

DRAFT GUIDANCE FOR USAID-FUNDED NUTRITION-SENSITIVE PROGRAMMING

AUDIO TRANSCRIPT

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Presenters

Richard Greene, USAID/BFS

Sally Abbott, USAID/BFS

Jeannie Harvey, USAID/BFS

Diane DeBernardo, USAID/BFS

Presentation

Julie MacCartee:

Hello everyone. Good morning and thanks for your patience as we got everything started today. All right, on behalf of the USAID Bureau for Food Security and the Agrilinks platform I'd like to welcome you to today's special webinar on Draft Guidance for USAID Funded Nutrition Sensitive Programming. My name is Julie MacCartee and I'm a knowledge management specialist with the USAID Bureau for Food Security. And I'll be facilitating today and moderating the question and answer portion of the event.

A portion of this webinar will be spent specifically discussing a draft guidance brief on nutrition sensitive agriculture. And if you'd like to download this brief just to make sure that you have it in front of you it is available in the file downloads box which is on the left side of your screen. It's the second item in there that says – or the first item that says "Nutrition Sensitive Agriculture Draft." You can also download the full USAID Nutrition Strategy in that file downloads box.

And we also have a few links in our links box to a variety of nutrition sensitive agriculture researchers. Before we get started I just wanted to very quickly mention that Agrilinks has an Ag Sector Council seminar/webinar coming up this Wednesday both in person here in Washington, D.C. or you can join via webinar. And its title is: Integrating Landscape Management into Climate Smart Agriculture. And we will share links to the registration for that in the top box.

So very quickly I'm just going to introduce our speakers here today and then go ahead and pass it over to them to take it over. And first up will be Richard Greene who is senior deputy assistant to the administrator with the USAID Bureau for Food Security. And Richard has worked on projects in more than 20 countries during 30 years with USAID and 35 years in the global health development field. And I think his name is familiar to many of you.

We'll also have Sally Abbott speaking. And she is a nutrition advisor with the USAID Bureau for Food Security and has been part of the team that's developed the USAID Nutrition Strategy.

And we were hoping to have Jeannie Harvey, a gender advisor of the USAID Bureau for Food Security join us today remotely. We may or may not be able to bring her in but if we're not able to we'll have another member of our team, Diane De Bernardo, a nutrition advisor give a presentation on the INGENAES Project.

All right so we are ready to dive right in, into the niche of the content of our presentation. We encourage you along the way to enter your questions and comments in the chat box at any time. But we'll be pausing at certain portions – in the middle and at the end of the webinar

today – to answer your questions. I'm going to go ahead and pass the microphone over to Richard.

Richard Greene:

Good morning everybody and thanks for joining us. And it says in our USAID Multi-Sectoral Nutrition Strategy that agriculture may be able to address and prevent undernutrition – may but not necessarily. And so what we want to do is provide some guidance on nutrition sensitive agriculture. But more important- distill this down into four key actions that we would like to track and basically make sure that in our programs we're able to address all four so that we can classify them as nutrition sensitive agriculture.

So the idea is can we have a filter like this where we have a small number of key actions, where we actually certify a program is nutrition sensitive or not? And then that would allow us then to report internationally on how much nutrition agriculture we do as well as to evaluate and verify the data to see if this really works. So this is really the idea. We want your feedback specifically on four items which we would make; if they turn out to be the right ones the prerequisites for programs that in order to be labeled by us as nutrition sensitive.

So that is the concept. And we want your feedback both on the concept and on the content of these four items which we'll get to later as well as how we would implement such a scheme. Because one thing is clear, that at the very beginning of this concept of nutrition sensitive programming it was very expansive. And in fact if you paid attention to the nutrition for growth commitments these are very high – for the U.S. Government \$2 billion a year. And so the problem with that is it makes us feel like we're spending more on nutrition than we really are effectively.

And then it kind of includes everything related to nutrition in our programming. So we want to make this more real, much more discriminating, and we want to actually assess whether some specific actions can make a difference in terms of the effects of agriculture programs on nutrition. And so we're going to get to that in a moment. I do want to say that we are concentrating our efforts at the beginning here on nutrient rich value chains.

And that is going to be the focus of our discussion on nutrition sensitive agriculture, beginning with those programs that promote nutrient rich value chains. Later on we'll talk more about other agricultural programs that may not fall in this category but that are certainly important to do with related to cereals, et cetera. So to get started, before we get into that specific discussion and those four points and the indicators that relate to them I'm going to ask Sally Abbott to give some general background on the USAID Multi-Sectoral Nutrition Strategy and how this particular exercise fits into our broader plan.

Sally Abbott:

Great. Thank you Richard. Can people hear me okay? Great, so I just wanted to start with the aim of the strategy that guides the agency with

policies and programs for nutrition, both emergency and development context with the goal of improving nutrition to stabilize, build resilience and increase economic curve activity and enhanced development. What I've included in another slide is our overall conceptual framework.

I'm not sure if the visual on this is very well but I do encourage everybody to go to the Nutrition Strategy which we've included as an attachment to this presentation. It's also available on USAID's homepage. And one of the reasons for this is sort of showing where nutrition sensitive agriculture gets into our overall world _____ program, and optimal nutrition. This is the – has been adapted from the UNICEF framework and is looking at how we go to improve the nutrition.

Really on agriculture we're looking at the availability of sufficient safe and nutritious foods, access to sufficient and nutritious foods, and stability and resilience. I think it also addresses – Agriculture can also address around _____ time, care – space and support for care. And that's something that we're talking about such a high number of women that are working in agriculture that is important to look at. When we're talking about nutrition sensitive agriculture – I'm not sure if Richard mentioned this.

But the Lancet series in 2013 mentioned that with 90 percent coverage of the nutrition specific [*inaudible comment*] interventions that have _____ around them we know that we can reduce something by 20 percent. And we know that that isn't enough. We know that if we want to reach our goals reducing stunting in Feed the Future but also worldwide we're looking at the Global Health Assembly goal of reducing stunting by 40 percent by 2025 that we need to do more than just nutrition specific adventures.

We know that agriculture is essential for improving nutrition. We know that something like 70 percent of the world poor in Feed the Future countries work in agriculture. And without changing specifically and trying to address nutrition we won't see the changes that we think that we can in nutritional status. We've done a number of things on looking at how we can address nutrition in agriculture. And this is the set of programming exposure I think was originally developed by IFPRI in our SPRING project worked with us on – And I've adapted them just slightly here.

And we're looking at making sure we incorporate explicit objections and indicators in the design process, looking at incorporating nutrition promotion in education, looking at diversifying production and increasing nutrient dense crops and livestock when it makes economic sense to do so. We're looking at improving quality of processing, storage, and preservation of food. We're looking at expanding market taxes to vulnerable groups and expanding markets for nutritious food.

During project design we want to make sure we're assessing the local context and addressing underlying causes specific to the situation. A

really, really big part of it is ensuring the design works to empower women and promotes gender equity and that we are targeting the nutritionally vulnerable to improve this equity. And finally we want to work across all sectors, collaborating and coordinating whenever possible, and maintaining and improving agriculture and nutrition resource base.

So these are setups to programming principles that all nutrition or agriculture programs should look to address. Whether they're denying nutrition sensitive programs specifically or not there's a *[inaudible comment]* that as they take them into account can help to make their programs more nutrition sensitive. And when I say more nutrition sensitive I'm really looking at these pathways that were again originally developed by IFPRI in the SPRING project worked on for us.

Agricultural livelihoods affect nutrition of individual household members and multiple pathways of interactions. The framework depicts in the figure how various agriculture investments or activities could improve access to food and healthcare, how they impact and are affected by the enabling environment and how they ultimately affect nutrition of women and children. The pathways aren't always linear. There are many interactions among them.

In general they can be divided in the three main roots at the healthful level: food production which can directly affect the food available for household consumptions as well as the price of diverse foods; agriculture income for household expenditure, and women's empowerment, which affects income, carrying capacity processes, and female energy expenditure. Acting on all of these roots is enabling this enabling environment for nutrition which includes several key components: the natural resource environment, the food market environment, the house water and sanitation environment, the nutrition health knowledge and norms, and other factors such as cost and governance.

[inaudible comment]. Sorry about that. So acting on all those roots is enabling environments: the food market environment, the health and water and sanitation environments, nutrition health knowledge and norms and other factors such as policy and governance. These components may affect nutrition of consumers or communities, not only farmer households. Child nutrition outcomes ultimately feed back into the national economic growth with healthful asset and livelihoods including those that contribute to both agriculture and non-agriculture sources of income.

And one of the things I want to stress in this is that when we're looking at the child nutrition outcomes in some ways this sort of looks at the conceptual framework we had in the previous slide and turned on its side with the outcomes at the end. And one of the things that we found is that a lot of our projects are sort of working on one end are our agriculture projects. And our nutrition specific projects may be working on the other.

But there are a lot of pieces in the middle looking at processing and storage, looking at access, looking at how agriculture income can be affecting healthcare and looking at how women's empowerment can affect carrying capacities which then can affect nutritional status of mother and children. And those missing pieces often aren't there. So we have projects working out the separate ends. And one of the things we're trying to do across our portfolio is drive them together.

So we're not expecting that agriculture products work all the way across the pathway but that our projects are working in coordination so that the pathways are addressed in their entirety. However we do think that there are a few projects in a few areas that can have almost low hanging fruit and that can be affected more quickly. When we looked at – When USAID looked at what projects were doing two years ago now – We have a SPRING project go through and do a landscape analysis.

One of the things that was found – And so a lot of times specific value chains were picked because they're thought to be nutritionally rich. And so when we look at nutrient rich value chains what our M&E teams did is actually went out and defined what we meant by a nutrient rich value chain. And on the Feed the Future website under Progress there is the Feed the Future indicator handbook. And this has the definition of the three new indicators that Richard is going to discuss further.

Well when we defined the nutrient rich value chain we define these as – A commodity is defined as nutrient rich with any of the following criteria: it's bio-fortified; it's a legume, nut, or some seed such as sesame seeds, sunflower seeds, pumpkin seeds, wheat germ or sprout or legume seeds; it's an animal source food which includes dairy products, fish, eggs, organ meats, meat, flesh foods, and other miscellaneous small animal protein; a dark yellow or orange flesh root or tuber, or is a fruit or vegetable that meets certain criteria of threshold for being a high source of micro-nutrients on the 100 calorie and 100 gram basis.

And the full definition of what that is is in the Feed the Future Indicator Handbook. And now I'm going to pass it back to Richard to talk about our critical points to find nutrition sensitive agriculture and what we're really going to be focusing on on our projects that are looking at these nutrient rich value chains.

Richard Greene:

[inaudible comment] and we do want some feedback whether we're on the right track in trying to establish a small number – in this case four specific actions which would define for us whether an agriculture program focused on nutrition rich foods can be classified as nutrition sensitive. Because eventually we want to be able to report on our nutrition sensitive agriculture and frankly we want to be more discriminating than we had to be in the past when we didn't have any real criteria on this.

And also we want to make it real. We just don't want to say that any horticulture program is automatically nutrition sensitive or any program addressing women. We want to be able to have value added and be able to really use these programs to improve nutrition and be able to measure it. And at the same time be able to report more accurately on how much of our agriculture programs are really nutrition sensitive and work in the future to be able to increase that number.

And again as Sally said this is pretty important because even if you are able a scale up to 90 percent coverage the 10 most important evidence based nutrition interventions it will only reduce stunting by 20 percent. So we really do need a lot of nutrition sensitive programming beginning in agriculture. But this program needs to be real. So let me go through our proposed four critical points – and this is what we want the discussion on – and then talk a little bit about some of the new indicators that we have that relate to this.

And again we're focusing only on what we call the nutrient rich value chain. So we're not talking about all of the important programs related to cereals and others at this time. So when we're talking about nutrition – nutrient rich value chains – we dealing with horticulture, agriculture, livestock, and legumes. These are the types of programs that we're going to begin with. And so here are the four critical points which I will go over. One, we do want to target production of nutrient rich crops, ideally those that include nutrients lacking in diet.

In horticulture programs which are probably the biggest thing we do in Feed the Future – one of the biggest things – there's a whole host of different vegetables that could be promoted and marketed. And the choice of them is very, very important. For instance when I was in Bangladesh eggplant was a very, very important vegetable. But there are a lot of goods which couldn't be – you could make money on but weren't particularly nutrient rich.

So the first thing is target production of nutrient rich crops. And ideally that includes those nutrients lacking in the diet. Second, include behavior change, a communication component, specifically aimed at consumption of target crops. Now in all of these programs that I mentioned – horticulture, legumes, agriculture, livestock – women play a major role. There is always outreach whether it's Ag extension or others to these women involved in these programs.

There needs to be an evidence based behavior change, communication component so that when women are reached in terms of horticulture or any of these programs they also include some key nutrition messages that are both related to things such as consumption of the nutrient rich foods, but also some of the key messages related to nutrition for the local area. It could be exclusive breastfeeding. It could be hand washing with soap. It could be dietary diversity. It could be micronutrient consumption, et cetera.

There has to be a connection – any nutrient. A nutrition sensitive agriculture program like this has to have some connection and knowledge of the nutrient – a nutrition specific interventions supported by the health sector principally. So first one was target production of nutrient rich crops. Second is include a behavior change communication component. And we can help every program develop one because we have programs in each of our countries that relate to health and nutrition. And we have strong links with the health sector as I know many of our implementers do.

Third, ensure the target crop is available in local markets and support consumption education. A lot of our hort programs – horticulture or legume, livestock or agriculture programs – are focused on marketing, income generation as a value chain. And we want to make sure that the nutrient rich products under these programs are marketed, are available in local markets and that we track the consumption of these products and we promote the consumption of these products in our marketed areas.

The last one is very important which is measuring outcomes, particularly beginning with consumption. We want to measure the consumption of these nutrient rich foods that we promote because this has been the rub with horticulture programs if you – in vegetable garden programs that we have promoted over the years all the Corcoran analyses and others that I'm aware of provide very limited data that these programs improve nutrition because there isn't consumption of these nutrient rich foods.

So we need to measure consumption. Now, again in Bangladesh, we had a horticulture program where they did measure consumption. And the good news was that there were significant improvements in consumption. The bad news is doubling of zero is still zero, that was very low. But it's a start. Measuring consumption, tracking consumption among the producers of particularly women and children and among the targeted marketed areas of our nutrient rich foods.

So these are the four major critical points that we would ask that all these programs are implemented to be classified as nutrition sensitive agriculture. And related to this we have some new indicators that our M&E people developed. Three indicators in particular and it's on your slide. Number one – now the total quantity of targeted nutrient rich value chain commodities set aside for home consumption by direct beneficiary producer households.

Two the prevalence of women of reproductive age who consume targeted nutrient rich value chain commodities, the ones we're promoting in our program. And three, the prevalence of children 6 to 23 months who consume targeted nutrient rich value chain commodities. So there we have it. We've got four litmus criteria for constituting being classified as nutrition sensitive agriculture program. And we would ask – assuming these are the right – this approach is a good one for asking your feedback on – we would ask all of our programs to include these actions.

They'd be in the work plans that we would have. We would include them in our evaluations. We would ask that your annual or semiannual reports include reference to these four actions. And we would use this as a way of reporting back on our nutrition for growth commitments on how much we're spending on nutrition sensitive programming at least in the Ag sector. So we want your feedback on all of this.

Is this a harebrained idea to boil this down to four keys? Because you know the problem is there is no lack of guidance. In fact I started collecting them when I was at the ICN2 conference how many different sets of guidance are out on nutrition sensitive programming, including nutrition sensitive agriculture? And because there's so much out there – some of it vague, some of it very specific – that it is easy simply to massage our messaging and basically say that yes where we're doing many aspects of it we understand.

We want to boil it down to either you're in or you're out on these four key messages. So is this concept a reasonable one? Are these the right four critical points? If they are then do we have the right way to follow this up in work plans and annual reports, et cetera? And that's it in a nutshell. So we're very anxious to hear people's feelings about this and their inputs. And so now we're going to open it up to our comments.

Q&A

Julie MacCartee:

Great. Thank you so much Richard and Sally. There has been some confusion and thorough coverage of these issues. We've had a lot of great questions and comments in the chat box. Please keep them coming. We will be saving all of the comments in this chat box and using them as input for adjusting this nutrition sensitive agriculture guidance. We'll also be formulating a survey which we plan to send out to all of you – anyone who registered for this event to help further your commentary.

That will be something that you can – If you'd like to spend a bit more time reading the brief and formulating some questions and comments that would be fantastic. So I wanted to quickly bring up a comment that was brought up by Britta Hanson and seconded by Christy Cook. A comment for Richard which is to say agriculture and horticulture programs may need good information on what the nutrient gaps are in terms of *[inaudible comment]* so that you can focus on the nutrient crops that can potentially fill those key gaps. Their just emphasizing that there's a huge gap in understanding of these nutrient needs, and particularly which target groups have a large deficit.

And I was just wondering if you have comments on that?

Sally Abbott:

So I think maybe I will address that. I think that that's the truth. In a lot of cases we don't know what specific nutrients are missing in the diet. I think if there are some basic nutrients that we know are often missing: vitamin A, iron, zinc to name a few, but I think the *[inaudible comment]* beginning of the project and actually doing some sort of analysis to see what is consumed and what isn't consumed is something that can greatly aid in *[inaudible comment]*.

That's why we say actually we want to address those that are lacking in the diet. If you don't know what's lacking in dietary adjustments the basic nutrients that *[inaudible comment]* good if we could get some analysis on like it might be in the diet but similarly decide what crops to target. And I would point out that we are working with SPRING project on a *[inaudible comment]* on a tool that will help identify what goods based on the analysis that you could use ahead of time.

And that should be *[inaudible comment]*.

Julie MacCartee:

Great thank you. And Kristen Weeks mentions that she likes the proposed new indicators but her concern is looking at Feed the Future indicators. Too often we go straight to the output level and don't think about how this might fit into a productive plan for the future. She says that, "I think we need to incorporate these more in baselines and designs and not go straight to reports and work plans."

Sally Abbott:

So I think on the indicators that this is a start. We didn't have anything on indicators a year ago and we are managing and supporting all developing guidance. We're honoring nutrition sensitive programs like the output, outcome, and outcome level and *[inaudible comment]* almost a year away. That's something that we don't have. So we don't have programs on *[inaudible comment]*. I would point out that if your missions are interested in having help on this we have resources available. And our interest is in doing a better job at coming up with output/outcome level indicators to monitor.

Julie MacCartee:

There have been a couple of comments here, Sally, about animal sourced food and also fisheries. For instance someone particularly mentioned that fish are one of the world's most widely traded food products and among the most nutritious. So I think there's a bit of a concern about a focus on crops and how animals sourced food, especially fish might fit into this.

Richard Greene:

Certainly fish is – Agriculture is one of the four that we talked about as our initial starting point for this discussion: horticulture, agriculture, livestock, and legumes. And we would actually like to see broader more expanded agriculture programs because of the importance of the availability of protein in the nutrients.

Julie MacCartee:

We've got a bit of a specific question but asking whether days of micronutrient enriched fertilizer – like zine enriched would be considered as a key *[inaudible comment]* agriculture?

Sally Abbott: I think that where there are nutrients missing in the soil it's something that is _____. I think that one of the things that we're trying to get to is to push people a little bit further on nutrition sensitive agriculture and looking at very clear criteria for a certain subset of agriculture programs. And they can get people a little bit further than we have done previously.

Julie MacCartee: And I think [inaudible comment] ongoing [inaudible comment] and combining [inaudible comment] and agriculture extension. Some are co-located. Most _____ aren't food crop so that the nutrition component is combined with a [inaudible comment]. We are two to three years in [inaudible comment] plans and are there any [inaudible comment]?

Richard Greene: Thanks for the question. We recognize that in most of our programs that we have are anywhere from just beginning this year to two, three, and four years old. And so this is a proposal to move ahead. And we really want to see how quickly we can implement these critical points if they prove to be the right ones. Now this is not going to be the only criteria in the end that we use to look at nutrition sensitive agriculture. But it's going to be a major one. And so we're interested.

Gee are these actions important ones? Are these the actions we should be promoting? Are there any of these for which you know are given the – when we develop new or continuing ongoing programs that are not that important to implement? So this is the idea. There will be other programs that won't have the opportunity to do this. But we feel that these are four very critical points that will improve the nutrition impact of our – of these types of agriculture programs.

So we're very interested in any particular discussion of any of these four points.

Julie MacCartee: And I'm not sure if you have any comments on how the nutrition innovation labs might be involved? That was something that came up in the chat box and – Actually we have Diane De Bernardo here online who has joined us instead of Jeannie Harvey and will have a bit later to say about the INGENAES Project. But she has a comment about the Nutrition Innovation Lab. Let's see if we can get her audio.

Diane De Bernardo: Can everybody hear me? Okay so our AOR of the Nutrition Innovation Lab is not present but I'm familiar enough with some of the work that the Innovation Lab is doing to maybe answer adequately. Basically the Nutrition Innovation Lab isn't implementing programs so much as researching programs operationally and for impact. And for example in Bangladesh a new associate award was just launched. And it looked at the combined impact of integrating and co-locating agriculture and nutrition projects and activities.

And that will include behavior change programs as well as others. But it won't actually be carrying out those activities per se. But I think we'll be

learning a lot of lessons learned from these research activities that we can apply to implementation projects.

Julie MacCartee:

Because we've had so many comments for you and since we know that we have Diane's audio working I think this might be a good time to let you know about two projects – *[inaudible comment]*? We're getting some feedback in the room. Let's see. This is a question that sometimes comes up from our colleague Richard Tinsley about the caloric needs for small holder farmers and the concern that we may not be focusing enough on having sufficient caloric needs for farmers, that it may be up to 4,000 kilocalories a day.

And can we meet that basic metabolism? Is that an important consideration alongside the micronutrients piece?

Richard Greene:

Well I mean it's a very good question that under local circumstances there may be other actions which will promote better nutrition. Now our focus is really on undernutrition for women of reproductive age and children, and particularly for our goal level of stunting. And so these four critical points are aimed at that with the idea that every project among horticulture, agriculture, livestock, and legumes are in a different phase of development.

And they're going to have to take a look at how they would implement these and what others. Now in terms of the overall kilocalorie consumption; that's an important item. And I'm not sure the – you know within the range of our programs what actions that they would take. But it is an important one and you know we're not trying to cover the entire waterfront. These are four basic actions that would be a base of which, based on the local circumstances which is one of our programming principles, we would add obviously a whole slew of other things in there.

But these are things we would want to make sure that these programs supported because we feel they're – There's evidence base for behavior change communication. There's certainly an evidence base for including nutrient rich crops and varieties and we do want to measure our outcomes.

Sally Abbott:

Thanks. I just want to add briefly to that. And I think that Hillary made a really good point that we are also looking at a situation where people are consuming too many calories. Her point was that in Peru that the issue even with women who are agriculture producers have high BMI. Look at the trends. That is something that we're seeing an increase of overweight and obesity more than we're seeing levels of undernutrition in adults through low BMI. And I think that's something we need to pay attention to.

One of the reasons we really aren't focusing on core intake but we're focusing on a quality diet with sufficient dietary diversity and especially intake of nutrients that are missing. And I also wanted to point out that Karen - one of our colleagues at USDA pointed out that there is a lot that

we can learn from our USAID SNAP programs in the U.S. And I do want to say that we are working on a U.S. government coordination plan right now looking at how we can continue our efforts across our U.S. government programs and make sure that we're learning from all of our programs.

So thank you to my colleague at USDA who brought up that point as well.

Richard Greene:

Yeah the – At this point I'd be very interested in asking if there is an implementer involved presently in a horticulture, agriculture, legume, or livestock program that would want to comment on these four critical points either by saying that well they seem to be reasonable or we think we can do them or there would be a stretch for various reasons. So if there's somebody out there related to an implementer for one of these programs I'd be very interested in hearing their reaction to these four points.

Julie MacCartee:

Thanks Richard. And I see some folks typing in the chat box. So there may be some comments coming in regarding those questions. One more piece about the *[inaudible comment]* SPRING and INGENAES sections were just a little bit more focus on that second point and having better evaluation of rigor on behavior change messaging. There's a concern that a lot of messaging becomes messaging for messaging's sake and doesn't actually lead to the change.

And an emphasis that the behavior change intervention should be more robust than just targeted at the consumption of target crops. So do you have any comments just about that?

Richard Greene:

Yeah thanks for that comment. The behavior change is not just related to consumption but that's obviously an important part. It's related, as I mentioned, to the evidence base nutrition interventions which are appropriate for the locality where you have your programs. And it could be exclusive breastfeeding could be a major issue. It could be dietary diversity at weaning. It could be the micronutrient status. It could be hand washing with soap. So it is not strictly consumption.

But that's one of them because that has been the rub and the deficiency on many garden projects is the fact that all of the stuff is sold and there isn't much improvement in nutrition status of food producer families as well. So yes we completely agree and certainly behavior change programming has to be quality. And this is why I mentioned the connection between these types of programs and the more health related nutrition specific programming where there is in general tested and evidence based behavior change modules that could be used in some degree – appropriate degree – for the interactions with women for horticulture, agriculture, livestock, or legume programs.

But that's a very good comment and we agree.

Julie MacCartee:

This person did mention in reaction to your question about the four points and implementers that she had seen that the harvest program in Cambodia and the program in Tanzania have been doing great work in that regard. And so we'll see if a few more comments roll in with other people – listeners – about their comfort level with the critical points. Would the *[inaudible comment]* quickly run to the SPRING and INGENAES? No? We have an amazing set of questions and comments come in.

I'm sorry that we haven't been able to address every one of them but you've all been so robust in your questions. And I'm just looking through to see if I can find one more key question or comment. Oh so we have had a request for some best practice examples – where those can be obtained?

Richard Greene:

That is a very good comment. We're aware of some programs like the one I mentioned in Bangladesh where number one, there are methodologies to estimate consumption of these products. In that case it was a horticulture program that it produced. So that's something we could share with people. There is also behavior – There are behavior change modules related to nutrition out there in virtually every country where we work. And again you would want to pick and choose out of them but they're usually ones that are evidenced based and they've been pre-tested.

And certainly we know a lot I think in each country about the types of whether it is legumes or horticulture for instance, what may be the most nutritious crops which fit in with the gaps in the local situation. So we will try to gather together some of the best practices relating to these critical points to share with people. But on the other hand we're very interested in having people share with us their tools and their best practices related to these points. Or if they have an additional point that they would want to propose and some best practice related to that.

Because – I mean I haven't heard or seen much that says that this is not a reasonable approach to try to boil it down to some critical points that can be tracked and followed up. So we're going to carefully review all of these responses and what we're going to do is we're going to go out and follow up with a survey and to get some additional and then review those. But assuming that this approach – we don't hear anything compelling to argue against this approach we will then try to review, making sure that we've got the four correct critical points.

We'll also collect some best practices related to these. And I'm hoping some of the people on this webinar will alert us to those. And then what we're going to do is go back and think about how, again, we implement these. And again our initial ideas are asking that they put in work plans for these Feed the Future programs and horticulture, livestock, legumes, and agriculture, that they be – that we share some best practices and some tools that we have, help them, for instance, access some of the behavior change modules that may exist for that locality.

Then we would ask that the implementers of these types of programs report on these indicators in their annual and semiannual reports. And then we'd want to get a sense later on what the impact might be on some of these programs because as I said the data we have seen historically on horticulture and gardening programs is not very strong for its impact on nutrition. So this is how we would like to proceed at this point. We're going to review your responses.

We're going to send out a survey. We're going to look at best practices and then we're going to see if we can progressively implement this, assuming that we continue to get some positive, you know very helpful comments, activity by activity within Feed the Future. And then this would lead to our ability to report back on how much nutrition sensitive agriculture that we're really doing which is going to be a much smaller but more genuine number than before which was basically every program that involved any of these products were automatically assigned as nutrition sensitive.

So that is the idea and we really appreciate all of the comments. And they're still coming in. Again we're going to try to address all of them. We're going to do a separate survey and then we're going to continue and work towards, in the next two or three months, trying to implement this approach and at the same time collect some of the tools and the best practices whether it's on measuring consumption or behavior change modules. And we're going to be very interested in the use of our three new indicators related to this which were developed by the Feed the Future monitoring and evaluation team.

So now the next – Just as a closing we are going to have very brief descriptions of several of our programs where our missions – and this part is primarily for our missions – can access some technical assistance related to nutrition sensitive agriculture. And they're going to be brief. And these are really aimed towards our mission folks who would be able to benefit if they feel they need it of these four programs. So we're going to turn this over to very brief descriptions of these. And again thanking everybody who has given us comments on our four critical proposed actions as well as thanking people in advance for responding to our follow up survey.

Presentation

Sally Abbott:

Great. Thank you. I just want to mention that there are several central projects that are available. There's the Food and Nutritional Technical Assistance Project III, the GAIN project and both SPRING and then INGENAES. What we're going to talk about today is SPRING and it's

because we and the Office of _____ and implementation and the technical division have some core resources in these projects that provide assistance to our mission.

SPRING is one of the projects that we have buy-in to. It's a global health project over all the- we in the Bureau for Food Security have put some investments in. I mentioned a couple of things that they've worked on with us in the past. They're specifically working with USAID with implementing partners to better design, implement, and monitor Feed the Future activities, providing technical assistance to operationalize the pathways that I mentioned earlier, building the evidence base on what works better and to document and share innovation results and lessons learned.

And specifically this year we have put funds into the project to be working both on monitoring, evaluation, and operationalizing these pathways. So if there are missions that are looking for assistance on monitoring and evaluation and on the operationalizing then please reach out to me and I will work with the project, something that you attach, with the best way forward. And I also want to mention that the four indicators – or the three indicators that we had mentioned earlier we are going to be testing.

And I don't know that we've identified the sites that we're going to be testing on. So before they become standard indicators – Or I guess they're already standard. Before they become a little bit more pushed indicators we are going to be field testing them in a couple of missions. So if there is mission staff that is interested in this and we haven't been in touch with you yet that are specifically working on these nutrient rich value chains please reach out to me and I will work with you.

And I'm going to pass things to Diane who is very kindly stepping in for Jeannie and has not seen these slides before but is going to do her best to very, very briefly introduce INGENAES and other projects we have.

Diane De Bernardo: So thank goodness we had our launch last week so now I'm well-versed in this and can probably wing it without having seen the slides. So we launched last week our new associated awards, the Modernizing Extension and Advisory Services or MEAS award with our new INGENAES award which stands for Integrating Gender and Nutrition within Agricultural Extension Services. The purpose of this award is to help us explore ways to integrate gender and nutrition into agriculture extension services.

Traditionally agriculture extension tends to focus on men – what men need and want – focusing on men's schedules and so forth. So we're going to try to learn best practices for focusing on women's needs and what women want. And also at the same time we're going to explore ways to integrate nutrition into extension services. And this may primarily be nutrition education or social and behavior change activities.

Or it may be supporting technologies that reduce the burden on women, for example, so that they can care for their children more.

So we're going to explore the three gender empowerment pathways in particular to do this. And that'll include women's time, women's labor, and women's control over income. And I also know I've got some co-conspirators in the audience. So please feel free to chime in and clarify what I'm saying now. We will end up having a total of eight Feed the Future countries that we'll support and that will be – They will be selected in two rounds. We're really close to the first round of selections but we can't make the official announcement just yet.

The next round will be in another year and a half or so. The way that missions can apply for this is we send out a survey link and they fill that out. And then we also look at landscape analyses and so forth and find out where we feel we can have the biggest impact. And each country context will determine the final set of activities that take place. And I think that about covers it. There is also a new INGENAES website which we'll send around and you can learn more.

Sally Abbott:

Great. And so I am going to turn it back over to Richard. I think we have some additional time for questions and answers if there are any additional questions both on the content of the webinar but also on the projects that we have available. And I know that we've mentioned this. We are going to send out a survey to everybody that registered as a participant. If you are listening in and didn't register, if you're sitting at a friend's computer, I'm sure if you either register now or get in touch with KDAD, they will make sure that you get the survey.

We still have to develop the survey so it will probably be week or so before we send it out. But we will send this out and provide the opportunity to provide additional feedback on the two-page or three-page guidance that we send out. And please be – We really do appreciate your assistance and do get in touch with either Diane, Jeannie, or myself if you have questions about the project that we mentioned. So Richard?

Richard Greene:

Great [*inaudible comment*]. And again just to give- repeat and that is we're really trying to [*inaudible comment*] this whole concept of nutrition sensitive agriculture ideally can be measured. And that will improve the new nutrition impact of these programs. So that's what we're striving for. We're not trying to you know say that these are the only things that are important. These are just some ideas where we – that we feel kind of a minimum for our programs.

And what we want to do is we want to make this concept work for us and at the same time to take some very good horticulture, livestock, agriculture, and legume programs and make them stronger by including these critical actions and be able to be a little clearer when we report on how much of this we're going to do. And we need to have a research and evaluation component to see if this is really working because the thing,

as I said, that struck us is that the Corcoran analyses of the gardening program showed very little impact on nutrition.

And that's something that we want to change. So we really appreciate all of the comments we've gotten and your participation in the follow on survey. And we will get back to people as well. We are going to have another webinar in – probably in January about data driven nutrition programs and we're still developing that. And we will come back to this topic at that time. But our intention is to try to move this thing forward in the next three or four months and see where we end up.

Because this is a critical – The whole idea of nutrition censored programming is going to be where we make progress on stunting reduction in particular. And we're going to try whatever we can do to move this forward. So thank you very much to everybody who participated.

Julie MacCartee:

Thank you Richard, Sally, and Diane. And I'd like to send out a special thank you to Katherine Dennison who is answering some questions in the chat box. And I have John Nicholson with the SPRING project who's been sharing a lot of great relative resources in the chat box. I would highly recommend that everyone use it to learn more about nutrient sensitive Ag. We have about five minutes left. Is it worth bringing up a couple of additional questions that have come through?

One of the central questions that a couple people have asked is about fruit, about local foods, and about wild foods, and how those will be addressed. Do they play any role in nutrition sensitive interventions? Or are they kind of the radar?

Sally Abbott:

So I think absolutely that *[inaudible comment]*. However I think that we need to keep in mind that we're talking about value chains here and that wild foods probably are not going to become part of a broad-based value chain. That being said that does not mean that they don't play an important part of the diet and that they shouldn't play a role in some of the behavior change messaging.

Richard Greene:

Let me just add something about indigenous vegetable *[inaudible comment]* very important – which are very important new area and a lot of them are quite nutritious. And so we're very, very open to this. But the whole idea – Let's try to – you know all things being equal – you know promote for marketing or value chain or income or consumption the more nutrient rich foods as opposed to the ones that may not be. So we're – This is not meant to be restricting but it certainly you know makes sense to us to keep that in mind as we choose the products to promote.

Julie MacCartee:

Great, thank you. And I'd like to mention to everyone on the webinar that if you joined us today we will send you a post of that e-mail to the recording of this event and also the downloadable presentation slides in PDF form. Those will also be posted on <http://www.agrilinks.org>. And

we've got some great links resources sharing in the chat box. I think Diane you answered a lot of the question along the way about – concerns about gender about how – you know whether we're relying too much on women to take control of nutrition, what role men will be playing in any of this along the way.

I don't know if you have any kind of final comments to ally everyone's concerns about whether we'll really be integrating gender here.

Diane De Bernardo: Right, right. Well one thing I really did forget to mention is this won't just be a project oriented to women. It will also look at men to help support the nutritional needs of their families. And yes it will definitely – The primary purpose of this award originally was to integrate gender. And we decided to add nutrition after. So I would say it still has a tremendous amount of focus in it. And we also know that we can't really adequately address nutrition and agriculture unless we address gender at the same time.

And that is mainly by empowering women or empowering men to help in the nutrition of their families. So I hope that's a good answer for everybody and I'm happy to follow up with individual e-mails also after. *[inaudible comment]*.

Julie MacCartee: *[inaudible comment]* for people. Great, thank you Diane. And just for the few people who asked about the timeline for providing comments how urgent are these comments requested?

Male: Well next month?

Sally Abbott: Yeah I would say just with the timing of the holidays it would be most of the input in sending something out would be mid-week for the survey and we'll be looking at these after the New Year.

Male: Just hold for just about five seconds. Okay, go ahead.

Sally Abbott: I was just saying that we'll probably be looking at addressing the comments and doing incorporation right after or right around *[inaudible comment]*.

Julie MacCartee: Perfect. That sounds great. Well we are running up on our time today. But I'd like to thank everyone for joining and –

[inaudible comment]

for our presenters *[inaudible comment]* posted in the chat box and we'll be reading them much more thoroughly now that we have the chance to sit down with the transcript. We will contact you soon. And we really appreciate your adherence and your buy in to the concept of nutrition sensitive agriculture. And we will be in touch. And very lastly if you are interested in joining another Agrilinks webinar this Wednesday,

December 7, we have our Ag Sector Council Seminar focusing on climate change, land use, and climate smart agriculture.

So we hope to see you again on Wednesday and thank you very much for your participation. We'll talk to you soon.

[End of Audio]