

# BUSINESS DRIVERS FOR FOOD SAFETY

## The Challenge

Food passes through many hands on its way to consumers. Some foods are sold close to the point of production in food markets, whereas some move through complex systems of aggregators, transporters, storage operators, and retailers to reach small towns and urban centers. As it moves through this system, food is susceptible to contamination and spoilage, resulting in negative impacts on health, nutrition, economic development, and general well-being.

In emerging economies, small to medium-sized local food businesses – referred to as growing food business (GFBs) – have the potential to substantially reduce these negative effects by adopting better food safety standards and practices. Feed the Future Business Drivers for Food Safety (BD4FS) aims to strengthen capacities of these key actors and make them agents of positive change in the effort to reduce the risk of food contamination, mitigate pre-consumer food loss, and strengthen the overall food system.

## Our Approach

BD4FS complements USAID Missions and other Feed the Future programs through capacity building activities targeting GFBs. Our goal is to improve consumer access to safer and nutritious foods by increasing the adoption of safer food practices by GFBs. Food safety is increasingly driven by informed consumers, and we work with GFBs to strengthen their capacity to respond to demand and drive the food safety agenda forward as a strategic component of overall food systems development. Our capacity building efforts include all levels of businesses along production to consumption corridors to improve the adoption of food safety practices more quickly and sustainably. By investing in GFBs and their market linkages – and addressing their constraints to food safety – USAID programs can accelerate the availability of safer food choices for consumers in all markets.

Key to our approach is building incentive-based business-to-business relationships with GFBs in food systems to improve the linkages from food-deficit areas to larger markets. We work in close collaboration with in-country experts to co-design relevant, innovative, and sustainable approaches for delivering food safety training, certification, and technical assistance to GFBs. The GFBs themselves, and the array of institutions serving them, are all part of our business-to-business model for food safety capacity building.

We work with GFBs to set a higher standard of food safety, thereby leveraging their efforts to help raise food safety practices among other actors in the food system. For example, food safety training and technical assistance to food enterprises in the production to consumption corridors will be complemented by training and technical assistance to businesses in zones linked throughout those corridors. To build greater momentum for food safety improvements in the communities where we work, we utilize multi-media outlets in developing outreach programs that target GFBs and consumers. We convene business owner of all sizes to facilitate dialogue about the benefits of practicing food safety, linking this dialogue with public institutions responsible for policy, regulation, and enforcement. As such, BD4FS is helping businesses become drivers of food safety and advocates of food safety reform to help advance a “culture of food safety.”

### BD4FS Services

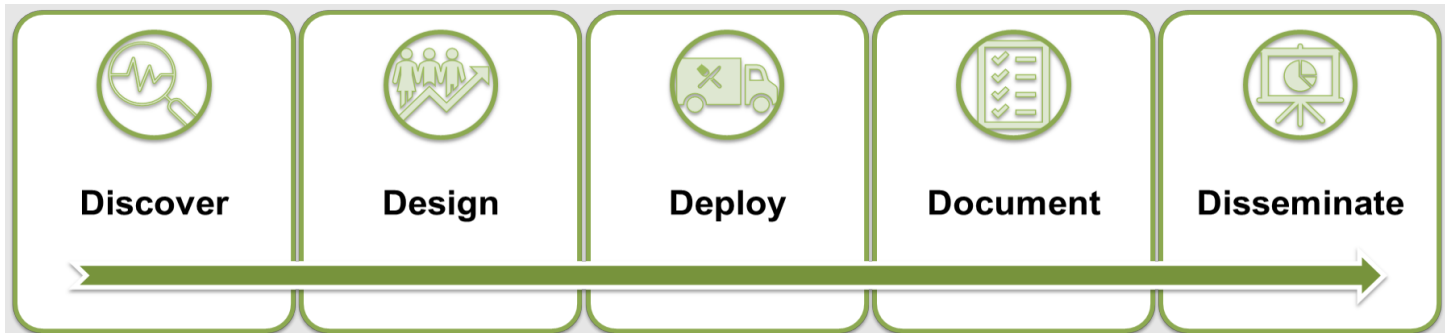
- ⇒ Training GFBs on food safety through on-line and in-person venues.
- ⇒ Raising food safety awareness through mSafeFoods mobile messaging.
- ⇒ Building capacities for women and youth entrepreneurship.
- ⇒ Providing expertise in cold chain supply logistics.
- ⇒ Connecting GFBs with an established network of on-the-ground partners.
- ⇒ Mapping financial services for GFBs.
- ⇒ Supporting GFBs through matching grants.

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Feed the Future Business Drivers for Food Safety (BD4FS) is funded by USAID and implemented by Food Enterprise Solutions (FES). The activity is managed by USAID's Office of Market and Partnership Innovations (MPI), which strives to reduce poverty, fight hunger and improve nutrition by increasing the productivity and profitability of smallholder farmers through a diverse portfolio that combines market-led innovation and dissemination of technology. Through this partnership, BD4FS is co-creating initiatives that are tailored to working with USAID and the private sector. For more information, please contact Dr. Lourdes Martinez Romero, AOR, USAID/BFS/MPI at [lmartinezromero@usaid.gov](mailto:lmartinezromero@usaid.gov) or Russ Webster, FES President and BD4FS Chief of Party, at [russ.webster@foodsolutions.global](mailto:russ.webster@foodsolutions.global).

## What We Do : BD4FS D-5 Approach to Food Safety

BD4FS builds the capacity of GFBs and supports their adoption of food safety practices and technologies to reduce the risk of food contamination. We focus on perishable foods – paying particular attention to cleanliness and cooling to improve product quality and safety. Our strategy is based on a 5-step approach: discover, design, deploy, document, and disseminate – “D-5” – done in partnership with local stakeholders.



- **Discover** – Hold co-creation meetings with USAID Mission to prepare and undertake a food safety situational analysis (FSSA) in each country to identify food corridors, business constraints and opportunities, and potential GFBs to partner with.
- **Design** – Review FSSA findings with USAID and other key actors in the system, and partner with lead GFBs to co-create food safety practices that are specific for each focus country.
- **Deploy** – With partner GFBs, initiate co-designed solutions for improved food safety practices; regularly review and adapt with GFB involvement.
- **Document** – Monitor, evaluate, and document learning over the duration of the project.
- **Disseminate** – Produce technical outputs, highlighting successes and lessons learned, to share findings with local partners, USAID, and other food system actors.

Collaboration and co-creation with businesses and other food systems actors are key to our approach. With our in-country teams, we review food safety regulations and laws; provide trainings that concentrate on our unique “cool & clean” approach for perishable foods to improve temperature control and hygiene; host workshops that bring together consumers, businesses, and government representatives; promote affordable financial services for capital investment in cold chain logistics and innovative technologies; partner with local research organizations; and engage youth and women entrepreneurs in building a strong and safe food system. Our strategy is adapted to be relevant and appropriate for each partner country; considering local challenges, opportunities, and topics of importance.

### Summary of BD4FS Activities to Date (May 2021)

- ⇒ BD4FS initiated work with three Feed the Future countries - Senegal, Nepal, and Ethiopia; project teams are established in Senegal and Nepal to guide and implement in-country work; Ethiopia is in early stages of start-up.
- ⇒ As part of the discovery phase, an FSSA has been completed in Senegal and is underway in Nepal.
- ⇒ In partnership with USAID and lead GFBs, BD4FS will co-design and deploy safer food strategies that are tailored for each focus country.
- ⇒ Produced the *Food Safety Implementation Manual: A Hands-On Guide for Implementing an Appropriate Food Safety Management System in Africa*.
- ⇒ Activities are being monitored, evaluated, documented, and disseminated to capture and share learning. Initial findings can be found at:  
<https://www.agrilinks.org/activities/business-drivers-food-safety>.



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