

For a world without hunger



AGROECOLOGY, LANDSCAPES & FOOD SECURITY: ECONOMIC PERSPECTIVES AND TRADE-OFFS

Humboldt Symposium on Value Chains in Food Systems Berlin

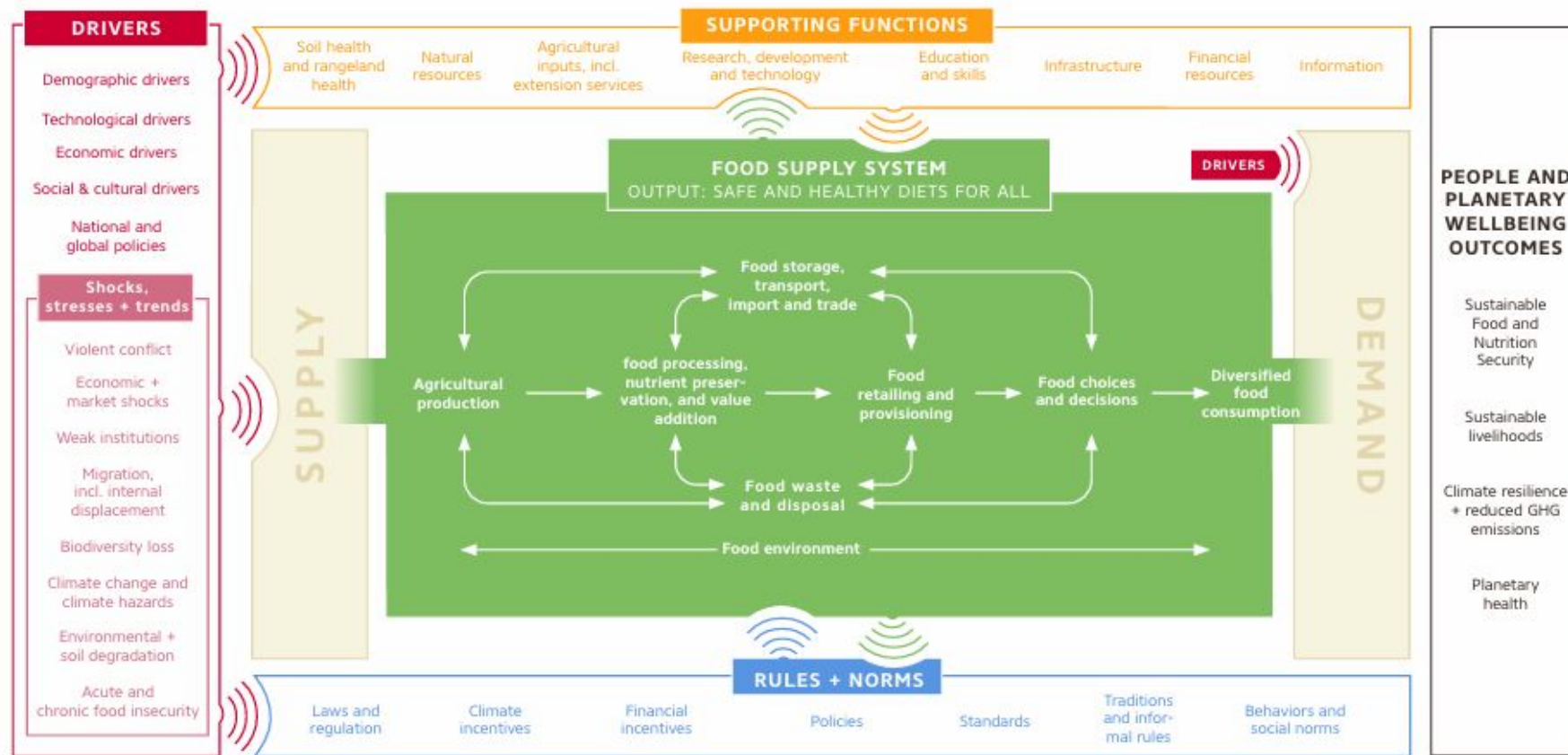
22 September 2025 Benjamin Davies

GLOBAL CONTEXT

- Global pressures: food demand vs. ecological limits
- Smallholder vulnerabilities & inequality
- Tension: short-term growth vs. long-term sustainability



CONCEPTUAL LINKS



FOOD SUPPLY SYSTEM

The core system within a food system is the **food supply system** which ensures the flow of food commodities from farm to fork. The **food environment** refers to the physical, economic, political, and socio-cultural surroundings that influence people's food choices and nutritional status through the availability, affordability, convenience, promotion, and sustainability of foods.

DRIVERS

Drivers, shocks, stresses and trends can affect the core system, supporting functions, and/or related rules and norms at any time and at any intensity.

SUPPORTING FUNCTIONS

Supporting functions refer to the services, infrastructure, information, and resources that enable the food supply chain and/or core market to develop, transition and function effectively and sustainably.

RULES + NORMS

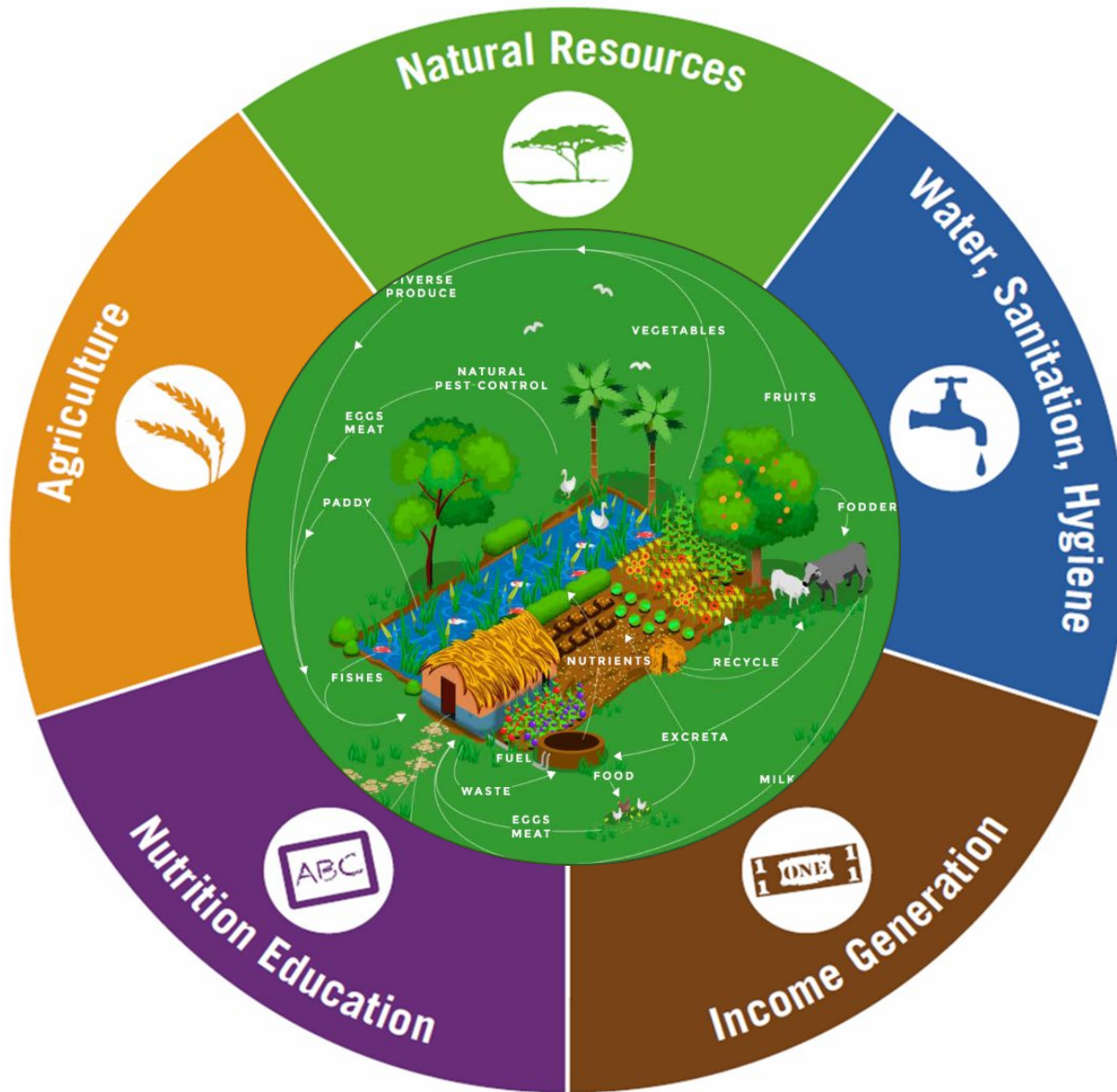
Food supply chains and supporting functions do not happen in isolation. They are always subject to an institutional context or business environment.

Rules and norms refer to the formal and informal institutions that shape how food is produced, distributed, accessed, and

consumed. **Rules** include policies, laws, regulations, and standards set by governments or institutions, while **norms** are socially shared beliefs, cultural practices, and unwritten expectations influencing behavior. Together, they determine who has power and access within the food system, affecting equity, sustainability, and resilience.

WELTHUNGERHILFE'S EXPERIENCE





LINKING AGRICULTURE AND NATURAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT TOWARDS NUTRITION SECURITY

Nutrition Smart CommUNITY

1. Nutrition Sensitive
Agriculture

2. Participatory Learning
and Action (PLA) For
Nutrition Education

3. Nutrition
Camps

4. Nutrition-Sensitive
Micro Planning

5. Strengthening
Institutions



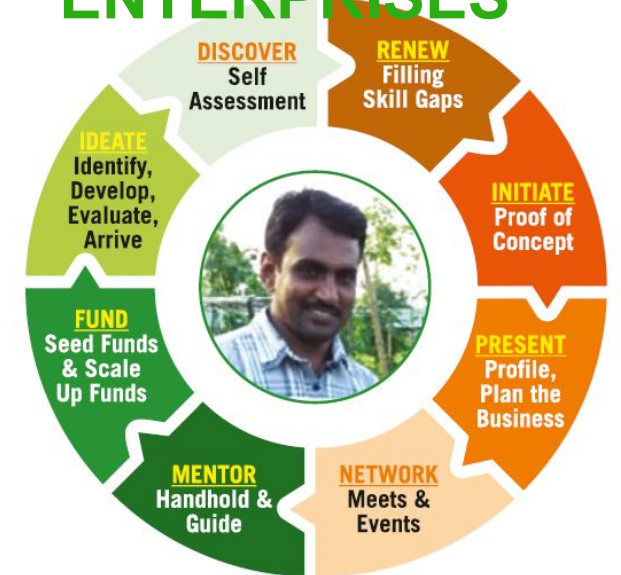
CONSUMERS



URBAN FOOD BUSINESSES



RURAL ENTERPRISES



STRENGTHENING LOCALLY ANCHORED MARKETS

- Based on the demand of the producer families
- Multi-actor coordination
- Advocacy towards municipal authorities
- Show case in global advocacy



TRADE-OFFS & ECONOMIC PERSPECTIVES



Short-term vs. long-term: Farmers may face income losses or higher labor requirements today, while ecological and nutrition benefits are only visible years later.

Equity: Better-off farmers may capture more of the gains, while poorer households struggle to afford the transition.

Market failures: Agroecology and landscape approaches deliver public goods—like carbon storage or biodiversity—but private markets rarely reward these.

Policy misalignment: Subsidies for fertilizers, staples, or export crops can directly undermine agroecological incentives.

From an economic perspective, the key dilemma is this: **how do we align value chains and market signals with broader food system goals, rather than against them?**

QUESTIONS FOR THOUGHT

- How can value chains reward agroecological benefits?
- Who bears costs versus who captures value?
- Can efficiency-driven markets coexist with nutrition & ecology goals?
- Where are the limits of economic valuation?