

## Feed the Future Food Systems for Nutrition Innovation Lab Country Activity Brief - Malawi 2023-2024

### Introduction

The Feed the Future Food Systems for Nutrition Innovation Lab (FSN-IL) is at the forefront of catalyzing the transformation of food systems to improve nutrition across diverse global contexts. Operating its activities in Bangladesh, Malawi, Mozambique, and Nepal, FSN-IL collaborates with governments, research and academic institutions, private sector stakeholders, and development partners to address the unique challenges within each country's food system.

Through its closely interlinked domains of research for development (R4D), human and institutional capacity development, and stakeholder engagement, FSN-IL works to identify scalable solutions that address critical gaps in food systems, prioritizing improved access to nutrient-rich perishable foods, food safety, and reducing food loss and waste.

The country-specific update below offers a snapshot of FSN-IL's ongoing efforts to reduce food loss and waste, promote nutrient-dense diets, and accelerate the adoption and scaling of food systems innovations tailored to the broader context and needs of Malawi.

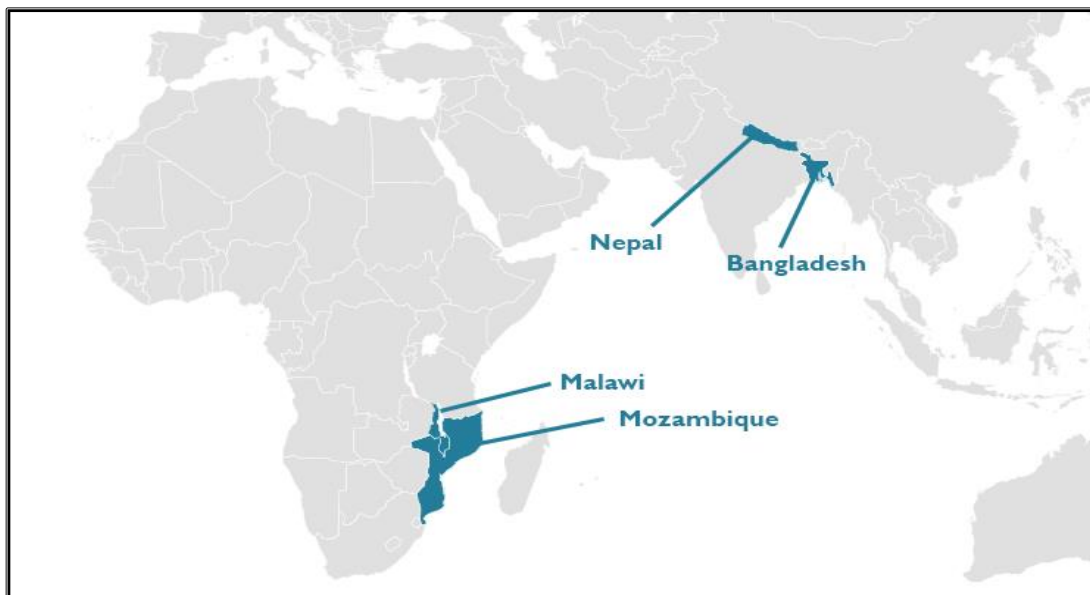


Figure 1: Map of FSN-IL Focus Countries

### Malawi Activity Brief | Key Highlights from FY2024

#### Scoping Visit | Lilongwe, Malawi | January 2024

In January 2024, FSN-IL conducted a scoping visit in Lilongwe, Malawi. During the visit, FSN-IL engaged in one-on-one meetings with various stakeholders involved in food systems transformation in the country. These meetings identified potential collaborators for upcoming in-country workshops focusing on circular economy and scaling readiness. FSN-IL also held in-briefs with the USAID mission and met with key representatives from the government, academia, and private sector, including the National Planning Commission (NPC), LUANAR, Tetratech, ICRISAT, Heifer International, MwAPATA Institute, Care Malawi, CIAT, USAID-supported Growth Poles, Growth Accelerator, and aQysta.

### **Circular Food Systems Workshop | Lilongwe, Malawi | 20-22 May 2024**

In May 2024, FSN-IL, in collaboration with Thriving Solutions and ICRISAT, hosted a regional workshop on circular economy strategies in Lilongwe. The workshop brought together 34 participants from Malawi and Mozambique and focused on enhancing the capacity of stakeholders to implement circular economy concepts. This initiative aimed to promote sustainable outcomes in food systems and nutrition within the region.

### **National Consultation on Accelerating Food Systems Transformation in Malawi | Lilongwe, Malawi | 23-25 April & 23 May 2024**

FSN-IL supported a series of Action Track Dialogues (April 2024) as well as a National Consultation (May 2024) led by the Ministry of Agriculture and the National Planning Commission, in collaboration with the MwAPATA Institute. This consultation, which followed the 2021 Food Systems Summit, involved 178 participants across several sessions. Discussions centered around the progress, challenges, and policy gaps in Malawi's food systems. The consultation also included the launch of the Investment Plan 2024-2030 on May 23rd, where FSN-IL provided insights on integrating global experiences into the local context. FSN-IL continues to offer technical guidance on this front.

### **Scalability Assessment Workshop | Lilongwe, Malawi | 25-26 August 2024**

In August 2024, FSN-IL hosted an interactive Scalability Assessment Workshop in Lilongwe, which engaged 24 participants. The workshop focused on evaluating the scalability of innovations within Malawi's food system, particularly in managing innovation portfolios and identifying scalable solutions for improving nutrient-rich perishable food systems. Following the workshop, the NPC expressed interest in collaborating with FSN-IL to conduct a comprehensive analysis of its priorities, which will inform the Investment Plan 2024-2030.

### **Malawi Agricultural Productivity and Commercialization Conference (MAAPC) | Lilongwe, Malawi | 10-11 September 2024**

FSN-IL is set to support the upcoming MAAPC event in September 2024, aligning with its food systems for nutrition agenda. FSN-IL will contribute both financially and technically to the event, working closely with the Government of Malawi, the Ministry of Agriculture, and the National Planning Commission to ensure effective reporting and dissemination of the event's outcomes.

### **FY2023 R4D Competitive Award: Packaging and Processing of Foods for Safety and Reduced Environmental Impact in Malawi | Ongoing**

FSN-IL is currently engaged in an activity assessing consumer demand for dried watermelon and preparing samples for biological analysis. This activity also includes comparing production costs between conventional and solar ovens. Additionally, a novel compostable film has been successfully utilized for packaging Ready-to-Use Therapeutic Food (RUTF) at Project Peanut Butter (Malawi).

### **FY2024 Competitive Award Selection and Final Approval | Planned**

FSN-IL is engaged in an extensive co-creation process with two EOIs that were successfully selected through a competitive review.

### **Networking and Collaboration with In-Country Stakeholders | Ongoing**

FSN-IL continues to foster relationships with development institutions such as GIZ and WHH, supporting the assessment of food systems actors, nutrition governance, and stakeholder mapping in Malawi. FSN-IL has shared its NGI tool with GIZ, which is now being utilized in three districts of Malawi. Furthermore, FSN-IL has emphasized the importance of the food environment in informal networking sessions and has shared the Food-EPI tool, previously used in Nepal, with partners as a follow-up step.