



FANRPAN
Food, Agriculture & Natural Resources Policy Analysis Network



FANRPAN Strategy for Integrating Nutrition into Agriculture Programmes

1. The Need for Integrating Nutrition into Agriculture Development Programmes

At a time when agricultural investments and productivity of food staples are finally increasing in Africa, the number of stunted children in Africa rose from 50.8 million in 2000 to 58.6 million in 2012. Malnutrition undermines the health and limits the opportunities of almost one in four people in Africa. It is estimated that high rates of malnutrition can reduce a country's gross domestic product (GDP) by as much as 12 percent. The disconnect between agriculture and nutrition must end.

Agricultural development initiatives have the potential to improve the nutrition of those most vulnerable to malnutrition, particularly women of child bearing age and young children below five years. While the link between agriculture and nutrition seems intuitive, it cannot be taken for granted. Direct evidence linking agricultural programs and nutrition outcomes is weak. The intense focus of many agricultural programs on increasing productivity of staple foods and value chain development can come at the expense of nutritional security. To fulfil their potential for reducing poverty and hunger, agricultural development initiatives must incorporate nutrition-sensitive interventions, and ensure consumption of diverse diets with essential proteins, minerals and vitamins and sufficient caloric intake.

2. The ATONU Project

ATONU is a six-year Agriculture to Nutrition African initiative focusing on how agriculture can deliver positive nutrition outcomes to smallholder farm families through the implementation of robust, evidence-based nutrition-sensitive interventions. To create a link between agriculture and nutrition, ATONU will provide technical assistance to integrate tailored nutrition-sensitive interventions into agriculture development programmes/projects such through (i) generating tools and frameworks for diagnosing the opportunities to incorporate tailored nutrition-sensitive interventions into agriculture projects; (ii) provision of technical assistance for designing, testing, and rigorously monitoring and evaluating results of the tailored nutrition-sensitive interventions ; (iii) documenting best practices and evidence and adding to the agriculture for the nutrition knowledge base; and (iv) advocating for evidence-based decision making at all levels; and (v) strengthening the capacity of participating individuals and institutions to effectively mainstream NSIs. Capacity building will help to institutionalize the integration of agriculture and nutrition, and up-scaling of successful interventions.

ATONU is framed to incorporate two cross-cutting themes of Gender Responsiveness and Sustainable Natural Resources and Environment Management.

- (i) *Gender*: ATONU mainstreams gender in all activities so that the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of NSIs are gender-responsive and culturally-sensitive. ATONU will propose approaches and lessons on how gender and socio-cultural issues can be dealt with to effect positive behaviour change and empower women with the capacity to influence behaviour change and nutritional outcomes.
- (ii) *Natural Resources and Environment (NRE)*: The NRE theme promotes climate-smart agriculture (CSA), which addresses the interlinked challenges of food insecurity and climate change. CSA in the agriculture-nutrition nexus aims to tackle three main objectives: sustainably increasing agricultural productivity and incomes; adapting and building resilience to climate change; and reducing and/or removing greenhouse gas emissions, where possible.

3. The Approach

ATONU works with existing agricultural development projects through the provision of technical assistance (TA), to identify, design and support implementation of nutrition-sensitive interventions (NSIs) to deliver positive nutrition outcomes. Additional support may be provided to collect data for and evaluation of impact of NSIs.

ATONU will explore and work with five pathways to strengthen the contribution of agriculture to positive nutrition outcomes:

- (i) Pathway 1: Food production for household consumption;
- (ii) Pathway 2: Income-oriented production for purchase of food, health and other non-food items;
- (iii) Pathway 3: Empowerment of women as agents instrumental to household food security and health outcomes;
- (iv) Pathway 4: Reduction in real food prices associated with increased agricultural production;
- (v) Pathway 5: Nutrition Sensitive Agricultural Growth - the indirect relationship between increasing agricultural productivity and nutrition outcomes through the agriculture sector's contribution to national income and macro-economic growth.

The first three pathways work at the household level, while the last two operate at policy level. To start with, focus will be on household level interventions, whose results may later be used to leverage policy level interventions.

To integrate nutrition into agricultural development projects/programmes, it is proposed to use the process presented in Figure 1.

Step	Description
1.	Select and assess suitability of an agricultural project/ programme for feasibility of integration of nutrition
2.	Identify, screen and design nutrition-sensitive interventions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) Conduct situation analysis through a desk study/literature review to assess the food and nutrition security policy and institutional environment, opportunities for and barriers to possible interventions (ii) Assess nutrition status of communities served by project and their contextual circumstances

	(iii) Convene stakeholder workshop to identify and select nutrition-sensitive interventions, results framework, impact evaluation and process indicators, and M&E and implementation plans
4.	Design and elaborate selected NSIs
5.	Identify and train country implementation partners to implement nutrition-sensitive interventions
6.	Conduct baseline study
7.	Implement NSIs
8.	Conduct process and impact evaluation studies
9.	Document and communicate results

Figure 1. Processes for selecting and implementing nutrition-sensitive interventions

4. Summary of What FANRPAN has to Offer

Therefore ATONU bring the following to integrate nutrition into agriculture development programmes:

- (i) Agriculture-nutrition expertise through full-time staff and partner experts.
- (ii) Tools for identifying, selecting, implementing and assessing NSIs. These are:
 - A research tool, with research questions used to analyse and identify entry points within the identified value chain (i.e., to assess project readiness for interventions).
 - Criteria to screen and identify possible NSI opportunities. The criteria consider a number of issues, including: projected cost of implementing NSIs, farm level viability/profitability, socio-cultural acceptability, impact on gender and women empowerment, projected strength of nutrition outcomes and environmental impact, among others.
 - A tool for impact evaluation of nutrition-sensitive interventions which outlines methodologies and indicators for assessing the impact of interventions and evaluating processes.
- (iii) Gender analysis, social behaviour change communication (SBCC) and awareness tools and modules to encourage and deepen nutrition education within the communities.
- (iv) Analysis of the status of national agriculture, food and nutrition policies to promote agriculture-nutrition practices.
- (v) Through FANRPAN, convening power for multi-stakeholder dialogue to upscale the results of nutrition-sensitive interventions into state, federal (national) and regional policies.

ATONU will not carry-out actual implementation of the NSIs but will provide technical assistance, and guidance on nutrition, from situation analysis to implementation and if necessary, impact evaluation. ATONU staff will provide training and facilitate learning by doing at all stages. For the actual implementation of NSIs, Country Implementing Partners (CIPs) are central to ATONU's approach.

ATONU will provide technical assistance from its staff or through outsourced service providers (OSPs) as necessary. OSPs will provide inputs such as formative research and development of training materials, and provision of training on social behaviour change communication (SBCC), gender and women empowerment under the guidance of ATONU.

5. Example of Application of FANRPAN Approach

ATONU is working with the African Chicken Genetic Gains (ACGG) Project that is being implemented by the International Livestock Research Institute (ILRI) in Ethiopia and Tanzania, to integrate and

assess the impact of selected nutrition-sensitive interventions (NSIs) to provide evidence for agriculture's potential to deliver positive nutrition outcomes.

The objective of the ACGG Project is to improve the production and productivity of chickens kept by smallholder households by introducing improved and tropically adapted genotypes in four regions of Ethiopia and five zones of Tanzania. ATONU interventions are being implemented in four regions of Ethiopia, namely Amhara, Oromia, Tigray and Southern Nations, Nationalities, and Peoples' Region (SNNPR); and three zones of Tanzania, comprising Eastern, Central and Southern Highlands. The ATONU project activities are being embedded within the ACGG Project.

ATONU is testing three pathways to deliver improved nutrition to smallholder farming households: (i) agricultural production for own consumption, (ii) use of agriculture income to purchase other nutritious foods, and (iii) women empowerment to improve agency and nutrition. The results from the household level studies will be used to model national level responses and feed into engagements with decision- and policy-makers (government, private sector, and development investors).

The ATONU nutrition-sensitive intervention (NSI) package comprises the following components that are being delivered to participating households:

- (i) Production for own consumption:
 - a. Behaviour change communication (BCC) on nutrition education and hygiene to increase consumption of eggs and chicken meat, especially by women and children;
 - b. Promotion of home gardens for increased availability of green leafy vegetables and dietary diversity
- (ii) Income expenditure:
 - a. BCC for increased expenditure on nutritious food from incomes from sale of eggs, chicken and other household income
- (iii) Women empowerment:
 - a. BCC for women empowerment to influence changes in women's time use and decision making within the household
 - b. Engagement of both men and women to understand the impact of workload on women's time and energy and how that can affect productivity and nutrition of family members and support their wives to manage competing tasks at household level.
 - c. Engendered and joint budgeting by husband and wife

To date, ATONU has conducted a baseline study and is implementing the nutrition-sensitive interventions in the two countries. The impact evaluation results should be available last quarter of 2018.