



# FEED THE FUTURE

The U.S. Government's Global Hunger & Food Security Initiative



## The Making of a Messenger: Engaging Extension and Advisory Service Providers in Nutrition-Sensitive Agriculture Part II: Focus on Ethiopia

Ashley Aakesson

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# Today's Presentation

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- Process review objectives and design
- Findings from the review
- Conclusions and recommendations
- Tying in the findings from Malawi presented on October 29<sup>th</sup>
  - Recording and presentations can be found at:  
<http://www.spring-nutrition.org/events/making-messenger-engaging-extension-and-advisory-service-providers-nutrition>

# Background

- SPRING's Landscape Analysis of Feed the Future implementation in 19 countries found that some activities in each country reported using AEWs to promote nutrition among target groups
- Little documentation to date of the design, implementation, or monitoring of the approach
- Process review design was informed by previous work by SPRING and the Global Forum for Rural Advisory Services about integrating nutrition into extension services

# Process Review Objectives



Photo: Teshager Yadetie for USAID ENGINE

- Document the coordination among Feed the Future partners utilizing agriculture extension workers to deliver nutrition social and behavior change messages and interventions
- Document the process, challenges, successes, and lessons learned from the perspective of activity staff, government counterparts, agriculture extension workers, and community members

# Community level change agents

- Development Agents
  - At district (woreda) level, paid and managed by the FMoA. They generally don't reach below the sub-district level.
- Community Health Extension Workers
  - Also at woreda level, paid and managed by the FMoH. They provide services at facility, community, and HH level.
- Health Development Army
  - Model families who are volunteers managed by the Ministry of Health. They do outreach to neighbors.

# Participating Activities

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- Empowering New Generations to Improve Nutrition and Economic Opportunities (ENGINE)
- Agricultural Growth Program – Agribusiness and Market Development Project (AGP-AMDe)
- Pastoralist Resiliency Improvement and Market Expansion (PRIME)

# In support of ENGINE's internal mid-term evaluation

- Collaboration with and providing guidance to Feed the Future partners and how this can be enhanced
- Supporting coordination of community-level activities and how to improve this coordination



Photo: Teshager Yadetie for USAID ENGINE

# Process Review Design



- Document review
- Data collection
  - Key informant interviews with key project staff, government counterparts and Development Agents
  - Focus group discussions with community members
- Data analysis and reporting
- Dissemination of findings



# PRIME Interventions in Afar Region



Photo credit: USAID PRIME

- Training DAs and community members to use underground grain storage systems
- Training DAs to hold cooking demonstrations at meetings and schools, and promote nutrition-specific behaviors at meetings and HHs
- Facilitating access to inputs including grain storage bags

# AGP-AMDe Interventions in Amhara Region



- Training DAs to hold cooking demonstrations at FTCs and promote nutrition-sensitive and -specific behaviors with cooperative members
- Providing teaching aids to DAs to support SBCC
- Providing supportive supervision to DAs

# ENGINE Interventions in Amhara Region



Photo: Teshager Yadetie for USAID ENGINE

- Training DAs to hold cooking demonstrations; and to promote nutrition-sensitive and -specific behaviors during meetings and HH visits
- Supportive supervision to DAs
- Providing crop and animal inputs to vulnerable HHs
- A new SBCC strategy and SBCC materials has rolled out since the review

# Findings: Coordination



- With government
- Among Feed the Future implementers
- Between Development Agents and Health Extension Workers
- With other community actors

# Findings: Process and Challenges

- Describing process from different perspectives
  - Including start-up, training, supervision, monitoring, and reporting
- Related to women's status, religious beliefs, food and water security, competing household needs:
  - “We can't avoid selling, as we need money. The decision is based on the relative cash value of the food; for example, if we have cabbage and carrots, we'll sell the one that will bring more money.” (Woman, Bore worda)
- Related to the DA system
  - high number of tasks and messages, high turnover, large coverage areas, lack of transport, and poor infrastructure

# Findings: Successes and Lessons Learned



Photo: Teshager Yadetie for USAID ENGINE

# Findings: Gender

- Most feel women DAs are the best to promote nutrition (after probing)
- Values and norms of fasting and selflessness
- Men decide about allocation of ag and HH resources
- Having a presence in the public sphere is progress for women in Amhara



“Thanks to this activity, we are more empowered. We appear in public with our male counterparts. The DAs and HEWs call us to meetings and we participate. We are in a better position than before.” (Woman, Bore woreda)

# Conclusions and Recommendations

- Context should inform initial activity design as well as mid-course corrections.
- Challenges within the DA system can be addressed by partners building on recent political attention and prioritization being given to nutrition in Ethiopia.
- Nutrition-sensitivity of activities can be enhanced by applying agriculture to nutrition conceptual pathways during annual work-planning and/or design of mid-course corrections.



# Conclusions and Recommendations

- Mechanisms to support cross-sector collaboration should be strengthened at the national, regional, zonal, and *woreda* levels.
- ENGINE has an important role to play in continuing to work with the Mission on developing comprehensive SBC guidance on approaches as well as messages.
- Not all agricultural interventions should target nutrition outcomes at the household level, but should work together as a complementary portfolio.

# Tying things together: Malawi and Ethiopia

- Some similar challenges and recommendations despite very different policy and program contexts
- “Implement in Learning Mode”
  - process monitoring that captures behavior change
- Generate evidence around effective approaches to leverage comparative advantages across sectors and strengthen systems
  - Engage people through groups using tailored SBCC
  - Increase coverage, improve training and support for AEWs, e.g. through expanded use of ICTs
  - Continue learning to leverage markets to generate and meet demand for improved nutrition

# Thank you!

