

COLEAD 2030 STRATEGY

A CALL FOR AN INTERNATIONAL MOVEMENT
TO TRANSFORM FOOD SYSTEMS

COLEAD 2030 STRATEGY

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1 ECONOMIC POSITIONING

2,000 MSMEs
€250 millions in investments
>100 M integrated producers
>1Bn consumers reached

2 RESOURCE PLATFORM

1 multipolar hub
250 trainers & 50 training centres
2,000 experts
250,000 digital users

3 INTERNATIONAL MOVEMENT

1 community
50 countries
1,000 members
20 alliances

 5 COLEAD hubs

 Digital users

 Members and field partners

Santo Domingo

Lomé

Brussels

Paris

Nairobi

2026-2030 TRAJECTORY

A COMMUNITY

A KNOWLEDGE HUB

A PURPOSE

2026 FOUNDATIONS

2027-2029 LEVERAGE

2030 ANCHORING

PREAMBLE

By 2030, food systems will face a convergence of climate, economic, social and geopolitical crises that will permanently undermine their stability. Whilst these pressures are global in nature, their effects are particularly severe in low- and middle-income countries, where producers and MSMEs have limited capacity to adapt to shocks, transitions and the growing demands of the markets.

At the same time, models of cooperation are undergoing profound change. The structural decline in official development assistance, the rise of private and hybrid financing, and the increased demand for demonstrable results necessitate a rethinking of approaches. The sustainable transformation of food systems remains a central challenge — but it must now be embedded within viable economic frameworks capable of attracting investment, innovation and collective commitment.

The COLEAD 2030 strategy responds to this demanding environment with a clear objective: to increase and accelerate the organisation's impact. It builds on more than fifty years of commitment to the food sector in low- and middle-income countries, with a long-standing presence in Africa and a growing presence in the Caribbean, Latin America and other European Union partner regions. It does not represent a break with the past, but rather a defining step towards adapting COLEAD's role, organisation and levers for action to the challenges of 2030.

The COLEAD 2030 strategy is the result of an in-depth participatory process, conducted over nearly two years, involving all stakeholders within COLEAD's sphere of action. This process was based on:

- a theory of change clarifying COLEAD's vision, ambition and pathways to impact;
- a 128-question 2030 strategic questionnaire, distributed to stakeholders and answered by 350 individuals representing COLEAD's members, team, partner beneficiaries, and technical and financial partners
- more than 20 bilateral consultations conducted with external facilitation, involving technical and financial partners;
- collective consultations involving the team, members and partner beneficiaries separately, including in particular surveys, dedicated sessions with partner beneficiaries and more than 50 national member meetings;
- technical programme evaluations drawing on COLEAD's last ten years of operational experience;
- an ongoing dialogue with major international political and sectoral agendas (UNFSS+4, AU-EU process, regional business forums, CAADP frameworks, EU-CELAC process).

This work has enabled observations, expectations and, at times, divergent viewpoints to be transformed into 24 structural recommendations, now consolidated within the COLEAD 2030 strategy.

The discussions arising from this process initially revealed strong areas of convergence: the relevance of a systemic approach linking the micro, meso and macro levels; the need to strengthen the link

between technical assistance, market access and access to finance; the importance of preserving and promoting COLEAD's distinctive expertise, particularly in the areas of market access, quality, value chains and public-private partnerships. They also highlighted a clear expectation: that COLEAD should strengthen its role as an economic actor in sustainable transformation, capable of acting as a catalyst, connector and accelerator of change, going beyond the mere implementation of support projects and programmes.

This document translates this ambition into a clear strategic roadmap for 2030. It is structured around six complementary components:

- three strategic orientations that set the course;
- seven cross-cutting transformational priorities;
- the expected impact as set out in COLEAD's theory of change;
- nine workstreams that structure the transformation;
- a phased roadmap for 2026-2030; and
- key figures for the transformation.

The COLEAD 2030 strategy thus serves as a shared strategic compass. It aims to guide COLEAD's choices, priorities, partnerships and the delivery of its activities over the next five years, in an uncertain and constantly evolving environment.

It is not a static strategic plan, but a dynamic framework for guidance, subject to regular review and adjustment in line with lessons learnt, changes in the context and emerging opportunities. This approach combines a clear direction with agility of action, in order to produce a stronger, measurable and sustainable impact over time.

STRATEGIC ORIENTATIONS 2030



AN ECONOMIC POSITIONING TO STRENGTHEN
THE VIABILITY AND ATTRACTIVENESS OF THE
FOOD SECTOR



A RESOURCE PLATFORM PRODUCES,
CAPITALISES ON AND DISSEMINATES
KNOWLEDGE AND KNOW-HOW



A FEDERATING MOVEMENT TO AMPLIFY
A SUSTAINABLE COLLECTIVE IMPACT

1. Call for COLEAD's transformation: three key strategic orientations by 2030

Building on recognised expertise and a model founded on technical quality, trust and strong ties to the private sector, COLEAD has established itself over time as a leading provider of agricultural technical assistance. Looking ahead to 2030, in the context of evolving food systems and changing financing and cooperation models, COLEAD is undertaking a strategic transformation in line with its DNA.

This evolution is based on three complementary priorities:

- Assert a clear economic positioning
- Build a resource platform that produces, capitalises on and disseminates knowledge and know-how, and
- Become a federating movement to multiply lasting collective impact.

Our conviction is simple: sustainability – economic, social and environmental – rests on economic viability and the structuring of value chains, the coherent articulation of micro–meso–macro levels, and the mobilisation of alliances capable of ensuring scaling up.

1.1 Strategic Orientation 1: an economic positioning to strengthen the viability and attractiveness of the food sector

Faced with contexts marked by climatic, economic and geopolitical shocks, COLEAD affirms its position as an economic actor in sustainable development. This is based on a conviction: social and environmental progress can only be rooted in viable, inclusive and competitive economic models.

True to its DNA as an association of economic operators, COLEAD acts as a value facilitator within food supply chains. The alignment of its vision, mission and values is intended to strengthen the coherence and credibility of its work by 2030.

COLEAD's strategy is based on a systemic approach linking value chains, markets and financing. Action is deployed in a complementary manner at the micro, meso and macro levels: capacity building for producers and MSMEs (micro); structuring of economic and institutional ecosystems (meso); contributing to the development of policy, regulatory and normative frameworks (macro).

This integrated approach helps to remove structural constraints, strengthen the competitiveness and resilience of stakeholders, and facilitate sustainable access to markets and finance. Finally, COLEAD's 'glocal' positioning enables it to combine a strong grounding in local realities with the capacity for action, dialogue and influence at regional and international levels.

From this perspective, information, communication and the promotion of results become strategic levers in their own right, serving to inspire, engage, build trust and foster collective mobilisation around the sustainable transformation of food value chains.

1.2 Strategic Orientation 2: build a resource platform that produces, capitalises on and disseminates knowledge and know-how

The transformation trajectory driven by the COLEAD 2030 strategy calls for a hybrid organization — both digital and field-rooted — able to produce, capitalise on and disseminate knowledge, tools, training and instruments serving the players of the agricultural and food sector. COLEAD thereby positions itself as a genuine resource platform, an essential condition for scaling up the complexity, reach and impact of its action.

This ambition rests first on an equipped, agile and hybrid organisation. It requires continuous investment in robust systems: an integrated and secure information system, data-driven management, a professionalised monitoring-evaluation function, strengthened quality assurance and a controlled integration of digital tools and technologies, including artificial intelligence. Developing and mobilising skills is a central pillar of this foundation: COLEAD continuously strengthens its internal capacities, structures, runs and certifies expert networks, and secures diversified financial resources.

It then translates into a capacity for structured and accessible technical information and influence, putting field-based knowledge, data and analysis at the service of economic players, ecosystems and decision-makers. Finally, it draws on a dynamic of innovation, capitalisation and large-scale dissemination, turning learnings into transferable solutions and spreading them widely. The aim is to guarantee the quality, coherence and credibility of the model, while enabling the innovation, agility and scaling up required by the transformation trajectory towards 2030.

1.3 Strategic Orientation 3: a federating movement to amplify a sustainable collective impact

By 2030, COLEAD will evolve from a project/programme implementation organisation into an international movement of stakeholders committed to sustainable food value chains. This evolution is underpinned by structured alliances, rooted in national ecosystems and connected to regional and global dynamics.

To this end, COLEAD is strengthening its role as a glocal¹ connector, capable of linking public and private actors, initiatives, knowledge and resources. It is consolidating its function as a public–private interface, developing its capacity for influence and technical advocacy, and actively engaging in alliances, partnerships and key forums. These collaborations are designed to be genuine drivers of transformation, geared towards sustainable, measurable and shared outcomes.

This collective dynamic is underpinned by the development of a broader, structured and active international community, both online and on the ground, as well as by strengthened, open governance based on subsidiarity.

The multipolar model that is taking shape aims to better distribute value, the power to act and initiative within ecosystems, whilst consolidating a shared collective identity.

COLEAD thus aims to become an impact-oriented economic movement, capable of sustainably mobilising public and private actors around a shared ambition for systemic transformation.

¹ Global and local



COLEAD

7 TRANSFORMATIONAL PRIORITIES

7

QUALITY &
COHERENCE OF
ACTION

5

NUTRITION & ACCESS TO
HEALTHY FOOD

6

LOCAL OWNERSHIP &
LONG-TERM
TRANSFORMATION

3

VALUE DISTRIBUTION

4

DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION
AND IMPACT-DRIVEN
INNOVATION

1

INCLUSION & LEADERSHIP
(WOMEN AND YOUTH)

2

CLIMATE RESILIENCE
AND VALUE CHAIN
SUSTAINABILITY

2. Transformational priorities of COLEAD's 2030 strategy

The three strategic priorities outlined in the previous section define the direction COLEAD intends to take by 2030: establishing a clear economic positioning, building a resource platform that produces, capitalises on and disseminates knowledge and know-how, and contributing to the emergence of an international movement committed to the sustainable transformation of food value chains.

The implementation of these priorities forms part of a framework of cross-cutting requirements that have become essential to supporting this transformation. The transformational priorities set out below do not constitute additional areas of action: they guide the design, strategic choices and evaluation of all COLEAD's interventions, in order to ensure the coherence, accountability and credibility of the path set out for 2030.

2.1 Economic inclusion and leadership of women and youth

The sustainable transformation of food value chains cannot take place without the increased participation of women and young people as full economic actors. This is particularly true in Africa, where the agricultural sector faces a dual challenge: a lack of appeal to young people and an ageing workforce, against a backdrop of rapid population growth. This dynamic requires the creation of a large number of skilled jobs and large-scale skills development, tailored to the needs of value chains.

COLEAD ensures that its interventions, partnerships and collective initiatives strengthen:

- women's and young people's access to economic opportunities,
- their capacity for entrepreneurship, innovation and investment,
- their participation in decision-making and governance within the sectors.

2.2 Climate resilience and environmental sustainability of sectors

Food value chains are on the front line of the impacts of climate change and ecological transitions. Environmental sustainability is a fundamental imperative, not a secondary objective. COLEAD systematically integrates:

- climate adaptation,
- the reduction of environmental impacts,
- the promotion of sustainable and resilient practices,
- alignment with market and public policy transition pathways.

2.3 A fairer distribution of value and the inclusion of vulnerable stakeholders

The desired economic transformation must be accompanied by an improvement in the conditions for value creation and distribution throughout food supply chains. COLEAD contributes to dynamics that enable:

- better remuneration and recognition for producers,
- more balanced trade relations, particularly for the most vulnerable links in the chain,
- the creation of decent jobs and improved living conditions,
- the sustainable inclusion of MSMEs and vulnerable stakeholders in market pathways.

2.4 Digital transformation and innovation for impact

The sustainable transformation of food value chains requires an increased capacity to harness digital technology as a lever for efficiency, knowledge dissemination, transparency and scaling up. COLEAD integrates digital tools and artificial intelligence in order to:

- enhance economic actors' access to services, information and markets,
- improve the quality of monitoring, learning and accountability,
- accelerate the dissemination of best practices, innovations and standards,
- support a multipolar model based on reliable data and interoperable systems.

This priority aims to make digital technology a cross-cutting lever for transformation, without widening access gaps or excluding the most vulnerable stakeholders.

2.5 Nutrition and equitable access to healthy diets

The sustainable transformation of food value chains cannot be separated from their impacts on nutrition, health and the resilience of populations. Beyond the volumes produced and traded, the capacity of food systems to provide safe, diverse, nutritious and accessible food is a fundamental development challenge. As part of its 2030 strategy, COLEAD integrates nutrition as a cross-cutting transformational priority, ensuring that the dynamics of competitiveness, sustainability and investment it supports contribute to more equitable access to healthy diets. This approach is reflected in particular by:

- strengthening nutritionally relevant value chains,
- improving product quality and food safety,
- reducing food losses,
- support for models that promote access to nutritious food.

COLEAD operates within its value-added scope production, processing, quality, skills, markets and investment to ensure that the transformation of food systems contributes to the well-being of societies.

2.6 Local ownership, coherence and sustainability of transformations

The COLEAD 2030 strategy is based on a “glocal” ambition: acting as closely as possible to local realities whilst contributing to broader transformation frameworks. COLEAD ensures that the transformations undertaken are:

- owned by national and regional stakeholders,
- supported by strengthened local ecosystems,
- sustainable beyond the projects and programmes,
- consistent with a common strategic framework.

2.7 Quality, integrity and consistency of action in complex contexts

The COLEAD 2030 strategy operates in environments marked by growing economic, political, climatic and social tensions, involving complex trade-offs between sometimes conflicting objectives. COLEAD ensures that it conducts its work with responsibility, integrity and consistency, explicitly taking ownership of the choices made, the priorities selected and the necessary compromises, whilst

respecting its values, its economic positioning and the realities of the contexts in which it operates. This requirement aims to guarantee the quality of COLEAD's work, the trust of its partners and the robustness of its transformation pathways over the long term.

These seven transformational priorities serve as a common framework for analysis, design and monitoring across all initiatives under the COLEAD 2030 strategy. They ensure that COLEAD's growing impact is accompanied by a transformation that is: inclusive; resilient to climate and environmental challenges; economically more equitable across value chains; sustainable over time thanks to strengthened local ownership; accelerated by responsible digital transformation; and conducted with responsibility and consistency in complex contexts.

They thus strengthen the overall coherence of the strategy, its credibility with partners and its capacity to produce systemic and sustainable effects on a large scale.





COLEAD

EXPECTED **IMPACT** BY 2030

GLOCAL MOVEMENT

MACRO

Enabling frameworks, policies,
and investments

MESO

Structured value chains and
strengthened ecosystems

MICRO

Strengthened economic operators
(producers, MSMEs)

LEVERAGE EFFECTS

LEVERAGE EFFECTS

TARGETED ECONOMIC IMPACT

catalyzing positive social and environmental effects

**AN IMPACT DRIVEN BY COLLECTIVE ACTION,
DESIGNED TO BECOME A MOVEMENT**

3. The expected impact by 2030: COLEAD's contribution to change

COLEAD's 2030 strategy is based on a proven theory of change: the sustainable transformation of food value chains depends less on isolated actions than on the ability to link, over time, changes at the micro, meso and macro levels. This theory of change forms the structural framework for COLEAD: it describes the mechanisms through which technical assistance, when targeted, coherent and linked to structural partnerships, contributes to sustainable economic transformations and broader positive societal and environmental impacts.

The 2030 strategy does not call this framework into question. It reinforces and updates it by setting out a trajectory: COLEAD is evolving from a primarily technical role towards a more comprehensive role as a glocal economic actor, an ecosystem connector and a catalyst for scaling up, capable of influencing decision-makers, supporting applied innovation and the dissemination of solutions, and facilitating the mobilisation of responsible investment. The strategic orientations, transformational priorities and expected impact thus describe not a new theory of change, but a scaling-up of COLEAD's capacity to activate this theory of change with greater ambition, coherence and leverage.

3.1 An approach prioritising economic impact, catalysing positive societal and environmental effects

The COLEAD 2030 strategy fully embraces this approach: it is by acting on economic models, market and investment incentives, and the structuring of ecosystems that sustainable positive social and environmental impacts can be generated. Improving working conditions, the inclusion of women and young people, climate resilience, the adoption of sustainable practices, and the reduction of sanitary and environmental risks are not treated as isolated ends in themselves, but as the expected consequences of credible, viable and sustainable economic transformations. This approach is part of COLEAD's theory of change, based on the three pillars of sustainability — economic, social and environmental — and on the coherent articulation of the micro, meso and macro levels:

- at the micro level, capacity building, professionalisation and compliance among producers and MSMEs;
- at the meso level, the structuring of value chains, support services, intermediary organisations and collective dynamics, including access to finance;
- at the macro level, contributing to the development of regulatory, normative and policy frameworks, as well as to the improvement of investment conditions.

It is through coherence between these three levels that the desired leverage is achieved. The mechanism is clear: to sustainably link actors, ecosystems and intervention frameworks in order to generate cumulative transformation chains. Economic positioning anchors sustainability within viable models; the systemic approach ensures coherence across levels; the modernisation of tools and skills enables to manage complexity and scale up what works. As a glocal connector, COLEAD reinforces this leverage effect by structuring alliances and facilitating convergence between public, private and financial actors. The 2030 strategy translates this theory of change into a progressive trajectory: first, strengthening clarity and management capacity; second, producing demonstrable results and knock-on effects; and third, enabling the scaling up of approaches, innovations, partnerships and responsible investments.

This ramp-up aims to embed transformations beyond direct interventions and to support distributed, multipolar and sustainable dynamics. It is accompanied by an increased demand for accountability:

documenting results, learning, adjusting and making visible the changes produced at the level of value chains and ecosystems, without multiplying indicators but by strengthening the quality of governance.

3.2 Expected changes at the micro, meso and macro levels

COLEAD's theory of change is based on three interdependent levels of transformation — micro, meso and macro — which do not correspond to categories of action, but to distinct and complementary registers of change. It is their coherent articulation over time that enables a sustainable and systemic impact to be generated across food value chains. The COLEAD 2030 strategy does not alter this architecture. It aims to enhance its clarity, depth and scalability by consolidating the expected outcomes at each of these levels. This ambition is underpinned by COLEAD's gradual rise as a global economic actor, capable of mobilising strategic alliances, supporting applied innovation, facilitating responsible investment and influencing sectoral frameworks, whilst ensuring consistency and staying the course over the long term.

3.2.1 *Expected changes at the micro level: credible actors capable of contributing to the transformation*

At the micro level, COLEAD's theory of change aims to achieve the sustainable strengthening of the capacities of economic actors within food value chains, particularly producers and MSMEs. The challenge is not merely to improve individual performance, but to ensure these actors' ability to become sustainably embedded within structured, viable and inclusive economic dynamics. The expected changes primarily concern the development of technical, organisational, entrepreneurial and managerial skills, the adoption of more efficient and sustainable practices, and an enhanced ability to meet market demands, standards and regulations. They also include a greater ability to engage with financing stakeholders, to structure credible investment pathways and to mobilise innovative solutions tailored to the challenges facing the sectors. This evolution translates into enhanced credibility with commercial, financial and institutional partners. In the COLEAD 2030 strategy, changes at the micro-level form a foundation, not an end in themselves. The challenge is to ensure the sustainability of the capacities developed, their dissemination within the sectors — notably through structured training programmes and accredited intermediaries — and their integration with collective dynamics at the meso and macro levels. The desired impact at the micro level is thus inseparable from the ability of stakeholders to contribute to structured, resilient value chains that are attractive to responsible investment.

3.2.2 *Expected changes at the meso level: value chains and ecosystems capable of generating leverage*

The meso level corresponds to the structuring of value chains, support services, professional organisations, training and research centres, competent authorities, and the economic and institutional ecosystems in which micro-level actors operate. The changes expected at this level result in more organised, transparent and inclusive value chains, more stable and equitable economic relations, as well as better coordinated, professionalised support services tailored to the needs of economic actors. These developments create the conditions necessary for the emergence of collective dynamics, the dissemination of practices and innovations, and the alignment of interventions beyond isolated projects.

The COLEAD 2030 strategy significantly reinforces this level of transformation. It positions COLEAD as a key enabler at the meso level, capable of linking capacities developed at the micro level to collective

dynamics, structuring alliances and coalitions of stakeholders around shared objectives, and strengthening environments conducive to responsible investment, applied innovation and scaling up. It is at this level that micro-level transformations can produce cumulative, sustainable and visible effects across food systems.

3.2.3 Expected changes at the macro level: frameworks and dynamics that will shape transformation in the long term

At the macro level, COLEAD's theory of change focuses on changes to the frameworks, rules and dynamics that guide the decisions of economic actors, investors and institutions at national, regional and international levels.

The expected changes concern the evolution of regulatory, normative and policy frameworks affecting food value chains, greater consideration of economic, productive, climatic and technological realities in public policy, and the strengthening of more structured and effective public–private dialogue. They also include the creation of conditions more conducive to applied innovation, the dissemination of sustainable solutions and their scaling up across sectors. Finally, they result in a shift in funding and investment towards sustainable, inclusive and resilient models.

In the COLEAD 2030 strategy, this level of change is progressively reinforced. COLEAD is increasing its capacity to inform and influence decision makers and practices based on data, analyses, proven innovations and concrete demonstrators arising from action on the ground, to contribute to the alignment of policies, standards and financial instruments with the real needs of value chains, and to play a recognised role as a facilitator and catalyst for responsible investment, particularly at European level. The desired macro-level impact is that of a trusted third party, capable of linking the realities of sectors to decision-making forums and contributing to sustainable systemic transformations.

3.2.4 Stronger coordination across levels throughout the 2030 pathway

The added value of the COLEAD 2030 strategy lies less in the isolated intensification of changes at each level than in the strengthening of their progressive coordination. In the short term, the focus is on consolidating capacities at the micro level and stabilising the meso frameworks to enable their dissemination. In the medium term, the meso level becomes the main lever for scaling up, by linking stakeholders, services, innovations and investments. In the longer term, changes at the macro level enable these transformations to be sustainably embedded and their scope amplified.

This approach is fully consistent with the trajectory described in section 5. It enables COLEAD to remain true to its core values whilst strengthening its capacity to generate systemic, widespread and sustainable impact.

3.3 A systemic and sustainable impact driven by collective action

By 2030, COLEAD's impact will be measured by its ability to sustainably link transformations at the micro, meso and macro levels to produce systemic effects.

Progress made by producers, MSMEs and professional organisations only becomes meaningful when it is embedded within structured supply chains and more favourable frameworks. Conversely, regulatory or financial changes only bring about real change if they tangibly improve the performance and resilience of economic actors.

COLEAD's specific contribution lies in this ability to coordinate and cross thresholds: moving from one-off initiatives to viable economic trajectories, from local experiments to collective dynamics, and from dependence on external support to sustainable autonomy.

Once these thresholds are crossed, the transformations become self-sustaining: stakeholders gain autonomy, ecosystems take shape, and the economic effects translate into tangible social and environmental progress.

This impact can only be achieved collectively. By connecting economic actors, professional organisations, public institutions and financial partners, COLEAD creates the conditions for a sustainable, viable transformation that extends beyond its direct interventions.



4. COLEAD's strategic transformation workstreams between now and 2030

The COLEAD 2030 strategy is being realised through the implementation of nine priority workstreams, which constitute its main operational levers. These translate strategic orientations into action plans designed to bring about the desired transformations.

Some workstreams focus directly on COLEAD's economic positioning and its ability to increase the impact of its work. Others aim to strengthen the organisational capacities, tools and partnerships needed to support this ambition.

Together, they provide the framework for implementing the strategy and constitute the operational framework for the transformation underway towards 2030.

- Workstream 1 defines the identity.
- Workstream 2 establishes the backbone of the action.
- Workstream 3 triggers investment.
- Workstream 4 structures the alliances.
- Workstream 5 sets the momentum in motion.
- Workstream 6 equips the organisation.
- Workstream 7 influences.
- Workstream 8 innovates and disseminates.
- Workstream 9 ensures long-term sustainability.

9 STRATEGIC WORKSTREAMS

OUR 3 STRATEGIC ORIENTATIONS

EMBODY OUR ECONOMIC IDENTITY

DRIVE OUR MACRO-MESO-MICRO APPROACH

FACILITATE INVESTMENT

BUILD HIGH-LEVERAGE ALLIANCES

STRUCTURE AND LEAD A MOVEMENT

EQUIP THE ORGANIZATION AND ITS PARTNERS

INFLUENCE AND INSPIRE

ACCELERATE INNOVATION AND SCALING

SECURE THE COLEAD'S LONG-TERM TRAJECTORY

COMMITMENT

CONTINUOUS
IMPROVEMENT

DIFFERENCE

PERFORMANCE

HUMANITY

OUR 5 VALUES

4.1 Workstream 1: “Embodying a confident and inspiring economic identity”

The rapid evolution of food systems, the proliferation of crises and the restructuring of development funding require organisations capable of adopting a clear identity and a distinct strategic stance. This is particularly true in low- and middle-income countries. The consultation process led by COLEAD over nearly two years consistently highlighted a need to clarify and strengthen the organisation’s positioning, both with its partners and with its members and staff. The COLEAD 2030 strategy responds to this need by affirming an explicit economic identity, based on the conviction that the sustainable transformation of food value chains depends on their economic viability, an essential condition for their social and environmental sustainability.

This initiative builds on COLEAD’s history and core values. It represents neither a change of direction nor a break with the past, but rather a clearer articulation of its position. Building on a model recognised for the quality of its technical expertise, its support for agri-food sectors and its close ties with economic stakeholders, COLEAD has chosen to make clearer what has always underpinned its added value: its ability to support economic operators, professional organisations and ecosystems towards greater competitiveness, resilience and inclusion. Affirming a clear economic positioning thus enables COLEAD’s work to be better promoted, without diminishing its social or environmental scope.

The COLEAD 2030 strategy is based on an explicit alignment of vision, ambition, mission and values. This clarification responds to a strong expectation expressed during consultations, particularly regarding the need to formulate a narrative that is simpler, more distinctive and more directly linked to the desired transformations.

The “glocal” positioning is the other central element of this identity: it reflects COLEAD’s ability to be deeply rooted in local realities, whilst being recognised and influential at regional and international levels. It enables the organisation to link on-the-ground action, the capitalisation of experiences and influence in the arenas where economic, regulatory and political frameworks are shaped.

In this context, information and communication become strategic levers in their own right. Stakeholders have highlighted the need for more coherent, visible and audience-specific communication, placing greater emphasis on concrete transformations, the trajectories of key players and the results achieved. This workstream therefore also aims to evolve COLEAD’s communication towards an approach of an impact-oriented economic movement, capable of strengthening members’ commitment, credibility with financial and technical partners, and ownership of the strategy by actors on the ground.

By asserting a confident and inspiring economic identity, COLEAD is establishing a common framework against which its actions, partnerships and positions can be aligned and strengthened. This workstream is an essential prerequisite for the coherence of the entire 2030 strategy: it enables COLEAD to unite, distinguish itself and inspire, whilst grounding its ambition in a realistic and rigorous understanding of the social, economic and environmental dynamics of food systems.

Workstream 1: “Embodying a confident and inspiring economic identity” Expected changes by 2030

1. COLEAD’s glocal economic positioning is clearly recognised

COLEAD is identified and perceived as a leading economic player in the sustainable transformation of food value chains, beyond its historical role of providing technical assistance, and is recognised for its ability to combine local roots, regional credibility and international influence.

2. A clear, shared and inspiring strategic narrative is effectively embodied

COLEAD's vision, mission, ambition and values form a common framework, understood and championed by teams, members and partners. The 2030 strategy is embraced as a collective endeavour, rather than as an institutional document.

3. A community aligned with the COLEAD 2030 ambition

COLEAD structures and consolidates its community and actively mobilises its members around collective initiatives aligned with its economic positioning, reinforcing its role as a global connector and the appeal of the COLEAD movement.

4. Greater consistency between positioning, action and communication

COLEAD's interventions, partnerships and communication reflect its strategic positioning, highlighting stakeholders' trajectories and concrete transformations, thereby strengthening its credibility, visibility and ability to inspire and unite within national, regional and international food ecosystems.

4.2 Workstream 2: “Deploying an integrated micro–meso–macro systemic approach”

COLEAD is implementing a systemic approach linking the micro, meso and macro levels to remove the structural constraints that hinder the competitiveness and resilience of food value chains. It acts simultaneously on the capacities of economic actors, the structuring of ecosystems and the evolution of institutional frameworks, in order to produce cumulative and sustainable effects.

At the micro level, COLEAD's work continues to focus on strengthening the skills, practices and *sustainability*² performance of producers and MSMEs. Stakeholders have, however, highlighted the need to tailor digital and face-to-face intervention methods more closely to the profiles of partners who benefit from COLEAD's initiatives, to strengthen post-training support, and to better integrate entrepreneurial and financial dimensions, in addition to market access. This initiative consolidates a demand-driven, context-specific approach geared towards sustainable results.

At the meso level, the workstream addresses a strong need to structure economic and institutional ecosystems. COLEAD strengthens professional organisations, support services, training centres, research centres, funding bodies, competent authorities, public–private dialogue mechanisms and coordination mechanisms that enable economic actors to develop in a more favourable environment. This level of intervention is a key lever for ensuring the sustainability of impacts beyond the projects themselves.

At the macro level, COLEAD strengthens its role as an informant and contributor to developments in policy, regulatory and normative frameworks, drawing on its technical expertise, information systems, data and field experience. Partners expect to be better informed about access to markets and finance, and have expressed a clear expectation for more structured, targeted and accessible technical advocacy, capable of informing public decisions without supplanting the competent authorities. Beyond this role of providing information and exerting influence, COLEAD also helps to inspire credible pathways to transformation, based on proven practices and on-the-ground experience. Information, influence and inspiration are thus established as fully-fledged modes of action, consistent with micro- and meso-level interventions.

The added value of this workstream lies in COLEAD's ability to coordinate these three levels in order to maximise impact. The consultations highlighted the risks of fragmentation and strategic overload. In response, the COLEAD 2030 strategy opts for a clear prioritisation of value chains, themes and geographical areas of intervention, as well as a harmonised methodological framework that balances flexibility and rigour. This approach allows COLEAD to maintain the depth of its support whilst

² Based on the three pillars of sustainability: economic, social and environmental.

enhancing its leverage effect. Furthermore, the key strategic and operational alliances also recommended (Workstream 4) should help to strengthen the leverage and systematisation of the sustainable impact of COLEAD's work.

This workstream forms an essential foundation of the 2030 strategy by ensuring coherence between on-the-ground action, the structuring of ecosystems and the evolution of reference frameworks.

Workstream 2: "Deploying an integrated micro-meso-macro systemic approach"

Expected changes by 2030

1. Sustainably transformed economic actors (micro level)

Supported producers and MSMEs sustainably improve their economic, social and environmental performance, moving beyond one-off training, thanks to contextualised, demand-driven support embedded in credible pathways of resilience, initiative, investment and adaptation.

2. Structured and strengthened food ecosystems (meso level)

COLEAD contributes to the sustainable strengthening of professional organisations, training centres and other support services, competent authorities and coordination mechanisms, notably through public-private dialogue, enabling the consolidation of value chains beyond individual projects and the scaling up of transformations initiated at the micro level.

3. A recognised contribution to the evolution of sectoral frameworks (macro level)

COLEAD provides stakeholders with factual and scientific information on access to markets and finance. It exerts structured and credible technical influence, drawing on field experience and data from its interventions to inform regulatory and normative frameworks and public policy. It also plays a demonstrative, inspirational role by highlighting exemplary pathways driven by the actors themselves, without supplanting the competent authorities.

4. An integrated, coherent and clear articulation of the micro-meso-macro levels

An increasing proportion of COLEAD's programmes are designed according to a systemic approach linking the micro, meso and macro levels. The programmes are based on an explicit prioritisation of value chains, themes and geographical areas. A common methodological framework ensures strategic coherence, contextual flexibility and continuous learning.

4.3 Workstream 3: "Facilitating access to finance and mobilising investment as a lever for transforming value chains"

The sustainable transformation of food value chains cannot rely solely on technical assistance. It requires improved access to finance and a greater capacity to mobilise investment. Against a backdrop of shifting development finance, COLEAD intends to play an active role in improving the *bankability* of stakeholders and building credible bridges with actors in the finance ecosystem and investors.

In light of this shift, the COLEAD 2030 strategy has chosen to fully embrace an economic positioning that views access to finance not as an additional component of action, but as a key driver of transformation. This workstream reflects an evolution in COLEAD's role, strengthening its capacity to operate at the interface between technical assistance, the economic structuring of stakeholders, and dialogue with financial institutions.

It affirms its legitimacy as a facilitator, capable of developing credible investment pathways that are compatible with local realities and market requirements, whilst ensuring that the most vulnerable actors in value chains are not excluded.

As part of its contribution to the structuring of food value chains, COLEAD is strengthening its role in mobilising private investment, particularly from Europe, by creating conditions conducive to the engagement of responsible financial actors along the value chains.

The process underway is based on a more systematic integration of financial considerations from the very outset of interventions. *At the micro level*, it aims to strengthen the capacity of supported MSMEs to develop viable business models, improve their financial management, engage with financial actors and secure resources suited to their development. *At the meso level*, it helps to structure ecosystems conducive to investment by strengthening interactions between public, private and financial actors, improving access to support mechanisms and supporting the development of relevant financial and non-financial services. *At the macro level*, it informs and fuels public–private dialogue and technical advocacy on regulatory frameworks, financial instruments and public policies conducive to sustainable investment in food value chains.

This workstream is based on the development of strategic partnerships with financial institutions, donors and impact investors, as well as on strengthening COLEAD’s internal capacities, tools and methodologies. It enables the exploration of innovative financial mechanisms, designed as catalysts for transformation, tailored to the challenges and needs of the agricultural sector, sustained by millions of producers and as many enterprises. Where appropriate, these new mechanisms may be implemented directly or indirectly by COLEAD. This approach aims to maximise the leverage effect of technical assistance, strengthen the *bankability* of projects and contribute to the mobilisation of additional resources for the benefit of the supported value chains, in a spirit of coherence, accountability and measurable impact.

Access to finance and investment facilitation are thus envisaged as a catalyst for structural change. The transformation sought is not limited to the volume of finance mobilised, but translates into a sustainable capacity among the supported actors to invest, innovate, create decent jobs and strengthen the economic, social and environmental resilience of food value chains. As such, this workstream constitutes one of the major turning points of the COLEAD 2030 strategy, in line with the ambition to evolve the organisation into an impact-oriented glocal economic movement.

The success of workstream 3 by 2030 will be measured by COLEAD’s ability to play a credible role as a facilitator between economic and financial stakeholders, to integrate the financing dimension into its interventions, to mobilise significant volumes of capital, and to improve effective and sustainable access to finance for MSMEs.

Workstream 3: “Facilitating access to finance and mobilising investment as a lever for transforming value chains” Expected changes by 2030

1. COLEAD is recognised as a credible facilitator between economic and financial actors

COLEAD is recognised as a key player in facilitating finance within food value chains. COLEAD facilitates credible and inclusive investment pathways between MSMEs, financial institutions and investors.

2. The financing dimension is systematically integrated into interventions

An increasing proportion of COLEAD’s programmes incorporate a structured component for access to finance from the design stage. These mechanisms cover the entire financial journey — preparation, intermediation and support — whilst ensuring the inclusion of vulnerable stakeholders.

3. Responsible financing and investment, particularly from Europe, is effectively made available and mobilised for the benefit of MSMEs and supply chains

COLEAD helps to mobilise significant volumes of financing and investment (particularly from Europe) tailored to food MSMEs in the targeted partner countries. COLEAD’s technical assistance generates a measurable leverage effect in terms of investment. The investments mobilised support sustainable growth trajectories incorporating innovation, decent employment and environmental transition.

4. Sustainable, inclusive and transformative access to finance is strengthened within food ecosystems

A growing number of supported MSMEs are gaining access to suitable formal finance. The supported MSMEs are strengthening their *bankability*, financial management and capacity for autonomous investment. COLEAD helps to structure ecosystems conducive to sustainable investment, notably through the strengthening of public–private interactions and the development of innovative financial mechanisms.

4.4 Workstream 4: “Organising and activating “glocal” alliances to support food ecosystems”

The sustainable transformation of food systems requires structured and coherent collective dynamics. Public, private, technical and financial actors operate within complex, often poorly coordinated ecosystems, where opportunities for impact are still too limited by the compartmentalisation of initiatives, the dispersion of resources and the lack of bridges between national, regional and international levels.

Consultations carried out as part of the development of the COLEAD 2030 strategy revealed a strong and shared expectation: that of a player capable of connecting, structuring and bringing coherence to existing dynamics, without replacing them. Against a backdrop of restructuring in development finance, the decline in official development assistance and the rise of public–private partnerships, the role of facilitator is becoming a strategic lever in its own right.

This workstream responds to this expectation. It aims to strengthen COLEAD’s capacity to act as a “glocal” connector: firmly rooted in national and regional realities, whilst being able to influence, unite and exert influence in the spaces where economic, regulatory and financial frameworks are shaped at the international level.

This ambition rests on several complementary pillars:

- a strengthened role as a public–private interface, facilitating dialogue, co-creation and the alignment of interests around shared objectives of sustainability, competitiveness and inclusion;
- targeted economic and technological alliances, mobilised as levers for innovation, investment and scaling-up;
- a stronger presence within national and regional ecosystems, to ensure the relevance, sustainability and ownership of the initiatives undertaken.

COLEAD thus positions itself as a player capable of linking different levels of action, circulating knowledge, resources and opportunities, and creating leverage effects to benefit food value chains.

This workstream marks a fundamental shift in COLEAD’s approach. The focus is less on increasing the number of partnerships and more on enhancing their quality, prioritising them and embedding them within clear pathways for transformation.

In practical terms, COLEAD:

- is strengthening its role as a facilitator of multi-stakeholder collaboration, particularly within value chains where market, standards, financing and investment issues are closely interlinked;
- is becoming more systematically involved in key forums, platforms and initiatives, in order to provide an economic and technical voice grounded in on-the-ground realities;
- develops locally rooted alliances, in support of national and regional actors, based on a principle of subsidiarity and capacity-building, without taking over their roles.

This workstream positions COLEAD as a pivotal actor, capable of linking initiatives, structuring alliances and amplifying collective positive impact. It supports COLEAD’s evolution towards an impact-oriented glocal movement, true to its DNA, moving beyond the logic of juxtaposed projects to generate

sustainable transformations on the scale of needs of food ecosystems. Particularly in low- and middle-income countries.

Workstream 4: “Organising and activating “glocal” alliances to support food ecosystems”
Expected changes by 2030

1. Sustainable, prioritised and transformation-focused strategic alliances

COLEAD structures and manages a portfolio of active strategic alliances, bringing together public, private and voluntary sector stakeholders around shared pathways for the sustainable transformation of food value chains, resulting in concrete joint actions and measurable outcomes in terms of sustainability, competitiveness and inclusion.

2. A recognised role as a public–private interface within food ecosystems

COLEAD is recognised as a pivotal and operational player in public–private dialogue within food ecosystems. COLEAD facilitates the co-creation of results-oriented solutions between institutions, businesses, professional organisations and actors on the ground, and helps to structure balanced and sustainable partnerships.

3. Locally rooted partnerships generating leverage and collective outcomes at the system level

An increasing proportion of COLEAD’s initiatives are implemented through partnerships rooted in national and regional ecosystems. Local stakeholders are actively involved in the governance and implementation of initiatives, without substitution. These partnerships generate economic and investment leverage and produce sustainable results beyond the scope of individual projects.

4.5 Workstream 5: “Structuring and leading an impact-oriented movement”

COLEAD’s ability to sustainably increase its impact does not rest solely on the quality of its technical interventions, nor on the strength of its partnerships. It also depends on its ability to mobilise its community, to share the power to act, and to evolve its organisation towards a more distributed, representative and resilient model.

Consultations carried out as part of the development of the COLEAD 2030 strategy highlighted a clear and widely shared expectation: to transform COLEAD from an organisation primarily focused on project delivery into a movement of economic actors committed to the sustainable transformation of food value chains. This evolution is seen as an essential condition for strengthening local ownership, fostering innovation, accelerating scaling up and preserving COLEAD’s DNA in a context of growth and diversification.

This workstream addresses this expectation. It aims to establish a sustainable collective dynamic, based on renewed governance, increased member engagement and a multipolar model founded on subsidiarity, shared responsibility and trust.

By 2030, COLEAD will establish itself as a structured international movement, representative of the diversity of its members, partners and the territories in which it operates. This is not merely an organisational expansion, but a profound transformation of the way in which initiative, value and responsibility are distributed within the COLEAD ecosystem.

This ambition is based on several complementary developments:

- a federated community, with a broader, more diverse and committed membership base, playing an active role in implementing the strategy;
- a more open, representative and accountable governance structure, involving national and regional stakeholders more closely, as well as young people and women;
- a progressive, multipolar model, based on relays, hubs or platforms with the capacity for initiative and adaptation;
- a shared collective identity, combining COLEAD’s local roots with its global vision.

COLEAD is thus strengthening its capacity to act as a catalyst for collective action, whilst ensuring the coherence, quality and integrity of its work. This workstream involves a major cultural and organisational shift: moving from a predominantly centralised mode of operation to a model in which the COLEAD community becomes a fully-fledged actor in the strategic dynamic.

In practical terms, COLEAD:

- clarifies the roles, rights and responsibilities of members, as well as the practical terms of their involvement;
- develops its governance mechanisms to strengthen representativeness, transparency and effective participation;
- rolls out a structured multipolar model, allowing for greater operational and strategic autonomy at clearly defined national or regional levels;
- invests in community engagement, knowledge sharing and the recognition of members' and partners' contributions.

This evolution helps to strengthen local ownership, stimulate innovation and create sustainable momentum driven by the actors themselves, whilst maintaining a common strategic and operational framework.

Workstream 5: “Structuring and leading an impact-oriented movement” **Expected changes by 2030**

1. A federated community with a broad, diverse and sustainably committed membership base

COLEAD's membership base is expanding, both geographically and across all links in the food value chains. A growing proportion of members are actively and sustainably engaged in implementing the 2030 strategy, going beyond mere formal membership. A structured framework for participation and recognition supports members' engagement.

2. Open, representative and accountable governance, driven by members

COLEAD's governing bodies reflect the movement's geographical, sectoral and generational diversity. Members participate in decision-making processes. Well-established mechanisms for transparency and accountability strengthen COLEAD's institutional legitimacy.

3. A multipolar operational model, based on subsidiarity and overall coherence

COLEAD implements a multipolar model based on a structured network of regional hubs or platforms with clear mandates. A significant proportion of decisions, partnerships and activities are carried out at a decentralised level. Strategic, methodological and ethical coherence is ensured across the entire movement.

4. A collective dynamic generating impact, integrity and knock-on effects

COLEAD acts as a catalyst for collective dynamics driven by its community. The partnerships developed are more horizontal and structuring, fostering innovation and local ownership. Common standards of quality, integrity and shared responsibility ensure the unity of the movement.

4.6 Workstream 6: “Equipping the organisation and its partners to support the scaling up of impact”

The ambition set out in the COLEAD 2030 strategy involves scaling up, diversifying partnerships and moving towards a multipolar model. These transformations cannot be sustained in the long term without infrastructure, systems and resources that meet the standards of quality, consistency, traceability and accountability expected by partners, members and beneficiaries.

The consultations carried out highlighted several shared expectations: more integrated and interoperable tools, improved circulation of data and knowledge, harmonised processes, and a

strengthened capacity to measure and demonstrate impact. They also emphasised the need to secure and diversify human, technical and financial resources to support COLEAD's growth without undermining its core values.

This workstream addresses these challenges. It aims to provide COLEAD with a modern, robust and scalable organisational infrastructure capable of supporting the strategic transformation underway and ensuring its quality.

By 2030, COLEAD will have integrated, reliable and data-driven infrastructure, systems and resources, enabling it to steer its activities, demonstrate their impact and support a demanding multipolar model. This ambition rests on several complementary pillars:

- integrated and interoperable information systems, facilitating the management of programmes, partnerships, members and knowledge;
- a professionalised M&E function, supporting COLEAD's learning, accountability and credibility;
- strengthened quality assurance and risk management mechanisms, tailored to an evolving organisation;
- the judicious integration of artificial intelligence, to promote efficiency, innovation and the dissemination of knowledge;
- secure and diversified human, technical and financial resources, capable of supporting the 2030 trajectory.

COLEAD is thus equipping itself with the necessary means to support the increasing impact of its interventions whilst ensuring their consistency and reliability. This workstream is fundamentally transforming the way in which COLEAD designs, implements and manages its activities. It is not a one-off technological modernisation, but a systemic evolution of organisational practices incorporating artificial intelligence.

In practical terms, COLEAD:

- deploys integrated digital tools (information systems, ERP/CRM, data platforms) to facilitate cross-functional management and coordination between levels;
- structures the management and utilisation of data as a strategic, shared and secure asset;
- strengthens the monitoring, evaluation and learning function, aligning it closely with strategy, communication and advocacy;
- adapts its quality and risk management systems to the requirements of a multipolar model;
- invests in skills development, anticipating future needs and mobilising networks of experts;
- explores and integrates digital tools and technologies, including artificial intelligence, to improve internal efficiency and enhance COLEAD's offering;
- develops and diversifies its funding arrangements.

These developments help to strengthen the organisation's coherence, transparency and agility, whilst supporting innovation and continuous learning.

Workstream 6: "Equipping the organisation and its partners to support the scaling up of impact" **Expected changes by 2030**

1. Integrated information systems supporting data-driven management

COLEAD has unified and interoperable information systems covering all its programmes and partnerships. These systems enable consolidated management and reliable access to strategic dashboards (results, finances, risks). Process automation significantly reduces the administrative and reporting burden.

2. A professionalised, structuring and recognised M&E function

COLEAD's M&E function is fully institutionalised and governed by harmonised standards. COLEAD regularly produces consolidated evidence of impact recognised by its partners. Lessons learnt from M&E are integrated into the design and adaptation of interventions.

3. A robust, secure and credible organisation, founded on quality, risk management and the judicious use of AI

COLEAD implements quality assurance mechanisms covering all its activities. Proactive risk management ensures COLEAD's compliance and institutional credibility. Artificial intelligence is integrated in an ethical manner to improve productivity and knowledge management.

4. Sustainable human, technical and financial resources supporting a mature multipolar model

COLEAD has diversified and secure financial resources. Critical human resources are stable and attractive. COLEAD relies on strengthened technical capabilities, including a structured network of certified trainers and accredited partner training centres. COLEAD operates as a mature, multipolar organisation recognised for the quality of its work, with more diversified funding arrangements.

4.7 Workstream 7: “Strengthening COLEAD’s influence, advocacy and reach”

The sustainable transformation of food systems does not depend solely on the quality of technical interventions or the structuring of ecosystems. It also requires more favourable political, regulatory and economic frameworks capable of supporting investment, the inclusion of economic actors and the sustainability of value chains.

Consultations carried out as part of the development of the COLEAD 2030 strategy highlighted a clear expectation: that of a stakeholder capable of speaking with credible technical and economic authority, based on practical experience, and of contributing to the evolution of decision-making frameworks. In a context where food security issues are sometimes sidelined by other global priorities, this capacity to influence appears to be an essential strategic lever.

COLEAD possesses distinctive strengths to fulfil this role: recognised expertise, a long-standing relationship with economic stakeholders, the ability to link data, practices and market requirements, as well as a ‘glocal’ positioning that enables it to connect local realities with regional and international decision-making forums. This initiative aims to structure and strengthen this role of influence, in line with the overall strategy.

By 2030, COLEAD will consolidate its role as a leading technical and economic influencer, contributing to more coherent frameworks for development. Its work aims to strengthen alignment between trade, agricultural, health, climate, investment and cooperation policies at international, European, regional and national levels. Drawing on its field expertise and understanding of value chains, COLEAD informs public decision-making, promotes clearer and more predictable frameworks, and helps to bridge the gap between European ambitions and the economic realities of partner countries.

This ambition is based on several complementary dimensions:

- a clearly defined advocacy strategy, focused on a limited number of priority issues;
- the ability to produce and mobilise analyses and messages based on data, results and lessons learned from interventions;
- a strengthened and relevant presence in the forums where public policies, standards and economic frameworks are shaped;
- greater visibility for COLEAD, not as an activist, but as a solutions-oriented contributor aiming for greater coherence in development policies;
- the ability to positively inspire the stakeholders in its work, through activities driven by its values, particularly diversity.

COLEAD thus assumes a role of influence in the service of concrete change, without replacing institutional or political actors. This workstream marks the transition from individual advocacy efforts to a structured, coherent and coordinated approach: making advocacy and outreach fully integrated levers within COLEAD's other modes of action.

In practical terms, COLEAD:

- formalises a strategy for advocacy, influence and inspiration, specifying priority themes, targets, key messages and formats for intervention;
- draws on data, results and lessons learnt from its programmes to inform its policy positions, thereby ensuring greater coherence in development policies;
- strengthens internal coordination to ensure consistency between technical work, communications, *position papers*, partnerships and advocacy;
- develops strategic alliances with other stakeholders to amplify the reach of shared messages;
- adapts its methods of intervention to different levels (national, regional, international) and to the relevant audiences.

This evolution enables COLEAD to contribute more effectively to changes in the policy framework, beyond its direct interventions. By 2030, the success of this initiative will be gauged by COLEAD's ability to influence the policy frameworks of food systems. It will also be measured by the launch of various activities that have a positive impact on the visibility of COLEAD and its community.

Workstream 7: "Strengthening COLEAD's influence, advocacy and reach" **Expected changes by 2030**

1. Structured, targeted technical and economic advocacy, managed as a fully-fledged mode of action

COLEAD implements a clearly defined and operational advocacy strategy, focused on a limited number of priority issues with high potential for transformation, based on technical expertise and an economic analysis of value chains, and managed with the same rigour, consistency and high standards as technical interventions.

2. Field-based knowledge transformed into credible levers of influence

COLEAD systematically produces, capitalises on and promotes analyses, data and lessons learnt from its programmes, transforming them into technical, analytical or scientific content that can be used to exert influence, ensuring a direct and demonstrable link between on-the-ground action, evidence, expertise and policy positions.

3. Recognised contributions to policy, regulatory, scientific and programmatic frameworks

COLEAD contributes to the development of policy and regulatory frameworks at national, regional and international levels. Its positions and technical analyses are incorporated or referenced in key documents. COLEAD facilitates coherence between European ambitions and the economic realities of partner countries.

4. A presence, alliances and inspiring collective dynamics that reinforce COLEAD's impact and positive influence

COLEAD occupies a recognised position in key forums and spaces for dialogue. It develops strategic alliances with its members and partners. COLEAD acts as a global connector and catalyst for collective dynamics. These dynamics strengthen the reach of COLEAD's advocacy and its influence beyond institutional frameworks.

4.8 Workstream 8: "Accelerating applied innovation and the scaling up of sustainable solutions"

The sustainable transformation of food value chains depends on stakeholders' ability to access not only skills, markets and funding, but also innovative solutions that are adapted to local realities, economically viable and scaled up. In a context marked by climate pressure, rapidly changing markets, rising regulatory requirements and increased competition, innovation is becoming a key driver of competitiveness, resilience and inclusion.

Consultations carried out as part of the COLEAD 2030 strategy have highlighted a strong expectation: that of a stakeholder capable of linking technical expertise, applied research, entrepreneurial innovation and the dissemination of best practices more systematically, in order to transform isolated advances into sustainable sectoral dynamics.

This initiative aims to strengthen COLEAD's role as a platform for applied innovation, capable of identifying, testing, adapting and disseminating concrete solutions to support producers, MSMEs and food ecosystems. The aim is not to position COLEAD as an academic research body, but as a catalyst for operational innovation, grounded in on-the-ground needs and focused on impact.

By 2030, COLEAD will consolidate its capacity to:

- identify and promote relevant innovations within the supported value chains;
- strengthen links between research, training, businesses and markets;
- build partnerships with innovation centres, research institutes, technology companies and public sector bodies;
- accelerate the scaling up of proven solutions, notably through its hubs, alliances and training programmes.

This ambition is based on several complementary pillars:

- an applied innovation strategy aligned with the COLEAD 2030 priorities;
- enhanced mechanisms for knowledge capture and dissemination, enabling the transformation of learning into transferable solutions;
- structural partnerships with stakeholders in research, entrepreneurship and technological innovation;
- an enhanced capacity to support scaling-up pathways, beyond pilot projects.

This workstream thus helps to position COLEAD as a key player capable of generating a ripple effect, by accelerating the dissemination of sustainable practices and solutions across food systems.

Workstream 8: “Accelerating applied innovation and the scaling up of sustainable solutions”
Expected changes by 2030

1. A structured portfolio of applied innovations, tested and deployed at scale

COLEAD is developing a structured portfolio of innovative solutions addressing the challenges of food value chains. The tested solutions move beyond the pilot stage and are rolled out on a larger scale. The rolled-out solutions are being adopted to a measurable extent by producers, MSMEs and professional organisations.

2. Strategic partnerships linking research, innovation, the field and markets

COLEAD develops and facilitates active partnerships with research centres, innovation platforms, incubators, technology companies and public sector stakeholders, strengthening its ability to link science, training, entrepreneurship, the field and markets within a framework focused on operational solutions.

3. Innovation focused on economic viability, inclusion and sector transformation

The innovations supported by COLEAD enhance the competitiveness and *bankability* of producers and MSMEs. These innovations promote the inclusion of young people, women and vulnerable groups. They help to strengthen the climate, environmental and social resilience of value chains.

4. A proven ability to capitalise on, disseminate and scale up sustainable solutions

COLEAD systematically transforms lessons learnt from innovation into transferable tools, training modules, sectoral benchmarks and dissemination mechanisms, drawing on its hubs, alliances and multipolar networks to generate ripple effects and sectoral dynamics that can be replicated beyond individual projects.

The first eight workstreams define the levers through which COLEAD acts to bring about sustainable transformation of food value chains. But transformation alone is not enough: COLEAD must also stay on course, make decisions over time and demonstrate the effects of collective action. This is the focus of Workstream 9. Whilst Workstreams 1 to 8 describe what COLEAD is implementing, Workstream 9 specifies how the transformation is steered, secured and made credible over the long term.

4.9 Workstream 9: “Ensuring the credibility, sustainability and long-term viability of the COLEAD 2030 trajectory”

The COLEAD 2030 strategy aims for a sustainable transformation of food value chains. This ambition requires effective management, clear decision-making mechanisms and a commitment to accountability. In an environment marked by uncertainty, the restructuring of development funding and an increased demand for proof of impact, COLEAD’s credibility rests on its ability to manage, coordinate and report. Workstream 9 organises the cross-cutting management of the COLEAD 2030 strategy. It ensures the monitoring, adjustment and safeguarding of all workstreams over time. By 2030, COLEAD will be recognised as an organisation capable of:

- monitoring and adjusting its strategic trajectory based on consolidated analyses and lessons learnt;
- demonstrating the impact of its actions at the micro, meso and macro levels;
- securing the economic and partnership conditions necessary for scaling up impact;
- sustainably strengthening the trust of its members, partners and donors.

COLEAD implements formalised strategic steering mechanisms, including regular reviews of the 2030 roadmap and its workstreams, in order to make clear trade-offs regarding priorities, resources and partnerships. It structures cross-cutting learning loops linking monitoring, evaluation, knowledge capture and strategic decision-making, in order to document transformation trajectories beyond one-off results. It ensures the overall economic sustainability of its work, in line with its positioning as an economic actor in sustainable development, and the diversification of its resources. Finally, it ensures transparent accountability and rigorous management, an essential condition for maintaining the trust of its members, partners and donors. By guaranteeing the coherence and sustainability of the COLEAD 2030 trajectory, Workstream 9 secures the long-term impact of COLEAD’s work.

Workstream 9: “Ensuring the credibility, sustainability and long-term viability of the COLEAD 2030 trajectory” Expected changes by 2030

1. A long-term strategic roadmap for 2030

COLEAD steers its 2030 strategic roadmap on the basis of regular reviews and explicit trade-offs. This enables it to adjust its priorities, resources, partnerships and methods of intervention.

2. Strategic learning integrated into management

COLEAD relies on structured learning loops linking monitoring, evaluation, knowledge capture and decision-making, utilising a limited number of reference transformation pathways to strengthen its ability to adapt in uncertain and evolving contexts.

3. A clear demonstration of micro–meso–macro impact

COLEAD demonstrates the effects of its work at the micro, meso and macro levels, in line with its systemic approach, by producing clear evidence of impact that is shared beyond the specific results of individual projects.

4. Economic sustainability and lasting stakeholder trust

COLEAD ensures sustainable economic balance, gradually diversifies its resources and secures its partnerships, thereby strengthening trust, accountability and recognition of its work over the long term.

The nine workstreams outlined above constitute the main drivers for implementing the COLEAD 2030 strategy. However, their roll-out does not follow a uniform or simultaneous approach. Some

workstreams require gradual changes, whilst others necessitate preparatory stages, pilot schemes or the consolidation of partnerships.

To ensure the coherence and feasibility of this transformation, the strategy is based on a phased implementation plan. This enables the articulation of priorities, the support of organisational changes, and the creation of the conditions necessary to achieve the ambitions set for 2030.





COLEAD 2030

PHASING 2026 - 2030

**FROM A PROJECT-BASED ORGANISATION TO AN
IMPACT-DRIVEN INTERNATIONAL MOVEMENT**



**COLEAD 2030 TRAJECTORY:
A GRADUAL RAMP-UP TOWARDS A MOVEMENT
DRIVING SYSTEMIC CHANGE**

5. COLEAD's transformation roadmap towards 2030

COLEAD's 2030 roadmap is based on a gradual ramp-up. The first year (2026) lays the foundations (clarity, architecture, management capacity, priority partnerships). The 2027–2028–2029 phase transforms these foundations into tangible results and leverage (transformation portfolios, demonstrators, investment mechanisms, structured influence). The 2030 phase anchors the transition at scale (recognition, dissemination, catalysed investment, multipolar movement).

5.1 2026: laying the foundations for credibility and governance

(clarification + structuring)

Objective: to make the strategy actionable (not operational), and to position COLEAD as a recognisable glocal economic actor, capable of steering a transformation over time.

Expected concrete indicators:

- clarified and stable positioning: messages, stance and priorities perceived as coherent by partners (assumed economic identity – workstream 1)
- micro–meso–macro framework adopted as a common language for designing and interpreting interventions (systemic approach – workstream 2)
- portfolio of prioritised alliances: less fragmentation, 'core' partners identified and embraced (glocal connector – workstream 4)
- first steps towards an applied innovation function: identification of key themes and partnerships to test and disseminate solutions (innovation and scaling up – workstream 8)
- consolidated governance and accountability framework: strengthened M&E/learning, quality assurance and knowledge management functions (organisational foundation – workstream 6; credibility – workstream 9)
- Structured capacity for influence: prioritised advocacy themes, targeted channels and spaces for influence (influencing and inspiring – workstream 7)

What really sets this phase apart: COLEAD is not yet seeking scale; it is seeking demonstrable coherence. Success is measured by the reduction of ambiguity (who COLEAD is, where it focuses its efforts, with whom, and how it manages).

5.2 2027–2028–2029: transforming foundations into evidence and leverage

(demonstration + triggering)

Objective: to move from a "clear COLEAD" to a "COLEAD that produces structural effects", by demonstrating the ability to link technology → meso-level structuring → macro-level frameworks → innovation → investment.

Expected concrete indicators:

- transformation demonstrators: a few flagship trajectories (value chains / ecosystems) showing combined micro–meso–macro results (workstream 2 + workstream 9)
- innovation becoming a lever for scaling up: portfolio of solutions tested, adapted and disseminated via hubs, centres and structuring partnerships (workstream 8)
- alliances now operational: coalitions producing shared outcomes (not just intentions), with a Team Europe approach where relevant (workstream 4)

- access to funding becoming a real lever: a pipeline of prepared investment opportunities (*demand readiness*), structured dialogue with investors/DFIs, and initial triggers (triggering investment – workstream 3)
- influence underpinned by evidence: technical positions and advocacy are based on data, documented cases and recognised references; COLEAD is invited/solicited in certain forums where frameworks and priorities are set (workstream 7)
- community mobilised as a relay: members, experts and beneficiary partners contribute (cases, feedback, dissemination) rather than merely participating (movement – workstream 5)

What truly distinguishes this phase: evidence (demonstrators), portfolios (of innovation, investment and alliances) and a capacity for structuring that goes beyond project logic are beginning to emerge.

5.3 2030: scaling up and establishing the role as a benchmark

(dissemination + institutionalisation)

Objective: to make the transformation a widespread, replicable, self-sustaining phenomenon, in which COLEAD plays a recognised role as a catalyst and connector.

Expected concrete indicators:

- consolidated benchmark role: explicit recognition of COLEAD as a driver of sustainable transformation within value chains, particularly at the meso and macro levels (workstream 7 + workstream 9)
- scaling up through replication: the approaches, standards, methods, innovations and benchmarks produced are adopted by others (institutions, platforms, programmes, private sector actors) – a major sign of systemic impact (workstream 2 + workstream 8 + workstream 9)
- institutionalised innovation as a COLEAD asset: proven solutions disseminated via networks of centres, hubs and partners, helping to accelerate large-scale transformation (workstream 8)
- significant investment triggered: COLEAD is identified as a credible facilitator of responsible investment (particularly at European level), via pipelines, mechanisms or structuring vehicles co-managed with partners (workstream 3)
- a visible multipolar movement: more open governance, structured coordination, active contribution from hubs/relays, inspiring individuals highlighted as drivers of dissemination (workstream 5)
- sustainability and robustness: ability to maintain quality, accountability, learning and financial security within an expanded model (workstream 6 + workstream 9)

What truly sets this phase apart: COLEAD is no longer merely evaluating results, but a systemic shift: dissemination, adoption, investment, recognition, and an active community.

The COLEAD 2030 strategy is thus designed as a long-term transformation pathway. The strategic directions, workstreams and implementation phases outlined above all converge towards a single objective: to bring about real, sustainable and measurable changes in the functioning of food value chains and their ecosystems.

KEY FIGURES FOR THE TRANSFORMATION

ORIENTATION 1

2,000 MSMEs supported to improve their competitiveness, market access, access to finance and resilience, with a particular focus on businesses led by women and young people.

€250 million in investments mobilised in food value chains through the leverage effect of technical assistance.

Up to 100 million producers integrated and better remunerated into more sustainable, resilient and inclusive value chains.

More than 1 billion consumers having access to healthier and more sustainable diets, thanks to the transformation of food value chains into more responsible ones.

ORIENTATION 2

1 multipolar hub integrating digital solutions, field expertise and a shared quality system.

250 certified trainers and 50 partner training centres committed to large-scale skills development.

2,000 national experts mobilised to accelerate the transformation of food systems.

250,000 users of COLEAD's digital platforms

ORIENTATION 3

1 federated and committed international **community** under COLEAD

50 countries committed to transforming food value chains into sustainable and inclusive ones

1,000 members, 85% of whom are based outside Europe, representing a diverse range of stakeholders in the food sector.

20 global strategic alliances mobilising public and private stakeholders, civil society organisations, research institutions and financial partners.



