



The Food
Foundation



FOOD SYSTEM ACTORS IN LOW- AND MIDDLE-INCOME COUNTRIES: A NATIONAL BENCHMARKING PILOT

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About The Food Foundation

The Food Foundation is an independent charity working to address challenges in the food system in the interests of the UK public. Working at the interface between academia and policymakers (parliamentarians, civil servants, local authorities, business leaders), we use a wide range of approaches to make change happen including events, publications, media stories, social media campaigns and multi-stakeholder partnerships. We are independent of all political parties and business, and we are not limited by a single issue or special interest. Visit www.foodfoundation.org.uk



About the World Benchmarking Alliance

The World Benchmarking Alliance is a non-profit organisation holding 2,000 of the world's most influential companies accountable for their part in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals. It does this by publishing free and publicly available benchmarks on their performance and providing companies with a clear roadmap of what commitments and changes they must make to put our planet, society and economy on a more sustainable and resilient path. Its Food and Agriculture Benchmark measures and ranks 350 food and agriculture companies from farm to fork on their contributions to transforming our global food system. Visit www.worldbenchmarkingalliance.org



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1 SUMMARY

The Food Industry Benchmarking Toolkit was developed in 2021 by The Food Foundation and the World Benchmarking Alliance, in collaboration with the International Benchmarking Coalition. The Toolkit assists countries in undertaking a benchmarking of the governance, environmental, social and nutrition commitments of companies within the food sector at a national level. A national benchmarking pilot in 2021–23, funded by the UK's Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office, provided catalytic funding for low- and middle-income countries to use the Toolkit to assess businesses across agricultural production, manufacturing and processing, retail and food services segments of the industry.



Three countries have successfully undertaken a benchmarking process (albeit sometimes quite light touch), which clearly demonstrates proof of concept. The results provide a baseline understanding of the food industry, using a consistent set of metrics, that have the potential to be used by civil society advocates and government in each of the countries to take a stronger stance in encouraging food companies to embed and disclose on economic, social, governance and nutrition indicators. It has also provided insights and learnings into the benchmarking process that can be taken on board by other countries that may wish to use the Toolkit to assess their own food industry.

2 BACKGROUND

The food industry has a key role to play in helping (or hindering) the health of consumers and of the planet. Food producers, manufacturers and retailers are all capable of influencing consumption and production, and there is increasing interest in business accountability in environmental, social and governance issues, including nutrition. However, to date there has been a lack of consistent metrics that can be used by government, civil society, investors and businesses themselves to understand and track progress in all countries towards a healthier, fairer and more environmentally friendly world.

To address this gap, The Food Foundation and the World Benchmarking Alliance (WBA) developed a national benchmarking tool, consisting of 45 indicators – covering governance, social and environment (ESG) and nutrition issues – which can be used to undertake national spotlights (initially in the UK). This is based on the methodology used by the WBA for its 2021 Food and Agriculture Benchmark, so that national companies

are assessed in the same way as the multinationals. The resulting benchmarking – known as **Plating Up Progress** – has been run three times (in 2020, 2021 and 2022), assessing and ranking the major players in the food retail, foodservice and restaurant chain sectors in the United Kingdom. It is the first time that these different metrics have been assessed together in the UK food industry.

80% of the world's population live in low- and middle-income countries (LMICs) – but the full breadth of ESG assessment has been a relatively nascent issue in these regions. There has been little interest in or scrutiny of the actions of the multinationals in those markets or domestically headquartered businesses, whether from investors, non-governmental organisations (NGOs) or governments. A national benchmarking pilot, funded by the UK's Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO), set out to test whether the Plating Up Progress methodology could be transplanted to LMICs, to build pressure domestically on the food industry to strengthen

its ESG commitments and to increase momentum globally. ESG is not an add-on for high-income countries: it should be mainstreamed throughout all markets. Where there is little in the way of government scrutiny, such benchmarking could be particularly useful in signalling the need for action. The pilot countries are all members of the International Benchmarking Coalition (IBC), which has been a conduit to share learning to date (Box 1), and the UN Food Systems Summit (Box 2) provided much of the initial momentum for the establishment of the Coalition.

This completion report is not only to demonstrate to the funder what has been achieved as the project ends (March 2023): it is also being placed in the public domain, as the Food Foundation hopes that it will inspire governments and NGOs in other countries to use the Toolkit to begin to understand the food industry and hold companies to account across a range of environmental and social issues, including health and nutrition.



BOX 1

THE INTERNATIONAL BENCHMARKING COALITION

“ *The IBC is a good learning opportunity, including how to adapt the benchmark to different places* ”

NGHOMSI BOUTCHOUANG, CAMEROON

The IBC was formally convened after the 2021 UN Food Systems Summit with the aim of establishing metrics to assess the food industry’s role in food system transformation, both nationally and globally. It is convened quarterly by The Food Foundation and the WBA, and has a fluid membership of benchmarking experts, civil society organisations, and country representatives, all of whom are interested in developing a consistent approach to benchmarking the food industry. Meetings have been attended by stakeholders from 17 countries, including the LMICs that have been involved in the pilot.

BOX 2

THE UN FOOD SYSTEMS SUMMIT

The UN Food Systems Summit (UNFSS) was held virtually in September 2021. It was the culmination of an 18-month consultation on how to ‘bring about tangible, positive changes to the world’s food systems, ... offering a catalytic moment for public mobilisation and actionable commitments by heads of state and government and other constituency leaders to take this agenda forward’ and contribute to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by 2030.

After the Summit, the Secretariat of the UNFSS became the UN Food Systems Hub, which now supports national convenors (government representatives) in developing and implementing ‘national pathways’ in their country. Progress along these pathways will form the basis for reporting at the UNFSS stocktaking meetings, which will take place every two years with the first in Rome in July 2023.

3 PROJECT AIMS

“ This is about empowering the value chain, helping them to understand why this matters, creating a good climate for the food system, building momentum, and understanding why monitoring is useful. ”

NGHOMSI BOUTCHOUANG, CAMEROON

It became clear through discussions with the IBC that countries would welcome support in contextualising and using benchmarking indicators, to understand and influence the food industry in their countries to improve sustainability and nutrition practices. In 2021, The Food Foundation and the WBA (in consultation with IBC members and with initial funding from the Children’s Investment Fund CIFF) developed a Toolkit to enable other countries to adapt the process used in the UK by The Food Foundation in its Plating Up Progress benchmark (see box 3).

“ The Food Foundation has provided the necessary tool: they had done the work to make it easy for us! ”

ASMA BADAR, PAKISTAN

In 2021, The Food Foundation received additional funding from the UK’s Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office, to provide secretarial support for the IBC and to be directed towards a pilot of the Toolkit and benchmarking in low- and middle-income countries, to be completed by the end of March 2023. The pilot would help to build understanding nationally and to provide insights into the realities of food systems in different countries, building on the UK’s Plating Up Progress experience.

In particular, in the future this process could be of benefit to advocacy organisations that wish to assist national governments in understanding the role and impact of agri-food businesses in the food system in their own countries. For example, following the UNFSS, many governments have committed to report on their progress along a ‘national pathway’ towards improved food systems. The knowledge provided by the benchmarking could be of real benefit in building this understanding.

BOX 3

FOOD INDUSTRY BENCHMARKING TOOLKIT

The **Food Industry Benchmarking Toolkit** is based on WBA’s methodology and lessons learnt from The Food Foundation’s experience of benchmarking the food industry in the UK. It is freely available online, setting out the methodology behind the indicators, and providing advice on choosing companies and engaging stakeholders, and how to work out which indicators are most appropriate. The indicators cover four areas – governance and strategy, environment, social inclusion and nutrition issues – and are listed in Annex 1 to this report. By way of an exemplar, the Toolkit also describes how The Food Foundation used the methodology in its Plating Up Progress assessments in the United Kingdom, and how the results were presented.

“ The Toolkit is very interesting as it helps us to understand how we can get inside a sector and get out the information we need. ”

NGHOMSI BOUTCHOUANG,
CAMEROON

4 PARTICIPANTS

The countries involved in the IBC and benchmarking have very different cultural, economic, political and geographical factors, which influence the food system and are very different from the context for the original Plating Up Progress benchmarking in the UK. In each, the food system is much more fragmented than in the UK, with a preponderance of small- and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs). In Bangladesh, for example, the

majority of the food industry is made up of SMEs. Food is also a sizeable and essential part of the economy: in Cameroon, agriculture is the occupation of around 60% of the working population.

Countries receiving national benchmarking pilot funding were required to be countries falling within FCDO's remit, and receiving Overseas Development Assistance funding.

FIGURE 1: THE INTERNATIONAL BENCHMARKING COALITION AND PILOT COUNTRIES



- Countries undertaking benchmarking: UK, Canada, Bangladesh, Cameroon, India
- Countries that considered the benchmarking: Pakistan, South Africa
- Other countries that have taken part in the IBC: Australia, Egypt, Indonesia, Italy, Nepal, Netherlands, Nigeria, Sri Lanka, United States

In a parallel process, Canada has developed its own National Index on Agri-Food Performance – but has been engaged through the IBC.

Unfortunately, the partner organisation in South Africa – Solidaridad – was not able to take this forward within the timescale, but it was interested in the benchmarking. The World Food Programme in Pakistan also considered the benchmarking, as noted in **section 5**.





5 THE BENCHMARKING PROCESS

In three countries – Bangladesh, Cameroon and India – the pilot was successfully completed before the end of the funding period in March 2023, although time pressures meant that the assessments in Bangladesh and Cameroon were lighter touch than originally hoped. In India, the main assessment was completed in 2022, and follow-up initiatives to sensitise stakeholders about benchmarking have since taken place. In Pakistan and South Africa,

despite clear interest by the main partners, unfortunately there was insufficient time for the assessment to take place within the timeframe and they therefore did not receive funding for the pilot.

The Food Foundation and WBA have provided support to the country partners throughout, and the IBC has met regularly to discuss progress.

FIGURE 2: THE BENCHMARKING IN THE FOUR COUNTRIES

	BANGLADESH	CAMEROON	INDIA	PAKISTAN
Main partner				
Stage reached	Light-touch assessment complete	Assessment completed	Assessment completed	Insufficient time to begin
Government involved?	Planned, but not possible in time allotted	Not involved	Not involved	Involved
Indicators used	All	Some	All	n/a
# of companies in assessment	30	30	53	Would have liked 50
Ranking of companies (disclosure)	Top 5, plus top 3 in each category (plus some poorer-scoring)	Top 5 overall and in each category	Top 5 overall; top 3 listed in each category	n/a

Note: The partner in South Africa was not able to take the project forward enough to be able to complete this table.

THE BENCHMARKING PROCESS IN BANGLADESH

GAIN is well placed within Bangladesh to undertake this project, with extensive and longstanding in-country partnerships. Initially, a group of key stakeholders was convened, chaired by the Ministry of Industries, consisting of representatives of civil society, the Consumers Association Bangladesh, the National Association of Small and Cottage Industries and Bangladesh Agricultural University. The government suggested that, as a first step, a 'Technical Advisory Committee' and 'Validation Sub-Committee' be convened from within this group to validate the indicators – but a combination of a change of personnel at the Ministry and the short timelines meant that there was insufficient time to create this committee and complete the data collection before the project deadline.

Instead, in consultation with The Food Foundation, the SUN Business Network (which is supported by GAIN) took forward a lighter-touch approach – described as a '*pilot of the pilot*' – without the active involvement of the government. Information has been gathered from the public domain – but due to in-country challenges, there was not the time before the project deadline to begin the process of validation and engagement with companies. The report was submitted to The Food Foundation in March 2023.

“ *The best thing about the project is having the indicators as a mechanism to hold business accountable and share transparency on ESG issues* ”

MAHMUDUL HASAN, SUN BUSINESS NETWORK, GAIN

The process to date has not been robust enough – yet – to make a strong case, so the results will be shared only with a small group of stakeholders, namely those involved in the original discussions, including government representatives.



THE BENCHMARKING PROCESS IN CAMEROON

The food and agriculture sector is a vital part of the economy in Cameroon, but to date the different parts of the value chain have not been brought together to work with each other or to consult with each other. There are laws in place to begin to take sustainability forward, but there is often a gap between the regulation and reality, so 'We need to sensitise and mobilise sectors and society to implement good strategy.' The opportunity to do the benchmarking was welcomed as an opportunity to start this conversation.

“ *This is the first time the different segments have been brought together in Cameroon. We can use it to advocate to our policymakers to create values, to have sustainable development goals, and to create more jobs – like to reduce waste. This is good for all.* ”

NGHOMSI BOUTCHOUANG, CAMEROON YOUTH ECONOMIC FORUM

A steering committee was formed, consisting of lead partner ACDIC (the Association Citoyenne de Défense des Intérêts Collectifs), SAILD (which brings decades of engagement with farmers), the Ligue Camerounaise des Consommateurs and the Cameroon Youth Economic Forum. Companies were selected on the criteria of size, their importance in the food system in Cameroon and data availability. The partner organisations each took responsibility for analysing different companies, the data was collated, and the organisations worked together on the analysis. The lack of any detail behind high-level statements on company websites was problematic: the companies were contacted to gather more information and, although the majority have been spoken to during the project, most did not agree to provide any further information.

The report was submitted to The Food Foundation in March 2023.



THE BENCHMARKING PROCESS IN INDIA

The pilot in India was the most rapidly established, with the benchmarking being completed in mid-2022. The pilot has been led by the Food Future Foundation (FFF), a social enterprise founded in 2019, which takes a holistic approach to food systems, and focuses primarily on the demand side (a healthy food curriculum for schools). The founder of FFF, Pawan Agarwal, heard about the benchmarking during the meetings ahead of the UNFSS and approached WBA for more information.

The main partners in this initial phase have been SG Analytics (a third-party agency working in ESG data and analytics that carried out the company selection and assessment), E-Cube Investment Advisors (a knowledge partner) and the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII). The involvement of the CII has been crucial for industry buy-in – but negotiating this required taking an approach that would be perceived as being more collaborative than judgmental: *‘There were initial challenges getting industry buy-in – which is why we said we wouldn’t disclose the full results. But getting to know where we stand is itself important.’* The focus is on building trust with industry – and therefore only the top three companies in each category are mentioned by name in the final report, out of a total of 53 that were assessed.¹ Indian companies are currently not good at disclosing what they are doing, so it is hoped that this approach will encourage companies to be more transparent.

“ *The best thing has been the opportunity to be engaged with a global effort that is going in the right direction. It was a matter of huge satisfaction that as a developing nation with a complex food environment we were able to meaningfully engage with The Food Foundation and WBA to demonstrate what can and cannot be done in a developing country context.* ”

PAWAN AGARWAL, FUTURE FOOD FOUNDATION

Government was not involved in the process and reportedly currently has little interest in benchmarking. ESG guidance from the government (run from within the Ministry of Corporate Affairs) is due to be introduced with a timeline for disclosure by all companies (not just in the food sector). But the benchmarking goes further, as the government framework does not include nutrition. NGOs have also not been involved – it was noted that there are few in this space in India, and it was felt by the FFF that NGO involvement could be counterproductive if it focused too much on naming and shaming at this early stage.

The report was submitted to The Food Foundation in mid-2022 and, since then, the FFF has extended its work on benchmarking. In early 2022, it ran two initial sensitisation and training sessions, with partner the CII Food and Agriculture Centre of Excellence, to:

- a) engage businesses, building the capacity of Indian companies to understand why ESG and disclosure is important (those attending are mostly from corporate or regulatory affairs, as few companies have ESG managers) and
- b) develop a cadre of independent assessors, so that there will no longer be any need to engage an external agency to do the assessment.

¹In India, only companies that disclosed on at least some of the indicators were included in the analysis: around 200 were identified by SG Analytics, but only 53 made the cut. FFF also noted that it would have liked to assess more companies, but the process took longer than anticipated.

THE BENCHMARKING PROCESS IN PAKISTAN

The lead partner in Pakistan is the World Food Programme (WFP), and interest was expressed in 2021. However, due to a number of unforeseen events – including the major flooding disaster in 2022– it has not proved possible to undertake the pilot project within the time available.

However, there is considerable interest in taking the benchmarking project forward. Pakistan would be fertile ground for the project, as WFP co-leads the SUN Business Network with GAIN, which has over 100 companies registered, and with whom dialogue has already been initiated. WFP is also well networked with the government: WFP provides secretarial support to SUN, and the SUN platform is housed in the Ministry of Planning and Development. The focal point for the National Fortification Alliance within the Ministry of Health is also positive about the idea of the assessment. WFP's involvement with the SUN Network could also provide access to the 200+ organisations in the SUN's Civil Society Alliance. All these platforms would be good entry points for discussion and dissemination of results of the benchmarking. WFP will explore funding for the benchmarking project and take it forward.

“ *There is limited market research in this area in Pakistan, so this could contribute both to engage the private sector but also to guide future WFP programming.* ”

ASMA BADAR, WFP



6 FINDINGS OF THE BENCHMARKING

IMPORTANT NOTE: The assessments are based only on company information that is available in the public domain: it is a measure of the indicators that are publicly disclosed and business transparency, rather than an assessment of action being taken in practice. In reality, companies may be doing more than they currently disclose or, alternatively, a high-level statement that scores on an indicator may not be backed up by actual action by the company. This level of understanding would require a much greater level of assessment, which is not the aim of the Toolkit as currently constituted or of this national benchmarking pilot.

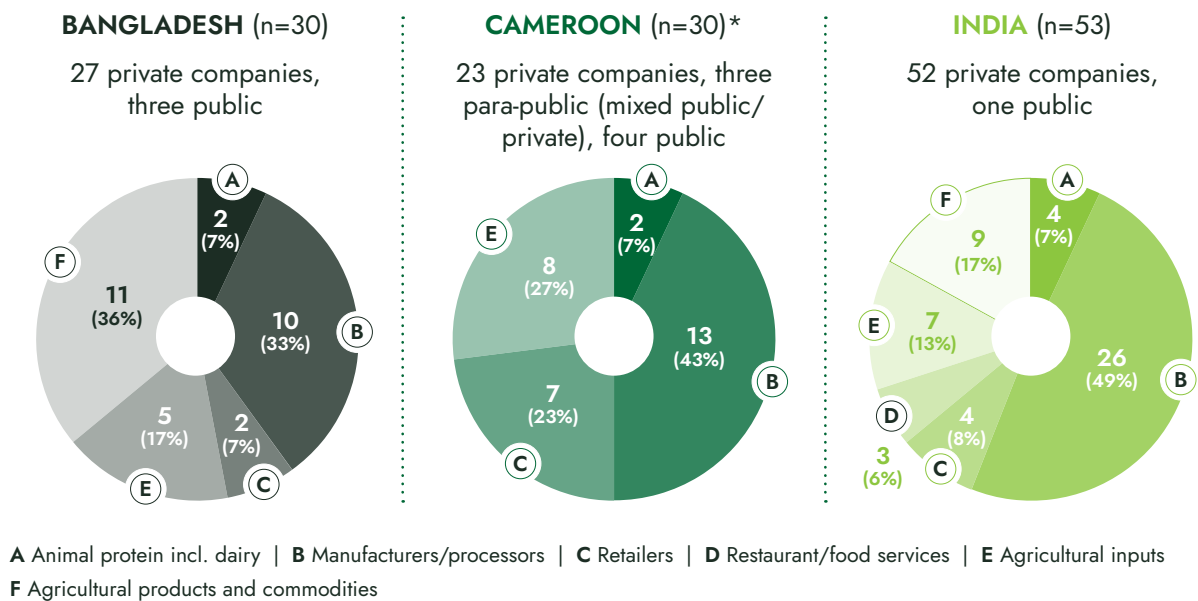
Overall summary of the benchmarking

It is very encouraging that, despite the practical problems encountered, three reports were submitted – from Bangladesh, Cameroon and India. The reports received set out very high-level conclusions from the data and provided a basic breakdown of company disclosure on the indicators – although in all three countries, concerns were raised about the lack of disclosure.

The country reports state that a small number of companies have taken some steps towards disclosure and scored relatively well across the board. However, the reports note that:

- in **BANGLADESH:** ‘The overall score on different critical indicators for all the companies are very low... This indicates that the companies need to be brought under predefined mandates that they should disclose periodically.’
- in **CAMEROON:** ‘The overall performance of the companies was very low... The ecosystem for disclosures on ESG parameters in Cameroon is embryonic. There is no mandatory law in Cameroon on open data.’
- in **INDIA:** ‘Many companies showed that there are still major gaps in making impactful and relevant disclosures... The ecosystem for disclosures on ESG parameters in India is relatively nascent.’

FIGURE 3: TYPES OF INDUSTRY ASSESSED



*Cameroon combined the agricultural segments, so the eight companies shown here as agricultural inputs includes both agricultural inputs and agricultural products and commodities.

Direct comparison between countries and between companies (for example, Nestlé, which was the only company to be named as having been assessed in all three countries) is not currently possible. This is inevitable using the relatively light-touch approach of the Toolkit because the level of scrutiny is slightly different within each country (due both to time and resourcing issues – see **section 7**).

In all countries, the companies were chosen from across the food sector, using the segments proposed in the Toolkit (**figure 3**). All three countries chose to assess only companies for which some information on at least one indicator out of the 45 could be found, and contribution of the companies to the economy was also taken into account. For example in Bangladesh companies were selected based on issues including revenues and volumes within the sector and perceived influence on national governance processes and institutions.

Annex 2 clearly sets out that lack of disclosure is a problem across the four categories. The results of this assessment do suggest that there are differences between countries. For example, of the four constituent categories – Governance and Strategy, Environment, Social Inclusion and Nutrition:

- in **BANGLADESH**, the highest-scoring category was Governance and Strategy and the lowest scoring was Environmental indicators.
- in **CAMEROON**, the highest-scoring category was Nutrition and the lowest scoring was on Environmental indicators.
- in **INDIA**, the highest-scoring category was Governance and Strategy and the lowest scoring was Social Inclusion indicators.

Nutrition scores, for example, are notably different. It is the highest scoring in Cameroon and in India Pawan Agarwal noted that *‘Sustainability as part of business thinking is still not there – but nutrition as part of the thinking is somewhat there, driven by food safety regulations, some of which address nutrition as well as safety’*. However, in Bangladesh, a third of the companies did not score at all in the Nutrition category, which the country report notes as ‘alarming’.

The quantitative results from the countries were not comparable, as it was outside the scope of this report to undertake any validation between the countries of ‘what

counted’ on each indicator: the level of evidence for each may not be consistent. This is a particularly important limitation of this pilot, so any comparisons of the numbers provided in **Annex 2** should be treated with great caution as it is not possible to verify the data. In addition, scrutiny of the country reports for this summary identified some small discrepancies in how the data was presented, but there was not the opportunity to go back to the countries to check where the inconsistencies occurred.

The reports from both Cameroon and India note the need for training for companies to be more aware of the issues addressed in the indicators. The Cameroon report states that ‘the ecosystem for disclosures on ESG parameters is embryonic’. There is ‘no mandatory law in Cameroon on open data’ and it would be beneficial for the government to ‘introduce a law to facilitate disclosure of data.’ However, the introduction of a standardised framework does make it easier for civil society and (as the India report notes) for companies themselves to assess and compare themselves to industry best practice.

Annex 2 sets out some more granular detail for selected indicators within each category, and more complete results are available in the country reports. In addition, the section on ‘Looking forward’ (**section 8**, below) sets out the next steps planned in the countries, some of which were presented in the reports and others elucidated only at interview.

A NOTE ON SCORING

Companies in the benchmarking are being assessed based on their public disclosure on the indicators, which is an important measure of business transparency and a proxy for assessing progress. The analysis is not a benchmark of actual performance of individual companies, but a snapshot of whether clear information exists for stakeholders – government, NGOs, investors and others – to make a judgement on progress. It is possible that some companies that have not publicly posted information about their action on a particular indicator have therefore not been scored, despite in practice having taken relevant action on the indicator.

Companies' disclosure

The countries chose not to provide a full ranking of all the companies that were assessed (for more on this, see **section 7**), but all three countries provided a ranking of the top five companies overall (figure 5). In addition:

- **BANGLADESH** provided the names of the top three disclosing companies in each category. Sometimes the company that disclosed least was also named, but this was not consistently reported in all categories. It was also the only report of the three to name other than the top disclosers – which is welcome, as this could be used for more public advocacy – and it also provided some examples of statements from the companies.
- **CAMEROON'S** final report on the project provided the top five disclosing companies in each category.

- **INDIA** provided either the top three or top five disclosing companies in each category.

As figure 5 shows, in India, the companies disclosing most are the multinational companies, with three of the five headquartered outside the country, and the other two also working in international markets. However, the picture is different in Bangladesh and Cameroon, with Nestlé being the only multinational in the top five in both countries. The conclusion of the Bangladesh country report specifically notes that 'large international corporations like Unilever, Nestlé and Coca-Cola have not made satisfactory scoring' on disclosure, and also suggests that a later phase could focus specifically on these larger companies to identify gaps.

FIGURE 5: THE COMPANIES PROVIDING THE MOST DISCLOSURE ON THE INDICATORS

Overall ranking	BANGLADESH	CAMEROON	INDIA
1	C.P. Bangladesh	SABC	ITC Ltd
2	BRAC Feed Mills	SOSUCAM	Hindustan Unilever
3	PRAN Foods	Nestlé Cameroon	PepsiCo India
4	Nestlé Bangladesh	UCB	Britannia Industries Ltd
5	Transcom Beverages	Pasta	Nestlé India

■ NATIONAL COMPANY ■ MULTINATIONAL COMPANY

Dissemination

Bangladesh does not currently have a plan to share its results with companies and does not have the budget to organise meetings to disseminate the report – but the hope is that funding will be found to share the findings with both companies and other stakeholders in the future, and publicise the report in local media. The country report will also be put on the SUN Business Network website when finalised.

In **Cameroon**, an in-person conference to disseminate findings is planned for just after the end of the funding period, to which the companies, government and other stakeholders will be invited (see also **section 8**). The

country report will be shared with the companies involved with the project and this consolidated report is likely to be shared on partner websites. It is also hoped to arrange meetings with ministers involved in the food system.

In **India**, the sensitisation programme will be continued and extended. Both the India country report and this consolidated report will be shared with the companies involved and with other stakeholders – both one-to-one and through social and local media. The India report also featured in an exhibition on the sidelines of the Global Dialogues on Food System Transformation in New Delhi in April 2023.

7 LESSONS LEARNED FROM THE NATIONAL BENCHMARKING PILOT PROCESS

Understanding the landscape

It was very clear from the feedback at interview that the benchmarking process is an opportunity to improve understanding of the food system in each country. For example, in Cameroon, *‘It has enabled us to understand the environment of each stakeholder. We are now aware of what issues are relevant in which sector, how the companies are working, how they work with employees and on environment issues, and how they organise their governance’* – and this is the basis on which recommendations could be drawn up in future (Nghomsi Boutchouang, Cameroon).

The assessment is also making it clearer where the gaps are in what companies are doing, which can help with focusing advocacy. It is, however, evident that companies have a long way to go: *‘We cannot achieve the same level of performance as in some advanced countries – the process of change is gradual... We have to use a graded approach in moving the needle towards sustainability’* (Pawan Agarwal, India).

Partnership working

The assessment has proved useful in cementing and starting new conversations with partners – and it helps to have a lead partner who already has good links in-country. For example, Pakistan could be fertile ground for benchmarking in future because of GAIN’s links to in-country networks (the SUN Business Network, the National Fortification Alliance and the SUN’s Civil Society Alliance).

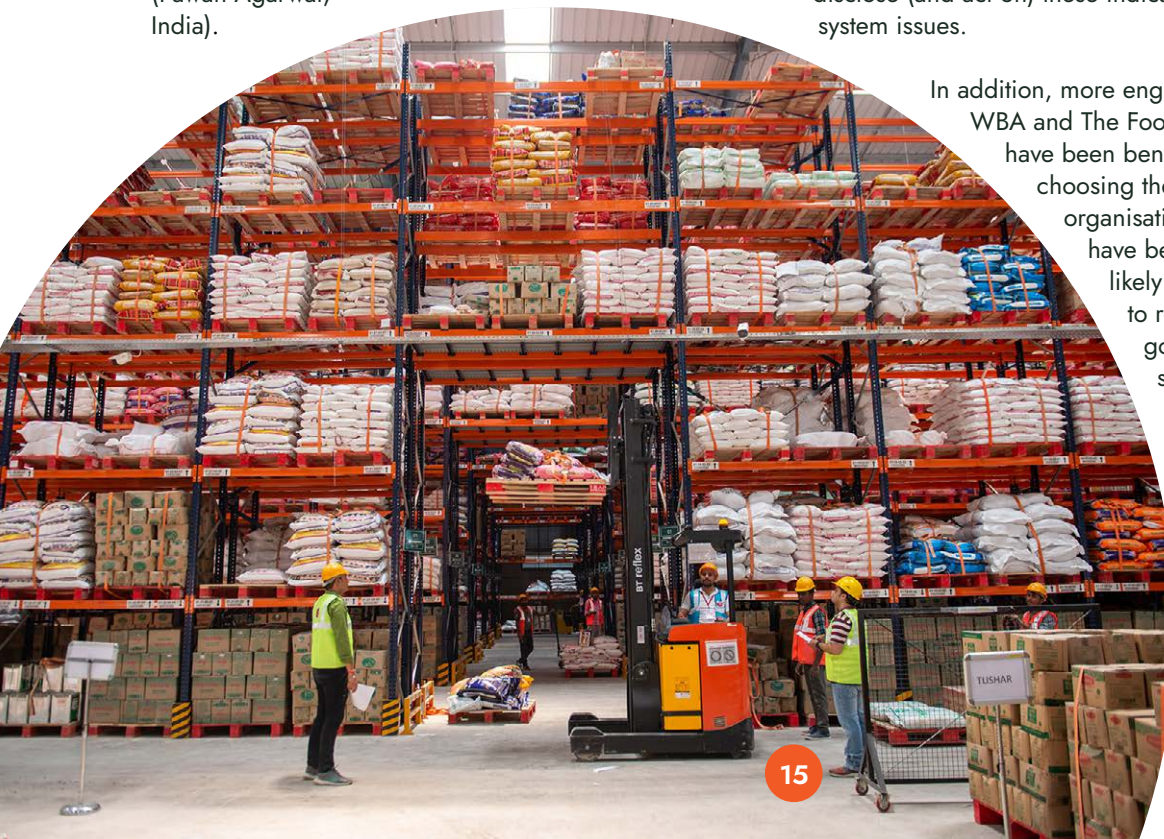
Government policymakers can also be involved, which may increase understanding of the status of the indicators nationally – notably the national convenors of the UNFSS pathways. However, it can be difficult to engage government when there are pressing competing priorities. For example, in India, during the initial UNFSS process the relevant parts of government were heavily involved in the crisis over proposed

“ *Involve government stakeholders! Aligning your stakeholders gives credibility and sustainability.* ”

MAHMUDUL HASAN, BANGLADESH

new farming laws, leaving little capacity to engage – and, in addition, the different aspects of the food system are overseen by different ministries: *‘a whole-of-government approach is not yet part of its thinking’* (Pawan Agarwal). When both government and NGOs are calling for change, businesses are more likely to disclose (and act on) these indicators and other food system issues.

In addition, more engagement between WBA and The Food Foundation could have been beneficial, both when choosing the countries (both organisations’ networks could have been used to identify likely target countries) and to reflect on what was going well and how to support each other throughout the pilot.



Engaging the private sector

“ We need to promote a culture of disclosing information, but not naming and shaming. ”

MAHMUDUL HASAN, BANGLADESH

Working with stakeholders includes engaging the private sector itself, following up with the companies to verify the findings and encourage greater disclosure and action. Working with the private sector should be done with caution, to ensure that perceptions of conflict of interest or lack of independence are avoided. Cameroon plans to follow up with the companies after the initial data-gathering. India has had the strongest engagement with the private sector, working with the CII, and now sensitising middle managers within companies to help them to understand the indicators and to improve disclosure. In Bangladesh, the country report noted that the ‘**large international corporations like Unilever, Nestlé, Coca-Cola have not made satisfactory scoring**’.

Multinational corporations often report in some detail on ESG indicators in higher-income countries, and should be at least as assiduous in LMICs.

“ Even if Indian companies are doing good work, their [public-facing] information is poor. There is a need to build capacity within the companies to be able to do this. ”

PAWAN AGARWAL, INDIA

Adapting to national differences

“ The multinational companies might have the information available publicly, but the non-MNCs would not... It wouldn’t have been possible just to do a desk review: it’s not that simple, and needs working around. ”

ASMA BADAR, PAKISTAN

Differences in context between countries necessitate balancing the practical (on-the-ground realities and barriers) with the aspirational (the desire for comprehensive, consistent metrics and processes). This is recognised by the Toolkit, which is flexible in how the assessment process takes place. Ideally, however, the initial desk research will be followed by verification with all the companies themselves and, following the analysis, the full results will be shared with a wide range of stakeholders – NGOs, government, investors and industry – to be used in advocacy and action.

In particular, countries have taken different approaches as to whether to go public with results (including a ranking of companies) or to keep the analysis private. Not ‘naming and shaming’ may build trust with the companies themselves, enabling conversations and potentially leading the change from within. However, this also prevents cross-country comparison between multinational companies and limits the targeted advocacy that civil society can undertake. There is a careful balance to be

struck on the level of disclosure – so transparency could be included as a stipulation by future funders who want to see the results published and used for advocacy and comparisons. (For more on dissemination, see **section 6**.)

The indicators have proved largely fit for purpose, and all welcomed the chance of taking a consistent approach. The Toolkit has been designed as a menu card, providing consistent metrics but countries can choose to tweak them to make them more relevant or focus on areas that are particularly material to the national context, to which different weightings can be applied.

“ We would like to see the analysis being made public and then stakeholders are engaged to rally around these results and create change. ”

VIKTORIA DE BOURBON DE PARME, WBA

SOME NATIONAL DIFFERENCES

- **BANGLADESH:** The establishment of a government-led technical advisory committee was proposed that would have discussed and potentially adapted the indicators. It was also suggested that the localisation of indicators could be done in consultation with The Food Foundation or WBA.
- **CAMEROON:** Some indicators were not used in the assessment, but others could usefully be developed in the future, particularly around climate change: *'Rain is not coming when it should: climate change is here.'* In addition, the process would have benefited from greater understanding of the realities faced by both ends of the value chain: farmers and consumers. This need for wider understanding of the food ecosystem was echoed by WBA, which noted that a more strategic approach – including engaging NGOs and investors – would be beneficial, albeit more complex.
- **INDIA:** The whole set of indicators was used in India, rather than rejecting some as being less relevant prior to the research: *'Let the lack of relevance come from our findings!'* It was noted that it is not possible for the same level of performance to be achieved as in high-income countries, requiring a graded approach towards sustainability over time. In addition, the indicators will need to be simplified for industry and explained, as they may be new concepts.
- **PAKISTAN:** WFP noted that engagement with companies might be improved through use of a follow-up questionnaire to ascertain more detail – particularly from those that do not currently disclose any information online.

Assessing ESG issues together or separately?

“ *The world IS interconnected, with cross-cutting sectors – so we must talk about all aspects together, and it is good and appropriate practice to bring them together.* ”

MAHMUDUL HASAN, BANGLADESH

Thinking about sustainability or about nutrition often takes place in silos, so a whole-system approach is needed: *'Problems in nutrition also affect the environment, and often the solutions are solutions to all these different things'* (Rayan Kassem, WBA). The benchmark combines the three areas of ESG – and most of the country partners in the benchmarking pilot agreed that a mechanism dealing with nutrition and environment issues together is sensible, because of the co-benefits and because the companies themselves do not operate these issues separately in practice. There was one dissenting voice among those interviewed for this report, who felt that separating out specific areas could be more useful in making a strong advocacy case – an example of which is the approach taken in the Access to Nutrition Initiative's Global Index and country indexes, which take a much deeper-dive look at nutrition.

“ *This definitely has more traction together: these issues are interconnected!* ”

PAWAN AGARWAL, INDIA

Barriers to success of the pilot



TIME: The multi-stage nature of the project – drawing up the service agreement and statement of works, signing the contract, transferring funding, employing (as necessary) a third-party consultant, undertaking the assessment and producing results – meant that some level of delay was inevitable. Involving in-country partners can also take significant time, as each partner will have their own internal processes to align with the project, which adds complexity: this was particularly the case in South Africa, and a major reason why the pilot could not be carried out there in the timescale allowed.

The Pakistan partner noted that the main squeezes on time were signing the contract (which would have taken a couple of weeks to work its way through internal systems), followed by the time needed to identify a third-party consultant to do the data-gathering and analysis. In total, this would have been likely to take six to eight months, and this was just too tight: *‘We can’t compromise on the quality of the project, so we decided not to do it [because of a lack of time] – but it was a missed opportunity as it is a really interesting study’* (Asma Badar, Pakistan).



“We thought it would be easy and quick, but it took far longer than we expected. But the fact that we could do it is a big satisfaction”

PAWAN AGARWAL, INDIA



PARTNERSHIP PROCESSES: Pulling together the desired in-country partnerships can also add to the time and complexity of the process. In Bangladesh, for example, government was keen to be involved, but the time required to establish the formal and expanded technical advisory committee that would have been required would have made it impossible to complete the analysis in time. Full engagement of all the partners – with appropriate resourcing and prioritisation – is needed to get the benchmarking going.



FUNDING: There was only a small amount of funding available (£5,000 per pilot) – described in one interview as ‘meagre’ – but the countries were keen to run the pilot anyway.



“We have done the best with the money!”

NGHOMSI BOUTCHOUANG, CAMEROON



STAFF CHANGES: During the course of the project, several key staff members moved on or were not able to continue taking part. The Food Foundation found that the benchmarking was not always sufficiently highly prioritised in handovers – perhaps because of the relatively small amount of funding involved. In South Africa, the potential partner Solidaridad was restructured, and its strategy renewed and refocused, with staff members being reassigned – which meant that the opportunity to take part was lost (although Solidaridad remains interested in future involvement).



UNFORESEEN CIRCUMSTANCES:

Finally, external factors can throw even the best-laid plans off track. The floods in 2022 in Pakistan, for example, added considerable time to the planning. Unstable internet connections can make meetings more challenging. And another unanticipated problem was that transferral of funding to Cameroon proved extremely difficult, with the partner having to begin the work prior to the money had been successfully received, in order to complete within the deadline.



VERIFICATION AND PRESENTATION OF RESULTS:

It has not been possible to cross-check ‘what counts’ in scoring for each country, making it difficult to make any cross-country comparisons. In addition, the countries provided the scoring in slightly different formats: in future, it would be helpful for all countries to present data in the same way.

8 LOOKING FORWARD

Now that the first results of the national benchmarking pilots have been received, the next step is how these may be used to create a ripple effect in each country (among civil society, private sector and government) and more widely:

- in other countries: encouraging wider use of the Toolkit
- among funders: encouraging them to put resources towards data-gathering and analysis; and
- investors: making the case that ESG issues – particularly around nutrition – are central to good business practice in the food industry.

In-country

BANGLADESH: GAIN hopes to share the results widely, forming the basis for discussion with the private sector and for broader advocacy by other stakeholders. GAIN hopes that the delays arising from needing to follow government processes could be overcome, with the government taking back ownership of the project (within the Ministry of Industries) and a full assessment undertaken. In addition, GAIN believes that in-country stakeholders would welcome a repeat of the analysis in future, holding companies to account through an ongoing process rather than a single snapshot.

CAMEROON: An in-person conference to disseminate findings is planned for just after the end of the funding period, hosted by the in-country partners in the project using the pilot funding. In addition to the companies that have been benchmarked, government and other stakeholders will also be invited, with the aim of bringing public and private sectors together. Civil society organisations will be invited to receive training on the assessment process, which will share the experience to date and which hopes to inspire them.

The partners hope to repeat the benchmarking in future every two years – to validate previous data, to identify where progress has been made, to assess new companies, and to identify strengths and weaknesses in the system that can be encouraged or addressed. The partners in this work will advocate to the public and private sector for funding to create a more permanent platform that could house this ongoing information. This would enable clearer evaluation of progress, provide a way for different stakeholders to make resolutions on future action, and facilitate dialogue with the businesses. It was also suggested that this approach should be used

“ *There is increasing appetite for this kind of benchmarking. The industry is becoming more willing to engage as the [Indian government's] ESG framework is being put in place: the timing is perfect!* ”

PAWAN AGARWAL, INDIA

in other countries, with the creation of what the country report describes as an ‘International Benchmarking Platform for Central and West Africa with other civil organisations’ – a sub-regional platform to share learning across borders in the region.

INDIA: The main ambitions are to continue and extend the sensitisation programme for professionals from within the agri-food industry (to improve company disclosure) and to run further in-person training to create a cadre of 10–15 assessors, who will build capacity in benchmarking assessments in India. ‘We will sensitise [businesses] to be better disclosers, to make them aware that they need to be concerned about this. The actual assessors will be from outside industry, however’ (Pawan Agarwal). Extension of this programme (particularly if it is to be in person) will require funding – although conflicts of interest could arise were business to fund this, and funding from independent third parties will be sought. It would also be good to engage more resources to follow up with the companies at least once, to give them the opportunity to provide more detail on what they are doing on the indicators.

In addition, an award scheme could be established to recognise companies that demonstrate best-practice disclosure of the full range of indicators, to create excitement and encourage other companies to get involved.

PAKISTAN: Although not able to take part in the pilot, the in-country partner – WFP – is looking into doing the benchmarking in the future: ‘We will look at how best we can do it – and we would like to do it! There was a clear indication from management that this is important, but time has been a limitation.’

More widely

COMPARE RESULTS. Only basic comparisons between countries have been possible to date, as the scoring from the three countries were presented in slightly different formats and there was not the resource available to undertake any form of cross-country verification. Although this makes any comparison between the countries challenging, the differences in the categories within each country are very evident.

The Food Foundation hopes that, as and when the benchmarking tool is used more widely and consistently, resourcing will be found to assess the results from many more countries. This could lead to the identification of a range of commonalities and differences, for example identifying high-scoring indicators within countries and regions, clarifying which indicators (and where) are of particular concern, and a better understanding of areas that are of most relevance to different countries/regions (which will be evident where countries chose to amend or omit particular indicators).

In future, advising countries on how to present data in rigorous, standardised ways would greatly assist in comparisons and on reaching a regional or global view. Issues such as whether or not to include alcohol companies should also be clarified and more information provided, such as whether companies are multinationals or national-level companies. Comparable, verifiable results will enable a more conclusive picture to be drawn, providing a stronger basis for advocating for corporate accountability at a global level.

ENGAGE STAKEHOLDERS IN-COUNTRY. The assessment is an opportunity to engage with companies in the food sector on the importance of ESG and nutrition within business practice and of good disclosure – although caution should be urged to ensure that this leads to genuine change, not just to improved reporting. In addition, the benchmarking could be an opportunity to make stronger links between the organisations that are undertaking the benchmarking process and the government convenors in their country who are responsible for the UNFSS national pathways. Making these links early in the process could help to ensure that the learning is shared more effectively with government and that it feeds into reporting for UNFSS stocktakes.



SHARE WITH THE IBC. The lessons learnt will be looped back to share with the International Benchmarking Coalition at its next meeting in May 2023, to demonstrate that the benchmarking can be used not only in high-income countries (the UK's Plating Up Progress) but can be refined for much wider application. WBA also noted at interview that it would be helpful to set out a clear joint mission for the IBC, with the stocktake of the UNFSS as a crucial milestone. Although the IBC has been valuable in identifying partners and in sharing learning, it is not yet clear whether the IBC will be able to continue following the end of the funding for this project, but options are being considered by IBC members.

“ *The link with the UNFSS gave this project a flying start – and we will continue to link it explicitly with the UN Food Systems Stocktake and the work of the UN Food Systems Hub [the UNFSS secretariat].* ”

VIKTORIA DE BOURBON DE PARME, WBA

INSPIRE OTHER COUNTRIES. The Food Foundation would like to see learnings from the benchmarking widely used both to galvanise advocacy and to encourage governments to take action. For example, the UN Food Systems Coordination Hub is hosting the 2023 UN Food Systems Stocktaking Moment in July 2023. Ahead of this, the IBC will come together and assess how the different benchmarking initiatives can feed into this and be used to advocate to hold the private sector accountable for sustainable food systems transformation.

This pilot report can also be disseminated at events surrounding the Stocktaking Moment – for example, WBA will discuss the work in Vietnam in April at the One Planet Network's 4th Global Conference of the Sustainable Food Systems Programme, which is considered a pre-stocktaking moment. COP28 later in 2023 could also be an opportunity to highlight that metrics on a healthy and sustainable food system are not simply a concern for high-income countries, and that this is a tool that can be usefully applied in LMICs.

Additionally, the findings of the national benchmarking pilots have been considered by the International Fund for Agricultural Development and the World Bank for the development of a tool for national governments to better understand whether investment is supporting a healthy and sustainable food sector.

The Food Foundation hopes that this report will assist and inspire other countries to use the Toolkit, looping back the learning within the IBC and beyond. As the partner representative in Pakistan put it, *'We missed the train on the funding – but it would be useful for us to have the report to help us plan for the future.'*

ENGAGE INVESTORS. Benchmarking results can help to inform investors of multinationals' approach to ESG and nutrition priorities in low- and middle-income countries as well as high-income countries, demonstrating the extent of change that is needed to establish healthy and sustainable food systems: this should be a focus for multinationals in all markets. The Food Foundation plans to share this report with its Investor Coalition on Food Policy, a group of 23 institutional investors with £6 trillion in assets under management predominantly based in the UK. Brief findings will also be included in a future Food Foundation Investor Update and will be shared with other external stakeholders, including other NGOs operating in this space with which The Food Foundation works, such as ATNI, ShareAction and FAIRR.



9 CONCLUSIONS

The national benchmarking pilot has firmly established proof of concept. The approach used in the UK for Plating Up Progress can be successfully used in LMICs, having been carried out in India and, with a lighter touch, in Bangladesh and Cameroon. Each country partner has adapted the process, but using broadly the same indicators, and all hope to repeat the assessment or continue work on it in some form. The training planned in India will help to spread the knowledge about benchmarking to a cadre of independent assessors.

The process has not always been straightforward. It was at times frustrating, and the fixed deadline has, for some, proved impossible to meet, even though it is less onerous than a deep-dive benchmark. In future, the time needed to establish and complete the assessment, and other issues such as staff changes and even natural hazards, should be taken into account. The time taken is also partly because this is new: it takes time to establish new partnerships and undertake a new initiative. Success will depend on the enthusiasm, capacity and practical hurdles faced by the organisations.

Benchmarking also requires funding. With more funding,

a deeper dive would be possible (including greater fact-checking with the companies themselves), which would make the results more comparable between countries. The interest of the government in Bangladesh is particularly hopeful, as it shows that this is an issue that can be of interest to policymakers.

The pilot has provided many valuable lessons that can improve benchmarking in the future, including the need for standardised reporting where possible, to enable better comparability. The hope is that this can help to maintain momentum, within the IBC and beyond, for food system benchmarking – particularly as the Toolkit is freely available and can be used by any or all. There are upcoming opportunities to highlight this approach – for example, at the stocktake of the UNFSS and at COP28, which will have a greater focus on the nexus of health and climate change.

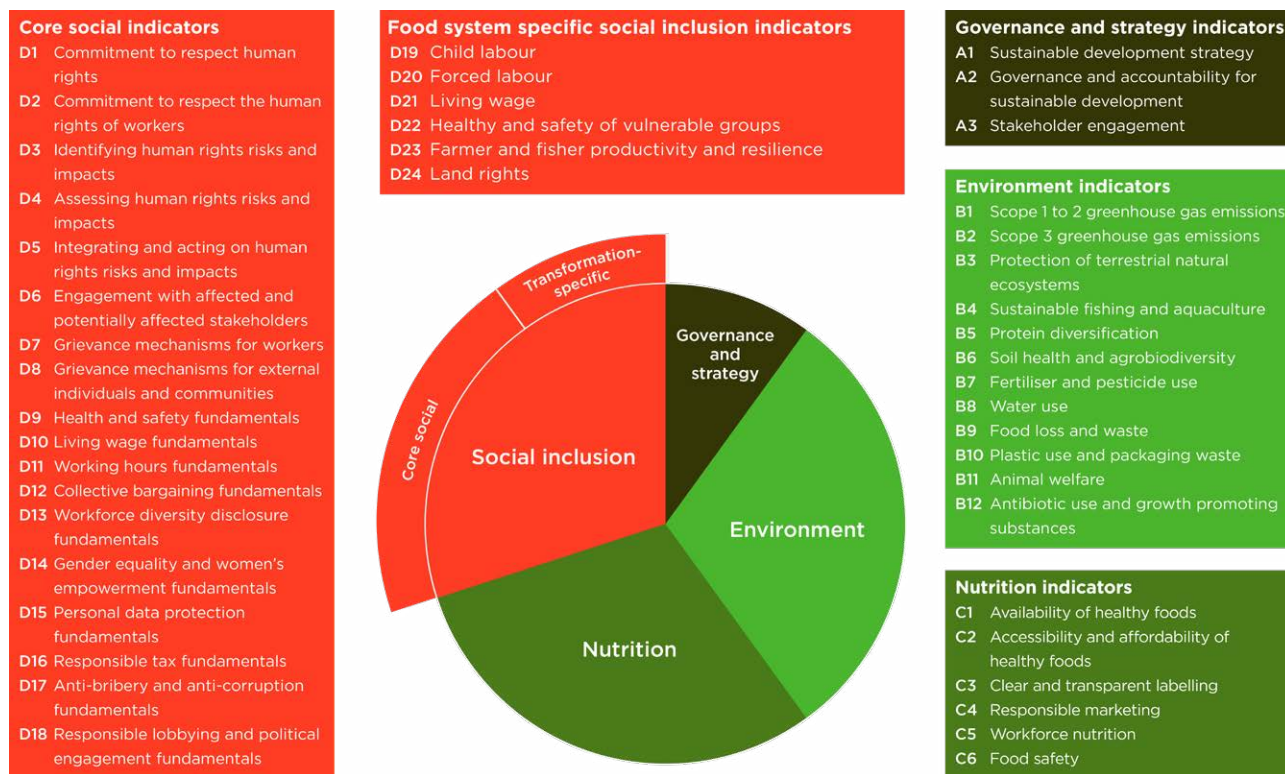
ESG is not optional, it is fundamental. Using the Toolkit, the pilot has shown that it is possible to begin to assess companies in the food sector in LMICs across a wide range of indicators which could, in future, facilitate holding them to account on their progress.



ANNEX 1: INDICATORS

The 45 indicators that form the basis of WBA and Food Foundation methodologies, and on which the Food Industry Benchmarking Toolkit is predicated, are set out here.

FIGURE 6: OVERVIEW OF INDICATORS IN THE FOUR MEASUREMENT AREAS



ANNEX 2: FURTHER COUNTRY DETAIL

Disclaimer: It has not been possible to cross-check, for consistency, the way in which the scoring has been done in each country. Cameroon's scoring is significantly higher than in Bangladesh and India, and The Food Foundation is not able to comment on whether a similar approach has been taken in the three countries. There are clearly differences between the categories, however, which is instructive.

Note also that the percentages have been calculated by The Food Foundation, using the number of companies scoring in each indicator as supplied by the countries.

For a note on scoring, see box on **p.13**.

Governance and Strategy indicators

There are three Governance and Strategy indicators, all three of which are provided below. Full scores are available in the country reports.

BANGLADESH

The companies with greatest disclosure in Governance and Strategy in Bangladesh were BRAC Feed Mills, Pran Foods and ACI Foods. Just one company did not score at all in this category (which is fewer no-scores than any other category).

Across the 30 companies (selected indicators):

- 24 (80%) state publicly that they have a sustainability strategy, objectives and targets
- 19 (63%) state publicly that they undertake stakeholder engagement activities
- 27 (90%) state publicly that they have governance and accountability structures linked to sustainability topics.

CAMEROON

The five companies in Cameroon with the greatest disclosure on Governance and Strategy were all from the manufacturer/processor segment of the industry, with SABC and Nestlé heading the list. It was not disclosed how many (if any) scored zero.

Across the 30 companies (selected indicators):

- 23 (77%) state publicly that they have a sustainability strategy, objectives and targets:
- 22 (73%) state publicly that they undertake stakeholder engagement activities:
- 26 (87%) state publicly that they have governance and accountability structures linked to sustainability topics.

INDIA

Two companies (ITC Ltd and Hindustan Unilever) scored the maximum on the indicators, followed by Tata Consumer Products, Marico Ltd and Britannia, which suggests that disclosure among the food manufacturer/processor segment is higher than the rest of the industry. However, the average level of disclosure leaves significant room for improvement, with over a quarter of the companies being found to make no disclosures on the Governance and Strategy indicators at all.

Across the 53 companies (selected indicators):

- 38 (72%) state publicly that they have a sustainability strategy, objectives and targets
- 23 (43%) state publicly that they undertake stakeholder engagement activities
- 11 (21%) state publicly that they have governance and accountability structures linked to sustainability topics.

Environment indicators

There are 12 Environment indicators, of which the scoring for three is provided below. Full scores are available in the country reports.

BANGLADESH

The Environment category in Bangladesh was very low scoring, with nine companies not scoring at all and, for example, not a single company scoring on efforts to reduce Scope 3 emissions. The highest score was achieved by C.P. Bangladesh.

Across the 30 companies (selected indicators):

- 3 (10%) state publicly that they have set a target to reduce Scope 1 and 2 greenhouse gas emissions and are reporting progress
- 5 (17%) provided some evidence in the public domain of reducing the use of plastic and transitioning to more sustainable forms of packaging
- 6 (20%) provided some evidence in the public domain of reducing water withdrawal across operations and supply chains.

CAMEROON

The Environment category was the lowest scoring category in the Cameroon assessment. SABC and CHOCOCAM were the highest scoring in this category.

Across the 30 companies (selected indicators):

- 26 (87%) state publicly that they have set a target to reduce Scope 1 and 2 greenhouse gas emissions and are reporting progress
- 26 (87%) have provided some evidence in the public domain of reducing the use of plastic and transitioning to more sustainable forms of packaging
- 26 (87%) provided some evidence in the public domain of reducing water withdrawal across operations and supply chains.

INDIA

The top three companies for disclosure in the Environment category in India were ITC Ltd, Hindustan Unilever and Britannia Industries so, once again, the food manufacturer/processor segment scored higher than the other segments. Of the 53 companies, eight did not score at all in this category.

Across the 53 companies (selected indicators):

- 5 (9%) state publicly that they have set a target to reduce Scope 1 and 2 greenhouse gas emissions and are reporting progress
- 30 (57%) have provided some evidence in the public domain of reducing the use of plastic and transitioning to more sustainable forms of packaging
- 12 (23%) provided some evidence in the public domain of reducing water withdrawal across operations and supply chains.

Social Inclusion indicators

There are 24 Social Inclusion indicators, of which the scoring for three is provided below. Full scores are available in the country reports.

BANGLADESH

Scoring in the Social Inclusion category was low in Bangladesh, with seven companies not scoring at all. C.P. Bangladesh was the highest scoring.

Across the 30 companies (selected indicators):

- 8 (27%) have a publicly available policy statement that states a commitment to respect human rights across its activities.
- 10 (33%) have publicly committed to respecting the health and safety of workers and disclose relevant data
- 5 (17%) state publicly that they prohibit bribery and corruption and take steps to identify and address bribery and corruption risks and incidents.

CAMEROON

Scores in this category were on average higher than the Environment category, but not as high as in Nutrition. As in Governance and Strategy, SABC and Nestlé were the two highest scoring.

Across the 30 companies (selected indicators):

- 27 (90%) have a publicly available policy statement that states a commitment to respect human rights across its activities.
- 23 (77%) have publicly committed to respecting the health and safety of workers and disclose relevant data
- All 30 (100%) state publicly that they prohibit bribery and corruption and take steps to identify and address bribery and corruption risks and incidents.

INDIA

This was the lowest-scoring category in India, suggesting that there is very significant room for improvement. No companies scored on either payment of living wages or on having an approach to lobbying and political engagement. The top three companies were PepsiCo India, followed by Bayer India and Hershey India.

Across the 53 companies (selected indicators):

- 38 (72%) have a publicly available policy statement that states a commitment to respect human rights across its activities.
- 15 (28%) have publicly committed to respecting the health and safety of workers and disclose relevant data
- 28 (53%) state publicly that they prohibit bribery and corruption and take steps to identify and address bribery and corruption risks and incidents.

Nutrition

There are six Nutrition indicators, of which the scoring for three is provided below. Full scores are available in the country reports.

BANGLADESH

Overall levels of disclosure on nutrition indicators were very low in Bangladesh, with 10 companies scoring nothing at all in this category (the highest no-scores of the four categories). Only one company – C.P Bangladesh was once again the highest scoring. Food safety scored most highly.

Across the 30 companies (selected indicators):

- 6 (20%) have a public commitment to supporting the production of healthy and nutritious foods
- 6 (20%) provided evidence in the public domain of addressing food insecurity by improving accessibility and affordability of healthy foods
- Only 2 (7%) state publicly that they have workplace nutrition programme, such as healthy food at work, nutrition education and nutrition-focused health checks through company-wide policies

CAMEROON

This is the category with the highest average score out the four categories. The highest levels of disclosure on the indicators were all from the manufacturers/processors segment: UCB, NT Foods, Camlai and CHOCOAM.

Across the 30 companies (selected indicators):

- 26 (87%) have a public commitment to supporting the production of healthy and nutritious foods
- 26 (87%) provided evidence in the public domain of addressing food insecurity by improving accessibility and affordability of healthy foods
- 22 (73%) state publicly that they have workplace nutrition programme, such as healthy food at work, nutrition education and nutrition-focused health checks through company-wide policies – much higher than in Bangladesh and India.

INDIA

Once again, the manufacturers/processors scored most highly in this category: ITC Ltd, Hindustan Unilever, Britannia Industries and Nestlé India were the top four for disclosure. However, 41 companies scored very low in this category.

Across the 53 companies (selected indicators):

- 40 (75%) have a public commitment to supporting the production of healthy and nutritious foods
- 33 (62%) provided evidence in the public domain of addressing food insecurity by improving accessibility and affordability of healthy foods
- 5 (9%) state publicly that they have a workplace nutrition programme, such as healthy food at work, nutrition education and nutrition-focused health checks through company-wide policies.

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