

CONSCIOUS FOOD SYSTEMS ALLIANCE (CoFSA)

RECONNECTING WITH OURSELVES, EACH OTHER AND NATURE

Key messages

CoFSA

1. The Conscious Food Systems Alliance (CoFSA) is pioneering the application of evidence-based methods to cultivate the whole human as a vital element to transforming the food systems.
2. Now is the time
3. UNDP is seeking core partners to co-create the alliance and help build the future we want
4. Work in progress and emergent strategies

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The Rationale

02

CoFSA: The Concept

03

Making it happen



01

The Rationale

“Yesterday I was clever, so I wanted to change the world. Today I am wise so I am changing myself.”

What is the main blind spot in our collective efforts to achieve sustainable food systems?



The sustainability community works on:

- Policies and projects,
- Legal and institutional frameworks,
- Technologies,
- Investments,
- Capacity-building,
- Research
- Etc.

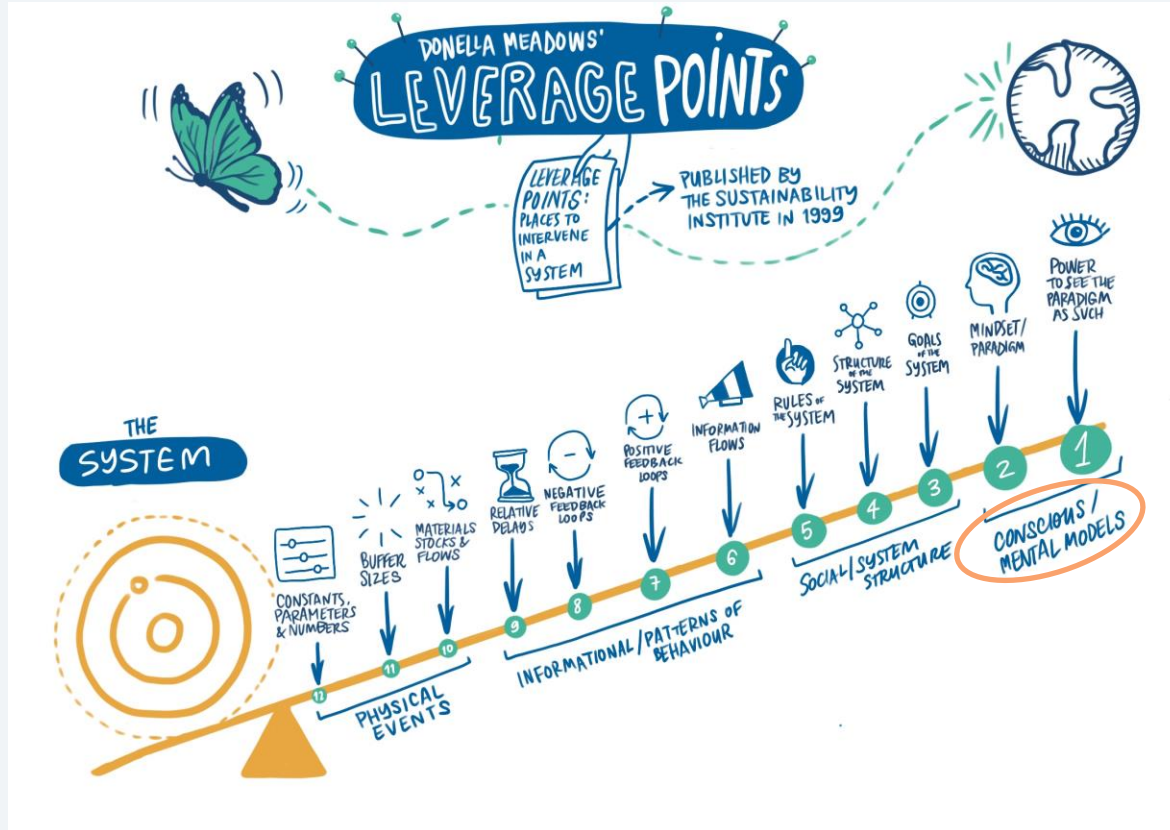
But results are not enough and we are running out of time

Why aren't we able to turn the many solutions we have into the systemic transformations we need?

How can we reinvent our work after the COVID-19 pandemics ?

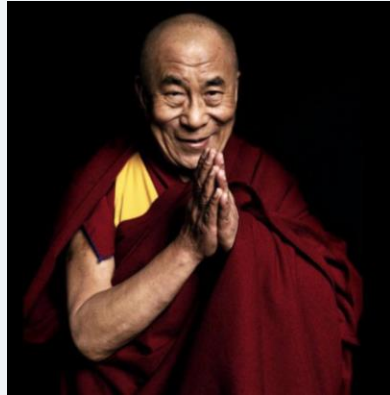
Addressing problems at the root-cause level

The most powerful way to change a system is to change consciousness

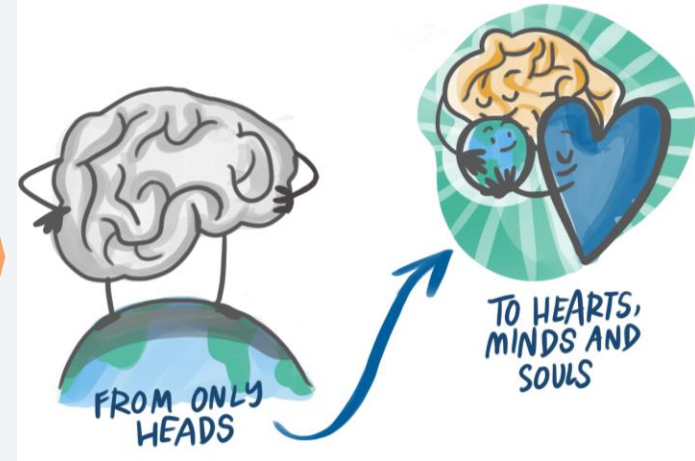


The importance of inner change for sustainability is increasingly recognized

THE RATIONALE



*“the fundamental problem [...] is that at every level we are giving too much attention to the external, material aspects of life, while neglecting moral ethics and inner values”
(H.H. the Dalai lama)*



*“A change of minds and hearts”
(The Earth Charter)*

A leadership based on « being » rather than only « doing »

Leaders need to access their emotional and whole-body intelligence – head, heart, gut.

Internal Sensing

- Accessing their whole-body wisdom.
 - Emphasis on exploring authentic being that we are, versus the traditional focus on what we are supposed to be doing as leaders.
 - Deep self-awareness and courage.
 - Recognizing they are part of the systems they seek to change
 - Connect with a higher purpose
-

External sensing

- Aptitude to foster reflection, more generative conversations and collaborative learning.
 - Capacity to create trusted relationships that empower performance.
 - Ability to understand complex relationships.
 - Capability to shift collective focus from reactive problem solving to co-creating the future.
 - Open to experimentation and continuous learning.
-

Consciousness is emerging

Conscious and “good living” has been recognized by 500 million indigenous people.

A major evolution of values in developed countries over the last decades towards post-materialist values and self-expression values

Regenerative movements grounded in consciousness and higher values: deep ecology, empathy and compassion, mindfulness, non-violence, deep equity, happiness, systems thinking, etc.

Need to find practical pathways to translate them into new forms of actions for sustainability systemically integrated to our work, scale them up and articulate them in a new narrative.



Some examples of conscious development initiatives

Companies	CSOs	Governments	Academia/Education
<p>Value-based management for sustainability (e.g. Patagonia)</p> <p>Promotion of mindful consumption practices, for example by Mondelez</p> <p>Mindful on Wall Street: mindfulness & compassion training in financial services</p> <p>Mindful Finance Institute</p>	<p>Charter of Compassion and its network of compassionate cities</p> <p>Earth Charter</p> <p>Extinction Rebellion's focus on shifting collective consciousness</p> <p>Many examples of indigenous communities and the support to bio-cultural conservation by NGOs such as Pachamama Alliance</p>	<p>Bhutan's Growth National Happiness and New Zealand's well-being budget</p> <p>Ecuador's "buen vivir" and Bolivia's "vivir bien" development paradigm and the recognition of the rights of nature in many countries</p> <p>Mindful Nation UK</p> <p>"Folk-Bildung" (state-funded personal development centers) in European Nordic Countries (late XIX, early XX century)</p>	<p>Institute for Advanced Sustainability Studies (IASS) – Mindset for the Anthropocene (AMA)</p> <p>Presencing Institute/Theory U</p> <p>Contemplative Sustainable Futures Program</p> <p>Various systems leadership curriculum</p> <p>Mind4Change</p> <p>TransVision</p>

But this emergence faces many challenges

New forms of economic and existential insecurity associated to rapid **social transformations** are creating a cultural backlash.

Intolerance, polarization, distrust, violence, stress, burn-outs and mental health issues are currently on the rise in many places. They are often associated with some forms of denial of the **environmental crisis**.

Sustainability practitioners and stakeholders are not exempt, which impedes our effectiveness.

The majority of the population, in particular in low-income countries, **do not have access to consciousness techniques and approaches**.



The inner path to sustainability: a practice of change

Consciousness =
3 essential connections for individuals to nourish

THE RATIONALE



Ego-
centered /
disconnected
individuals



Human, social and
environmental crises



Wellness and
pro-social behaviours



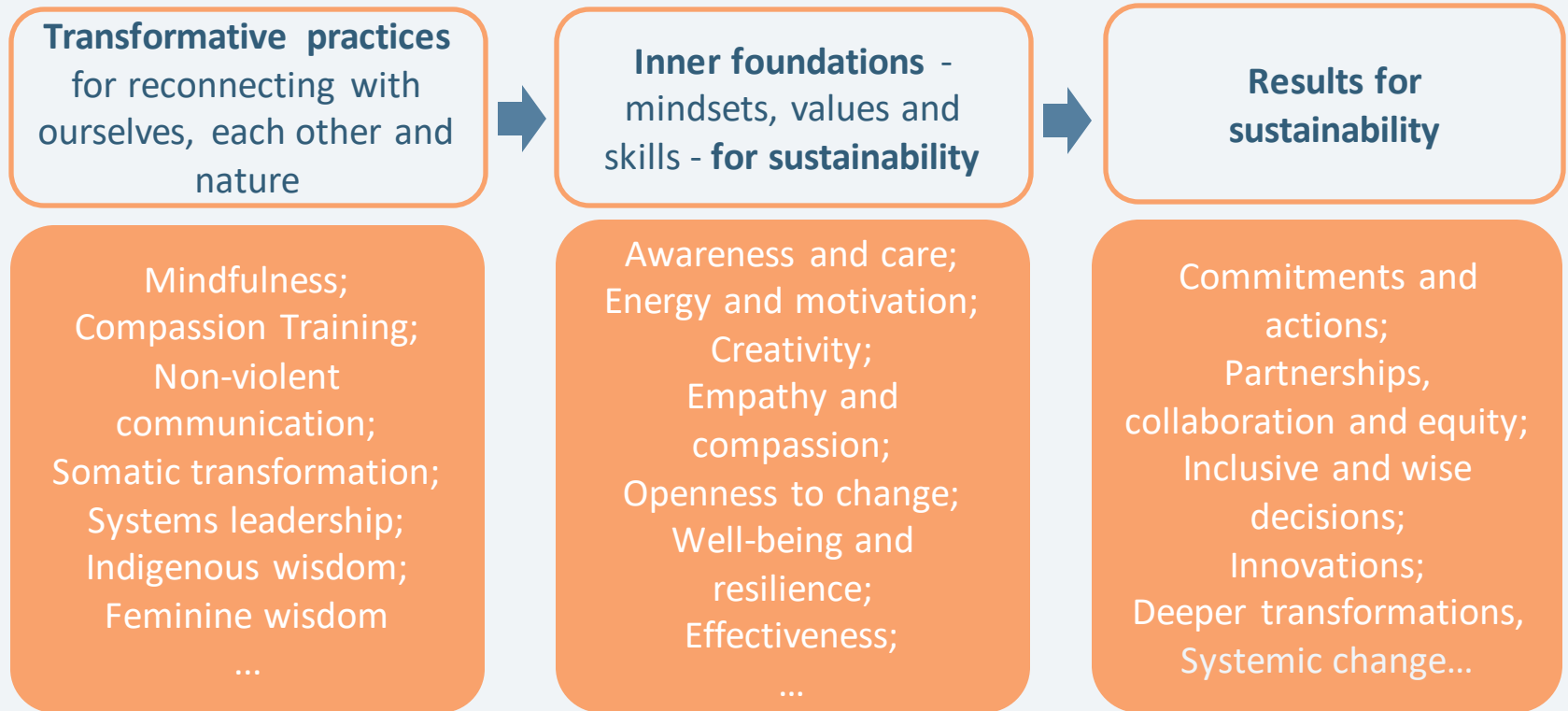
Organizational and
institutional
transformations



Systems change towards
sustainability

Consciousness approaches can build the inner foundations for sustainability

THE RATIONALE



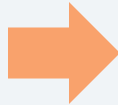
Example:
Mindfulness

Mindfulness and meditation holds the potential to reshape our brain for sustainability...

Science has evidenced the following benefits of mindfulness-based interventions:

THE RATIONALE

- Empathy and compassion;
- Care for the environment;
- Flexibility and openness;
- Creativity;
- Reduced stress and improved well-being;
- Emotional regulation;
- Healthier diets;
- Focus and productivity;
- Clarity and acceptance;
- Improved decision-making.
- Etc.



Willingness and
capacity for
transformation
towards
sustainability



Example:
Mindfulness

Mindfulness has been applied successfully in many sectors and leading organizations

Sectors

- Business
- Healthcare
- Education
- Justice
- Defense
- Sports
- Diplomacy

Companies



THE RATIONALE

Why Food and Agricultural Commodities Systems?

- Agriculture is the largest driver of greenhouse gas emissions and **biodiversity loss**; together with forest clearing (often for planting crops or for cattle grazing), agriculture accounts for **nearly a quarter of all greenhouse gas emissions**.
- A handful of global agricultural commodities play an outsized role in tropical deforestation, with beef, soy and palm oil **accounting for nearly 75% of all tropical deforestation**.
- Agriculture is the largest water user worldwide, accounting for **70% of total freshwater** withdrawals on average.
- Currently, **one third of all food produced** globally is **lost or goes to waste**.
- Sustainable agriculture can be a major contributor to **climate change mitigation**.
- Agriculture is the **largest employer in low-income countries**, accounting for 60% of the labor force and producing 25% of GDP.

Conscious Food Systems transformation requires a deeper connection with ourselves, each other and nature

- From a focus on production increase driving agricultural expansion into natural habitats to a focus on **sustainable land management**
- From mono-culture to **regenerative agriculture**
- From conventional food consumption to **reduced food loss & waste** and changing diets
- From lower farm prices for higher corporate margins to **social justice** across the supply chain and **fair prices to farmers**
- From agro-chemical subsidies to **nature-based solutions**

CoFSA: The Concept

02



The Conscious Food Systems Alliance (CoFSA)

The Conscious Food Systems Alliance (CoFSA) is pioneering the application of evidence-based methods to cultivate the whole human as a vital element to transform Food Systems.

Mission: To establish Consciousness as a recognised field of practice for systems transformation.



CoFSA unique added value

- UNDP has a trusted, convening power in 170 offices across the world
- Bringing together leading experts in consciousness, systems change and food and agricultural commodity systems
- Forging a global alliance across governments, businesses and civil society
- Working across a variety of consciousness approaches with thought leaders and practitioners
- Linking inner, organizational and systems change
- Formulating public and corporate policies for conscious food systems
- Injecting conscious practices into one of the largest global sustainability portfolio of projects
- Building on cutting edge expertise in multistakeholder collaboration

KAIROS: the opportune /spiritual moment

The world takes a breath, and in the pause before it exhales, fates can be changed...

There has never been a better time to launch such an initiative.

The **2021 United Nations Food Systems Summit** offers a unique opportunity to launch bold new actions to transform the way the world produces and consumes food and deliver progress on all 17 Sustainable Development Goals.

The combination of crises – from the immediate threat of a global pandemic along with existential threats of climate change and nature loss – is leading to a fundamental re-think of our values, from the individual to the global level, and how to re-set and re-new our world and our lives.

The search for a paradigm and systemic change increasingly points to the need to change mindsets, while science now validates the effectiveness of consciousness approaches in this regard.

CoFSA brings together a powerful combination of knowledge and wisdom from across sectors to help chart a new pathway for sustainable food systems through profound exploration and experimentation.

What CoFSA could do

Convene, facilitate and support co-creation by sustainability and systems change practitioners, as well as consciousness experts



BUILD A GLOBAL COMMUNITY

Build a global community of institutional partners and practitioners around conscious sustainability through **dedicated events** and the establishment of a global **knowledge management and communication** network.



SUPPORT ACTIONS

Injecting conscious sustainability into sustainable development programs and the formulation of public and corporate policy through **advisory and technical assistance services**.

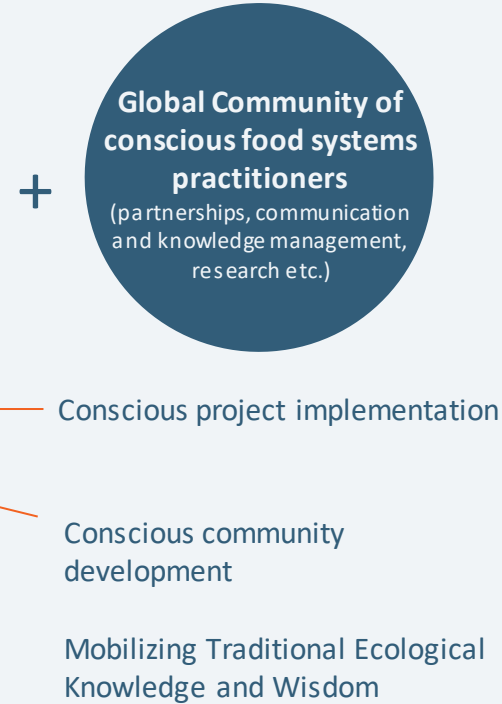
Supporting the **design, incubation, prototyping, funding and implementation** of conscious sustainability initiatives.

TRAINING, FACILITATION and COACHING

Training and coaching sustainability practitioners and stakeholders in conscious leadership.

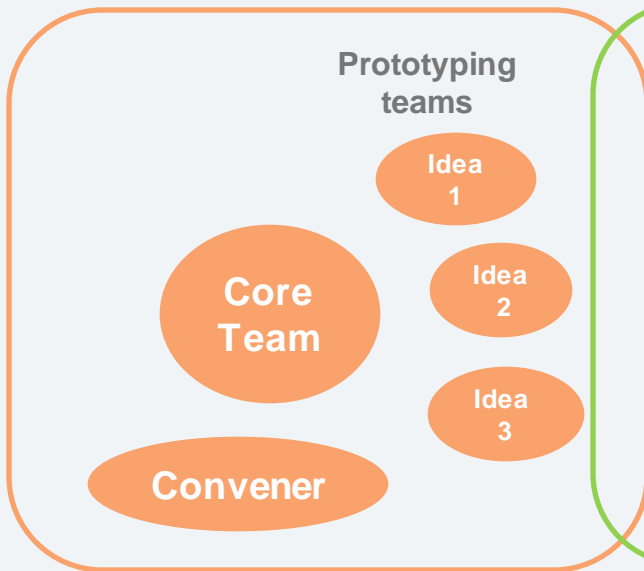
Facilitation of conscious workshops, multi-stakeholder processes and team meetings

CoFSA: THE CONCEPT



Breathing and Practice Room

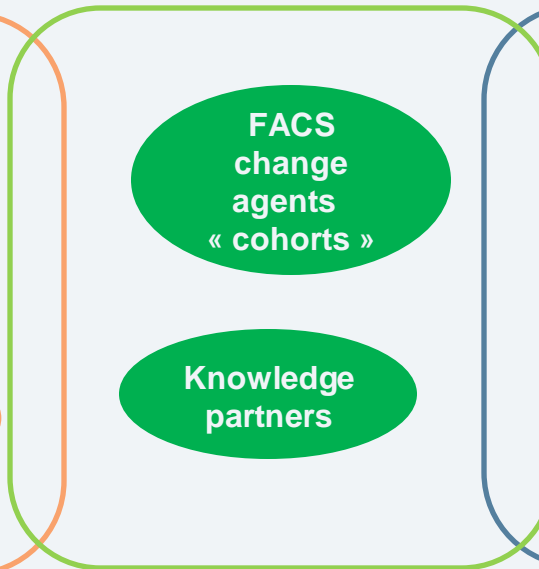
Experimenting together new ways of being and doing



Secretariat

Learning Room

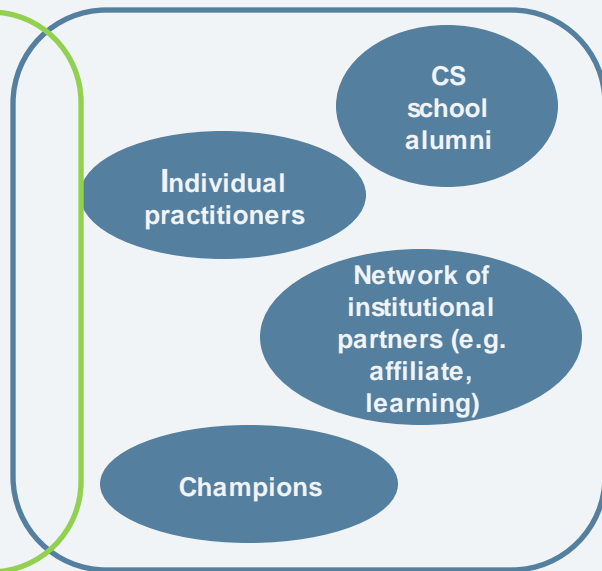
Training offer on the interlinkages between inner and systems change



Steering Committee

Community Space

Establishing a vibrant global community anchored into action



Advisory Board

CoFSA Secretariat

CoFSA: THE CONCEPT

- Team of 4-5 people creative and passionate with strong facilitation and collaboration skills
- Oversee the development, structure, fundraising and operations of the CoFSA through its 3 core elements (Breathing & Practice Room, Learning Room and Community Space)
- Deliver on a range of activities such as facilitation, logistics, partnership development, communications, analysis, documentation, etc.
- Report to the CoFSA Steering Committee

The Breathing and Practice Room

"I believe that every home should have one room for breathing. Simple practices like conscious breathing and smiling are very important. They can change our civilization" (Thich Nhat Hanh:, Peace is every step)

Breathing and
Practice Room

Objectives

- To bring together a strategic microcosm of the system to **experiment together new ways of being and doing** to address the complex challenges of food and agriculture system transformation
- To develop, fund and implement a **portfolio of prototype solutions** that are more systemic in nature
- A clear commitment to **improve our ways of working** opening-up to see, seed and grow better possibilities

Key Activities

- **Action-learning journey & prototyping** (*see next slides*)

Outputs

- The development of new insights, relationships and capacities for leadership and collaboration in food systems.

How it works?



Core Team

- Need to be “social” which means that the team reflects the diversity of stakeholders involved in the challenge
- 25-30 people
- Multi-stakeholder in nature with government, civil society, private sector – individual representation
- Mix of practitioners from food and agriculture system, consciousness and system change

Conveners

- Trusted individual/institution
- Strong experience with the proposed process of experimentation (e.g. social labs, theory U, human centered design, consciousness, system thinking/design)

Action-learning journey

CoFSA: THE CONCEPT

Why?

- To discover how to respond to the challenge of food system transformation in ways that are more **intentional**, **connected** and **transformative**
- Building capacity and confidence to lead system transformation
- To co-create the future infrastructure needed for CoFSA

Potential Convener?

Presencing Institute (MIT)/ REOS partners/IDEO for prototyping, others?

Expertise on convening **whole system/whole person** (consciousness, system thinking/design, sustainability)

Participants

Breathing Room Core Team and CoFSA Secretariat (around 30-40 people)

Estimated Duration

6 months

Potential output

- **New insights** about what is needed
- **New relationships** among diverse actors with a stake in Food and Agriculture system transformation
- **New capacities** for leadership and collaboration
- **Interventions or actions** that address the complex challenges of food system transformation by acting upon leverage points at the individual, organizational and system levels
- New **infrastructure/institutions** for CoFSA mainstreaming phase

Focus areas for potential prototype projects

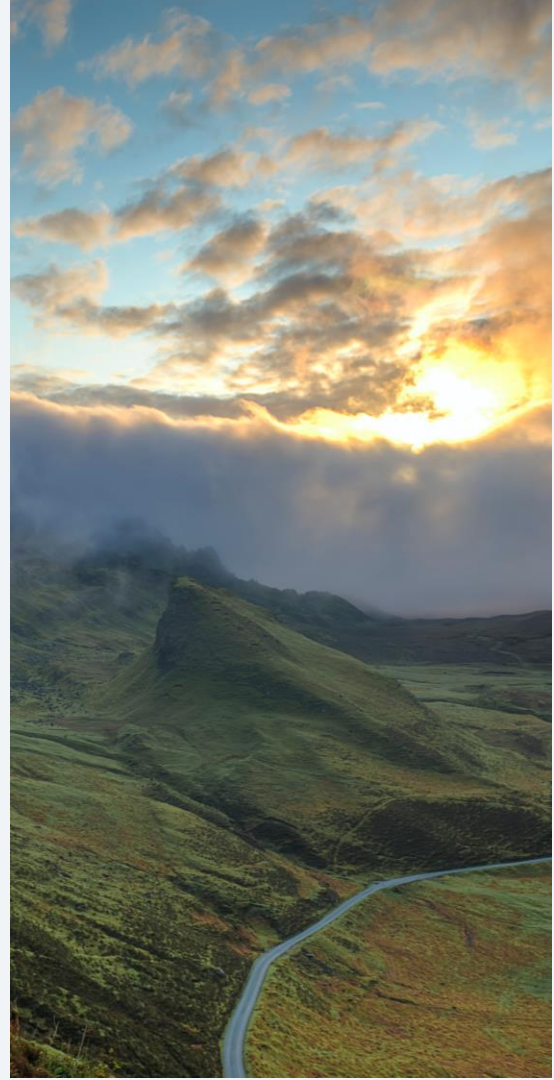
Themes: less food waste, reduced deforestation, increased regenerative agriculture, ambitious public policy on climate change, social justice for farmers & local communities

Stakeholders: Multi-Stakeholder Platforms (MSPs), consumers, companies, governments, NGOs, farmers & local community

Practices & Policies: government policies, company supply chains, consumption habits, farmer practices & livelihoods

Examples:

- Support **collaboration in multi-stakeholder platforms** through conscious facilitation, deep listening and compassion training.
- Building a community of practitioners around **mindful consumption** and leveraging consciousness for **food waste reduction**.
- **Bridging understanding between Indigenous Peoples and Commodity Supply Stakeholders**, including through immersion journeys.
- Supporting the revival of traditional practices and harnessing **Traditional Ecological Knowledge and Wisdom** for the conservation and sustainable management of resources.



The Learning Room

Objectives

- Create a space for cohorts of FACS change agents to connect and become more conscious agents of food systems transformation.
- Engage partners with a common understanding and agenda in relation to conscious food systems

Key Activities

- Conscious Food Systems Curriculum (online training course)
- Specialized courses in consciousness approaches for food systems transformation

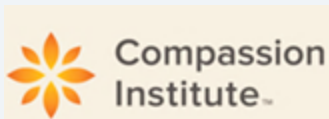
Outputs

- Alumni of FACS change agents who apply Conscious Food Systems training to their work
- Development of prototype projects with partners

A comprehensive training offer

Already available:

- Mindfulness (coordinated by Gelong Thubten)
- Compassion



In development :

- Happiness and well-being
- Emotional awareness
- Deep ecology
- Indigenous wisdom
- Feminine leadership

Different formats available, customized to partners' needs

- Online courses
- In country trainings for partner projects
- Advanced trainings of trainers

A specific Conscious Food Systems Curriculum

Learning
Room

Proposed Structure:

- 6 weeks, 2-3 hours commitment per week;
 - Two hour training session led by consciousness experts, rooted in practical application to food systems.
 - One hour learning circle in groups.

Join as a team;
minimum of 3
people per project /
organisation

Modules:

Week 1: Introduction & Foundation of Mindfulness

Week 2: Bringing Mindfulness into the Workplace

Week 3: Meeting Complex Situations with Resilience and a Fierce Heart

Week 4: Communicating with Compassion

Week 5: Conscious Food Systems Transformation

Week 6: Systems Leadership: Integration and Looking Ahead

Engaging with Partners through CoFSA Curriculum

Learning
Room

**Induction
Session**



**Induction
follow-up**



Conscious Food Systems Curriculum

Week 1: Introduction & Foundation of Mindfulness

Week 2: Bringing Mindfulness into the Workplace

Week 3: Meeting Complex Situations with Resilience and a Fierce Heart

Week 4: Communicating with Compassion

Week 5: Conscious Food Systems Transformation

Week 6: Systems Leadership: Integration and Looking Ahead



**Half-day
workshop**



**Prototyping
& tailored
support**

The Community Space

Community
space

Objective

- To establish a vibrant **Global community** of institutional and individual partners around Conscious Food Systems

Key Activities

- **Thought leadership** on Conscious Food System
- Developing and nurturing **innovative partnerships** through linking academic, practitioner, activist and conscious approaches.
- **Sharing** experience and learnings
- **Dedicated events** e.g. CoFSA Annual Summit

Outputs

- An active global **knowledge management and communication platform**



03

MAKING
IT HAPPEN



Outreach to potential partners and donors ongoing from October 2020

Key stakeholders from the agricultural commodities space

Businesses:    

Financial sector:  

Indigenous people:    

Civil society:    

Donors:     

Conscious and systems leadership experts

Some have already expressed potential interest to join CoFSA as core partners

MAKING IT HAPPEN



EKSKÅRET

But we need additional government and private sector partners to have a better representation of FACS

Different modalities of engagement

Partner	Opportunities for Engagement
Core Partner	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Join the Breathing Room and co-creation process• Design & implement prototype initiatives• Support fundraising• Join the global Community Space
Donor	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Provide seed funding and / or investment funding• Join the Breathing Room and co-creation process• Join the global Community Space
Affiliate Partner	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Join the Learning Room• Launch pilot initiatives• Join the global Community Space
Delivery Partner	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Deliver trainings, conscious facilitation, coaching and technical assistance in the Learning Room• Join the Breathing Room and co-creation process• Join the global Community Space
Individual	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Join the global Community Space

Core Team Commitment

MAKING IT HAPPEN

- Estimated time involvement: 10 days over a year
- Participate in a guided **6-month action learning journey**
- Participate in **prototyping** teams based on area of interest (more days will be needed based on interest to prototype)
- Participate as a “**whole person**” – not simply as a representative of an organisation or as an expert (which only partially represent who they are)
- Personally committed to a **systemic breakthrough** in the area of conscious food system transformation
- But ideally bring the strength of their organisations with them
- Provide **start-up funding** or help identify **fundraising opportunities**/support donor outreach

Benefits for partners

- Co-shape **CoFSA's strategic orientation** and work agenda, and position your institution at the center of his emerging field of practice and community
 - Have your **brand** associated with a **ground-breaking initiative**
-
- Access **cutting-edge transformative practices** to enhance the leadership, well-being and engagement of your staff for greater performance and impact
 - Leverage existing sustainability initiatives to drive systems transformation
 - Benefit from a **vibrant movement** and experience of a cross-sectoral **community of practitioners** cutting across all sectors of society
 - Develop and test **innovative and effective solutions** to deliver on organizational and sustainability goals
 - Develop **innovative partnerships**

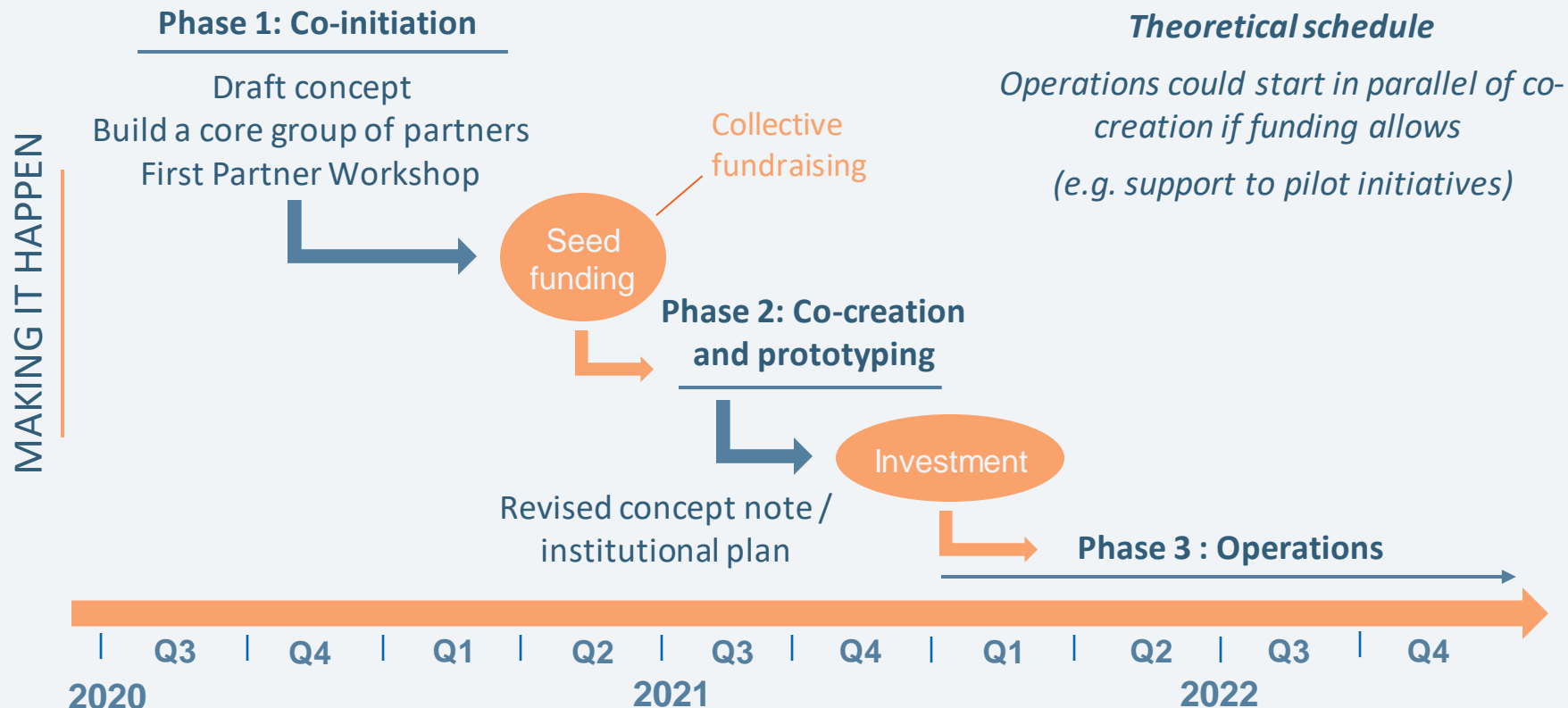
Core
partners



Increasing
benefits

Affiliate
partners

A phased approach for a flexible, organic process of emergence



Next Steps

- Share CoFSA presentation with organisation or team to bring together interested colleagues
- Follow-up call with CoFSA team for more information, clarifications or explore potential specific collaborations
- Join Second Partner Workshop – April (*date tbd*)
- Support fundraising efforts

Further materials are being developed and available on request:

- Funding proposal with budget and workplan
- Service offer and training offer
- COFSA and food system transformation

A person is sitting on a wooden pier that extends into a calm lake. The lake is surrounded by steep, forested mountains. The water reflects the surrounding landscape. The word "THANKS" is written in large, white, sans-serif capital letters across the middle of the image, with a thin orange horizontal line underneath it.

THANKS

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