

A photograph of three women walking away from the camera on a grassy hill under a clear blue sky. The woman on the left is carrying a large brown pot balanced on her head. The woman in the middle is also carrying a pot on her head. The woman on the right is carrying two metal pots, one in each hand. They are all wearing traditional, patterned clothing. The text 'CONSCIOUS FOOD SYSTEMS ALLIANCE (CoFSA)' is overlaid on the right side of the image in large, white, sans-serif font. A vertical orange bar is on the far right edge.

# 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

01

The Rationale

02

CoFSA: The  
Concept

03

Making it happen



01

# The Rationale

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*“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 RATIONALE



The sustainability community works on:

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

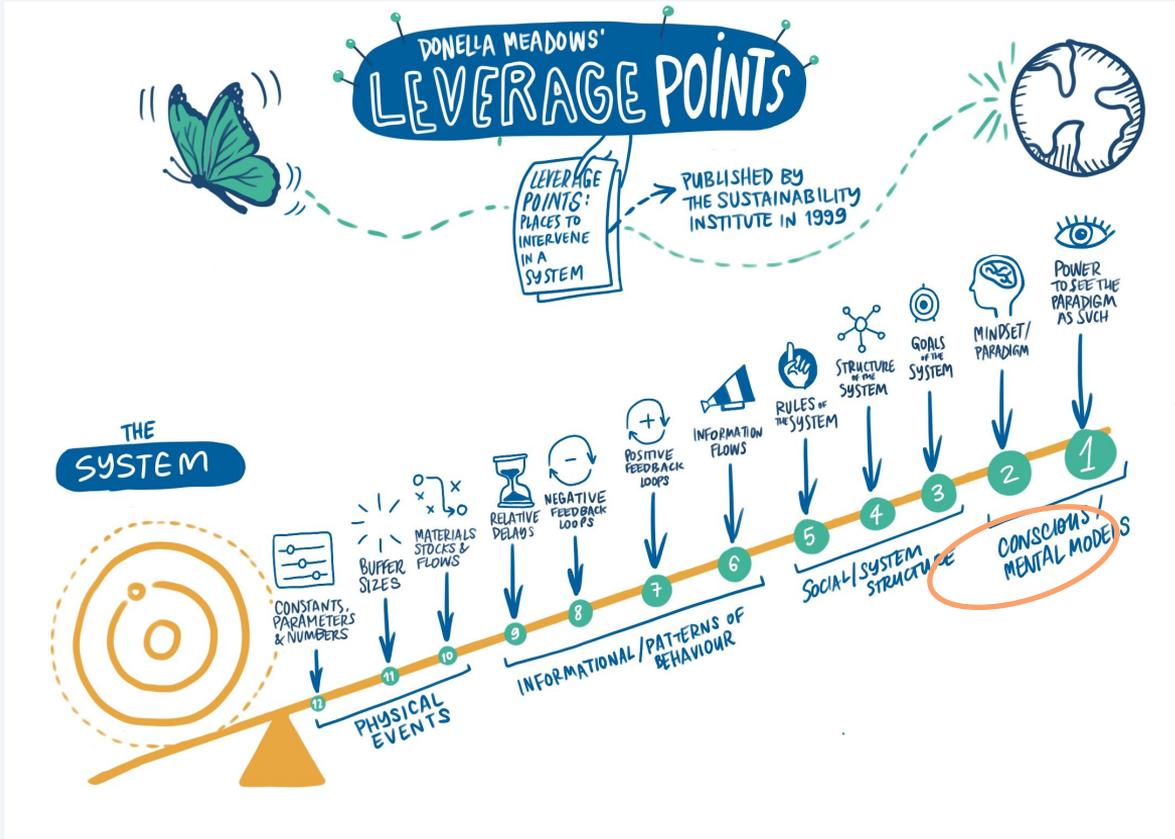
**But results are not enough and we are running out of time**

**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 ?**

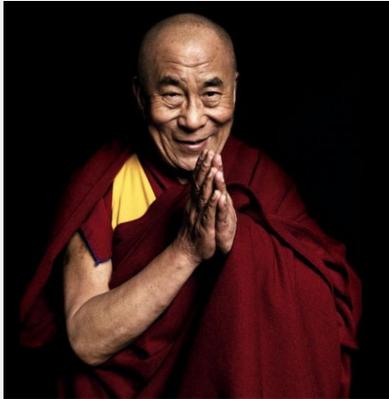
# Addressing problems at the root-cause level

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

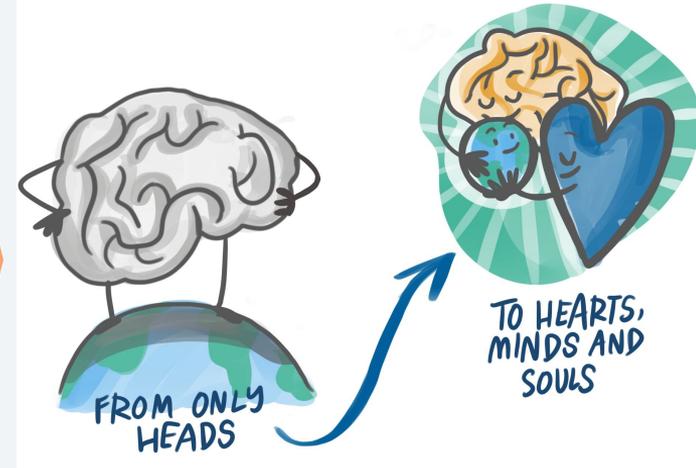


# The importance of inner change for sustainability is increasingly recognized

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 continues 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

## THE RATIONALE

### Companies

**Value-based management** for sustainability (e.g. Patagonia)

Promotion of **mindful consumption** practices, for example by Mondelez

**Mindful on Wall Street:** mindfulness & compassion training in financial services

**Mindful Finance Institute**

### CSOs

**Charter of Compassion** and its network of compassionate cities

**Earth Charter**

**Extinction Rebellion's** focus on shifting collective consciousness

Many examples of **indigenous communities** and the support to bio-cultural conservation by NGOs such as **Pachamama Alliance**

### Governments

**Bhutan's Growth National Happiness** and **New Zealand's well-being budget**

**Ecuador's "buen vivir"** and **Bolivia's "vivir bien"** development paradigm and the recognition of the rights of nature in many countries

**Mindful Nation UK**

"Folk-Bildung" (state-funded personal development centers) in European Nordic Countries (late XIX, early XX century)

### Academia/Education

Institute for Advanced Sustainability Studies (IASS) – **Mindset for the Anthropocene (AMA)**

**Presencing Institute/Theory U**

**Contemplative Sustainable Futures Program**

**Various systems leadership curriculum**

**Mind4Change**

**TransVision**

## 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**.



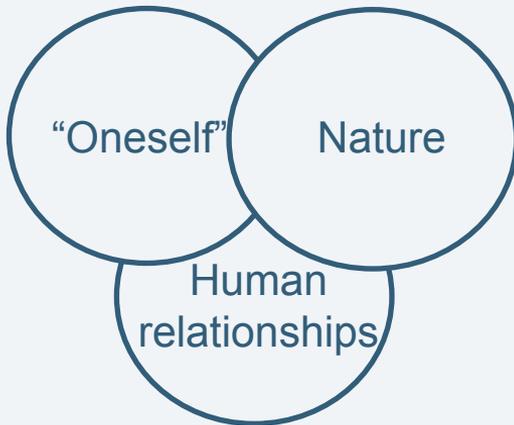
# The inner path to sustainability: a practice of change

**Consciousness =  
3 essential connections for individuals to nourish**

THE RATIONALE



**Human, social and environmental crises**



**Wellness and pro-social behaviours**



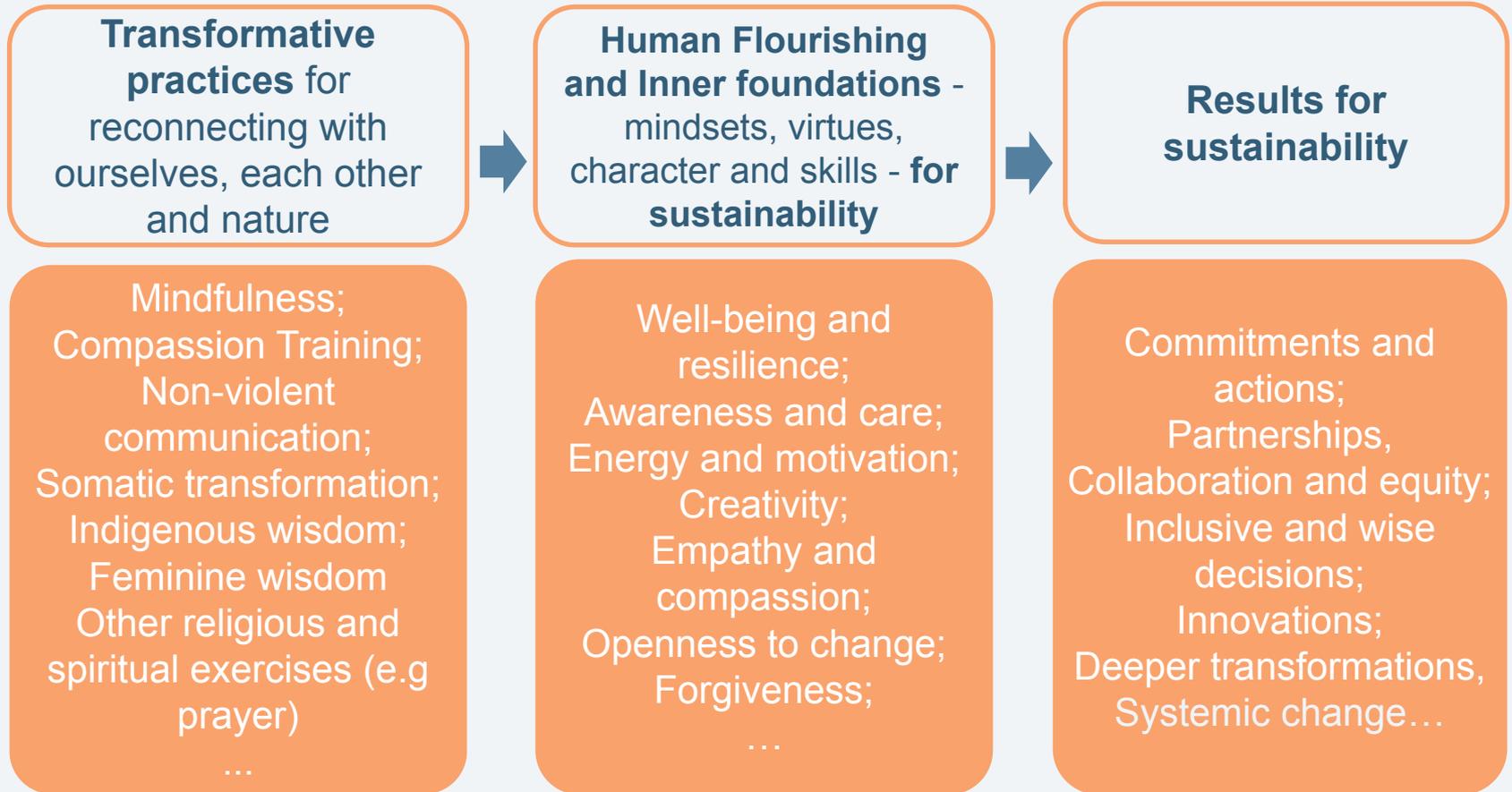
Organizational and institutional transformations



**Systems change towards sustainability**

# Consciousness approaches can support human flourishing and build the inner foundations for sustainability

## THE RATIONALE



Example:  
Mindfulness

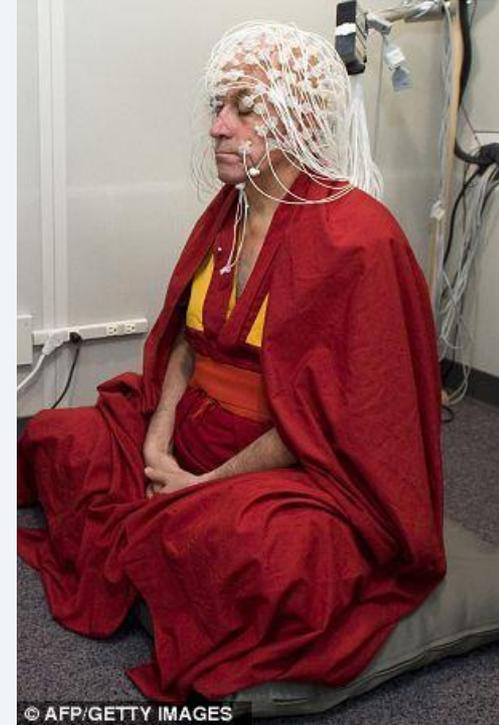
## Mindfulness and meditation holds the potential to reshape our brain for sustainability...

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

- 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



THE RATIONALE

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 accounts for **nearly a quarter of all greenhouse gas emissions**.
- A handful of global agricultural commodities account for **nearly 75% of all tropical deforestation**.
- Agriculture uses **70% of total freshwater** withdrawals.
- **One third of global produce is lost or goes to waste**.
- Regenerative agriculture mitigates **climate change**.
- Agriculture is the **largest employer in low-income countries**, accounting for 60% of the labor force and producing 25% of GDP.

## CoFSA will support a change....

### CoFSA: THE CONCEPT

- In focus from relentless production increases to **sustainable land management**
- From mono-culture to **regenerative agriculture**
- From conventional food consumption to **reduced food loss & waste** and changing diets
- From corporate pressure for lower farm prices to **social justice** across the supply chain, including **fair prices to farmers**
- From agro-chemical subsidies to **nature-based solutions**

**CoFSA:  
The  
Concept**

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02



# The Conscious Food Systems Alliance (CoFSA)

## CoFSA: THE CONCEPT

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 key evidence-based practice to envision and create a regenerative system.



# Our Practice of Change

Our strategy is to realign our culture and behaviours in order to shift towards a regenerative food system. This change in mindset will be supported by:

CoFSA: THE CONCEPT

- Questioning the beliefs and practices that keep the existing system in place?
- Envisioning the new system we want to create
- Understanding what personal qualities will be needed to get us there
- Training across the system in transformational personal/group practices such as mindfulness and compassion
- Building self awareness and authenticity
- Inspiring and developing wise leadership
- Building trust and the ability to manage conflict to resolution
- Supporting radical collaboration and generating experiments aimed at sensing the current system and finding ways to embed new models

## Why CoFSA now?

Systems change as a concept is now mainstreamed, but practitioners are hitting major implementation barriers:

### CoFSA: THE CONCEPT

- Focus so far has been on understanding how systems work and how to intervene at an organizational and community level. Little attention has been given to the power of individuals and wise leadership within the system to drive transformation
- An increasing recognition that our deeply embedded extractive mindset cannot create a pathway to a regenerative future
- Regenerative values can be embedded only with deeper personal awareness and the ability to see the world with fresh eyes.
- Understanding the fundamental need to align personal values/ethics with the process of creating change in the world

## 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 multi-stakeholder collaboration

# How CoFSA sits within a deep and broad systems change practice

## CoFSA: THE CONCEPT

CoFSA is integrated within a dynamic systems change practice being pioneered by UNDP and other partners that seeks to address the three levels of intervention; the whole system, the community, and individual.

### **The \$40 million GEF-6 funded Good Growth Partnership (GGP)**

GGP is a flagship programme to reduce deforestation from commodity supply chains. GGP adopts systems mapping done collaboratively and engages all stakeholders, from the private sector (producers, traders, manufacturers, retailers, financial institutions and investors) and consumers to governments, civil society organizations and development partners.

### **Sustainable Food Systems Co-Inquiry Group (CIG)**

The CIG is examining questions around systems change in practice, systems leadership amongst individuals, and documenting the results and impact of systems change. It produced an Insights report from its first phase, the conclusions from which are feeding into the Future of Food Systems Collaboration.

### **Food Systems Summit: Future of Food Systems Collaboration (FFSC)**

FFSC is being developed by UNDP, FAO, UNEP, the World Economic Forum (WEF) and the Norwegian Foundation EAT with the aim of developing a broad-based partnership initiative to accelerate a new future for food systems 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 developing shared learning around conscious regeneration.



### SUPPORT ACTIONS

Co-creating sustainable development prototypes/programs and public and corporate policy commitments through **advisory and technical assistance services.**

### TRAINING, FACILITATION and COACHING

**Training and coaching** sustainability/regeneration practitioners and stakeholders in conscious leadership.

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

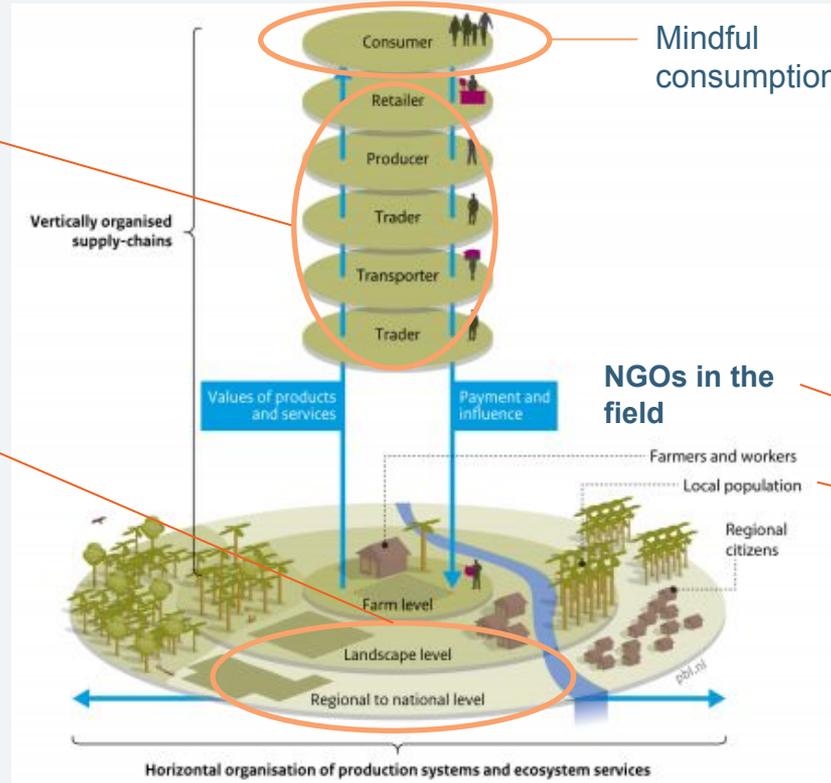
# Transforming the food and agricultural commodities system

CoFSA: THE CONCEPT

Cultural transformation of companies

Conscious public policy development

Multi-Stakeholder Platform and event facilitation



Mindful consumption

**Global Community of conscious food systems practitioners**

(partnerships, communication and knowledge management, research etc.)

+

NGOs in the field

Conscious project implementation

Conscious community development

Mobilizing Traditional Ecological Knowledge and Wisdom

# CoFSA Home

## Breathing Room

Experimenting together new ways of being and doing

Core Team

facilitator

Convener

## Practice Room

Prototyping, piloting and implementing CoFSA interventions

Prototyping teams

Idea 1

Idea 2

...

## Learning Room

Training offer on the interlinkages between inner and systems change

FACS change agents  
« cohorts »

Knowledge partners

## Living Room

Establishing a vibrant global community anchored into action

Individual practitioners

Learning room alumni

Network of institutional partners (e.g. affiliate, learning)

Champions

CoFSA: STRUCTURE

## Study Room

Working Groups on specific workstreams to develop CoFSA

Secretariat

Advisory Board

## CoFSA HOME

Rooms	Activities
<b>Breathing Room</b> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Experimenting new ways of being and doing</li><li>• Co-create and steer CoFSA - strategy, vision, Manifesto, work plan 2022-23 etc.</li><li>• Develop portfolio of prototype initiatives</li><li>• Joint fundraising for implementation</li></ul>
<b>Practice Room</b> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Develop and launch prototypes pilot initiatives</li><li>• Generate and capture lessons learned</li></ul>
<b>Learning Room</b> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Design &amp; deliver trainings</li><li>• Participation to training</li></ul>
<b>Living Room</b> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Connect and exchange with a community of practitioners</li><li>• Develop partnerships</li><li>• Share knowledge and experience</li></ul>
<b>Study Room</b> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Working groups on Theory of change, Case studies, Evidence base, Conceptualization of Hubs and Labs, etc.</li></ul>

# The Breathing 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  
Room

CoFSA: THE CONCEPT

## Objectives

- To bring together a strategic microcosm of the food system to **experiment together new ways of being and doing** to address the complex challenges of its transformation
- To build trust, learning journey and a clear commitment to **improve our ways of working**

## Key Activities

- **Initial phase (6 months)** with some 25 core partners – grassroots organizations, international NGOs, companies, representatives of the academia, as well as consciousness and systems change experts.

## Outputs

- Develop a **common Manifesto**, agreed roles and work processes among core partners;
- A **strategy and workplan for COFSA 2022-2023**;
- An initial **portfolio of interventions** identified and partnerships formed to implement these;
- **Joint fundraising for COFSA** global operations and a portfolio of interventions initiated, including the development of a general CoFSA proposal with specific activities and budgets;
- **New relationships, increased trust and bonds** among diverse actors with an interest in Food and Agriculture system transformation;
- **New insights** about how to leverage the power of inner transformation to support systemic change in food and agriculture systems;

# The Breathing Room methodology

- **Format:** two sessions each month, organized by the Secretariat, with a total of approximately 3.5 hours commitment per month.
  - **Core session (2 hours):** focused on co-creation of the Alliance (Manifesto, strategy, prototypes etc.), facilitated by a member of the Secretariat.
  - **Connection session (1.5 hours):** focused on fostering deep connections with ourselves and each other, as well as perspective taking on CoFSA and space for emergence, facilitated by the Secretariat and/or partners on a rotating basis.
- **Decision making:** the decisions in the Breathing Room are expected to be taken by consensus or follow a principle of non-objection.
- **Online platform:** members of the Breathing Room will be invited to join the CoFSA digital space, hosted on the UNDP Green Commodities Community online platform.
- **Working groups:** Participants are also expected to join working groups in parallel to help process the outcomes of the meetings and discuss specific questions more in depth (e.g. evidence basis, Manifesto, communication, proposals, etc.).

## The Breathing Room: expected commitments and benefits

### Benefits for core partners to join

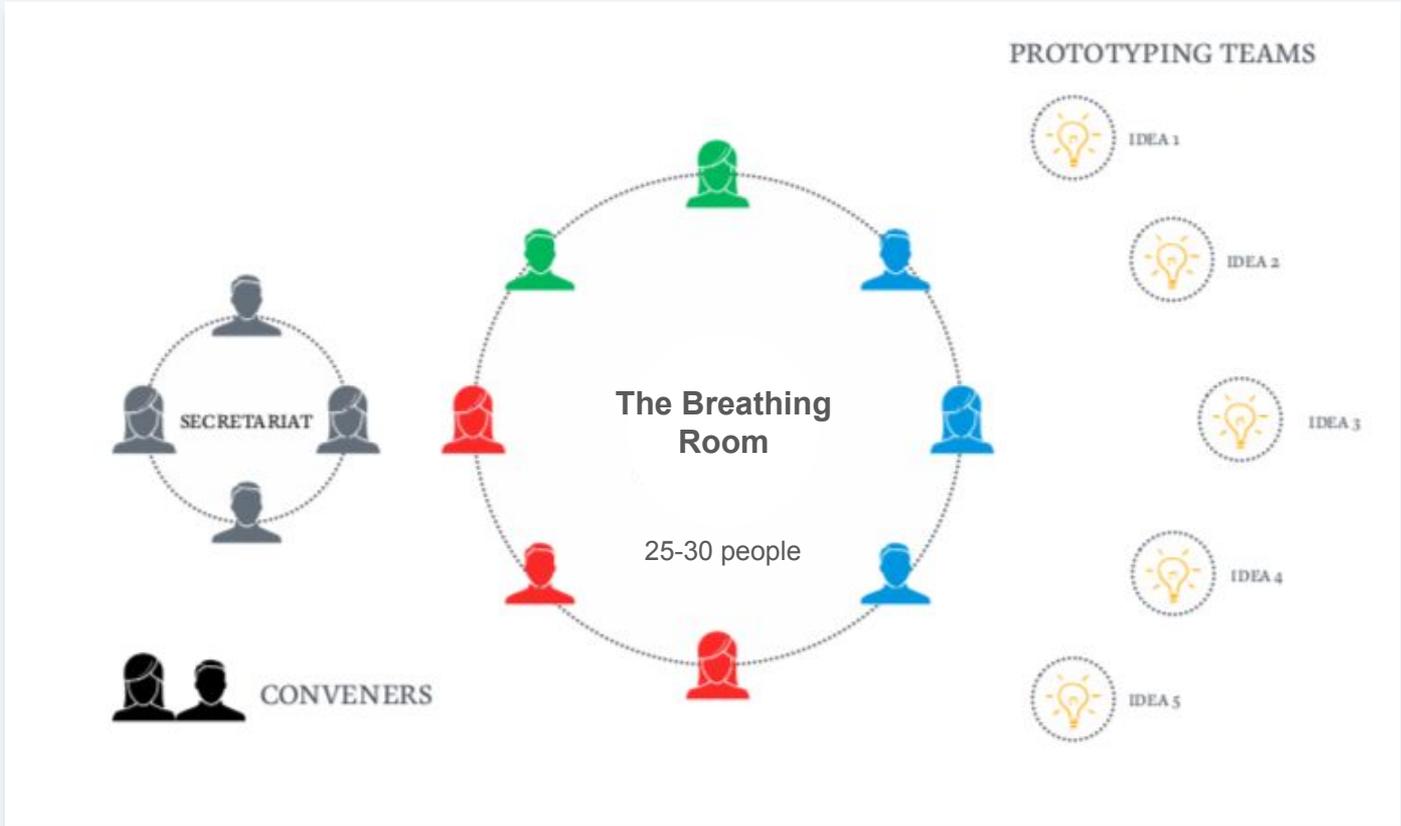
- Co-create CoFSA's strategic orientation and work agenda
- Benefit from a vibrant movement and experience of a cross-sectoral community of practitioners
- Develop innovative partnerships and leverage existing sustainability initiatives to drive systems transformation
- Access funding opportunities for the implementation of pilot projects
- Develop and test innovative and effective solutions to deliver on organizational and sustainability goals
- Access cutting-edge transformative practices to enhance the leadership, well-being and engagement of your staff
- Increase visibility and have your brand associated with a ground-breaking initiative.

### Commitments for core partners

- Attend and actively engage in all core & connection sessions
- Commit to the Values & Principles of CoFSA
- Contribute to advancing workstreams to co-create the CoFSA in-between sessions (e.g. develop Manifesto, evidence base and theory of change, fundraising, etc.)
- Be an ambassador and champion of the CoFSA, including representing the Alliance at events, doing partner outreach, etc.

# How it works?

CoFSA: THE CONCEPT



# The Practice Room: Prototyping

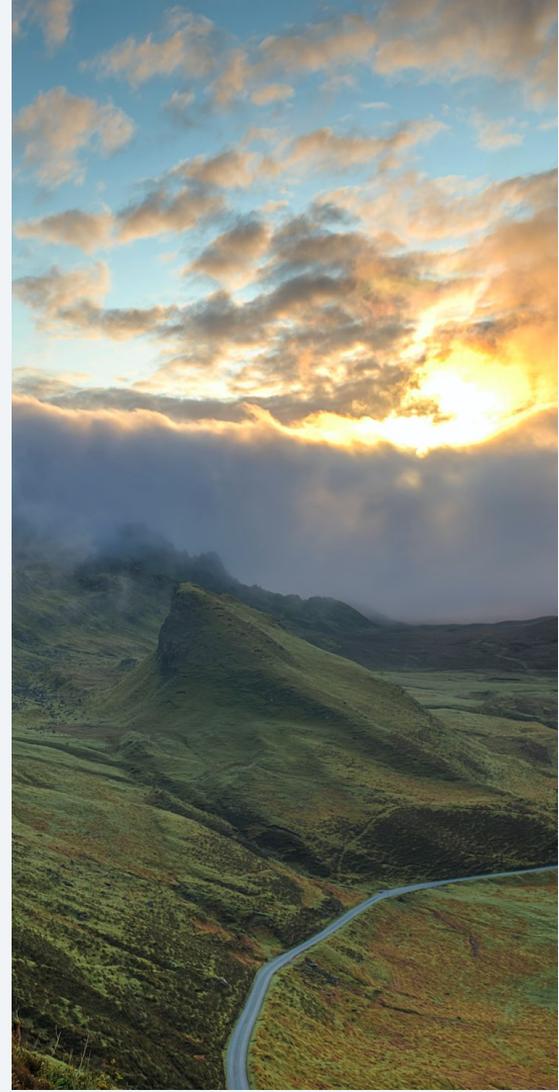
**Themes:** less food waste, reduced deforestation, increased regenerative agriculture, ambitious public policy on climate change, social justice for farmers & local communities

**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

- Capacity building for targeted groups (practitioners, policy makers, companies, farmers) to apply techniques in their work and decision making

## Key Activities

- Common curriculum and specialized courses in consciousness approaches for food systems transformation
  - Already available: Mindfulness, Compassion
  - In development: Happiness and well-being, Emotional awareness, Deep ecology, Indigenous wisdom, Feminine leadership

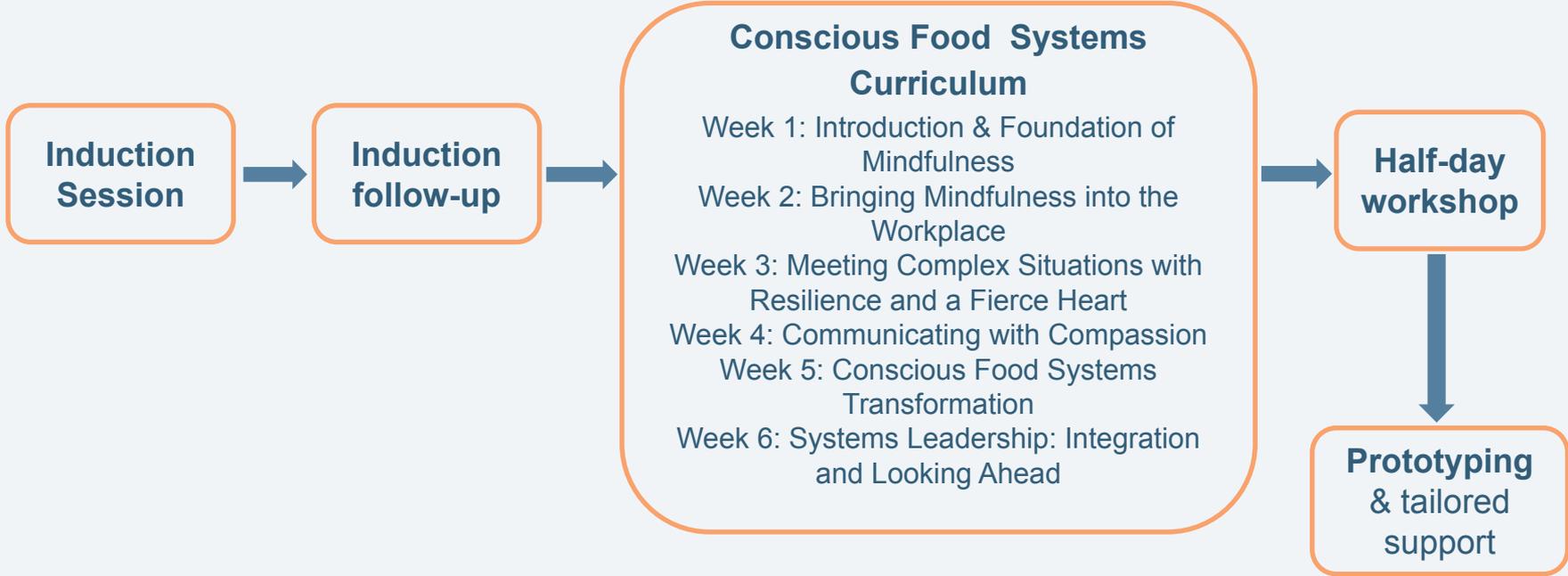
## Outputs

- Alumni of FACS change agents who apply Conscious Food Systems training to their work

# Engaging with Partners through CoFSA Curriculum

Learning Room

CoFSA: THE CONCEPT



# The Living Room

## 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



# Core partners joining the Breathing Room

MAKING IT HAPPEN



INNER DEVELOPMENT GOALS  
Transformational Skills for Sustainable Development



EKSKÄRET



ONE RESILIENT EARTH



Research Centre  
Agroecology, Water  
and Resilience

## Different modalities of engagement

MAKING IT HAPPEN

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

## Benefits for partners

- Co-shape **CoFSA's strategic orientation** and work agenda, and position your institution at the center of this 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

## Phase 1: Setting Up

Draft Concept Note  
Build a core group of partners  
Discussions in workshops  
Emerging Insights Report



## Phase 2: Co-creation and prototyping

Co-creation in the Breathing Room  
Prototyping and Pilots  
Research and application  
Fundraising  
Community-building



*Operations to start in parallel of co-creation, as funding allows*

## Phase 3: Implementation / Achieving the vision

Implementation  
Research and Learning  
Movement building and advocacy  
Scale-up strategy



MAKING IT HAPPEN



## Phase 1 (Q4 2020 – Q3 2021): Setting-up

MAKING IT HAPPEN

- Development of a **Concept Note**,
- **Partner outreach** to 60+ key stakeholders, including development agencies, companies, governments, NGOs, donors, academia, grassroots and indigenous networks, and consciousness experts,
- **First Partners Workshop** in March 2021,
- **Series of 7 mini-workshops** to develop the CoFSA (April-July 2021)
- **Emerging Insights Report** capturing key findings and paving the way forward for CoFSA,
- **Pilot opportunities** identified within UNDP country offices (e.g. Paraguay) and partner portfolios,
- **Communication and participation to events** (e.g. Mindshift Conference)
- **Fundraising research** of potential donors.

## Phase 2 (Q4 2021 – End 2022): Scoping/“Development”

- **Research and application**, including evidence base and case studies, tools development for implementation and monitoring and evaluation
- **Co-creation process** with some 20 partners (Breathing Room), including the design of the alliance
- **Prototyping and piloting** (Practice Room / Learning Room), capturing learning feeding tools development and adaptation to different contexts
- **Community-building** (Living room)
- **Planning next phase and Fundraising**, through a scoping report, proposal and outreach

## Phase 3 (2022–2023): Achieving the vision /“Launch”

- **CoFSA implementation** (Breathing Room / Practice Room / Learning Room), rolling out CoFSA service offer in 5 - 10 countries and integration with UNDP and partners’ global initiatives
- **Research and Learning** including a guidance note to embed consciousness in project design and implementation, measurement of long term impact, and promoting lessons learnt across food sector and other sectors
- **Movement-building and advocacy** (Living room with more than 1000 participants), including global annual events and a conscious food prize
- **Scale up strategy** including more partners, more countries/projects, more sectors

A person is sitting on a wooden dock that extends into a calm lake. The lake is surrounded by steep, forested mountains. The sky is clear and blue. The word "THANKS" is written in large, white, sans-serif capital letters across the middle of the image. A thin orange horizontal line is positioned below the word.

# THANKS

Andrew Bovarnick, Head Food and Agricultural Commodity Systems, [andrew.bovarnick@undp.org](mailto:andrew.bovarnick@undp.org)

Thomas Legrand, Lead Technical Advisor CoFSA, [thomas.legrand@undp.org](mailto:thomas.legrand@undp.org)

Alice Jervoise, CoFSA Coordinator, [alice.jervoise@undp.org](mailto:alice.jervoise@undp.org)