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Second Food Aid and Food Security Assessment (FAFSA-2) Summary

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Contents

Abbreviations and Acronyms	iii
Executive Summary	1
Introduction	2
FAFSA-2 Objectives, Scope, and Methods	3
Program Impact	4
Impact on Child Undernutrition	4
Impact on Household Diets and Incomes	6
Resource Trends and Geographic and Program Priorities	7
Overall Funding	7
Geographic and Program Priorities	7
Maintaining a Rural Focus	7
Focusing on the More Food Insecure Countries	8
Continuity in the Priority Technical Areas	8
Balancing Food and Cash	8
Program Management and Implementation: Achievements and Challenges	11
Program Integration	11
With Mission Strategies and the Foreign Assistance Framework	11
With the Feed the Future Initiative	11
Program Design	12
Improving Problem Assessments	12
Improving In-Country Geographic Targeting	12
Targeting at the Community Level	13
Integrating Technical Program Interventions	14
Adding a Risk and Vulnerability Dimension to Development Programs	15
Women, Gender, and Gender Equality	16
Sustainability	17
Program Management	18
Office Management and Operations	18
Technical Assistance and Capacity Building Mechanisms	19
Program Performance Management	19
Technical Sector Results and Lessons Learned	23
Agriculture, Natural Resources Management, Livelihoods, Income Generation	23
Context	24
Funding	24
Interventions and Outcomes	24
Approaches	26
More Successful Programs	27
Better and Not-So-Good Practices	28

Infrastructure and Public Works	29
Context	30
Funding	30
Approaches, Interventions, and Outcomes	30
Opportunities and Challenges	31
Maternal and Child Health and Nutrition	32
Funding	33
Targeting	33
Interventions and Outcomes	34
Nutritional Status Impact by Type of Supplementary Feeding	36
Approaches That Work in Title II Development Programs	37
More Successful Programs	37
Approaches That Do Not Work in Title II Development Programs	37
HIV	38
Context	38
Funding	38
Approaches, Interventions, and Outcomes	38
Co-Programming with PEPFAR	39
Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene	39
Funding	40
Approaches and Interventions	40
Outcomes and Impact	42
FAFSA-2 Recommendations	43
Recommendations for Improving Program Performance	43
To Improve Technical Guidance	43
To Improve Program Procurement and Enhance Program Effectiveness	43
To Improve Performance Management	44
To Expand the Direct Use of Food and Enhance Program Impact on Child Nutrition	46
To Address Environmental Issues Effectively	46
Technical Sector Recommendations	46
Recommendations for AG/NRM/LH	46
Recommendations for Infrastructure	47
Recommendations for MCHN	48
Recommendations for HIV	49
Recommendations for WASH	49
 Annex 1. Title II Development Programs included in the FAFSA-2 Universe, by Region, Country, Awardee, and FAFSA-2 Technical Reviewer	 50
 References	 53

Abbreviations and Acronyms

ADS	Automated Directives System	kg	Kilogram(s)
AER	Annual Estimate of Requirements	km	Kilometer(s)
AG	Agriculture	LAC	Latin America and the Caribbean
AIDS	Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome	LH	Livelihoods
BEST	Bellmon Estimation Studies for Title II	M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
CBO	Country Backstop Officer	MCHN	Maternal and Child Health and Nutrition
CCB	Community Cereal Bank	MFI	Microfinance Institution
CHW	Community Health Worker	NACS	Nutrition Assessment, Counseling, and Support
DEC	Development Experience Clearinghouse	NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
DHS	Demographic and Health Surveys	Non-AG IG	Non-Agricultural Income Generation
ENA	Essential Nutrition Actions	NRM	Natural Resources Management
EWR	Early Warning and Response	OVC	Orphans and Vulnerable Children
F	Office of U.S. Foreign Assistance Resources (U.S. Department of State)	PD/H	Positive Deviance/Hearth
FAFSA	Food Aid and Food Security Assessment	PEPFAR	United States President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief
FANTA	Food and Nutrition Technical Assistance Project	PLHIV	People Living with HIV
FAQR	Food Aid Quality Review	PM2A	Preventing Malnutrition in Children under 2 Approach
FEWS NET	Famine Early Warning Systems Network	PSNP	Productive Safety Net Program
FFW	Food for Work	PVO	Private Voluntary Organization
FSCF	Food Security Country Framework	RFA	Request for Applications
FTF	Feed the Future Initiative	RUTF	Ready-to-Use Therapeutic Food
FY	Fiscal Year	SBCC	Social and Behavior Change Communication
g	Gram(s)	TOPS	Technical and Operational Performance Support
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus	U.S.	United States
HN	Health and Nutrition	USAID	U.S. Agency for International Development
ICB	Institutional Capacity Building	USAID/FFP	USAID Office of Food for Peace
IFAR	International Food Assistance Report	USG	U.S. Government
IFPRI	International Food Policy Research Institute	VGf	Vulnerable Group Feeding/Social Safety Net
IG	Income Generation	VSL	Village Savings and Loan
INF	Infrastructure	WASH	Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene
IPTT	Indicator Performance Tracking Table		
IR	Intermediate Result		
IYCF	Infant and Young Child Feeding		

Executive Summary

Food Insecurity in Vulnerable Populations Reduced: The Title II Development Program Experience

Title II development programs implemented during the second Food Aid and Food Security Assessment (FAFSA-2) time period delivered a wide range of interventions to respond to unique problems and opportunities to improve the lives of people in targeted areas. These programs worked in agriculture and natural resources management; maternal and child health and nutrition; vulnerable group feeding; HIV; education; water, sanitation, and hygiene; non-agricultural income generation; infrastructure; and emergency preparedness and disaster management. The programs were technically complex and challenging to design and implement successfully, and operated in difficult environments in some of the poorest and most food insecure countries in the world.

The results of the FAFSA-2 analysis indicate that Title II development programs can indeed reduce undernutrition in young children, improve a number of important maternal and child health and nutrition outcomes, and increase household access to income and food. Most importantly, many children are alive and have been spared ill health and lifelong disabilities thanks to Title II. Stunting in children under 5 years of age fell on average 1.32 percentage points per year with delivery of MCHN services provided by Title II. Improvements in household diets and incomes took place in more than three-quarters of the programs that reported on these indicators. The assessment identified various technical sector models, approaches, and practices that are more likely to contribute to positive food security impacts. Because it is just as important to learn from failures as it is to emulate successes, the FAFSA-2 also includes examples of approaches and practices that have not worked well. Learning from the experiences of Title II development programs, made available through the FAFSA-2 analysis and findings, and doing more of what works in future programs presents a tremendous opportunity for the U.S. Agency for International Development's Office of Food for Peace and its Awardees to improve overall program performance.

Introduction

The second Food Aid and Food Security Assessment (FAFSA-2) was commissioned by the U.S. Agency for International Development’s Office of Food for Peace (USAID/FFP), which is housed in the Bureau for Democracy, Conflict, and Humanitarian Assistance. The report was commissioned to review the changes in and accomplishments of the Title II development food aid (non-emergency) program since the previous assessment in 2002.¹ The Title II development program strives to enhance food security in developing countries, an objective that dates from the 1990 Farm Bill and the 1995 USAID “Food Aid and Food Security Policy Paper” (Policy Paper). During the time period covered by the FAFSA-2 (Fiscal Year [FY] 2003–FY 2009), more than US\$2.5 billion was made available to Title II development programs in 36 food insecure countries in Africa, Asia, and Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC), making Title II one of the major sources of U.S. Government (USG) funding for food security-related activities during the period.

The 1995 Policy Paper laid out the basic policies that guided program development and resource allocation during the FAFSA-2 time period. The paper introduced a number of key changes, including a focus on rural areas and the identification of two geographic priorities, **sub-Saharan Africa** and **South Asia**, and two program priorities, **improving household nutrition** and **increasing agricultural**

productivity. The paper also recognized the importance of complementary resources—especially cash—to the success of development programs and to the achievement of food security on a sustainable basis, and it encouraged more integration of Title II and USAID Mission programs. The 2006–2010 USAID/FFP Strategic Plan, which was developed during the early 2000s in an environment characterized by the increasing frequency and severity of natural and man-made disasters, placed more emphasis on addressing risk and vulnerability in Title II programs. This included changing the Strategic Objective of the program to “Food insecurity in vulnerable populations reduced” and adding activities to the development programs designed to reduce the risks that targeted communities, households, and individuals face and to increase their capacity to cope with shocks.

This summary report provides a synopsis of the findings and conclusions of the FAFSA-2. Readers seeking more details on the analyses, including specific program examples, data, and citations from the literature, are encouraged to consult the relevant chapters in the full report, which is available at USAID/FFP’s website (<http://www.usaid.gov/what-we-do/agriculture-and-food-security/food-assistance/resources/research-and-policy-papers>) and FANTA’s website (<http://www.fantaproject.org/>).

FAFSA-2 Objectives, Scope, and Methods

The primary objective of the FAFSA-2 was to document the overall achievements of Title II development programs since the 2002 FAFSA.¹ This included assessing the approaches adopted and results achieved in the principal technical sectors and identifying promising practices, innovations, lessons learned, strengths, weaknesses, and constraints to achieving results. While the emphasis was on the technical review, USAID/FFP also asked the FAFSA-2 team to assess the extent to which the objectives, approaches, planning, and management changes proposed in the 2006–2010 Strategic Plan were adopted and how these changes influenced the program. The focus of the assessment was on Intermediate Result (IR) 2 of the Strategic Plan: “Title II impact in the field increased.” Emergency programs were not included in the assessment, and the review of activities under IR 1—“Global leadership in reducing food insecurity enhanced”—was limited to those that were directly relevant to the performance of the field programs. At the request of USAID/FFP, the FAFSA-2 Summary and full report also include recommendations for future program directions in light of assessment findings and changes in the legislative, organizational, policy, and development environment. The FAFSA-2 could best be described as a systematic review of the qualitative and quantitative information available in documentation and evaluations of the Title II development programs in the FAFSA-2 universe.

¹ A complete list of the countries and programs included in the FAFSA-2 universe is provided in Annex 1. Details on the criteria used to identify the countries and programs are found in Chapter 1 of the full FAFSA-2 report, as are the criteria used to select the countries included in the field visits.

FAFSA-2 Scope and Methods

- **Time Frame:** FY 2003–FY 2009
- **Programs and Countries:**
101 programs in 28 countries (Africa: 64 programs in 20 countries; Asia: 14 programs in 3 countries; LAC: 23 programs in 5 countries)
- **Methods:** Systematic review of documents and data, stakeholder interviews, field visits (Bangladesh, Guatemala, Malawi, Niger, Uganda)
- **Major Technical Areas Covered:** agriculture; natural resources management; livelihoods; income generation; maternal and child health and nutrition; HIV; water, sanitation, and hygiene; infrastructure

Program Impact

From the 1990s through the FAFSA-2 time period, the Title II development program was unique among USAID programs in its mandate to address the breadth of determinants of household food insecurity and undernutrition. This can be seen in Figure 1, which presents the conceptual framework used in the FAFSA-2 for understanding the immediate, underlying, and basic causes of food insecurity. It illustrates the many intervention points and causal pathways that Title II development programs can and do work on to positively affect food security. Most importantly, it highlights what Title II development programs can do to improve child nutritional status at the highest impact level and what they can do to address household food access and income as underlying causes. This framework can also be used to better understand some of the more important factors and pathways that could influence whether a given agricultural intervention—the transfer of agricultural technology, for example (which is found at the bottom right of the framework)—might have the desired impact on food access and nutritional status. Most of the changes in the agricultural sector will influence nutritional status through their effects on food availability and access. But changes in agricultural technologies and practices can also influence child nutritional status through changes in health status (e.g., the introduction of a water-related disease along with a new irrigation system) or changes in the amount of time women spend on agricultural and income-generation activities, which are likely to affect the amount of time they have for child care.

Impact on Child Undernutrition

Reducing child undernutrition saves lives and protects human potential. As seen in Figure 1, there are multiple determinants of child nutritional status, and improvements occur at the most immediate level only in response to *improved dietary intake*

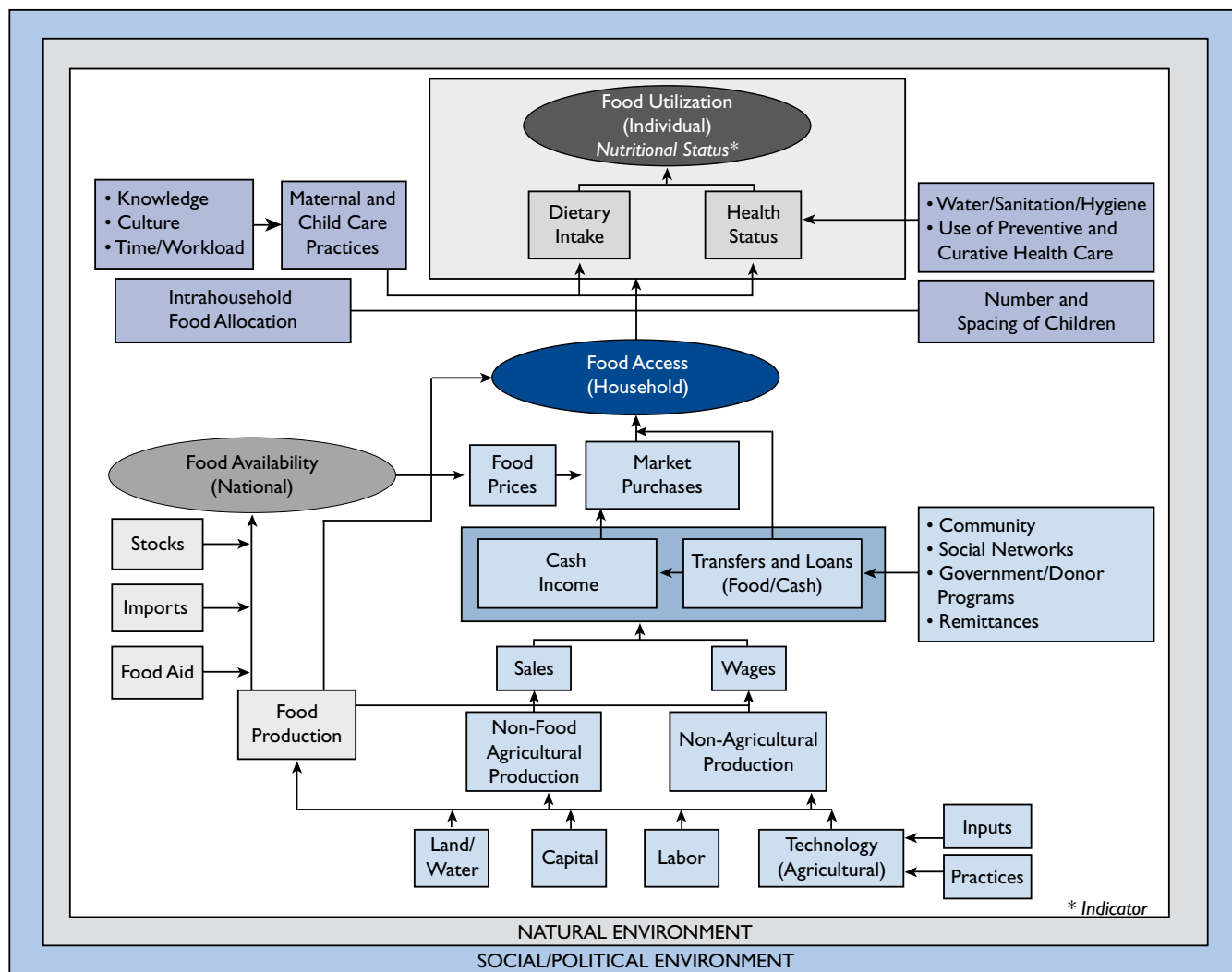
Title II Program Impact

Results from the FAFSA-2 analysis add to the growing body of evidence that effective Title II development programs can reduce undernutrition in young children and increase household access to food and income. Most importantly, many children are alive and have been spared ill health and life-long disabilities thanks to Title II. Child nutritional status and household access to food are both important measures of food security and of the impact of Title II programs in meeting the USAID/FFP Strategic Objective.

or *improved health status* (less disease). But increases in food consumption and better health are influenced by many other factors, including child care, income, food production, and water and sanitation infrastructure. While child nutritional status is primarily an indicator of the results of Title II programs' work in the health and nutrition (HN) technical sector, it can also be a collective measure of the impact of work in other technical sectors, such as water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH); vulnerable group feeding/social safety net (VGF); sustainable agricultural production and natural resources management (AG/NRM); and non-agricultural income generation (Non-AG IG). For these latter interventions to have a nutritional impact, however, they must benefit many households with children under five and result in improvements in dietary intake or health status of children under five.

The standard, population-based anthropometric indicators used by USAID/FFP and Title II Awardees

Figure 1. The Food Security Conceptual Framework Developed for Use in the FAFSA-2



This figure presents the conceptual framework used in the FAFSA-2 for understanding the immediate, underlying, and basic causes of food insecurity, including food availability, access, and utilization.

Adapted by Roberta van Haefen and Mary Ann Anderson from: Riely et al. 1999. "Food Security Indicators and Framework for Use in the Monitoring and Evaluation of Food Aid Programs." <http://www.fantaproject.org/downloads/pdfs/fsindctr.pdf>; and UNICEF. 1990. *Strategy for improved nutrition of children and women in developing countries*. New York: UNICEF.

Reducing Stunting in Title II Development Programs

Stunting in children under five years of age fell an average of 1.32 percentage points per year with delivery of maternal and child health and nutrition services by Title II development programs.

Improvements in Diets and Incomes in Title II Development Programs

Improvements in household diets and incomes took place in more than three-quarters of the Title II development programs that reported on these indicators.

to measure whether their programs were having a positive impact on the program’s nutritional goals are the *percentage of children under five years that have low weight-for-age (underweight)* and the *percentage of children under five years that have low height-for-age (stunting or chronic undernutrition)*. The FAFSA-2 analyzed nutritional status impact data for children under five years reported in Title II final evaluation surveys compared to baseline surveys with no known limitations: 28 programs with weight-for-age data and 28 with height-for-age data (not necessarily the same 28 programs for both measures). The median length of time between baseline and final evaluation surveys was four years.² The programs in the analysis had a bigger impact on stunting (reducing it on average across all programs by 1.32 percentage points per year) than on underweight (which declined on average by 0.63 percentage points per year). These declines were greater than the secular trend changes in stunting and

² A complete description of the methodology used for this meta-analysis of anthropometric data from Title II development program evaluations is found in Section 6.4.2 of the full FAFSA-2 report.

underweight reported in Demographic and Health Surveys (DHS) for a number of the same countries. There were marked regional differences in reducing chronic undernutrition, with Title II programs in the combined Asia and LAC regions achieving a bigger average annual reduction in stunting of 1.53 percentage points, compared to Africa programs, where stunting fell only 0.98 percentage points per year. These differences in the impact of Title II development programs on child stunting track with the differences in program interventions, approaches, and budgets for maternal and child health and nutrition (MCHN) across the regions. Greater reductions in stunting and underweight were seen in programs that did preventive supplementary feeding, which is discussed in the “Nutritional Status Impact by Type of Supplementary Feeding” section on page 36.

Impact on Household Diets and Incomes

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

Resource Trends and Geographic and Program Priorities

Overall Funding

Funding for the overall Title II program increased substantially during the FAFSA-2 time period, with the majority of the increases going to fund emergency programs (see Figure 2). Funds for development programs increased to more than US\$412 million in FY 2003, and remained in the US\$330–US\$378 million range between FY 2004 and FY 2009. These funds bought smaller amounts of food later in the FAFSA-2 time period, as increasing commodity and freight costs eroded their purchasing power (see Figure 3). Title II development programs that dedicated high percentages of their resources to direct distribution of food rations were more adversely affected by these upward price trends, because higher food prices and fixed budgets meant less food was available to distribute to the planned number of recipients.

Geographic and Program Priorities

The majority of Title II development resources continued to be allocated according to the priorities initially established in the 1995 Policy Paper. That is, most of the resources were allocated to programs in Africa and to agricultural production and productivity and household nutrition interventions.

Maintaining a Rural Focus

The 1995 Policy Paper also gave priority to programs in rural areas since food insecurity was predominantly a rural problem at that time. This

Figure 2. Trends in Title II Funding during the FAFSA-2 Time Period

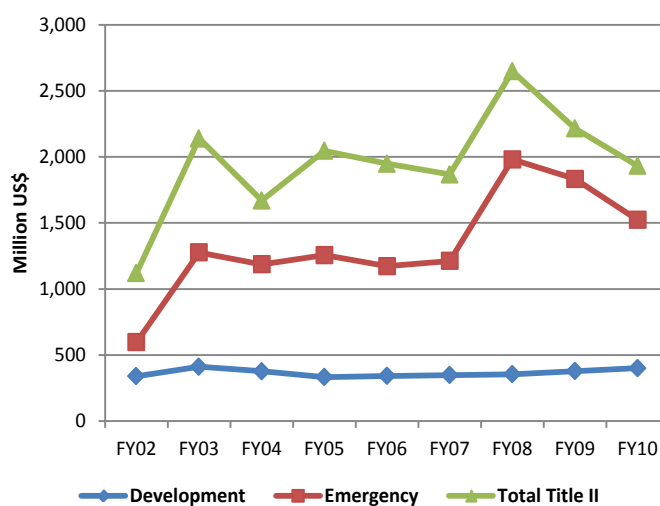
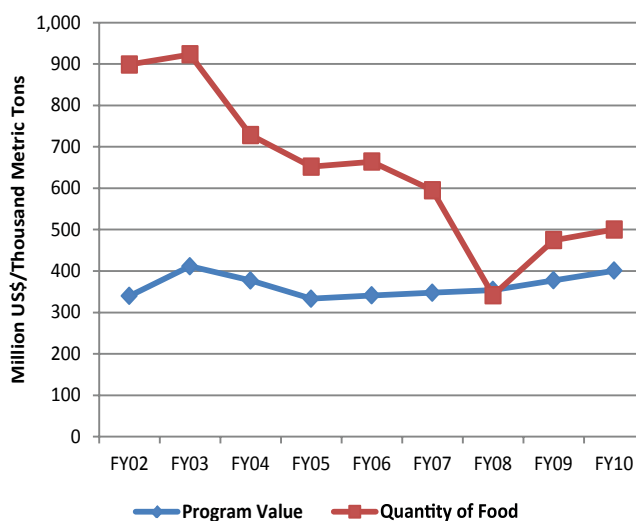


Figure 3. Changes in the Value and Quantity of Food Made Available through the Title II Development Program



Source: USAID/FFP Operating Year Budgets

rural focus continued throughout the FAFSA-2 time period. Although most countries in the FAFSA-2 universe continued to urbanize rapidly and urban poverty and food insecurity increased substantially, the FAFSA-2 concluded that the position on urbanization in the Strategic Plan remains relevant³ and that USAID/FFP should continue monitoring these trends.

Focusing on the More Food Insecure Countries

Consistent with the commitment to target Title II resources to the most vulnerable countries as outlined in the 1995 Policy Paper, USAID/FFP has continued to reallocate Title II development resources to a smaller number of more food insecure countries. The shift in countries that occurred during the FAFSA-2 time period was a major one and one that was not easy to plan and execute, in part because it entailed closing programs in 14 non-priority countries. The reallocation process was basically completed by FY 2010, five years after it began (see Figure 4), which was a remarkable accomplishment. USAID/FFP used an objective, data-based method for identifying priority countries. Since 16 of the initial 20 priority countries were located in Africa,⁴ this shift also led to a surge in Title II development resources allocated to Africa beginning in FY 2007, with concurrent declines in

³ “The assumption underlying the 1995 ‘Food Aid and Food Security Policy’ was that food insecurity is primarily a rural problem. Now, with many developing countries rapidly urbanizing and urban poverty increasing, there will be cases when strong arguments can be made for supporting urban-based activities. However, urban poverty in itself will not cause a structural reorientation of Title II activities away from rural areas if country-specific analyses of risks and vulnerabilities indicate that this is where the priorities still lie” (USAID/FFP Strategic Plan, p. 43).

⁴ The 16 priority countries in Africa were Burkina Faso, Burundi, Chad, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Ethiopia, Liberia, Madagascar, Malawi, Mali, Mauritania, Mozambique, Niger, Sierra Leone, Sudan, Uganda, and Zambia. Of the remaining four priority countries, two were in Asia (Afghanistan and Bangladesh) and two were in LAC (Guatemala and Haiti).

Title II development resources for programs in Asia and LAC.

Continuity in the Priority Technical Areas

During the FAFSA-2 time period, the majority of Title II development resources continued to be allocated to the two major program priorities identified in the 1995 Policy Paper, i.e., AG/NRM (39 percent in FY 2003 and 40 percent in FY 2009) and HN/WASH (40 percent in FY 2003 and 38 percent in FY 2009).⁵ The relative importance of these two program priorities varied considerably by major geographic region. The share of resources going to the AG/NRM sector was higher in Africa and the share of resources going to HN (with WASH) was higher in Asia and LAC (see Figure 5). Other technical sectors that received funding and the proportion of total resources dedicated to them in FY 2009 included VGF (10 percent), education (5 percent), emergency preparedness and disaster management (4 percent), Non-AG IG (3 percent), and civil society strengthening (1 percent).

Balancing Food and Cash

Finding the right balance between food and cash resources remained an important challenge for Title II development programs during the FAFSA-2 time period. Awardees needed access to cash to pay for complementary inputs (including technical assistance, training, materials, supplies, equipment, and other inputs and services) that are essential if their programs are to have developmental impact. Without access to other sources of cash, and having to rely only on Title II resources, Awardees found themselves having to sell (monetize) food commodities to generate their programs’ cash requirements. As a result of this and other factors, such as operating environments that were more stable and a decline in development assistance levels, the share of resources monetized increased

⁵ This also includes HIV programming in AG/NRM and HN.

Figure 4. Distribution of Title II Development Resources by USAID/FFP Priority and Non-Priority Countries

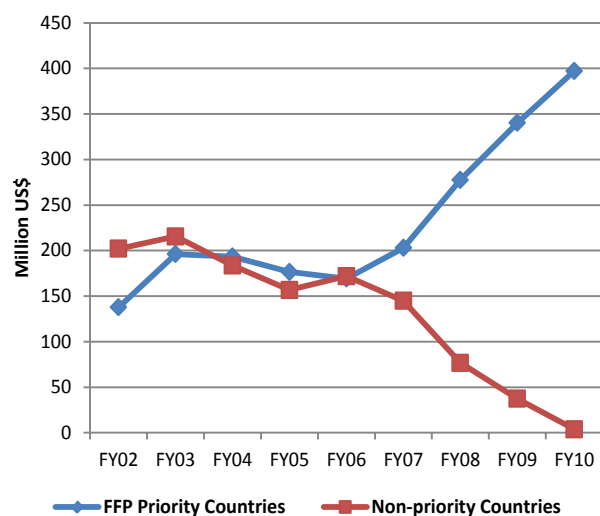
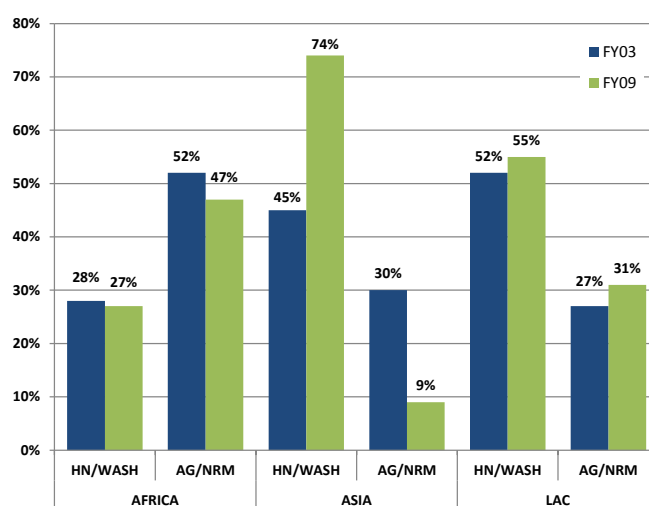


Figure 5. Changes in the Distribution of Title II Development Resources to the HN/WASH and AG/NRM Sectors by Region



Sources: Figure 4 – USAID/FFP Operating Year Budgets; Figure 5 – USAID/FFP Annual Resource and Beneficiary Tracking Tables.

from a little more than a quarter of the total commodities made available to development programs in 1994 to more than three-quarters in 2001. The ramifications of increased monetization were discussed in the 2002 FAFSA report, and a number of the issues identified continued to be of concern when work began on the USAID/FFP Strategic Plan in the early 2000s.

In the Strategic Plan, USAID/FFP encouraged Awardees to program more food directly in their programs to *enhance physical capital* through the use of food-for-work (FFW) to pay for labor on public works and to *enhance human capital* through the provision of food as take-home rations to encourage greater participation in MCHN activities and to supplement inadequate diets. Quantities of food distributed in FFW and MCHN activities did not increase, however (see Figure 6). During the FAFSA-2 time frame, monetization levels stabilized at an average of approximately 62 percent of

Title II development resources between 2002 and 2010 (see Figure 7), with the level exceeding 70 percent in only one year, i.e., FY 2007. Factors that helped USAID/FFP accomplish this were changes in the 2008 Farm Bill that expanded the acceptable uses of Section 202(e) funds⁶; the introduction of the Preventing Malnutrition in Children under 2 Approach (PM2A); and access to Community Development Funds, which became available in FY 2010. USAID/FFP was also successful during the FAFSA-2 time period in achieving greater program integration with Mission strategies, but was less successful in co-programming resources, due in part to procurement constraints.

⁶ See Section 2.2.2 in the full FAFSA-2 report for a brief discussion of the legislative history of the Title II program and Food for Peace Information Bulletin 11-01 of October 15, 2010, for additional information on Section 202(e) funds and eligible uses.

Figure 6. Trends in the Use of Food in Food for Work Public Works and MCHN Programs

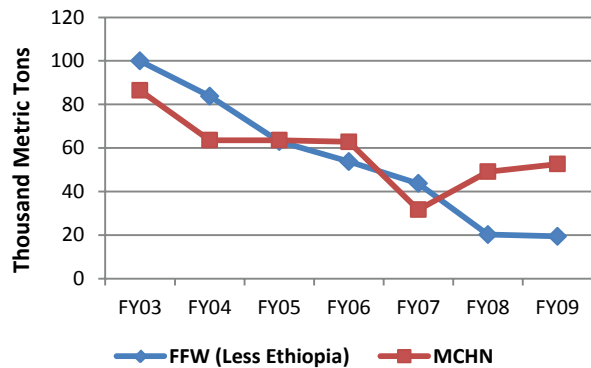
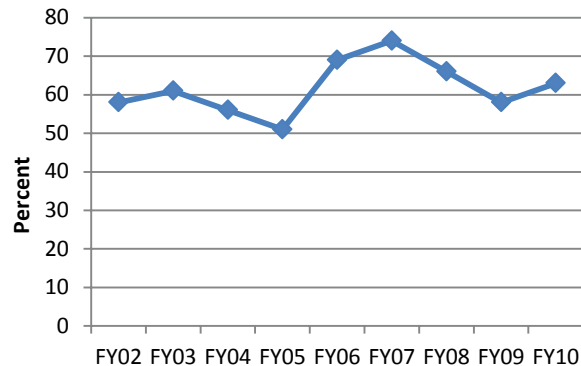


Figure 7. Percent of Title II Development Resources Monetized during the FAFSA-2 Time Period



Sources: Figure 6 – USAID/FFP Annual Estimates of Requirements (AERs); Figure 7 – USAID/FFP Operating Year Budgets.

Program Management and Implementation: Achievements and Challenges

Program Integration

With Mission Strategies and the Foreign Assistance Framework

Better integration of the Title II program with the priorities and strategies of the rest of USAID has been an objective of USAID/FFP since the 1995 Policy Paper. At the beginning of the FAFSA-2 time period, Title II development programs were encouraged to be integrated into Mission strategies and to contribute to specific Mission strategic objectives. In FY 2006, with the development of the Foreign Assistance Framework, all State Department and USAID-funded programs, Title II included, were encouraged to align with the framework's five key objectives and their program areas, elements, and sub-elements. Most Title II development programs were/are seen as being aligned with and contributing to three of the five objectives: "Investing in People," "Economic Growth," and "Humanitarian Assistance." Responsibility for annual reporting on the U.S. Department of State Office of U.S. Foreign Assistance Resources indicators (the so-called "F" indicators) is split between USAID/FFP and the Missions. USAID/FFP in Washington reports on indicators for Title II emergency programs, while Missions include performance data from the Title II Awardees' development programs in their reporting to Washington.

With the Feed the Future Initiative

The issue that was still being debated at the time that the FAFSA-2 report was being written was the extent

to which and how the Title II development program could be integrated with the Administration's Feed the Future Initiative (FTF). The Strategic Objective of the Title II development program—"Food insecurity in vulnerable populations reduced"—is consistent with and can help support the broader goal of the FTF "to sustainably reduce global hunger and poverty."ⁱⁱ The two programs have similar visions, including the commitment to a comprehensive approach to reducing poverty and food insecurity and a focus on strengthening the links between agriculture and improved nutrition outcomes and impact. Both also focus on a subset of high-priority countries to make more effective use of their resources. Nine countries—Bangladesh, Ethiopia, Guatemala, Haiti, Liberia, Malawi, Mali, Mozambique, and Uganda—had been selected for both programs as of the end of 2011. From the perspective of the FAFSA-2, Title II development programs have the potential to make an important contribution to the FTF in countries where the two programs overlap geographically, with both programs benefiting from each other's presence and efforts, creating synergies among and enhancing the impacts of each of the programs. The FTF could build on existing Title II community-based program delivery platforms that reach the most vulnerable populations, increasing the likelihood that the growth in the agricultural sector that FTF programs promote will be "inclusive." Title II programs could benefit from the ability of FTF programs to work on problems and constraints higher up the value chain, for example, and/or on the policy environment.

Program Design

Improving Problem Assessments

The 1995 Policy Paper stressed the importance of good problem assessments, arguing that it is “essential to understand the food security problems in recipient countries and make the link between initial problem assessments and the selection of specific program interventions most likely to succeed.” In addition, the Strategic Plan committed USAID/FFP to improving its own assessments and those of its partners, arguing that better problem assessments would result in more effective programs.

Food Security Country Frameworks. The preparation of a series of country-specific Food Security Country Frameworks (FSCFs), which were initiated after the adoption of the USAID/FFP Strategic Plan, resulted in a significant improvement in the quality of USAID/FFP’s country-specific proposal guidance. These documents, which begin with a detailed description of the nature of the food insecurity problems in a country, including its determinants and geographical distribution, also define program goals and objectives. In addition, FSCFs recommend areas where Title II development programs should be concentrated geographically, identify program priorities, describe the types of interventions and approaches that should be considered, and identify potential strategic partnerships. The first FSCFs were prepared by the Food and Nutrition Technical Assistance Project (FANTA) in 2007 for the programs scheduled to start in FY 2009 and, by the end of 2011, FSCFs were available for 11 of the USAID/FFP focus countries.

Awardee Applications and Problem Assessments. Most applications reviewed during the FAFSA-2 were well written and appeared to be well designed. The quality of the problem assessments also improved over time. The arguments were more likely to be data-based, consistent, and coherent, improvements that are likely due in part to the availability of the FSCFs. However, many Awardee

Food Security Country Frameworks

USAID/FFP initiated Food Security Country Frameworks during the FAFSA-2 time period, leading to improved country-specific guidance, better-quality problem analysis, and improved targeting to regions and districts that were more food insecure.

proposals still lacked specificity about the nature of the problems in the areas where they proposed to work and the constraints that they were likely to face in trying to implement effective programs in these areas. Few proposals prepared during the FAFSA-2 time period included information on the specific markets and market potentials, value chains, and activity profitability in the target areas, for example. Important details missing from most MCHN designs included information on specific child-feeding practices in the areas to be targeted and the likely barriers to change—information that is crucial to the development of effective behavior change strategies.

Improving In-Country Geographic Targeting

Progress was also made in targeting Title II programs to the more food insecure regions and districts within countries. Some of this improvement was due to the guidance provided in the FSCFs. Awardees also appeared to have become more skilled at the analyses they needed to make to inform decisions about how best to target their programs within the larger geographical units identified in the FSCFs. Since few details were provided in most project documents, it was difficult for the FAFSA-2 team to get a clear understanding of the various analytical processes and indicators used, which varied by Awardee and country. Most Awardees focused their programs in areas with the most severe food insecurity problems, i.e., in areas with the

highest percentages of poor people or chronically malnourished children. A case can also be made, as it was in the 2009 Bangladesh FSCF, that programs could be more cost-effective if the absolute numbers of food insecure people living in an area were also taken into account.

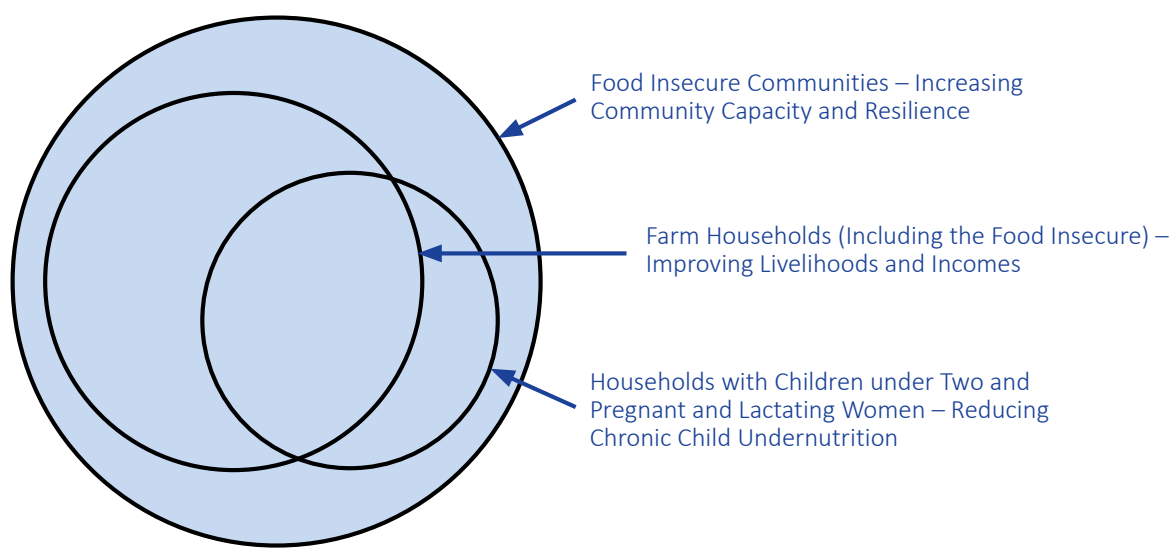
Targeting at the Community Level

Targeting at the community level can be complicated and appears to work better when adapted to the nature and objectives of the specific interventions, as the example in Figure 8 suggests.

Interventions Focused on Increasing Community Capacity and Resilience. Based on FAFSA-2 and other field experiences, the better practice with respect to increasing community capacity and resilience is to open program participation to all community members, both formal and informal leaders, as well as the more vulnerable. Inclusive programs work best for a wide range of activities, including community organization, planning, and capacity strengthening activities focused on risk identification, protection of community assets, and disaster preparedness.

Interventions Focused on Improving Household Livelihoods and Incomes. Agricultural technology transfer and marketing activities that are open to all community members that are interested in participating also appear to be better practices, based on FAFSA-2 and other field experiences. More inclusive programs are more likely to capture the farm leaders and first adopters, who play a critical role in getting the agricultural technology adoption process started. And their early adoption of new technology packages can also help pave the way for poorer farmers in a community that may be more reluctant to try new practices because they have fewer assets and need additional assurances as to the value of the new technologies (see Sections 4.3.2.1 and 4.3.3.2 of the full FAFSA-2 report). FFW and asset and cash transfers, on the other hand, need to be means tested to be cost-effective. That is, they need to be targeted to the poorer, more food insecure households and individuals that have more need for such assistance. Experiences with the AG/NRM/Livelihoods (LH) programs during the FAFSA-2 time period also suggest that Title II development programs are likely to have to be proactive to ensure that the more food insecure individuals

Figure 8. An Example of Targeting of Title II Interventions at the Community Level



Targeting at the community level can be complicated and appears to work better when adapted to the nature and objectives of the specific interventions.

and households in their target communities have the opportunity and are able to participate in these programs.

Interventions Focused on Reducing Chronic Child Undernutrition. Many MCHN programs implemented during the FAFSA-2 time period focused their activities on households in the community that had malnourished children (the *recuperation* model), while others concentrated on the poorer households. There is now evidence from research, including USAID/FFP-supported research in Haiti (see Section 3.7.1.4 on the PM2A study in the full report) and from the FAFSA-2 (see Section 6.4.5 of the full report) that the recuperation only model is less effective than programs that focus more broadly on all children under two and pregnant and lactating women in a food insecure community (the *prevention* model). Another rationale for age-based targeting of children is that in the food insecure rural communities where Title II programs work, even households in the upper-income quintiles may be food insecure and their children’s growth faltering, which means that these households can also benefit from social and behavior change communication (SBCC) to improve infant and young child feeding (IYCF) practices as well as from supplementary feeding.⁷

⁷ The FAFSA-2 concludes that a strong case can be made for providing a conditional food or cash transfer to MCHN beneficiaries in the 1,000-day window. Food transfers in particular can play an important biological role in improving mothers’ and children’s dietary intake at a critical stage of growth and development in food insecure communities. The use of conditional food or cash transfers is also frequently necessary to compensate mothers for the time spent participating in MCHN activities and also to encourage improved feeding practices, because the positive impact of this behavior change on children’s cognitive development, health, and nutritional status is less visible in the short term. This is in contrast to the agricultural sector, where paying farmers in food or cash as an incentive to apply recommended practices on their own lands is generally not a good idea because farmers are able to directly benefit from the results of their decisions and because the feedback between the action—planting a recommended seed variety, for example—and the results—a larger crop—tends to be more visible and timely. (Also see discussion in the “Sustainability” section on page 17.)

Interventions Focused on Improving Household Livelihoods and Incomes

The FAFSA-2 affirmed the importance of opening agricultural technology transfer and marketing activities to all community members that are interested in participating, while targeting FFW and asset transfers to the poorer, more food insecure households.

Integrating Technical Program Interventions

Various attempts were made during the FAFSA-2 time period to promote the integration of AG/NRM/LH and MCHN activities in Title II development programs, at the community level in particular. The rationale for viewing the integration of AG/Income Generation (IG) and MCHN activities as a better practice stems from a recognition by many of the links between poverty (i.e., lack of income), lack of access to food, and undernutrition (see Figure 1). Poverty and lack of access to sufficient food can be important underlying causes of undernutrition, as a number of studies have shown.⁸ However, increased incomes alone often do not translate into improved family diets. Diets will not improve if families lack

⁸ Alderman, H. et al. in the 2000 World Bank HNP Discussion Paper 12, *Reducing Child Malnutrition: How Far Does Income Growth Take Us?*, review evidence that income growth helps improve both food demand and nutritional outcomes. They also argue that “despite the importance of income growth as a factor in reducing malnutrition, it is, by itself, almost surely unlikely to meet the needs of the coming generation of children... and a combination of growth and specific nutrition programs will be needed.” Ecker, O. et al. in “Growth Is Good, but Not Enough to Improve Nutrition” in *Reshaping Agriculture for Nutrition and Health*, Shenggen, F. and R. Pandya-Lorch, R. (eds.), 2012, International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI), argue that economic growth is good, especially during the earlier stages of development when growth can help “reduce the prevalence of calorie deficiencies,” but that “growth—whether driven by the agricultural or non-agricultural sectors—is insufficient to address child malnutrition and reduce micronutrient malnutrition in all their dimensions.”

Getting the Basics Right

There is evidence from the FAFSA-2 that programs that succeeded in increasing household incomes and/or reducing child undernutrition got the basics right. That is, they focused first on the development of strong, commercially oriented, agriculture-based IG interventions and/or delivered strong, community-based, preventive MCHN interventions (the Essential Nutrition Actions [ENA]) in the first 1,000 days.

information on the importance of what constitutes a more nutritious diet and if families do not purchase and consume better diets. Nor will increased incomes translate into less child undernutrition if IYCF and hygiene practices are poor and families lack access to water, sanitation, and health services. The latter situation is illustrated by the high prevalence of stunting in middle- and upper-income quintiles in a number of the USAID/FFP focus countries.

Decisions with respect to program integration need to be balanced against other objectives, including achieving desirable levels of coverage for the individual components. This is especially the case in a resource-constrained environment. These issues arise in the project design, proposal review, and implementation phases. Few programs provided information on how many individuals or communities benefited from multiple components or evaluated the outcomes and impact achieved in groups that received different intervention packages. As a result, the evidence base in favor of integrating technical interventions is relatively slim. More information on the actual benefits and impact of program integration would help USAID/FFP and Awardees define the right balance among sectors and interventions. More information would also be useful on the effectiveness and impact of different

approaches to program integration. The arguments for integrating programs at the community level, rather than at the household level, are stronger, in part because well-designed and executed, commercially oriented AG/IG programs frequently have multiplier effects that can lead to increases in incomes of non-participant households.

Adding a Risk and Vulnerability Dimension to Development Programs

USAID/FFP took several steps to add a risk and vulnerability dimension to its development programs after the Strategic Plan was approved in 2005. This included the creation of a new technical sector focused on emergency preparedness and disaster management, encouraging programs to pay more attention to the development of community-based early warning and response (EWR) systems, and the development of trigger indicators that could be used to signal when conditions warranted Awardees reallocating Title II development resources to respond to a shock or an emerging crisis in their target areas.

The Creation of a New Technical Sector. USAID/FFP created the emergency preparedness and disaster management technical sector in FY 2006 so that it would have information on the amount of resources devoted to this new priority area through annual Awardee reporting in USAID/FFP Tracking Tables.

Community-Based EWR Systems. The amount of attention devoted to the development of community-based EWR systems expanded rapidly after approval of the USAID/FFP Strategic Plan. By FY 2009, Awardees reported that 78 percent of Title II-assisted communities “had disaster and early warning systems in place,” compared to only 30 percent in FY 2007, when the indicator was first introduced. A 2007 review of these systems, commissioned by USAID/FFP, found that some programs were much further along than others and that the systems in place ranged from those that were largely externally

driven to others that were genuinely community-managed. Externally driven EWR systems raise questions about how long they will continue to operate once projects end.

Trigger Indicators. The concept of trigger indicators was introduced in the FY 2006 USAID/FFP Annual Proposal Guidelines for Title II development programs as an option for making it quicker and easier for Awardees to respond to emerging crises and shocks in their operating areas. Adopting this concept meant that Awardees had to invest considerable time and effort upfront to identify potential shocks in each of their target areas; define potential indicators and response thresholds; and then set up the systems needed to collect, monitor, and analyze the data. Several USAID/FFP staff described the concept as one that was interesting and seemed to have promise but turned out to be difficult to operationalize, and the FAFSA-2 was unable to identify any cases where trigger indicators were actually used.

The need for trigger indicators has also changed as a result of other developments that have taken place in USAID/FFP operations since the concept was first introduced. These include improvements in USAID/FFP's projections of emergency needs and advanced planning, utilizing information from USAID's Famine Early Warning Systems Network (FEWS NET) project; the recent use of more agile and rapid procurement mechanisms, such as expedited food commodity procurements; and the introduction of the Emergency Food Security Program, through which International Disaster Assistance funds are used to support cash transfers, food vouchers, and/or local and regional procurement. Broader EWR systems, on the other hand, appear to have real potential as a risk management and responsive program implementation tool and could benefit from additional support to increase their usefulness and likelihood of sustainability in specific community and country contexts. Efforts to improve the linkages between these systems, which are able to amass

more detailed and country-specific early warning information, and FEWS NET would also be useful.

Women, Gender, and Gender Equality

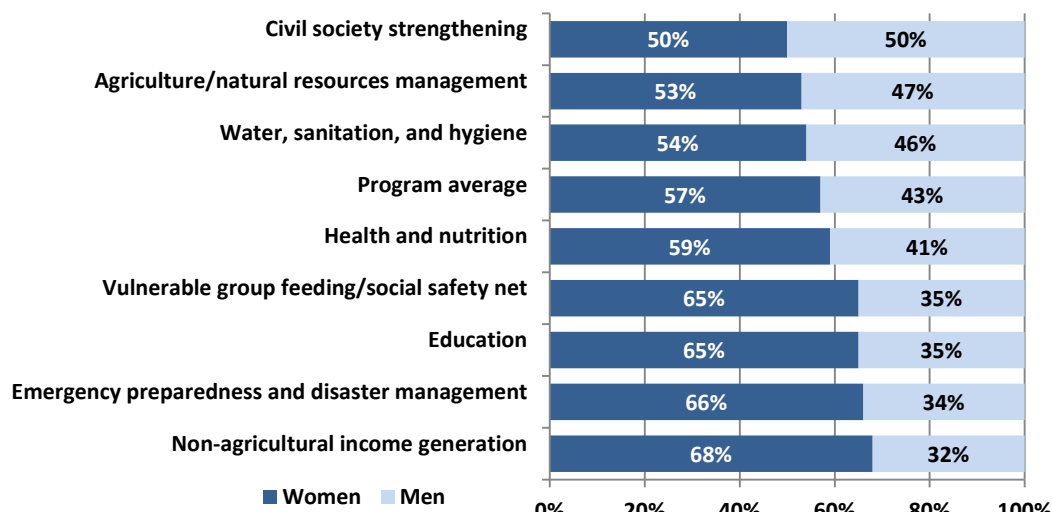
Gender issues were discussed in the context of “Women in Development” at the beginning of the FAFSA-2 time period, in USAID/FFP's Annual Proposal Guidelines for the FY 2003 Title II development programs, for example. USAID's and USAID/FFP's understanding and guidance on gender and gender equality and equity have advanced over time. Current guidance stresses the importance of adding an effective gender lens to the design and implementation of Title II development and emergency programs, a need also identified in the FAFSA-2.ⁱⁱⁱ

Integrating gender into a program does not mean that it has to become exclusively or even primarily focused on women, however. Gender equality, as defined in USAID's new *Gender Equality and Female Empowerment Policy*, “concerns women and men, and it involves working with men and boys, women and girls to bring about changes in attitudes, behaviors, roles and responsibilities at home, in the workplace, and in the community. Gender equality means more than parity or laws on the books; it means expanding freedoms and improving overall quality of life so that equality is achieved without sacrificing gains for males or females.”^{iv}

Women Beneficiaries

Women were major beneficiaries of Title II development programs by the end of the FAFSA-2 time period, comprising 57 percent of all beneficiaries in FY 2009, 53 percent of AG/NRM beneficiaries, and 59 percent of HN beneficiaries (see Figure 9).

Figure 9. Distribution of Beneficiaries by Sex by Technical Sector in FY 2009



Sustainability

It was beyond the scope and resources of the FAFSA-2 to explore in any depth the sustainability of Title II development programs *after* they ended. Additionally, sustainability of the Title II development programs *after* they ended is the focus of the USAID-funded Tufts University Exit Strategy Study, which was already under way at the time the FAFSA-2 began. Achieving sustainability is extremely important, however, and the FAFSA-2 team took advantage of the analytical framework developed for the Tufts study to better understand some of the sustainability issues that arose during the assessment.

The distinction between the sustainability of the people-level impact versus the sustainability of the activities/services producing the impact is an important concept with respect to MCHN programs in the FAFSA-2, while the potential tradeoffs between immediate impact and longer-term sustainability were found to be critical issues in AG/NRM programs. In the case of MCHN, if a program is able to prevent children under two from becoming stunted, this positive impact will benefit these

individuals for the rest of their lives. That is, the long-term individual impact is sustained, even if the mothers revert back to traditional feeding practices for their next child and/or the system that was put into place to achieve this result does not last beyond the life of the project, for example, when community health workers (CHWs) are no longer paid and cease to provide services after a project ends. Ideally, one would like to see mothers continuing positive child feeding practices and workers continuing to deliver services long after programs end, but the FAFSA-2 takes the position that having a positive impact on the nutritional status of the first cohort of children is of immense benefit in its own right. Whether the MCHN interventions are sustainable beyond one generation is unknown and would require research. It is known, however, that there are intergenerational nutritional improvements in birth weight, through improving the nutrition of young girls and pregnant women (see the United Nations System Standing Committee on Nutrition *6th Report on the World Nutrition Situation*, 2010).

In AG and NRM activities, economic incentives (i.e., profits) are key to getting farmers to adopt new technologies and practices as well as to keep

using them. One way to encourage farmers to adopt project-recommended technology packages is to provide these inputs to farmers for free or at subsidized prices (see discussion on “Distributing Inputs and Capital Assets” on page 27) and, in the case of NRM structures and practices, to pay farmers for the amount of time that they spend in their fields building these structures and applying these practices. These subsidies can help Awardees increase the numbers of new technology adopters (the percentage of adopters is one of the major outcome indicators for AG/NRM components), but these are artificial incentives and there is no guarantee that farmers will continue to use these new technologies and practices once a project is over and the subsidies and payments end. Having an impact in the short run, in cases where subsidies are used, in other words, is not necessarily an indicator of success in the longer term and may actually make it harder for a project to achieve a sustainable impact.

Program Management

Office Management and Operations

After approval of the Strategic Plan, USAID/FFP made major improvements in its business practices, many of which the Strategic Plan had recommended, as part of its commitment to the implementation of “strategic management and streamlined approaches.” Since USAID/FFP programs commodities as well as dollars, “the management of these resources comes with many complications and regulations that other USAID offices do not have to deal with,” as pointed out in the Strategic Plan. The extent of the changes and how rapidly they were implemented at a time of high staff turnover, including at senior management levels, is remarkable. The FAFSA-2 team also found that the consensus among staff is that USAID/FFP operates more effectively and transparently as a result of these management improvements.

Reorganizing the Washington Office. The Washington office was reorganized in 2006 and the Emergency and Development Program

Divisions were replaced by two regional divisions, as recommended in the Strategic Plan, to better integrate emergency and development activities. Based on interviews with USAID/FFP management and staff, the reorganization has helped USAID/FFP respond more quickly and effectively to differing regional needs and has reduced the inconsistencies and fragmentation that occurred previously when program responsibilities were divided among two divisions and two Country Backstop Officers (CBOs). There are limits, however, in how far USAID/FFP can go in erasing the distinction between its emergency and development programs, since these distinct categories are still used in the Congressional Presentation, authorization, and appropriation processes.

Strengthening Program Management and Oversight. USAID/FFP has also made considerable progress since 2006 in strengthening program management and oversight. This includes adding staff in its three Africa regional offices and placing at least one Food for Peace Officer in each of its

Strengthening Program Management and Oversight

During the FAFSA-2 time period, USAID/FFP:

- Added field staff in its three Africa regional offices and placed at least one Food for Peace Officer in each of its focus countries
- Expanded staff training opportunities, including by supporting the development of tailored courses, workshops, and manuals focused on the specific needs of its staff
- Encouraged more proactive management and oversight by Washington-based CBO and field staff

focus countries to manage the Title II programs. USAID/FFP also put more effort into strengthening the capacities of its own staff during the FAFSA-2 time period. It encouraged staff to take advantage of other training opportunities at USAID, including the course for agreement officer's representatives, and supported the development of tailored courses, workshops, and manuals focused on the specific needs of its staff. More proactive management and oversight on the part of USAID/FFP CBOs and field staff and involving other USAID Mission staff in Title II program activities also fostered program complementarities, synergies, and integration. Joint visits by USAID/FFP field officers and other USAID staff to field programs was one of the better practices observed during the FAFSA-2, as was the participation of USAID/FFP field officers in field visits for Title II program assessments and evaluations.

Aligning USAID/FFP Management and Operations with the Rest of USAID. Significant advances were made in aligning basic management systems and practices, including terminology, the filing system, and the project funding cycle, with the way things are done in the rest of USAID. The recent adoption of country program/portfolio reviews open to all staff and monthly budget/pipeline reviews increased transparency and improved program oversight within USAID/FFP, according to many staff. These changes, which are common practices elsewhere in USAID, were expected to promote more consistency across divisions and USAID/FFP CBOs in the way that policies are interpreted and programs managed. Soon after the 1995 Policy Paper was issued, USAID/FFP began taking steps to increase consistency among its development programs at the country level in the location of programs, program objectives and interventions, and time frames, including having all programs in a given country start and end in the same fiscal year. These and other changes led to proposals that were more focused and fully developed and to a more rigorous review process. In late 2010, USAID/FFP made the final conversion to using a Request for Applications (RFA) mechanism

for competing the 2011 Title II development programs, which USAID/FFP management expected to lead to better project proposals and more effective program implementation in the field.

Technical Assistance and Capacity Building Mechanisms

As part of its efforts to improve program performance in the field, USAID/FFP committed itself in the Strategic Plan to learning more about what works in its field programs and why (Strategic Plan Sub-IR 1.3: "Evidence base for more effective policy and program approaches improved") and to strengthening the capacity of its partners in key technical sectors (Strategic Plan Sub-IR 1.4: "Technical excellence and innovation supported"). Information about the major USAID/FFP-funded activities implemented under these two sub-IRs during the FAFSA-2 time period and their accomplishments is summarized in Table 1.

Program Performance Management

Performance management encompasses program monitoring, evaluation, communicating results (reporting), and learning from them. The performance management area is arguably where

Program Performance Management

The performance management area is arguably where USAID/FFP, Title II Awardees, and FANTA jointly made the greatest progress during the FAFSA-2 time frame. Major advances include new and standardized indicators; normative guidance in Information Bulletins and Technical Notes; the requirement for quantitative, independent, population-based evaluation surveys; and training workshops on M&E for Awardees.

Table 1. Summary of USAID/FFP-Funded Technical Assistance and Capacity Strengthening Mechanisms

Technical Support for Developing Guidance and Providing Technical Assistance	Capacity Strengthening	Special Studies
<p>FANTA and FANTA-2 Projects</p> <p>These consecutive Global Health Bureau-managed projects, which began in 1998, made major contributions to several areas based on applied research (see discussion of PM2A in this table) and to the development of new indicators that have become standard for measuring the impact of the Title II, FTF, and Global Health Initiative programs. Considerable effort was devoted to strengthening M&E. By December 2011, FANTA had also completed seven full FSCFs.</p> <p>FEWS NET</p> <p>The transfer of FEWS NET from the Africa Bureau to USAID/FFP in 2006 resulted in USAID/FFP having access to more reliable early warning information earlier, in more detail, and in new ways, including new products. FEWS NET relies on a unique combination of advanced technologies and field-based data collection making it increasingly accurate in its ability to predict weather-related anomalies and allowing USAID/FFP to understand food assistance needs six months into the future for programming decisions.</p> <p>Bellmon Estimation Studies for Title II (BEST) Project</p> <p>With the creation of the BEST pilot program in FY 2009, the Congressionally mandated assessments of the potential disincentive effects of Title II food assistance on food production and marketing in the recipient countries are now being conducted by an independent entity using methods that are consistent across countries and programs, with consistently higher-quality assessments as a result.</p>	<p>Institutional Capacity Building (ICB) Grants</p> <p>USAID/FFP provided ICB grants to 14 Title II Awardees between 2003 and 2008 to develop tools and strengthen capacity to improve performance in the field. An independent review found that Awardees did not always have enough time during the grants to complete staff training or roll out the new tools in the field. Most benefits accrued to each grantee private voluntary organization (PVO), with little evidence of networking with other Title II Awardees, sharing of tools, or interorganizational learning. A new approach was adopted in 2010 (see below).</p> <p>Technical and Operational Performance Support (TOPS) Project</p> <p>The TOPS Project started in late 2010 to promote excellence in food security programming by facilitating networking and knowledge sharing among Title II Awardees and other PVOs and stakeholders. It strives to foster collaboration and to overcome the obstacle of “competitive isolation” or reluctance of some PVOs to share their tools and what they are doing and have learned. A challenge is ensuring that approaches and tools that the TOPS Project promotes are based on objectively verifiable evidence or a rigorous, independent review of their effectiveness or utility. The TOPS Project has an email newsletter that is sent to the Food Security and Nutrition Network, a webpage, and technical task forces, and holds knowledge sharing and capacity strengthening events.</p>	<p>Preventing Malnutrition in Children under 2 Approach (PM2A)</p> <p>The International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI), Cornell University, World Vision/Haiti, and FANTA collaborated on this research study, which compared two methods for targeting and delivering food-assisted MCHN programs in Haiti: a prevention model, which proved to be more effective in reducing the prevalence of child undernutrition, and a recuperation model. These results have been incorporated into USAID/FFP program guidance, and further research is under way in Burundi and Guatemala to assess the effects of different ration types and sizes and varying durations of supplementary feeding.</p> <p>Food Aid Quality Review (FAQR)</p> <p>The 2011 FAQR was prepared by Tufts University in consultation with industry, PVOs, technical experts, and United Nations agencies to identify cost-effective ways to better match the nutritional quality of U.S. food aid with the nutritional requirements of target populations in developing countries.</p> <p>Exit Strategy Study</p> <p>The goal of this Tufts University/ FANTA-2 study is to provide guidance to USAID/FFP and its Awardees on general approaches to planning for program exit, to identify key elements of an exit strategy, and to determine how to build sustainability into program designs from the beginning.</p>

USAID/FFP, the Title II Awardees, and FANTA jointly made the greatest progress during the FAFSA-2 time frame. Major advances include new and standardized indicators; normative guidance in Information Bulletins and Technical Notes; the requirement for quantitative, independent, population-based evaluation surveys; and training workshops on M&E for Awardees. The placement of M&E advisors in the three Africa regional offices is another accomplishment, but there are not enough M&E experts in USAID/FFP and Awardee organizations.

Monitoring and Evaluation. Considerable heterogeneity of results indicators, especially in the earlier years of the FAFSA-2 time frame, and use of inappropriate indicators in some programs often precluded assessment of overall performance across all programs. However, comparability of results was greatly enhanced by a consensus building and applied research process during the FAFSA-2 time period. This culminated in USAID/FFP's 2007 release of standard indicators for development food aid programs and the pioneering introduction of new indicators to measure household access to food, women's dietary diversity, and complementary feeding practices.

The FAFSA-2 found that less work had been done to improve monitoring of Title II development programs and more to strengthen evaluation. In addition, proactive oversight by USAID was associated with better program results. Valuable efforts to systematize USAID's monitoring of Title II included Layers, a tool developed by FANTA, and a methodology for Title II-specific Monitoring Plans, an approach developed by the USAID/FFP East Africa Regional office and used by USAID/Ethiopia.

USAID/FFP's *evaluation* requirements for Title II development programs were more extensive and ambitious than those for other USAID programs in the same time frame. As a result, there is a wealth of quantitative outcome- and impact-level performance data available to assess the overall program. Joint evaluations of several programs in the same country were especially informative from a portfolio-wide

and comparability perspective. However, USAID/FFP's expectation that all its Awardees have the capability to design and conduct, or to oversee others that are conducting, quality quantitative evaluation surveys is unrealistic. The specialized skills required are scarce. Thus, the goal of generating solid data on program effectiveness by doing quantitative evaluations was frustrated by the poor quality of many (46 percent) of the baseline and final surveys. There were not enough qualified evaluators during the period of the FAFSA-2 study, and this appears to be a continuing problem. With greater focus on final evaluations, less progress was made in advancing the art of effective mid-term evaluations. The USAID/FFP East Africa Regional Office's proposal that USAID staff conduct program reviews to complement partner-led mid-term evaluations of Title II development programs is one response to the need to do more.

Reporting. From a user's perspective, the FAFSA-2 team found that Title II development program reporting needs to be strengthened. The overall program is seriously underrepresented, undercounted, and undervalued in terms of the many technical areas supported and results achieved. The International Food Assistance Report (IFAR) that USAID and the U.S. Department of Agriculture submit annually to Congress could better describe the important impact that Title II development programs have on improving nutrition and food security by including information on the impressive quantitative results of the program. Recent steps by USAID/FFP to better align Title II and "F" reporting by using the same program elements and indicators are positive. But there is still no central database for Title II development programs that includes standardized information on common interventions and approaches being used in field programs. This impedes USAID/FFP's ability to describe Title II development programs in the aggregate as well as its ability to coordinate and co-program with other USAID programs. The required Indicator Performance Tracking Table (IPTT) is an invaluable tool for Awardees and USAID to monitor, record, and report the progress and final results of

each Title II program using agreed-on targets and indicators. However, the IPTT's usefulness was reduced by the lack of a standard template, format issues, and incomplete information. Lack of public access to final program IPTTs with results data is also an issue.

Learning from Results. The experiences of the Title II programs included in the FAFSA-2 universe could make invaluable contributions to organizational learning. However, many programs' final evaluations did not advance learning because they lacked adequate descriptions of the development hypothesis; the interventions and implementation approaches used; the project's inputs, outputs, and processes; the number of people and communities benefited (compared to the expected number) by each component and by multiple components (integration); and the length of time benefits were provided and at what cost. Some Awardees submitted final performance reports to USAID with this information, although such reports were not required in their agreements, as they are in some other USAID projects. Another major obstacle to transparency and learning from the Title II program experience was the fact that only one-third of the final evaluations were publicly available on the Development Experience Clearinghouse (DEC), despite the requirement that Awardees post them to the DEC. The FAFSA-2 team did not encounter any USAID/FFP-commissioned cross-cutting studies or in-depth analyses of Title II evaluation results to advance organizational learning other than the FAFSA and the FAFSA-2. Much greater use could be made of the evaluation data for systematic reviews, meta-analyses, secondary analyses, and learning.

Using Information for Decision Making. Although using information to make decisions is an important step in USAID's performance management process, the extent to which USAID/FFP and Awardees used Title II M&E data to improve program design, implementation, and management was unclear. There were only a few examples of mid-course corrections based on mid-term evaluation findings and little technical guidance issued by USAID/FFP based on Title II evaluation findings.

Technical Sector Results and Lessons Learned

Agriculture, Natural Resources Management, Livelihoods, Income Generation

More than three-quarters of the Title II development programs in the FAFSA-2 universe had a strategic objective related to agriculture. Fifty of these programs were in Africa (20 countries), 6 were in Asia (3 countries), and 23 were in LAC (5 countries). Almost 60 percent of this set of programs also focused on LH and IG. The vast majority of these programs were designed based on the assumptions that most of their clients⁹ were farmers and that the solutions to their food insecurity lay primarily in production agriculture. This strategy was successful in numerous situations. There are many examples of programs in the FAFSA-2 universe that helped improve the lives of their clients, usually by providing them access to a combination of improved agricultural technologies and market opportunities. Not all clients in Title II target areas are farmers, however, and many that do farm do not have the asset base needed to farm their way out of poverty. A few programs also included limited amounts of support for the development of microenterprises in their target areas, but since most people do not have strong entrepreneurial skills, the rural poor included, what is really needed for

⁹ The FAFSA-2 uses the term “client” when discussing AG/NRM/LH/IG programs because it better describes the fact that the resource-poor farmers, who are the main targets of these programs, are economic actors, who respond to economic incentives in managing their farms and other household enterprises, and not just “objects of compassion” (as one Title II Awardee expressed it), which is sometimes implied by the use of the term “beneficiary.”

AG, NRM, LH, and IG Policy Implications

- Title II development programs that are market-oriented and focus on linking producers to more promising, higher-value markets in combination and simultaneously with the introduction of new technologies, technical assistance, and training tend to be more successful in terms of technologies and practices adopted, income generated, and activities sustained.
- To be cost-effective, Title II development programs should focus agricultural interventions on farmers that are “vulnerable and viable” and look for other options involving the creation of off-farm jobs, for example, for those clients in their target areas that do not fall into this category.
- Increasing overall household incomes is crucial. However, higher incomes will not necessarily result in more nutritious diets if people lack basic nutrition knowledge. Higher incomes will also not necessarily result in reductions in child undernutrition in the absence of community-based MCHN programs that deliver the ENA in the first 1,000 days and that provide access to improved water, sanitation, and health services.

those households, who will not be able to succeed as farmers, is access to more and better-paying jobs.

Context

Most AG/NRM programs included a wide range of interventions in an attempt to be responsive to the different opportunities and production potentials available to farmers in their target areas. This resulted in programs that were often technically complex and difficult to design and implement successfully. The successes that these programs did achieve (described in the following “Interventions and Outcomes” section and Chapter 4 of the full report) are even more noteworthy given the challenging environments in which these programs worked, e.g., areas characterized by low agricultural productivity; heavy dependence on rain-fed agriculture; geographical isolation; degraded natural resource bases; lack of productive infrastructure, including farm-to-market roads and irrigation systems; lack of agricultural support services; and weak and underdeveloped market linkages.

Funding

More than US\$125 million was devoted to AG/NRM technical sector activities in FY 2009, which represented 40 percent of the total Title II development resources. The amount of resources devoted to Non-AG IG was considerably smaller, i.e., only US\$8.9 million in FY 2009 or 3 percent of total resources.

Interventions and Outcomes

Production Agriculture. The vast majority of programs in the FAFSA-2 universe included a strong focus on *crop agriculture*. Agricultural productivity levels are low in the Title II target areas, and most Title II clients made only limited use of improved technologies. As a result, most programs focused their efforts on increasing crop productivity (yields), by, among other activities, introducing new and/or improved seeds and planting materials (materials that were higher yielding and/or more resistant to drought and/or common plant pests and diseases).



ACD/VOCA/Uganda

Application of conservation agriculture (low-labor, high-yielding) techniques in Northern Uganda. More Awardees began experimenting with these types of practices in the latter part of the FAFSA-2 time period.

Most programs also promoted more productive farming practices, including conservation agriculture and other *NRM* practices designed to improve soil fertility and increase water retention. Programs also helped farmers expand their access to *irrigation* in at least 15 countries. These small-scale systems enable farmers to produce more (by growing an additional one or two crops per year on their small plots) and reduce their vulnerability to droughts. Awardees helped with engineering designs for these systems, supervised their development, provided information about farming under irrigated conditions, and helped organize and train the water user groups needed to take over the responsibility for their operation and maintenance. A large number of programs exceeded their life-of-project targets for key outcome indicators. This included more than half of the programs that collected information on *yields* and more than three-quarters of the programs that collected information on *rates of technology adoption* and *number of new hectares brought under irrigation*.

Storage. To reduce food crop losses, some programs promoted improvements in farm-level storage, providing farmers with information about improved storage techniques and introducing them to improved storage facilities. Some programs also used project funds to build community storage

facilities and train communities in their operation and management. Community storage activities and other types of community-based, in-kind (also cash) revolving funds have had a poor track record, however, with funds/stocks declining in value, and they usually ceased to exist after several seasons.

Marketing. Many programs were focused initially on staple food crops. Over time, however, more programs began to see the advantages of helping their resource-poor clients increase their incomes and access to food by switching to products for higher-value markets. Early programs focused their marketing efforts on helping farmer groups get access to more and timelier market information and promoting marketing by groups. But this shift to higher-value products and markets led programs to devote more attention to assessing markets,

identifying more profitable products, and promoting and facilitating linkages to these more promising markets (see examples below). Sixteen programs reported on a sales indicator, with three-quarters of those reporting exceeding their targets.

Livestock. Approximately one-quarter of the programs included livestock activities, many as an add-on to crop activities. Most programs included some combination of introduction of new breeds to improve the breeding stock, distribution of animals to poor and/or women-headed households, promotion of improved management practices, and support to improved animal health (e.g., training community-based animal health workers and helping set them up as microenterprises). The most successful programs, including from a sustainability perspective, seem to be those developed using a

Examples of Successful Market-Oriented Title II Development Programs

Successful market-oriented programs included those producing and selling:

- Bird's Eye chilies (Malawi and Uganda)
- Broad beans (Bolivia)
- French beans (Guatemala)
- Potatoes (Bolivia, Guatemala, Uganda)
- Sesame (Mozambique)
- Peanuts (Mozambique)
- Onions (Bolivia and Guatemala)
- Tomatoes and green peppers (Nicaragua)
- Peaches, plums, and grapes (Bolivia)
- Cashew nuts (Mozambique)
- Milk (Bolivia and Zambia)
- Several indigenous crops (e.g., amaranth in Bolivia)



Dr. Jayachandran Vasudenevan, CRS (Emanuel International)/Malawi

Women farmers in Malawi selling Bird's Eye chilies for export—an example of a successful market-oriented Title II development program.

business model. Examples are several dairy value chains in Bolivia and Zambia and a fee-for-service model for providing animal health services (i.e., community-based animal health workers) in Bolivia and Kenya.

Rural and Agricultural Finance. More than 20 programs also included a finance component. A few programs continued to support the development of microfinance institutions (MFIs), but this approach was less popular during the FAFSA-2 time period as it became clearer that it was more suited to poor clients in more urbanized areas and to non-agricultural microenterprises. Village savings and loan (VSL) activities, on the other hand, seemed to have found a way to use social pressure to help poor rural households save their money and invest it later, including in their farms and other microenterprises. VSLs helped members respond to emergencies; smooth consumption; and also have enough cash on hand when needed to make house improvements, pay school fees, and buy fertilizers and other agricultural inputs. Awardees were less successful in helping their clients access the credit they needed to invest in the technology packages being promoted, but this problem was not/is not unique to Title II programs.

Risk Prevention and Management. Per the new directions in the USAID/FFP Strategic Plan, the AG/NRM/LH programs in the FAFSA-2 time period also focused more on risk prevention and helping farmers manage their risks better. Specific strategies Awardees used to help their client farmers reduce their risks included diversifying farm production and/or non-farm sources of income and introducing more drought-resistant crop varieties, conservation agricultural practices, water harvesting techniques, soil and water conservation, and irrigation.

Approaches

The Title II AG/NRM programs are geographic based and client focused. That is, they are designed to respond to the problems faced by and have an impact on specific target groups in specific

geographic areas. They also provide services to these client groups—disseminating knowledge about improved technologies and practices to farmers in their target areas, organizing them into groups, and distributing agricultural inputs and capital investment goods.

Disseminating New Knowledge. Disseminating knowledge was a key approach used in all programs and across all interventions. The quality of many knowledge dissemination efforts improved significantly over the FAFSA-2 time period. The agricultural technology packages disseminated now tend to be better developed, and Awardees also tend to have more competent staff working in the field, i.e., staff with more technical expertise in agriculture. Programs are better linked to sources of new and improved technologies and practices, including local and international research institutions and other donor- and non-governmental organization (NGO)-supported programs. More programs are also using practical, hands-on methods to extend packages of new technologies and practices. Programs also began to focus more on markets and marketing. However, too many programs remained too production oriented, with a tendency to view marketing as something that one starts thinking about later in the project, after production problems have been addressed, and often too late to be effective. And, because the Title II agricultural components are staffed primarily with technicians with an agronomy background, even many programs designed with a stronger marketing focus end up being more production oriented.

Organizing/Strengthening Groups. Programs also concentrated on the development of a variety of groups, including producer groups, water user associations, marketing groups, savings and loan groups, cooperatives, and networks of farmer associations. Awardees organized many women's groups, and many also worked hard during the FAFSA-2 time frame to increase the percentage of women members in the mixed male/female groups. Working with groups of small farmers is essential to achieve economies of scale in extension

and marketing. But many programs did not pay enough attention to the important role that economic incentives play initially in getting farmers involved in these groups and keeping them involved. Many Awardees also tried to push their clients to work in groups and to develop group businesses, when allowing them to work on their own or as individual entrepreneurs would have been more appropriate, given the evidence that most smallholder farmers prefer to work and make decisions at the household level and choose to work as a community when the resources are too large for a single individual or family to handle, such as an irrigation system, grazing lands, and forests.¹⁰

Distributing Inputs and Capital Assets. Many programs distributed agricultural inputs and capital investment goods to participants, sometimes for free, but often at subsidized prices, to jump-start the technology adoption process. During the FAFSA-2 time period, these inputs included seeds, fertilizer, pesticides, small tools, carts, water pumps, food processing equipment (e.g., grain mills), and animals. Input subsidies can have their rationale in the short run, including as a way to demonstrate the value of a promising new technology and/or as a way to reduce the risk to client farmers of trying a promising but not yet fully proven technology. Longer-term disadvantages include encouraging dependencies on the part of farmers and discouraging input dealers in the private sector from supplying these goods, reducing the likelihood of their availability once the Title II project ends.

More Successful Programs

AG programs specifically and IG programs more generally were more successful—in terms of technologies and practices adopted and income generated—if they were market-oriented and, even better, market-driven. Program interventions/activities in the AG/NRM/LH components that

were most likely to be sustainable were those that were organized around economic incentives—profitability—and produced their own resources, through product sales or charging fees for services, for example. This means activities that used a business model and focused on markets, as well as on the sale of goods and services to these markets. Preliminary results from the Tufts Exit Strategy Study support the FAFSA-2 conclusion that commercialization, profitability, and increased incomes are key to the achievement of impact *and* sustainability.

More Successful Programs: The “Pull Plus Push” Model*

The “Pull Plus Push” model, with its focus on linking farmers to more promising, higher-value markets in combination and simultaneously with improved technologies and practices, technical assistance, training, and, in some cases, asset transfers, is a better practice. To encourage and enable greater participation by the more vulnerable in the Title II development programs, Awardees may also need to be more proactive, providing the more vulnerable households/ individuals with additional, tailored technical assistance, training, and mentoring; cash and/or in-kind grants; and upgrading roads and other community (public), productive infrastructure (a “Pull Plus Extra Push” model).

* See Section 4.5.6.2 on “Alternative Development Hypotheses and Models” and Figure 4.14 in the full FAFSA-2 report for additional information on the “Pull Plus Push” and other models used in the FAFSA-2 programs.

¹⁰ See Section 4.3.3.2 in the full FAFSA-2 report for examples. Also see Netting, Robert McC. 1993. *Smallholders, Households: Farm Families and the Ecology of Intensive, Sustainable Agriculture*. Palo Alto, California: Stanford University Press.

Better and Not-So-Good Practices

Based on FAFSA-2 findings:

- Extension and training programs that emphasize “learning by doing and seeing” methods, including in their marketing activities, are better practices. Programs that are more prescriptive (e.g., that require their producer groups to be of a certain size and/or that require group members to farm and sell collectively) or exclusionary (e.g., that exclude more progressive farmers that may be best situated to get the technology adoption process started and to provide continuing support) are less effective and sometimes even counterproductive. Activities that are most effective include on-farm demonstrations; farmers’ field days; exchange visits; and visits to potential buyers, markets, and agricultural fairs.¹¹
- Expanding farmers’ access to irrigation in the drought-prone areas where so many Title II clients live, when cost-effective and technically feasible, is a better practice. When linked to markets, these programs can increase farmers’ incomes, reduce risks, and, in many cases, stimulate other economic activities in the area (multiplier effects).
- VSL groups, which promote individual savings (as a way for individuals to accumulate cash that they can use to invest in their own homes, farms, and microenterprises), and value chain financing are better practices and should be encouraged.
- Revolving funds, especially in-kind funds that are collectively owned and managed by communities, are not good practices and should be discouraged. Community cereal banks (CCBs), which have been described as effective “slow release mechanisms” for distributing emergency food assistance during the droughts in the Sahel, also have a poor record as a development intervention,

¹¹ See Section 4.3.2.1, “Technology Adoption and Diffusion Process,” and Section 4.3.3.1, “Disseminating New Knowledge,” in the full FAFSA-2 report.

especially in terms of their lack of sustainability.¹² Therefore, Awardees should be discouraged from including CCBs in future applications, especially given the alternative of being able to use food to have a more direct impact on reducing the high rates of child undernutrition in these countries (see the “Supplementary Feeding” section on page 34).

- Training community-based animal health workers and helping set them up as microenterprises is a better practice and should be encouraged in countries with a supportive (or at least neutral) policy environment. The distribution of animal assets to Title II clients can also be a better practice, if the animals are targeted to the poorer households in a community as an economic asset that can be sold in local markets or through a value chain. Adding an animal pass-on requirement to these programs,¹³ on the other hand, is often fraught with problems and should probably be avoided under most circumstances.
- Using FFW and cash to develop public, productive assets is a good practice and should be encouraged (see the following “Infrastructure and Public Works” section). However, using FFW or cash for work as an incentive to get farmers to apply AG or NRM practices on their own lands or to participate in other activities from which they

¹² Proponents of CCBs consistently underestimate the difficulties involved in grain trading, which is a complicated, risky, and competitive business, and overestimate the ability of CCB managers, who are managing collective goods—not their own—which means that they have fewer incentives to manage efficiently or to minimize costs, and whose inexperience coupled with the slowness of collective decision making and social pressures also leads to poor decisions on the timing and pricing of grain purchases and sales. See Section 4.3.2.4 in the full report for more details on CCB performance and the supporting documentation.

¹³ Some animal distribution interventions require recipients of an animal to pass on a certain number of the first young chicks, goats, or pigs to other people in the community. The few evaluations that discussed these interventions suggested that pass-ons were not likely to continue beyond the first or second cycle. See Section 4.3.2.6 in the full FAFSA-2 report.

will receive a direct economic benefit is a poor use of scarce resources and, with few exceptions, should not be approved.

Infrastructure and Public Works

Infrastructure activities (not including drinking water and sanitation infrastructure, which are assessed in the section on WASH on page 39) were implemented in 61 programs in 23 countries. This included 39 programs in Africa, 3 programs in Asia, and 19 programs in LAC. Using food to pay unskilled labor to work on public infrastructure (FFW) was a common feature of food assistance

programs prior to the 1995 Policy Paper. After the Policy Paper, more attention was paid to the contributions that public infrastructure can make to the Title II development program's longer-term goals, such as increasing agricultural productivity and production and reducing rural poverty. Infrastructure activities during the FAFSA-2 time frame were more fully integrated into Title II development programs than before, frequently under an AG/NRM/LH/IG strategic objective, and, after the USAID/FFP Strategic Plan, under components focused on increasing community resilience and/or reducing community vulnerabilities. More cash was also needed to pay for the necessary complementary

Infrastructure Policy Implications

- Title II development programs should continue to take advantage of their capacity to support the development of small-scale public infrastructure to help reduce key constraints in the poor and often relatively isolated rural areas where many Title II development programs are concentrated.
- These infrastructure activities should be designed and implemented consistent with the principles outlined below.

Suggested Principles for Implementing Infrastructure Activities in a Title II Development Program

- Give priority to: (1) the creation of assets rather than the generation of temporary employment, (2) productive assets rather than social assets, and (3) community assets (public goods) rather than private assets.
- Involve communities in the identification, design, and implementation of the infrastructure, recognizing that communities are more likely to contribute to and maintain assets that they recognize as having an economic value.
- Enhance the likelihood of sustainability by: (1) ensuring quality, (2) building in appropriate environmental mitigation measures, and (3) strengthening local commitment and capacity to operate and maintain any infrastructure that is constructed.
- Avoid selecting or implementing activities in ways that are likely to distort participants' economic incentives in perverse ways and/or have adverse effects on local labor and product markets (e.g., by setting wage rates below the locally prevailing rates).

Sources: Malawi Food Security Programming Strategy FY 2008–FY 2014; Bangladesh Food Security Country Framework FY 2010–FY 2014.

inputs, including engineering drawings and services and the technical assistance and training needed to ensure that the public works would be constructed, operated, and maintained properly. Several programs implemented during the FAFSA-2 time period, including the programs in Cape Verde and Mozambique, used *only* cash in their infrastructure interventions, even when reimbursing unskilled labor.

Context

Infrastructure programs were implemented for four different purposes, depending on the country context: to rehabilitate infrastructure damaged or destroyed by natural disasters or complex emergencies (Liberia, Mozambique, Sierra Leone, and northern Uganda); to complement broader AG/NRM/LH programs by building roads, dams, canals, NRM infrastructure, and a variety of buildings, such as cyclone shelters and storage facilities (Bangladesh, Bolivia, Burkina Faso, Cape Verde, Ghana, Guatemala, Guinea, Honduras, Kenya, Malawi, Nicaragua, Niger, and Rwanda); to support the Government of Ethiopia's Productive Safety Net Program (PSNP); and to implement two urban public works programs in Bolivia and an urban slum program in Bangladesh.

Funding

If one excludes the Ethiopia PSNP, which is a special case, the value of the food devoted to FFW activities declined from approximately US\$60 million in FY 2003 to a little more than US\$20 million in FY 2009, despite the emphasis in the USAID/FFP Strategic Plan on the importance of increasing the use of food in FFW public works programs. The value of the food represents only a portion of the Title II development resources spent on infrastructure during the FAFSA-2 time period. But whether this was a small or large share or what the total amount of resources spent on infrastructure added up to is unknown, since USAID/FFP does not have an infrastructure category that Awardees can use to report on their annual expenditures on

infrastructure, i.e., the amount of cash plus the value of food used, if any.

Approaches, Interventions, and Outcomes

The approaches Awardees used to implement infrastructure activities varied, with some Awardees taking responsibility for building the roads themselves and others contracting the work out to private contractors. Awardees also developed different levels of technical capacity, with some hiring their own engineers, others contracting with consulting engineers to design and oversee the work, and others relying on local governments for the design work and oversight of the actual construction. Some used food to pay for unskilled labor in their programs, and others did not.

Road Improvements

Approximately 13,060 km of farm-to-market/feeder roads were built, repaired, rehabilitated, maintained, and/or upgraded by Title II development programs between FY 2002 and FY 2009. More than half of the 30 programs reporting on *kilometers of roads built, repaired, rehabilitated, maintained, and/or upgraded* exceeded their targets.



Eamonn Kilmartin, MC/Uganda

In Uganda, a small roller compactor is used on a road bed.

Road Improvements. Road improvements were among the most common infrastructure activities funded by Title II development programs during the FAFSA-2 time frame. In isolated rural areas, roads are often among communities' highest priorities. The FAFSA-2 universe includes many examples of Title II-supported improvements in feeder roads, helping improve farmers' access to markets, reducing the time that it takes to get goods to markets, expanding access to markets further afield, and helping reduce product losses. Roads also provide social benefits, as many of the Title II evaluations attested to, making it easier for people to get to schools and health posts, for example, and for social service providers to get to communities. They also help decrease social isolation.

Management of Natural Resources. Ten programs had separate strategic objectives focused on improving the management of natural resources in their target areas—five in Africa and five in LAC.¹⁴ Numerous other programs included NRM components. Most programs implemented a mix of interventions to improve the management of soils, water, forests, and grasslands. Many included a strong focus on the construction of soil and water conservation structures, e.g., live and dead barriers, gully plugs, terracing, infiltration trenches, micro-dams, dikes, and water harvest ponds. Some Title II Awardees also worked with communities and local governments on the development and implementation of watershed and conservation area management plans. Approximately 60,000 hectares were conserved or had new/improved NRM practices applied to them by Title II development programs between FY 2002 and FY 2009, with three-quarters of the programs reporting exceeding

¹⁴ The focus in this section is on NRM activities that were implemented on community and/or state lands. These activities were clearly a public good, in that large numbers of community members were likely to benefit and, as such, the activities fall into the category of public works. NRM activities that were focused on getting farmers to adopt improved practices on their own farms to improve productivity and farm incomes are discussed in the "Agriculture, Natural Resources Management, Livelihoods, Income Generation" section on page 23.



Eamonn Kilmartin, CPI/Niger

Dune stabilization in Niger to protect the development of a Title II-supported agricultural wetland and an adjacent village.

their targets on the *number of hectares of land conserved* or the *number of hectares with new/improved NRM practices applied to them*. Millions of tree seedlings were also produced, usually in program-run or -supported nurseries, and planted during this same time period.

Water Management Structures. Some of the irrigation interventions described in the section on AG/NRM, on page 23, also fall into the category of public works, since they included the construction of structures that benefit larger numbers of people, e.g., large dams, relatively large intake structures, major canals, and overnight storage reservoirs. Numerous programs also built structures to harvest water for agricultural uses (e.g., stock ponds, low check dams, and contour stone bunds) and to reduce the likelihood of damages from floods and storms (e.g., defense walls around villages and along river banks).

Buildings. Relatively few buildings were constructed, with the few that were usually built to satisfy specific project objectives (e.g., stores and warehouses for agricultural products, markets, and storm shelters for emergency use).

Opportunities and Challenges

Title II development programs are somewhat unusual within USAID in that they can use their resources to support the development of small-

Infrastructure Activities in the Aftermath of Natural Disasters or Complex Emergencies

Infrastructure activities were particularly crucial during the FAFSA-2 time period in countries where the focus was on the repair and rehabilitation of infrastructure damaged or destroyed by natural disasters or complex emergencies.

scale public infrastructure. Most areas where Title II development programs work are relatively isolated geographically, and their lack of productive infrastructure, e.g., access roads and irrigation and other water harvesting structures in particular, is frequently a major constraint to their development over the longer term. Infrastructure activities were particularly crucial during the FAFSA-2 time period in countries where the focus was on the repair and rehabilitation of infrastructure damaged or destroyed by natural disasters or complex emergencies. In other countries and programs, the immediate challenges to the implementation of successful infrastructure components—problems in meeting technical standards; the need for a completely different set of technical skills (e.g., engineers) than needed for other interventions; the need for more human resources to properly oversee construction and other management problems; the high cost, taking scarce resources from other important activities; the inherent sustainability issues; and, particularly, the susceptibility to fraud—seemed to drive many Awardees' decision-making processes about whether to do infrastructure, rather than the longer-term benefits of infrastructure.

Maternal and Child Health and Nutrition

The three core services provided in MCHN Title II development programs are:

- Community-based SBCC
- Preventive and curative health and nutrition services
- Supplementary feeding

The USAID/FFP guidance promoting MCHN services in the Strategic Plan, Proposal Guidelines, and Technical Reference Materials for PM2A is sound and built on a solid foundation of state-of-the-art science. That science includes broad international consensus on the essential MCHN interventions in the package, based on evidence of their effectiveness.^v Title II development resources supported more than 15 types of proven, high-impact

MCHN Policy Implications

To maximize the nutritional impact of Title II development food aid, more attention should be paid to:

- Targeting women and children in the first 1,000 days from pregnancy to age two
- Making prevention the goal
- Improving complementary feeding practices
- Including *preventive*, conditional supplementary feeding as an essential intervention
- Developing an Africa Initiative to close the MCHN intervention gaps that the FAFSA-2 identified there

HN interventions in the 69 programs reviewed in 23 countries (34 programs in Africa, 12 in Asia, and 23 in LAC). Programs achieved impressive improvements in the use of HN services, child feeding and hygiene practices, and nutritional status by applying a number of effective approaches and by integrating services in nutrition, maternal and child health, family planning, malaria, and WASH. The program experiences and Awardee results data contributed a wealth of evidence on what works in Title II MCHN programming, consistent with published evidence.

Funding

Most Title II programs included HN technical sector activities, and US\$92.3 million was spent on HN (excluding HIV and WASH) in FY 2009, approximately 29 percent of the total Title II development resources that year, according to the FAFSA-2 Tracking Tables analysis. The proportion of total Title II development resources used for HN programming varied greatly between programs in the Africa region and programs in the Asia or LAC regions, with investments in HN far lower in Africa. Only 17 percent of Title II development resources were spent on the HN technical sector in Africa in FY 2009, which contrasts sharply with programs in Asia, which spent four times more on HN (70 percent), and LAC programs, which spent three times more (53 percent). The FAFSA-2 considers the low allocation by Awardees of Title II development resources to HN in their Africa programs an underinvestment problem. Underinvestment in HN in Africa has been an ongoing problem over the past decade and was not limited to the FAFSA-2 time frame.

Targeting

The USAID/FFP Strategic Plan and Proposal Guidelines adhered to scientific evidence emphasizing targeting nutrition interventions in Title II development programs to pregnant and

Delivering Essential Nutrition and Health Services to Protect Human Potential and Save Lives

Title II development programs delivered more than 15 proven, high-impact health and nutrition interventions in 69 programs in 23 countries. The experiences and results data contributed a wealth of evidence on effective MCHN programming, consistent with published evidence. Programs worked on:

Nutrition

- Breastfeeding
- Complementary Feeding
- Feeding Sick and Severely Malnourished Children
- Supplementary Feeding
- Vitamin A Supplementation
- Women's Nutrition
- Iron/Folic Acid Supplementation

Health

- Hygiene Improvement
- Immunization
- Treatment of Child Illness
- Birth Preparedness and Maternity Services
- Deworming
- Malaria Prevention
- Family Planning and Birth Spacing
- Newborn Care and Treatment
- Reduction of Exposure to Indoor Smoke from Cooking

lactating women and children under two years to maximize effectiveness and impact in the first 1,000 days. However, 70 percent of all programs that provided Title II commodities for supplementary feeding distributed rations to children over two and up to six years of age, reducing the nutritional impact that could have been achieved. Programs that distributed food strictly to recuperate malnourished children focused the least on children under two.

Interventions and Outcomes

Nutrition Interventions. A popular term for the nutrition interventions recommended by USAID/FFP is Essential Nutrition Actions. The FAFSA-2 used ENA as an organizing principle for its review of nutrition interventions supported by Title II. The findings on each of the actions are presented here. Nearly all programs worked to improve breastfeeding and complementary feeding practices. Many also focused on improved feeding of sick and severely malnourished children and increasing coverage of vitamin A supplementation from the health system. Fewer than half of the programs offered women's nutrition interventions, other than food rations, and there was little focus on addressing anemia.

Two-thirds or more of the programs that measured their results (outcomes) for nutrition interventions achieved improvements, depending on the indicator (except for anemia, with only 20 percent achieving improvement). Changes in breastfeeding practices were the most common nutrition outcome measured—81 percent of programs. Major increases in exclusive breastfeeding in the first six months of life were achieved by six programs that measured the indicator in a standard way; on average, rates quadrupled after three to five years of SBCC. In contrast to breastfeeding, less than 50 percent of programs measured results indicators for the other nutrition interventions.

Though 90 percent of programs worked on complementary feeding, the FAFSA-2 found these efforts could have been stronger. Common gaps were: (1) no formative research on practices

or dietary intake data, (2) no or ineffective interpersonal counseling and counseling that was not mother-child specific, (3) lack of educational materials, (4) too little focus on the quantity of food eaten and meeting energy requirements while simultaneously working to improve the quality/diversity of the child's diet, and (5) not measuring results.

Supplementary Feeding. A major finding of the FAFSA-2 is that while two-thirds of the MCHN programs included food, one-third of the MCHN

Essential Nutrition Actions

- Promotion of optimal breastfeeding during the first six months
- Promotion of optimal complementary feeding starting at six months with continued breastfeeding to two years of age and beyond
- Promotion of optimal nutritional care of sick and severely malnourished children
- Prevention of vitamin A deficiency in women and children
- Promotion of adequate intake of iron or folic acid and prevention and control of anemia for women and children
- Promotion of optimal nutrition for women
- Promotion of adequate intake of iodine by all members of the household

Seventy percent of the Title II development programs worked on four or more of the ENA.

See <http://www.coregroup.org> for nutrition and ENA programming tools.

programs did *no* direct Title II food distribution to women or children; 19 of the 22 MCHN programs with no supplementary feeding were in Africa. Indeed, in Africa, 56 percent of all Title II MCHN programs did no supplementary feeding. Not providing Title II food supplements to very vulnerable mothers and young children in programs that could have been a mistake, given the high rates of undernutrition and food insecurity where these programs worked and the missed opportunity to have a positive nutritional impact. Most (81 percent) of the programs with no food assistance used the Positive Deviance/Hearth (PD/H) approach to reducing undernutrition as a stand-alone intervention. The main focus of PD/H is recuperating malnourished children without donated food assistance by teaching caregivers to prepare and feed their children better diets from their own local food supply, emulating the good feeding practices of local “positive deviant” mothers whose children are well nourished. However, most of the PD/H programs reviewed were ineffective. On average, they enrolled only 367 malnourished children per year per program, and only 48 percent of the enrolled children recuperated (i.e., gained at least 400 g in one month). The exclusive-treatment-only focus in most of these PD/H programs and the lack of services to prevent undernutrition contributed to their ineffectiveness. (See Section 6.3.3.7 of the full FAFSA-2 report for a discussion of programs that tried PD/H and why it was often not well implemented, feasible, or effective).

Of the 47 programs with supplementary feeding, 33 (70 percent) gave rations to all pregnant and lactating women and children in a selected age group in the target area with the goal of prevention of undernutrition. In the remaining 14 programs (30 percent), eligibility was restricted to malnourished children for a limited period of time, with the purpose of nutrition recuperation.¹⁵ The

¹⁵ Most of the recuperation only programs targeted children with low weight-for-age. Only four of them provided food to children with moderate acute malnutrition (low weight-for-height) as part of Community-Based Management of Acute Malnutrition.



SHARE Guatemala

In Guatemala, a mother with good complementary feeding practices actively feeds her child enriched porridge.

PM2A research that USAID/FFP supported in a Title II program in Haiti from FY 2002 to FY 2005 clearly found the prevention model for targeting food rations more effective for reducing child undernutrition than the recuperation model, and undernutrition actually increased in recuperation communities where food was targeted only to malnourished children. The preventive approach helped mitigate the deleterious effects on childhood malnutrition of the economic and political crisis that occurred in Haiti during the study period.

Based on these findings, USAID/FFP promoted the prevention model more proactively in the later years of the FAFSA-2 time frame. Among programs reviewed in Africa, only 12 percent did preventive supplementary feeding, versus 75 percent of programs in Asia and 87 percent of programs in LAC, where prevention was the norm. The tremendous variation in rations found within countries and across countries was mainly due to the total lack of data on actual dietary intakes of mothers and children, intra-household distribution, and gaps compared to recommended nutrient intakes. Supplementary feeding could be made more cost-effective by standardizing the nutrient content of rations, based on dietary intake data, and doing

operations research to identify delivery approaches that work. Varying food preferences and dietary patterns in different countries need to be taken into account in ration design.

Health Interventions. Many Title II programs supported health interventions critical to maternal and child survival and prevention of undernutrition caused by infection. Common interventions in most programs, in order of decreasing frequency, were: (1) hygiene improvement, (2) immunization, (3) treatment of child illness, and (4) birth preparedness and maternity services. Less common were deworming, family planning and healthy timing and spacing of pregnancies, malaria prevention, and newborn health. Two-thirds or more of the programs that measured health outcomes achieved improvements, depending on the indicator. Indicators evaluated by more than half of the programs were improvements in hygiene practices, immunization coverage, and treatment of childhood illness. Forty percent of programs measured diarrhea prevalence, and half of these programs decreased diarrhea through WASH activities. Seven programs achieved an impressive average annual reduction in diarrhea of 4 percentage points. Across five programs that measured family planning results, there was an average increase in contraceptive use of 2 percentage points per year. The mean birth interval increased from 31.9 months to 42.4 months across four programs in Haiti. Spacing births three to five years apart reduces neonatal, infant, and child mortality, and stunting and underweight in children under five years.^{vi}

Nutritional Status Impact by Type of Supplementary Feeding

Programs that provided MCHN preventive supplementary feeding achieved an average annual reduction in stunting of 1.69 percentage points, a decline three times greater than the DHS secular changes, and double that achieved in recuperative feeding only or no food ration programs (consistent with the PM2A research results in Haiti). However, in evaluating this comparison, it is important to

note that recuperative feeding and preventive feeding do not typically target the same age range. Preventive supplementary feeding was also superior at reducing the number of underweight children. A preventive approach to supplementary feeding, delivered with an integrated package of community- and population-based SBCC and HN services, had the biggest positive impact on nutritional status. Recuperative feeding only programs had the worst performance. Furthermore, preventive programs with only individual rations (< 15 kg of food/month) had greater impact on reducing stunting (1.91 average annual percentage point reduction) and double the reduction in underweight (1.37 percentage points) compared to programs with larger individual plus household rations (> 16 kg of food/month).¹⁶ It has been hypothesized that individual rations alone are insufficient, and that complementing them with large household rations is cost-effective and necessary to achieve greater program participation, less intra-household sharing of mother-child rations, and improved dietary intake and nutritional status of beneficiary mothers and children. However, there is an absence of evidence to support these hypotheses and research is needed to inform these issues. Many more people would benefit if preventive programs provided individual rations only rather than individual plus household rations. The ongoing USAID/FFP-funded PM2A research in Burundi and Guatemala exploring different ration types and sizes and their impacts will yield important findings in this regard.

¹⁶ No programs reviewed had rations sizes of 15–16 kg. Five programs with preventive supplementary feeding using individual rations—in Bangladesh, Guatemala, Honduras, Indonesia, and Nicaragua—were compared to 11 programs with preventive individual plus household rations in Bolivia (3 programs), Ghana, Guatemala, Haiti (2 programs), Honduras (3 programs), and Nicaragua. Three countries—Guatemala, Honduras, and Nicaragua—had programs with both types of rations, allowing effectiveness to be compared in similar settings. In Guatemala and Honduras, preventive programs with individual rations had greater impact on reducing stunting and underweight than did programs with individual plus household rations, whereas in Nicaragua, the preventive program with individual plus household rations reduced stunting more than the program with individual rations.

More Impact with Prevention

Preventive supplementary feeding delivered with an integrated package of community-based SBCC and health and nutrition services had the biggest positive impact on nutritional status of children under five years. The decline in stunting of 1.69 percentage points per year in these Title II development programs was twice that achieved in recuperative feeding only or no food ration programs, and three times greater than the decline in stunting found in DHS in the countries where the programs worked.

Reducing Stunting – What Works

Common features of Title II development programs that had greater success reducing stunting were nutrition counseling to improve IYCF practices, targeting of children under two or three years, and home visits. Most programs with little or no impact on stunting did not do these approaches, and a high percentage of them did PD/H.

Approaches That Work in Title II Development Programs

One very effective way to achieve high coverage of immunization, vitamin A supplementation, growth monitoring and promotion, and food supplements was outreach from health centers at fixed-day, fixed-site Child Health Days where these and other services were delivered. Additional effective approaches included prioritizing improving complementary feeding, effective behavior change with the right message to the right person at the

right time based on formative research on maternal dietary and IYCF practices, counseling home visits, community mobilization, client-centered community-based growth promotion, at least monthly contact between CHWs and clients in the community, and cross-program learning. A much lower percentage of Africa Title II development programs did some of the more effective approaches, i.e., Child Health Days (26 percent), nutrition counseling (50 percent), and home visits (35 percent), compared to programs in the Asia and LAC regions.

More Successful Programs

Fourteen programs in eight countries reduced stunting at an annual rate greater than the changes in stunting reported in the DHS for the same country. These 14 programs also achieved greater reductions in stunting than the average decline in stunting across all 28 Title II programs reviewed. Furthermore, 8 of these 14 programs in six countries were also more successful at reducing underweight than the changes in underweight in the DHS in the same country and the average annual reduction in underweight achieved across 28 Title II programs. Most of the programs with greater nutritional impact were in Asia or LAC.

Approaches That Do Not Work in Title II Development Programs

Design and implementation decisions that impeded reaching MCHN targets included having no or too few CHWs, facility-based or distant service delivery, multipurpose agricultural extension/nutrition workers instead of dedicated CHWs, and infrequent contact between workers and clients. Increasing mothers'/caregivers' workloads to the detriment of child care and nutrition, stand-alone PD/H without community- and population-based prevention, nutrition and health education talks as the main behavior change strategy, and stand-alone home economic classes also hindered achieving results and should be avoided.

HIV

HIV activities were implemented by 41 Title II development programs in 20 countries: 34 programs were in Africa, 7 were in LAC, and none were in Asia. In fact, half of all programs in Africa in the FAFSA-2 universe had HIV components. The main HIV intervention in nearly all these programs was SBCC to reduce high-risk sexual practices for transmission of HIV. Nineteen of the HIV programs reviewed conducted direct food distribution in 10 countries, primarily for short-term food insecurity mitigation, and, with few exceptions, had no specific objectives and reported no results beyond the number of food recipients. Coverage of the food recipients with livelihood strengthening and protection interventions was very low, despite these interventions being a comparative advantage of Title II. Thus, there was little focus on achieving long-term solutions to food insecurity.

Context

HIV programming evolved significantly during the FAFSA-2 time frame, spurred by an exponential increase in donor resources and major advances in access to and quality of prevention, counseling, testing, treatment, and care, including nutrition support. However, nearly half of the Title II programs reviewed started in FY 2003 or earlier, before resources from the United States President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR) and the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria made HIV prevention, counseling, testing, treatment, and care widely available. It was not until FY 2006 that PEPFAR began to focus on the nutritional needs of people living with HIV (PLHIV), which prompted major advances in treatment, including the nutrition assessment, counseling, and support (NACS) approach, now considered an essential standard of care. Nearly all Title II programs reviewed were designed without the benefit of this increased knowledge and experience on what works, because 85 percent of

HIV Policy Implications

Title II development programs should move beyond short-term mitigation and implement effective and sustainable solutions to food insecurity in the context of HIV by:

- Addressing HIV less through food rations as relief and more through improving long-term food and livelihood security of households and communities to provide sufficient food for themselves (including, but not restricted to, HIV-affected households)
- Defining objectives and measuring the results of their efforts

them began in FY 2005 or earlier. Thus, these older program designs do not meet today's standards.

Funding

Programs spent US\$21.1 million on HIV activities in FY 2009, approximately 7 percent of the total cost of Title II development programs that year. Nearly all these resources supported activities in the HN or AG/NRM technical sectors for PLHIV and HIV-affected households (46 percent each), with only 7 percent of the US\$21.1 million attributed to VGF.

Approaches, Interventions, and Outcomes

Prevention of Sexual Transmission of HIV. The focus on preventing sexual transmission of HIV through SBCC was appropriate and 78 percent of the programs reviewed worked on this. The reduction in high-risk behaviors in half of the programs that evaluated practices is encouraging. The programs used awareness-raising, mobile cinema, theater forums, computer literacy classes, radio broadcasts,

peer education, and peer counseling to disseminate HIV prevention messages.

Supplementary Feeding for HIV. One-third of the programs with food distribution targeted rations only to confirmed HIV or tuberculosis cases and to children orphaned and or made vulnerable by HIV, but not to their family members. Another 26 percent of programs targeted these same individuals, but also provided food for all household members. The remaining 42 percent of programs targeted supplementary feeding to these same groups, but also used broader vulnerability criteria, such as the presence of a chronically ill or elderly family member or female-headed households, to enroll other food insecure households, usually providing rations for the entire household. Most programs (63 percent) enrolled orphans and vulnerable children (OVC). Unlike PEPFAR, anthropometric measurements (nutritional status) were not used as entry or exit criteria in Title II development programs, except during the last two years of three programs in Rwanda. Fixed terms of participation in supplementary feeding are desirable to avoid creating dependency. However, the vast majority of the Title II development programs did not have clear, time-bound graduation criteria. Approaches used in supplementary feeding included working through associations of PLHIV, providing home-based care, and paying peer educators and community workers with FFW.

Livelihood Strengthening and Protection. These interventions included agriculture and animal husbandry, microenterprise, vocational training, VSLs, and health insurance.

Co-Programming with PEPFAR

There were and are considerable constraints to co-programming Title II and PEPFAR resources to reach the same PLHIV and HIV-affected households, and only a few examples of both programs working together. Collaboration occurred where the Title II Awardee received separate funding from PEPFAR

for complementary activities with the same population served in its Title II program.

Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene

Potential health and nutrition benefits are greatly increased when potable water, environmental sanitation, and hygiene education are part of development programs, and when communities and households have access to all three. The term WASH is used in this report to refer to these three essential components, which comprise an important technical sector supported by Title II resources. Two-thirds of all programs in the FAFSA-2 universe included some WASH activity. That proportion increased to 90 percent among the 69 programs with MCHN activities. Many Title II programs promoted better hygiene, measured change in hygiene practices, and reported improvements. A significant amount of community water and sanitation infrastructure was constructed during the FAFSA-2 time frame, benefiting a large number of people. Nevertheless, a number of Awardees appeared reluctant to include water and sanitation infrastructure in their programs, for many of the same reasons described earlier in the

WASH Policy Implications

To maximize the health and nutritional impact of Title II development resources, more programs should deliver an integrated WASH package in more communities by:

- Assessing needs
- Forging alliances to increase funding
- Improving the level of service to Level II
- Measuring the impact on diarrhea prevalence

“Opportunities and Challenges” section on page 31. Such programs did no WASH activities or provided only hygiene education. In programs that supported infrastructure, the low level of Title II funding often precluded addressing the needs of all program communities, or providing all three essential WASH components in each community served.

Funding

US\$16.4 million was devoted to WASH technical sector activities in FY 2009, approximately 5 percent of the total cost of Title II development programs that year. However, programs with WASH activities represented less than a third of all Title II development programs in FY 2009, a lower proportion than seen in the earlier years of the FAFSA-2 time period.

Approaches and Interventions

WASH Components. Among the 69 programs reviewed for MCHN in the FAFSA-2, 55 percent delivered an integrated package of water and/or sanitation and hygiene interventions.¹⁷ Twelve percent had only a water and/or sanitation component and 23 percent had only a hygiene component. There were seven MCHN programs with no WASH interventions (10 percent). The FAFSA-2 WASH review focused primarily on 31 programs in 19 countries that had sizeable water and sanitation infrastructure activities.¹⁸ The following is a summary of Title II interventions and approaches in support of the three basic pillars of a successful rural WASH activity: (1) appropriate water and sanitation technology, (2) hygiene education, and (3) community participation and capacity

¹⁷ Only five of the WASH programs in the FAFSA-2 universe were not also MCHN programs, which is why the tallying of WASH components was done as part of the MCHN review.

¹⁸ Among the 31 programs, the reviewer counted and analyzed follow-on programs by the same Awardee in the same country along with the predecessor program as only one program. Counting predecessor and follow-on grants separately, there were actually 38 programs reviewed for Title II WASH activities.

strengthening (to ensure sustainable operation and maintenance of systems).

- **Water and Sanitation Technology.** Water sources and delivery systems, rehabilitated or newly constructed by programs, included hand-dug wells, drilled wells (boreholes), rainwater catchment devices, springs, and surface water. A number of programs (42 percent) lacked targets for water and sanitation infrastructure in proposals and reports. Most program clients (61 percent) accessed improved drinking water at a shared community site (Level I services or lower).¹⁹ Many wells were equipped with hand pumps for ease of use and the pumps provided appeared appropriate in most cases, because maintenance was simple and spare parts were available. Clients in the remaining 12 programs (all in LAC) enjoyed a higher level of services with household water connections (Level II). Some Awardees also promoted point-of-use drinking water treatment at the household level, but widespread adoption has been a challenge because it requires sustained behavior change. Technologies most often supported for excreta disposal included Level I pit or ventilated improved pit latrines and, less often, Level II water-seal, pour-flush latrines. Level II and higher water and sanitation services are associated with better health outcomes. Therefore, a worthwhile goal would be for more Title II programs to support Level II water and sanitation infrastructure, learning from successful LAC program experiences. No programs should provide service below the minimally acceptable Level I, but 13 percent of the programs reviewed did.
- **Hygiene Education.** All 31 programs reported working on SBCC to improve practices for personal, food, water, and environmental

¹⁹ See the WASH chapter of the full FAFSA-2 report for a description of the five levels of water and sanitation services. The most common in Title II programs were *Level I*, with water from community standposts and sanitation via one latrine per household, and *Level II*, with one household level yard water tap and a pour-flush latrine.

hygiene. Specific behaviors emphasized were handwashing with soap or ash, safe disposal of feces (including eliminating open defecation), and safe storage of household drinking water. Innovative handwashing devices (e.g., the tippy-tap) were also promoted. While most of this work was excellent, it was of concern that one-fourth of the MCHN programs reviewed in the FAFSA-2 were doing only hygiene promotion, without any support to improve access to essential water and sanitation infrastructure.

- **Community Participation and Capacity Strengthening.** Community participation was an important focus. Furthermore, nearly all the programs (94 percent) organized and trained village water committees, responsible for operation and maintenance and setting and

collecting user fees. This is a proven, good practice for ensuring sustainability of water systems.

Collaborating with Host Government Water Authorities and Seeking Partnerships.

Collaboration is invaluable, yet only 39 percent of the Title II programs doing WASH had a close working relationship with host government WASH institutions. This lack of coordination, in combination with a lack of involvement of permanent host country organizations, limited Awardees' access to high-quality technical support, guidance on what was already being done in a given geographic area and possible partners, and prospects for long-term sustainability. Water and sanitation infrastructure needs in program communities can easily outstrip Title II resources, limiting the number

Drinking Water Improvements

Title II programs constructed a total of 570 water systems benefiting 228,000 people and 3,277 wells benefiting 98,310 people.

Greater Access to Drinking Water and Less Diarrhea

By constructing and repairing infrastructure, 16 Title II development programs increased access to an improved source of drinking water by 23 percentage points. WASH interventions lowered the prevalence of diarrhea in half of the programs that measured this impact. Diarrhea prevalence fell by an average of 4 percentage points per year across seven programs.



Herbert Caudill, SC/Bangladesh

A woman in Bangladesh using a hand pump to draw drinking water from a well.

of communities and households that receive WASH. Several Title II programs played a very useful role by assessing needs, assisting communities to prepare proposals, and then finding other partners to fund water and sanitation projects.

Outcomes and Impact

Many programs measured at least one of the WASH “monitoring indicators” (61 percent) or “impact indicators” (55 percent) recommended by FANTA.^{vii} Among programs that evaluated these indicators, all achieved improvements in their selected “monitoring indicators” and 88 percent achieved improvements in their selected “impact indicators.” On average, 16 programs increased access to an improved water source by 23 percentage points. The FAFSA-2 MCHN review found that many Title II programs (59 percent) measured change in hygiene practices and 74 percent of those reported improvements. Forty percent of Title II MCHN programs evaluated changes in diarrhea prevalence in young children. WASH interventions were successful in reducing diarrhea in half of these programs.

FAFSA-2 Recommendations

Recommendations for Improving Program Performance²⁰

To Improve Technical Guidance

Recommendation 1 USAID/FFP should develop an applied research agenda and sponsor studies that focus on the implementation of Title II programs in the field to better define what works and what does not. This should include comparative analyses of program approaches and their effectiveness and cost-effectiveness based on: (1) more analyses of existing evaluation reports and data; (2) collection and submission of additional information by Awardees; and (3) more systematic, rigorous, and independent cross-country case studies and other original applied research.

Recommendation 2 USAID/FFP should have a technical contractor analyze Title II development program-wide (worldwide) results data and evaluation findings annually and organize knowledge-sharing events to foster learning from the evaluations. The focus could be on an in-depth review of one technical sector or approach each year. In addition, this contractor should present the program-wide results in a format that USAID/FFP can readily use for high-level reporting and wide dissemination to communicate what Title II development programs accomplish.

To Improve Program Procurement and Enhance Program Effectiveness

Recommendation 3 USAID/FFP should include options for extensions of awards or separate follow-on awards to enable USAID/FFP to continue to support high-performing programs beyond five years and up to ten years while complying with the Automated Directives System (ADS) 303.3. This would be consistent with what is known about the time requirements of the AG/NRM programs (e.g., the technology identification and adoption process) and the evidence from the MCHN programs that longer implementation periods are associated with greater impact.

Recommendation 4 USAID/FFP should select the review panel for new Title II applications carefully to ensure appropriate technical expert representation, and give reviewers a “cheat sheet” on interventions and approaches that USAID/FFP is and is not interested in funding because they work better or do not work as well. Provide this same information in the RFA.

²⁰ USAID/FFP’s accomplishments with respect to improving program guidance, procurement, oversight, and evaluation during the FAFSA-2 time period are summarized in Figure 10 along with the FAFSA-2 recommendations for making further improvements in program performance in the field.

Recommendation 5 *USAID/FFP* should require Awardees to identify up to five key personnel and provide their CVs in applications, not just the Chief of Party's CV, to ensure programs have sufficient technical expertise in their field staff in: (1) nutrition; (2) agriculture, agribusiness, marketing, and economics; (3) M&E; and (4) gender.

Recommendation 6 *USAID/FFP* should arrange for Awardees to make presentations during in-country application reviews, a practice followed in some other USAID procurements. This presentation, if managed correctly, can help clarify points up front and reduce the amount of time on the preparation of written issues and responses. This presentation might also help clarify the extent to which proposed local staff and key personnel are involved with and understand the proposed program design and implementation strategies.

Recommendation 7 *USAID/FFP* should ensure substantive changes made to the program description during implementation are approved by the Agreement Officer and formalized in amendments to the agreement.

To Improve Performance Management

Recommendation 8 (Monitoring) *USAID/FFP* should strengthen monitoring by USAID and Awardees.

Recommendation 9 (Evaluation) *USAID/FFP* should support experimentation to develop better models for mid-term evaluations.

Recommendation 10 (Evaluation) *USAID/FFP* should conduct USAID-led program reviews to complement mid-term evaluations done by Awardees. Ensure that the reviews are done by qualified teams.

Recommendation 11 (Evaluation) *USAID/FFP* should have the baseline and final evaluation surveys and qualitative final evaluations done independently by professional organizations, centrally contracted by USAID/FFP.

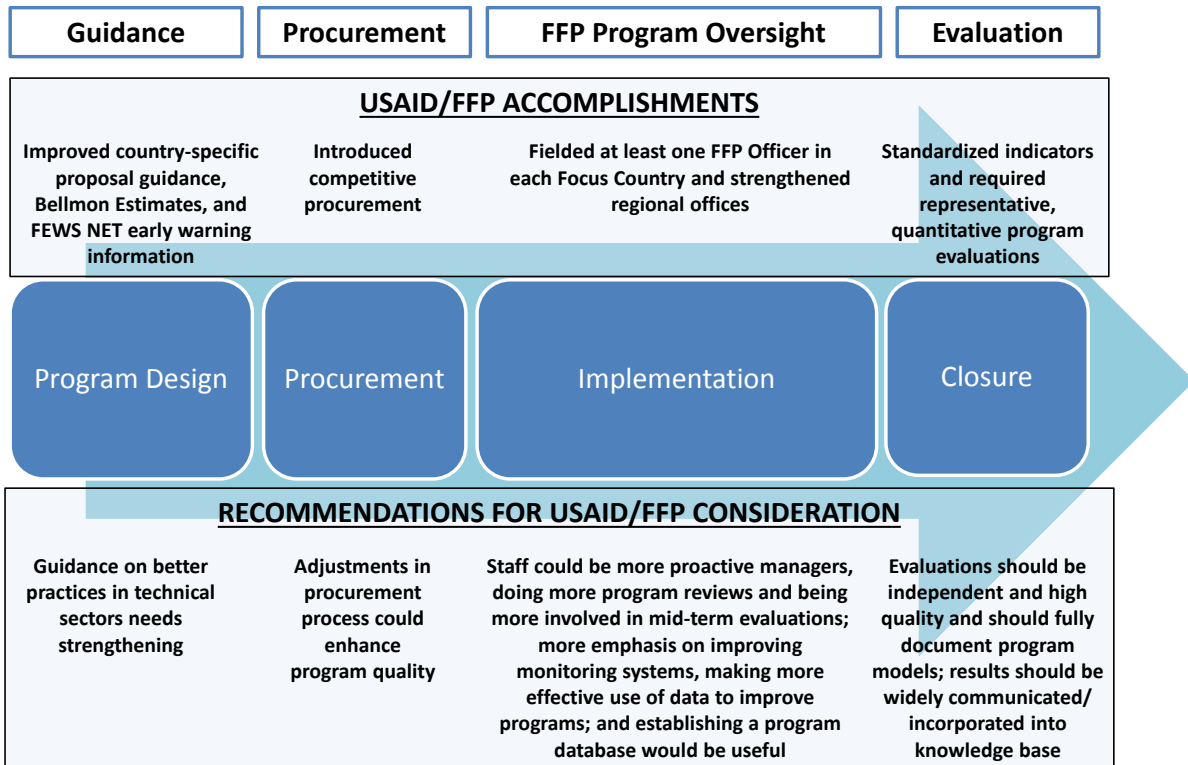
Recommendation 12 (Evaluation) *USAID/FFP* should require the survey organization to submit, along with the survey report, a checklist indicating whether quality survey performance standards were met.

Recommendation 13 (Evaluation) *USAID/FFP* should ensure that there are enough professionals available with relevant technical expertise and knowledge of Title II development programs to meet the demands for independent, high-caliber evaluators, by contracting qualified evaluation firms; having a core professional staff dedicated to Title II evaluation at such firms, as well as short-term consultants hired to do the evaluations; and inviting evaluators to attend technical capacity building and knowledge-sharing events organized for or by Awardees.

Recommendation 14 (Evaluation) To implement USAID's Evaluation Policy, *USAID/FFP* should consider the dollar value of all Title II development projects in a country as one block, to determine whether together they are large enough to require a joint performance evaluation.

- Recommendation 15 (Evaluation)* *USAID/FFP* should make joint baseline and final evaluation surveys the standard for all Title II development programs in countries with multiple Awardees and similar project timelines. Encourage evaluation of all programs.
- Recommendation 16 (Reporting)* *USAID/FFP* should enforce the requirement that Awardees post project reports and evaluations to the DEC, starting with requesting immediate submission to the DEC of the final evaluations that the FAFSA-2 found missing (see Table 9.1 in the full FAFSA-2 report).
- Recommendation 17 (Reporting)* *USAID/FFP* should make final IPTT data accessible online to all Awardees.
- Recommendation 18 (Reporting)* *USAID/FFP* should include results data and beneficiary numbers in the IFAR.
- Recommendation 19 (Reporting)* *USAID/FFP* should improve completeness of “F” reporting, including establishing categories for Title II reporting on infrastructure constructed and use of FFW.
- Recommendation 20 (Reporting)* *USAID/FFP* should create a database on interventions and approaches in ongoing Title II development programs to be filled from Awardees’ annual reporting on a checklist.

Figure 10. Improving Title II Program Performance in the Field



*Recommendation 21
(Reporting)*

USAID/FFP should require final performance (or end of program) reports by Awardees and final evaluation reports by independent evaluators with information on the: (1) development hypothesis; (2) interventions and approaches; (3) inputs, outputs, and processes; (4) final IPTT with results, sample size, and confidence intervals for all indicators; (5) number of people and communities benefited, by each separate component and by multiple components, compared to targets, and for how long; and (6) cost.

To Expand the Direct Use of Food and Enhance Program Impact on Child Nutrition

Recommendation 22

USAID/FFP should require Title II development programs to include an integrated, community-based MCHN component and, at a minimum, provide conditional, *preventive* food rations to women during pregnancy and the first six months postpartum and to children from six to twenty-three months in participating communities—or make a very convincing case to *USAID/FFP* why this would not be advisable and/or feasible. Provision of these rations should be conditioned on the participation of the mothers and children in specified MCHN activities.²¹

To Address Environmental Issues Effectively

Recommendation 23

USAID/FFP should consider commissioning a review of the extent to which Title II development programs are being implemented in accordance with Regulation 216 and their approved Initial Environmental Examinations or whether further guidance and training is needed to improve compliance and performance in the field. As part of this assessment, reviewers should also consider whether *USAID/FFP* should require that an assessment of compliance with Regulation 216 be included in scopes of work for mid-term and final evaluations of all Title II development programs.

Technical Sector Recommendations

Recommendations for AG/NRM/LH

Recommendation 24

USAID/FFP and Awardees should give preference to models and strategies that are market-oriented and that focus on linking producers to more promising, higher-value markets, in combination and simultaneously with the introduction of new technologies, technical assistance, training, and, in some cases, asset transfers (e.g., the “Pull Plus Push” model). To encourage and enable greater participation on the part of the more vulnerable in these programs, Awardees may also need to be more proactive, providing them with additional, more tailored technical assistance, training, and mentoring; cash and/or in-kind grants; and upgrading roads and other community (public), productive infrastructure (a “Pull Plus Extra Push” model).

²¹ When food is directly distributed in Title II development programs, it is generally in the form of a conditional resource transfer. The provision of food to individuals in FFW activities is conditioned on the amount of work they perform, and the better practice in MCHN programs is to condition the food ration on the caregiver’s and child’s participation in specified MCHN activities, as is the case with similar conditional cash transfer programs.

- Recommendation 25* USAID/FFP and Awardees should also give preference to the use of better practices and avoid practices that experience indicates do not work as well.
- Recommendation 26* USAID/FFP should require Awardees to be more specific in applications about: (1) the commercial aspects of their AG and LH programs, including providing more information on priority products, markets, possible buyers, and other organizations with which they plan to partner and collaborate along the value chain; and (2) their plans, if any, to make use of inputs and other subsidies, as well as how they plan to use them and for how long and how they plan to avoid dependencies and disruptions to private sector suppliers.
- Recommendation 27* In addition to taking full advantage of any business and value chain development expertise available elsewhere in their organizations, *Awardees* should: (1) strengthen the business development and management skills of their staff and increase their marketing expertise, especially among country-level program staff; (2) develop a better understanding of the basic costs and returns of their interventions (those involving knowledge transfers as well as physical structures) and the technology packages they are promoting²²; and (3) focus more on program monitoring and the use of rapid appraisals and focus groups as management tools for improving performance by helping them understand why certain components and activities are not progressing as expected and identify better practices.
- Recommendation 28* USAID/FFP should require all programs with food access and income objectives to report, on an annual basis, the value of sales made through program-supported processes, including forward contracts and producers' associations. USAID/FFP should also consider adding several indicators to the list of standard indicators that are both meaningful measures of impact and more directly connected to AG and LH interventions than the current Title II food access/consumption indicators are. This could include an asset indicator and an indicator that measures income from farm operations (e.g., the gross value of farm-based income).

Recommendations for Infrastructure

- Recommendation 29* USAID/FFP should encourage Awardees to give greater priority to infrastructure and adhere to the principles on page 29.
- Recommendation 30* USAID/FFP should restore the FFW category in the Annual Estimate of Requirements (AERs) and add an infrastructure program element to the Resource and Beneficiary Tracking Tables.
- Recommendation 31* USAID/FFP should require more detailed annual reporting on performance measures to enable more effective oversight.

²² USAID recently began to re-emphasize the importance of cost-benefit and cost-effectiveness analyses “to direct practitioners to the most promising and sustainable paths to development” and “to insure that we use scarce funds to benefit the poor by intervening where necessary and leveraging private funds and untapped sources of capital wherever possible.” Bahn, Rachel and Lane, Sara. 2012. “Reclaiming Economic Analysis” in Shah, Rajiv and Radelet, Steven (eds.). *Frontiers in Development*. Washington, DC: USAID. pp. 192–195.

Recommendations for MCHN

- Recommendation 32* *USAID/FFP and Awardees* should give top priority to an Africa Initiative to make existing and future Title II MCHN programs in this region more effective by closing the gaps identified in the FAFSA-2, namely, underinvestment in MCHN (only 17 percent of total Title II resources in FY 2009), less impact on stunting than programs in other regions, high percentage of MCHN programs with no supplementary feeding (56 percent) and 73 percent of those with supplementary feeding doing the less effective recuperative feeding model, no interpersonal counseling to improve feeding practices (50 percent), no Child Health Days (74 percent), no home visits (65 percent), no MCHN in Ethiopia, and PD/H as a stand-alone approach (59 percent).
- Recommendation 33* *USAID/FFP and Awardees* should target women and children in the first 1,000 days with a preventive, population-, and community-based approach that includes SBCC; conditional, *preventive* supplementary feeding; all or most of the ENA; and preventive and curative health services. Do not enroll children over two years, except in cases of acute malnutrition. Do not approve programs with no conditional, preventive supplementary feeding.
- Recommendation 34* *USAID/FFP and Awardees* should discourage large household rations given in addition to individual rations until there is evidence that they are cost-effective for increasing dietary intake, nutritional status, and program participation of beneficiaries in the first 1,000 days. Do research to answer these questions.
- Recommendation 35* *USAID/FFP and Awardees* should prioritize effective behavior change to improve complementary feeding practices in children six to twenty-three months of age, closing the gaps identified in the FAFSA-2.
- Recommendation 36* *USAID/FFP and Awardees* should support MCHN programs with approaches that the FAFSA-2 and other research have found effective, and beware of programs without those approaches.
- Recommendation 37* *USAID/FFP and Awardees* should review ongoing Title II MCHN programs that have several years of implementation remaining that are doing only recuperative feeding, or providing no direct food assistance to pregnant and lactating women and children six to twenty-three months of age, or doing stand-alone PD/H, in light of the FAFSA-2 findings. These programs should be redesigned and formally amended to increase their prospects for improving nutritional status during the remainder of the agreements by adding preventive supplementary feeding and behavior change that are population- and community-based.
- Recommendation 38* *USAID/FFP and Awardees* should require basic nutrition training and certification of USAID/FFP staff and nutrition credentials and experience in Awardees' key personnel.

Recommendations for HIV

- Recommendation 39* USAID/FFP and Awardees should continue to mainstream behavior change for prevention of HIV in Title II programs in countries with generalized HIV epidemics.
- Recommendation 40* USAID/FFP and Awardees should define clear objectives for HIV components of Title II programs and measure the results.
- Recommendation 41* USAID/FFP and Awardees should design programs to address HIV less through food rations as short-term relief and more through improving long-term food and livelihood security of households and communities to provide sufficient food for themselves. Implementers should apply an HIV lens to make livelihood-strengthening activities more accessible to PLHIV, but they should not design food security programs to benefit only PLHIV and HIV-affected households.

Recommendations for WASH

- Recommendation 42* USAID/FFP should strongly encourage that potential Awardees include integrated WASH activities in their applications in response to Title II RFAs, to elevate communities' water and sanitation infrastructure to Level II. Make the case that integrated WASH services are essential for reducing diarrhea, undernutrition, and food insecurity.
- Recommendation 43* USAID/FFP should require Awardees to assess the water and sanitation infrastructure situation in every program community, make an inventory, and prepare a plan for closing the gaps.
- Recommendation 44* USAID/FFP should strongly encourage Awardees to form alliances with partners working in water and sanitation, including host government agencies, other USAID projects, other NGOs, bilateral aid agencies, international organizations, and the private sector, to increase funding and coverage.
- Recommendation 45* USAID/FFP should require that impact on reducing diarrhea prevalence in children under thirty-six months be evaluated in Title II WASH activities.
- Recommendation 46* Awardees should avoid using FFW to pay for community labor to construct water and sanitation infrastructure. This practice denies villagers the opportunity to make a significant, sacrificial contribution that will foster a deeper sense of ownership in their water and sanitation systems.
- Recommendation 47* Awardees should set and report on numerical targets for water and sanitation and establish monitoring systems.

Annex 1. Title II Development Programs included in the FAFSA-2 Universe, by Region, Country, Awardee,ⁱ and FAFSA-2 Technical Reviewerⁱⁱ

Region	Country	PVO	Program Years	Technical Reviewer				
				AG/IG	MCHN and HIV		WASH	INF
					MCHN	HIV		
AFRICA	Burkina Faso	AFRICARE	FY04-10	1		1	1	
		CRS	FY04-10	1		1		
	Cape Verde	ACDI/VOCA	FY03-08	1				1
	Chad/Mali ⁱⁱⁱ	AFRICARE	FY03-08	2	2	2	2	
	Ethiopia	CARE	FY02-05	1				1
		CARE	FY05-08	1				1
		CRS	FY03-08	1	1	1	1	1
		CRS	FY05-08	1				1
		FH	FY05-08	1				1
		REST	FY03-07	1				
		REST	FY05-08	1				1
		SC	FY03-07	1				
		SC	FY05-08	1				1
		WV	FY03-08	1	1	1	1	1
		WV	FY05-08	1				1
	Ghana	ADRA	FY02-08	1	1	1		
		CRS	FY03-08		1	1		
		OICI	FY04-09	1	1	1	1	
		TNS	FY06-10	1				
	Guinea	ADRA	FY00-09	1				
		AFRICARE	FY01-08	1	1	1		
		OICI	FY05-09	1		1	1	
	Kenya	ADRA	FY03-08	1	1	1		
		CARE	FY04-09	1			1	
		CRS	FY01-06	1	1		1	
		FH	FY04-08	1	1	1		
		WV	FY03-07	1	1			

ⁱ ACDI/VOCA (Agricultural Cooperative Development International/Volunteers in Overseas Cooperative Assistance); ADRA (Adventist Development and Relief Agency); CPI (Counterpart International); CRS (Catholic Relief Services); FH (Food for the Hungry); LOL (Land of Lakes); MC (Mercy Corps); OICI (Opportunities Industrialization Centers International); PCI (Project Concern International); REST (Relief Society of Tigray); SC (Save the Children); TNS (TechnoServe); WV (World Vision).

ⁱⁱ The number 1 in a cell in the columns for the four technical reviewers indicates that the reviewer reviewed the documents for that program.

Region	Country	PVO	Program Years	Technical Reviewer				
				AG/IG	MCHN and HIV		WASH	INF
					MCHN	HIV		
AFRICA (cont'd.)	Liberia	CRS	FY07-10	1	1	1	1	1
	Madagascar	ADRA	FY04-09	1	1	1		
		CARE	FY03-09	1			1	
		CRS	FY03-08	1	1			
	Malawi	CRS	FY00-05	1				
		CRS	FY05-09	1	1	1		
		CRS	FY09-14	1	1	1		
	Mauritania	CPI	FY07-11	1	1	1		
		WV	FY01-07	1	1			
	Mozambique	ADRA	FY02-08	1				
		AFRICARE	FY02-08	1	1	1		
		CARE	FY02-08	1	1	1		
		FH	FY02-08	1	1	1		
		SC	FY02-08	1	1	1		
		WV	FY02-08	1	1	1		
	Niger	AFRICARE	FY00-07	1	1		1	
		AFRICARE	FY07-11	1	1	1	1	
		CPI	FY08-13	1	1		1	
		CRS	FY07-11	1	1	1	1	
	Rwanda	ACDI/VOCA	FY00-05	1				
		ACDI/VOCA	FY05-10	1	1	1		
		CRS	FY00-09	1		1		
		WV	FY04-09	1		1		
	Senegal/Gambia	CRS	FY02-07	1				
	Senegal	CPI	FY05-11		1	1		
	Sierra Leone	CARE	FY04-07	1				
		CARE	FY07-10	1			1	
	Uganda	ACDI/VOCA	FY02-06	1		1		1
		ACDI/VOCA	FY07-11	1		1		1
		AFRICARE	FY02-06	1	1		1	1
		CRS	FY02-06	1				1
		MC	FY08-13	1	1			1
SC		FY03-09	1	1	1		1	
WV		FY03-09	1	1	1		1	
Zambia	CRS	FY06-11			1			
	LOL	FY04-09	1					

Region	Country	PVO	Program Years	Technical Reviewer				
				AG/IG	MCHN and HIV		WASH	INF
					MCHN	HIV		
ASIA	Bangladesh	ACDI/VOCA	FY10-15	1	1			
		CARE	FY05-10	1	1		1	1
		CARE	FY10-15	1	1		1	1
		SC	FY05-10	1	1		1	1
		SC	FY10-15	1	1		1	1
	India	CARE	FY02-06		1			
		CARE	FY07-10		1			
		CRS	FY02-06	1				
		CRS	FY07-10	1				
	Indonesia	CARE	FY05-08		1			
		CRS	FY05-08		1		1	
		MC	FY05-08		1			
		SC	FY05-09		1			
		WV	FY05-08		1			
	LAC	Bolivia	ADRA	FY03-09	1	1		1
CARE			FY02-09	1	1		1	1
FH			FY02-09	1	1		1	1
SC			FY02-09	1	1		1	1
Guatemala		CARE	FY01-08	1	1		1	1
		CRS	FY01-07	1	1		1	1
		CRS	FY07-11	1	1		1	1
		SC	FY00-07	1	1		1	1
		SC	FY07-11	1	1		1	1
		SHARE	FY01-07	1	1		1	1
		SHARE	FY07-11	1	1		1	1
Haiti		CARE	FY02-08	1	1	1		
		CRS	FY02-08	1	1	1	1	
		SC	FY02-08	1	1			
		WV	FY02-08	1	1	1		
Honduras		ADRA	FY05-09	1	1	1	1	
		CARE	FY01-08	1	1			
		SC	FY05-09	1	1	1	1	
		WV	FY05-09	1	1	1	1	
Nicaragua		ADRA	FY02-09	1	1	1		
	CRS	FY02-09	1	1				
	PCI	FY02-09	1	1		1		
	SC	FY02-09	1	1				
TOTAL	28 Countries	101 Programsⁱⁱⁱ		91	69	41	38	33

ⁱⁱⁱ The Chad/Mali program is counted as two programs, which is why there is a number 2 in the cells for the Chad/Mali program.

References

ⁱ Bonnard, Patricia et al. 2002. “Report of the Food Aid and Food Security Assessment: A Review of the Title II Development Food Aid Program.” <http://www.fantaproject.org/downloads/pdfs/FAFSA.pdf>.

ⁱⁱ “Update on Measuring the Impact of Feed the Future.” Accessed on October 17, 2012. <http://agrilinks.org/events/update-measuring-impact-feed-future>.

ⁱⁱⁱ USAID. 2011. *Gender Integration in USAID Office of Food for Peace Operations*. Occasional Paper 7. Washington, DC: USAID/FFP.

^{iv} USAID. 2012. *Gender Equality and Female Empowerment Policy*. Washington, DC: USAID. p. 3.

^v See the evidence-based direct interventions to prevent and treat undernutrition in “Scaling Up Nutrition: A Framework for Action.” April 2011. http://scalingupnutrition.org/wp-content/uploads/pdf/SUN_Framework.pdf; and in Bhutta, Zulfiqar et al. 2008. “Maternal and child undernutrition 3. What works? Interventions for maternal and child undernutrition and survival.” *Lancet* 371:417–440.

^{vi} Rutstein, Shea. 2008. “Further Evidence of the Effects of Preceding Birth Intervals on Neonatal, Infants, and Under-Five-Years Mortality and Nutritional Status in Developing Countries: Evidence from Demographic and Health Surveys.” http://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf_docs/PNADM649.pdf.

^{vii} Billig, Patricia; Bendahmane, Diane; and Swindale, Anne. 1999. “Water and Sanitation Indicators Measurement Guide.” <http://www.fantaproject.org/downloads/pdfs/watsan.pdf>.

* Complete lists of references can be found in the full FAFSA-2 report.

