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# USAID Advancing Nutrition

**PROJECT YEAR 3 IN REVIEW**

October 1, 2020–September 30, 2021



### **About USAID Advancing Nutrition**

USAID Advancing Nutrition is the Agency's flagship multi-sectoral nutrition project, led by JSI Research & Training Institute, Inc. (JSI), and a diverse group of experienced partners. Launched in September 2018, USAID Advancing Nutrition implements nutrition interventions across sectors and disciplines for USAID and its partners. The project's multi-sectoral approach draws together global nutrition experience to design, implement, and evaluate programs that address the root causes of malnutrition. Committed to using a systems approach, USAID Advancing Nutrition strives to sustain positive outcomes by building local capacity, supporting behavior change, and strengthening the enabling environment to save lives, improve health, build resilience, increase economic productivity, and advance development.

### **Disclaimer**

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### **USAID Advancing Nutrition**

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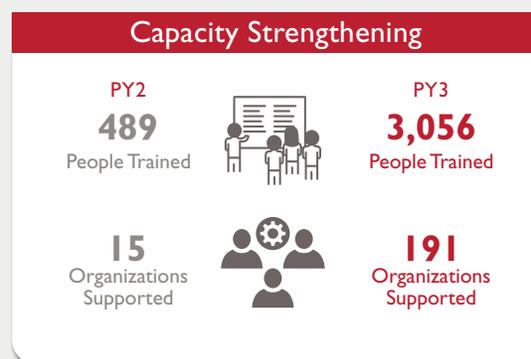
[www.advancingnutrition.org](http://www.advancingnutrition.org)

USAID Advancing Nutrition envisions a world where countries, communities, and families are well nourished, resilient, and able to thrive. At a time when more than 45 million children under 5 years of age are wasted and 571 million women and girls of reproductive age are anemic,<sup>1</sup> we are committed to helping USAID answer the call for change by supporting its strategies for multi-sectoral nutrition and global food security. In practical terms, this means we are working globally and locally, in 12 countries and regions, to design, implement, and evaluate programs that strengthen local capacity and support behavior change to strengthen the enabling environment for better nutrition.

Our activities are led by four technical teams: **Early Childhood Development, Food Systems, Nutrition and Health Systems, and Nutrition in Humanitarian Contexts**. Four cross-cutting teams support these technical teams and lead their own activities: **Capacity Strengthening; Knowledge Management; Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning;** and **Social and Behavior Change**. Each of these focus areas is critical to examining the causes of malnutrition and ways to intervene. Working in concert, these teams share knowledge, resources, and learning continuously for programming that can lead to sustainable change for improved nutrition.

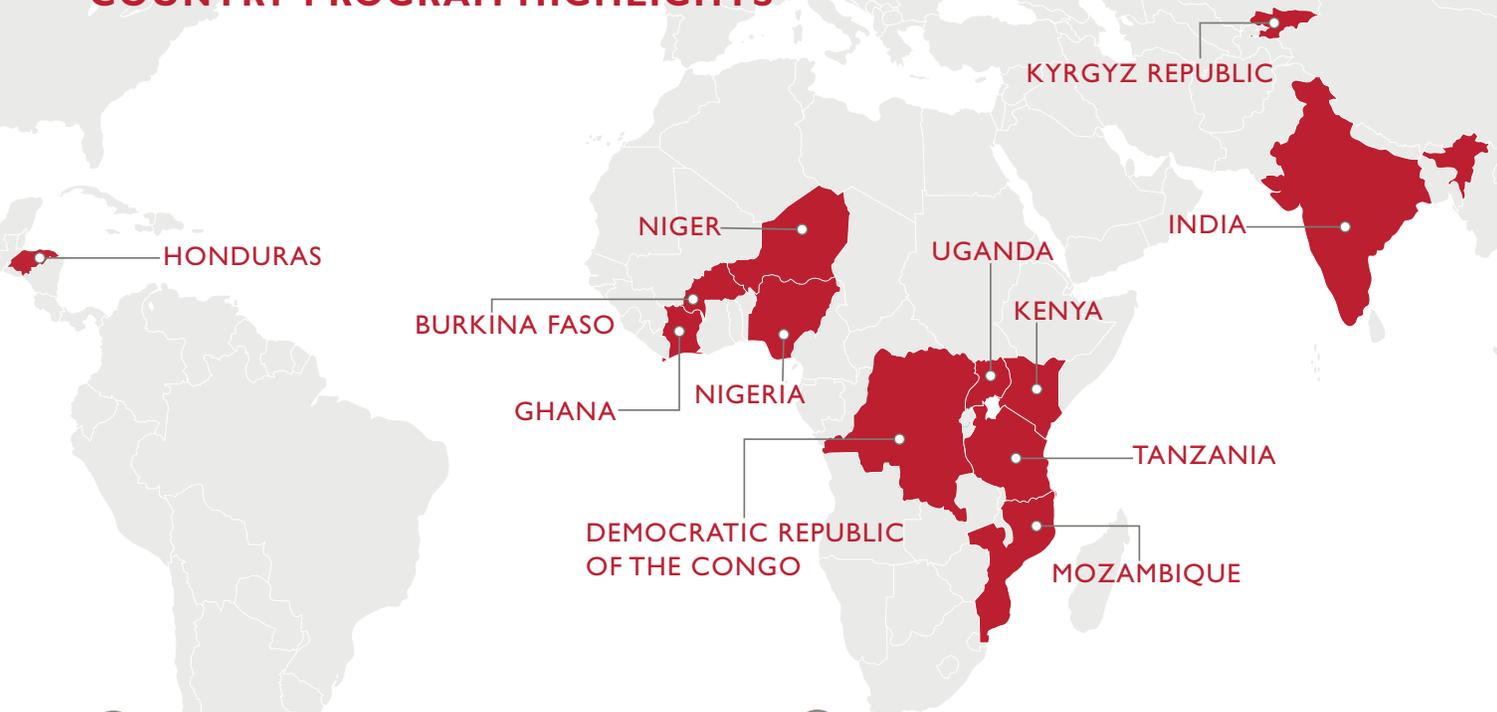
The project’s third year brought significant growth that helped accelerate our work toward USAID’s nutrition priorities. Adding **seven new country programs** offered greater opportunity for **local implementation**, whether through research, collaboration, and coordination support to country governments, or the development and testing of national or global guidelines and tools. This support will continue and expand, if requested, with new country buy-ins in project year (PY) 4 to help ensure that Missions, governments, and partners achieve their multi-sectoral nutrition goals.

## USAID ADVANCING NUTRITION PROJECT YEAR 3 AT A GLANCE



1. Development Initiatives. 2021. 2021 Global Nutrition Report: The State of Global Nutrition. Bristol, UK: Development Initiatives.

## COUNTRY PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS



### HONDURAS

Our work supports the government to strengthen systems that deliver nutrition-specific and nutrition-sensitive interventions to reduce malnutrition among households and children under 5.



### BURKINA FASO

To improve regional nutritional outcomes, we support the national government and key stakeholders to improve results-based planning and strengthen data-driven nutrition interventions.



### GHANA

We advance the national government's efforts to improve district planning for equitable delivery of services that improve nutrition, household resilience, and early childhood development.



### NIGER

We strengthen micronutrient supplement delivery systems and treatment services to reduce anemia and vitamin A deficiency among women of reproductive age, adolescents, and children under 5.



### NIGERIA

We provide technical support to the government and partners and generating evidence to enhance multi-sectoral nutrition programming.



### DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO

We partner with BHA to document learning on coordination and collaboration among nutrition actors working along the continuum of care for the management of wasting.



### UGANDA

We help the government to reduce micronutrient deficiencies by strengthening compliance with food fortification standards, enforcement, and monitoring.



### KENYA

At the national and sub-national levels, we strengthen stakeholders' capacity to advocate for improved nutrition among Kenya's most vulnerable populations.



### TANZANIA

We work with the national government to better plan and coordinate multi-sectoral nutrition programs.



### MOZAMBIQUE

We assist the national and Nampula Province governments to improve nutrition of pregnant and lactating women, adolescent girls, and children under 2.



### INDIA

We address malnutrition among socio-economically disadvantaged families in Assam that are negatively impacted by COVID-19 and create knowledge exchange platforms on nutrition-sensitive agriculture.



### KYRGYZ REPUBLIC

We improve the nutritional status of women of reproductive age and children under 5 with a focus on the 1,000-day window of opportunity.



## CAPACITY STRENGTHENING AND COLLABORATION

In PY3, capacity strengthening and collaboration underpinned our country work as well as a range of tools and guidance developed to support key stages of the USAID Program Cycle.

### KEY ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- A pre-service training guide helps program planners understand what skills health workers have and what they are trained to deliver, and supplements that training with counseling skills.
- New resources on evaluation, costing, and measuring collaboration offer nutrition programs tools for learning and decision-making.
- A nutrition-sensitive agriculture curriculum aims to strengthen Mission capacity to design, implement, and monitor multi-sectoral nutrition programs.

Directly in countries, under the umbrella of USAID's New Partnerships Initiative (NPI), we launched our first activity focused on developing the capacity of local

organizations to address malnutrition. After an extensive solicitation process, we identified four local organizations—two in Kenya and two in Burkina Faso—to be our partners. We issued grants for work to improve nutrition in their contexts and communities and began conducting organizational capacity assessments.

In Kenya, the USAID Mission supports a robust multi-sectoral nutrition activity through USAID Advancing Nutrition, which is complemented by seven core-funded activities. In fact, one of our core-funded NPI grantees is also an implementing partner on our Mission-funded program. Our country programs in Kyrgyz Republic, Ghana, Tanzania, Mozambique, Burkina Faso, Niger, and Kenya also supported a range of trainings, workshops, and consultations that engaged local actors to ensure joint planning, implementation, and accountability to nutrition while also ensuring the safety of all in light of the COVID-19 pandemic.



## QUALITY MULTI-SECTORAL NUTRITION PROGRAMMING—EMERGING TECHNICAL THEMES

In PY3, working in both **development** and **emergency** contexts, we used **behavior-centered, evidence-based** approaches to—

- strengthen **food and health systems** for nutrition
- integrate **early childhood development** and nutrition
- reach **families, caregivers, and public and private sector stakeholders** with critical tools, messages, discussions, and strategies
- ensure that the high-quality deliverables we produce inform **learning, better practice**, and more effective and/or efficient ways of working among our primary target audiences—USAID Missions, operating units, and implementing partners.

Four shared technical areas of work emerged across our team portfolios that align with USAID's priorities for nutrition globally: **micronutrients, infant and young**

**child feeding, healthy diets, and wasting prevention and management.**



### MICRONUTRIENTS

Our portfolio of work in **micronutrients** is both multi-sectoral and multi-disciplinary in nature and contributes to global learning, evidence, collaboration, measurement, and improved practice. In line with the Agency's focus on **large-scale food fortification (LSFF)**, we drew heavily on our participation in the Nutrition Modeling Consortium and support to the Tanzania Food and Nutrition Centre in planning a food intake survey comparing household consumption and expenditure surveys (HCES) and 24-hour dietary recall to prepare a concept note on assessing diets, markets, and the cost of an adequate diet to inform LSFF programming. Four of our country programs—Uganda, Niger, Tanzania, and

Honduras—are also undertaking significant efforts to strengthen micronutrient fortification and/or supplementation for their target populations.

**KEY ACCOMPLISHMENTS**

- **The Anemia Toolkit** provides public health practitioners and policymakers with resources pertaining to anemia causation and its assessment, and presents tools for strategic intervention, and needs for further investigation.
- Research modeled **food fortification contributions in Malawi** and compared cost and cost-efficiency of **micronutrient powder delivery in rural Uganda**.



**INFANT AND YOUNG CHILD FEEDING**

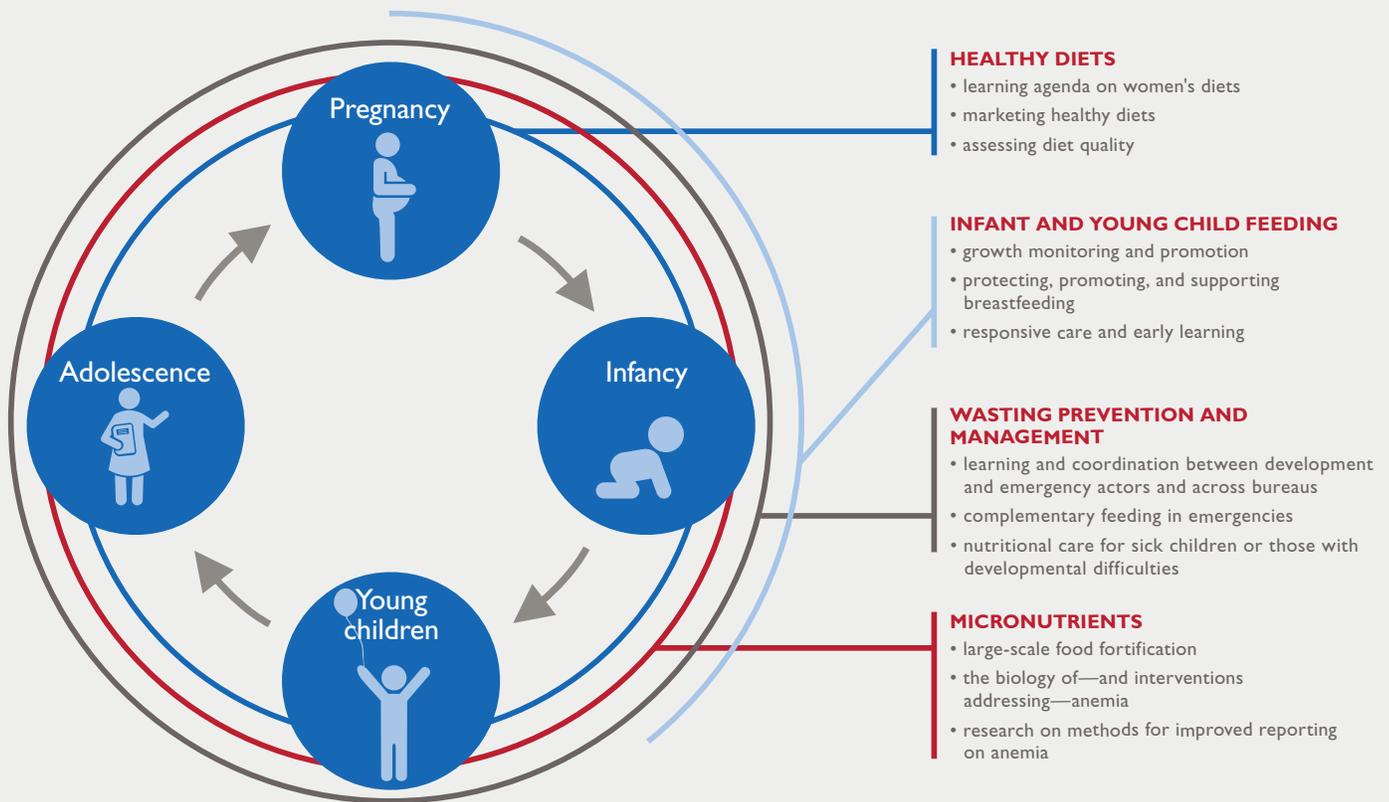
USAID Advancing Nutrition is building evidence and improving implementation for **infant and young child feeding** initiatives through technical assistance

and guidance to implementing partners, USAID, and the global nutrition community. We focused research activities on learning how nutrition programs—such as those involving growth monitoring and promotion and integrated community case management—operate at the country level to promote young child feeding.

**KEY ACCOMPLISHMENTS**

- **The Responsive Care and Early Learning Addendum** includes a planning, adaptation, and implementation guide; facilitator’s guide; counseling cards, counselor’s resource packet, and training aid for use by infant and young child feeding programmers.
- **The Enabling Better Complementary Feeding: Guidance and Workbook** highlights challenges and examples of quality social and behavior change for improving complementary feeding for use by nutrition and SBC programmers and practitioners.

**OUR WORK ACROSS CRITICAL STAGES IN THE NUTRITION LIFE CYCLE**



- Our **breastfeeding-related research** identified ways to **protect, promote, and support** breastfeeding, including strengthening commitments to the nine national Baby-Friendly Hospital Initiative responsibilities to ensure that mothers and newborns receive appropriate and timely care at all health facilities.

## HEALTHY DIETS

Supporting healthy diets is the foundation of both our research—such as our work to understand and measure consumer demand for safe, nutritious foods—and our technical/program guidance—like our brief on marketing healthy diets. With more than 20 activities contributing to healthy diets across the USAID Advancing Nutrition year 3 portfolio, we are improving the ways USAID Missions and implementing partners design, implement, and measure interventions that contribute to healthy diets.

This work has global implications, such as the protocol completed in PY3 that will support a study comparing the minimum dietary diversity indicator in children ages 6 to 23 months with a qualitative observation of food intake in USAID’s Feed the Future zones of influence in Cambodia and Zambia. Other measurement efficiencies may also derive from the country-specific diet quality questionnaire validated for monitoring population-level diet quality through existing and emerging diet quality indicators.

### KEY ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- **Methods, Tools, and Metrics for Evaluating Market Food Environments in Low- and Middle-Income Countries** compiles tools to assist implementing partners and programmers in monitoring and evaluating the range of factors that influence food access and food choices.
- **Social and Behavior Change Resources for Women’s Healthy Diets** explores gaps in existing SBC resources and makes recommendations for future research and resource development.



## KNOWLEDGE SHARING

In PY3, USAID Advancing Nutrition grew its substantial body of work and shared more broadly new evidence, tools, better practices, and guidance developed in line with USAID’s priorities and interests. The two

- **The Modality Decision Tool Nutrition Addendum** aids implementing partners in applying a nutrition lens to the selection of appropriate food assistance modalities (cash, vouchers, or in-kind) for the nutritionally vulnerable.



## WASTING PREVENTION & MANAGEMENT

Our work on **wasting** has engaged participants from various USAID offices and Missions and supports USAID’s internal Wasting Technical Working Group. Consultations aim to promote the roll out and use of the Global Action Plan for prevention, early detection, and treatment of child wasting in collaboration with UNICEF, the World Health Organization, and other global stakeholders. Other USAID Advancing Nutrition activities contribute to these efforts through a range of timely, targeted interventions. We are shining a light on women’s diets to reduce low birth weights, developing guidance for complementary feeding in emergencies and testing tools to improve nutrition care for sick children and those with developmental disabilities.

### KEY ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- **Facilitated discussions** across USAID operating units to define and share USAID’s comparative advantage in wasting management across the continuum of care in development and humanitarian contexts.
- **Facilitated development of health zone-level coordination and collaboration action plans for management of wasting** in two provinces (Kasai Oriental and Sud Kivu) of the Democratic Republic of Congo and summarized learning to support continued improvements in coordination and collaboration between development and emergency actors.
- The two-country case study on **how to strengthen and harmonize key elements of growth monitoring and promotion (GMP)** informs wasting management, as improved and expanded use of GMP will help to identify and ensure early treatment.

Multi-Sectoral Nutrition Global Learning and Evidence Exchanges (GLEEs) for instance, brought USAID staff and global experts together from 33 countries and 5 regions to share and learn about approaches at the forefront of

## GLOBAL LEARNING AND EVIDENCE EXCHANGE BY THE NUMBERS



multi-sectoral nutrition programming. Coordinated by the project, the GLEEs were successful in highlighting country-based successes, facilitating a review of evidence, and helping attendees share successes and challenges, as well as leading them to discuss opportunities for collaboration between individuals and among USAID Missions.

The project's robust knowledge management efforts led to the publication of a variety of tools and guid-

ance documents and the curation and sharing of key evidence and resources published by others through our bi-monthly **Multi-Sectoral Nutrition Resource Review**. We also finalized eight manuscripts for publication on topics ranging from modeling micronutrient programming and engaging family members in nutrition interventions to shifting social norms to promote positive behaviors for nutrition.

### THE YEAR TO COME

In PY4, USAID Advancing Nutrition will strengthen dissemination of the growing library of resources developed by the project and other USAID partners. We will also enhance communications and storytelling about our learning and achievements at the technical team level as well as around emergent technical thematic

areas. The project's core and country teams will intensify their collaboration and cross-pollination, together identifying key lessons, innovations, and experiences that will advance USAID's important work to reduce malnutrition in all its forms.



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USAID Advancing Nutrition is the Agency's flagship multi-sectoral nutrition project, addressing the root causes of malnutrition to save lives and enhance long-term health and development.

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