



ROOTS FOR IMPACT

**Kindergarten food environments in the
Negev**



Prof. Danit Shahrar, Dr Naomi Fliss-Isakov, Prof. Dorit Nitzan

The Negev's Perfect Storm

A convergence of crises is threatening our children's future at its very roots.



SYSTEMIC OBESITY

A pediatric health crisis rooted in ultra-processed diets [UPF], poor food environments, and unhealthy eating habits. This is exacerbated in children already suffering from food insecurity.



FOOD INSECURITY

Over 25% of Israeli households—impacting approximately 1 million children—face nutritional vulnerability. The Negev region is disproportionately affected.



CLIMATE & CONFLICT

Climate change and the “Swords of Iron” war are placing extreme stress on supply chains, magnifying existing inequities and straining municipal resources in an already fragile region.



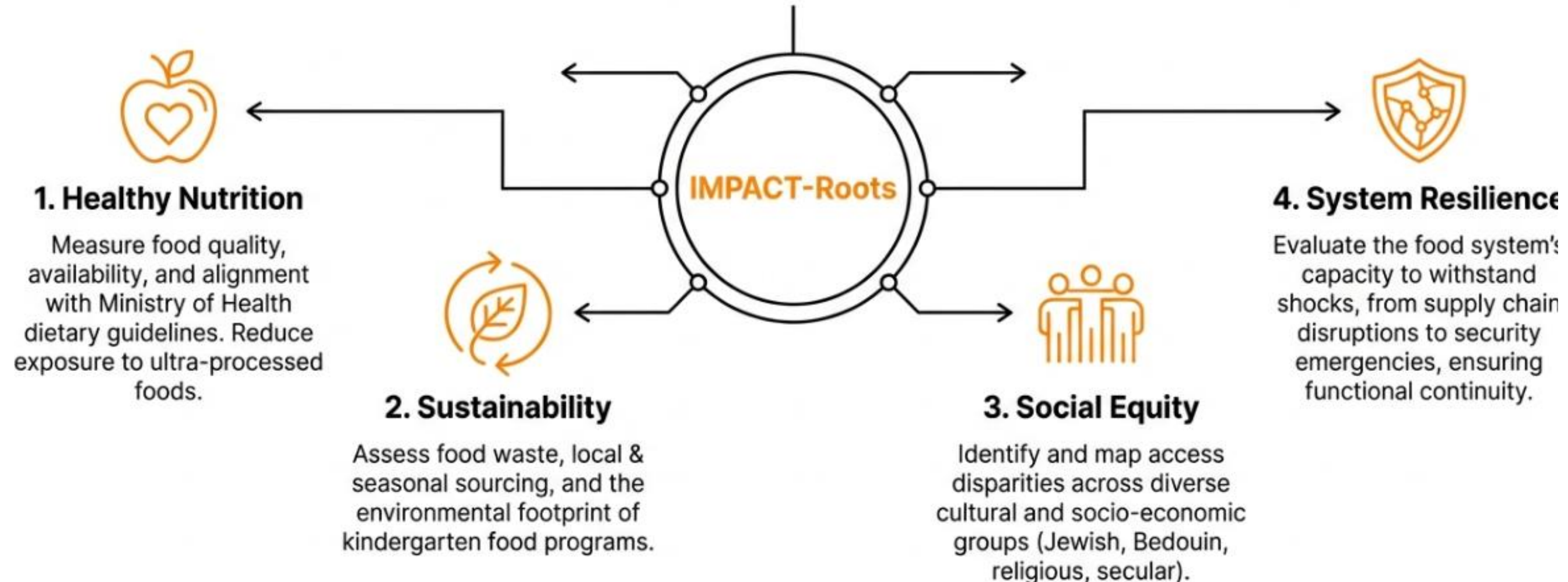
Without systematic data, local authorities are flying blind.
We cannot manage what we do not measure.

Our Solution: The IMPACT-Roots Toolkit

A unified system to transform kindergarten food environments from a vague concept into a manageable policy metric.

We will develop, validate, and implement the first toolkit in Israel to monitor, benchmark, and improve food ecosystems for young children. It is built on four critical, interconnected pillars:

We will develop, validate, and implement the first toolkit in Israel to monitor, benchmark, and improve food ecosystems for young children. It is built on four critical, interconnected pillars:



The Partnership: A Unique Alliance for Change

Our strength lies in the integration of world-class science, policy leadership, and on-the-ground implementation.



ACADEMIA

Ben-Gurion University
(School of Public Health & BGU-POR Center)

Role: Scientific Leadership & Rigor. Led by Prof. Dorit Nitzan and Prof. Danit Shahar, this team provides the methodological foundation, data analysis, and academic validation for the entire project.



GOVERNMENT

Ministry of Health
(Nutrition Division)

Role: Policy Integration & National Scaling. A committed partner ensuring the toolkit aligns with national strategy. They provide professional guidance and create a direct pathway for future nationwide adoption.



COMMUNITY

Negev East & West Clusters

Role: Implementation & Impact. Representing 21 diverse local authorities, the clusters are committed partners providing access, coordinating with municipalities, and translating research findings into tangible action. Their involvement guarantees the toolkit is practical and its impact is real.



Our Methodology: A Blueprint for Growth

A 24-month, multi-phase study designed for scientific validity and real-world applicability.

PHASE 1

Co-Design & Develop (Months 1-6)

Develop culturally-adapted metrics through a partnership-based approach with community stakeholders, local authorities (Negev clusters), and government experts (Ministry of Health).



PHASE 2

Pilot & Validate (Months 7-12)

Pilot the toolkit in diverse kindergartens across the Negev clusters (representing different demographics and educational streams) to ensure reliability, validity, and usability.



PHASE 3

Analyze & Visualize (Months 13-16)

Translate complex data into an actionable, user-friendly dashboard for policymakers, identifying risks, opportunities, and 'positive deviants' to model success.

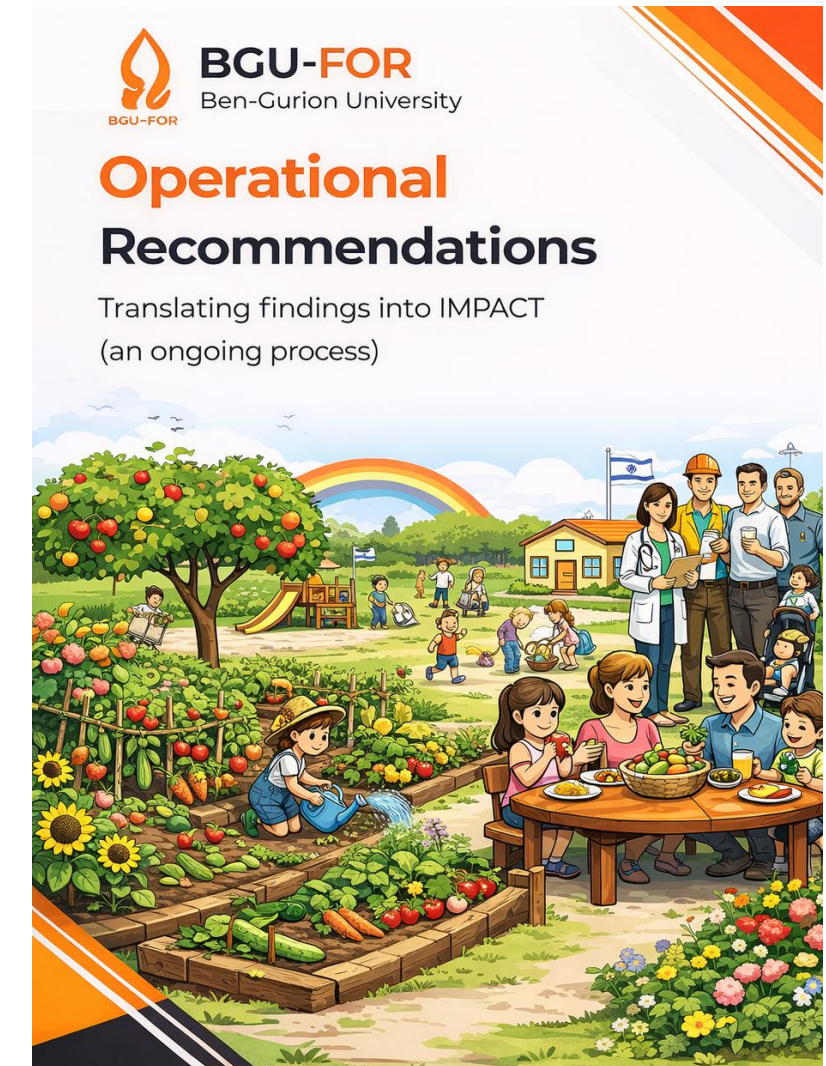
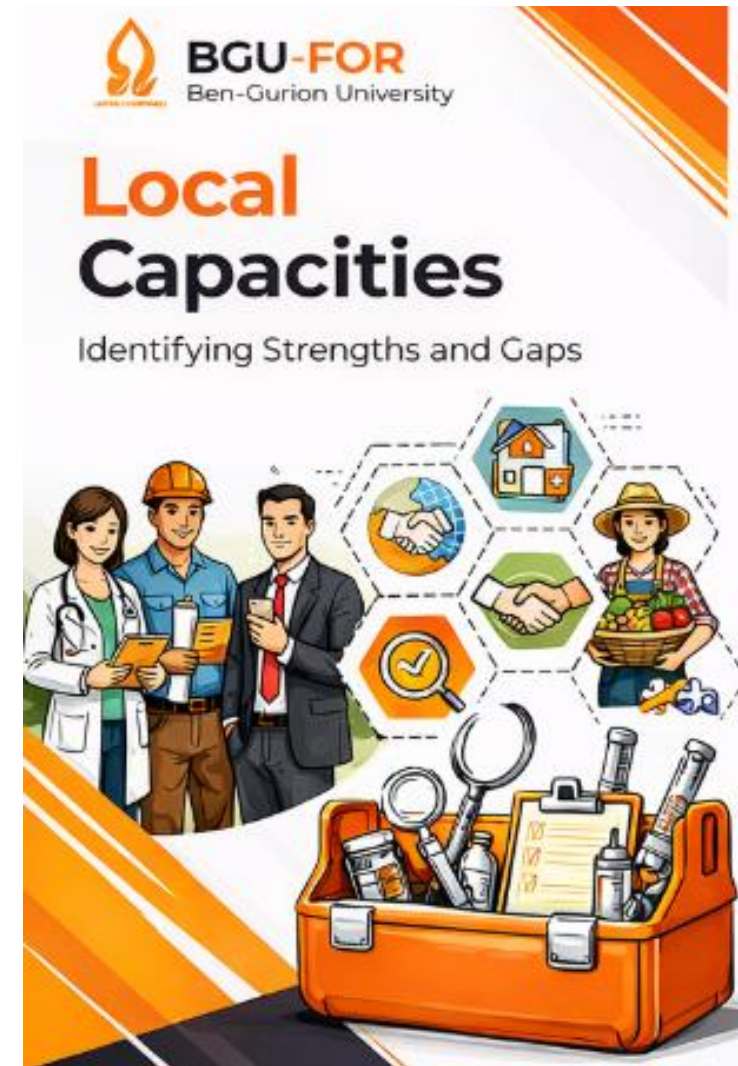
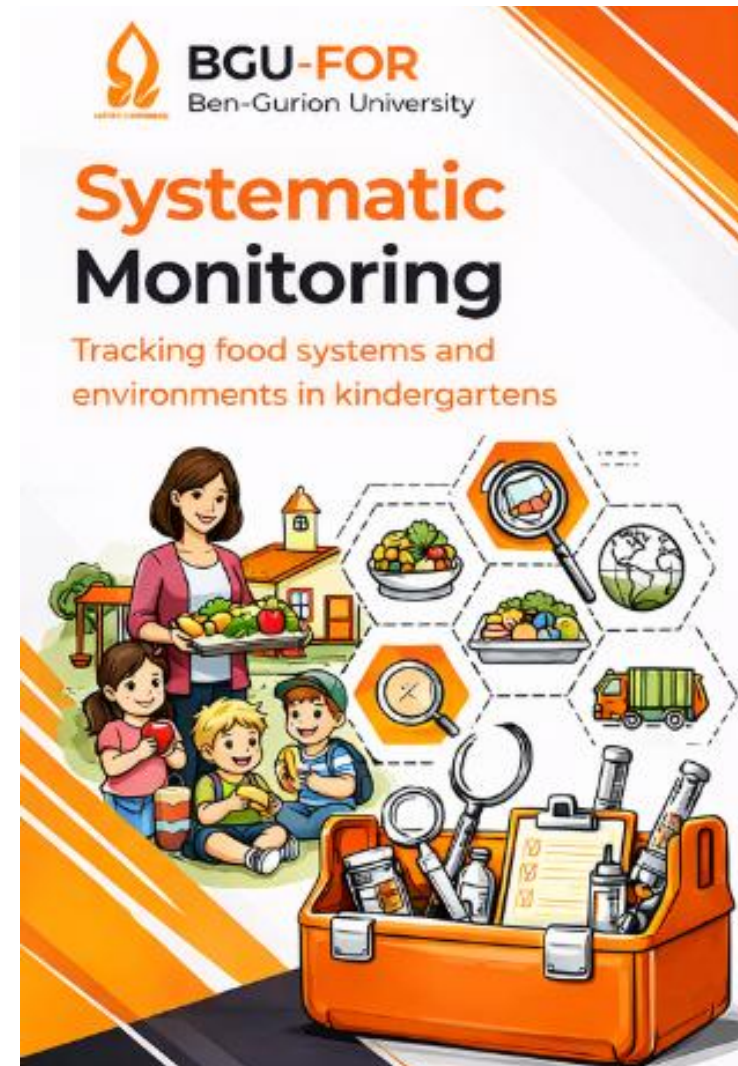
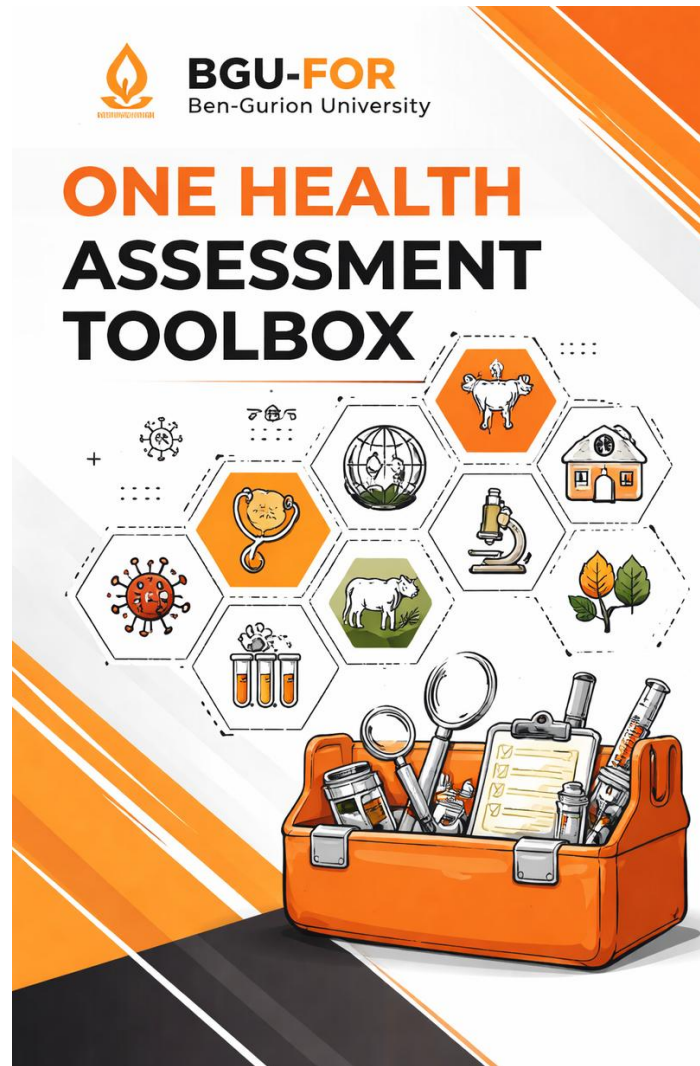


PHASE 4

Implement & Measure (Months 17-24)

Deploy the validated toolkit for ongoing monitoring. Work with local authorities to implement data-driven interventions and measure their impact, creating a cycle of continuous improvement.





Assessment Tools
 Customized for diverse educational streams

Systematic Monitoring
 Tracking food environments in kindergartens

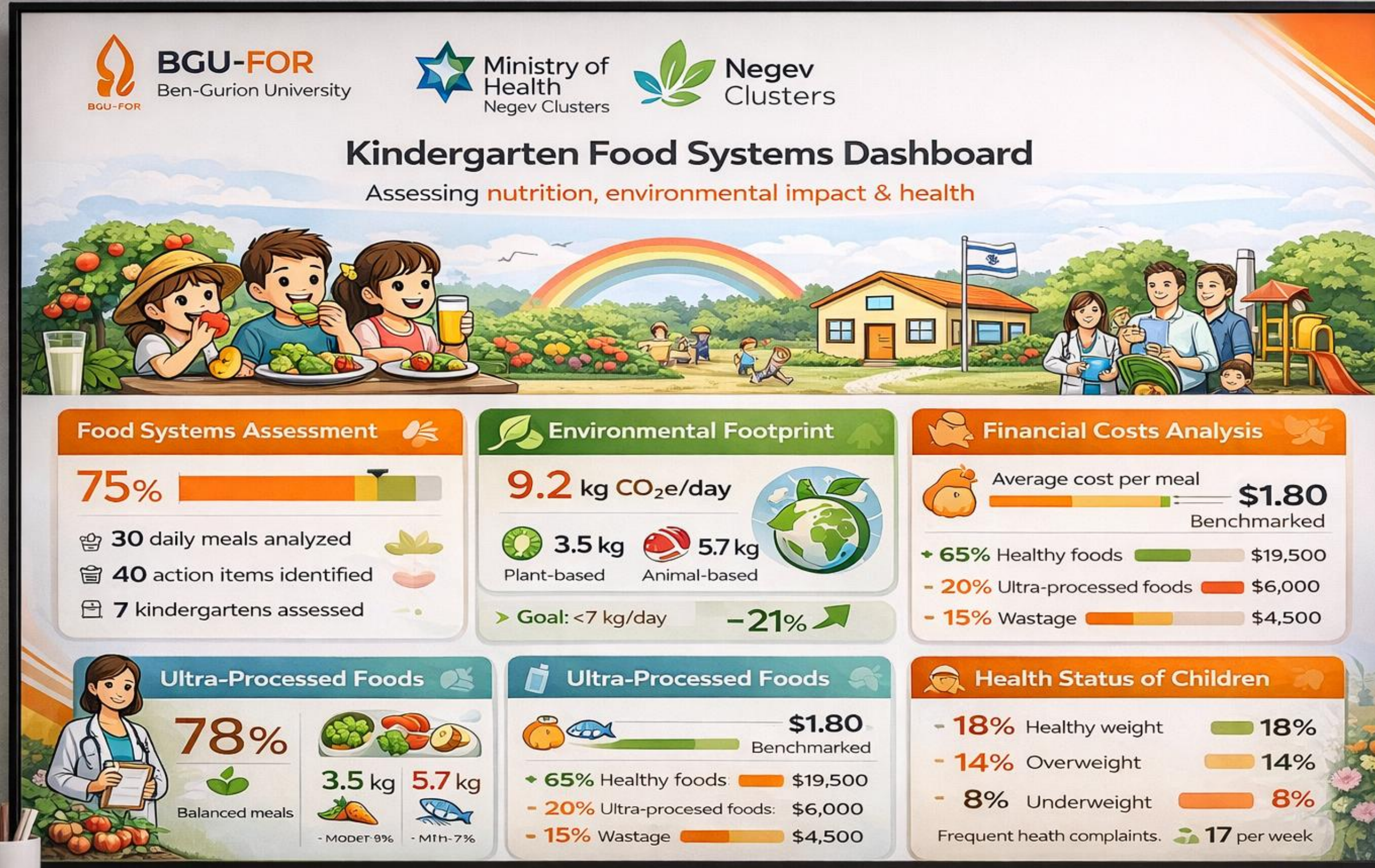
Identify Strengths
 Assessing local authorities' capacities

Operational Recommendations
 Translating findings into actionable insights- Food Systems and Culinary Health

Toolboxes for Impact



Interactive Dashboard: Tools for ongoing monitoring, evaluation and decision-making



The Vision: From Negev Roots to a National Model

This research provides more than data; it delivers a new capacity for governance and a blueprint for a healthier, more resilient Israel.

Immediate Local Impact

- ✓ **Healthier children** in the Negev through improved food environments.
- ✓ **Data-driven resource allocation** for local authorities.
- ✓ **Reduced health and nutrition inequities** between diverse communities.

Systemic Regional Impact

- ✓ **A common language** for health, education, and municipal governance.
- ✓ **Strengthened local food system resilience** in routine and emergencies.
- ✓ **Lowered ecological footprint** from institutional food programs.

Future National Impact

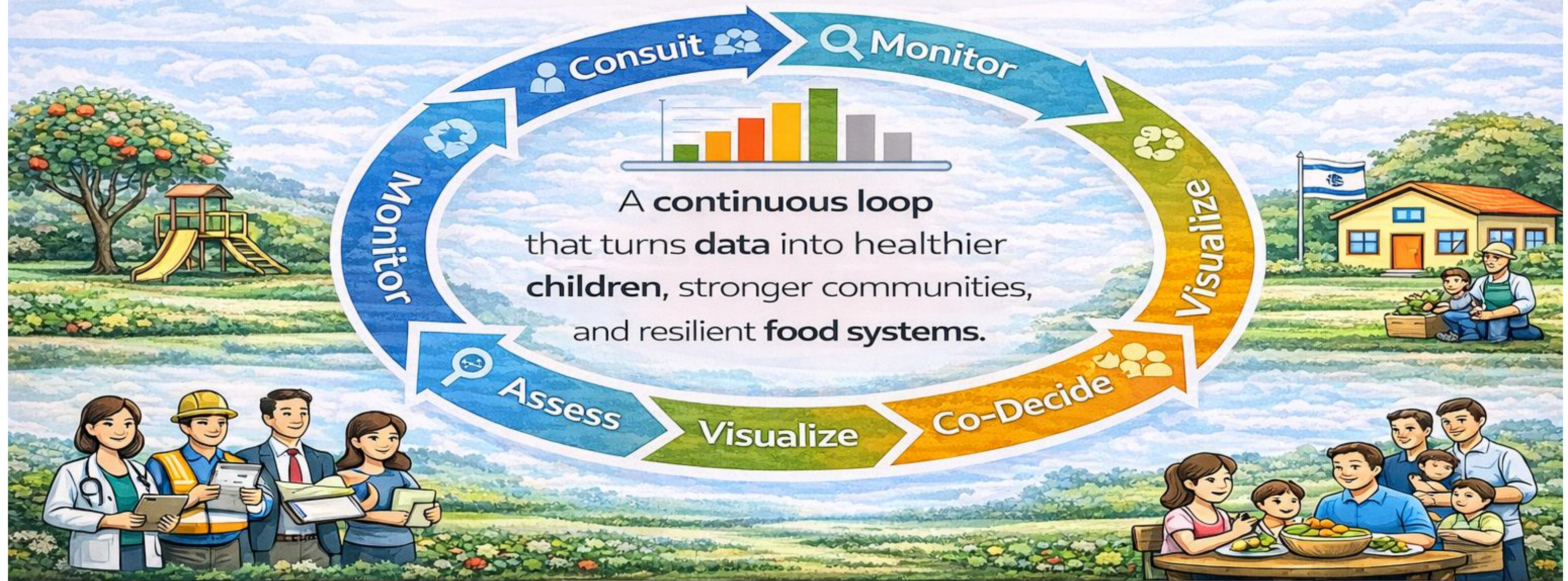
- ✓ **A validated, scalable model** ready for implementation across all of Israel.
- ✓ **Evidence-based policy** for national food security and public health.
- ✓ **A foundation for a more sustainable and equitable food future.**



We are not just studying a problem. We are building the toolkit to solve it. Join us in planting the roots for the next generation.

How **IMPACT** Happens

Healthy, Sustainable Kindergarten Food Systems in the Negev



Educators



Parents & Families



Community Doers



Producers

