STRENGTHENING THE ENABLING ENVIRONMENT FOR A MULTISECTORAL RESPONSE TO UNDERNUTRITION

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• USAID-funded five-year project (2014 – 2019)
• Implementing partners: USAID, Government of Ghana (GOG), Global Communities (prime), John Snow, Inc., Urban Institute
• Government-to-government funded
• Goal is improved livelihoods and nutritional status of vulnerable households
• Three primary activity areas:
  – Agriculture and livelihoods
  – Nutrition and WASH
  – Governance

Figure 1: Map of 17 Implementation Districts in Northern Region, Ghana
To bring about meaningful change in the quality of nutrition-sensitive and nutrition-specific services provided in target districts, RING’s implementation approach works through the GOG to build resilient systems that are better prepared to identify and address nutrition and livelihoods needs.
BUILDING THE FOUNDATION: HUMAN RESOURCES

- All RING activities are managed, implemented, and monitored by government workers
- Government workers from all sectors who are engaged in RING understand that they have a role in addressing undernutrition
- RING conducted capacity building activities specifically for government staff to improve their capacity to deliver nutrition-sensitive and nutrition-specific activities

A Community Health Volunteer interacts with a caregiver of a child within the first 1,000 days period. Credit: RING.
EXAMPLE 1

JOINT PLANNING AND BUDGETING

• Local government (District Assemblies) convene agriculture, health, WASH, and governance admin and technical staff to develop annual work plans
  – Nutrition is a collective goal
  – District-level yearly inception meetings
  – All implementing staff receive hard copy of full plan and budget
  – Plans are integrated into district’s medium term development plans and sector-specific annual work plans

Above: East Gonja district reviews their annual work plan. Below: A cooking demonstration was organized by health, agriculture, and WASH staff. Credit: RING.
EXAMPLE 2
CAPACITY BUILDING FOR NON-HEALTH STAFF

• RING conducts various capacity building efforts to mainstream nutrition behaviors across sectors

• District Nutrition Officers have trained more than 1,400 non-health staff on essential nutrition actions
  – Includes ag. extension agents, environmental health officers, school health teachers, community development officers, and more

Officers and extension agents integrate nutrition into WASH and agriculture activities, such as community-led total sanitation efforts and orange-fleshed sweet potato cultivation, pictured above. Credit: RING.
EXAMPLE 3 SUPPORT

• Activities promoted under RING can often be found in district and regional plans, though funding has been a challenge to execute them in the past

• RING funding allows GOG entities to fulfill their mandates at providing livelihoods, agriculture, nutrition, WASH, and good governance services to their constituents

• This correlation fosters greater sense of ownership in plans on the part of government officials and strengthens systems to address nutrition
THANK YOU.

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