The Rockefeller Foundation | RF Catalytic Capital

BUILD THE SHARED FUTURE

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INTENTIONAL DATA COMMUNITY FOR FOOD & NUTRITION SECURITY

ROADMAP FOR A NEW VISION OF THE DATA ECOSYSTEM

Problem Statement and Context

Escalating conflict, climate and economic shocks are increasing food and nutrition insecurity around the world at the same time that resources for prevention, preparedness and response are shrinking.[1] In this context, countries and communities need to be able to make earlier, better-informed decisions about how to anticipate risk, protect livelihoods and their food and nutrition security, and build resilience.

The data and information needed to inform both long-term resilience investments and short-term crisis response remains fragmented across institutions, sectors, and geographies. Trusted information is often difficult for national and local actors to access, interpret or apply. Analysis does not consistently translate into financing or action and is often disconnected from the governments, businesses and communities who are closest to the crises. Critical data system resourcing is declining, with 41 critical data systems seeing an average 34% reduction in funding between 2024 and 2025. Many partners are already working towards solutions to these problems, but in ways that remain fragmented and siloed, often relying on pilots that are not being scaled into system level reform.

This roadmap sets out a vision for a food and nutrition security (FNS) data ecosystem that drives local undertakings, global investment, and a value proposition for building a more coherent and coordinated system that acts before crises hit. It introduces an **Intentional Data Community** (IDC) for food and nutrition security to close gaps that no single organization can address alone. It draws on a year of consultation with more than 60 organizations across the world and synthesizes diverse stakeholder initiatives into common goals, common language, and common approaches and actions in the face of increasing global volatility.

This roadmap is a starting point to build a movement that aims to rationalize approaches to data collection, build greater country ownership and trigger early interventions and financing that help communities better maintain their food and nutrition security through crises. We invite interested partners to collaborate and take specific parts of the agenda forward both individually and collectively. The following sections describe the principles that underline this movement; establish a joint vision for what the sector needs to become; lay out the transformative pillars to realize the vision, and introduce the IDC as one solution to drive transformation.

Principles

Escalating conflict, climate and economic shocks are increasing food and nutrition insecurity around the world at the same time that resources for prevention, preparedness and response are shrinking. In this context, countries and communities need to be able to make earlier, better-informed decisions about how to anticipate risk, protect livelihoods and their food and nutrition security, and build resilience.

Four principles run through the vision and priorities below and underpin the intentions of our community. Shared principles are the first step to build alignment and broad commitment for new institutional arrangements and the technical solutions for a re-imagined sector. The principles build from many initiatives that are detailed in the links below.

- Local Ownership and Benefit: Communities who provide data should benefit from the analysis generated. Systems are operated, hosted and funded by the local communities or institutions in the places they describe. International institutions enable local partners to analyze the data and implement their own programs. Local ownership without financing or support is a transfer of risk rather than of power. (Grand Bargain; GNDR Localized EW; CARE Principles; GNC Localization)
- Responsible Technology Integration: Technology is built for or adapted to the contexts it operates in to support human decision making, with appropriate safeguards and clear roles for who acts on what it produces. Models, including AI, cannot compensate for data that is missing or of poor quality. Systems that generate foundational data are built and maintained. (Principles for Digital Development; Safe AI Framework; IASC Data Responsibility Guidance)
- Unified Data Architecture: Information systems are connected, de-duplicated, interoperable, and designed to scale impact across sectors, institutions and borders, while recognizing the need for local data sovereignty and ownership. Data security, interoperability, and quality standards are developed in concert across stakeholders. (Humanitarian Reset & Data

[1] Hunger Hotspots June 2026; Global Report on Food Crises 2026 (Global Network Against Food Crises);

Collaborative; CFS Data Policy)

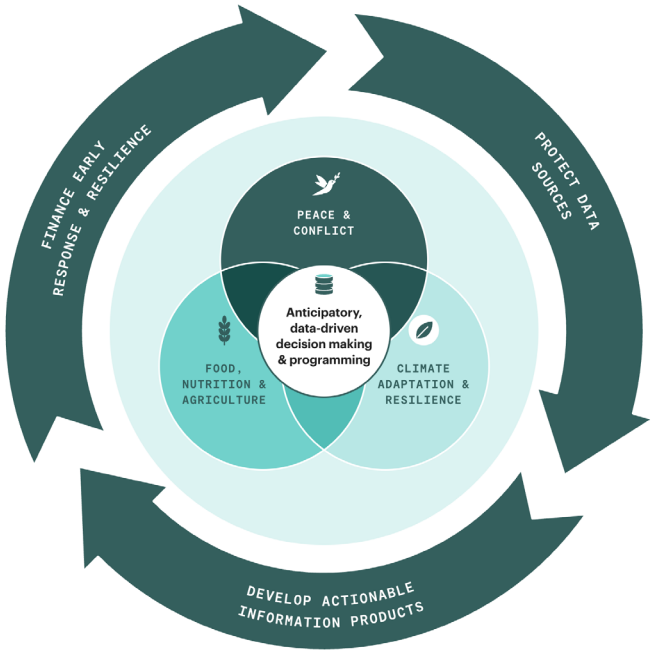
- Long-term Resilience and Sustainability: Every shock response builds more accurate and anticipatory information systems and food & nutrition systems in the communities they serve. Short-term crisis response and long-term resilience building draw on the same data systems and risk analysis frameworks. Data systems have clear value propositions and enable financing to address evolving food and nutrition risks. (GNAFC Strategy; Sendai Framework for DRR)

Vision for the Future of the Sector

Communities living with food and nutrition insecurity have the right insights and resources, in the right hands, at the right time — to act before crises hit, to build long-term resilience, and to hold global systems accountable.

Acting ahead of a food or nutrition crisis, or investing to reduce future harm, depends on three things: 1. What data gets observed and recorded, 2. What gets analyzed, and 3. What action is taken in response. These are the three building blocks of the vision. Each crosses the food, nutrition, agriculture, climate, and conflict domains for both the humanitarian and development sectors.

This figure sets out a unified food and nutrition security data system in which peace and conflict, climate, and food and agriculture data converge to support anticipatory, data-driven decision-making, sustained by a self-reinforcing cycle of protecting data sources, developing actionable information products, and financing early response.



The Pillars of Transformation

Below, three core pillars are proposed to achieve the vision and enable this transformation. Under each pillar are a short list of recommended transformation priorities. Next steps for catalyzing change and harnessing existing initiatives working towards these priorities are also underway.

A. Secure and enhance the data ecosystem

Analysis, models, research, and AI outputs are only as good as the data they rely on. The sector needs sustained investment in high-quality, observational survey- and community-generated data. Strengthening national and local data systems, including the capacity of national statistical agencies, requires better alignment of standards, improved interoperability, and reduced duplication. Emerging technologies and alternative data sources can help address gaps, provided they complement existing systems and are integrated responsibly, with appropriate attention to data quality, validation, and local ownership. Priorities:

- Align common standards to support local activities
- Invest in field-level collected data
- Innovate and complement foundational data with alternative data sources
- Better coordination and coherence between systems

B. Data into Actionable Insight

Data only becomes valuable when it is translated into information that reaches the right people, at the right time, in a form they understand, trust, and use. The sector needs stronger connections between data producers, analysts, and the institutions responsible for policy, planning and operational decisions. Global institutions need to make sure the information ecosystem is accessible and streamlined, while analytical capacity needs to be embedded in local institutions at regional, national, and community levels. Capacity needs to be built not only at local levels for working with global information systems, but also at global levels for incorporating local signals. Priorities:

- Ensure knowledge products are available and accessible
- Build capacity for systematically producing and using FNS knowledge products in regional, national, and local institutions
- Translate and integrate local knowledge into analytical products, processes, and decision-making at all levels

- Ensure that data drives evidence-based solutions for more predictable financing for chronic and predictable food and nutrition insecurity.

C. Data for Financing Resilience, Prevention, Response

Where possible, data needs to enable financing for actions before coming hazards turn into crises. At present, funding is mostly in small discrete pots in anticipation of individual shocks and not linked to the risk reduction needs of investors in longer term resilience. Shock readiness information needs to be aligned with national food and nutrition systems and adaptation investment plans. This data-informed planning needs to frame how local and international financiers support anticipatory action, integrated with social protection and resilience investing, that builds underlying risk reduction and reduces the social and financial costs of future shocks. Priorities:

- Pre-position data-driven resource decisions with actors closest to the crisis
- Integrate National Food and Nutrition Security Resilience Finance Plans into one framework
- Scale up anticipatory financing based on leading FNS indicators
- Build long-term and predictable FNS resilience financing solutions, with embedded triggers for shocks, built on existing scalable best practice models.

The Partner Ecosystem

To realize the vision and priorities, and to embed the principles in a reimagined food and nutrition data ecosystem, sector actors should embrace several dimensions of transformation, including:

- Reform multi-lateral international institutions: The UN80 process is fostering reform within the UN, including consolidating and aligning data systems across both the UN and iNGO humanitarian organizations. This reform process needs to be extended to other international organizations.
- Reimagine roles for international NGOs: iNGOs need to pivot from implementing local programs to utilizing increasingly scarce grant funding to support and build the capabilities of local, civil society organizations, while reducing parallel data collection and analyses. Roles for iNGOs will endure in ensuring response in areas where local capacity is limited and in providing technical expertise on an international level.
- Enable local leadership and agency: Local governments, private sector and civil society organizations need to claim their ownership of and commitment to the local leadership, capacity building, and resourcing over time of critical data systems and resilience building, aligned with relevant national and local priorities and plans. Fundamentally, the issue of food and nutrition security needs to be owned and driven at the national level.
- Align public, private and philanthropic finance: Funders, investors, insurers, and other actors need to coordinate their support for foundational data sets and risk analytics at local and international levels and align their anticipatory and crisis responses, and resilience financing for food and nutrition security at national and international levels.

Intentional Data Community

The Intentional Data Community (IDC) is a multi-stakeholder initiative of institutions and individuals who share the above principles and vision and who are working to connect and strengthen the global food and nutrition data ecosystem. It is intentional because it is constituted by members who commit to the principles of this roadmap and to driving meaningful collaboration and change to the sector. The community is not another platform or network initiative, but rather the wrapper around existing platforms and initiatives that are relevant to delivering the vision. It carries only as much structure as delivery requires and works to connect existing initiatives, rather than building a new institution.

The IDC builds on work underway — across humanitarian and development actors, national and local government, research, technology and other private sector players, and finance — so that partners can find the expertise they need, see where the gaps are, build on what others have already solved, and work together on actions to enable the envisioned transformation to be achieved. The IDC works in four ways that build on each other: **connecting** the people, networks, and coalitions working on the vision and its pillars; **consolidating** evidence, learning, and systems; creating **consensus** for what needs to change; and **catalyzing** action and commitments to realize that change. Membership is open to any organization working on food and nutrition data and turning data into action.

In the next two months members of the IDC will commit to a 2027 workplan, including articulating a sector reform agenda. Strategic initiatives for action include continuing FNS data and information system vulnerability mapping and solution development, strengthening local data for local solutions, completing a stocktake of data needs for anticipatory action and resilience financing, and building collaborations for joint support around food and nutrition security data, analysis, and response. Member organizations will also be looking at the changes needed within their own organizations to make this vision real.

If you are interested in joining or finding out more information about the Intentional Data Community, please be in touch with Simon Winter and Allison Greenberg (Vice President and Director of Reimagining Humanitarian Nutrition Security): swinter@rfcatalytic.org and agreenberg@rfcatalytic.org.

Contributing Partners

2026 Steering Committee:

- AKADEMIYA2063, Debisi Araba
- Google.org, Sarah Bright and Joseph Hassine
- European Commission, Joint Research Center, Roosmarijn Verstraeten
- Government of Somalia, Abdihakim Ainte
- Haiti Food Systems Alliance, Jamie Rhoads
- IFPRI, Ruth Hill
- Insurance Development Forum, Nick Moody and Ekhosuehi Iyahen
- Microsoft AI for Good Lab, Inbal Becker-Reshef
- Planet Labs, Andrew Zolli
- RF Catalytic Capital, Simon Winter and Allison Greenberg
- Scaling up Nutrition Movement Secretariat, Jo Raisin
- Start Network, Anna Farina
- UNICEF, Chika Hayashi
- Welthungerhilfe, Matthias Amling
- W.K. Kellogg Foundation, Dana Francois
- World Bank, Bo Pieter Johannes Andree and Zacharey Carmichael
- World Food Program (HQ &Philippines Office), Lyca Therese Srenas and Kyriacos Koupparis

Consulted Partners:

Acceso	GSM Association – Mobile for Humanitarian Innovation
AidData / William & Mary	Humanity Insured
Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa	IMPACT Initiatives
Arrell Food Institute, University of Guelph	Integrated Food Security Phase Classification
Bangsamoro Planning and Development Authority	International Rescue Committee
Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation	Kofi Annan Foundation
Cornell University	Mercy Corps
Dalberg Advisors and Catalyst	Micronutrient Forum
Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations	NASA Harvest / RAAPID
Fraunhofer Heinrich-Hertz-Institut	Odoros Dashboard (Somalia)
Gallup	Save the Children
George Washington University	Scaling Community of Practice
GAIN - Global Alliance for Improved Nutrition	Scaling Up Nutrition (SUN) Movement Secretariat
Global Network Against Food Crises	Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation
Global Network of Civil Society Organisations for Disaster Reduction	United Arab Emirates Aid Agency
Global Partnership for Sustainable Development Data	