

Executive Summary

Title II Development Program Impact

From the 1990s through the *Second Food Aid and Food Security Assessment* (FAFSA-2) time period, the Title II development program was unique among U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) programs in its mandate to address the breadth of determinants of household food insecurity and undernutrition. Title II development programs implemented during the FAFSA-2 time period delivered a wide range of interventions to respond to unique problems and opportunities to improve the lives of people in targeted areas. These programs worked in agriculture and natural resources management; maternal and child health and nutrition (MCHN); vulnerable group feeding; HIV; education; water, sanitation, and hygiene; non-agricultural income generation; infrastructure; and emergency preparedness and disaster management. The programs were technically complex and challenging to design and implement successfully, and operated in difficult environments in some of the poorest and most food insecure countries in the world.

The results of the FAFSA-2 analysis indicate that Title II development programs can indeed reduce undernutrition in young children, improve a number of important MCHN outcomes, and increase household access to income and food. The assessment identified various technical sector models, approaches, and practices that are more likely to contribute to positive food security impacts. Because it is just as important to learn from failures as it is to emulate successes, the FAFSA-2 also includes examples of approaches and practices that have not worked well. Learning from the experiences of Title II development programs, made available through the FAFSA-2 analysis and findings, and doing more of what works in future programs presents a tremendous opportunity for USAID's Office of Food for Peace (USAID/FFP) and its Awardees to improve overall program performance.

Impact on Child Nutrition

Reducing child undernutrition saves lives and protects human potential. The standard, population-based anthropometric indicators used by USAID/FFP and Title II Awardees to measure whether their programs were having a positive nutritional impact are the *percentage of children under five years that have low weight-for-age (underweight)* and the *percentage of children under five years that have low height-for-age (stunting or chronic undernutrition)*. The FAFSA-2 analyzed nutritional status impact data for children under five years reported in Title II final evaluation surveys compared to baseline surveys with no known limitations: 28 programs with weight-for-age data and 28 with height-for-age data (not necessarily the same 28 programs for both measures). The median length of time between baseline and final evaluation surveys was four years.¹ The programs in the analysis had a bigger impact on stunting (reducing it on

¹ A complete description of the methodology used for this meta-analysis of anthropometric data from Title II development program evaluations is found in Section 6.4.2.

average across all programs by 1.32 percentage points per year) than on underweight (which declined on average by 0.63 percentage points per year). These declines were greater than the secular trend changes in stunting and underweight reported in Demographic and Health Surveys for a number of the same countries. There were marked regional differences in reducing chronic undernutrition, with Title II programs in the combined Asia and Latin America and the Caribbean regions achieving a bigger average annual reduction in stunting of 1.53 percentage points, compared to Africa programs, where stunting fell only 0.98 percentage points per year. These differences in the impact of Title II development programs on child stunting track with the differences in program interventions, approaches, and budgets for MCHN across the regions. Greater reductions in stunting and underweight were seen in programs that did preventive supplementary feeding, which is discussed in Section 6.4.5.

Impact on Household Diets and Incomes

USAID/FFP had no standardized approach to measuring the impact of Title II development programs on food access at the beginning of the FAFSA-2 time period. This changed in 2007, when USAID/FFP began requiring Awardees to include two standard “household food consumption indicators” in their monitoring and evaluation systems for any Title II development program that included activities to improve “household access” to food (i.e., programs with agriculture, microenterprise development, income generation, and/or diversification interventions). Twenty-five programs in the FAFSA-2 universe reported on the *number of months of adequate household food provisioning* indicator, with 92 percent reporting improvements. Twenty-four programs reported on the *household dietary diversity score* indicator, with 79 percent reporting improvements. These are proxy indicators to measure access to food and not actual dietary intake. Twenty-four programs also reported on some measure of household income, with 80 percent exceeding their targets for increasing income (see Section 4.4).