

PROJECT STRATEGY AND OBJECTIVES

The *Agriculture-Nutrition Advantage* project's strategy was to develop teams of informed and skilled leaders and advocates across sectors, disciplines, and institutions who could promote a linked, gender-informed approach. To do this, the project sought to strengthen the team members' knowledge and skills related to linking agriculture, nutrition, and gender; provide them with the means to work together and with targeted communities; and collect and disseminate evidence-based results.

By the end of the project, it was expected that the following objectives would be achieved:

- (1) Members of the five African country teams would have the skills and knowledge to convince decision makers in their countries of

the important contributions a linked, gender-informed approach can make in achieving national development objectives;

- (2) The five African country teams would have planned, implemented, and evaluated activities that strengthen commitment to and use of such an approach; and
- (3) The U.S.-based team (ICRW and IFPRI) would have created greater recognition of and support for this approach among international development and donor agencies.

Selection Criteria

Five countries – Ghana, Kenya, Mozambique, Nigeria, and Uganda – were selected as project sites, based on the following criteria:

Annual Events Provided a Crucial Forum for Learning and Network Building

April 2001, Kenya

At the first *Agriculture-Nutrition Advantage* project workshop, “Strengthening Agriculture, Nutrition, and Gender Linkages: Opportunities to Reduce Hunger and Promote Economic Growth,” participants learned of the Q-survey findings, discussed their relevance to each country, and drafted action plans to address barriers and build on opportunities to promote greater use of a linked, gender-informed approach in their respective country. The teams identified groups in their countries representative of the multi-sector approach to reducing hunger and undernutrition and developed a list of persons who could expand and enhance the core team's influence and outreach.

June 2002, Ghana

The second workshop, “Gender, Agriculture, and Nutrition Strategies to Reduce Hunger in Africa,” strengthened team members' leadership and advocacy skills. The workshop focused on developing participants' understanding of the advocacy process and strengthening their skills in using particular tools and planning processes for developing, implementing, and evaluating advocacy strategies. By the end of the workshop, each team had a measurable advocacy objective and the working elements of a strategy for achieving that objective and measuring results.

August 2003, Uganda

The third workshop, “Gender Makes a Difference: Using Gender Analysis to Enhance Results,” was designed to increase team members' practical skills in using gender analysis to link agriculture and nutrition, and to reduce hunger and undernutrition. They learned the elements of gender analysis and applied them to the project's conceptual framework, the interpretation of data, and field visits to observe community-based interventions. They learned what a “gender indicator” is, the differences between equity and efficiency models, and why it is sometimes important to focus only on men, sometimes only on women, and other times on both.

August 2004, Nigeria

In the final workshop, entitled “Reducing Hunger through Gender-Informed Agriculture-Nutrition Links: Lessons from a Multi-country Project,” team members presented their findings and identified common themes and lessons learned from the three-year *Agriculture-Nutrition Advantage* project. Participants also discussed ways they found most useful for operationalizing multi-disciplinary, multi-sectoral, and multi-institutional strategies to reduce hunger and undernutrition.

- ▶ Institutional capacity to take a leadership role in promoting the project approach;
- ▶ Existing professional relationships between African and U.S.-based partners;
- ▶ Characteristics and prevalence of malnutrition; and
- ▶ Presence of policy environments that were supportive of a linked approach, e.g., a national food and nutrition policy that explicitly mentioned agriculture; gender policy or sectoral policies that integrated gender (Table 1).

The five African country teams and the U.S. team were composed of specialists and recognized leaders with expertise in agriculture, health, nutrition, and gender; skilled in research, program design and implementation, and policy development; and who worked in institutions viewed by policymakers and program practitioners as credible and influential (Table 2).

Each team developed a plan of action with country-specific objectives and activities. Though the plans varied, all included gathering new and existing

Table 1: Policy Environment of Country Teams

Policy document	Ghana	Kenya	Mozambique	Nigeria	Uganda
Master development policy	Ghana Poverty Reduction Strategy 2003-05 – An Agenda for Growth and Prosperity – PRSP document	Kenya Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper 2001-2004 National Development Plan 2002-2008	PARPA - Action Plan for the Reduction of Absolute Poverty – PRSP document	none highlighted	Poverty Eradication Action Plan – PRSP document
Agricultural development policy	Food & Agriculture Sector Development Policy, 2002	Kenya Rural Development Strategy 2002-2017	PROAGRI - National Program for Agrarian Development	National Policy on Integrated Rural Development	Plan for the Modernization of Agriculture
Agricultural extension planning framework	none highlighted	National Agricultural Extension Policy	none highlighted	none highlighted	National Agricultural Advisory Services Programme (NAADS) Master Document
National nutrition policy	none in place	none in place	Estratégia de Segurança Alimentar e Nutrição (National food security and nutrition strategy)	National Policy on Food and Nutrition in Nigeria	Uganda Food and Nutrition Policy
National nutrition action plan	National Plan of Action on Food and Nutrition, 1995-2000	National Plan of Action for Nutrition 1994	Strategic Plan for Nutrition in Mozambique (Nutrition Section of Ministry of Health)	in preparation	Food and Nutrition Strategy and Investment Plan
National gender policy	none in place	National Gender and Development Policy 2000	none highlighted	none highlighted	The National Gender Policy
Decentralization policy	Local Government Act of 1993	none highlighted	none highlighted	none highlighted	The Local Governments Act, 1997

Source: Benson et al., 2004; Benson and Satcher, 2004

Table 2: The Agriculture-Nutrition Advantage Teams

Ghana	Kenya	Mozambique	Nigeria	Uganda	United States
Nutrition Unit (MOH)	Winrock	National Agriculture Research Institute (INIA)	International Institute for Tropical Agriculture (IITA)	Dept. of Food Science & Technology, Makerere University	International Center for Research on Women (ICRW)
MOST (USAID Micronutrient project)	University of Nairobi	Nutrition Dept., MOH	Dept. of Agriculture, Oshimili North	Africare	International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI)
Ministry of Food & Agriculture	Kenya Agricultural Research Institute (KARI)	Gedlide Institute	Federal Dept. of Rural Development	National Agriculture Research Organization (NARO)	U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID)
Food Research Institute	Ministry of Agriculture & Livestock Development		Nutrition Division, Federal MOH		
	Ministry of Health		U. Nigeria/Nsukka; U. Ibadan		
			U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID)		

evidence of linked, gender-informed techniques and how they contribute to nutritional outcomes, and using the evidence to influence changes in policies, resource allocations, and program implementation. Three of the country plans also included testing pilot interventions that used linked, gender-informed techniques.

To promote greater use of gender methodologies in the project's activities, three steps were taken. First, each team included at least one gender

specialist. Second, ICRW and the country teams reviewed the literature and, in some cases, generated case studies of policies and programs to identify success factors in addressing gender constraints and using a linked approach to achieve nutritional (and other) benefits. Finally, the third project workshop (see box p.10) strengthened the team members' skills in using gender analysis as a planning, implementation, and evaluation methodology.