



ASHOKA INNOVATORS FOR THE PUBLIC

Introducing the Nutrient Value Chain Framework

Based on trends among system-changing social entrepreneurs, we foresee a future of commerce, public policy and community action that improves people’s health, agricultural productivity, and the natural environment in parallel; not just alongside each other, but because of each other.

While similar regenerative economics are sometimes promoted from a philosophical or theoretical perspective, we see business models underlying this vision of intertwined social and environmental wellness emerging in patterns among actual enterprises of more than 120 leading social entrepreneurs in Ashoka’s global fellowship.

We call the practical basis of this idea the Nutrient Value Chain, and in partnership with these social entrepreneurs and other collaborators we are beginning to test, refine and promote strategies to activate it at wide scale in society.

In essence, in the fields of health, food and agriculture we see indications that by focusing on full-spectrum nutritional outcomes, in contrast to a more typical subset of nutrient inputs, important but unconventional factors align both scientifically and economically. From this frame, premiums are placed on performance results rather than inputs, and on practices fostering the chemical or biological factors in soils, plants and people that drive “bioavailability” of the commonly prioritized macro-nutrients. These premiums drive entrepreneurship and innovation.

A focus on full-spectrum nutritional outcomes is being made possible at this point in history by advances in the understanding of micronutrient deficiencies in people (the “hidden hunger”), by the analytic prowess of the information revolution for deciphering patterns that traditional science hadn’t yet traced, and by the motivational forces both of global population growth and of increasingly erratic weather conditions on food, agriculture and environmental systems.

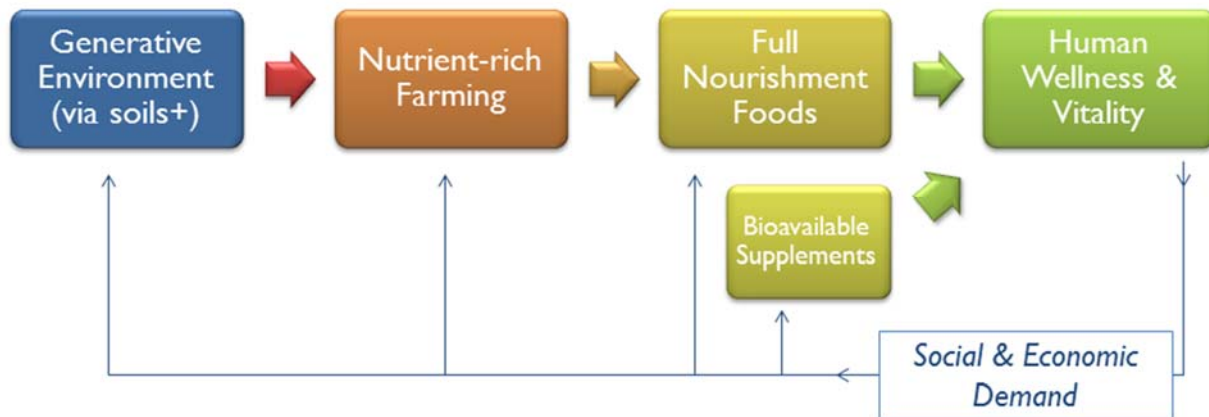
Results we see and foresee include healthier people; increased food security for vulnerable populations; more stable and higher quality agriculture; and economic demand driven from all these sectors for ecologically healthy and regenerative soils and landscapes because of their key role in the Nutrient Value Chain.

We now seek critical feedback and collaboration. We see opportunity to place a premium on systemic nourishment of both people and the environment. We want to foster investment in initiatives and entrepreneurs that propel this, and in continuing to evolve the framework itself.

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The Nutrient Value Chain Framework



Bolstered by the intimate relevance of food to every person on the planet, the supply and demand cycle enabled by the Nutrient Value Chain comes clearly into view.

At large and small scale, in rural and in urban settings, it offers concrete basis for new communications and commerce both within and across the traditional health, food, agriculture and environmental sectors. It reflects economics that, like the evolving science of full nutrition, aren't constrained by traditional sectoral boundaries. And it reveals potential for a healthy cycle of demand and supply between communities that succeed in nourishing themselves (physically, economically and culturally) and factors helping drive wellbeing of people and ecosystems elsewhere.

This is a call to action. Join Ashoka's global initiative alongside many of the world's system-changing social entrepreneurs to spread action and innovation along the Nutrient Value Chain.