

# Feed the Future: The U.S. Government's Global Hunger and Food Security Initiative - Promotion of household food security - Women of reproductive age (WRA)

Programme: Feed the Future: The U.S. Government's Global Hunger and Food Security Initiative

## Programme Data

### Programme Description

Feed the Future, the U.S. Government's global hunger and food security initiative, is establishing a foundation for lasting progress against global hunger. With a focus on smallholder farmers, particularly women, Feed the Future supports partner countries in developing their agriculture sectors to spur economic growth that increases incomes and reduces hunger, poverty, and undernutrition. Feed the Future efforts are driven by country-led priorities and rooted in partnership with governments, donor organizations, the private sector, and civil society to enable long-term success. Feed the Future aims to assist millions of vulnerable women, children, and family members to escape hunger and poverty, while reaching significant numbers of children with highly effective nutrition interventions to prevent stunting and child mortality.

Over the next five years in Ghana, Feed the Future aims to help an estimated 860,000 vulnerable Ghanaian women, children and family members—mostly smallholder farmers—escape hunger and poverty. More than 324,000 children will be reached with services to improve their nutrition and prevent stunting and child mortality. Significant numbers of additional rural populations will achieve improved income and nutritional status from strategic policy engagement and institutional investments.

To meet its objectives, Feed the Future Ghana is making core investments in three key areas:

1. To achieve food security, agriculture programs will focus on driving a step-change in the volume and value performance of core staple value chains—starting with rice, maize and soy—and improving the governance of marine fisheries resources.
  - Improving the Enabling Environment for Private Sector Investment
  - High Impact Value Chain Activities and Investment
2. To help reduce malnutrition and improve household resilience of vulnerable populations, agriculture and nutrition programs will focus on a) improving access to diverse quality food, b) improving nutrition-related behaviors within vulnerable households, c) developing community mechanisms to identify and address their food and nutrition problems, and d) strengthening coordination of government and other actors to meet food security and nutrition objectives.
3. To improve the nutritional status of women and children, nutrition programs will focus on:
  - Improving nutrition-related behaviors and community norms regarding nutrition
  - Expanding community-based treatment of acute malnutrition of children
  - Expanding the accessibility of safe, quality foods available for child weaning in Ghana
  - Identifying and addressing the root causes of severe levels of anemia among women and children in Ghana

In addition to these three core areas, environment, natural resource management, climate change, and gender are incorporated as cross-cutting issues in all programs and activities as guiding principles.

### Target Regions

A strategic focus on the rice, maize and soy value chains for five years could raise tens of thousands of people out of poverty, 75 percent of whom would be in northern Ghana. Improving marine fisheries governance in the Western Region will benefit fishery households and increase the nutritional status of fish consumers across Ghana.

### Highlights

*Northern Zone.* The rural northern regions have the highest rates of food insecurity in the country—as much as seven times the national average. The northern zone program will aim to improve economic opportunities and diversify household income by doing the following:

- Identifying and facilitating private investment into the agriculture sector in order to strengthen rice, maize and soy value chains to produce more and better staple food products
- Leveraging technical knowledge and seeking innovations, especially in the areas of science and technology
- Increasing income during lean periods
- Encouraging the production of nutritious foods for household consumption and income generation
- Supporting communities to develop plans for storage, food safety and food security
- Improving nutrition-related behaviors

*Coastal Marine Fisheries Zone.* Poverty in the coastal areas of Ghana is extensive, with the average welfare level among food farmers in rural coastal areas 12 percent below that in large urban centers such as Accra. Marine capture fisheries are the major economic activity along the coast and their importance reaches far beyond the coast. There is strong evidence that Ghana's coastal ecosystems are already seriously degraded and experiencing erosion and will undoubtedly be under growing pressure with an oil and gas industry on its way. The Feed the Future program will:

- Support direct, targeted interventions where the poor fisheries-dependent households are located and focus on what has greatest potential for improving their situation, as well as the environment
- Increase the ability of coastal residents to better access and manage their most important productive asset: marine fisheries

*National Scale Nutritional Programming.* In coordination with other development partners, Feed the Future will support the Government of Ghana's implementation of a comprehensive program of community-based management of acute malnutrition through a comprehensive behavior change program. This comprehensive package will improve nutrition-related behaviors and will be incorporated into programming in the Western, Central, and Greater Accra regions. Operational research will be conducted in 2011–2012 to better understand the extremely high rates of anemia among children in Ghana. This research will be used to develop key nutritional aspects of Feed the Future programming and to shape a national child anemia strategy and program that can be undertaken by Ghana Health Service and its development partners.

## Program type

Multi-national

## Cost

60 million US dollars

## References

- <http://feedthefuture.gov/country/ghana>
- <http://feedthefuture.gov/sites/default/files/country/strategies/files/Gh...>
- <http://feedthefuture.gov/sites/default/files/country/strategies/files/ft...>
- <http://feedthefuture.gov/sites/default/files/country/strategies/files/Gh...>

## Implementing organisations

- Other
  - Details:  
more  
Millennium Challenge Corporation, Peace Corps:  
Small Business, Health and Environmental  
Volunteers

## Funding sources

- Bilateral and donor agencies and lenders
  - US Agency for International Development (USAID)

## Action data

Start date	January 2011
End date	January 2015
Country(ies):	Ghana
Status:	On-going
Area:	Rural Peri-urban
Place:	Northern region of Ghana
Topic:	Promotion of household food security
Target group:	Women of reproductive age (WRA)
Delivery:	Community-based
Implementation details :	Activities will be implemented within the communities where staple crop value chain activities will take place, but will target vulnerable households that would not be captured by a staple crop value chain approach. Hopefully some of these households will eventually be able to participate in the larger commercial value chains as their condition improves. USAID's efforts will concentrate on value chains in which women have some control and decision-making power over the production, processing, or

marketing of the crops, or livestock, as well as control over the income derived from sales of those products. Examples of these include horticulture and small animal husbandry, which are generally managed and controlled by women. 16 In Ghana, activities of the USAID funded Global Livestock Project, ENAM (Enhancing Child Nutrition through Animal Source Food Management), showed positive results on improving production and consumption of animal source foods through a comprehensive approach that integrated income generation and nutrition education. USAID Title II programs in Ghana have also shown success in improving production of staple and non-staple foods. Nutrition and food safety education will be combined with microenterprise development so that men and women beneficiaries build resources and gain knowledge to provide safe and diverse diets to themselves, young children, and families. Male involvement is an essential aspect for the adoption of positive nutrition behaviors and practices.

Messages against child abuse and child trafficking as well as improved nutrition will be carried out among vulnerable households. Capacity-building in the use of good agricultural practices to prevent contamination of horticultural crops will result in higher yields and higher quality, safer products which will improve public health and develop markets for surplus products. Other aspects of household behaviors such as hygiene and sanitation are critical components to improve nutrition. Evidence shows that hand washing alone can reduce the incidence of diarrhea by 47 percent; diarrhea being both a potential cause and a consequence of undernutrition. By using evidence-based approaches (e.g., Community Led Total Sanitation), program activities will stimulate community mobilization and train local craftsmen (e.g., masons, carpenters) on inexpensive latrine construction or materials that could be purchased at the community level based on the types of latrines identified to construct by community members.

#### **Improved access to diverse safe and quality food, especially for young children**

Improved access to food can be accomplished through either direct consumption of produced goods or through purchase with improved incomes; most often improved access requires both approaches. In the northern areas of Ghana, both poverty and poor dietary diversity contribute to reduced access to diverse foods for the most vulnerable. Poverty is associated with lower consumption of a diverse diet including animal source proteins throughout Ghana, with particularly low diversity scores in the northern areas. Storage remains a major obstacle to food preservation and safety in Ghana that not only impedes direct access to food throughout the year, but also limits access to income since the majority of crops are sold post-harvest at low prices and then purchased at higher prices for consumption late in season. This strategy under the Agriculture Program explains that improving storage options will help address this problem.

The integrated program will require that implementing partners assess men's and women's roles to design interventions related to the four areas above that have the greatest chance for improving household and community resilience. For example, research on small-scale production activities through the ENAM Project found that men's perception and appreciation of women's activities had an impact on women's empowerment and use of income for the household,<sup>17</sup> underscoring the importance of including men in nutrition programs.

#### **Improved nutrition-related behaviors within vulnerable households**

Interpersonal communication, linked with community-based monitoring, will promote positive household behaviors related to nutritional health. This approach will encourage not only households but also communities to support broader measures such as hygiene and sanitation improvements, while helping reduce social and cultural barriers to improved nutrition-related behaviors, such as dietary restrictions based on age or gender. Positive practices that affect nutritional status of women and children will be promoted and supported through a combination of household visits, community outreach events, mother-to-mother support groups and other community groups. Men will be also targeted to promote their role in supporting positive nutrition-related behaviors.

This sub-program on nutrition behavior will be intertwined with and will build upon mass media and community behavior change activities undertaken through Program Objective Three. It will also be coordinated with other USG efforts such as the President's Malaria Initiative (PMI), other USAID-funded health and agriculture programs, and related programs of the Ghana Health Service and other development partners and civil society groups to ensure complementarity and leverage additional resources and activities in target areas.

#### **Communities able to identify and address their food and nutrition problems**

Communities will establish food and nutrition objectives and will monitor their own progress by developing community-based nutrition monitoring systems. With data in hand, communities will be enabled to identify specific actions (e.g., diversified food production, fortification, improved storage or improved hygiene to reduce the incidence of diarrheal diseases) relevant to the local context and particular challenges. The integrated program will promote participatory practices that encourage men, women, and children to undertake and advocate for improvements to critical infrastructure through public works, facilitating effective engagement with local authorities, access to private sector credit, and potentially other support such as a small grants program. These actions will all be oriented to improve resiliency of households by allowing greater diversity and stability of income and access to food products.

One possible approach is to develop multi-sectoral collaborations to allow communities to systematically address food and nutrition challenges. All of the features of an improvement collaborative are applicable to improvement of services regardless of sector, including: shared improvement objectives; adequately supported quality improvement teams testing changes; an implementation package; regular analysis of measured results to guide quality improvement; shared learning for accelerated scale-up; spread of the successful strategy; and development or

strengthening of relevant organizational structures.

### **Strengthened coordination of government and other actors to meet food security and nutrition objectives**

USAID will work to strengthen cross-sectoral management of food security efforts at the central level as well as at the regional level. MOFA's Women in Agricultural Development (WIAD) is working on several integrated initiatives targeting women farmers, focused on dietary diversity and increasing access to nutritious foods, and has also been involved in the CAADP and METASIP review processes. On the health side, the interagency nutrition working group chaired by the Ghana Health Service will be strengthened as a planning and decision-making body for health-related nutrition efforts, and will be encouraged to work more directly with WIAD. Increasing support to WIAD and utilizing USAID's position in health sector coordination to ensure that health actors become more involved with WIAD's initiatives will greatly contribute to progress toward FTF objectives. These actions will provide a forum for sharing of best practices in cross-sectoral food security interventions, and will help WIAD to become the lead agency for coordinating interventions to improve food security for vulnerable households.

Target population size : This Resilience and Reduction of Undernutrition program will increase resiliency of at least 40,000 food insecure households with women of reproductive age and children under two in the Northern region of Ghana

Coverage level (%): Northern region of Ghana

Outcome indicator(s): **Increased resilience of vulnerable communities and households**

- Change in average score on Household Hunger index , disaggregated by sex of household head
- Reduction in stunting among children under five, disaggregated by sex
- Number of women with effective control of productive assets
- Number of vulnerable households that benefited directly from USG assistance

### **Improved access to diverse and quality foods**

- Percent of children 6-23 months that received a Minimum Acceptable Diet, disaggregated by sex
- Number of beneficiaries with access to home or community garden, disaggregated by sex

M&E system: USAID/Ghana will continue using the basic methodology of its existing Performance Monitoring Plan (PMP) for 2009–2013 that includes its monitoring of regular Development Assistance funds, GFSR, and FTF funds. With technical support to be provided by USAID/Washington, USAID/Ghana will build on its current monitoring and evaluation (M&E) systems to design and establish a comprehensive new FTF M&E system and PMP in 2011. In addition, the Mission has several years of experience using the Initiative to End Hunger in Africa (IEHA) monitoring and reporting system which will form the foundation for FTF monitoring and reporting. Since Mission implementing partners will be the source of a great deal of information, their own monitoring and reporting systems will be set up to provide the appropriate sex-disaggregated data, results, indicators, followed by regular monthly, quarterly, semi-annual, and annual reports to comply with the Operating Unit's overall M&E system requirements. The Mission will be more watchful in ensuring that sex-disaggregated data is collected at all levels of indicators (outputs, outcomes and impacts), and will use available resources to invest in more in-depth analysis of the impacts of programs on men and women.

**Data Quality and Management:** FTF M&E will benefit greatly from assistance provided by the USAID's GSSP project to strengthen Ghana's agricultural statistics system. A new system is being launched in 2011 called the Ghana Agricultural Production Survey (GAPS). The key improvements to be made in the current Multi-Round Crop and Livestock Survey (MRCLS) are a disaggregated and updated sample design (district representativeness), expanded scope and depth of (geo-referenced) agricultural information collected, and new and enhanced management system consisting of improved data management practices and tailored software for improved and timely data processing, monitoring, and reporting. This resource will provide unprecedented household (gender disaggregated) information on an annual basis to help report on a number of FTF indicators. Other than the in-house sources of information, various other M&E analytical tools, structures, and approaches will be considered for establishing baselines and constant monitoring. These options include instruments like the Ghana Living Standards Survey (GLSS- the local version of the LSMS), Participatory Poverty and Vulnerability Assessment (PPVA), Poverty and Social Impact Analysis (PSIA), and the Northern Ghana Food Security and Nutrition Monitoring System. Data from the Demographic and Health Survey, which was last conducted in Ghana 2008, provides the baseline for nutrition and maternal and child health interventions. The USG will support this survey again in 2011, and therefore will have access to important data to assess the impact of the program at its midpoint. The Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey, conducted by UNICEF with support from USAID and planned for 2011 and 2015, will provide impact data to assess the success of the FTF program in Ghana at the conclusion of this Strategy period. Developing National/Regional Capacity to use Data: IFPRI (through the GSSP project) is helping to establish the CAADP Strategic Analysis and Knowledge Support System (SAKSS) Node and will continue to provide the professional guidance to

the country to ensure high quality statistical data remains available. In addition, a Technical Services staffer will support the ASWG Secretariat in carrying out its functions effectively, including tasks like helping stakeholders (especially MOFA) keep track of agricultural related public and private sector investments and foreign support to the sector. There may be times where additional design work will be needed to create results monitoring frameworks for new activities and assist in modifying existing frameworks by adjusting indicators, defining baselines and setting targets. In addition, the Mission will be a partner in Joint Sector Reviews of agricultural sector performance conducted jointly by MOFA and development partners according to a mutual agreement the Mission supports for transparency, accountability, benchmarking, and results monitoring.

**Impact Evaluations:** The USG will ensure that evaluations for FTF will be adequately covered by above mentioned Technical Services PASA. One of its primary objectives is to evaluate and assess impact of the USAID/Ghana/EG portfolio of investments, in relationship to GOG and donor portfolios, and in relationship to Ghanaian needs in order to make progress towards MDGs and sustaining status of a middle income country. This includes providing relevant information for design of new and/or scaled-up projects as USG increases its investments in Ghana.

**Evaluations will include both qualitative and quantitative methods.** The hypothesis is that the development process itself can have a significant impact on and bring change to the Ghanaian environment. The objective is to test how much influence FTF programs have had on human behavior, human attitudes (e.g., trust in value chain systems), business and commercial practices, establishment of value chain linkages, increased livelihood options, smoothed out income flow over time (not just level of income), institutional efficiency and quality service delivery, and the programs' impact on reducing key gender disparities. In addition, the programs should be evaluated to see if they were effective enough to bring about a transformative change or improvement in the lives of the poor, mainly in the northern regions.

Baseline:	Household Hunger Index; percent children stunted; households benefitting from USG assistance.
Post-intervention:	Household Hunger Index; percent children stunted; households benefitting from USG assistance.
Outcome reported by social determinants:	Vulnerable groups Sex Socio-economic status

**Typical problems      Solutions**

Other actions from same programme

- Feed the Future: The U.S. Government's Global Hunger and Food Security Initiative - Promotion of food security and agriculture - All population groups
- Feed the Future: The U.S. Government's Global Hunger and Food Security Initiative - Management of severe acute malnutrition - Infants and young children|SAM child

Links to policies in GINA

- Breastfeeding Promotion Regulations
- Growth and Poverty Reduction Strategy (GPRSII)
- Imagine Ghana Free of Malnutrition

eLENA Link

- Complementary feeding

