

# Transformation Story:

# Initiative Next Gen(D)eration Leadership Collective

We are the **Next Gen(D)eration Leadership Collective (NGLC)** – an initiative built on the expertise of women working in food systems. We believe that transforming food systems requires **transforming leadership**. Our mission is to promote an **inclusive, courageous leadership culture** and **increase women's representation, participation, and influence** in decision-making processes for food systems transformation.

It all began with twelve women working in food systems, each striving to lead differently yet facing similar challenges. **Structural barriers** often kept our efforts and achievements from being fully recognised. These limitations have not only hindered the growth of our leadership roles and styles, but have also reinforced a system in which **women's voices, expertise and experiences** remain unrecognised and undervalued, preventing us from realising our full potential and catalysing the change our food systems need. We saw a clear need for change. If food systems are to become more sustainable and equitable, **leadership and power structures must evolve** – and this is how NGLC came to life.

Our vision is to accelerate **progress towards a well-nourished world** by transforming **food systems leadership** and addressing **power imbalances**. With a collective action approach, NGLC champions **courageous leadership practices** – shifting leadership from power and control to **empathy, collaboration, trust, and long-term thinking**.

To turn our vision into action, we are currently setting up new **partnerships** that bring together **diverse voices**. By strengthening **collective agency and action in food systems transformation**, we strive to **amplify the impact** we can jointly have on food systems. In February 2025, we came together with five partner organisations at a **Partnership Lab** in Berlin. Together, we started to **co-design strategies and activities** that spark action for food systems transformation through courageous leadership. Each of the invited partners brought in valuable **expertise and hands-on experience** – from the right to food, agroecology, and indigenous knowledge to advocacy and research. The power of these new partnerships lies in **amplifying these voices** through NGLC's collective approach and courageous leadership practices.





An example that came out of the Partnership Lab percolates the Global Health Advocacy Incubator's (GHAI) **global advocacy methodology** with NGLC's **leadership approach**. Together, we aim to drive **policy change in local school meal procurement**, transforming it to support **agroecological practices** and sourcing from **small-scale women farmers** to provide **healthy meals for children**. Why this policy area?

Because it offers multiple entry points to address **power imbalances across the food system**, from local food production and procurement to creating business opportunities for women and improving children's nutrition. A starting point will be enriching GHAI's advocacy methodology with NGLC's leadership practices advocating for healthier school meals from procurement to consumption to be implemented in three countries. We believe this combined approach can drive **structural political change** through concrete **catalytic processes**.

Looking further into the future, we want to **collaborate with our new partners as a network**. First steps include developing priorities for **joint advocacy** and developing a shared **communication and knowledge sharing approach**. By joining forces as a network to address power imbalances and change leadership for food systems transformation, we can reach out to a larger number of actors in diverse contexts, creating a **ripple effect of lasting change** in food systems worldwide.

**“Leadership is not just about authority – it’s about creating change, fostering relationships, and lifting others as you rise.”**

**– Carmen Torres Ledezma, NGLC Strategy Group, 2025**

Imprint:

Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale  
Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH  
Friedrich-Ebert-Allee 32, 53113 Bonn, Germany

Global programme Transformation of food  
systems G530 – Global agendas for food security  
Photos: © Syspons, 2025