



CITY REGION FOOD SYSTEM TOOLKIT

Assessing and planning resilient and sustainable city region food systems

Tool: Developing a vision and summary vision statement

Brief description	An explanation of what visioning is, why it is needed, and who should participate, example visions and vision statements, and detailed guidance on the visioning process.
Expected outcome	Consensus over the overall project goal and possible priorities
Expected output	Vision and summary vision statement
Scale of application	Project workshop
Expertise required	- Facilitation skills
Examples of application	-
Year of development	2021
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Relevant CRFS Handbook modules; related tools, examples and activities	CRFS Handbook: Introduction; Inception module; Define the CRFS; Rapid scan module.

Full description and justification

This tool explains clearly what visioning is, why it is necessary, who should participate, and provides some examples of what a vision and a summary vision statement might look like. Detailed guidance is provided for how to develop an initial CRFS vision in a workshop setting, with variations of developing a vision when stakeholders cannot meet in person and for adjusting the vision later on in the CRFS process.

The visioning process helps build consensus within the core team and multi-stakeholder SAG regarding the overall project goal (i.e. increased sustainability of the CRFS, increased resilience and reduced vulnerability to shocks and stresses). It brings together a range of different perspectives and provides a more holistic or rounded picture of how a better future might look. It also begins to capture ideas for action and a sense of what might be priorities.



1 Heading 1

2 The 'what, why, and who' of visioning

2.1 What is visioning?

Participatory visioning is the process of developing and articulating:

- i) the shared CRFS vision that captures the types of changes or new elements in the CRFS that they want to see in place in the future. It expresses: the direction in which the stakeholders want to take the food system, and why; and what success will look like in the future (5+ years).
- ii) a brief and inspiring summary vision statement that summarises that vision, agreed by all stakeholders.

By establishing the direction of travel, the fully-articulated CRFS vision becomes the starting point for developing priorities.

The summary vision statement can be used to easily explain the CRFS vision to other stakeholders or it could be adapted for more public engagement (see examples in Box 1 from Bristol, UK and Quito, Ecuador).

2.2 Why do visioning?

The visioning process helps build consensus within the core team and multi-stakeholder SAG regarding the overall project goal (i.e. reduced vulnerability of CRFS to climate shocks and stresses and increased resilience). It brings together a range of different perspectives and provides a more holistic or rounded picture of how a better future might look. It also begins to capture ideas for action and a sense of what might be priorities.

An initial CRFS vision should be developed with stakeholders during the inception phase of the project (see section 3 below). Its purpose is to establish and guide the direction of travel, including serving as a basis for identifying more refined impact areas, priorities and indicators.

Working with the CRFS vision can be an iterative process. Ideally the CRFS vision will be revisited at each subsequent phase, as more information is obtained, to check if it is still relevant and useful (see section 4 below).

Having a summary vision statement helps to:

- anchor the project, providing a shared reference point that can help to guide discussion (for example, it can be used as a reminder of focus in reports or presentations)
- orientate any new stakeholders who join later in the process (for example, in stakeholder invitations or briefings)

Who should participate in visioning?





The intention is to develop a fully-articulated CRFS vision and a summary vision statement with which all or most of the stakeholders participating in the process agree. Depending on the food system node or component at which they operate, different stakeholders will be able to offer different insights. The perspectives of different kinds of stakeholders will also be quite different (e.g. between a producer, a government official, an NGO employee), and between those at different government levels.

For this reason, participating stakeholders should be broadly representative of stakeholders in the CRFS (identified by the stakeholder mapping).

3 What could a CRFS vision and summary vision statement look like?

A shared CRFS vision can be articulated as a set of sentences that capture what a better future will look like from various perspectives, a bit like a collection of photographs. It should have an active and inspiring tone and a clear focus. In the case of this project the focus is ‘reduced vulnerability of the city region food system to climate shocks and stresses and increased resilience’. The content should be co-created with a group of stakeholders, so that it does not contain just the ideas of one person or organisation.

A summary vision statement is a summary of the headline key points contained within a vision. It is not the vision itself. It should be short (one or two sentences) and quite simple, and should be something that everyone can agree with.

These two outputs of the vision process provide a solid and invaluable reference framework for the project.

Example 1: Vision clusters in Antananarivo

The final vision adopted by stakeholders in Antananarivo is:

“A well-organized and resilient food system that guarantees healthy food for the population”

This vision is underscored by four themes, from which ideas of priority areas emerged.

- Theme 1: Production
Idea of priority area: stimulate production that is respectful to environment
- Theme 2: Value chains
Idea of priority area: move to more sustainable modes of consumption
- Theme 3: Food security
Idea of priority area: produce access to healthy and nutritious food for all
- Theme 4: Resilience
Idea of priority area: reinforce resilience in face of vulnerabilities to shocks and stresses

Example 2: Kigali CRFS vision statement





“By 2050, we would like to have a sustainable food system for Kigali City Region dwellers based on climate resilient agriculture.”

4 How to develop an initial CRFS vision and a summary vision statement

This section describes a visioning process that will result in the following elements:

- A detailed, structured CRFS vision document made up of various different themes, and that may contain ideas for actions.
- A summary vision statement

4.1 When to do visioning

An initial multi-stakeholder vision is developed early in the CRFS process, but may be developed and refined in subsequent stages (see section 4 below).

Before embarking on the process, it is helpful for participants to be aware of previous climate shocks and stresses in the city region, and to have some awareness of their impact on the food system.

This will enable stakeholders to determine the ways in which the city region and the CRFS may change as a result of climate change in the future based on past changes and trends, and to pinpoint the most likely major climate-related shocks and stresses that will affect the food system. This would provide a foundation discussion upon which to then consider an alternative future.

4.2 How long should visioning take?

It takes time to build a meaningful shared vision. You need to dedicate a minimum of 2 – 3 hours to this, but a half- to a whole day’s workshop would be ideal. The more time the better, to allow more sharing and discussion between workshop participants, to allow a deeper process of building consensus, and to enable stakeholders to identify potential priority areas and actions. However long you have, the important thing is to have some form of agreement about what success looks like in the future (in 5+ years).

4.3 Developing a vision and vision statement: guidelines for the facilitator

The following steps are intended to guide the facilitator through the entire process of developing a CRFS vision and summary vision statement. They are divided into three parts: Before, during and after the workshop.





4.3.1 Before the workshop

It is very important to do a trial run on the guided visualisation exercise with a few trusted colleagues or friends to familiarise yourself and also to generate a few examples of how to write vision 'ideas'. This is also an opportunity to test how well the instructions are understood and what kinds of responses you get.

You might want to obtain a bell or some kind of pleasant-sounding alarm for timekeeping.

You should also make sure you have plenty of pens and lots of pieces of paper, A5 size or half of A5 (ideally different colours), so that participants can write each point on a separate piece of paper and you can cluster similar ideas.

4.3.2 During the workshop

- 1. In plenary:** Take the group through a guided visualisation, following the process in Box 2 below.

Box 2: How do you run a guided visualisation?

Introduction (5 mins)

Explain purpose of visioning and the structure of the exercise.

If you think participants may not be comfortable with the word 'vision' you can simply avoid it. Rather, explain that you will invite the participants to go on an imaginary journey into the future, and to take a look around this future place to see what is happening, imagine taking a few photographs to capture what is going on. Use a simple statement and question:

Statement: It is the year 2025/2030 and there has been a dramatic reduction in the vulnerability to climate shocks and stresses of the [name of place] city region food system.

Question: 'What do you see happening in 2025/2030?' [You need to decide if you want people to imagine 5 years ahead or 10] 'What is being achieved?'

Visual aid: Have this written up large and visible for all to see as clear guidance

Give a couple of clear examples from your trial run – each one written briefly on a separate piece of coloured paper, visible to everyone (no more than 7 words, no more than 3 lines in large writing). . (See examples in Box 3)

Encourage people to notice what first comes to their imagination, not to force anything. Notice any small details, they are also important.

Check if there are any questions before moving on to the exercise itself.

Visioning exercise (7 to 9 mins – do not allow it to go on too long)

First make sure everyone is ready to start and knows that this exercise is will be done in silence. There is no need for participants to write anything, just to use their imagination. You could ask everyone to close their eyes for a few minutes, but this may not feel comfortable. You will need to decide what will work best.





Next, the participants will think alone and in silence. You (the facilitator) read the text below out loud. Make sure to read quite slowly, as if you are guiding someone. Allow some pauses between the sentences.

“I would like to invite you to imagine you are standing in front of a closed door in a wall. On the other side is the future. (Pause). You step through this door in a wall to find yourself ten years in the future. It is the year 2030. (Pause). There has been a dramatic reduction in the vulnerability to climate shocks and stresses of the city region food system. (Pause). You look around places that you know well. What can you feel? (Pause). What can you hear? (Pause). You are delighted to see some really positive changes in the city region food system. (Pause). What can you see? (Pause). You notice some quite surprising changes (Pause). What has most surprised you? (Pause). Maybe you notice some logical and not so surprising changes. What are these changes? (Pause). What is happening? What is not happening? (Pause) The people you see are proud of what they are achieving. What are they doing? Notice what you see, what has made them so pleased? (Pause). Who is doing what?’ (Pause). Maybe you notice that people are working in a different way. What is making these things happen?” (Pause).

Once you have finished reading, stay silent for two more minutes to allow the participants to think.

When the time is up, you say:

“You take a last look around and then you return to the door in the wall. (Pause). Open it and step through the wall and back into the present. (Pause). Welcome back to the workshop”. (Pause).

Leave another pause of about half a minute for this. Some people find it quite difficult to return so you could suggest everyone stand up and have a quick shake (or dance!) but not to start talking.

Now, ask the participants to take 3 – 5 minutes to write a description of what they saw, still in silence. Remind them of the writing up format, already demonstrated with examples visible for all to see.

“Still in silence, imagine you are now reporting back to your colleagues about your journey. Choose up to 5 key things from your vision – things that strike you as really important and different from the current situation. Remember if anything surprised you. Note the way people were working. Write down what you saw in a few clear sentences on paper provided. On separate A5 (landscape) pieces of paper, describe each of those 5 key things in no more than 7 words and write them in no more than 3 lines in large writing.”

[If working with a large group: Consider adding an extra stage of group work for a large group of more than 20 people. Ask people to work in twos or threes depending on numbers. Groups should share their notes, notice similarities and differences. Each group agrees and selects their top 5 pieces of paper without changing the wording of any of them to share in plenary. This extra stage of small group work will help reduce the number of pieces of paper that are presented in plenary.]

Immediately move on to the next step





Box 3: Examples of what people might write and why clustering is so important

Different stakeholders will notice different aspects of the food system, and will have different visions and write down different key points in response to the question:

“By the year 2030 there had been a dramatic reduction in the vulnerability to climate shocks and stresses of the Kigali city region food system”.

For example, the vision of an urban farmer may be:

“I see work has been done on river flooding prevention upstream of Kigali city. There is now a flood plain area that can be used for part of the year to produce seed crops. This flood plain area is linked to a series of rainwater harvesting ponds which provide water for urban farmers during the dry season. The farmers are proud of their new seed production co-op enterprise that is supplying over 1000 other farmers. I am surprised to see the clever integration of solutions.”

Consequently, the five key points they write down may be:

- River flooding prevention work upstream of city (6 words)
- New flood plain used for seed production (7 words)
- Rainwater harvesting ponds for urban farmers (6 words)
- Successful farmer-owned seed production co-op (6 words)
- Clever but simple integrated solutions (5 words)

On the other hand, the vision of a market manager could be:

“I see an improved covered city centre market that no longer gets flooded where traders have access to clean water and shared cold storage. I see smaller similar market hubs in many previously less-advantaged parts of the city. All markets have areas for street-food traders. All markets have a well organised food surplus and food waste for composting collection systems.”

Their five key points may be:

- Improved flood-protected covered market (5 words)
- Traders share cold storage & clean water (7 words)
- Successful market hubs in vulnerable areas (6 words)
- Street food traders supported at all markets (7 words)





- **Effective market food surplus and waste collection (7 words)**

Clearly then, there will be some shared points between different stakeholders. In the two examples above, both stakeholders mention flood prevention. However they also make very different points. This is why it is important to gather up all the different points and cluster them by theme or similarity, and to make a working title for each second-stage cluster (see activity 3). The purpose of this exercise is to provide a clear focus for the next stage of work.

2. **In plenary:** The facilitator goes to one individual (or small group) and asks them to read out one of their chosen ideas. The facilitator then reads it out again and places it on the wall. Working rapidly and without discussion, the facilitator then goes to each individual (or small group) and asks them to read out one of their chosen ideas. The facilitator then reads it out again and asks the whole group to say (without discussion) whether this idea is the same as, similar to or different from the pieces of paper already on the wall. If the group says it is the same, the facilitator places it next to its twin. If the group says it is similar, it goes close to the other ones. If the group says it is different, it goes in a separate place on the wall.

When all the pieces of paper have been collected up (100 max with a group of 20 people) and sorted into clusters on the wall, the facilitator leads a second round of sorting, this time bringing together similar clusters of ideas. (For example you might cluster ideas related to particular food chain nodes, or by theme.) The facilitator then asks the participants to think of a working title for each second-stage cluster. The working title is written on a separate piece of coloured paper (choose a different colour paper for titles) and placed by the cluster.

3. **In groups:** Divide the large group of participants into several smaller groups, and allocate to each group one or more of the second-stage clusters of ideas. . Ask each group to write a summary statement for each cluster on separate pieces of paper. (We refer to these as 'cluster summaries'; they are distinct from the vision statement).
4. **In plenary:** Bring together the different parts of the draft vision by displaying all the cluster summaries, combining any that logically sit together. (For example, all cluster summaries relating to organisational issues, all relating to resources, all relating to policy etc. Or all relating to global issues, national issues, local issues etc.) These cluster summaries and the pieces of paper to which they relate are all elements of the bigger vision so it is very important to keep all the papers for each cluster together (see Box 2). At this stage it may be a good idea to take photos of the clusters so you have an accurate record (especially if groups need to go and work in another room, as the paper may get mixed up).

Depending on the number of participants, divide into 2 or 3 groups to combine the cluster summaries into a draft vision statement. For example, if there were six cluster summaries, those now need to be combined into one simple summary vision statement.

5. **In plenary:** synthesise the 2 or 3 draft vision statements from the work groups into a single vision statement.

Remember: What is a vision statement? It is a summary of the headline key points contained within a vision. It is not the vision itself – just a summary statement!

6. **In plenary:** Final reflections.





For a final round up, invite a few people to share positive or negative reflections/feedback on the exercise itself (rather than the vision). There is no need for any judgment comments from the facilitators, just listen and thank participants for all their contributions. This should be quite quick, but it is important to do this. A final reflection allows for people to mentally complete the session, and it may give you some helpful feedback.

4.3.3 After the workshop

Document the process by writing up all of the ideas that were noted by participants, and also the summary statements that go with each group of ideas. Together these details become the vision. Also write up the agreed overall vision statement. (If you did not manage to summarise the CRFS vision into a vision statement, the facilitator should write it now).

The vision will consist of the following elements:

- Overall vision statement (a summary of the full vision)
- The cluster summaries that form a more detailed vision
- The titles of the first grouping of ideas and all the separate related ideas.

In this way you can start to see an emerging and quite structured direction of travel with likely priorities and some details that could be ideas for action.

This vision document should become a key reference for how to develop the project. It should inform any research plans, and it should be revisited once the in-depth assessment has been done to again inform action planning. New information may be generated in future CRFS phases, so the focal point, core group or later stakeholder workshops will need to consider whether the vision document needs to be revised to take it into account (see section 4 below).

Example: Developing Kigali's CRFS vision statement

In Kigali, an adapted visioning exercise was conducted during the first multistakeholder workshop. Participants were asked to reflect on the current situation of the CRFS, focusing especially on the vulnerability of the value chain nodes to climate shocks and stresses. They were invited to consider the food system they would like to see in Kigali city region by 2050.

Each participant wrote a vision statement on a piece of a paper, which they discussed initially with a partner. Next, the participants formed groups of four to develop one shared vision statement, which they wrote down on a piece of paper.

The group visions were shared in plenary and combined into the following vision statement:

“By 2050, we would like to have a sustainable food system for Kigali City Region dwellers based on climate resilient agriculture.”

The project coordinator reassured stakeholders that it does not matter if the statement appears to be too simple or evident. It is an important summary that will enable stakeholders to explain what they are working towards. During the exercise everyone in the room was thinking about a collective aim; the visioning process, as well as the vision statement, were therefore important for driving collaboration and capturing a sense of team effort.





4.4 Building a vision when large in-person meetings are impossible

It is better by far to develop a vision during a face-to-face workshop, and resources should be allocated for several multi-stakeholder meetings as part of the overall CRFS process. However, in-person meetings involving large number of participants are not always possible, such as during local lock-downs due to the 2020 Covid-19 pandemic. In such situations it may possible to build an initial shared vision in small groups or using online tools, which can be refined in a live workshop setting at a future date. This will enable the core team to continue working on the rapid scan and on refining priorities and identifying indicators in the meantime [link to tool on flow diagram]. There are two ways you could do this:

Online dialogue

Zoom enables online dialogues in plenary and breakout rooms for small groups of participants to work together. It is also possible to use bolt-on tools such as Miro, which incorporates an interactive white board and sticky notes. To take this approach, however, you need to be confident that all participants have the IT skills required, as well as a stable internet connection. If this is not the case, some stakeholders will be excluded from the process, resulting in an incomplete or biased vision.

Example questions for online dialogues (or very small face-to-face meetings where only a very simple visioning process is feasible)

- Please explain your role and expertise within the CRFS?
- Based on your expertise, what do you feel are the most urgent risks to the CRFS to be addressed over the next 5-10 years? [you might want to refer to the tool containing laypersons' definitions and examples of hazard, vulnerability, exposure and risk here].
- Let's imagine future that we want to see: by 2030 there has been a dramatic reduction in the vulnerability to climate shocks and stresses of the city region food system. Risks have been addressed. There have been some innovative, effective and impactful achievements. From your perspective:
 - What might these achievements be or look like?
 - What processes or interventions have enabled these achievements to happen? Who might have done what?

If these questions are discussed in small breakout rooms, ideally each group would have its own facilitator and a separate note-taker to keep a record of answers.

Online survey

Another option is to prepare an **online survey** (e.g. using the free tool [Survey Monkey](#)) and circulate the link to stakeholders. The benefits are that stakeholders will be able to complete the survey in their own time. Again, however, it is important to be aware that some participants may not have internet access or know how to complete a survey online (e.g. farmers, informal food workers). If





this is likely, the core team may wish to supplement the online survey with written questionnaires sent by mail or short telephone surveys.

It is also worth bearing in mind that some people are more succinct in writing than speaking, and surveys do not give the possibility to clarify what people mean or ask them to expand on ideas.

Importantly, survey findings will need to be systematised. SurveyMonkey includes a certain amount of automated systematisation of responses, but only where data is quantitative or the responses are multiple choice. For all open-ended questions, the facilitator or core team will need to do the systematisation as a first step towards drafting an initial vision; it may be helpful to follow the sorting process outlined in section 3 above. It is important to keep a record of the process, which can be used to show stakeholders how their responses were used.

Example questions that could be included in a vision-building survey

1) What is your particular role in the CRFS? Check all that apply

- Farmer/producer
- Processor/manufacturer
- Distributor
- Transporter
- Warehouse manager
- Market trader
- Household food purchaser
- Food and organic waste manager
- NGO representative
- Academic or consultant [please specify field from sub-list below]
 - Social inclusion and equity
 - Environmental and ecosystem services
 - Livelihoods and economic development
 - Food security and nutrition
 - Natural resources (soil, land, water, biodiversity, forests, ecosystem services)
 - Infrastructure (logistics, roads, storage, processing facilities, electricity grid/fuel)
- Local government official [please specify field from sub-list below]
 - Social inclusion and equity
 - Environmental and ecosystem services
 - Livelihoods and economic development
 - Food security and nutrition
 - Natural resources (soil, land, water, biodiversity, forests, ecosystem services)
 - Infrastructure (logistics, roads, storage, processing facilities, electricity grid/fuel)
- Other [please specify]

2) Based on your expertise, what do you feel are the most urgent risks to the CRFS to be addressed over the next 5-10 years?

[you could either leave this open for free text, or you could include a list of checkbox options that are relevant to the particular CRFS. If the latter, it is recommended to develop the options with reference to the tool on containing laypersons' definitions and examples of hazard, vulnerability, exposure and risk]





- 3) Let's imagine future that we want to see: by 2030 there has been a dramatic reduction in the vulnerability to climate shocks and stresses of the city region food system. Risks have been addressed. There have been some innovative, effective and impactful achievements.

For each of the priority risks identified in question 2):

- a) What might these achievements be or look like?

[free text response]

- b) What processes or interventions have enabled these achievements to happen?
Who might have done what?

[free text response]

- c) What evidence will be needed that this/these change(s) have taken place?

[free text response]

5 How does the vision evolve over time?

The CRFS vision is a key reference document for the project, but it is not set in stone. It may evolve over the course of the project.

The coordinator and core team, and if possible the SAG should 'check in' on the CRFS vision at the start of the rapid scan, in-depth assessment, and action planning phases to ensure it is still valid in the light of new information and the latest outputs. Adjustments may be made in order to direct the next activities (see Tool: Flow chart on vision, priorities, indicators and research methodology). In particular, the CRFS vision is likely to become more refined, consolidated and political over the course of the project, and able to direct the action planning phase.

The summary vision statement, on the other hand, should not change unless the CRF vision changes so significantly that it is no longer fit for purpose.

5.1 Reviewing the vision at a SAG workshop

It is a good idea to 'check in' on the CRSF vision start and end of every SAG workshop or multi-stakeholder event:

- at the start to remind everyone of the CRFS vision to reaffirm the direction of travel and to orientate new joiners; it may be helpful to display the CRFS vision and summary vision statement;
- at the end of the event to account for new information that has emerged from discussions on the latest outputs, which should be incorporated into the vision.

The following steps could be helpful for reviewing the CRSF vision at the end of the event:

- 1) The facilitator identifies in advance new information that has emerged from the previous phase that might need be incorporated into the existing vision, such as details of





vulnerabilities or coping capacity of certain stakeholders identified in new research or new information contributed by stakeholders.

- 2) A note-taker identifies any new points that arise during the workshop that could also be incorporated.

This information/key points are briefly presented back to the participants. Check together if these points are additional details to add to existing themes or if they are completely new points or themes.

If the points are completely new and so far do not feature in the vision then there needs to be a discussion about how to add them. Remember the vision is about the future changes that stakeholders want to see. For each new point the facilitator asks 'why is this point important; what impact does it have on the CRFS resilience and sustainability; what is the change that we want to see?'

If there are only a few new points (1-2) then this can be discussed and agreed in plenary. The desired change should be written down and added to the vision.

If there are several new points (3 or more), small groups should discuss the above questions and agree some suggested future changes, each one written on a separate paper as in Box 3.5).

- 3) The ideas are then read out and go through the sorting and clustering process described in 3.3.2 above, ending with the production of 'cluster summaries'.
- 4) Consider – or display – the new cluster summaries alongside the cluster summaries from the previous stage visioning. This is the new full CRFS vision.
- 5) Remind participants of the existing summary vision statement. Seek consensus as to whether the additional cluster summaries are so significant that the summary vision statement must be amended. If so, agree the wording together.
- 6) After the workshop, write up the new cluster summaries into fully-articulated the CRFS vision and share with stakeholders.

If it is not possible to re-visit the vision with the SAG (due to timeframes or difficulties in meeting, such as due to pandemic-related physical distancing measures), the coordinator and/or core team will need to consider whether the CRFS vision document needs to be revised.

