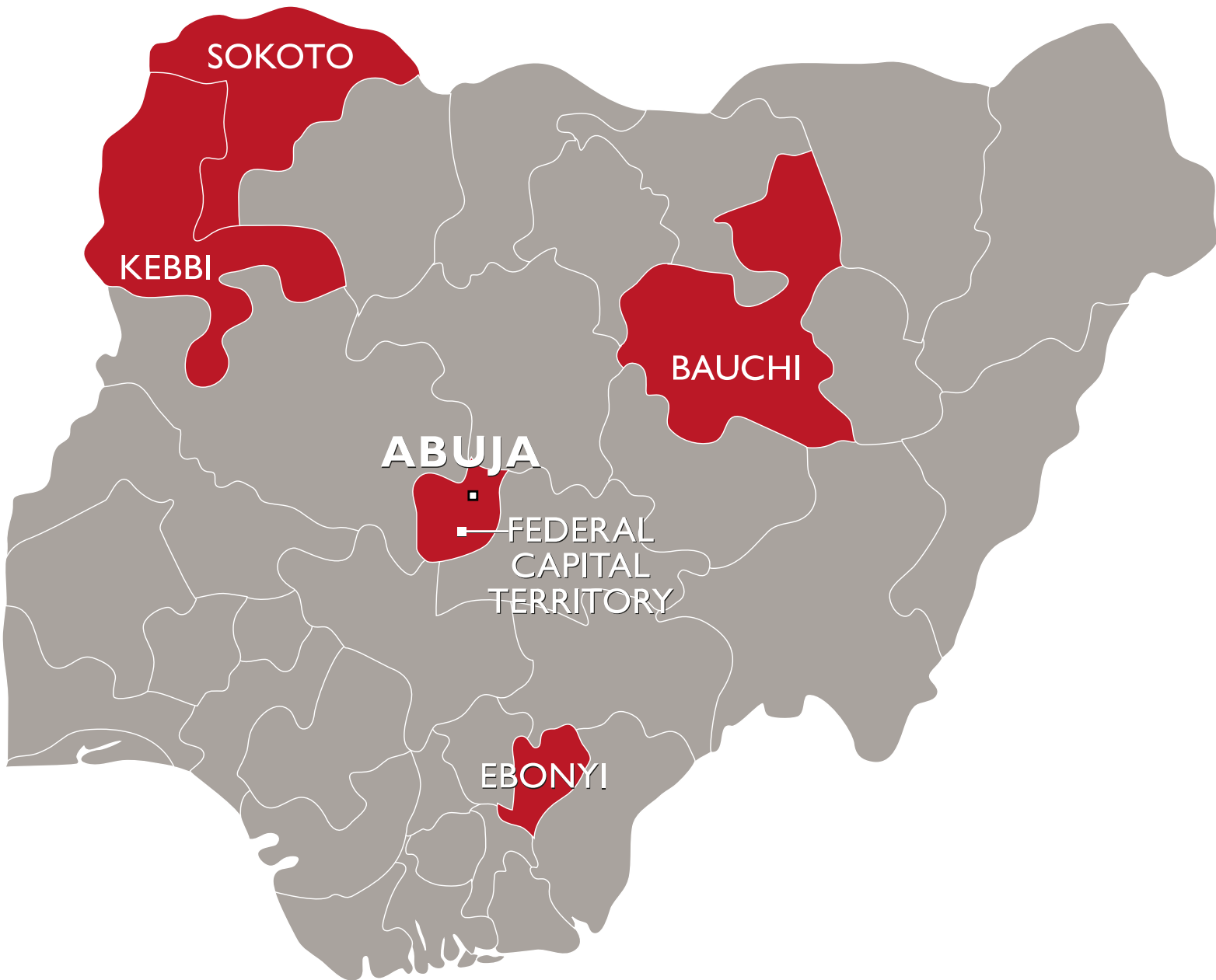




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USAID Advancing Nutrition Nigeria Final Report

Fiscal Years 2021–2023



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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Finally, we thank the USAID Advancing Nutrition Country Support teams and all the project's staff members in Nigeria for their worthy contributions to the project that produced the results and successes we proudly share in this report.

Acronyms

CBO	community-based organization
CS-SUNN	Civil Society Scaling Up Nutrition in Nigeria
CSO	civil society organization
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States
EMMP	Environmental Mitigation and Monitoring Plan
FCT	Federal Capital Territory
FMOH	Federal Ministry of Health
FY	fiscal year
GAP	Good Agricultural Practices
GON	Government of Nigeria
HR	human resource
ICRISAT	International Crops Research Institute for the Semi-Arid Tropics
IMAM	integrated management of acute malnutrition
IP	implementing partner
IPC	inpatient care
LGA	local government area
LGCFN	local government committee on food and nutrition
LSFF	large-scale food fortification
M&E	monitoring and evaluation
MAM	moderate acute malnutrition
MDA	ministries, departments, and agencies
MIYCN	maternal, infant, and young child nutrition
MNCH	Maternal, Newborn, and Child Health
NCFN	National Committee on Food and Nutrition
NCN	National Council on Nutrition
NFCMS	National Food Consumption and Micronutrient Survey
NGO	nongovernmental organization
NMPFAN	National Multi-Sectoral Plan of Action for Food and Nutrition 2021–2025
OCA	Organizational Capacity Assessment
OCAT	Organizational Capacity Assessment Tool
OFSP	orange-fleshed sweet potato
OTP	outpatient therapeutic program
PHC	primary health care

Q	quarter
RUF	ready-to-use food
RUTF	ready-to-use therapeutic food
SAM	severe acute malnutrition
SBC	social and behavior change
SCFN	State Committee on Food and Nutrition
ToT	training of trainers
WHO	World Health Organization

Executive Summary

Background and Objectives

USAID Advancing Nutrition provided technical assistance to the Government of Nigeria (GON) and its implementing partners (IPs) at the national level and in Bauchi, Kebbi, Sokoto, and Ebonyi states, as well as the Federal Capital Territory (FCT) through the implementation of activities under three objectives:

Strengthen multi-sectoral linkages and coordination through technical assistance to the GON, the USAID Mission in Nigeria, and IPs.

Support the GON in strengthening wasting prevention and treatment services.

Generate evidence and test innovative approaches to improve nutrition programming and inform future designs.

At the national level, we supported the GON, particularly the National Council on Nutrition (NCN); Federal Ministry of Health; Federal Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development; Federal Ministry of Education; Federal Ministry of Finance, Budget and National Planning; and other ministries, departments, and agencies (MDA) that are members of the National Committee on Food and Nutrition (NCFN) in strengthening systems for improved multi-sectoral coordination in an effort to leverage activities across the public and private sectors for improved nutrition outcomes. At the state level, we supported similar coordination efforts in Bauchi, Kebbi, Sokoto, and Ebonyi states and FCT by strengthening the capacity of the State Committees on Food and Nutrition (SCFNs) and their members. In addition, we provided assistance to the Civil Society Scaling Up Nutrition in Nigeria (CS-SUNN), the Nutrition Society of Nigeria (NSN), and collaborated with private sector entities such as Premier Seed Nig Ltd, Lela Agro Allied, and various agro-input suppliers in Bauchi, Kebbi, and Sokoto States. In all these, our aim was to improve nutrition programming and improve communities' access to high-quality seeds and other essential production inputs.

Major Accomplishments

In Nigeria, the journey toward improved nutrition is a tale of strategic collaboration, evidence-based learning and action, and multi-sectoral partnership. USAID Advancing Nutrition, at the forefront of this narrative, continued to shape and address the nation's food and nutrition priorities through a multi-sectoral approach that emphasizes policy integration, community engagement, capacity building, and data-driven decision-making.

Objective 1: Strengthened multi-sectoral linkages and coordination through technical assistance to the Government of Nigeria, the USAID Mission, and implementing partners

USAID Advancing Nutrition took steps to support the SCFNs of Sokoto, FCT, Ebonyi and Bauchi to adapt the National Nutrition Policy and National Multi-Sectoral Plans of Action and have their own state policies and nutrition action plans. To strengthen coordination of the SCFNs, USAID Advancing Nutrition co-developed the SCFN Orientation Package with the Nigeria Governors' Forum, Office of the Vice President delivery Unit, National Committee for Food and Nutrition and other stakeholders, which consists of a facilitator's guide, participant's manual, and slide deck and serves as a comprehensive guide for training, development, and succession planning for SCFNs. Further, to prioritize capacity-strengthening opportunities with the target SCFNs, we implemented an Organizational Capacity Assessment Tool (OCAT) for SCFNs, which resulted in the understanding of structural, programmatic, administrative, and fiduciary capacity gaps. These gaps were prioritized by each state committee for Food and Nutrition and, with the support of consultants embedded by the project into the SCFN. Some of the gaps identified and addressed include the establishment of Local Government Committees

for Food and Nutrition (LGCFNs) the development of orientation manual for new members, trained SCFN members on Gender and Inclusion and establishment of State Secretariats

Community and institutional empowerment was a central part of AN strategy to drive change at the municipal level. To achieve this, we supported the establishment of 28 local government committees on food and nutrition (LGCFNs) across supported states. These committees, under the guidance of the SCFNs, stand as powerful catalysts for change, effectively marrying community needs with planned state activities and policies. Concurrently, through strategic advocacy and communication, we directed efforts at fostering the formation of nutrition departments within relevant MDAs to increase the integration of nutrition across multi-



Breakout session of Sokoto SCFN members during the OCAT assessment.
Photo Credit: Israel Odiba/Helen Keller Intl

sectoral activities in the states. For example, in Ebonyi State, nine MDAs were mandated to establish nutrition departments with budget lines. A key priority under Objective 1 was improving informed decision-making. In collaboration with the State Primary Healthcare Development Agency, we trained 148 (120M, 28F) nutrition focal persons and local government area monitoring and evaluation (M&E) officers on data management, data entry in DHIS2, and how to review and analyze state nutrition data. At the national level, we developed a national Food Systems Dashboard (disaggregated by states) a comprehensive data repository that equips stakeholders with data on nutrition, food systems, and target nutrition behaviors. In collaboration with the NCN, NCFN, and Nigerian Governors' Forum, we developed a National Nutrition Scorecard that provides policymakers with data-driven insights for effective resource allocation. The project facilitated a workshop in collaboration with the State Committee on Food and Nutrition (SCFN) across Bauchi, Ebonyi, Kebbi, Sokoto, and the FCT. This workshop served as a platform to collectively prioritize activities, identify key advocacy areas, and engage with pertinent state stakeholders to enhance nutrition indicators in each respective state. The culmination of the workshop saw each state delineating key priority areas, shaping the trajectory of their advocacy efforts for the upcoming year, 2024.

Objective 2: Supported the Government of Nigeria to strengthen prevention and treatment of wasting

USAID Advancing Nutrition implemented a range of activities that support wasting prevention and treatment in the target states and at a national level. First, the project implemented a series of consultations with key state- and national-level stakeholders on the priority challenges and opportunities

to reduce wasting in Nigeria and achieve the Nigeria Global Action Plan on Child Wasting country roadmap outcomes and sustainable development goals. Out of these efforts, the project facilitated the creation of an advocacy framework that food and nutrition stakeholders can use to prioritize and plan food and nutrition advocacy efforts. Specifically, this framework will help local stakeholders who belong to the ready-to-use food coalition group to identify the problem and define goals, objectives, and activities to be carried out at national and state levels to create an enabling environment to increase the local production of ready-to-use therapeutic food (RUTF).



RUTF consultation workshop with government stakeholders, donor agencies, and private sector manufacturers. Photo Credit Amara Ogwuma/Helen Keller Intl

To improve health service delivery for the prevention and treatment of wasting, the project enhanced the capacity of health workers through training on Nigeria's newly refreshed integrated management of acute malnutrition (IMAM) guidelines, as well as through targeted training during Maternal, Newborn, and Child Health weeks. To promote a safe, nutritious food system, the project implemented several activities to promote agricultural productivity and generate consumer demand for safe, nutritious foods. The project improved the expertise of 513 agricultural extension workers and lead farmers on Good Agricultural Practices (GAP) and aflatoxin mitigation, covering all aspects of the agricultural value chain. One prominent outcome of the capacity building is the significant increase in agricultural outputs as reported by some farmers. For example, Murna Zaman, a female farmer and food processor Bauchi State, reported an increase from 40 bags to 60 bags of groundnut as the result of the training and adoption of the



Cross section of GAP training. Photo Credit: Amara Ogwuma/USAID Advancing Nutrition

knowledge gained. With this capacity development, the project assisted in developing a nutrition workforce geared towards empowering local communities to adopt optimal production practices for nutritious and safe foods and also address the nutritional requirements of households. Through strategic stakeholders meetings, we facilitated the identification and prioritization of key nutrition-sensitive agriculture and food systems activities in each state. If undertaken, activities could increase the availability of safe, nutritious foods in the states.

Objective 3: Generated evidence and test innovative approaches to improve nutrition programming

Undertaking various studies, including formative research on adolescent nutrition, costing and scale-up research

on Tom Brown and Porridge Mums for treating moderate acute malnutrition (MAM), a counter-referral mapping exercise, illuminated pathways for informed nutrition programming in the future. Empowering local communities is a cornerstone of our work. Through targeted training and mentoring initiatives for 80 civil society organizations (CSOs), we enhanced their capacity in grant writing and nutrition programming. From the training, three organizations in Bauchi State have secured funding opportunities in Livelihood and Health Workforce Management grants, while others have undertaken strategic changes in their approach toward nutrition programming, M&E, and governance.

Key Evidence and Learning

As noted under Objective 3, the project undertook several research activities and produced learning on local alternatives to treat MAM, key programming considerations for reaching adolescents with nutrition programming, factors affecting the consumption of target nutrient-rich foods, and gaps and opportunities in the counter-referral system in the target states.

Challenges

The project encountered several challenges that impeded our ability to implement planned workplan activities. Specifically, the project found that receiving buy-in and attention from the government for multi-sectoral nutrition issues was difficult at times. This was further compounded by changes in leadership around the elections. Additionally, identified local community-based organizations and CSOs had insufficient capacity to undertake grant activities, which resulted in the cancellation of our grants under contract activities planned for FY23.

The Way Forward

We must continue to address several critical activities to carry the momentum of USAID Advancing Nutrition forward. First, enhanced coordination and capacity at the national, state, and local government levels is required to fully implement the National Policy on Food and Nutrition in Nigeria and the National Multi-Sectoral Plan of Action for Food and Nutrition 2021–2025. Second, additional attention is required to build the capacity of health workers in maternal, infant, and young child nutrition and IMAM for improved prevention and treatment of malnutrition, particularly wasting. Additional community-level interventions are required to promote the adoption of nutrition-specific and nutrition-sensitive behaviors and reinforce counseling and messaging received from health workers. To promote an improved food system that supplies safe nutritious foods, additional attention is required to support farmers to produce nutritious foods, largely by addressing access to inputs and resources, markets, information, and capacity.

Overview

1. Project duration

Two years

2. Starting date

August 2021

3. Geographic focus

- National
- Bauchi
- Ebonyi
- Kebbi
- FCT
- Sokoto

4. Project objectives

USAID Advancing Nutrition provided technical assistance to the Government of Nigeria (GON) and its implementing partners (IPs) at the national level and in Bauchi, Kebbi, Sokoto, and Ebonyi states, as well as the Federal Capital Territory (FCT), through the implementation of activities under three objectives:

1. Strengthen multi-sectoral linkages and coordination through technical assistance to the GON, the USAID Mission in Nigeria, and IPs.
2. Support the GON in strengthening wasting prevention and treatment services.
3. Generate evidence and test innovative approaches to improve nutrition programming and inform future designs.

At the national level, we supported the GON, particularly the National Council on Nutrition (NCN); Federal Ministry of Health (FMOH); Federal Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development; Federal Ministry of Education; Federal Ministry of Finance, Budget and National Planning; and other ministries, departments, and agencies (MDA) that are members of the National Committee on Food and Nutrition (NCFN) in strengthening systems for improved multi-sectoral coordination in an effort to leverage activities across the public and private sectors for improved nutrition outcomes. At the state level, we supported similar coordination efforts in Bauchi, Kebbi, Ebonyi, FCT, and Sokoto states by strengthening the capacity of the State Committees on Food and Nutrition (SCFNs) and their members.

Background

Country Context

Nigeria, Africa's most populous nation, faces both the opportunity and challenge of a youthful population, with 43 percent under 14 years old and 23 percent between 10 and 19 years old (NBS 2018). Recurrent food insecurity plagues Nigeria, with states like Bauchi, Kebbi, Ebonyi, and FCT categorized as Phase 2 (stressed) and parts of Sokoto in Phase 3 (crisis) due to ongoing conflict, market restrictions, and high food prices (FEWS NET 2021). Nutrition indicators in these states are consistently worse than the national average, revealing the pressing need for targeted interventions (Ministry of Budget and Planning 2016).

Bauchi boasts favorable agricultural conditions, focusing on staples and new initiatives like orange-fleshed sweet potatoes (OFSPs). Kebbi's vast cultivable land is a hub for rice and crop production. Sokoto's two agro ecological zones present diverse agricultural potential, with emphasis on livestock and fisheries. Ebonyi emphasizes staple food crops like rice, maize, and yam, promoting agriculture for revenue generation.

Nigeria's commitment to reducing poverty and improving health is evident through initiatives like the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme Compact, Scaling Up Nutrition Movement, and Economic Community of West African States Zero Hunger Initiative. A 2021 revised National Policy on Food and Nutrition underlines multi-sectoral action to combat malnutrition. National and state councils and committees drive coordination, though challenges exist at lower levels. The National Multi-Sectoral Plan of Action for Food and Nutrition 2021–2025 (NMPFAN) sets targets for malnutrition reduction. Efforts are required to support the GON in reducing poverty and combating malnutrition.

Project Goal and Objectives

1. Strengthen multi-sectoral linkages and coordination through technical assistance to the GON, the USAID Mission in Nigeria, and IPs.
2. Support the GON in strengthening wasting prevention and treatment services.
3. Generate evidence and test innovative approaches to improve nutrition programming and inform future designs.

The project aligns with the following USAID Mission and GON strategies:

- USAID/Nigeria Country Development Cooperation Strategy Development Objectives, specifically, Development Objective 1: Broadened and Inclusive Economic Growth; Development Objective 2: A Healthier, Better Educated Population; and the Special Objective: Greater stability and early recovery advanced in selected states
- USAID/Nigeria Multi-Sectoral Nutrition Strategy 2020–2025
- GON strategies, including the NMPFAN and the 2016 National Food and Nutrition Policy.

Accomplishments

Objective I: Strengthen multi-sectoral linkages and coordination through technical assistance to the Government of Nigeria, the USAID Mission, and implementing partners.



SUPPORTED IMPROVED GOVERNANCE AND COORDINATION FOR MULTI-SECTORAL NUTRITION

- Developed a **training module for state committees for food and nutrition (SCFNs)** to increase their capacity
- Supported the **establishment of nutrition departments** with budget lines in Ebonyi
- Facilitated the **activation of 19 local government committees for food and nutrition** across supported states
- Supported the **development of state-level policies on food and nutrition and the development of state-level plans of action for food and nutrition**
- Supported **quarterly review meetings of SCFNs** to evaluate their progress on key food and nutrition issues

Strengthening the NCFN and national-level ministries to carry out multi-sectoral nutrition activities

At a national level, USAID Advancing Nutrition supported the NCFN and national-level ministries to prioritize nutrition interventions, develop critical frameworks, and develop capacity-strengthening tools for the SCFNs. As part of its holistic approach to advocacy, the project developed the National Nutrition Advocacy Communication toolkit in collaboration with the World Bank. This toolkit includes advocacy briefs that aim to raise awareness about pressing nutrition concerns, galvanize stakeholders into action, and target diverse audiences, including influential figures such as political officeholders. It was observed that members of the SCFN do not fully understand what their roles are in the committee, hence the development of the SCFN Orientation Package to allow for members to have a uniform understanding of what is expected of their MDA in SCFN. This orientation package was piloted in two states (Ebonyi and Kebbi) and the FCT. The feedback received from the SCFN and LGCN members during the pilot revealed that the orientation package has helped them to understand the nutrition situation of their state and also highlights what their roles as representatives of their Ministries, Departments, and Agencies are and it will help them deliver on those roles and responsibility. The broader goal being for the NCFN to ratify the orientation package and adopt it as an administrative document for all SCFNs in the country and scaled-up to other states for use.. In collaboration with the NCN and the Governors' Forum, the National Nutrition Scorecard was developed as an advocacy tool for the state governors to better focus on nutrition and make funds available to implement nutrition activities in the state.

Strengthening coordination of multi-sectoral nutrition planning, programming, and evaluation in target states

To better understand how best to strengthen the multi-sectoral coordination of nutrition programming in each state, a baseline Organizational Capacity Assessment (OCA) was conducted to identify areas of weakness that need to be strengthened to allow the SCFN to function as expected. Capacity-strengthening plans were developed after the assessment based on the gaps identified and to help in strengthening the capacity of the SCFNs. Consultants with good understanding of nutrition programming and organizational capacity-strengthening were embedded with the SCFN to address these identified gaps (no written policy, procedures, and systems in place to address culture and gender issues; no costed monitoring and evaluation plan and lacks professional qualifications and competencies both

collectively and individually to effectively and efficiently implement Monitoring and Evaluation activities; among others) working with the capacity-strengthening plan. Upon completion of the capacity-strengthening plan developed by each state, another OCA was conducted in August 2023 to assess the strength of the SCFNs. OCA scores in the compiled thematic areas increased overall were as follows: Bauchi State improved from 48% to 59%, Kebbi State improved from 46% to 69%, and Sokoto State improved from 40% to 52%.

OCA Performance by thematic areas

Thematic Area	Bauchi State		Kebbi State		Sokoto State	
	1st OCA	2nd OCA	1st OCA	2nd OCA	1st OCA	2nd OCA
Institution & Context	58%	59%	58%	83%	34%	34%
Structure & Function	59%	83%	71%	88%	64%	64%
Gender, Equality, Social Inclusion	57%	75%	52%	67%	47%	77%
Finance & Operations	41%	50%	40%	59%	36%	65%
Monitoring, Evaluation & Learning	39%	58%	42%	58%	41%	49%
State & LGA Offices	37%	54%	15%	57%	20%	20%
	48%	59%	46%	69%	40%	52%

Through its technical assistance and advocacy efforts, USAID Advancing Nutrition supported SCFNs in developing state-specific policies and action plans, ensuring contextual relevance and responsiveness to nutrition challenges. All five states (Bauchi, Ebonyi, Kebbi, Sokoto and the FCT) have developed their state-specific policies. This policy has become a guiding document for their specific state in addressing the nutritional situation of the state. The project's commitment to fostering multi-sectoral collaboration is evident through its steadfast support for the establishment and activation of local government committees on food and nutrition (LGCFNs) in diverse states. Serving as vital conduits for grassroots-level coordination of nutrition activities, these committees play a crucial role in connecting various stakeholders. Moreover, the project's active involvement in adapting the National Policy on Nutrition and the NMPFAN at the state level underscores its dedication to aligning state strategies with overarching national policies.

Strengthening nutrition data systems for improved multi-sectoral decision-making and monitoring

Through various stakeholder collaborations, and technical assistance, the project strategically facilitated a range of workshops, comprehensive reviews of national nutrition policy documents; such as national policy on nutrition, MICYN policy and Multisectoral nutrition plan of action, and targeted data management training. These initiatives aimed to empower members of the SCFNs and local nutrition and food systems actors, like local health workers. Notably, the implementation of training of trainers (ToT) programs on aflatoxin prevention and mitigation in staple crops, data management, service delivery, and documentation for an effective and efficient Maternal, Newborn, and Child Health (MNCH) week, with pretesting exercises and validation workshops, played a pivotal role in enhancing health care services, streamlining data management practices, and optimizing program efficiency. To ensure timely, accurate, and reliable data for critical and sound decision-making at the policy, planning, and implementation levels, the project trained 274 (males 212, females 62) nutrition focal persons and local government area (LGA) monitoring and evaluation (M&E) officers on data quality and management and DHIS2 backlog reporting. In Kebbi State, six months backlog data entry was completed after the training, making nutrition data available in the DHIS2 for decision-making. Recognizing the pivotal role of robust food systems and nutrition data systems for informed decision-making, the project engaged in collaborative efforts with key stakeholders, including the National Bureau of Statistics, to launch the [Subnational Food Systems Dashboard](#)—a sophisticated tool designed to visually represent food systems and nutrition data at the state level.

The project facilitated a workshop in collaboration with the State Committee on Food and Nutrition (SCFN) across Bauchi, Ebonyi, Kebbi, Sokoto, and the FCT. These workshops served as a platform to collectively prioritize activities, identify key advocacy areas, and engage with pertinent state stakeholders to enhance nutrition indicators in each respective state. The culmination of the workshop saw each state delineating key priority areas, shaping the trajectory of their advocacy efforts for the upcoming year, 2024.

The FCT Committee on Food and Nutrition identified key advocacy areas, these include following up with the FCT Minister of State to sign the Food and Nutrition Policy and Multisectoral Plan of Action. Push for the establishment of nutrition departments and dedicated budget lines for nutrition implementation. Additionally, the committee aims to advocate for the FCT Minister to participate in the UNICEF matching fund for nutrition interventions.

In Bauchi, Kebbi, and Sokoto states, the focus of advocacy will be on establishing nutrition departments, creating dedicated budget lines, and incorporating other livelihood interventions in support of nutrition. These states will continue to advocate for the utilization of the RUFT seed stock delivered under the Ukraine funding and seek involvement in the UNICEF matching fund for nutrition interventions. For Ebonyi state, the committee's advocacy efforts will concentrate on ensuring the timely release of funds for the nutrition departments and increasing awareness regarding the procurement and management of nutrition commodities. These targeted advocacy efforts reflect a comprehensive approach to advancing nutrition-related initiatives in each of the respective states.

Objective 2: Support the Government of Nigeria to strengthen



IMPROVED CAPACITY OF HEALTH WORKERS TO PREVENT AND TREAT WASTING

- Trained **2,140 (823 Males, 1317 Females)** health care and community workers on service delivery for maternal and child health week
- Trained **109 (53 Males, 56 Females)** health care workers on Integrated Management of Acute Malnutrition
- Trained 58 (26 Males, 32 Females) Doctors and Nurses on In-Patient Care for Integrated Management of Acute Malnutrition
- Trained **211 (161 Males, 50 Females)** local government area (LGA) monitoring and evaluation (M&E) officers, nutrition focal persons and health record officers on nutrition data management and use
- Supported the development of the **National Maternal, Infant, and Young Child Nutrition Training Manual**



FACILITATED A MORE NUTRITIOUS, PRODUCTIVE, AND SAFE FOOD SUPPLY

- Trained **470 (351 Males, 119 Females)** extension agents and lead farmers on aflatoxin prevention and mitigation in staple crops. The extension agents further stepped down this training to 24,663 ((19,285 Males and 5,376 Females)) small holder farmers
- Trained **258 (169 Males, 89 Females)** agriculture actors on good agricultural practices for target nutritious foods to increase productivity
- Facilitated linkages between **12 private sector input suppliers and 47 extension agents or lead farmers** for critical inputs across three states (Bauchi, Kebbi & Sokoto)

Strengthen wasting prevention approaches

The project was dedicated to improving the capabilities of health care workers through comprehensive training. This training encompassed essential aspects like mid-upper arm circumference screening and procedures for the MNCH week. In Sokoto and Kebbi, more than 2,000 health care workers were equipped with enhanced skills, enabling them to detect and report malnutrition at an early stage. The successful completion of the Maternal, Infant, and Young Child Nutrition (MIYCN) Training Manual validated the project's commitment to enhancing training resources for health care professionals. Additionally, the project carried out a counter-referral mapping study to gather information regarding the risk of relapse into severe acute malnutrition (SAM) for children recently discharged as cured from outpatient therapeutic program (OTP) centers, and the availability and utilization of complementary services and support systems that are at their disposal within the community to reduce the risk of relapse and promote sustained recovery. The study identified an existing gap in the referral system between OTP centers and nutrition-sensitive facilities (WASH, social protection, food security and livelihood). It also confirmed that a continuous care system for children discharged from SAM treatment as cured is essential for sustained recovery and to minimize the burden of SAM treatment on the health system. Findings from this study will provide local decision-makers with evidence-based information to strengthen referral systems for the continuum of care. Furthermore, findings will inform the global and national technical nutrition networks on the need to include post-treatment services for recovered SAM children. The addition of this phase into the treatment program with an effective referral system will greatly improve nutrition programming, data and results.

Strengthen wasting treatment capacities and approaches

In September 2022, USAID Advancing Nutrition supported the FMOH in launching and dissemination of the national guidelines for integrated management of acute malnutrition (IMAM). These guidelines were broadened to include management procedures for moderate wasting and wasting in children facing special circumstances, such as cases of HIV infection, disabilities (orofacial cleft, cerebral palsy, etc.), emergency situations, and pandemics, and the integration of these services at both facility and community levels. In light of this, USAID Advancing Nutrition supported the government in conducting training for trainers on IMAM in Bauchi, Kebbi, Sokoto, and Ebonyi states and the FCT. This initiative established a pool of master trainers at the primary health care (PHC) level for easy step-down at the LGA level. To further promote the integration of nutrition services across all health facilities, in collaboration with the World Health Organization (WHO) and FMOH, we conducted the IMAM inpatient care (IPC) training for medical personnel working in secondary or tertiary health facilities in Bauchi and Ebonyi states and the FCT. This will increase access to timely treatment for children with severe wasting with medical complications, with specific focus on areas where few or no stabilization centers are supported by United Nations Children's Fund or Médecins Sans Frontières for IPC. USAID Advancing Nutrition provided logistical and financial support to facilitate the successful implementation of these training sessions, both for IMAM IPC and OTP. The training itself was conducted by a team of master trainers from the FMOH and the WHO.

In 2022 and 2023, USAID Advancing Nutrition undertook several activities to understand the challenges and opportunities for increasing the production of cost-effective nutrition commodities used for the treatment of acute malnutrition. This included interviews and visits with private sector producers or ready-to-use foods (RUFs), and state- and national-level consultations with key public, private, and civil society stakeholders, in collaboration with UNICEF, and key government MDAs such as FMOH, FMARD, and FMITI.

These consultations resulted in the establishment of the RUF Coalition group, a formal platform for dialogue between the private sector producers of ready-to-use nutrition commodities (RUTF, RUSF, SQ-LNS, MNP) and the government ministries and regulatory agencies to regularly meet and take forward actions needed to create an improved enabling environment for the local production of RUTF in Nigeria. The project facilitated the group's first five meetings, which led to the identification of the need to involve agricultural research institutes in order to enhance local access to essential RUF ingredients, particularly peanuts and dry skimmed milk, which make up 60% of RUTF components. USAID Advancing Nutrition in collaboration with the FMARD organized a one-day meeting involving key nutrition stakeholders, agricultural research institutes, RUTF manufacturers, and dairy companies to coordinate resources and align efforts to improve access to peanuts and explore the potential of locally produced dry skimmed milk, thereby reducing the cost of producing RUFs in Nigeria. The meeting revealed that Nigeria has the potential to produce dry-skimmed milk with ample support to improve livestock farming in the country. The animal husbandry department made a commitment to collaborate more closely with the National Animal Production Research Institute (NAPRI) and other international and national dairy companies to improve actions and explore the potential of producing dry skimmed milk by the year 2025. The government, private partners, and the Agricultural Research Institute (IAR) committed to collaborate and align their ongoing efforts to increase the production of quality peanuts to meet 80% of demand by the year 2025. The RUF coalition group will continue to hold meetings to monitor and evaluate these commitments and support the actualization of results.

To generate evidence-based data to aid decision-making to improve wasting management in areas that are currently underserved by TSFPs, the project conducted a costing study and a scale-up assessment focused on the Tom Brown and Porridge Mum approaches. The Tom Brown supplementary food powder is a blend of nutritious locally available ingredients such as soya beans, groundnuts, millet and sorghum and is typically prepared as porridge. It is believed that the origin of the name is the instruction

during preparation to roast soya beans and groundnuts to “turn brown.” Tom Brown supplementary feeding program’s primary purpose is to help children U5 with MAM recuperate and to prevent their deterioration to SAM through (1) screening and referral, (2) eight weeks of supplemental feeding, (3) infant and young child feeding (IYCF) counselling and (4) weekly MUAC monitoring. The Porridge Mum approach is comprised of two main technical elements: (1) the provision of one complementary nutritious meal daily, and (2) nutritional lessons that are provided by Action Against Hunger to each group on a monthly basis. The Porridge Mums’ approach was developed specifically to address low dietary diversity among children under 5 years of age as a key contributor to existing undernutrition levels in IDP and host communities.

The objective of the costing study was to document the costs for the Tom Brown and Porridge Mums approaches, as implemented by the selected IPs in North-East Nigeria. The study estimates the cost efficiency of each approach by calculating the cost per child (Tom Brown) and cost per beneficiary (Porridge Mums) enrolled. Having data on the costs of these approaches can assist local implementers and stakeholders with program planning and provide valuable information to assess the scalability and replicability of these approaches in Nigeria. Our analysis found that the cost of Tom Brown ranged from \$154 to \$493 per child, and the cost of Porridge Mums was \$422 per beneficiary (PLW and children, as the program provides benefits to both beyond moderate wasting management). However, for one Tom Brown implementing partner, which had the lowest cost per child) we were unable to assess all of the shared implementation costs (e.g. office space, shared management staff costs) so the cost of the program may actually be higher. As these programs are scaled and as up-front investments in start-up costs (e.g. staff capacity strengthening) depreciate, the cost per child/beneficiary has the potential to decrease over time. This cost-efficiency analysis highlighted several cost-related factors to consider, with technical considerations, when determining which approach, if any, is appropriate for the context.

The scale up assessment examined the socio-economic considerations for the scale-up of the Tom Brown and Porridge Mum approaches in Bauchi, Sokoto, Kebbi, and Ebonyi states and the FCT. According to stakeholders interviewed as part of the assessment, these approaches are culturally appropriate and pushback from communities is not anticipated. This is because women already routinely gather in groups to take part in various activities and because the foods used are local they should be readily accepted. The approaches are relevant to the states, considering all states have a moderate to very high level of wasting prevalence and, according to stakeholders, three of the states (Bauchi, Ebonyi, and Sokoto) do not currently have services available to manage moderately wasted children. However, Kebbi and Ebonyi states currently do not have active cash/voucher electronic transfer programs, which are a critical component of Porridge Mum and an option for Tom Brown in more food-secure areas. This aspect will require further assessment before scale-up proceeds. Lastly, a national-level conversation about the formal adoption of these approaches as options to manage moderate wasting is needed to help facilitate an orderly scale-up process.

Strengthening state-level food systems to ensure access to safe, diverse and nutritious foods and help prevent wasting

USAID Advancing Nutrition implemented several activities to strengthen local food systems to better provide safe, nutritious foods that consumers desire. The project organized stakeholder forums that spanned multiple states, engaging an impressive total of 171 participants to identify opportunities and challenges in the food supply chain to inform state-level interventions. Some of the outcomes of the stakeholder consultation forum include co-identification of food systems interventions such as capacity building on aflatoxin mitigation, good agricultural practices and food safety; these activities played a pivotal role in shaping the food systems activities for FY2023. These activities encompassed various elements, such as enhancing the capabilities of agricultural extension workers and lead farmers in

promoting good agricultural practices and aflatoxin mitigation techniques. Furthermore, efforts were directed towards improving access to improved agricultural inputs to boost the production of nutritious and safe foods. Additionally, social behavioral communication strategies and materials were developed to encourage consumers to opt for nutritious foods.

In collaboration with the State Ministries of Agriculture, the Agriculture Development Program, and the Feed the Future Agricultural Extension Advisory Services Activity, the project of actors with different inputs and agribusiness services providers in Bauchi, Kebbi, and Sokoto states. The



Linkage between Farmers and Agro Dealers. Photo Credit: Amara Ogwuma/ USAID Advancing Nutrition

The linkage meetings brought together notable agro-input dealers and service providers like Premier Seeds Nigeria Ltd., Alheri Agro, Gidan Ingwai Investments, Nagari Seeds, Wakala Agro, Tura Agro Allied Nig Ltd., Basiru Dan Ubangari Agro, Akoma Gona Agrochemicals, Alhaji Babayo, Mukhtar Enterprises, and Ismail Shaibu Agrochemicals. The agro-input dealers and service providers exhibited different agricultural inputs, such as improved seeds, which included provitamin A maize (PVA maize), hybrid maize variety (samaas 52), sosat-88 millet variety, millet (super sosat), rice (faro 44, gawal R1), soyabean (TGX 1951-3F, TGX 1835-10E) and OFSP vines. facilitated trainings on Good Agricultural Practices (GAP) training for 258 (169 males and 89 females) agricultural extension workers and lead farmers across Bauchi, Kebbi and Sokoto states geared toward improving the production of safe, nutritious, and diverse foods. As a follow-up, the project organized six linkage meetings to connect various fo With the collaboration of the Agricultural Development Programs (ADPs) and agricultural extension workers, private sector companies organized similar exhibitions at the community level during the step-down training on good agricultural practices. This initiative aimed to ensure that farmers had direct access to these crucial inputs. Many farmers attested to purchasing improved inputs like seeds, fertilizers, and pesticides directly from these events. They also obtained contact information for the input suppliers, enabling them to make future purchases. Further interactions with farmers revealed that they now have a more straightforward pathway to acquiring genuine improved inputs from reputable suppliers, addressing a long-standing challenge. Some farmers have already reported noticeable improvements in their agricultural production as a result of the information they gathered during these events and the physical inputs they obtained.

USAID Advancing Nutrition implemented a series of aflatoxin prevention and reduction training between 2022 and 2023. In total, we trained 255 extension agents and lead farmers who, in turn, trained an estimated 24,663 (19,285 males and 5,378 females) farmers.

Additionally, the project's involvement in translating local recipe books promotes the consumption of nutritious foods while providing valuable support to community-based organizations (CBOs) in their community engagement efforts.

Objective 3: Generate evidence and test innovative approaches to improve nutrition programming and inform future designs



GENERATED EVIDENCE TO INFORM FUTURE POLICIES AND PROGRAMS IN FOOD AND NUTRITION ON

- **Adolescents' dietary practices** in Northern Nigeria
- **Consumer demand rapid** in Northern Nigeria
- **Counter referral systems** in Northern Nigeria
- **Cost of using locally produced alternatives** for the treatment of malnutrition

Supporting national-level food and nutrition reports and dissemination efforts

In strengthening human resource (HR) capacity, the project engaged local consultants who initiated analysis of food consumption and micronutrient data for the National Food Consumption and Micronutrient Survey (NFCMS). This collaborative effort involved intricate linking of anthropometry, dietary intake, and biomarker data sets. Workshops on data analysis and report writing were conducted to contribute to the final NFCMS report, fostering availability of data for evidence-based nutrition programming. This initiative bolsters the capabilities of local experts in data analysis and report generation, facilitating informed decision-making. In the sphere of strengthening systems for coordination of multi-sectoral nutrition planning, programming, and evaluations at the national level, the project played a pivotal role in the 17th Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) Nutrition Forum, where West African nations convened to discuss nutrition challenges. Technical and financial support from USAID facilitated productive deliberations on sustainable financing, multi-sectoral approaches, and policy formulation to accelerate access to nutritious diets. The forum yielded actionable recommendations, such as the need for sustained investment in nutrition and multisectoral collaboration and the deliberate involvement of the private sector in improving the availability, scalability, and access to nutritious food. These demonstrate the project's commitment to cross-sectoral collaboration and knowledge exchange.

Generating evidence to improve nutrition programming

Furthermore, the formative research on adolescent nutrition shed light on dietary patterns, nutritional challenges, and behaviors of adolescents. By identifying disparities in consumption and highlighting barriers such as affordability and gender norms, the research informs targeted interventions that cater to the specific needs of adolescents. Further, as discussed under Objective 2, the project also generated evidence on consumer preferences and factors affecting consumption of target nutritious foods, the cost of managing moderate acute



Participants at the NFCMS Report Writing Workshop. Photo Credit: Amara Ogwuma/Advancing nutrition

malnutrition (MAM) using community-based approaches, considerations for scaling up community-based MAM treatment approaches using locally available foods, and the gaps and opportunities in the counter-referral systems in the target states. These exercises revealed certain program gaps and opportunities,

such as the need to increase adolescent nutrition activities targeting both girls and boys in the community. Nutrition program proposals and plans should go beyond targeting adolescent mothers' and include all adolescents; the feasibility of leveraging food-based approaches for the management of MAM; and the opportunity to include post-SAM treatment services to improve the management of wasting. This evidence will be shared with nutrition stakeholders and enhance the future of nutrition strategy and implementation in Nigeria.

Supporting capacity development of local organizations

The project's commitment to reinforcing HR capacity within nutrition programming was demonstrated through partnerships with civil society organizations (CSOs). By conducting training sessions covering grant writing and effective nutrition programming, the project empowered CSOs to seek funding and implement nutrition interventions. This initiative not only empowers individual CSOs but also cultivates a broader network of organizations capable of contributing to comprehensive nutrition solutions. Notably, the collaboration between the project and Civil Society Scaling Up Nutrition in Nigeria (CS-SUNN) exemplifies effective teamwork in achieving capacity-building objectives.

Core-Funded Activity Accomplishments

Activity 2.5.A MAM Treatment with Local Foods—Documentation of Approaches

Management of moderate acute malnutrition (MAM) is an important component of country-level strategies to address wasting, given high numbers of children with moderate wasting and their susceptibility to illness and death. In light of these supply chain challenges, IPs in some countries, including Nigeria, have developed programmatic approaches that use locally available foods for the management of moderate wasting. However, there is little evidence to inform their potential scale-up, including their replicability in other contexts. This documentation exercise detailed local food-based approaches to manage moderate wasting in Nigeria, Senegal, and Uganda. In Nigeria, we documented the implementation of the Tom Brown approach, as implemented by CRS, PUI, and SCI, and the Porridge Mum approach, developed by AAH. All partners were implementing these approaches in North East Nigeria. Across the three countries, the design of the documented approaches varied greatly. However, the duration of the overall program and feeding, the mix of complementary interventions, and the ration type, along with related feeding considerations, emerged as some of the key considerations for using local foods for the management of moderate wasting.

Activity 1.2.C Food Environment Methods, Tools, and Metrics to Support Healthy Diets

USAID Advancing Nutrition conducted a pilot study to test a set of market food environment assessments designed to provide information on multiple dimensions of food environments, a crucial space within food systems for influencing diets. In Nigeria, the pilot study was conducted with local research partner Ipsos Nigeria Limited. The pilot took place in 12 markets across three states: Bauchi, Kebbi, and Sokoto. In general, the assessment package was suitable for use in Nigeria. Only one of the seven assessments, Healthy Eating Index, was not recommended for use by Ipsos because of the challenges enumerators faced weighing foods during vendor interviews. Collectively, assessment findings suggest that the food environments in Bauchi, Kebbi, and Sokoto states had diverse food options available to the populations; however, the cost of meeting dietary recommendations was considered relatively expensive when compared to international thresholds for the cost of a healthy diet. These pilot study results suggest that nutrient-dense foods are available in 7 of the 12 markets included in this pilot study; therefore, almost half of the markets assessed lack nutrient-dense foods.

Where diverse foods are present, the quantities available in markets are more likely to be sufficient in daily markets relative to weekly markets. This suggests some initial market targeting based on greater need, though exploration of food environments (e.g., corner stores) in communities around open air markets should also be considered. Our indicative exploration of food price pointed toward a somewhat affordable cost of a diet that meets food group diversity in adequate quantities for many families in Nigeria. However, when taking consumer preference into consideration, the cost of achieving a healthy diet is out of reach for the average Nigerian family. Given the national-level indicators that demonstrate low intakes of nutrient-rich foods among children and adults, we need to ask, what additional barriers should be explored? Considerations that require further exploration in the context of Nigeria include influence of corner stores and bodegas, as well as home production, on household diets and spending behaviors, particularly since the COVID-19 pandemic.

Activity 2.4.C.I Large-Scale Food Fortification

At the request of the USAID Bureau for Resilience and Food Security, USAID Advancing Nutrition developed a draft operational overview and methods guide that includes a methodology to assess diets, markets, and the cost and affordability of an adequate diet with and without large-scale food fortification (LSFF). USAID Advancing Nutrition conducted a pilot study in Nigeria to qualitatively assess the application of the methodology and the operational overview and methods guide that describes it, as well as apply the methodology to inform LSFF in Nigeria.

Based on diets alone, and without accounting for LSFF or other micronutrient interventions, a high proportion of household diets in Nigeria do not meet micronutrient requirements. Household diets have a high prevalence of inadequacy, especially for thiamine, riboflavin, vitamin B6, vitamin B12, and zinc (inadequacy > ~50 percent). Across most micronutrients, we saw evidence of the contribution of the mandatorily fortified food vehicles at the status quo level of fortification (which reflects the current situation in Nigeria in terms of (1) the proportion of the fortifiable food vehicle that is currently fortified to any extent, and (2) the average fortification level relative to the standard) and evidence that if compliance with the national standards could be improved (e.g., reflecting a realistic, though not yet fully achieved, situation in Nigeria in which 80 percent of the fortifiable food vehicle is fortified to the national standard [i.e., 100 percent of the standard after adjusting for expected losses from point of fortification to households]), say via investments in more intensive monitoring of local industries and also of imported products, the contribution of existing LSFF could be larger. Though the difference between modeled contributions and status quo at status quo and improved compliance levels in general were fairly modest, with substantial gaps remaining for riboflavin. The pilot of the market assessment methodology in Nigeria demonstrated that the availability of fortifiable and fortified oil, sugar, and wheat flour products is good in the various geopolitical regions of Nigeria and the various market types. Households should have good availability of fortified oil, sugar, and wheat flour; or oil, sugar, and wheat flour that is processed by large producers and is fortifiable. Availability of fortifiable and fortified maize flour products varies depending on geopolitical zone and market type. Households in North Central and South have good availability of maize flour that is processed by large, local millers, which is fortifiable and is labeled as fortified. Households in North East, South East, and South West have virtually no access to maize flour products that are fortifiable, when looking at product volume, given their access is through small- and medium-sized enterprises, for whom fortification is usually difficult due to production costs, and it is also difficult for the government to regulate and monitor many small processors. Households with access to kiosks and market stalls should have good availability of fortified or fortifiable maize flour, but other retail outlet types have very poor availability of fortifiable or fortified maize flour, especially bakeries, grocery/retail shops, and wholesalers, and to some extent, supermarkets.

Activity 1.2.B.1 Marketing Healthy Diets

USAID Advancing Nutrition implemented components of the *Marketing Healthy Diets Guide* in Nigeria with local nongovernmental organizations (NGOs). Specifically, the project facilitated a series of capacity-strengthening workshops with local NGOs to increase their capacity to design and implement social and behavior change (SBC) activities to drive consumer demand for nutritious foods. Relevant topics included in the training from the *Marketing Healthy Diets Guide* included the concept of key insights, identifying priority groups, and developing your concept. The USAID Advancing Nutrition Nigeria team felt that the guide was very helpful in informing their training and SBC development activities. However, they were not able to fully implement this activity due to cancellation of the grants under contract activity.

Key Evidence and Other Learning

- Aflatoxin mitigation activities demonstrated that interventions rooted in the food system are not only cost-effective but also yield optimal outputs relative to the invested resources. Furthermore, integrating these food system-based strategies with health system approaches has the potential to enhance the overall effectiveness of health interventions, creating a more comprehensive and impactful approach to addressing public health challenges.
- Facilitating consultative forums that encompassed a diverse array of stakeholders resulted in the formulation of the Wasting Consultation report, focusing on comprehensive approaches to both wasting prevention and treatment.
- The implementation of the grants under contract activity faced setbacks due to the limited capacity of local Community-Based Organizations (CBOs) and Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) in proposal planning and writing, leading to the exclusion of originally designated local activities, prompting the facilitation of a workshop focusing on nutrition program design and grant writing to enhance their proficiency for future engagements.
- Behavioral insights derived from comprehensive consumer demand assessments conducted in Bauchi, Sokoto, and Kebbi states underscored the significance of understanding the socio-cultural determinants of dietary practices. Leveraging these insights has the potential to tailor interventions that are not only culturally sensitive but also effective in fostering sustained behavior change within the target communities. For instance, the assessments in the mentioned states highlighted the considerable awareness of Orange Fleshed Sweet Potatoes (OFSP) among the populace as a credible vehicle for essential micronutrients. However, due to the scarcity of the planting vines for OFSP, the crop is not readily available in our project states and this was identified as a significant barrier to its consumption and subsequently impacting its potential nutritional benefits. However, the project provided this feedback and advocated to the states through the Agricultural Development Program and Ministry of Agriculture to provide the planting vines to enhance the production and consumption of the food group.
- The analysis of cost-effectiveness and scalability indicated that both Tom Brown and Porridge Mum are culturally acceptable and scalable interventions for the management of Moderate Acute Malnutrition (MAM) across Nigeria. However, it was noted that costing is highly contextual, prompting the need for individual state-based costing analysis.
- Holding targeted dialogues between the private sector, particularly local producers of Ready-to-Use Foods (RUFs), and the government along with its regulatory agencies has emphasized the importance of strengthening collaboration. This collaboration is crucial to enhancing the enabling environment for promoting and supporting local production of RUFs in Nigeria.
- Training SCFN members and healthcare workers on nutrition indicators, coupled with comprehensive mapping exercises and efficient data compilation for analysis, has demonstrated its critical role in effective decision-making, targeted interventions, and the prevention of malnutrition relapses.
- Establishing and enhancing the capacity of healthcare workers to effectively tackle malnutrition is an essential initiative. However, ensuring consistent training and skill development across a diverse array of healthcare facilities presents a significant challenge that necessitates strategic planning and implementation.

- The activation of Local Government Committee on Food and Nutrition (LGCFN) in various states, coupled with continual support through capacity building efforts, has underscored the pivotal role of strengthened LGCFNs in empowering local-level coordination, fostering collaboration, and facilitating the effective implementation of nutrition programs.
- The sustainability of Local Government Committee on Food and Nutrition (LGCFN) activities hinges upon sustained funding, clearly defined mandates, and continuous engagement. Addressing these aspects becomes pivotal in ensuring the long-term viability and effectiveness of LGCFNs in addressing nutrition-related challenges at the local level.

Challenges

- Dealing with multiple stakeholders and parastatals can lead to overlap and conflict in activities. The project has addressed this through timely notification and dissemination of activity plans to stakeholders and notifications ahead of scheduled activities.
- There is a saturation of partners addressing activities at the state level. This leads to conflict on aspects of SCFN activities to support. On the other hand, there is a dearth of partner presence at the local government tier. Coordination between implementers in the states needs further attention.
- The project faced challenges in implementing the grants under contract activity due to low capacity of local CBOs and CSOs to successfully plan for and write proposals. “The quality of proposals received from CBOs and CSOs were of low quality making it difficult to implement the grant under contract (GUC). Also, the timeframe for the engagement and implementation of the GUC was quite short and may not yield the required outcome. . To address this unexpected challenge, we facilitated a nutrition program design and grant writing workshop to increase local capacity for these opportunities in the future.

The Way Forward

To realize the objectives set out in the National Policy on Food and Nutrition in Nigeria and the NMPFAN, a wide range of government MDA at both the federal and state levels must coordinate their actions, along with private and civil society sector entities. This requires clear guidance and planning, data for decision-making, and necessary skills and capacities, all geared toward strengthening multi-sectoral coordination activities across all sectors.

Continued localizing and integrating of national nutrition policies and multi-sectoral action plans into the priorities of individual states is imperative. This approach ensures a unified and cohesive strategy for nutrition programming that aligns with the broader developmental goals. The domestication (adaptation) of the national policies and multi-sectoral action plans for each state was done in a consultative manner where key stakeholders (SCFN members, CSOs, private sector, and academia) gathered to review and understand the nutrition landscape of their state and how the issue of malnutrition can be addressed with the plan of action developed. Programs should prioritize understanding the landscape with data to show high burden areas of malnutrition and advocate for support to the state government. Additionally, empowering communities through bodies like the LGCFNs and SCFNs is crucial for nurturing grassroots-driven nutrition efforts. The expansion of capacity-building initiatives for SCFNs, particularly in areas where guidance is currently lacking, such as coordination mechanisms and mandate fulfillment, will further enhance their effectiveness in driving sustainable progress.

Efforts should persist in building the capacity of health care workers, especially on optimal MIYCN for the prevention of wasting and IMAM for timely treatment of children with wasting. This continuous training supports the wider reach of nutrition services across all levels of health facilities, thereby improving the health system’s ability to prevent and treat malnutrition. The continuous facilitation of

focused consultative stakeholders meeting to create an enabling environment for improved production of nutrition commodities, especially ready-to-use therapeutic food (RUTF), is essential. The availability and affordability of these essential nutrition commodities will increase access to treatment for children with wasting. Collaboration with stakeholders to address challenges in the food system, including aflatoxin mitigation, remains essential, with additional opportunities for sensitization on food safety and hygiene. Culturally tailored communication materials and engagement with CBOs should be maintained to boost the demand for nutritious foods and effectively convey nutrition messages. To continue to scale up the adoption and use of the Food Systems Dashboard, stakeholders should prioritize refresher training with target users in the states.

Furthermore, completing the NFCMS report and leveraging the data collected for evidence-based decision-making should be a priority. The findings from the formative research on adolescent nutrition should also be shared with relevant stakeholders and incorporated into targeted interventions for adolescents. Active participation in knowledge-sharing events, such as ECOWAS Nutrition Forums, should continue to foster informed discussions on nutrition. The development and distribution of nutrition stories for primary school children should progress, ensuring alignment with local preferences and effective communication of nutrition messages.

Lessons Learned

- **Policy Integration Is Key:** The integration of national nutrition policies and action plans at the state level proved effective in aligning nutrition objectives with broader developmental priorities. This highlights the importance of policy integration in ensuring a cohesive approach to nutrition programming.
- **Community Empowerment for Sustainable Change:** Empowering communities through local committees, such as LGCFNs and SCFNs, is a powerful strategy for grassroots-driven nutrition transformations. These committees can effectively bridge community needs with targeted action.
- **Collaborating with CS-SUNN in capacity building for CSOs in nutrition programming** enhances their networking capabilities and provides them with access to a wider range of resources. This partnership facilitates the effectiveness of CSOs in their programming efforts by expanding their knowledge base and enabling them to tap into additional support and opportunities.
- **Capacity Building for Local Committees:** Providing targeted capacity-building workshops for local committees is essential for building their self-sufficiency and ensuring they have the tools to drive sustainable progress. Training should address coordination mechanisms and mandate fulfillment.
- **Comprehensive Health Care Worker Training:** Building the capacity of health care workers in various aspects of nutrition, from MNCH to IMAM, enhances the reach and quality of nutrition services. Integrated training programs are effective in improving service delivery.
- **When building the capacity of SCFNs, use of embedded consultants is effective.** By working closely with SCFN members, these consultants provide tailored training, technical assistance, and mentorship, bridging knowledge gaps and fostering continuous learning. They offer expertise, facilitate problem-solving, and promote sustainability within the SCFNs. Overall, use of embedded consultants has proven to enhance SCFN capacity and foster self-driven development.
- **Collaborative Approaches to Food Supply Chains:** Collaboration with stakeholders is vital for addressing challenges in food supply chains, including issues like aflatoxin contamination. Sensitization efforts and training should be used to improve food safety and hygiene.

- **Culturally Tailored Communication:** Tailoring communication materials to local cultures and preferences is crucial for driving demand for nutritious foods. Involving CBOs can amplify the impact of nutrition education.
- **Data-Driven Decision-Making:** The use of data, including the National Food Systems Dashboard and National Nutrition Scorecard, plays a pivotal role in informed decision-making. These tools provide critical insights for coordinated responses and resource allocation.
- **Active Participation in Knowledge Sharing:** Engaging in knowledge-sharing events and platforms, such as ECOWAS Nutrition Forums, fosters informed discussions and keeps stakeholders updated on best practices and innovations in nutrition programming.
- **Dissemination of Research Findings:** Effective dissemination of research findings ensures that valuable insights reach relevant stakeholders. Findings from research initiatives, such as the NFCMS and adolescent nutrition studies, should be shared and integrated into interventions.
- **Early Nutrition Education:** Initiatives like developing nutrition stories for primary school children contribute to nutrition education from an early age. These materials should be designed to resonate with local preferences and effectively convey nutrition messages.

Best Practices and Recommendations

- **Regular Training Material Updates:** Collaboration with relevant stakeholders to regularly update training materials is essential. This ensures that they remain aligned with current best practices and comprehensive in addressing various aspects of nutrition.
- **Engaging the Private Sector in Agriculture:** Organizing training on GAP for farmers, agriculture extension workers, and community committee members and engaging the private sector in agriculture help to enhance productivity, access to improved seeds, and climate-smart practices, which in turn contribute to improved nutrition outcomes.
- **Effective Data Management and Mapping:** Training SCFN members and health workers on nutrition indicators, conducting mapping exercises, and compiling data for analysis are crucial. Proper data management and mapping exercises contribute to effective decision-making, targeted interventions, and the prevention of malnutrition relapses.
- **Skills Enhancement for Health Workers:** Conducting ToT IMAM and malnutrition management for health workers is essential. Equipping health workers with skills in acute malnutrition management enhances the health system's effectiveness in addressing malnutrition-related issues.
- **Cross-Sectoral Collaboration:** Holding stakeholder consultative forums, training agricultural extension workers and farmers in aflatoxin mitigation, and promoting food safety initiatives demonstrate that collaboration across sectors is essential for addressing challenges in food supply chains, ensuring food safety, and improving the availability of nutritious foods.
- **Strengthening Local Health Care Capacity:** Training health care workers across PHC centers in MNCH weeks procedures and mid-upper arm circumference screening strengthens local health care capacity. This, in turn, improves the quality and reach of nutrition interventions, especially in maternal and child health.
- **Involving Diverse Stakeholders:** Organizing consultative forums with a wide range of stakeholders helps in defining priorities and strategies that are comprehensive and responsive to local needs. This inclusive approach ensures that nutrition programs address the multifaceted nature of nutrition challenges.

- **Strengthening Local-Level Coordination:** Activation and ongoing support of LGCFNs empower local-level coordination, collaboration, and implementation of nutrition programs. Local-level engagement is crucial for effective program delivery.
- **Data-Driven Decision-Making:** Collaboration with national bodies and stakeholders to develop a national nutrition scorecard demonstrates the value of data-driven scorecards. These scorecards provide valuable insights to policymakers and stakeholders, supporting evidence-based resource allocation for nutrition activities.

Sustainability

One of the key approaches for promoting sustainability was the localization and integration of the National Nutrition Policy and National Multi-Sectoral Plans of Action into state-level priorities. This work provided a strong foundation for lasting impact, as stakeholders now have processes and systems in place to better plan for and implement food and nutrition programs and policies. However, it is critical that these policies and approaches continue to be upheld and effectively implemented by successive administrations.

Empowering communities and institutions through the establishment of LGCFNs and SCFNs represents a pivotal step toward grassroots-driven transformation. Sustainability hinges on their continued engagement and effectiveness, which is bolstered by the capacity-building initiatives, including tools like the OCA Tool. The project's advocacy for multi-sectoral partnerships, addressing issues like therapeutic food affordability and accessibility, holds promise for long-term impact. The sustainability of these partnerships depends on ongoing commitment and collaboration from stakeholders beyond the project's time frame.

The project's focus on data-driven decision-making, facilitated by tools like the National Food Systems Dashboard and National Nutrition Scorecard, equips policymakers with crucial insights. Maintaining and updating these data systems is vital for their continued relevance. Empowering local communities and CSOs is a sustainable strategy for locally owned nutrition programming. The project emphasized localization efforts, which contribute to sustainability, via the nutrition programming and grant writing workshop. Capacity-building initiatives for CSOs should result in improvements in grant writing, programming, and governance, thereby increasing the ability of local organizations to apply for and implement food and nutrition programs on their own.

Training health care workers and strengthening local capacity in integrated service delivery enhances the health system's effectiveness in addressing nutrition issues. Sustaining these achievements requires ongoing support for training programs and the integration of nutrition services across health facilities. Efforts to improve state-level food systems and food safety, notably aflatoxin mitigation, address critical challenges. Sustainability relies on continued collaboration, training, and adherence to food safety practices. Boosting the demand for nutritious foods through culturally tailored communication materials and CBOs is pivotal. However, sustainability hinges on continuous engagement and adaptation to evolving consumer needs.

Integration of Cross-Cutting Issues

Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment

Gender inequality is a persistent challenge in Nigeria, with distinctive issues magnified in the context of Northern Nigeria. In Northern Nigeria, gender inequality remains a pervasive issue, marked by disparities in various aspects of life. Societal norms and cultural practices often restrict women's access to education, healthcare, and employment opportunities. Traditional gender roles are deeply ingrained, relegating women to domestic spheres and limiting their decision-making power. Discrimination in land ownership further marginalizes women, impacting their economic independence. Additionally, issues like child marriage and female genital mutilation persist, disproportionately affecting girls.

Our accomplishments demonstrate our dedication to gender equality and women's empowerment. An example of our gender-focused ethos lies in our meticulous process of selecting priority food groups and value chains. This endeavor was a strategic decision, using a gender lens to ensure that the often-underserved voices of women, who play a pivotal role as primary caregivers, were prominently acknowledged. This approach began with the thoughtful selection of workshop participants, aiming for a balanced representation of both women and men. We recognized the intrinsic connection between women's empowerment, agriculture, and income generation. Understanding the gender dynamics at play, we specifically focused on crops that empower women. We chose crops for both their nutritional value and their potential to be grown, managed, and processed in ways that boost income opportunities for women.

We also addressed the gender disparities of land ownership in Northern Nigeria. We designed our approach to align with the challenges faced by women, particularly those with limited land access. Within our training initiatives, the elevation of women's participation was both deliberate and effective. In FY22, 16% of the total number of people trained were women and it increased to 28% in FY23. By creating avenues for women's involvement, we sought to counteract traditional gender roles and foster equal opportunities. For example, during our workshops on GAP, both women and men attended and learned together, challenging stereotypes that had previously hindered women's participation. As a direct result of this training, female farmers saw a remarkable increase in their harvests and income. For instance, Murna Zarman, who cultivates groundnuts, had a growth of over 50 percent.

Additionally, we actively sought and collaborated with women-led farmer groups, such as Women in Agriculture. This collective mobilized women to get involved in agriculture, particularly in managing community gardens that focused on cultivating high-income potential crops. This commitment yielded encouraging results, manifesting in a progressive increase in the number of women who have benefited from our initiatives.

Sustainability and Host Country Ownership

We engaged with the GON's coordinating structures and mechanisms at all levels in pursuit of long-term impact. In the realm of capacity development, our partnership with the SCFNs is an example of our dedication. Together, we have embarked on a systematic capacity assessment approach to pinpoint operational gaps and devise tailored remediation plans. This collaborative spirit was a cornerstone of our approach, which led to the implementation of context-specific activities at the state and LGA levels.

We continue to focus on deepening and fortifying coordination capacities within SCFNs and the LGCFNs. In this pursuit, we embraced a holistic approach that encompasses mentoring, coaching, embedding, and blended learning techniques. Through these multifaceted methodologies, we nurtured the emergence of self-sustaining capacities within GON's local structures. The goal is to empower these entities to independently tackle the intricacies of nutrition challenges within their unique contexts. We

embedded capacity-strengthening consultants within SCFNs. This move ensured that the knowledge transfer process was seamless and dynamic.

Our commitment is underscored by the technical support and resources we provide. Our journey has been an embodiment of sustainability in action. We remain steadfast in our mission to empower local structures, fostering their autonomy and resilience in addressing nutrition complexities within their spheres of influence.

Local Capacity Development

The commitment of the project to building local capacity is evident in our collaborations. We have continuously supported SCFNs, CS-SUNN, CBOs, and CSOs through targeted capacity-building endeavors. By tailoring our activities to their unique requirements, we ensured that knowledge transfers were effective and enduring. The synergy established with private sector entities, particularly agribusiness producers, has fortified our food systems interventions. These partnerships, driven by a shared vision, have paved the way for innovative approaches to enhance agricultural productivity. By facilitating access to time-saving technologies, we have unlocked pathways to amplify output and efficiency for farmers. Our journey as capacity-building advocates remains vibrant and purpose-driven. Through our strategic interventions, we empower stakeholders to navigate the complexities of nutrition challenges with competence and confidence, ensuring a legacy of sustainability beyond the life cycle of the project.

Private Sector Engagement

The private sector's pivotal role in driving transformative change within the project's scope is clearly evident, particularly in the areas of wasting consultations and food value chain deliberations. Engaging private sector actors, we have identified key challenges in our food systems and harnessed their potential to catalyze effective solutions. Collaborations with entities such as International Crops Research Institute for the Semi-Arid Tropics (ICRISAT), Harvest Field, and Nutri-K have been essential in enhancing aflatoxin mitigation skills among agricultural extension workers and smallholder farmers. These partnerships address pressing concerns while equipping stakeholders with the tools to enhance food safety and quality. The project's strategic vision extended to cultivating a broader coalition of stakeholders united by the mission of sustainable financing. This coalition seeks to address critical aspects of sustainable access to RUTF, ensuring that nutritional interventions are robust and enduring. This initiative is a testament to the project's dedication to fostering holistic solutions that transcend immediate challenges.

Our engagement with the private sector has yielded significant strides in fortifying state-level food systems. By facilitating the participation of last-mile agricultural input dealers, we facilitated a direct channel for agricultural products, bridging the gap that hindered safe and nutritious food production. Specifically, we hosted workshops with private sector input suppliers, the Agricultural Development Program, lead farmers, and extension agents. These workshops provided an avenue for these local actors to showcase an array of high-quality products, from bio-fortified seeds to agrochemicals and fertilizers. The initial outcomes of this engagement are promising, as local actors demonstrated keen interest in purchasing these improved inputs. The workshops garnered active participation from diverse backgrounds, underscoring the collective commitment to driving change within the agricultural landscape. The engagement of notable private sector entities like Premier Seeds Nigeria Ltd., Alheri Agro, and Tura Agro Allied Nig Ltd. showcases the collaborative spirit that underpins these endeavors.

Learning Highlights from Key Informant Interviews with Private Sector Actors on Demonstration Workshops:

- On the whole, the reception of the private sector engagement (PSE) events was extremely positive across all three states. All parties, including the private sector input suppliers, agricultural extension agents, and lead farmers, reported that they considered the event highly successful and would like to see events like this continue in the future.
- Extension agents reported that one positive aspect was that the events brought together all the relevant actors under the same roof to have open communication, something that had been lacking in the past.
- Farmers reported that they were able to connect with dealers of genuine agro products, not adulterated ones.
- Many farmers reported that they purchased improved inputs (such as fertilizers and pesticides) at the events and collected the direct contact information of the input suppliers so that they could repeat those purchases. The data suggests that the farmers can now more easily access genuine improved inputs from legitimate input suppliers, something they have lacked in the past.
- Some farmers reported that, with the information they learned at the events and the physical inputs they purchased, they have already seen improvements in their agricultural production.

Science, Technology, and Innovation Impacts

The project remains committed to innovation and operates through its lens. At the state level, we have curated a repository of innovative approaches that stand poised for leverage and expansion, fueled by the support of USAID. A pivotal facet of our innovation journey involves robust collaboration with Global Alliance for Improved Nutrition as we navigate the intricate landscape of the Nigeria Food Systems Dashboard. The adaptation of the Nigeria Food Systems Dashboard is an embodiment of the project's dedication to scientific innovation. This dynamic platform emerges as a beacon of data-driven decision-making, furnishing critical information on nutrition, food security, agriculture, and the intricate tapestry of food systems.

Environmental Compliance

Our work plans (FY22/FY23) included an Environmental Mitigation and Monitoring Plan (EMMP) per our contractual requirements. Required actions, as stated in the EMMP, were adhered to during our activities. As part of the activities described in the work plans, all paper and non-paper goods used during training, meetings, workshops, interviews, or other in-person gatherings (e.g., individual-serving water bottles and food containers) were properly discarded to mitigate any potentially negative environmental impact. We also disposed of face masks, hand sanitizers, and other goods for COVID-19 protocols per our EMMP. In addition, the project designed key messages that were embedded in several activities to increase awareness of potentially harmful practices to the environment. For any nutrition-sensitive agriculture activities, USAID Advancing Nutrition relied on the efforts of the following partners for the delivery of technical assistance and training: ICRISAT, HarvestPlus, and the Feed the Future Agricultural Extension and Advisory Services Activity, Agribusiness Investment Activity, and Rural

Resilience activities. These partners received USAID funding and had existing technical materials and training manuals that were used to conduct training sessions. These partners also had existing manuals on the safe handling and use of agricultural inputs. For more information on environmental compliance, please see Annex 2.

Annex I. Performance Indicators

The project reported a total of 13 indicators during the implementation period of USAID Advancing Nutrition Nigeria. In FY22, 10 of these indicators achieved over 100 percent of their set targets. The project did not report the Percent of US Government (USG)-assisted organizations with improved performance indicators because baseline data was collected that year.

In FY23, follow-up data was collected for the indicator about organizations with improved performance; all three organizations that USAID Advancing Nutrition supported (the SCFNs of Bauchi, Kebbi, and Sokoto states) had improvements from the baseline. Ten indicators achieved over 100 percent of their set targets in FY23. The indicator for the number of grants awarded to local organizations was reviewed, and funds assigned for the indicator were used to train CBOs/CSOs on Grant Writing and Nutrition Programming, as agreed with the Mission; therefore, there are no results for this indicator. However, 160 participants representing 80 CBOs/CSOs drawn from the four focused states and the FCT were trained and reported under nutrition-related training.

In closing out the project, USAID Advancing Nutrition organized a dissemination event, where five different study findings were disseminated: *Consumer Demand Rapid Assessment*, *Adolescent Formative Research*, *Advancing Stakeholders' Action to Address Wasting (Acute Malnutrition)*, *Management of Wasting using Local Food (MAM Costing)*, and *SCFN Orientation Package Pilot*. Similarly, we supported the Nutrition Society of Nigeria to host its 53rd Annual General Meeting and Scientific Conference, where we presented four abstracts papers: *Investigating the Impact of Leadership Training Programs on Cultivating Effective Nutrition Leaders*, *Mapping of Counter-referrals and Support Systems to Prevent Relapse among Children Treated for Severe Acute Malnutrition*, *Assessing the Role of Embedded Consultation in Enhancing the Functionality of State Committees for Food and Nutrition: A Case Study of Ebonyi State*, and *Exploring Community Perceptions and Behaviors Regarding Consumption and Purchase of Diverse, Nutritious Foods in Northern Nigeria*. With just these two events, we disseminated nine findings. This would have counted more on events hosted if we had hosted a separate for each finding, hence the 42 percent achievement on events hosted. We had no major challenges in data collecting and reporting during the implementation period.

Life of Project Performance Indicators

Indicator	FY22			FY23		
	Target	Achieved	% Achieved	Target	Achieved	% Achieved
Objective 1: Strengthen multi-sectoral linkages and coordination through technical assistance to the Government of Nigeria, the Mission, and implementing partners						
O.1.1 Number of organizations supported in planning, assessment, or design of nutrition programs or strategies	16	11	68.8%	16	18	113%
O.1.2 A national multi-sectoral nutrition plan or policy is in place that includes responding to emergency nutrition needs	Yes	Yes	100%	Yes	Yes	100%
Strategy 1.1: Support the Mission to strengthen strategic nutrition coordination and integration across its investments.						
Strategy 1.3: Strengthen multi-sectoral nutrition coordination in Bauchi, Kebbi, and Sokoto States						
Strategy 2.1: Generate data to support decision-making to improve the reliability and quality of wasting management.						
Strategy 3.3: Develop nutrition-related content for integration into national- and state-level primary school curricula						
S.1.1.1 Number of documents developed/ revised with support from USAID Advancing Nutrition	8	3	37.5%	15	3	20%
Objective 1 & Objective 3: Generate evidence and test innovative approaches to improve nutrition programming and inform future designs						
Strategy 1.2: Strengthen nutrition data systems for improved multi-sectoral decision-making and monitoring						
S.1.2.1 Number of technologies, practices, and approaches under various phases of research, development, and uptake as a result of USG assistance	3	3	100%	3	2	66.67%

Indicator	FY22			FY23		
	Target	Achieved	% Achieved	Target	Achieved	% Achieved
S.1.3.1 Percent of US Government (USG)-assisted organizations with improved performance	0	100%	0%	100%	100% ¹	100%
Objective 1 & Objective 2: Support the Government of Nigeria to strengthen wasting prevention and treatment services						
Strategy 1.3 & Strategy 2.3: Strengthen wasting prevention approaches						
S.1.3.2 Number of individuals receiving nutrition-related professional training through U.S. Government-supported programs, disaggregated by sex	520	796	153%	800	2,058	257%
S.1.3.3 Average percentage point change in score between pre- and post-tests of participants of trainings	20%	35%	175%	20%	28%	140%
S.1.3.4 Average percentage post-test score among participants of USAID Advancing Nutrition trainings	80%	82%	103%	80%	83%	104%
S.1.3.5 Proportion of training participants who improved from pre- to post-test results	50%	100%	200%	50%	94%	188%
S.1.3.6 Proportion of training participants scoring 80% or more on the post-test result	50%	69%	138%	50%	74%	148%
Objective 2 & Objective 3: Generate evidence and test innovative approaches to improve nutrition programming and inform future designs						
Strategy 2.1: Generate data to support decision-making to improve the reliability and quality of wasting management						
Strategy 2.2: Strengthen state-level food systems to ensure access to diverse and nutritious foods and help prevent wasting & Strategy 3.1: Generate evidence to improve nutrition programming						

¹¹ OCA was conducted for Bachi, Kebbi, and Sokoto SCFNs in FY22, with consultants embedded within the SCFNs to support improvement from identified gaps. The second OCA was conducted in August FY23, with visible improvements across thematic areas of the OCA tool.

Indicator	FY22			FY23		
	Target	Achieved	% Achieved	Target	Achieved	% Achieved
S.2.1.1 Number of evidence-sharing events hosted or supported by USAID Advancing Nutrition	10	16	160%	12	5	42%
S.2.1.2 Number of participants at evidence-sharing events hosted or supported by USAID Advancing Nutrition	410	1,261	308%	510	895	175%
Objective 3: Generate evidence and test innovative approaches to improve nutrition programming and inform future designs						
Strategy 3.1: Generate evidence to improve nutrition programming						
S.3.1.1 Number of organizations supported to improve the monitoring and evaluation of nutrition programs	1	5	500%	5	10	200%
Strategy 3.2: Scale-up of existing innovative approaches						
S.3.2.1 Number of grants awarded to local organizations	3	0	0%	3	0	0% ²

²² We agreed with the Mission to not report on this indicator due to the short length of the project to engage CBOs. The funds were used in training CBOs across the five supported states on Grant Writing and Nutrition Programming, hence no report in FY23.

Annex 2: Environmental Mitigation and Monitoring Report

USAID Advancing Nutrition's work in Nigeria supports the GON and the Mission to implement their multi-sectoral nutrition policies, strategies, and plans of action. To achieve this, many of our activities involve bringing people together to strengthen policy and implementation guidance, M&E, capacity development, information sharing, and private sector actors.

The FY22/FY23 activities had no foreseeable potential environmental impacts beyond the possibility that activities that involve training may generate a small to moderate amount of paper and non-paper (e.g., individual-serving water bottles) waste. While USAID Advancing Nutrition funds were used to coordinate and facilitate training activities on improved agricultural production and post-harvest-related practices, project funds were not used for the distribution, promotion, and procurement of agricultural inputs, technologies, and machinery. More specifically, the project funded the coordination of the training, including event space, refreshments, and financial support for participants to attend.

Some activities include the use of agrochemicals, facilitated increased private sector engagement for improved access to necessary agriculture and post-harvest inputs, Support the implementation of aflatoxin mitigation programming for groundnuts and other staple foods, increased capacity of key agricultural actors on GAP for target value chains. For these activities, USAID Advancing Nutrition leveraged existing partners to deliver any technical assistance or training and fund any inputs used during training sessions. These partners included ICRISAT, HarvestPlus, and the Feed the Future Agricultural Extension and Advisory Services Activity, Agribusiness Investment Activity, and Rural Resilience activities. These partners had funding from USAID for the relevant activities, existing manuals on the safe handling and use of agrochemicals and other inputs, and, if currently funded by USAID, existing EMMP manuals.

Because of the increased uptake of vaccines and adherence to prevention protocols, activities involving meetings, training, or workshops were in person and mostly held in outside venues. All paper and non-paper waste were disposed of based on the regulations and customs of the locations. No other FY22/FY23 activities fell within any of the categories identified in the IEE or our EMMP. Best EMM practices were followed per USAID Advancing Nutrition EMM guidance, and the standard PowerPoint template was used for sensitization purposes during events. For in-person activities conducted where and when COVID-19 or other airborne illnesses were a threat, appropriate disposal of paper masks or other personal protective equipment deemed necessary was in place.

Mitigation Measure Categories	Mitigation Measures	Outstanding Issues Relating to Required Conditions	Remarks
1. Education, Technical Assistance, Training	<p>Many of the FY22/FY23 activities foresee in-person training, education, or technical assistance.</p> <p>Given the design of the Nigeria activities and the capacity-building strategies involved, a number of in-person training, meetings, and workshop sessions will be conducted.</p> <p>As mitigation measures, there was strict adherence to and observance of COVID-19 protocols and directives. COVID-19 prevention materials were procured for use by participants. Steps were taken to ensure proper disposal of used protective gear and any water bottles, cups, plates, or food containers.</p> <p>Training activities supported by the project on improved agricultural production and post-harvest-related practices did not include the procurement of agricultural inputs, technologies, or machinery with project funds.</p> <p>No other planned activities affect this category.</p>	N/A	N/A
2. Research and Development	N/A	N/A	N/A
3. Public Health Commodities	No public health nutrition commodities were procured.	N/A	N/A
4. Small-Scale Construction	N/A	N/A	N/A
5. Small-Scale Water and Sanitation	N/A	N/A	N/A
6. Nutrition	No nutrition commodities were procured. All nutrition-related training was conducted taking into consideration the COVID-19 protocols of the GON. All waste generated from training was disposed of per contractual requirements.	N/A	N/A
7. Vector Control	N/A	N/A	N/A
8. Emergency Response	N/A	N/A	N/A

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