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3. Overall Program Performance during the FAFSA-2 Time Period

3.1 Basic Facts on the Programs Included in the FAFSA-2 Universe

3.1.1 Programs and Countries

The FAFSA-2 universe includes 101 programs in 28 countries. Sixty-four of these programs were undertaken in 20 African countries, 14 programs in 3 Asian countries, and 23 programs in 5 LAC countries. (See Table 1.3 in Chapter 1 for the complete list of countries and programs.)

The majority of programs implemented during the FAFSA-2 time period (60 of the 101 programs) had a goal related to “improving food security” (see Figure 3.1), based on the Results Frameworks included in their proposals. “Reducing food insecurity” became more common as a goal after the adoption of the USAID/FFP 2006–2010 Strategic Plan, with the percentage of programs having this as their stated goal increasing from 12 percent in FY 2003 to 33 percent in FY 2009.

Eighty-two of 101 programs in the FAFSA-2 universe included an SO related to MCHN,³¹ 79 programs included an SO related to AG, and 72 included both of these objectives in their designs. The next most frequently found SOs included those related to community capacity (24 programs), IG (19 programs), safety nets (18 programs), NRM (10 programs), and ED (8 programs). A few programs included separate SOs focused on IG and WASH, but it was more common to include these objectives as IRs under the AG and MCHN SOs—46 of the 79 AG SOs included an IG dimension, and 34 of the 82 MCHN SOs included a WASH dimension.

³¹ Although 82 of the programs in the FAFSA-2 universe adopted an MCHN SO, only 69 dedicated at least one-third of their total resources to this objective. (See Section 6.2.2 for further discussion of this issue.)

Programs that focused only on MCHN or AG/NRM tended to be special cases. Examples of the first include the CARE programs in India (FY 2002–FY 2006 and FY 2007–FY 2010), which provided support to the Government of India’s Ministry of Women and Child Development’s Integrated Child Development Services scheme and the five urban nutrition programs in Indonesia. The six Productive Safety Net Programs (PSNPs) in Ethiopia lacked an MCHN dimension. The number of programs that included an SO related to community capacity, which included aspects of two IRs that were included in the USAID/FFP Strategic Plan—“community resiliency protected and enhanced” and “community capacity to influence factors (decisions) that affect food security increased”—increased from 13 percent in FY 2003 to 26 percent in FY 2009. School feeding (also referred to as Food for Education) was a popular intervention in the Title II development program prior to the 1995 USAID Policy Paper, which refocused the Title II program on food security as its primary objective. The 2002 FAFSA also included a separate chapter on Food for Education, but, by 2009, only three programs in the FAFSA-2 universe had Food for Education as one of their SOs—the CRS programs in Burkina Faso and India (both of which were scheduled to end in 2010) and the CARE program in Kenya (which ended in 2009).³²

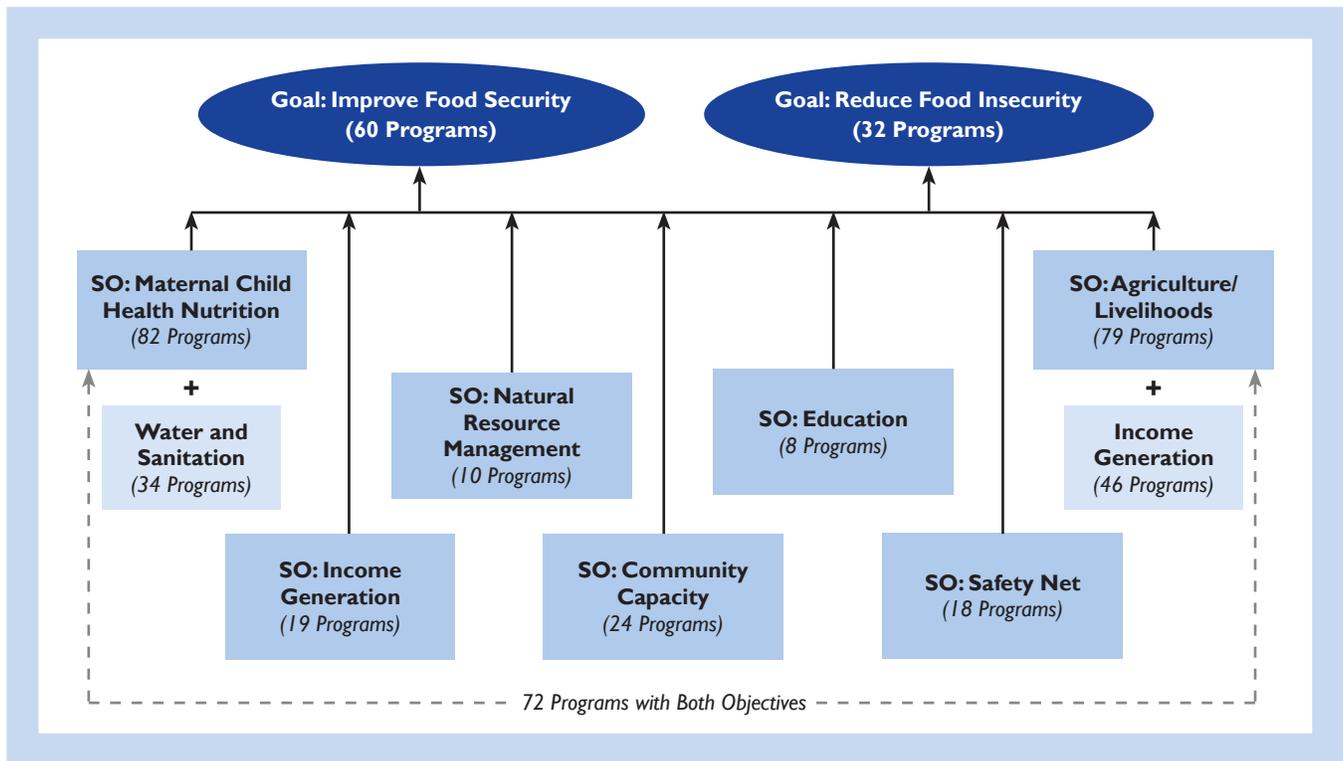
3.1.2 Resources and Beneficiaries

3.1.2.1 Resources

Levels and trends. Funding for the Title II program as a whole increased substantially during the first decade of the 21st century as USAID assumed a leadership role in relief efforts with

³² Other programs that reported allocating Title II development resources to school feeding included CPI/Senegal, FH/Kenya, CARE/Haiti, and CRS in Ghana and Haiti.

Figure 3.1. Title II Development Program Designs Based on Proposal Results Frameworks



Program Universe: 101 programs in 28 countries

increased emergency food aid. More specifically, total funding for the Title II program increased from US\$1.1 billion in FY 2002 to more than US\$2.1 billion in FY 2003 and peaked again in FY 2008 at more than US\$2.6 billion (see Figure 3.2). In relative terms, this meant that the portion of the Title II budget spent on emergency programs increased from approximately 56 percent (the FY 2002/FY 2003 average) to an average of 79 percent for FY 2008/FY 2009.

The growing demand for emergency food aid put increasing pressure on funding for the Title II development programs during the FAFSA-2 time period. These programs were/are protected by a Congressional mandate (the sub-minimum), which requires that a certain minimum amount of commodities be set aside for use in the non-emergency (development) programs each year. These mandates are waivable, however, and USAID/FFP has waived the sub-minimum each year since FY 2002.

FY 2003 was the high point with respect to funding for the Title II development programs, when funding reached almost US\$412 million (see Figure 3.3). The lowest point was in FY 2005, when funding dropped to US\$333 million, and it took until FY 2010 (and perhaps the introduction of the so-called “hard” mandate in the FY 2008 FFPA) for the value of the program to climb back over US\$400 million.³³ These funds bought smaller amounts of food later in the FAFSA-2 time period, however, as increasing commodity and freight costs eroded their purchasing power (see Figure 3.3). Title II development programs that dedicated high percentages of their resources to direct distribution of food rations

³³ The “hard” mandate required that at least US\$375 million be used for development programs in FY 2009 (the actual amount was US\$377.5 million) and at least US\$400 million in FY 2010 (the actual amount was US\$401 million). It can be waived only in cases when “an extraordinary food emergency exists and the President determines, and informs Congress, that no other food or financial resources are available to meet the emergency.” Further details are provided in Chapter 2, Section 2.2.2.2.

Figure 3.2. Trends in Title II Funding during the FAFSA-2 Time Period

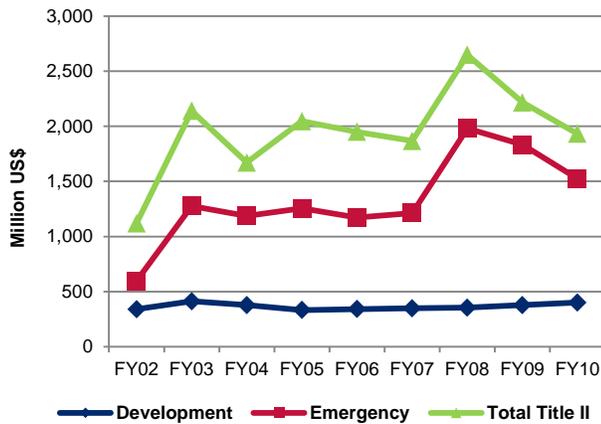
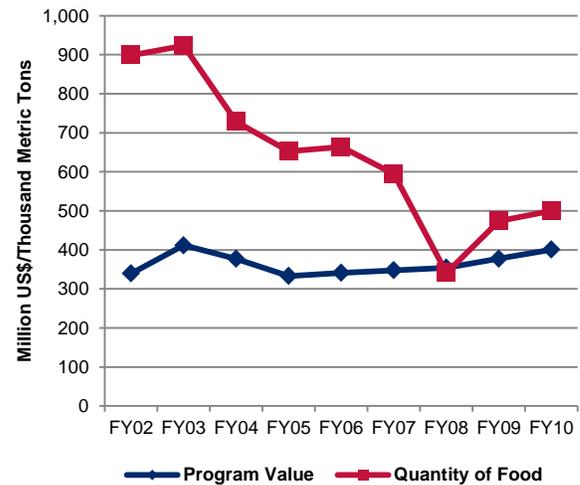


Figure 3.3. Changes in the Value and Quantity of Food Made Available through the Title II Development Program



were more adversely affected by these upward price trends, because higher food prices and fixed budgets meant fewer commodities were available to distribute to the planned number of recipients.

Allocations to priority regions. In response to the geographic priorities established in USAID’s 1995 Policy Paper, the dollar value of Title II development resources going to countries in sub-Saharan Africa had increased during the later years of the 1990s. This trend continued during the FAFSA-2 time period, with the value of the programs in sub-Saharan Africa increasing from less than US\$150 million in FY 2002 to more than US\$250 million in FY 2009 (see Figure 3.4). Since the total value of Title II development resources did not increase, this resulted in fewer resources going to the programs in Asia and LAC.

Allocations to major technical sectors. During the FAFSA-2 time period, the majority of Title II development resources continued to flow to two technical sectors—AG/NRM and HN.³⁴ In FY 2009, 40 percent of the development resources were devoted to AG/NRM, and 38 percent of the resources to HN plus WASH (i.e., HN=33 percent

plus WASH=5 percent).³⁵ The amounts devoted to the other technical sectors were considerably smaller, with only 10 percent going to VGF, 5 percent to ED, 4 percent to emergency preparedness and disaster management, 3 percent to Non-AG IG, and less than 1 percent to CSS (see Figure 3.5).

The relative importance of the two major technical sectors changed slightly during the FAFSA-2 time period (see Figure 3.6), with the share allocated to HN/WASH declining by two percentage points (from 40 to 38 percent) and the share allocated to AG/NRM increasing by one percentage point (from 39 to 40 percent). This allocation was not very different from the one described in the 2002 FAFSA, when 39 percent of Title II development resources were allocated to HN/WASH in FY 2001 and 41 percent were allocated to AG/NRM (FAFSA, Bonnard et al., 2002, p. 15).

The differences in the relative importance of these two technical sectors by major geographical region are striking, however (see Figure 3.7 and Table 3.1). In Africa, the proportion of resources going to the AG/NRM sector has been much higher than in Asia and LAC, ranging between 47 percent (2009) and

³⁴ The analysis in this section is based on the data on resource allocations that the Title II Awardees provide to USAID/FFP in the Resource Tracking Tables that they submit annually to USAID/FFP as part of their AERs.

³⁵ HN and WASH, which were reported as separate technical sectors in FY 2009, are combined to be able to compare these data with data for FY 2003 when WASH was part of HN.

Figure 3.4. Distribution of Title II Development Resources by Region

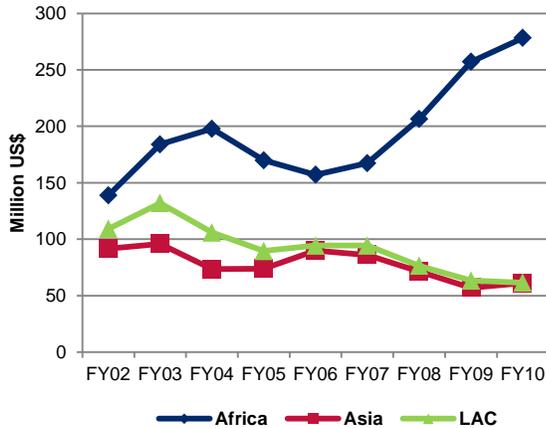
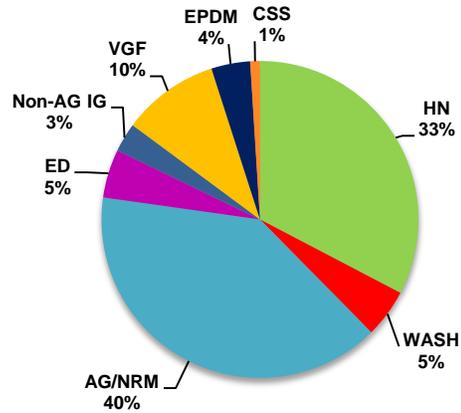


Figure 3.5. Distribution of Title II Development Resources by Technical Sectors in FY 2009*



*Percentages do not add up to 100 due to rounding.

Figure 3.6. Distribution of Title II Development Resources to the HN/WASH and AG/NRM Technical Sectors (FY03 and FY09)

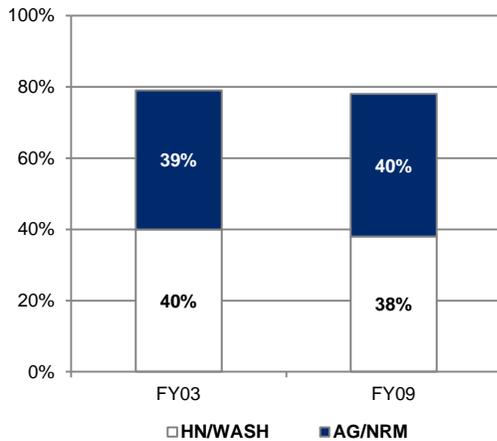


Figure 3.7. Changes in the Distribution of Title II Development Resources to the HN/WASH and AG/NRM Sectors by Region

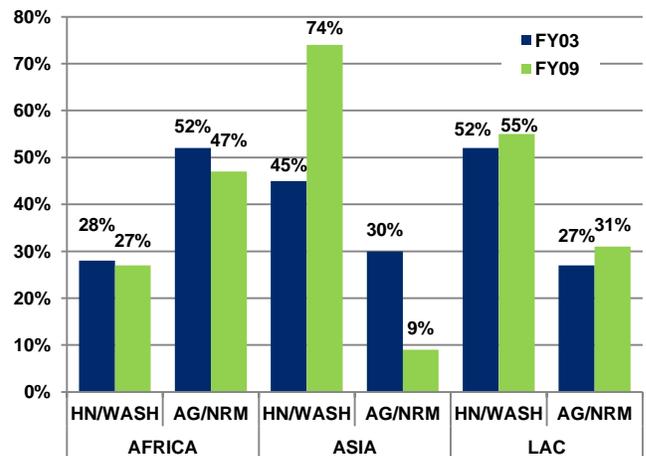


Table 3.1. Percentage of Title II Development Resources Allocated among Technical Sectors in FY 2003 and FY 2009 Worldwide and by Major Geographical Region*

Technical Sector	Africa		Asia		LAC		All Regions	
	2003	2009	2003	2009	2003	2009	2003	2009
HN/WASH	28%	27%	45%	74%	52%	55%	40%	38%
AG/NRM	52%	47%	30%	9%	27%	31%	39%	40%
ED	7%	3%	8%	10%	8%	5%	7%	5%
Non-AG IG	3%	4%	0%	0%	10%	2%	5%	3%
VGF	9%	11%	17%	7%	3%	6%	9%	10%
EPDM**	–	5%	–	< 1%	–	< 1%	–	4%
CSS**	–	2%	–	0%	–	< 1%	–	1%
Total Program Cost (US\$ millions)	172.5	222.0	97.8	37.5	132.6	55.7	403.0	315.2

* The FY 2009 data exclude the Title II PM2A research programs in Burundi and Guatemala, which were just beginning in late FY 2009, and the Afghanistan program because they are not part of the FAFSA-2 universe. Percentages do not always add up to 100 due to rounding. Data come from the FY 2009 Resource Tracking Tables in the AERs submitted to USAID/FFP by Title II Awardees.

** These were not separate technical sectors in FY 2003.

52 percent (2003). In Asia and LAC, HN (including WASH) programs were favored. This was especially true in Asia where the percentage of resources going to HN (with WASH) increased from 45 percent in FY 2003 to 74 percent in FY 2009 and the percentage going to AG/NRM fell from 30 percent in FY 2003 to only 9 percent in FY 2009. In LAC, the percentage of resources going to AG/NRM increased slightly, from 27 percent in 2003 to 31 percent in 2009, but this was still relatively small in comparison to the approximately 50 percent of the resources going to the HN sector (with WASH).

Allocations to Awardees. The number of Awardee organizations participating in the Title II program as direct grantees declined during the FAFSA-2 time period, from 17 in FY 2003 to 14 in FY 2009.³⁶ The same three Awardees—CARE, CRS, and WV—were in the top three in terms of total value of programs in FY 2003 and FY 2009. CRS’s share increased from 25.6 percent in FY 2003 to 34.1 percent in FY 2009. CARE was in second place in FY 2003 (22.5 percent), but dropped to third (9.4 percent) in FY 2009, and WV went from third place in FY 2003 (14.7 percent) to second place (11.1 percent) in FY 2009 (see Figure 3.8).

³⁶ Some organizations that had been direct recipients of Title II awards in the past are now participating as members of consortia, for example, LOL as part of the C-FAARM consortium headed by CRS in Zambia.

3.1.2.2 Beneficiaries

More than 6.2 million people benefited from the Title II development program in FY 2009, 61 percent in Africa, 28 percent in Asia, and 11 percent in LAC.³⁷ Thirty-eight percent of the total (2.3 million people) benefited from the AG/NRM programs and 35 percent (2.2 million people) benefited from the HN programs. Most of the beneficiaries of the AG/NRM programs were in Africa (76 percent or nearly 1.8 million). This is in contrast to the HN sector, where 45 percent of the beneficiaries (984,000 people) were located in Africa, 36 percent (803,000) in Asia, and 19 percent (415,000) in LAC (see Figure 3.9).

Women were major beneficiaries of the Title II development programs by the end of the FAFSA-2 time period, comprising 57 percent of all beneficiaries in FY 2009. Women’s participation rates in the other sectors ranged from 50 percent in CSS and 53 percent in AG/NRM to 59 percent in HN and 68 percent in Non-AG IG activities (see Figure 3.10).

³⁷ The analysis in this section is based on the data on beneficiary allocations that the Title II Awardees provide to USAID/FFP in their annual Beneficiary Tracking Tables. The number of years for which comparisons are possible is limited due to the considerable amount of time that is required to calculate the numbers.

Figure 3.8. Allocation of Title II Development Resources among Awardees in FY 2009

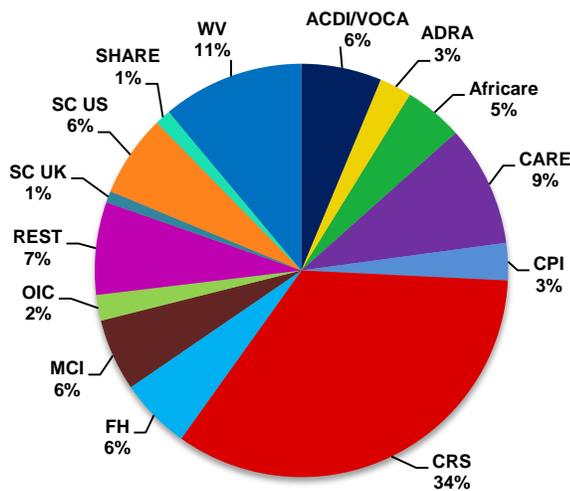


Figure 3.9. Number of Beneficiaries by Major Technical Sector by Region in FY 2009

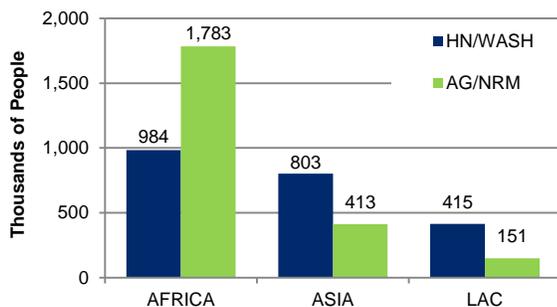
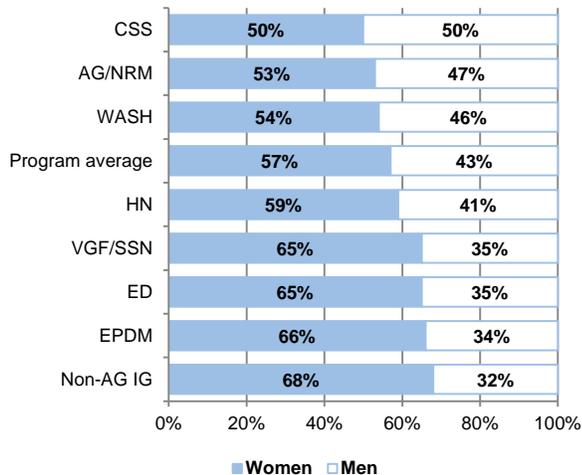


Figure 3.10. Distribution of Beneficiaries by Sex by Technical Sector in FY 2009



3.2 Reallocating Resources to a Smaller Set of Priority Countries

USAID/FFP made a major change in how Title II development resources were allocated among countries soon after the Strategic Plan was approved, with more resources being allocated to a smaller set of priority countries and programs in non-priority countries being closed out. The desirability of targeting Title II development resources to a smaller set of more food insecure countries was initially raised in the 1995 Policy Paper. The USAID/FFP Strategic Plan also proposed allocating more resources to the more vulnerable (priority) countries.³⁸ However, resource constraints, rather than policy pronouncements, were the more likely drivers of the priority country policy change.

3.2.1 Background to the Policy Decision

The amount of resources devoted to emergency programs almost doubled between FY 2002 and FY 2003, and USAID/FFP clearly expected that the needs for food for emergency purposes would continue at these high levels and that “resources available to the program [were] likely to grow at a modest rate.”³⁹ By this time, USAID/FFP was also committed to funding a large number of multi-year development programs—86 programs in 31 countries in FY 2004. This decision to fund multi-year development programs was part USAID/FFP’s commitment to increase these programs’ longer-term impact. However, this decision also meant that USAID/FFP had less flexibility to move resources among programs to respond to unanticipated increases in the demand for emergency food. There was/is a tension between these two objectives—being responsive to the needs of both

³⁸ The Strategic Plan talked about the desirability of focusing staff time and effort on a smaller set of “Strategic Management” countries as a means to improve program management.

³⁹ This was one of the “Critical Assumptions” included in the USAID/FFP Strategic Plan, along with the assumption that USAID/FFP was going to have to “continue to make the case for using food resources in non-emergency (development) settings” (p. 25).

the emergency and development programs—and this came to a head in FY 2005. This is when USAID/FFP found itself having to delay call forwards for a number of development programs until the middle of the year, when it had a better idea of the amount of non-emergency resources it was going to have available for the rest of the year, and also having to make cuts across the board in some development programs in response to the potential budget shortfalls. These strategies were unavoidable, but also had adverse effects on program implementation and impact in the field. The effects of these resource cuts and/or delays in getting resources were particularly serious in countries where the Title II development programs were integrated with Mission programs and expected to contribute to specific Mission SOs.

The Awardees wanted support for the Title II development programs to continue. However, to operate effectively, Awardees also needed assurance that they would continue to receive the resources that had been agreed to and on a timely basis. The Office of Management and Budget (OMB) would have preferred to have seen reductions in the development programs and to focus these programs more in countries and in areas prone to shocks, with the expectation that if more resources were devoted to the longer-term development of these areas, their needs for emergency assistance in the future might be reduced. For its part, USAID/FFP wanted to find a solution that would enable it to support the development programs at some level, but with the flexibility it needed to respond effectively to emergencies.

The “Grand Bargain,” as one USAID/FFP staff member referred to it, and one that all major parties eventually agreed to, was to reduce the number of countries eligible for Title II development programs to a smaller set of the more food insecure. The decision was made and the “priority countries” were identified in FY 2006. Country rankings were data-based and the country rankings were scrupulously followed to avoid a long, drawn-out process in which special exemptions were requested by advocates of countries that fell into the non-priority category.

3.2.2 The Targeting Method

The methodology USAID/FFP used to rank countries by level of food insecurity was developed in consultation with FANTA-2⁴⁰ and the International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI). The methodology uses three indicators that address the three basic elements of food security—availability (defined as “percentage of population undernourished”),⁴¹ access (defined as “percentage of population living on less than US\$1 per day”), and utilization (defined as “percentage of children under five stunted”)—and two sets of calculations. The analysis involved calculating three sets of country rankings, one for each indicator, and then calculating an average score, one for each country, using the three rankings. The average is weighted, with USAID/FFP giving greatest weight to the stunting indicator (60 percent), lesser weight to the poverty indicator (30 percent), and least weight to the undernourishment indicator (10 percent). Because one of the objectives of this exercise was to reduce the number of countries with multi-year (i.e., development) programs, USAID/FFP focused on countries that already had ongoing programs.

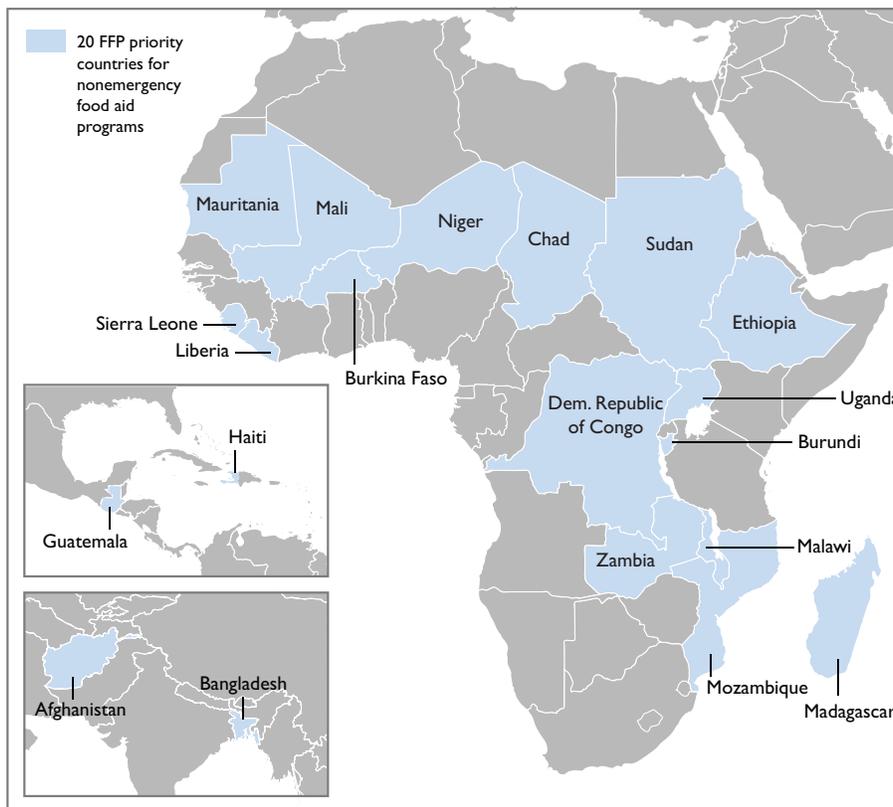
3.2.3 The Priority Countries and Changes in Resource Allocations

Fifteen countries made the first cutoff, with another five added during the second round, including Afghanistan and Sudan, to reach the 20 countries that were on the list from FY 2006 to FY 2010 (see Figure 3.11). Sixteen of the 20 countries were in Africa (Burkina Faso, Burundi, Chad, DRC, Ethiopia, Liberia, Madagascar, Malawi, Mali, Mauritania, Mozambique, Niger, Sierra Leone, Sudan, Uganda, and Zambia), two were in Asia

⁴⁰ FANTA-2 was originally implemented under the auspices of the Academy for Educational Development (AED) and was transferred to FHI 360 in July 2011.

⁴¹ This FAO-developed indicator is based on estimates of per capita food supplies available in a country, adjusted on the basis of additional assumptions about the distribution of these food supplies across households, the age distribution of the population, and a minimum age-specific energy requirement threshold.

Figure 3.11. USAID/FFP Priority Countries, FY 2006–FY 2010



(Afghanistan and Bangladesh), and two were in LAC (Guatemala and Haiti).

The shift in resources from the non-priority to the priority countries was rapid—one might even say dramatic (see Figure 3.12). In FY 2006, approximately US\$170 million was allocated to each set of countries. Four years later (i.e., in FY 2010), programs in the priority countries received almost US\$400 million a year, while only US\$3.7 million went to the one program left in a non-priority country—the CRS program in India.⁴² By FY 2010, Title II development programs had also been closed out in 14 of the countries that had been receiving resources in FY 2003—nine in Africa (Angola, Benin, Cape Verde, Eritrea, Ghana, Guinea, Kenya, Rwanda, and a West African regional program), one in Asia (Indonesia), and four in LAC (Bolivia, Honduras, Nicaragua, and Peru) (see Table 3.2).

USAID/FFP also reaped additional management benefits from the adoption of its “priority country” policy. This has included a reduction in the overall number of development programs it has to manage, from 79 in FY 2003 to 50 in FY 2009 to 42 in 2010 (see Figure 3.13). The average program value also increased, from US\$5.2 million in FY 2003 to US\$7.6 million in FY 2009 to US\$9.5 million in FY 2010 (see Figure 3.14).

At the time the FAFSA-2 report was written, USAID/FFP was in the process of updating its list of priority countries. USAID/FFP had obtained updated information for the original three criteria. However, it was also looking at other criteria and issues, including the potential in specific countries for integrating Title II resources with other USAID programs to take advantage of potential synergies and increase the likelihood of program impact.⁴³

⁴² The US\$3.7 million was provided as final funding for the CRS program in India. Final funding for the CARE program occurred in FY 2009.

⁴³ Zambia was dropped in 2010 and replaced by Zimbabwe, Sudan is now referred to as the newly independent country of South Sudan, and USAID/FFP now refers to all of these as its “focus” countries.

Figure 3.12. Distribution of Title II Development Resources by FFP Priority and Non-Priority Countries

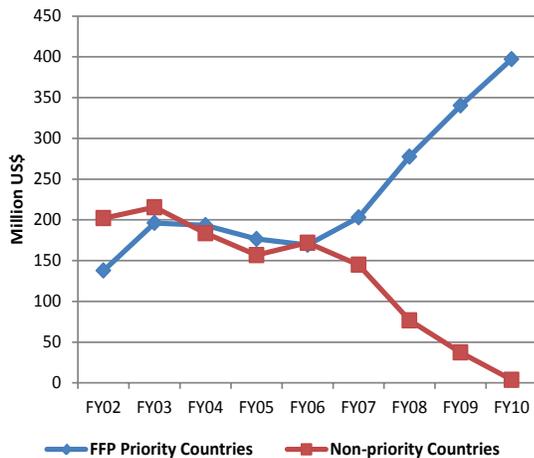


Figure 3.13. Changes in the Number of Title II Development Programs and Countries

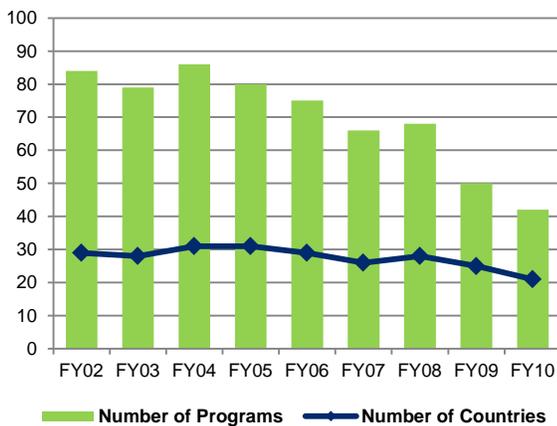


Figure 3.14. Changes in the Average Value of a Title II Development Program

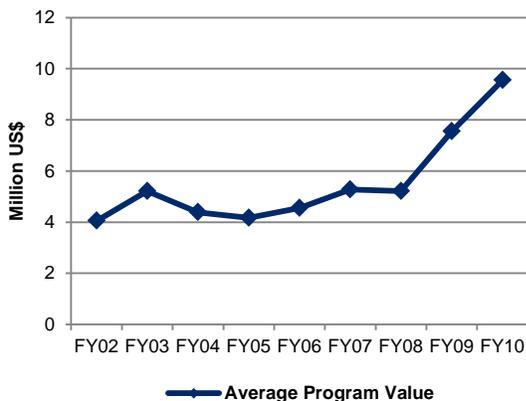


Table 3.2. Countries Receiving Title II Development Assistance in FY 2003 and FY 2010 (US\$ millions)

COUNTRIES*	FY03	FY10
AFGHANISTAN	0.0	15.5
Angola	3.2	0.0
BANGLADESH	38.6	42.0
Benin	4.5	0.0
Bolivia	29.8	0.0
BURKINA FASO	7.8	13.0
BURUNDI	0.0	7.5
Cape Verde	3.7	0.0
CHAD	2.6	5.7
DRC	0.0	15.6
Eretria	2.9	0.0
ETHIOPIA	26.7	62.1
Ghana	22.6	0.0
GUATEMALA	22.0	25.0
Guinea	4.1	0.0
HAITI	33.1	36.5
Honduras	7.0	0.0
India	42.8	3.7
Indonesia	14.4	0.0
Kenya	23.7	0.0
LIBERIA	0.0	15.0
MADAGASCAR	10.5	17.1
MALAWI	3.3	18.0
MALI	0.0	10.2
MAURITANIA	4.7	5.0
MOZAMBIQUE	17.3	19.6
Nicaragua	13.7	0.0
NIGER	10.4	15.0
Peru	26.7	0.0
Rwanda	6.2	0.0
Senegal	0.2	0.0
SIERRA LEONE	0.0	12.0
SUDAN	0.0	30.3
UGANDA	19.2	25.0
ZAMBIA	0.0	7.2
Number of Countries	27	21
Value of Program		
Total	401.7	401.0
Priority Countries	196.2	397.3
Non-Priority Countries	205.5	3.7

* Priority countries are in ALL CAPITALS and bold.

Source: AERs submitted by the Awardees to USAID/FFP.

Almost half of USAID/FFP’s priority countries—Burkina Faso, Burundi, Chad, DRC, Madagascar, Mauritania, Niger, Sierra Leone, and Zimbabwe—did not receive much in the way of other USAID resources, and many have not benefited from FTF or the GHI. In short, the adoption of the “priority country” policy meant that more Title II development resources were reaching the needier countries, but the trade-off was that many of the Title II development programs had to go it alone with food aid and little access to other USAID resources.

3.3 Program Integration in the Context of a Changing Foreign Assistance Environment

Better integration of Title II programs with the priorities and strategies of the rest of USAID has been an objective of USAID/FFP since the 1995 Policy Paper. But the environment in which this objective has been pursued has gone through at least three phases since the start of the FAFSA-2 time period.

3.3.1 Integrating Programs into Mission Strategies

USAID/FFP’s focus at the beginning of the FAFSA-2 time period was on trying to make sure that Title II development programs were integrated into Mission strategies and were seen as contributing to specific Mission SOs. Most Missions integrated their Title II development programs into their strategies as a separate SO on food security, or under economic growth and rural development, or under health-related SOs. Missions in Bangladesh, Bolivia, Ethiopia, and Haiti managed their Title II development programs out of separate food security units, but the degree to which these programs were integrated with and/or expected to contribute to other Mission SOs varied by Mission and over time.

How these arrangements were structured, however, did not seem to be as important to successful program integration as the active involvement of other Mission staff in the Title II programs, technical

staff in particular. Based on the FAFSA-2 field visits and team members’ previous experiences working with Title II development programs in the field, much seems to start with the FFP officer and how proactive she or he is. When the FFP officer makes a concerted effort to involve other Mission staff in Title II program activities, as the FAFSA-2 team found to be the case in Bangladesh and Malawi, for example, she/he was able to increase the opportunities for program complementarities, synergies, and integration. Joint visits by USAID staff to programs in the field was one of the better practices observed, as was the participation of FFP officers in field visits made as part of Title II program assessments and evaluations. In Mozambique, the active engagement on the part of the FFP officer led to an agreement from USAID/Mozambique to co-finance with USAID/FFP the preparation of a Food Security Country Framework (FSCF) (see Section 3.4.1.1) and the Mission’s use of this document as a basis for its new food security-oriented agricultural development program. It can also help when the push for greater program integration comes from higher up. This was the case in Bangladesh, when the Mission Director, as one example, insisted that the Title II FSCF team, the GH HN strategy team, and the EGAT food security strategy team do their field work in Bangladesh at the same time and coordinate their findings and recommendations. The importance of active involvement on the part of Mission staff from different technical sectors as critical to project success was also emphasized in the 2002 FAFSA.⁴⁴

3.3.2 Integrating Programs within the Foreign Assistance Framework

This focus on Mission strategies changed in FY 2006 with the creation of the “F” and the development of a standardized Foreign Assistance Framework

⁴⁴ “Whichever integration approach is taken, active involvement of Mission staff from the different technical sectors the Title II addresses seems to be critical to program strength and quality. What appears to be a necessary condition is the interest and effort among all partners, both food aid and DA funded, to promote more interaction, collaboration and integration. Setting up a particular structure alone is insufficient” (FAFSA, Bonnard et al., 2002, p. 33).

to guide both State and USAID programs. (See Section 2.2.2.3 for further information on what was referred to as the “F” process.) With the adoption of the Foreign Assistance Framework, Department of State and USAID funding was required to be aligned with the framework’s five key objectives and their program areas, elements, and sub-elements. All programs were also expected to report on their results, selecting from among the Standard Foreign Assistance Indicators that had also been developed. In the case of Title II development programs, this meant that Title II Awardees were now required to report on program performance using USAID/FFP, Mission, and F indicators. Most Title II development programs were/are seen as being aligned with and contributing to three of the five objectives: “Investing in People,” “Economic Growth,” and “Humanitarian Assistance.” (See Table 3.3 for further information on how the Title II programs align with the program areas and elements.) All Title II development programs approved since FY 2006 were designed, developed, and implemented within the context of this framework. Responsibility for annual reporting on the F indicators is split between USAID/FFP and Missions. USAID/FFP in Washington reports on the indicators for Title II emergency programs, while Missions include performance data from the Title II Awardees’ development programs in their own reporting to Washington.

3.3.3 Integrating Programs with the New Food Security and Health Initiatives

The context in which the issue of program integration was/is being discussed changed again in 2009, when the new administration took office and with the new emphasis within State and USAID on food security and the development of FTF and the GHI.

3.3.3.1 Feed the Future

The SO of the Title II development program—“Food insecurity in vulnerable populations reduced”—is consistent with and can help support the broader goal of FTF “to sustainably reduce global hunger and poverty.” The two programs have adopted

Table 3.3. Alignment of Title II Development Programs with the U.S. Foreign Assistance Framework

OBJECTIVES	PROGRAM AREAS AND ELEMENTS
Peace and Security	
Governing Justly and Democratically	2.2 Civil Society <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Civic Participation (2.4.1)
Investing in People	3.1 Health <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HIV/AIDS (3.1.1) • Maternal and Child Health (3.1.6) • Family Planning and Reproductive Health (3.1.7) • Water Supply and Sanitation (3.1.8) • Nutrition (3.1.9) 3.2 Education <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Basic Education (3.2.1) 3.3 Social and Economic Services and Protection for Vulnerable People <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social Assistance (3.3.3)
Economic Growth	4.4 Infrastructure <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transport Services (4.4.3)* 4.5 Agriculture <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agricultural Sector Capacity (4.5.2) 4.7 Economic Opportunity <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengthen Microenterprise Productivity (4.7.3) 4.8 Environment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Natural Resources and Biodiversity (4.8.1)
Humanitarian Assistance	5.1 Protection, Assistance, and Solutions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protection and Solutions (5.1.1) • Assistance and Recovery (5.1.2) 5.2 Disaster Readiness <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Capacity Building, Preparedness, and Planning (5.2.1) • Mitigation (5.2.2)*

* The FAFSA-2 recommends that USAID/FFP also report under these program areas and elements because of the infrastructure work that is implemented under the Title II development programs, on roads in the case of Transport Services (4.4.3) and on disaster-related infrastructure in the case of Mitigation (5.2.2).

similar approaches, including the commitment to a comprehensive approach to reducing poverty and food insecurity and a focus on strengthening the links between agriculture and improved nutrition outcomes and impact. Both have also decided to focus on a subset of high-priority countries to make more effective use of their resources. Nine countries—Bangladesh, Ethiopia, Guatemala, Haiti, Liberia, Malawi, Mali, Mozambique, and Uganda—were eligible for both programs as of the end of 2011.

Title II programs are more limited in terms of their geographical focus than FTF programs. This is in response to the requirement that they focus on the poorer areas in the countries in which they operate and on the poorer and more food insecure communities and populations within those areas. They are also likely to work with farmers that are poorer and more resource constrained than many of FTF farmers, given the communities that they work in. Their objectives, however, are similar to the objectives in the FTF results framework: increasing agricultural productivity and rural incomes in the communities where they are working, increasing the resilience of these vulnerable communities and households, and improving the nutritional status of the people in their target areas, women and children in particular. Experiences from the FAFSA-2 time period that should be of particular relevance to FTF include introducing resource-poor farmers to improved agricultural technologies and practices and helping link them to stronger markets to improve their sales and incomes. Many Title II programs implemented during the FAFSA-2 time period were also successful in implementing the types of investments that FTF has identified as key to improving nutrition, for example: (1) preventing undernutrition through community-based programs, especially for pregnant and lactating women and children under two years; (2) improving diet quality and diversity through agricultural interventions and educating women to improve family diets; and (3) improving delivery of nutrition services by health systems linked to community programs.

Both FTF and Title II programs are operating in four of the five countries that were included in the

FAFSA-2 field visits—Bangladesh, Guatemala, Malawi, and Uganda. In Guatemala, the decision had been made to locate FTF and Title II programs in the same areas of the country, but the details about how the programs would relate to each other programmatically were still being worked out at the time of the FAFSA-2 visit. In Bangladesh, FTF areas overlap with two of the Title II programs. The Bangladesh Mission wanted to add FTF resources to the programs of the two Awardees working in the areas of overlap, but was running into procurement problems at the time the FAFSA-2 report was being written. In Malawi, the FTF program is working in an area that is contiguous to the area where the Title II development program is currently working. The previous Title II program (Improving Livelihoods through Increasing Food Security [I-LIFE]) had also been working in this area, but the current Title II program (Wellness & Agriculture for Life Advancement [WALA]) moved to an area further south, which the Malawi FSCF had identified as being more food insecure. In Uganda, the Title II program is being moved into an area in the northeast of the country where few USAID programs are operative, and there is likely to be little or no geographic or programmatic overlap between it and the FTF program.

3.3.3.2 *The Global Health Initiative*

Achieving major, sustainable improvements in health outcomes, especially for women, newborns, and children, is the main goal of the GHI—a goal shared and described by the Title II program as “human capacities protected and enhanced” in the USAID/FFP Strategic Plan. The GHI helps partner countries strengthen health systems, combat infectious diseases, and provide quality health services for HIV, malaria, tuberculosis (TB), neglected tropical diseases, child health, nutrition, family planning, and reproductive health. The Title II program uses food aid and supplementary feeding to support the broad GHI agenda, most significantly in woman-centered MCHN activities mainly at the community level. Food aid also addresses food insecurity of people affected by or infected with HIV and improvement in HIV treatment, care, and support. While the GHI applies everywhere the U.S. government assists

health programs in developing countries, its initial focus is on eight “GHI Plus” countries for intense implementation and learning to inform the work of all countries. Five of these countries—Bangladesh, Ethiopia, Guatemala, Mali, and Malawi—are also FFP priority countries with ongoing health and nutrition activities, creating special opportunities for synergy, especially as smart integrated programming in nutrition, MCH, and family planning is tested. Title II program experience with integration at the local level can provide valuable lessons and promising practices to shorten the learning curve for new GHI activities.

Two-thirds of Title II development activities in the FFP priority countries in FY 2009 had a major MCHN or HIV component, offering valuable platforms that the GHI can build on. Food assistance supports the following interventions that are priorities for the GHI, either directly or through integration with government health services:

- (1) improving women’s nutrition and infant and young child feeding (IYCF) practices;
- (2) preventing undernutrition through community-based programs, especially for children under two years and their mothers and pregnant women, such as PM2A;
- (3) water, sanitation, and improved hygiene practices;
- (4) micronutrient supplementation;
- (5) malaria prevention through insecticide-treated bednets (ITNs);
- (6) prenatal, delivery, postpartum, and newborn care;
- (7) treatment of diarrhea, pneumonia, and malaria;
- (8) immunization;
- (9) treatment of moderate malnutrition and referral of severe cases to services for Community-Based Management of Acute Malnutrition (CMAM); and
- (10) HIV-nutrition interventions.

3.4 Improvements in Program Design

3.4.1 Improving Problem Assessments

The 1995 Policy Paper stressed the importance of good problem assessments, arguing that it is “essential to understand the food security problems in recipient countries and make the link between initial problem assessments and the selection of specific program interventions most likely to succeed.” The USAID/FFP Strategic Plan went

Box 3.1. The Commitment of the USAID/FFP Strategic Plan to Good Problem Assessments

“FFP recognizes the importance of good problem assessments and plans to take further steps under this strategy to improve its own assessments and those carried out by its partners—both the PVOs and the WFP. In the future, problem assessments will need to be based on credible livelihood and market analyses and include estimates of needs and program approaches that recognize when and where food is needed and when and where non-food resources are needed, alone or in combinations with food.”

Source: USAID/FFP Strategic Plan, p. 45.

even further, taking the position that better problem assessments would result in more effective programs and committing USAID/FFP to taking specific steps to improve its own problem assessments and those of its partners (see Box 3.1). The FSCFs that USAID/FFP asked FANTA-2 to prepare for countries whose Title II development programs were coming up for renewal could be thought of as one of the efforts taken after the Strategic Plan was approved to put this commitment to improved problem assessments into practice.

3.4.1.1 Country-Specific Food Security Programming Frameworks

The FSCFs are a new tool developed for USAID/FFP to use in preparing its country-specific guidance to Awardees developing new Title II development program proposals. The first FSCFs were prepared in 2007 for three countries—Madagascar, Malawi, and Mozambique—and a second set was prepared in 2009 for four countries—Bangladesh, Burkina Faso, Liberia, and Sierra Leone.⁴⁵ These FSCFs

⁴⁵ Work was also done in 2010 on country frameworks for Ethiopia and Zambia, but they were never finalized as full-fledged FSCFs.

describe the nature of the food insecurity problems in the country, including their determinants and geographical distribution; identify the areas of greatest food insecurity and the nature of the risks and vulnerabilities in these areas; and provide a broad overview of the contextual factors affecting the food security conditions in the country, including the food security-related policies and programs of the host government and other donors and stakeholders. These frameworks also define program goals and objectives, recommend areas where the programs should be concentrated geographically, identify program priorities, describe the types of interventions and approaches that should be considered, and identify potential strategic partnerships. Other issues frequently dealt with include integrating gender equity into program design and implementation; finding the right balance between food and cash; integrating programs at the community level; developing sustainability and exit strategies; and addressing cross-cutting issues, such as risk and vulnerability, strengthening local capacity, and the environment. This level of analysis (i.e., a rigorous description of the food security situation in a country and evidence-based prescriptions as to the location and contents of the programs) did not exist before, and USAID/FFP has used these frameworks effectively to increase the quality of its country-specific program guidance.

Although the FAFSA-2 team did hear a few complaints about specific FSCFs, several from Awardees involving targeting issues, the overall feedback was favorable. USAID/Mozambique used its FSCF as a basis for developing its own integrated agriculture and health and nutrition program. The FSCFs also seem to have value beyond their immediate use as a basis for program guidance. The detailed background information was useful to a broader audience, including at least two Mission Directors.

These analyses can be expensive, however, and some also took a long time to complete, up to 18 months in several cases. This long lead time was also a challenge at times, because USAID/FFP does not always know that far in advance which programs

Table 3.4. Summary of the Status of the FSCFs as of December 31, 2011

Country	For the Program Starting in FY:	Food Security Country Framework Finalized and Available	Country-Specific Guidance Provided
Afghanistan	2012		X (Draft)
Bangladesh	2010	X (2009)	X
Burkina Faso	2011	X (2009)	X
DRC	2011	X (2010)	X
Ethiopia	2011		X
Guatemala	2012	*	X
Liberia	2010	X (2009)	X
Madagascar	2009		X
Malawi	2009	X (2007)	X
Mozambique	2009	X (2007)	X
Niger	2012	*	X
Sierra Leone	2010	X (2010)	X
South Sudan	2011	*	X
Uganda	2012	*	X

* Desk review

it is going to put up for rebid. In 2011, for example, the assessments for the three countries where programs were coming up for rebid in FY 2012—Guatemala, Niger, and Uganda—were done as desk reviews, because USAID/FFP was not able to provide sufficient advance notice to FANTA-2 to conduct comprehensive analyses.

3.4.1.2 Awardee Proposals and Problem Assessments

Most proposals reviewed during FAFSA-2 were well written, and appeared to be well designed. The quality of the problem assessments also improved over time. The arguments were more likely to be data-based, consistent, and coherent, improvements that are likely due in part to the availability of the FSCFs. Many Awardee proposals still lacked specificity about the nature of the problems in the areas where they were proposing to work, however, and the constraints they were likely to face in trying to implement effective programs in these areas.

There is also a difference between information that can be used to describe a situation and information that is actionable. Information from livelihood assessments, for example, can be used to describe what people are doing in a particular target area in order to earn a living, but this information does not provide much in the way of insight into what other types of activities people could be doing or should be doing to earn a better living. For the latter purpose, information is also needed on market and production potentials and on the relative profitability of alternative activities. Few proposals prepared during the FAFSA-2 time period include information on the specific markets and market potentials, value chains, and activity profitability in the target areas, however. Information missing from most MCHN designs includes information on specific child feeding practices in the areas to be targeted and the likely barriers to change—information that is crucial to the development of an effective behavior change program.

One reason for this lack of specificity could be resource constraints, but another could be a result of the design process itself. There are limits as to how much time and effort an organization can afford to spend on proposal development. On the other hand, Title II Awardees already working in a country should be able to provide more specific information than many do, if they are asking the right questions. Taking a few more trips to the proposed target areas and talking to potential project participants, as well as to a range of potential stakeholders, about markets and production potentials and current child feeding practices would be a good start. Some of the feedback that the FAFSA-2 team received from the field is that many proposals are written by consultants or professionals from the Awardee's headquarters and not by field-level implementers, which may be another reason why so many proposals lack specificity. This process may also lead to program designs that are not realistic given field conditions.

Furthermore, approved proposals are not always an accurate guide to what is actually under way in the field, as the FAFSA-2 team found during its program

reviews and field visits. During implementation, many programs begin to stray from the designs and the program descriptions in their agreements with USAID. This can be for several reasons. Implementers find the design not feasible, face budget constraints and cut back on activities or take shortcuts, decide to give more priority to other components than what USAID agreed to, or learn as they go and adjust interventions to do more of what works. Many changes are desirable. However, there were examples of substantive changes that were not formalized in amendments to USAID's agreements with the Awardees, which made it difficult for reviewers to understand how and why the program evolved over time.

3.4.2 Improving Targeting within Countries

3.4.2.1 Improving In-Country Geographic Targeting

Considerable progress was made during the FAFSA-2 time period in targeting Title II programs to the more food insecure regions and districts within countries. Some of this improvement was due to the guidance provided in the FSCFs. However, Title II Awardees also appeared to have become more skilled in the analyses they need to undertake in order to make informed decisions about how best to target their programs within the larger geographical units identified in the FSCFs. More sources of information also seem to be available now than at the beginning of the FAFSA-2 time period for many of the countries where the Title II development programs were/are operating. This includes livelihood assessments from a number of sources and the WFP's Comprehensive Food Security and Vulnerability Assessments and Vulnerability Assessment Maps. Most targeting began with an analysis of the distribution of poverty within the country (a measure of access) and chronic child undernutrition (arguably the best measure of utilization). Both measures have been available for most Title II priority countries, although some datasets are more current than others. One limitation in using these data for targeting purposes, however, is that they are usually collected to develop national-

level estimates, which means that the information tends not to be available for geographical divisions below major regions and/or political divisions. Therefore, most recommendations provided in the FSCFs have been couched in terms of the more food insecure regions of a country and/or major political divisions.

The processes and indicators that Awardees used to make decisions about how best to target their programs within these larger geographical units varied by Awardee, and details are not always available in program documents. In Malawi, the consortium that ran the I-LIFE program (FY 2005–FY 2009) selected the seven districts where they were working based on an assessment of five indicators of food insecurity and vulnerability: chronic malnutrition, HIV,⁴⁶ poverty, food needs, and illiteracy rates. The FSCF based its recommendation to re-target the next program (FY 2009–FY 2014) on an analysis of more recent data on the prevalence of poverty and chronic malnutrition by district. The new Malawi program—WALA—accepted these recommendations and then selected its implementation sites by livelihood zones (identified based on a detailed livelihood zones assessment CRS conducted in 2008) rather than by district, as was done in the case of the I-LIFE project. CARE also developed a very elaborate process for targeting its programs to the more food insecure villages in its area of operation in Bangladesh and to the poorer households in these villages, through the process of a well-being analysis, to better target its asset distribution activities to the poor and extremely poor (see Box 3.2).

Most Awardees focused their programs in areas where the food insecurity problems were the most severe, i.e., areas with the highest percentages of poor people, and chronically malnourished children. However, a case can also be made, as it was in the 2009 Bangladesh FSCF, that programs could be more cost effective if the absolute numbers of food insecure people living in an area were also taken into account. As another example, at the time the targeting recommendations were being developed for the Nicaragua Title II development

⁴⁶ The I-LIFE mid-term evaluation and the Malawi FSCF expressed some concern about the use of HIV as one of the selection factors, since other data indicated that not all households affected by HIV were also poor, which is a key indicator of people's ability to access food.

Box 3.2. The Village and Beneficiary Selection Process Used in the CARE Title II Development Program in Bangladesh

“The process begins by first meeting with the Union Parishad (UP) Government of Bangladesh officials, elected representatives, and key individuals in a group discussion to identify the villages within their UP who are poorest and disenfranchised—all of which are ranked. SHOUHARDO II [Strengthening Household Ability to Respond to Development Opportunities Project] [the CARE project] staff then physically visit, in order of poverty, these villages to verify whether or not the status[es] of these villages are as poor as they are made out to be. The result of this physical verification process is then brought back to the UP Group to make final changes in the ranking of these villages. This is an important step to ensure later accusations and criticisms are avoided in the targeting process, as well as being an important first step to building relations with these individuals who will be important throughout the life of SHOUHARDO II. Once the villages are finally ranked, starting with the poorest village, program staff facilitate a Well-Being Analysis (WBA) to identify and rank the Poor and Extreme Poor (PEP) households in the village. Each of these households will be registered at the end of this process. This approach continues until the total number of PEP allocated for that area has been reached, at which time no further villages are visited.” (According to CARE, this process, which was expected to take four months to complete, i.e., August through November 2010, involved the majority of the SHOUHARDO II staff plus an additional 240 short-term hires that were recruited solely to help with this effort.)

Source: SHOUHARDO II FY 2010 ARR.

programs, information became available from a new World Bank Living Standards survey that indicated that rates (percentages) of poverty and chronic child malnutrition were the highest in the Atlantic Coast region. But the actual numbers of poor households and chronically malnourished children were much higher in the north central area of the country, meaning that it would be more cost effective for implementers to locate their programs in this area. The logistic costs per beneficiary of running the program in the north central area would be lower than in the more isolated Atlantic Coast area, because implementers would be able to distribute these costs over a larger beneficiary group.

3.4.2.2 Targeting at the Community Level

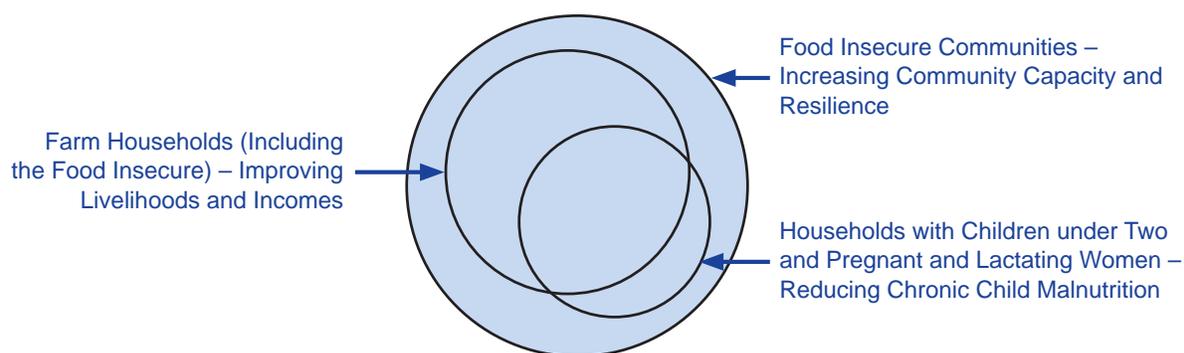
Targeting at the community level can be complicated and appears to work better when adapted to the nature and objectives of the specific interventions, as the example in Figure 3.15 suggests.

Interventions focused on increasing community capacity and resilience. Based on FAFSA-2 and other field experiences, the better practice with respect to increasing community capacity and resilience is to open program participation to all community members, both formal and informal leaders, as well as the more vulnerable. Inclusive programs work best for a wide range of activities, including community organization, planning, and capacity strengthening activities focused on risk

identification, protection of community assets, and disaster preparedness. Awardees have learned that they may have to be proactive to ensure that women and poor households are involved in these activities and that the needs of other vulnerable groups, including children, the elderly and disabled, and socially excluded groups, are taken into account. This was one lesson learned by both the CARE and SC programs in Bangladesh, for example. Being too exclusionary at the community level, as several evaluations pointed out, can also result in programs being viewed as insensitive to community dynamics and local culture and could easily become divisive and undercut their effectiveness.

Interventions focused on improving household livelihoods and incomes. Agricultural technology transfer and marketing programs that are open to all community members that are interested in participating also appear to be better practices, based on FAFSA-2 and other field experiences. More inclusive programs are more likely to capture the farm leaders and first adopters, who play a critical role in getting the agricultural technology adoption process started. They can often be more effective transmitters of new technologies and practices than external extension agents. And their early adoption of these new technology packages can also help pave the way for poorer farmers in a community that may be more reluctant to try new practices because they have fewer assets and need additional

Figure 3.15. Targeting at the Community Level



assurances as to the value of the new technologies.⁴⁷ But experiences with the AG/NRM/LH programs during the FAFSA-2 time period also suggests that Title II development programs are likely to have to be proactive to ensure that the more food insecure individuals and households in their target communities have the opportunity and are able to participate in these programs. Approaches that the Title II programs have used to expand participation include additional training, including literacy training, and asset transfers. Women could be, and frequently were, the main targets of some AG/NRM/LH activities. However, limiting programs to women only is likely to exclude some of the early adopters and did not/does not guarantee that all the poor and more food insecure in a community will be reached, as the SC/Bangladesh program (FY 2005–FY 2010), which initially focused its LH program on the target group for its MCHN program (households with pregnant and lactating women and children under two), learned. FFW and asset and/or cash transfers, on the other hand, to be cost effective need to be means tested. That is, they need to be targeted to the poorer, more insecure households and individuals that have more need for such assistance. Food and cash for work can be self-targeted to the poor and food insecure by setting the value of the ration below the prevailing wage rate in rural areas. Food rations are sometimes more attractive to women, and programs have also found that they can attract more women and poorer women by setting a low value on the ration.

Interventions focused on reducing chronic child malnutrition. Many MCHN programs implemented during the FAFSA-2 time period focused their activities on the households in the community that had malnourished children (the *recuperation* model), while others concentrated on the poorer households. There is now evidence from research, including

⁴⁷ Considerable information exists on the technology adoption process based on years of research in the United States and in developing countries. This topic is also discussed in more detail in Section 4.3.2.1 on “Crop Production and Productivity.” Several Title II program evaluations also argued that being more inclusive, including in the implementation of the AG/NRM components, helped programs avoid exacerbating social tensions in a community.

USAID/FFP-supported research in Haiti (see Section 3.6.1.4 on the PM2A study) and from the FAFSA-2 (see Section 6.4.5) that the recuperation-only model is less effective than programs that focus more broadly on all children under two and pregnant and lactating women in a food insecure community (the *prevention* model). Another rationale for age-based targeting of children is that in the food insecure rural communities where Title II programs work, even households in the upper-income quintiles may be food insecure and their children’s growth faltering, which means that these households can also benefit from social and behavior change communication (SBCC) to improve IYCF practices, as well as from supplementary feeding.⁴⁸

3.4.3 Improving the Integration of Program Interventions

3.4.3.1 Rationale for the Integration of Technical Programs

The rationale for viewing the integration of AG/IG and MCHN activities as a better practice stems from a recognition by many in the development community of the links between poverty (i.e., lack of income), lack of access to food, and undernutrition (see Figure 1.1). Poverty and lack of access to sufficient food can be important underlying causes of undernutrition, as a number of studies have

⁴⁸ The FAFSA-2 concludes that a strong case can be made for using a conditional food or cash transfer to MCHN beneficiaries in the 1,000-day window. Food transfers in particular can play an important biological role in improving mothers’ and children’s dietary intake at a critical stage of growth and development in food insecure communities. The use of conditional food or cash transfers is also frequently necessary to compensate mothers for the time spent participating in MCHN activities and also as an encouragement to improve feeding practices, because the positive impact of this behavior change on children’s cognitive development, health, and nutritional status is less visible in the short term. This is in contrast to the agricultural sector, where paying farmers in food or cash as an incentive to apply recommended practices on their own lands is generally not a good idea because farmers are able to directly benefit from the results of their decisions and because the feedback between the action—planting a recommended seed variety, for example—and the results—a larger crop—tends to be more visible and timely. (Also see discussion in Section 4.5.4 on “Sustainability.”)

shown.⁴⁹ However, increased incomes alone often do not translate into improved family diets, if families lack information on the importance of as well as what constitutes a more nutritious diet and do not purchase and consume better diets. Nor do increased incomes translate into less child undernutrition, if IYCF and hygiene practices are poor and families lack access to water, sanitation, and health services. The latter situation is illustrated by the high prevalence of stunting in middle- and upper-income quintiles in a number of the USAID/FFP focus countries.

3.4.3.2 Guidance Promoting Greater Technical Integration

Various attempts were made during the FAFSA-2 time period to promote the integration of AG/LH/IG/Non-AG IG and MCHN activities within Title II development programs, at the community level in particular. Better program integration was promoted in several of the FSCFs (Bangladesh, Burkina Faso, and Malawi, for example) as a way to create synergies and increase impact. However, the evidence base in favor of integrating technical programs is relatively slim. The request for applications (RFA) for the FY 2011 Title II Non-Emergency Food Aid Programs made no reference even to the desirability of multi-sector programs, while the RFA for 2012 programs called for applicants to provide an estimate of how many beneficiaries will benefit from more than one sector (for multi-sector applications). “Awardees are also encouraged to use a Venn diagram to show how many beneficiaries are expected to overlap across sectors” (2012 RFA, pp. 8–9).

⁴⁹ Alderman, H. et al. review evidence that income growth helps improve both food demand and nutritional outcomes. The authors also argue that “despite the importance of income growth as a factor in reducing malnutrition, it is, by itself, almost surely unlikely to meet the needs of the coming generation of children...and a combination of growth and specific nutrition programs will be needed” (2000). Ecker, O. et al. argue that economic growth is good, especially during the earlier stages of development when growth can help “reduce the prevalence of calorie deficiencies,” but that “growth—whether driven by the agricultural or non-agricultural sectors—is insufficient to address child malnutrition and reduce micronutrient malnutrition in all their dimensions” (2012).

3.4.3.3 Evidence from Programs in the FAFSA-2 Universe

Many of the final evaluations reviewed by the FAFSA-2 team also made reference to the value of integrating MCHN and AG/IG activities. However, it was difficult for the FAFSA-2 team to determine the extent to which this type of program integration was actually taking place in the field, since only a few programs provided information on this practice.

Joint evaluations of the four Title II programs in Guatemala (2006) and four programs in Haiti (2007) measured the extent to which the same households received AG and MCHN interventions (see Figure 3.16). In Guatemala, 70 percent of families participated in MCHN; 26 percent in AG and IG activities; and 20 percent in FFW, infrastructure, democracy, or other activities. In Haiti, 74 percent of households had a member that participated in health activities (range of 46–92 percent across the four Awardees). The best integrated coverage was achieved by WV, with 92 percent of households having a member participating in the HN activities and 26 percent in the AG activities.

Other Awardees reported on integration at the community level, not the household level. In the CRS/Ethiopia program, for example, only 38 percent of communities were to receive both HN and AG/NRM. The SC/Uganda final evaluation has a useful

Figure 3.16. Percent of Households in the Title II Development Programs in Haiti and Guatemala Participating in Health and Nutrition vs. Agriculture Interventions

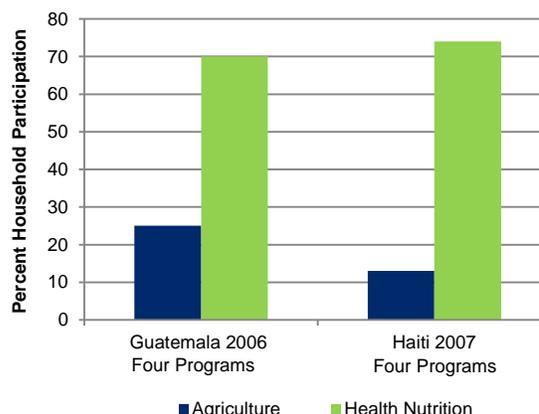


table on integration. Only 18 percent of program communities (40/226) got more than two of the nine project components. The final evaluation of the CRS/Madagascar program stated that 30 percent of the target communities (42/142) were fully integrated, i.e., received all four components.

Only the Bangladesh and Bolivia programs reported on the food access or nutritional impact of integrating AG and IG with MCHN. The final evaluation of the SC/Bangladesh program (FY 2005–FY 2010) found that the program almost achieved its nutritional goals in the unions where they did both interventions (i.e., food access [LH] and food utilization [HN]), while the nutritional improvement was minimal in unions where they did just HN and no LH. CARE/Bangladesh (FY 2005–FY 2010) documented a positive correlation between the household dietary diversity score (HDDS) and the number of project components in which the household participated. These examples of in-depth analysis of the impact evaluation survey data, disaggregating results to compare different intervention packages, are better practices and should be done more often. The joint final evaluation of the Bolivia programs also concluded that the impressive reductions in stunting and underweight achieved were due to doubling or quadrupling incomes plus effective community-based growth promotion (CBGP), SBCC, and health services in the same communities.

3.4.3.4 *Constraints to Expanding Program Integration*

Better program integration is probably one of those things that is easier said than done. The documentation available for the programs did not provide much in the way of insights into the practical constraints to improving program integration, but discussions with Awardee staff with field experience did.

Resource constraints came up in a number of discussions, for example. If Title II MCHN components have to cover larger geographic areas to reach a critical mass of children under two than when their objective was to reach all

children under five, this has implications for their AG/IG components and whether resources will be sufficient to enable them to expand the coverage of their AG/IG components so that a significant percentage of their communities will be able to benefit from both sets of interventions. Or if a Title II program has to decrease the area in which its MCHN program operates to increase the size of its MCHN ration, does this mean that it should also reduce the number of communities covered by its AG/IG activities? Differences in the coverage and capacities of host governments to deliver health and agricultural services in Awardees' target areas can also affect program costs and decisions about program coverage and integration. There are also differences in the underlying logic of how these programs operate, with the AG/IG programs seeing technology adoption and market participation as a dynamic process that starts with a smaller group of early adopters and expands over time, with the rate of expansion depending on the suitability and profitability of the technology being promoted. This is in contrast to the MCHN programs, which tend to be focused on providing complete service coverage of a predetermined population group. These differences can result in the AG/IG and MCHN programs operating on a different time frame, leading to Awardees having to make difficult choices in designing their programs between an exit strategy that has programs exiting from communities when specific benchmarks are reached or one that maintains program integration at the community level. In short, trade-offs abound and, in the real world, decisions with respect to program integration also need to be balanced against other objectives, including achieving desirable levels of coverage for the individual components. This is especially the case in a resource-constrained environment. These issues arise in the program design, proposal/application review, and implementation phases.

More information on the actual benefits and impact of program integration would help USAID/FFP and Awardees define the right balance among sectors and interventions. More information on the effectiveness and impact of different approaches to program integration would also be useful. The arguments for

integrating programs at the community level, rather than at the household level, are stronger, in part because well-designed and -executed commercially oriented AG/IG programs frequently have multiplier effects that can lead to increases in incomes of non-participant households. There is also evidence from the FAFSA-2 universe that the programs that were successful in increasing household incomes and reducing child undernutrition got the basics right. That is, they focused first on the development of strong, commercially oriented, agricultural-based IG programs and strong community-based MCHN programs focused on the application of the Essential Nutrition Actions (ENA) in the first 1,000 days.

3.4.4 Adding a Risk and Vulnerability Dimension to Development Programs

The Strategic Plan committed USAID/FFP to reorienting its programs to focus more directly on the vulnerabilities of the food insecure—individuals, households, and communities—“focusing more on prevention and helping countries, communities and households cope and manage risk better.” Risk, as defined in the Expanded Conceptual Framework in the Strategic Plan, includes natural shocks and economic, social and health, and political risks (see Figure 2.1 and Box 3.3). This commitment to adding a risk and vulnerability dimension to the development programs was put into effect in a

number of different ways after the adoption of the Strategic Plan.

3.4.4.1 Creating a New Technical Sector

USAID/FFP created a new technical sector in FY 2006 that Awardees can use to report on the amount of resources they are devoting to emergency preparedness and disaster management activities (see Box 3.4). In FY 2009, only 4 percent of the Title II development resources were spent on this category worldwide and only 5 percent of the total resources allocated to Africa. Fewer than 200,000 people were estimated as directly benefiting from these programs worldwide (out of 6.2 million Title II program beneficiaries), but 95,000 of them (49 percent) were in Africa. Countries that reported using resources for these purposes included Bangladesh (SC), Burundi (CRS), Chad (Africare), Ethiopia (FH and REST), Guatemala (CRS and SHARE), India (CRS), Mali (Africare and CRS), Mozambique (ADRA, SC, and WV), Niger (Africare and CRS), and Zambia (CRS).

3.4.4.2 Early Warning and Response Systems

More emphasis was also given to programs contributing to “enhancing community resiliency” by helping communities develop (improve) early warning and food security information systems and/or disaster preparedness and mitigation plans

Box 3.3. Source of Risk for Title II Target Populations Identified in the USAID/FFP Strategic Plan

“Risks, as the expanded food insecurity framework makes clear, come from many sources. Food supply can be affected by climatic fluctuations, depletion of soil fertility, or the loss of a household’s productive assets. Factors that can disrupt access to markets include changes in policies or global terms of trade, a disruption of markets during crises, or risks stemming from the insecurity of non-farm incomes. Food access can be negatively affected by physical insecurity stemming from conflict, loss of livelihood or coping options (such as border closings that prevent seasonal job migration), or the collapse of safety-net institutions that once protected people with low incomes. Factors that can impair food utilization include epidemic diseases, lack of appropriate nutrition knowledge or socio-cultural practices that affect access to nutritious foods according to age or gender. Political risks, including the lack of good governance, can exacerbate natural, economic, social, and health risks.”

Source: USAID/FFP Strategic Plan, 2005.

Box 3.4. USAID/FFP Definition of Its “Emergency Preparedness/Disaster Mitigation” Technical Sector

“Objectives include improving the ability of communities and other partners to prepare for and mitigate the effects of disasters, including both natural disasters and complex emergencies. Activities include efforts to enhance the capacities of national host-country authorities, humanitarian assistance providers, and local communities to engage in disaster reduction and response activities, including early warning information systems and disaster response plans.”

Source: USAID/FFP Annual Results Reporting Guidance for FY 2009.

and the capacity to implement them.⁵⁰ USAID/FFP also added an indicator to the Performance Management Plan (PMP) for Awardees to use to assess performance with respect to the development of early warning and response (EWR) systems—“Percent of Title II assisted communities with disaster and early warning systems in place.” In FY 2007, the first year that the indicator was required, only 30 percent of the Title II-assisted communities had disaster and early warning systems in place, but by FY 2009, this had increased to 78 percent (FY 2009 Standardized Annual Performance Questionnaire [SAPQ] database).

Some programs were much further ahead in the development of early warning systems than others. For example, the CARE program in Bangladesh, which had a relatively long history of helping improve the early warning and disaster response systems in the communities where it was/is working, worked with national-level organizations to help

⁵⁰ This was one of the illustrative activities included in the USAID/FFP Strategic Plan under the heading: “To help communities increase their capacity to predict and respond to shocks,” p. 73.

develop and/or update national-level disaster early warning systems. Others were just getting started in 2007 when FANTA did a review for USAID/FFP of the experiences that Awardees were having with the introduction of *Trigger Indicators and Early Warning and Response Systems in Multi-Year Title II Assistance Programs* (Mathys, 2007).

The FANTA report identified the characteristics of EWR systems (see Box 3.5) and described the characteristics of the community-based EWRs included in the review as ranging from being largely external to being genuinely community managed. The report also noted a tension on the part of Awardees between maintaining sufficient control over food security information to ensure technical rigor in the system and working with and through partners to promote local ownership and sustainability. It is not surprising that community-based EWR systems are often not truly community managed in the sense of communities (and their local leadership or representatives) actually playing a leadership role in developing the systems and indicators, ongoing data collection, analysis, interpretation, and use or response. Rather, community EWR systems may collect data at a community level (local governments and community-level monitors and community members may even conduct tabulations), but Awardees usually control the analysis and linkages to the response. The FAFSA-2 team was able to visit community EWR systems in Bangladesh and Guatemala. In Bangladesh, the community groups that the team met with were very focused on the natural disasters that were most likely to affect their communities. The groups were highly organized and linked in with the regional and national systems, which is not surprising in a country that has to deal with serious floods and cyclones on almost an annual basis. In Guatemala, one of the programs was clearly driven by the Awardee, and in one of the communities visited, the team was skeptical that the system would be sustainable given the large number of indicators that community members were being asked to report on, many of which seemed to be more useful as descriptors and were not actionable by the communities or local authorities.

Box 3.5. Characteristics of Early Warning and Response Systems

According to a FANTA-2-sponsored review, “early warning and response systems broadly encompass vulnerability analysis, monitoring, food security scenario development, assessment, action (e.g., contingency and response planning, humanitarian assistance) and continuing institutional and network strengthening.”

Source: Mathys, 2007, *Trigger Indicators and Early Warning Response Systems in Multi-Year Title II Assistance Programs*, p. 8.

3.4.4.3 Trigger Indicators

The concept of “trigger indicators” (see Box 3.6) was first introduced in the USAID/FFP FY 2006 Annual Proposal Guidelines and defined in more detail in the FY 2007 Guidelines.⁵¹ The idea was that these indicators would give Awardees a greater degree of flexibility and make it quicker and easier to respond to emerging crises and shocks in their operating areas. This was expected to be particularly true in the case of slow onset and subnational crises, where national emergency declarations might not be issued and where the Awardee may be in the best position to detect any indicators of deteriorating food security conditions. Prior to 2006, to respond to an increase in food needs due to a shock, Awardees had to divert resources from their development programs to the emergency response. While this approach facilitated a rapid response to new food

⁵¹ This concept was further elaborated in the FY 2008 Guidelines as follows: “Where specific types of shocks and emergencies are predictable in a country, FFP prefers that these be identified and planned for in MYAP proposals as trigger indicators. In these cases, when predicted emergency indicators are triggered, the [Awardee] will respond in the manner indicated in the proposal. In some cases, however, when unforeseen emergencies occur, SYAPs [Single-Year Assistance Programs] may be approved apart from an existing MYAP to respond” (p. 24).

needs, Awardees, in making this decision, ran the risk of undermining their ability to accomplish the objectives of their development programs, especially in the event that USAID/FFP did not reimburse them for the resources that were diverted.

Considerable time and effort was spent on elaborating the trigger indicator concept. USAID/FFP commissioned FANTA-2 to undertake a review of the Awardees’ experiences in developing these indicators (Mathys, 2007). In 2010, USAID/FFP published an Information Bulletin on “Trigger Indicators in Multi-Year Title II Assistance Programs” (USAID/FFP Information Bulletin [FFPIB] 10-01). Several Missions (e.g., Haiti) also requested specific TA from FANTA-2 to build trigger indicators into ongoing development programs. Awardees also invested considerable time and effort in identifying potential shocks in each of their target areas; defining potential indicators and response thresholds; and then setting up the systems needed to collect, monitor, and analyze the data. And much of this work had to be done and basic agreements reached between USAID/FFP and Awardees at the proposal/application approval stage.

The team also interviewed a number of USAID/FFP staff, in Washington and in the field, several of whom suggested that trigger indicators were likely to be useful only in the case of slow onset emergencies,

Box 3.6. Definition of Trigger Indicators

“Trigger indicators are used to signal the emergency threshold at which MYAP awardees should shift activities to respond to a shock affecting the MYAP target community. By utilizing trigger indicators and the emergency response they signal, awardees will be able to respond quickly to food security emergencies in MYAP-targeted communities.”

Source: USAID/FFP, 2010.

such as drought, as opposed to natural disasters, such as floods or cyclones. Others pointed out that trigger indicators were useful only as a response mechanism in areas of a country where the Title II development programs were located. This may not be a problem in some countries, such as Bangladesh, where there is considerable overlap between the Title II programs and the areas that are most vulnerable to natural disasters as well as the areas with the most serious chronic food insecurity. In other countries, there may be very little overlap; in Guatemala, for example, the areas most subject to drought are in the east and the areas of highest chronic food insecurity are in the western highlands. In Mozambique, the areas most subject to droughts are in the south and west and the areas with the most serious chronic food insecurity are in the center and north.

Several USAID/FFP staff members described the trigger indicator concept as one that was interesting and seemed to have promise but turned out to be difficult to operationalize, and the FAFSA-2 was unable to identify any cases where trigger indicators were actually used. Other interviewees suggested that trigger indicators were no longer necessary, given other changes that had taken place since the idea was first introduced. These included recent procurement changes (including the use of Annual Program Statements for Emergency Programs), which have made it much quicker and easier for USAID/FFP to respond to emergencies, a point that was made by both Washington-based and field staff, and the introduction of the Emergency Food Security Program, through which International Development Assistance funds are used to support cash transfers, food vouchers, and/or local and regional procurement. Others in Washington also argued that the transfer of responsibility for USAID's FEWS NET⁵² to USAID/FFP, which took place after the USAID/FFP Strategic Plan was adopted, means that they have much better early warning information from FEWS NET now than they did prior to the transfer, which also lessens the need for trigger indicators.

⁵² See Section 3.6.1 for more information on FEWS NET.

3.5 Finding the Right Balance between Food and Cash Resources

One of the more important issues that USAID/FFP had to deal with during the FAFSA-2 time period was to find the right balance between food and cash. The Title II program was the largest source of USG resources available to focus on food insecurity during the FAFSA-2 time period, as was pointed out in the USAID/FFP Strategic Plan (p. 39), and the main resource available to the program was/is food. On the other hand, as was initially recognized in the 1995 Policy Paper, cash was/is also necessary to pay for all of the complementary inputs that are essential ingredients to a successful Title II development program, including TA and training activities and the provision of inputs and other services. These needs for cash had led to a major increase in the levels of monetization during the time period covered by the 2002 FAFSA, with the percent of commodities being monetized increasing from a little more than one-quarter of the commodities made available to the program in 1994 to three-quarters in 2001 (FAFSA, Bonnard et al., 2002, p. 27). The ramifications of increased monetization were discussed in the 2002 FAFSA and a number of the issues identified continued to be of concern when the work began on the USAID/FFP Strategic Plan in the early 2000s.

3.5.1 Using Food in Direct Distribution Programs

Given the issues being raised about monetization, USAID/FFP decided to use its 2006–2010 Strategic Plan as a vehicle for putting more emphasis on the use of food as food in its development programs, as well as in its emergency programs. USAID/FFP also decided that it wanted food to be used in ways that had positive impacts beyond just feeding people. So arguments were also included in the Strategic Plan in support of giving more emphasis on the use of food to:

- **Enhance physical capital** through the use of FFW to pay for labor on public works

- **Enhance human capital** through the provision of food as take-home rations to encourage greater participation in MCHN activities and to supplement inadequate diets

Efforts to increase direct food distribution were not very successful, however, as an analysis of data from the AERs on the allocations of food to FFW and MCHN activities indicates. In both cases, the tonnages of food used in these activities declined sharply over the FAFSA-2 time period. If one excludes Ethiopia, which is a special case (see Section 5.1.2 and Box 5.2), Title II development resources devoted to FFW activities declined from almost 100,000 MT in FY 2003 to less than 20,000 MT in FY 2009 (see Figure 3.17). The amount of food used in MCHN programs also declined during the FAFSA-2 time period, from almost 90,000 MT in FY 2003 to a little more than 50,000 MT in FY 2009 (see Figure 3.18). What is particularly surprising is the relatively little amount of food that was used in MCHN programs in Africa—an average of approximately 10,000 MT per year during the FAFSA-2 time period—given the high rates of acute and chronic malnutrition in many of these countries (see Chapter 6 on MCHN).

3.5.2 Combining Food with Other Resources

The USAID/FFP Strategic Plan also recognized that non-food resources to complement the food were critical to the achievement of the Strategic Plan’s objective. The Strategic Plan also concluded that “[m]obilizing sufficient non-food resources to complement food aid will be one of FFP’s greatest challenges under this strategy” (USAID/FFP Strategic Plan, p. 41).

3.5.2.1 Monetization

Monetization remained a major source of cash resources for Title II development programs throughout the FAFSA-2 time period. USAID/FFP was more successful in managing the monetization levels during the FAFSA-2 time period, however, maintaining levels at an average of approximately 62 percent of total Title II development resources between 2002 and 2010 (see Figure 3.19), with

Figure 3.17. Trends in the Use of Title II Food in FFW Activities

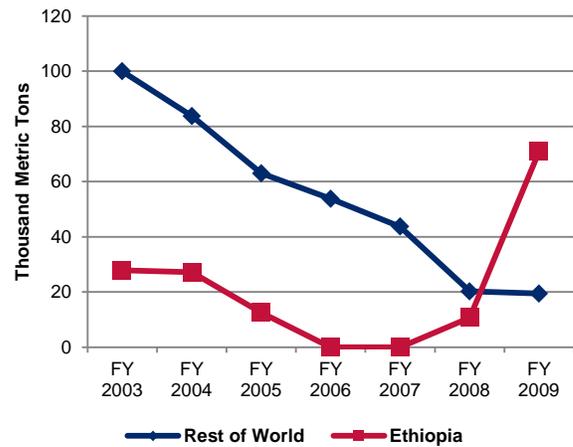


Figure 3.18. Trends in the Use of Food to Support MCHN Activities

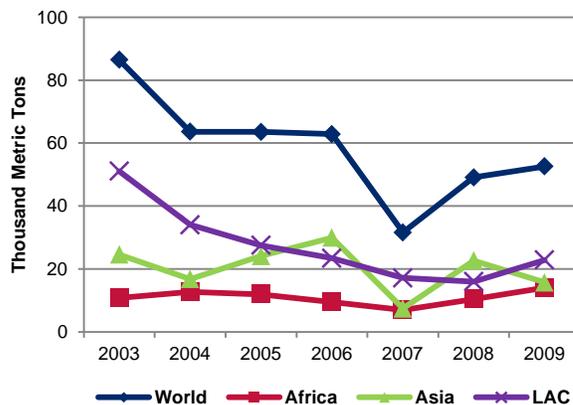
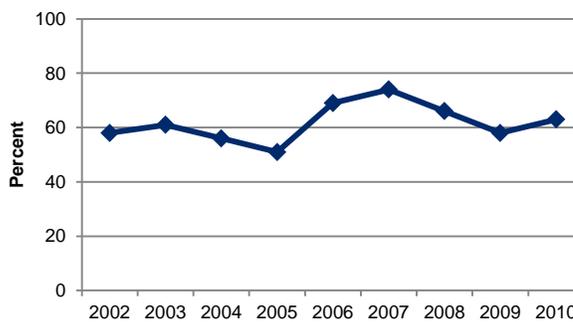


Figure 3.19. Percent of Title II Development Resources Monetized during the FAFSA-2 Time Period



the level exceeding 70 percent in only one year, i.e., FY 2007. Factors that helped USAID/FFP accomplish this were changes in the 2008 Farm Bill that expanded the acceptable uses of Section 202(e) funds⁵³; the introduction of PM2A; and access to Community Development Funds, which became available in FY 2010.

With the creation of the BEST Project (see Section 3.6.1.3), it is also clearer now what needs to be done to keep the potential disincentive effects of monetization under control. BEST Project analyses have laid out the conditions that need to be met to minimize the disincentive effects on local market prices. This includes the need to ensure that the monetized commodities are sold at a “fair market price” (defined as the import parity price) and in a volume that would not be expected to cause disruption of normal trade patterns.

3.5.2.2 *Efforts to Access Other USAID Resources for Development Programs*

The importance of getting access to additional USAID resources to complement the food resources available in Title II programs was first raised in the 1995 Policy Paper, under the rubric of resource

⁵³ See Section 2.1 for a brief discussion of the legislative history of the Title II program and FFPIB 11-01, of October 15, 2010, for additional information on Section 202(e) and eligible uses.

integration, and repeated in the 2002 FAFSA and the USAID/FFP Strategic Plan. But USAID/FFP has had more success in achieving greater program integration with Mission strategies than it has had in co-programming resources.

Many of the co-programming problems appear to have been procurement issues. Early attempts to add DA resources to the Title II transfer authorizations did not always work, and some more recent attempts by Missions to provide DA resources directly to Title II Awardees through a non-competitive waiver have ended up with Missions having to compete these activities under a separate RFA, with the hope that one or more of the Title II Awardees would win one or more of the awards (on their own and/or as part of a consortium). This was the case in Mozambique, when the Mission tried to integrate its DA resources with the final round of Title II programs (FY 2008–FY 2012/13). This was also the situation that the Bangladesh Mission faced at the end of 2011, when it tried to add some of its FTF funds to the two Title II programs that overlap geographically with its FTF programs. USAID/FFP has more flexibility than Missions when it comes to getting waivers for non-competitive procurement in emergencies (see Box 3.7), and waivers for non-competitive procurements in Missions may also be easier to come by in situations in which programs are in the process of coming out of an emergency situation. The most recent attempt to facilitate the

Box 3.7. Automated Directives System (ADS) Section 303 Requirements for International Disaster Assistance and Title II Programs

“USAID may award without competition new or follow-on awards, or amend existing awards, for disaster relief, rehabilitation or reconstruction assistance provided under section 491 of the Foreign Assistance Act and for emergency food aid under Title II of the Food for Peace Act without competition following the written determination that competition is impracticable by the Director of the Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance or the Director of the Office of Food for Peace for awards within their respective areas of responsibility on an award-by-award or disaster-by-disaster basis. Following such a determination, no other requirements of this section ADS 303.3.6.6 apply.”

integration of USAID/FFP and Mission resources can be found in the USAID/FFP’s FY 2012 RFA for Haiti.⁵⁴

3.6 Technical Assistance and Capacity Building Mechanisms

As part of its efforts to improve program performance in the field, USAID/FFP committed itself to learning more about what works in its field programs and why (Strategic Plan Sub-IR 1.3: “Evidence base for more effective policy and program approaches improved”) and to strengthening the capacity of its partners in key technical sectors in particular (Strategic Plan Sub-IR 1.4: “Technical excellence and innovation supported”). These activities were included under the first IR—“Global leadership in reducing food insecurity enhanced”—but many activities supported under these two sub-IRs were designed to improve the performance of field programs. This is why the decision was made to include some information, although brief, about these activities and their accomplishments in the FAFSA-2.

3.6.1 Creating an Evidence Base for the Development of More Effective Programs

In 2003, USAID/FFP had only two mechanisms in place to call on for technical support: FANTA, which is described below, and a contract with AMEX, which was not included in this assessment because its primary function was/is to provide institutional support. Two new technical support mechanisms added during the FAFSA-2 time period were FEWS NET, a project that was transferred to USAID/FFP in 2006 as part of a broader effort to improve USAID’s

response to the growing number of emergencies in the world,⁵⁵ and the BEST Project, a pilot project launched in 2009.

3.6.1.1 Food and Nutrition Technical Assistance Project

USAID/FFP began funding FANTA in 1998. This GH project has been implemented through several cooperative agreements, initially with the Academy for Education Development (AED) and currently with FHI 360. The current cooperative agreement runs through February 7, 2017.

FANTA played a key role in the formulation of the USAID/FFP Strategic Plan. It also worked to strengthen Title II programs throughout the program cycle of assessment, strategy, design, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation, and made major contributions to the state of the art in these areas based on academic research and a strong evidence base. Notable examples were the development of new indicators that became standard for measuring the results of Title II, FTF, and GHI programs, including HDDS, the Household Hunger Scale (HHS), the Women’s Dietary Diversity Score, and the Minimum Acceptable Diet for children from 6 to 24 months of age. Other major contributions include PM2A research and the PM2A Technical Reference Materials, and the Exit Strategy Study, which was still under way at the time the FAFSA-2 report was being finalized.⁵⁶ The USAID/FFP website has a link to FANTA’s website, which contains numerous reference materials for use by Awardees and USAID/FFP staff to improve Title II program design, implementation, and M&E.⁵⁷ A brief review of these publications indicates that considerable effort was directed to M&E, with fewer products focused on design and implementation.

⁵⁴ This document includes the following statement: “The U.S. Agency for International Development in Haiti (USAID/Haiti) and FFP anticipate that a portion of this \$35 million of FY 2012 funding may be replaced with complementary cash resources (up to \$12 million) from USAID/Haiti, subject to the availability of funds.” http://transition.usaid.gov/our_work/humanitarian_assistance/ffp/fy12.finalcsi.pdf.

⁵⁵ This was one of the specific management improvements anticipated in the USAID/FFP Strategic Plan.

⁵⁶ See Section 3.6.1.4 for further details on these studies.

⁵⁷ See <http://www.fantaproject.org>.

3.6.1.2 *Famine Early Warning Systems Network*

FEWS NET is implemented through a private sector contractor (Chemonics) that works in tandem with several USG agencies—the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS), the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA), the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), and USDA. FEWS NET also collaborates with international, regional, and national partners to develop and disseminate accurate, timely early warning and vulnerability information on emerging and evolving food security issues. It develops its predictions by combining remote analyses of crop conditions and agricultural production, including satellite-based information, with on-the-ground monitoring, using household surveys and observations of local socioeconomic conditions. Its reporting products, maps, data, and satellite imagery are posted on the project’s website.⁵⁸

FEWS NET was initially created in response to the 1985 famine in Ethiopia, and prior to its transfer to USAID/FFP, it had been located in and received most of its financial support from the USAID Africa Bureau. Two objectives for the transfer were to expand FEWS NET’s geographical coverage and to strengthen its linkages with and increase the relevance of its products to USAID/FFP. In 2007, FEWS NET had 23 country and regional offices, in Africa, Central Asia, and Central America and the Caribbean covering 25 countries. Resource constraints, including those stemming from the loss of DA financing from USAID’s Africa Bureau, put financial pressures on the FEWS NET program, which resulted in, among other things, the closing of five offices during 2008 and 2009.

This financial pressure seems to have had a positive side, however, in that it also stimulated FEWS NET to look for ways to make its products more relevant to its new funder—USAID/FFP—and to find more cost-effective ways to produce those products. Initiatives started after the transfer include:

- FEWS NET’s FY 2008 launch of a monthly “Price Watch” publication that reports on staple food prices in key markets in urban and town centers in food insecure countries as another type of advance warning of potential problems that USAID/FFP can use for planning purposes.
- The initiation of a “remote monitoring” system in FY 2009, which FEWS NET is using to develop early warning information on significant changes in food availability and access in a country that could lead to a food security crisis without having to maintain a physical presence in that country. This system combines information available from the existing FEWS NET global monitoring system with information produced by organizations already working in the target country, which FEWS NET partners with, supplemented by a minimum number of on-the-ground visits. The system, which was initially pilot tested in three countries—Burundi, Tajikistan, and Yemen—provided important information on the accuracy of nutritional surveys in Yemen and the food security implications of a drop in remittances in Tajikistan.
- The development of another new reporting product—the Food Assistance Outlook Briefing—which provides warning of potential food assistance needs six months into the future. The purpose of these medium-term warnings is to help USAID/FFP improve its advance planning and reduce the amount of time it takes to respond to an emergency.
- Other activities designed to increase its relevancy to USAID/FFP, including providing more reports on a monthly basis and providing briefings to USAID/FFP staff prior to their monthly budget/call forward reviews.

3.6.1.3 *Bellmon Estimation Studies*

In FY 2009, USAID/FFP launched a three-year pilot project to help USAID comply with the requirements of the Bellmon Amendment, which include requirements that adequate storage facilities be available in recipient countries at the time

⁵⁸ See <http://www.fews.net>.

commodities are to be shipped to prevent them from spoiling or being wasted and that the distribution of these commodities in the recipient countries does not result in a substantial disincentive or interference with domestic production or marketing in those countries.⁵⁹ The Bellmon Amendment also requires that the USAID Administrator certify that these requirements have been met before shipments can be made.

Prior to the BEST Project, USAID made determinations about the market impacts of its Title II development programs based primarily on the Bellmon analyses made by the Awardees (i.e., the recipients of the grants). Under the BEST Project, one organization has the responsibility for doing the Bellmon market analyses for all Title II development programs. This organization—Fintrac—has expertise in commodity markets, is independent from the Title II development program, and reports directly to USAID/FFP. As of November 2011, BEST Project analyses had been completed for 14 countries (see Box 3.8).

The methodology used for BEST Project analyses includes identifying the commodities that have the potential to be monetized, reviewing trends in imports and local production to ensure that the commodities that are being considered have been imported in sufficient quantities and that local production is insufficient to meet demand, ensuring that there are no official barriers or restrictions on these commodities, reviewing local market structures and previous and planned food aid initiatives, and examining the likelihood of achieving fair and competitive market prices. Fintrac’s methodology also includes field visits to obtain additional data and interviews with stakeholders in the recipient countries, such as Awardees; commercial importers; and potential buyers, including millers and processors. BEST Project analyses also include an

⁵⁹ These requirements were included in the Bellmon Amendment, which was passed in 1977 as an amendment to Public Law 480. A third requirement that “the importation of U.S. agricultural commodities and the use of local currencies for development purposes will not have a disruptive impact on the farmers or the local economy of the recipient country” was added at a later date.

assessment of the potential disincentive effects of direct distribution programs on local production and markets, if the amounts of food brought into an area are too large or poorly timed.

Although a few initial glitches were mentioned to the FAFSA-2 team, the vast majority of stakeholders interviewed, USAID staff in particular, were in agreement that this new arrangement was/is a major improvement over the previous arrangement. The quality of the analyses has improved greatly, and having one organization do the market analyses for all countries has resulted in much more consistency in the analytical methodology used as well as in the reporting structure and format. Putting an

Box 3.8. Bellmon Estimates Completed as of November 2011

- Bangladesh BEST, August 2009
- Burkina Faso BEST, August 2009
- Burundi BEST, November 2010
- DRC BEST, January 2010
- Ethiopia BEST, November 2010
- Ethiopia BEST Annex, November 2010
- Ethiopia BEST Addendum, November 2010
- Guatemala BEST, October 2011
- Haiti Market Analysis, January 2011
- Haiti Market Analysis Annex, January 2011
- Liberia BEST, August 2009
- Madagascar BEST, December 2008
- Malawi BEST, December 2008
- Niger BEST, October 2011
- Niger BEST Annex, October 2011
- Sierra Leone BEST, August 2009
- Southern Sudan BEST, August 2009
- Uganda BEST, July 2011
- Uganda BEST Annex, July 2011

organization in charge that is not directly affected by the results of its own analyses, as the Awardees were, has also reduced the potential for conflicts of interest.

3.6.1.4 *Special Studies*

To expand the evidence base for making program improvements, the Strategic Plan also committed USAID/FFP to “support selected research activities to validate best practices, especially those related to problem analyses and program design and implementation, and clarify key theoretical models on food aid and food security” (USAID/FFP Strategic Plan, p. 53). Several key assessments and research activities were initiated during the FAFSA-2 time period, including the research on PM2A (Menon et al., 2007; Ruel et al., 2008); the Food Aid Quality Review (FAQR) (Webb et al., 2011a and 2011b); and the Exit Strategy Study, which is nearing completion. The FAFSA-2, which is the subject of this report, also falls into this category.

PM2A. In 2002, IFPRI, Cornell University, WV/ Haiti, and FANTA began work on research designed to compare two methods of targeting and delivering food-assisted MCHN programs in Haiti. The first model used a recuperative approach that provided nine months of food and other health and nutrition assistance to children six months to five years of age that were identified as underweight. The second model used a preventive approach that targeted all pregnant and lactating women and children 6–23 months of age with similar food and health and nutrition services until they were 24 months of age. The results showed that the prevalence of undernutrition was lower in communities receiving the preventive program, which confirmed that population-based interventions that aim to prevent undernutrition can be much more effective than those that target children once they have become undernourished (i.e., recuperative programs). With these results in hand, USAID/FFP began promoting prevention programs more vigorously, starting in its Proposal Guidelines for FY 2009, and branded this approach as PM2A, following the model tested in Haiti (FANTA, 2010). Additional USAID-funded research on PM2A is ongoing in the CRS/Burundi and MC/Guatemala Title II programs (FY 2009–

FY 2014) to better define if household rations increase impact and, if so, the most cost-effective ration size, as well as the minimum duration of participation.⁶⁰ The potential role of specialized foods, such as lipid-based nutrition supplements (LNS), is also being tested; all of this research is being conducted by FANTA.

FAQR. In April 2009, USAID/FFP commissioned the two-year FAQR by Tufts University’s Friedman School of Nutrition Science and Policy. Prepared in consultation with industry, PVOs, technical experts, U.N. agencies, and others, the review aimed to identify cost-effective ways to better match the nutritional quality of U.S. food aid with the nutritional requirements of target populations in developing countries applying new understanding in nutrition science, including the importance of optimal dietary intake during the 1,000 days from pregnancy through the first two years of life (Webb et al., 2011a).⁶¹ The recommendations of the FAQR are summarized in Box 3.9.

The GAO recently completed a performance audit on the extent to which the U.S. government’s international food assistance programs: “(1) meet the nutritional needs of intended recipients, and (2) maintain the quality of commodities throughout the food aid supply chain” (GAO, 2011). While the focus was emergency food aid, many of the findings and recommendations are relevant to development food aid programs, which distribute the same commodities through the same food aid supply chain. One example is the need to evaluate the performance of specialized food products and issue guidance on their use, track key quality indicators, and evaluate food packaging specifications for durability.

Exit Strategy Study. USAID/FFP required Awardees to include a sustainability or exit strategy in their proposals throughout the FAFSA-2 time period in an attempt to increase the likelihood of lasting program impact, but also realized that

⁶⁰ The PM2A research programs are not in the FAFSA-2 universe because they are studies with recent start dates. However, the FAFSA-2 team met with MC and discussed PM2A during the visit to Guatemala.

⁶¹ See <http://nutrition.tufts.edu/research/food-aid-quality>.

Box 3.9. Food Aid Quality Review

The FY 2010 *International Food Assistance Report* (USAID and USDA, 2011) summarized the FAQR recommendations, stating “the implementation of these recommendations should dramatically enhance the nutritional impact of food aid rations in both emergency and development settings:

- Reformulating fortified, blended foods by enhancing micronutrient content and adding animal protein to improve both absorption and growth;
- Improving both composition and use of fortified vegetable oil;
- Improving fortified cereals used in general food distributions;
- Using ready-to-use products when appropriate;
- Modifying programming guidance so that the quality improvements can be used more cost-effectively to achieve specific nutritional outcomes; and
- Changing the processes used to approve new products, develop specifications, procure, and monitor the use of food aid commodities.”

Source: USAID and USDA, 2011; Webb et al., 2011a.

little information existed on what constitutes a successful sustainability or exit strategy or how to go about implementing one (Rogers and Macías, 2004a and 2004b). To remedy this gap, USAID/FFP commissioned Tufts University in 2009, under the auspices of FANTA-2, to conduct a special assessment of the situation after program closeout in four countries: Bolivia, Honduras, India, and Kenya. Each country study includes a review of each of the planned exit strategies, the implementation

of these strategies during the final year of the program, a qualitative review of developments one year after each of the programs ended, and in-depth qualitative and quantitative assessments two years after each of the program endings. The goal is to provide guidance to USAID/FFP and its Awardees on general approaches to planning for program exit, identification of key elements of a successful exit strategy, and how to build sustainability into program design from the beginning. This study was in its final phase at the time the FAFSA-2 was written, but some of the preliminary findings are discussed in this report.

3.6.2 Support for Technical Excellence and Innovation

The main steps that USAID/FFP took during the FAFSA-2 time period to strengthen the capacity of its Awardees are described below.⁶²

3.6.2.1 Institutional Capacity Building Grants

From FY 2003 to FY 2008, USAID/FFP provided Institutional Capacity Building (ICB) grants to 14 Awardees that also had Title II programs. The goal was to build technical capacity in implementing Title II food security and nutrition interventions. According to the Awardees, the ICB grants, and tools developed under them, were very useful. However, there was not enough time in the grants to complete training and to roll out use of the new tools in the field. Most Awardees said that they continued to expand the use of new tools in the field after the grants ended. They reported that there were spin-off benefits from these tools beyond Title II because they are also used in other Awardee programs.

In 2008, on behalf of USAID/FFP, FANTA assessed the effectiveness of ICB grants in meeting USAID/FFP’s capacity building objectives. The review

⁶² The FAFSA-2 team was not able to assess the quality of capacity strengthening activities undertaken by the Awardees in their field programs from program documents or from the limited number of programs that the team was able to visit in the field and the short duration of these visits. However, it is well understood that effective capacity strengthening is a key input to successful and sustainable programs, and Awardees spend considerable time and resources on it.

found that Awardees generally used ICB grant funds to develop tools, disseminate them to field staff, and support training as intended by USAID. It also concluded that the training supported by the grants often did not result in solid technical mastery at the local, program level. Most of the benefits of the ICB grants accrued to each Awardee. There was little evidence of networking with other Title II Awardees, sharing of tools, or inter-organizational learning. Some Awardees said that it had become harder to collaborate since 2003 when the mechanism USAID/FFP had funded for a number of years for that purpose, namely the Food Aid Management (FAM) Consortium of 15 Title II Awardees, disbanded when USAID funding ended.

3.6.2.2 *Technical and Operational Performance Support Project*

With the conviction that a central, inclusive, stakeholder-driven, field-oriented network could lead to greater capacity strengthening and consensus building than individual grants to each Awardee, USAID/FFP ended the ICB grants and launched the TOPS project at the end of FY 2010. The purpose of the TOPS project is to improve the design and implementation of Title II programs by fostering collaboration, innovation, and knowledge sharing around food security and nutrition promising practices from the field. In 2010, USAID/FFP awarded a Leader with Associate-type cooperative agreement for the TOPS project to SC and a consortium of the CORE Group, FH, MC, Technical Assistance to NGOs (TANGO), and a number of other collaborating and resource partners. The project formed the Food Security and Nutrition (FSN) Network—an email group—and has held several technical knowledge sharing and capacity strengthening events. The priority technical areas are commodity management, nutrition and food technology, agriculture, social and behavior change, M&E, gender integration, and knowledge management. Task forces directed by TOPS project lead advisors are working on a number of these topics. There is also a small grants component. The TOPS project and FANTA collaborate closely as they both work to improve the effectiveness of Title II food aid.

Several of the TOPS project FSN Network task forces have defined key competencies for Title II Awardee staff responsible for M&E, social and behavior change, and nutrition and food technology. These are intended to be used for self-assessment to identify competency gaps. The TOPS project is gathering and reviewing tools that can support skill building in these competency areas. The Social and Behavior Change Task Force has conducted several “Designing for Behavior Change” training workshops for an audience of multi-sector agriculture and nutrition programmers. However, FAFSA-2 identified a greater and more urgent need for offering this type of training to Awardee staff working on improving IYCF practices in Title II programs and strengthening their formative research skills, where there is a bigger gap.

3.7 Program Management

3.7.1 Office Management and Operations

After approval of the Strategic Plan, USAID/FFP made major improvements in its business practices, many of which the Strategic Plan had recommended as part of its commitment to the implementation of “strategic management and streamlined approaches.” Since USAID/FFP deals with commodities as well as dollars, “the management of these resources comes with many complications and regulations that other USAID offices do not have to deal with,” as pointed out in the Strategic Plan. The extent of the changes and how rapidly they were implemented at a time of high staff turnover, including at senior management levels, is remarkable. The FAFSA-2 team also found that the consensus among staff is that USAID/FFP operates more effectively and transparently as a result of these management improvements.

3.7.2 Reorganizing the Washington Office

The Washington office was reorganized in 2006 and the Emergency and Development Program Divisions were replaced by two regional divisions, as recommended in the Strategic Plan, to better integrate emergency and development activities. Based on interviews with USAID/FFP management

and staff, the reorganization has helped USAID/FFP respond more quickly and effectively to differing regional needs and has reduced the inconsistencies and fragmentation that occurred previously when program responsibilities were divided among two divisions and two CBOs. There are limits, however, to how far USAID/FFP can go in erasing the distinction between its emergency and development programs, since these distinct categories are still used in the Congressional Presentation, authorization, and appropriation processes.

3.7.3 Strengthening Program Management and Oversight

USAID/FFP has also made considerable progress since 2006 in strengthening program management and oversight. This includes adding staff in its three African regional offices and placing at least one Food for Peace Officer in each of its focus countries to manage the Title II programs. USAID/FFP also put more effort into strengthening the capacities of its own staff during the FAFSA-2 time period. It encouraged staff to take advantage of other training opportunities at USAID, including the course for Agreement Officer's Representatives (AORs), and supported the development of tailored courses, workshops, and manuals focused on the specific needs of its staff. More proactive management and oversight on the part of USAID/FFP CBOs and field staff and involving other USAID Mission staff in Title II program activities also fostered program complementarities, synergies, and integration. Joint visits by USAID/FFP field officers and other USAID staff to field programs was one of the better practices observed during the FAFSA-2, as was the participation of USAID/FFP officers in field visits for Title II program assessments and evaluations.

3.7.4 Aligning USAID/FFP Management and Operations with the Rest of USAID

Significant advances were made in aligning basic management systems and practices, including terminology, the filing system, and the project funding cycle, with the way things are done in the rest of USAID. The recent adoption of country

program/portfolio reviews open to all staff and monthly budget/pipeline reviews increased transparency and improved program oversight within USAID/FFP, according to many staff. These changes, which are common practices elsewhere in USAID, were expected to promote more consistency across divisions and USAID/FFP CBOs in the way that policies are interpreted and programs managed. Soon after the 1995 Policy Paper was issued, USAID/FFP began taking steps to increase consistency among its development programs at the country level in the location of programs, program objectives and interventions, and time frames, including having all programs in a given country start and end in the same fiscal year. These and other changes led to proposals that were more focused and fully developed and to a more rigorous review process. In late 2010, USAID/FFP made the final conversion to using an RFA mechanism for competing the 2011 Title II development programs, which USAID/FFP management expected to lead to better project proposals and more effective program implementation in the field.

3.8 Cross-Cutting Issues

3.8.1 Women, Gender, and Gender Equity

According to the 2002 FAFSA, most of the development programs included in its review claimed to be “gender sensitive and inclusive of women.” However, the FAFSA criticized performance in the field, concluding that, with few exceptions, Awardees needed “to place more emphasis on overcoming the obstacles to incorporating women as active economic agents and full participants in their programs.” This emphasis was repeated in the development Proposal Guidelines that USAID/FFP issued for the FY 2003 and FY 2004 development programs in separate discussions in the subsections on “Women in Development” in the sections on “Agency Policies.” These subsections made two basic points: (1) “women and girls suffer the differential impact of intra-household food distribution and, therefore, may suffer from higher rates of malnutrition” and (2) programs using Title II resources “should seek

to maximize the role of women and improve the inequitable distribution of household resources, including food, to girls.”

The USAID/FFP Strategic Plan took a slightly more nuanced approach to the gender issue. It did note that “women are generally recognized as being among the most vulnerable to food insecurity along with young children and the elderly.” But it also recognized that there is a tension between women’s roles as the major participants in and beneficiaries of the community-based MCHN programs, which are among the most important Title II interventions in the HN sector, and their roles with respect to household livelihoods and in community organizations, which vary greatly across countries and regions depending on culture and tradition. The Strategic Plan ended its gender discussion with two requirements: (1) that Awardees need to make sure that their “program designs include strategies for addressing gender issues and objectives” and (2) that “all livelihood programs, agricultural programs in particular, will need to be designed and implemented in ways that recognize women as producers and economic agents in their own right with their own unique constraints and opportunities.” The first requirement was added to the USAID/FFP Proposal Guidelines for FY 2005 through FY 2009, i.e., that Awardees should describe a gender strategy in their proposals to ensure equitable participation by both men and women in the design, targeting, and management of their development programs.

More than 60 percent of the proposals reviewed as part of the FAFSA-2 assessment included a discussion of gender, and the majority of these discussions were short, usually only one paragraph. Major issues raised in these sections included: the importance of women in the agricultural sector, including as farmers (30 proposals); the long distances that women usually have to walk to fetch water and firewood (19 proposals); the high female rate of illiteracy (15 proposals); and men’s control over the distribution of household resources, including food (13 proposals).

According to USAID/FFP beneficiary data cited earlier, women accounted for 50 percent or more

of the beneficiaries in all eight technical sectors in FY 2009 (see Figure 3.10). What the FAFSA-2 team saw on its field visits was also apparently quite different from the experience of the 2002 FAFSA. That is, at every program in every country visited, the Awardees seemed to be going to great lengths to make sure that women in their communities were involved in a wide range of project activities, including many agricultural and livelihood activities. And, in fact, team members were concerned in several cases that the amount of time women were spending in all the groups that the projects had created—producer groups, marketing groups, village savings and loan (VSL) groups, Non-AG IG groups, and mother care groups—was not leaving them enough time to take care of their own well-being and the health and nutrition of their young children and families. (See Chapter 6 for a further discussion on this issue.)

To deal with concerns related to women’s workloads, USAID/FFP began to add a requirement to its Proposal Guidelines, beginning in FY 2007, that new Awardees include a description in their proposals of how their activities, including agricultural activities, will affect women’s workloads. This issue did not seem to be on the agendas of program staff in any of the programs visited, even though women’s workloads can be critical, including because of their potential negative effects on child malnutrition (see the example in Section 6.4.8).

USAID’s and USAID/FFP’s understanding of and guidance on gender equality and equity have advanced over time. This can be seen in the guidance provided in the FSCFs. (See Box 3.11 for information on the guidance that was included in the Bangladesh FSCF, for example.) Other important developments include the preparation, with FANTA assistance, of Occasional Paper #7, *Gender Integration in USAID Bureau for Democracy, Conflict, and Humanitarian Assistance, Office of Food for Peace Operations*, released in 2011 (McNairn and Sethuraman), and the addition of stronger language in the FY 2010 Proposal Guidelines that states that “[u]nderstanding gender constraints as they affect food security and integrating gender considerations into food

Box 3.11. Integrating Gender Equity in Program Design and Implementation

“A better understanding of the gender constraints, how gender issues will affect the various dimensions of their programs and their ability to achieve their food security objectives, should inform the design and implementation of the Title II programs. Men’s and women’s needs and constraints will differ, and they will not always be affected in the same way by project interventions. Adding a gender lens to these programs means understanding and taking these differences into account in the design and implementation of the Title II programs. As such, integrating gender equity into programming is context specific. Mainstreaming gender into a program does not mean that a program has to become exclusively or even primarily focused on women. It is about understanding the social context in the program areas sufficiently to transform the enabling environment at the community level so that men and women can dialog, participate and gain equably from programs’ efforts in food security and nutrition. Integrating gender equity in this way will facilitate and deepen program impact, and along the way will likely promote gender equity as well.”

Source: Bangladesh Food Security Country Framework FY 2010–FY 2014 (van Haeften and Moses, 2009, p. 87).

aid programming is essential and a mandatory requirement as noted in [Automated Directives System] 201 to ensure, promote and sustain food security” (USAID/FFP, 2009, p. 9).⁶³ Key recommendations in the Occasional Paper include: developing comprehensive guidelines specific to

⁶³ Similar emphasis was given to gender equality and equity in USAID/FFP’s FY 2011 and FY 2012 RFAs.

gender and food security for use in improving the monitoring of Title II programs, strengthening staff competencies on gender integration in food security, and supporting pilot efforts to determine how best to empower women in food assistance programming. Gender equality, as defined in USAID’s 2012 Gender Equality and Female Empowerment Policy, “concerns women and men, and it involves working with men and boys, women and girls to bring about changes in attitudes, behaviors, role and responsibilities at home, in the workplace, and in the community. Gender equality means more than parity in numbers or laws on the books; it means expanding freedoms and improving overall quality of life so that equality is achieved without sacrificing gains for males or females” (USAID, 2012, p. 3).

3.8.2 Urbanization

The 1995 Policy Paper gave priority to programs in rural areas, since food insecurity was predominantly a rural problem at that time. And this rural focus continued throughout the FAFSA-2 time period.

Most countries have become more urbanized since the mid-1990s, however, and the numbers of poor and food insecure living in urban areas have also increased. These trends were recognized in the 2002 FAFSA, which included a recommendation that USAID/FFP consider the merits of Title II development programs with an “urban focus and prepare guidance on the role of agriculture in promoting better food security in urban and peri-urban environments.” The USAID/FFP Strategic Plan also recognized that there could be “cases where strong arguments could be made for supporting urban-based activities” (see Box 3.12). This was the case with respect to the FH and SC programs in Bolivia that had urban FFW components (which are discussed in more detail in Box 5.3).

The numbers of poor and food insecure in urban areas are increasing rapidly, including in a number of the USAID/FFP priority countries. According to U.N. projections, for example, more than 50 percent of the populations of Liberia and Guatemala and more than 40 percent of the populations of Haiti,

Box 3.12. Urbanization in the USAID/FFP Strategic Plan

“The assumption underlying the 1995 ‘Food Aid and Food Security Policy’ was that food insecurity is primarily a rural problem. Now, with many developing countries rapidly urbanizing and urban poverty increasing, there will be cases when strong arguments can be made for supporting urban-based activities. However, increased urban poverty in itself will not cause a structural reorientation of Title II activities away from rural areas if country-specific analyses of risks and vulnerabilities indicate that this is where the priorities still lie.”

Source: USAID/FFP Strategic Plan, p. 41.

Mauritania, Mozambique, and Sierra Leone will be living in urban areas in 2015 (World Bank, 2009). The urban poor in developing countries are particularly vulnerable to high food prices and greater price volatility. This was the case during the food price crisis in 2007 and 2008. And high and volatile food prices are likely to continue to be problems in the foreseeable future, according to predictions by both FAO and IFPRI.

Adding an urban focus to the Title II development program also might be one way to increase the use of food as food in the program, which would be consistent with the emphasis given to this objective in the USAID/FFP Strategic Plan. Urban FFW programs have been out of favor since the 1995 Policy Paper, but one lesson learned from the two Bolivian urban FFW components is that “[i]t is easier logistically and more cost effective to implement FFW in an urban area where projects and beneficiaries are more concentrated than in rural areas, especially in Bolivia, where populations and priority infrastructure projects are likely to be more dispersed geographically” (van Haeften et al., 2009, p. 253). Urban FFW programs can also be designed to contribute to longer-term objectives, such as

increasing worker skills (improving human capital) and the physical environment in which the workers are living (improving physical and human capital), in addition to helping poor people, many of whom may be recent migrants from rural areas, to meet their immediate food needs.

3.8.3 The Environment

All USAID projects, including Title II development programs, must comply with Environmental Regulation 22 CFR 216, which requires them to be environmentally sound in design and management. Regulation 216 provides guidelines for writing an Initial Environmental Examination (IEE), in which all Title II development program activities are analyzed to ensure that no harm comes to the environment in the execution of these activities. Mitigation measures are also written into these documents to minimize or eliminate possible negative environmental impacts—the Environmental Threshold Decision. The IEE, once final clearance is granted by the USAID DCHA Bureau’s Environmental Officer, is also the key environmental management tool for the Awardees, in addition to host government laws and regulations. These tools not only guarantee environmental compliance with laws, but certify that projects are designed with mitigation measures that should be executed throughout the implementation phase of the program. A quality design is expected to reduce potential environmental damage and offer alternatives that could be less costly to implement and help guarantee sustainability.

Environmental compliance is an important issue, but one that the FAFSA-2 team was not able to spend much time on. Neither the FAFSA-2 team nor the majority of individual program evaluation teams included environmental specialists, which limited the amount of information available on environmental issues and compliance. The result was that little information was available to the FAFSA-2 team about program performance, how and how well programs were monitored, what steps were taken to ensure that the appropriate mitigation measures were

taken and when, and whether the negative effects that had been identified were avoided.

Most Title II development programs involved large amounts of education and training activities across technical sectors, which fell under the categorical exclusion category. Infrastructure activities, which included roads, dams, canals, soil and water conservation structures, tube wells, latrines, and a variety of different types of buildings, were given negative determinations, usually with conditions. Types of potential adverse effects that were typically identified included: soil erosion; land degradation; deforestation; damage to habitat and biodiversity; contamination of waterways and aquifers; increased flooding and/or water logging; and damages to human health due to improper use and disposal of ITNs, agricultural chemicals, and human waste. One issue that was raised in several final evaluations had to do with training in the proper use of agricultural chemicals. In these cases, the Awardees were not promoting the use of these chemicals, but their client farmers were using them on their own, and the evaluations recommended that the Awardees add a training module to their programs to ensure that their client farmers learned how to use these chemicals properly.

3.8.4 Sustainability

It was beyond the scope and resources of the FAFSA-2 to explore in any depth the sustainability of Title II development programs *after* they ended. Additionally, sustainability of the Title II development programs *after* they ended is the focus of the Tufts Exit Strategy Study, which was already under way at the time the FAFSA-2 began. Achieving sustainability is extremely important, however, and the FAFSA-2 team took advantage of the analytical framework developed for the Tufts study to better understand some of the sustainability issues that arose during the assessment.

The distinction between the sustainability of the people-level impact versus the sustainability of the activities/services producing the impact is an important concept with respect to MCHN programs in the FAFSA-2, while the potential tradeoffs

between immediate impact and longer-term sustainability were found to be critical issues in AG/NRM programs. In the case of MCHN, if a program is able to prevent children under two from becoming stunted, this positive impact will benefit these individuals for the rest of their lives. That is, the long-term individual impact is sustained, even if the mothers revert back to traditional feeding practices for their next child and/or the system that was put into place to achieve this result does not last beyond the life of the project, for example, when community health workers (CHWs) are no longer paid and cease to provide services after a project ends. Ideally, one would like to see mothers continuing positive child feeding practices and workers continuing to deliver services long after programs end, but the FAFSA-2 takes the position that having a positive impact on the nutritional status of the first cohort of children is of immense benefit in its own right. Whether the MCHN interventions are sustainable beyond one generation is unknown and would require research. It is known, however, that there are intergenerational nutritional improvements in birth weight, through improving the nutrition of young girls and pregnant women (see the UNSCN *6th Report on the World Nutrition Situation*, 2010).

In AG and NRM activities, economic incentives (i.e., profits) are key to getting farmers to adopt new technologies and practices as well as to keep using them. One way to encourage farmers to adopt project-recommended technology packages is to provide these inputs to farmers for free or at subsidized prices⁶⁴ and, in the case of NRM structures and practices, to pay farmers for the amount of time that they spend in their fields building these structures and applying these practices. These subsidies can help Awardees increase the numbers of new technology adopters

⁶⁴ Input subsidies can have their rationale in the short run, including as a way to demonstrate the value of a promising new technology and/or as a way to reduce the risk to client farmers of trying a promising but not yet fully proven technology. Longer-term disadvantages include encouraging dependencies on the part of farmers and discouraging input dealers in the private sector from supplying these goods, reducing the likelihood of their availability once the Title II project ends. (See Chapter 4 for further discussion on this issue.)

(the percentage of adopters is one of the major outcome indicators for AG/NRM components), but these are artificial incentives and there is no guarantee that farmers will continue to use these new technologies and practices once a project is over and the subsidies and payments end. Having an impact in the short run, in cases where subsidies are used, in other words, is not necessarily an indicator of success in the longer term and may actually make it harder for a project to achieve a sustainable impact, or as the Tufts Exit Strategy Study recently concluded, the “provision of free resources poses risks to sustainability.”⁶⁵

3.9 Conclusions and Recommendations

3.9.1 Conclusions

Program Designs

- The Results Framework for IR 2—“Title II program impact in the field increased”—in the USAID/FFP Strategic Plan was focused on protecting and enhancing individual capabilities and livelihood and community capacities. In the proposals prepared prior to the Strategic Plan, programs were organized by technical sector (e.g., AG/NRM and MCHN) or by the three food security pillars (i.e., food availability, access, and utilization). The few programs that tried to use the new expanded framework included in the Strategic Plan as a basis for organizing their programs found it unworkable and reverted to the more traditional frameworks.

Program Resources

- The majority of Title II development resources continued to be allocated according to the priorities initially established in the 1995 Policy Paper. That is, the majority of the resources

⁶⁵ Beatrice Rogers and Jenifer Coates, “Effectiveness of Title II Program Exit Strategies: Conclusions and Recommendations,” a PowerPoint presentation given at a Title II stakeholder meeting on February 7, 2013.

continued to be allocated to programs in Africa and to the two major technical sectors: AG/NRM and HN.

- USAID/FFP was very successful during the FAFSA-2 time period in reallocating Title II development resources to a smaller set of more vulnerable (“priority”) countries. This was a major undertaking, and it is quite remarkable that USAID/FFP was able to complete the transition in such a relatively short period of time, and especially for an organization that had very little experience in closing programs.
- The quantities of food used as food in FFW and MCHN programs declined during the FAFSA-2 time period despite the heavy emphasis in the USAID/FFP Strategic Plan on the use of direct food distribution to enhance physical and human capital.

Program Integration

- **Feed the Future.** Title II development programs have the potential to make an important contribution to FTF in countries where the two programs operate and overlap geographically, with both programs benefiting from each other’s presence, creating synergies among and enhancing the impacts of each other’s programs. FTF could build on existing Title II community-based program platforms that reach the most vulnerable populations, increasing the likelihood that the growth in the agricultural sector that its programs are promoting will be “inclusive.” And Title II programs could benefit from the ability of the FTF programs to work on problems and constraints higher up the value chain, for example, and/or in the policy environment.

Creating an Evidence Base for More Effective Programming

- Although some progress was made during the FAFSA-2 time period, USAID/FFP still does not have enough evidence on which types of interventions and approaches work better and which ones do not work so well based

on systematic, rigorous, and independent comparisons of program performance across countries and programs.

- That said, the FANTA and FANTA-2 projects made major contributions to the state of the art in some areas based on applied research and to the development of new indicators that have become standard for measuring the impact of Title II, FTF, and GHI programs. Considerable effort was devoted to M&E, with fewer products focused on project design and implementation.

Planning and Analysis

- The transfer of FEWS NET to USAID/FFP was successful, resulting in USAID/FFP having access to more reliable early warning information earlier, in more detail, and in ways that have made it much more useful to USAID/FFP for advance planning.
- The creation of the BEST Project has also resulted in Bellmon analyses whose methodologies are now consistent across countries and programs, independent, and of consistently higher quality.

Guidance and Technical Assistance

- The preparation of country-specific FSCFs has resulted in a significant improvement in the quality of USAID/FFP's country-specific proposal guidance.
- There is still a lack of guidance from USAID/FFP on what interventions and programs work better, based on cross-cutting programmatic research, and complementary TA to Awardees.
- The need for trigger indicators appears to have been obviated with the transfer of FEWS NET to USAID/FFP and the procurement changes that have made it easier and quicker for USAID/FFP to respond to requests for emergency resources. Broader EWR systems, on the other hand, appear to have real potential as a risk management and responsive program implementation tool and could benefit from additional support to increase their usefulness and likelihood of sustainability in

specific community and country contexts. Efforts to improve the linkages between these systems, which are able to amass more detailed and country-specific early warning information, and FEWS NET would also be useful.

Capacity Strengthening

- The TOPS project got off to a good start facilitating networking and knowledge sharing among Awardees and other stakeholders. However, it remains to be seen if it can overcome the challenge of “competitive isolation” and the reluctance of some Awardees to truly share their tools, what they are doing, and what they have learned. Caution is also needed to be certain that approaches and tools promoted are based on objectively verifiable evidence, or a rigorous, independent review of their effectiveness or utility.

3.9.2 Recommendations

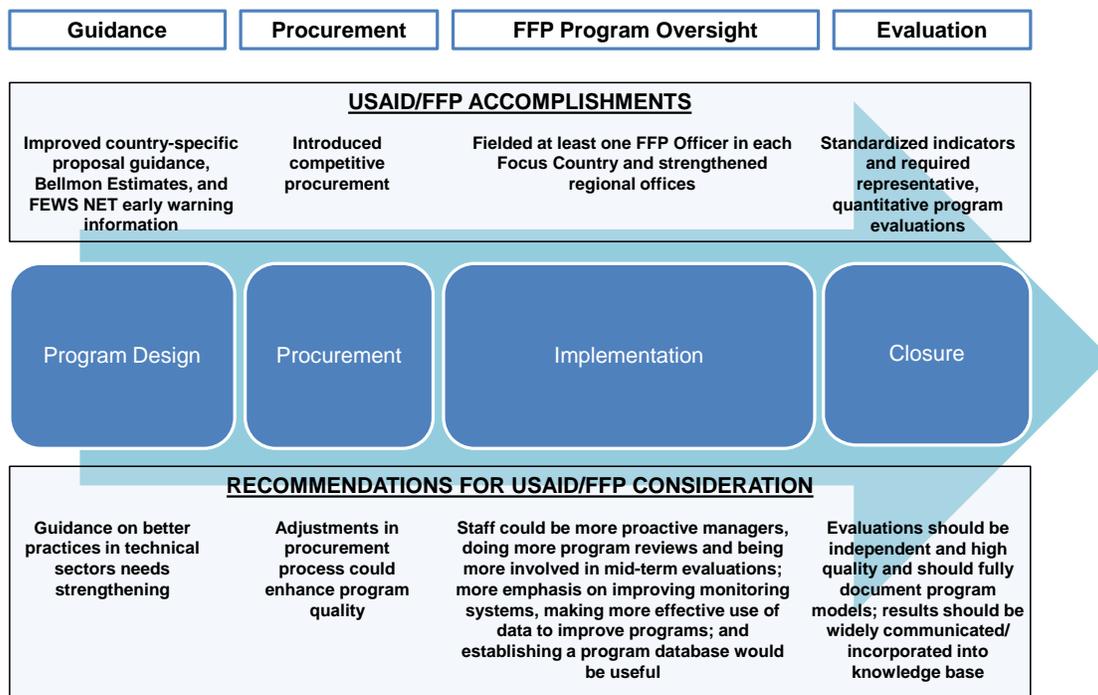
3.9.2.1 Recommendations to Improve Program Performance

USAID/FFP's accomplishments with respect to improving program guidance, procurement, oversight, and evaluation during the FAFSA-2 time period are summarized in Figure 3.20 along with the FAFSA-2 recommendations for making further improvements in program performance in the field.

To Create an Evidence Base for More Effective Programming:

- *USAID/FFP* should develop an applied research agenda and sponsor studies that focus on the implementation of Title II programs in the field to better define what works and what does not work. This should include comparative analyses of program approaches and their effectiveness and cost-effectiveness based on: (1) more analyses of existing reports and data; (2) collection and submission of additional information by Awardees; and (3) more systematic, rigorous, and

Figure 3.20. Improving Program Performance in the Field



independent cross-country case studies and other original applied research. (**Recommendation 1**)⁶⁶

- *USAID/FFP* should not try to do a broad FAFSA once every 10 years, but divide the assessment into annual reviews on one or two technical sectors, program approaches, or management issues (perhaps the “F” program areas or program elements) and go into more depth. Examples of potential topics for more in-depth reviews include assessing program approaches and performance with respect to: (1) community-based EWR systems and (2) targeting to more food insecure districts and communities, including processes, tools, and indicators.
- *USAID/FFP* should conduct a technical review of the major findings coming out of the final evaluations submitted each year—a “mini-FAFSA”—and have technical meetings on the cross-cutting results attended by *USAID/FFP* principals, Awardees, and other stakeholders. The results of these reviews should be disseminated

widely and changes should be made in programs so that they do more of what works and eliminate ineffective approaches. TA could be used to conduct the in-depth analysis and highlight the salient points.

To Improve Guidance and Technical Assistance:

- *USAID/FFP* should provide more guidance, direction, and standardization to the field using the evidence on what works and what does not.
- *USAID/FFP* should ask FANTA to review the FAFSA-2 report and recommendations and suggest what it can do to address them through TA and applied research.
- *USAID/FFP* should provide Awardees with the option, if they win a new agreement in the same country in which they are completing a Title II program, to stay in touch with some of the communities where they used to work to encourage community members to continue the interventions, learn what is not continued and why, and share their findings with *USAID/FFP* and other Title II partners. This will better inform effective sustainability and exit strategies, and

⁶⁶ The numbers after certain recommendations throughout this report are the same as those assigned to the major recommendations in the FAFSA-2 summary report.

nudge community members to continue with activities that they found worthwhile, with their own resources. Such extended accompaniment would add to what is being learned in the Tufts Exit Strategy Study. Encourage Awardees to propose this in their applications and allow some agreement funds to be used for post-graduation community-level follow-up.

To Strengthen Capacity:

- *USAID/FFP* should ask the TOPS project to review the FAFSA-2 report and make recommendations about what it can do to address them.
- *USAID/FFP* should ask the TOPS project to give highest priority in selecting participants for its “Designing for Behavior Change” training to Awardee staff working to improve IYCF practices in Title II programs, where there is a bigger gap and more urgent need than among the multi-sector agriculture and nutrition program audience reached so far. The training should strengthen qualitative research skills. The TOPS small grants program should be used to fund formative research on IYCF practices, especially complementary feeding.

To Improve Program Procurement and Enhance Program Effectiveness:

- *USAID/FFP* should include options for extensions of awards or separate follow-on awards to enable *USAID/FFP* to continue to support high-performing programs beyond five years and up to ten years while complying with the Automated Directives System (ADS) 303.3. This would be consistent with what is known about the time requirements of the AG/NRM programs (e.g., the technology identification and adoption process) and the evidence from the MCHN programs that longer implementation periods are associated with greater impact. **(Recommendation 3)**
- *USAID/FFP* should select the review panel for new Title II applications carefully to ensure appropriate technical expert representation, and give reviewers a “cheat sheet” on interventions

and approaches that *USAID/FFP* is and is not interested in funding because they work better or do not work as well. Provide this same information in the RFA. **(Recommendation 4)**

- *USAID/FFP* should require Awardees to identify up to five key personnel and provide their CVs in applications, not just the Chief of Party’s CV, to ensure programs have sufficient technical expertise in their field staff in: (1) nutrition; (2) agriculture, agribusiness, marketing, and economics; (3) M&E; and (4) gender. **(Recommendation 5)**
- *USAID/FFP* should arrange for Awardees to make presentations during in-country application reviews, a practice followed in some other *USAID* procurements. This presentation, if managed correctly, can help clarify points up front and reduce the amount of time on the preparation of written issues and responses. This presentation might also help clarify the extent to which proposed local staff and key personnel are involved with and understand the proposed program design and implementation strategies. **(Recommendation 6)**
- *USAID/FFP* should ensure substantive changes made to the program description during implementation are approved by the Agreement Officer and formalized in amendments to the agreement. **(Recommendation 7)**

3.9.2.2 *Special Issues*

Enhancing Program Impact on Child Nutrition

As long as high rates of undernutrition among young children is one of the major criteria *USAID/FFP* uses to identify its “priority countries” and reducing undernutrition is one of the main measures of overall program impact, and given the evidence, including from the FAFSA-2, that preventive supplementary feeding for pregnant and lactating women and young children, delivered along with an integrated package of community- and population-based SBCC and essential health and nutrition interventions has the biggest positive impact on nutritional status (see Section 6.4.5), *USAID/FFP* should:

- Require Title II programs in its focus countries to include an integrated, community-based MCHN component and, at a minimum, to provide *preventive* food rations to women during pregnancy and the first six months postpartum and to children from 6 to 23 months in participating communities—or make a very convincing case to USAID/FFP why this would not be advisable and/or feasible. Provision of these rations should be conditioned on the participation of the mothers and children in specified MCHN activities.⁶⁷ **(Recommendation 22)**

Responding to the Increasing Poverty and Food Insecurity in Urban Areas

- The 1995 Policy Paper gave priority to programs in rural areas since food insecurity was predominantly a rural problem at that time. This rural focus continued throughout the FAFSA-2 time period, even though most countries in the FAFSA-2 universe continued to urbanize rapidly and urban poverty and food insecurity increased substantially. The FAFSA-2 concluded that the position on urbanization that was set forth in the USAID/FFP 2006–2010 Strategic Plan remains relevant for now (see Box 3.12), but recommends that USAID/FFP continue to monitor these trends and make readjustments as necessary.

Addressing Environmental Issues More Effectively

- USAID/FFP should consider commissioning a review of the extent to which Title II development programs are being implemented in accordance with Regulation 216⁶⁸ and their approved IEEs or whether further guidance and training is needed to improve compliance and performance in the field.

⁶⁷ When food is directly distributed in Title II development programs, it is generally in the form of a conditional resource transfer. The provision of food to individuals in FFW activities is conditioned on the amount of work they perform, and the better practice in MCHN programs is to condition the food ration on the caregiver’s and child’s participation in specified MCHN activities, as is the case with similar conditional cash transfer programs.

⁶⁸ All USAID projects, including Title II development programs, must comply with Environmental Regulation 22 CFR 216, which requires them to be environmentally sound in design and management.

As part of this assessment, reviewers should also consider whether USAID/FFP should require that an assessment of compliance with Regulation 216 be included in the scopes of work (SOWs) for mid-term and final evaluations of all Title II development programs. **(Recommendation 23)**

3.9.2.3 Two Key Issues for Further Deliberation

Strategic Plan

- Should USAID/FFP prepare a new Strategic Plan? The 2006–2010 Strategic Plan was useful as a frame of reference for Title II development programs during the later years of the FAFSA-2 time period, according to most of the USAID/FFP Washington-based and field staff that were interviewed. Most supported the idea of having a USAID/FFP Strategic Plan, but felt that the current one needed to be updated—not rewritten. If the Strategic Plan is updated, it should include a revision of the results framework for IR.2—“Title II impact in the field improved”—to make it more consistent with the framework being used by FTF. If a new strategy is not advisable, USAID/FFP needs to find another mechanism for disseminating any new guidance developed in response to the FAFSA-2 recommendations, in addition to its annual RFAs.

AG/NRM and MCHN Interventions

- Is there a proper balance between AG/NRM and MCHN programs? The programs in Africa have tended to give much higher preference in resource allocations to AG/NRM interventions at the expense of MCHN, and there are some programs in the Asian and LAC regions that may have erred in favor of MCHN. The FAFSA-2 team does not have a “one size fits all” recommendation with respect to this issue, but it is one that deserves more analysis and discussion to inform guidance.

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