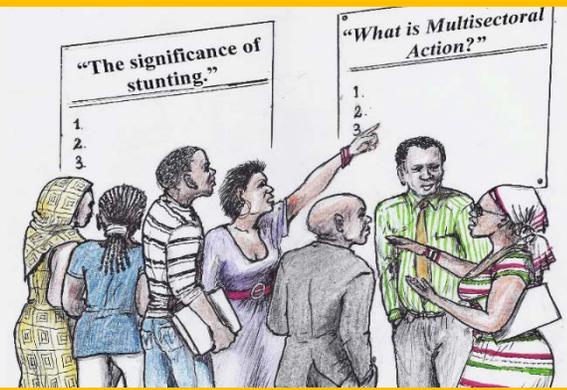


Engagement workshops help District Nutrition Officers expand a nutrition network



Workshops reveal the meaning of 'joint nutrition action'

National guidelines explain how different sectors can work together to improve nutrition. They offer examples of how partners from health, water, education, and other sectors can include nutrition in their existing activities. These tools help District Nutrition Officers (DNOs) and Council members put guidance into action.

Teamwork across sectors is most efficient when key stakeholders have a clear purpose based on shared values and goals. They can work together to find common ground and take joint action to improve health. Multi-sectoral activities that impact nutrition are happening within districts. But these efforts can improve with support from local government.

One way to promote joint nutrition action is through existing Council Nutrition Steering Committees. These Committees meet quarterly and aim to coordinate a multi-sectoral response to nutrition challenges. There have been calls to strengthen Committee membership, terms of reference, and reporting.

Additionally, DNOs can involve individuals across sectors who implement frontline activities. These individuals can improve their capacity by attending a workshop that uses participatory methods for learning.

Participatory methods increase teamwork

A participatory approach brings a group of people together to exchange knowledge and solve problems. Participatory methods can improve project management and strengthen partnerships. They can also lead to more effective dialogue and decision-making. In Tanzania, participatory learning methods boosted refresher trainings for facility-based staff.

As part of the Building Strong Nutrition Systems project, academic mentors supported DNOs in two districts. They conducted a series of one-day engagement workshops for those responsible for joint nutrition efforts. DNOs invited members of the multi-sectoral Council Nutrition Steering Committee and people from local organizations.

"Because of this workshop, I can now see the possibility of how people in the Education Department can work with the Water Department on nutrition issues within schools."

[Workshop participant]

First, workshop facilitators led discussions about nutrition and development challenges in Tanzania. This provided a common understanding of key challenges and joint nutrition approaches. Participants then worked in both large and small groups to share knowledge and experiences. Participants from different sectors described their priorities. Everyone actively discussed challenges and new ways to work on nutrition activities across sectors.

Engagement Workshops, Objectives:

- Share knowledge and strengthen understanding of the linkages between nutrition and other sectors
- Increase visibility, motivation and buy-in for an effective district multi-sectoral nutrition system.
- Identify challenges and opportunities in current planning and implementation.
- Develop priority areas as a team aimed to increase collaboration across sectors.

District leaders shared ideas on how to improve coordination

Participants focused on the need to:

- Improve communication channels and clarify roles and responsibilities
- Create opportunities to review national policy guidelines as a team.
- Increase knowledge and skills of frontline workers for joint nutrition activities.
- Sensitize Committee members to better allocate resources and plan joint nutrition activities.

Engagement workshops allowed the heads of department and community leaders to discuss how sectors can better work together to support joint nutrition action.

During the workshops, DNuOs identified motivated individuals and formed positive relationships. Participants saw the benefits of teamwork. They explored ways for all sectors to work with the DNuO to improve activities and plan programs that better serve the community.

Engagement Workshop, Outcomes:



Discussed the purpose and importance of allotting time and resources to plan for nutrition



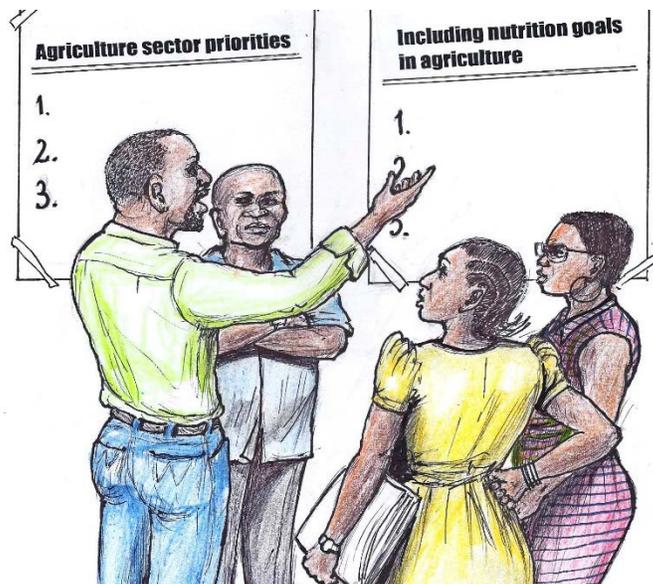
Increased awareness of how to access and apply government guidelines and joint nutrition strategies



Improved understanding of how sectors can add nutrition goals and activities into their current work



Documentation of challenges to collaborating across sectors and identified priority areas to work on as a team



Continued efforts are needed to ensure DNuOs have the support they need to improve nutrition. Participants said the workshops helped motivate them and raise their commitment to nutrition. Continuing to use participatory methods is one way to strengthen joint nutrition planning and a context specific action plan. DNuOs can promote these participatory methods at the ward and village levels, where key programs take place.

“We rarely are able to sit down together to discuss the health and development of our nation. This time has been invaluable to share challenges and successes and the way forward as far as nutrition is concerned.”

[Workshop participant]

Summary of key points:

- ▶ National guidelines include helpful examples of how sectors can include nutrition in their activities.
- ▶ Academic mentors supported DNuOs in two districts to lead one-day engagement workshops. They reviewed evidence and discussed ways for participants to support nutrition across sectors.
- ▶ Through workshops, DNuOs increased awareness of the benefits of joint nutrition activities.
- ▶ Workshops provided an opportunity for councils to show their support for DNuOs to overcome challenges to joint nutrition programs.



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