What if Clim-Eat didn't exist?

It's a question we have been reflecting on. Not because the answer is dramatic, but because it's an opportunity to learn, and improve. Systems change is slow, requires collaboration, and is rarely attributable to any single actor. We know this. We work in spaces where progress is measured in nudges: a policy window opened, a connection made between people who needed to find each other, evidence placed in front of a decision-maker at the right moment. We are one part of a much larger ecosystem working toward the same goal.

2025 was a year that tested that ecosystem. Aid budgets contracted, multilateral cooperation became harder to sustain, and the political will to act on food and climate grew harder to find. At the same time, the urgency intensified: climate shocks and conflict, guided by policies designed for a different era and geopolitical context, compounding their effects on the world's most vulnerable food systems and the people who depend on them.

In this context, every contribution matters. This annual report is our attempt to be specific about ours.

We've structured it around eight stories from 2025, each framed by the same question: what would have happened if Clim-Eat hadn't been there? In some cases the answer is: something similar would have happened, more slowly, with less coherence across actors. In others, the specific combination of relationships, evidence, and facilitation that Clim-Eat brought was harder to replicate. In all cases, these stories represent early steps as part of lasting systems change. The outcomes we care most about, a flexible, inclusive and innovative ecosystem of actors that is working towards resilient and sustainable food systems in LMICs.

We share these stories not as a victory lap, but as a learning tool: to understand where our contribution is genuinely catalytic, to identify where the next opportunities lie, and to be honest about where we still have more to do.

Key Impact 2025

The three pillars guiding our work in 2025

Repurpose Subsidies

Transforming Farm Support

Scale Local Action & Innovation

Guiding Regional Policy

Facilitate Big Unlock Opportunities

Data Driving Decisions

Key Moments

Repurpose Subsidies

Building momentum for global fertilizer reform: Clim-Eat's contribution to the Belém Declaration

In the lead-up to COP30 in Belém, Brazil, Clim-Eat contributed its voice and expertise to the development of the Belém Declaration on Fertilizers a commitment by governments and stakeholders to reform fertilizer policy toward more sustainable, climate-aligned approaches. Clim-Eat engaged in consultations and advocacy processes to help shape the Declaration's framing, drawing on its work on subsidy repurposing and fertilizer policy reform across multiple country contexts, as well as promoted this throughout

Without Clim-Eat

It might have gone ahead withouth Clim-Eat, but somethings in life are about the marginal gains. One drop of water can make an ocean.

With Clim-Eat

Often, big changes require the momentum of many - large, small and everything in between. Clim-Eat is proud to have contributed its voice.

South-South Knowledge Exchange: How African Governments Learned from Each Other on Soil Health

Clim-Eat and the Farmers Union of Malawi co-facilitated a regional workshop in Lilongwe bringing together government representatives, farmer organisations, and global partners from Malawi, Tanzania, Kenya, and beyond. The event was part of Clim-Eat's ongoing work supporting the Government of Malawi and the World Bank on a soil health pilot programme that offers payments to farmers for adopting sustainable practices.

Without Clim-Eat

The conversation around soil fertility and plant nutrition in Africa may have remained stuck between opposing narratives. Without the exchange, the participating countries could have kept working on similar programmes without learning from each others' experiences. Plus, the World Bank probably wouldn't have started organizing regional convenings to stimulate cross-country learning.

With Clim-Eat

By convening government representatives, farmer organisations, and global partners in Lilongwe, Malawi for the regional workshop "Incentives for Soil Health in Africa – Lessons for Repurposing Public Support"... the country governments learned about each other's challenges and innovations in repurposing agricultural inputs subsidies, and could embed these learnings in their domestic programs.

Giving farmers a seat at the table: co-producing evidence for subsidy reform

Through the Voices for Just Rural Transition (V4JRT) programme, Clim-Eat supported country-level research and stakeholder engagement in Indonesia and Tanzania, working to understand how agricultural subsidy reform can be made more inclusive and effective. This involved engaging farmers, civil society organisations, and policymakers to co-produce evidence on how public support can be better aligned with smallholder needs and climate goals. This sparked conversations at global fora, like the CSA conference and COP30, about how to meaningfully include voices of farmers in policy.

Without Clim-Eat

Research on subsidy reform in these countries would have continued to be shaped primarily by national governments and international institutions, and key focal areas for reform would remain uncovered. Conversations on the most meaningful ways to include farmers voices in policy processes would remain out of the spotlight.

With Clim-Eat

We have started building understanding of the key issues faced by farmers and civil society in Indonesia and Tanzania. The evidence generated is building the case for repurposing public support toward more sustainable, climate-aligned outcomes and providing south-south learning opportunities across Asia, Africa, and Southern America.

Paying farmers to heal the land: scaling ecosystem service incentives through blended finance

Building on previous work with CompensAction, Clim-Eat developed evidence base from pilot experiences across Brazil, Ethiopia, Kenya, India and beyond, exploring how blended finance can sustainably fund the transition to resilient, low-emission farming systems. This work culminated in a lessons report synthesising what works, what doesn't, and what it would take to scale.

Without Clim-Eat

The lessons on how to apply and scale financing mechanisms that reward small-scale farmers for their positive externalities would have remained scattered.

With Clim-Eat

Decision-makers, funders, and practitioners now have a clearer, evidence-based picture of how ecosystem service payments can work in practice and what conditions are needed to take them to scale. The CompensACTION lessons report provides a practical blueprint for redirecting agricultural finance toward outcomes that benefit both farmers and the planet.

Key Moments

Scale Local Action & Innovation

Bridging the climate-nutrition nexus: getting the right people in the right rooms

Clim-Eat convened a targeted dialogue bringing together officials from different government ministries, across agriculture, health, and climate, where conversations rarely happen across departmental lines. The goal was to surface shared opportunities at the intersection of climate adaptation and nutrition, and to identify concrete pathways for more integrated work.

Without Clim-Eat

What we essentially did is bring together the relevant people from different ministries together in 1 room. They all agreed that climate and nutrition are relevant for their work, but without it, they wouldn't have made connections to start acting on it

With Clim-Eat

here's improved understanding of opportunities for more integrated work, and identified opportunities for a way forward. Clim-Eat is acting on (some of) them in 2026

Food systems: ASEAN's five-year strategy

Working with GIZ and regional partners, Clim-Eat contributed analysis and advocacy to inform the new ASEAN-CRN (Climate Resilience Network) five-year strategy for food and agriculture 2026-2030. The primary objective was to ensure that the region's approach to "Climate-Smart Agriculture" expanded to explicitly include nutrition-sensitive practices.

Without Clim-Eat

Nutrition may not have been as strongly embedded and recognised in the new ASEAN-CRN five-year strategy. Key actors from different ministries may not have had the opportunity to connect, identify shared priorities, and begin acting on the links between climate and nutrition.

With Clim-Eat

With Clim-Eat, stakeholders in Lao PDR began exploring how food-based dietary guidelines and climate adaptation objectives could be better aligned. By conducting an initial analysis, we helped establish the evidence and partnerships needed to support future UNFSS-aligned work on this agenda.

Forecasting for farmers: scaling gender-responsive climate advice

In Rwanda, Clim-Eat worked to scale the uptake of gender-responsive Digital Climate Advisory Services among smallholder farmers. Clim-Eat provided technical support, learning facilitation, and strategic guidance to connect the private sector partner's commercial interests with the development outcomes for farmers.

Without Clim-Eat

These farmers would remain with little to no access to climate advisories. This would result in lower and poorer quality maize yields, which in turn would affect the access to high quality produce for the (private sector) food processor

With Clim-Eat

These farmers had access to climate advisories. These services supported them in improving their maize production and their (potential) financial income. It also resulted in more high quality produce to be available for the food processor.

From talk to traction: turning Climate-Smart Agriculture into real deals

In November 2025, Clim-Eat co-hosted the Global Climate-Smart Agriculture Conference in Brasília, Brazil, bringing together 180 participants from over 110 organisations including governments, research institutions, civil society, and the private sector. The conference used an innovative "deal-making" approach designed to move beyond presentations and panels toward concrete commitments.

Without Clim-Eat

Climate-smart agriculture efforts would have continued to be scattered (lots of ideas, but little coordination, funding, or follow-through). Promising solutions would have remained stuck in silos or duplicated across actors, with fewer partnerships and no clear pathway from discussion to real-world action.

With Clim-Eat

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When the rains fail: building farmers' financial resilience through climate insurance

Working with Trafigura and GIZ across four Kenyan counties, Clim-Eat supported the piloting and scaling of agricultural insurance for smallholder farmers, with a particular focus on Arid and Semi-Arid Land (ASAL) regions most exposed to climate shocks. This included surveying over 1,800 farmers on their perceptions of climate insurance, training more than 22,000 farmers on how agricultural insurance works and why it matters, generating evidence to support expansion across additional counties.

Without Clim-Eat

Agricultural insurance programmes and pilots would still be disconnected, missing personal learnings that make these programmes effective and feasible for farmers to access. Insurance would have remained misunderstood and underused, seen as a risky expense rather than a safety net.

With Clim-Eat

More than 22,000 farmers across four counties are now better equipped to make informed decisions about risk, and the evidence generated is supporting expansion of the programme. Insurance is being demystified, and programmes are being designed with farmers in mind.

Key Moments

Facilitate Big Unlock Opportunities

18 bold bets: food system innovations that could change everything

In partnership with the Bezos Earth Fund, Clim-Eat expanded and updated the Food Systems Tech (FST) platform, adding 18 new “bold bet” innovations to the database. This involved horizon scanning, literature review, expert interviews, and peer review by leading scientists and industry professionals. The updated platform now maps dozens of high-potential innovations across plant nutrition, sustainable livestock, and next-generation crops.

Without Clim-Eat

We wouldn't have 18 new bold bets to geek out on, and a less thrilling Foodsystems.tech to explore the future of food.

With Clim-Eat

We now know what bold bets like 'Non-thermal plasma-based nitrogen fixation' and 'Biodegradable bolus methane inhibitor' are capable of, and what kind of support they would need.

Making it make sense: translating food system innovation

Clim-Eat produced an expert op-ed series in partnership with Farming First by commissioning and editing accessible, evidence-based pieces on the current challenges and opportunities in plant nutrition, sustainable livestock, and next-generation crops. Written by leading scientists and practitioners, the series was designed to translate cutting-edge innovation research into formats that funders, policymakers, and practitioners could actually engage with and act on.

Without Clim-Eat

We wouldn't have the experts breaking it down for us what are the current challenges and opportunities in plant nutrition, sustainable livestock and next-gen crops.

With Clim-Eat

We now know that sustainable livestock is not an oxymoron but a reality in some farming systems, and learned how to avoid snake oil with novel fertilizers and biostimulants.

Assembling the agents of change: building a shared vision for leadership

Clim-Eat is making the impossible, possible. Bringing together groups of leaders through two convenings, in Costa Rica and New York, Clim-Eat provided the space for deep, frank conversations that went back the basics of identifying key barriers and solutions for food systems change. Transforming this into a discussion on people's "one shot" for food systems change, further catalysed alignment between actors and ultimately contributed to a new narratives journal article.

Without Clim-Eat

Leaders would have continued working in parallel — busy, committed, but not fully aligned or pushing collectively toward system-wide change. The linkages between actors would not have been made, and big ambitions would have remained just that: ambitious, but fragmented.

With Clim-Eat

Leaders who attended gained a clearer understanding of the roles different actors play in food systems change and had substantive discussions about how to foster better coordination. New partnerships were formed, priorities were better aligned, and a shared sense of urgency emerged along with concrete follow-up ideas around finance and investment, policy and advocacy, knowledge sharing, and new narrative framing.

Charting a 30-year horizon for crop innovation in a warming world

Clim-Eat Senior Adviser Dr Sonja Vermeulen published Next-Generation Crops: A 30-Year Horizon, a technical report produced as part of Clim-Eat's partnership with the Bezos Earth Fund. The report maps the landscape of breakthrough innovations in crop breeding and identifies where researchers, policymakers, and funders should focus their attention over the coming decades, and what it would take to ensure these innovations reach scale equitably and sustainably.

Without Clim-Eat

Without it we wouldn't know which strategies for breeding the next-generation of crops would be most relevant to CC adaptation in the coming decades.

With Clim-Eat

Now we know what to expect, where to invest, and why innovation will be at the heart of adaptation.