urbal

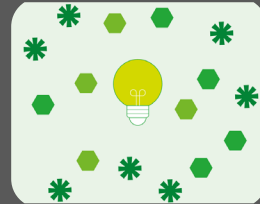# The Urbal Guide to sustainable food system innovation
2023

THE URBAL GUIDE

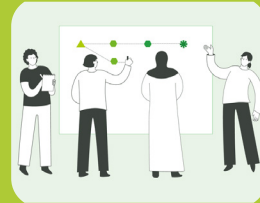a multistep method that helps you better understand your sustainable food system innovation

KEY CONCEPTS

STEP 1: PREPARE

STEP 2: MEET & MAP

STEP 3: SHARE & ACTIVATE

DEVELOP METRICS

CONTENTS

Licence

The Urbal approach is licensed under the creative commons CC-BY-NC-SA license. The attributes of these licences are as follows:

BY: All Creative Commons licences (other than public domain dedications) require attribution. This means that all licences begin with the BY modifier.

NC: Stands for non-commercial. A licence with an NC modifier can not be used for a commercial purpose, such as being sold or used in an advertisement, without the author's authorization.

ND: Stands for no derivatives. A licence with an ND modifier bars the creation of derivative works based upon the original, such as rewriting a work or translating it.

SA: Stands for share alike. Licences that allow derivatives, meaning they lack the ND modifier, can require that derivative creations "share alike" or license their new creations under the same terms.

Note for consultants or companies wanting to sell Urbal as a service:

Selling Urbal as a *product* is not allowed. Selling Urbal as a *service* is allowed, providing that you:

> explicitly refer to the Urbal Guide and original content
> explicitly cite and name the Urbal method to your clients/users
> explicitly commit to comply to the Urbal ethical values

Ethical conditions of use

To claim to have used the Urbal approach, you must strive to meet ethical commitments in the table below.

To certify your use of Urbal, you must declare that you have made every effort to comply with these ethical commitments, list elements that demonstrate your compliance with these commitments, and make this declaration public to the Urbal user community.

Ethical Commitment	Targeted Principal	What For?
Make your results publicly available.	cooperation	Sharing to help scale up/deep/out towards more sustainable food systems.
Involve a variety of stakeholders in the initiative, preferably within a participatory workshop.	collective intelligence, food democracy	Gathering a diversity of point of view to have a better view.
Involve stakeholders that are potentially critical of the initiative (constructive and non-destructive criticism).	food democracy, adversarial debate, pluralism	Evaluating for the prosecution and the defence .
Strive to encourage the participation of actors who do not have easy access to the floor (dominated categories).	food democracy, pluralism, equity	Gathering a diversity of point of view to have a better view.
Strive to address the diversity of dimensions of food system sustainability.	intellectual integrity, scientific accuracy	Producing a global view of sustainability impacts and a clear understanding of the contradictions and trade-offs between the dimensions of sustainability.
Strive to address a diversity of the activities of the initiative under consideration.	intellectual integrity, scientific accuracy	Producing a global view of sustainability impacts and a clear understanding of the contradictions and trade-offs between the dimensions of sustainability.

Welcome to the Urbal Guide

Urbal is a multistep method that helps you better understand your sustainable food system innovation. With tools to map how food system innovations create changes and impacts over time, Urbal can help uncover key barriers and enablers of sustainability and provide important information for community members, practitioners, decision makers, and researchers working to make food systems better.

This guide explains how to use the Urbal process. It provides detailed information about how to elaborate activities linked to your food system innovation, how to map changes and impacts to food system sustainability, and how to identify the enablers and impediments to these changes and impacts. Urbal also offers the possibility to benchmark, evaluate, and track the sustainability of food system innovations.

Who is this Guide For?
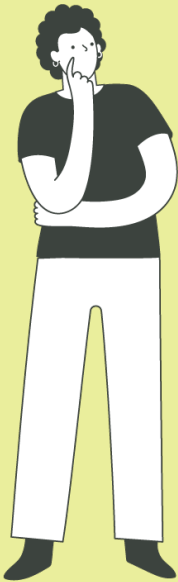
For **sustainable food systems actors**, it helps:
> understand and guide your actions to meet sustainability objectives
> collect the information you need to make better decisions
> clearly communicate the value of your innovation to relevant audiences and attract more funding
> network within your food region
> develop indicators to track and evaluate your progress towards sustainability, if you choose

For **policy and decision makers**, it helps:
> conduct structured overviews of food system innovations
> understand, integrate, and promote food system innovations
> gain the insights you need to strengthen sustainable food policies and overcome barriers to food system sustainability
> develop and improve sustainable food system evaluations
> use evidence from Urbal to develop more suitable policies and programmes

For **researchers**, it helps:
> conduct an overview of a food system innovation and better understand how it supports community empowerment and sustainability
> bring together community knowledge holders to create an inclusive and reflective evaluation
> identify innovation barriers and enablers
> clearly communicate the value of your innovation to relevant audiences
> develop indicators to track and evaluate your progress towards sustainability, if you choose

For **funders**, it helps:
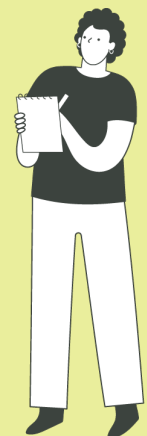> understand the changes and impacts connected to an innovation
> better understand the challenges and enablers of an innovation
> potentially track and evaluate the impact of funded innovations
> assess the potential for longer term sustainability impacts of an innovation

Urbal Objectives

What does Urbal do?

Urbal is a free, open access, adaptable, and easy to use tool to help guide planning and decision making for sustainable food system innovations.

Urbal helps you identify and map how an innovation creates changes and impacts in a food system.

Urbal helps you find the barriers and enablers to sustainability in a food system innovation.

Urbal highlights how innovations help transform sustainable food systems by being replicable, networked, amplified, supported, and/or disseminated at multiple scales.

Urbal enables the identification and selection of indicators to assess and monitor food system sustainability.

Who is Urbal for?

Urbal is designed to support public and private practitioners—including **innovators, policy-makers, community organizers,** and **funders**—who want to advance and share their work to increase food system sustainability.

How does Urbal work?

Through online, open access and customizable resources, Urbal enables:

> multi-stakeholder participation and co-learning
> a reflexive exercise to map pathways of change and impact
> an assessment of different dimensions of sustainability

How to navigate the guide

We suggest looking at the Urbal application experiences included in each section, and then adapting according to your specific context. Each section of the guide is color-coded to show users which section they are in.

KEY CONCEPTS

STEP 1: PREPARE

STEP 2: MEET & MAP

STEP 3: SHARE & ACTIVATE

DEVELOP METRICS

Sustainable Food Systems

Sustainable food systems, from seed to compost, are ecologically regenerative, provide fair livelihoods, preserve and protect biodiversity, are regionally focused and provide healthy, culturally appropriate food to everyone now and into the future. They integrate benefits across sectors and scales, and can offer multiple ways to make the world more sustainable. Urbal focuses on 5 dimensions of sustainability.

Each of the sustainability dimensions includes a wide range of dynamic and context dependent issues, such as:

> **Health:** food security,access, and quality, nutrition, well-being
> **Governance:** transparency, power dynamics, participation, accountability
> **Environment:** protection of biodiversity, renewable resources, energy efficiency, climate resilience
> **Social-cultural:** equity, community building, trust in institutions, positive expression of social and cultural identity and culture
> **Economic:** equity, resilience, fair work and livelihoods, local economies

Five dimensions of Sustainability
(conception: Urbal; design: Alice Zavaro, 2022)

These five dimensions are the backbone for **Impact Pathway Maps**. They will guide which activities you will choose for the mapping workshop (see Steps 1 and 2). These dimensions will also help you develop a more in depth and precise understanding of your pathways to change. The sustainable food system dimensions you focus on will depend on your innovation and your sustainability vision and goals. To increase your understanding about your innovation changes and impacts, we urge you to consider at least two sustainability dimensions. This will help you see interconnections between the innovation goals, changes and impacts, and the sustainability dimensions. It will also help guide you as you address where you can realize multiple benefits and reduce trade-offs as you learn from the findings from your Impact Pathway Maps.

Mapping Change

The aim of the Urbal methodology is to help disentangle the goals and strategies that help make an innovation more sustainable, not necessarily to measure its impact. That is why Urbal suggests working with impact pathway mapping, which aims to answer the question of how and why an impact has occurred over time.

An impact pathway map is a diagram that maps how an activity can generate short-term and medium-term changes to achieve long-term changes, also called impacts.
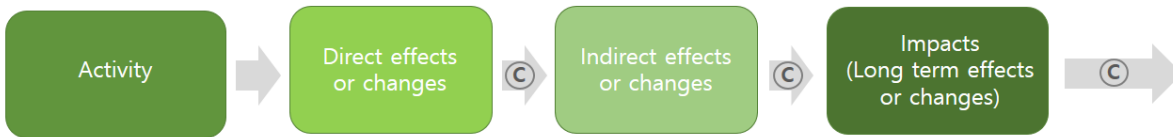
© = **conditions** for success / obstacles

Activities are actions associated with delivering the innovation goals. In other words, they are what is actually done in order to achieve the aims of the initiative.

Outputs are the direct immediate term results associated with a project. In other words, they are usually what the project has achieved in the short term.

Outcomes refer to the medium term consequences of the innovation. They usually relate to the innovation goal.

Impacts are the long term consequences of a project.

To understand how your innovation might have produced impacts on sustainability, the Urbal approach encourages you to ask:

What has changed since the innovation began?

What changes produced the activities you developed in order to meet your goals?

KEY CONCEPTS

Activity = What an innovation does	Output = Direct products of an activity
Must be precisely defined *E.g.: distribution of 100% plant based meals in school canteens.*	**The resources (or inputs) needed can be measured (e.g. labour time, money, tools…)** E.g.: 100% plant-based meal on the children's table once a month.

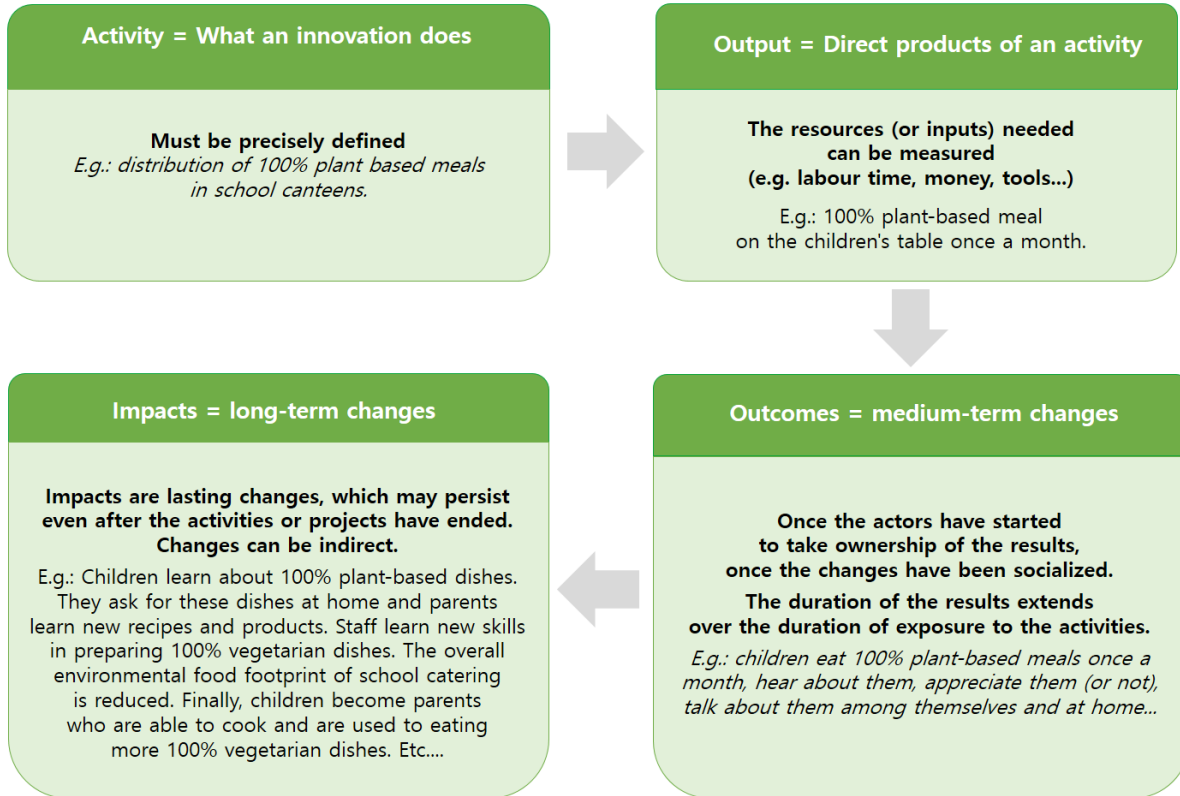| Impacts = long-term changes	Outcomes = medium-term changes
Impacts are lasting changes, which may persist even after the activities or projects have ended. Changes can be indirect. E.g.: Children learn about 100% plant-based dishes. They ask for these dishes at home and parents learn new recipes and products. Staff learn new skills in preparing 100% vegetarian dishes. The overall environmental food footprint of school catering is reduced. Finally, children become parents who are able to cook and are used to eating more 100% vegetarian dishes. Etc….	**Once the actors have started to take ownership of the results, once the changes have been socialized.** **The duration of the results extends over the duration of exposure to the activities.** *E.g.: children eat 100% plant-based meals once a month, hear about them, appreciate them (or not), talk about them among themselves and at home…*

Examples of activities, outputs, outcomes, and impacts

There are multiple possible pathways leading an activity to one or multiple impacts on sustainability. Impact pathway mapping helps disentangling the multiple cause and effect relationships that have led to change. These pathways are not necessarily linear constructs: the interrelation, convergence, potential divergency between the various changes and pathways towards the different dimensions of sustainability, also build a systemic theory of change, emphasizing positive and negative feedback loops, unforeseen changes and unforeseen contradictions between pathways, which we believe are particularly relevant to address the issue of the sustainable food systems.

A single activity can result in several pathways:

Ⓒ Conditions for succes

X Barriers

🟩 Positive and expected effect

🟥 Negative effect, to be avoided/limited
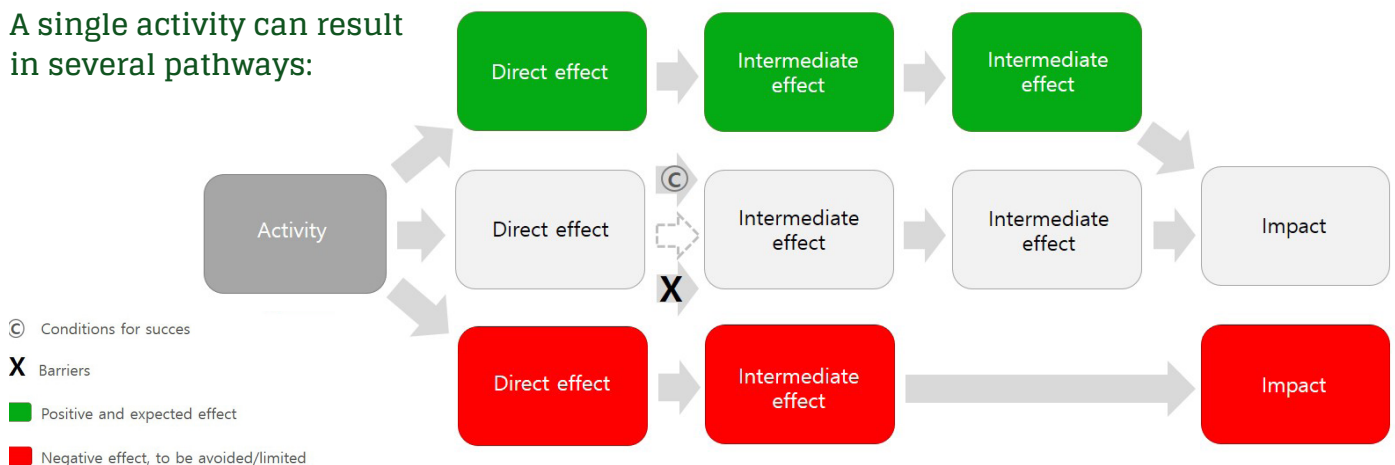
Participatory Engagement

Participatory engagement is at the heart of the Urbal methodology. A participatory process requires ongoing engagement with a range of actors and explores shared understandings and relationships.

Participatory approaches can be supported by experts—people with extensive experience and/or practitioner knowledge. Experts may be community knowledge holders, practitioners, academics, or others who can provide useful guiding insights. This means that all knowledge and experiences are equally valuable and valid.

The Urbal approach urges you to be as inclusive as you can so that you make space for all participants. The more voices that get included, the more relevant your findings will be. It is important to engage with all groups involved in your innovation process. You need to create a welcoming and open space for engagement where participants can provide their insights and be heard.

Power relationships are a crucial consideration when selecting participants for the workshop. It is important to avoid power imbalances where one or a few voices dominate the conversation at the expense of others. And remember, participation does not always equate to inclusion. It is critical that participants can provide feedback and input throughout the process so that Urbal can help build capacity. In practice, this may require more than one workshop and/or breakout session during the workshop to provide opportunities for all participants to express their perspectives and ideas. For example, it may be difficult for new members to speak honestly if innovation leaders are in their group. Organizing breakout groups can allow more open conversations and mixed methods approach can help. For example, it is possible to conduct interviews with more/less vocal people followed by a workshop that might be more stakeholder focused. Interviews can supplement the workshop results for those who might either dominate a workshop or be too intimidated to participate.

Clear, plain language that avoids jargon can also help participants feel engaged. As all knowledge and experiences should be treated as equally valuable and valid, lived experience, scientific knowledge and policy-maker contributions need to be given the same consideration. Urbal helps you to be inclusive by providing the tools you need to engage in participatory processes effectively.
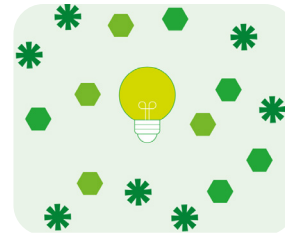
Social innovation

Social innovation is an intervention initiated by social actors to respond to an aspiration, meet a need, provide a solution to societal challenges. It aims to modify the institutional frameworks that shape relationships in society (Bouchard, Evers & Fraisse, 2015).

In developing Urbal, we found many examples of social innovation that shared these characteristics:
> The innovators wanted to create or activate change that responded to a social or societal need.
> The innovation goals were inclusive and aimed to share economic, social, and environmental benefits with everyone.

For planning forward, collaborative or participatory activities connected to social innovation can include:
> the intention to change a social situation to improve life for individuals
> Social innovations are embedded in a value system, so they are not intrinsically good and what is undesirable (problematic) and desirable (solutions) can change over time.
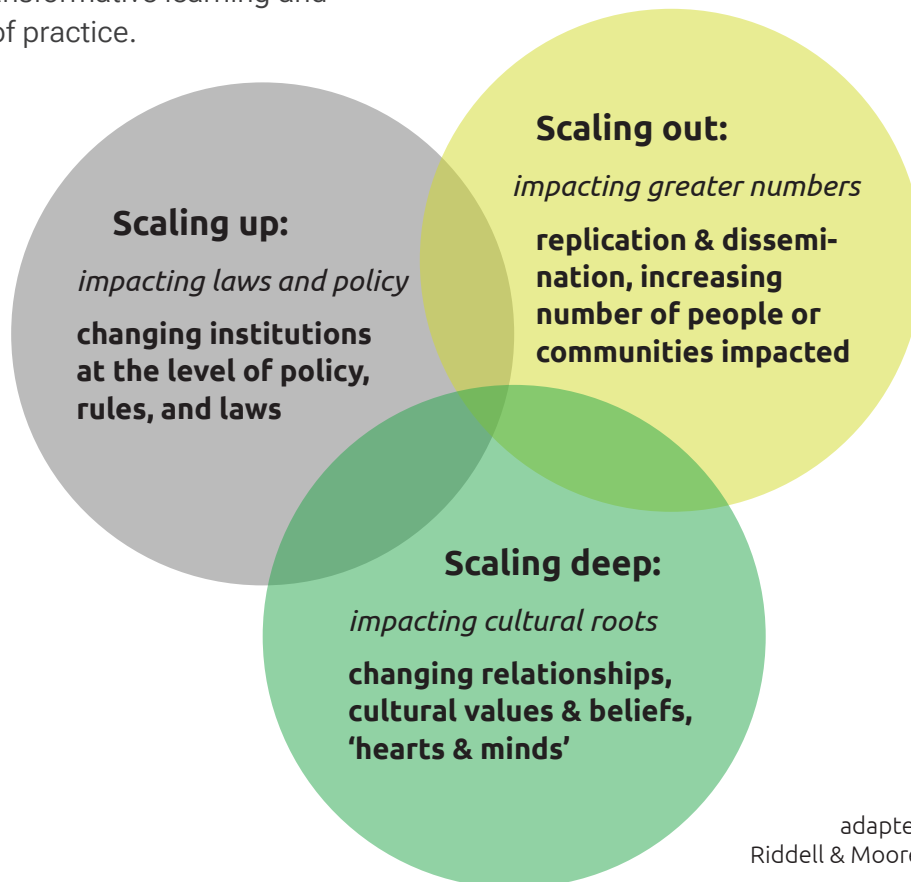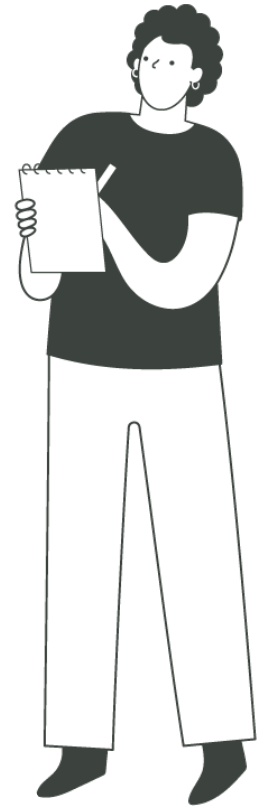
KEY CONCEPTS

Scale

The capacity of single innovations to contribute to sustainable food system transformation is weak if they are not replicated, imitated, networked, amplified, supported, and/or disseminated.

It is useful to consider different scale considerations for an innovation (Moore et al., 2015):

> **Scaling out** is about impacting greater numbers. Strategies may include the replication or the spreading of projects and programs geographically and/or in greater numbers, or the dissemination of principles, knowledge, experiences, with the adaptation to new territorial contexts
> **Scaling up** is about impacting laws and policy. This can include changes to legal terms, policy governance, commodity chain structuring, etc.
> **Scaling deep** is about impacting cultural roots. That means spreading big cultural ideas and using stories to shift norms and beliefs, or investing in transformative learning and communities of practice.

By engaging with multiple actors and sharing results, Urbal can enable various kinds of scale shifts, by strengthening the capacity of practitioners to disseminate their innovations and contribute to the transition towards more sustainable food systems. Urbal also helps to document scale related change in support of additional transitions and/or transformation.

Scaling up:

impacting laws and policy

changing institutions at the level of policy, rules, and laws

Scaling out:

impacting greater numbers

replication & dissemination, increasing number of people or communities impacted

Scaling deep:

impacting cultural roots

changing relationships, cultural values & beliefs, 'hearts & minds'

adapted from
Riddell & Moore, 2015

Learning about the innovation

In Step 1, you will interview people involved in the innovation to gather background information and develop a better understanding of how the Urbal method can help you document sustainability changes and impacts. You can also look into reports and academic literature to see if there are any important or useful lessons from the work other folks are engaged in.

Step 1 Objectives

Through interviews, gather information about your innovation including:

> The innovation context and how it operates considering the goals, cultural contexts, its history, the people involved, any power dynamics you can think of and related innovation activities, scale considerations.
> How the innovation acts to implement the transition: the mission (if defined), the activities, and the short-term, medium-term, and long-term changes produced or expected from the innovation.

Pick the tools you'll develop to help you understand the innovation, such as:

> An actor diagram showing who has been/is involved in your process to help decide who to interview.
> A timeline outlining the history of the innovation.
> A list of activities related to the innovation.
> A first draft of some impact pathway maps.

You can share these resources as they develop with your interview participants to add details and check for accuracy.

Benefits of documenting the innovations

There are many benefits to collecting different kinds of information about an innovation, including the opportunity to engage with innovation stakeholders and partners.

Benefits for **innovators** include:
> gaining valuable insights about what you are doing
> identifying resources you need to be more strategic
> supporting the evolution of the innovation
> sharing your experience with communities
> using the information gathered to attract investments and/or public support

Benefits for **policy-makers and funders** include:
> providing an overview and high level understanding of the innovation
> identifying tools that facilitate deeper understandings about the innovation
> identifying how the innovation is sustainable
> establishing plans for future directions
> developing evidence-informed policies and programs

Benefits for **researchers** include:
> documenting existing pathways for sustainable food systems
> building a knowledge base informed by systems thinking for scientific questions
> encouraging communities of practice and knowledge sharing to create more sustainable food systems
> preparing quantitative and qualitative assessments

There are several tools that can be used to document an innovation using the Urbal process. Be sure to choose the tools that are the best fit for the innovation you are documenting and that fit within the constraints of your project.

Tool	Function
Document and Literature Review	Learning as much as possible about the innovation and its context, using existing literature and documents including public reports and from other organizations.
Interviews	Meetings structured by specific questions with key actors to explore visions, role and perspectives about the innovation. Interviews can be one-to-one conversations and/or focus groups.
Timeline	Chronological visualisation of the evolution of the innovation, key events and turning points that can include: number and type of actors involved, scope and activities, target audience, governance, budget and funding, etc.
Actor Diagram	Visualization of direct and indirect actors involved in the activities of the innovation, inter-relationships, influence and power dynamics.
Main Innovation Activities	List identifying which activities are core to the innovation and which are likely to bring about changes towards sustainability.
Synthesize Results	Summary document that includes an innovation overview and detailed description, method, visual tools.

Document and Literature Review

It is important to gather as much information as possible about the innovation and its context. As a starting point, review existing documents and texts related to the innovation into a literature review. A literature review will allow you to familiarize yourself with your subject and to conduct more in-depth interviews with the actors later on.

Interviews

Interviews are an important part of Step 1 for the Urbal process. They offer a chance to gather information directly from innovators, innovation actors, policy- and decision-makers, and experts. Interviews are an opportunity to hear from key innovation actors in their own words about how the innovation contributes to food system sustainability.

Some key considerations when planning interviews:

> Who you interview will impact what type of information you are able to gather about the innovation. If possible, be sure to identify people to interview from four key groups—innovators, innovation actors, policy- and decision-makers, and experts.

> Conduct at least 5 and ideally no more than 20 interviews. Select the number of interviews that makes the most sense for your context, taking into consideration time and resource constraints.

> Be mindful of the power dynamics involved in interviewing, especially when interviewees are in a less powerful position than interviewers or others involved with the innovation. It is very important to create a safe space to facilitate dialogue with interviewees.

> At the end of each interview, ask the interviewee to suggest others that you should talk to. This will help you make sure that you've included all of the relevant innovation actors in the interview process.

Interviews must be conducted in compliance with institutional/organisational ethics procedures and local privacy protection laws. Interviewers must have recorded verbal or written consent of all participants and provide detailed information to participants about how their words and personal information will be used in the project and how all information gathered will be securely stored during and after the project.

Obtaining consent requires interviewers to be thoughtful and clear about their intentions and to build trust with participants so that they fully understand the project and their role.

Interviewers may want to explore different questions or topics depending on the role of interviewees. On the following page are some recommended questions to get the process started.

Conducting interviews: who to interview?

People to interview and their role

Innovators
- People who developed the initial innovation concept
- People who are involved in the innovation to date

Policy makers and/or funders as appropriate
- Interest in and capacity to enable or impede innovation through policy, programs, funding, tools and other supports

Innovation actors
- Actors directly or indirectly related to the innovation
- Such as consumers, clients, beneficiaries, providers, producers, employees, etc.

Experts
- You may also want to include sustainability experts to provide context for the innovation and draw on insight from other research to inform case description

STEP 1: PREPARE

Focus of questions, suggested topics
Meeting the interviewee

Example questions

(?)   Please introduce yourself

Focus of questions, suggested topics
His/her knowledge about the innovation: background and history, main activities, actors involved and concerned

Example questions

(?)   What is the primary purpose of the innovation? How the innovation evolved and who is affected? What are the enabling and constraining factors and the challenges of achieving the innovation? What are the main activities of the innovation?

Focus of questions, suggested topics
Interviewee's role and link to the innovation including practices, interactions with other stakeholders

Example questions

(?)   What is your role as part of the innovation initiative? What are your activities and practices related to the innovation? Who do you interact with?

Focus of questions, suggested topics
Their vision for the innovation and the perspectives

Example questions

(?)   What do you think about the sustainability goals for the innovation? What do you see about the future for the innovation?

Focus of questions, suggested topics
Perceived or expected impact/changes related to the innovation

Example questions

(?)   What has changed or/and been impacted in the food system by this innovation? Have ideas and/or practices about food changed because of this innovatioin? What has changes for the environment, the people, health, economy, governance?

(!) Don't forget to store the data collected during the interviews, in a table for example, you will need for step 2

Timeline

The timeline is a chronological representation of the evolution of the innovation, including key events and outputs. Based on the information gathered through the document and literature review and the interviews, timelines can also include the type and number of actors, innovation activities, key governance decisions or processes, and location, among other important types of information. The timeline helps uncover turning points and thresholds in the development of the innovation, which in turn allows you to better visualize the explicit or implicit strategy, and the various steps taken towards scaling, and other difficult to identify aspects of an innovation.

Examples of timelines from other Urbal users:

Innovation step	Events of the innovation process	External events	Unexpected events affecting the innovation process	URBAL project development

2019 ... 2020

Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Ago	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec

Formulation of the problem | **Finding the innovation** | **Development of the innovation** | **Validation of the innovation**

Introduction of Area B in Milan | Introduction of Ecotax in Milan

New logistic tender publication postponed to 2020 | Election of MiRi new Board of Directors

Project kick-off and analysis of MiRi needs and expectaions | Analysis of MiRi internal processes and external context | Further interviews with stakeholders and operative meetings and brainstorming sessions with MiRi staff | Organization of the participatory workshop with stakeholders

Preliminary interviews with stakeholders | Formulation of the new criteria for the logistic tender and preparation of the tender documentation | Validation of the impact pathway map, adaptation of the tender criteria and documentation for next publication

URBAL Workshop in Montpellier with UFILs | *Writing of URBAL-WP3 Report* | *Writing of URBAL Workshop Report*

URBAL Methodology development & refinement with the other UFILs

---

1973 Park Slope Food Coop (NYC)

10/2016 Supermarché La Louve (Paris) → → →

Association Amis Cagette — 9/1/2015 - 11/22/2018

Coopérative La Cagette — 3/1/2017 - 11/22/2018

Local hall Gambetta — 9/1/2015 - 9/1/2016

Local Balard — 9/1/2016 - 9/1/2017

Local SPAR Clémenceau — 9/1/2017 - 11/22/2018

1er groupement d'achat — 10/1/2015 - 1/1/2017

Epicerie participative — 1/1/2017 - 9/1/2017

Supermarché coopératif — 9/1/2017 - 11/22/2018

Crowdfunding — 10/1/2016 - 12/31/2016

Financement participatif — 4/1/2017 - 6/1/2017

Intégration pépinière d'entreprise (formations, investissement ESSOR) — 3/1/2017 - 11/22/2018

LA CAGETTE

1300 adhérents 9/1/2018

1900 adhérents 11/15/2018

X? fournisseurs 11/22/2018

8 fournisseurs 11/1/2015

32 fournisseurs 1/1/2016

400 adhérents 10/1/2016

800 adhérents 12/1/2016

1000 adhérents 3/1/2017

Achat SPAR 6/15/2017

2015	2016	2017	2018	**2018**

Aujourd'hui

11/1/2015 Prix YESS Académie

9/1/2016 1er salarié

3/1/2018 6ème salariée

Two examples of linear timelines (previous page):

These linear timelines, moving left to right, illustrate the innovation steps, events of innovation process, external events, unexpected events affecting the innovation process, and Urbal project development. (source: Bartezzaghi & Canniato, 2019)

Rabat Timeline (above):

The first attempt to develop a SPG and that of an agro-ecological label was carried out by the Réseau des Initiatives Agroécologiques au Maroc (RIAM). While a first attempt to develop a SPG within the still informal RIAM took place between 2011 and 2013, this attempt did not succeed due to the lack of time of the network's volunteer actors. In 2017, thanks to a new partnership with the CIRAD research centre, RIAM was able to start a pilot SPG experiment in the Rabat region and the creation of an agroecological quality sign to which producers and consumers can refer. Innovation thus emanates from the associative sector, civil society and research. The Figure traces this history by placing it in a broader context of the development of SPGs in the world, notably with the creation of Nature et Progrès in France in 1964, whose charter and functioning inspired the Moroccan SPG, but also through the definition and basic elements of SPGs adopted by IFOAM in 2004, which helped to structure the SPG. The history also shows that the Moroccan SPG came after a series of initiatives in agroecology in Morocco.

Actor Diagrams
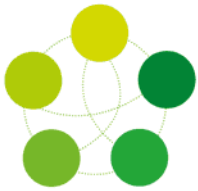
Based on the information collected in the interviews, actor diagrams depict how different groups of people are involved in the innovation. These diagrams provide an overview of how various actors are directly or indirectly involved in and affected by the innovation and the relationships between those groups. The actor diagram also helps you identify the participants to be involved in Step 2.
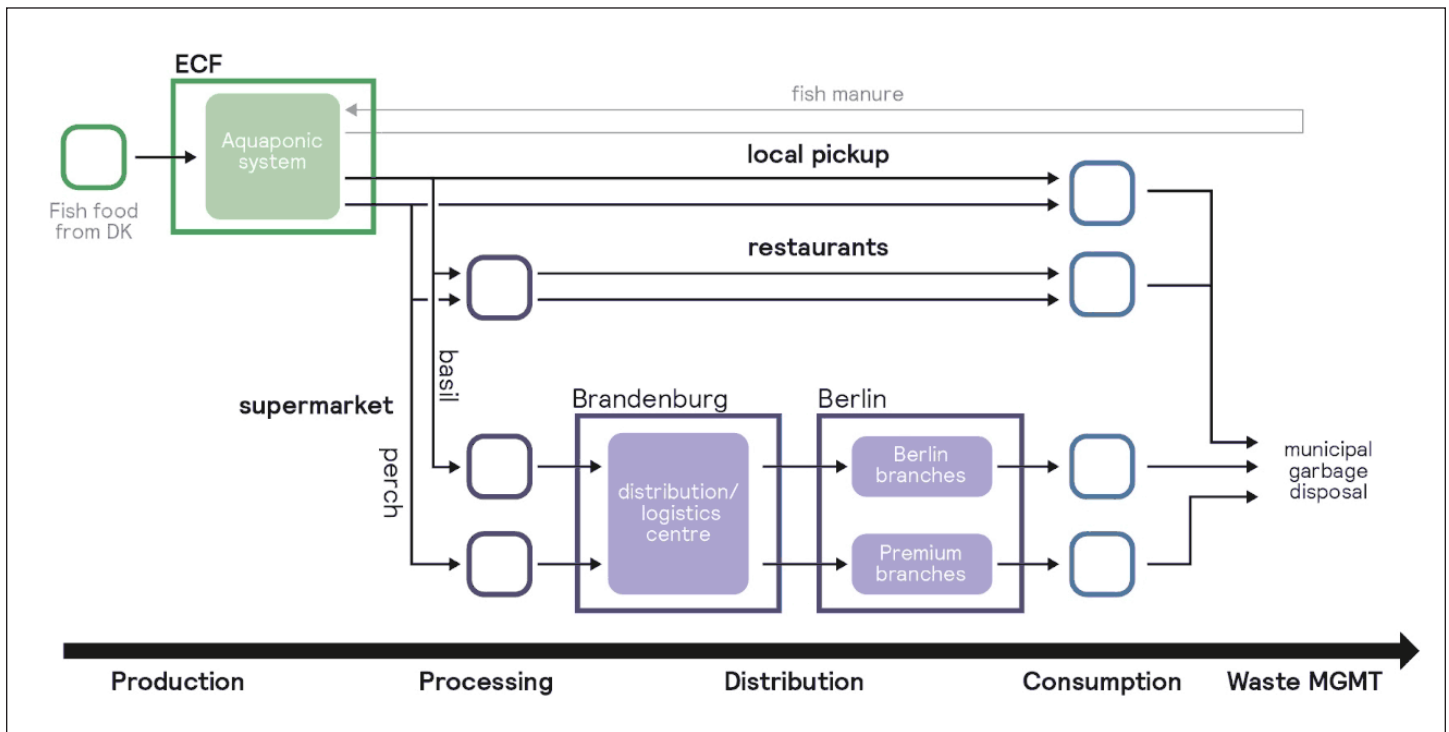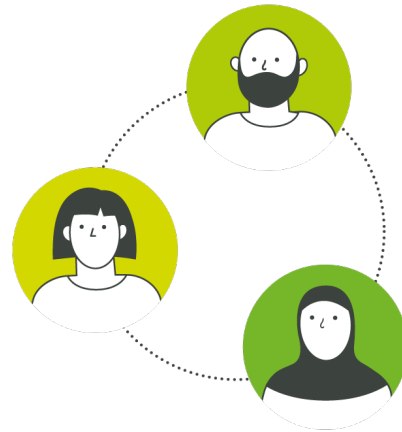

Moving from left to right, this model illustrates how fish from the aquaponic system move through the stages of processing, distribution, and consumption to become waste. Network map. (source: ECF Farmsystems, 2017)

STEP 1: PREPARE
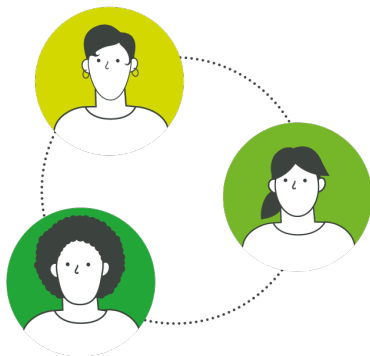
If you have enough information after identifying the main innovation actors, you may describe and map the roles and relationships of actors in the innovation. You may also want to identify their roles in relation to their power and interest in the innovation.

This can include describing the actors' level of involvement in the innovation, asking questions like: Are actors developing, funding, or supporting the innovation? Are they benefiting from the innovation activities? Attention to power dynamics among stakeholders in the actor diagram can help identify key information for Step 2.
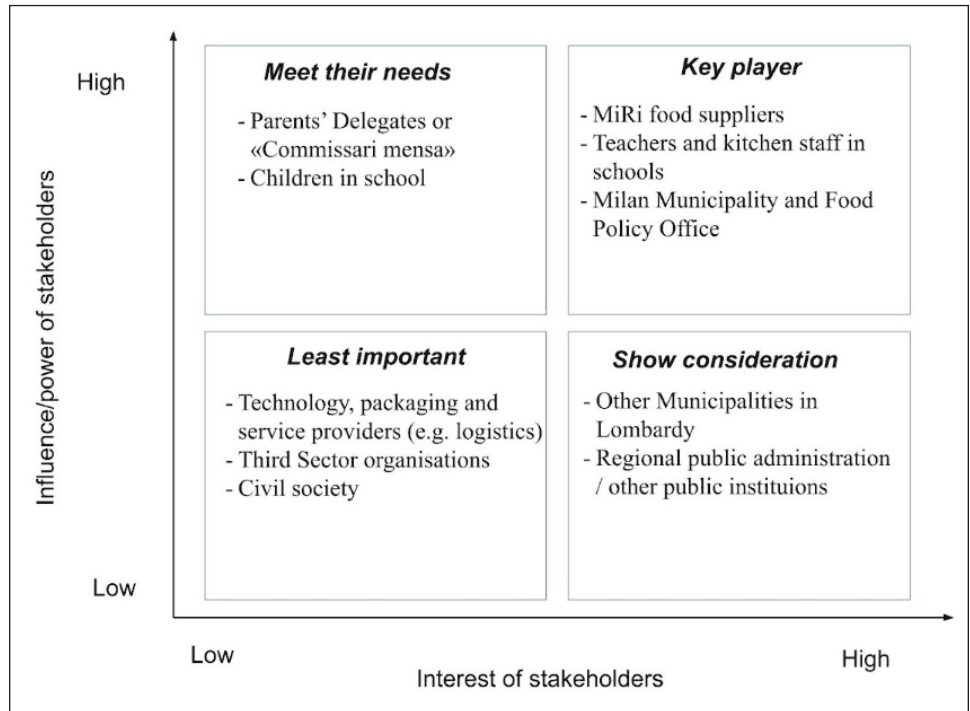
(source : Bartezzaghi & Caniato, 2023)

Main Innovation Activities

Identifying the innovation activities will: (1) provide you with an overview of the main actions connected to the innovation, and (2) help you pre-select the most relevant activities to be discussed in-depth during Step 2. As you review information collected through the interviews, you may begin to identify the most relevant innovation activities that lead to understanding more about sustainability pathways. These can be organized into a list, concept map, or any other way of representing the information that is the most useful to you.
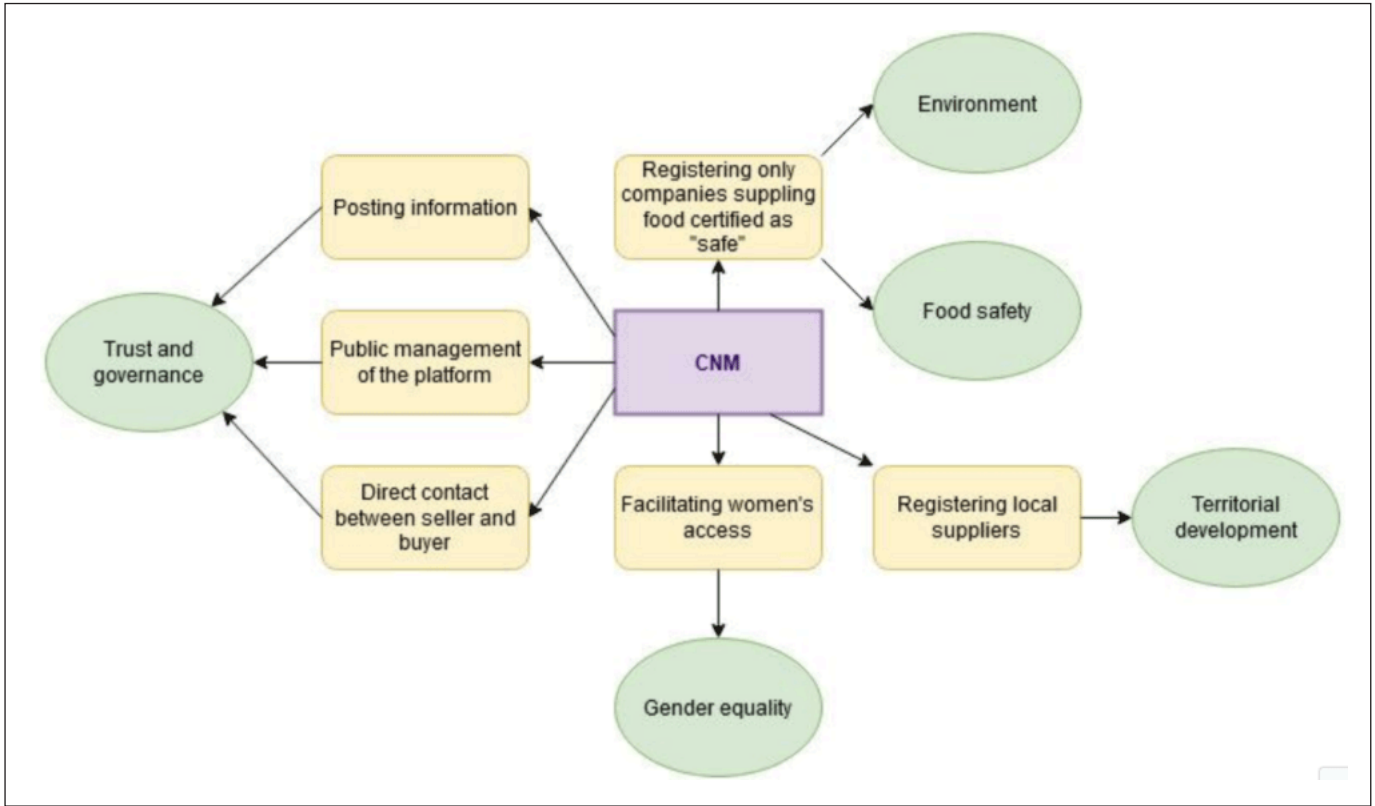
Draft Impact Pathway Map

If you have enough data from the Step 1 interviews you can start to draw some preliminary impact pathway maps. Creating draft impact pathway maps is not a mandatory task at this stage, but it can help organize your ideas and key information from Step 1 to prepare for a more detailed look at the innovation in Step 2. At the end of the Urbal process you may want to compare your draft impact pathway map to the more comprehensive impact pathway map you create.

The following page shows two samples of draft impact pathway maps. For more information on creating yours, refer to *Mapping Change* on page 4 of this Guide, in the Key Concepts section.

To conclude Step 1, it may be useful to summarize what you learned about the innovation in a short report. This synthetic report could include details about how you applied the method so far and what first results you obtained (interviews, timeline, actor diagram, etc.). This report can be in whatever form is most useful to you—including a slide show, standard report, or reflective portfolio.

Examples of draft impact pathway maps:

Hanoi case study : Public-private platform to market safe food products.
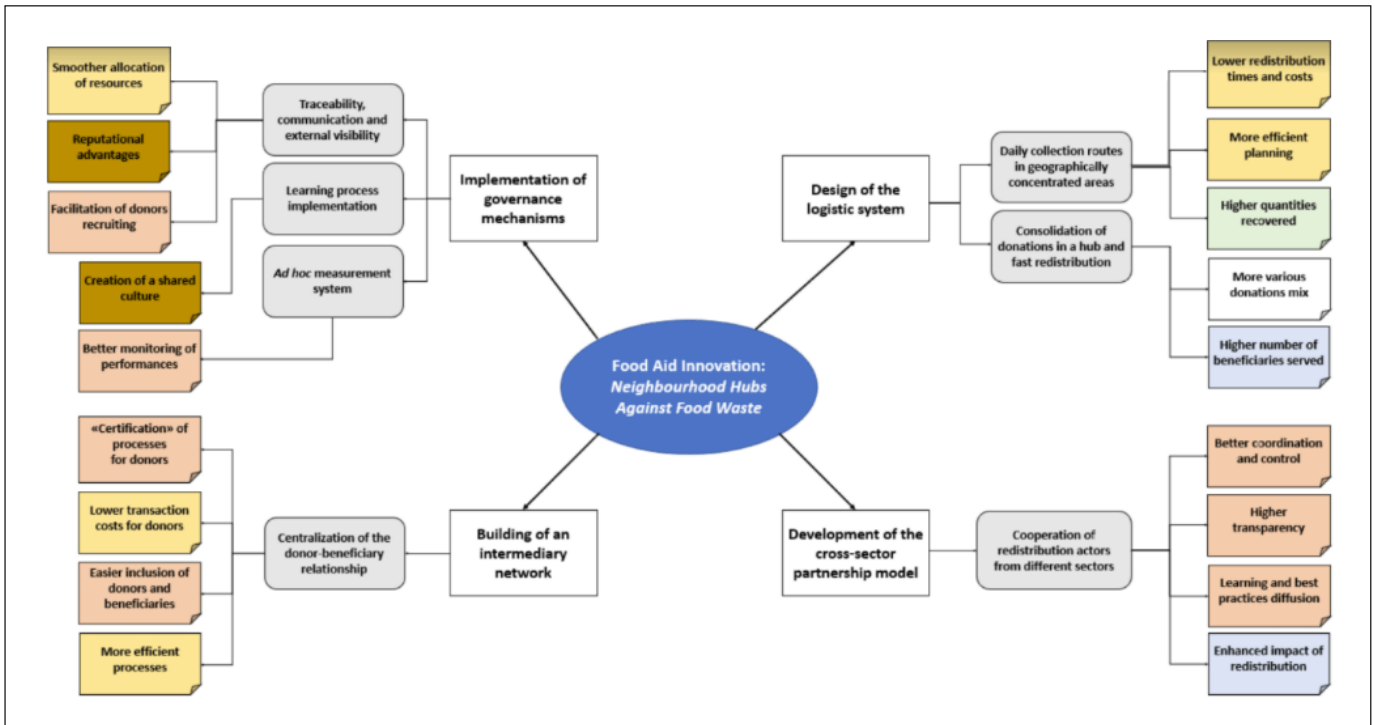
Food Aid case study : Preliminary innovation impact pathway map.

STEP 1: PREPARE

Workshops to map innovation changes

In Step 1 you collected critical information about the innovation through a literature review and interviews. You then used the information you gathered to create innovation timelines, actor maps, and a draft innovation pathway map. In Step 2, you will use this information to plan and run a participatory meeting. The preferred format for this meeting is a participatory workshop, but you can adapt the process to your needs and constraints.

Step 2 Objectives

> Discuss and validate the impact pathway maps that have been drafted during Step 1, if applicable.
> Use collective intelligence or enable discussion in a workshop about the innovation processes and pathways that lead to changes. Remember, the goal is to document, not to measure.
> Map the short (changes), medium (outcomes) and long term changes (impacts) produced by the activities carried-out by the innovation.
> Build the innovation global impact pathway map which includes all the examined activities.

When mapping the innovation changes using Urbal, it is important to keep the dimensions of sustainability in mind. It is also important to remember that the Urbal sustainability dimension diagram is neither fixed nor prescriptive and can be adapted, refined, or edited according to the innovation context and how the impact mapping process unfolds.

Benefits of mapping innovation & change

Like Step 1, Step 2 of the Urbal process helps you gather, organize, and understand information about the innovation. Through Step 2, you will:
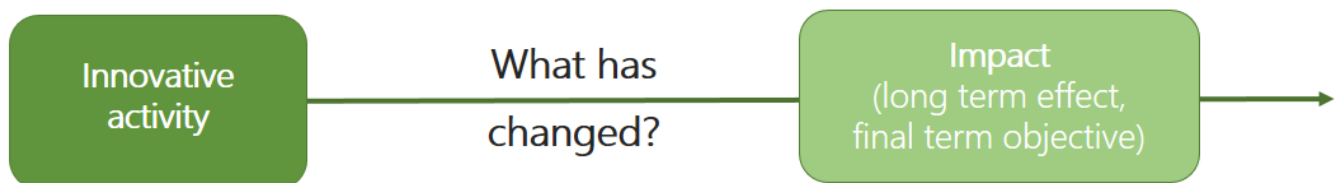> gather people together in a participatory workshop to better understand the innovation
> get a big picture view of what the innovation does
> assess the innovation and see if and how it creates sustainable changes

Benefits for **innovators** include:

> new information and insights to guide actions and decisions regarding sustainability objectives
> the collection feedback and new ideas to inform innovators
> more participative governance dynamics
> increased networking within a territory
> increased capacity to scale innovation up, out, and deep
> the creation of benchmarking and regular evaluation processes to track progress for the innovation
> Benefits for other innovators: to benefit from the Urbal results produced by other innovations, in a process of building communities of practice.

Benefits for **innovation actors** (consumers, clients, beneficiaries, providers, producers, employees etc.) include:

> increased awareness about innovation and sustainability
> enhanced capacity building and dialogue
> enhanced connections with other stakeholders and networking

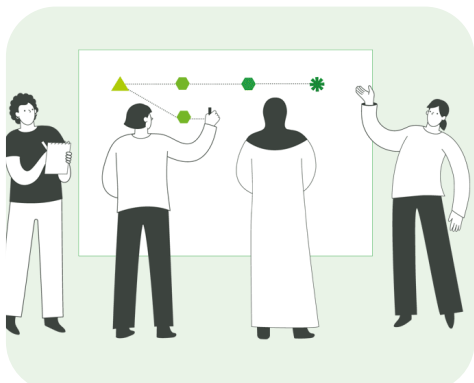| Innovative activity	What has changed?	Impact (long term effect, final term objective)

Benefits for **policy-makers** include:
> better understanding of the innovation
> increased support for decision-making processes concerning
> ability to promote innovations in an integrated way
> increased capacity to strengthen local food policies

Benefits for **researchers** include:
> expanded understanding about the impact of innovation on building more sustainable food systems
> deeper understanding of how sustainability dimensions are considered in the innovation, which are missing and how the overall sustainability work can be improved
> ability to prepare for a quantitative assessment
> ability to build community of practices

Benefits for **funders** include:
> ability to assess projects and gather information for strategic decision making
> ability to benchmark on-going or proposed projects

Organizing and running a workshop

For a workshop to be fully effective you will need:

> **Between 6 and 20 participants,** with a diversity of profiles to ensure adequate consultation and meet a minimal variety of viewpoints. Who to engage in the workshop will usually emerge from the interviews and as you establish the context for the innovation. As you realize where you want to focus, you will need to engage people who understand how those dimensions of the innovation do or don't lead to enhanced sustainability.

A face-to-face workshop is the best option. It may not be possible to get the people together for many reasons: Some people may prefer not to come to the workshop for personal or professional reasons, inability to meet physically, etc. This should not discourage you, because you can adapt the process by having one or more people participate by video, holding more than one workshop or conducting an online workshop. For example, if you are a non-profit seeking to provide healthier food to the people you want to serve, you need to engage with them in the workshop to understand what kinds of food are culturally appropriate. You also need to include food producers and distribution people to figure out whether there are barriers on the supply side.

> **At least a half day** (3-4 hours including breaks).

Make sure to choose a time and place for the workshop that makes participation as easy as possible. Late afternoon/evening (5:00 to 8:00 pm) can be a good option. You may want to offer childcare services to increase participation.

> **An open and comfortable space** for discussions where participants feel free to provide feedback and input throughout the process without limits.

If this condition cannot be met for various reasons (power imbalances between actors, hierarchical relationships, social and cultural context, etc.),

feel free to adapt the process in order to collect inputs from all the participants. For example, you can conduct interviews with people who feel less free to share their insights once the workshop is over to give them a chance to provide unfettered input for the impact pathway maps. Carefully organized breakout groups during the workshop can also address this issue.

> **Physical accessibility** for a wide range of needs.

> **Facilitators to accompany and guide** each working group.

Pre-workshop

Identifying relevant innovation activities

Before you begin the workshop, establishing a clear understanding of the innovation's key activities will help you map out the actual or potential short, medium, and long-term changes from the innovation.

Not all innovation activities are likely to create changes that contribute to food systems sustainability so it is important to select between 6 and 12 specific innovation activities to focus on. The interviews from Step 1 will help you identify the most relevant innovation activities to be discussed more in-depth during the workshop. You can organize the activities into a list, a map or any other format that you think is useful. *How to choose the activities you will map out during the workshop?* Based on the list of innovation activities provided through Step 1, two questions need to be addressed to choose the appropriate activities:

> *Which activities are the most innovative?*

Which activities are at the core of the innovation and stand out from others initiatives using new ideas, processes, practices, techniques, etc.?

Which activities have been designed to achieve and/or inadvertently result in sustainability change?

> *Which activities are more likely to make changes that will have an impact on sustainability?*

You might also select some activities that especially matter to you, because you believe they are important, or because you think it is crucial to better understand the changes they have contributed to.

To name an activity, you need to be as specific as possible and find wording that relates to only one activity. For example: "valorization of native corn" can be confusing and sounds more like a goal than a concrete action. A title such as "purchasing native corn" is clearer.

Identification of «innovative» activities
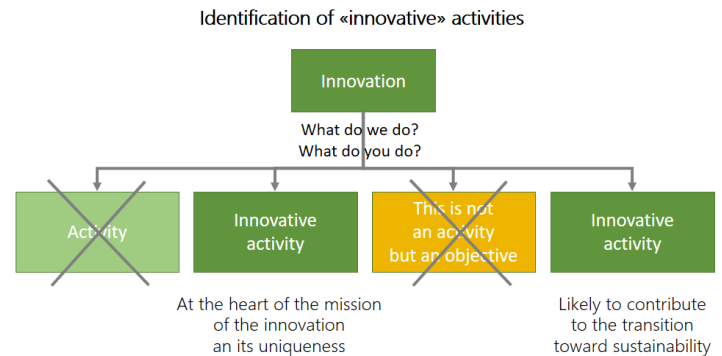
There is a difference between the general innovation activities (what the innovation does) and innovative activities, that means activities that make a difference. When selecting the innovative activities you will map during the workshop, pay attention to :
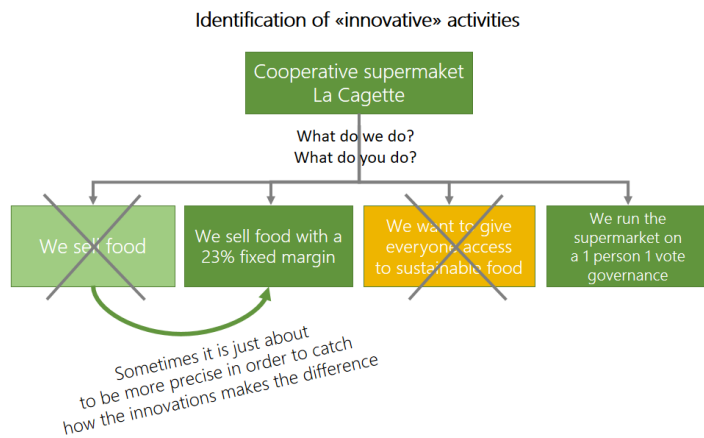> activities that are at the heart of the mission of the innovation, and that make the innovation special with respect to sustainability goals or impacts
> actual activities, not general innovation objectives or goals

For example, when selecting the meaningful activities of the cooperative supermarket la Cagette, the activity of "selling food" is not particularly special, and does not make la Cagette stand out from regular grocery stores. However, "selling food with a 23% fixed profit margin" is an innovation specific to La Cagette cooperative supermarket. This activity makes la Cagette special as it has potential consequences on prices,

access to food, etc., and therefore would be a relevant innovative activity to select.

When selecting the innovative activities, make sure to define them precisely to better explain how they make a difference. For example, when talking about la Cagette's innovative governance structure, the detail "we run the supermarket on a 1 person 1 vote governance" helps underscore the values that lead the action in addition to the action itself.

Conversely, the phrase "we want to give everyone access to sustainable food" does not explain how an objective is achieved and is a goal rather than an activity.

Identification of «innovative» activities

Cooperative supermaket La Cagette

What do we do?
What do you do?

We sell food

We sell food with a 23% fixed margin

We want to give everyone access to sustainable food

We run the supermarket on a 1 person 1 vote governance

Sometimes it is just about to be more precise in order to catch how the innovations makes the difference

Identifying participants

Once the relevant innovation activities have been identified, you will need to select and invite workshop participants. You may invite people who were interviewed in Step 1 and/or people who were not interviewed. Power dynamics, availability, and practicality all play a role in these decisions. Bear in mind that not all guests will be able to participate.

The table on the following page provides a checklist to help guide your selection of workshop participants.

We suggest a minimum of 6 and up to 20 participants for the workshop. Beyond 20 people it may be difficult to manage the workshop, guarantee speaking

time for everyone, and ensure good quality knowledge exchange.

To ensure that all actors involved can contribute, additional arrangements can be made to accommodate folks based on their circumstances, including age, language, literacy, geographical distance, diverse accessibility needs, etc. For example, statements can be collected using focus groups addressing selected subjects, held separately, before or after the workshop, to allow actors more opportunities to interact and discuss with one another.

Some people will want to take part in the workshop out of interest and a sense of civic duty. In other cases, engaging with various stakeholders requires understanding their needs and letting them know how the Urbal workshop and results will help them. For example:

> Public authorities will have more information about how to develop relevant policies and programmes.
> Innovators will understand more about how to improve their innovation process and build in more sustainable directions.
> Producers could be interested as it gives them a chance to connect into new networks and make connections to community members .
> Consumers, beneficiaries, and users of innovations may be interested in serving public interests, sharing their viewpoint, or improving the innovation.

To overcome time, access, or money constraints for participants, you can offer, for example, thank you gifts, honoraria or, childcare.

Guidelines for selecting workshop participants

Workshop participants including roles and considerations

Profile
Innovators

Role and things to consider

✓ People who developed the initial innovation concept

Profile
Policy makers as appropriate
(this may not make sense for all innovations)

Role and things to consider

✓ Interest in enabling (or not) the innovation through policy or program tools. Policy and program at multiple scales that interact in good and bad ways

Profile
People affected and affecting the innovation

Role and things to consider

✓ People directly or indirectly involved in enabling (or not) the innovation. This will depend on the innovation and on whom and with whom it acts.

✓ It can be: consumers beneficiaries or users (retail, canteens, restaurants), managers, suppliers (food distributors, farmers, processors), competitors, other similar or related innovators

✓ The more diverse the profiles of the people you involve, the more the dialogues will be enriched with different perspectives

Profile
Experts

Role and things to consider

✓ Sustainability experts provide context for the innovation, insight on the sustainability dimensions and from other researh, raise gaps or missing questions and provide support in the dialogues

✓ Ideally at least one urban food system sustainability expert would participate as well as specific sustainability experts as appropriate to the innovation. E.g.: economic, social, cultural, environmentale, health or governance experts. They don't need to be academic experts

✓ Experts should be informed of their role before the workshop, so that they know what you expect of them. It is therefore a good idea to explain their expected role precisely when you invite them

Profile
Workshop and working groups faacilitators

Role and things to consider

✓ It can be the person applying the method, a member of URBAL or someone else appropriate to this role. It also may make sense to hire a facilitator depending on your context

✓ The facilitators need to be distant enough from the workshop participants that people feel confortablble speaking openly. They also need skills in facilitation and knowledge about how to use the goal of the URBAL methodology

✓ Also keep in mind that during the worksop each working group needs a facilitator
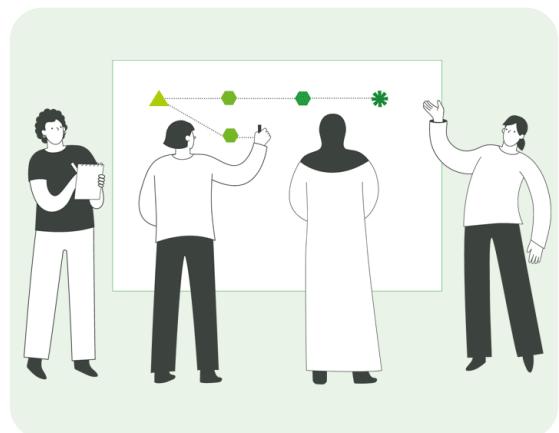
The Workshop

General overview and organisational tips

> When inviting participants, **explain the reason for and the objective** of the event as well as planned activities. Use a meeting poll like Framadate or Doodle to find the best time for the most people. You may also decide to call the meeting after speaking personally to people about their availability. It is important that people commit to the entire workshop.

> **Identify and invite facilitator(s)** to help guide discussions during the workshop

> **Meet with facilitators** ahead of workshop to engage in consensus building to ensure a common understanding of key processes and definitions to ensure a smooth workshop

> **Select a meeting place** that is welcoming as you want people to feel comfortable and have enough space to engage with each other. This place should have a room for a plenary session (where you can get everyone together) with sub-locations separated by walls and with good acoustic conditions to ensure a good working environment for breakout groups.

> **Ensure there are chairs and tables** that can be moved around, as well as walls, easels, or whiteboards where large pieces of paper can be put up using masking tape and sticky notes can be placed to document ideas. A white wall or projection screen where you can project presentations and/or hang the final maps will be useful. You can find a comprehensive materials list here.

> **Arrange for snacks or meals** (at least water) based on the length of the meeting (1/2 day versus whole day). The organization should respect local conventions. You may want to offer small gifts or honoraria to express your appreciation. It is important to make your workshop welcoming for the success of your workshopTake care to meet the special needs of participants (parking, access for people with reduced mobility, etc.).

> Remember to send a confirmation email to participants a few days before the workshop, it should contain:
>   • date, hour and place of the workshop (how to arrive and access)
>   • thank the participants for their availability and for the time they will dedicate
>   • recall the objective of the workshop and what is anticipated a provisional agenda with time for at least a plenary session, group work, final discussion and socializing.
>   • appropriate information to allow consistent and equitable involvement, to put all participants on the same footing: basic info on the innovation, key documents for participants to review prior to addressing them in the workshop, etc.

We suggest you divide the workshop into three parts:

I. Welcome and introduction, presentation of the objectives, and schedule of the workshop (plenary/all participants)

II. Mapping of the impacts (see "How to map the impacts?) (breakout groups)

III. Debriefing, presentation of results, and final discussion (plenary/all participants)

Welcome and introduction

You will first bring all the participants together to welcome and thank them for participating in the workshop. Then, you provide necessary context for the activities that you will undertake together and explain how the workshop will run:

> **Tell them who you are** and why they are there. You may want to use an ice breaker to help people learn more about each other and build some familiarity.

> **Explain the objective** of the workshop and what they are about to do: *identify and map changes and possibly impacts from innovation activities.* You may remind participants of the key question: *"What has each activity changed in the short, medium and long term on the path to sustainability?"* and present one example of an impact pathway map.

> **Review the Urbal sustainability dimensions** diagram and engage in a facilitated discussion about the sustainability dimensions that are relevant for the innovation.

> **Present the chosen activities** they are about to reflect on in groups and briefly explain what is expected from the participants, that is to share their knowledge, expertise, and experience.

> **Name and present facilitators**, as well as people involved in the organization, and specify their role.

> **Present the workshop flow** including planned breaks.

> **Provide logistical information,** such as the location of bathrooms, water, and other amenities you have provided.

> **Leave time for questions,** so participants feel engaged and things are clear.

Participants should then be invited to join the members of the groups to which they have been assigned. This is the time to distribute some key documents to them including: sustainability diagram, agenda, example of an impact pathway, list of group participants and contacts.

Facilitators' roles, tools, and tips

You will need at least one facilitator per breakout group. The role of facilitators is to:

> keep the momentum and guide participants step by step by:
>   • formulating questions for a productive group discussion
>   • tactfully refocusing participants on the objectives
>   • maintaining a focused discussion
>   • reformulating participant engagement to ensure consistency and precision
> collect the information and transcribe it according to what was agreed in advance with the other facilitators and workshop organizers
> help the group share their own experiences by maintaining an encouraging, safe and open environment so all the participants can voice their insights.

Facilitators may be looking for tools and general suggestions for facilitating the workshop. Information can be found on **the Seeds for Change website**.

Our experience has shown that it is most effective when the facilitator is the only one to interpret the conversation during the workshop and translate that to create draft impact pathway maps (although it may be useful to have another person take full notes). This task allows facilitators to better manage and interpret the discussions in real time and to ensure that workshop participants have the opportunity to validate information that is recorded in draft impact pathway maps.

Note that if the workshop organizer is not a facilitator, she/he must be involved as well in the discussion between facilitators. Updating and coordination of the organizer with facilitators may have an impact on the results and on the smooth running and success of the workshop.

To ensure consistency in breakout groups and collecting information, and to save time for the subsequent data analysis, the workshop organizer(s) should meet with facilitator(s) to discuss workshop details and organization to agree on:

> the timing allowed for each exercise and group
> effective phrases/prompts/key questions to guide the group, for example "this activity can lead to what change..."?
> a common understanding of the following terms: (1) changes (short term), outcomes (medium term), and impacts (longer term); (2) actual, hoped for, and anticipated changes; and (3) positive and negative changes. This is especially important if it is difficult to make this distinction depending on the actors and changes.
> how to interpret group conversations/data: e.g., how the information is displayed on the paper/document (where to place short, medium, and long term changes, what colors/shapes to use, etc.); how to get participants to make complete sentences such as "who/what does what to what/who?" to encourage focused and complete pathway mapping.
> the process for break out groups to validate and add to each other's draft impact pathway maps. e.g., how will follow-up groups' data be integrated into first group's observations about activities and pathways. (See next section.)

Working together to map changes and impacts

The objective is to collect the participant's knowledge and expertise on the innovations' impacts on sustainability. Participants are asked to answer the simple question: *What has each activity changed in the short, medium and long term on the path to sustainability?*

To identify a large enough number of changes and points of view, we suggest you use breakout groups. These are an easy to use, as a functional and inclusive way to achieve your objectives:

> **Functional**: Breakout groups will help you map more changes and impact pathways of innovation and can enable you to work on several activities simultaneously.
> **Inclusive**: Breakout groups offer safer spaces for people to contribute as people usually engage more in discussions and reflections in smaller groups

Each group will start from an activity to map the pathways to determine what changes and impacts stem from that activity.

Groups working on the first stages of an impact pathway map.

STEP 2: MEET & MAP

We recommend having one facilitator per table/breakout group and between 3 to 6 participants per group. Small groups are more effective because they give everyone a chance to express themselves, engage in dialogue and improve team spirit.

Ideally there will be two or more opportunities for breakout groups to develop and review the impact pathway maps that they create. Once the first breakout group has drafted an impact pathway map, groups should change positions and to validate and add to the initial impact pathway maps.
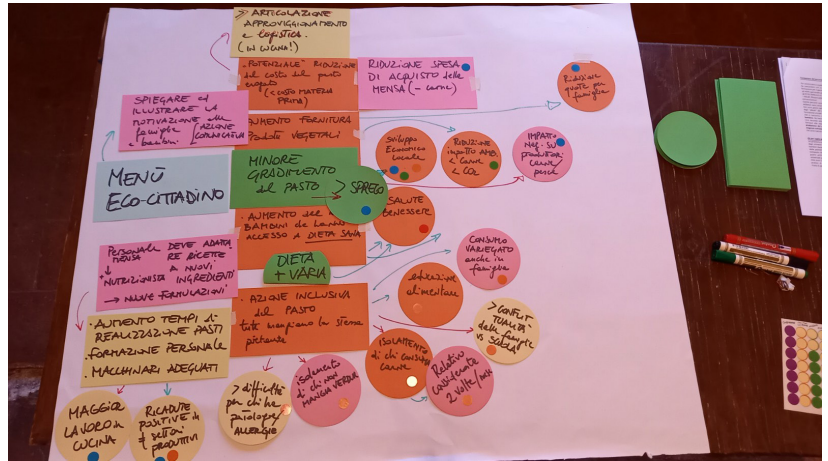
Final version of an impact pathway map drawn during the workshop.

The early stages of an impact pathway map.

Facilitators can help participants bring their ideas to the group, distinguish direct changes (outputs) from indirect changes (outcomes) and from impacts to draw a pathway. They can also make sure to flag the final impacts and their sustainability dimensions (using colored dot stickers for example) and help unravel how these pathways emerged. They can also help distinguish potential changes from actual changes, or negative and positive changes (using different coloured or shaped markers for example).

Keeping in mind power dynamics, it can be very generative to organize groups so there is substantial diversity among participants, which can lead to more fruitful discussions. In addition, if possible it could be useful to think ahead which group will work on which activity in order to identify actors who would be better able to reflect on a given activity.

The organisation of breakout groups can vary by topic addressed and format. Refer to the two examples below for more details.

Sample Workshop Timeline

4:00 pm	Briefing and discussion with facilitators
5:00 pm	Workshop start
	> Icebreaker activity
	> Presentation of the innovation (preselected activities)
	> Explanation of breakout groups and participatory exercise
5:30 pm	Breakout Groups—Round 1
6:10 pm	Breakout Groups—Round 2
6:50 pm	Break
7:00 pm	Breakout Group—Round 3
7:30 pm	Debriefing and Feedback
8:00 pm	End of workshop

Example 1: format & topic addressed by breakout groups:

"Ma Cantine Autrement (MCA)" (watch video)

Topic addressed:
To identify the impacts of the different activities of MCA on different sustainability dimensions.

Format:
To ensure the continuity of discussions, and to have an overview of all the participants' inputs, it helps to have each facilitator in charge of one table that addresses a set group of activities (and not of one group). Each group works successively on three activities with the facilitator. This phase can last 45 min. The group can then change tables to work on three new activities for 20 minutes, while building on the work on and add to the work by the previous group. Depending on the time available, you can ask the groups to rotate again. At the end of the exercise, each group will have had the opportunity to provide inputs on each activity and will also have an overview of the inputs of each group.

Example 2: What to do and topics you can cover in your breakout groups

"Mexico case study" (watch video)

Suggested breakout group topics and tips on how to address them:

Exercise 1. Observed impacts and potential impacts: List impacts/changes of activities: each group works 10 minutes in a given activity then rotates, findings of the previous group are summarized to be completed and improved.

Exercise 2. Processes that lead to impacts as levers, stumbling blocks, facilitators and impediments: After choosing one observed and one potential impact activity, participants identify how the listed impact occurred by positioning red and green sticky notes on the sheet list, to identify stumbling blocks (red) and accelerators/facilitators (green). Groups are fixed and move together from one facilitator table to another.

Exercise 3. Innovation actors' functions: how they do things, their rationales, the things that help them and the barriers they face: Use a separate sheet of paper to Identify, for a given activity, what each actor did, how, what were the limits to this role, why they took on this role, why they did not take on this role and/or why they could no longer take on this role.

Workshop Materials

> name tags
> markers (different colours and sizes)
> large sheets of paper
> sticky notes or index cards in various colours
> masking tape (to attach the cards to the large paper, then to the wall)
> colored dot stickers (to tag the dimensions of sustainability)
> rimer with alarm, clock or watch
> audio recorder for each table
> pens and notepads to record what happens at each breakout table
> camera to take pictures of the results and the participants

Things to review before your mapping exercise begins

We suggest you review a few points with all participants before the mapping begins.

> the questions they will use to map the impact pathways. Ensure that these questions are not prescriptive
> the differences between changes (short term), outcomes (medium term), and impacts (longer term) as the structure of the impact pathways and the basis for the impact pathway map
> the difference between actual/observed changes, desired changes, and anticipated changes
> ensure the causal links between the activities and changes are clear and justified
> the importance of identifying changes in various dimensions of sustainability

While it may be easier to talk about the positive changes of an innovation, it is also important to discuss negative changes and the system blockages that prevent change. Although there are many ways to do this, you may want to set aside a reasonable amount of time to ask specifically about the negative effects or changes at the end of each breakout group session.

It is important to reinforce that your impact pathway maps represent the evolution of changes driven by innovation through a holistic and comprehensive view of sustainability. The organizer(s) and facilitator(s) should ensure that the time available in the workshop allows for in-depth reflection on the impact pathways, relying on the facilitators to manage time during breakout sessions. For this reason, once the most important changes have been identified, facilitator(s) may want to limit the discussion to the top 5 to 10 changes, to go as in-depth as possible when analysing the pathway of each change.

The role of experts

Workshop participants can include researchers and/or sustainability experts not directly related to the innovation. To ensure that experts are able to effectively contribute to the discussion during the workshop, it is important to give them clear objectives and include them in different breakout groups.

The role of the experts is to:
> identify gaps or missing questions, for example, different interpretations of a change or unexpected changes
> help participants think outside the box
> support discussions about innovation activities and/or related sustainability changes including enabling factors and barriers
> provide knowledge and considerations about which sustainability dimensions to include

It is important that the contributions of experts is not valued over the contributions of other workshop participants, but seen as complementary.
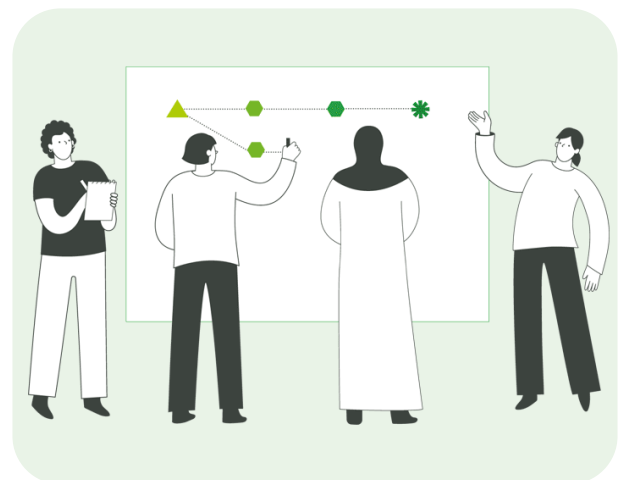
The workshop wrap up: debriefing and final discussion

The last part of the workshop is usually a plenary session that includes all of the participants.

By this point in the workshop, people will have likely contributed a lot and you might want to give the facilitators an opportunity to quickly present the results of their breakout group. These final presentations typically generate a lot of enthusiasm from participants, and reinforce the feeling that good work was accomplished together. You can summarize what was accomplished and share the impact pathway maps. You should also provide a way for participants to contact you with additional insights (for example, the email address for the organizer). And, as the organizers, you will have the opportunity to reflect on the results in detail when conducting the analysis and consolidation of the results (Step 3).

If possible, concluding with a networking opportunity is an excellent way for people to reinforce connections made through the Urbal process.

Feedback on the final map to the groups by one of the facilitators
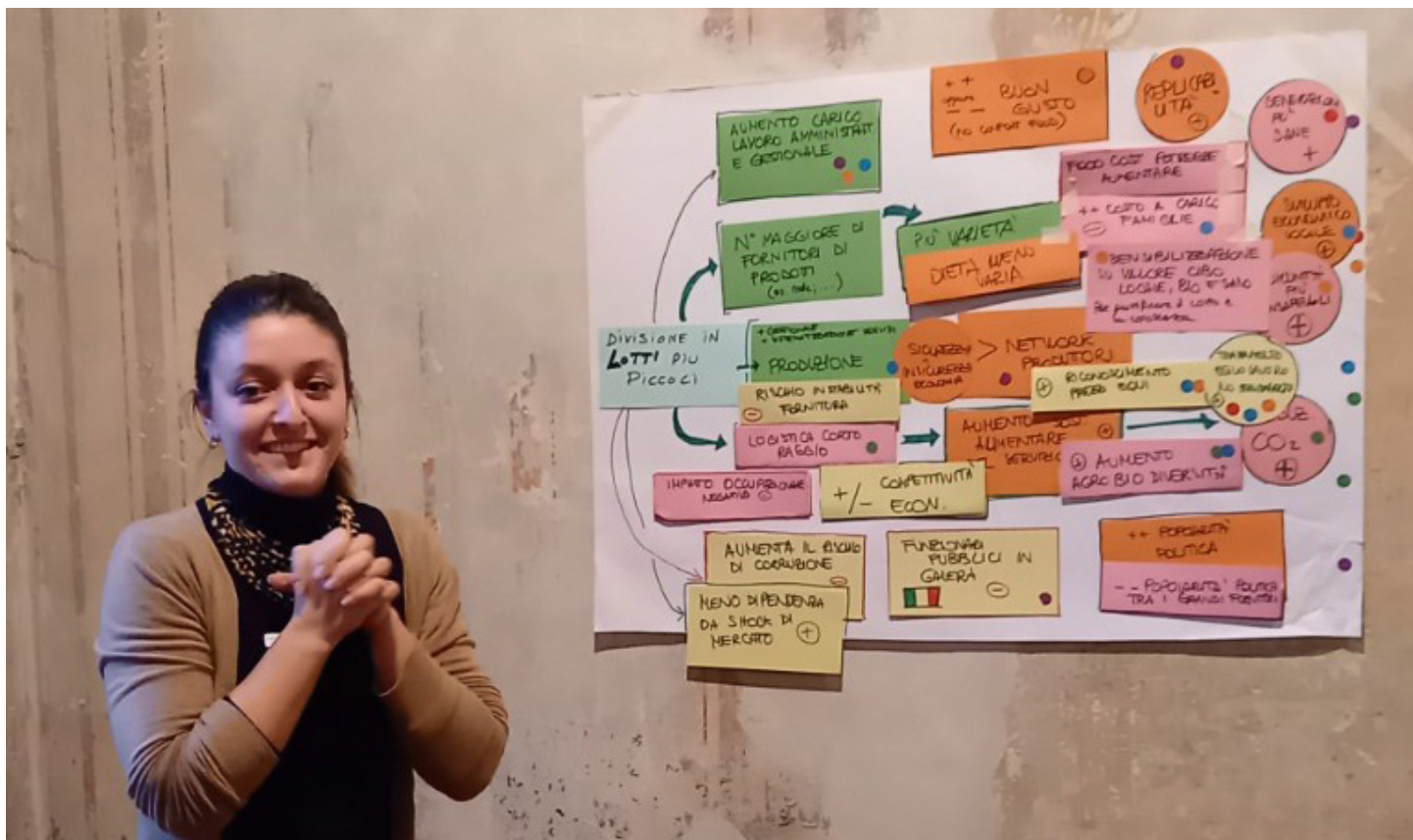
Post-workshop

Make your workshop data usable and create final impact pathway maps of each activity

The workshop and the interviews conducted in Step 1 have allowed you to collect raw and complex data. Coming out of the workshop in Step 2 you might have impact maps that display clear connections and pathways.

However, you also might also have simple lists, or a collection of changes that have come out of your discussions about the innovation without clearly identified connections, outputs, outcomes, or impacts. The act of gathering and thinking about the innovation

together is itself a contribution to developing insights and future thinking. It is important to have allowed the participants to collectively name and list the various changes produced by the innovation as part of the thinking behind developing more detailed impact pathway maps that connect activities to changes, outcomes, and impacts. If you find yourself with lists or preliminary impact pathway maps, you and a smaller group of participants and/or experts can develop impact pathway maps. If possible, you can share these online or in-person with workshop participants for input and further reflections.
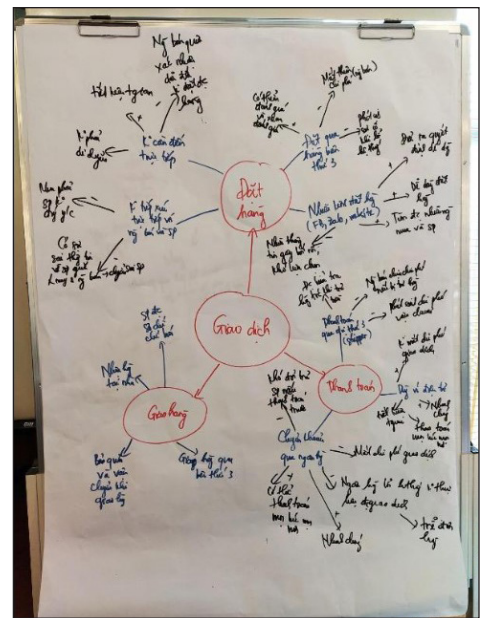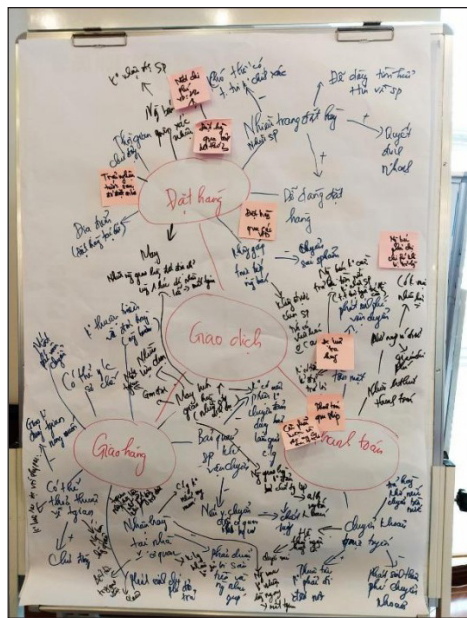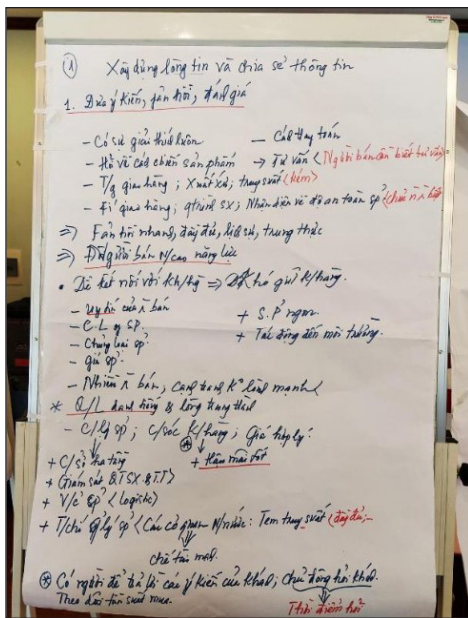
Impact pathway maps, Hanoi case study.

Suggested process:

There are a few steps you can follow to make your data easier to turn into and/or add to your impacts pathway maps (refer to 'Data Refinement Process' on the following page). To begin, ou will need to digitize the data using mind mapping software (e.g., **Diagrams.net** or **Canva**), Excel, PowerPoint, or your preferred data management software. If needed, you can add to the data if you have an audio recording or notes from the workshop.

Then, you will clean, elaborate, edit, and organize your data so it can be used to distinguish activities and the related changes (short term), outcomes (medium term), and impacts (longer term).

Data Refinement Process:

Digitize: transfer your data to digital management or mapping software.

Clarify: make sure that the links between activities and changes are clear, logical, and justified.

Complete: identify the incomplete pathway(s) and, if possible, fill them in based on the information collected during the Workshop or Step 1 Interviews. Make sure to clearly state where inputs come from so the pathways are as clear as possible.

Clean: Remove any incomplete information and merge redundant information.

Harmonize: Edit the text so it flows smoothly.

Synthesize: Highlight the most relevant, important, and unexpected impact pathways as well as levers and impediments so you have impact pathway maps for each activity.

Repeat this process as many times as needed to develop clear impact pathway maps. These stages will help you refine the results so you have clear impact pathways maps for each activity. Once you have clear maps, you can share the results with participants.

The final result will depend on the time you can dedicate to this task, and on what you want to do with the results. For example, if you plan to use the results for internal communication, you might not spend so much time as if you plan to share the results with a wider audience, or to use them as a communication tool.
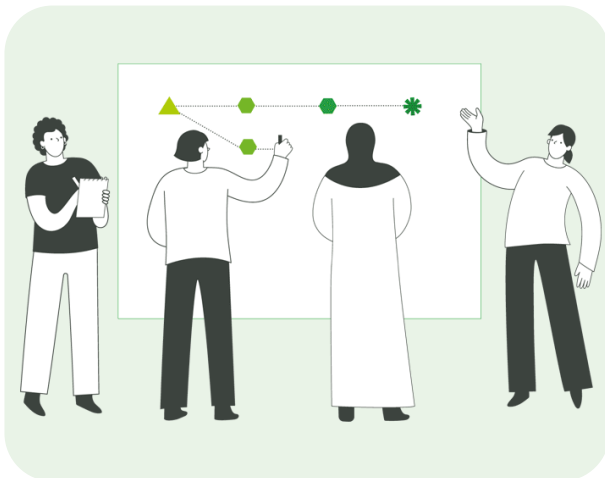
Different ways to reorganise and display the results of the workshop

There are many ways to organize impact pathway maps, but all maps go through multiple stages of development. On the following pages are examples of the three stages of data analysis from a workshop done in Lyon with VRAC, an association that organizes bulk buying groups in low income neighborhoods for organic/farm/fair trade agriculture, sold at cost.
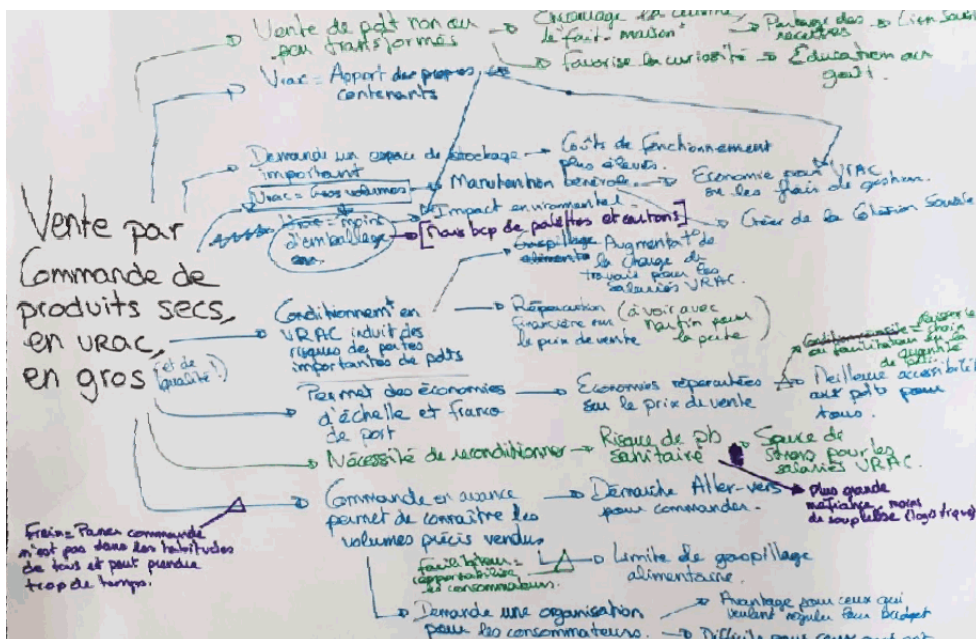
Stage 1. Impact Pathway Map at the end of a workshop beginning with an activity on the left and working through to changes and impacts on the right with enablers and impediments identified along the way. This is only one out of the 9 maps designed during the workshop, each one mapping a different activity. Each of the 3 breakout groups worked successively on the same map, using a different color. No particular attention has been paid to the distinction between impacts on the various dimensions of sustainability (no color flags).
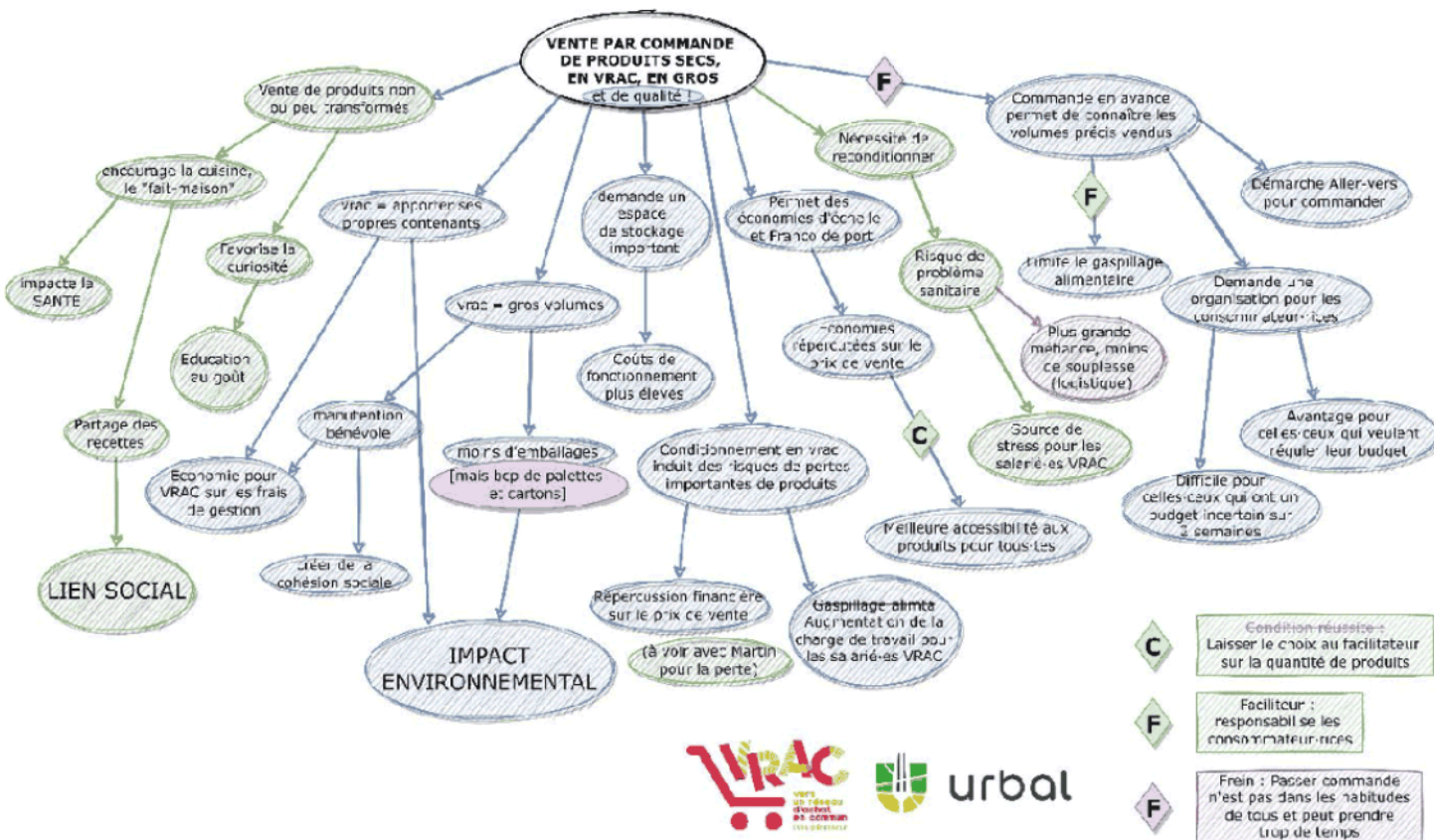
Stage 2. Digitization of the map with the addition of conditions, brakes, and levers for change (based on workshops discussion and interviews from Step 1). Digitizing the map helps create a clearer view of the map and the goal is to create a general overview of the impact pathways identified in the breakout groups. (source: Castellano, Rigaud & Valette, 2022)

Vente par commande de produits secs, en vrac, en gros et de qualité
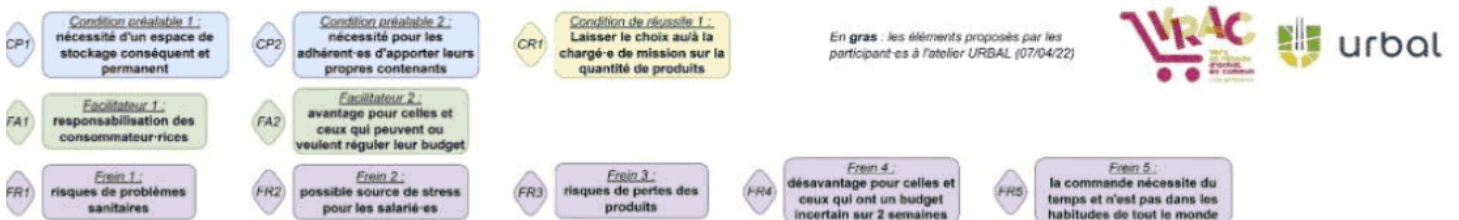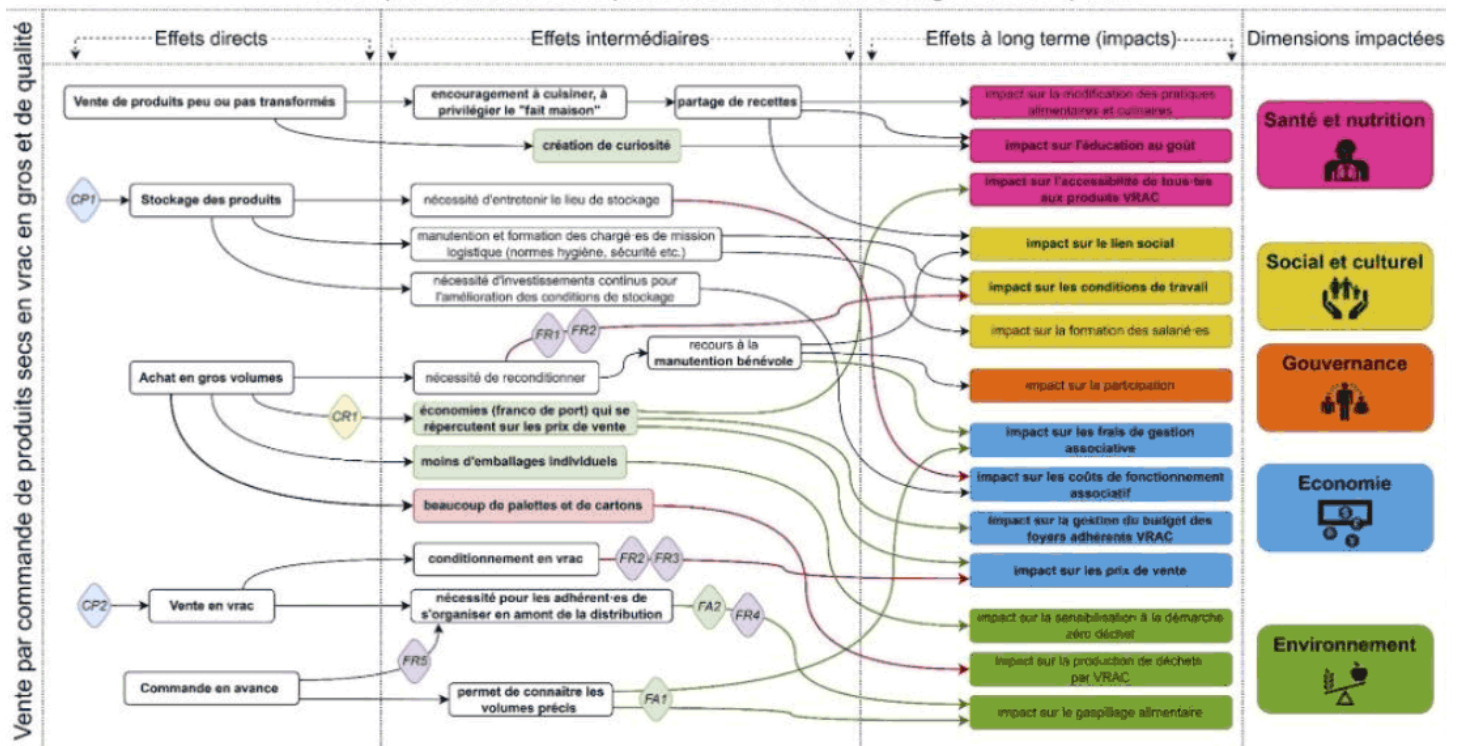
Stage 3. Reorganization of the map that includes: (1) complementary elements from the interviews in Step 1 (in bold); (2) positioning of each item to link the identification and name of the impact on each sustainability dimension; (3) reflection on the pathways; and (4) conditions for success, levers for and barriers to change, with different colours to signify negative or positive impacts.

There are other options to display workshop results. For example your results can be organized to showcase key impacts for each sustainability dimension. You may also want to summarize the main findings from the map in a short narrative as an add-on to the map (see Booklet UFIL Lyon).

The maps drawn during the workshop can also be reorganised according to various needs. For example, it might be useful to select the results you share based on the interests of various audiences. In the case of La Panaméenne, a Paris restaurant and grocery store

that focuses on skills development and employment of immigrant women living in precarious conditions, the results were reorganized to showcase the impacts on three key audiences: women working in the organization, on the clients themselves, and on the surrounding neighborhood. Organizing the impact pathway maps in this way helped to clearly demonstrate how these key groups are affected by the innovation.
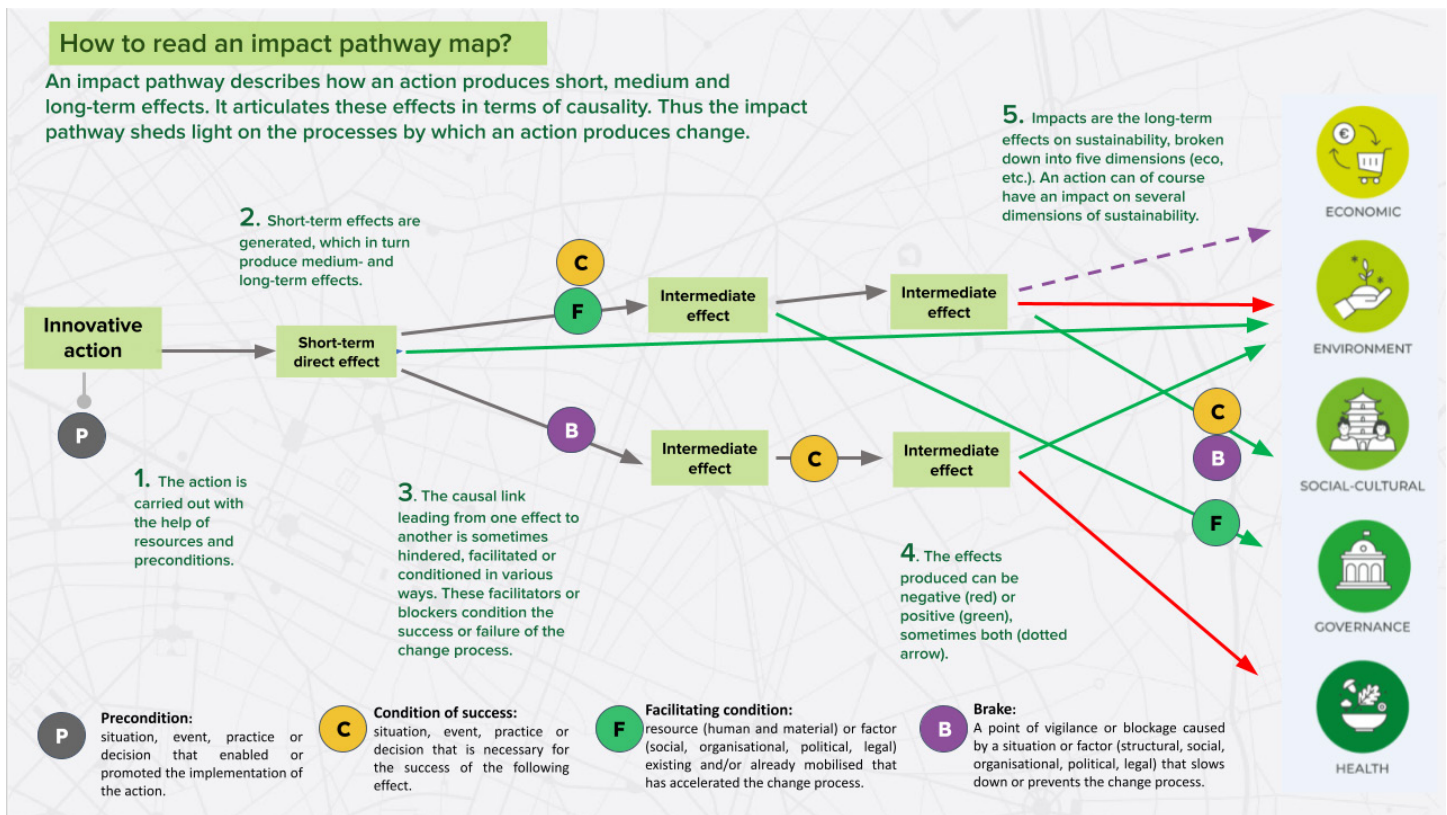
Reading an impact pathway map

The diagram below helps you understand how to read an impact pathway map.

A typical impact pathway map begins with the innovation and the related action (or activity) on the left hand side of the diagram and progresses to the right. This activity is helped or constrained by existing preconditions. The activity then creates a short-term, direct change that in turn can lead to medium term outcomes and longer term impacts. In this map, these flows are captured using lines and arrows. Wherever possible it is useful to identify the conditions that enable or impede success along the way. While this information can be represented using different colours (in this case green for positive and red for negative), it can be more accessible if different shaped symbols are used. Finally, on the right hand side of the map, the pathway ends with related sustainability dimensions.

One example of data processing using the Urbal approach is that of Ma Cantine Autrement (link opens a Google document). The process results in a revised final map enriched with interviews data, collective reflections on conditions of success, facilitating conditions and brakes, and rephrased in a homogeneous way to improve its usability.

How to read an impact pathway map?

An impact pathway describes how an action produces short, medium and long-term effects. It articulates these effects in terms of causality. Thus the impact pathway sheds light on the processes by which an action produces change.

5. Impacts are the long-term effects on sustainability, broken down into five dimensions (eco, etc.). An action can of course have an impact on several dimensions of sustainability.

2. Short-term effects are generated, which in turn produce medium- and long-term effects.

Innovative action

Short-term direct effect

Intermediate effect

1. The action is carried out with the help of resources and preconditions.

3. The causal link leading from one effect to another is sometimes hindered, facilitated or conditioned in various ways. These facilitators or blockers condition the success or failure of the change process.

4. The effects produced can be negative (red) or positive (green), sometimes both (dotted arrow).

ECONOMIC | ENVIRONMENT | SOCIAL-CULTURAL | GOVERNANCE | HEALTH

P **Precondition:** situation, event, practice or decision that enabled or promoted the implementation of the action.

C **Condition of success:** situation, event, practice or decision that is necessary for the success of the following effect.

F **Facilitating condition:** resource (human and material) or factor (social, organisational, political, legal) existing and/or already mobilised that has accelerated the change process.

B **Brake:** A point of vigilance or blockage caused by a situation or factor (structural, social, organisational, political, legal) that slows down or prevents the change process.

Other considerations

> Do not underestimate the time needed to process data. It often takes longer than expected.

> It is important to complete the data processing phase as soon as possible after the workshop for two reasons: (1) the information is still fresh and more reliable, (2) the delay for sharing with participants will be shorter and you can maintain momentum from the workshop and other engagement activities.

> Make sure that the workshop facilitators are involved in processing the data or can check the results.

Share and apply your results

The two previous steps allowed you to collect, process, analyze, and collate your data and impact pathway maps so you can extract and present your results. As part of your participatory approach, you may want to share the results with participants to wrap up the project.

Step 3 can be a meeting or a workshop to both share and reflect on your results. Depending on your objectives, innovators, actors, policy-makers, funders, users, customers, and possibly other innovators, companies, and economic actors can be included in this Step.

Step 3 Objectives:

> sharing your results
> reflection on the results and the project as a whole, including the scaling potential to amplify change and impact: scale out, up, deep
> use of the results according to your needs

Step 3 is an opportunity to:
> discuss enablers, brakes, and challenges
> set new directions and strategies for innovation
> discuss whether you can use the project results to identify indicators for benchmarking and measuring changes and impacts (see Step 4)
> showcase innovation activities and advocate for stronger support through public policies or funders
> build a network (within a territory) as a kind of Community of Practice to take the findings forward

Sharing the results

Reporting back of the results is an important step. Sharing results can help generate additional knowledge about innovation impacts and help you make collective decisions. It is also in the spirit of participatory data gathering and making the project socially relevant.
If you can't have an in-person meeting, you can run a video conference, or distribute a document by email.

You can also use Step 3 to collectively validate the impact pathway maps, including the levers and brakes you added or expanded and to reflect on the findings and the potential of the knowledge acquired.

Reflection on the results and the project as a whole

The results of Step 2 will reveal levers and brakes for your innovation as you work to achieve more sustainability.The levers can be activated/amplified while the brakes can be adjusted or removed.

It is possible to organise a reflection or collective thinking moment during the Step 3 Results Sharing meeting in plenary or in groups. This reflection is a unique opportunity to go beyond the impact assessment to discuss the possibility of wider impacts on the food system. For instance, you can address the potential for a Community of Practice tohelp influence the surrounding food system and its laws, policies, norms, and practices.

Knowledge mobilization

Advocacy

> creating awareness beyond the project with local stakeholders
> promoting the innovation for stronger support from either public policies or funders
> fostering the integration of this knowledge into urban plans
> gaining accountability fromtoward institutions and government

Communication

> education
> describing how the people and the environment benefit from the effects of the innovation
> situating innovation action in local and international regulatory evaluation systems enabling knowledge transfer

Planning

> supporting innovation strategy
> orienting practitioners so they can address sustainability challenges
> integrating participatory qualitative evaluation and project planning

Advocacy

Urbal results can be a valuable resource to define the context, goals, and objectives for reports and presentations to funders, decision-makers, and/or influencers. Understanding your innovation's strengths and weaknesses can help you create effective messages to engage your target audience for stronger support from either public policy-makers and/or funders. In-depth knowledge of the impact pathways can help you create awareness and gain project accountability, which can also help foster the integration of these findings into urban and regional plans.

Communication

The outcomes of Step 1 and 2 help you create knowledge on how an innovation is able to increase sustainability across several dimensions. This is essential to effectively convey information about the innovation and the food system in which it is embedded.

The graphic documentation of that knowledge—including an actor diagram, timeline, and impact pathway map—can help you communicate the complexity of the innovation in an easily understandable way, and be used to raise awareness among stakeholders and users.

In addition, this collectively generated knowledge can be a meaningful resource for sharing innovation knowledge through presentations and official documents.

Finally, Urbal results can be a valuable support when presenting innovation outcomes within the local food system and as input for sustainability goals set at local, national, and international level.

Planning

Urbal Step 1 and 2 helps you gain both in-depth knowledge and a breadth of perspectives on the causal relationships between direct changes and impacts, and about internal and external levers and brakes. This research and analysis can provide you with significant insights as you reach towards your goals, improve strategy, and allocate resources.

In addition, understanding assets and weaknesses in the different spheres of sustainability can orient you as to address sustainability challenges.

Using Urbal results to develop meaningful indicators Since Urbal is a participatory impact pathway mapping approach, it does not include the development of indicators. But, if you want to go further by adding on or optimizing existing indicators for your innovation assessment, Urbal results can prove very useful.

Research institutes, cities, regions, national governments, international organisations, and global partnerships of experts have designed aspirational guidelines and toolkits for the transition toward sustainable food systems, including the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the Milan Urban Food Policy Pact Monitoring Framework (MUFPP), the Sustainability Assessment of Food and Agriculture systems (SAFA) or the City Region Food System (CRFS) indicator framework.

These frameworks are not always easily transferable to the reality of urban-driven food system innovations. Reasons may be discrepancy of objectives and needs, inappropriate scale, and inaccessible and/or expensive data.

The Urbal method can be used as a preliminary step to choose, develop and use indicators. From the impact pathway map that highlights complex and multidimensional elements that enable or impede sustainability and that account for the priorities of people connected to the innovation, Urbal can help frame the choice of indicators. Your impact pathway maps also contextualize innovation action with respect to local and/or global food system sustainability recommendations.

Using Urbal results can help you prepare or improve your innovation indicators by:

> developing a multidimensional and inclusive assessment
> identifying pertinent qualitative and quantitative indicators to report results of activities based on the innovation's means, context and vision
> identifying missed parameters in the evaluation
> embedding indicators in the narrative process of the innovation, by matching them to a specific stage of the innovation changes and impacts pathway
> better targeting indicator contributions to one or more reference frameworks for sustainability assessment, whether on a local or international scale

In addition, participation in Step 2 and 3 enhances participants' knowledge about the innovation and its context, and can improve their ability to engage in a collective process to identify indicators. See Chapter 11 of *Evaluating Sustainable Food Systems Innovations: A Global Toolkit for Cities*.

You can find a more detailed explanation in Chapter 11 of the **open access Urbal book** and in the **So What, Policy Brief**.

Conclusion

We would be delighted to hear how you applied the Urbal approach to evaluate the impacts of an urban food innovation, how you adapted it to your context, what difficulties and successes you encountered, and above all your results. We look forward to hearing from you at info@urbalfood.org!

Acknowledgements

graphics & cover design: Alice Zavaro

guide design: David Szanto/Icebox Studio

Bibliography

Bartezzaghi, G., Canniato, F., WP3_Report - UFIL Milano Ristorazione, School of Management Politecnico di Milano, 2019, 17p.

Bartezzaghi, G. & Caniato, F. 2023. The potential of short food supply chains for sustainable urban agri-food systems: The UFIL of Milano Ristorazione. In E. Valette, A. Blay-Palmer, B. Intoppa, A. Di Battista, O. Roudelle, G. Chaboud (eds.). Evaluating Sustainable Food System Innovations: A Global Toolkit for Cities, Routledge.

Bouchard, M. J., Evers, A., & Fraisse, L. (2015). Concevoir l'innovation sociale dans une perspective de transformation. Sociologies pratiques, 2, 9-14.

Castellano, C.C., Rigaud, L. & Valette, E. 2022. Évaluation participative Urbal de l'association VRAC Lyon métropole, 25p.

Castellano C.C., Rigaud L., Valette E., 2022. Évaluation participative Urbal de l'association VRAC Lyon métropole, 25 p.

Intoppa B., Valette E., 2023. Using Urbal to develop metrics for evaluation. In E. Valette, A. Blay-Palmer, B. Intoppa, A. Di Battista, O. Roudelle, G. Chaboud G. (eds), 2023. Evaluating Sustainable Food System Innovations: A Global Toolkit for Cities, Routledge.

Intoppa B. & Valette E. 2022. Collaborative approaches to the identification of evaluation indicators using the Urbal framework, So What ? Policy Brief, 22, Chaire Unesco alimentations du monde, 4 p.

Moore, M.-L., Riddell, D., & Vocisano, D. (2015). Scaling out, scaling up, scaling deep : Strategies of non-profits in advancing systemic social innovation. Journal of Corporate Citizenship, 58, 6.

Riddell, D. & Moore, M.-L. 2015. Scaling Out, Scaling Up, Scaling Deep: Advancing Systemic Social Innovation and the Learning Processes to Support it. J.W. McConnell Family Foundation & Tamarack Institute.

Our warm thanks to all the researchers and practitioners around the world who were involved in the Urbal project from 2018 to 2023. This guide would not have happened without your enthusiasm, ingenuity, and attention to detail.

info@urbalfood.org
www.urbalfood.org