

2021

ENABLING BUSINESS TO ADVANCE NUTRITION INDEX

Global Summary Report

Scaling Up
NUTRITION

Business Network
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About GAIN

The Global Alliance for Improved Nutrition (GAIN) is a Swiss-based foundation launched at the UN in 2002 to tackle the human suffering caused by malnutrition. GAIN is driven by a vision of a world without malnutrition, in which all people, especially the most vulnerable, have access to and consume nutritious and safe food. Working with governments, businesses, and civil society, we aim to transform food systems so that they deliver more nutritious food for all people, especially the most vulnerable.

About SBN

Since 2010, the SUN Movement has inspired a new way of working collaboratively to end malnutrition, in all its forms. With the governments of 63 SUN Countries in the lead, it unites people – from civil society, the United Nations, donors, businesses, and researchers – in a collective effort to improve nutrition. Established in 2012, the SUN Business Network (SBN) is the private sector branch of the SUN Movement and aims to support businesses in growing the role they play in improving nutrition and to support SUN countries in developing national business engagement strategies. SBN is co-convened by the Global Alliance for Improved Nutrition (GAIN) and the United Nations World Food Programme (WFP).

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EBANI

The Enabling Business to Advance Nutrition Index (EBANI) is a tool developed by GAIN and SBN that provides insights into the nutrition and food policy landscapes in 30 countries.

Global Alliance for Improved Nutrition

Rue de Varemè 7

1202 Geneva, Switzerland

Phone: +41 22 749 18 50

info@gainhealth.org

www.gainhealth.org



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1 BACKGROUND

Poor diets and the food systems that support them are major drivers of malnutrition in all its forms, including avoidable ill health in every country (Figure 1). But this also means that food and food systems are critical levers for improving people's nutrition and lives.

Food systems have a key role to play in advancing universal goals like the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly those around zero hunger and good health and wellbeing.



Figure 1: Malnutrition takes many forms and is present in one in three people worldwide

One of the most important – if often overlooked – categories of actors or shapers in food systems, particularly in the food systems of low- and middle-income countries, are small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs). In low-income country contexts in particular, SMEs provide the bulk of the food that people eat, especially people who are resource-constrained. Unfortunately, not enough of the food that is available, affordable and desirable, from SMEs and other sources, is nutritious, safe and contributing to sustainable food systems.

Though SMEs are engaged in and contribute to nourishing people around the world, they face many barriers, including operating in environments that do not always encourage or reward good practices. In many cases, SMEs need more support and appropriate incentives if they are to produce food that is nourishing and safe.

Often, SME voices are unheard. The Enabling Business to Advance Nutrition Index (EBANI) helps aggregate these voices, articulating needs. It can catalyse action from many small businesses together. Though EBANI has been conceptualised with SMEs as a focus, it also takes the wider private-sector into consideration, including larger enterprises in food systems.

Overall, EBANI has been designed to help identify whether government policies that are expected to enable better nutrition are in place, or not – pointing to areas in need of attention.

2 WHAT IS EBANI FOR?

EBANI is a tool to stimulate dialogue between government, business, and other actors to improve the enabling environment for nutrition.

EBANI provides a starting point for conversations among stakeholders, identifying gaps between what is stated, and what results from existing policies. It is important to emphasise that EBANI is a heuristic tool to support starting policy discussions – rather than a scientifically comparative assessment for ranking and comparing diverse national policy environments.

EBANI can help stakeholders to identify priority areas in the enabling environment around which they can collaborate to encourage governments to make and implement policies that are more conducive to food systems that deliver for the nutritional wellbeing of national populations. EBANI is not designed to produce a set of final or definitive recommendations – it is a starting point.

This first round of EBANI has been developed by the Global Alliance for Improved Nutrition (GAIN) and the Scaling Up Nutrition (SUN) Business Network (SBN)¹, to provide insights into the nutrition and food policy landscapes in selected countries where SBNs are present or emerging (Figure 2 shows the 30 countries covered by EBANI at present). EBANI reports for each of these countries can be accessed on the SBN and the GAIN websites.

Figure 2: Countries in EBANI

EBANI in Africa

1. Nigeria
2. Cote d'Ivoire
3. Senegal
4. Mali
5. Guinea
6. Gambia
7. Niger
8. DRC
9. Kenya
10. Tanzania
11. Ethiopia
12. Uganda
13. Burundi
14. Mozambique
15. Lesotho
16. Malawi
17. Madagascar
18. Zambia



EBANI measures the policy and legislative enablers for increasing private sector investment in safe, nutritious diets across the 30 countries. It has been envisaged as both a global and a national advocacy tool that can help to start conversations and spark ideas around key recommendations to make policy and legislative environments more enabling for businesses, SMEs in particular, to contribute to advancing positive nutrition outcomes.

¹ ThirdWay Africa provided consultancy services in the development of this round of EBANI.

EBANI in South + West Asia

1. Vietnam
2. Philippines
3. Cambodia
4. LAO PDR
5. Indonesia
6. Myanmar



EBANI occupies a space between indices and reports that focus primarily on nutrition (for instance, the Global Nutrition Report, Global Access to Nutrition Index, Hunger and Nutrition Commitment Index) and those that focus primarily on the private sector (especially Doing Business Index, Enabling Business of Agriculture Index World Economic Freedom Index).

Given this positioning, EBANI can be used as a starting point in the

conversation with stakeholders, identifying gaps between **what is stated**, and **what results** from existing policies.

EBANI in South East Asia

1. Pakistan
2. Nepal
3. Afghanistan
4. Bangladesh
5. Yemen
6. Sri Lanka



Each national EBANI report includes good practice examples related to specific nutrition and business policy initiatives.

2.1 What indicators comprise EBANI?

EBANI is a collection of 22 indicators covering seven groups, each aimed at classifying the country-based policies that promote key aspects of an enabling business environment for

nutrition. Table 1 summarizes the indicators and groups, and provides a brief rationale for the inclusion of each indicator.

2.1.1 A: Promoting National Planning and Procurement

The first group, *Promoting National Planning and Procurement*, includes the following indicators:

1. Specified role for private sector in National Nutrition Plan (NNP, or equivalent if no NNP),
2. National non-communicable disease (NCD) policy with a focus on nutrition that has a specified role for private sector, and
3. Public food procurement policies (social protection, hospitals) go beyond staple foods.

The rationale for including **1** is to highlight whether the government is actively thinking about how the private sector contributes and supports the advancement of nutrition. The rationale behind **2** is to determine if the government is actively thinking about how private-sector activities relate to NCDs. Indicator **3** is included to show that whether the government is being proactive in sending signals to the private sector about promoting/adapting food baskets to ensure dietary diversity.

2.1.2 B: Promoting Fortification and Reformulation

The second cluster, *Promoting Fortification and Reformulation*, includes the following indicators:

4. Mandatory food fortification policies for more than one staple food,
5. Reformulation policies to encourage a reduction of salt or sugar in processed foods, and
6. Reformulation policy to encourage removal of trans fats in processed foods

The rationale for including **4**, **5**, and **6** is to show whether the government is being proactive about sending signals to the private sector about the importance of nutritious foods – those that are fortified, those that contain

lower levels of ingredients deemed unhealthy in large quantities like salt and sugar, and those that contain fewer trans fats (which are associated with heart disease).

2.1.3 C: Promoting Food Safety and Food Labelling

The third cluster, *Promoting Food Safety and Food Labelling*, includes the following indicators:

7. Food safety certificates are required for sale of food in the formal sector,
8. Food safety certificates are required for sale of food in the informal sector,
9. Policies to regulate mycotoxins in food exist, and
10. Regulations that all pre-packaged food products must list nutritional value of ingredients exist

The rationale for including **7**, **8**, and **9** is to indicate whether the government is being proactive about sending the private sector signals about the safety of foods. The rationale for including **10** is to show government again being proactive about sending the private sector signals about the importance of nutritious foods.

2.1.4 D: Promoting Special Provisions for Children

The fourth cluster, *Promoting Special Provisions for Children*, includes the following indicators:

11. National laws substantially aligned with the International Code of Marketing of Breast-milk Substitutes (BMS)²,
12. School meals provision is explicitly guided by food-based dietary guidelines, and
13. Some regulation of marketing of junk food to children exists

The rationale for including **11** is to indicate whether the government is being proactive about sending the private sector signals about the promoting exclusive breastfeeding for the first 6 months of a child's life and other provisions in CODEX³. Indicator **12** shows again if the government is being proactive about sending the private sector signals about the importance of nutritious foods, particularly for school children. Indicator **13** shows if government is being proactive about sending the private sector signals about the importance of protecting children from unhealthy food environments.

²<https://apps.who.int/iris/bitstream/handle/10665/40382/9241541601.pdf;jsessionid=B5A533AE9ECE4E962AC4B6E883089C6?sequence=1>

³ <http://www.fao.org/fao-who-codexalimentarius/en/>

2.1.5 E: Promoting Technical and Financial Support

The fifth cluster, *Promoting Technical and Financial Support (including provisions for women and agricultural businesses)*, includes the following indicators:

14. Support to SMEs to comply with any food regulations,
15. Dedicated access to finance for SMEs (Ease of Doing Business 'Getting Credit' score above 50),
16. Policies to support women in food businesses, and
17. Enabling climate for agricultural businesses (Enabling the Business of Agriculture index score above 50)

The rationale for including **14** is to show the government is serious about SMEs as a source of nutritious food – given that most regulations relate to food safety or nutrition. Indicator **15** is included to show whether the government is proactive in supporting SMEs as a major source of nutritious food. The rationale for including **16** is to determine whether government is being proactive about supporting female food entrepreneurs, who face more barriers than their male counterparts in similar businesses. Indicator **17** shows whether government is supportive of agriculture in general, which is necessary but not sufficient for promoting access to nutritious foods.

2.1.6 F: Promoting Subsidies, Taxes and Duties for Improved Nutrition

The sixth cluster, *Promoting Subsidies, Taxes and Duties for Improved Nutrition*, includes the following indicators:

18. Subsidies or lower or no taxes on production or sale of nutritious foods,
19. Taxes on sugar-sweetened beverages, and
20. Lower or no import duties on nutritious foods

The rationale for including **18** and **19** is to show whether the government is willing to adjust fiscal policy to incentivise nutritious foods. Indicator **20** shows whether the government is willing to adjust trade policy to incentivise nutritious foods.

2.1.7 G: Promoting Zoning and Planning Policies to Reduce Food Loss and Improve Nutrition

The seventh and final cluster, *Promoting Zoning and Planning Policies to Reduce Food Loss and Improve Nutrition*, includes the remaining two indicators:

21. Zoning or planning laws regulating location of fast-food outlets exist, and
22. Policies to reduce food loss exist

The rationale for including **21** is to determine whether the government is willing to adjust zoning policy to disincentivise unhealthy foods. Indicator **22** suggests whether the government is proactive about ways to promote reduction in loss.

2.2 EBANI methodology and scoring overview

All EBANI indicators are scored very simply as either zero or 1. While a more complex scoring mechanism would deliver more nuanced information about the policies covered, EBANI was deliberately designed to be simple for ease of initial user engagement. Most EBANI indicators thus capture whether policies exist or not somewhere in the country, with a score of 1 being positive and of 0 being negative⁴. Where appropriate, existing policies were also examined in terms of how comprehensive they were in providing coverage or support for each indicator, with this information shared in the text of individual national reports. A score of 0 was also applied if a policy or strategy was out of date.

Most of the policies examined were sourced via the Nutrition Landscape Information System (NLiS) of the World Health Organisation. Sources used by NLiS include the Global database on the Implementation of Nutrition Action (GINA), GAIN's Access to Nutrition Index, SUN country strategies, and the Global Nutrition Report (GNR). In the event of missing data from the NLiS, further desk research was conducted to provide access and insight into key policies.

A few of the indicators are scored using existing databases, indices, or analyses. This is the case for Indicators 15 and 17 which draw on the World Bank's *Ease of Doing Business* and *Enabling the Business of Agriculture* reports, as well as Indicator 11, which draws on an analysis of how aligned nations are with the International Code of Marketing of Breast-milk Substitutes (BMS).

A detailed report on methodology captures EBANI national reports available (see section 2.3.) includes a detailed methodology section.

2.3 EBANI national reports

The EBANI national reports available for the 30 countries indicated in Figure 2 each cover three main sections:

- i. The **EBANI Overview** section: This sets out the 22 EBANI indicators with a simple explanation behind their inclusion in this index, and what they mean in terms of enabling businesses to advance nutrition. A summary of the methodology is also provided.
- ii. The **EBANI National Scorecard**: This includes a one-page overview of the country's existing policies, measures, and scores relating to the 22 EBANI indicators, with sub-scores under each of the 7 categories. It also includes a detailed table with more information under each of the 22 indicators, all of which are scored as either **1** or **0**. A full methodology is available to highlight the specific language within policies that drives the EBANI score.
- iii. Thirdly, **conclusions and implications** for policy and advocacy are presented, on the basis of the overall EBANI score, and guidance on how to use the content of EBANI for the setting of in-country priorities and convening dialogues for advocacy initiatives, alongside high-level observations and recommendations.

⁴ A score of 1 reflects adequate, fully or partially, implemented policies, or achieving a certain threshold on existing indices.

EBANI national reports also include a description of global and regional good practice, with examples linked to each of the 22 indicator groups drawn from good global practice. These examples may provide inspiration to advocates and policymakers, showing how places have already tackled some of the areas EBANI highlights, and pointing to cases from which lessons might be drawn. Table 2 catalogues four examples.

Table 2: Global good practice examples

Taxes on Sugar-Sweetened Beverages (SSBs)	Ethiopia's Sales Tax and Excise Taxes 2019 establishes a sales tax of 5% for food products with exceptions. As sugar is considered a luxury item, it has an excise tax of 33% (according to Reuters, this may be lowered to 20% following privatization of industry), and soft drinks have an excise tax of 30%.
Zoning and planning laws for Healthy and Non-healthy foods	South Korea's 'Green Food Zones' around schools (200 metre radius) prohibit the sales of 'unhealthy' foods.
National NCD policy with a focus on nutrition that has a specified role for private sector	Mexico The National Strategy for Prevention and Control of Overweight, Obesity and Diabetes outlines quality seal and advertising standards for children under 12, placing explicit responsibility on private sector stakeholders.
Food Safety certificates required for sale of food – informal sector	India: The Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) piloted the Clean Street Food Hub Initiative (CSFHI), seeking to promote food safety and hygiene at popular street food locations across India

Sources: *Sales Tax and Excise Taxes, 2019 (Ethiopia)*; *INFORMAS, 2019*; *Pan American Health Organisation, 2011*; *Nemer et al., 2020*

2.4 Why these EBANI indicators and scoring?

In creating EBANI, efforts have been made to balance different objectives, including: a) providing a relatively simple, 'big picture' overview of the policy landscape in a given country to identify broad entry-points for advocacy and action; and b) being able to represent national and subnational situations with enough detail to accurately reflect the landscapes in question.

EBANI is a non-exhaustive collection of the type of actions a country could take to improve the enabling environment for nutrition – and can point to areas that are worth the consideration of policymakers, with precedents in regional and global contexts. Some of the indicators will capture very familiar actions in many places – for instance indicator 7 (Food safety certificates required for sale in the formal sector), while others will be areas that not enough policymakers have tackled, such as indicator 8 (Food safety certificates required for sale of food in the informal sector).

Policy landscapes are often complex – characterised by measures that are qualitative rather than highly quantitative. There are also different ways policies with the same aim might be designed, implemented, and enforced. Just because a policy exists, that doesn't mean it is necessarily implemented or effective. Moreover, policies may have (often unseen, good or bad) implications or effects beyond those for which they were designed. It is not the intention of EBANI to assess policy implementation, quality, coverage, gaps, and so forth in a systematic way across diverse national systems. The depth of analysis required would be an exercise beyond the scope of this heuristic tool. For EBANI users it is worth emphasising that it remains a starting point for conversations around different policy action areas. See Box 1 for two examples.

Box 1: Interpreting and having conversations around EBANI scores

A country may score '1' on indicator 4 around the existence of mandatory food fortification for greater than one staple food. Despite such a score, conversations around for instance coverage, additional relevant fortifiable staple foods, or monitoring and enforcement may still be relevant and necessary.

A country may score '1' on indicator 7 around food safety certificates being required for sale of food in the formal sector, but it may score '0' on indicator 8 around food safety certificates being required for sale of food in the informal sector. This type of result emphasises the need for a key area of work where SBN is engaged, for example in Bangladesh, working on food safety compliance, especially for SMEs.

A country may score '0' on an indicator, not because it has not created policies in that area, but because policies have become outdated. This may be a good opportunity to raise a discussion around how to refocus attention to these areas.

2.5 How might EBANI country reports be used?

At the national level, EBANI is a starting point, providing a birds-eye view of how policies are supporting or hindering healthy diets. It is a helpful if blunt tool, serving as a guide to where current priorities lie, and exposing some scope for a new direction to support and incentivise the private sector to make healthy diets a priority.

EBANI, as a heuristic tool, doesn't delve in every case into subnational policy – limitations of the scope of the policy scanning that was possible through the desk-based, remote methodology, mean that inevitably some things will be missed, but EBANI may still be used as a starting point to identify priorities around which stakeholders can have discussions at the national level to identify areas to work on.

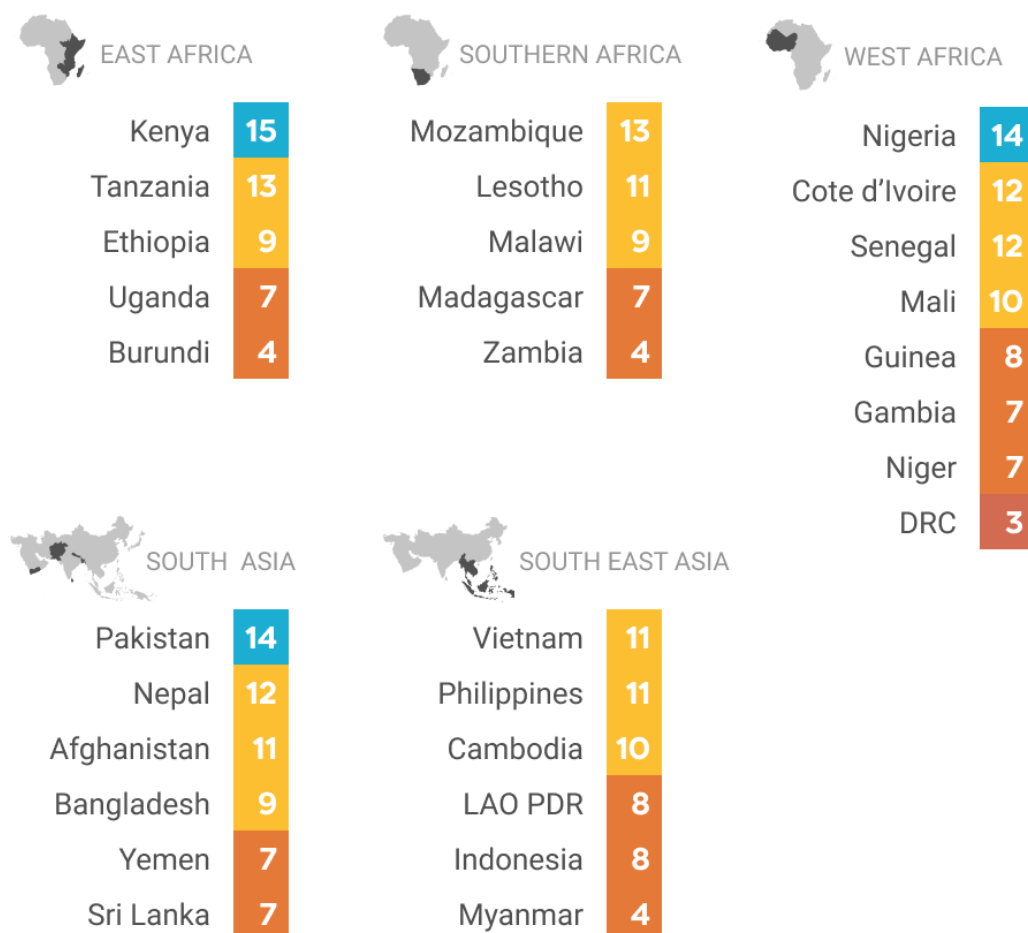
The EBANI country reports are thus primarily envisaged as a conversation-starter for discussions around the enabling environment for better nutrition. They are a way to begin more focussed assessments on the current situation across different indicators or indicator clusters. Following such discussions, they could potentially also be used to help multistakeholder groups interested in better nutrition to define three to five priority areas for action, advocacy, or strategizing.

3 EBANI 2021 GLOBAL OVERVIEW OF FINDINGS

3.1 Country scores

EBANI overall scores for the 30 countries for which they were undertaken, clustered by region, appear in Table 3. The highest score, from a possible score of 22, was 15, while the lowest score was 3.

Table 3: EBANI overall scores for 30 countries



Note: For the purposes of simplification, the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) as the only country in Central Africa has been clustered with West Africa, while Yemen, the only country from West Asia has been clustered with South Asia to allow for the inclusion of these two cases in these regional comparisons.

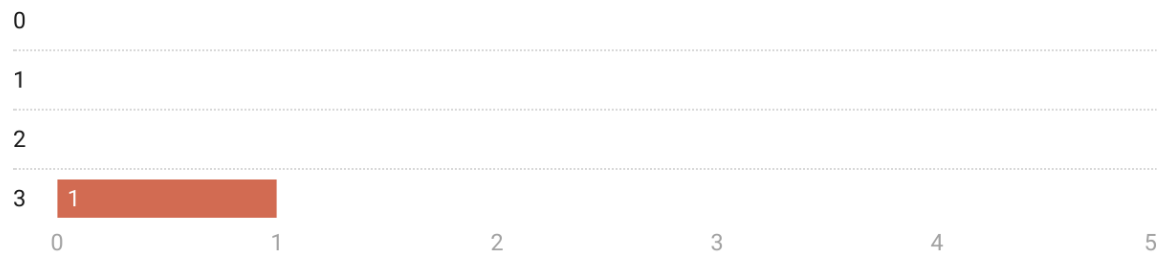
One-page scorecards that breakdown these scores by indicator for each country are available in the Annex. These scores point to significant room for improvement, even among countries at the top of the distribution.

How are scores distributed? Figure 3 shows that most countries scored in the *low* or *moderate* ranges, with fewer countries scoring in the *very low*, *high*, and *very high* ranges. Indeed, no country scored higher than 15. While 19 of the 30 countries scored less than half, 11 of the 30 countries scored greater than or equal to half.

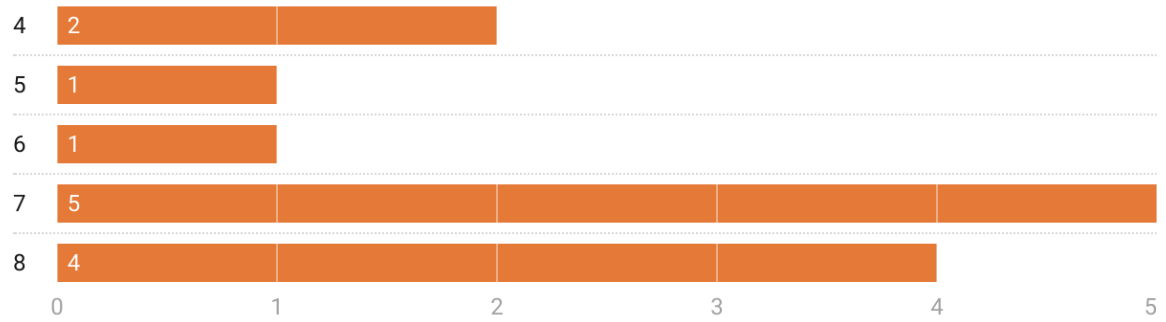
Figure 3: Distribution of EBANI scores by country (number of countries scoring)

■ Number of countries with a very low score
 ■ Number of countries with a low score
 ■ Number of countries with a moderate score
 ■ Number of countries with a high score

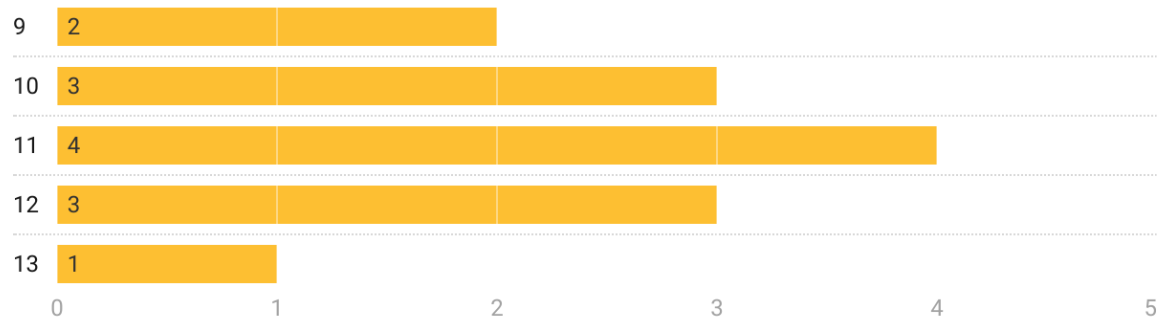
Very low score



Low score



Moderate score



High score



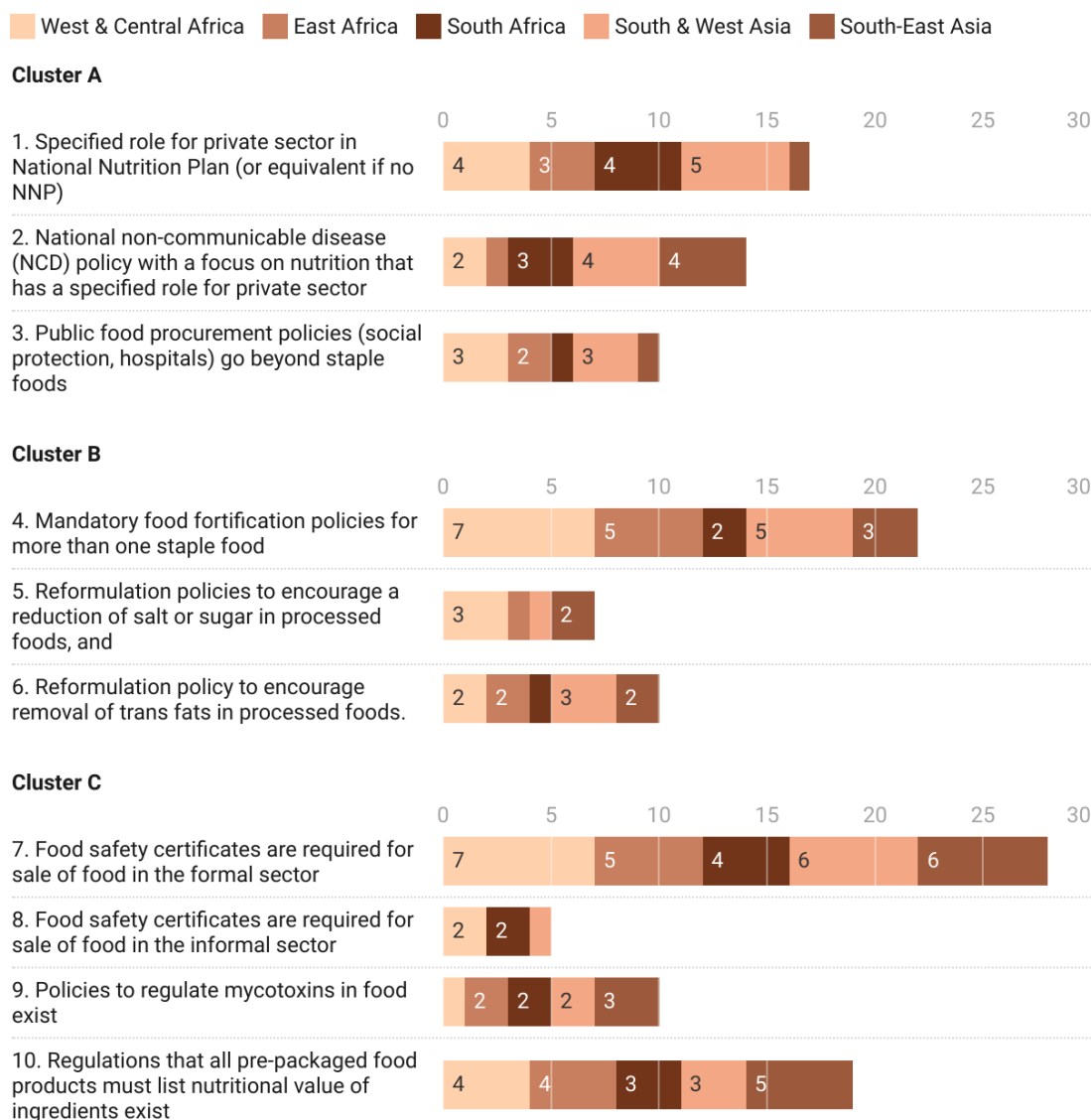
3.2 Global trends by indicator

Looking across EBANI's 22 indicators, which ones scored 1 in many countries, and which ones were less likely to score? Figure 4 shows how many countries (out of 30) score 1 on each of the 22 indicators – clustered by region.

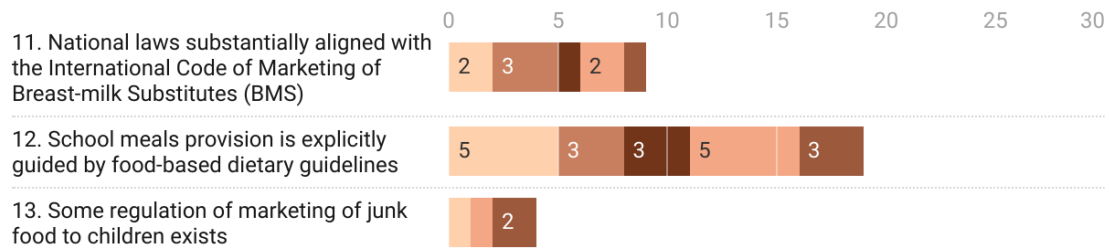
Eight indicators achieve a score of 1 in at least half of the countries, with the highest-scoring indicator being number 7 (*Food safety certificates required for sale of food in the formal sector*). This achieved a score of 1 in 28 of the 30 countries. No indicator scored a zero across the board, however in the case of indicator 21 (*Zoning or planning laws regulating locations of fast food outlets*), only one of the thirty countries (Kenya) scored a 1.

The regional distribution illustrated by the different coloured segments of the bars in Figure 4 also indicates where regional gaps have appeared – in each case where indicators are generally scoring 1 in fewer countries to begin with. In the cases of 15 of the 22 indicators, at least one country in each of the five broad regional groups (as set out in Table 3) scored a 1.

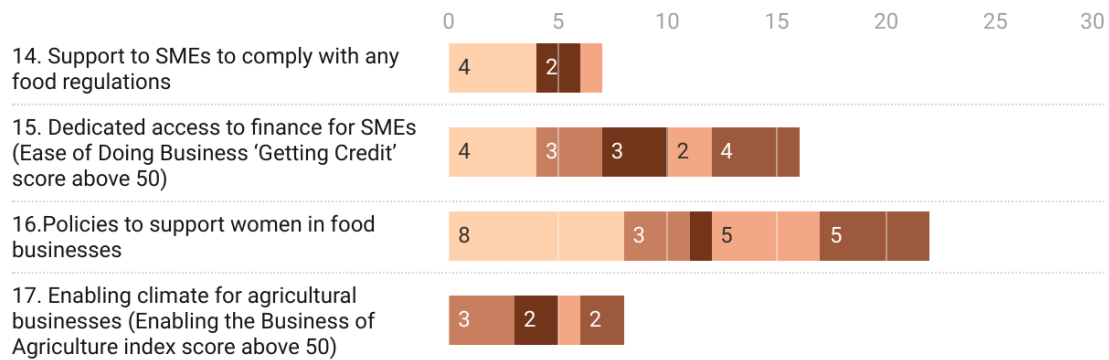
Figure 4: Scores by indicator – and regional pattern (number of countries scoring 1)



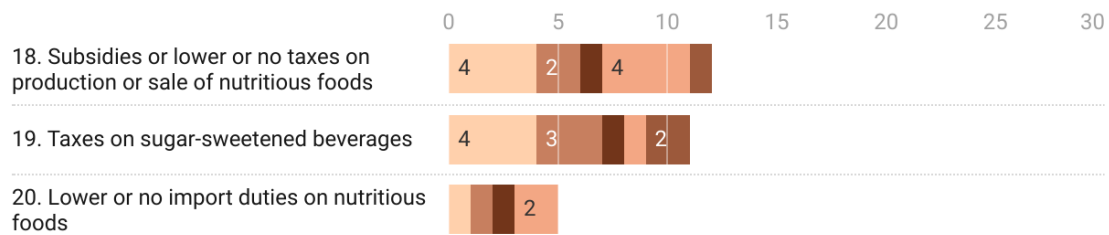
Cluster D



Cluster E



Cluster F



Cluster G

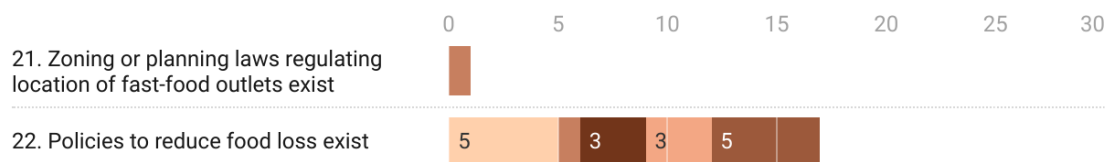
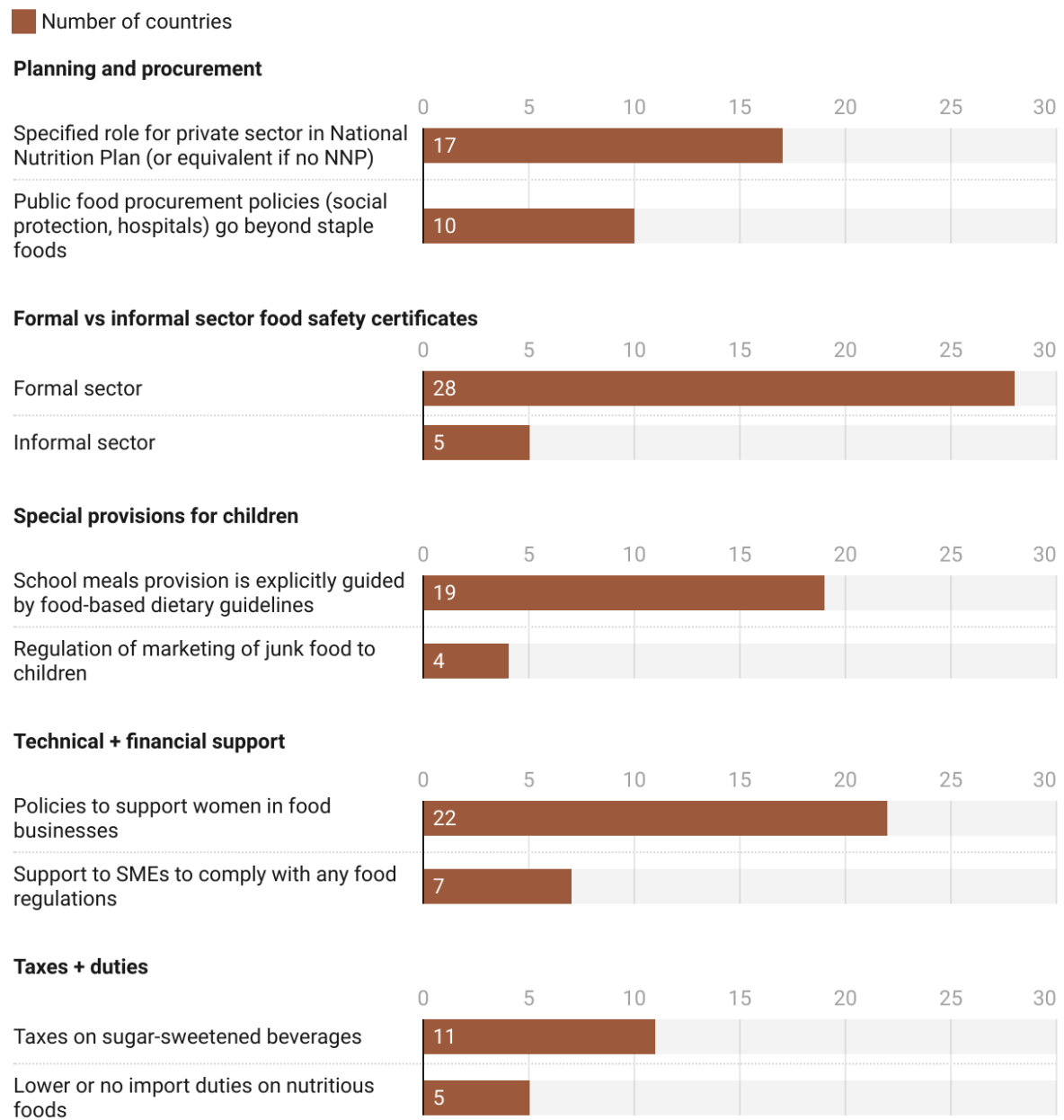


Figure 5 provides a closer look at selected indicators in selected clusters. It is evident that even within each of the seven clusters of indicators, considerable variation appears in terms of the number of countries scoring 1.

Figure 5: A closer look at selected indicators in selected clusters



4 REFLECTIONS AND CONCLUSION

Food systems are vast and complex and can be difficult to navigate. For years, policy-makers have had to rely on limited data and often siloed decision-making. Decisions about nutrition have often been made by those in the health sector, without wider consideration of the agricultural, social and environmental context. Policy tools such as the NOURISHING framework, INFORMAS, and GINA have all contributed to better understanding of the policy levers available to decision-makers and can serve as inspiration with specific country case studies. The recently published Food Systems Dashboard aims to go one further by bringing together extant data from public and private sources to help decision makers understand their food systems, identify their levers of change and decide which ones need to be pulled. However, there remains a gap to incorporate how businesses can be incentivised to prioritise nutrition at the policy-level and our hope is that EBANI helps narrow the gap supporting decision-makers to make better decisions for nutrition.

EBANI provides a glimpse of the policy landscape for better nutrition through business, at national level, as well as showing regional and global comparisons. As such, EBANI has been designed as a resource for a range of stakeholders, including SUN Business Network members, government officials, NGOs and other civil society.

Government officials and decision makers can use it to assess some of the gaps in their national strategies and take inspiration from the examples of good practice globally. EBANI can also be a starting point for civil society and other stakeholders to come together and assess the state of play and use the index in a policy prioritisation process to call for change in the food system, aligning EBANI scores for countries with government priorities and resource allocation. This first EBANI survey could be expanded in the future to determine where policies have changed across the 30 countries, or to add more countries to the analysis, or more indicators.

At a global level, EBANI confirms the general understanding that much work remains to be done to incentivise businesses to provide healthy diets. Most countries score 0 on several indicators. Even where scores of 1 are assigned, work remains to be done to assess whether policies are being implemented comprehensively or whether they are yielding the desired outcomes and impacts.

While gaps in policy may appear stark, particularly for some indicators, EBANI also demonstrates that there are countries taking action across each of the areas highlighted. Where there is appetite and political will, significant changes can be made to help transform food systems into those that better support businesses to deliver on making healthy diets a reality for more people.

5 REFERENCES

This report draws from the EBANI Country Reports, available on the SUN Business Network and the GAIN websites.

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Pan American Health Organization (2011). Recommendations from a Pan American Health Organization Expert Consultation on the Marketing of Food and Non-Alcoholic Beverages to Children in the Americas. Report available from: [https://www.paho.org/hq/dmdocuments/2012/Experts-Food-Marketing-to-Children-\(ENG\).pdf](https://www.paho.org/hq/dmdocuments/2012/Experts-Food-Marketing-to-Children-(ENG).pdf)

Nemer, LE, Gorla I, Demmler KM, and Polak S. India's Clean Street Food Hubs: Working with vendors to improve food safety and strengthen urban food systems. Global Alliance for Improved Nutrition (GAIN). Working Paper #3. Geneva, Switzerland, 2020. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.36072/wp.3>

6 ANNEX: NATIONAL EBANI SCORECARDS

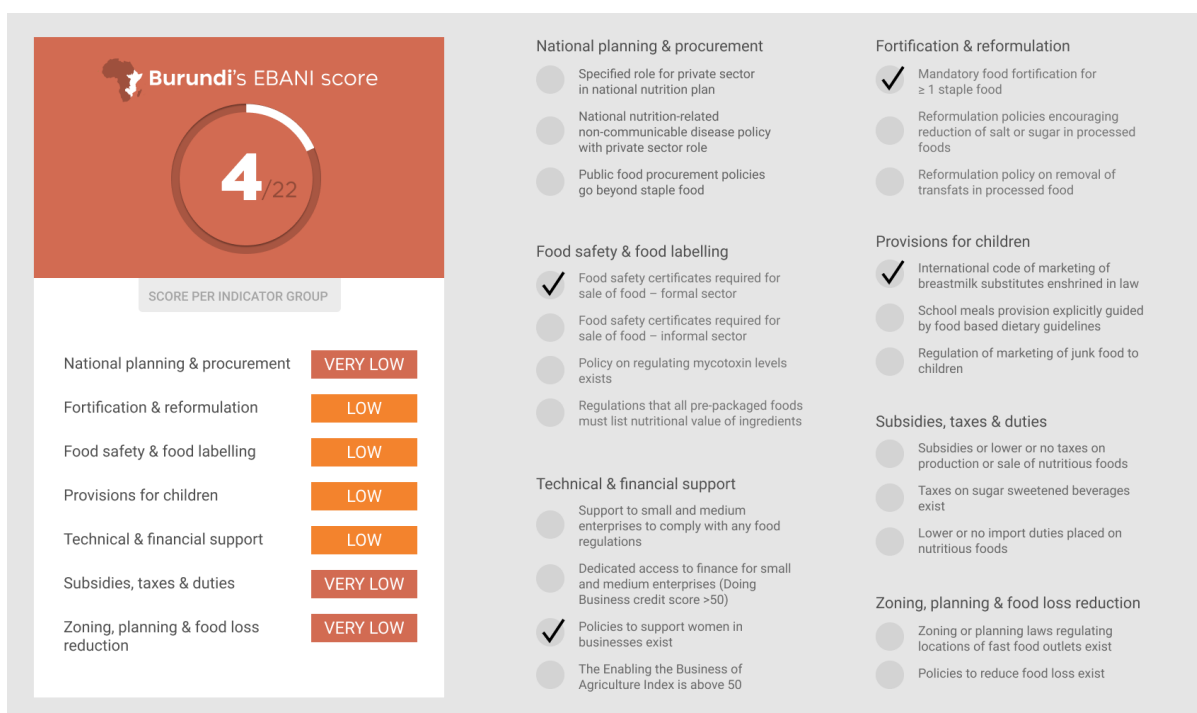
6.1 Afghanistan



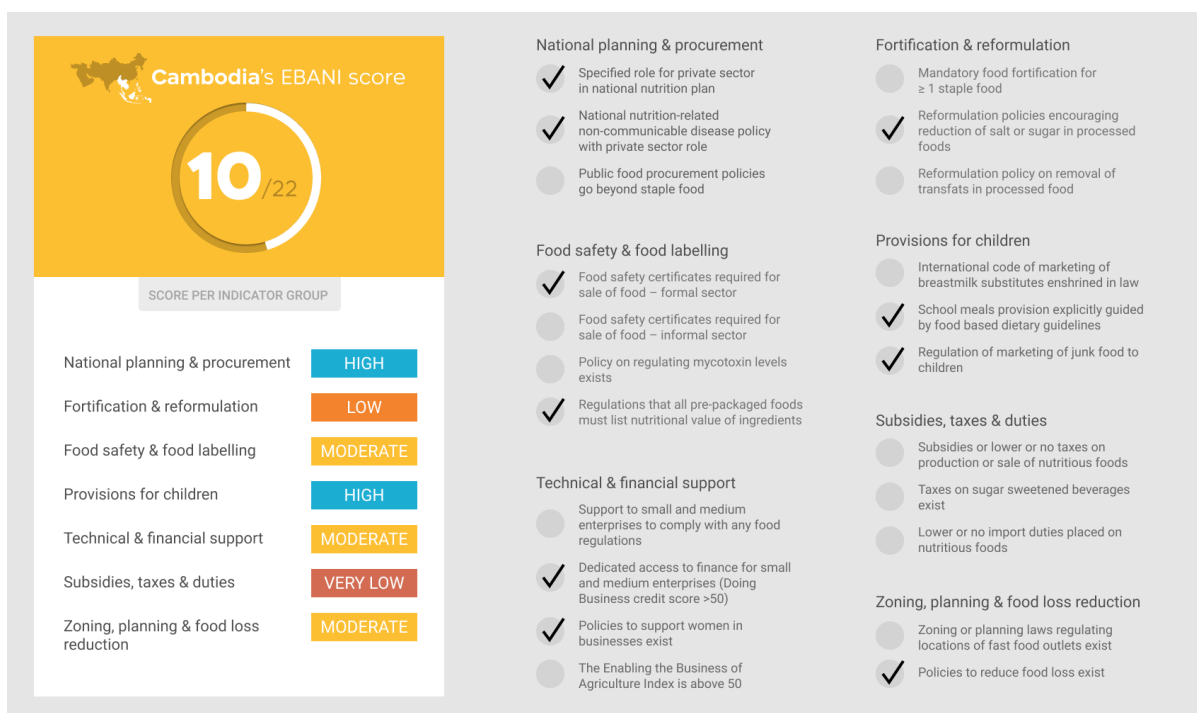
6.2 Bangladesh



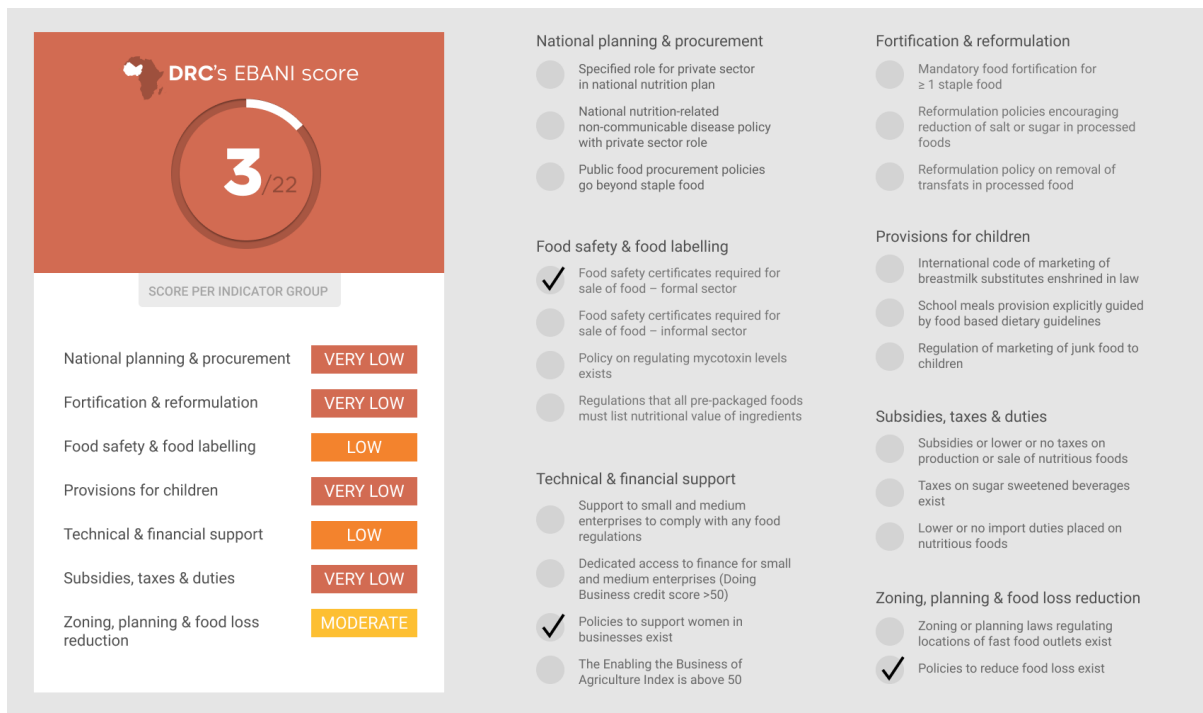
6.3 Burundi



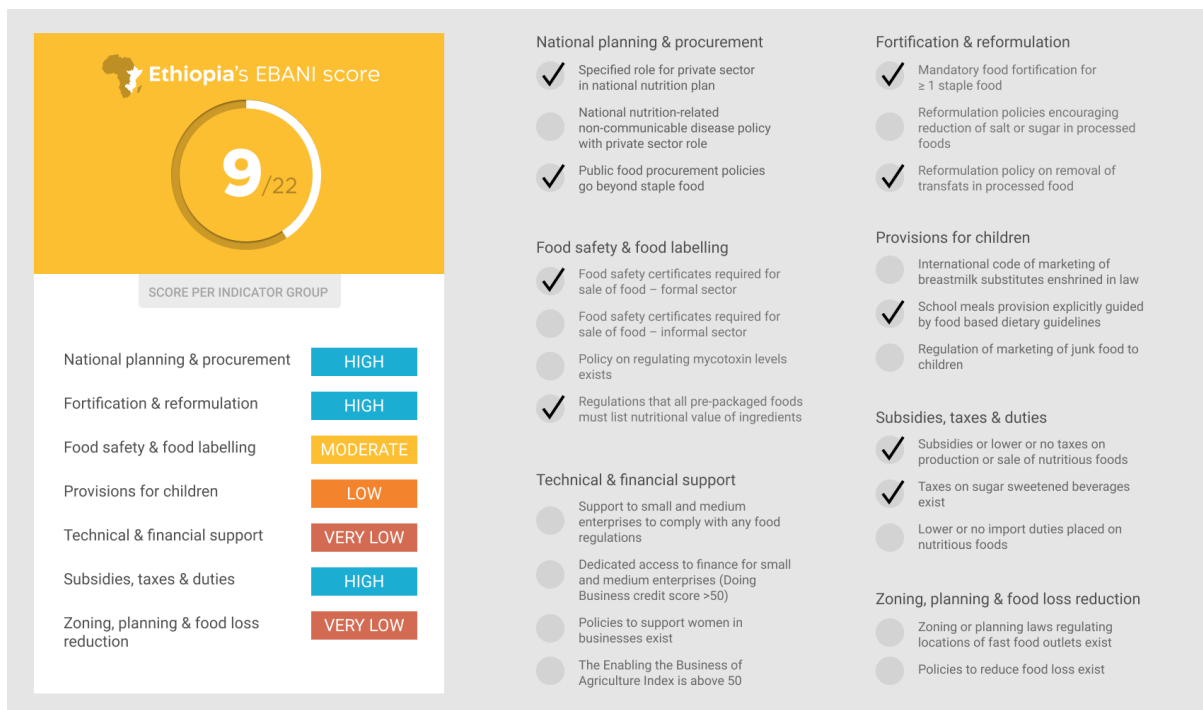
6.4 Cambodia



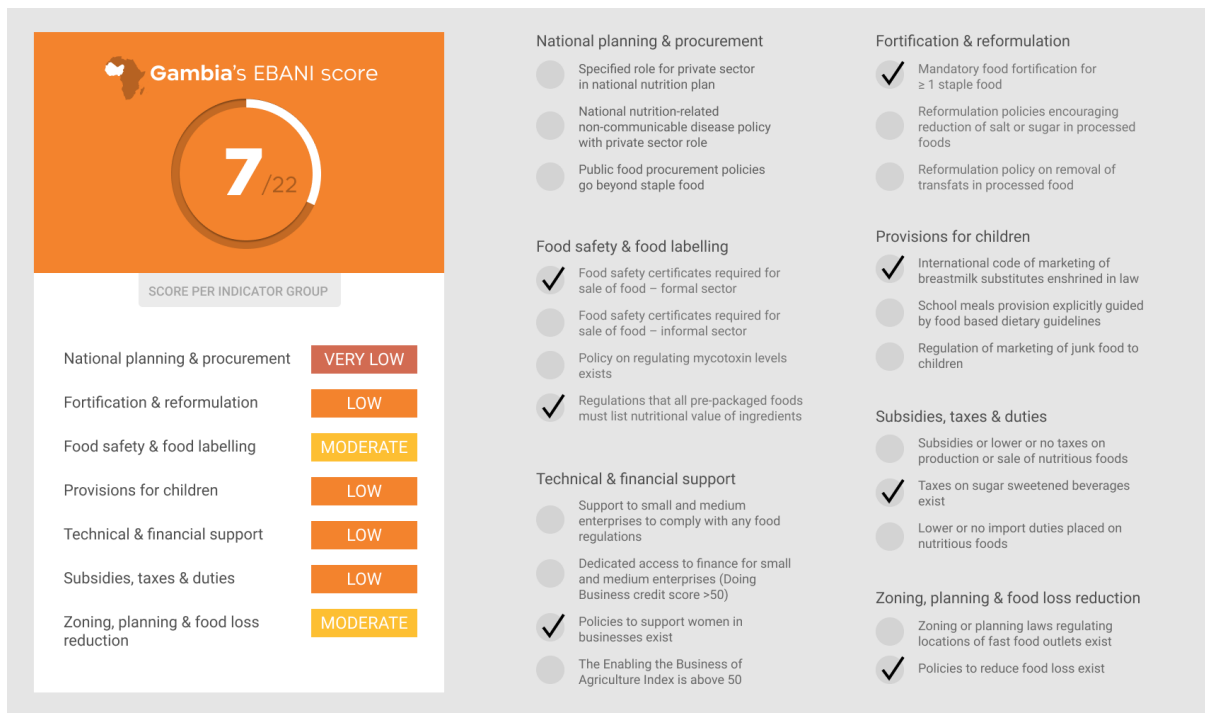
6.5 DRC



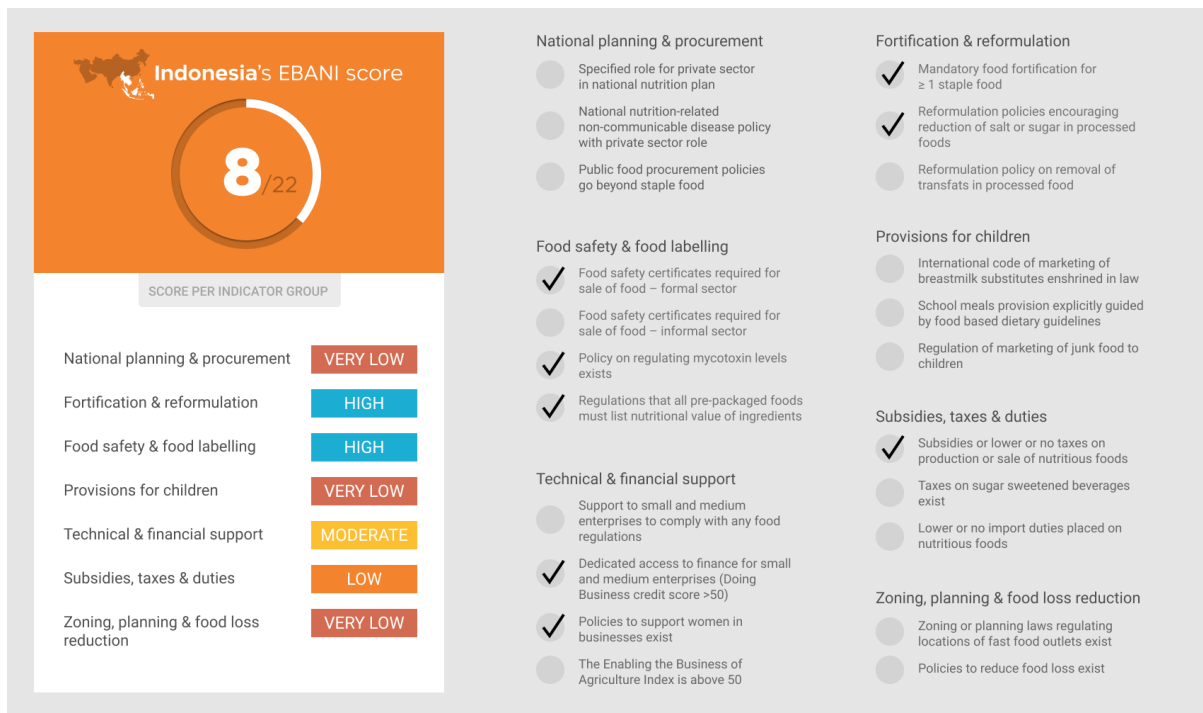
6.6 Ethiopia



6.7 Gambia



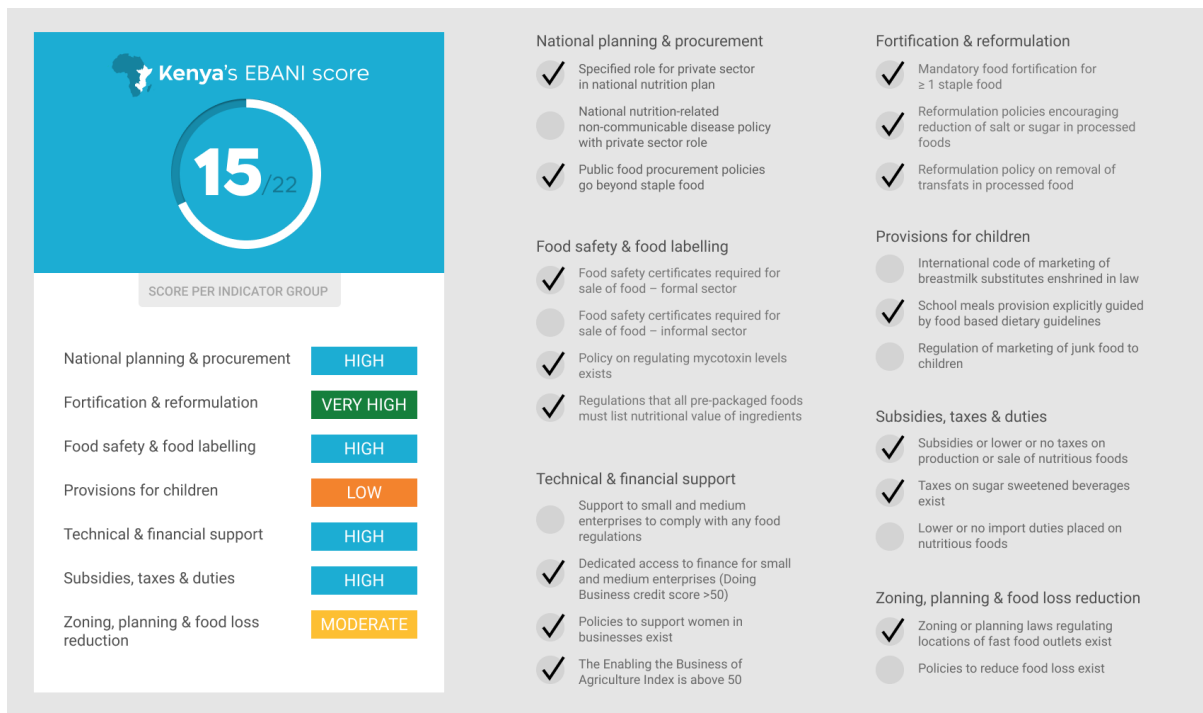
6.9 Indonesia



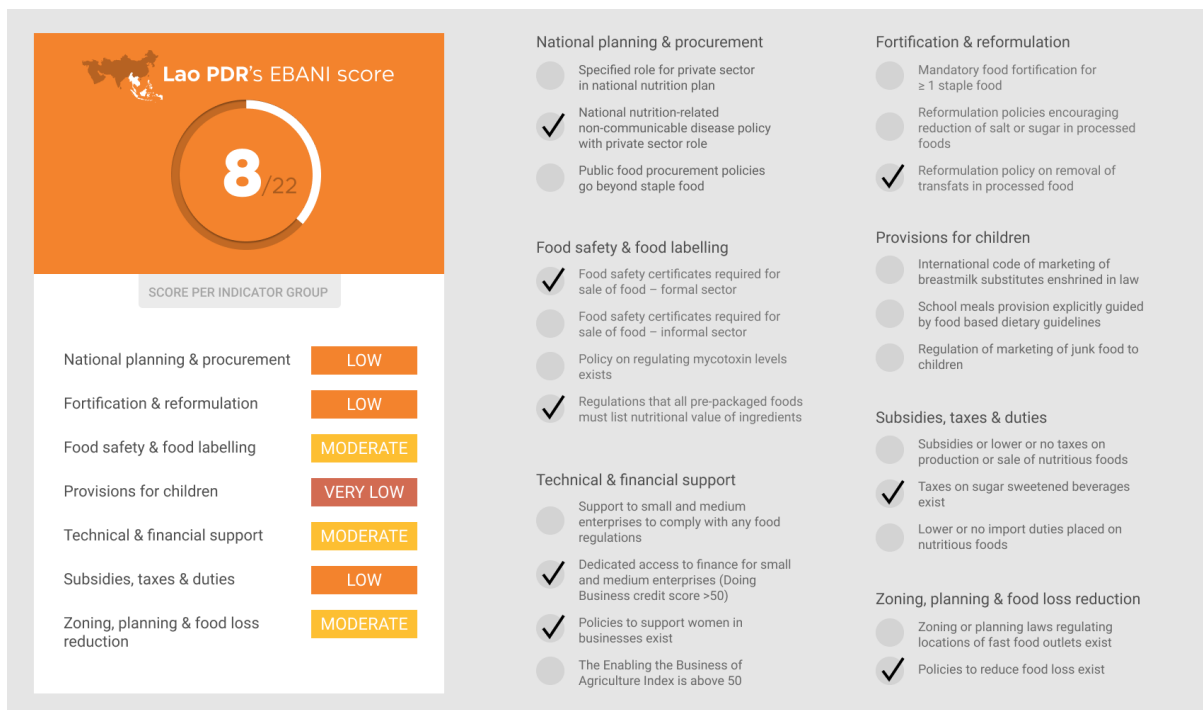
6.10 Ivory Coast



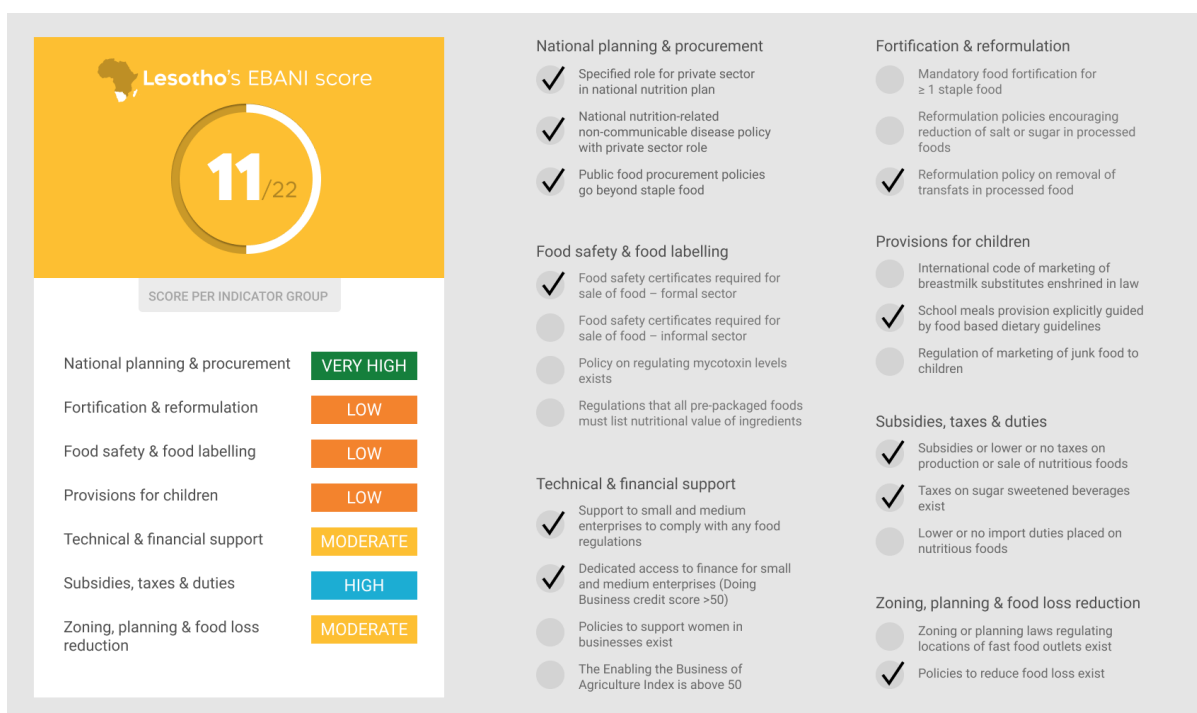
6.11 Kenya



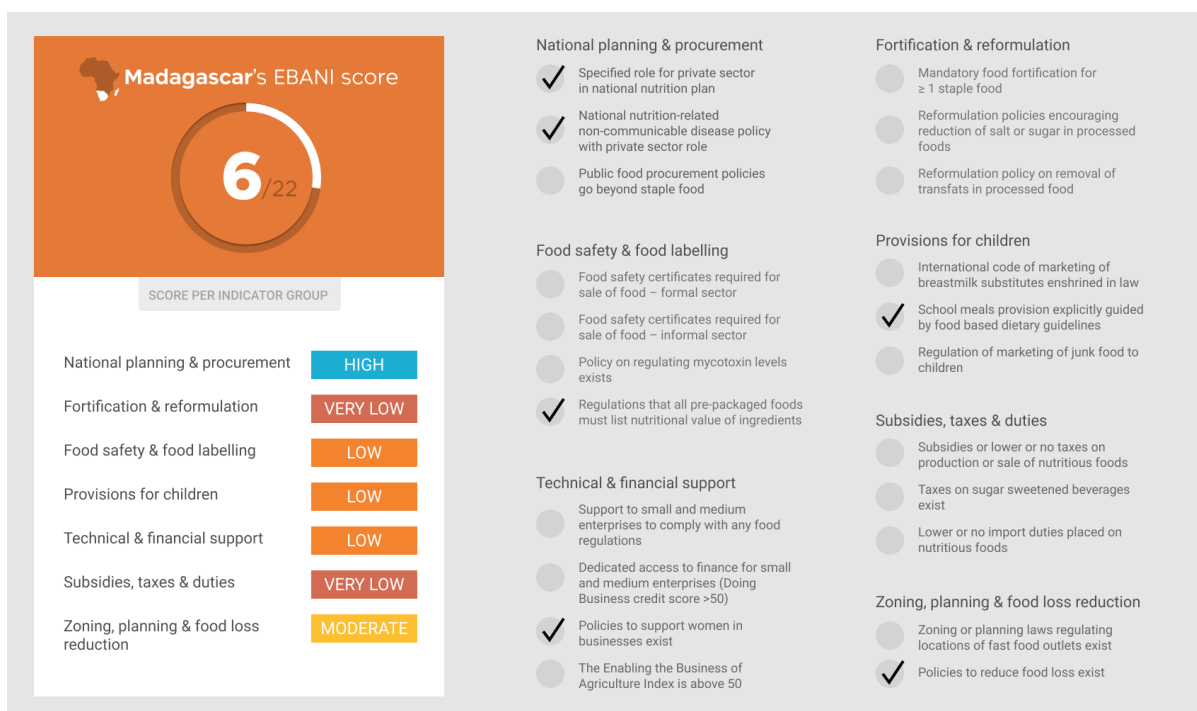
6.12 Lao PDR



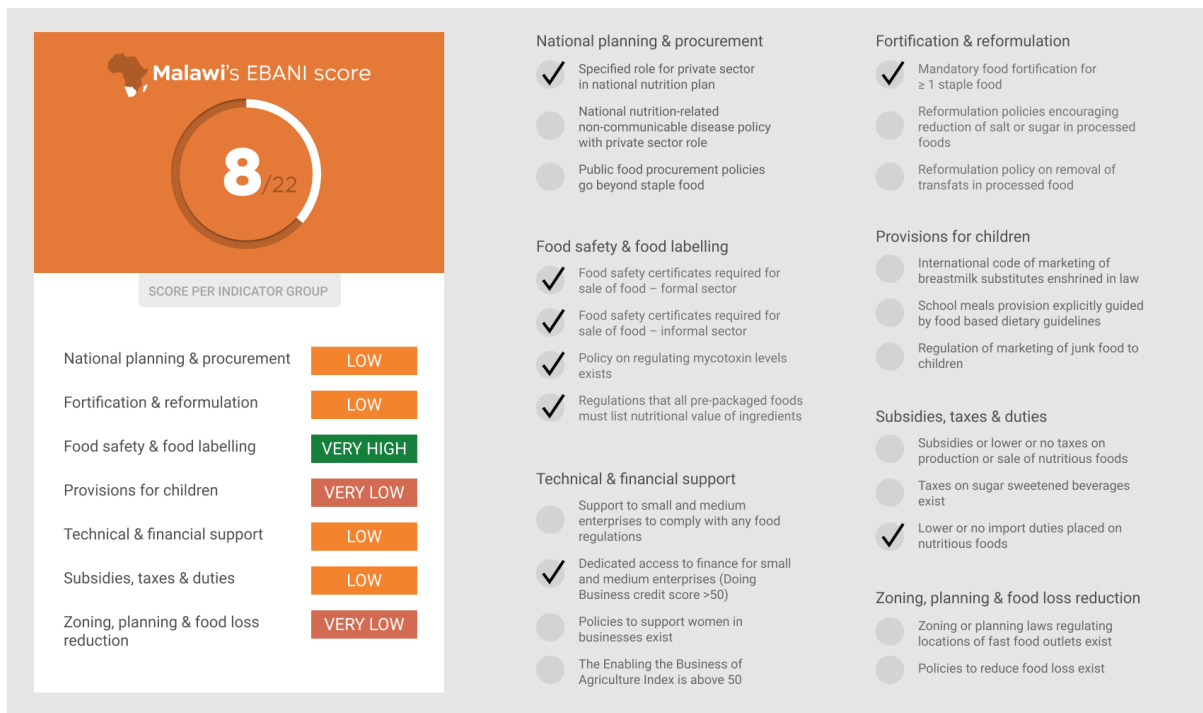
6.13 Lesotho



6.14 Madagascar



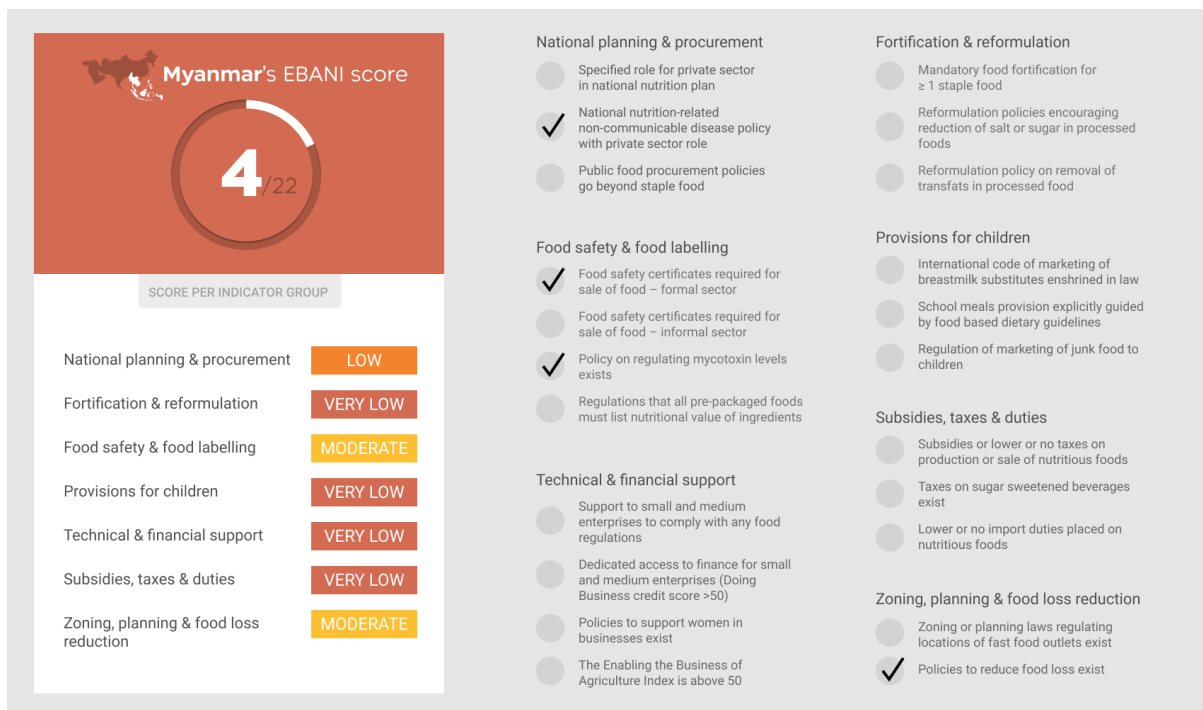
6.15 Malawi



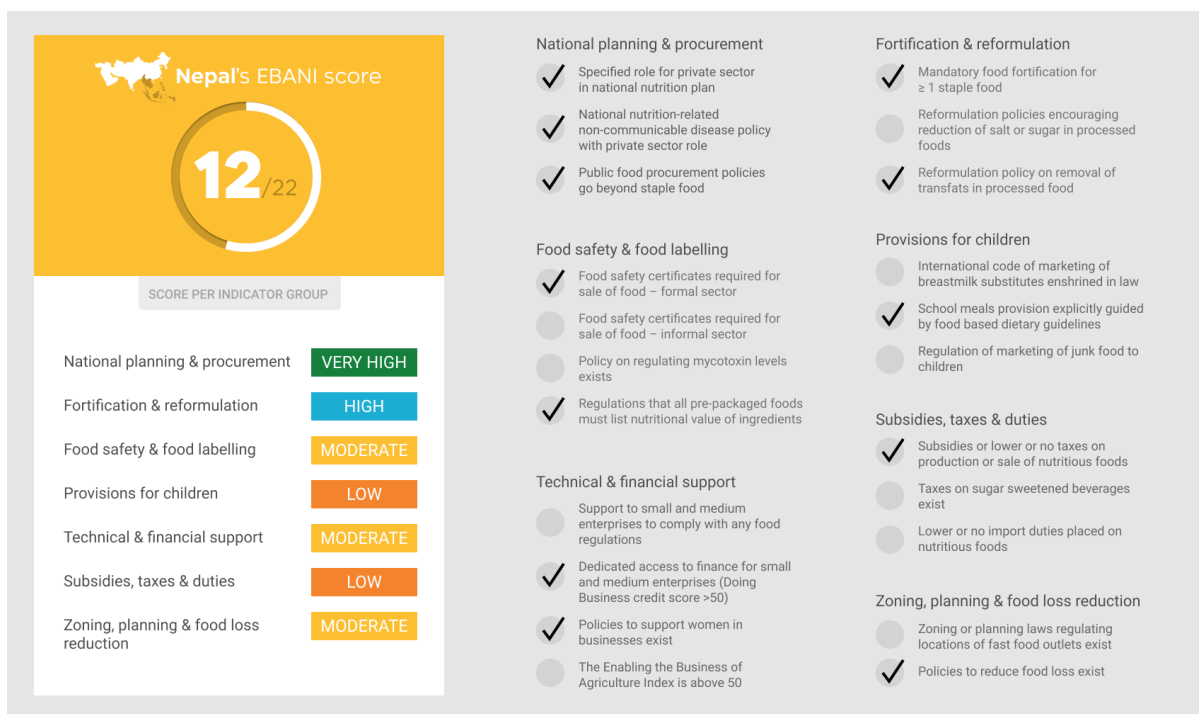
6.17 Mozambique



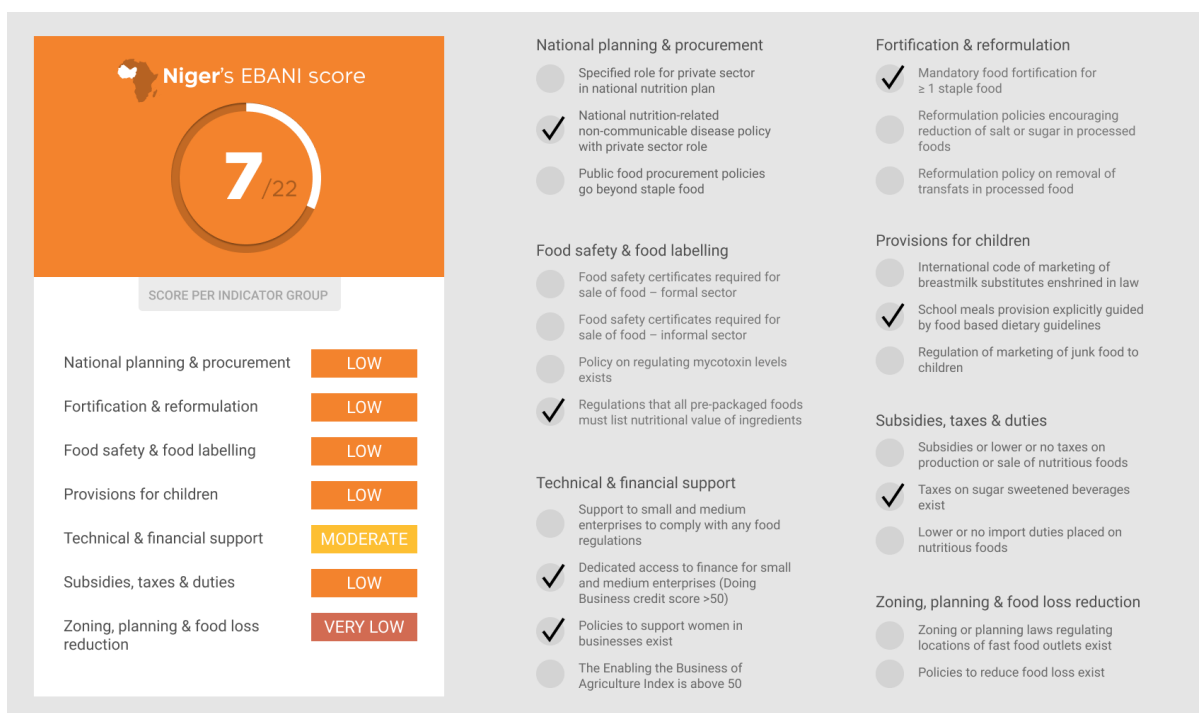
6.18 Myanmar



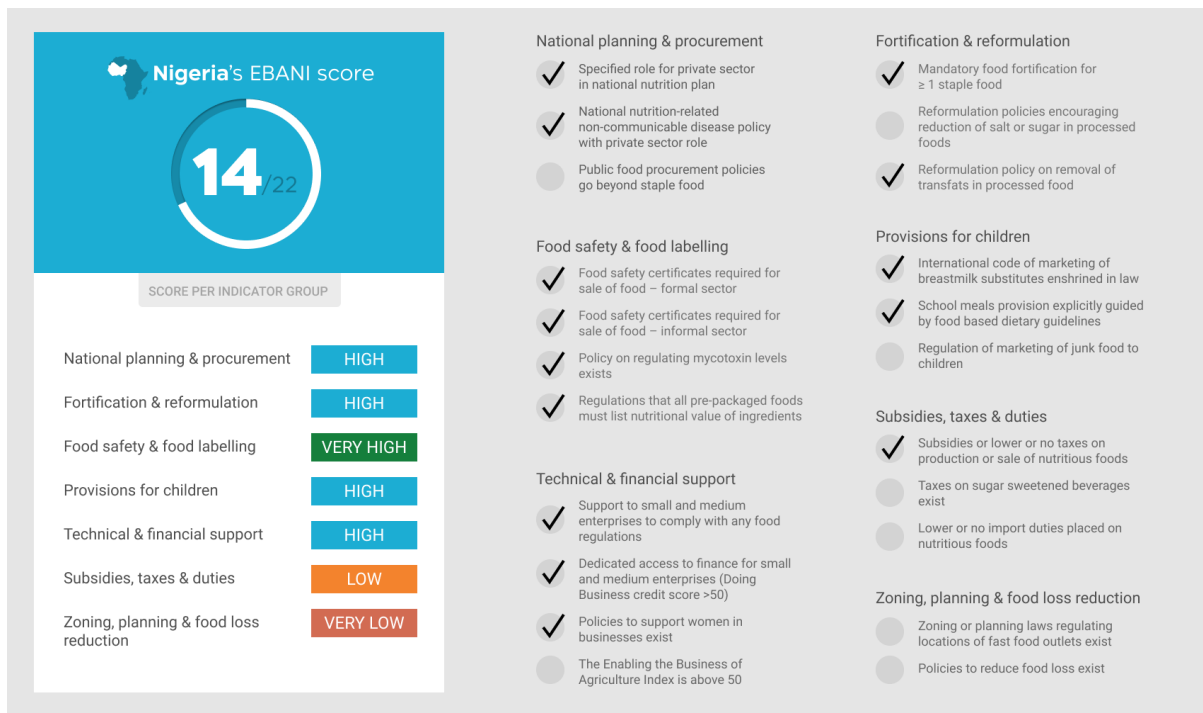
6.19 Nepal



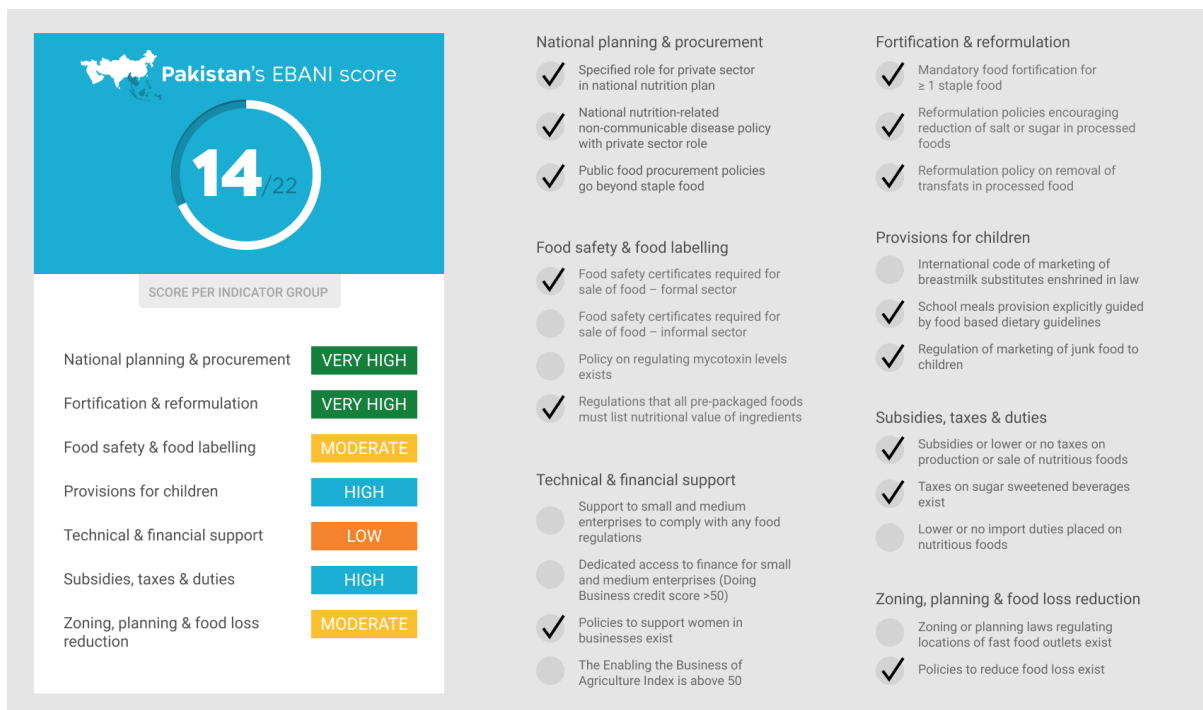
6.20 Niger



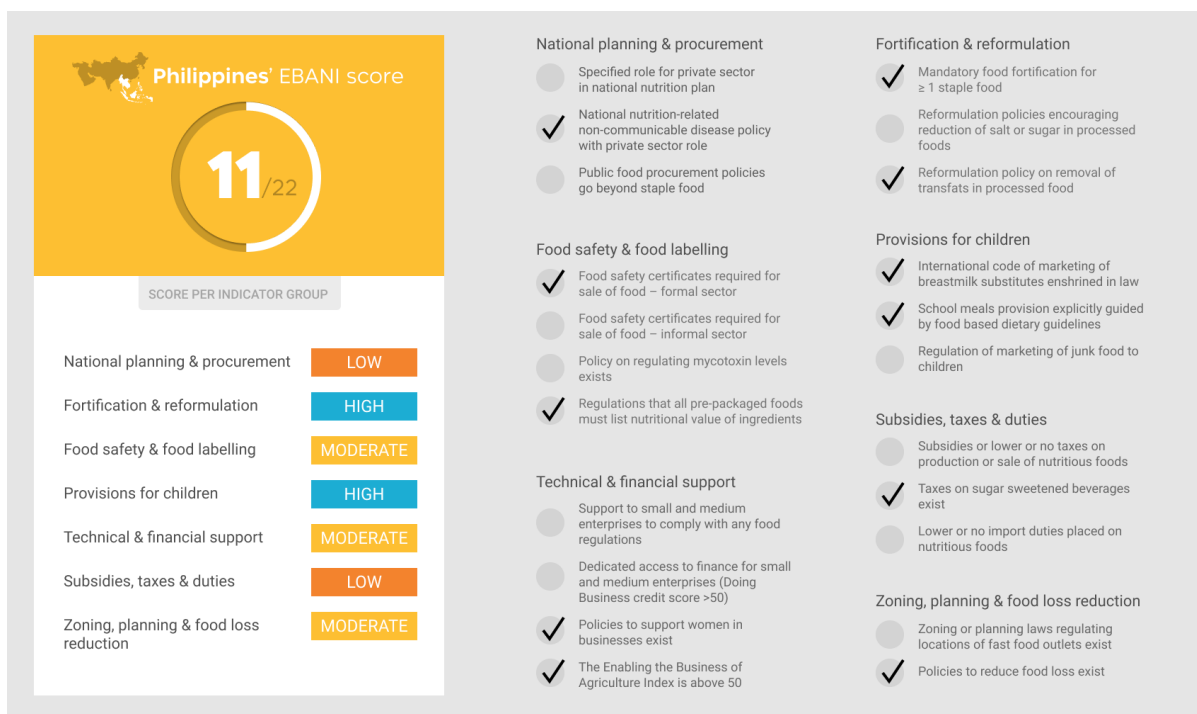
6.21 Nigeria



6.22 Pakistan



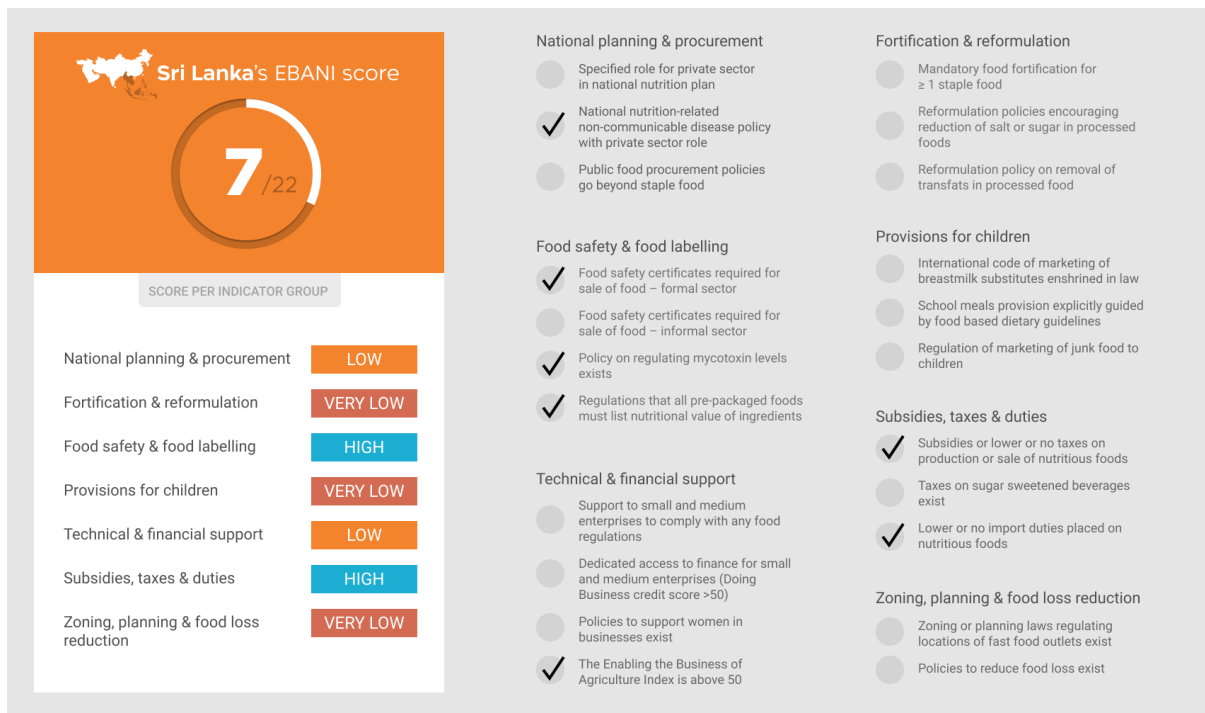
6.23 Philippines



6.24 Senegal



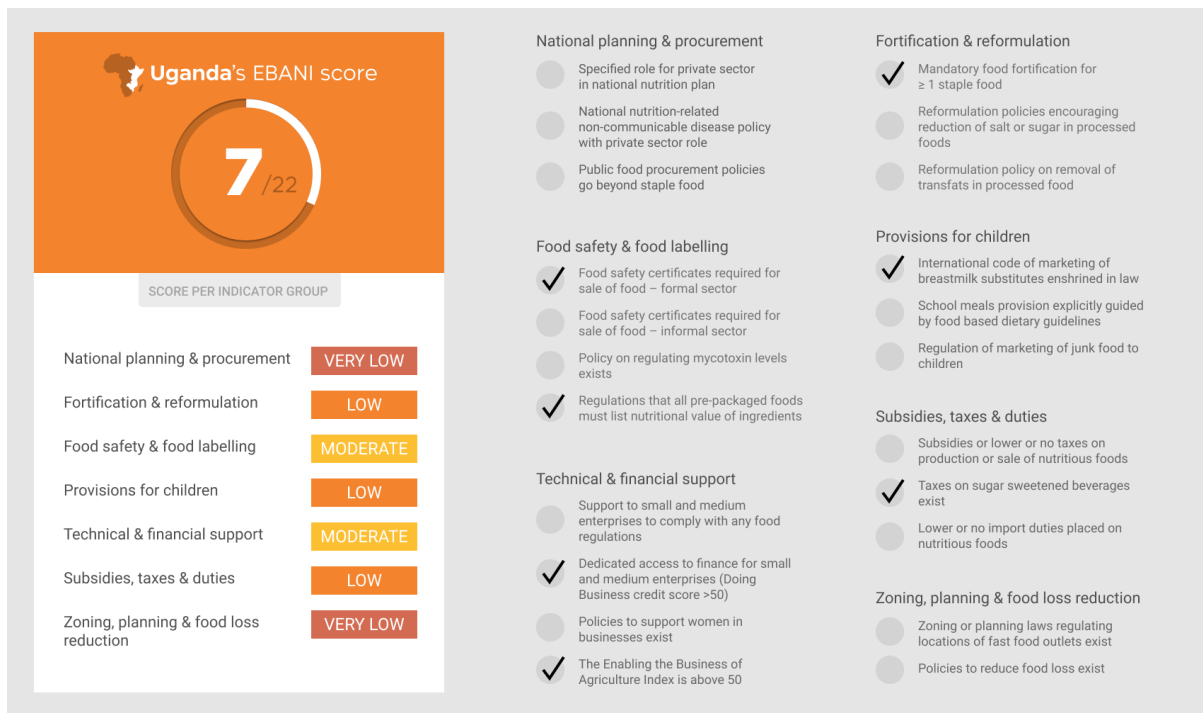
6.25 Sri Lanka



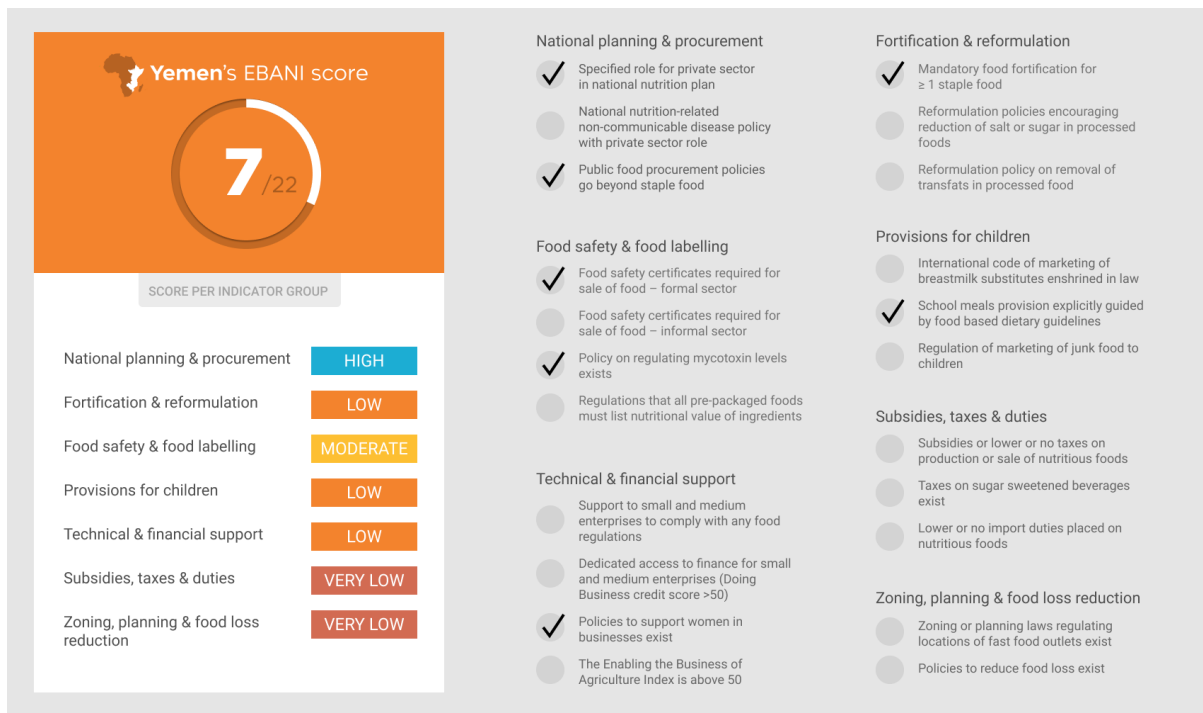
6.26 Tanzania



6.27 Uganda



6.29 Yemen



6.30 Zambia

