



**Ethiopian
Food Systems
Transformation
and Nutrition**



Ethiopia & Italy 2025

**UN FOOD SYSTEMS
SUMMIT + 4
STOCKTAKE**

Ethiopia's Food Systems Transformation Clustered and Multi-Stakeholder Approach

**Committed to Transforming
Food Systems for a Thriving Ethiopia!**



ETHIOPIA'S FOOD SYSTEMS TRANSFORMATION

A CLUSTERED AND MULTI-STAKEHOLDER APPROACH

Ethiopia is actively implementing a comprehensive and coordinated set of interventions aimed at transforming its food systems to be resilient, sustainable, inclusive, and nutrition sensitive. Guided by the National Food Systems Roadmap and aligned with the Sustainable Development Goals, these efforts are organized around seven thematic clusters that reflect the country's structural priorities. Each cluster integrates the coordinated actions of federal leadership, regional implementation, development partners, and private sector engagement. As part of its commitment to transforming food systems by 2035, Ethiopia has adopted a structured approach centered on seven clusters and anchored in Four Governance Pillars: federal leadership, Regional implementation, Development Partner support, and Private Sector engagement. These principles guide the initiatives showcased in the following Nine Field Visit Packages, prepared for the UNFSS+4 Stocktaking Moment.

As part of the UNFSS+4 Stocktaking Moment hosted in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, the event is organizing field visits to highlight practical, scalable models and innovations that are driving its transformation. These packages exemplify how multisectoral governance, anchored in the four pillars, advances food sovereignty, nutrition, and inclusive economic growth. Each field visit reflects how Ethiopia operationalizes transformation on the ground—linking production, markets, nutrition, and climate resilience into a coherent whole-of-system and whole-of-society approach.

ETHIOPIA'S FOOD SYSTEMS TRANSFORMATION FIELD VISIT PACKAGES



1. CLUSTERED WHEAT PRODUCTION

Cluster Alignment: Agricultural Commercialization and Food Sovereignty

Governance in Action:

- **Federal:** MoA leads national irrigation, mechanization, and import substitution strategies.
- **Regional:** Bureaus facilitate cluster formation and input distribution.
- **Development Partners:** Provide irrigation tech, seed systems, and farmer training.
- **Private Sector:** Aggregators and millers strengthen value chains.

Wheat is prioritized under the Agricultural Commercial Clusters (ACC) framework, with irrigated expansion into lowland areas enhancing year-round production. This supports Ethiopia's goals of self-sufficiency and climate resilience, while empowering smallholder farmers.

Wheat is a key crop in Ethiopia with significant potential to strengthen food security and achieve self-sufficiency. Acknowledging this, the Ethiopian government has prioritized wheat production under the Agricultural Commercial Cluster (ACC) approach. This strategy capitalizes on the country's favorable conditions for cultivating wheat both during the primary rainy season and the dry season through irrigation. Recently, irrigated wheat farming has expanded into lowland regions where it was previously uncommon, boosting domestic production capacity. This progress supports Ethiopia's vision of food sovereignty and self-sufficiency by increasing wheat availability. Wheat is the second staple food after maize in the diets of several Ethiopian, providing about 14 % of the daily total average dietary calorie intake for the country's populations (FAO,2021). Ethiopia is the largest wheat producer in Africa, with 23 million metric tons of wheat produced on more than 6.5 million hectares of land under rainfed (main season) and irrigation in 2023/24. Beyond enhancing food security, this initiative plays a crucial role in transforming Ethiopia's food systems and nutrition. By reducing wheat imports, mitigating climate-related risks, and empowering smallholder farmers, it fosters a more resilient and sustainable economy.

To this end, participants of the UNFSS+4 Summit will have the opportunity to visit a Clustered Wheat Production value chain encompassing input supply, wheat cultivation, and processing facilities. The visit is scheduled to take place in Berta Sami Kebele, Bora Woreda, East Shoa Zone, Oromia Regional State.



2. AVOCADO VALUE CHAIN

Cluster Alignment: Cluster 1: Agricultural Commercialization and Export Diversification

Governance in Action:

- **Federal:** Strategic commodity under ACC; export facilitation.
- **Regional:** Seedling distribution, extension, and market linkage
- **Development Partners:** Value chain development, global compliance
- **Private Sector:** Expanding role in orchards, packing, and exports

Ethiopia's avocado sector is experiencing rapid growth, driven by increasing domestic demand and promising export prospects. The country currently supplies avocados to key international markets, including the Middle East (UAE and Saudi Arabia), Europe (particularly the Netherlands), and neighboring East African countries. As one of the priority commodities under Ethiopia's Agricultural Commercial Cluster (ACC) initiative, avocado production benefits from structured support for commercialization.

Nutritionally, avocados offer significant health benefits as they are packed with essential vitamins, minerals, and healthy fats. Environmentally, avocado cultivation contributes to sustainable agriculture through its compatibility with agroforestry systems and soil conservation practices. The crop's expansion aligns with Ethiopia's goals for economic growth, improved nutrition, and environmental sustainability. With demand rising in Europe and the Gulf, avocado exemplifies how Ethiopia integrates nutrition, climate resilience, and export growth, while linking agroforestry practices to food systems goals.

Participants of the UNFSS+4 Summit will have the opportunity to visit an Avocado Cluster Production value chain in Oromia Regional State, specifically in Lume Woreda of the East Shoa Zone, near Modjo town. The tour will include the nursery site, avocado farms, and packaging facilities.



3. POULTRY VALUE CHAIN

Cluster Alignment: Clusters 1 and 2: Livestock and Nutrition Security

Governance in Action:

- **Federal:** Yelemat Turufat drives genetic improvement and extension.
- **Regional:** Hatchery services and farmer training.
- **Development Partners:** Health and feed support systems.
- **Private Sector:** Hatcheries, feed mills, and aggregators.

Poultry production plays a pivotal role in transforming Ethiopia's food systems and improving nutrition. As one of the most efficient and rapidly scalable livestock sectors, poultry provides high-quality animal protein through eggs and meat, addressing widespread malnutrition and micronutrient deficiencies. The sector's growth supports food system transformation by enhancing dietary diversity, creating employment along value chains (from feed production to marketing), and offering smallholders a low-entry barrier livelihood option. With relatively low land and water requirements compared to other livestock, poultry production presents a sustainable pathway to improve food security while adapting to climate change pressures.

The nutritional impact is particularly significant for vulnerable groups; eggs provide essential amino acids, vitamins (A and B12), and minerals (iron and zinc) that are crucial for child development and maternal health. As Ethiopia works to reduce stunting and malnutrition, integrating poultry into smallholder farming systems offers a dual benefit: improving household nutrition while generating income. The government's focus on improving chicken breeds, veterinary services, and market linkages under agricultural transformation programs highlights the strategic role of poultry in achieving nutrition-sensitive food systems and sustainable development goals. Poultry, with its shorter production cycle and low land footprint, contributes high-quality protein and income—particularly for women and youth—while reducing malnutrition through egg consumption.

UNFSS+4 Summit participants will have the opportunity to explore poultry production value chain, including input supply, poultry farms, and processing facilities, in Bishoftu, Adama and Modjo City Administration, Oromia Regional State.



1.4. DAIRY VALUE CHAIN

Cluster Alignment: Clusters 1 and 2: Livestock, Nutrition, and Market Integration
Governance in Action:

- **Federal:** National Dairy Strategy guides investment and hubs.
- **Regional:** Breed improvement, milk collection systems.
- **Development Partners:** Infrastructure and cold chain support.
- **Private Sector:** Milk processors and cooperatives.

Dairy production plays a crucial role in Ethiopia's efforts to transform its food system and improve nutrition. As the largest livestock producer in Africa, Ethiopia's dairy sector provides essential nutrients through milk and milk products, offering a sustainable solution to combat protein-energy malnutrition and micronutrient deficiencies, particularly among children and pregnant women. The sector's growth supports broader food system transformation by enhancing rural livelihoods through smallholder commercialization, creating employment across value chains (from feed production to processing), and improving dietary diversity in a country where per capita milk consumption remains below global averages. With climate-resilient indigenous cattle breeds and emerging cross-bred varieties, dairy production represents an adaptable pathway toward nutrition security while supporting Ethiopia's climate-smart agriculture objectives.

Nutritionally, dairy products provide high-quality protein, calcium, vitamin D, and other micronutrients critical for physical and cognitive development. The government's focus on dairy hubs, breed improvement programs, and processing infrastructure, as demonstrated by initiatives such as the National Dairy Development Strategy, underscores the pivotal role of dairy in achieving nutrition-sensitive agricultural transformation. By linking smallholder farmers to urban markets and school feeding programs, Ethiopia's dairy sector simultaneously addresses malnutrition, boosts rural incomes, and contributes to sustainable food systems, making it a key driver in the country's journey toward food and nutrition security. Dairy production addresses protein-energy gaps while enhancing rural incomes and job creation. The government and its partners are building market linkages through school feeding programs and urban consumer initiatives.

During the UNFSS+4 Summit, participants will be able to observe dairy production value chain—encompassing input supply, poultry farms, and processing facilities—in Bishoftu and Adama City Administration, Oromia Regional State.



5. MELKASSA AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH CENTER (MARC)

Cluster Alignment: Cluster 4: Research, Innovation, and Climate Resilience
Governance in Action:

- **Federal:** EIAR sets research priorities for climate-smart agriculture.
- **Regional:** Collaboration with extension and demo farms
- **Development Partners:** Fund R&D in resilient and biofortified crops
- **Private Sector:** Seeds and tech adoption

Agricultural research centers, such as the Melkassa Agricultural Research Center (MARC), play a pivotal role in Ethiopia's food system transformation by developing and disseminating climate-resilient, high-yielding crop varieties and sustainable farming technologies. As a key research hub under the Ethiopian Institute of Agricultural Research (EIAR), MARC focuses on improved seeds (maize, sorghum, and wheat), irrigation-based farming systems, and soil fertility management—critical for boosting productivity in drought-prone areas, such as the lowlands and the Rift Valley. By testing and promoting drought-tolerant crops, water-efficient practices, and post-harvest technologies, MARC helps smallholders adapt to climate change while enhancing food security. Additionally, its farmer training programs and partnerships with extension services accelerate the adoption of innovations, directly linking research to on-farm impact.

Beyond productivity, MARC contributes to nutrition-sensitive agriculture by researching biofortified crops (e.g., vitamin A-enriched maize, Iron and zinc-rich beans) and diversified farming systems that integrate pulses, vegetables, and livestock. Its work on irrigated year-round production ensures a stable food supply, while studies on crop-livestock interactions improve household diets through milk and meat availability. By aligning its research with Ethiopia's Food Systems Transformation Pathways, MARC helps bridge the gap between science, policy, and practice, ensuring agricultural innovations translate into better nutrition, higher incomes, and environmental sustainability. MARC illustrates how research institutions drive innovation by linking drought-tolerant crops, nutrition-sensitive agriculture, and sustainable intensification across food systems.

During the UNFSS+4 Summit, participants will visit MARC to observe and learn about ongoing technology generation efforts adaptable to diverse agro-ecologies in Oromia Regional State, located approximately 17 kilometers from Adama town, Awash Melkassa area.



6. ADDIS ABABA URBAN FOOD SYSTEMS

Cluster Alignment: Cluster 5 and 7: Urban Food Systems, Markets, and Governance Integration
Governance in Action:

- **Federal & City Administration:** Oversee cross-sectoral programs.
- **Development Partners:** Support nutrition, digital markets, and green cities.
- **Private Sector:** Vendors, cooperatives, and agro-processors.

6.1. School Feeding (Home-Grown School Feeding Program)

Cluster Alignment: Cluster 6: Urban Food Systems, Markets, and Governance Integration
Governance in Action:

Ethiopia's school feeding programs (SFPs), particularly the Home-Grown School Feeding (HGSF) initiative, serve as a powerful link between food systems transformation and improved nutrition. By sourcing meals directly from local smallholder farmers, these programs create a stable market that incentivizes agricultural production, reduces post-harvest losses, and supports the growth of rural economies. This demand-driven approach promotes the cultivation of diverse, nutrient-rich crops, such as pulses, vegetables, and fortified cereals, thereby enhancing dietary diversity in schools while simultaneously transforming local food systems. The integration of climate-resilient crops and sustainable farming practices further ensures that SFPs contribute to long-term food system resilience, aligning with Ethiopia's goals for nutrition-sensitive agriculture.

From a nutrition perspective, SFPs provide children with daily meals rich in essential vitamins, minerals, and proteins, directly addressing malnutrition and improving cognitive development. By incorporating fortified foods (e.g., iron-rich beans or vitamin A-enriched sweet potatoes), these programs combat micronutrient deficiencies prevalent among Ethiopian children. Additionally, SFPs indirectly improve household nutrition by boosting farmers' incomes, enabling families to afford healthier diets. The synergy between school feeding, local agriculture, and nutrition education creates a multiplier effect, transforming food systems from production to consumption while fostering a healthier, more educated generation. This model exemplifies how targeted interventions can simultaneously advance food security, economic development, and human capital growth in Ethiopia. Aligns local procurement with nutrition and education goals—linking rural farmers to urban schools and enhancing children's diets through the provision of fortified, diverse foods.

UNFSS+4 Summit participants will visit Dejezmach Wondirad Pre-Primary School located in Yeka Sub-city, Addis Ababa, to observe and learn about the government's implementation of the Home-Grown School Feeding Program.



6.2. Lemi Kura Market Center

Cluster Alignment: Cluster 5: Urban Food Systems, Markets, and Governance Integration

Governance in Action:

Agricultural market centers, such as the Lemi Kura, are pivotal in transforming Ethiopia's food systems by bridging smallholder farmers to structured markets, enhancing efficiency, and reducing post-harvest losses. By providing modern storage, quality control, and digital trading platforms, Lemi Kura Market Centre ensures farmers receive fair prices while stabilizing food supplies for consumers. Its integration with commercial clusters encourages production of nutrient-rich foods like vegetables, fruits, cereals, animal livestock products, pulses and oilseeds, which are then channeled to school feeding programs and urban markets—linking agricultural commercialization directly to improved nutrition. Modern agri-market systems improve price transparency, storage, and reduce food loss. Digital platforms and cold chains support urban food access and farmer profitability.

UNFSS+4 Summit participants will visit the Lemi Kura Market Centre in Addis Ababa to observe how expanded market infrastructure effectively connects producers with consumers. The visit will also demonstrate how structured market centers contribute to reducing post-harvest losses and improving food product quality.

6.3. Quality Village

Cluster Alignment: Urban Food Systems, Markets, and Governance Integration

Governance in Action:

Quality is central to Ethiopia's food system transformation, as it bridges nutrition, safety, and economic progress. Ensuring access to diverse, safe, and nutrient-rich foods is crucial for combating malnutrition—particularly stunting and micronutrient deficiencies—while enhancing public health and productivity. High-quality agricultural products enhance market competitiveness, increase farmer incomes, and minimize post-harvest losses, bolstering food security and economic resilience. Investments in improved storage, processing, food safety standards, and diversified farming are essential for building a sustainable food system that delivers better diets, strengthens livelihoods, and adapts to climate challenges.

In this context, Ethiopia's "Quality Village" initiative will be visited during the UNFSS+4 Stocktaking Moment—highlights the critical role of institutions like the Ethiopian Conformity Assessment Enterprise (ECAE), Ethiopian Standards Institute (ESI), Ethiopian National Accreditation Office, and Ethiopian Metrology Institute in ensuring quality products and services, further driving the nation's economic and food system development. Institutions such as ECAE, ESI, and the Metrology Institute enforce food safety and quality standards, thereby building consumer confidence and supporting the development of the agro-industry. These institutions are located within a single compound in the Addis Ababa City Administration.



6.4. Yeka Metasebia Health Center

Health centers are key to transforming food systems by providing nutrition services, addressing malnutrition, promoting healthy diets, and supporting communities through education and disease prevention. They also monitor nutrition trends, collaborate across sectors, and inform policy with health data. In this context, participants of the UNFSS+4 Summit will visit Yeka Metasebia Health Center in Yeka Subcity, Addis Ababa, to observe how it functions as a frontline hub in advancing food system transformation.

6.5. Gulele Injera Making Women Group

More than 300 women's groups in Addis Ababa and Shagar City are engaged in injera production, supplying various buyers including school feeding programs, hospitals, and restaurants. Gulele Injera Bakery operates with over 300 injera ovens (mitads) and supplies injera to hotels, universities, Ethiopian Airlines, and consumers.

6.6. Tree Plantation (Green Legacy Initiative)

Cluster Alignment: Cluster 3, and Governance Integration

Governance in Action:

Ethiopia's Green Legacy Initiative serves as a foundational pillar for the country's food systems transformation and nutrition security by promoting sustainable land management, agroforestry, and ecosystem restoration, which directly enhance agricultural productivity and dietary diversity. Through massive tree-planting campaigns and soil conservation efforts, the initiative combats land degradation, improves water retention, and increases resilience to climate shocks—critical factors for stable food production. By integrating fruit-bearing trees, such as avocado and mango, into farming systems, it simultaneously boosts household nutrition and income opportunities. Additionally, the initiative's emphasis on community awareness and youth engagement fosters long-term behavioral change toward sustainable food consumption and environmental stewardship. This holistic approach aligns with Ethiopia's broader food system goals by ensuring that ecological sustainability, climate adaptation, and improved nutrition progress in tandem, creating a resilient foundation for food sovereignty and healthier populations. Agroforestry integrates environmental restoration with food and nutrition goals. Fruit trees such as avocado and mango contribute to climate resilience, household nutrition, and ecosystem restoration.

To this end, UNFSS+4 participants will leave a legacy by planting trees along the Kebena River in Addis Ababa and Lume Woreda contributing to sustainable urban ecosystems.

Takeaway Message - From Coordination to Impact

Ethiopia's field visit packages reflect a systemic transformation, aligning strategic priorities with localized delivery and multi-stakeholder partnerships. Through the Seven Clusters and Four Pillars of Governance, Ethiopia is building a food system that ensures sovereignty, climate resilience, nutrition security, and inclusive economic growth. These models offer actionable lessons for countries seeking to implement integrated food systems pathways.



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