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DNCC Initiative Approach to Strengthening Nutrition Governance in Uganda IMPLEMENTATION GUIDE



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Abbreviations and Acronyms

AWP	annual work plan
BCC	behaviour change communication
CNDPF	Comprehensive National Development Planning Framework
CSO	civil society organization
DNCC	District Nutrition Coordination Committee
FANTA	Food and Nutrition Technical Assistance III Project
MoLG	Ministry of Local Government
MSNAP	Multi-Sectoral Nutrition Action Plan
MSP	multi-stakeholder partnership
NCC	Nutrition Coordination Committee
NFPO	Nutrition Focal Point Officer
OPM	Office of the Prime Minister
TPC	technical planning committee
UNAP	Uganda Nutrition Action Plan 2011–2016
USAID	U.S. Agency for International Development

Who Should Use this Guide

The implementation of multi-sectoral nutrition activities is ultimately the responsibility of the local governments, with oversight and guidance provided by the Office of Prime Minister (OPM) through the Nutrition Secretariat. The intended users of this guide are those working alongside local governments and Nutrition Coordination Committees (NCCs) to improve nutrition outcomes through multi-sectoral approaches. This guide aims to present practical information to lead local governments, NCCs, and their stakeholders through the key steps of the approach to strengthen nutrition governance in Uganda.

How to Use this Guide

Learning and adaptation, based on the local government context and needs, are important characteristics of the approach. Therefore, this guide is not meant to be prescriptive. However, it does aim to ensure that the package of support provided to local governments and NCCs is both comprehensive and aligned with Uganda's national nutrition policies and guidance and local government systems and structures.

This guide includes a section for each of the five main approach components, with opportunities to integrate cross-cutting components highlighted throughout. Steps, key activities, and available resources are detailed within each section. Implementation strategies, based on the implementation experience from the DNCC Initiative, are also provided.

Using this guide will also help stakeholders navigate OPM's Multi-Sectoral Nutrition Toolkit website, which is a repository of references, tools, and resources meant to support the strengthening of nutrition governance and activity implementation. All the resources mentioned here, plus many more, can be found in the online toolkit at <https://nutrition.opm.go.ug/>.

Summary of Approach Components and Key Steps

Consensus Building

- Step 1: Secure Local Government and Stakeholder Buy-In
- Step 2: Ensure Joint Understanding Roles and Responsibilities
- Step 3: Agree on the Way Forward

Capacity Strengthening

- Step 1: Plan Multi-Sectoral Nutrition Activities
- Step 2: Identify Capacity Strengthening Needs
- Step 3: Provide Follow-Up Support

Advocacy

- Step 1: Develop A Nutrition Advocacy Plan
- Step 2: Identify Nutrition Champions

Monitoring and Reporting

- Step 1: Monitor Activity Implementation
- Step 2: Report on Progress towards Goals and Targets
- Step 3: Follow-up, Evaluate, and Address Concerns

Experience Sharing

- Step 1: Identify Challenges and Successes
- Step 2: Implement Lessons Learned

Introduction

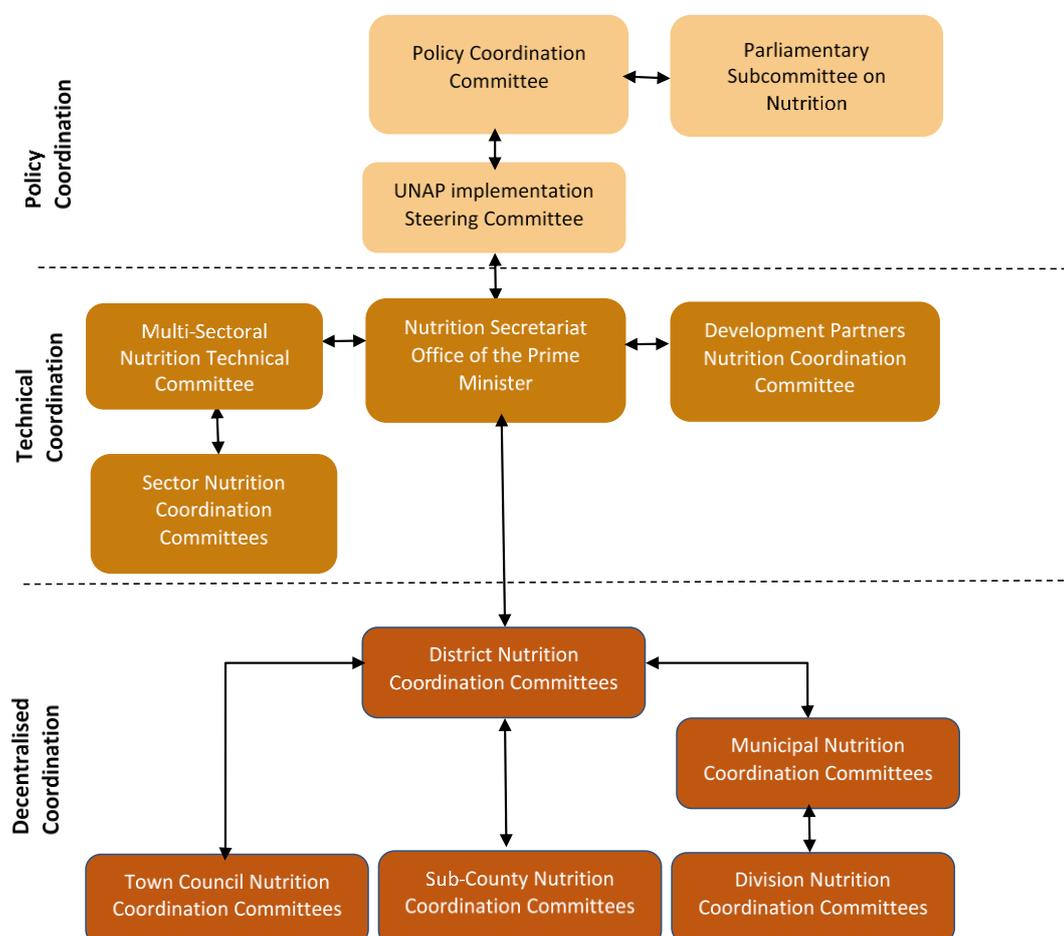
Malnutrition is a serious problem in Uganda that affects the health and well-being of children and adults and compromises the nation's economic productivity. According to the 2016 Uganda Demographic and Health Survey, 29 percent of children under 5 are stunted and 53 percent are anaemic. In addition, 32 percent of women are anaemic, putting them at risk of giving birth to low birth weight babies that are more likely to suffer from the consequences of malnutrition. The causes of malnutrition are found at the individual, household, and societal levels and must be jointly addressed by all government sectors to break the cycle of malnutrition and achieve lasting improvements.

What Is Nutrition Governance?

Nutrition governance is the process and actions taken to institutionalise nutrition as a part of existing government structures, policies, and frameworks.

Recognizing the complexity of addressing malnutrition, the Government of Uganda developed the Uganda Nutrition Action Plan 2011–2016 (UNAP), which presents nutrition as a cross-cutting issue that must be addressed by all sectors and departments. To support this effort, a multi-sectoral nutrition coordination framework (Figure 1) was developed to establish a structure for comprehensive nutrition governance action at the policy, technical, and decentralised levels of government.

Figure 1: Uganda National Nutrition Coordination Framework



The Role of NCCs within the Coordination Framework

NCCs are responsible for nutrition governance at the decentralised level. All levels of local government (district, municipality, town council, sub-county, and division) should have an NCC, with district nutrition coordination committees (DNCCs) playing an oversight and coordination role for their entire district. NCCs are composed of representatives from the following key departments: health, agriculture, gender and social development, education, planning, water, trade and industry, and administration. Their members are expected to support strong nutrition governance by fulfilling the following roles and responsibilities:

Technical guidance: NCCs provide nutrition technical guidance at all local government levels, including to departments, partners, technical planning committees (TPCs), and councils to ensure proper nutrition planning and quality of service delivery. This also includes identification of capacity strengthening needs.

Coordination and partnership with nutrition stakeholders: NCCs provide a platform through which nutrition stakeholders from all departments can share information and build consensus on how best to address nutrition problems, use available resources, and harmonise the implementation of nutrition activities in the local government. NCCs also have the responsibility to identify and build partnerships with nutrition stakeholders who can contribute to local government nutrition goals and objectives.

Monitoring and reporting: NCCs conduct joint monitoring and support supervision visits to their lower local government NCCs, departments, and partners to provide oversight to activity implementation. NCCs are also responsible for submitting quarterly reports. Reporting requirements capture progress on nutrition governance activities and on the implementation of activities in the multi-sectoral nutrition action plan.

Planning, budgeting, and resource mobilisation: NCCs ensure integration and alignment of nutrition interventions in all local government development planning frameworks, including development plans, multi-sectoral nutrition action plans (MSNAPs), annual work plans (AWPs), and budgets. NCCs should also mobilise internal and external resources to address resource gaps (e.g. local revenues, partners, proposal development).

Advocacy: NCCs conduct advocacy to raise nutrition awareness among their local government leaders. NCCs should also identify and work with nutrition champions to support advocacy efforts.

Nutrition behaviour change communication (BCC) and social mobilisation: NCCs should utilise available platforms such as the media, community dialogue meetings (*barazas*), and community outreach to carry out BCC for nutrition. NCCs also take the lead in ensuring that nutrition BCC messaging and social mobilisation efforts are harmonised across partners and lower local governments.

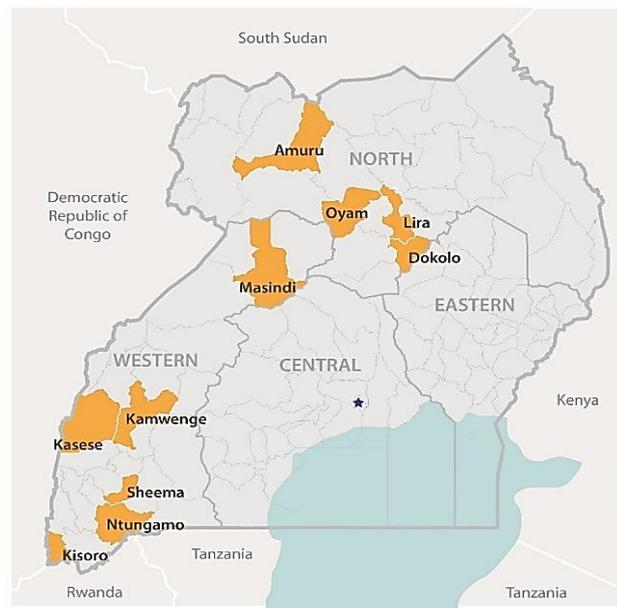
The Approach to Strengthening Nutrition Governance

The OPM Nutrition Secretariat and the Ministry of Local Government (MoLG), in collaboration with the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) and with technical support from the Food and Nutrition Technical Assistance III Project (FANTA) and Wageningen Centre for Development Innovation undertook a 2-year process in 10 districts (Figure 2), known as the DNCC Initiative, to develop an approach to strengthen nutrition governance.

The DNCC Initiative used the multi-stakeholder partnerships (MSP)¹ approach to bring together Uganda's nutrition stakeholders from all levels of government. MSP is an adaptive process that engages different perspectives and points of view, enabling diverse stakeholders to agree on common objectives.

The lessons learned through the implementation of the DNCC Initiative were used to develop a comprehensive approach to strengthening nutrition governance. The key components of the approach are described below and presented in Figure 3.

Figure 1: DNCC Initiative Districts

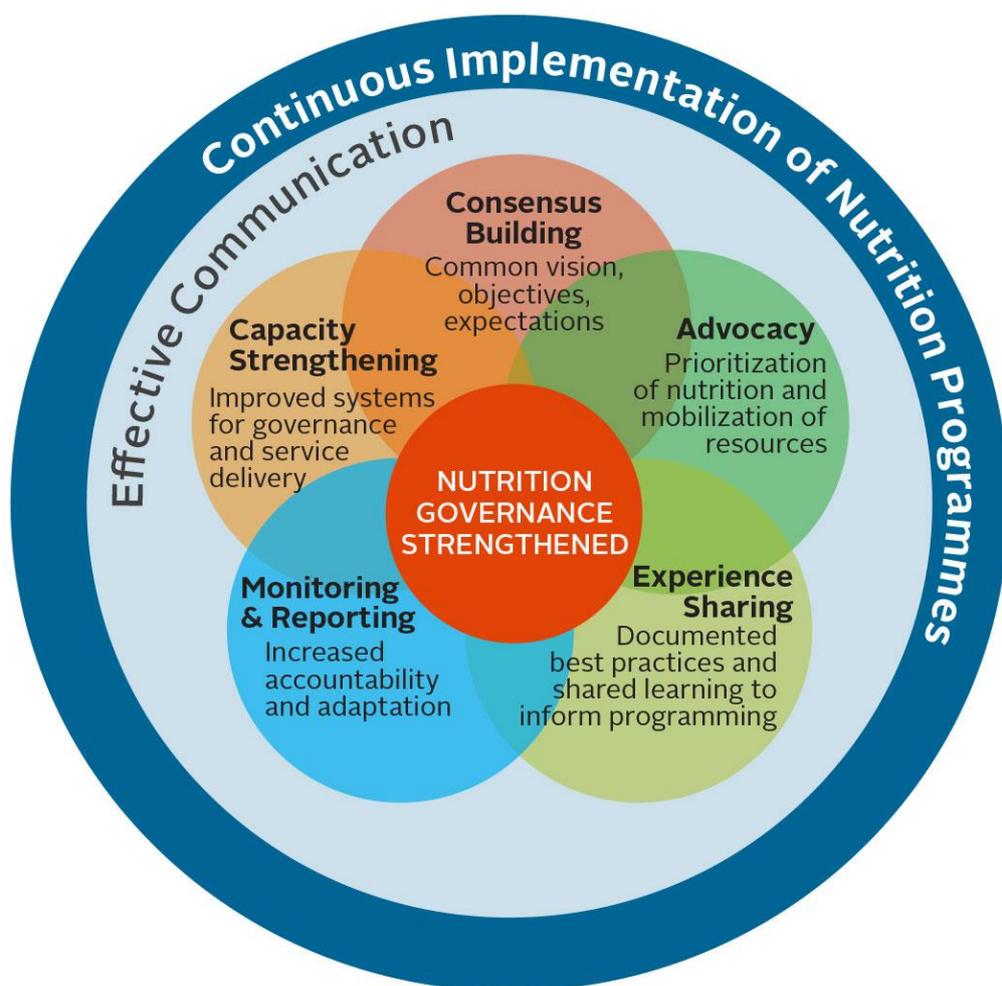


Consensus building to agree on a common vision, objectives, and expectations: The consensus-building process helps stakeholders agree on and define the problem to be addressed, clarify expectations about stakeholder partnerships, and address conflicts that may arise due to differing views and competing priorities. Providing forums for open discussion and orienting nutrition stakeholders on the roles and responsibilities of nutrition governance help to ensure joint understanding and ownership of the process. A key activity that supports consensus building is to orient NCCs and their stakeholders on national-level policies and frameworks, as well as on NCC roles and responsibilities. This opens the dialogue about how to initiate multi-sectoral nutrition activities in local governments.

Capacity strengthening to improve systems for governance and service delivery: Two types of capacity strengthening are required: (1) nutrition governance capacity strengthening, through training on planning, budgeting, monitoring, and reporting; advocacy; and consensus building; and (2) department-specific trainings to strengthen nutrition capacity and technical skills. Governance training targets all NCC members, whereas department-specific trainings target local government technical staff, such as health workers, agriculture extension workers, and community development officers, to ensure they have the necessary skills to integrate nutrition into their regular responsibilities.

¹ To learn more about MSP visit www.mspguide.org.

Figure 2: Approach to Strengthen Nutrition Governance



Advocacy to encourage prioritisation of nutrition and mobilisation of resources:

Effective advocacy helps community members and political, technical, and traditional leadership appreciate and prioritise nutrition. NCC members need advocacy skills to help them secure this buy-in, lobby for the approval of multi-sectoral nutrition action plans by councils, and secure funding for planned activities. An important activity that helps NCCs take on this advocacy role is holding a local government-level advocacy planning workshop to develop an advocacy plan and talking points for key audiences.

Monitoring and reporting to promote increased accountability and adaptation: A strong monitoring and reporting system facilitates learning, creates linkages between bottom-up and top-down structures, and generates accountability. A well-functioning monitoring and reporting system ensures that NCCs can respond to the dynamic settings in which they work, adapting strategies and activities or seeking support as needed to ensure targets are met and results are achieved. An important activity in this area is joint support supervision visits. These visits should include national- and local-level governments and stakeholders. During these visits, fulfilment of roles and responsibilities can be tracked, problems can be identified, and support actions can be planned.

Experience sharing to document and share best practices to inform programming:

Through sharing district experiences, promising practices, and challenges faced in other districts, stakeholders learn how to deal with challenges and conflicts.

Additionally, national level stakeholders learn from local government experiences, which encourages institutional changes that are responsive to local needs, such as developing national policies, guidelines, and strategies to facilitate improvements in local government processes.

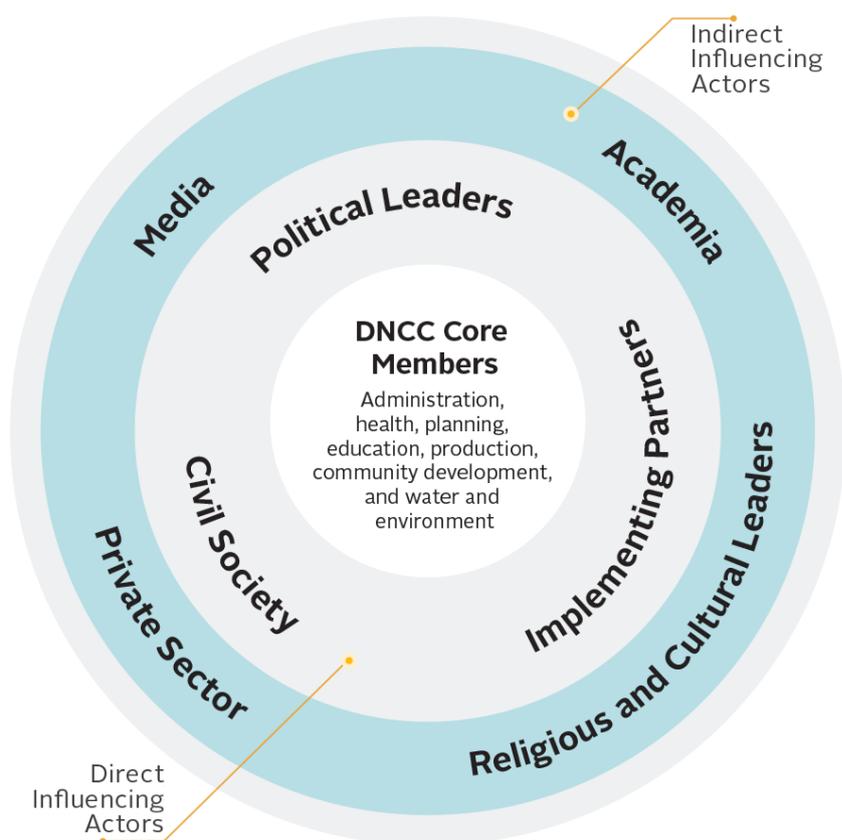
The approach includes two cross-cutting components. **Effective communication** influences all aspects of the approach and is critical to maintaining stakeholder coordination and promoting learning. **Continuous implementation of nutrition programmes** by working through and strengthening existing systems helps avoid the creation of parallel structures.

Consensus Building

Consensus building serves as the entry point into the overall nutrition governance strengthening process. It includes identifying stakeholders, defining roles and responsibilities, and ensuring everyone has a shared understanding of the local government’s nutrition needs and priorities

Determining who to involve in the consensus building process is critical. Two of the primary targets for consensus building are the local government’s political and technical leadership. Political leadership encompasses the members of the council, who have the authority to approve plans and allocate resources. Technical leadership, which includes members of the TPC and the NCC, helps set the nutrition agenda, plan activities, and oversee implementation. However, many other stakeholders can influence NCC members and local government nutrition priorities. Non-government stakeholders, such as implementation partners, civil society organizations (CSOs), and religious and cultural leaders, should be included in the consensus building process in consultation with the local government political and technical leadership. Figure 4 illustrates some of the direct and indirect influencing actors that engage with NCCs.

Figure 4: NCC Core Members and Influencing Actors



Strategies for Consensus Building

Consensus building activities should be conducted in coordination with OPM and MoLG to emphasize that the process of strengthening nutrition governance is part of the national strategy to improve nutrition.

Local government stakeholders, especially political and technical leadership, should be engaged early and often throughout the nutrition governance strengthening process.

Certain consensus building activities, such as orientations, may need to be repeated as key stakeholders change. This can be the result of routine civil servant staff rotation, elections, or the start-up and closure of implementing partner projects and programmes.

Step 1: Secure Local Government and Stakeholder Buy-In

Purpose and Guidance

To introduce local government leadership and their stakeholders to the nutrition governance strengthening approach and gain their buy-in.

These meetings should emphasize multi-sectoral nutrition as a national priority and explain the proposed approach to strengthen nutrition governance and expand the implementation of nutrition activities within the local government.

Key Activities

Stakeholder sensitization meetings/district entry meetings

Resources

Nutrition Call to Action Briefs and Fact Sheets for Key Audiences

Uganda Nutrition Action Plan

Step 2: Ensure Joint Understanding of Roles and Responsibilities

Purpose and Guidance

To explain national nutrition policies and priorities and the roles and responsibilities of local governments, NCCs, and their stakeholders to support and implement them.

OPM has an orientation package for NCC members that highlights national priorities and the requirements of local governments to support multi-sectoral nutrition.

Key Activities

NCC orientation

Resources

[Multi-Sectoral Nutrition Coordination Committee Orientation Package](#)

Step 3: Agree on the Way Forward

Purpose and Guidance

To agree on next steps based on the outcomes of the consensus building process and begin to outline nutrition governance strengthening activities through the development of a nutrition coordination work plan.

Annex 1 of this guide provides a rapid assessment checklist to determine the current capacities of the NCC. Using the results of the assessment and the outcomes of the consensus building process, stakeholders can develop a coordination work plan that details the nutrition governance actions to be undertaken by NCCs and stakeholders to ensure that roles and responsibilities are being fulfilled.

Key Activities

NCC rapid assessment

Nutrition coordination work plan development

Resources

NCC Rapid Assessment Checklist (Annex 1)

[Multi-Sectoral Nutrition Coordination Committee Orientation Package](#)

[Nutrition Coordination Committee Quarterly Reporting Template](#)



Opportunities for Effective Communication

To ensure successful coordination and collaboration, all key stakeholders, including district political and technical leadership, development and implementing partners, and CSOs, among others, must be identified, invited to participate, and informed about the process and proposed activities (see Figure 4 above for an illustration of key NCC stakeholders). Once your nutrition coordination work plan is developed and agreed upon, you should share it with all key stakeholders. For those stakeholders who couldn't participate directly in the plan development, consider giving them an opportunity to provide feedback. Communicating about your plan and listening to the priorities and concerns of others helps you gain buy-in and support for your efforts.

Capacity Strengthening

Each local government will have unique capacity strengthening needs, based on its level of experience with multi-sectoral nutrition and the nutrition priorities that have been identified through the consensus building process.

To ensure that they can fulfil their roles and responsibilities, NCC members may require capacity strengthening on nutrition governance skills, including planning and budgeting, monitoring and evaluation, and reporting. Department staff, including health workers, production officers, and community development officers, need the skills necessary to implement the nutrition plans the NCC and local government establish, including department-specific nutrition technical training.

Strategies for Capacity Strengthening

Capacity strengthening can take many forms, including training, mentoring, and support supervision. A combination of these methods should be used to ensure a sustainable and high-quality implementation of activities.

Tailor nutrition technical information to the target audience and make it relevant to their day-to-day work. For example, an agriculture extension worker may not need to know how to identify clinical signs of malnutrition, but he may need to know the basics on which crops can contribute to good health and nutrition. As nutrition becomes increasingly integrated into local government and department activities, you can always revisit training content or hold additional refresher trainings on new topics.

Step 1: Plan Multi-Sectoral Nutrition Activities

Purpose and Guidance

To ensure a comprehensive approach to tackling malnutrition issues and planning technical and financial resource requirements.

The nutrition planning process should be the first major activity undertaken by NCCs following their orientation, as it lays the ground work for all other nutrition governance strengthening activities. See Box 2 for more details about how nutrition fits into the national planning process.

Key Activities

- Integrate nutrition into local government development plan
- Multi-sectoral nutrition action planning training
- Annual work planning and budgeting for nutrition
- MSNAP mid-term review

Resources

- Multi-Sectoral Nutrition Action Planning Training Module
- Local Government Planning Guidelines
- National Nutrition Planning Guidelines

Step 2: Identify Capacity Strengthening Needs

Purpose and Guidance

To ensure NCC members and department staff have the technical skills required to implement the activities identified in the local government's MSNAP.

Once the MSNAP is approved, NCC members and their stakeholders should review the technical requirements for the planned activities and identify existing capacity gaps. These should be addressed through targeted, department-specific trainings and mentoring.

Key Activities

Implementation of technical trainings, based on identified capacity gaps. See Box 1 for examples of types of technical training.

Resources

Local government MSNAP

For the most up-to-date selection of department-specific training materials, visit the [Implement](#) section of the Multi-Sectoral Nutrition Toolkit website.

Step 3: Provide Follow-Up Support

Purpose and Guidance

To ensure sustainable and high-quality delivery of nutrition services.

Training alone is often not sufficient to ensure transfer and mastery of skills. Support supervision and mentorship are important to reinforce what has been communicated during training sessions. This can be done, to some extent, during routine NCC monitoring and support supervision activities (see section on Monitoring and Reporting). However, department-specific mentoring and support supervision is also recommended.

Key Activities

Frequency and length of monitoring and support supervision will vary by activity. Refer to guidance provided in the specific training packages used.

Resources

Materials provided on the [Monitor and Report](#) section of the Multi-Sectoral Nutrition Toolkit website can help inform these activities.



Opportunity for Effective Communication

Nutrition plans should be shared with stakeholders so that their planned activities align with and contribute to government priorities. While NCCs take the lead to ensure that nutrition is incorporated into local government plans and budgets, it is important that stakeholders are given an opportunity to provide feedback on the plans. This can lead to opportunities for further coordination, collaboration, and resource sharing.



Opportunity to Strengthen Systems

Local governments follow nationally established planning and budgeting frameworks and guidelines. It is important that nutrition is integrated into these existing systems to ensure that it becomes an integrated and sustainable part of local government planning, budgeting, and service provision. For example, obtaining council approval for the MSNAP means it is an official plan and therefore eligible for funds to be allocated against its specific activities. As a result, activities are integrated into and implemented through AWP and budgets, and monitored through routine local government accountability mechanisms.

Box 1: Sample of Types of Department-Specific Nutrition Trainings

Nutrition, Assessment, Counselling, and Support (NACS) training for health facility staff

Health Management Information System for nutrition training for district and facility health workers and bio-statisticians

Orientation on Nutrition in the Agriculture Enterprise Mix for extension workers

Orientation on Community Mobilisation and Food and Nutrition Security for community development workers

Box 2: Nutrition in the Uganda National Planning Cycle

The Comprehensive National Development Planning Framework (CNDPF) guides Uganda's long-, medium-, and short-term planning processes. According to the CNDPF, all plans, including those of sectors, departments, and local governments, should align to Uganda's long-term strategic vision. Local governments develop 5-year medium-term development plans that align with the 5-year National Development Plan. AWP for local governments and sectors are derived from the 5-year development plans. The Local Government Planning Guidelines identify nutrition as a cross-cutting issue to be included by all sectors and local governments in their planning documents. To ensure that nutrition is planned and budgeted for on an annual basis, it needs to be incorporated into district 5-year development plans. NCCs spearhead the development of district 5-year MSNAPs, which provide further guidance on nutrition activities. Like the 5-year development plans, the MSNAP is approved by the council and is reviewed and revised, as needed, mid-way through the 5-year planning period. NCCs then develop annual nutrition implementation work plans that are monitored on a quarterly basis. The National Nutrition Planning Guidelines provide detailed guidance on the integration of nutrition into local government plans. Figure 5 summarizes the nutrition planning process.

Figure 5: Uganda Nutrition Planning Process



Advocacy

Advocacy for nutrition is necessary to encourage the prioritisation of nutrition and mobilisation of resources to implement activities.

The Nutrition Advocacy and Communication Strategy for the Uganda Nutrition Action Plan 2015-2019 should inform advocacy activities. The strategy emphasizes the importance of nutrition advocacy and communication at all government levels. Local governments are expected to operationalise this strategy by developing district-specific nutrition advocacy plans that feed into the national strategy.

Strategies for Advocacy

Advocacy efforts should never stop—there are always new stakeholders to bring on board and new priorities to be addressed. However, advocacy can play a critical role during some key moments in the nutrition governance strengthening process:

- Ensuring buy-in during the consensus building process
- MSNAP finalisation and approval by the local government council
- Resource mobilisation during planning and budgeting processes

Always keep in mind which stakeholders have financial resources, technical resources, and political influence. This can help inform and focus your advocacy efforts.

The Nutrition Focal Point Officer (NFPO) should serve as a strong advocate for nutrition in the local government. Ideally, the NFPO should also be a member of the local government's TPC. This gives the NFPO a high-level platform from which to keep nutrition prominent on the local government agenda and to lobby for resource allocation and partner support.

Step 1: Develop a Nutrition Advocacy Plan

Purpose and Guidance

To identify target audiences for advocacy efforts, plan advocacy strategies, and develop key messages.

This activity works best when it follows the development of the local government MSNAP, as NCC members will have identified their nutrition priorities and objectives, giving them a focus for their advocacy efforts.

Key Activities

Nutrition advocacy planning workshop

Resources

[Nutrition Advocacy Planning Workshop Guide for Districts and Lower Local Governments](#)

[Nutrition Advocacy and Communication Strategy for the Uganda Nutrition Action Plan 2015-2019](#)

Step 2: Identify Nutrition Champions

Purpose and Guidance

To build and sustain momentum and political will to support multi-sectoral nutrition activities.

Advocacy is an ongoing process and requires constant engagement with local government decision makers. Nutrition champions can help NCC members ensure that nutrition remains high on the local government agenda. Champions should be selected based on the local government's priorities and its unique context, and can include a broad range of people, from religious and cultural leaders, and extension workers, to a care group lead mother.

Key Activities

Identify nutrition champions and undertake advocacy activities, per the local government nutrition advocacy plan.

Resources

Local government nutrition advocacy plan

Additional resources and sample materials related to nutrition advocacy can be found on the [Orient and Advocate](#) page of the Multi-Sectoral Nutrition Toolkit website.



Opportunity for Effective Communication

Successful advocacy requires effective communication. As with the nutrition plans such as the MSNAP, the advocacy plan should be shared with stakeholders to ensure that advocacy messages are harmonised and that a joint effort can be made to share your message with your target audiences.



Opportunity to Strengthen Systems

When developing the nutrition advocacy plan, consider what advocacy platforms are used by the local government and stakeholders. Integrating nutrition into advocacy platforms that already reach your target audiences can help ensure your messages are heard.

Monitoring and Reporting

A good monitoring and reporting system facilitates learning and creates accountability. The process of building a strong monitoring and reporting system begins with the MSNAP development process, which includes the development of a monitoring and evaluation plan to track progress towards achieving MSNAP targets, objectives, and overall nutrition goal. From there, quarterly monitoring and support supervision visits, along with quarterly reporting, help track progress and identify challenges that may need to be addressed.

Strategies for Monitoring and Reporting

Monitoring and support supervision visits should build upon one another. This can be achieved by ensuring that feedback is provided after each visit and that agreed-upon actions are followed up at subsequent visits. Consistent follow-up and feedback also helps to ensure accountability to meet agreed-upon targets and plans.

Additional oversight to ensure quality and timeliness of reporting may be necessary when NCCs begin reporting on their activities.

Step 1: Monitor Activity Implementation

Purpose and Guidance

To track progress towards the longer-term objectives set out in the MSNAP and AWP targets.

During monitoring and support supervision visits, fulfilment of NCC roles and responsibilities can be tracked, challenges identified, and corrective actions planned. OPM and the Multi-Sectoral Nutrition Technical Committee are responsible for providing monitoring and support supervision visits to DNCCs. DNCCs are responsible for providing monitoring and support supervision visits to NCCs at the municipal, town council, and sub-county levels. Municipal nutrition coordination committees provide monitoring and supervision to divisions.

In addition to monitoring and support supervision of nutrition governance activities and NCC performance, sector-specific monitoring and support supervision visits are also encouraged to monitor the quality of nutrition service delivery.

Key Activities

Quarterly monitoring and support supervision visits

Department-specific supervision (see section on Capacity Strengthening)

Resources

Monitoring and Support Supervision Checklists

Step 2: Report on Progress towards Goals and Targets

Purpose and Guidance

To create accountability regarding the achievement of agreed-upon goals and targets.

NCCs are required to submit quarterly reports to OPM as well as provide updates and raise technical issues with the local government TPC and council. Tracking progress allows NCCs to re-evaluate strategies and activities as required to ensure goals and targets are met.

Key Activities

Submission of quarterly reports.

Participation in TPC and council meetings.

Resources

[NCC Quarterly Reporting Template](#)

Step 3: Follow-up, Evaluate, and Address Concerns

Purpose and Guidance

To review and revise activities, as required, based on findings from monitoring and support supervision visits and quarterly reporting to ensure that goals and targets are achieved.

NCCs should have regular meetings to discuss the status of nutrition activity implementation and progress within the local government. Results from support supervision visits and reporting should be discussed and adaptations to strategies and approaches made as required.

Key Activities

NCC meetings to discuss progress and ensure action is taken

Resources

NCCs should take action based on identified gaps and weaknesses as identified through support supervision and reporting and refer to resources, tools, and training packages as appropriate to the need. When doing so, consider what activities will help keep goals and targets on track. Has nutrition become less of a priority? Consider revisiting consensus building and advocacy activities. Is the level of quality of nutrition services low? Consider additional capacity strengthening activities by targeting sectors where services are weakest or need improved integration.



Opportunity for Effective Communication

Monitoring data and reports are not meaningful unless findings are shared. NCC members should keep local government leadership, such as TPC and council members, apprised of progress towards nutrition goals and targets. They should also share information with stakeholders who may be able to help them address challenges. Likewise, all stakeholders working on nutrition in the local government should share their data and reporting with the NCC.



Opportunity to Strengthen Systems

NCC reporting should align with existing local government reporting to reinforce and benefit from established accountability mechanisms. In addition to completing NCC-specific reporting templates, NCCs should also include information on nutrition through the Programme Based Budgeting System reporting procedures. They can also capitalize on opportunities to integrate department and NCC monitoring into existing monitoring and support supervision mechanisms, such as quarterly district health management team supervision visits to health facilities or education department school inspections.

Experience Sharing

Experience sharing strengthens NCC operations by providing the opportunity to learn about best practices from other local governments and work together to find solutions to common problems. In turn, experience sharing provides implementing partners with an opportunity to better understand NCC operations; hear about their plans, successes, and challenges; and identify areas of potential support.

Strategies for Experience Sharing

Experience sharing events should use a mix of methods to generate discussion and share best practices and lessons learned. Examples include individual presentations from local governments, partners, or sectors; panel discussions; and group work around key topics. (See Box 3 for sample discussion topics.)

During the DNCC Initiative, experience sharing events were held once a year; however, more events can be held based on available resources. At least one event should be held each year to promote continued learning.

Experience sharing does not need to be limited to experience sharing meetings. Other activities, such as visits to other districts, newsletters, and mobile messaging groups, can be used to keep in touch with others who are implementing similar activities.

Step 1: Identify Challenges and Successes

Purpose and Guidance

To reflect on what has been achieved and identify what can be strengthened further.

Experience sharing is closely linked with monitoring and reporting in that it requires NCCs and their stakeholders to determine whether what they have set out to do has been accomplished. Experience sharing allows these lessons to be shared with a wider audience and brings new ideas that can be integrated into existing plans.

Key Activities

Experience sharing meeting (or other type of event)

Resources

See Box 3 for sample discussion questions and topics

Step 2: Implement Lessons Learned

Purpose and Guidance

To integrate promising practices and lessons learned to address challenges and improve quality and efficiency of systems.

Ideas taken from experience sharing events should be incorporated into plans, as appropriate. Opportunities such as annual work planning and the mid-term MSNAP review are times when these changes can be formally integrated into plans.

Key Activities

Document best practices and lessons learned throughout implementation, in addition to routine reporting.

Resources

Examples of documented experiences and lessons learned from the DNCC Initiative can be found on the [Approach](#) page of the Multi-Sectoral Nutrition Toolkit Website.



Opportunity for Effective Communication

Experience sharing overlaps a great deal with monitoring and reporting. Both require NCCs to reflect on what was intended and what has been achieved. However, monitoring and reporting are introspective activities, including reviewing an NCC's targets, goals, and challenges. Experience sharing looks beyond the NCC's local government for ideas and answers that can be applied to their different context. Because of this, the audience for experience sharing activities is much broader, and messages about lessons learned and best practices should be shared widely, so that others can apply them.

Box 3: Sample Experience Sharing Topics and Questions

Advocacy and Awareness Creation

What opportunities/platforms have been used for advocacy and awareness creation? Which were the most/least successful? Share some outcomes of your advocacy efforts.

Who needs to be targeted for further advocacy and why?

What challenges are the local governments facing that could be addressed/improved through advocacy efforts?

Stakeholder Coordination

How has the local government brought nutrition stakeholders together and for what purpose?

What practices have helped to encourage positive stakeholder interactions in the local government? Which were the most/least successful?

What are examples of good coordination mechanisms used by the local government? Can these be built upon or replicated for nutrition?

Resource Mobilisation

What resources has the NCC used for nutrition coordination and/or implementation?

How has the private sector been engaged to support implementation of nutrition activities?

MSNAP Implementation

What nutrition activities from the MSNAP have you undertaken in the local government?

What support is available to assist with the implementation of MSNAPs?

Monitoring and Reporting

What opportunities have the NCCs used to conduct integrated support supervision for nutrition?

How are the findings from monitoring and support supervision visits shared and used by stakeholders?

What have been the outcomes from the support supervision activities?

Capacity Strengthening

How has capacity strengthening of NCC members influenced nutrition programming?

What are the outcomes of capacity strengthening efforts? What capacity strengthening techniques or topic areas have produced the best results?

How can capacity strengthening help to address challenges you might be facing?

Figure 6. Timeline of Key Activities

		Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
Consensus Building	Stakeholder sensitisation meetings	✓				
	NCC rapid assessment	✓				
	NCC orientation	✓				
	Nutrition coordination work plan development	✓				
	NCC orientation refreshers, consensus building among new stakeholders			✓	→	
Capacity Strengthening	Integrate nutrition in local government development plan	✓				
	MSNAP development	✓				
	MSNAP mid-term review			✓		
	Department-specific nutrition capacity strengthening	✓	→			
	Nutrition in annual work planning and budget	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Advocacy	Nutrition advocacy planning workshop	✓				
	Identification of nutrition champions	✓				
	Advocacy activities per Advocacy Implementation Plan and during annual planning and budgeting periods	✓	→			
Monitoring & Reporting	Quarterly monitoring and support supervision visits	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	NCC quarterly reporting	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Experience Sharing	Annual experience sharing opportunities	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

Planning and Budgeting Guidance

Strengthening nutrition governance is an ongoing process. NCCs and stakeholders should always assess progress towards meeting their goal and objectives, adapting strategies as needed, and taking steps to keep improving nutrition service quality and integration. These actions require proper planning and adequate resources. Based on the DNCC Initiative's experience, it is beneficial to structure nutrition governance strengthening activities around the national planning and budgeting cycles.

The 5-year National Development Plan sets priorities for the medium-term planning period, to which local governments are supposed to contribute. Figure 6 shows how the key activities from each component of the nutrition governance strengthening approach can be mapped out within a 5-year national planning cycle. You will see that some activities take place only once or twice within a 5-year period, while others occur on an annual or even quarterly basis. Figure 6 represents the minimum level of activity to be undertaken to ensure strong nutrition governance—additional actions may be required, based on circumstances specific to each local government.

If nutrition governance strengthening activities begin mid-way through a 5-year planning cycle, local governments are still encouraged to begin the activities detailed in year 1 in Figure 6. However, all planning documents (e.g., MSNAP, nutrition advocacy plans) should only cover the remaining years in the planning cycle (e.g., if you are starting in year 3, the MSNAP should only cover activities for the remaining 2 years of the 5-year cycle).

To support planning and budgeting for nutrition governance at the local government level, the sections below provide sample cost items for some of the main activities included in the approach to strengthening nutrition governance.

Because the specific needs and stakeholders of each local government are unique, budget numbers for local government-specific needs, such as nutrition-related training for departments, have not been included for each key activity. When planning, budget estimates for labour, either that of government staff or other stakeholders, must also be considered when undertaking comprehensive planning for these activities.

To encourage experience sharing and learning and to maximize the use of resources, it is recommended that the approach be applied to local governments in groups, either across multiple districts or across multiple lower local governments within a single district. This allows NCC members and their stakeholders to share successes that can be replicated and create innovative solutions to their challenges by hearing about lessons learned from colleagues.

Finally, to ensure sustainability of nutrition governance activities, it is also important to consider cost-sharing between local government and its stakeholders. If stakeholders are supporting the start-up of activities, a transition plan should be considered.

Stakeholder Sensitisation Meetings

Initial sensitisation meetings/district entry meetings with local governments and their stakeholders can typically be completed over the course of 1 to 2 days. If working with multiple lower local governments within a single district, individuals can be brought together for these meetings. If working with multiple districts, it is recommended that a series of stakeholder sensitisation meetings be held in each district to ensure the district's unique needs are captured and understood.

The number of participants will vary, based on the number of key stakeholders identified in the local government (see Consensus Building section for guidance on the types of stakeholders to include). Participation should be as inclusive as possible while maintaining a low enough number so that questions and concerns can be heard and addressed adequately.

Based on the DNCC Initiative's experience, it is recommended that these meetings be hosted by the local government, if space is available, and that representatives from the national level be included (e.g., OPM and MoLG). If national-level representatives are included, per diem and transportation costs for the representatives may be included in the activity budget. Printed materials (e.g., copies of the UNAP district message, advocacy materials) may also be considered in the budget.

NCC Orientation

The official NCC orientation requires 2 full days. Participants should include NCC members, at a minimum, but consider inviting other interested stakeholders as appropriate. The orientation should be attended and/or facilitated by a national-level representative, therefore per diem and transportation costs for the representative(s) may be included in the activity budget. Depending on available space, orientations can be hosted by the local government. The cost of meals and refreshments during the 2-day orientation, as well as printing costs for the orientation materials, may also be included in the budget.

Opportunity for cost savings: *During planning, consider holding the sensitisation meetings back-to-back with the NCC orientation to reduce transportation reimbursement costs.*

Multi-Sectoral Nutrition Action Planning Training

The MSNAP training requires 5 days. The training works best when conducted with multiple districts or sub-counties in a single training, as the teams provide feedback to each other's plans and share ideas about how to design their nutrition interventions. If this activity is planned across multiple local governments, a rented venue should be considered to accommodate a large group. It is recommended that national-level representatives (e.g., OPM, MoLG, National Planning Authority) participate in the planning process.

Depending on the location of the planning training, per diems and transportation reimbursement may be allocated for national-level representatives and local government participants. Meals and refreshments may also be included. Additional

budget costs to consider include printing the MSNAP training module materials, flip charts, markers, and coloured cards for the participatory planning sessions.

Advocacy Planning Workshop

The local government-level advocacy planning workshop occurs over 4 days. Like the MSNAP training, this workshop works well when representatives from several districts or sub-counties are brought together to share ideas. Sample cost items for advocacy planning are like those of the MSNAP training and may include per diems, transportation reimbursement, venue rental, meals and refreshments, and printed workshop materials.

Monitoring and Support Supervision

Your monitoring and support supervision planning will depend upon the type of support supervision being conducted. DNCCs need to plan for monitoring and support supervision visits to other NCCs within the district as well as to their departments. Partners providing support at the district level may want to plan their monitoring and support supervision visits in conjunction with national-level representatives and visit multiple districts during a single period. Each supervision visit (to a single NCC, regardless of level) takes 4 to 6 hours. The monitoring and support supervision checklists should be printed and used for each individual supervision visit. Additional budget costs may include the following: fuel, per diems (if conducting visits to multiple local governments, requiring an overnight stay), and refreshments for during the supervision visit meetings.

Opportunity for cost savings: *NCC monitoring and support supervision visits can be combined with other types of visits, such as department or health facility supervision visits.*

Experience Sharing Meetings

Experience sharing can take many forms and should be driven by your sharing and learning objectives. One format, used during the DNCC Initiative, was a 1- to 2-day experience sharing meeting that brought together representatives from multiple local governments from across regions as well as national representatives and implementing partners. This format may include meeting costs of: per diems; transportation reimbursement; venue rental; meals and refreshments; and workshop materials, such as flip charts and markers.

DNCC Initiative Planning and Budgeting Example

The budget scenarios presented in this section represent the implementation of the initiative involving 2 groups of 5 DNCCs, one group in the north and one group in the southwest. To promote learning and maximise budget efficiency, the examples assume activities will be held regionally. Examples of planning and budget scenarios for two key activities, MSNAP development and monitoring and support supervision visits, are detailed below.

The example budgets use the Updated Allowance Schedule for Government Officials and Civil Society Beneficiaries (December 2016) for per diem and transportation expenses^a. An average exchange rate from 2017 has been used to convert Uganda Shilling (UGX) estimates to U.S. Dollars (USD) at a rate of UGX 3,531.00.

MSNAP Training

In this example, each region plans 1 MSNAP training event. The budget below shows the sample costs for 1 regional workshop involving 5 districts. This scenario considers the attendance of 8 participants from each district, including the Chief Administrative Officer and representatives from each of the departments on the NCC. Because the DNCCs have additional monitoring and oversight responsibilities for the rest of the lower local governments within the district, the participation of national-level representatives, who will provide additional guidance and oversight to the district-level planning process, is included in the plan.

Item	Unit cost	Units	No. Days	Total (UGX)	Total (USD)
Overnight allowance ^b (accommodation and meals and incidentals – meeting days)	131,000	44 people	5	28,820,000	\$ 8,162
Overnight allowance (accommodation and meals and incidentals – full)	161,000	44 people	1	7,084,000	\$ 2,006
Safari Day allowance (return travel day)	20,000	44 people	1	880,000	\$ 249
Transport reimbursement for local government staff	100,000	40 people	1	4,000,000	\$ 1,133
Mileage reimbursement for national staff	3,500	86 km	2	602,000	\$ 170
Meals and refreshments	80,000	42 people	5	16,800,000	\$ 4,758
Venue rental	400,000	1 room	5	2,000,000	\$ 566
Stationary/printing	500,000	1 set	--	500,000	\$ 142
Total				60,686,000	\$17,186

^a These are the approved government rates as of the publication date of this document. Please confirm rates with your government or donor contact prior to activity implementation.

^b The allowance unit cost was adjusted to take into account meals and refreshments provided during days when the meeting is held.

Monitoring and Support Supervision

The budget below provides sample costs for undertaking joint monitoring of DNCCs with national representatives from OPM and the sectors. To facilitate national-level participation, the plan considers conducting support supervision regionally, which involves visiting all 5 districts within a 1-week period. The planned duration of the supervision visits is approximately a half day, allowing the team to either move to the next district on the same day, or the following morning, depending on the distance. This example assumes that partners and national-level representatives share vehicles to reduce transportation costs.

Item	Unit cost	Units	No. Days	Total (UGX)	Total (USD)
Overnight allowance (accommodation and meals and incidentals – full)	161,000	5 people	6	4,830,000	\$1,368
Safari Day allowance (return travel day)	20,000	5 people	1	100,000	\$ 28
Mileage reimbursement for government vehicles	3,500	100 km	5	1,750,000	\$ 496
Refreshments	20,000	13 people	5	1,300,000	\$ 368
Supervision checklists printing	50,000	1 set	--	50,000	\$ 14
Total				8,030,000	\$2,274

Annex 1: NCC Rapid Assessment

Implementing partners should use this rapid assessment to determine the ability of the local government's NCC to implement its roles and responsibilities. The results of the rapid assessment will help stakeholders prioritise activities and customise the approach to meet the local government and NCC needs.

The rapid assessment should be completed in consultation with stakeholders. At a minimum, NCC members should participate. However, participation of other stakeholders, such as political leadership and other implementing partners or CSOs, can be considered.

The scoring scale for each task listed in the rapid assessment is based on either completeness or frequency, with a maximum of 3 points for each task.

Rapid Assessment Scoring Guide

Completeness/Frequency	Scoring	Overall performance ranges
Complete/Always done	3	Satisfactory: 55–72 points (75–100%)
Almost complete/Sometimes done	2	Fair: 37–54 points (50–75%)
Initiated/Rarely done	1	Needs improvement: 19–36 points (25–50%)
Not yet initiated/Not yet done	0	Poor: 0–18 points (0–25%)

The total number of possible points per category is included in the rapid assessment scorecard. The total percent of points out of the possible point total can be used to guide prioritisation of activities, based on the NCC's performance in each category.

Nutrition Coordination Committee Rapid Assessment Scorecard

DISTRICT: _____ Date _____

Responsibility Area	Task	Score	Comments
NCC Composition	NCC includes members from all core departments.		
	All NCC members have received official assignment letters from the Accounting Officer (AO).		
	Nutrition focal point officer (NFPO) has been formally designated by AO.		
	Total points (out of 9)		
Technical Guidance	NCC has received orientation on roles and responsibilities from OPM.		
	NCC presents nutrition issues to the Technical Planning Committee (TPC) on at least a quarterly basis.		
	NCC presents nutrition issues to the Council on at least a quarterly basis.		
	NCC provides nutrition technical guidance to departments and partners upon request.		
	Total points (out of 12)		
Coordination and Partnerships with Nutrition Stakeholders	NCC has an approved annual nutrition coordination work plan.		
	NCC holds nutrition coordination meetings on at least a quarterly basis.		
	NCC conducts joint activities with stakeholders upon request.		
	NCC has an up-to-date nutrition partner database.		
	NCC shares nutrition information with stakeholders on at least a quarterly basis.		
	Total points (out of 15)		

Responsibility Area	Task	Score	Comments
Planning, Budgeting, and Resource Mobilisation	Nutrition is included in the local government 5-year development plan.		
	Local government has a Multi-Sectoral Nutrition Action Plan (MSNAP).		
	Local government has an approved annual multi-sectoral nutrition implementation work plan and budget.		
	Local government has identified resources for nutrition.		
	NCC undertakes activities to mobilise resources for nutrition, as required.		
	Total points (out of 15)		
Monitoring and Reporting	NCC conducts joint monitoring and support supervision visits to lower local government NCCs and/or departments and partners on a quarterly basis.		
	NCC receives joint monitoring and support supervision visits on a quarterly basis.		
	NCC submits a consolidated quarterly coordination report on a quarterly basis.		
	Total points (out of 9)		
Advocacy	Local government has an approved advocacy implementation plan.		
	NCC has identified nutrition champions.		
	NCC conducts advocacy activities on a quarterly basis.		
	Total points (out of 9)		
Nutrition Behaviour Change Communication (BCC) and Social Mobilisation	NCC conducts BCC and social mobilisation activities on a quarterly basis.		
	Total points (out of 3)		
TOTAL Score (out of 72)			

