

## S.14 Sustainable Public Food procurement

### 1. Existing Game changing solutions on Public procurement:

AT1: #7 creating a global partnership on public procurement

#12 implement comprehensive school food programs

AT2: #16 leveraging food-based dietary guidelines through public procurement

AT5: #17 local and public procurement schemes specifically targeting smallholder farmers and SMEs

At the moment, all the gaming changing solutions related with public procurement are dispersed and do not allow for a comprehensive approach of the topic. However, Sustainable Public Procurement (SPP) is already included under SDG 12 on Sustainable Consumption and Production, with one specific indicator # 12.7 *“promote public procurement practices that are sustainable in accordance with national policies and priorities”*.

It would make sense to align all these gaming changing solutions within a new Action Area (or a sub-topic under another AA) aligned with SDG 12.7. This would promote a comprehensive and coherent approach to sustainable public food procurement conceived as a policy instrument able to achieve multiple social (including healthy and nutritional), economic and environmental outcomes and benefit multiple beneficiaries, including food consumer, food producers and the local community. A comprehensive approach that is in line with the existing international frameworks and broader debate on sustainable public procurement.

### 2. Rationale for a specific Action Area:

Sustainable Public Food Procurement is part of a broader Sustainable Public Procurement (SPP) agenda, that is anchored on the SDGs ( # 12.7 ) and on existing international and national policy and regulatory frameworks. It is based on the recognition that government can and should use its procurement power to promote sustainable development and to address social, economic and environmental policy goals.

According to procurement choices and government priorities, countries, regions and cities can use Public Food Procurement (PFP) to achieve specific social (including health and nutrition), economic and environmental outcomes and benefit not only those who receive the food, but also those who produce it and the wider community.

“Green procurement”, “local procurement”, “procurement from smallholder farmers and SMEs” are all different facets of sustainable PFP. The possibility of targeting different policy goals (according to government priorities) does not means that these are different instruments. It represents exactly the great flexibility and versatility of PFP that makes it a unique policy instrument, adaptable to the very different contexts, from low to high-income economies

Food procurement has been increasingly recognized not only as one key part of the SPP agenda, but also as an important **entry point to shape food systems** and to trigger more sustainable modes of food consumption and production.

By its intrinsic characteristics, PFP impacts upon all different components of the food system (i.e. food production, food environments and food consumers) and affects a wide range of actors and actors.

By creating a demand for certain types of products (such as diverse, nutritious, healthy, locally produced by smallholder farmers and environmental friendly), governments can not only benefit those who receive the food, but also set a positive trend. They can send a signal about government ambitions on the future directions of the food system that has the power to incentivize also supply chain actors to align their values and practices accordingly, fostering a transition towards sustainable food consumption and production.

The great potential of sustainable PFP to achieve multiple benefits and multiple beneficiaries comes also with great complexity for its implementation. Enabling factors and necessary interventions are linked not only to the demand, but also to the supply sides. They are also linked to policies, institutions and legal frameworks.

To discuss PFP with a comprehensive approach (and possibly within a specific Action Area) is therefore very relevant. It may contribute: to strengthen the linkages between PFP and the existing SPP agenda, the SDGs and related existing policy and regulatory frameworks; to foster an international discussion on the topic based on an unified and multi-dimensional policy instrument; to promote broader knowledge exchanges on best practices, common challenges, enablers, barriers and instrument useful for supporting the implementation and scaling up of PFP within a multi-dimensional perspective.

### **3. FAO comparative advantage and value added:**

PFP initiatives represent one of the key areas of work of the Food and Nutrition Division (ESN) under the responsibility of the “Market Linkages and Value Chain” group, and one of the FAO growing areas of work for the recent years.

The work of FAO on sustainable PFP covers with particular attention school food and nutrition initiatives (i.e. home-grown school feeding - HGSF), as well as other public institutions initiatives.

FAO work encompasses all: (i) technical assistance (ii) evidence generation and (iii) policy support. It covers all (i) supply side; (ii) demand side, (ii) as well as the aspects on how to establish the link between the two, including policy, institutional and legal frameworks.

Areas of FAO support related to public food procurement initiatives include:

Technical support on production, post-harvest, storage, processing, organizational and marketing skills,

Technical support for market diversification and nutrition sensitive value chain development,

Guidance on the design and implementation of smallholder-friendly procurement mechanisms,

Technical support for developing, implementing and monitoring food based dietary guidelines as well as nutrition standards and guidelines for school food and meals,

Promotion of explicit linkages between policy, procurement, school food and the food environment,

Advocacy and guidance on development/review of food procurement related policies and legal frameworks,

Promotion and support of multi-sector coordination mechanisms and knowledge-exchange platforms,

Capacity development and training materials,

Monitoring, evaluation and evidence generation, in particular related with impact evaluations of HGSP Programmes on food security for small farmers and the all community.

FAO work in this area is developed in synergy with the various technical units, regional and country offices and in **partnership** with several institutions, including other UN agencies. Examples include the World Food Programme, UN Environment Programme, International Training Centre of the International Labour Organization, World Health Organization, Bioversity International and the academia. FAO is currently a member of the Multi-Stakeholder Advisory Committee (MAC) of the Sustainable Public Procurement programme of the One Planet Network. FAO is supporting the development and will lead a new interest group on “sustainable public food procurement”.