

Q&A Session: A Snapshot of Food-Based Dietary Guideline Implementation in Selected Countries

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Question	Answer
I was very interested to hear about the nutrition-sensitive agriculture (NSA) villages. Is there an M&E system already in place, to see how effective these villages are? Do you have information yet on how the FBDGs will be integrated into activities/programs in these villages? Thank you.	Yes, we have M&E system in place in the model villages. The NSA model village is supported by the NSA project donors like Save the children, Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) and soon will be supported by SLM (Sustainable livelihood management) project. First, we have taken a baseline survey on dietary diversity, livelihood, and on malnutrition issues. Then we implement the NSA intervention activities like the six groups of foods, post-harvest management, food safety, and now the school feeding program, home gardening, and others. After two years we conduct a survey to assess how much there is a change in dietary diversity and malnutrition status. Therefore, we have such kind of monitoring and evaluation system.
Is it possible to get the draft FBDGs possibly to add inputs?	The Ethiopian FBDGs have been finalized and endorsed, and are available on the FAO FBDGs repository for download, https://www.fao.org/nutrition/education/food-dietaryguidelines/regions/countries/ethiopia/en/ But I'm sure the team is happy to receive inputs, especially relating to implementation.
Are there any challenges anticipated for FBDG implementation in Ethiopia? What are the strategies to sustain once implemented?	In my opinion, there is. Because, if there is no enough supply of diversified foods it will be difficult to follow the recommendation of the guideline for most of the population. I do understand in cities and urban centers there is access to a variety of foods but when it comes to rural areas it will be difficult. The market is monotonous and the food market is very weak in such areas. We have to work on that. It might be a challenge for FBDG implementation.
Could you please specify the other sectors involved in FBDG implementation in Ethiopia, besides MoH and MoA?	So far only MOH and MOA are involved in the implementation of FBDG. However, an effort is being made in engaging the Ministry of Education in the program.

<p>It is good to learn about Ethiopia's development of FBDG; now moved to the implementation phase. My question is on Nutrition-Sensitive Agriculture. Ethiopia is a good example that NSA is mainstreamed in Agriculture which is great. But in the Asia-Pacific region that is not the case; recently we were having a discussion on the food system transformation. In the meeting, ministers of agriculture from different countries participated including UN agencies. One participant asked, for the last five years did the nutrition community worked enough work to integrate nutrition into agriculture? Now they are asking the World Bank and donors since integrating Nutrition into agriculture is profitable. I would like to ask about Ethiopia's case that FBDGs can promote nutrition-sensitive agriculture. So, have you got enough dialogues with agricultural sectors and other sectors to incorporate NSA as part of their job? Otherwise, it will be difficult to apply the FBDGs.</p>	<p>We have been implementing NSA in Ethiopia for the past five years. We have tried our best to convince our senior officials to handle NSA and promote the program in the agricultural sectors. Fortunately, we have some achievements in the program. Now we are popularizing biofortified crops, all directorates in the MOA mainstreamed the NSA; focal persons are assigned from each directorate. We are working hard, but it remains a lot to do. NSA is very much similar to the agri-food system. It is to produce highly nutritious food and secure the availability of the food throughout the year. Overall, it means we have to produce a lot which is the challenge. One of the reasons is MOA has a conflicting goal in addressing the issue. MOA is responsible for import substitution, export market, for industry-raw materials, and now thanks to high-level officials the ministry considers nutrition as one of the priority activities. We have evidence that the revised Ethiopian policy on agriculture and rural development's main goal is food and nutrition security. It will be easier to engage private agricultural development organizations to work on the NSA.</p>
<p>Monitoring and evaluation of FBDGs implementation using the Women Dietary Diversity score, MDD, and dietary quality indicators to track the impact of FBDG is mentioned. My question is using MDD, W-MDD and other proxy indicators are more qualitative, how did you assess the amount of food consumed quantitatively?</p>	<p>The question is very important. It is better to use quantitative 24-hour recall to accurately measure nutrient adequacy. However, the behavioral component should be measured using qualitative methods such as case studies. Currently, we have a national survey being conducted which also assesses diet using 24 hr. quantitative recall method. We will use this as a baseline and we will conduct another survey to track the change in nutrient adequacy. We use both techniques and triangulate the proper implementation accordingly. Your question is much valuable thank you.</p>

<p>The use of the FBDG is important but the use of the guideline may need behavioral change as indicated in the presentation. But in the controversy education, advocacy, training, and promotion may not successfully bring about the intended change. What practical approach did you think will enhance the consumption of food using the FBDG? Is there any evidence regarding the contribution of FBDG in reducing malnutrition?</p>	<p>Education advocacy activities should definitely be undertaken, but based on an analysis of target audience, and their food and diet behaviors. However, we believe that this will not be enough without support from the food supply and food environments. The success of FBDGs over the years, a very good point. This is exactly why we set out to revise the methodology for developing dietary guidelines. And also, to integrate M&E throughout the whole process of development, and implementation too.</p>
<p>MOA promotes biofortification to alleviate the double burden of malnutrition. What I hear from the presentation is, MOA promotes micronutrient biofortification. What about other biofortification schemes like quality protein biofortification?</p>	<p>It is a good question, but I think there is some misunderstanding about the protein quality of maize. Normally when we say biofortification it refers to micronutrients like orange flesh sweet potato for Vitamin A, iron and zinc rich beans, yellow cassava, Iron rich potato, and others. But in the case of quality protein maize (QPM), it is not a biofortified crop. Of course, it is developed for protein-energy malnutrition because of the quality of protein, not the quantity. But we don't consider QPM as a biofortified crop. Even if it is not biofortification, it is our priority area to promote the QPM to places where they solely consume maize or for those that can't afford animal source food. We are still promoting the QPM in marginalized areas. Thank you.</p>
<p>Would there be any plan to evaluate the impact of the use of this FBDG during the piloting phase?</p>	<p>The results expected from the implementation of this guideline are: Did the FBDG have an impact which is expressed by improving healthy diets from sustainable food sources at the population level. Once the new intervention is implemented the impact should be measured. We have a plan to assess the impact but for now, we have only a one-year implementation, we will have an impact study in the future. Thank you.</p>