

# Governing Fragmented Food Systems

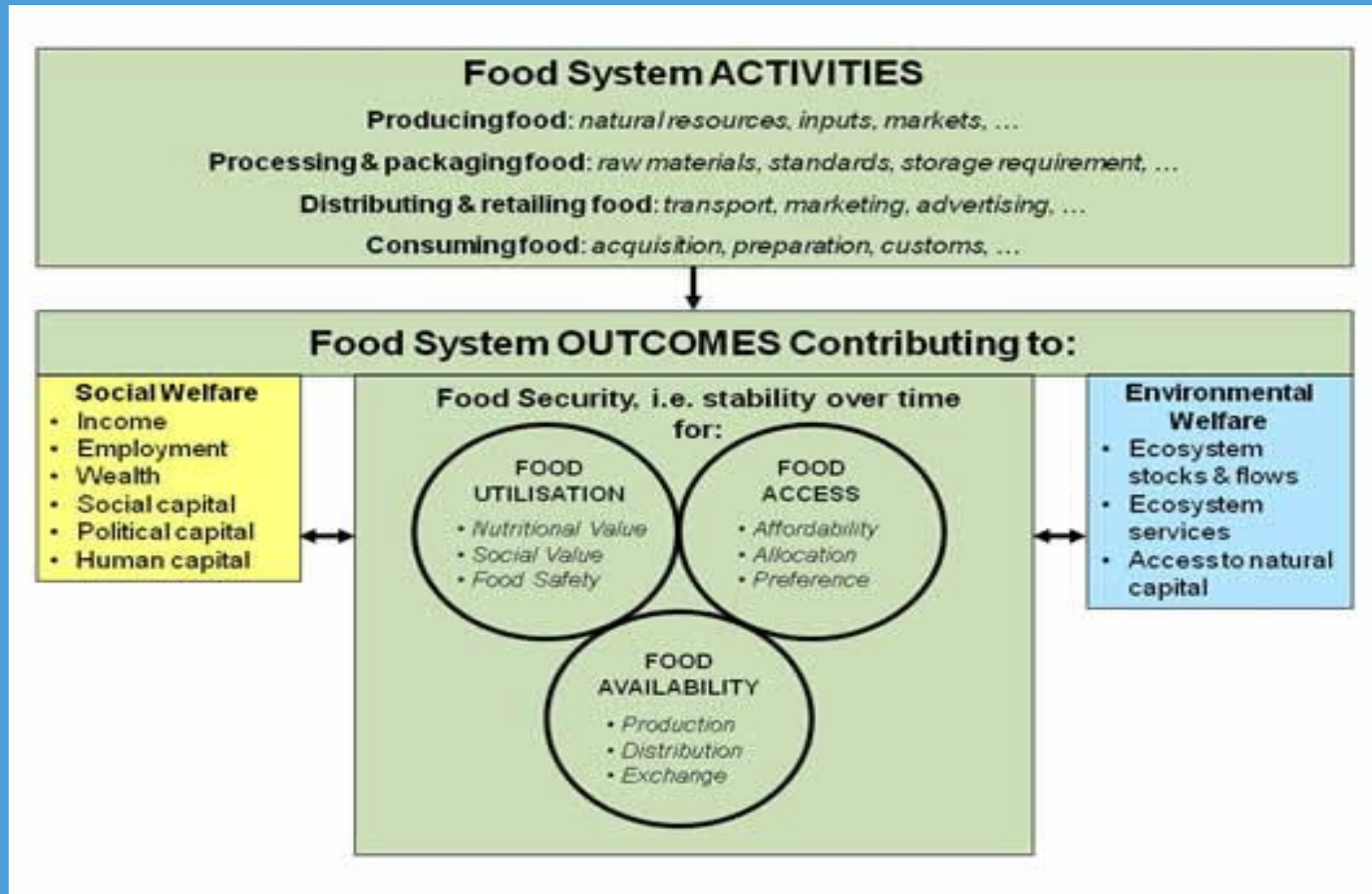
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# Food system perspective (GECAFS)



# Who governs the food system?

Municipalities

Small holders

Civil society organisations

FAO

States

Informal leaders

Development NGOs

Processing industry

Landowners

Ministries of Agriculture

Consumers

Ministries of health

Private companies

Water agencies

Farmers' organisations

WTO

UNFCCC

Ministries of environment

Ministries of trade

Terrorists

Retailers

Policymakers

Humanitarian aid NGOs

Local communities

Youth food movement

Seed companies

Environmental NGOs

Scientists

World Bank

Politicians

Anti GMO communities

Ministries of infrastructure



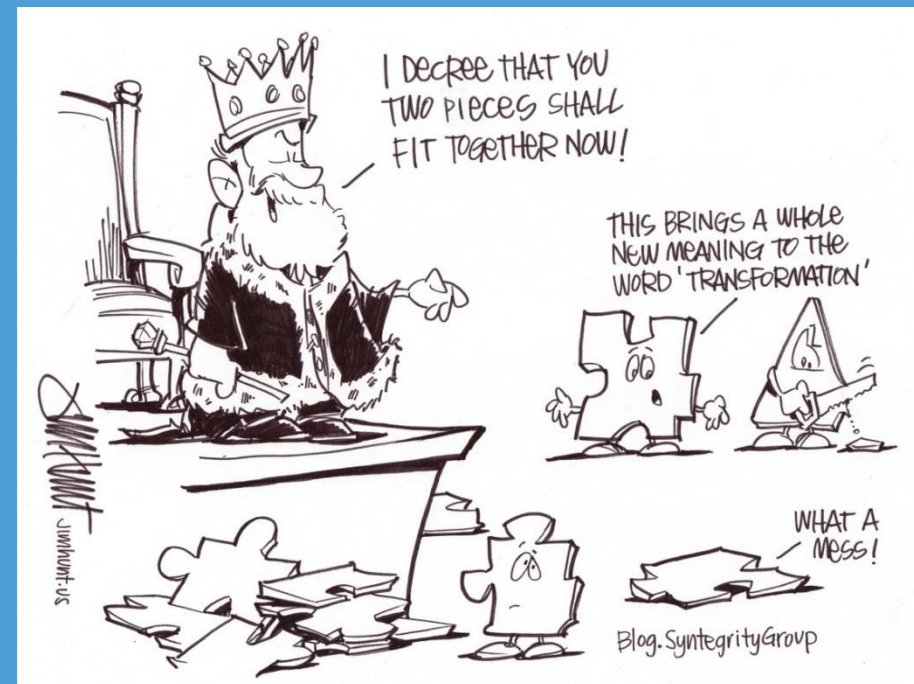
# An attractive proposition for people with a change agenda:

*Food is a highly complex system that cannot be dealt with effectively by the current fragmented institutional architecture. Therefore, the governance system should be made more coherent and harmonized, better integrated and coordinated, and more inclusive.*



# Risks of top down coordinated food policies

- Narrowly linked to a specific department and jurisdiction
- Unproductive patterns in siloed administrative systems
- Lack of transparent checks and balances
- Elite capture
- Lack of revitalising power



	<b>Optimist</b>	<b>Realist</b>	<b>Pessimist</b>
Governance	Concerted effort to solve societal problems	Interactions of dependent actors embedded in formal and informal rules	Power-play of actors in a locked-in society
Role of government	Governments initiate, provide guidance, make resources available, build institutions	Pluriform dynamic arenas of actors from within and outside government	Governments play marginal role. Governance controlled by the powerful
Success	Determined by the structures, processes, means through which decisions are made.	Small wins in the context of transformative pathways	Risk of failure is structural
Dealing with fragmented systems	Integrative policies and improved coordination	Search for synergies, collaboration, smart governance arrangements	Trying to removing barriers that cause recurring failures



# No simple solutions

“When the world we are trying to explain and improve, however, is not well described by a simple model, we must continue to improve our frameworks and theories so as to be able to understand complexity and not simply reject it”.

Elinor Ostrom,  
Nobel Prize Winner 2009

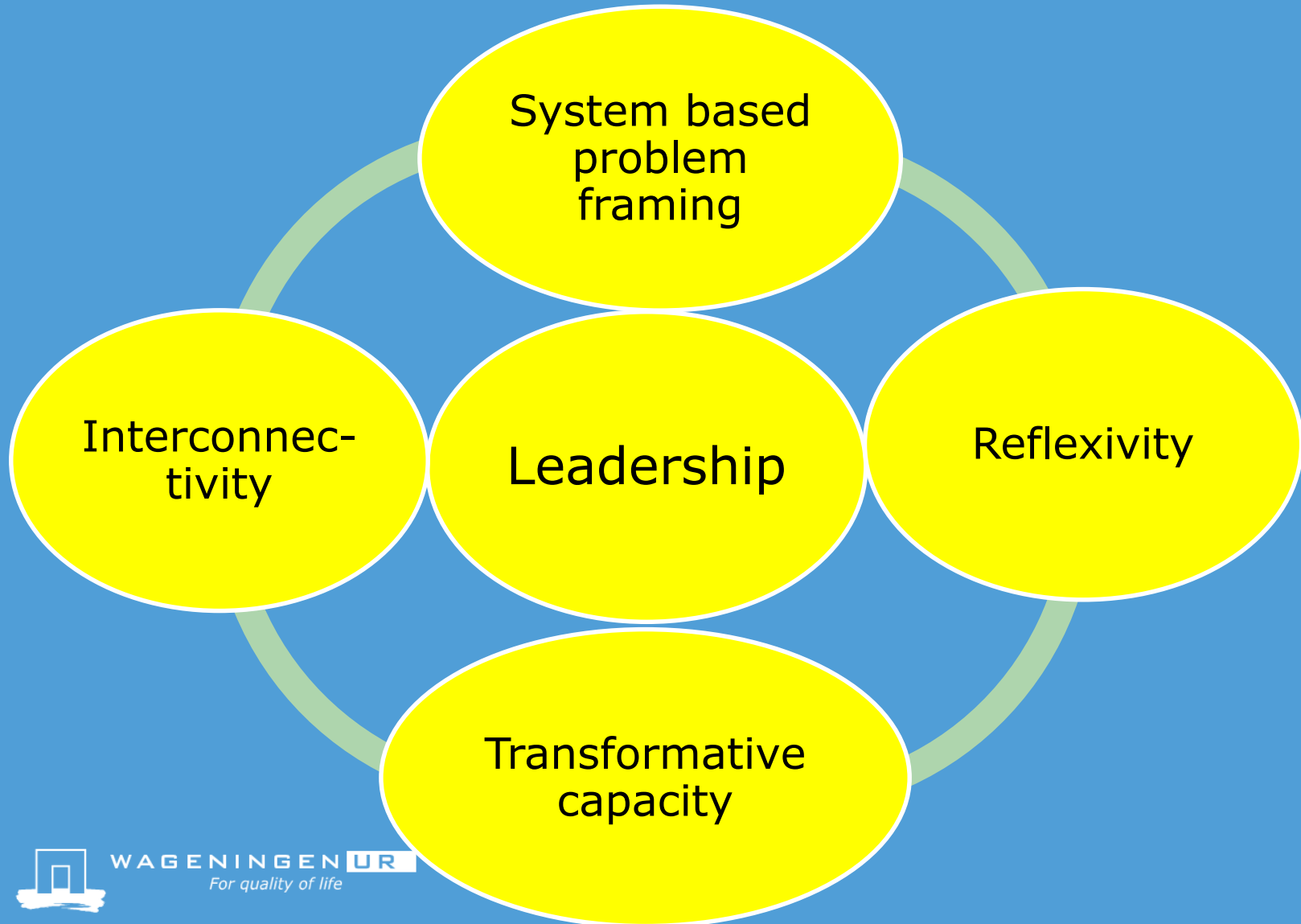


# Smart food system governance arrangements?





# Principles for smart food system governance arrangements



# System based problem framing

- Addresses the issue of interconnected problems
- Reflect inherent political character of foodsystems
- Beyond technical problem frames and de-politicisation
- Include dissenting voices



# Boundary spanning structures

- Addresses the issue of fragmented institutions
- Venues for conflict resolution, synergies, mutual gains
- Boundary drawing
- Enable/cherish clear identities
- Prevent shifting/avoiding of responsibilities



# Reflexivity and adaptability

- Addresses the issue of uncertainties and volatility
- Animates people to improvise, generate experiments and uncover opportunities
- Provides room for flexible tailor-made measures and self organisation

**EVO**

Environmental  
Virtual  
Observatory



# Transformative capacity

- Addresses the issue of unproductive patterns, lock-ins and path dependencies
- Challenge assumptions underlying current practices
- Resources: budget, people, authority, social capital





# Leadership

- Addresses the issue of meta governance
- Daring, visionary, entrepreneurial, collaborative
- Multiple leadership
- Small steps

INTERNATIONAL FORUM  
**WOMEN'S FOOD  
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IN THE GLOBAL SOUTH

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Questions?

*Small steps  
can  
lead  
to  
big changes.*

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