme (NNPII). Their main activities will be use existing evidence and data to try to provide answers to questions relevant to policy makers and programme planners. A multi-sectoral advisory committee will support policy makers in developing their questions.

NIPN Ethiopia is part of the larger global NIPN initiative, which is designed to support SUN countries to strengthen their capacity to bring together existing information on nutritional status with information on factors that influence nutritional outcomes; to track progress towards international global targets; and to inform national policies and improve programmes. NIPN Ethiopia receives technical support and capacity building from the Global Support Facility (GSF) of the global NIPN initiative.

4.2 National platforms in Ethiopia

In Ethiopia, the web-based scan yielded 15 platform initiatives (Table 3), mostly around preventing undernutrition. Similar to the findings in Bangladesh, Nigeria and Vietnam, no existing platforms were found to deal with healthier diets as such, and it diet quality is mentioned it relates to diet adequacy, rather than moderation. This perhaps is expected given the persistently high levels of child undernutrition.

Most initiatives (n=4) are policy driven, and their aim relates to the implementation of the National Nutrition Programme (NNPII). The NNP II encompasses objectives and planned results related to healthier diets⁶, however, information available on the web could not confirm which NNP II objectives were targeted by the platforms. These platforms see their main role and reason for existence in NNP II coordination or to inform policy decisions and guidelines.

Other drivers for platforms were UN agencies (n=2; REACH Ethiopia and Nutrition Development Partners forum), NGO/civil societies (n=3; ECSC, AgriPro Focus and Food and Nutrition Society Ethiopia), emergency response (n=2; DRM-ATF and Emergency nutrition coordination unit⁷), donor (n=1; Feed the Future Working Group) and private sector (n=1; SUN business platform). The Nutrition Development Partners Forum, led by UNICEF, is reported to be a key body in the

⁵ <http://www.nipn-nutrition-platforms.org/Launch-of-the-NIPN-in-Ethiopia>

⁶ NNP II, objective 3) Improve the delivery of nutrition services for communicable and non-communicable lifestyle related diseases (all age groups) and 4) strengthen implementation of nutrition sensitive interventions across sectors
https://cdn5-eeas.fpfis.tech.ec.europa.eu/cdn/farfuture/EVfWg3nI9jaYQ5qPWfDPfJcebJ1jApW6AxzEH8FFrPo/mtime:1509368815/sites/eeas/files/nnp2_pdf.pdf

⁷ The emergency coordination mechanism in Ethiopia is composed of the ENCU and the Multi-Agency Nutrition Task Force (MANTF). In Ethiopia, the term cluster appears to be used inter-changeably with the ENCU and the MANTF. The MANTF was established by the ENCU for coordination, information sharing and discussion of technical issues among nutrition partners working in Ethiopia. There is no information available on the web on the share aim, stakeholders, structure, urgency, functionality and linkages of this platform.

development of the National Nutrition Strategy, and is referred to in several documents and websites. No information could be found on the structure or members of this forum. No research driven platforms were identified at this level. The Agricultural Growth Programme (AGP 2) Nutrition Task Force exists to support the implementation all nutrition sensitive activities in the AGP 2. The Nutrition Task Force seeks to increase synergies among partners implementing nutrition sensitive agricultural projects and prevent duplication.

Table 3 National platforms in Ethiopia

Platform initiative	Shared aim				
	Improving diet quality	Fighting malnutrition	Bio fortification	Agriculture/ business	Other
<i>UN driven</i>					
Nutrition Development Partners Forum		√			
REACH		√			
<i>NGO/Civil society driven</i>					
Ethiopian Civil Society Coalition (ECSC)		√			Implementation of the NNP, Civil society engagement
AgriPro Focus Ethiopia				√	
Ethiopian home gardens network		√			
Food and Nutrition Society of Ethiopia		√	√		
<i>Policy driven</i>					
National Nutrition coordination body		√			Oversees the implementation of the national nutrition programme
National Nutrition Technical Committee (NNTC)					Formulate guidelines, update national level action plans, and monitor and evaluate these action plans
Agricultural Growth Programme (AGP) National Steering Committee				√	
AGP2 Nutrition Task Force	√			√	Nutrition sensitive agriculture
<i>Research driven</i>					
CASCAPE				√	Evidence based best practices
<i>Emergency response driven</i>					
Disaster Risk Management Agricultural task force (DRM-ATF)		√			Humanitarian aid
Emergency nutrition coordination unit (ENCU)		√			Humanitarian aid
<i>Donor driven</i>					
Feed the Future Working group					
<i>Private sector driven</i>					
SUN private sector platform			√		

Ethiopia is also connected to international platforms such as Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme Network (CAADP) and represented on IFPRI's food security portal, which is a platform to pool food security information in structured ways and stimulates collaboration among policymakers, development professionals, and researchers.

4.3 Network mapping

Key clusters

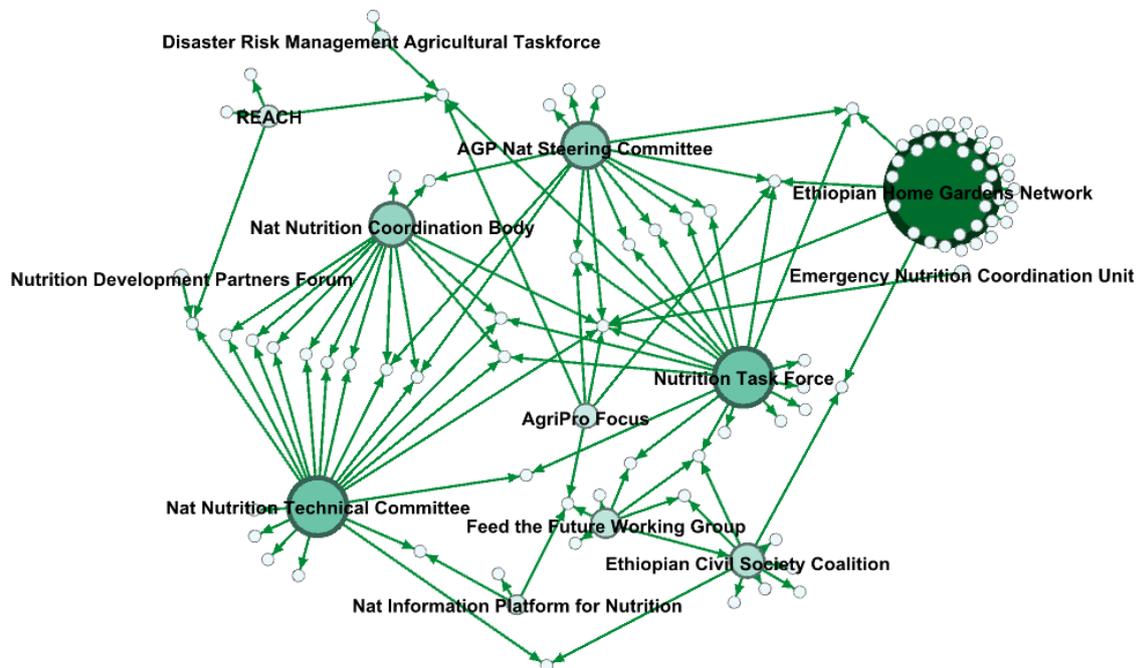


Figure 3 Platform mapping Ethiopia

Based on the network mapping of the different platforms in Ethiopia a number of major clusters emerged. Four major clusters are around the policy driven platforms, The National Nutrition Technical Committee (NNTC) with 19 members, National Nutrition Coordination body (NNCB) with 13 members, the Nutrition Task Force with 19 members and the Agricultural Growth Programme National Steering Committee with 14 members. Eight line ministries are represented in both the NNTC and NNCB. This duplication is to be expected, as the mandate for the NNTC is to provide technical advice and recommendations to the NNCB, who makes policies and takes decisions based on the recommendations of the NNTC. The actual number of members of these platforms is expected to be higher. E.g. for the NNTC it is reported that academia and private sector are also members, but it is not specified in online documentation who or how many.

Three other major clusters are around the Feed the Future Working group with seven members, Ethiopian Home Garden Network with 40 members and the Ethiopian SUN Civil Society Coalition with nine members. Similar to Bangladesh and Nigeria, the SUN Civil Society Network is much larger (around 50 organisations), but the full list of members is not easily available. The cluster of the Ethiopian Home Garden Network is relatively large because on the web based searched yield minutes of their meetings including a list of all members who are present. This type of information was often not found for other platforms.

The shared aims evolved in majority around the theme of fighting malnutrition (e.g. NNCB, ENCU, AGP2 Nutrition Taskforce). Other themes covered by few platforms were biofortification (FONSE and SUN private sector platform) and agri-culture and -business (e.g. AgriPro Focus and AGP National Steering Committee).

Key connectors

The major connector seems to be MoANR with its membership to seven platforms (similar to findings for Nigeria); the ENCU, AGP National Steering Committee, AgriPro Focus Ethiopia, the AGP2 Nutrition Task Force, the Ethiopian Home Gardens Network, the NNTC and the NNCB. UNICEF and FAO seem to be the UN agencies, which are major connectors, with UNICEF's participation in three clusters; NNTC, REACH and the National Development Partners Forum and FAO's participation in four clusters; the Disaster Risk Management Agricultural Taskforce, Reach, AgriPro Focus and the AGP2 Nutrition Task Force. The EU participates in four clusters; the Ethiopian Home Gardens Network, the AGP2 Nutrition Task Force, the AGP National Steering Committee and AgriPro Focus. One can expect that more UN agencies and INGOs to appear as major connectors, if the members of the National Development Partner Forum could be identified and included in this map. IFPRI, Save the Children, EKN and USAID connect to 3 platforms. FONSE has an interesting position, as it is a platform in itself, but - as a platform - a member of the National Nutrition Technical Committee. The majority of the dominant connectors are grounded in international organisations or governmental structures, rather than local CSO actors or businesses.

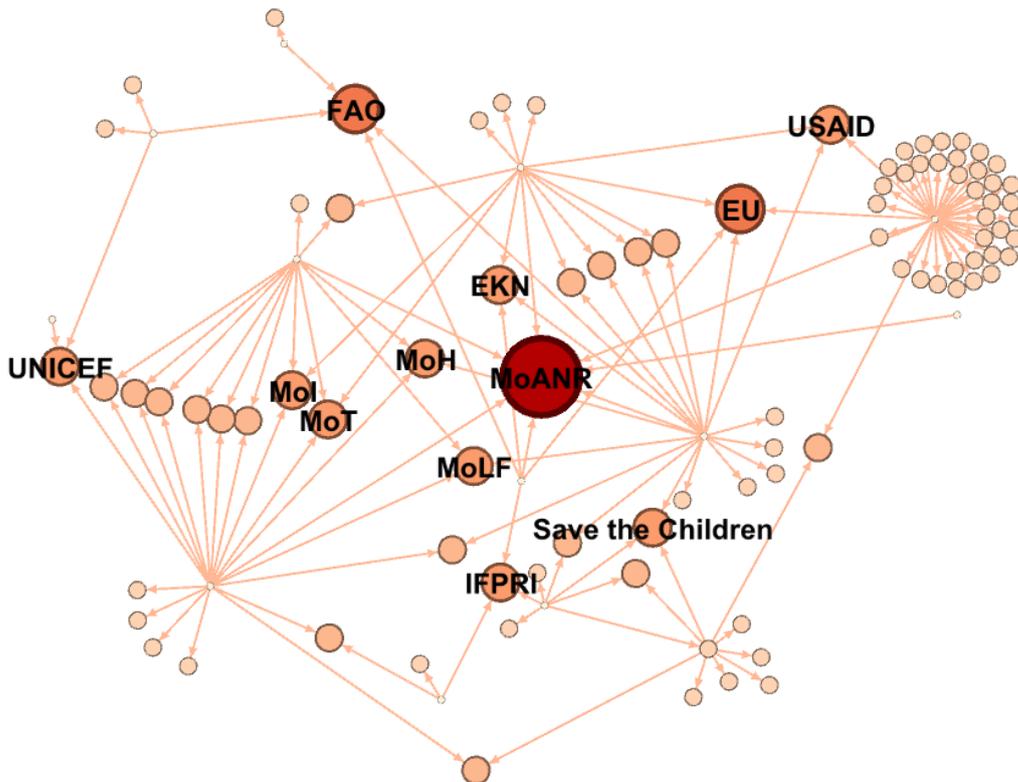


Figure 4 Ethiopia key connectors between platforms

4.4 Ethiopia synthesis: high potentials

Based on the desk-based work, the following platforms surface as high potentials, namely the AGP2 Nutrition Task Force and the Feed the Future Working Group. It should be noted, however, that in Ethiopia a lot of ongoing networking initiatives are not captured by this method of review because on line presence of platforms or their outputs is very limited.

The Nutrition Development Partners Forum for example, led by UNICEF, while not well represented in its own right online reported is often referred to by other organisations and is known to meet regularly. These meetings are attended by most civil society organisations active in nutrition programming.

Verification of high potentials therefore, should be done with parties active in the field.

5 Overall synthesis of platform findings

5.1 Similarities between platforms Ethiopia and Vietnam

Based on the combination of web-based platform identification and network mapping, several relevant issues came up. For example, we did not find a single platform in either country, which specifically focused on our definition of healthy diets. Platforms would mostly highlight a focus on nutritious/healthy/safe/diverse foods (e.g. the Ethiopian Home Gardens Network in Ethiopia and VINASTAS in Vietnam). We mostly saw platforms emphasizing 'adequacy' rather than 'moderation' – in the sense that many actors are working on malnutrition and child nutrition issues. This gives the idea of a relatively 'classic' focus on (child & maternal) malnutrition and food production for dietary improvement, rather than a 'food systems' driven approach.

In both countries, multi-stakeholder platforms were identified (around the multi-sectoral implementation of national nutrition plans and strategies (e.g. the NNCB, NNTC, AGP Steering committee and AGP2 Nutrition Task Force in Ethiopia and the NNS Steering committee in Vietnam). These platforms bring together relevant ministries such as agriculture, health, women, rural development, education etc. This suggests that networking between multiple stakeholders, engaged in different parts of the food system, is mostly driven from the governmental side.

For the majority of the platforms identified in Ethiopia and Vietnam, the members are predominantly (I)NGOs and government policy actors. The private sector representation among platform members was in both countries limited or non-existent. We noted that in both countries, platforms with local CSOs fulfilling a **leading or coordination role** were not found. Instead, platforms are led by either government, INGOs or UN agencies. With regard to **key connectors**, both in Ethiopia and Vietnam, the ministry of agriculture (MoANR Ethiopia and MOARD in Vietnam) seems to be centrally positioned. FAO seems to be a key connector in both countries.

In addition, the scan in Ethiopia and Vietnam did not yield **subnational platforms**. Plans for the establishment of subnational level platforms to coordinate the multisector implementation of nutrition programmes at subnational level, were mentioned in policy documents. Our web-based scan, however, did not detect any information on actual presence of such platforms, nor on its members.

5.2 Key differences between platforms Ethiopia and Vietnam

For Vietnam, several **CGAIR related platforms** were identified. Those CGIAR-related platform initiatives can be described as predominantly research-driven, with a focus on improving either access to, and availability of 'healthier' food products (FoodSTART+) or raising the micronutrient content of staples (CIAT Breeding better crops), or platforms which seek to improve the linkage between agriculture and nutrition (CIAT elucidating pathways from agrobiodiversity to dietary diversity and A4NH). The main aim of these platforms is to contribute to generating a robust evidence base of what works and why. In Ethiopia, only one CIAT related platform was identified: NIPN.

In Vietnam, food safety was a more prominent theme in the **narrative and urgencies** of the platforms (e.g. for the Food safety working group, VINASTAS, A4NH, Steering committee of NNS, MALICA). In Ethiopia, this theme was less prominent. It should also be mentioned that for the platform identified in Ethiopia, less information was found in the urgency and narratives of the platforms, compared to Vietnam.

Based on the web-based scan, it seems that in Ethiopia, a considerable number of platforms are centred around national level policies (National Nutrition Coordination Body, AGP National Steering Committee, AGP2 Nutrition Task Force). Two platforms focusing on emergency nutrition emerged (Emergency nutrition coordination unit and the Federal Disaster Risk Management – Agriculture Task Force) versus only one in Vietnam (Central level emergency nutrition working group). This could suggest that emergency nutrition is of greater concern and relevance in Ethiopia.

The ministries of agriculture and FAO were the only members that emerged as major connectors in both countries. The EU was another **major connector** (with membership to 4 platforms) in Ethiopia, and in Vietnam, CIAT, NIN and UNICEF were formed a key connector between clusters with memberships to four or more platforms.

With regard to the **key members** involved in the platforms, in Vietnam, CIAT frequently came up as a key member/coordinator of platforms (A4NH, SPEAR, CMBP), jointly with the NIN (Technical Working Group on Nutrition and Elucidating pathways from agrobiodiversity to dietary diversity). In Ethiopia, key members were representatives of various departments of the Ministry of Health or the Ministry of Agriculture and Natural Resources). Only in Ethiopia, two platforms are led by a University; the Feed the Future working group and the Ethiopian Home Gardens Network are led by the Tufts University.

5.3 Comparison with 2017 platform identification in Bangladesh and Nigeria

Similar to the CGAIR-related platforms identified in Bangladesh and Nigeria, the CGAIR-related platforms in Vietnam are also mostly research driven. Only in Nigeria and Vietnam, research driven platforms aiming *to improve dietary quality* through bio-fortification were identified (CIAT Breeding better crops in Vietnam and Harvest Plus in Nigeria). Platforms around nutrition sensitive agriculture were more common the FSHD countries (e.g. in Bangladesh: ANGel and Ag4N, in Vietnam: Scaling-up nutrition sensitive agriculture project, A4NH, CIAT Elucidating Pathways from Agrobiodiversity to Dietary Diversity, FoodSTART+ and SPEAR, in Ethiopia: the AGP2 Nutrition Task Force).

As far as the key actors across the food systems are concerned, a general observation is that stakeholders involved in food storage, transport, trade, transformation, retail and provisioning⁸ are relatively limited or not represented among the **members** of the platforms identified in the four FSHD focal countries. Stakeholders related to food production, consumers, and policy makers are relatively better represented. This suggests that vertical supply chain coordination through platforms as mechanism is limited.

The – horizontal - coordination and implementation of **multisector** national nutrition/agriculture programmes, and intergovernmental policymaking clusters, however, bring together line ministries related to different systems (agro-food, education, health). These platforms could facilitate active networking of multiple stakeholder engaged in different part of the food system. With respect to key members, usually one or two particular organisations could be identified as chair/co-chair of the platform, mostly CGIAR and UN agencies together with relevant government administration. Information on SUN networks/platforms, who are also supposed to bring multiple actors together for improved nutrition, could only be found online for Nigeria and Ethiopia, although all four FSHD focal countries are SUN countries.

Members with four or more connection were considered **key connectors**. The ministry of agriculture seems to be a critical key connector across all countries. Only in Nigeria, the Ministry of health is also a key connector. Across all FSHD focal countries, key connectors have ties with/are grounded in international organisations or governmental structures rather than in local/national CSO actors/businesses, with the exception of BRAC, a Bangladeshi CSO. However, BRAC also has

⁸ See Figure 1 on food system analysis the GLOPAN, included in the Platforms for healthier diets report on Bangladesh and Vietnam.

international branches. Across all countries, large international donors (DFID, EU, USAID, WHO, UNICEF, and FAO) are major connectors.

As mentioned in the Discussion Paper 2018, Selsky and Parker (2010) presented three main platform types for cross-sectoral social partnerships:

- Those driven by 'Resource-dependency', in which the main motivation for joining is to ensure to meet organisational needs and realise organisational sustainability and autonomy.;
- Those driven by 'Social issues', in which the main motivation for joining is to identify, understand and respond to a form of social need, usually external to the organisation, starting from a broadly shared notion that stakeholders are morally responsible to contribute to addressing this need;
- Those driven by 'Societal-sector', in which the main motivation for joining relates to the fact that businesses, NGOs and governmental actors are increasingly drawing from different sectors to solve problems within their own sector.

In our study, we observed 'resource-dependency', and 'social issues' as major drivers for platform initiatives relating to nutrition and healthy diets, whereby platforms seek to navigate the challenges of limited resources and overlapping interests. This might relate to the fact that often international bodies seem to push platform initiatives 'from behind', in their efforts to establish coordination structures horizontally. With reference to the overall objective of this study, exploring the role of platforms as mechanisms to strengthen and/or support the processes of scaling up and anchoring food system transformations for healthier diets, we are challenged, however, to emphasize and to enforce more the collaborative structures driven by the societal sector, whereby both horizontal and vertical coordination can be addressed and businesses, NGOs and governmental actors acknowledge the contribution of from different sectors and collaborate to solve problems within their own sector.

Another notable observation pertains the **scale** of the platforms; the web-based scan generated mostly national level platforms in all countries, whereas only Nigeria, more subnational level platforms were identified.

In addition, the **functionality** of the platforms identified in the four FSHD countries related mainly to research activities (with reports as key output), knowledge sharing (events and workshops) and capacity building.

Lastly, while we have tried to indicate a number of "**high potential**" platforms based on established set criteria: adherence to platform definition; focus on healthy diets according using the diet quality definition; level of recognisable organisational structure and a clear lead party; showing linkages across scales (international, national, local); and demonstrating proof of on-going activity (action plans, timelines, products). However, what is considered a high potential platform may vary considerably depending on what one hopes to achieve through the platform- as there are many entry points through which the healthy diet narrative can be influenced. Some platforms might be much better suited to dissemination of research findings, while others might be much better as places for collective civic action.

References

Alkerwi, A., 2014. *Diet quality concept*. *Nutrition*; 30: 613-8.

Béné et al., 2018. Understanding the policy agenda on food systems – going beyond the food safety crisis narrative in Vietnam. Policy paper. CIAT. Hanoi.

Gelli A., Hawkes C., Donovan J., Harris J., Allen S.L., De Brauw A., & Ryckembusch, D., 2015. *Value chains and nutrition: A framework to support the identification, design, and evaluation of interventions*, IFPRI Discussion Paper 01413, Washington D.C.

Herforth, A., E.A. Frongillo, F. Sassi, et al., 2014. Toward an integrated approach to nutritional quality, environmental sustainability, and economic viability: research and measurement gaps. *Ann. N.Y. Acad. Sci.* **1332**: 1–21.

Wageningen Centre for Development
Innovation
Wageningen University & Research
P.O. Box 88
6700 AB Wageningen
The Netherlands
T +31 (0)317 48 68 00
www.wur.eu/cdi

Report WCDI-19-056

Wageningen Centre for Development Innovation supports value creation by strengthening capacities for sustainable development. As the international expertise and capacity building institute of Wageningen University & Research we bring knowledge into action, with the aim to explore the potential of nature to improve the quality of life. With approximately 30 locations, 5,000 members of staff and 10,000 students, Wageningen University & Research is a world leader in its domain. An integral way of working, and cooperation between the exact sciences and the technological and social disciplines are key to its approach.



To explore
the potential
of nature to
improve the
quality of life



Wageningen Centre for Development Innovation
Wageningen University & Research
P.O. Box 88
6700 AB Wageningen
The Netherlands
T +31 (0)317 48 68 00
www.wur.eu/cdi

Report WCDI-19-056

Wageningen Centre for Development Innovation supports value creation by strengthening capacities for sustainable development. As the international expertise and capacity building institute of Wageningen University & Research we bring knowledge into action, with the aim to explore the potential of nature to improve the quality of life. With approximately 30 locations, 5,000 members of staff and 10,000 students, Wageningen University & Research is a world leader in its domain. An integral way of working, and cooperation between the exact sciences and the technological and social disciplines are key to its approach.

