VOLUME I: MONITORING AND EVALUATION UNDER FEED THE FUTURE

FEBRUARY 2014

NOTE: This document is intended to frame understanding of the Feed-the-Future Results Framework and the three monitoring & evaluation tools being employed: the performance indicators, impact evaluations, and knowledge-sharing feedback process. Please review this document in context of viewing these three other documents: 1) the comprehensive FTF Results Framework document, 2) the Summary Chart of Feed the Future Indicators, and 3) the complete Handbook of FTF Indicator Definitions document.

Overview of Goals and Objectives of Feed the Future

The President's Global Hunger and Food Security Initiative (GHFSI), titled "Feed-the-Future (FTF)," has the overarching goal of sustainably reducing global poverty and hunger. To implement FTF, the United States works with host governments, development partners and other stakeholders who are committed to tackling the root causes of global hunger by increasing agricultural productivity and facilitating efficient market systems to meet the demand for food, increasing incomes so the poor can purchase food, and improving health and nutritional practices to reduce under-nutrition. The Initiative aims to strengthen the capacity of countries and communities to anticipate, prevent and cope with adverse weather, economic downturns and other events that can lead to food crises, reducing the suffering caused by emergencies.

FTF uses management approaches that are effective in low-income countries: developing strategies and interventions in coordination with stakeholders, committing to sound investments through reliable partners, and adjusting program elements based on analyses of performance reports. Experience has shown that in order to meet FTF objectives, host governments must be committed to the effort. Therefore, FTF will focus on countries that have placed high priority on poverty and hunger reduction and have adopted national plans to combat those problems, which are called "Country Investment Plans."

The FTF Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) Approach

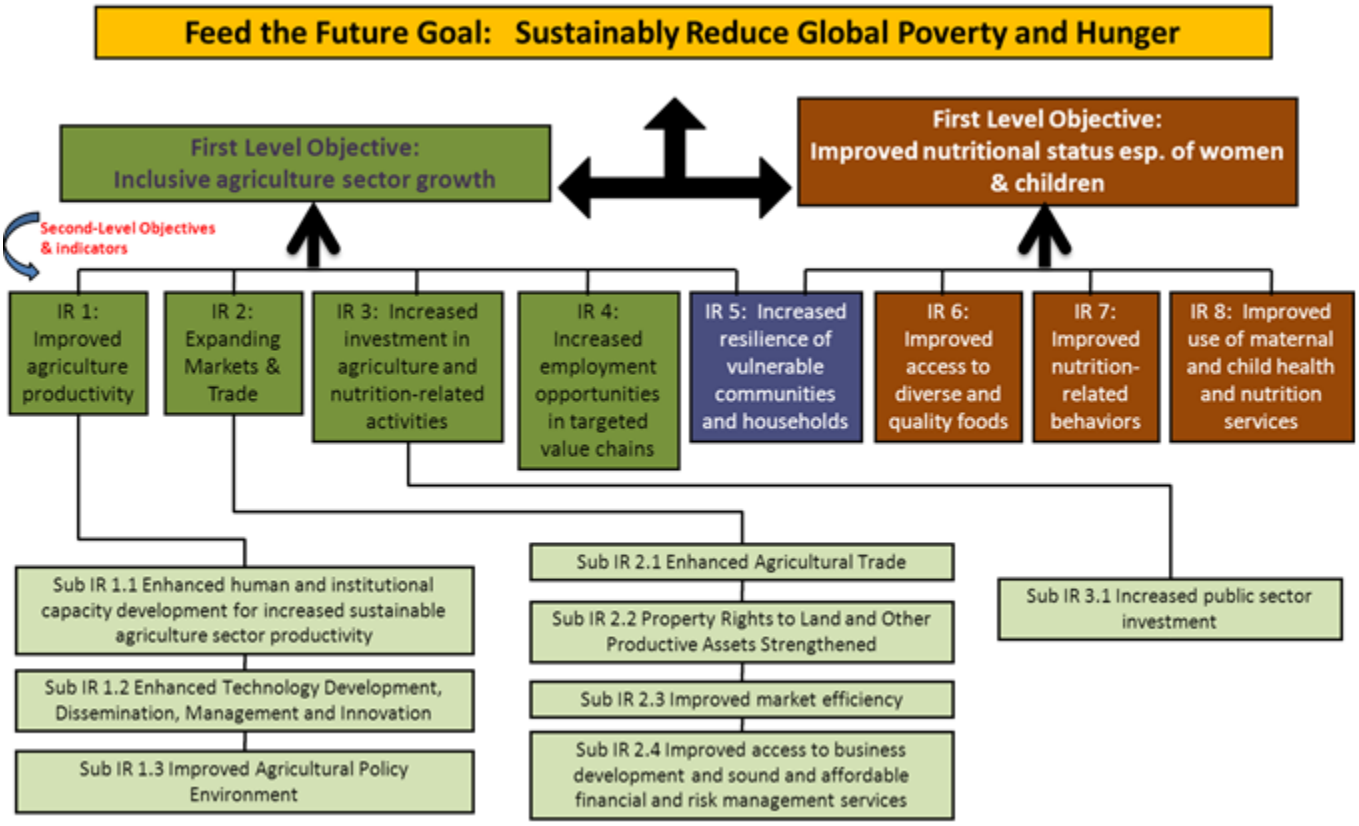
Through this approach, FTF seeks to have growing and lasting development impacts over time. Measuring progress towards the ambitious goal of sustainably reducing hunger and poverty is key. Therefore, we are committed to rigorous monitoring and evaluation of our FTF investments in order to track progress and facilitate results-driven planning and performance-based management. We will regularly assess and learn from the answers to these questions: What are FTF investments buying? Are FTF activities, projects, and programs accomplishing what we intended? Are FTF efforts impacting our overall goal to reduce poverty and hunger? Are barriers hindering the progress or performance of FTF programs? What changes would support broader or deeper FTF program impacts?

To this end, FTF will employ the following monitoring and evaluation (M&E) tools:

(1) The FTF **Results Framework**, which is the conceptual and analytic structure that establishes the goals and objectives of the FTF Initiative;
(2) A performance monitoring process and standard **performance indicators** to track progress toward desired results;
(3) **Local capacity-building** to improve the quality and frequency of data collection and use;
(4) **Impact evaluations** to determine the measureable effects of our FTF investments; and
(5) **Knowledge-sharing** activities to foster learning and use of M&E findings.

(1) Results Framework

The foundation of our M&E efforts is a Results Framework that maps linkages between program activities and their intended outcomes as they relate to the overall goal of sustainably reducing global hunger and poverty. The Results Framework assists in both designing effective programs and measuring progress by providing a structure against which to determine strategies for country-specific programs and by outlining causal pathways toward FTF's end goal. It consists of four levels of desired results that feed into each other from bottom to top: project level results called "Sub-Intermediate Results" feed up into program level Intermediate Results, which feed into two Key Objectives, which lead to FTF's overarching Goal. These causal relationships have been identified and tested through multi-disciplinary research and economic analysis focusing on the reduction of global hunger and poverty. Based on the findings of that research, FTF's Results Framework delineates the milestones that are necessary to achieve as FTF investments pursue the overarching goal.



(2) Performance Indicators and Management

As we structure our FTF investments around the Results Framework, we will employ performance indicators to assess the progress of our work and track changes that are occurring (see the *Handbook of FTF Indicator Definitions*). The 57 FTF indicators measure progress toward each result in the four levels of the Results Framework. Specifically, FTF aims to achieve results that move from **outputs** - tangible and intended products or consequences of an activity; to **outcomes** - the results of those products and consequences; and eventually to **impacts** - medium to long-term effects produced by a project or program that change the development situation of a country[1]. FTF will track this progression of performance through results reporting

[1] As defined by USAID's Automated Directives Service (ADS) 200.6, accessed here: http://www.usaid.gov/policy/ads/200/200.pdf

against indicators from the project level (predominantly outputs), to the broader program level (predominantly outcomes), and the overall goal level (representing impacts).

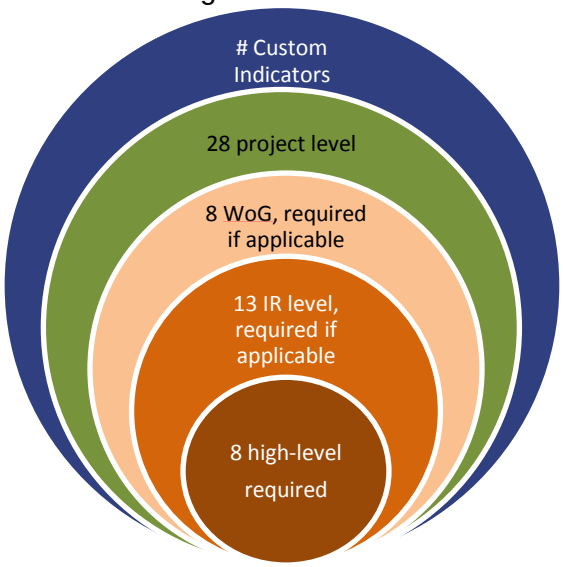
As a means to prioritize FTF investments, each country will first determine which section of the RF is most applicable in their country context and which causal linkages will have the greatest potential for change. While all countries will share the top three layers of the RF (the Goal, First- and Second-level Key Objectives), the specific Sub-IRs (fourth level of the RF) to be examined will vary by country and region. Project-level indicators will then be selected from the set of 57 to best measure progress against the chosen sections of the RF. For each indicator selected, countries will establish baselines, set targets, and routinely track progress toward them. While countries will monitor performance against applicable output and outcome indicators for their projects and programs, an M&E contractor will monitor higher-level impact indicators, such as "prevalence of poverty," to maintain consistency in reporting and reduce workload in the field. Each mission will develop an FTF performance management plan (PMP) or integrate performance management for FTF into existing mission PMPs. FTF implementing partners will develop PMPs for all projects supported by the mission.

Improvements in indicator results toward targets signify progress toward the associated objective and, thus, can be used to monitor our investments. Over time, the comparison of targets against actual results, combined with analysis of planned against actual spending, will provide critical information on the effectiveness of our investments and enable us to make shifts in our programs in order to be more successful. Performance management through these monitoring tools will be conducted at the country, regional, and global level.

Of the 57 FTF performance indicators, 8 are required and 21 are required if applicable for FTF missions in an effort to ensure comprehensive reporting on the priorities and objectives of the Initiative. Many of these indicators will be fulfilled through data collection and entry by M&E contractors, as mentioned above. Missions will use more than the required/required if applicable indicators and may create custom indicators tailored to measure specific projects, when no standard indicator is available.

Of the 21 indicators that are required if applicable, 8 of them have been identified as whole-of-government (WOG) indicators. These are indicators which other USG agencies supporting food security programs and services with non-FTF funding (e.g. MCC, USDA, etc.) have pledged to use, at a minimum, even though they are encouraged to use as many of the 57 as applicable to their work. The M&E team is working with these USG agencies for best coordination in performance reporting.

The following diagram illustrates the various categories of FTF indicators:



Please see the *Summary Chart of FTF Indicators* for a list of all FTF standard indicators with information on:

- ✓ the type of indicator (output, outcome, impact)
- ✓ the level of collection (national level/country context vs. sub-region targeted by USG project), and
- ✓ the responsible data collector (Implementing partners vs. M&E contractor)
- ✓ the designation of the 8 required indicators
- ✓ the designation of the 13 required if applicable
- ✓ the 8 WOG indicators

(3) Local Capacity-Building Investments for Data Collection and Use

All countries require valid and reliable statistics for strategic planning and therefore monitor economic indicators, demographics and other measures of a country's status and welfare. In developing countries this is often accomplished through specialized agencies that are responsible for collecting, processing, and disseminating official statistics. However in many low-income countries, including some FTF focus countries, the work of those agencies and the use of data to build effective policy responses to complex development problems and to monitor progress toward economic and social objectives is not well appreciated. This has become a serious impediment to implementing development strategies. To assure sufficient and appropriate data is collected to measure progress of Country Investment Plan implementation for food security, FTF will advocate and support investment in strengthening national statistical systems and capacity in data use to inform policy, development priorities and program design. Specifically, local capacity building will be a crucial component of the development and execution of impact evaluations, where local groups or host government agencies will be engaged in the process from the beginning to formulate impact evaluation priorities, learn proper evaluation methodologies, and collect and analyze data. In addition, certain tools used for data collection against performance indicators, such as household surveys (e.g. Living Standards Measurement Study) or population sampling (e.g. Lot Quality Assessment Sampling), will include local groups or host government staff, such as the national statistics office, to build capacity to conduct the same methodologies in the future.

(4) Impact Evaluations

While monitoring results through indicators is an important piece of managing performance, impact evaluations are needed to thoroughly understand the changes resulting from FTF programs in the focus communities. Specifically, data collected through program monitoring will track progress and changes in indicators; impact evaluations will then explore if, how, and to what extent FTF programs are causing those changes.

Impact evaluations for FTF's have a two-fold purpose: (1) to strengthen FTF's accountability to stakeholders and (2) to foster learning that will improve the effectiveness of FTF programs. Through impact evaluations, we will learn which results can be attributed to FTF interventions and use this knowledge to inform future program design and development, enabling a feedback loop that is a critical piece of the FTF strategy. Impact evaluations will examine whether and how FTF programs are fulfilling their specific objectives and provide the best available empirical evidence to inform policy and investment decisions that support effective, innovative, and sustainable development practices.

Impact evaluations will use qualitative and quantitative data collection and analysis methodologies and apply experimental and quasi-experimental design to rigorously and objectively examine the impacts that FTF programs have on targeted beneficiaries, as well as test the causal linkages establish in the RF. FTF will prioritize the use of impact evaluations to examine pilot or experimental interventions. Missions should plan to fund impact evaluations as specified in the USAID Evaluation Policy (see Guidance on Impact Evaluations in this M&E Guidance Series).

(5) Knowledge Management: Sharing Monitoring and Evaluation Findings

Systematically sharing findings garnered through monitoring and evaluation will ensure that case studies, best practices, and lessons learned about the effectiveness of different methods are well described and widely disseminated. A variety of approaches will be used, such as reports, briefs, seminars and webinars, to reach a variety of target audiences. Innovative and efficacious knowledge-sharing approaches, such as a centrally-managed knowledge-sharing database, will facilitate the discipline of incorporating feedback into program design, development, and implementation.

Reporting will be done annually to Congress at the country, regional, and global levels and include evidence of learning through our rigorous M&E approaches. In following President Obama's call for transparency and openness in government, FTF is also committed to sharing our progress towards overall goals externally, both with development stakeholders and the general public, potentially through the Feed-the-Future website (www.feedthefuture.gov) or the new Foreign Assistance Dashboard (www.foreignassistance.gov). Overall, through use of the tools and methods described, FTF will demonstrate its commitment to rigorous performance management and sound investments to sustainably reduce global hunger and poverty.