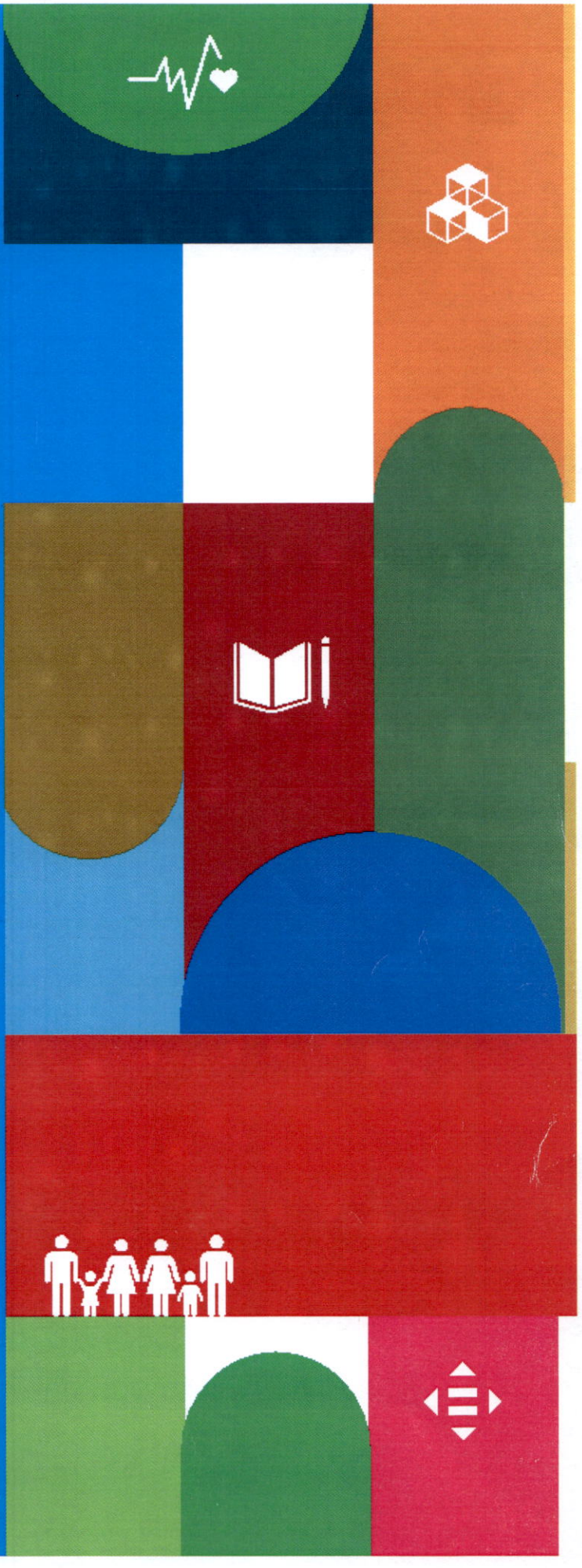
JOINT SDG FUND

Joint Programme Document:

Driving Climate Resilience and Nature-Positive Value Chain (VC) Development in Ghana – Private Sector Driven and Public Sector Enabled



JOINT SDG FUND

COVER PAGE

MPTFO Project Reference Number	*(Leave blank, for automatic population in Quantum)*
Country	Ghana
Territorial/Geographic Focus	*Savannah, Northern and Upper west regions*
Joint programme title:	Driving Climate Resilience and Nature-Positive Growth Through Sustainable Soyabean Value Chain (VC) Development in Ghana - Private Sector Driven and Public Sector Enabled
Phase I Duration:	*18 months*
Phase I Start and end dates:	*October 2025 to March 2027*
Short description:	The Joint Programme (JP) in Ghana, across both phases, aims to catalyse the transition to sustainable, resilient, and equitable food systems. It does so through innovative financing assessments, value chain scenario analysis, and the development of a nature-positive soybean value chain. While the focus is on a single commodity, soybean serves as a strategic entry point for national transformation. It is Ghana's most significant legume, aligned with the national Planting for Food and Jobs (PFJ) 2.0 strategy, and offers systems-level benefits through its linkages to livestock feed, soil health, and nutrition. The JP will test and scale solutions in climate-smart production, circular processing, nutrition-sensitive procurement, and policy alignment. It aims to engage over 10,000 youth and women in green agribusiness, improve dietary diversity for more than 400, 000 schoolchildren, and restore soil fertility on over 10,000 hectares (ha) of degraded land. It targets a 40 percent increase in yields, a 50 percent reduction in food loss, and a 30 percent boost in processing capacity, contributing to stronger food and income security. With a total budget of USD 2.99 million (including USD 1 million from the Joint SDG Fund), the JP seeks to achieve a 1:6 financial leverage ratio. This would unlock over USD 12 million in new public and private investments, alongside support from ongoing initiatives and government co-financing (e.g. GAFSP, PFJ 2.0). The programme will also explore ways to improve governance in the soybean sector, including the establishment of a multi-stakeholder platform informed by investment readiness clinics and a finance scoping assessment. To address access to finance, the JP will begin with a detailed scoping and pipeline-building exercise. This will identify financing gaps across the value chain, assess the willingness of financial institutions to deploy risk-sharing mechanisms (e.g. guarantees), and evaluate the readiness of value chain actors to access such facilities. The exercise will also map ready partners and relevant stakeholders. If top-up funding becomes available from the Joint SDG Fund, the JP may introduce financing tools such as the UNCDF's Loan Portfolio Guarantee Facility to de-risk private lending. This could enable at least 10 SMEs and farmer cooperatives to access finance, supported by blended finance instruments, digital market platforms, and improved value chain governance. The JP's integrated approach is fully aligned with Ghana's Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs), Land Degradation Neutrality targets, and Biodiversity Strategy. By leveraging the comparative advantages of UN agencies, the programme presents a scalable model for financing climate resilience and inclusive food systems growth. Soybean is positioned as a flagship value chain—nationally significant and globally relevant—with strong potential for replication and broader impact.

Joint Programme team:	
Resident Coordinator	Mr. Zia Choudhury zia.choudhury@un.org;
Joint Program RCO focal point	Roza Chiobaeva roza.choibaeva@un.org
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Anticipated Total Budget:	*Total anticipated sum from all sources of funds*
Phase I Budget (for approval):	*USD 500,000*
Source of funds:	*SDG*
UN Joint SDG Fund **(Phase 1)**	*USD 500 000*
PUNO 1 co-funding	*USD 700,000*
PUNO 2 co-funding	*USD 600,000*
PUNO 3 co-funding	*USD 1,700,000*
Government co-funding	*USD 3,000,000*
International donor co-funding	
Other sources co-funding	

Legal context	The legal basis for the Joint Programme is provided in **Legal Annex 3 (page 79)** of the signed *United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF)* between the UNCT and the Government of the Republic of Ghana for the period **2023–2025**.

DECLARATION OF COMMITMENT AND SIGNATURES

By signing this Joint Programme document, all signatories commit to work together in a spirit of partnership to achieve the results identified in the results framework, work plan and budget.

I hereby confirm that the funds requested are in accordance with the approved Work Plan & Joint Programme Document. I also certify that the copy transmitted to the MPTF Office is a true copy of the original which is secured by the RC Office. I have received documentation from Participating Organizations demonstrating committed amounts where applicable. I also confirm that the PUNOs' indirect cost does not exceed 7%.

Co-Chairs of JP Steering Committee	
Government representative	**UN Resident Coordinator**
Ministry of Food and Agriculture (MoFA) *Honourable Minister Erick Opoku* *Signature* *Date* 13/01/26	*Name: Zia Choudhury* *Signature* Zia Choudhury *Date* 13 September 2025

Participating UN Organizations	
Name of Representative: Priya Gujadhur 22 Sep. 2025 *Signature* *Name of Organization: United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO)* *Date*	*Name of Representative: Rose Mwebaza* *Signature* Digitally signed by Rose Mwebaza Date: 2025.09.15 12:30:57 +03'00' *Name of Organization: United Nations Environment Programme* *Date*
Name of Representative: Abdul -Razak Saeed (Team Leader, Environment and Climate Officer-in-Charge) *I* *Signature* DocuSigned by: Abdul-razak Saeed *Name of Organization: The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)* *Date*	*Name of Representative:* *Name of Organization: United Nations Capital Development Fund (|UNCDF)* *Date*
Non-UN Partners *(as applicable)*	
Name of Representative Signature *Name of Organization* *Date*	*Name of Representative* *Signature* *Name of Organization* *Date*

JOINT SDG FUND

JOINT PROGRAMME PROFILE

Contribution to Cooperation Framework Outcome(s) and Output(s)	Sustainable agriculture drives agro-industrialization and economic growth. The Joint Programme will contribute to increased agricultural productivity in targeted areas, while strengthening the capacity of government and non-state actors to enhance sustainable production and consumption of safe and nutritious foods.
SDG Targets directly addressed by the Joint Programme	*SDG 2; SDG 5; SDG 8; SDG 13; SDG 10*
Expected key results of the Joint Programme	• Smallholder farmers' productivity and climate resilience are enhanced by promoting climate-smart agriculture, expanding access to certified seeds and sustainable technologies, and reducing post-harvest losses through training and improved handling solutions. • Household and school nutrition improved by promoting soy-based recipes, building the capacity of women, youth, and caterers, and conducting public awareness campaigns on the nutritional benefits of soybean. • National and subnational governance strengthened through platforms and tools that align food systems with biodiversity, climate, and environmental policies to foster nature-positive, climate-resilient outcomes. • Access to finance for MSMEs and women- and youth-led enterprises will be expanded through investment clinics, innovative financing mechanisms, and multi-stakeholder platforms to drive sustainable soybean value chain growth.
Anticipated direct beneficiaries	Outcome 1: 10,000 smallholder farmers Outcome 2: 1,500 households and 1,000 school meal providers (including the public for the awareness campaigns) 400,000 school children (indirect) Outcome 3: 2 government ministries/agencies Outcome 4: 10 MSMEs and cooperatives
Anticipated financial leverage (both phase I and phase II)	*The total amount in USD* - Co-funding (within the JP budget): USD 3,000,000 - Co-financing (parallel to JP budget): USD 26,300,000 (*ongoing government coordinated projects.*)

The secondary focus on SDG Transitions in the JP	☐ Digital Transformation ☐ Decent Jobs and Universal Social Protection ☐ Energy Access and Affordability ☐ Transforming Education **X Climate, Biodiversity, Pollution**

JOINT PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

Baseline and Situation Analysis

While blessed with a rich tradition of indigenous agroecological practices and crop diversity—from millet, soyabean, sorghum, and yam to leafy greens and legumes that contribute immensely to resilience and nutrition, Ghana's food system faces significant structural challenges that limit the country's ability to fully harness its vast potential to drive sustainable, resilient, and equitable development, particularly in the northern regions. Agricultural productivity remains below optimal levels, driven by declining soil fertility, limited access to certified seeds, reliance on manual farming, and inadequate irrigation. Post-harvest losses exceed 15 percent, and value chains are fragmented, underfinanced, and dominated by smallholder farmers—particularly women and youth—who face barriers to accessing land, finance, and technology and market opportunities despite their extensive involvement in the value chain. These challenges are compounded by climate vulnerability and exclusion from decision-making in resource management, reducing the adaptive capacity of small holder farmers, particularly women and youth. These systemic constraints contribute to food insecurity, persistent child malnutrition, environmental degradation, and climate vulnerability. Despite these challenges, there are real opportunities to build on. Many smallholder farmers still use traditional, diverse farming practices that support soil health and nutrition. Women's groups and farmer associations are finding simple, low-cost ways to improve farming and access markets. Agri-entrepreneurs are adding value to local crops, helping reduce post-harvest losses and create jobs. Interest from young people is also growing, especially in digital tools and climate-smart farming. Ghana's rich food traditions offer a strong base for healthier, more sustainable diets. Soybean is one example of a promising entry point—it improves soil fertility, is in high demand for food and feed, and offers income and nutrition benefits, especially when linked to local processing and women-led enterprises.

The soybean value chain offers a strategic, commodity-based entry point to accelerate food systems transformation while promoting women's and youth empowerment. As a nitrogen-fixing crop with a short production cycle, soybean contributes to improved soil health, enhances land productivity, and reduces fertilizer dependency, supporting agroecological goals. It is relatively drought-tolerant, making it well-suited to Ghana's changing climate. Soybean production has steadily increased, especially in the Northern regions, driven by rising demand for livestock and poultry feed as well as growing consumer interest in plant-based protein. In Ghana, soybeans are used in diverse ways: as feed in the poultry and livestock sectors, and in food products such as soy milk, tofu, soy flour, and infant nutrition blends. Women are actively involved in small-scale processing, helping improve household nutrition and income. These uses can be expanded further to support food security and nutrition (FSN), particularly in schools and vulnerable communities. Youth are increasingly drawn to opportunities in agribusiness, agro-processing, and digital marketing along the value chain. Despite its potential, Ghana still produces only about half of its domestic soybean demand and remains largely import-dependent. Constraints include land degradation, limited access to quality seed and inoculants, low mechanization, and weak private sector linkages. However, with targeted investment and support, soybean presents a strong opportunity for inclusive, resilient growth, especially through enhanced integration into agro-industrial and nutrition-sensitive value chains.

Contrary to concerns that soybean is not a direct consumer crop, evidence from across Africa shows strong and growing demand for human consumption: of the 7–8 million tonnes used annually, the majority goes into soy oil, flour, fortified blended flours, milk substitutes, and textured soy protein, with school feeding programmes making increasing use of soy-based blends. Imports of nearly USD 3 billion in 2021 demonstrate a rising market, of which only a third is supplied locally highlighting opportunities for import substitution and local livelihoods. In West Africa alone, over 100

complementary foods already incorporate soy, and large-scale programmes have validated consumer acceptance of soy products, including in infant feeding. In Ghana, soy has entered school feeding menus and women-led enterprises producing soy kebabs, gari–soy blends, and tofu, showing its adaptability to local diets. Far from replacing other legumes, soybean adds to agrobiodiversity and supports agroecological rotation systems that restore soil fertility, increase maize yields, and lower fertilizer costs.

A major barrier to transformation is insufficient country specific financing mechanisms that do not align with the needs of food system actors, particularly smallholders and MSMEs as well as the lack of coordinated governance mechanisms (including cooperatives) to foster an inclusive multi-stakeholder dialogue and knowledge-sharing. Risk-averse lending practices and high collateral demands constrain credit access, while public investments remain siloed and disconnected from private capital and environmental goals - challenges that can be fully or partially addressed by leveraging cooperatives, which reduce perceived credit risk through collective risk-sharing, social collateral systems, and other inclusive financial mechanisms.

The proposed Joint Programme will address the above systemic barriers and seek to capitalise on available opportunities by promoting regenerative, climate-smart production; developing circular processing infrastructure; and assessing or scoping the establishment of an innovative blended finance facility, ensuring inclusive participation, sustainable and equitable access to resources and technologies, and economic opportunities. The programme will explore or investigate market appetite of introducing a Loan Portfolio Guarantee Facility to de-risk private sector lending, enabling inclusive and sustainable finance for farmers and MSMEs, particularly targeting women and youth farmers, and women and youth led enterprises. A National Food-Environment Policy Coherence Platform will harmonize policies and subsidies with climate and biodiversity commitments, fostering an enabling environment for sustained transformation. The JP will also explore the option of undertaking investment clinics that provide a basis for the establishment of an inclusive governance multi-stakeholder platform to enhance cross-learning and policy coherence. This integrated, cross-sectoral approach embeds sustainability across the value chain and links production to nutrition, environmental restoration, and enterprise development. It will directly benefit over **10,000 smallholders** including approximately 6,000 women and 4,000 youth, 1,500 households, 1,000 school meal providers, and improve diets for over **400,000 schoolchildren**, and improve and sustain soil health/fertility for **10 000+ hectares (ha)**. It will also directly support 10 MSMEs and cooperatives and 2 Government Ministries. Therefore, providing a scalable model that supports Ghana's national goals under Ghana's NDCs, Feed Ghana strategy, and Land Degradation Neutrality framework.

By working closely with national authorities and systems to lead implementation, and by drawing on the support of UN agencies (FAO, UNDP-UNCDF, UNEP) and national and private co-financing, the Joint Programme ensures strong national ownership and increases the chances of scaling up across other commodities and regions.

Programme strategy and Theory of Change

By investing in inclusive access to technologies, regenerative inputs, finance, skills, and market linkages across the soybean value chain, the Joint Programme will help Ghana advance towards nature-positive, inclusive, and resilient food systems. It will also support efforts to reduce import dependence, improve nutrition, and restore degraded ecosystems. While not addressing all aspects needed for full transformation—such as broad policy reform or nationwide land access—the JP focuses on practical, scalable actions as triggers of change that contribute to these long-term goals.

This transformation will take place by bringing together actions across five closely linked areas. These include helping farmers adopt more sustainable production and processing practices that protect the soil and environment, making sure food systems support better nutrition, strengthening inclusive policies and environmental laws through multi-stakeholder governance platforms, and leveraging opportunities for improving how the value chain is managed and financed.

3. Strategic Objectives and Programme Logic

The Joint Programme aims to transform the local agrifood system by addressing interlinked constraints through a coordinated and integrated approach. Its strategic objectives include:

- Enhanced Smallholder farmers' productivity and climate resilience by promoting climate-smart agriculture, expanding access to certified seeds and sustainable technologies, and reducing post-harvest losses through training and improved handling solutions.
- Improved Household and school nutrition by promoting soy-based recipes, building the capacity of women, youth, and caterers, and conducting public awareness campaigns on the nutritional benefits of soybean
- Strengthened National and subnational governance through platforms and tools that align food systems with biodiversity, climate, and environmental policies to foster nature-positive, climate-resilient outcomes.
- Expanded access to finance for MSMEs and women- and youth-led enterprises through investment clinics, innovative financing mechanisms, and multi-stakeholder platforms to drive sustainable soybean value chain growth.

4. Outcomes and Outputs by Component

Outcome 1: Increased smallholder farmers' productivity and climate resilience by enhancing their capacities on climate-smart/regenerative agriculture production and post-harvest practices and technologies.

Output 1.1: Capacity of smallholder farmers on climate smart agricultural practices increased. Climate-smart agricultural practices technologies will be disseminated among smallholder producers for adoption. This will include the establishment of demonstration farms, organizing farmer field days for sustainable farming practices, and linking smallholder producers to agricultural advisory services, input suppliers, markets/off takers, markets, and financial services providers. By providing training and resources to build capacity, smallholder farmers, particularly women and youth will be better equipped to mitigate the effects of climate change on their crops and improve their overall productivity. Additionally, these initiatives will help foster sustainable agricultural practices that benefit both the environment and the livelihoods of smallholder farmers.

Output 1.2: Improved inputs and technologies to smallholder farmers delivered. Access to key productivity-enhancing inputs and technologies such as certified seed, phosphate fertilizers, inoculants, and manual planters will be facilitated through partnerships with government agencies, NGOs, and private sector organizations to ensure that smallholder farmers have the resources they need to improve productivity and sustainability. Access to these elements will contribute to increased yield, income, livelihoods, and resilience of smallholder households.

Output 1.3: Selected farmers including women and youth-led enterprises and cooperatives to produce certified seeds supported. Selected farmers, mostly commercial farmers, will be identified, engaged and trained on seed production and business protocols. High-performing varieties (high-

yielding, drought-resistant, and early maturing certified seeds) will be targeted for multiplication to increase smallholder farmers' access to more affordable seeds, ultimately boosting their crop yields and overall resilience to climate variabilities.

All year-round seed production from green energy sources will be enabled, promoting water use efficiency and climate adaptation. Leveraging two solar-powered irrigation systems installed on five hectares of land each in the West and East Gonja municipalities of the Savannah region. Reducing the use of fossil fuel, carbon emissions, and operational costs will contribute to a more profitable, sustainable, and environmentally friendly seed production process. This initiative will be targeted at smallholder farmers, with a particular focus on women and youth.

Output 1.4: Producers and small actors trained in improved post-harvest handling and management of soyabean. The capacity of smallholder producers and value chain actors on improved post-harvest handling and management of soybeans will be developed. Farmers groups including women and youth will be supported with improved post-harvest technologies and assets, including hermetic sacks, tarpaulins, hand-held moisture meters and high-performance multi-purpose threshers to reduce drudgery, post-harvest losses and improve the overall quality of the grain.

Outcome 2: Increased utilization of soybean-based products in household diets and school meals through strengthened capacities of women, youth, and school caterers.

Output 2.1: Capacities of women and youth on inclusion of soya recipes in household diets developed

The capacity of women will be strengthened in developing soya recipes and how to include them in household diets to improve the diets and nutrition of resource poor households. The utilization of soybean-based products in household diets will contribute to the diversification of diets and increasing the level of protein intake among resource poor households.

Output 2.2: Capacities of school caterers to include soya recipes in school meals enhanced

Caterers involved in the Ghana School Feeding Programme at selected schools will receive training and education on the incorporation of soya-based recipes into school meals. This initiative aims to enhance the nutritional quality of the meals provided, thereby contributing to addressing malnutrition among school children.

Output 2.3: Public awareness campaign on the nutritional benefits of soybean organized

Sensitization and public awareness campaigns focused on the nutritional benefits of soybeans across various platforms, including schools, market squares, prisons, and local communities will be organized. These campaigns will feature interactive sessions designed to engage participants, the distribution of informative leaflets containing soybean-based recipes, and radio discussions to highlight the importance of soy-based food products in enhancing dietary diversity and nutritional well-being of consumers, particularly children.

The Women in Agriculture Development (WIAD) and Ghana school feeding program will lead the training of women and school feeding programme caterers on the processing and inclusion of soybean recipes in the meals of school children and households in deprived communities. They will also lead public awareness campaigns on the nutritional benefits of soybean. This collaborative effort

will also involve the District Assemblies in the targeted project locations, with the Municipal or District Department of Agriculture directly leading the community mobilization, stakeholder engagement and activities implementation.

Outcome 3: National food-environment governance frameworks institutionalized to enable policy coherence, environmental sustainability, and cross-sectoral collaboration (UNEP)
To amplify and catalyse action on nature-positive and resilient agriculture, it is essential to place ecosystem integrity, agrobiodiversity, and positive environmental outcomes at the core of food systems transformation. Creating the enabling conditions for this transformation requires a holistic approach that aligns policy and action through multilevel governance, leveraging the Biodiversity Plan and other multilateral environmental agreements (MEAs) to ensure coherence across sectors and alignment with global and national goals on climate, nature, pollution, and sustainable development. Complementary efforts to align financial flows and promote private sector accountability further support the shift toward sustainable food systems. This component seeks to align national and subnational food systems governance structures with environmental, climate, and nutrition goals.

Output 3.1: National Food-Environment Policy Coherence Lab/ Platform Established led by MoFA and MESTI to harmonize subsidies (e.g., for irrigation, fertilizer, seeds) and streamline planning under NDCs, NBSAPs, and LDN frameworks.

This platform will lead efforts to align agriculture, food security, biodiversity, and climate agendas, promoting integrated and coherent policymaking. By positioning MEAs as drivers of food systems transformation, the inter-ministerial platform will enable policy makers to engage with the latest science, identify gaps and synergies, and co-create the enabling conditions for nature-positive, climate-resilient outcomes. Capacity building activities on integrated programming and policy making will be carried out with government stakeholders.

Output 3.2: Food Systems–Biodiversity Alignment Toolbox Developed to support the integration of food systems into updated NBSAPs and alignment with biodiversity commitments under the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (KMGBF).

The Food Systems–Biodiversity Alignment Toolbox will provide capacity-building resources tailored for national and regional application, promoting nature-positive and resilient food systems. It will support policymakers and value chain actors in advancing sustainable agriculture, efficient water use, circularity, sustainable consumption, and healthy diets. The guidance materials will contribute to the integration of food systems into updated NBSAPs by establishing a robust knowledge base and normative guidance that aligns national food strategies with biodiversity commitments under the KMGBF. By strengthening integrated planning and reporting frameworks, the toolbox aims to ease the reporting burden on countries while fostering more coherent, cross-cutting implementation across biodiversity, climate, and food system agendas.

This governance mechanism will foster cross-sectoral alignment, enabling longer-term environmental and social returns on public and private investments.

Outcome 4: Expanded access to finance for MSMEs and women- and youth-led enterprises through investment clinics, innovative financing mechanisms, and multi-stakeholder platforms to drive sustainable soybean value chain growth (UNDP – UNCDF)
This component aims to strengthen value chain governance and unlock private and public capital by deploying innovative financing mechanisms, building investment-ready enterprises, and improving coordination across stakeholders. Through a combination of de-risking tools, digital solutions, and structured platforms, the initiative will foster inclusive, sustainable investment in agri-food systems.

The outcome will be a robust, evidence-based blueprint to inform investment and further resource mobilisation

Output 4.1: **MSMEs Investment Clinics Established;** Focusing on business in the soybean value chain, partner financial service providers and government to undertake a detailed engagement with value chain actors to discuss challenges, opportunities and broker partnerships.

The MSME investment clinics will present entry points for inclusive dialogue and multistakeholder engagement as they help:

- Identify and engage grassroots actors (smallholder farmers, processors, aggregators, women/youth groups).
- Surface barriers to investment (e.g., land access, finance, equipment, certifications).
- Feed these insights into multistakeholder platforms at regional or national levels to shape policies and investments.
- Map gaps and foster cross-sector partnerships (including geographic/cluster gaps in soybean production, input supply and logistic bottlenecks, innovations that need scaling (including digital tools, traceability, etc.)

These will feed into the establishment of a multi-stakeholder platform to strengthen cooperative governance, enhance accountability mechanisms, and facilitate cross-learning and knowledge exchange among cooperatives. This will include designing the governance architecture of the platform, launching it and engaging in subsequent dialogue based on key outcomes of the MSME clinics and the guarantee facility study.

Output 4.2: Portfolio loan guarantee facility assessment conducted, exploring value chain scenario analysis and opportunities to leverage additional financing

The study will identify and address financing gaps. It will assess details on the interest rates businesses can absorb, the lending terms financial institutions are willing to offer, and the optimal structure for risk-sharing.

Output 4.3: Multi-stakeholder governance platform established.
A platform will be established to strengthen cooperative governance, enhance accountability mechanisms, and facilitate cross-learning and knowledge exchange among cooperatives.

5. Anticipated Results Across Phases
Phase I (2025–2027)

- Pilot regenerative farming practices on 10,000 hectares (ha) of land.
- Engage 6,000 women and youth in green enterprises.
- Achieve 40 percent increase in yields, 30 percent processor capacity boost, and 50 percent reduction in post-harvest losses.
- Improve nutrition for 400,000 children through soybean-based school feeding
- Conduct a portfolio loan guarantee facility assessment, exploring value chain scenario analysis and opportunities to leverage additional financing.
- Undertake MSME investment clinics with value chain actors and financial service providers on challenges and opportunities for partnerships.
- Establish national policy coherence platform and pilot incentive toolbox
- Leverage USD 6–8 million in additional financing through co-funding and aligned investments.

Phase II (2027–2030)

- Expand regenerative farming practices to additional 5,000+ ha.
- Engage additional 30,000+ youth and women in green enterprises.
- Establish a multi-stakeholder platform to strengthen cooperative governance, enhance accountability mechanisms, and facilitate cross-learning and knowledge exchange among cooperatives.
- Scale access to finance for 100+ MSMEs and cooperatives.
- Leverage USD 12 million+ through local banks, development finance institutions (DFIs), and private investors.
- Institutionalize food-environment governance and financing tools.
- Mainstream innovations into government programmes (Feed Ghana Program, NBSAP).
- Deepen alignment of food systems transformation with climate and biodiversity targets.

6. Enablers of Sustainability and Scaling

- **Government Ownership:** MoFA, MESTI, and local authorities engaged throughout implementation, with policy alignment mechanisms ensuring sustainability and strong commitment to cross sectoral coordination and strategic ownership (national soybean strategy and Soybean National Task Force under the FAO OCOP initiative in progress).
- **National Science and Research Networks and Institutions:** Proven impact and scaling of soybean value chain related intervention resulting in increased youth employment in northern Ghana. Sustainable Soybean Production in Northern Ghana (SSPiNG) initiative in collaboration with the International Institute of Tropical Agriculture and soybean research of Savanna Agriculture Research Institute (SARI) on improved soybean varieties.
- **Private Sector Anchors:** Greenland Seeds and Newage Agric will facilitate outgrower integration, input supply, and market access.
- **Blended Finance:** Co-designed with UNCDF, the LPGF provides a pathway for scaling via the Development Bank of Ghana and GIRSAL.
- **UN System Collaboration:** FAO (production, nutrition), UNDP/UNCDF (finance) and UNEP (environment, governance) bring synergistic expertise and the leveraging of pipeline projects.

2.1. Theory of Change

The Joint Programme (JP) is anchored in the UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF) 2023–2025 for Ghana, which emphasizes inclusive, green, and resilient growth, climate adaptation, and strengthened governance. The JP contributes to Outcome 1.2 (Sustainable Food and Nutrition Systems), Outcome 2.1 (Inclusive Green Growth), and Outcome 3.1 (Resilient Ecosystems and Climate Change Adaptation).

The domain of change is Ghana's national food system, with a focus on the soybean value chain (VC) as an actionable entry point. While this subsystem faces challenges characterized by low productivity, land degradation, post-harvest inefficiencies, financial exclusion, and fragmented governance—especially affecting northern Ghana and vulnerable groups (women, youth, smallholder farmers), the soybean sector of Ghana provides catalytic opportunities. The JP can build on successful past initiatives including increased production/adoption of drought-resistant seeds varieties, supported by a strong national science and research network and opportunities for local input service and seed system development. Moreover, there is growing interest in soybean consumption and integration in school feeding programmes using local ingredients. High local demand leverages rising private sector interest in soybean processing given the underused national processing capacities and high demand from the rising national poultry and aquaculture sector. Moreover, promising private partnerships in input distribution and extension services play notable roles.

The JP leverages this subsystem as a catalytic lever for system-wide transformation, aiming to influence production, processing, consumption, environmental governance, and market-finance linkages, thereby shifting the food system toward sustainability, resilience, and equity.

Problem Space and Solutions Space

Problem Space

- Degraded land and climate-vulnerable production systems.
- High food losses and inefficient processing infrastructure.
- Limited access to inputs, technology, and markets.
- Weak access to finance for agri-SMEs and smallholders.
- Fragmented food-environment policy frameworks.
- Persistent malnutrition and dietary inadequacy.
- Underemployment and exclusion of youth and women.

Solutions Space

The JP identifies interlinked systemic pathways to move from fragmentation to integration, and from degradation to regeneration:

1. Regenerative Production Systems
   → Increased yields, soil health, and climate resilience
   → Strengthened input services and viable business models for local seed production systems established
2. Efficient and inclusive Agro-Processing
   → Reduced food losses
   → Enhanced enterprise growth through improved processing capacity utilization and catalytic impact on related poultry and aquaculture value chains which sustain flow of investments through local demand.
3. Nutrition-Sensitive Value Chains
   → Improved diets and public procurement systems
4. Policy Coherence and Environmental Incentives
   → Aligned climate, agriculture, and biodiversity goals
   → Streamlined public policies and subsidies for catalytic, strategic public investments
5. Innovative and Inclusive Finance
   → Increased financial flows to smallholders and MSMEs

These pathways are mutually reinforcing and collectively drive nature-positive, nutrition-smart, and investment-ready food system transformation.

Model of Anticipated Transformation

The JP contributes to a larger transformation led by the Government of Ghana and supported by public, private, and multilateral stakeholders. It aims to:

- Catalyse a national shift toward nature-positive, climate-resilient food production and processing systems
- Enable policy coherence reforms that institutionalize environmental incentives and cross-sectoral collaboration
- Design strategies to crowd in commercial and public investment through de-risking mechanisms and blended finance and translate them into government supported agri-business finance institutions including but not limited to GIRSAL.
- Enabling small scale farmers (especially women and youth) through improved inclusive VC governance and viable business models to sustain and scale impact.
- Scale inclusive economic opportunities for women, youth, and MSMEs through coordinated market access.

- Embed nutrition and sustainability into national programmes such as Feed Ghana, the National Soybean Strategy, and school feeding initiatives.
- Influence broader ecosystems, including financial institutions, agribusiness, and research bodies.

By doing so, the JP contributes to systemic outcomes such as:

- Restored and productive landscapes.
- Resilient livelihoods for vulnerable populations.
- Improved nutrition outcomes.
- Increased private sector investment in agriculture.
- Stronger national ownership and policy alignment.

Integration of Joint Programme Results in the Broader Model

Joint Programme Contribution (Catalytic Interventions)	Contribution to Broader System Outcomes
10,000 ha of soil fertility improved (regenerative agriculture)	Supports national LDN and climate targets
40% increase in yields	Enhance food security and farmer incomes
400.000 schoolchildren with improved diets	Reduces stunting and malnutrition
10,000+ youth/women in agribusiness	Builds inclusive green employment base
Assessment of portfolio loan guarantee facility roll out	Demonstrates bankable models for scale-up
Environmental Incentives Toolbox piloted	Information subsidy and sustainability reforms
National Policy Coherence Platform operational	Aligns food, climate, and biodiversity plans
USD 6 million leveraged by end of Phase II	Attracts sustainable investment at scale
Multi-stakeholder Governance Platform	Facilitates cross-learning and policy coherence

Key Assumptions Underpinning the Model

The validity of this Theory of Change rests on several critical assumptions:

1. Government commitment remains strong to integrate and implement food system transformation, particularly through MoFA, MESTI, and key national strategies (Feed Ghana, NDCs, NBSAP).
2. Private sector partners (e.g., aggregators, processors, financiers) are willing to co-invest, engage in outgrower schemes, and adopt inclusive, green business models.
3. Financial institutions are willing to lend to agriculture and MSMEs under fair terms if appropriate de-risking tools are in place.
4. Food systems actors (farmers, SMEs, cooperatives) adopt new technologies and practices when incentives are clear, and support mechanisms are strong.
5. Political and macroeconomic stability allows for effective implementation of Phase I and enables Phase II to mobilize greater financing and reform.

If any of these assumptions shift—e.g., a change in government priorities, private sector disengagement, or economic shocks, the model must be revisited, and adaptive management strategies deployed.

Critical Elements for Phase I to Enable Phase II

To ensure strategic continuity and unlock Phase II, the following must be accomplished during Phase I:

1. **Proof of Concept for improved production and processing processes adapted to local context**: Demonstrated success of regenerative farming practices and VC governance changes in the local context and contextualise the design of inclusive blended finance mechanisms.
2. **Policy Innovation:** Functioning National Policy Coherence Platform and tested Environmental Incentives Toolbox to inform policy reform.
3. **Stakeholder Mobilization:** Engagement of financial institutions, aggregators, processors, and farmer groups in viable public-private models.
4. **Evidence Generation:** Tangible results (yield increases, enterprise creation, land restored, nutrition gains) documented and communicated through robust M&E.
5. **Investment Readiness:** Scalable models ready for replication, with financial and implementation frameworks validated by stakeholders.

Phase II will focus on scaling these innovations, increasing financial leverage, embedding governance mechanisms, and mainstreaming food system transformation into national and regional strategies.

Summary of the Theory of Change
The Theory of Change envisions a national food system in Ghana that is regenerative, resilient, inclusive, and investment ready. The Joint Programme serves as a catalytic driver within this broader ecosystem, using the soybean value chain as a leverage point to trigger an inclusive food system transformation with great potential for women and youth. By scaling climate-smart agriculture, fostering inclusive green enterprises, aligning food-environment policies, and assessing opportunities for unlocking blended finance, the JP activates systemic pathways that restore ecosystems, improve nutrition, and increase equitable prosperity.

The transformation relies on critical partnerships with government, private sector, financial institutions, and local communities. Phase I pilots and validates innovative approaches. Phase II scales these approaches through institutional anchoring and expanded investment. Assumptions around policy support, private sector engagement, and adoption of innovations are vital to success. The JP, while limited in scope, contributes to long-term system outcomes that reach far beyond its interventions.

.2 Description of the Transformative impact

Lasting Catalytic Impact After Phase II

By the end of Phase II (2030), Ghana's soybean value chain (VC) will serve as a model for inclusive, regenerative, and investment-ready food systems. The JP will have catalysed structural transformation by embedding climate-smart practices, market systems development, and innovative inclusive finance in national policy and implementation mechanisms. National institutions, local communities, and private sector actors will be empowered and actively co-leading in sustaining and scaling results.
This transformation will result in:

- A strengthened, nutrition-sensitive and climate-resilient food system.
- Enhanced financial flows for food systems actors and infrastructure, especially accessible for women and youth.
- Policies and incentives fully aligned with environmental and nutrition outcomes.
- An inclusive ecosystem where women, youth, and smallholders thrive.
- Institutionalized capacity to sustain and expand impact beyond the JP.

Alignment with National Policy Frameworks
The JP is fully aligned with Ghana's strategic development, food systems, climate, and environmental agendas:

- **Ghana's Food Systems Transformation Pathway:** Operationalizes key priorities—climate-smart agricultural practices, nutritious and healthy diets for all, equitable livelihoods for actors, and building resilience to vulnerabilities, shocks, and stresses.

  The JP directly advances these pillars of Ghana's Food Systems Transformation Pathways:
  - Boosting Nature-Positive Food Production (Pathway 3)—emphasizes promoting sustainable agriculture practices that enhance biodiversity and ecosystem health. By implementing climate-smart agricultural techniques/regenerative farming practices aimed at improving soil health and biodiversity, the JP will contribute to enhancing nature-positive food production systems that increase productivity while ensuring environmental stewardship and sustainability.

  - Nutritious and healthy diets for all (Pathway 1 and 2) -focuses on access to affordable and nutritious and heath diets for all. Incorporating soybean into households' diets and school meals will ensure cost effective, sustainable access to improved nutrition, reducing malnutrition, stunted growth among children, contribution to improved dietary diversity and nutritional well-being of Ghanaians especially children.

  - Equitable livelihoods for actors in the food system (Pathway 4)—emphasizes the need for equitable livelihood opportunities for all, particularly women. The JP will deliver targeted training, technologies, innovative financing solutions, and access to market, extension services and irrigation for year-round farming, focusing on women and the youth to enhance productivity and improve economic well-being.

  - Building resilience to vulnerabilities, shocks, and stress (Pathway 5)—underscores the need for robust social safety nets and empowering individuals to adapt and recover from adverse situations, including climate change variabilities. By facilitating policy coherence, access to climate smart agriculture, innovation financing solutions and solar powered irrigation system for all year production, the JP will contribute to building a more resilient agri-food system.

- **Nationally Determined Contributions (NDC 3.0)**: Supports climate-resilient agriculture, land restoration, livelihoods opportunities for women and youth, and sustainable value chain development The JP will contribute to the realization of the nationally determined contribution policy actions, including building resilience and promoting livelihood opportunities for the youth and women in climate-vulnerable agriculture landscapes and food systems—by delivering targeted training and facilitating women and youth access to improved technologies, including access to drought-resistant, early maturing, and high-yielding varieties; innovative financing solutions; solar-powered irrigation systems for all-year production; and policy coherence. The JP aims to contribute to building a more resilient agri-food system.
- Enhancing climate resilience of women and the vulnerable: The JP will contribute to achieving this through capacity building for women and youth in climate-smart agriculture practices, facilitating access to productive resources and technologies to adapt to changing climate change variabilities.
- **National Adaptation Plan (NAP)**: Contributes to adaptation priorities through water-use efficiency, drought-resilient crops, and community-based resilience. The JP will contribute to the NAP program objective of promoting climate change adaptation through the implementation of climate-smart /regenerative practices, green energy sources for through

solar-powered irrigation, that enhance ecosystem restoration. Ultimately, building resilience to the impacts of climate change and creating a more sustainable agrifood system

- **National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (NBSAP II)**: Advances agroecological approaches and sustainable land use. The JP's implementation of regenerative practices/sustainable agricultural techniques will contribute to biodiversity conservation and sustainable use, ecosystem protection, and natural resource sustainability.
- **Feed Ghana Programme**: The JP complements and enhances implementation with regenerative inputs, strengthened cooperatives, and improved market systems. The JP will play a pivotal role in advancing the Feed Ghana Programme, which aims to support research institutions in accelerating the development and release of improved soybean varieties with good pod clearance —specifically those that pod 25cm above ground, ideal for mechanical harvesting. A previous government initiative had targeted to produce 2,000 kg of breeder seeds from these released pod clearance varieties by 2027.

  Building on the foundation laid by the Savannah Agricultural Value Chain Development Project (SADEP), which is supporting the release of the pod clearance variety, the JP will collaborate with the Savanna Agricultural Research Institute (SARI) to facilitate the production of foundation seeds for the pod clearance variety following its release. This initiative will ensure that private seed producers have access to high-quality foundation seeds, enabling them to generate a greater supply of certified seeds for farmers.

  By increasing farmers' access to pod clearance seed varieties, the JP aims to significantly reduce labour costs, save time, and alleviate the drudgery associated with manual soybean harvesting—particularly for women farmers. This transition to more efficient and sustainable harvesting practices will not only enhance profitability for individual farmers but will also benefit the entire soybean value chain, positively impacting an estimated 200,000 soybean farmers.

  The Feed Ghana Programme (FGP) seeks to enhance soybean production for consumption, poultry feed processing, and export through improving farmers' access to high-quality input and extension services. By delivering training and facilitating access to improved agricultural inputs, climate-smart technologies, and improved post-harvest practices/technologies, the JP will be contributing to the objectives of the FGP.

Through the National Policy Coherence Platform and the Environmental Incentives Toolbox, the JP informs and supports integrated planning and implementation across these frameworks.

Key Results (Phases I, II and Beyond)

Area	Phase I (2025–2027)	Phase II (2027–2030)	Legacy/Long-term
1. Food security & nutrition	10,000+ women/youth engaged; dietary improvements for 400.000 children; 40% yield increase.	Expansion of nutrition-sensitive VC nationally; reduced stunting in priority regions.	Institutionalized nutrition-sensitive procurement and VC models.
2. Climate, biodiversity & restoration	10,000 ha soil fertility improved; toolbox piloted; eco-audits completed.	50,000+ ha under regenerative practices; incentives scaled.	Biodiversity and LDN commitments advanced through permanent practice adoption.
3. Food system finance	LPGF and scenario plans designed.	De-risking tools e.g. LPGF deployed.	De-risking tools embedded in national

			lending structures (e.g., GIRSAL, DBG).
4. Agency of national actors	Multi-stakeholder platforms formed; farmer/MSME orgs strengthened.	Institutionalization of platforms; national ownership of scaling.	Decentralized and inclusive VC governance, with youth and women co-leading.
5. LNOB groups	Youth- and gender-sensitive MSD approach operationalized.	Value-added jobs, incomes, land access, and enterprise growth secured.	Reduced inequality in food systems participation and benefits.

Systemic Change Reflected In

Dimension	Change Catalysed
1. Resource flows	USD 6 million+ leveraged; investment pipeline developed; PFJ, GAFSP, and GEF funds aligned.
2. Norms, purpose, goals	Regenerative, inclusive agriculture mainstreamed as a viable norm in policy and private sector practice.
3. Institutional frameworks	Environmental Incentives Toolbox and National Coherence Platform institutionalized.
4. Behaviours and incentives	Smallholders and SMEs adopt climate-smart, nutrition-sensitive models; finance providers shift portfolios.
5. KPIs/performance	Increased yields, reduced post-harvest losses, greater market participation by LNOB groups.
6. Relationships/partnerships	Stronger public-private-producer linkages; new actors engaged (banks, processors, innovators).

Causal Logic: How JP Activities Drive Impact

- Climate-smart production pilots → increased yields and land restoration → higher incomes and resilience.
- RECP and circular economy infrastructure → better environmental performance and food loss reduction.
- MSD and nutrition-sensitive procurement → better diets and inclusive enterprise growth
- Policy coherence platforms → harmonized subsidies and integrated action across NDC, NBSAP, LDN.
- Innovative finance and de-risking tools → crowd-in private investment and lower access barriers for SMEs.

Each output area creates enabling conditions for systemic outcomes—by de-risking behaviour change, aligning incentives, and institutionalizing practices.

Adaptive Implementation and Phasing

The JP is built on adaptive, phased implementation with milestones for real-time review and strategic adjustment:

Phase I (2025–2027) Milestones

- *Month 1–3*: Prepare to establish governance and coordination structure; stakeholder onboarding.
    - Identify and select sites for demonstration farms, and coordinate capacity building on climate smart agriculture, seed production and post-harvest processing through farmer field days.

- *Month 4–6*:
    - Finalize pilot hub locations and scoping exercise for financing instruments, initiate policy dialogue.
    - Incept and establish National Food-Environment Policy Coherence Platform.
    - Incept and establish multistakeholder platform.
    - Launch capacity building for school feeding programme through canteens.

- *Month 6–9 ("Low-hanging fruits")*:
    - Deploy demo plots for climate smart agriculture, seed production and post-harvest processing and launch farmer field days for seed producer and climate smart agriculture.
    - Deploy regenerative inputs and demo plots.
    - Launch farmer/MSME capacity building.
    - Conduct scoping exercise on financing and de-risking mechanisms.
    - Initiate public awareness campaign on soybean nutrition.
    - Coordinate work on policy coherence platform.
- *Month 12–18*:
    - First round of eco-audits; review initial financing flows; mid-term adaptation.
    - Coordinate work on input service subsidies guide.
    - Continue and extend farmer capacity building through farmer field schools, mid-term adaptation.

- *End of Phase I*:
    - Review of uptake, results, and policy integration → Go/No-go decision on scaling and investment expansion.
    - Review of uptake of climate smart agriculture practices, post-harvest management and seed production.
    - Review of impact on school feeding program and adaptation of public awareness campaign.

Phase II (2027–2030) Milestones

- Expansion of successful hubs and practices to other regions.
- Deployment of de-risking facilities e.g. LPGF through DBG and GIRSAL.
- Integration of tools and results into Feed Ghana Programme and NDC platforms.
- Systematized M&E feedback loops to inform national policy.
- Development of new policy instruments or subsidy redesigns if needed.
- Maintain Farmer Field Days and extend farmer capacity building by facilitating access to and demonstration of new technologies. This includes intentionally linking farmers with

technology providers—such as irrigation service providers—to showcase how the technologies work in practice, enabling farmers to adopt innovations and positioning interested participants as potential customers.

Summary Table: Five Dimensions of Transformative Change

Key pillars of transformative change	Key elements of the joint programme demonstrating transformative change
Integration	Coherence between food security, climate resilience, biodiversity, and inclusive finance; Joint UN and Government delivery.
Scale	Phase I pilots cover 10,000 ha, 410 people (10,000 smallholder farmers and 400,000 school children); Phase II expands to 50,000+ ha; 750 000 (50,000 smallholder farmers and 700,000 school children) reached through nutrition programmes.
Speed	Low-hanging results by Month 9; catalytic finance tools and demonstration effects speed adoption and replication.
Sustainability	Institutionalization of policy platforms and incentive tools; mainstreaming in government and DFI pipelines.
Local context-specific	Gender and youth-focused Market Systems Development (MSD) approach; alignment with Feed Ghana Programme, GIRSAL models, and regional agroecological zones as entry points identified in multi-stakeholder consultation and validation workshops during FAO Value Chain study (conducted in 2024).

Financing Food Systems

Financing Leverage and Structure

The proposed Joint Programme (JP) in Ghana targets a verified leverage ratio of **1:6**, mobilizing a total of **USD 6 million** in additional public and private investments, against a **USD 1 million** contribution from the Joint SDG Fund. This will be achieved through a mix of **co-funding, co-financing of financial solutions**, and **scale-up of policy services**, using evidence-based design and catalytic partnerships.

Category	Source	Value (USD)	Type
Government of Ghana	GAFSP grant via AfDB	1, 000,000	Scale-up of policy services
Government of Ghana	Input subsidies (Feed Ghana Programme)	2,000,000	Co-financing of policy solutions
UNEP	EU & GEF alignment	1,700,000	Co-funding of JP
FAO	OCOP & pipeline projects	700,000	Co-funding of JP
UNDP	Existing and Pipeline projects (northern Ghana)	600,000	Co-funding of JP
		6,000,000	

Assumptions and Verification:

- GAFSP financing (USD 20 million to GoG) under final review by AfDB. USD 1 million conservatively earmarked for soybean/Feed Ghana alignment.
- Private sector contributions (e.g., inputs, logistics, extension services) confirmed via preliminary MOUs.

Financing Mechanism: Design and Modality

When it comes to *financing mechanisms*, UNCDF will lead the JP with a three-phase approach depending on budget availability:

1. Scoping exercise to prepare the market and identify pipeline of business as well as the financing gaps to tackle with the proposed financing instruments.
2. Deployment of de-risking mechanisms (if fully funded by JP) e.g. portfolio guarantees to banks and MFIs. Or other blended finance mechanisms. The facility may use a pari passu risk-sharing model, covering up to 50% of loan portfolios to de-risk lending to agro-MSMEs, smallholder farmers, and cooperatives.
3. Scale-Up Potential: USD 10+ million via Development Bank of Ghana, GIRSAL, and DFIs (e.g., EBID)

Governance Structure

The financing mechanism will be coordinated through a multi-tiered governance arrangement embedded in JP's institutional set-up:

- **Strategic Oversight:** National Steering Committee co-chaired by MoFA and UNRC/FAO, with representation from MESTI, Ministry of Finance, UNEP, UNDP, UNCDF, and private sector anchors. Oversees alignment with national policies (NDCs, NBSAPs, Feed Ghana Programme).
- **Technical Coordination Unit:** Led by UNCDF, with FAO and UNDP as co-conveners. Responsible for technical design, risk assessment, M&E, and reporting.
- **Investment Decision Body:** Independent Financing Review Panel including financial institutions, MoF, GIRSAL and DPs to review pipeline, assess guarantees, and approve financing packages.
- **Territorial Ownership:** Regional Agriculture Directorates and District Assemblies will facilitate local ownership, ensure investments meet environmental/social standards, and support targeting.

Building on the strong governmental support and upon proven impact and evaluation of the proposed structures, the governance structure can be integrated in the structures supporting the planned National Soybean Strategy of Ghana under leadership of MoFA and the overall initiative to support soybean under the Feed Ghana Programme.

Business Model and Impact Metrics

- **Return on Investment (ROI):** Expected ROI of 15–20% for participating SMEs; average loan payback period 12–18 months.
- **Concessionally Level:** Moderate; up to 50% risk coverage to encourage lending to underserved actors.
- **Cost per Development Outcome:**
    - USD 200 per beneficiary engaged in Green VC enterprise
    - USD 1,000 per hectare of degraded land restored
    - USD 15 per child benefiting from improved nutrition

Investment Pipeline

The initial investment pipeline targets the Soybean value chain but is designed to be replicable to other strategic commodities and unfold catalytic investment effects in the national feed industry and related poultry and aquaculture value chains.

Priority projects and beneficiaries include:

- 10 soybean SMEs (processing, aggregation, input suppliers)
- 2–3 regional climate-smart production hubs (Northern, Upper East, Bono East)
- Cooperatives and women/youth producer groups
- Partnerships with Greenland Seeds, Newage Agric, and others as anchors

Readiness: All anchor partners identified; regional stakeholder consultations completed; early-stage pipeline mapping done by UNDP/UNCDF teams in Q2 2025.

Prospects for Scale-Up

- **By end 2027:** Leverage up to USD 10 million from domestic DFIs and anchor partners.
- **Beyond Soybean:** Expand to Fonio, Cassava and Tomato in other regions.
- **Long-Term Goal:** Establish Ghana Food Systems Financing Facility aligned with National Food Systems Pathways.

4. Partnerships and stakeholder engagement

National Government Leadership

The JP will be nationally led by the **Ministry of Food and Agriculture (MoFA)**, which will provide overall policy direction, ensure alignment with the **Feed Ghana programme** and NDC 3.0, and chair the **National Steering Committee (NSC)**. The NSC will also include representation from the Ministry of Environment, Science, Technology and Innovation (MESTI), the Ministry of Finance, and subnational government actors through Regional Coordinating Councils (RCCs). The **National Food Systems Convenor** will play a key advisory and coordination role to ensure the JP is coherent with national Food Systems Pathways, the National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (NBSAP), and the Land Degradation Neutrality (LDN) targets. MoFA and MESTI will co-lead the **Food-Environment Policy Coherence Platform**, ensuring policy alignment and embedding sustainability in public subsidies and programmes.

Subnational governments, including District Assemblies and Regional Departments of Agriculture, will ensure territorial ownership, support targeting of beneficiaries, and monitor results. These structures will also help ensure that women, youth, and vulnerable populations are meaningfully engaged.

Financing Partners

The JP will be anchored in a blended finance structure involving UNCDF, GIRSAL, the Development Bank of Ghana, and selected local financial institutions. UNCDF will manage a **Loan Portfolio Guarantee Facility (LPGF)** to de-risk credit to agro-MSMEs and smallholder groups. GIRSAL and the Development Bank of Ghana will be mobilized in the scale-up phase to expand access to finance across other regions and value chains.

Engagements with private sector anchors — **Greenland Seeds and Newage Agric** — will leverage offtake and input supply contracts, acting as credit enablers and market integrators. The Ministry of Finance and its budget programming departments will be engaged to explore realignment of PFJ 2.0 funding toward climate-smart agriculture, unlocking further fiscal space for food systems transformation.

By the end of the JP, the financing solution aims to deploy **USD 1–2 million** in loans and guarantees and unlock a pipeline worth **USD 12 million** in co-financing and scale-up investments.

Other Strategic Partnerships

- **UN Agencies**: FAO (Lead), UNEP, UNDP, and UNCDF bring technical leadership, policy support, environmental safeguards, and innovative finance capabilities. The JP aligns with ongoing efforts including FAO's One Country One Priority Product (OCOP) and GEF initiatives.
- **International Development Partners**: The AfDB-managed **GAFSP** (USD20 million) will provide public sector co-financing. The EU and GEF, through UNEP, will co-finance sustainability-related policy support.
- **Civil Society and Community Groups**: Women and youth-led enterprise and cooperatives will be actively supported to participate in value chain development. Civil society organizations will be involved in capacity building, monitoring, and ensuring social inclusion.
- **Knowledge and Innovation Networks**: Engagements will include peer learning through South-South exchange, farmer field schools, and agroecological hubs.

5. Towards the Right to Adequate Food for All and Leaving No One Behind

The Joint Programme (JP) is firmly rooted in a human rights-based approach to food systems transformation, guided by the **CFS Voluntary Guidelines on the Right to Food, Gender Equality, Youth Engagement**, and the **UNSDG Operational Guide on Leaving No One Behind (LNOB)**. The JP targets the most food-insecure and marginalized groups in Ghana—particularly smallholder farmers, rural women and youth, and underserved regions in the North—through inclusive interventions that enhance their right to food, agency, and access to sustainable livelihoods.

Target Beneficiaries
Using an intersectional approach, the JP will prioritize:

- Smallholder farmers, including women and youth, especially those practicing rain-fed and manual agriculture, through Output 1 (climate-smart production), Output 2 (green processing), and Output 5 (finance access and governance).
- Women and girls, who are disproportionately affected by food insecurity and land access barriers, through Output 3 (women-led SMEs), Output 4 (policy coherence), and Output 5 (inclusive finance).
- Youth, via Output 3 and Output 5, through vocational training, green entrepreneurship, digital tools for market access, and entry into value chain nodes (e.g. aggregation, logistics).
- Children, through school feeding and awareness programmes under Output 3, improving nutrition and dietary diversity.
- Persons with disabilities and older persons, by engaging disabled and elder-friendly cooperatives and supporting inclusive MSME models.
- Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) and refugees (where applicable), in partnership with local authorities and UNHCR where needed, particularly in regions affected by climate migration or cross-border movements.

The JP aligns with the following **UN human rights mechanisms**:

- Universal Periodic Review (UPR) – Ghana's recommendations on rural poverty, women's empowerment, and climate resilience.
- CEDAW – advancing women's access to economic opportunities and land.
- CRC – ensuring child nutrition and school feeding.
- CRPD – promoting inclusion of persons with disabilities in food systems.
- CESCR – progressive realization of the right to adequate food and decent work.

Gender Equality

The JP promotes gender equality, women and youth empowerment through:

- Dedicated **financial products for women and youth-led SMEs** and green business support (Output 2,3 & 4).
- Gender-responsive value chain upgrading (Output 1 & 2).
- Capacity building in leadership and market negotiation skills for women and youth in cooperatives.
  These align with the FAO Policy on Gender Equality and **CFS Guidelines on Gender Equality and Empowerment of Women and Girls** in the context of food security and nutrition.

Youth Empowerment

The JP integrates youth via:

- Climate-smart farming and regenerative agri-enterprises (Output 1).
- Skills training, incubation hubs, and access to finance for green start-ups (Output 3 & 5).
- Digital tools and platforms for agri-market access.
  This approach is informed by the **CFS Voluntary Guidelines on Youth Engagement and Employment in Agriculture and Food Systems**.

Participation and Agency

The JP will ensure meaningful participation through:

- Local stakeholder consultations and **participatory M&E systems.**
- Empowering youth and women to join and lead cooperatives and multistakeholder platforms.
- Inclusion of rightsholders in the **National Steering Committee** and thematic working groups to influence decisions on land, subsidies, and markets.
- This rights-based and inclusive framework ensures that food systems transformation leaves no one behind while advancing the right to adequate food for all.

Table: Dedicated Outputs for Marginalized and Vulnerable Groups

Marginalized Group	Dedicated JP Output(s)
Smallholder food producers	Output 1, Output 2, Output 4
Women and girls	Output 1, Output 2, Output 4
Children	Output 2(school feeding, nutrition awareness)
Youth	Output 1,2, Output 4
Persons with disabilities	Output 2, Output 4 (inclusive MSMEs, accessible finance)
Older persons	Output 2, Output 4 (cooperative participation, post-harvest roles)
Indigenous peoples	N/A
Refugees & asylum seekers	N/A
Internally displaced persons	N/A
Other: Youth-headed households	N/A
Other: Landless women farmers	Output 1 and Output 3 (policy support and access to inputs)

*Note: While Ghana has limited formally recognized Indigenous populations, the programme includes traditional authorities and custodians of land in planning and implementation to respect local land tenure norms and cultural practices.

6. Challenges and Risks

The proposed JP faces a range of external and internal risks that could affect implementation timelines, resource flows, stakeholder coordination, and delivery of intended outcomes. The design

integrates a proactive risk mitigation strategy, with shared risk ownership among UN agencies, national counterparts, and private sector actors.

External Risks

1. Political and Policy Uncertainty

Potential political transitions in 2024–2025 may delay policy alignment processes and disrupt continuity in leadership, especially at the ministerial and district levels. This may impact on the operationalization of the National Food-Environment Policy Coherence Platform or harmonization of subsidies.

Mitigation: Engage both political and technical leadership across ministries early; secure cross-party policy commitments; ensure MoUs and steering structures are institutionalized beyond individuals.

2. Climate and Natural Disasters

Erratic rainfall, droughts, and floods—especially in northern Ghana—may affect crop yields, infrastructure, and access to inputs.

Mitigation: Promote drought-resistant seeds and water-use efficiency (Output 1); include contingency planning in production pilots; coordinate with Ghana Meteorological Agency and NADMO for early warning and adaptation response.

3. Market and Economic Shocks

Currency fluctuations, inflation, or global soybean price volatility may affect the viability of input supply, SME margins, or investment appetite.

Mitigation: Develop localized procurement and production models to reduce exposure to imports; ensure flexible pricing clauses in procurement; apply blended finance models to buffer shocks (Output 5).

Internal and Institutional Risks

4. Institutional Coordination and Capacity Constraints

Overlapping mandates and weak inter-ministerial coordination (e.g., MoFA, MESTI, MLGRD) may delay implementation or dilute accountability. At local levels, capacity to roll out complex interventions like environmental incentives or RECP may be limited.

Mitigation: The National Steering Committee, co-chaired by UNRC and MoFA, will ensure vertical and horizontal coordination. Capacity-building efforts are embedded across Outputs 1–4. District-level technical staff will receive targeted training.

5. Financial and Procurement Delays

Slow disbursement cycles or delays in procurement could stall the implementation of time-sensitive activities (e.g. input supply, equipment for SMEs).

Mitigation: Fast-track approval processes via pooled procurement planning among PUNOs; align with existing UN and Government delivery mechanisms; stagger activities based on seasonal calendars.

6. Stakeholder Engagement and Participation Gaps

Lack of inclusive participation—particularly of women, youth, and farmer groups—could undermine ownership and equity.

Mitigation: Build in inclusive multi-stakeholder platforms from inception (Output 5); deploy participatory M&E; dedicated resources to CSO engagement, cooperative strengthening, and digital inclusion tools.

Deal-Breaker Risks

- Failure to unlock blended finance and de-risk investments (Output 5): This would jeopardize scaling potential and JP sustainability.

Mitigation: UNCDF and UNDP will pilot risk-sharing tools early, with strong M&E, and engage GIRSAL/DBG to co-design scale-up pathways.

- Inadequate seed systems or delays in regenerative input delivery (Output 1): This would reduce yield targets and disrupt seasonal planning.
  Mitigation: Early procurement and partnership agreements with Greenland Seeds and Newage Agric; buffer stock mechanisms for drought-resistant inputs.

Risk Management Governance:
A Risk Mitigation Plan will be regularly updated by the JP coordination unit and reviewed quarterly by the Steering Committee. Each Outcome will have assigned "risk owners" responsible for early warning, reporting, and triggering of mitigation measures.

7. Sustainability and exit strategy

The JP embeds sustainability across financial, institutional, and community dimensions to ensure continuity and scalability beyond the 24-month implementation period. The exit strategy focuses on institutional ownership, policy alignment, capacity transfer, and market-based solutions to ensure long-term impact without ongoing reliance on external support.

Financial Sustainability
The JP will conduct a scoping study for a blended finance mechanism, anchored by the Loan Portfolio Guarantee Facility (LPGF), to explore designing a loan portfolio guarantee to operate beyond the JP's life. UNCDF and UNDP will conduct the scoping exercise for the pilot facility in Year 1 and engage with Development Bank of Ghana (DBG) and GIRSAL to explore possibilities of adoption and expansion of the instrument nationally beyond the project. The design is aligned with the Government of Ghana's agriculture financing strategy and can be institutionalized through national financial intermediaries, leveraging ongoing GAFSP and PFJ 2.0 investments.

Greenland Seeds and Newage Agric will continue as anchor firms with outgrower schemes that generate sustained demand for regenerative inputs and services. Once risk-sharing models prove viable, the private sector is expected to scale independently. Future growth will be supported by (DFIs) and domestic banks with improved confidence in smallholders and SME performance.

Institutional Sustainability
Key policy shifts—such as the establishment of a National Food-Environment Policy Coherence Platform—will be jointly led by MoFA and MESTI, ensuring national policy integration (NDCs, NBSAPs, LDN targets, and the Food Systems Pathway). UNEP will build institutional capacity for environmental incentives and eco-audits, with MoFA and MESTI owning and mainstreaming these tools.

FAO and UNEP will support the development of technical guidelines and training modules for sustainable land restoration, soil management, and RECP standards, which will be integrated into MoFA's extension system and district-level agriculture services. FAO will also work with MoFA to embed soybean-specific modules into OCOP and Feed Ghana programmes, ensuring institutional uptake.

Community and Local Ownership
The JP will foster long-term community ownership through strengthened farmer cooperatives and women/youth-led MSMEs. These groups will receive targeted technical assistance, financial literacy, and market access support through the Market Systems Development (MSD) approach. This enables them to operate as viable business entities post-JP.

Additionally, partnerships with schools and local governments will promote nutrition-sensitive procurement (e.g., soya-based foods in school feeding programmes), creating sustained demand for local production. The awareness and behavioural change components led by FAO will institutionalize dietary shifts towards biodiverse, nutritious foods.

Scalability and Replication
The JP serves as a proof of concept for climate-smart, nature-positive soybean value chain transformation. Its structure, anchored by market-based instruments, multi-stakeholder platforms, and policy coherence—can be replicated for other commodities and regions. Lessons from pilot hubs will inform scale-up strategies, including cross-sectoral coordination and DFI engagement.

Exit Strategy and Preconditions
The JP exit will be phased, with key handovers starting in the second year. Preconditions include:

- Institutionalization of policy platforms (MoFA, MESTI).
- Functional LPGF with initial capital and pilot success.
- Operational anchor partnerships with private sector.
- Capacity embedded in national/district-level systems.
- Continued budget alignment and co-financing from Government (e.g., PFJ 2.0, GAFSP).

The UN system's role will shift from direct implementation to advisory and convening support during scale-up phases.

8. Management arrangements

The JP will be implemented through inclusive, participatory, and transparent governance structures aligned with the UNSDG Guidance Note on Joint Programmes. The institutional setup will ensure coordination, accountability, and delivery across the UN system and key national stakeholders.

Joint Programme Steering Committee (JPSC)
The JPSC will serve as the apex decision-making body, overseeing strategic direction, high-level coordination, and accountability for results. The JPSC will:

- Be co-chaired by the UN Resident Coordinator (RC) and a senior representative of the Ministry of Food and Agriculture (MoFA).
- Include representatives from participating UN organizations (FAO, UNDP, UNEP), the Ministry of Environment, Science, Technology and Innovation (MESTI), the Ministry of Finance, GIRSAL, and selected non-UN implementation partners (e.g. Greenland Seeds, Newage Agric, Mastercard, and a representative from the private sector or civil society).
- Meet semi-annually, or as needed, to review progress, approve annual work plans and budgets, resolve bottlenecks, and ensure alignment with national development priorities.
- Ensure linkages with other relevant food systems, climate, and resilience governance mechanisms in Ghana.

The JPSC will follow the standard ToRs set out in the UNSDG guidance unless adjustments are needed and agreed by all partners.

Joint Programme Team (JPT)
The JPT will be responsible for the day-to-day technical coordination and implementation of activities across the workstreams and geographical locations. The JPT will:

- Be **led by FAO** as the Lead PUNO and includes focal points from **UNEP and UNDP**, with **UNCDF** providing technical inputs on financing mechanisms.

- Include dedicated programme managers, M&E specialists, knowledge management officers, and gender/youth focal points from the respective PUNOs.
- Hold **monthly coordination meetings** to ensure progress tracking, harmonized implementation, adaptive management, and reporting. Ad hoc meetings will be held as necessary to resolve emerging operational issues.
- Report to the JPSC and liaise closely with the national coordination mechanisms for Feed Ghana, NDCs, and the Food Systems Pathway.

The JPT will coordinate technical backstopping, field-level support, and knowledge exchange between implementing partners. FAO will also manage coordination with the UN Country Team and ensure integration with broader UN programming frameworks (UNSDCF, GEF/GCF initiatives, OCOP, etc.).

Operations and Common Business Services

The JP will maximize use of **UN common services** to enhance cost-effectiveness, operational coherence, and reduce transaction costs. These services include:

- Joint procurement where feasible (e.g. input, visibility materials).
- Shared logistics and transport arrangements.
- Common M&E tools and digital platforms for data collection and reporting.
- Harmonized visibility and communication in line with the Joint SDG Fund guidelines.

The management arrangements are designed to foster strong collaboration across UN agencies and national actors while ensuring delivery of results, effective risk mitigation, and sustainability beyond the life of the programme.

9. Monitoring, accountability, financial management, and public disclosure

Reporting on the Joint SDG Fund will be focused on concrete results and grounded in evidence. The RCO focal point and lead PUNO is responsible for coordinating and drafting a concise annual report (using the Fund Secretariat template/guidance), which is submitted to the Joint SDG Fund Secretariat through the RC by January 31st of the following year. Additionally, a final narrative report must be prepared and submitted to the Joint SDG Fund Secretariat through the RC no later than two (2) months after the operational closure of the Joint Programme activities.

The JP Steering Committee, co-chaired by the RC, is mandated to oversee and monitor the implementation of the joint programme, with the involvement of Joint SDG Fund Secretariat to which it must submit data and information upon request. Additionally, the Joint SDG Fund Secretariat may request additional insights, such as policy papers, value-for-money analysis, case studies, infographics, or blogs/articles, as needed.

PUNOs will be required to include information on complementary funding received from other sources (both UN cost sharing, and external sources of funding/financing) for the activities supported by the Fund, including in kind contributions and/or South-South Cooperation initiatives, in the report.

PUNOs at Headquarters level shall provide the Administrative Agent with the following statements and reports prepared in accordance with its accounting and reporting procedures, consolidate the financial reports, as follows:

Annual financial reports as of 31st December each year with respect to the funds disbursed to it from

the Joint SDG Fund Account, to be provided no later than four months after the end of the applicable reporting period; and
A final financial report, after the completion of the activities financed by the Joint SDG Fund and including the final year of the activities, to be provided no later than 30 April of the year following the operational closing of the project activities.

The JP will be using a pass-through fund management modality where UNDP Multi-Partner Trust Fund Office will act as the Administrative Agent. The programmatic UN entity of the Facility shall assume full programmatic and financial accountability for the funds disbursed to it by the Administrative Agent of the Joint SDG Fund (Multi-Partner Trust Fund Office). Such funds will be administered by each UN Agency, Fund, and Project in accordance with its own regulations, rules, directives and procedures. The entity shall establish a separate ledger account for the receipt and administration of the funds disbursed to it by the Administrative Agent.

A minimum of 5% of the JP budget is allocated for monitoring, reporting, evaluation, audit and communications. Indirect costs of the Participating Organizations recovered through project support costs will be 7%, with exception of WFP and UNHCR which should be 6,5%. All other costs incurred by each PUNO in carrying out the activities for which it is responsible under the Fund will be recovered as direct costs. Procedures on financial transfers, extensions, financial and operational closure, and related administrative issues are stipulated in the Operational Guidance of the Joint SDG Fund. PUNOs and partners must comply with Joint SDG Fund brand guidelines, which includes information on donor visibility requirements.

ANNEX 1: Mapping of related projects, investments and other development initiatives

List relevant initiatives from the UN system, Government, IFIs, bilateral donors , civil society, the private sector, and other partners, as relevant.

Name of project/ investment / initiative	Relevance for the JP	Lead actors and partners	Budget and funding source	Timeframe
Support for soybean Development in Ghana	JP will leverage on the 50 HA land developed, solar powered irrigation system developed to facilitate women and youth access to land, green energy and water for all year-round production of soybean	FAO, MOFA, School feeding programme	600, 000 (USD)	March 2023-September 2024
Greenland Seed Company	Leveraging on its existing network of 333 (295 female) soybean seed producers, over 1000 grain producers, and expertise in farmer training, input supply, seed production and off taker arrangement	MOFA	1 million (USD)	2023 to date
Newage Agric Solutions Ltd	Mobilize donors funding (through the Mastercard/HAPPY project) for youth and women-led seed enterprises, agronomic extension services, and value addition	MoFA, Mastercard, Happy project	3 million (USD)	Private sector - ongoing
Savannah Agricultural Value Chain Development Project (SADEP),	The JP will build on the foundation laid by the Savannah Agricultural Value Chain Development Project (SADEP), which is supporting the release of the pod clearance variety,	MOFA	21.7 million (USD)	2022-2026

	the JP will collaborate with the Savanna Agricultural Research Institute (SARI) to facilitate the production of foundation seed for the pod clearance variety following its release. This initiative will ensure that private seed producers have access to high-quality foundation seeds, enabling them to generate a greater supply of certified seeds for farmers. By increasing farmers' access to pod clearance seed varieties, we aim to significantly reduce labour costs, save time, and alleviate the drudgery associated with manual soybean harvesting—particularly for women farmers. This transition to more efficient and sustainable			
Feed Ghana Programme	The JP will contribute to advancing the Feed Ghana Programme, which aims to support research institutions in accelerating the development and release of improved soybean varieties with good pod clearance — specifically those that pod 25cm above ground, ideal for mechanical harvesting.	MOFA	0	2024-2028

ANNEX 2: Integrated results framework, work plan and budget

Joint Programme Outcomes	Baseline	Target Year 1 Phase I	Target Year 2 Phase II	Means of Verification
CF Outcome Statement: Sustainable agriculture drives agro-industrialization and economic growth, with enhanced productivity and resilience of smallholder farmers through adoption of climate-smart and regenerative practices				
JP Specific Outcome: Increased smallholder farmers' productivity and climate resilience by enhancing their capacities on climate-smart/regenerative agriculture production and post-harvest practices and technologies.				
Outcome indicator 1.1: Number of smallholder farmers (including women and youth) adopting climate-smart/regenerative agriculture practices.	0	5 000	5 000	Project Report
Outcome indicator 1.2: The number of farmers including women trained in climate smart and post-harvest technologies	0	5 000	5 000	Project Report
CF Outcome Statement: Food systems ensure access to nutritious and safe diets for all, contributing to improved nutrition and dietary diversity in vulnerable communities.				
JP Specific Outcome: Increased utilization of soybean-based products in household diets and school meals through strengthened capacities of women, youth, and school caterers.				
Outcome indicator 2.1: Number of households and schools incorporating soy-based products into meals.	0	750	750	Project report
Outcome indicator 2.2: Number of MSMEs adopting soy-based green processing technologies.	0	5	5	Project report
CF Outcome Statement: Coherent and inclusive governance systems support sustainable food systems transformation aligned with climate, biodiversity, and land restoration goals.				
JP Specific Outcome: National food-environment governance frameworks institutionalized to enable policy coherence, environmental sustainability, and cross-sectoral collaboration.				
Outcome indicator 3.1: Number of national food-environment policy coherence platforms established and operational.	0	1	0	Project report
Outcome indicator 3.2: Number of capacity-building tools and modules	0	2	2	Project report

developed to support integration of biodiversity and climate targets into food systems policy.				
CF Outcome Statement: Inclusive access to finance enables resilient and equitable growth in sustainable agrifood systems and green entrepreneurship for women and youth.				
JP Specific Outcome: Expanded access to finance for MSMEs and women- and youth-led enterprises through investment clinics, innovative financing mechanisms, and multi-stakeholder platforms to drive sustainable soybean value chain growth.				
Outcome indicator 4.1: Number of MSMEs and cooperatives benefiting from financing mechanisms or investment partnerships.	0	5	5	Project report
Outcome indicator 4.2: Establishment of inclusive multi-stakeholder platform to strengthen value chain governance and facilitate cross-learning.	0	0	1	Project report

Joint SDG Fund Indicators

Global Indicator	Phase I	Phase II
S.2.1 – Number of people benefiting from food systems transformation levers and activities to improve food security and nutrition outcomes	410,000 beneficiaries (10,000 smallholder farmers + 400,000 schoolchildren)	750,000 beneficiaries (50,000 smallholder farmers + 700,000 schoolchildren)
S.2.2 – Amount of additional financing leveraged for food systems transformation initiatives	USD 6–8 million	USD 12 million
S.2.3 – Number of new and improved evidence-based food systems policies/strategies developed and implemented	2: Establishment of National Food-Environment Policy Coherence Platform + Environmental Incentives Toolbox	1: Institutionalization of food-environment governance and integration into national strategies (e.g., Feed Ghana, NDCs, NBSAPs)
S.2.4 – Number of farmers and producers adopting innovative and sustainable food production practices	10,000 farmers (climate-smart/regenerative practices and post-harvest technologies)	50,000 farmers (expanded regenerative practices and seed production systems)

PHASE I Joint Programme Workplan

Outcome/Output	Geographic Focus	Phase I Start	Phase I End	PUNO	SDG Targets	Gender Equality Marker	QCPR Function	Phase I Budget (USD)
Outcome 1: Increased smallholder farmers' productivity and climate resilience by enhancing their capacities on climate-smart/regenerative agriculture production and post-harvest practices and technologies.	Savannah, Northern and Upper West regions	October 2025	March 2027	FAO	SDG 2.4, 13.2, 1.5, 5.5	2 – Gender equality is a significant objective		**150,000**
Outcome 2: Increased utilization of soybean-based products in household diets and school meals through strengthened capacities of women, youth, and school caterers.	Savannah, Northern and Upper West regions	October 2025	March 2027	FAO	SDG 2.1, 2.2, 3.4, 5.5	2 – Gender equality is a significant objective	1 – Capacity development and technical cooperation	**100,000**
Outcome 3: National food-environment governance frameworks institutionalized to enable policy coherence, environmental sustainability, and cross-sectoral collaboration.	National (Policy-level intervention with links to all target regions)	October 2025	March 2027	UNEP	SDG 2.4, 13.2, 15.9, 17.14	1 – Gender equality is a limited objective	2 – Institution building	**100,000**
Outcome 4: Expanded access to finance for MSMEs and women- and youth-led enterprises through investment clinics, innovative financing	Savannah, Northern and Upper West regions	October 2025	March 2027	UNDP / UNCDF	SDG 8.3, 9.3, 5.a, 2.3	2 – Gender equality is a significant objective	3 – Policy advice and advocacy	**150,000**

mechanisms, and multi-stakeholder platforms to drive sustainable soybean value chain growth.								

ANNEX 3: PHASE I Budget per UNSDG Categories

UNSDG BUDGET CATEGORIES	PUNO 1 (FAO)		PUNO 2 (UNDP)		PUNO 3 (UNEP)		Total	
	Joint SDF Fund (USD)	PUNO Contribution (USD)	Joint SDF Fund (USD)	PUNO Contribution (USD)	Joint SDF Fund (USD)	PUNO Contribution (USD)	Joint SDF Fund (USD)	PUNO Contribution (USD)
1. Staff and other personnel	65,000		20,000		73,458		158,458	
2. Supplies, Commodities, Materials	56,238		20,000				76,238	
3. Equipment, Vehicles, and Furniture (including Depreciation)	20,004		5,000				25,004	
4. Contractual services	20,000		25,000		10,000		55,000	
5.Travel	27,000	700,000	15,000	600,000	10,000	1,700,000	52,000	3,000,000
6. Transfers and Grants to Counterparts	25,500		45,000				70,500	
7. General Operating and other Direct Costs	19,903		10,187				30,090	
Total Direct Costs	**233,645**		**140,187**		**93,458**		**467,290**	
8. Indirect Support Costs (7% of total direct costs – except for WFP and UNHCR which should apply 6.5% of total direct costs)	16,355		9,813		6,542		32,710	
TOTAL Costs	**250,000**	**700,000**	**150,000**	**600,000**	**100,000**	**1,700,000**	**500,000**	**3,000,000**

ANNEX 3: Gender Equality, Human Rights, Peace markers

Gender Equality Marker
Please copy the output as per in the workplan and add the Gender Equality marker score and justify the scoring. Please refer to the UNSDG guidance here: https://help.uninfo.org/un-info/results-framework/results-framework-structure/suboutput-level/guidance-on-applying-tags-and-markers/guidance-on-applying-the-gender-equality-human-rights-and-sustaining-peace-markers

Joint Programme Outputs	GEM Score	Justification
Output 1: Climate-smart/regenerative agriculture production technologies disseminated	2	Promoting climate-smart and regenerative agriculture technologies, and post-harvest technologies will specifically target women and youth and equip them to mitigate the effects of climate change on their crops and improve their overall productivity. It aims to increase income and improve livelihoods for smallholder farmers, particularly women, youth through improved access to resources and knowledge by facilitating access to information and decision-making resources. This will include targeted capacity-building of women and youth -led enterprises, women, youth farmers in Good Agricultural Practices, sustainable agriculture practices, and the linking of smallholder producers to extension advisory services, access to inputs suppliers, and services providers. Community demonstration farms, farmer field days approach will significantly contribute to gender equality by addressing structural barriers for women and youth in post-harvest value addition. Women and youth farmers will be equipped with post-harvest technologies and assets for their economic empowerment.
Output 2: Green processing and the utilization of soybean-based products in school meals and household diets/ industrial use promoted	2	Nutrition education campaigns and sensitization will focus on utilization of soybean-based products in household diets, and incorporation of soya-based recipes into school meals. This aims to diversify diets and increase protein intake among resource poor households, and enhance the nutritional quality of the meals provided, thereby contributing to addressing malnutrition among schoolchildren. This integrates nutrition education targeting women and youth, who are often primary caregivers and play a major role in household food security. It also supports women-led food enterprises and women's role in school feeding programmes.
Output 3: Policy Coherence and Environmental Governance	2	Governance level structures will prioritize multi-sectoral coordination in the establishment of Food Systems governance structures with environmental, climate, and nutrition goals. This aims to align national and subnational governance structures with climate and environmental goals in a manner that includes gender-responsive policy coherence. The JP targets barriers to women's and youth's participation in food systems governance and supports inclusive policy dialogues.
Output 4: Enhance Food Systems Governance and Innovative Financing	2	It directly addresses gender-specific barriers in accessing finance, targeting women- and youth-led MSMEs through innovative financing mechanisms and loan guarantee schemes. It includes value chain scenario analysis to identify and address financing gaps, strategies to de-risk private sector investments in gender-responsive enterprises, improve women's financial literacy, and promote equal access to productive assets.

Human Rights Marker

Please copy the output as per in the workplan and add the Human Rights marker score and justify the scoring. Please refer to the UNSDG guidance here: https://help.uninfo.org/un-info/results-framework/results-framework-structure/suboutput-level/guidance-on-applying-tags-and-markers/guidance-on-applying-the-gender-equality-human-rights-and-sustaining-peace-markers

Joint Programme Outputs	HRM Score	Justification
Outputs 1: Climate-smart/regenerative agriculture production technologies disseminated	2	The JP is a deliberate focus on inclusive access to climate-smart agriculture (CSA), addressing systemic barriers faced by marginalized groups (e.g., women, youth, and smallholder farmers in northern Ghana). This includes targeted support for smallholder farmers, particularly women and youth, reduce. post-harvest losses and enhance value retention across the value chain. The technologies and extension services will be disseminated through participatory approaches that promote the rights to food, livelihood, and participation in decision-making, ensuring that vulnerable groups are not left behind.
Output 2: Promote the utilization of soybean-based products in school meals and household diets/ industrial use	2	Promoting the right to adequate food and nutrition, particularly for children and food-insecure households. It integrates nutrition-sensitive and culturally appropriate approaches that benefit vulnerable groups. It strengthens food-based social protection and engages communities in nutrition education. It also raises awareness on healthy diets and supports rights-based behavioral change.
Output 3 Policy Coherence and Environmental Governance	2	It prioritizes inclusivity and accountability in environmental governance. It ensures representation and participation of marginalized groups, including women, youth, traditional community in policy dialogue and institutional coordination. This includes human rights principles non-discrimination, participation, transparency, and accountability.
Output 4 Enhance Food Systems Governance and Innovative Financing	2	Strengthening institutional mechanisms to uphold economic and social rights (right to food, right to development) and promotes equitable access to finance and services. It ensures engagement and inclusion of vulnerable populations in financial and policy systems.

Sustaining Peace Marker

(optional- please only fill out if relevant, and add the marker to the workplan above)

Please copy the output/outcomes as per in the workplan and add the Sustaining Peace marker score justify the scoring. Please refer to the UNSDG guidance here: Please refer to the UNSDG guidance here: https://help.uninfo.org/un-info/results-framework/results-framework-structure/suboutput-level/guidance-on-applying-tags-and-markers/guidance-on-applying-the-gender-equality-human-rights-and-sustaining-peace-markers

Joint Programme Outputs	SPM Score	Justification

Output 1: Farmers adopt climate-smart and regenerative agricultural production technologies	1	The JP contributes to social cohesion by addressing rural economic vulnerabilities and enhancing livelihoods, particularly in underserved areas of northern Ghana. By reducing post-harvest losses, it strengthens food security and household incomes, helping to mitigate risks that could heighten tensions in food-insecure communities
Output 2: Increased green processing and use of soybean-based products in school meals, household diets, and industry.	1	By improving child nutrition and reducing household food insecurity, the intervention contributes to long-term human capital development and social stability. It also builds trust in public institutions, such as school feeding programmes
Output 3 Policy Coherence and Environmental Governance	1	Contributing to sustaining peace through inclusive governance structures, promoting social cohesion, and reducing risks of conflict over natural resources. Environmental governance is strengthened with a focus on inclusive participation, equitable resource management, and inter-agency coordination key to reducing fragility in climate-vulnerable and conflict-prone areas.
Output 4: Enhance governance of food systems and promote innovative financing solutions.	1	The programme promotes resilience and reduces fragility in food-insecure regions, contributing directly to conflict prevention, trust-building, and social cohesion. Improving access to finance and productive land—especially for marginalized groups such as women and youth—helps ease tensions linked to resource distribution, livelihood insecurity, and unemployment. While the contribution to peace is indirect, it is significant, particularly in fragile contexts

ANNEX 4: Overview of the Communications and visibility plan

Present the strategy and activities for strategic communications for the joint programme. It should be integrated into the work plan of the joint programme and costed. Communication results and approach should reflect country and programme context. Relate this plan with the objectives to the overall SDG communication approach (plan/strategy) of the UNCT, and relevant government communication strategy/ies.
- Note that the joint programme must respect Joint SDG Fund brand guidelines, including information on donor visibility requirements
- Use the format provided below and do not exceed 2-3 pages, not counting eventual graphs.

Overall narrative

The Joint Programme (JP) aims to drive inclusive, climate-resilient, and nutrition-sensitive food systems transformation in Ghana through a nature-positive soybean value chain. Through practical, scalable innovations—such as regenerative agriculture, circular processing, and blended finance—the JP addresses rural poverty, food insecurity, and environmental degradation, particularly in underserved northern regions. Strategic communication will amplify the JP's contribution to human capital development, trust in public institutions, and policy coherence, positioning soybean as a national flagship for systemic transformation

Objectives and Main Activities

Objective 1: Raise awareness and support for the Joint Programme among national stakeholders and beneficiaries.

Target audience: Government, district authorities, smallholder farmers, youth and women groups, cooperatives.

Activity	Description	Responsible	Monitoring
1.1	Develop and disseminate a communication toolkit including factsheets, FAQs, and branded materials in English and local languages.	FAO (Lead), MoFA, District Assemblies	Toolkit produced and distributed in all project locations
1.2	Organize local launch events and community sensitization campaigns, including radio spots and durbars.	FAO, District Agricultural Offices, WIAD	Event reports, photos, media coverage
1.3	Produce human interest stories and beneficiary profiles to document impact on smallholders, especially women and youth.	UNDP Communications Unit	Minimum 3 stories published (web/social) per year
1.4	Establish feedback mechanisms at the community level (e.g., listening groups, hotlines, feedback boxes).	FAO, Local CSOs	Monthly feedback summary reports
1.5	Use community radio and mobile SMS platforms to share key messages on soybean production, nutrition, and finance.	FAO, local media partners	Broadcast logs, listener engagement data

Objective 2: Strengthen visibility and donor recognition in line with Joint SDG Fund brand guidelines.

Target audience: Donors, development partners, UN agencies, private sector, media.

Activity	Description	Responsible	Monitoring
2.1	Brand all communication materials, field sites, and visibility items with SDG Fund and donor logos.	All PUNOs (FAO, UNDP, UNEP)	Quarterly photo documentation
2.2	Share progress and results through joint UN press releases, social media campaigns, and newsletters.	RCO, FAO Communications	Minimum 4 major communications annually
2.3	Host at least one joint high-level field visit with donor participation.	RCO, MoFA, UNCT	Field visit report and media coverage

2.4	Contribute articles to UNCT Ghana's SDG newsletter and websites.	RCO Comms Focal Point, PUNOs	Minimum 2 publications per year
2.5	Document success stories and lessons in multimedia formats (videos, infographics).	UNDP/FAO Comms Teams	At least 2 multimedia products per year

Objective 3: Support national advocacy and policy coherence through strategic messaging.

Target audience: Policy makers, researchers, national platforms, private sector actors.

Activity	Description	Responsible	Monitoring
3.1	Develop policy briefs, infographics, and data visualizations based on results and evaluations.	UNEP, FAO, UNDP	Two briefs published per year
3.2	Share JP results at national fora, e.g., Food Systems Policy Platforms and Feed Ghana events.	MoFA, UNCT	Number of presentations/events
3.3	Align messages with national campaigns on food security, biodiversity, climate resilience.	MoFA, MESTI, RCO	Messaging aligned in joint advocacy
3.4	Host webinars and learning events for stakeholders and partners.	RCO, UNDP, UNEP	At least 2 learning events per year
3.5	Engage journalists and influencers in media briefings on food systems transformation.	FAO, RCO Comms	Number of media engagements

Integration and Budgeting

This Communications and Visibility Plan will be fully integrated into the Joint Programme's work plan and M&E framework. A minimum of 5% percent of the total budget is allocated for monitoring, evaluation, communications, and visibility. The plan will be implemented in coordination with the UNCT SDG Communications Strategy, and aligned with Ghana's national communications frameworks, including PFJ 2.0, Feed Ghana, and MoFA's public engagement initiatives.

All communications activities will comply with the Joint SDG Fund brand guidelines, including proper visibility of donors and contributing partners.