



REPORT

SOWING THE SEEDS OF GOOD NUTRITION

Making Agricultural Policies Deliver Better Nutrition

In collaboration with:



This synthesis report is based on three country case studies commissioned by ACF:

- Alpha Arlène, 2013, *Analysis of the implementation of nutrition-sensitive agricultural and food security policies in Kenya.*
- Levard Laurent, 2013, *Agricultural policies and the fight against malnutrition in Peru.*
- du Vachat Etienne, 2013, *Reconciling agriculture and nutrition: case study on agricultural policy and nutrition in Burkina Faso.*

These studies can be found on www.actioncontrelafaim.org/en/content/seeds-of-good-nutrition (ENGLISH) and www.actioncontrelafaim.org/fr/content/graines-bonne-nutrition (FRENCH).

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ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

ACF	Action Contre la Faim (Action Against Hunger)
ASDS	Agricultural Sector Development Strategy
CNCN	National Nutrition Coordination Council
CPF	Country Programme Framework
CRECER	Estrategia Nacional de Intervención Articulada de Lucha contra la Pobreza y la Desnutrición Crónica Infantil (National strategy for coordinated intervention to combat poverty and chronic child malnutrition)
CSO	Civil Society Organization
DFID	UK Department for International Development
ECHO	European Commission Humanitarian Office
EU	European Union
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
FNSP	Food and Nutrition Security Policy
GAM	Global Acute Malnutrition
GDP	Gross domestic product
HANCI	Hunger And Nutrition Commitment Index
HE	Home Economics
HEA	Household Economy Approach
HINI	High impact Nutrition interventions
HLPE	High-Level Panel of Experts
ICN	International Conference on Nutrition
IDI	Initiative against Child Manutrition
IDS	Institute of Development Studies
IFAD	International Fund for Agricultural Development
IFPRI	International Food Policy Research Institute
MAFAP	Monitoring African Food and Agricultural Policies
MCLCP	Mesa de Concertación para la Lucha contra la Pobreza (peruvian body facilitating consultation and communication in the fight against poverty)
MIDIS	Ministry of Inclusion and Social Development
MINAG	Ministry of Agriculture
MoA	Ministry of Agriculture
MoH	Ministry of Health
MoPHS	Ministry of Public Health and Sanitation
MUAC	Mid-Upper Arm Circumference
NEPAD	New Partnership for Africa's Development
NNAP	National Nutrition Action Plan
NTF	Nutrition Technical Forum
OECD	Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development
PNSR	National Rural Sector Programme
RBB	Results-Based Budgeting
RCT	Randomized Control Trials
REACH	Renewed Efforts Against Child Hunger and undernutrition
SAM	Severe Acute Malnutrition
SOFA	State of Food and Agriculture
SUN	Scaling Up Nutrition
WFP	World Food Programme

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Linking agriculture with nutrition and improving the nutritional impact of agriculture programmes and interventions is the topic of a growing international agenda. The objective of this report is to assess to what extent this global agenda is actually translating into action at country level. In this report we analysed the agricultural policy framework of three countries that have recently committed to improving the alignment of their agricultural policies with their commitments to reducing undernutrition: Burkina Faso, Kenya and Peru. The case studies are based on the following questions:

- i) How do national agricultural policies integrate nutrition issues?
- ii) What are the main constraints to improving the contribution of agriculture policies to the reduction of undernutrition?
- iii) How could these constraints be alleviated?

AGRICULTURE AND NUTRITION: A PROMISING INTERNATIONAL AGENDA

To be considered “nutrition-sensitive”, interventions and programmes should address the underlying determinants of foetal and child nutrition and development (such as food insecurity) and incorporate specific nutrition goals and actions. Agricultural development does not automatically result in improved nutrition at the household or community level. There are 7 main pathways between agriculture and nutrition, which show that agriculture can have both positive impacts and potential negative impacts on nutrition, particularly with respect to women’s use of time and control of income. Agricultural policies should maximize positive impacts while mitigating negative impacts with appropriate measures.

From the agriculture side	To the nutrition side
Household production	Food consumption
Income	Food purchase
Income	Healthcare purchase
Food prices	Food purchase
Women’s use of time	Care capacity
Women’s workload	Maternal energy use
Women’s control of income	Resource allocation

Amongst the main drivers of the agenda on linking agriculture and nutrition at the international level are the SUN movement, UN agencies such as the World Bank and the FAO, research institutions such as the IFPRI and the Lancet journal and many countries, bilateral donors and CSOs. However, despite this remarkable progress, the nutrition-sensitive agenda is still incomplete. It is very much an agenda of the nutrition community rather than one of the agriculture community and buy-in from the agriculture sector has so far been lacking. Secondly, a too large emphasis has been placed on searching for robust scientific evidence, which may not be attainable, as agriculture takes place in the real world and not in an “all things being equal” laboratory. It needs to be recognized that strengthening the nutrition sensitivity of sectoral programmes is first and foremost a political issue.

COUNTRY FINDINGS

Section 2 briefly describes the study methodology, the three countries’ nutritional and agriculture situations and the findings from the case studies on the main processes, achievements and constraints to making the agriculture policy framework more sensitive to nutrition. The contexts of the three countries are very different and yet, an interesting level of commonality and similarity was found on how agriculture and nutrition are interrelated.

GOOD PRACTICES AND REMAINING CHALLENGES AT COUNTRY LEVEL

Section 3 identifies and explains both the major obstacles to an agriculture which is fully aware of its nutritional impact and tries to maximize it and the best practices identified in the three countries on how to alleviate these constraints.

The main finding of the report is that despite a rapidly growing agenda at the international level, including increased commitments from international institutions and donors, nutrition-sensitive agriculture is long overdue and toils to materialize at the level where it matters most.

The main constraints to unleashing the potential of agriculture for nutrition are:

- the limited priority given to nutrition within the agriculture sector;
- the difficulties in adequately integrating nutrition into monitoring and information systems to allow cross-sectoral analysis on nutrition;

- the poor cross-sectoral coordination around nutrition between agriculture and other sectors;
- the lack of implementation of nutrition-sensitive interventions in the agriculture sector;
- the inadequate level of funding for nutrition-sensitive agriculture.

However, it is possible to alleviate these obstacles and the experience from Burkina Faso, Kenya and Peru provide interesting illustrations of good practices that are able to fill these five gaps.

The identified good practices are: setting up nutrition within the agriculture sector agenda, such as the CAADP nutrition-sensitive agriculture investment plans (Kenya and Burkina Faso); integration of nutrition courses into the training of agriculturalists in national agriculture schools (Burkina Faso); integrating nutrition indicators in agriculture information systems and surveys (Burkina Faso); cross-sectoral policy coordination against poverty, integrating nutrition into broader development strategy (Peru); donor support to multisectoral coordination mechanisms, such as food security and nutrition donor working groups (Burkina Faso); reinforcing the nutrition mandate of Ministries of Agriculture and increasing support to nutrition-sensitive

programmes (such as with the Department of Food and Promotion of Nutritional Quality in Burkina Faso and the Home Economics section in Kenya); and results-based budget mechanisms that hold different sectors accountable for common goals (Peru).

FAST-TRACKING THE IMPLEMENTATION OF NUTRITION-SENSITIVE AGRICULTURE

Our country case studies have found that the growing attention on nutrition-sensitive agriculture at the international and national level has not yet translated into practice. We were also interested to see how the international organizations leading this agenda at the global level are actually supporting the implementation of nutrition-sensitive agriculture approaches and playing a leverage role to move towards an agriculture which is more accountable to nutrition.

We have looked at the role of a limited number of emblematic organisations and initiatives, including FAO, the IFAD, the World Bank, USAID's Feed the Future programme, the G8 supported New Alliance for Food Security and Nutrition and the European Commission.

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Most of them are members of the SUN movement and have recently committed to improving their work on nutrition-sensitive agriculture at the G8 2013 Nutrition for Growth event.

RECOMMENDATIONS

What will be the main drivers of change? The main message is that a higher priority should be given to country level nutrition-sensitive action to leverage and accelerate the actual implementation of nutrition-sensitive policies. Countries, donors and international organisations should do more, do it better and begin doing so now!

National actors, particularly Ministries of Agriculture, with the support of nutrition actors, should strengthen commitments and implementation of nutrition-sensitive agriculture by:

- making the role of nutrition in agriculture more explicit and prioritizing the nutrition goal of agriculture;
- establishing better information systems that allow for intersectoral nutrition monitoring and link agriculture and nutrition analysis;
- strengthening the quality and quantity of programme implementation, including by improving the targeting of the most vulnerable populations and by putting more emphasis on improving the role of women in agriculture (in particular through increased access to land, inputs and income) in order to maximize positive nutrition impacts;

- developing specific 'agriculture to nutrition' trainings for both field staff and central ministries;
- improving the coordination between agriculture and other sectors around nutrition, by reinforcing the participation of the agriculture sector in existing multisectoral coordination mechanisms;
- dramatically increasing the funding available for nutrition-sensitive approaches in agriculture, including by securing specific lines for nutrition within the agriculture budget.

International stakeholders should:

- prioritize nutrition in agricultural programmes and international forums to make agriculture more accountable to nutrition. Global initiatives and forums such as the recently established Global Panel on Agriculture and Food Systems for Nutrition, the Committee on World Food Security (CFS) and its High-Level Panel of Experts (HLPE) and the upcoming 2nd International Conference on Nutrition (ICN2) have a strong role to play in mobilizing more countries and fostering current momentum;
- dedicate stronger support to country level nutrition-sensitive initiatives in agriculture, through: programming and funding, technical assistance, policy dialogue, improved donor coordination around nutrition in agriculture and country-focused nutrition research programmes;
- deliver on their commitments for nutrition-sensitive agriculture, in particular the pledges of the recent Nutrition for Growth event.

INTRODUCTION

In 2013, 870 million people are still undernourished while around 2 billion people are affected by micronutrient malnutrition or “hidden hunger”¹. Making agriculture work for nutrition represents one of the greatest challenges as well as one of the greatest opportunities to achieving good nutrition for the hungry and undernourished people of the world. For this to happen, agriculture needs to maximize its nutritional potential.

Agriculture is a major component of local food systems, the systems through which people produce, transform, distribute and consume food. Making agriculture deliver improved nutrition means that through local food systems more nutritious diets will be available and accessible for all family members.

Two current trends in agriculture and nutrition are converging into a growing agenda on nutrition-sensitive agriculture.

Following the global food price crisis in 2007-2008, we have witnessed a strong political momentum in favor of increasing investments in agriculture and food security. This trend has been illustrated by the renewed interest in agriculture and commitments from many countries, donors and international organisations, including the establishment of the United-Nations High-Level Task Force of Food Security, the successful reform of the Committee on World Food Security (CFS) at the World Food Summit in 2009, the 22 billion USD pledges of the G8 L’Aquila summit in 2009, the G20 Action Plan on Agriculture and Food Price Volatility adopted in 2011 as well as many other collective and individual strategies and programmes. These initiatives all contribute to putting agriculture higher on the national and international agenda. The main goals are to increase production and productivity, to reduce price volatility and also to improve food security and nutrition. Nutrition security is indeed increasingly presented as a goal of agriculture investment. A recent global example of this trend includes the G8 recently created Global Panel on Agriculture and Food Systems for Nutrition.

Recent years have also shown a growing momentum in the fight against malnutrition, in particular following the publication of the 2008 Lancet series on infant and maternal malnutrition and the 2010 launch of the SUN movement, in the framework of renewed commitments at both country and global levels. Most of the ini-

tiatives have a primary focus on the scaling-up of direct specific interventions whose effectiveness has already been demonstrated. However, nutrition specific interventions delivered successfully at scale will only reduce stunting by one third (*DFID, 2012*). This means that solutions to undernutrition must go beyond the provision of specific nutrients, treatment and direct prevention: there is a need for nutrition-sensitive development in different contributing sectors, including agriculture and food security. This trend has been confirmed by the recent 2013 Lancet series on malnutrition, which has dedicated a specific article to nutrition-sensitive programmes².

In fact, there is a double challenge to be taken on: on the one hand, the consideration of agriculture within multisectoral malnutrition reduction strategies and, on the other hand, the integration of nutrition within sectoral agriculture strategies. Meanwhile, ambitious poverty reduction policies, contributing to improvements in the livelihoods and well-being of the most vulnerable groups through a variety of sectors, have been recognized as having a powerful impact on the reduction of undernutrition. This does not mean that specific interventions focusing on the underlying determinants of undernutrition are not required at the same time.

This report focuses on the integration of nutrition within national agricultural policy based on three key reasons. First, agriculture³ is the main source of livelihoods, food and nutrients for the majority of people suffering from hunger and undernutrition, who are mostly in rural areas, making their living from agricultural production and agriculture-related activities (including agricultural labor and processing, storage, transport and marketing activities).

Secondly, agriculture and food systems are a central economic sector for development, with multi-billion investments every year from the small-scale family investments in production to post-harvest transformation and processing industries. This sector offers enormous opportunities to contribute to improving nutrition at a marginal cost. Indeed, given the scale of investments in agriculture, only small changes to existing agriculture investments to make them more nutrition sensitive could have a very large impact on nutrition. However, the current focus of the agriculture sector is much more on production volume rather than on the nutritional quality of the production.

1 - FAO, WFP and IFAD, 2012, *The State of Food Insecurity in the World 2012. Economic growth is necessary but not sufficient to accelerate reduction of hunger and malnutrition*. Rome, FAO.

2 - Ruel M, Alderman H, and the Maternal and Child Nutrition Study Group, 2013. *Nutrition-sensitive interventions and programmes: how can they help to accelerate progress in improving maternal and child nutrition?* Lancet 2013 series on Maternal and Child Nutrition.

3 - Agriculture here is taking in its broad sense which includes livestock, fisheries, forestry and other natural resource based production activities.



Thirdly, policies are a prerequisite for programmes to deliver. Existing guidelines and practical tools are useful for making agriculture more sensitive to nutrition at programme and project level. But in order to transform potential nutrition-sensitive investments into actual nutrition-sensitive investments on a large scale, the national policy frameworks need to mainstream nutritional considerations. If agricultural and food security policies are able to provide the right kind of priority and incentives for nutrition, they will foster and support the multiplication of many individual and collective nutrition-sensitive initiatives.

The objective of this study is to assess to what degree the global agenda on nutrition and agriculture is translating at country level. For this, we have analysed the agricultural policy frameworks of three countries which have recently committed to better aligning their agricultural policies with their commitments to reduce undernutrition. These countries are Burkina Faso, Kenya and Peru. The following questions were asked:

- i) How do national agricultural policies integrate nutritional issues?
- ii) What are the main constraints to improving the contribution of agriculture policies in the fight against undernutrition?
- iii) How best could these constraints be alleviated?

The main findings of the report is that despite a rapidly growing agenda at the international level, including increasing commitments from international institutions and donors, nutrition-sensitive agriculture is long overdue and toils to materialize at the level where it matters most.

A higher priority should be dedicated to country level action. Countries, donors and international organisations should do more, do it better and begin doing so now! The main constraints that have been identified to unleashing the potential of agriculture for nutrition are:

- the limited level of priority given to nutrition within the agriculture sector;
- the difficulties in adequately integrating nutrition into monitoring and information systems to allow for cross-sectoral analysis on nutrition;
- the poor cross-sectoral coordination around nutrition between agriculture and other sectors;
- the lack of implementation of nutrition-sensitive interventions in the agriculture sector;
- the inadequate level of funding for nutrition-sensitive agriculture.

The first section introduces the recent growing momentum at the international level on linking agriculture and nutrition. The second section presents the main findings from three country case studies on the level of integration of nutrition concerns into agricultural and food security policies. The third section describes the best practices and remaining challenges identified in these countries. The fourth section analyses the on-going efforts of key rural sector donors and international institutions to better mainstream nutrition into their work. The fifth section gives recommendations for both national and international actors on how to strengthen country level nutrition-sensitive agriculture commitments and actions.

AGRICULTURE AND NUTRITION: A PROMISING INTERNATIONAL AGENDA

WHAT IS “NUTRITION-SENSITIVE”?

Nutrition-sensitive interventions or programmes are those that address **the underlying determinants** of foetal and child nutrition and development — food security; adequate caregiving resources at the maternal, household and community levels; and access to health services and a safe and hygienic environment—**and incorporate specific nutrition goals and actions.**

Examples: agriculture and food security; social safety nets; early child development; maternal mental health; women’s empowerment; child protection; schooling; water, sanitation, and hygiene; health and family planning services (Ruel et al, 2013).

This definition emphasises that various sectors (such as health, education, water and sanitation, social protection, agriculture) shall be mobilized together in the fight against malnutrition, in order to collectively maximize their effectiveness in one given area, for one given population group. Full integration of different sectors under the same multisectoral umbrella is not always possible (Garrett and Natalicchio, 2011), that is why making sectoral approaches more nutrition-sensitive is crucially important. In other words: “think multisectorally, act sectorally” for nutrition (as underlined in *World Bank, 2013*). Sectoral programmes should “*incorporate specific nutrition goals and actions*” in their design to be considered nutrition-sensitive. In fact,

recent review and analysis have found lots of programmes presented as nutrition-sensitive that “*were not originally designed with clear nutrition goals and actions and were retrofitted to be nutrition-sensitive*” during implementation (Ruel et al, 2013). Strengthening the nutrition sensitivity of the national policy frameworks therefore appears to be a straightforward incentive to make this happen at programme level from the design phase.

THE MAIN PATHWAYS FROM AGRICULTURE TO NUTRITION

Our analysis is based on the main pathways between agriculture and nutrition, established by IFPRI research in 2012 (Gillespie et al, 2012). These pathways were one of the main sources of our methodology for the country case study. They are presented here to give a concrete illustration of the stakes of mobilizing agriculture for good nutrition. Pathways show that agriculture can have both positive impacts and potential negative impacts on nutrition, particularly on women’s use of time and women’s control over income. Agriculture policies should maximize the positive impacts and identify the most likely negative impacts in order to mitigate them with appropriate measures.



	From the agriculture side	To the nutrition side	How?
1	Own production	Food consumption	Agriculture production provides food which increases food availability and access. For a given household, the nutritional impacts will depend on the share of production that is sold on the market versus the share that is consumed at home, as well as the quantity, nutritional quality and varieties of items grown. Promoting crop diversification can increase the availability of food in critical periods through the year.
2	Income	Food purchase	Agriculture provides income, through agriculture wages and/or marketing of commodities produced. The nutritional impact will depend on the availability of nutritious foods on the market, the relative prices of nutritious foods and the preferences of the family members who purchase the food.
3	Income	Healthcare purchase	Incomes from agriculture could also be used to purchase healthcare or other nutrition-relevant goods and services. The nutritional impact will depend on the share of additional income spent on healthcare and the availability of, and access to, quality facility-based and community-based health services.
4	Food prices	Food purchase	Agriculture production affects food prices (upward and downward), which affect income of net sellers (producers) and purchasing power of net buyers (consumers) ⁴ . The effects on nutrition will depend on the relative prices of nutritious foods on the market and the family purchaser's preferences.
5	Women's time use	Care capacity	Agriculture can affect women's time availability, through arbitration between time spent on farm/non-farm labour versus time spent on child care (hygiene, interaction, play time) and other activities (water fetching, cooking, house cleaning).
6	Women's workload	Maternal energy use	Agriculture can affect women's health and nutritional status, through physical work, proximity of water, time available to rest, particularly during pregnancy. Workload has a nutritional impact on women, children and the birth weight of unborn children.
7	Women's control of income	Resource allocation	Agriculture activities can affect women's social status and empowerment through income generation. The impacts on nutrition will depend on the amount of income controlled by women and the difference between men and women's priority purchase needs.

Adapted from Gillespie S., Harris J. and Kadiyala S., 2012, "The Agriculture-Nutrition Disconnect in India, What Do We Know?", IFPRI Discussion Paper and Lidan Du, 2013, AgN-GLEE Landscape Analysis Presentation, Illustrative Intermediate Indicators along IFPRI Agriculture-Nutrition Pathways.

The pathways between agriculture and nutrition are highly context-specific and vary from one location to another. They could be prioritized depending on the context. For instance, in the Eastern region of Burkina Faso, according to a Nutrition Causal Analysis⁵ recently conducted by ACF, the main causes of malnutrition that are related to food security and agriculture were found to be:

- the low quality and diversity of diets of pregnant and lactating women (contributing to low birth weight) and of children above 2 years, those who share the family meal;
- the agricultural workload burden for women, giving them limited time to rest and take care of children;
- the weakness of women's discretionary income and decision-making power at the household level, leading to women's priorities being neglected.

THE NUTRITION-SENSITIVE AGRICULTURE "AGENDA"

Internationally, there is growing attention on the links between agriculture and nutrition, from the research, policy and programme sides, with many recent initiatives. To name a few, the following institutions have been important drivers of the much needed agenda on nutrition-sensitive agriculture and food systems.

- In 2008 and again in 2013, the Lancet (one of the world's leading medical journals) published a series on maternal and child undernutrition. While the 2008 series focused on the most effective direct interventions to reduce undernutrition, the recent 2013 series has focused more on the importance of cross-sectoral strategies to

4 - Individual agriculture programmes rarely affect market prices of food directly. This requires specific policy level instruments or a combination of both.

5 - The Nutrition causal analysis – NCA methodology has been developed by ACF with scientific partners to determine the context-specific causes of malnutrition in one given local area with primary and secondary data both quantitative and qualitative.

The missing link?

Food is the missing link between agriculture and nutrition. As simple as it can appear, too often agriculture experts are not really paying attention to food as such. They are interested in production, yield, labour productivity, volume of products, looking at prices and markets opportunities for income generation, etc. But agriculture policy makers could change the way they look at nutrition by focusing on food, especially from the demand side factors. In particular, food consumption patterns need to be included in agricultural information systems. For instance, by concentrating on consumers' needs, diets and the costs of balanced diets, the impact of agriculture on food prices, nutrient preservation along the value chain,

the agriculture community would take a big step forward for nutrition. From a nutrition perspective, food consumption needs to be viewed more widely, taking into account quantity, quality, variety and all the food needed for a healthy and active life⁶. The nutrition potential is far lower when food is referred to from a calorie-only point of view. It is important to keep in mind that when food (of adequate quantity, quality and variety) is prepared and available at the family table, the nutritional impact will still depend on women and children's respective food intake compared to men's intake (sequence, quantity, variety and other factors that affect absorption, such as infections, water quality, etc.). By paying more attention to food issues, it is possible to reconcile nutrition and agriculture, which have been kept apart for too long.

alleviate undernutrition by including an article on nutrition-sensitive interventions and programmes, as well as an article on “the politics of reducing malnutrition” focused on enabling policy environments for nutrition.

- The Scaling-Up Nutrition (SUN) movement⁷, launched in 2010, has been built on a twin track approach of both nutrition-specific and nutrition-sensitive interventions. The SUN movement aims to mobilise country level action to scale-up the 13 most effective nutrition specific interventions, as identified by the 2008 Lancet series. It also aims to increase investments in nutrition-sensitive development by addressing the underlying causes of undernutrition in different key sectors. To date, 41 countries have joined the SUN and committed to action. The movement has been one of the main promoters of the nutrition-sensitive agenda.
- Following the 2011 New Delhi conference on “Leveraging agriculture for improving nutrition and health” organized by IFPRI⁸, the CGIAR⁹ and partners launched in October 2011 the A4N (Agriculture for Nutrition) research programme, whose objective is to “enhance the contribution of agriculture research outputs to nutrition and health improvements”. The research focuses on three components: 1) value chains that make more nutritious and safer foods accessible to the poor, 2) more effective development programmes that integrate agriculture, nutrition and health and 3) better cross-sectoral policy, regulation and investment.
- The World Bank, one of the major global rural development donors, has been an important contributor of the agenda, in terms of research and publications, including the 2007 ‘From Agriculture to Nutrition, Pathways, Synergies and Outcomes’ report, a 2012 report on ‘Prioritizing nutrition in agriculture and rural development: guiding principles for operational investments’ and the ‘Improving Nutrition through Multisectoral Approaches’ 2013 report that features a chapter on how agriculture and rural development can contribute to better nutrition. The World Bank has also promoted discussions on this topic internally as well as externally, in particular through the online Secure Nutrition discussions and knowledge sharing platform¹⁰.
- The UN Food and Agriculture Organisation has supported the building of a consensus around the 20 ‘key recommendations’ on agriculture programming for nutrition, which aims at fostering actions amongst actors around an approach linking agriculture and nutrition. The recommendations are based on a review of existing guidelines and technical manuals on the topic and have been formally published in a synthesis report¹¹. The FAO, whose initial mandate gives an equal priority to nutrition, food and agriculture, adopted a Nutrition Strategy in late 2012. The 2013 issue of the annual State of Food and Agriculture (SOFA) report focuses on “Food systems for better nutrition”, featuring nutrition in its title for the first time since 1964.

6 - World Bank, 2013, *Improving Nutrition Through Multisectoral Approaches*.

7 - SUN movement: www.scalingupnutrition.org

8 - IFPRI is the International Food Policy Research Institute (www.ifpri.org). More information can be found on the website of the New Delhi 2020 conference: <http://2020conference.ifpri.info>

9 - The CGIAR is the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research, a global consortium that gathers 15 agriculture and food research institutes (www.cgiar.org).

10 - See: <https://www.securenutritionplatform.org/Pages/Home.aspx>

11 - FAO, *Synthesis of guiding principles on agriculture programming for nutrition*, available: <http://www.fao.org/docrep/017/aq194e/aq194e.pdf>



- The agenda of the upcoming ICN2 (International Conference on Nutrition), whose primary objective is to take stock of more than 20 years of international policies against malnutrition (following the initial 1992 ICN), will focus on nutrition-sensitive policies and programmes in two main areas: agriculture and social protection.

Many other individual countries, donors, research and CSO initiatives would also be worth mentioning. These initiatives, though not necessarily supportive of the same approaches, are very much interrelated and have been able to foster a joint momentum on the links between agriculture, rural development interventions and improved nutrition.

However, despite this remarkable progress, the nutrition-sensitive agenda is still incomplete. First, it is very much an agenda of the nutrition community rather than one of the agriculture community, involving a limited number of institutions and a limited number of people within each of these institutions. More buy-in from the agricultural sector has so far been lacking. Our research has shown that the accountability of the agriculture sector on the food and nutrition outcomes of their actions is low. A stronger involvement of agricultural actors (in particular national Ministries of Agriculture, traditional rural sector donors and the private sector) is required. For this to happen, providing the right incentives for the agriculture sector to be more accountable to nutrition is the greatest challenge.

Secondly, while building the evidence base between agriculture interventions and improved nutritional status has been given a high level of priority, strong evidence on the nutritional impact of agriculture interventions has so far been missing. One of the main reasons is that very few agriculture programmes which include a nutritional objec-

tive have set up robust enough M&E systems to be able to draw scientific conclusions. The 2013 Lancet article on nutrition-sensitive interventions reflects this: “limited evidence is likely due to i) the weaknesses in program goals, design, targeting and implementation and ii) the lack of rigor in impact evaluation, including lack of theory-based program impact pathway analysis” (Ruel *et al*, 2013). This lack of evidence makes it obviously more difficult to convince agriculture actors. Building up programme design, monitoring & evaluation systems is therefore crucial.

Meanwhile, it might also be time to recognize that a too high priority has been given to searching for robust scientific evidence, which might not be attainable. While the objective is to transform agricultural policies and interventions based on evidence, it is worth recognizing that agriculture takes place in the real world and not in an “all things being equal” laboratory. It is highly complex to assess multi-causal pathways in the real world, when a variety of interconnected factors are at work. RCT (Randomized Control Trials), the highest standard of impact evaluation, might never succeed in building the evidence base on nutrition-sensitive agriculture programmes, both because the “treatments” cannot be easily randomized and the effect pathways are far longer and more interrelated than for other sectoral research (Pinstrup-Andersen, 2013). It should be recognized that strengthening the nutrition sensitivity of sectoral programmes is first a political issue. Increasing the volume of nutrition-sensitive investments over a longer period of time will be able to make a difference.

Finally, the hypothesis behind this report is that the nutrition-sensitive agenda is very much an agenda at the global level and so far has not greatly translated into action at country level. This is what we wanted to check in three countries where ACF is working: Burkina Faso, Kenya and Peru.



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COUNTRY FINDINGS

The research laid out in this report seeks to determine how the international agenda on nutrition sensitive agriculture currently translates into policies and practices in the field, at the level where it matters the most. It seeks to address the following three questions:

- i) How do national agricultural policies integrate nutritional issues?
- ii) What are the main constraints to improving the contribution of agriculture policies in the fight against undernutrition?
- iii) How could these constraints be alleviated?

Case studies were commissioned in three countries: Burkina Faso, Kenya and Peru¹². The methodology of the country case studies was based on literature review, analysis of secondary data and interviews with key informants from governments, donors, international organisations and civil society actors. This work was based on an analysis grid developed by ACF to assess the different ways through which agricultural policies can integrate nutrition. The analysis grid is made up of 25 questions divided into five main pillars, based on the different elements of the policy (the full version is presented in annex). The main questions are:

- How does nutrition feature in the objectives and monitoring and evaluation system (indicators, etc.)?
- Have targeting criteria been established? Do they include nutrition concerns? Has the gender dimension been integrated with consideration to nutrition?




- Has the policy assessed its potential negative effects on nutrition and set up measures to mitigate potential negative effects in case they appear?
- In terms of the main activities planned, how will the policy contribute to improving year-round consumption of diverse, nutritious food? How does the policy contribute to increasing availability (from production to marketing) and affordability of nutrient-rich food and reducing its seasonality? When doing so, to what extent is it based on nutrition considerations?
- Have relevant nutrition complementary interventions been planned, such as nutrition sensitisation, nutrition training and nutrition education?
- Finally, how are the agriculture governance mechanisms supporting the integration of nutrition? What level of funding has been dedicated to nutrition-sensitive interventions in the agriculture budget?

THE NUTRITION AND AGRICULTURE SITUATION

The selected countries show very different nutritional situations and are at different stages of their nutrition transition, as illustrated by the following table (see page 16).

12 - These studies can be found on www.actioncontrelafaim.org/en/content/seeds-of-good-nutrition (English) and www.actioncontrelafaim.org/fr/content/graines-bonne-nutrition (French).



		Burkina Faso	Kenya	Peru	
Wasting prevalence (children U5)		10.9% ¹	7% ²	0.8% ³	
Stunting prevalence (children U5)		32.9% ¹	35.2% ²	18.1% ⁴	
Stunting caseload (children U5)		1 000 000 ⁵	2 400 000 ⁵	770 000 ⁵	
Improvement in the trends of stunting (children U5)		 (1993-2012) ⁶ Stunting = -7,1 (40% - 32,9%)	 (1993-2009) ^{2, 7} Stunting = -4,8 (40% - 35,2%)	 (2007-2012) ⁴ Stunting = -10,1 (28,2% - 18,1%)	
Micronutrient deficiencies	Vitamin A deficiency (Pre-school age children)	54% ⁸	76% ⁹	14.90% ¹⁰	
	Anemia	Pre-school age children	91.50% ¹¹	73% ⁹	50.40% ¹⁰
		Pregnant women	68.30% ¹¹	55% ⁹	42.70% ¹⁰
Overweight (women of child bearing age)		10,5% ¹²	25% ^{2, 7}	50% ¹³	
Share of cereals in Dietary Energy supply		72,3% ¹⁴	46,5% ¹⁴	42,8% ¹⁴	
Share of agriculture in total GDP		33% ¹⁵	16% ¹⁶	13,6% ¹⁷	
Share of total active population working in agriculture		86% ¹⁵	68,8% ¹⁸	22,8% ¹⁸	
Share of rural and urban population (% rural / % urban)		71,7% / 28,3% ¹⁸	76,7% / 23,3% ¹⁸	22% / 78% ¹⁸	

¹ Enquête nutritionnelle nationale 2012. Ministère de la santé du Burkina Faso. Data for 2012.

² Kenya Demographic and Health Survey 2008-09. Kenya National Bureau of Statistics (KNBS) and ICF Macro. 2010. Data for 2008.

³ Extracted data from WHO website (accessed 9 July 2013). Data for 2008.

⁴ Encuesta Demográfica y de Salud Familiar. Instituto Nacional de Estadística e Informatica. Data for 2012.

⁵ Extracted data from Sun Website (accessed 9 July 2013). Data for 2013.

⁶ EDS 1993, 1998, 2003, ENIAM 2008, ENN 2010, 2012.

⁷ National Nutrition Action Plan 2012-2017. Republic of Kenya. Data for 2008.

⁸ WHO Global Prevalence of Vitamin A Deficiency in Populations at Risk 1995-2005.

⁹ Mwaniki D.L., Omwega A.M., Muniu E.M., Mutunga J.N., Akelola R., Shako B.R., Gotink M.H., Pertet A.M. "Anaemia and status of iron, vitamin A and zinc in Kenya. The 1999 National Survey". Nairobi, Ministry of Health, 2002. Data for 1999.

¹⁰ Monitoreo nacional de indicadores nutricionales 2004. Ministerio de Salud Pública, Instituto Nacional de Salud. Data for 2004.

¹¹ Burkina Faso, Enquête Démographique et de Santé 2003. Institut National de la Statistique et de la Démographie. Ministère de l'Economie et du Développement du Burkina Faso. Calverton, MD, ORC Macro, 2004. Data for 2003.

¹² Enquête Nationale sur l'Insécurité Alimentaire et la malnutrition (ENIAM). Ministère de l'agriculture, de l'hydraulique et des ressources halieutiques, Direction générale des prévisions et des statistiques agricoles, Aout 2009. Data for 2009.

¹³ Grupo de Análisis para el Desarrollo, octubre 2011. Data for 2002.

¹⁴ Faostats 2009 (ACF calculations).

¹⁵ Recensement général de la population et de l'habitation (RGPH) de 2006 du Burkina Faso – Résultats Définitifs. Data for 2006.

¹⁶ FAO Nutrition country profile, 2005. Data for 2003.

¹⁷ FAO Nutrition country profile, 2000. Data for 1998.

¹⁸ Faostats 2013 (ACF calculations).

NATIONAL COMMITMENTS TO REDUCE UNDERNUTRITION

Each of the three countries has existing commitments to reduce hunger and undernutrition, though at very dif-

ferent levels. The 2012 HANCI¹³ index, developed by IDS, used three main factors (legal frameworks, policies and programmes, public expenditures) to rank 45 countries on their commitments to reducing hunger and improving nutrition. These commitments are not specific to agriculture but give a good idea of how high nutrition is on the political agenda of the countries.

Country	Hunger and Nutrition Commitment Ranks (/ 45)	Level of commitment	Dates of accession to the SUN movement
Peru	4	High commitment	November 2010
Burkina Faso	10	Moderate commitment	June 2011
Kenya	34	Very low commitment	August 2012

Source: HANCI report 2012

COUNTRIES' PROGRESS IN STRENGTHENING NUTRITION IN THEIR AGRICULTURAL POLICIES

The three countries have recent commitments to integrating nutrition considerations into their agricultural and food security policies. The following section briefly presents their commitments, recent developments and main achievements¹⁴.

In **Burkina Faso**, stunting affects 32.9% of children under the age of five. 91.5% under the age of five are affected by anemia (iron-deficiency). The prevalence of stunting increased between 1993 and 2003 and has subsequently decreased, with high differences between wealth quintiles (the prevalence of stunting is 18% for the richest quintile against 42% for the poorest one) and regions. 50.5% of households and 71% of children have low food diversity, due to the high cost of quality diets.

The National Rural Sector Programme (PNSR), approved in 2012, is the “single framework for public action in rural development”. It brings together strategies for agriculture, livestock, fisheries, forest, environment, access to water and sanitation in rural areas. The global objective relates to food and nutrition security and two of the six specific

objectives have a nutrition component: “ensuring coverage of the quantitative and qualitative food needs” and “reducing stunting amongst children”.

During the elaboration of the PNSR, specific attention was given to nutritional concerns. A CAADP review of the draft document identified nutrition as being weakly included. It was followed by a regional CAADP workshop on the integration of nutrition within National Agriculture Investment Plans in West Africa. This created an opportunity for the team in charge of the coordination of agricultural policies to take nutrition considerations on board. Some references to food and nutrition have since been integrated into the analysis and main priorities, especially in terms of reducing seasonality of food availability and improving production diversification and access to markets. However, nutrition doesn't feature as a priority of the agriculture sector (which is mostly oriented toward economic growth and trade).

Interventions that can be considered nutrition-sensitive are limited in number and scale. In particular, some important aspects were not given sufficient consideration such as the targeting of vulnerable groups, the gender dimension and women's empowerment with regards to nutrition, the affordability of balanced diets, food fortification and the mitigation of the potential negative impacts of agriculture interventions on nutrition. In fact, the document suffers from a relative disconnection between the specific objectives that include nutrition and the intervention framework, where many nutrition-relevant aspects are missing. It is therefore difficult to assess to what extent the interventions will be able to contribute to achiev-

13 - The 2012 Hunger And Nutrition Commitment Index (HANCI) ranks governments on their political commitment to tackling hunger and undernutrition, measures what governments achieve and where they fail in addressing hunger and undernutrition and assesses whether improving commitment levels lead to a reduction in hunger and undernutrition. The full report (with rankings by sub-index) is available at: <http://www.ids.ac.uk/publication/the-hunger-and-nutrition-commitment-index-hanci-2012#sthash.N7e6os5F.dpuf>

14 - Except specifically stated, all the information from this sections comes from the country case studies



ing the expected nutritional objectives and how this will be measured.

In terms of funding, even though nutrition-sensitive aspects are qualitative and difficult to measure in a policy document that is not disaggregated enough, available data shows that only 7% of the total budget can be considered sensitive to nutrition.

Despite this relatively low priority, some positive steps are worth highlighting. Since 2004, the quarterly agriculture survey of the Ministry of Agriculture collects a nutrition indicator as part of its methodology. The Ministry of Agriculture has recently become the Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security. In 2012, a department dedicated to Food and Promotion of Nutritional Quality was created within this Ministry, with a mandate including nutritional activities. The 2012 food and nutrition crisis¹⁵ has led the Ministry of Agriculture to recognize the Household Economy Approach (HEA) as a methodology to identify vulnerable households for food security programmes. Despite tensions around the respective responsibilities of the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Agriculture with regards to nutrition, the crisis also led to improvements in the level of their dialogue around nutrition. Finally, with UNICEF support, the curricula of the national agriculture school are currently being revised to include nutrition courses in the basic training of agriculture extension agents.

Burkina Faso joined the SUN movement in 2011. The SUN country plan is the National Nutrition Strategic Plan 2010-2015. However, this plan comes from the Ministry of Health. Agriculture and food security programmes have not been taken into account within the nutrition-sensitive activities, nor reflected in the budget.

Few rural development donor strategies and programmes seem to really integrate a nutritional perspective, despite some interesting individual initiatives. This can be explained by the funding tools available to donors (rural development offers more loans and less grants than other sectors), the lack of interest and expertise on food and nutrition issues and the priority given to economic and commercial approaches within the agriculture sector. In particular, most of their rural sector programmes do not include nutrition indicators in their results framework and monitoring systems, meaning they are not able to measure their contribution to reducing malnutrition. Recent programmes aimed at strengthening 'resilience' of vulnerable communities are interesting opportunities to reinforce operational links between agriculture, food and nutrition.

One of the main challenges to a better mainstreaming of nutrition into agriculture policies lies in the significant gap in terms of approach and timing between the 'rural

sector' (which is economic and long term oriented) and the work of the National Food Security Council, housed at the Ministry of Agriculture, whose mandate focuses on the short-term response to food gaps in deficit areas. This gap comes from the setup of Government institutions but is reinforced by donors' coordination mechanisms. The donors that are the most interested in nutrition prioritize their support to emergency food security rather than long term agricultural approaches. The PNSR does however include the work of the National Food Security Council as part of its intervention framework, even though the only medium-term production support activity targeted to vulnerable households represented 0.2% of the total budget.

In **Kenya**, chronic malnutrition affects 35% of children under the age of five years, and there has been little or no improvement since 1998. In the fight against malnutrition, political priority has been given to the Ministry of Public Health and Sanitation (MoPHS) and within this Ministry, to High impact Nutrition interventions (HiNi) such as vitamin A and zinc supplementation or food fortification.

Two developments have recently tried to integrate nutritional considerations into the agriculture sector. The first one is the Food and Nutrition Security Policy (FNSP) finalized in 2011. The drafting of the FNSP, under the coordination of the Ministry of Agriculture, has been a long and participatory process (2005-2011) that leads to a balanced view between food and nutrition. A second initiative, more recent, has taken place within the CAADP framework and might contribute to strengthening national efforts in favour of nutrition. It is the follow-up of a regional workshop, held in February 2013 in Tanzania on "Mainstreaming Nutrition in National Agriculture and Food Security Investment Plans". No specific deadline has been set for this process but regular reporting on progress made is planned.

However, in parallel with the FNSP drafting process, the Ministry of Agriculture developed its Agricultural Sector Development Strategy (ASDS), aimed at ensuring food and nutrition security for all Kenyans, a document that only mildly integrates nutrition issues. It targets vulnerable groups and women but does not mention any specific interventions in favour of small-scale farmers nor production diversification for dietary diversification.

The main priority of the MoA remains to "have food first" and nutrition security comes second. Within the MoA, the Home Economics (HE) section has the mandate to deal with nutrition. The whole work of the HE section within the MoA could be termed nutrition-sensitive. More than 500 HE officers and general agricultural extension officers under the HE section are key nutrition information relays on the ground to change behaviour in the long term. However,

15 - In June 2012, in Burkina Faso, 2,8 million people were at risk of food insecurity and malnutrition peaked.



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the HE Section remains a very small section within the MoA, which is critically understaffed considering the food and nutrition situation in Kenya. Among the main constraints for implementation appear to be the lack of human resources and the lack of knowledge of policy documents on nutrition from MoA officers at the district level.

Kenya's accession to the Scaling-Up Nutrition (SUN) movement in August 2012 is more a continuation of previous national efforts rather than a sudden progress. The National Nutrition Action Plan (NNAP) was drafted in 2012 in relation to this initiative. The NNAP is presented as strongly aligned with the FNSP and underlines that "reducing malnutrition is not just a health priority" but it focuses on HiNi and there is no proposal on nutrition-sensitive agricultural interventions.

A number of existing nutrition-sensitive agricultural and food security government-led programmes or donor-supported projects exist. An emblematic governmental programme combining agriculture and nutrition is Njaa Marufuku Kenya programme (Eradicate Hunger in Kenya, NMK) which targets the extremely poor and vulnerable groups and has nutrition outcomes. This programme is one of the MoA's biggest programmes and its nutrition component seems substantial. There are a number of examples of donor-supported or NGOs projects that also

include a nutrition component but it is often quite limited and these types of projects do not represent a large share of the total amount of projects.

In terms of funding, the HE Section's activities as such represent a small share of the agricultural budget. In the costing of the NNAP, nutrition-sensitive approaches only represent 3% of the total costs and are confined to health, water, sanitation and hygiene actions. There is nothing related to agriculture, due to the fact that Kenya has not yet established financial links with agricultural plans that have nutrition outcomes.

For now, the integration of nutrition aspects into the agriculture and food security monitoring and evaluation systems seems to be rare, although some recent progress has been made regarding how surveillance and early warning systems include nutrition indicators. Even when projects include an explicit nutrition component, the demonstration of the positive impacts of such projects on nutrition is lacking. This creates difficulties in the identification of nutrition-sensitive interventions and their accountability with regards to nutrition.

In **Peru**, malnutrition was included in the political agenda in the mid-2000s and since then it has been a priority of social policies, particularly with the creation in 2006 of the *National strategy for coordinated intervention to combat poverty and chronic child malnutrition – CRECER (To Grow)*, which encom-



passes a series of multisectoral social programmes and coordinates the different institutions in charge of executing these. The programmes are funded with a Results-Based Budgeting (RBB) scheme that, in addition to allowing transparent and efficient use of public funds, reflects priority areas for public investment. Civil society groups and other stakeholders of the *Initiative against Child Malnutrition* (IDI) campaign, created in 2006, were instrumental in convincing governments to include nutrition goals as part of the wider national poverty reduction strategy.

Little progress was made between 2000 and 2005 but these commitments have resulted in chronic malnutrition in children under five falling from 28.5% in 2007 to 18.1% in 2012. Nevertheless, the rate varies greatly between urban areas and rural areas, where prevalence is higher, even if that is where the greatest progress has been made in recent years; between regions, with high prevalence in the rural Sierra and Selva regions (more than 25% in many districts) and relatively low in Lima (6.3%) and the rest of the Costa region; and according to wealth quintiles: stunting correlates with poverty levels, and has hardly changed over the last five years in the two lowest poverty quintiles.

Peru joined the Scaling Up Nutrition movement in November 2010. Peru's participation in the SUN movement also reflects the government's priority to fight chronic child malnutrition, even though participation in the SUN was not decisive in defining the fight against malnutrition as a national priority.

In 2012 the national strategy for development and social inclusion *Incluir para Crecer* (Include to Grow) was adopted under the coordination of the Ministry of Inclusion and Social Development (MIDIS), focusing on vulnerable, poor populations that represent 16% of the total population (93.5% of whom live in rural areas). It includes an objective to reduce chronic malnutrition to 10% by 2016.

Until recently, the Ministry of Agriculture (MINAG) has remained outside the strategies to improve the population's nutritional status. In fact, in the last decade, agricultural policy has been mainly aimed at fostering the competitiveness of Peruvian agriculture, especially in external markets. Agricultural policy has not been developed in response to food insecurity or in support of small-scale peasant farming and has not incorporated nutritional concerns. However, this is evolving and the new government has developed a more inclusive, sustainable view of agricultural policy, increasing support to food security programmes. The new *2012-2016 Multiyear Agriculture Strategic Plan* reaffirms competitiveness as the agricultural sector's objective, with a focus on promotion of irrigation and agro-exports, but with a certain emphasis on small-scale production and

ecological sustainability. However, although child malnutrition and micronutrient deficiencies are mentioned, there is no nutrition objective as such.

Two main processes aimed at improving the population's nutritional status directly involve the agricultural sector: the *National Strategy for Development and Social Inclusion, Incluir Para Crecer* (which makes specific reference to areas in which MINAG must contribute, especially as part of the pillar 4 on *Economic Inclusion*, aimed at generating temporary employment and reducing poverty for beneficiaries between 18 and 64 years old) and the *National Strategy for Food and Nutrition Security*, the development of which is coordinated by the MINAG. This new strategy (currently being drafted) reflects the willingness to incorporate food and nutrition security objectives into agricultural policies and to coordinate agricultural policies with those of other sectors that influence nutrition.

Beyond these agriculture-related processes, various legislative initiatives are on-going at the Congress level and should soon result in a law on food security, which may also integrate nutrition.

Among the small-scale farming programmes, the project *Mi chacra emprendedora – Haku Winay* (My enterprising little farm – we are going to grow) should be mentioned. It does not depend on MINAG but on MIDIS and belongs under the *Economic Inclusion* core concept of the *Include to Grow* strategy. Though it has no explicit objective to improve nutrition and no nutrition indicators yet, there is a plan to add these in 2014. As for MINAG coordinated programmes, the methods and activities indicate a possible positive effect on the nutrition situation of beneficiaries in: the selection criteria for beneficiaries; a frequent gender approach; the funding of activities that enable the production of varied and highly nutritious foods (especially small livestock) and a more regular supply throughout the year; as well as a generalised effect by capitalizing families and improving living standards.

In terms of coordination, a key role is played by the MCLCP (consultative body facilitating consultation and communication in the fight against poverty), created in 2001, which coordinates the fight against poverty (including nutrition goals) at the different institutional levels. However, while the *National Strategy for Food and Nutrition Security* is aimed at the population as a whole, the national social inclusion strategy (*Incluir Para Crecer*) focuses on the poorest and most vulnerable part of the population, which raises the need for coordination. Setting up clear coordination mechanisms between these two strategies as well as between agricultural policies and other policies aimed at nutrition objectives is still a challenge.

GOOD PRACTICES AND REMAINING CHALLENGES AT COUNTRY LEVEL

The main conclusion from our field research in the three countries is that recent commitments and changes at country level are important steps in the right direction but that the nutrition sensitivity of agricultural policies remains largely on paper and has not yet been made a reality. Some important hindering factors are still preventing nutrition-sensitive agriculture policies to deliver their full potential at country level. Although this approach has not yet received the required level of priority, we have

found some positive examples of good practices in setting a pro-nutrition agenda within the agriculture sector which could be shared and scaled-up across countries.

This section is based on the interesting level of commonality and similarity that we found across the three case studies, even though the three countries' contexts are very different and we acknowledge that the representativeness and relevance for other countries might be limited.



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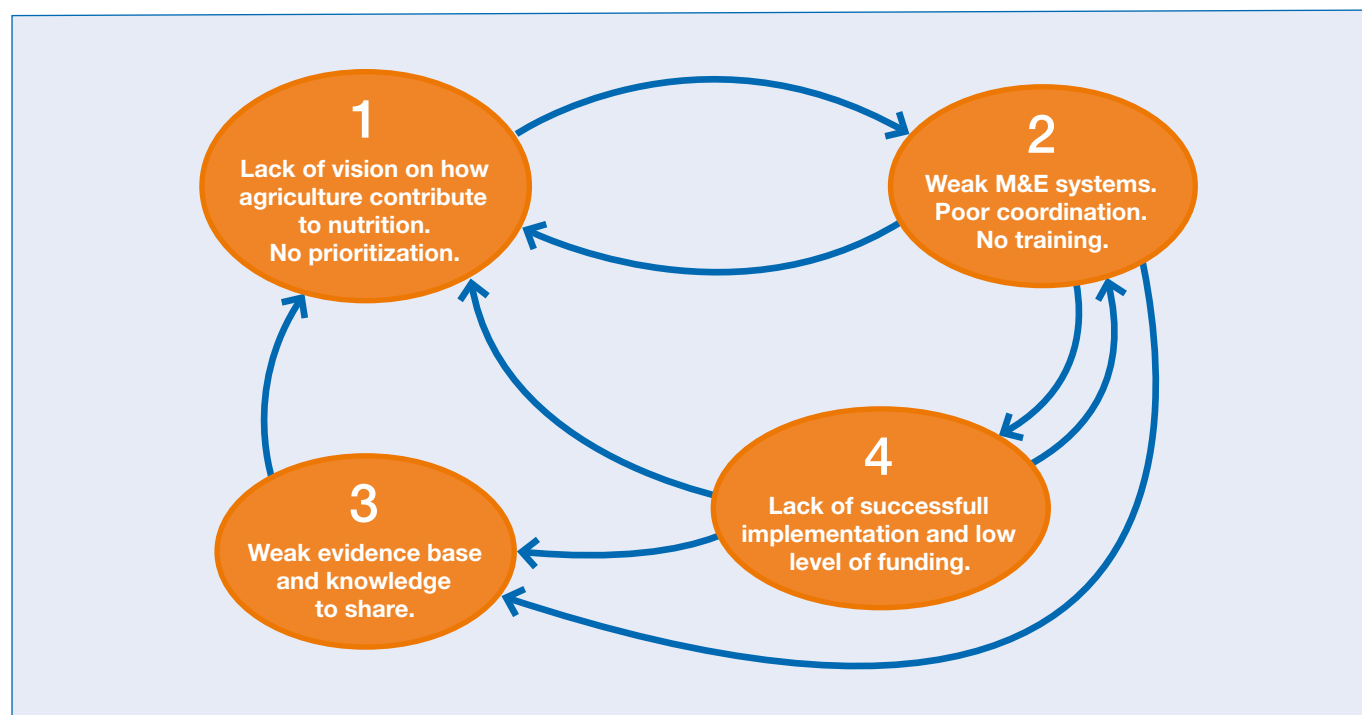
The 5 main challenges identified from the country case studies are:

- the limited level of priority dedicated to nutrition within the agriculture sector;
- the difficulties in adequately integrating nutrition into monitoring and information systems to allow cross-sectoral analysis on nutrition;
- the poor cross-sectoral coordination around nutrition

between agriculture and other sectors;

- the lack of implementation of nutrition-sensitive interventions in the agriculture sector;
- the inadequate level of funding for nutrition-sensitive agriculture.

These findings are highly interrelated: some are causes and/or consequences of others, as illustrated in the figure below.



The Vicious Circle of Low Interest for Nutrition-Sensitive Agriculture

Transforming this vicious circle into a virtuous circle would unleash the potential of agriculture for better nutrition. Some positive examples from country experiences, which may enable this to happen, are suggested in the following section.

THE LIMITED LEVEL OF PRIORITY DEDICATED TO NUTRITION WITHIN THE AGRICULTURE SECTOR

We have found that nutrition does not feature as a priority of agricultural policies, strategies and programmes, even when countries are highly mobilized for nutrition (Peru) or when countries have been supported to improve their approach in this regard (Burkina Faso and Kenya). In the three countries, the focus of agricultural policies is still overwhelmingly to increase production to generate income and export revenues.

However, in the three countries, there is an awareness that agriculture has many roles to play and that several visions of agriculture could cohabit: economic, social, trade, landscaping, etc. Nutrition should be agriculture's sole *raison d'être*. However, with regards to current practices, this would require dramatic changes that will not happen overnight. Pro-nutrition agriculture should therefore be promoted as one approach amongst others and should be prioritized as systematically as possible.

The way nutrition is perceived by the agriculture sector is an important indicator. In Kenya, for instance, nutrition is very much identified as being mainly a humanitarian issue, being predominantly dealt with under emergency institutional setting. In Burkina Faso, it is perceived as both a health and a humanitarian topic. In Peru nutrition is a public health and social protection issue. In none of these countries is agriculture recognized as a priority sector for nutrition.

Good practices: Setting up nutrition within the agriculture sector agenda

In the framework of the CAADP¹⁶ process, NEPAD and FAO have organized regional workshops in Africa on the integration of nutrition within National Agriculture Investment Plans. The workshops were attended by staffs from both the Ministry of Health's Nutrition team and the Ministry of Agriculture. Burkina Faso and Kenya have been invited to review their national agriculture policies from a nutrition perspective, which created an opportunity to better mainstream nutrition in agriculture sector. This raises

awareness on the links between agriculture and nutrition among agriculture staff and fosters cross-sectoral dialogue between agriculture and nutrition.

In Burkina Faso, the outcome of this workshop was an ambitious Action Plan with concrete recommendations to reinforce nutrition into the national rural sector programme framework. This process was referred to by several actors as instrumental in setting up nutrition within the agriculture policy agenda, even though resources and ownership were lacking at country level and that all the recommendations from the Action Plan have not been taken forward and translated into the agriculture policy framework.

The agriculture sector does not feel, nor is held accountable, for the country's nutrition situation. In the three countries, we have found an important lack of buy-in from the agriculture sector on nutrition. There are difficulties in making it clear how agriculture can contribute to reducing under-nutrition and in understanding the nutritional stakes in the agriculture sector. There is a role for nutrition actors to engage more with agriculture actors, to help them understand their contribution to improving nutrition and to convince them to do more and better. Nutrition in agriculture is a broad approach, as described in the agriculture to nutrition pathways, one that is not limited to one or two 'silver bullet' interventions such as crop biofortification or food fortification, as it is often thought. This makes the need for practical tools to support the integration of the nutrition perspective into agriculture particularly acute, a concern that has often been raised in Kenya.

The way national agriculture sectors are approaching nutrition is also influenced by the way international organisations and donors approach nutrition. In fact, in the three countries we found that rural sector donors and organizations gave low consideration to nutrition and good practices were based on a limited number of programmes (see following section).

A major constraint is the lack of nutrition expertise available at the Ministry of Agriculture level. When this expertise exists, it tends to be confined at a low level within the hierarchy of Ministries, such as the Home Economics section in Kenya. Agriculturalists have a very heterogeneous knowledge and understanding of nutrition. Reinforcing basic nutrition training for agriculture agents could be an instrumental leverage for developing a vision, facilitating cross-sectoral coordination and creating buy-in from

Ministries of Agriculture. Multiplying nutrition training opportunities for agriculturalists is highly recommended to improve nutrition knowledge and to enhance awareness of agriculture's contribution to adequate nutrition. This should concern agents, extension staff and students in the agriculture sector, as well as higher-level decision makers.

Good practice: Nutrition courses in the training of agriculturalists

Burkina Faso is currently reforming the National Agriculture School curricula to include nutrition courses in the basic training of agriculture students. This reform has been identified as an important step to change the mindset of agriculture civil servants vis-à-vis nutrition, although it will only bear fruit in 3 or 4 years, when the current students will be working in the field and at the ministry level, coordinating actions, implementing field programmes and advising farmers and farmer groups.

The current situation actually makes the relationship between nutrition and agriculture experts often difficult, simply because they are not speaking the same language. This shows that the absence of vision and understanding is also a consequence of the lack of coordination and dialogue between sectors around nutrition.

16 - Comprehensive African Agriculture Development Programme, www.nepad-caadp.net



THE DIFFICULTIES IN ADEQUATELY INTEGRATING NUTRITION INTO MONITORING AND INFORMATION SYSTEMS TO ALLOW CROSS-SECTORAL ANALYSIS ON NUTRITION

Statistics and information matter. In the three countries, though at different levels, our field research has found that the Ministries of Agriculture lack the right tools to take decisions about nutrition, to integrate nutrition-related activities and to monitor their impacts with adequate indicators. Building information systems that adequately include nutrition (with relevant indicators) will be needed to accelerate the attainment of nutrition-sensitive agriculture. In Kenya and Peru, it was underlined that good analysis of the context and the causes of undernutrition are often lacking on the agriculture side even though the need for quality data is strong to design adequate policies and responses. Agricultural strategies should be based on a joint analysis of available information and statistics (including information about undernutrition, consumption patterns, diets, prices, etc.).

Good practices: Integrating nutrition indicators in agriculture data collection

In Burkina Faso, the Permanent Agriculture Survey implemented on a quarterly basis by the Ministry of Agriculture has been collecting the MUAC¹⁷ of a sample of children under 5 since 2004. This was initially done following a recommendation from regional institutions, to better understand the Sahel 'cereal balance failure' showing that agricultural availability does not automatically result in an adequate nutrition situation. The Directorate of Nutrition (under the Ministry of Health) trained agriculture staff on how to collect MUAC.

In fact, nutrition data, available from the Ministries of Health, is also often failing to meet international standards and its quality should be improved. This recommendation has been raised in Kenya and Peru. When available, and of good quality, nutrition information can serve as a basis to reinforce agriculture ownership of policies aimed at reduc-

ing malnutrition. However, data could also become the focus of competition rather than collaboration between sectors, such as in Burkina Faso where the issue of whose responsibility it should be to collect MUAC is a long debated topic between the Ministries of Agriculture and Health.

It should be noted that none of the three countries has established a system to monitor the impacts of agriculture on nutrition. The absence of such monitoring systems has been identified by many actors as an important constraint to the development of agricultural programmes integrating nutritional objectives from inception. Better nutrition data can facilitate assessment of the nutritional impacts of agriculture interventions, both positive impacts and potentially negative impacts. This will help maximize positive changes and establish mitigation measures to minimize or alleviate the negative pathways. The development of plans to identify and mitigate the potentially negative consequences of agricultural programmes on the nutrition of adults and children is required, particularly in the case of large-scale extensive irrigation programmes, and should be backed by donors and international organisations.

The lack of data is compounded by the absence or weakness of a coordination body that would allow joint nutrition-agriculture analysis and learning across sectors. For instance in Kenya, in recent years, there have been major advances in institutionalizing the IPC¹⁸ process at government level, which includes both food security and nutrition surveillance, as well as development of national early warning and surveillance protocols that include nutrition indicators. However, doubts have been raised about the relevance of the selected nutrition indicators (such as GAM and SAM rates) for agriculturalists. Because food is the missing link between agriculture and nutrition, more accurate data on food, diets and consumption patterns are needed to be used by relevant agriculture development programmes.

THE POOR CROSS-SECTORAL COORDINATION AROUND NUTRITION BETWEEN AGRICULTURE AND OTHER SECTORS

In the three countries, the involvement of the agriculture sector in multisector coordination structures around nutrition at the government level has been relatively low or of short duration. In Kenya for instance, a joint agriculture-nutrition working group was established and worked with a good coordination but it lasted only the duration of the Food and Nutrition Security Policy elaboration process.

17 - MUAC: Mid-Upper Arm Circumference is a measurement taken at the mid-point of the left upper arm of children of 6 to 59 months of age which serves as a proxy indicator for acute malnutrition.

18 - IPC - Integrated Phase Classification, a Food Security surveillance and early warning system.

The responsibility is from both sides: sometimes agriculture has failed to participate as much as it could have and sometime the agriculture sector has not been included by other sectors leading the coordination. Even in Peru,

where the policy coordination on nutrition is strong, the social promotion and health ministries have been leading the process, with weak input from the agriculture sector until recently.

Good practices: Cross-sectoral policy coordination around nutrition for each sector to contribute to common goals

In the fight against under-nutrition, one mechanism is notable in Peru: the MCLCP (consultative body facilitating consultation and communication in the fight against poverty). This body, created in 2001, is an instance in which state institutions as well as civil society collaborate to adopt agreements and coordinate activities to combat poverty in each region, department, province and district. Its main functions are to monitor the implementation of the different government programmes but also to carry out joint advocacy messages.

In 2006, with the support of the *Initiative against Child Malnutrition - IDI* (a civil society campaign), it obtained commitments from political candidates of district and provincial governments to combat child

malnutrition as part of the national development agenda and to achieve undernutrition reduction goals at province and district level. Integrating nutrition as part of a broader poverty reduction strategy has been shown to be very effective in mobilizing the support of different sectors.

Amongst its initial goals, the MCLCP should serve as a “*mechanism for coordination between government sectors and between them and civil society*”¹⁹. The MCLCP could thus play a role in facilitating intersectoral coordination around nutrition issues, taking into account the specific role of the agriculture sector, which has recently been recognized by the National Strategy for Food and Nutrition Security and the *Incluir Para Crecer* Strategy. In terms of coordination, one of the challenges will also be to ensure coherence between those strategies and the upcoming Congress law proposal on food security.

The difficulties of working across sectors and silos are also illustrated in the SUN country plans of both Kenya and Burkina Faso. Despite the key role of the SUN movement in promoting cross-sectoral coordination around nutrition and nutrition-sensitive policies, coordination remains a challenge. In most SUN countries, the country focal point is housed at the Nutrition Directorate within the Ministry of Health. This is the case in Burkina Faso and Kenya and the two countries' SUN plans are primarily based on the nutrition action plan from the Ministry of Health. In Kenya, for instance, the plan only reflects activities for which the Ministry of Public Health is accountable for. In both plans there is no budget that relates to agriculture or food security within the nutrition-sensitive intervention budget²⁰.

This lack of coordination might result in a situation where there is a multiplication of strategies and policies without a common vision of agriculture and nutrition. In Peru for instance, there is some overlap between the *National Strategy for Food and Nutrition Security* (aimed at the entire population) and the *Incluir Para Crecer* strategy (aimed at the poorest and most vulnerable). The overlap

of strategies is not necessarily a problem, as long as there are no contradictions or discrepancies in their approach. However, the risk of contradiction between the different sectors' approaches should always be carefully taken into consideration. It underlines the need for efficient coordination mechanisms.

Coordination gaps at government level make it hard for other stakeholders (such as international institutions or donors) to support an integrated nutrition approach which fully involves agriculture and rural development. Very often donors' own coordination mechanisms are divided between rural development, food security and nutrition (which is often attached to the health sector). This harms coherence and potential synergies at government level rather than bridging the gap between silos. It should be noted that there is often a gap, both in terms of approach and timing, between the 'rural sector' (usually economic and long-term oriented) and the 'food security' sector (often focused on the short-term response to food gaps in deficit areas and dealt with under humanitarian settings). This gap may come from the segmentation of

19 - MCLCP homepage, objectives and functions, consulted on 25th July 2013 : <http://www.mesadeconcertacion.org.pe/contenido.php?pid=148>

20 - This is not necessarily representative of all the SUN countries. Actually, as part of the nutrition-sensitive part within their costed plans, more countries have included food security interventions than care practices, health or WaSH. The amount dedicated to food security is also higher than for other nutrition-sensitive sectors (according to the costs of SUN country plans Preliminary Summary, March 2013).



government's institutions but it is often reinforced by international actors and donor coordination mechanisms. The international actors and donors most interested in nutrition regularly prioritize their support to food security

strategies rather than long-term agricultural approaches. For instance, in both Kenya and Burkina Faso, the donor coordination group for the rural sector almost never addressed nutrition in their discussions.

Good practices: Donor supporting multisectoral coordination mechanism to emphasize coherence across related sectors

In Burkina Faso, a group of international partners, both donors and civil society organisations, has recently been established with a mandate focusing on

nutrition security. A sub-group dedicated to “food security and nutrition” is particularly active in supporting agriculture actors to mainstream nutrition into their programmes and activities and facilitating exchanges around nutrition between actors from the health side and actors from the agriculture and food security sector, especially around the National Nutrition Coordination Council (CNCN).

Progress towards effective coordination is needed not only at national policy level but also at the regional and local operational level, for a successful design and implementation of nutrition-sensitive agriculture interventions.

In Burkina Faso, it has been noted that the coordination between different sectors around nutrition is made easier at the local level, given the fewer number of stakeholders involved and the closer proximity of actors, all working under the supervision of regional governors. In Kenya, Nutrition Technical Forums (NTF) exist both at national and county level. Even if all counties have not set up functional working groups, it has been mentioned that these groups tend to focus on technical nutrition discussions and are not very open to other sectors, such as agriculture. Other district level steering groups bring together all partners in a multisectoral way, but these are mostly focused on information sharing only. The upcoming devolution process and the establishment of a Food and Nutrition Security secretariat are seen as opportunities to set up multisectoral teams at the local level.

THE LACK OF IMPLEMENTATION OF NUTRITION-SENSITIVE INTERVENTIONS IN THE AGRICULTURE SECTOR

Commitments to improve nutrition through agriculture are relatively recent and still limited to a narrow perimeter but their profile is growing on the national agenda in all three countries. In Peru, the willingness to link agriculture interventions with nutrition outcomes has followed a change in government. It is very recent and remains on paper. Recent institutional change has been noted in Burkina

Faso but is not yet translating into practice. Kenya is probably the most advanced but the scale of nutrition-sensitive interventions within the work of the Ministry of Agriculture is still limited. The level of commitment has not yet materialized into practice and actual implementation is low. Interesting pilot projects at local level exist but they are mainly the initiative of international actors and are not yet being scaled up to a higher level.

First of all, one should acknowledge that the lack of practice is partly explained by the complexity and the qualitative nature of the nutrition-sensitive approaches in agriculture. For instance, Kenya and Peru have national food and nutrition security strategies, which both provide a role for the agriculture sector, as main food producer²¹. However, the main challenge clearly is implementation. If this vision exists on paper in Peru and Kenya, it has proven difficult to translate into operations so far, especially given that it requires a revolution in the mind-sets of both agriculturalists and nutritionists.

Throughout the three countries, two nutrition-related dimensions appear particularly poorly taken on board by agricultural policies. Firstly, nutrition disproportionately affects the poorer groups. Therefore for agriculture programmes, targeting the most vulnerable groups, with both economic and nutrition criteria, is required to maximize nutritional impacts. According to our analysis, this hardly ever happens in traditional rural development programmes and is very much confined to humanitarian and food assistance types of programmes. In Burkina Faso, even though the Ministry of Agriculture has recognized the Household Economy Approach (HEA) as a beneficiary identification methodology for food security programmes, and is working to integrate it into its targeting methodology, this was not known or mentioned by the teams in charge of coordi-

21 - In Burkina Faso, the ongoing development of a National Food Security Policy could be an opportunity to incorporate more nutrition concerns into a policy document.

Good practices: Reinforcing the nutrition mandate of Ministries of Agriculture and increasing support to nutrition-sensitive programmes in Kenya

In Kenya, the Home Economics (HE) section has the mandate to deal with nutrition within the Ministry of Agriculture (MoA)²². 60 HE officers and 500 general agricultural extension officers working under the HE section are key nutrition information relays on the ground to change behaviour in the long-term, especially among young people and women (in terms of consumption habits, resource allocation and household member decision-making, etc.). They mainly provide knowledge, services and skills to people in their communities and households. It is worth noting that, at university, future HE officers have to follow a nutrition course that is also part of the nutritionists' training. However, the HE Section remains a

very small section within the MoA, which is critically understaffed given the food and nutrition situation in Kenya (only three people, which will soon be reduced to two people, coordinate the work of more than 500 HE Officers on the ground).

Among the main constraints for implementation are the insufficient number of HE and nutrition officers to ensure nutrition is prioritized and the low budget which doesn't help attendance at nutrition-related meetings. In fact, HE officers are supposed to participate in all the meetings related to nutrition and to implement more activities in the field (e.g. demonstrations in the urban and peri-urban project). Thus, to strengthen agricultural nutrition-sensitive interventions and linkages with other nutrition actors, the human and financial resources of the HE section should be revised upwards.

Even if the existence of the HE shows that the MoA and MoH could complement each other to strengthen nutrition messages, the HE section seems to be marginalized and under-recognized within the MoA.

nating agricultural policies, nor by some of the major rural sector donors, who questioned its relevance for their work.

Integrating vulnerable populations in order for them to benefit from agricultural investments is still a challenge in the three countries. Our research found a gap between agriculture investments on the one hand, often positioned towards economic growth and trade exports, with focus on cash crops and external markets and, on the other hand, the food security frameworks which target the vulnerable populations but are often limited to seasonal response interventions. This disconnection between agriculture and

food security objectives means that nutritionally vulnerable families are rarely considered as target beneficiaries for medium-term support to agricultural production.

A second dimension agriculture programmes hardly take into consideration is the various ways by which they affect women: workload, health, ability to care, income and status, as illustrated by the agriculture to nutrition pathways. This requires specific gender impact analysis and the integration of mitigation measures, such as capacity-building, empowerment activities and access to time- and labour-saving technologies both for agriculture work and

Good practices: Reinforcing the nutrition mandate of Ministries of Agriculture and increasing support to nutrition-sensitive programmes in Burkina Faso

In Burkina Faso, the former "Directorate of Norms" has been transformed into a "Directorate in charge of food and promotion of nutritional quality" in 2012. It is part of the General Directorate of Rural Economy within the Ministry of Agriculture and

Food Security. Its revised mandate integrates promotion of food and diet diversification, food and nutrition education as well as data collection on food consumption and nutrition as part of the work of three sub-sections. This institutional change should now be taken forward with a clear action plan and an increased budget allowing the Direction to fulfil its mission. However, the mandate of this new direction overlaps with those of other institutions, including the Directorate of Nutrition, which raises concerns and should be carefully coordinated so as to maximize synergies.

22 - Linkages with Home Economics section are recognized as important efforts made by the Health sector for scaling up nutrition education at the community levels (FNISP, 2011).



at home. The need to mitigate the adverse consequences of interventions on women's workload was never mentioned in agriculture policy frameworks at the national level. Although that might not be the most relevant level, it is needed to give a priority focus on women's role in agriculture in a wise and central manner, and to incentivise action. It should be noted that as time goes by and lessons will be learned, the implementation of more and better nutrition-sensitive programmes will allow improving monitoring and evaluation systems, including gender disaggregated data.

THE INADEQUATE LEVEL OF FUNDING FOR NUTRITION-SENSITIVE AGRICULTURE

Nutrition-sensitive agriculture needs to be mainstreamed within general agriculture programmes through different

types of activities and tools. The qualitative nature of the nutrition-sensitive approach makes it difficult to evaluate in financial terms. Country commitments are also relatively recent and limited in scale. The budget dedicated to such an approach is thus difficult to estimate.

However, according to estimates from the case studies, nutrition-sensitive agricultural programmes dramatically lack funding. In Burkina Faso for instance, even if the PNSR policy document is not sufficiently disaggregated, available data shows that only 10% of the sub-programmes and 7% of the total budget can be considered actually sensitive to nutrition. In Kenya, if nutrition is integrated within agricultural projects it is mainly as a small component spread over a multitude of projects, which makes it difficult to track the agricultural budget devoted to nutrition. The HE Section's activities, which can be considered nutrition-sensitive, represent a small share of the agricultural budget.

Good practices: Peru's innovative result-based budget mechanism that hold different sectors accountable for common goals

RBB (results-based budgeting) is a public management strategy that ties the attribution of resources to measurable results. This requires: a definition of the results to be obtained, a commitment to obtain such results above other secondary objectives or internal procedures, a designation of responsibility, a procedure to generate information from results, a set of products and institutional management tools, as well as accountability²³.

In Peru, the RBB mechanism is implemented progressively through budgetary programmes under the Ministry of Economy and Finance. There are cur-

rently 74 results-based budgeting programmes. In addition to enabling transparency and efficiency in the use of public funds, the existence of these programmes reflects priority areas of public investment for which there is multiyear public funding, which is accessible to sectoral ministries and regional and local governments. Thus it might also be used as a useful tool for civil society to monitor government financial and geographical commitments. Most of the programmes implemented under the National Nutrition Strategy (Crecer) are funded through this results-orientated mechanism.

The possibility to fund food security and agriculture programmes which fully integrate nutrition and incentivise cross-sectoral collaboration through this RBB tool is currently being discussed at the government level and seems promising.

The low level of funding from both governments and donors demonstrates that the priority given to mainstreaming nutrition into the agriculture sector is not high enough yet.

The limited size and budget of teams in charge of nutrition at the Ministry of Agriculture level, the weaknesses of government agricultural plans in addressing nutrition and the low number of donor-supported programmes in this area constitutes a good proxy. Rural sector donor

programmes integrating nutrition exist but they seem to be the exception rather than the norm.

Based on this diagnostic, our main message is that initiatives and processes to make agricultural policies more nutrition-sensitive should be dramatically strengthened at both national and local levels. For this to happen, section five presents some key recommendations to both national and international actors.

23 - Ministry of Economy and Finance, http://www.mef.gob.pe/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=2122&Itemid=101162&lang=es

FAST-TRACKING THE IMPLEMENTATION OF NUTRITION-SENSITIVE AGRICULTURE

Our country case studies have found that the growing attention focused on nutrition-sensitive agriculture at the international and national level has not yet translated into practice. We were also interested to see how the international organizations leading this agenda at the global level are actually supporting the implementation of nutrition-sensitive agriculture approaches on the ground and how they are playing a leverage role to move towards an agriculture which is more accountable to nutrition.

For agricultural policies to better contribute to improving nutrition, a joint effort on behalf of all actors is needed. If it is to bear fruit in the near future, enhancing the nutrition sensitivity of agricultural development strategies needs to be made a clear priority by most of the influencing actors in rural development and agriculture. Amongst those, we have looked at the role of a small number of emblematic organisations and initiatives, including FAO, the IFAD, the World Bank, USAID's Feed the Future programme, the G8 supported New Alliance for Food Security and Nutrition and the European Commission.

These actors are all members of the SUN movement (either through the SUN donor network or the UN system network). The SUN movement has played a key role in building the agenda of 'nutrition-sensitive agriculture'. The

framework of the SUN country-costed plans proposed by the SUN secretariat includes a food security component as part of the nutrition-sensitive interventions (through three dimensions: availability, access and supplementation). This could represent an incentive for more countries to integrate this dimension. Various SUN countries have actually dedicated a significant part of their nutrition-sensitive investments to food security interventions.

Furthermore, during the recent G8 Nutrition for Growth event in London, several of those actors took firm commitments to strengthen the fight against undernutrition, including through agriculture and food security. Across all sectors, the commitments to nutrition-sensitive programmes²⁴ made at the event amounts to USD 19.1 billion, 4.2 billion of which is additional funding. Those commitments on nutrition-sensitive programmes need a clear and transparent accountability framework, especially in terms of setting up criteria determining what is considered nutrition-sensitive or not. Tracking nutrition-sensitive agricultural expenditure is not possible at the current time. Reaching a consensus on a methodology to track nutrition-sensitive funding, sector by sector, is therefore required. In the meantime, donors need to report clearly on the perimeters and definitions used and their current levels of funding.

24 - The Nutrition for Growth pledges are based on the Lancet 2013 definition of nutrition-sensitive interventions and programs ("interventions/programs that address the underlying determinants of fetal and child nutrition and development – food security, adequate care-giving resources at the maternal, household and community levels, and access to health services and a safe and hygienic environment, and which incorporate specific nutrition goals and actions"). The list of commitments specifies that the amount estimates might be revised when a multidonor agreement on a methodology to track nutrition-sensitive spend will be reached.



Finally, many of these actors will also participate, in one way or another, in the Global Panel on Agriculture and Food Systems for Nutrition, established at the London event, where a drive to “provide global research and policy leadership on nutrition-sensitive agriculture” is indeed required. The following paragraphs should not be seen as a critique of what has been done or not been done, but rather as a strong plea to do more, to do it better and to begin doing so now.

The UN **Food and Agriculture Organisation** (FAO) is well-known for its role in rural development and food security policies. Less known is the fact that the mandate of the FAO gives an equal focus to nutrition, food and agriculture within the priorities of the organization. However, as the economic interests of countries evolve, the balance of these priorities has tipped towards supporting agricultural production.

Preamble of the Constitution of the FAO (extract)

“The Nations accepting this Constitution, being determined to promote the common welfare by furthering separate and collective action on their part for the purpose of:

- **raising levels of nutrition** and standards of living of the peoples under their respective jurisdictions;
- securing improvements in the efficiency of the production and distribution of all food and agricultural products;
- bettering the condition of rural populations;
- and thus contributing towards an expanding world economy and ensuring humanity’s freedom from hunger;

hereby establish the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (...), through which the Members will report to one another on the measures taken and the progress achieved in the field of action set forth above.

“Article I Functions of the Organization

1. The Organization shall **collect, analyse, interpret and disseminate information relating to nutrition, food and agriculture** (...)
2. The Organization shall promote and, where appropriate, shall recommend national and international action with respect to:
 - (a) **scientific, technological, social and economic research relating to nutrition**, food and agriculture;
 - (b) **the improvement of education and administration relating to nutrition**, food and agriculture, and the spread of public knowledge of nutritional and agricultural science and practice; (...)

Now might be the time for the FAO to renew its primary commitments and to reinvest in nutrition, with a view to reconciling agriculture and nutrition, a goal the FAO is well-placed to handle. This is especially the case since the election of José Graziano da Silva as Director General of FAO in January 2012, given his experience of the Brazilian Fome Zero programme²⁵.

As part of the recent Nutrition for Growth event, FAO committed in particular to strengthening both nutrition-specific activities and nutrition-sensitive approaches in agriculture, fisheries, forestry and natural resources and to locate “additional staff resources outside Headquarters” to better respond to country needs.

In October 2012, FAO validated a new nutrition strategy which is good but its implementation is a work in progress and lacks a precise implementation plan or dedicated

budget for the organization to take its commitments forward. The organization was revising its 2010-2019 Strategic Framework, which has been approved at the recent session of the FAO Conference (June 2013). This revision process, while further delaying the implementation of the nutrition strategy itself, appeared to be a good opportunity to develop a specific objective focused on the organization’s contribution to nutrition security. The fact that nutrition-sensitive agriculture is one of the two priorities of the forthcoming International Conference on Nutrition (ICN2, scheduled in November 2014) is a good sign. FAO has also played a key role in facilitating the consensus statement on “Key Recommendations for Improving Nutrition through Agriculture”, in particular within the Ag2Nut (Agriculture to Nutrition) Community of Practice²⁶. Meanwhile, the teams in charge of nutrition at headquarter, regional and country office levels were very restricted. Until very recently, there

25 - José Graziano is a former Brazilian Ministry of Food Security and had been in charge of the implementation of the Fome Zero programme, a well known programme that lifted 28 million Brazilians out of poverty during the 8 years of the Lula administration.

26 - Available : http://unscn.org/files/Agriculture-Nutrition-CoP/Agriculture-Nutrition_Key_recommendations.pdf. Also see annex 3.

was only one senior officer in charge of nutrition for the whole of the African continent. At the Burkina Faso FAO country office, for instance, a nutrition adviser was only recruited in late 2012 and his work focuses on FAO's own programmes, with little availability to provide support and advice to governmental policies and programmes.

In the three countries, we have found several FAO programmes incorporating a nutrition component. In Kenya for example, most of the projects have a nutrition component, even if not explicitly mentioned. The Country Programme Framework (CPF) has already integrated various nutrition indicators and FAO participates in the UN Joint Food Security and Nutrition Programme which prioritizes specific interventions as well as nutrition-sensitive agricultural interventions with a strong capacity building component. In Peru, between 2010 and 2012, amongst other projects, FAO financed the project "Mi Chacra Emprendedora" (My Enterprising Little Farm) which had nutrition potential and which will soon be reinforced. In Burkina Faso, an interesting FAO-supported programme promoting non-wood forest products (NWFP) for local transformation and marketing was also mentioned. However, mainstreaming this integration requires a stronger global commitment from the organization in order to be successfully implemented, assessed and monitored.

Together with the **CAADP programme** of the NEPAD²⁷, FAO has been supporting three regional workshops across the African continent to review the National Agriculture Investment Plans of different countries from a nutrition perspective²⁸. The workshops have resulted in raising the awareness about nutrition amongst key agriculture policy makers from different countries, including Burkina Faso and Kenya. The workshops also enabled the development of country action plans to better integrate nutrition into national agriculture strategies. Though the process was relatively successful in a number of countries, allowing for a prioritization of nutrition within agriculture development, for some countries it was probably too externally driven to succeed in creating enough country ownership on nutrition and agriculture. Furthermore, the monitoring capacity of both the CAADP team and the FAO following the workshops was limited. Some countries have not received the required level of support to finalize the full integration of nutritional considerations into their agriculture plans.

FAO also has to support countries in nutrition-related data collection, analysis and dissemination. The **MAFAP**

programme²⁹ (Monitoring African Food and Agricultural Policies) is hosted by FAO and is close to the CAADP process. It is a joint FAO-OECD Africa focused initiative, launched in 2011, originally funded by the Gates Foundation, then by World Bank and then by USAID. It focuses on five countries, including Burkina Faso and Kenya, and will subsequently be extended to 10 other countries (Mali, Burkina Faso, Ghana, Nigeria, Ethiopia, Kenya, Tanzania, Mozambique, Uganda and Malawi). Initial observations noted that there was a lack of adequate information at the national level to support policy decisions about investments in agriculture and food security. The initiative is therefore aimed at producing a set of indicators to measure the impacts of national agricultural policies. The initiative benefits from a unique food and agricultural policy monitoring system that allows for comparisons over time and between countries. However, despite the fact that this system is to be the central CAADP monitoring system and that CAADP has dedicated important efforts to integrating nutrition into national agriculture investment plans, there is currently no mention of nutrition or elements of nutrition sensitive agriculture within the key questions the MAFAP system seeks to address.

The UN **International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD)** is an international financial institution established as a specialized agency of the UN. IFAD's mission is to enable poor rural people to overcome poverty by providing a mix of low-interest loans and grants to support agricultural and rural development programmes and projects. IFAD investments target women and men smallholder farmers, landless workers, artisanal fishers, nomadic pastoralists, forest communities and indigenous peoples³⁰, to help them to improve their livelihoods, food security and nutrition, raise their incomes and strengthen their resilience, while sustainably managing their natural resources and adapting to climate change³¹.

Since its inception, the Fund has emphasized its mission to target and support the rural poor with services and investments. IFAD wants to "*primarily serve the population groups most vulnerable to food insecurity and malnutrition*"³². Nutrition is part of the concerns justifying this focus on smallholder farmers: "*Smallholdings can address one specific aspect of well-being very effectively: nutrition. Smallholder farming can potentially impact human nutrition by providing a variety of foods in sufficient quantities to enable all household members to eat a nutritionally adequate diet*"³³.

27 - CAADP – Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme, an initiative launched by the AU and the NEPAD secretariat in 2003 to support the development of national agricultural investment plans. Currently 28 African countries are taking part in this process.

28 - More information about this process, known as CAADP Nutrition Capacity Development Initiative, can be found on the following link: <http://www.fao.org/food/fns/workshops/caadp-nutrition/en/>

29 - <http://www.fao.org/mafap/home/en/>

30 - <http://www.ifad.org/governance/faq/index.htm>

31 - IFAD's Strategic Framework 2011-2015. Executive Summary, page 6.

32 - IFAD website, Food security and nutrition overview, adapted from: IFAD Paper for the World Food Summit, November 1996. Can be consulted at : <http://www.ifad.org/hfs/nutrition/index.htm>

33 - Smallholders, food security, and the environment. 2013, IFAD an UNED production. Can be consulted at: http://www.ifad.org/climate/resources/smallholders_report.pdf



Attention to nutrition within IFAD originates in the Agreement Establishing IFAD of June 1976, which states that “*emphasis shall be placed on improving the nutritional level of the poorest populations in these countries and the conditions of their lives.*” In this context IFAD has contributed primarily to nutrition through its support to agriculture, increasing food production and productivity in the poorest food deficit countries, and so improving access to nutritious foods and high-quality diets³⁴.

This nutrition-related objective was largely under-considered during the first years of the IFAD, but its consideration has grown with time: in April 1994, the Fund adopted a comprehensive strategy to move its rural investment projects further towards improved nutrition³⁵, an ambitious document that already reflected some elements of the current debate on nutrition and agriculture.

However, the actual consideration of nutrition within programme design appears relatively low as compared to the Fund’s commitments. In our countries of study, the Fund currently runs few programmes which integrate nutrition into their activities, and when integrated nutrition is only one component amongst others. In Burkina Faso for instance, out of the five current programmes of the Fund, four do not seem to consider the nutrition status of their beneficiaries, even if two of them³⁶ include nutrition indicators as key performance indicators. The fifth programme³⁷ could be considered more nutrition-oriented as its loan is conditioned to the implementation of a regular nutrition monitoring survey. In Kenya, over five projects, only two take into account the nutritional status of the population. The first one, *Smallholder Dairy Commercialization Programme* aims to improve nutrition and provide extra income to 24 000 households through dairy farming³⁸, while the second one, *Southern Nyanza Community Development Project*, aims to empower poor rural communities in six districts through improved food security and nutrition³⁹. In Peru, over three programmes, nutrition does not feature any of the specific objectives, even if one of them⁴⁰ includes nutrition indicators as key performance indicators.

Despite a lack of specific attention to nutrition in the past, IFAD is moving forward to enhance the nutrition dimension of its work. Child malnutrition is now a key indicator of the results and impact management system required for all projects and programmes. As part of its G8 Nutrition

for Growth event commitments, IFAD has committed to introduce “specific nutrition-sensitive designs in approximately 20% of all new IFAD funded projects” and integrate “nutrition-sensitive analysis, indicators and activities in approximately 30% of all new results-based country strategic opportunities programmes (COSOPs)”. In particular, IFAD is currently strengthening its team at Headquarter level to support integration of nutrition into agriculture and rural development investments and grants at country level and provide technical assistance in nutrition-sensitive agriculture programme design and management. These activities are supported by the Canadian Fund on Nutrition-Sensitive Agriculture and Rural Development, which aims to help smallholder farmers to improve the production of nutritious food and promote innovations in nutrition-sensitive agriculture, particularly in Africa. At the Nutrition for Growth event, **Canada** (the leading global donor on nutrition in 2010) announced nine new initiatives (both nutrition-specific and –sensitive) to strengthen the capacity of countries to address maternal and child under-nutrition.

In spite of being a strong voice on both nutrition and agriculture at the global level, **the World Bank** is a relatively weak player in the field of nutrition-sensitive agriculture. The Bank is a major actor in both nutrition and agriculture, providing funds (through both loans and grants) and technical assistance. However, a World Bank publication recently recognized that “despite increased awareness (...), there are currently very few agricultural or rural development projects supported by the World Bank that explicitly include objectives or targets for improving nutrition outcomes” (*World Bank, 2013*). The reasons given for this were: the limited evidence base, the weak demand from countries, as well as issues of internal accountability and internal difficulties in cross-sector collaboration. Indeed, the links between agriculture and nutrition are not easy to establish institutionally as well as in terms of operations, even when the same donor is supporting both sectors in the same countries.

In Burkina Faso, for instance, a World Bank agriculture programme manager⁴¹ acknowledges the difficulties in maintaining a dialogue between the two sectors, even internally. He also recognises that the links between nutrition and agriculture should be strengthened within its own programme portfolio. Indeed, while managing several rural sector programmes with potential nutri-

34 - Ibid.

35 - IFAD Fifty-first Session, Toward a Strategy for improving nutrition through rural investment projects, April 1994, <http://www.ifad.org/gbdocs/eb/51/e/EB-94-51-R-35.pdf>

36 - Namely the “Participatory Natural Resource Management and Rural Development Project in the North, Centre-North and East Regions (Neer-tamba Project)”, http://operations.ifad.org/web/ifad/operations/country/project/tags/burkina_faso/1580/project_overview and the “Programme de développement rural durable (PDRD)”, http://operations.ifad.org/web/ifad/operations/country/project/tags/burkina_faso/1247/project_overview

37 - “Projet d’appui aux filières agricoles (PROFIL)”, see http://operations.ifad.org/web/ifad/operations/country/project/tags/burkina_faso/1360/project_overview

38 - “Smallholder Dairy Commercialization Programme”, see http://operations.ifad.org/web/ifad/operations/country/project/tags/kenya/1305/project_overview

39 - “Southern Nyanza Community Development Project”, see http://operations.ifad.org/web/ifad/operations/country/project/tags/kenya/1243/project_overview

40 - “Strengthening Local Development in the Highlands and High Rainforest Areas Project”, see http://operations.ifad.org/web/ifad/operations/country/project/tags/peru/1498/project_overview

41 - Interviewed for the Burkina Faso case study, see: du Vachat Etienne (ACF), 2013, Reconciling agriculture and nutrition: case study on agricultural policy and nutrition in Burkina Faso.



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tion outcomes in Burkina Faso, the Bank did not integrate nutrition indicators into the programme design and was therefore unable to monitor the nutritional impact of the programmes. The focus of all the five World Bank programmes currently running in Burkina Faso remains on income generation and food availability (which can contribute to energy needs but is not sufficient to fulfil nutritional needs), even for a smallholder farmers focused programme.

Similarly, the World Bank office in Ouagadougou appears not to have taken part in the efforts to ensure better integration of nutrition considerations into the rural sector-wide national policy document⁴². However, the integration of nutritional indicators into the monitoring system of rural development programmes appears to have been the focus of a recent regional internal working group of World Bank agriculture experts, within the framework of a regional West African programme. The participating staffs had earlier been trained on the nutritional impacts of agriculture programmes.

What's more, at the G8 Nutrition for Growth event, the World Bank committed itself to: (i) reviewing all its upcoming agriculture programmes to improve their nutrition outcomes

by increasing nutrition-relevant activities; (ii) adding stunting ("one of the best predictors of development progress") as an indicator in the institution's corporate scorecard.

The **Global Donor Platform for Rural Development**⁴³ is a network of 34 donors, international organisations and development agencies, created in 2003 to "increase and improve the quality of development assistance in agriculture, rural development and food security" and to promote a coordinated global approach within the sector. Most of the major rural development donors, such as the European Commission, the World Bank, USAID, IFAD and France are members. The platform does not directly fund programmes or support policies, but it coordinates 9 thematic working groups amongst which one focuses on agriculture, food and nutrition. The platform's work on nutrition and agricultural development is currently led by the World Bank, DFID and Irish Aid⁴⁴. It is developing a policy brief on the linkages between nutrition, gender and agriculture for the ICN2 conference and is now working to provide its members with a list of indicators to measure the nutritional impact of agricultural programmes⁴⁵. This platform appears to be a good opportunity to share and promote good practices on nutrition-sensitive agriculture amongst traditional rural sector donors.

42 - "Programme National du Secteur Rural" (PNSR).

43 - <http://www.donorplatform.org/>

44 - Global Donor Platform for rural development work plan update for 2013 (version 30/04/13).

45 - Minutes from the Agriculture, food and nutrition work stream Conference call, 25th June 2013.



Feed the Future is **USAID**'s global food security strategy. The initiative aims to improve the integration of nutrition into USAID's agricultural interventions. With a focus on smallholder farmers, particularly women, Feed the Future supports 19 countries in developing their agriculture sectors to spur economic growth that increases incomes and reduces hunger, poverty, and under-nutrition. The initiative particularly focuses on:

- improving nutrition during the critical "1,000 day" window of opportunity –from pregnancy to two years of age–;
- tracking new indicators that measure the nutritional impact of the programmes;
- balancing prevention and treatment (emphasizing cost-effective approaches for preventing under-nutrition in the first place);
- maximizing nutrition synergies across health, agriculture and social protection programmes.

SPRING⁴⁶, a USAID-funded global nutrition project, has recently undertaken a broad assessment of the integration of nutrition concerns into Feed the Future programming. The report describes current Feed the Future programming and shows opportunities for enhancing nutrition impact, presented at four workshops for Feed the Future mission staff.

In Kenya, a rapid assessment was also conducted, with a nutrition lens, of the projects funded by Feed the Future in the country through its value-chain approach (*Henson et al, 2012*). According to this assessment⁴⁷, the lack of nutritional impact is predominantly due to: a non-targeting of nutrition deficient groups⁴⁸, a lack of nutritional baseline and/or relevant nutrition monitoring and evaluation indicators and a relatively limited scope for the nutrition initiatives (kitchen and community gardens, nutrition education through farmer field schools, etc.) which were not necessarily mainstreamed into other aspects of the programmes. The assessment also notes that linking agriculture and nutrition is particularly challenging because it brings together two distinct disciplinary domains that are typically institutionally separated in USAID, a comment that applies to many other donors.

That said, USAID is dedicating efforts to moving forward on nutrition-sensitive agriculture. As part of its Nutrition for

Growth commitments, the US government stated that it will be working to strengthen the links between its investments in nutrition and agriculture and committed to spend 8.9 billion USD on nutrition-sensitive activities between 2012 and 2014⁴⁹. This includes support to the Global Panel on Agriculture and Food Systems for Nutrition and to the Global Agriculture and Food Security Program (GAFSP)⁵⁰, which funds country-led programmes, of which "over half" allegedly "explicitly address undernutrition" (even though nutrition is only one out of the fifteen types of programmes that GAFSP is able to fund according to its Framework Document⁵¹). In June 2013, USAID has also published an "Agriculture-Nutrition Manual and Toolkit" that gives interesting guidance on mainstreaming nutrition in agriculture programmes.

In 2009, the **European Commission** created the Nutrition Advisory Service (NAS). This body aims to promote a common approach to nutrition across EU Delegations and Directorates, by drawing on the strong links between nutrition outcomes, food security, health, education and social protection, in order to advise on comprehensive and complementary responses⁵². In 2011, the EC published a reference document "Addressing undernutrition in external assistance. An integrated approach through sectors and aid modalities" that is very relevant to the nutrition-sensitive agriculture agenda. The document suggests ways to transform aid programmes from various sectors to strengthen their contributions to the reduction and prevention of undernutrition⁵³. More recently in 2013, the EU validated a Communication on "Enhancing Maternal and Child Nutrition in external assistance" which aims to "improve the nutrition of mothers and children in order to reduce mortality and disease as well as the impediments to growth and development caused by under-nutrition"⁵⁴. One of the three strategic priorities of the Communication focuses on "increasing nutrition-sensitive action in humanitarian and development settings"⁵⁵. This Communication complements the EU's existing food security policy (in particular the 2012 resilience policy and the 2010 Food Security policy framework) by enhancing its nutrition component. The Nutrition Communication is the main policy tool to deliver on the EU's commitment to help partner countries reduce stunting amongst children under five by at least 10% (7 million children) by 2025.

46 - SPRING: Strengthening Partnerships, Research and Innovation in Nutrition Globally, www.spring-nutrition.org

47 - Henson S., Humphrey J., McClafferty B., Waweru A. 2012. Assessing the integration of agriculture and nutrition in USAID target programs: Findings from a rapid assessment in Kenya. IDS and GAIN.

48 - The nutritional assessment of KHCP made by Fintrac recommends focusing on children under 5 years and women of reproductive age (in *Henson and al., 2012*).

49 - Nutrition for Growth Summit: List of Commitments, page 35.

50 - A multi-donor agricultural fund established following the 2008 food price crisis and managed at the World Bank.

51 - <http://www.gafspfund.org/content/frequently-asked-questions>

52 - The Nutrition Advisory Service, presentation paper made by EuropAid, 2010. <http://capacity4dev.ec.europa.eu/hunger-foodsecurity-nutrition/terms-19721/tags/nutrition-advisory-service>, consulted on 25th July 2013.

53 - CE, Addressing undernutrition in external assistance. An integrated approach through sectors and aid modalities, Tools and methods series, Reference document No. 13, septembre 2011. Can be downloaded at: http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/infopoint/publications/europeaid/252a_en.htm

54 - Press release: "New EU policy to improve nutrition across the world and save millions of lives", March 2013. http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-13-221_en.htm#PR_metaPressRelease_bottom

55 - Communication from the commission to the European parliament and the council; Enhancing Maternal and Child Nutrition in External Assistance: an EU Policy; March 2013. http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/documents/enhancing_maternal-child_nutrition_in_external_assistance_en.pdf

At the recent Nutrition for Growth event in London, the EU committed to spending 3.1 billion euros on nutrition-sensitive programmes (including agriculture, but also education, water and social protection) in the next seven years⁵⁶. The potential for mainstreaming nutrition in the EC agriculture-related programmes is huge: as part of the upcoming 11th EDF, agriculture and food security are priority sectors for respectively 27 and 15 countries out of 40 countries (as of March 2013).

In Kenya and Burkina Faso, our case studies found interesting EC nutrition-sensitive programmes. In Kenya, an ECHO funded nutrition-sensitive agricultural project aims to strengthen markets and maintain the livestock-based livelihoods of communities, in areas when markets are often disrupted by food aid, droughts and floods⁵⁷. In Burkina Faso, two upcoming resilience-building programmes appear to be opportunities for integrating nutrition: PSAN-BF (Programme de Sécurité Alimentaire et Nutritionnelle) and ProResi (Programme Résilience)⁵⁸.

However, the integration of nutritional concerns in some recent EU agriculture-related initiatives has been relatively weak. While nutrition was not a central objective of the one billion euros “Food Facility” (2009-2011)⁵⁹, its third objective⁶⁰ referred to nutrition and integrated nutrition-related interventions such as “*safety-net measures to maintain or increase agricultural production capacity and help meet the basic food needs of the most vulnerable populations, including children*”. However, the final evaluation of the Food Facility⁶¹ states that nutrition was under-represented among the interventions. The focus was instead on access and production of food, even if one third of the projects integrated nutrition activities. Furthermore, the funded safety net and nutrition interventions arrived in general one year after the peak of global food prices. Therefore, while the EC currently has a strong potential and the adequate tools to increase its support to nutrition-sensitive agriculture, these commitments still need to be confirmed and scaled-up.

The **New Alliance for Food Security and Nutrition** was launched at the Camp David G8 Summit in May 2012. It aims to lift 50 million people out of poverty over the next 10 years by encouraging multinational companies to massively invest in the agricultural sector of six pilot countries in Sub-

Saharan Africa. However, this initiative overwhelmingly focuses on intensive cash crop production for export markets.

While nutrition is in the title, the New Alliance has so far failed to fully address nutritional issues, with only 7% of its investments actually including a nutritional component⁶². Burkina Faso is one of the six initial pilot countries of the New Alliance. The country framework does not contain specific targets dedicated to nutrition. Almost none of the planned activities are related to nutrition, except the adoption of the National Food Security Policy (PNSA) “in coherence with the National Nutrition Policy (PNN)” and some limited market gardening activities. The choice of priority value chains has not been made on the basis of nutrition standards. For instance, no investment is planned in the dairy, fruit and vegetable value chains or in fisheries. Across the 10 national companies, only one (a food product company, SOPEDAL) is planning a nutrition-related investment. SOPEDAL plans to invest in the production of both food and nutritional supplementary food (based on agricultural, livestock and forestry products), however the company has not initiated its investments yet due to lack of funds.

Despite this, an on-going process to improve the Ministry of Agriculture’s methodology to identify and record vulnerable smallholder farmers is worth underlining. The new methodology will allow vulnerable households to benefit from agricultural production support and social safety nets.

If this alliance really wants to have pro-poor nutritional outcomes, its nutrition dimension needs to be dramatically strengthened. For instance governments, donors and private sector companies should place a much greater emphasis on nutrition-sensitive agriculture approaches. Resources are also needed to ensure close monitoring of the nutritional impact of private investments taking place under the New Alliance, to ensure mitigation of any possible negative impacts. The proposals of the 2013 UK Presidency of the G8 intend to strengthen the nutrition dimension by supporting links with the SUN movement and strengthening “*public policy commitments (...) to increase the nutritional impacts of existing or planned private sector investments*”. This goes in the right direction but won’t be sufficient without greater funds and attention being dedicated to close monitoring of private investments⁶³.

56 - European Commission Press release, Making malnutrition history - EU announces €3.5 billion for nutrition, June 2013.
http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-13-516_en.htm

57 - Arène ALPHA, CIRAD, Analysis of the implementation of nutrition-sensitive agricultural and food security policies in Kenya, July 2013.
<http://www.actioncontrelafaim.org/en/content/seeds-of-good-nutrition>

58 - Etienne du VACHAT, Reconciling agriculture and nutrition: Case study on the agricultural policy and the nutrition in Burkina Faso, July 2013,
<http://www.actioncontrelafaim.org/en/content/seeds-of-good-nutrition>

59 - The Food Facility was established in 2009 to enable the EU to respond to the negative consequences of soaring food prices in developing countries.
60 - “Support activities to respond rapidly and directly to mitigate the negative effects of volatile food prices on local populations in line with global food security objectives, including UN standards for nutritional requirements”.

61 - Final Evaluation of the EU Food Facility, Final Report, EuropeAid Cooperation Office (AIDCO), August 2012.

http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/what/development-policies/intervention-areas/ruraldev/documents/euff-final_report-en.pdf

62 - According to calculations made by ONE, so far “only 7% of investments include a direct nutritional component”:

<http://www.one.org/us/policy/new-alliance-for-food-security-and-nutrition-part-2/>

63 - See ACF-France position paper on the New Alliance for Food Security and Nutrition, jointly developed with CCFD-Terre Solidaire, Oxfam-France, GRET, Peuples Solidaires, Réseau Foi et Justice: “G8’s New Alliance: A threat to food and nutrition security in Africa?”



RECOMMENDATIONS

The nutrition-sensitive agriculture agenda, despite remarkable progress, is still an unfinished agenda at both international and country levels. There is a lag between what is being said at the international and national level and the interventions in the field. At the field level, the debate is long overdue and actions must be taken to make theoretical concepts a reality. The change in mind-set required from the agriculture sector is taking time and many key actors, particularly those most active in the international debate, should strengthen and accelerate their support to nutrition-sensitive forms of agriculture.

A consensus exists that stronger political support at all levels is required to make nutrition-enhanced agriculture happen (*Wiggins, 2013, Pinstrup-Andersen, 2013*). There is a collective responsibility from both the nutrition community and the agriculture community to work together to foster and sustain this political momentum. More than anything, a stronger leadership is required to bring about the changes needed to increase the nutritional impact of agriculture.

Supporting nutrition-sensitive agriculture is about political will but also financial considerations. However this change won't happen overnight, even though the theoretical costs required to make agriculture more sensitive to nutrition

are minimal compared to the enormous amounts invested every year in agriculture and the rural sector. Therefore, in the meantime, to bring about a significant impact on nutrition, more funds are needed to support nutrition-sensitive programmes and interventions (as per the Lancet definition) but also to develop relevant research, evaluation, capacity-building and adequate monitoring and information systems.

Providing the right incentives to strengthen the accountability of the agriculture sector with regards to nutrition is one of the greatest challenges that lies ahead. Long-term sensitisation and advocacy to agriculture and rural development groups and arenas is needed. "Pro-nutrition" focal points from the agriculture sector should be identified, as well as the most optimal advocacy channels. At the global level, agriculture-focused international policy forums such as the Committee of World Food Security (CFS) and the Global Donor Platform for Rural Development could be instrumental in this regard. A much larger group of agriculture actors (from grassroots farmer organisations to Ministries of Agriculture) should also be involved.

What will be the main drivers of change? The following sets out some recommendations on actions required to leverage and accelerate the implementation of nutrition-sensitive policies⁶⁴.

64 - These recommendations are mostly based on the findings from the three country case-studies as well as our analysis of what is happening at the global level. Therefore, they do not necessarily represent the various situations of the different countries and would need to be adapted to fit the specificities of each country's own context.

RECOMMENDATIONS TO NATIONAL ACTORS PARTICULARLY MINISTRIES OF AGRICULTURE

National actors, particularly Ministries of Agriculture, should strengthen commitments and implementation of nutrition-sensitive agriculture by:

- 1. Making the role of agriculture in nutrition more explicit and prioritizing the nutrition goal of agriculture.** This requires developing a vision on how agricultural policies will contribute to improving nutrition within the country context. It also means making nutrition a higher priority within agricultural policies and strategies. Ministries of Agriculture should work jointly on this with other Ministries, especially Ministries of Health and Social Development. Civil society organisations should also be involved in the process.
- 2. Establishing better information systems that allow for intersectoral agriculture and nutrition analysis and nutrition monitoring.** This should include plans to monitor and mitigate the potentially negative consequences on nutrition that may arise from large-scale agricultural programmes.
- 3. Strengthening the quality and quantity of programme implementation.** This includes:
 - a. setting up targeting tools to ensure that the most vulnerable populations will benefit from agricultural investments;
 - b. improving the role of women in agriculture (in particular through increased access to land, inputs and

income) while making sure nutrition gains are maximized for both mothers and children (through the introduction of time and labour-saving technologies, childcare nurseries when appropriate and raising awareness).

- 4. Developing specific ‘agriculture to nutrition’ trainings for both field staff and central ministries.** The poor quality/availability of nutrition training for agriculture staff was identified as one of the major obstacles to supporting nutrition-sensitive agriculture in the three countries studied. In particular, trainings should be targeted to field extension service agents, whose role makes it possible to provide sensitisation on nutrition to farmers and communities.
- 5. Improving the coordination between agriculture and other sectors around the topic of nutrition.** The participation of the agriculture sector in existing multisectoral coordination mechanisms needs to be reinforced. This is the collective responsibility of Ministries of Agriculture, Health and Social Development.
- 6. Dramatically increasing the funding available for nutrition-sensitive approaches in agriculture.** Ministries need to secure specific lines for nutrition within the agriculture budget. This budget should be easy to track and transparent. There also needs to be a continuity of sustainable financial investment. For this, Ministries of Finance and Ministries of Agriculture could work together.

All this will not be possible without strengthening the political will to make agriculture more sensitive to nutrition. At the country level, the nutrition community (including a range of actors from government to civil society, research, private sector and donors) has a key role to play in engaging with the agriculture sector and supporting it to better integrate nutrition within agriculture.



RECOMMENDATIONS TO INTERNATIONAL AGRICULTURE STAKEHOLDERS

As shown in section 4, the progress made by international organisations and donors towards making agricultural development more sensitive to nutrition is mixed. The glass is currently half full (in terms of commitments) and half empty (in terms of delivering).

Therefore, the main rural sector donors, both bilateral and multilateral (in particular members of the SUN donor network and the UN system) should:

1. Prioritize nutrition in agriculture programmes and international forums to make agriculture more accountable to nutrition:

- It is necessary to strengthen and share the consensus on agriculture and nutrition at both global and country levels, in particular to broaden the existing consensus from the nutrition sector to the agriculture sector.
- The recently established Global Panel on Agriculture and Food Systems for Nutrition, whose mandate is to “provide global research and policy leadership on nutrition-sensitive agriculture” should be a vehicle for this, if it associates countries and civil society in its work.
- The Committee on World Food Security (CFS), as the most inclusive international policy forum focusing on agriculture, food security and hunger reduction, should focus more on nutrition within agriculture programmes and policies.
- A future report from the High-Level Panel of Experts (HLPE) on the challenges of making the agriculture and food systems work better for nutrition would be a clear signal and a good opportunity.
- The upcoming 2nd International Conference on Nutrition (ICN2) will also be an important opportunity to mobilize

national decision makers from the agriculture sector to take the issue forward at country level.

2. Dedicate stronger support to country-level nutrition-sensitive initiatives in agriculture, especially through:

- a. programming and funding, which should mainstream nutrition into the agriculture and rural sector;
- b. technical assistance and providing an advisory role to the government, particularly for UN agencies such as FAO and WFP;
- c. policy dialogue with high-level decision makers (particularly bilateral donors including EU Member States and other members of the SUN donor network);
- d. improved donor coordination around nutrition in agriculture to increase the knowledge base, coherence, scale and synergies between donors;
- e. country-focused nutrition research programmes, including impact assessments.

Members of the SUN donor network in particular should use these five channels to increase their support to long-term nutrition-sensitive agriculture strategies and programmes. This will accelerate the SUN commitment to making nutrition-sensitive policies a reality in the field.

3. Deliver on their commitments for nutrition-sensitive agriculture

Thirty-nine countries and regional organisations, in particular G8 countries, have recently committed themselves to do more and do better for nutrition, including through agriculture, in the framework of the 2013 G8 Nutrition for Growth event in London. These countries need to deliver on these commitments and be accountable and transparent on their progress and achievements in the years to come. An accountability framework for reporting progress made with regards to initial commitments is currently being developed. It should set up clear criteria about what can be considered nutrition-sensitive or not.

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ACF nutrition-sensitive agriculture analysis grid

Pillars	Key questions to analyse agricultural policy framework
Objective, Assessment, Mitigation, Monitoring and Evaluation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have nutritional objectives been integrated? • Has an initial assessment including nutritional criteria been conducted? Has it included analysis of the potential negative impacts of part of the policy on nutrition? • Has a mitigation plan been established? What kind of concrete measures does it contain? Has it been implemented? • Does the monitoring of the policy include nutritional indicators/criteria? • Will the policy be evaluated through a nutrition lens? Will its impact on nutrition be analysed?
Targeting and Gender	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Who are the main targets of the policy? How has it been defined – have nutritional criteria been taken into account (1000-days, under-5, PLW, etc)? What targeting tools are recommended or used? • Has a geographical targeting or prioritization been established on the basis of nutrition indicators? Or aligned with investments in the other underlying causal factors of undernutrition? • Has a specific attention been paid to the gender dimension? How? What part of the total beneficiaries are women? • Are specific measures promoting the increase of women’s access to and control over incomes and other resources (of which land) and reducing women’s time constraints? • Have indirect impact on women been taken into account? (ie. risk of increased workload thus reduced time for childcare, unpaid work, discretionary income, etc.)
Main activities: contributions to the improvement of year-round consumption of diverse, nutritious food: improving nutrient-rich food availability (from production to marketing), affordability, reducing seasonality.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How the impacts of the policy on i) production diversification; ii) employment and income-livelihoods diversification; iii) food price reduction have been taken into account? • Seasonality: has the objective of reducing the seasonality of availability and prices been included? How? Through which interventions? • How is the policy promoting crop diversification? What products-crops are getting the more support? (Has the nutritional value of products a criteria for setting priority?) • Has the policy a component on promoting seed biofortification and product fortification? • How is the policy supporting reduction of post-harvest losses and increased storage capacities as well as rural and rural-urban transportation capacities? • Are some programmes aiming at easing the access to markets of nutrient-rich products? (through marketing measures, price support, community promotion, advertisement, etc.) • How is the policy supporting processing and manufacture of local production? Does that include preservation of the nutritional value of products? • Does the policy include specific attention on vegetables and fruits value-chains and on livestock, milk and dairy value chains?

[to be cont.]



Pillars	Key questions to analyse agricultural policy framework
Complementary activities: nutritional awareness, training and education	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Does the policy include or mention some activities specifically dedicated to nutrition? Such as home gardens, school gardens, nutritional education and awareness-raising activities, nutritional communication. What priority does it give to those activities?• Have agricultural agents or students been trained in nutrition? how? Does the policy give them a responsibility with regard to nutrition?
Governance and Funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Is nutrition a political priority? What elements could show that?• How are the agricultural and nutrition sectors discussing? At the central as well as at the local level? E.g. are there nutrition positions within ministry of agriculture? Are nutrition specialists being involved in the planning, review, evaluation and learning exercise of agricultural programmes?• Is there a multisectoral coordination body or instance to discuss nutrition? Where is it placed institutionally? How far has the agriculture sector been playing its role? What other sectors are represented (health, water, sanitation, social protection, etc.)• Has nutrition in agriculture received a comparative level of funding which is coherent with the political will? What part of the national-donors funding is dedicated to 'nutritional-sensitive programmes'?• Have donors and international organisations (particularly FAO, IFAD, the World Bank, etc.) supported the nutritional dimensions of the agricultural policy framework? How (through training, advisory role, technical assistance, funding, etc.)? Have some nutrition focused national or international initiatives (such as the SUN movement or the REACH initiative) been playing a role?

Five key recommendations for improving nutrition through agriculture and food policies

http://unscn.org/files/Agriculture-Nutrition-CoP/Agriculture-Nutrition_Key_recommendations.pdf

Agriculture programmes and investments need to be supported by an enabling policy environment if they are to contribute to improving nutrition. Governments can encourage improvements in nutrition through agriculture by taking into consideration the five policy actions below.

Food and agriculture policies can have a better impact on nutrition if they:

- Increase incentives (and decrease disincentives) for availability, access, and consumption of diverse, nutritious and safe foods through environmentally sustainable production, trade, and distribution. The focus needs to be on horticulture, legumes, and small-scale livestock and fish – foods which are relatively unavailable and expensive, but nutrient-rich – and vastly underutilized as sources of both food and income.
- Monitor dietary consumption and access to safe, diverse, and nutritious foods. The data could include food prices of diverse foods, and dietary consumption indicators for vulnerable groups.
- Include measures that protect and empower the poor and women. Safety nets that allow people to access nutritious food during shocks or seasonal times when income is low; land tenure rights; equitable access to productive resources; market access for vulnerable producers (including information and infrastructure). Recognizing that a majority of the poor are women, ensure equitable access to all of the above for women.
- Develop capacity in human resources and institutions to improve nutrition through the food and agriculture sector, supported with adequate financing.
- Support multi-sectoral strategies to improve nutrition within national, regional, and local government structures.

These key recommendations target policy makers and programme planners. These recommendations are based on the current global context, and may be updated over time as challenges and opportunities to improve nutrition through agriculture shift.

Note: These recommendations have been formulated following an extensive review and synthesis of available guidance on agriculture programming for nutrition, conducted by FAO, with substantial inputs from the Ag2Nut CoP in the form of relevant resources, comments, and verification of main conclusions. A consultation with a broad range of partners (CSOs, NGOs, government staff, donors, UN agencies), facilitated by FAO, in particular through the Ag2Nut Community of Practice, honed the common messages into a concise set of recommendations (or guiding principles) that represent a broad consensus on how to improve nutrition through agriculture, based on the current global context.



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