

FANTA III

FOOD AND NUTRITION
TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE



USAID
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

MULTISECTORAL NUTRITION PROGRAMMING: FANTA Achievements and Lessons Learned



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What Is Multisectoral Nutrition Programming and Why Is It Important?

In May 2014, the U. S. Agency for International Development (USAID) released the *2014–2025 Multi-Sectoral Nutrition Strategy*, the agency's first overarching strategy emphasizing the need to address both the direct and underlying causes of malnutrition in order to have an impact on the problem. The strategy provides a blueprint for aligning the efforts of USAID's Bureau of Global Health, the U.S. Government's Feed the Future and Global Health initiatives, and the Office of Food for Peace's (FFP) development and emergency programs, resilience activities, and other nutrition investments.

The determinants of nutritional status are multifaceted and include individual health status and access to health care; access to safe, nutritious, and diverse foods; access to safe water and proper sanitation facilities; conduction of optimal feeding, caregiving, and hygiene practices;

and adequately spaced birth intervals.¹ A 2013 *Lancet* series on maternal and child nutrition underscored that both nutrition-specific and nutrition-sensitive interventions are necessary to eliminate maternal and child malnutrition. Nutrition-specific interventions help to ensure adequate food and nutrient intake and proper feeding, caregiving, and parenting practices. Nutrition-sensitive interventions address food security; availability of adequate caregiving resources at the maternal, household, and community levels; and access to health services and a safe and hygienic environment.²

Multisectoral nutrition programming enables donors, countries, and implementers to address the multifactorial causes of national nutrition challenges by linking and integrating program design, delivery, and evaluation across disciplines and sectors.³

FANTA's Commitment to Multisectoral Nutrition Programming



Photo credit: Jessica Scranton, FHI 360

The Food and Nutrition Technical Assistance III Project (FANTA), has been working toward achieving the overarching goal of USAID's Multi-Sectoral Nutrition Strategy: improving nutrition to save lives, building resilience, increasing economic productivity, and advancing development in both emergency and development contexts.⁴ FANTA's work has brought positive improvements to nutrition globally and at every level, from national to local.

Global Tools and Approaches to Promote and Support Multisectoral Nutrition Programming

On a global level, FANTA has provided technical assistance and developed tools and methods to promote country-led, evidence-based, scalable multisectoral approaches that have improved nutrition and built sustainable capacity. FANTA's activities in this regard have included:

- Nutrition advocacy
- Development of multisectoral policies, action plans, and guidelines
- Nutrition costing and resource mobilization
- Analysis and use of nutrition gap data to strengthen agricultural linkages
- Multisectoral capacity building
- Multisectoral nutrition research
- M&E for integrated programming
- Knowledge sharing

Nutrition Advocacy

FANTA has supported nutrition advocacy in Bangladesh, Ghana, Ethiopia, Haiti, Uganda, Tanzania, Malawi, Zambia, and Guatemala by using the PROFILES tool. PROFILES consists of a set of computer-based models that calculate consequences across sectors if malnutrition does not improve over a defined time period. The tool also calculates benefits over the same time period of improved nutrition, including lives saved, disabilities averted, equivalent school years of learning gained, and economic productivity gains. Rather than asking various sectors to support nutrition for nutrition's sake, PROFILES estimates highlight the impact of improved nutrition on other sector goals through outcomes such as increased work capacity and productivity, decreased mortality, and improved learning ability.

FANTA has improved the tool significantly in the past 6 years, adding several new models that expand its scope and making the tool more user-friendly. The new models estimate

the effect of suboptimal breastfeeding on preschool overweight and obesity, the effect of chronic malnutrition (stunting) on learning ability as a measure of human capital, and the effect of suboptimal breastfeeding practices on child mortality. These updates have made the PROFILES tool even more effective for promoting multisectoral engagement to improve nutrition.

FANTA's support for the countries using PROFILES included nutrition advocacy planning, collaboration, and outreach with a multisectoral group of stakeholders, including actors from the health, agriculture, social welfare, gender, education, labor, and finance sectors. FANTA assisted with the development of materials to support the countries' nutrition advocacy plans, including briefs, presentations, talking points, and handbooks for reporting on nutrition using the estimates produced using PROFILES. These materials provide succinct quantitative information on the impact of malnutrition on health, education, agriculture, and economic development outcomes and include information on how stakeholders, such as government agents from different sectors, the media, private sector, and civil society, can work to improve nutrition.

In each country, FANTA worked with multisectoral government partners and stakeholders to develop a national nutrition advocacy plan using participatory methods, which includes a prioritized list of advocacy materials as well as a timeline for advocacy activities and development and dissemination of materials. This is a critical step in the process as the advocacy plan identifies key audiences to be targeted by the nutrition advocacy process and determines a specific "call to action" for each audience.

In Bangladesh, for instance, PROFILES results were shared with senior-level government policymakers representing 11 ministries in meetings aimed at convincing them of the need

for a national nutrition plan of action, increased resources for nutrition, and mainstreamed nutrition services. Meetings were also held with 30 civil society organizations working in family planning, agriculture, and education, to create a common nutrition advocacy platform and to promote greater coordination of nutrition work and activities.

FANTA has also developed a web-based manual for facilitation at the country level of a comprehensive and consultative nutrition advocacy process using PROFILES and nutrition costing. The manual is designed to be used by practitioners who work with government and nongovernment institutions who are invited to undertake a nutrition advocacy process in a given country.

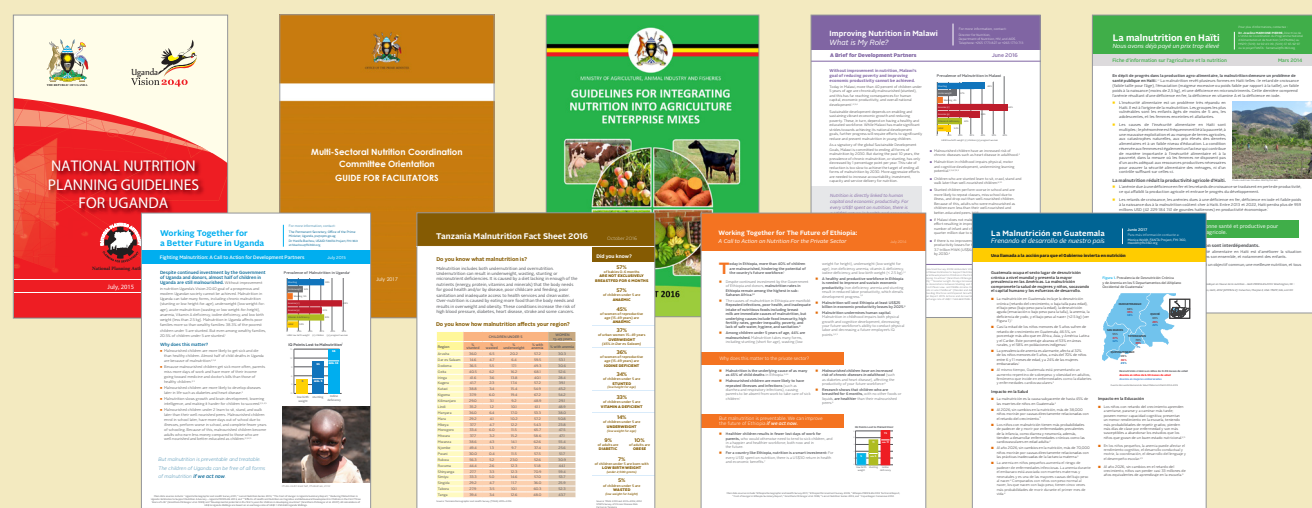
Multisectoral Policies, Action Plans, and Guidelines

The USAID Multi-Sectoral Nutrition Strategy 2014–2025 recognizes that policy development guides the concretization and expansion of nutrition actions from national institutions to the community. The presence of a strong policy foundation signals commitment to nutrition. Over the past 6 years, FANTA has worked with government leaders and high-level task forces in eight countries—Côte d'Ivoire, Guatemala, Indonesia, Malawi, Mozambique, Tanzania, Uganda, and Zambia—to strengthen or create

14 multisectoral nutrition plans, policies, and guidelines. Some examples of these documents are the *National Multi-Sectoral Nutrition Action Plan for Tanzania* and the *Uganda Multi-Sectoral Nutrition Coordination Committee Orientation Package*.

FANTA and the governments it has worked with recognize the power and necessity of national multisectoral policies and plans, not only because they describe how multiple sectors will work together, but because their development usually brings each sector to the table as part of a task force to determine priorities and approaches. This policy development and planning process also serves to forge links and strengthen bonds among sectors within a country.

In Uganda, FANTA has supported the implementation of the *Uganda Nutrition Action Plan (UNAP) 2011–2016*, which is signed by eight ministers from sectors ranging from agriculture and animal industries to trade and commerce and provides a multisectoral framework for improving nutrition.⁵ FANTA developed several tools that help strengthen the implementation of the UNAP: *The National Nutrition Planning Guidelines 2015*, the *Multi-Sectoral Nutrition Action Planning Training Module*, and the *Uganda Multi-Sectoral Nutrition Coordination Committee Orientation Package*, among others.



Nutrition Costing and Resource Mobilization

Successfully integrating nutrition interventions into health services requires careful planning, including development of budgets and allocation of sufficient funding and resources. To facilitate the financial and budgetary aspects of integration, FANTA has supported nutrition costing to help governments plan and budget for nutrition services. In each instance, using local information, an activity-based costing methodology was used to estimate the costs of such things as additional staff time, provision of micronutrient tablets, community nutrition education and promotion, systems strengthening, targeted food supplementation, deworming, and management of acute malnutrition.

FANTA supported the national governments of Bangladesh and Guatemala to undertake nutrition costing of comprehensive nutrition services at scale. In Bangladesh, briefs detailing the costing results have been used in meetings and workshops with members of Parliament, politicians, policy makers, civil society organizations, development partners, and the media, to convey the significance of the impact of nutrition on health, education, economic productivity, and the need for multisectoral coordination in nutrition. In both Bangladesh and Guatemala, the government used the cost estimates of providing nutrition services to reduce the malnutrition prevalence to make decisions about resource allocation in the national budget.

In addition, FANTA developed the Community-Based Management of Acute Malnutrition (CMAM) Costing Tool and the Nutrition Assessment, Counseling, and Support (NACS) Planning and Costing Tool. The tools are Microsoft Excel-based applications that estimate the resources and costs of establishing, maintaining, and/or expanding nutrition services within the health system. This information helps program managers determine whether plans for CMAM and NACS are financially feasible, identify resource requirements, and formulate effective implementation plans.

FANTA trained 51 staff from Guatemala's Ministry of Finance and the Ministry of Health in the use of the activity-based costing methodology so they will be able to continue performing costing analyses on their own.

In Ghana, the Ministry of Health (MOH)/Ghana Health Service (GHS) used FANTA's CMAM Costing Tool to develop a national strategy and plan for scaling-up CMAM within the health sector. The tool allowed the Ghanaian Government to analyze the costs associated with scaling up and institutionalizing CMAM within the national health system from 2013 to 2017. With support from USAID, WHO, UNICEF, FANTA, and other partners, the Government produced the National CMAM Scale-Up Costing Report, documenting its experience with the CMAM tool and the scale-up process.

In Malawi, health sector staff were trained to use the costing tool to develop a National Community-Based Management of Acute Malnutrition (CMAM) Operational Plan for 2017–2021, which outlines how to improve the quality of CMAM service delivery in Malawi and provides guidance on monitoring the plan's implementation. In addition, the MOH has used the NACS Planning and Costing Tool to develop a costed, national scale-up plan for Nutrition Care, Support, and Treatment services in Malawi.

Agricultural Linkages through Nutrient Gap Analysis

Improving dietary diversity is an important goal in countries with high levels of malnutrition and high poverty rates, especially in those where large numbers of children under 5 are stunted. A multisectoral approach that includes the nutrition and agriculture sectors is essential to successfully improve dietary diversity.

To help countries identify feasible options for improving dietary diversity, FANTA collaborated with WHO and other partners, including the

NOTES FROM THE FIELD

Côte d'Ivoire's Multisectoral Nutrition Resource Mobilization Roundtable

Obtaining sustainable financial and other resources for multisectoral nutrition programming presents a challenge for many countries. The Government of Côte d'Ivoire (GCI) took a unique approach to address this challenge. In 2016, the GCI asked USAID and FANTA to co-sponsor, with the Coordination Directorate of Côte d'Ivoire's National Nutrition Program, a resource mobilization roundtable to identify funds for Côte d'Ivoire's *National Multisectoral Nutrition Plan 2016–2020*, the country's first such plan, which FANTA helped develop. The event brought together 350 participants from 30 countries, and included representatives from UNICEF, the World Bank, the World Health Organization (WHO), the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), the World Food Programme (WFP), the African Development Bank, the European Union, USAID, and FHI 360, among other partners, as well as officials from the health, agricultural production, livestock and fisheries, water, sanitation, social protection, and education sectors. Overall, the event helped the country increase financial commitments to the plan by 77 percent, from 227 million CFA francs (US\$ 406,534) to 401 million CFA francs (US\$ 718,150).^a



Photo credit: Marc-Innocent, Abidjan.net

^a Based on exchange rate of August 18, 2017

London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine and Blue-Infinity, to develop a computer software program called Optifood. The software suggests locally available food combinations to fill nutrient gaps and meet people's nutritional needs.

Using Optifood, FANTA has supported Guatemala to identify the nutrients contained in locally available foods as well as the nutrient gaps in typical local diets. Guatemala has used these food combinations to form the basis of geographically specific food-based recommendations that have been tested and validated in the local population. By identifying gaps in the availability of essential nutrients in the local diet and the best food combinations to meet these gaps, Optifood has helped forge a link between the nutrition and agriculture sectors in Guatemala. Using the knowledge gained from Optifood analysis, FANTA and its partners have recommended that officials from these and other sectors improve availability of and access to nutrient-dense foods in local markets and build behavior change messages around their consumption. Using Optifood has also clarified the potential role of the private sector in providing missing nutrients through fortification or other means.

To share experiences with using Optifood in Guatemala, FANTA has developed technical briefs that describe the agriculture sector's role in improving dietary diversity to meet the nutrition needs of key populations. The briefs showcase the

critical importance of establishing a link between the agriculture and nutrition sectors to improve availability of and access to nutrient-dense local foods. Only when such foods are available and accessible is it possible to improve dietary diversity and reduce nutrient gaps. The briefs also provide recommendations to the agriculture sector on how to increase the availability and accessibility of nutrient-dense local foods.

Multisectoral Capacity Building

One of the challenges to multisectoral nutrition programming is that the education and work experience of most program staff and practitioners usually revolve around just one sector, which tends to promote the continuation of traditional single-sector programs. Therefore, learning across sectors may require additional education and training. With this in mind, FANTA developed a number of capacity building and training resources to facilitate the sustainable integration of nutrition interventions into other sectors, such as agriculture and health.

To address the nexus of agriculture and nutrition, FANTA helped to develop *Nutrition-Sensitive Agriculture Programming: An Online Training Course*, which guides agriculture program officers in applying key nutrition considerations to agriculture program design and implementation. It introduces the principles of nutrition-sensitive agriculture and provides guidelines for



The online "Nutrition-Sensitive Agricultural Programming" Course helps bridge the gap between nutrition and agriculture.

practitioners to use when designing nutrition-sensitive agriculture and food security programs, to ensure that such programs promote access to nutrient-rich foods and dietary diversity through agricultural programming. Developed by the Bureaus for Food Security and Global Health in collaboration with FANTA and Michigan State University, the course is hosted on the Agrilinks and USAID University websites. It has been used by people from over 111 countries.

In collaboration with the Instituto de Nutrición de Centroamérica y Panamá and the USAID/Nutri-Salud Project in Guatemala, FANTA developed a Spanish-language distance-learning course to support the seamless integration of nutrition into the health sector in Guatemala. Titled *Diplomado Nutrición Materno-Infantil en los Primeros 1,000 Días de Vida*, the course has built the capacity

of frontline health workers to support nutrition services for mothers and children during the first 1,000 days of life (pregnancy through the child's second birthday). The maternal and child nutrition distance learning course has now been institutionalized as a Ministry of Health (MOH) resource for in-service training and self-training. Five universities in the Western Highlands of Guatemala also offer an adapted version of the course as an elective in their health curricula.

Because nutrition plays an important role in preventing illness and reducing morbidity and mortality in people living with HIV, tuberculosis (TB), malaria, and other infectious diseases, FANTA has also supported the implementation of Nutrition Assessment, Counseling, and Support (NACS), an approach highlighted in USAID's Multi-Sectoral Nutrition Strategy as an effective means



Photo credit: FANTA

Some of the participants in Guatemala's first ever full-scale nutrition distance learning course show their certificates of completion.

of increasing access to nutrition services and strengthening the health system. With a focus on delivering client-centered nutrition services to people with infectious diseases, NACS has helped to prevent malnutrition and improve the nutritional status of people affected by HIV, TB, and other infectious diseases. In addition, FANTA's work to improve the nutritional status of people affected by infectious diseases, among other specific population groups, has included introducing, integrating, and scaling up health system services for Community-Based Management of Acute Malnutrition (CMAM)—a proven approach for effectively managing acute malnutrition.

Over the past 6 years, FANTA has supported training in NACS and/or CMAM in 15 countries, some of which received training in both service delivery approaches. FANTA has supported NACS training for a total of 7,780 health care providers and community health workers and has contributed to the production of 106 NACS-related guidelines, plans, training materials, and tools, including job aids, monitoring tools, and facility forms and registers. FANTA has also trained 4,190 health workers in CMAM and produced 12 guidelines, plans, training materials, and tools, to facilitate the integration of CMAM into health service delivery.

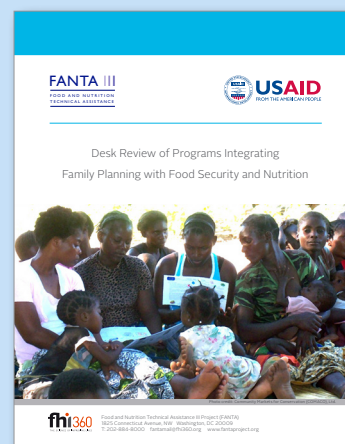
Multisectoral Nutrition Research

There is still much to learn about how to conduct multisectoral nutrition programming well and how best to integrate nutrition components into other sectors. FANTA has conducted a number of studies and reviews that contribute new evidence to the knowledge base in areas such as integrating family planning and food hygiene and safety into food security, agriculture, and nutrition programming.

Family Planning

Family planning and reproductive health services were prioritized in the USAID Multi-Sectoral Nutrition Strategy 2014–2025 as nutrition-sensitive interventions that address the underlying

and systemic causes of malnutrition. However, before that strategy was released, little was known on how to best integrate family planning into food security and nutrition programming. To address this gap, FANTA conducted an extensive desk review of programmatic experiences, examining integration models, platforms, contact points, and providers used for integrated service delivery. The review synthesized lessons from 102 health and multisectoral programs,⁶ provided a rich set of program examples, and produced three case studies to illustrate how various programs integrated family planning with nutrition and food security interventions.



The FANTA 2015 Desk Review of Programs Integrating Family Planning with Food Security and Nutrition provides an excellent overview of the evidence available regarding the impact of integrated nutrition and family planning programs and the need to improve research to better document the impact of integration.

—USAID Technical Guidance Brief: Nutrition, Food Security, and Family Planning

FANTA shared the results of the review through a USAID technical consultation, the USAID Mini University, presentations to maternal and child health working groups, and a webinar on lessons from the population, health, and environment sector. In 2016, the findings were presented at the International Conference on Family Planning and included in USAID technical guidance for its Multi-Sectoral Nutrition Strategy 2014–2025.

Following the recommendations in the review, FANTA helped to conduct research in Malawi on the systematic integration of family planning into development food assistance programs funded by FFP. The activity was intended as a proof of concept to generate learning on how to best integrate family planning into FFP projects, given overarching program design, local context, existing health system infrastructure, and beneficiary perspectives on family planning and service delivery. FANTA plans to document the process used for the assessment in a technical brief and to make the research tools available to other nutrition and food security projects interested in family planning integration.

Food Hygiene and Safety

Evidence suggests that food is at least as important as water as a route of diarrhea transmission in developing countries; therefore, information about food hygiene and safety is critical for nutrition, food security, and agriculture programming.⁷ In response to increased awareness about the impact of foodborne disease in developing countries, FANTA conducted a literature review of 23 studies relating to food hygiene to determine how donors and programs can reduce this burden at the household level. The review resulted in a report, titled *Literature Review on Effective Food Hygiene Interventions for Households in Developing Countries*, and a technical brief that documented interventions to improve food hygiene and safety and identified key actions to prevent foodborne illness, research and programming gaps in food hygiene, and short and long-term programmatic recommendations.

M&E for Integrated Programming

Measuring program results is important not only to gauge effectiveness in regard to goal achievement and to determine the level of impact on targeted beneficiaries. When integrated into programs from the start, ongoing monitoring and evaluation (M&E) also allows managers to adjust key design elements that improve program execution while the program is being implemented. Integrating M&E into program design is particularly beneficial for innovative and/or complex programs such as multisectoral nutrition programs because gaining access to data early allows managers to quickly discover inefficiencies, learn from them, and make changes to improve program implementation in situ.

Over the past 6 years, FANTA has been involved in several initiatives to facilitate the measurement of results of multisectoral nutrition activities. FANTA prepared the FFP *Indicator Handbook*, which provides performance indicator reference sheets for all FFP development indicators and tabulation instructions for select indicators. The Handbook serves as the principal reference document for FFP development indicators. FANTA also developed a framework for measuring gender integration and developed gender indicators across FFP's programming sectors.

FANTA has supported many M&E activities for development food assistance awards funded by FFP. These awards typically last 5 years and address food security using a multi-pronged monitoring and evaluating approach covering areas such as agriculture and livelihoods, maternal child health and nutrition, disaster risk reduction, and resilience. In this regard, FANTA has helped FFP enhance its M&E through the development of M&E policies and guidance, identification of new indicators, preparation of related reference documents, and organization of awareness-raising and capacity-building activities on the new indicators and M&E policies.

To improve awareness of FFP's development food assistance activities and communicate impact, FANTA has prepared annual FFP results summaries and impact stories that summarize the most significant annual project outcomes and key results from mid-term and final evaluation reports. These documents have allowed FFP to tell its story and demonstrate its achievements across multiple sectors.

Knowledge Sharing

Knowledge sharing facilitates coordination on multisectoral nutrition programming among international and national stakeholders by providing a mechanism for reviewing progress and sharing experiences and lessons learned in different countries. Consistent knowledge sharing is vital to avoid repeating past mistakes, replicate successful approaches, and improve collaboration. Over the past 6 years, FANTA has harnessed multiple avenues to engage stakeholders in knowledge-sharing activities, including producing a large number of publications and taking advantage of online communication channels such as social media outlets, webinars, multimedia products, and the project website. Since its re-launch in August 2013, over 173,000 people from 216 countries have visited the FANTA website on over 256,000 occasions, viewing a total of over 604,000 FANTA webpages (as of July 2017).

Drawing upon the results of its research and its operational work and experiences over the past 6 years, FANTA also has produced many technical guidance documents for USAID and its partners to support multisectoral nutrition programming. FANTA has shared this guidance via multiple dissemination channels, including webinars and distance learning courses, a monthly e-newsletter, social media, the project website, and in online discussion forums and collaborations with partners, governments, and other stakeholders.

In addition to supporting many online activities, the project also led, participated in, and supported a variety of international conferences, meetings, and knowledge-sharing events. For example in 2016, FANTA coordinated and hosted two Multi-Sectoral Nutrition Global Learning and Evidence Exchange (MSN-GLEE) events in Tanzania and Washington, DC. The purpose of these meetings was to improve global partners' understanding of relevant evidence related to multisectoral nutrition programming; lay out the foundational elements that make up effective multisectoral nutrition programs; share practical examples of country experiences, tools, and approaches; and strengthen understanding of multisectoral collaboration and coordination. The meetings brought together USAID mission staff, technical experts, government representatives, implementing partners, and other field practitioners working on nutrition, health, agriculture, economic growth, and water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) programs.

To support the operationalization of USAID's *Multi-Sectoral Nutrition Strategy 2014–2025*, FANTA helped produce a series of technical briefs to guide multi-sectoral nutrition programming, which are hosted on USAID's website. FANTA took the lead in producing briefs on community-based management of acute malnutrition (CMAM), nutrition costing, nutrition and early childhood development, and nutrition policy.

Country Experiences with Multisectoral Nutrition Programming

Guatemala: Optifood in Practice

Nearly half of children under 5 in Guatemala are stunted, and in some parts of Western Guatemala, as many as seven in 10 young children are stunted. In 2011, FANTA began providing Guatemala with technical assistance to address chronic malnutrition by strengthening its multisectoral efforts to integrate nutrition into health and agriculture interventions. FANTA has focused primarily on nutrition advocacy and costing, improving agriculture and nutrition linkages, and supporting the Government of Guatemala to strengthen integration of nutrition into health programs. One key FANTA area was identifying strategies to improve the nutritional quality of the diets of children 6–23 months and pregnant and lactating women in the Western Highlands, based on locally available foods.

To support the Government, FANTA, the Instituto de Nutrición de Centro América y Panamá (INCAP), and Nutri-Salud used Optifood to identify a set of evidence-based and population-specific dietary recommendations, known as food-based recommendations (FBRs), for these target populations. Once FANTA and INCAP tested the Optifood-derived FBRs in the local population to ensure that the recommended diet was practical, feasible, and affordable, FANTA worked with its partners to promote the dietary recommendations.

Because the analysis determined that obtaining adequate amounts of iron, zinc, and folate from local foods is difficult, FANTA and its partners realized that micronutrient supplementation was needed in some cases. Thus, in addition to promoting the use of micronutrient powder (MNP) and fortified blended flour (FBF), they also made several recommendations for the Government of Guatemala, development partners, and the private sector to review and improve MNP and FBF formulations.

FANTA then collaborated with the agriculture sector to improve the availability of and access to nutrient-dense local foods. The project worked with the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock, and Food to develop and disseminate extension messages and materials to support the production of nutritious foods. Optifood identified and to integrate nutrition-sensitive activities in the Ministry of Agriculture Livestock and Food 2017 plan of action. FANTA further strengthened linkages with the agricultural sector by organizing a participatory workshop with national and local staff from the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock, and Food and USAID partners on the integration of food-based recommendations into agricultural program planning.

Food-Based Recommendations for Pregnant and Lactating Women and Children 6–23 Months in the Western Highlands of Guatemala
Recommended foods to be consumed in addition to the regular diet

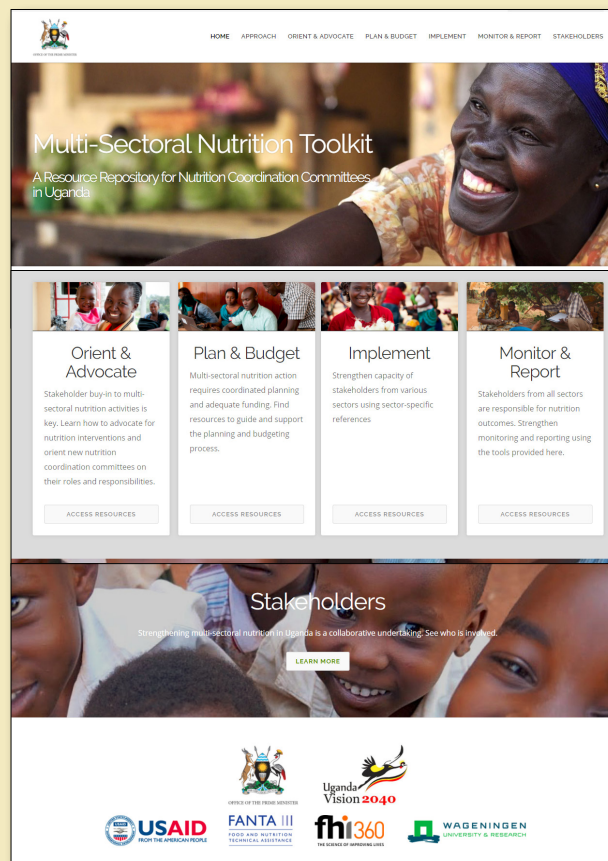
Children 6–11 months	Children 12–23 months	Pregnant/lactating women
BREASTFEED on demand PORRIDGE 1 1tbsp fortified blended flour with 1/3 cup boiled or treated water 5 times a week EGGS 1/2 well-cooked egg (yolk and white) 3 times a week BEANS 2 1tbsp mashed, pureed, or refried beans 3 times a week	BREASTFEED on demand PORRIDGE 2 1tbsp fortified blended flour with 1/3 cup boiled or treated water 4 times a week EGGS 1 well-cooked egg (yolk and white) 4 times a week BEANS 2 1tbsp whole, mashed, pureed, or refried beans 4 times a week VEGETABLES 1/2 cup cooked green leafy vegetables 4 times a week	THICK FORTIFIED DRINK 2 1tbsp fortified blended flour or oats with a cup of boiled or treated water once a day VEGETABLES 1 cup chopped vegetables, 1 tomato, or 1/2 a carrot twice a day LIVER 3 oz beef liver or chicken liver once a week

Uganda: Facilitating Local Coordination on Multisectoral Nutrition Activities

Because malnutrition has so many underlying causes, addressing it requires multisectoral, multi-stakeholder coordination at every level. While many countries recently have developed national nutrition units that are responsible for coordinating the nutrition agenda, efforts to coordinate local nutrition activities vary and are still nascent in many places. In Uganda, District Nutrition Coordination Committees (DNCCs) play an integral role in ensuring that multisectoral nutrition activities take place at the local government level. With a membership that includes representatives from the health, agriculture, gender and social development, education, planning, water, trade and industry, and administration sectors, DNCCs are responsible for planning, budgeting, overseeing implementation, and monitoring multisectoral nutrition activities in their districts.

To support the DNCCs in fulfilling their role, FANTA worked with the Office of the Prime Minister Nutrition Secretariat, the Ministry of Local Government, and the Wageningen Centre for Development Innovation to support a 2-year initiative to strengthen the DNCCs in 10 districts in Uganda and develop a model for scale-up. As part of this initiative, FANTA helped strengthen district-level leadership and governance through technical assistance to the DNCCs, including capacity strengthening in nutrition advocacy to promote multisectoral nutrition program planning and implementation. FANTA supported the sustainability of the DNCCs by training, mentoring, and orienting DNCC members; helping them develop multisectoral nutrition action plans, annual work plans, budgets, and district-level nutrition advocacy implementation plans; helping the DNCCs establish sub-county nutrition coordination committees; and developing DNCC support supervision and reporting tools. FANTA also held a training of trainers to support scale-up of multisectoral planning beyond the initial 10 DNCC districts and developed an online [Multi-Sectoral Nutrition Toolkit](http://www.multisectoralnutritiontoolkit.co.ug) of materials to support the DNCCs over the long-term.

The Toolkit provides resources to help national and sub-national actors improve coordination, delivery, and quality of multisectoral nutrition services. It contains nutrition-related resources that DNCCs and other multisectoral nutrition stakeholders have used at the local level for nutrition advocacy; multisectoral planning and budgeting; and program implementation, monitoring, and reporting. Under the purview of the Ugandan Government, the Multi-Sectoral Nutrition Toolkit website will continue to grow as new materials are developed and added. As the approach is scaled up across Uganda, the toolkit is expected to facilitate replication of the activities that were undertaken in the 10 initial districts. The toolkit can also serve as a resource for other countries seeking to improve multisectoral collaboration on nutrition at the sub-national level.



The Multi-Sectoral Nutrition Toolkit
www.multisectoralnutritiontoolkit.co.ug

Tanzania: Building an Enabling Environment for Multisectoral Nutrition Governance

With support from FANTA, the Prime Minister's Office (PMO) and the Tanzania Food and Nutrition Centre (TFNC) have made significant progress in strengthening multisectoral nutrition governance across key sectors and at the local government authority level, improving leadership ability, coordination, capacity, financing, and accountability. With Global Health Initiative funds made available through Feed the Future, FANTA provided technical assistance to build critical components of the enabling environment and to strengthen the multisectoral nutrition governance process, enabling Tanzania to scale up nutrition-sensitive and nutrition-specific actions nationally.

Examples of how FANTA supported the PMO include facilitating the revision of the National Food and Nutrition Policy, development of the companion policy implementation strategy, and facilitating multi-stakeholder engagement to ensure the package of policy documents was submitted to the inter-ministerial council and ultimately endorsed by the Cabinet Secretariat. FANTA also assisted the PMO to develop a 5-year National Multi-Sectoral Nutrition Action Plan (2016–2021), by leading the task force on multisectoral nutrition governance and nutrition-sensitive interventions, the largest of the six task forces working on the National Multi-Sectoral Nutrition Action Plan.

In the course of the work on the National Multi-Sectoral Nutrition Action Plan, FANTA supported implementation of the plan and provided additional content on WASH, food safety, and micronutrients for the revised National Food and Nutrition Policy and the policy implementation strategy.

In addition, FANTA provided technical assistance to the PMO and the Tanzania Food and Nutrition Centre to coordinate multisectoral stakeholders by chairing the Development Partners Group-Nutrition. As requested, FANTA also provided technical support for the High-Level Nutrition Steering Committee.

With FANTA support, the Government of Tanzania was able to meet key multisectoral nutrition policy commitments and report on progress at high-profile global meetings including the [International Conference on Nutrition-2](#), Scaling Up Nutrition (SUN) country calls and Global Gatherings, and the Nutrition for Growth Conference. Progress on food security and nutrition policy revision also has been documented in New Alliance for Food Security and Nutrition Compact progress reports.

FANTA provided the technical support we needed in terms of policy review, generating PROFILES estimates for evidence-based materials for advocacy. Our collaboration has been honest, transparent, and respectful, everything we expect from a partner. FANTA's flexibility and ability to adapt to the policy environment was critical. We now have a robust Multi-Sectoral Nutrition Action Plan after many stakeholder consultations. FANTA supported the policy revision and the critical components of multi-sectoral nutrition governance and nutrition-sensitive interventions. The multi-sectoral nature of nutrition is emerging, but coordination is the most challenging part. FANTA support helped shape the agenda so that we now have a way to support nutrition in a multi-sectoral fashion. This wasn't an easy concept, as it meant changing siloed thinking. Other countries are now coming to ask how we did it.



Obey Assery, Director, Coordination of Government Business Department, Prime Minister's Office

Democratic Republic of Congo: A Multisectoral Approach Improves the Lives of People Living with HIV

Nutrition plays a vital role in reducing morbidity and mortality among people living with HIV. A healthy diet can help people living with HIV adhere to treatment and better manage symptoms. In the Democratic Republic of Congo, FANTA and two other USAID projects, Livelihoods and Food Security Technical Assistance II (LIFT) and Applying Science to Strengthen and Improve Systems (ASSIST), collaborated on a three-pronged effort using nutrition assessment, counseling, and support (NACS) as the organizing framework to help the Ministry of Health (MOH) integrate nutrition into routine HIV care and treatment and connect clients to livelihood services.

From the start of the partnership in 2013, the projects planned their efforts jointly to ensure that each area of expertise was well covered in regard to training, materials, and support.

FANTA provided technical assistance and resources for implementing NACS at health facilities; LIFT helped to connect NACS clients to economic strengthening, livelihoods, and food security services in the community for further support; and ASSIST helped facilities improve the quality of NACS implementation. The three projects jointly designed a NACS training protocol and then helped the MOH conduct training to: 1) strengthen the competencies of health care workers to address the nutrition needs of people living with HIV and the MOH's capacity to integrate NACS into HIV care and treatment services (FANTA); 2) strengthen the capacity to address weaknesses in NACS service delivery using quality improvement methods (ASSIST); and 3) build the capacity of NACS providers to use a bi-directional referral system with economic strengthening and food security service providers in the community (LIFT). Among the outcomes of this collaborative work was that by strengthening the capacity of MOH and clinical partners to lead the integration of client-centered nutrition services into HIV care and treatment services, the Democratic Republic of Congo was able to scale up the NACS approach to over 100 health facilities, reaching over 25,000 clients with a comprehensive set of nutrition services.



A NACS coach shows a process diagram to help staff at a health facility in Kinshasa identify issues with implementation.

Photo credit: Aimee Nibagwire, FANTA/FHI 360

Ongoing Challenges for Multisectoral Nutrition Programming

Although progress has been made on many fronts to advance multisectoral nutrition programming, many ongoing challenges remain. Country experience has shown that problems can arise in multisectoral nutrition programs when any of the following circumstances are present:

- Weak collaboration and coordination exists among sectors, partners, and/or other stakeholders
- Insufficient human and financial resources are available to support multisectoral nutrition programming approaches
- Few incentives are offered to policymakers or practitioners to adopt multisectoral approaches to nutrition
- Policymakers and practitioners are pressured to show a quick return on investment
- Countries lack indicators or metrics to measure the results of multisectoral nutrition approaches or existing indicators do not capture the benefits of a multisectoral approach over a more siloed approach
- Nutrition is not seen as a driver of economics, profits, or other desired outcomes and therefore is not considered worthy of prominent attention or inclusion in development policies, planning, and design nor in the activities of other sectors

Lessons Learned on Multisectoral Nutrition Programming

- Advocacy efforts that aim to increase multisectoral attention to nutrition are more effective when they identify benefits for non-nutrition sectors rather than just try to persuade other sectors to adopt nutrition goals. For instance, nutrition advocacy is more likely to obtain the commitment of ministries of finance, labor, education, agriculture, and social services, when it also presents gains related to health, human capital, economic productivity, and education.
- Well-facilitated, high-level multisectoral and multi-stakeholder steering committees can serve as forums for strengthening national collaboration and coordination on multisectoral nutrition programming. In addition to the participation of multisectoral stakeholders, including civil society and private sector partners can broaden buy-in, extend the reach of multisectoral nutrition efforts, and reduce the chances of working at cross-purposes. Facilitation should focus on not only keeping discussions on track, but also building consensus on multisectoral nutrition programming priorities, setting targets, and ensuring that committee members follow up on action steps and commitments.
- Multisectoral plans, policies, and guidelines are key to ensuring that various sectors know what actions are expected of them to help achieve their country's nutrition objectives. The process of developing these documents also tends to increase commitment and understanding across sectors of the importance of nutrition for reaching national development goals.
- The education, training, and work experience of technical staff and government ministry agents tend to be along sectoral lines. Health service providers study courses specific to

their area of work, while agricultural extension agents and agronomists follow different study paths. Learning to work across sectors can require learning new terminologies, ways of thinking, calendars (e.g., the first 1,000 days, dry and rainy seasons), and approaches. Multisectoral engagement may require nutrition capacity building. For example, courses that guide agriculture program officers in applying nutrition considerations to their work may be needed, as well as guidance for health service providers on linking food insecure clients with economic strengthening opportunities.

- While evidence presented in the 2013 *Lancet* series on maternal and child nutrition clarifies the need for a multisectoral approach to addressing nutrition problems, the best ways to combine and apply multisectoral interventions are less clear. Programmatic experience and implementation research are still needed to fill gaps in understanding on topics such as the uptake of new practices, how to best integrate sectors at service delivery points, and how to determine the right intervention mix for maximum impact in different contexts.

Notes

- 1 United Nations Children's Fund. 1998. *The State of the World's Children, 1998: Focus on Nutrition*. Retrieved January 2017 from <http://www.unicef.org/sowc98/>.
- 2 Ruel, M.T. et al. 2013. "Nutrition-sensitive interventions and programmes: how can they help to accelerate progress in improving maternal and child nutrition?" *The Lancet*. 382:9891. pp. 536–551.
- 3 Lartey, A. (2008). "Maternal and child nutrition in Sub-Saharan Africa: challenges and interventions." *The Proceedings of the Nutrition Society*. 67:1. pp. 105-108.
- 4 United States Agency for International Development. 2014. *Multi-Sectoral Nutrition Strategy 2014-2025*, Washington, DC: USAID.
- 5 Government of Uganda. 2011. *Uganda Nutrition Action Plan 2011–2016: Scaling Up Multi -Sectoral Efforts to Establish a Strong Nutrition Foundation*.
- 6 In the areas of child survival; maternal, newborn, and child health; food assistance; population, health, and environment; and food security and agriculture.
- 7 Motarjemi, Y., Steffen, R., and Binder, H.J. 2012. "Preventive Strategy Against Infectious Diarrhea – A Holistic Approach." *Gastroenterology*. 143. pp. 516–519; Lanata, C.F. 2003. "Studies of Food Hygiene and Diarrhoeal Disease." *International Journal of Environmental Health Research*. 13. pp. S175–S183; Motarjemi, Y., Käferstein, F., Moy, G., and Quevedo, F. 1993. "Contaminated Weaning Food: A Major Risk Factor for Diarrhoea and Associated Malnutrition." *Bulletin of the World Health Organization*. 71. pp. 79–92; Käferstein, F.K. 2003. "Food Safety: The Fourth Pillar in the Strategy to Prevent Infant Diarrhea." *Bulletin of the World Health Organization*. 81:11. pp. 842–843; Esrey, S.A. and Feachem, R.G. 1989. "Interventions for the Control of Diarrhoeal Diseases among Young Children: Promotion of Food Hygiene." WHO/CDD/89.30. Geneva: WHO. Unpublished document.

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