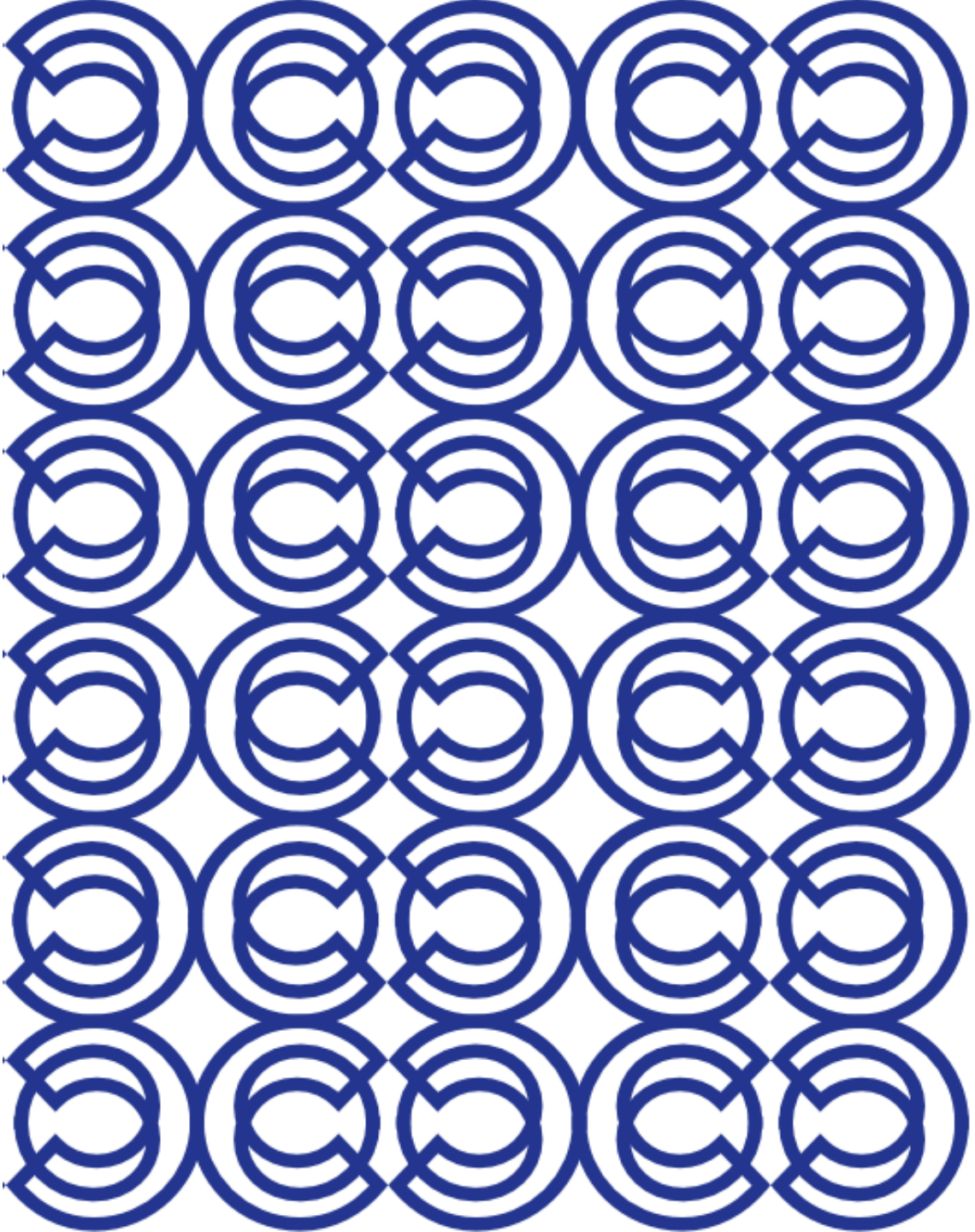
# Scoping Study on Private Sector Partnerships for Advancing ECD in Francophone West and Central Africa

Kick-off meeting

Van Leer FOUNDATION

**26 February 2025**



**1. Context and objectives**

2. Key focus areas

3. Analytical approach and preliminary findings

4. Timeline

# Context of our engagement

## Context

- **Underinvestment in ECD by Governments**: As of 2024, countries like Côte d'Ivoire allocated only 0.05% of their GDP to preschool education, significantly below the 1% recommended by the International Labour Organization (ILO).
- **Critical need for ECD investment:** In 2022, over 31.3% of children under five in sub-Saharan Africa were stunted, indicating chronic malnutrition and underscoring the urgent need for comprehensive ECD programs. Notably, within sub-Saharan Africa, Central Africa has the highest prevalence, with 37.4% of children under five affected by stunting.
- **Potential of private sector engagement**: Increased investment in ECD could create millions of jobs by 2030, with 65% benefiting women, thereby promoting economic growth and gender equity.
- **Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) alignment**: Many private sector entities are seeking avenues to fulfill their CSR objectives. Aligning CSR activities with ECD initiatives offers companies an opportunity to make a meaningful impact on community development while enhancing their corporate reputation.

## Scope & Objectives

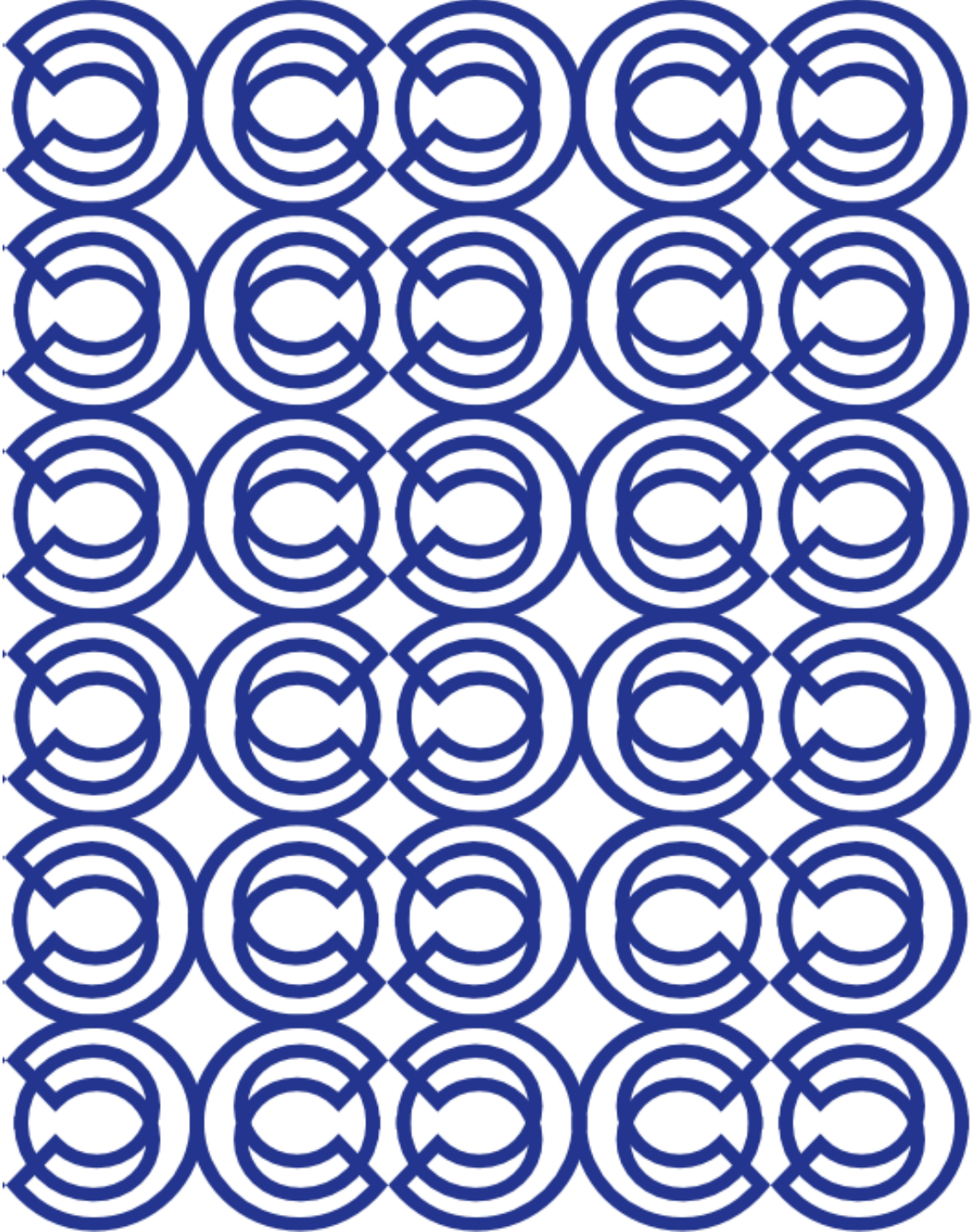
### Goals

- **Identify the most relevant countries to launch ECD strengthening initiatives in collaboration with the private sector**
  The project aims to identify and prioritize the most relevant countries for launching ECD initiatives in collaboration with the private sector.
- **Evaluate private sector engagement models and best practices**
  The project aims to evaluate private sector engagement models and best practices, analyzing their effectiveness and potential for scaling within ECD initiatives.
- **Analyze the barriers to collaboration with private sector**
  The project will focus on analyzing the barriers to collaboration with the private sector, identifying key challenges and potential solutions for better partnerships in ECD.
- **Identify collaboration opportunities to support private sector initiatives**
  The project seeks to identify collaboration opportunities to support private sector initiatives, fostering strategic partnerships that enhance ECD interventions.
- **Strategy guidance and recommendations**
  The project provides strategy guidance and recommendations to strengthen private sector engagement and optimize ECD interventions.

### Project scope

- 14 countries
- 6 value chains (the selected early childhood development dimensions)
- ~ 8 activities per value chain
- More that 25 stakeholders
- 15-20 interviews with private companies, public sector, caregivers, etc.

Sources: Childcare and Early Childhood Development Expenditures in Africa report : Comparative Policy Insights for Advancing Women's Economic Empowerment, Center for Global Development, December 2024; UNICEF / WHO / World Bank Group Joint Child Malnutrition Estimates, Key findings of the 2023 edition; Childcare and Early Childhood Development Expenditures in Africa, Center for Global Development, December 2024



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# The proposed analytical framework will anchor on three areas of research

**1 COUNTRIES**

- Which countries are we targeting?
- What are the selection criteria?

**2 POTENTIAL AREAS OF INTERVENTION**

- What are the key sectors for more impact?
- What are the challenges to consider?
- Which value chains present the most opportunities?

**3 PRIVATE SECTOR PARTNERSHIP**

- What are the largest companies in the target sectors?
- What are the opportunities for collaboration?

**? KEY DISCUSSION POINTS**

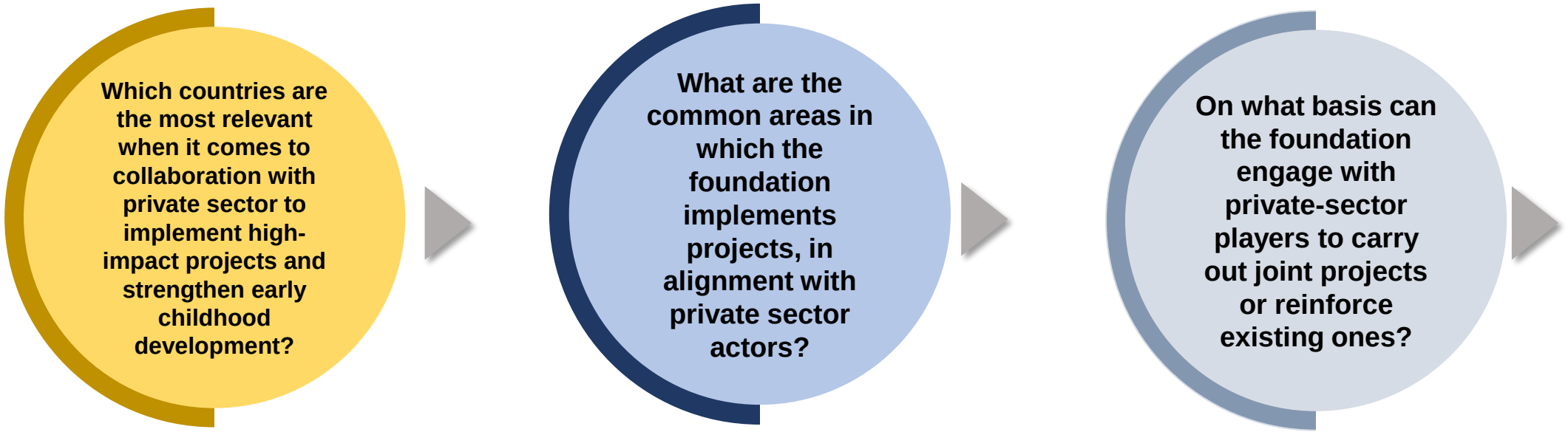
- What do we already know?
- What kind of private sector?
- Which data collection methods would work best?
- How should the Van Leer Foundation be involved in the project?
- Which key stakeholders should be involved?

# We will break down the central ask of the ToR into three key focus areas

**Focus area 1:** Produce a report that provides an overview of the value chains of key sectors in prioritized countries, as well as major private sector partners.

**Focus area 2:** Analyze the alignment of the interventions of key private sector actors in priority countries with those of Van Leer Foundation.

**Focus area 3:** Define a partnership approach with the key identified players in each area of intervention in prioritized countries.




***Desk research***

***Interviews and desk research***

***Interviews, synthesis, analysis and recommendations***

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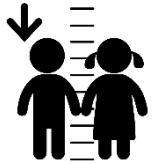
# Focus area 1 requires identification of the criteria used to select countries and detail value chains (1/2)

| | Rationale | How it helps in country selection |
|---|---|---|
| **Children development ally on track** | • Countries where fewer children are developmentally on track indicate a need for stronger ECD interventions<br>• Strong early childhood development reduces learning difficulties, dropout rates, and economic disparities later in life | • Identifies countries with low ECD performance where targeted interventions can improve child development outcomes<br>• Supports long-term goals for improving education, employability, and health outcomes |
| **Attendance in early childhood education (ECE)** | • ECE attendance is a strong predictor of lifelong learning, employment, and social mobility<br>• ECE directly impacts literacy, numeracy, and social skills | • Identifies countries with low access to preschool education, where investment in infrastructure, training, and materials can have the highest impact<br>• Highlights opportunities for public-private partnerships (PPPs) in preschool expansion |
| **Children with inadequate supervision** | • Working parents lack access to affordable childcare, leading to negative developmental impacts<br>• High levels of inadequate supervision signal the need for quality childcare services and daycare centers | • Highlights opportunities for investment in early learning centers, employer-supported daycare, and nanny training programs<br>• Helps align ECD strategies with social protection policies and economic empowerment initiatives for women |

# Focus area 1 requires identification of the criteria used to select countries and detail value chains (2/2)

| | Rationale | How it helps in country selection |
|---|---|---|
| **Minimum acceptable diet** | • Nutritional deficiencies in early childhood are linked to lower educational attainment and workforce productivity in adulthood<br>• A poor diet in early childhood leads to malnutrition, cognitive delays, and poor health | • Identifies opportunities for private sector investment in fortified foods, school feeding programs, and food distribution<br>• Ensures complementary integration of nutrition programs with education and health interventions |
| **Early stimulation and responsive care** | • A child's home environment plays a crucial role in brain development, emotional security, and school readiness<br>• Countries with low scores indicate limited caregiver knowledge and access to educational resources | • Aligns ECD efforts with family-centered policies and community interventions<br>• Prioritizes countries where families need better support, training, and awareness programs on child stimulation |
|  **Under-five stunting** | • Countries with high stunting rates often have poor maternal nutrition, limited healthcare access, and food insecurity<br>• It affects cognitive development, school performance, and long-term health outcomes | • Highlights opportunities for investment in child nutrition programs, food fortification, and maternal healthcare<br>• Prioritizes countries where severe malnutrition affects early childhood learning and health |

# On the six selected dimensions of ECD, almost all countries in West Africa have above-average rates of children developmentally on track

| Early childhood development dimensions | Côte d'Ivoire | Senegal | Mali | Togo | Guinea | Benin | Burkina Faso | Niger |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Population of children under 5 | 4,262,981 | 2,611,432 | 4,100,937 | 1,285,752 | 2,118,927 | 2,173,104 | 3,610,877 | 5,144,747 |
| Children developmentally on track (%) | 39 | 67 | 62 | 52 | 49 | 41 | - | - |
| Minimum acceptable diet (%) | 14 | 9 | 8 | 13 | 4 | 15 | 27 | - |
| Home environment - Early stimulation and responsive care (%) | 29 | 20 | 55 | 19 | 31 | 39 | 14 | - |
| Attendance in early childhood education (%) | 4 | 21 | 5 | 20 | 9 | 13 | 3 | 3 |
| Children with inadequate supervision (%) | 20 | 39 | 32 | 29 | 34 | 29 | - | - |
| Under-five stunting (%) | 20 | 17 | 24 | 22 | 28 | 30 | 22 | 47 |

High (>50%) Medium (≥30%) Low (<30%)

**Sources**: UNICEF Data: Monitoring the situation of children and women, Early childhood development; Nurturing Care for Early Childhood Development, World Health Organization, World Bank Group, UNICEF, EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT, 2023 country updates

**Children develop mentally on track (%)**: Proportion of children aged 24-59 months of age who are developmentally on track in health, learning and psychosocial well-being.
**Minimum acceptable diet**: This measures the number of different food groups a child consumes daily.
**Early stimulation and responsive care (%)**: It measures the percentage of children aged 24 to 59 months who, within the three days preceding the survey, engaged in four or more activities that promote learning and development with any adult household member.
**Attendance in early childhood education**: Percentage of children 36–59 months old who are attending an early childhood education program.
**Children with inadequate supervision**: Percentage of children 0–59 months old left alone or in the care of another child younger than 10 years of age for more than one hour at least once in the past week.
**Under-five stunting**: Under-five stunting refers to the percentage of children under five years old whose height-for-age is more than two standard deviations below the World Health Organization (WHO) Child Growth Standards median, indicating chronic malnutrition.

# The same trend is observed in Central Africa, where better performances in home environment and attendance in early childhood education are also noted

| Early childhood development dimensions | Central African Republic | Gabon | Chad | Congo | DRoC | Cameroon |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Population of children under 5 | 1,014,461 | 307,092 | 3,304,647 | 851,838 | 18,199,988 | 4,403,597 |
| Children developmentally on track (%) | 36 | - | 45 | 61 | 57 | 61 |
| Minimum acceptable diet (%) | 9 | - | 11 | 4 | 8 | 10 |
| Home environment - Early stimulation and responsive care (%) | 27 | - | 55 | 59 | 44 | 44 |
| Attendance in early childhood education (%) | 6 | - | 1 | 36 | 5 | 28 |
| Children with inadequate supervision+ (%) | 49 | - | 64 | 42 | 47 | 34 |
| Under-five stunting (%) | 40 | 13 | 32 | 17 | 40 | 27 |

High (>50%) Medium (≥30%) Low (<30%)

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# Following the identification of criteria and preliminary analysis, we suggest the selection of focus countries using the following approach

## Country scoring factors

**1 ECD dimensions (6) performance review:**

- The lower a country's performance on ECD dimensions, the higher its priority for intervention
- Countries with weaker ECD rates are given more priority

**2 Under five population data:**

- Countries with a larger under-five population are ranked higher
- Interventions in these countries could have a greater impact on a larger number of children

## Scoring (i)

- If the dimension score is Low = **5 points**
- If the dimension score is Medium = **3 points**
- If the dimension score is High = **1 point**

- More than 4 million = **5 points**
- Between 2 and 4 million = **3 points**
- 2 million or less = **1 point**

(i) The score is linked to the country's performance on each dimension

# Based on each country's performance on the dimensions, we obtain a ranking with West African countries at the top of the priorities

| | West Africa | | | | | | | | Central Africa | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | CIV | SEN | MALI | TOGO | GUIN | BENIN | BURK | NIGER | CAM | GAB | CAR | CONG | DRC | CHAD |
| **Children developmentally on track** | 3 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 3 | 3 | - | - | 1 | - | 3 | 1 | 1 | 3 |
| **Minimum acceptable diet** | *5* | *5* | *5* | *5* | *5* | *5* | *5* | - | *5* | - | *5* | *5* | *5* | *5* |
| **Early stimulation and responsive care** | 5 | 5 | 1 | 5 | 3 | 3 | 5 | - | 3 | - | 5 | 1 | 3 | 1 |
| **Attendance in early childhood education** | *5* | *5* | *5* | *5* | *5* | *5* | *5* | *5* | *5* | - | *5* | *3* | *5* | *5* |
| **Children with inadequate supervision** | 5 | 3 | 3 | 5 | 3 | 5 | - | - | 3 | - | 3 | 3 | 3 | 1 |
| **Under-five stunting** | *5* | *5* | *5* | *5* | *5* | *5* | *5* | *3* | *3* | *5* | *3* | *5* | *3* | *3* |
| **Population of children under 5** | 5 | 3 | 5 | 1 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 5 | 5 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 5 | 3 |
| **Total score** | **33** | **27** | **25** | **27** | **27** | **29** | **23** | **13** | **25** | **6** | **25** | **19** | **25** | **21** |

**Sources**: UNICEF Data: Monitoring the situation of children and women, Early childhood development; Nurturing Care for Early Childhood Development, World Health Organization, World Bank Group, UNICEF, EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT, 2023 country updates; Haskè Conseil

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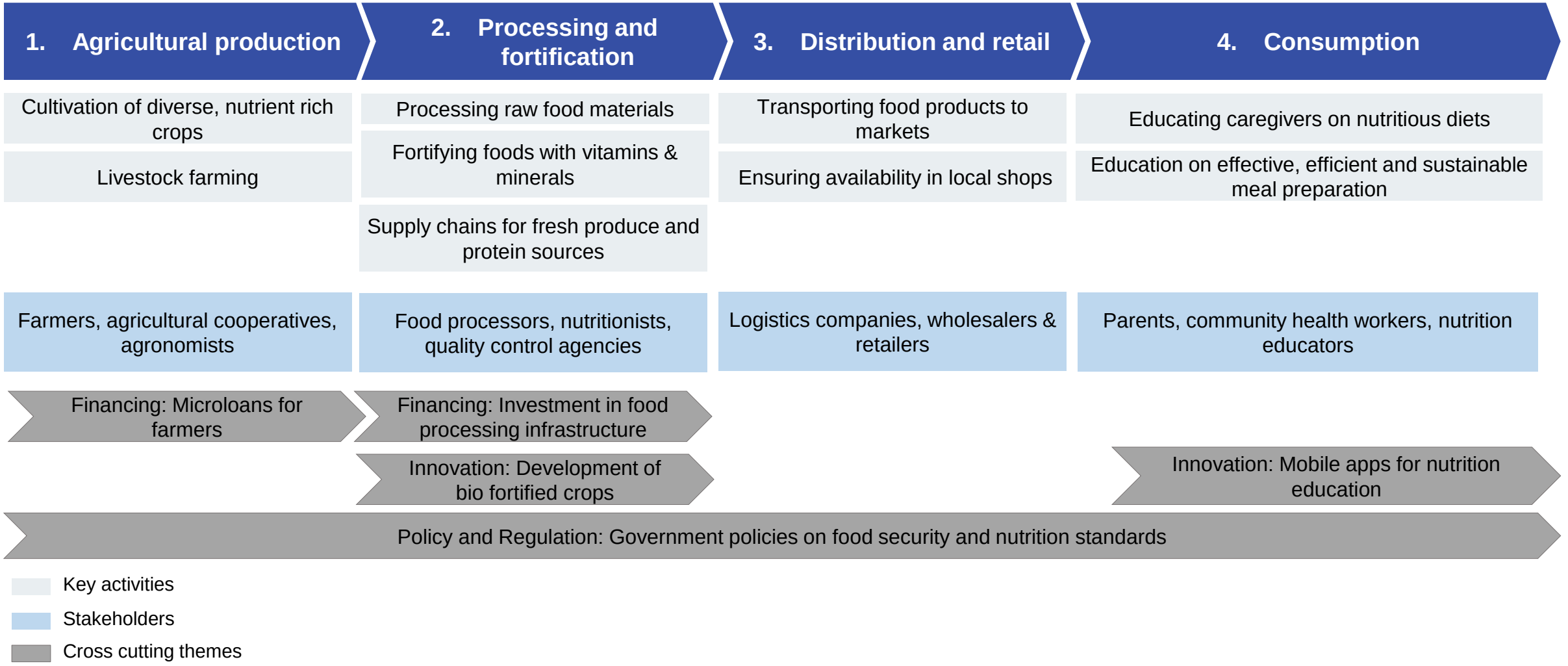
# Minimum acceptable diet is one of the EDC dimensions on which countries as a whole perform least well, and requires particular attention




Source : Haskè Conseil desk research

# We conducted a preliminary analysis of the most critical value chain for the lowest-performing country in both sub-regions, Côte d'Ivoire

## 1. Agricultural production (i)

| | Production | Needs |
|---|---|---|
| Moringa | No data | |
| Sweet Potato | 47,914 tons | No data |
| Millet | 67,000 metric tons | 452 metric tons |
| Livestock farming | 75 444 tons | 56% |

- National demand for Orange-Fleshed Sweet Potato exceeds available supply, which is virtually non-existent
- National meat production covers only 44% of needs (cattle, sheep, goats and poultry), 19% for milk and 16% for fish proteins
- The two main moringa-based products produced in Côte d'Ivoire are tea and oil (respectively 50% and 44% of processing output)

## 2. Processing and fortification

Child consumption of processed foods

**45.4%**

Cold chain efficiency

**851,000**
**cubic meters**

Wheat flour meeting the required enrichment standards

**32%**

- Consumption of processed foods is frequent in children aged 2-5 years than in those in the complementary feeding period (6-23.9 months)
- 91% of the cold storage capacity is located in Abidjan, especially around the "Port Autonome d'Abidjan" in Treichville
- Partnerships between GAIN and local businesses have created instant cereals for infants and young children

## 3. Distribution and market

Mixed distribution channels

- The retail food sector in Côte d'Ivoire is expanding, with a mix of traditional markets, local shops, and modern supermarkets

## 4. Consumption

Food group consumption (ii)

- Flesh foods: **52.5%**
- Dairy products: **42.4%**
- Vitamin A-rich fruits and vegetables: **58.5%**

- However children's consumption of sugary drinks (6.8%) and processed snack foods (6.8%) is lower in Côte d'Ivoire in comparison with countries such as Senegal or Niger
- Fruits and vegetables account for only 2% of total food expenses, indicating low prioritization of fresh, nutritious foods
- 19% of households have poor food consumption, with 7% experiencing severe food insecurity

(i) Moringa, Sweet Potato and Finger Millet are nutrient-rich crops that support early childhood development
Source: République de Côte d'Ivoire, Centre National de Recherche Agronomique, Rapport des techniques culturales de la patate douce, Juin 2015; Duntower global food trade, Ivory Coast Food Market: Growth Opportunities for Meat, Poultry, and Seafood Companies; Ministry of Animal and Fisheries Resources, 2023 data; United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Data base; Dietary diversity and associated factors among infants and young children in three West African countries; Cold chain sector and sandwich panel market, sector brief Côte d'Ivoire, GIZ; The Potential of Food Fortification to Add Micronutrients in Young Children and Women of Reproductive Age, Cross-Sectional Survey in Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire
FAO, FOOD SYSTEMS PROFILE - CÔTE D'IVOIRE, 2022
(ii) Children aged 6–23 months
GAIN: Global Alliance for Improved Nutrition

# The preliminary value chain analysis identified the key actors that make up the supply at each stage (non-exhaustive list)

## 1. Agricultural production

CNRA – Centre National de Recherche Agronomique

**Groupements de femmes (80)**

Coopérative **TLEFOC**

Groupe Oban

RAMA Cereal

## 2. Processing and fortification

SIPRA

BAMISA

PKL Protein Kissée-La

SCIFED-CI

IVOIRE AGRO

NOUVEL ESPRIT MANAGER

## 3. Distribution and market

BAMISA

SIPRA

PKL Protein Kissée-La

Nestlé

Carrefour Côte d'Ivoire

## 4. Consumption

Institut National de Santé Publique (INSP)

Réseau Ivoirien de Nutrition (RIN)

Financing: Microloans for farmers

Financing: Investment in food processing infrastructure

Innovation: Development of bio fortified crops

Innovation: Mobile apps for nutrition education

Policy and Regulation: Government policies on food security and nutrition standards

Source : Haskè Conseil desk research

# Four engagement models with key value chain actors will be explored to identify mechanisms for the foundation's involvement

## Public-Private Partnerships (PPP)

## Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) Initiatives

## Innovation Hubs and Incubators

## Community-Based Engagement

*Are there any particular commitment models that interest the foundation the most?*

Source : Haskè Conseil

# In summary, the following series of questions will guide the analyses conducted in Focus area 1

**Which countries are the most relevant when it comes to collaboration with private sector to implement high-impact projects and strengthen early childhood development?**

## Sub-questions

- How do countries in Francophone West and Central Africa rank in terms of key Early Childhood Development (ECD) indicators, and which ones show the greatest need for intervention?
- Which ECD-related value chains are the most critical for improving child development outcomes in target countries?
- Who are the key stakeholders involved in delivering ECD services and products across the value chain?
- What are the most effective private sector engagement models for strengthening ECD in selected countries?

## Essential data to be collected

- National ECD performance indicators (e.g., stunting rates, minimum acceptable diet, early learning attendance)
- National policies and frameworks supporting ECD
- Public investment levels in ECD

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- Availability and accessibility of nutritious foods for children
- Supply chain efficiency of early childhood education materials and services
- Gaps in healthcare and maternal-child support services

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- Private sector actors involved in food, healthcare, education, and childcare services
- Government agencies regulating or supporting ECD initiatives
- NGOs and international organizations actively involved in ECD development

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- Existing public-private partnership models in ECD
- Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) initiatives aligned with ECD
- Investment trends in child-related sectors (health, education, nutrition)

Source: Haskè Conseil

# Focus area 2 preliminary mapping of private sector & philanthropic partners to VLF's themes

**What are the common areas in which the foundation implements projects, in alignment with certain private sector actors?**

## Sub-questions

- What are the key areas of intervention where the foundation is currently implementing projects, and how do they relate to early childhood development (ECD)?
- Which private sector actors are currently active in the foundation's priority areas, and how do their initiatives align with the foundation's mission?
- How can we systematically document and compare private sector actors involved in ECD-related activities?
- What are the key stakeholders surrounding each identified private sector player, and how do they influence or support ECD initiatives?

## Essential data to be collected

- List of ongoing and past projects funded by the foundation
- Thematic focus of each project (e.g., nutrition, early learning, healthcare, caregiver support)
- Geographic coverage of the foundation's interventions

- List of private sector companies engaged in ECD-related sectors (e.g., food and nutrition, education, healthcare)
- Corporate Social Responsibility programs and initiatives linked to ECD
- Existing partnerships between private sector actors and development organizations

- Company name, sector, and core business activities
- Key ECD-related initiatives undertaken by the company
- Investment levels and financial contributions to ECD projects

- Local suppliers and distribution networks supporting ECD-related products/services
- Government agencies and regulatory bodies involved in child development programs
- NGOs, community-based organizations, and donor agencies working in the same space

Source: Haskè Conseil

# Focus area 3 analyzes how to develop profiles of and map potential private sector partners, ensuring both efficiency and synergy

**For effective ECD partnerships, what key factors, models, and outcomes should guide our mapping of potential private sector partners?**

## Sub-questions

- What criteria should the foundation use to establish strategic partnerships with private-sector players in each area of intervention?
- What types of engagement models (financial, operational, advocacy-based) can best support joint projects with private-sector actors?
- What legal and operational frameworks should be put in place to formalize partnerships and ensure effective collaboration?
- How can the foundation ensure that partnership agreements reflect the specific interests and capacities of each private-sector stakeholder?

## Essential data to be collected

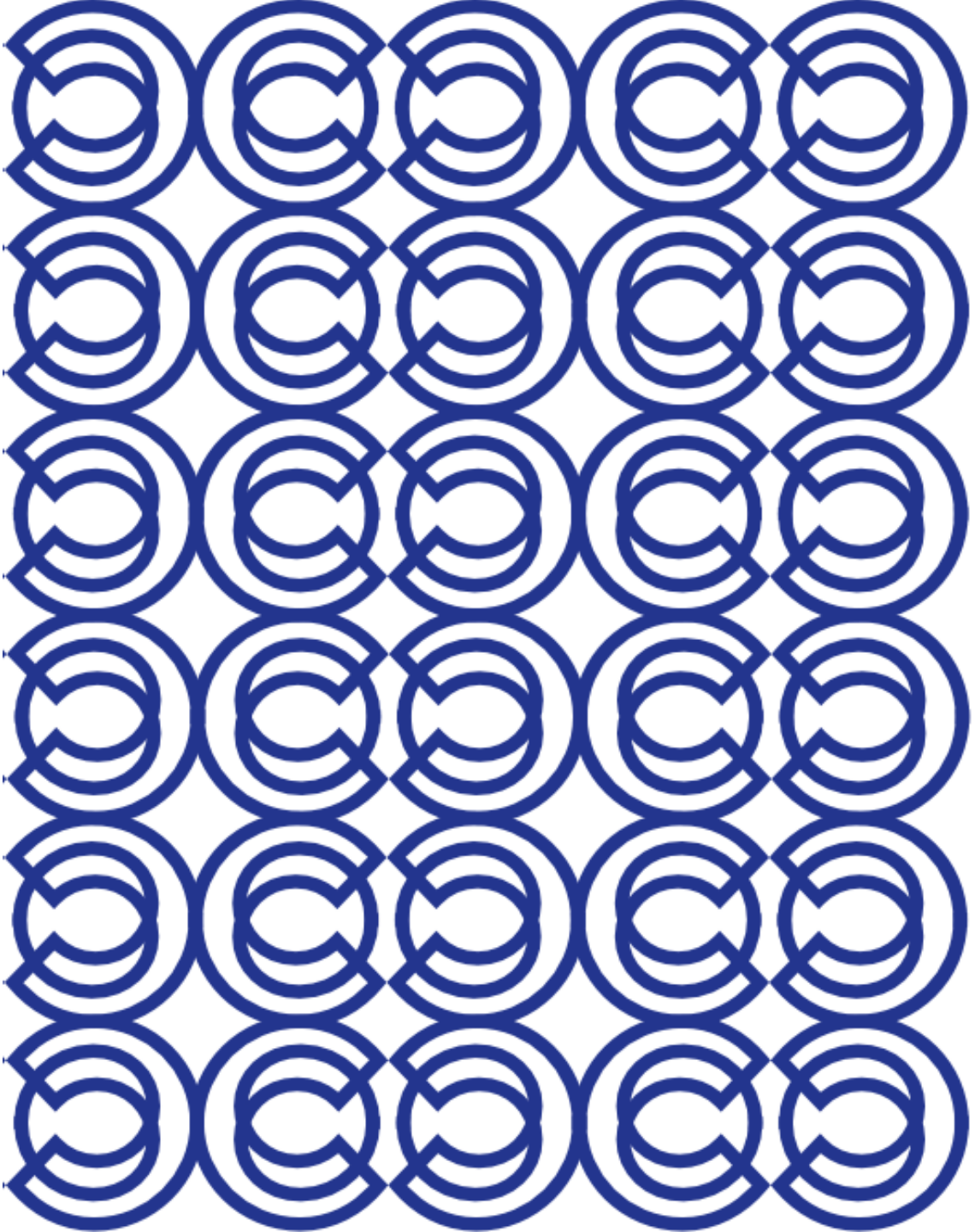
- Private sector actors' level of commitment and alignment with the foundation's mission
- Existing Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) initiatives related to ECD
- Previous or ongoing collaborations with government, NGOs, and donors

- Successful case studies of PPPs in ECD
- Stakeholder expectations and preferred modes of engagement
- Risk assessment and mitigation strategies for collaboration

- Standard Memoranda of Understanding (MoUs) or agreements for ECD partnerships
- Terms of engagement, including financial commitments, roles, and responsibilities

- Specific business interests and priorities of private-sector partners in ECD
- Customized collaboration models tailored to each stakeholder's sector
- Financial and non-financial contributions expected from each partner

Source: Haskè Conseil



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# The proposed methodology is structured under four phases spread over 23 weeks

**Phases**

| 1 Phase 1: Kick-off | 2 Phase 2: Mapping of potential private sector partners | 3 Phase 3: Matching of interventions and identification of partners | 4 Phase 4: Report consolidation and results dissemination |
|---|---|---|---|
| 2.5 weeks | 4 weeks | 4 weeks | 3.5 weeks |

**Key activities**

- Organize initial meetings with stakeholders
- Review existing documentation
- Develop a work plan
- Identify and validate priority countries and themes (which will serve as the basis for identifying actors in Phase 2)
- Identify engagement models and align on priority models
- Develop value chains for ECD for each priority theme
- Conduct a gap analysis of service offerings within the value chains of priority themes, based on a literature review
- Identify key actors within the value chains
- Compile a compendium of existing documents

- Conduct interviews with stakeholders identified in Phase 1
- Define key research questions for each engagement model
- Identify and categorize the profiles of relevant private sector actors
- Develop an evaluation framework to prioritize potential partners
- Analyze collected data and map potential partners.

- Conduct targeted interviews with key stakeholders
- Map the foundation's areas of intervention/themes based on the priority themes identified in Phase 1
- Align the foundation’s interventions with the identified private sector actors in each area of intervention/theme
- Develop standardized profile maps for the identified private sector actors
- Identify key actors within the local ecosystem of each identified private sector actor for each theme
- Consolidate three case studies focusing on a specific segment of the value chain for a given theme
- Develop a partnership approach/strategy with key identified actors in each area of intervention/theme.

- Consolidate all findings and compile the final report
- Ensure the report includes key insights, analysis, recommendations, and case studies
- Support the Van Leer Foundation in organizing a dissemination event to present the findings
- Develop presentation materials (e.g., executive summary, key takeaways, and visual data representations) for effective communication.

**Deliverables**

- Kick-off deck
- Country shortlist proposal
- Value chains gap analysis
- Recommendations for stakeholder engagement

- Database of private sector actors
- Evaluation framework with criteria
- Prioritization of identified actors

- Alignment matrix of the foundation's areas of intervention with those of the identified actors
- Profiles of identified private sector actors
- Three case studies

- Final report
- Executive summary in French and English
- Final report dissemination event

# Questions & discussion

- Any precision about the degree of detail you are aiming for?
- Are there any sectors in which you don't want to intervene?
- Are there any documents from VLF that speak more to your thinking and priorities?

# THANK YOU