

A Decade of Feed the Future's Impact on Nutrition

In 2010, the United States launched the “Feed the Future (FTF)” Global Hunger and Food Security Initiative to combat hunger, poverty and malnutrition. FTF currently operates in 12 focus countries and has lifted over 23 million people out of poverty.

From January-August 2020, CARE conducted a comprehensive analysis of FTF from its inception in 2010 to August 2020 and analyzed FTF's contribution to nutritional impacts. The analysis examined which FTF-supported countries had the greatest nutritional status improvements because of U.S. Government support. **It is clear through this analysis that Feed the Future has had a significant impact in multiple countries, and could become a transformational program if nutrition is elevated in authorizing legislation, appropriations and funding, accountability mechanisms and technical assistance.**

A Decade of FTF Accomplishments

- FTF helped to significantly reduce child stunting (children's height too short for their age due to malnutrition) in several countries. Stunting, a key indicator of child health and nutrition, decreased by 23% in Ethiopia and 22% in Zambia.
- FTF increased the global political will for investment in nutrition-sensitive agriculture programming, leading to the integration of nutrition in agriculture at an unprecedented level. FTF helped establish the U.S. government as a global leader in nutrition-sensitive agriculture programming.
- FTF significantly improved focus country nutrition policies and programs by streamlining guidance and improving the quality of data collection.
- USAID has provided global expertise and leadership in rigorous monitoring, evaluation and learning for nutrition in the FTF.
- Joint U.S. Government agency reporting under the FTF Monitoring System has improved accountability by focusing on clearly defined metrics and common reporting, while also collecting detailed program narratives.

Room for Improvements

- While FTF reduced child stunting in several countries, its impact across focus countries has been inconsistent.
- Despite the strong progress made to elevate the importance of nutrition-sensitive agriculture, there is more to be done to integrate nutrition into agriculture programming.
- FTF could strengthen coordination between U.S. government-funded implementing partners both globally and at the country level to help ensure efficiency and effectiveness.

To improve FTF's impact on global malnutrition, CARE suggests the following recommendations for policy, funding and program implementation. The recommendations cover the integration of nutrition within FTF, the transparency of program results and funding, the capacity of program implementers, the role of nutrition in the selection of focus countries, and the ongoing support of the U.S. foreign assistance for food security and nutrition programming.

Key Recommendations

Recommendations for Congress:

POLICY

- **Congress should reauthorize the Global Food Security Act in 2023.** Congress should pass updated legislation that builds on successes and better integrates nutrition into FTF programming across all focus countries.

FUNDING

- **Continue to increase funding for global nutrition interventions (nutrition-specific and nutrition-sensitive) through USG foreign assistance.** Congress should increase funding both for the nutrition Global Health Programs (GHP) sub-account and for other accounts including the McGovern-Dole International Food for Education and Child Nutrition Program, Title II Food for Peace Program, and Title III—Bilateral Economic Assistance and the Economic Support Fund (ESF) account.

Recommendations for the Administration:

PROGRAMMING

- **Elevate nutrition and integrate it more as a core element of Feed the Future Programming.** Make nutrition central to decision-making for budget allocations.
- **Update USG technical guidance for nutrition to reflect lessons learned from implementing nutrition programming in FTF-funded countries.** In addition, elevate nutrition within FTF by clearly integrating nutrition programming guidance into FTF policy and program guidance.
- **Strengthen the use of the FTF nutrition learning agenda research questions** within new program request for proposals design and related evaluations. This will help in learning more about linkages between agriculture and nutrition, including through market systems, risk and resilience, and scaling of technologies and practices
- **Consider nutrition for FTF focus country selection:** The State Department and USAID should **consider national malnutrition indicators as key criteria for adding or dropping FTF focus countries.**



- **Expand USAID nutrition technical capacity: USAID should expand its global network of nutrition-specific advisors** at headquarters and throughout its regional and country missions to accelerate the integration of nutrition into USAID's work worldwide.
- The USG should conduct a **systematic analysis of the key impact for indicators of nutritional status**, such as child stunting, wasting, and underweight women, to inform future programming modifications and improve women's and children's nutritional status.

FUNDING

- **Strengthen transparency about USG foreign assistance nutrition funding** by annually publishing a report on global U.S. nutrition program funding, disaggregated by funding mechanism, account and by country support.

ACCOUNTABILITY

- **Strengthen transparency for nutrition progress in FTF:** USAID should make absolute number output and outcome indicators results against nutrition targets publicly available for both FTF focus countries and other countries receiving USG nutrition funding.