



Food and Nutrition
Security Programme



NEPAD
TRANSFORMING AFRICA

Food and Nutrition Security Programme

What is it

Reducing poverty and hunger through agriculture-led growth is central to the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP). Improvements in agricultural production and productivity, and even in food security, do not automatically translate to improved nutritional outcomes, and can even have negative impacts on nutrition. As political commitment to nutrition is increasing, agriculture and food security interventions must be specifically designed to address hunger and malnutrition problems.

The Food and Nutrition Security Programme undertakes studies/research, builds capacity for policy makers and programme experts across sectors and supports implementation. The goal of the Programme is to reduce hunger and malnutrition of the vulnerable populations focusing on evidence based policies and programmes. To enhance and sustain the nutrition focused momentum within CAADP over the next decade, the food and nutrition programme seeks to build on/scale up programme activities around the following broad thematic areas, namely maternal and

child nutrition, food fortification and bio-fortification, dietary diversity and home grown school feeding. These thematic areas are driven by underlying programmatic activities which facilitate and support nutrition within CAADP implementation and include;

- a) Implementation of key flagship projects that are catalytic and can be leveraged at national level,
- b) Mapping of key nutrition sensitive and nutrition specific interventions and document best practices for lesson sharing,
- c) Development of a system of monitoring and tracking key milestones toward food and nutrition security,
- d) Development of a continental knowledge and information management system for nutrition,
- e) Promote collaboration and provide coordination and guidance on the development of technical and leadership capacities in nutrition to support improved policy development and review, planning and



- f) implementation, and advocacy to address the various nutrition issues and problems in the continent, Informing relevant policy discussions at national, regional and AU level to promote greater nutrition impact.

On the whole, CAADP provides a unique framework and gateway for mainstreaming nutrition in national, regional and continental food systems.

Why is it needed

Africa has the highest proportion of people (one third) suffering from chronic hunger, a problem that is both persistent and widespread. The continent also has widespread micronutrient deficiencies while at the same time facing mounting evidence of a nutrition transition associated with economic development and urbanisation that is bringing about increases in over-nutrition and related non-communicable diseases (NCDs). At the same time the number of underweight children in the continent has almost doubled since 1980 and is forecast to be 25% higher in 2015 than in 1990.

Many countries on track to meet MDG1 income

poverty targets have made little or no progress in reducing underweight prevalence. Malnutrition is both a cause and consequence of the devastating burden of poverty in the continent.

However, improving nutrition is achievable and evidence-based interventions exist. Reducing malnutrition requires nutrition policies, which then must translate into effective programs that address challenges at the household, community and national level.

Effective nutrition programmes therefore require:

1. Mainstreaming of nutrition within current programmes across different sectors;
2. Improving collaboration efforts between sectors and institutions;
3. Building capacities of skills across sectors;
4. Budgeting for and investing in priority nutrition sensitive and nutrition specific interventions;
5. Good information systems and surveillance.



Its benefits

Agriculture has a key role to play in improving the quality of diets and fighting all forms of malnutrition in sub-Saharan Africa, and conversely, improving nutrition is a pre-requisite for achieving the targets for agricultural productivity and production and socio-economic development that African states have set. It is highlighted by the international community strongly recommending the prioritisation of nutrition-sensitive, food-based approaches for improving diets. It is also important to raise levels of nutrition and leverage opportunities offered by agriculture to enhance nutrition and health.

Mainstreaming nutrition in the CAADP process and NAFSIPs therefore represents a unique opportunity for African countries to firmly establish the fight against hunger and malnutrition as an urgent matter for agricultural and socio-economic development, and to create ownership of nutrition in a broad range of sectors, and in agriculture in particular. It can also help leverage resources allocated to agriculture in favour of national priorities for nutrition.

How it works

CAADP is an opportunity for agriculture to engage in the "nutrition momentum" and facilitate concrete actions for nutrition security through improved agricultural practises and overall food systems. The New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) and the African Union Commission (AUC) launched a nutrition initiative to strengthen capacity for addressing nutrition through the formulation and implementation of National Agriculture and Food Security Investment Plans. This has been done in collaboration with Regional Economic Communities and with the support of FAO, USAID, and Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation. The regional workshops, at the heart of the Nutrition strategy, bring together country teams to share their experiences and develop action plans and roadmaps for maximizing the nutritional impact of agriculture investment plans.

This effort represents the largest capacity development initiative on agriculture programming for nutrition in Africa, in terms of the numbers of countries and stakeholders involved, and one of the most significant contributions to the operationalization of the



concept of “nutrition-sensitive development” as applied to the agriculture sector.

The Food and Nutrition Security Programme is increasing country-level momentum and heightening the profile of agriculture as a key partner in nutrition.

Across Scaling-Up-Nutrition countries, there has been significant progress in the implementation of nutrition actions. At the same time, this energy and commitment at country level is mirrored by a number of regional and global processes that aim to support national efforts. These include CAADP’s strategy for African Food Security, which continues to provide a vehicle to bring the agriculture, food security and nutrition agendas closer together.

NEPAD will continue to engage with multi-sectoral teams at country level to enhance understanding of nutrition, intensify dialogue and mutual understanding of each sector’s role in improving nutrition, and agree on practical steps for nutrition actions on the ground.

Key deliverables at country level include:

- **Nutrition Country Papers** - The Nutrition Papers summarise nutrition relevant information on the food, agriculture, health and socio-economic situation in African countries. These papers form part of the Nutrition Country Papers being drafted in preparation for the Second International Conference on Nutrition/ (ICN2).
- **Country Roadmaps** - The roadmaps from 50 countries in Africa, define how nutrition should be mainstreamed in agriculture investment plans and describe the actions to be taken to ensure recommendations are integrated and implemented.



- **The implementation of home grown school feeding (HGSF) programmes** that creates a strong linkage between education, nutrition and agriculture. HGSF programmes are a win-win for both the children who are attracted to school and learn better, but also for the small holder farmers who produce the food and gain a steady market from the school meal programmes. Good examples of this programme exist in Nigeria (Osun State), Corte d'Ivoire, Kenya, Ghana, and Ethiopia. The momentum is growing and many more countries are strategizing on how to incorporate HGSF in the appropriate sector plans.



Image courtesy of Partnership for Child Development



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