

ROSA Newsletter



OPERATIONAL FOOD SECURITY NETWORK

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ZOOM

How to generate nutritional impacts using agricultural development programmes: a review of the literature

Over the last few years, a fairly large amount of literature has been produced in answer to this question, stating or restating the link between agriculture and nutrition within the development institutions. Stimulated by the poor results obtained in MDGs to reduce hunger, these institutions have taken part in several initiatives such as the "Zero Hunger" challenge, the SUN Movement, the 1,000 Days Partnership, the Food Security and Nutrition Forum, etc. They have searched for the conditions required to generate positive nutritional impacts in agricultural development programmes.

In 2013, several studies have been published¹ presenting principles and guidelines for improving nutritional impacts in agricultural development programmes. The FAO has published a relatively exhaustive literature review on the subject (*Synthesis of Guiding Principles on Agriculture Programming for Nutrition*, FAO, 2013) and highlights the consensus between the various recommendations. The World Bank published *Improving nutrition through multisectoral approaches* and one of the areas covered is the agricultural approach. The United Nations Standing Committee on Nutrition (UNSCN) has also published its *Key Recommendations for Improving Nutrition through Agriculture*.

This *Zoom* is a reminder of these widely shared recommendations.

Planning for fostering nutritional impacts

Setting nutrition-sensitive goals and results

All stakeholders recommend designing programmes that integrate in a coherent way both agricultural and nutritional goals. This is not a question of drawing up an agricultural programme and adding on a few nutrition activities, but, on the contrary, drawing up an inclusive programme, showing results that will have a direct effect on the nutritional status of the recipients. This includes increasing the income spent on food and care for all household members, diversifying the food produced and home consumption, promoting more nutritive crops, etc. These results that take account of

¹ See the bibliography at the end of the Zoom

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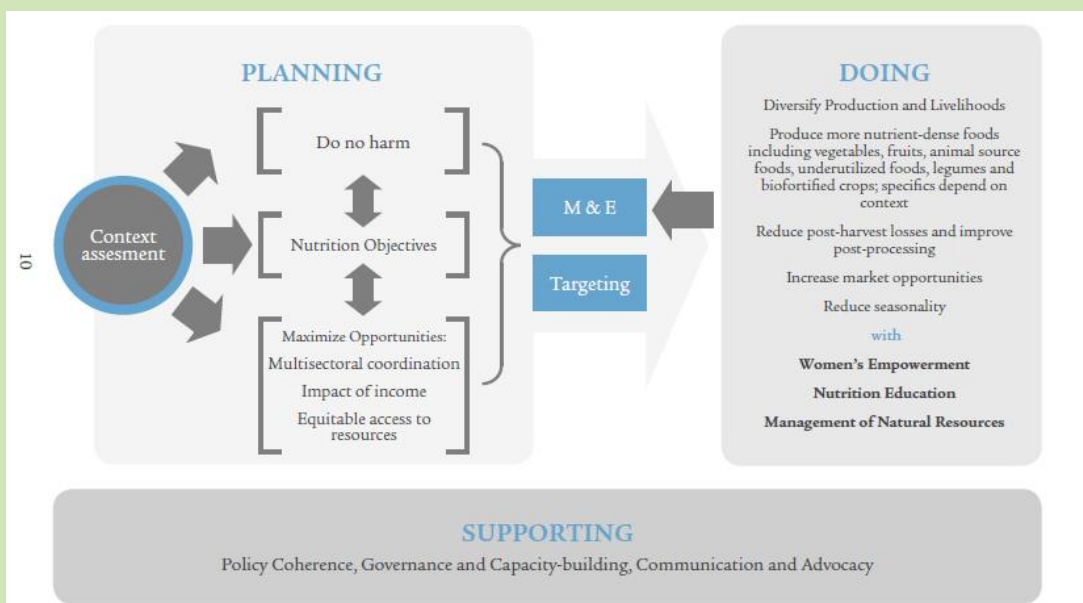
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nutritional issues will vary depending on the expected outcome of the agricultural development programmes.

So this requires a great deal of thinking initially, and a real change of paradigm in agricultural approaches and national policies which must develop a vision of the role of agriculture in improving nutrition, and include it in the content.

Box 1: The FAO programme framework

In the diagram below, the FAO presents a programme framework for drawing up and implementing nutrition-sensitive agricultural programmes in which improving nutrition is no longer an indirect effect of the programme but a goal to be reached.



This diagram shows the importance of integrating nutrition goals and adequate targeting resulting from prior context assessment for diagnosing agricultural and nutritional programmes.

Targeting these goals

The difficulty also lies in targeting the populations concerned by the various goals and activities. The targets and beneficiaries of an agricultural approach are not always the same as those targeted by a nutritional approach. An agricultural programme is aimed mostly at groups of farmers and professional associations or the village community, whereas programmes for tackling undernutrition mainly target children under 5 and pregnant and breastfeeding women. Reconciling these target populations in a nutrition-sensitive agricultural programme requires compromises on both sides, both in the agricultural and nutrition goals. One example of doing this would be a programme targeting smallholders whose families are vulnerable to food and nutrition insecurity.

In addition, EuropeAid's reference document on nutrition published in 2011 emphasises that empowering women to become independent and stepping up their economic role are major points of entry for improving nutrition via agriculture.

Monitoring and specific indicators

Even programmes that can be considered nutrition-sensitive rarely include specific nutrition indicators. The lack of monitoring and assessment measures specific to nutrition goals and results mean that less attention is paid to nutrition and identifying and quantifying potential impacts.

A multisectoral approach to addressing malnutrition

Maternal and child malnutrition is the result of interactions between factors present at different levels, including unsuitable policies, lack of money, poor quality diets, gender discrimination and lack of access to basic services². Given this complex in-

² See ROSA Newsletter 32, 2011 >>>

teraction of causes, a multisectoral approach is needed to address malnutrition effectively.

In the planning stage, this multisectoral nature must be taken into account in order to define realistic goals in the specific sector of intervention. This also means that the organisation of multisectoral coordination (agriculture, rural development, water and sanitation, education and social protection) must be thought ahead of implementing any programme if it is to be effective for nutrition.

Prevent undesirable effects (“Do no harm”)

Agricultural development programmes can have unintentional and/or adverse effects with risks for health, production systems and the organisation of daily life of households, impacting the nutritional level of the recipients. In order to limit these effects occurring and do no harm, it is often recommended to identify the potential effects (depending on the local context) in the planning stage, and to have a mitigation plan.

BOX 2: A review of the multiple roles of women in nutrition

Women are the most able to influence the nutritional level of their children and their family in three ways as:

- **Mother:** the critical periods of vulnerability are during pregnancy and early childhood (under two). During these times of maximum vulnerability, undernutrition and malnutrition have lasting and irreversible consequences for health and development.
- **In charge of the well-being of the household:** they care for their children and the household out of their own income.
- **Farmer:** women mainly cultivate food crops and home consumed food which impacts the family's nutritional level, but they enjoy low access to resources and agricultural services.

Implementing in order to generate nutritional impacts

In order to optimise the impact of agricultural programmes on nutrition, certain points are highlighted as drivers of nutritional impact.

The type of farming activities to prioritise

A fairly wide range of nutrition-sensitive farming activities is listed in the literature (see for example the FAO programme framework or the other sources quoted in the bibliography). Top of the list is promoting individual market gardens to generate improved nutritional status of households. These gardens make for increased availability of home consumed food and potential diversification of food, and thus better nutrition.

Increasing the production of nutrition-dense food by using appropriate varieties of seeds and/or by producing a greater diversity of food are also recommended almost systematically in the analyses and studies for maximising the impacts of agricultural programmes on nutrition.

Nutrition education

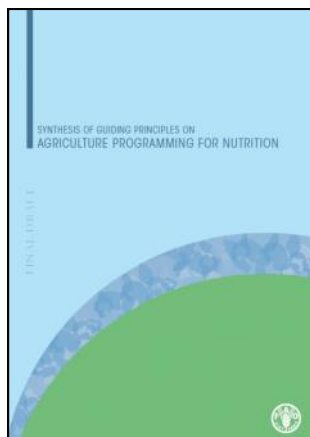
This is the nutrition activity that appears to be the simplest to integrate into agricultural programmes. It can range from simply promoting nutrition (and thus better diets including hygiene and healthcare) in short programmes through to activities aiming for real behavioural changes in longer programmes. Women and women's groups are often the main targets for these activities but many organisations also recommend targeting men. The means of communication mentioned include home visits, group activities, mass media and reaching schools. However, the content has a narrower scope than a conventional nutrition education programme. It includes:

- closely linking messages on nutrition with agricultural interventions to show the interconnections, and particularly the importance of preserving and storing food in order to avoid nutrient loss;
- encouraging people to grow and eat locally available nutrient-rich food;
- helping choose healthy, balanced food, differentiating between the nutritional needs of different members of the family and how to prepare food;

- diversifying food procurement so as not to be dependent (seasonality).

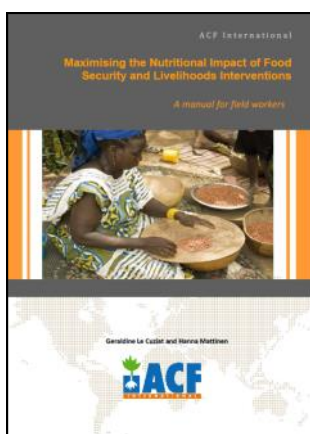
Conclusion

Modifying certain agricultural programmes into nutrition-sensitive programmes seems to be a path of real progress in addressing malnutrition. But planning and implementing more suitable programmes is only a start. We will also need to work at training agricultural and rural development players and raising awareness of nutrition concepts and issues, and more generally at planning national strategic frameworks and policies that also take account nutrition concepts.



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Towards the international year of family farming (2014)

The World Rural Forum has been working actively to promote the idea of an international year of family farming (IYFF). **Laura Lorenzo** and **José Antonio Osaba**, campaign coordinators at the FRM, recount the main steps of the campaign and explain the challenges of the IYFF.

Where does the project of international year of family farming come from? What the specificity of this initiative compared to existing ones in the field of family farming?

The World Rural Forum Association¹ (WRF), from its origin, has done a close follow-up of the policies related to family farming through the participation in several events, publications, advocacy initiatives, etc. However, we have noticed the lack of an outstanding worldwide event that could create a real momentum in favour of family farming.

At the end of 2007, the WRF reached the idea of promoting family farming through an international year that would be claimed by the UN. The best occasion to make it known broadly was the celebration of the 2nd Farmer Forum in Rome in February 2008. This meeting, organised by IFAD, has gathered farmers' organisations from all around the world.

Since then, the WRF has coordinated for 3 years a campaign to promote the IYFF. This large campaign has involved several organisations (farmer based, NGOs, Academia, Research, etc.), governments and international institutions. Thanks to this support (360 organisations and 55 countries), the FAO Conference, June-July 2011 adopted unanimously a resolution that requested the UN General Assembly to proclaim the IYFF- 2014. The approval of the IYFF-2014 by the UN General Assembly took place on December 22nd, 2011.

An important feature of the IYFF-2014 is that it is the first time that a UN international year is based on a civil society initiative. The aim is also to go beyond the usual objective of awareness about one topic. We want this initiative to help promoting policies more favourable to small scale family farmers and, globally, according to its different forms found in the 5 continents.

We consider that family farming is much more than only an economic model of agriculture. It is the basis for sustainable food production and to progress towards food security and sovereignty, natural resources management, environmental management of the land and maritime resources. Family farming is also the foundation of important cultural dimensions and finally a key element for the integral development of the nations, even beyond the 1.5 billion persons involved in this activity.

Now that the IYFF-2014 has been adopted by the international institutions, how can we guarantee that farmers' organisations and civil societies remain at the heart of the initiative?

During the campaign, the topic of the involvement of the civil societies and farmers' organisations in the coordination of the IYFF has been widely discussed. A framework with 2 levels of action has been agreed by the stakeholders to ensure a large participation and a smooth coordination of the different actions.

At the national level, National Committees are the main coordination body for the civil society and farmers' organisations (see below).

In order to ease the collaboration between the different national committees, the coordination is also under organisation at the regional, continental and international



Presentation of the IYFF-2014 to the media in Côte d'Ivoire - INADES Formation

¹ The WRF came into being as a result of the International Congress on Trade and Rural Development held at the end of November, 1988 in Vitoria (Spain). It became a forum for meeting, analysing and observing rural development. It has established agreements with universities and other educational or research centres, with farmers' associations and with NGOs. www.ruralforum.net and www.familyfarmingcampaign.net

levels. At the regional level, the main farmers' organizations are coordinating the activities related to the IYFF such as policy dialogues for the promotion of farmers' engagement in decision and communication activities to promote the recognition of the role of FF and the increase in public investment. At the international level, a consultative committee gathers the main national and regional stakeholders from the civil society and farmers' organisations involved in the national and regional level. The WRF is the Secretariat of this Committee. Their fields of action are mainly with regards to communication and policy lobbying.

The WRF also takes part to the International Steering Committee-ISC of the IYFF-2014 created by the FAO. This ISC also involved 12 governments representing the different regions, the European Commission, 4 international agencies: FAO, IFAD, World Food Programme, Biodiversity, Via Campesina, and the World Farmers Organisation. This Committee is planning the main events and studies that will take place in the framework of the IYFF-2014.

Box 1: Functioning of a national committee

It consists in a group of civil society organisations – farmers' organisations, rural NGO, etc. – that decide to gather themselves to elaborate the IYFF-2014 in their country. Depending on the country, the composition of the committee will change: the leadership can be ensured by farmers' organisations (e.g. *Confédération paysanne du Faso* in Burkina), NGO (in Equator), training institute (INADES in Côte d'Ivoire), Slow Food movement in Italy, etc.

The committee can gather all organization that are willing to be involved on the topic of family farming, whether they have participated to the early times of the campaign or they have recently joined the initiative. The setting of the objectives of the campaign nationally is left to each committee, given that they fit in the general framework of the IYFF-2014.

The idea is that the committees can influence national-level policies and regulation that affect family farmers. The linkages with government bodies are encouraged. Also, the FAO has received from the UN the mandate to facilitate the IYFF-2014 in worldwide and their offices are thus invited to take a coordination role at the national level.

At the date of August 2013, 25 national committees are already in place, mostly in Africa and Latin America. In Asia, India and Nepal have formalised committees as well as 4 European countries (Italy, France, Belgium, Switzerland and Slovakia).

Could you present some of the main events that will take place in 2014? What results do you expect from this IYFF-2014?

There is an official program developed by the FAO to which the WRF and farmers' organisations have contributed. It includes a wide range of events (regional dialogues, international conferences) and studies commissioned by the steering committee. The official launch of the IYFF-2014 will be done in by at the UN headquarters on 22nd November. In 2014, among several other events (see box 2), the WRF is organising a major international conference in Bilbao (Spain) in October. However, we need to emphasize on the fact that most of the action will happen at the national level where the challenges are the highest to promote policies that support family farming.

The expected outputs are related to changes in the policy agenda of national and regional governments and international institutions, and raising awareness in general

public about the relevance of family farming in contributing to food security and to improvement of livelihoods, and thus, at summing efforts in order to promote suitable public policies. Other important expected results are the recognition of the specific and equal status of rural women. The greater social and political recognition of farmers' and traditional fishers' organisations will be another important results.

Box 2: IYFF-2014 and the European Commission

The European Commission has launched on 3rd August a **public on-line consultation** on the role of family farming in order to identify the key challenges and priorities for the future. The consultation is open until 11 October 2013 >>>

The EC will open the IYFF with an **international conference** in Brussels on 29 November 2013 called: "Family farming: a dialogue towards more sustainable and resilient farming in Europe and in the World". The conference is organised by the DG for Agriculture and Rural Development. >>>



Upcoming events

23-25 September: Nutrition and health outcomes: targets for agricultural research - Science Forum 2013, ISPC, BMZ, Bonn (Germany) [>>>](#)

2 October: Drivers of success for agricultural transformation in Africa - Brussels Briefing, CTA [>>>](#)

26-27 November: European Development Days - Thematic Programme Food Security, Nutrition and Resilience Brussels [>>>](#)

Don't hesitate to post event on Rosa collaborative platform [>>>](#)

Past events

- **Toward African renaissance: Renewed partnership for unified approach to end hunger in Africa by 2025 within the CAADP framework - High level meeting of african and international leaders, FAO, AU, Instituto Lula – Addis-Abeba, 29 June-1th July 2013:** The African Union Commission, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations and the Instituto Lula have organized a meeting of African and international leaders to deliberate and endorse a radical approach to end Hunger in Africa by 2025, building on renewed partnerships within the CAADP Framework, and lessons learned from the experience of Brazil and other countries that have made substantial gains in their 'zero hunger' programs. The head of States and the other participants to the meeting published a joint declaration of principles, policies and strategies recalling their commitments for increased prioritization in the agricultural sector and pledging to target budget lines for social protection with attention to nutrition. [>>>](#)
- **Fish-farming: The new driver of the blue economy. Brussels Briefing, CTA, ACP Secretariat, Brussels – 3rd July 2013:** This 32nd Briefing has gathered more than 70 participants to discuss successes and to share lessons from the field of fish-farming, by emphasizing its role for the growth of the blue-economies of the ACP countries. The event consisted of two parts: the first provided an overview of the key concepts, existing systems, challenges and opportunities in aquaculture, especially for ACP countries, by dealing with the issues food and nutrition security, health management, and sustainability. The second panel presented proven actions in fish-farming corresponding to the regions of Africa, Caribbean, and Pacific. [>>>](#)

ROSA NEWS



EC's latest news

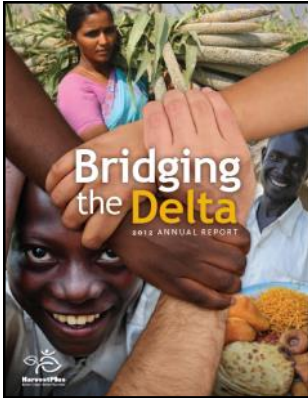


- **Communication of the Commission - Beyond 2015: Towards a comprehensive and integrated approach to financing poverty eradication and sustainable development:** On July 16th, the EU has adopted this new communication on financing for poverty eradication and sustainable development. It builds on the recent policy document "A Decent Life for all: Ending poverty and giving the world a sustainable future", which focussed on the "what" to put on the future development framework. The present communication focuses on the "how" to finance the post-2015 framework through a common EU approach.

The communication details the different financing sources available: international public finance, domestic public finance, private finance, and compare their weight in developing countries. Then, it lists the main principles of a comprehensive and integrated approach, among them: to consider all available resources together in a comprehensive way; to leave resource prioritisation at the country level; to rebalance international public finance towards countries most in need.

Development Commissioner, Andris Piebalgs welcomed the communication : *"This is another big step towards putting in place the future post-2015 framework. In order to make progress in policy, we need to use all available resources and look at new, innovative and reliable ways to fund poverty eradication and achieve long term, sustainable development."* [>>>](#)

New online resources



● **Which Anthropometric Indicators Identify a Pregnant Woman as Acutely Malnourished and Predict Adverse Birth Outcomes in the Humanitarian Context?, Médecins sans frontières Switzerland and Plos – July 2013:** Currently there is no consensus on how to identify pregnant women as acutely malnourished and when to enroll them in nutritional programmes. Médecins Sans Frontières Switzerland undertook a literature review with the purpose of determining values of anthropometric indicators for acute malnutrition that are associated with adverse birth outcomes (such as low birth weight, pre-term birth and intra-uterine growth retardation). A literature search in PUBMED was done covering 1 January 1995 to 12 September 2012 with the key terms maternal anthropometry and pregnancy. The review focused on the humanitarian context. Mid-upper-arm circumference was identified as the preferential indicator. [>>>](#)

● **Harvest Plus annual report 2012 – July 2013:** Harvest Plus, working on biofortification programs, has published its annual report 2012. This report focused on four highlights of the organism over the past year: i) The success of the program of biofortification of vitamin A of orange sweet potatoes in Uganda, which was the topic of an article in Journal of nutrition. And the other programs; ii) The new status of Member with Observer Status for the International Food Policy Research Institute in the Codex Alimentarius Commission; iii) The expansion on the South American continent and the Caribbean (The AgroSalud program); iv) Harvest Plus joined the CGIAR Research Program on Agriculture for Nutrition and Health. [>>>](#)

● **The Global Hidden Hunger Indices and Maps: An Advocacy Tool for Action – June 2013:** A first-of-its-kind global map and indices of micronutrient deficiencies—a public health problem that affects two billion people worldwide and seriously hinders economic development—found that hidden hunger hot spots are in sub-Saharan Africa, India and Afghanistan, and are severe in many countries in South-Central/South-East Asia. Developed by humanitarian nutrition think tank, Sight and Life, these 'Hidden Hunger Index' maps and rankings offer the health and development community an evidence-based tool to target the alleviation of multiple micronutrient deficiencies, which is critical to achieving many of the Millennium Development Goals. [>>>](#)

● **Agricultural policies and public finances in Africa: follow-up and evaluation since Maputo, Inter-réseau and SOS faim – June 2013:** This synthetic paper draws back on commitments of Maputo in 2003. African States have launched the detailed Programme for the development of Agriculture in Africa with aims to allocate 10% of the GNI to agriculture. Ten years later, has public investment in agriculture progressed? This work shows that the majority of African countries have not reached the target of 10%. It also deals with the difficulty to assess agricultural expenditure on the African continent and the lack of transparency at this level. (*document in French*) [>>>](#)

● **Sahel regional strategy. Mid-year review – July 2013:** The United Nations published its mid-year review of its Sahel Strategy. It concluded that food security and nutrition in the Sahel have improved somewhat since the acute crisis in 2012, following better rains and harvests. However, the effects of the recent crisis are not so quickly erased. Assessments, trend analysis and price monitoring in 2013 suggest that the food security and nutritional situation remains precarious for the most vulnerable and crisis-affected populations in the Sahel. Over 11 million people across the region continue to live in food insecurity. Five million children under five and pregnant or lactating women remain at risk of acute malnutrition, particularly in high risk areas such as Northern Mali and among Malian refugees in Burkina Faso, Mauritania and Niger. And cereal prices remain very high: in some areas as high as 50% more than the five-year average. [>>>](#)

● **Integration of Food Security & Livelihoods, and Nutrition Interventions, Technical Newsletter, ACF – August 2013:** This newsletter published on Rosa

website presents recent nutrition sensitive programmes implemented by ACF in various contexts: nutritional causal analysis in Chad and surveillance in Burkina Faso; social protection in Nigeria; homestead gardens in Afghanistan, Central African Republic and Myanmar; fully integrated approach in Pakistan; interview Anna Herforth. [>>>](#)

External resources and blogs

- **Zero Hunger website:** The Community for Zero Hunger was launched as an independent initiative to deliver a specific response to support the UN Zero Hunger Challenge. The Community for Zero Hunger brings together individuals and organizations unified around the common goals of ending hunger and malnutrition. [>>>](#)

- **FAO Statistical Yearbook 2013 :** Issued annually, FAO's Statistical Yearbook is an authoritative compendium of data on the major trends shaping global food and agriculture today. For each thematic area, brief analyses of the main trends are paired with graphical data visualizations as well as tables with key indicators. The topics it covers include: capital and investment; climate change; food availability; food production and trade; food prices; hunger and malnutrition; the consequences of political instability and natural- and human-induced disasters on food security; the state of the agricultural resource base and sustainability and environmental impacts. [>>>](#)

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This bulletin was written by the GRET team in charge of animating ROSA.

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