PRESS RELEASE

**New handbook for cities shows how urban food markets can transform cities**

*16 global real-world case studies demonstrate the potential of food markets in cities to provide jobs and secure and safe access to food*

**31 March 2025 | Bonn, Germany / Marseille, France.** At the Climate Chance Europe Africa Summit 2025, in Marseille, France, ICLEI - Local Governments for Sustainability (ICLEI) in partnership with the Global Alliance for Improved Nutrition (GAIN) and the World Farmers Markets Coalition (WFMC), launched “The CityFood Market Handbook for Healthy and Resilient Cities.” The Handbook equips local governments with a practical, case-based guide to transforming food markets to enhance urban food security, nutrition, and resilient livelihoods.

As cities around the world grapple with rising food insecurity, climate pressures, and deepening inequalities, food markets play a critical role in building healthier, more equitable, and climate-resilient urban food systems.

With 16 real-world case studies from cities across Africa, Asia, Europe, and the Americas, the handbook offers concrete examples of how markets can be reimagined as inclusive, sustainable, and people-centered spaces, showcasing how food is accessed, consumed, and valued in cities.

This Handbook is an outcome of the *Strengthening local fresh food markets for healthier food environments within planetary boundaries* project, funded by German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) and supported by the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ).

**Ariane Hildebrandt, Director General of BMZ**, said, “Food systems and urban development have been well-established pillars of German Development Cooperation for many years. However, the integration of urban food systems as a specific approach remains less explored. This makes this publication valuable, as it not only enriches the ongoing discourse, but also provides concrete inspiration for practical implementation.”

**Gino Van Begin, Secretary General of ICLEI**, said, “Through ICLEI’s global CityFood Program, launched more than a decade ago, we have been proud to lead the way in driving food systems transformation. This program has become a hub for fostering healthy people, healthy climate, and healthy landscapes.”

He continued, “Local governments have a unique and pivotal role to play, particularly in transforming food markets. Recognizing food markets’ significance to overcome food insecurity, provide nutritious food, and ensure a sustained income for farmers, we have joined forces with other committed networks and organizations. This Handbook is a testament to that recognition.”

**Lawrence Haddad**, **Executive Director of GAIN**, said, **“**Local governments can bring stakeholders together, to flip the narrative of markets solely as cost and service delivery centres towards community food places worthy of innovative financial and infrastructural investment to leverage many other opportunities for just food systems transformation, advancing nutrition for all.”

**Richard McCarthy**, **President of WFMC**, said, **“**Cities can be creative, they can be supportive of local food through local markets. Let’s make more markets happen.”

At the core of the handbook is the **CityFood Market Action Framework**, which provides a structured approach to transforming food markets in cities through four strategic pillars, built upon the 16 featured city case studies:

* **Policy & governance** – Integrating markets into urban planning and fostering collaboration across sectors.
* **Market infrastructure** – Improving both physical and digital infrastructure to enhance food safety and reduce waste:
* **Funding & incentives** – Mobilizing financial resources to support vendors, promote local produce, and attract consumer engagement.
* **Capacity building & awareness** – Empowering communities through education and participation to drive behavioral change.

While primarily designed for local governments, the Handbook is equally relevant to businesses, researchers, civil society and non-governmental organizations, and community members.

The Handbook offers actionable insights on markets’ management, infrastructure, hygiene standards, and services that shape different food market environments — highlighting how these factors impact food security and the livelihoods of market actors. The focus is on publicly managed markets that operate regularly, whether daily, weekly, or monthly.

As part of GIZ’s Global Program Transformation of Food Systems, the *Strengthening local fresh food markets for healthier food environments within planetary boundaries* project —coordinated by ICLEI’s CityFood Program—aims to harness the potential of food markets to promote healthier and more diverse diets while enhancing urban food environments. The Handbook is part of that offering.

ICLEI and GAIN developed 16 original city case studies for the Handbook:

Baltimore and Cleveland, USA; Barcelona, Spain; Beira and Pemba, Mozambique; Bogor, Indonesia; Brașov, Romania; Curitiba and Recife, Brazil; Dar es Salaam, Tanzania; Lilongwe, Malawi; Lusaka, Zambia; Machakos, Kenya; Mbale, Uganda; Peshawar, Pakistan, and Rourkela, India.

This is the first edition of the Handbook. A new edition will be released by the end of the year, featuring additional city case studies and translations in Portuguese and Spanish.

Download the “The CityFood Market Handbook for Healthy and Resilient Cities” [here](https://cityfood-program.org/documents/cityfood-market-handbook-healthy-and-resilient-cities)

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**NOTE TO EDITORS**

**About ICLEI**

ICLEI – Local Governments for Sustainability (known as "ICLEI") is a global network of more than 2,500 local and regional governments committed to sustainable urban development. Active in 125+ countries, ICLEI influences sustainability policy and drives local action for zero emission, nature-based, equitable, resilient and circular development. ICLEI Members and its team of experts work together through peer exchange, partnerships and capacity building to create systemic change for urban sustainability. For more information, visit: <https://iclei.org/>

**About ICLEI CityFood Program**

Launched in 2013, CityFoodis a flagship program of ICLEI that aims to accelerate local and regional government action toward sustainable food systems transformation. It spans a number of projects and initiatives across ICLEI’s Regional Offices and brings together local and regional governments as well as critical global and regional partners. For more information, visit: <https://cityfood-program.org/>

**About GIZ’s Global Program Transformation of Food Systems**

Commissioned by the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ), the program strengthens local, national and global Transformative Initiatives that shape food systems for healthier diets within planetary boundaries. Taking a systemic, partnership-based approach, it focuses on governance, vision-building, solution development, and broad political and social mobilization for improved food systems. For more information, visit: ​​<https://www.giz.de/>

**About GAIN**

The Global Alliance for Improved Nutrition (GAIN) is a Swiss-based foundation launched at the United Nations in 2002 to tackle the human suffering caused by malnutrition. Working with governments, businesses and civil society, we aim to transform food systems so that they deliver healthier diets for all people, especially the most vulnerable. For more information, visit: <https://www.gainhealth.org/>

**About WFMC**

The World Farmers Markets Coalition (WFMC), launched in July 2021 with support from Farmers Market Associations worldwide, promotes farmers markets as a solution to achieve the UN Sustainable Development Goal of Zero Hunger by 2030. The Coalition supports farmers markets globally to build sustainable food systems. For more information, visit: <https://www.worldfarmersmarketscoalition.org/>