

# PROJECT CHALLENGES AND LIMITATIONS

Results from the multi-year, multi-country *Agriculture-Nutrition Advantage* project indicate that its leadership strategy was successful in raising the profile and acceptability of a linked agriculture and nutrition, gender-informed approach, changing policies, and integrating the approach into organizations and community-based activities. However, the complexity of the undertaking had some inherent challenges and limitations.

**Sectoral emphasis:** By design, the project specifically focused on linking agriculture and nutrition. Less effort was made to bring in health, economic, and other sectors important to reducing hunger and undernutrition. As a result, the networks may have missed an opportunity to extend their learning and broaden the base of potential allies to convince others of the feasibility and value of the project's approach.

**Gender integration:** The network members received a focused infusion of gender training in the five-day workshop held midway through the project. Workshop evaluations showed significant improvements in the participants' understanding of and ability to articulate what gender is, how it adds value to technical project design, and use of gender analysis to enhance outcomes. If this workshop had taken place earlier in the project, participants could have more fully applied this insight to their project activities.

**Attribution of changes:** Each team's action plan was grounded in an assessment of local conditions and needs, and each plan had a monitoring and evaluation component. A pre-post design with comparison groups was not possible. Thus, it is not clear if the changes that occurred can be attributed solely to the network and its interventions or were partially the result of other, external factors.

**Cost-effectiveness:** The *Agriculture-Nutrition Advantage* project built on the literature showing the contributions that an agriculture-nutrition linked, gender-informed approach makes to reducing hunger and undernutrition. It was designed as a pilot study to learn if and why a leadership strategy could be successful in increasing knowledge and use of such an approach. There were direct costs related to the project's implementation, as well as costs in terms of team members' time and energies; however, the study was not designed to measure these costs or link them to the outcomes in any way. Now that the leadership strategy has proven to be successful, a next step might be to explore its cost-effectiveness.