



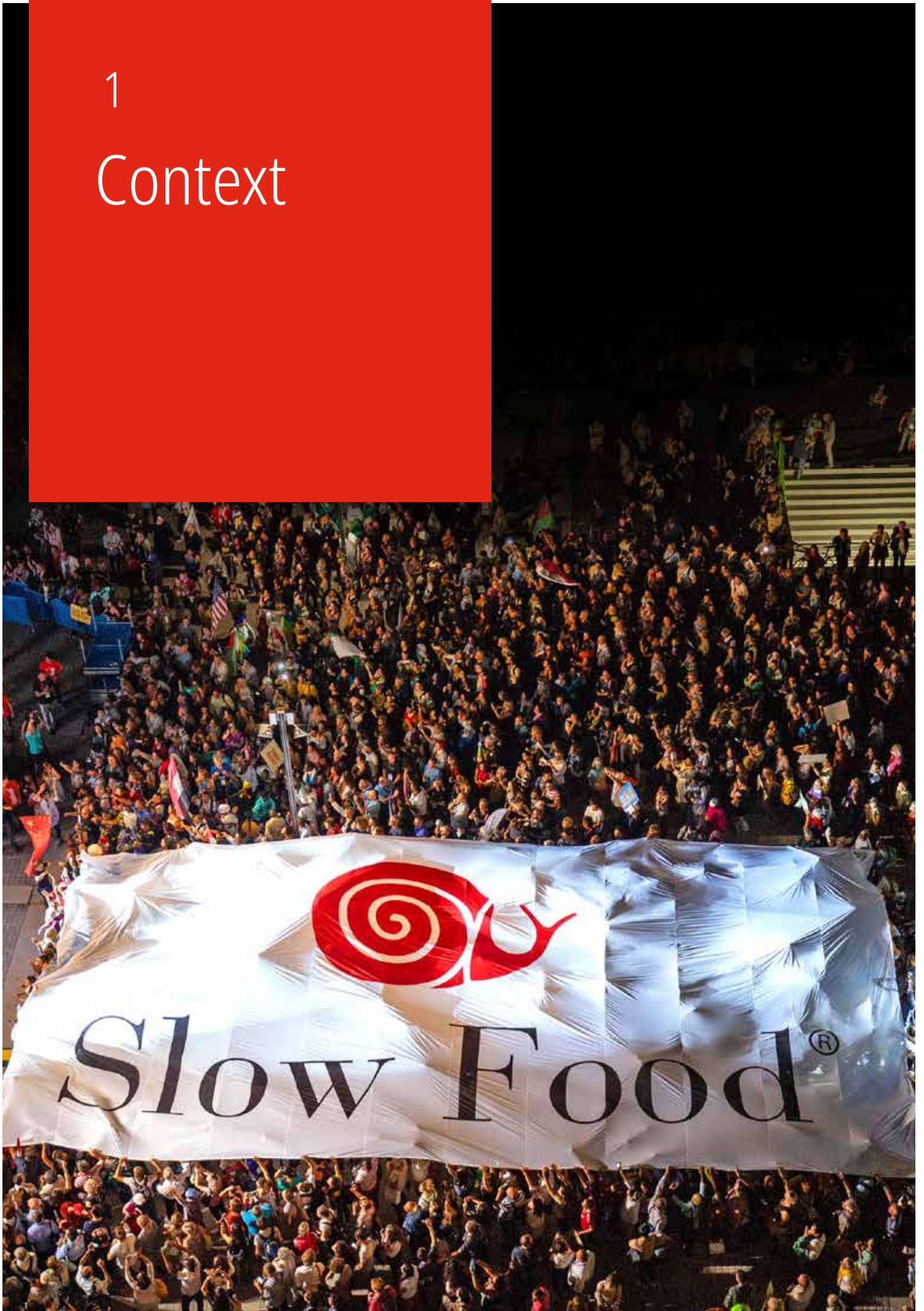
Slow Food®

SLOW FOOD RESILIENCE FUND



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Context



Context

The world is facing the worst global health crisis in 75 years, a crisis that is spreading human suffering, crippling the global economy and taking away people's lives. COVID-19 is threatening the whole of humanity, and the whole of humanity must fight back. **Global action and solidarity are crucial.**

While health needs are an urgent issue, **securing livelihoods and access to food** have also emerged as primary concerns.

Lockdown measures taken to slow the spread of the virus are having an adverse impact on global food chains, both short and long. Travel restrictions are preventing seasonal workers from reaching the fields, putting entire harvests at risk. Export restrictions introduced in some countries are halting crucial flows of staple foods. With Vietnam, for example, suspending its rice exports, Malaysia has been left with only two and a half months of rice supply, raising risks of increased food insecurity.

Uncertainties are threatening the already unstable livelihoods of farmers and farmworkers. The International Labor Organization estimates that over 50% of farm workers in the Global South live below the poverty line. Migrant and undocumented farmworkers are at particularly high risk of sickness as they often live and work in unsanitary conditions, are transported to fields on crowded buses, face hurdles in taking sick leave and lack access to information.

With informal and open-air markets being closed or restricted, vital provisioning channels for communities and sales outlets for farmers are being cut off. The situation is particularly worrying in countries in the Global South where vulnerable populations rely heavily on the informal sector for the sale and purchase of food.

The COVID-19 pandemic is sharply increasing already existing inequalities. Before the pandemic broke out, 820 million people worldwide were undernourished and 2 billion people experienced food insecurity. The recently published **Global Report on Food Crises**, by the UN Food and Agriculture Organisation, the World Food Programme and 14 other organizations, warns that **the coronavirus crisis will have a dramatic impact on vulnerable populations' access to food, the availability of food and household incomes.** It will likely contribute to pushing more than a quarter of a billion people to the brink of starvation unless swift action is taken to provide food and humanitarian relief to the most at-risk regions.

Across the globe, the closure of schools has prevented millions of children from accessing a daily free school meal, crucial to vulnerable low-income families. In Latin America, the number of children who depend on these free meals is estimated to be over 10 million.

Great inequalities also exist when it comes to fighting the virus. Malnutrition in the forms of overweight, obesity and undernutrition, intrinsically linked to social class, race and gender, has been found to be an important risk factor for the disease. Moving forward, the global economic recession is likely to further exacerbate rates of malnutrition as reduced incomes will make access to healthy food even more difficult for many.

The current COVID-19 pandemic has presented governments and the global community with unprecedented challenges. **The importance and essential value of the food supply chain continues to be emphasized by all and yet, in this critical moment, we risk losing sight of the true champions of the food system: the farmers, fishers, artisans and cooks** who develop economies of proximity, serve as a source of subsistence and income for local communities and provide nourishment for the entire population. Immediate action is needed to ensure that all players in the food system, so essential to safeguarding our future and our planet, preserve the economic strength to overcome the current crisis. This emergency has confronted us with the stark evidence that our current model of infinite development indifferent to cultural, social and environmental values is not sustainable.



The crisis is not only a time of resistance, but also an opportunity to cultivate change. The on-going emergency is forcing us to reflect on the transformation needed if we want to achieve a food system that feeds all people well, regenerates and protects the environment and allows local cultures to survive and prosper.

It has become clearer than ever what the common good actually means, how **“communities”** in their most classic sense **must become protagonists again**, fundamental units able to understand and adapt to social change, and how the actors in local food systems can play a crucial role in pushing forward the change we want.

2

Slow Food and its response to the COVID-19 crisis





Slow Food and its response to the COVID-19 crisis

Slow Food is a global network of local communities founded in 1989 to prevent the disappearance of local food cultures and traditions and counteract the rise of fast food culture. Since then, **Slow Food has grown into a global movement involving millions of people in over 160 countries**, working to ensure that everyone has access to good, clean and fair food. Over 3,000 local groups around the world coordinate activities, carry out projects, organize events and mobilize activists. Slow Food communities contribute on a daily basis to combatting growing social inequalities and injustices and the global environmental crisis.

Slow Food's widespread network unites in a bond of trust the skills and values of those who produce and transform, those who sell and those who buy. The economic texture of the food system that Slow Food promotes is made up of **small and medium local food businesses** who have been hard hit by this crisis and risk being marginalized in the recovery packages currently being devised and implemented by many governments.

The challenge and the opportunity is to support communities that sustain local food systems based on equity and environmental protection, providing resources for local projects capable of developing economies of proximity closely linked to local communities. We must seek out the proponents of virtuous food chains, giving them resources and support based on their real and immediate needs so that they can get through this crisis as well as permanently increasing their resilience and impact.

Our aim is to give support to territories and communities so that they can express their full potential agents of good, clean and fair change in the food system. It is crucial at this time to ensure the continuity of resilient economies of proximity, strengthen the relationship between producers and co-producers, keep markets alive through new technologies and create new services to revitalize local and fair supply chains. All over the world, our communities are thriving and have responded to the crisis, delivering solutions based on the characteristics of the local contexts and the needs of local actors that are not just a reaction to the crisis but represent a chance for change in the new scenarios that we will face in the near future.

In every corner of the world, our network has reacted immediately to this new and challenging situation: in the Netherlands, the Slow Food Youth Network is coordinating the delivery of baskets of fresh food produced in the countryside outside Amsterdam, while when markets closed in Normandy, the Basque Country and Coquimbo, Chile, local activists started offering home delivery services to support family farmers. The same is happening with local groups in Cluj and Turda in Romania, in Izmir in Turkey and in Toluca and Merida in Mexico. Across Italy, a similar service is being provided by the Slow Food Presidia network in collaboration with the Slow Food chapters. In Ukraine, Slow Food chapters have organized the distribution of native seeds to promote urban horticulture, while in Johannesburg townships young South Africans are delivering kits with soil, native seeds and urban food-growing manuals. In Cuba, the network is running online training courses on family horticulture in COVID times, while in Bolivia, Kazakhstan and Australia the network is educating the younger generations about sustainable shopping and anti-waste recipes. Brazilians, North Americans, Catalans and Uruguayans have already launched online platforms to connect citizens and small-scale local producers. Throughout the African continent, the thousands of Slow Food gardens continue to operate, providing villages with vegetables and fruit for families and school meals where schools are still open. In Belgium and Uganda, France and Kenya, communities have taken immediate action to ensure the delivery of local and fresh food to those who do not have the means to get it.

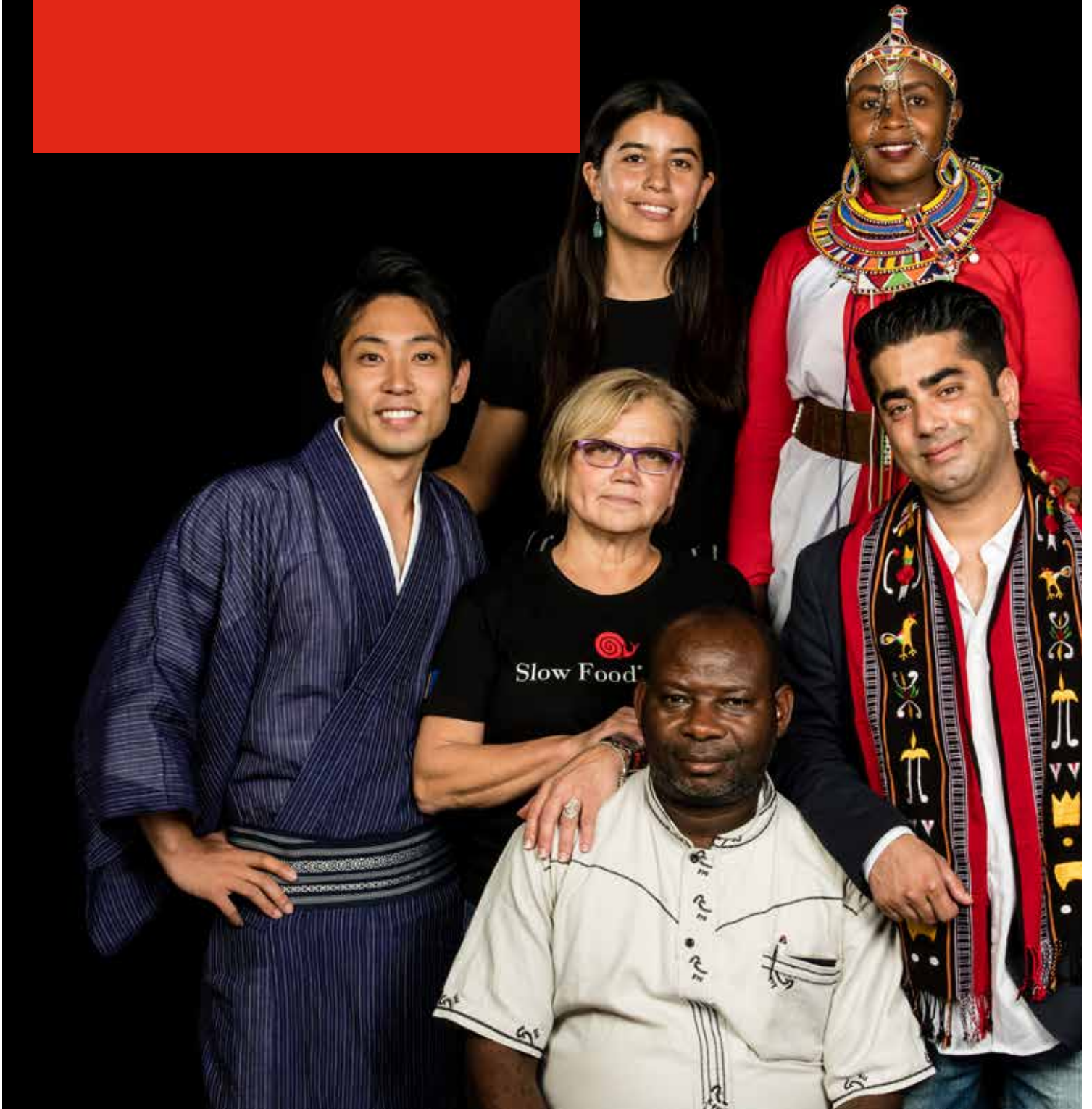


What holds this multitude of initiatives together **is a sense of belonging to a project of global change, common but different in every place, strictly local but proudly global.** They represent the determined and generous response of those who know that solidarity is the only way to get out of this tunnel a little less battered. They represent the resolute action of those who know that **the earth is our foundation and it is only by caring for it, cultivating it and respecting it that tomorrow will be built.**

We want to support these initiatives, open up to collaboration with groups sharing our values and provide a coordinated framework for the interventions in order to multiply their impact.

3

The Slow Food Resilience Fund





The Slow Food Resilience Fund

The plan is to support new and already-existing initiatives helping to construct food systems that allow for food to be sourced primarily locally and help local communities to guide the transformation of the global food system, bringing it back to a vision that has humanity and the planet at its center.

We must envision a **new global food system** that can ensure the continuity of sustainable economies of proximity, reinforce the connection between food producers and consumers, safeguard food markets and regenerate fair, local supply chains. With the awareness that **the world has become irreversibly open and interconnected, we know this new system must not be based on the closure and imposition of borders. Instead, we must increase the quality of our interdependence and level of cooperation.**

In order to provide a targeted response to the consequences of the global COVID-19 pandemic, **Slow Food believes it is vital to establish a fund to finance local initiatives that support local food system actors and their communities.** The resources collected will be used to make contributions to projects carried out by local actors who play a fundamental role in their local territories. The fund aims to respond to their specific needs, which Slow Food's extensive grassroots network will be directly involved in identifying and prioritizing.

We believe the fund should become a permanent tool to allow the projects supported to grow, multiply and ally themselves to build systems of food production, distribution and consumption guided directly by the communities to which they belong.

Slow Food calls on the philanthropic and private sectors alike to make their contributions to the fund immediately available and is committed to deploying all the instruments necessary for its implementation. All projects funded will be characterized by strong elements that promote food culture, socio-economic and environmental justice.

Slow Food's international headquarters, or the Slow Food national association, where it exists, will aggregate support from national and regional funders, and will direct money through local Slow Food groups and key on-the-ground partners. These groups must submit applications for funding which will be assessed by a diverse panel who will decide where to allocate funds.

The resources mobilized will be used to fund initiatives responding to the immediate and urgent needs arising in local areas, including to secure supply chains and connect communities. In line with what is being promoted by the UN, our **approach will be guided by fairness as well as by inclusivity, gender equality, community protection and engagement, which will be integrated in all the interventions, with the following guiding principles:**

- **A people-centered approach and inclusivity**, specifically focusing on the most vulnerable, stigmatized and hard-to-reach members of society, including displaced and mobile populations who may be left out of or inadequately included in national plans.
- **Cultural sensitivity** and attention to the needs of different age groups, as well as to gender equality, particularly accounting for women's key role as agents at the community level.
- Provision of inputs and services relating to essential **food security, livelihoods and nutrition and support to vulnerable groups** affected by the pandemic, with direct and indirect benefits including in regards to resilience-building, stability and the local economy.
- **Community-based social cohesion interventions** to prevent the deterioration of livelihoods and strengthen community engagement, particularly in displacement settings.



Funding will be available to initiatives actively collaborating with farmers, herders, fish harvesters, cooks and others who prioritize food access for vulnerable communities, play a pivotal role in the local community, respect the Slow Food philosophy and are unable to get enough support from public funds.

Clearly each region, country and community has vastly different needs. But the **outcomes** will share some common features:

- Improved nutrition and food security for households in vulnerable communities, with better access to healthy, local and fresh food instead of only shelf-stable foods from corporate chains.
- A shortened supply chain between producers and consumers, creating diversified markets for long-term resilience and robust local food economies, connecting tools and channels for direct selling, and improving the livelihoods of local food workers and their communities.
- Retention of employees in small and medium food-related businesses, with a special focus on women, youth and minorities, creating stability and decent work for families in vulnerable sectors.



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