



U.S. GOVERNMENT GLOBAL NUTRITION COORDINATION PLAN 2016–2021

**ANNUAL SUMMARY OF INTERAGENCY PROGRESS
(OCTOBER 2018–SEPTEMBER 2019)**



Cover photo

Kids with saplings. Kaffrine, Senegal. (Andrew Oberstadt for Trees for the Future).

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CONTENTS

Acronyms	iii
Updates on the Coordination Plan’s Operational Structure	2
Progress on Interagency Coordination	2
Reflections on the Coordination Plan Mid-Way through Implementation	6
Priorities and Plans for 2020	8
Annex 1. Global Nutrition Coordination Plan Technical Working Group Structure	10

ACRONYMS

CDC	Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
GFSS	Global Food Security Strategy
HHS	U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
HIV	human immunodeficiency virus
MCC	Millennium Challenge Corporation
NCD	non-communicable diseases
NIH	National Institutes of Health
PEPFAR	U.S. President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief
TWG	Technical Working Group
USAID	U.S. Agency for International Development
USDA	U.S. Department of Agriculture



Atia Darwish/Feed the Future

The U.S. Government has long been a leader in improving nutrition to save lives and enhance the prospects of future generations globally. The *U.S. Government Global Nutrition Coordination Plan 2016–2021* was developed to amplify the government’s diverse nutrition investments through better communication and collaboration across U.S. Government agencies and departments and by linking research to program implementation. The Coordination Plan began after the historic 2013 Nutrition for Growth Summit in London, where the U.S. Government committed to developing a government-wide nutrition plan to accelerate progress toward relevant World Health Assembly targets, the Sustainable Development Goals, and other global commitments. Over three years, eight departments and independent agencies developed the Coordination Plan, including the Millennium Challenge Corporation (MCC), Peace Corps, U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), U.S. Department of State, U.S. Department of Treasury, and the White House Office of Science and Technology Policy. By nurturing cross-government partnerships and coordination, the Coordination Plan magnifies the reach and effectiveness of U.S. Government programs and investments. This annual summary describes the progress during the third year of implementation and outlines plans for the coming year.

Updates on the Coordination Plan’s Operational Structure

A technical working group (TWG) was created in the first year of the Coordination Plan to lead implementation, with eight sub-groups addressing different themes (see [Annex 1](#)):

- The First 1,000 days
- Nutrition information systems
- Micronutrient delivery platforms
- Food safety
- Nutrition-related non-communicable diseases
- Nutrition and infectious disease
- Global Food Security Strategy
- Implementation science

Two co-leads from different agencies lead each sub-group. The overall TWG is led by three co-chairs (currently from USAID, USDA, and MCC) and a secretariat/operations hub. This year, USAID Advancing Nutrition, the Agency’s flagship multi-sectoral nutrition project, assumed the Secretariat Manager position, supporting the TWG’s administrative, knowledge management, communications, and meeting logistics needs. All TWG leadership and member positions are staffed on a voluntary basis by U.S. Government employees, with the exception of the Secretariat Manager, who is employed by USAID Advancing Nutrition.

Highlights from the Secretariat’s efforts this year include finalizing the TWG terms of reference; helping sub-groups update their terms of reference; rotating in new secretariat members from MCC and USAID; facilitating the co-chair, co-lead, and TWG meetings; and establishing a [webpage](#) on the USDA National Agricultural Library (in addition to [USAID’s webpage](#)), which includes [a link](#) to the Coordination Plan webinars.

Progress on Interagency Coordination

In the 2018–2019 implementation year, the TWG continued promoting nutrition leadership and partnerships within and across U.S. Government agencies by creating opportunities for knowledge-sharing and skills enhancement in high-priority action areas. Sub-groups met regularly and continued providing agency updates, presenting on various technical topics, and sharing technical resources. Following are examples of coordination efforts among the sub-groups and the TWG overall within four broad categories: knowledge-sharing events, interagency events, global initiatives, and country-based initiatives.

Knowledge-Sharing Events

During the 2018–2019 implementation year, the TWG continued promoting global learning through public webinars and technical presentations at the Coordination Plan meetings.

- In October 2018, TWG members led a webinar titled, “[U.S. Government Global Nutrition Coordination Plan—2 Years In](#)” in collaboration with the Core Group. The webinar provided an overview of how U.S. Government agencies and departments are enhancing action through the Coordination Plan. Yibo Wood and Diane DeBernardo from USDA and Anne Peniston from USAID gave the background, reported progress, and discussed plans to strengthen nutrition action across the U.S. Government.
- In May 2019, the Micronutrient Delivery Platforms sub-group hosted a webinar titled, “[Biofortification: History, Impact & Current/Future Developments](#).” Omar Dary from USAID gave an overview and presentations were given by Howarth Bouis from



USDA's Food and Nutrition Service

HarvestPlus on the history of biofortification and recent developments; Mark Manary from Washington University in St. Louis on mineral bioavailability of vegetarian diets; and Rufino Perez from USAID on how Codex Alimentarius conceptualizes biofortification. The webinar was attended by more than 80 people from organizations all over the world.

- In May 2019, the Implementation Science sub-group led an interactive learning-exchange [webinar](#) on applications of implementation science in nutrition programs for more than 70 people. Practitioners and researchers—including Rafael Perez-Escamilla from the Yale School of Public Health, Kenda Cunningham from Helen Keller International, Alice Ammerman from the University of North Carolina, David Pelletier from Society for

Implementation Science in Nutrition, and Gila Neta from National Cancer Institute—explained what an implementation science approach is and gave examples of how global nutrition programs have applied implementation science.

- In June 2019, the First 1,000 Days and Nutrition in Infectious Diseases sub-groups co-led an interactive [webinar](#) featuring opening remarks from Dan Raiten from the National Institutes of Health on the intersection of the first 1,000 days and nutrition and infectious diseases; and Jean Humphreys from Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health and Parminder Suchdev from the Emory Global Health Institute, and Emory University, and McKing Consulting Corporation assigned to the Nutrition Branch at the CDC, and the



Dave Cooper for USAID

implications of their interactions.

- The First 1,000 Days sub-group also held a [webinar](#) in July 2019 to discuss the October 2018 Ghana workshop “Improving Nutrition Services in the Care of the Ill and Vulnerable Newborn and Child,” and progress to institutionalize and operationalize country action plans. During the webinar, Ghana and Mali country teams discussed their perspectives and learnings from the workshop.
- The Food Safety sub-group organized monthly interagency technical discussions and presentations on topics such as the Food and Drug Administration’s On-Farm Readiness Review Program, the Partnership Training Institute Network associated with the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation’s Food Safety Cooperation Forum, and the World Trade Organization’s Standards and Trade Development Facility. These presentations offered insights on U.S. Government activities

to strengthen food safety systems and practices with partners globally.

- At the April 2019 TWG meeting, Eve Stoody from the USDA’s Center for Nutrition Policy and Promotion discussed development of the 2020–2025 Dietary Guidelines for Americans, which will include, for the first time, infants, toddlers, and women who are pregnant. At the September 2019 TWG meeting, Laura White from USDA’s Foreign Agriculture Service described how genetically modified microorganisms have provided an alternate sustainable method of food and nutrition production for 30 years and are increasingly being used to produce animal fats and proteins that require fewer resources.

Interagency Nutrition Events

TWG members used the Coordination Plan to organize interagency nutrition events throughout the 2018-2019 implementation year. Following are examples.

- The First 1,000 Days sub-group orchestrated a large interagency World Breastfeeding Week event that highlighted U.S. Government domestic and international scientific and programmatic activities, and led a workshop on pregnancy as part of the Pregnancy and Birth to 24 Months project, an initiative led by USDA and HHS.
- The First 1,000 Days sub-group also discussed lessons from MCC's Indonesia Community Health and Nutrition Project implemented in partnership with the World Bank and the Ministry of Health of Indonesia, and discussed the applicability of these lessons to other U.S. Government investments.
- Peace Corps and USAID collaborated on a regional staff training in Madagascar on the Ending Preventable Child and Maternal Deaths Initiative. Participants from 14 countries improved their technical skills on social and behavior change for nutrition and maternal health, and developed a plan to use what they learned to improve Peace Corps volunteers' effectiveness in their nutrition and maternal health work.
- The Micronutrient Delivery Platforms and Nutrition Information Systems sub-groups coordinated efforts on the work led by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) supporting WHO to update global guidance on use and interpretation of hemoglobin concentrations to assess anemia status in individuals and populations.
- TWG members are part of the governing board and conference planning committees for the Micronutrient Forum in Bangkok, Thailand in 2020. The theme is on food systems in addressing micronutrient nutrition, with an emphasis of the intersection of climate and environmental change, food systems, health, and nutrition.
- Food Safety sub-group members were part of the U.S. delegation to the International Food Safety Conference in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia in February 2019 and the World Trade Organization, World Health Organization, and the UN Food and Agriculture Organization cosponsored International Forum on Food Safety and Trade in Geneva, Switzerland in April 2019. These events raised the profile of food safety, in particular the roles of digital tools, trade facilitation processes, and food safety regulations to prevent transmission of foodborne illnesses and promote fair trade of safe food. All three secretariats acknowledged the important work of the Codex Alimentarius, the international organization that sets food safety standards.

Coordination with Global Nutrition Initiatives

U.S. Government agencies coordinated participation in global nutrition initiatives through the TWG, leading to a more harmonized government approach. The following are examples.

- As mentioned, the Coordination Plan arose from the U.S. Government's commitments at the Nutrition for Growth Summit in London in 2013. To prepare for the Tokyo Nutrition for Growth Summit 2020, the U.S. Government global engagement specialists are collaborating with the Coordination Plan TWG to form an interagency coordination group.
- The Global Food Security Strategy (GFSS) sub-group members contributed to the U.S. Government's feedback on the draft *Committee on World Food Security Voluntary Guidelines on Food Systems and Nutrition*, which is developing guidance for governments and other stakeholders

on policies, investments, and institutional arrangements to address important causes of malnutrition through food systems.

- U.S. Government agencies collaborate on tracking and reporting financial commitments and disbursements for nutrition-related activities and work with a global network of donors to improve accountability of reporting on investments. During this implementation year, the Coordination Plan contributed to the 2018 Global Nutrition Report and the Results for Development annual report “Tracking Aid for WHO Nutrition Targets.” The Coordination Plan also supported the development of guidance for the new Nutrition Policy Marker in the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development reporting system to track multi-sectoral aid across donors that contributes to improved nutrition. The TWG will support implementation of the new policy marker and continue to help U.S. Government agencies report on obligations and disbursements to identify nutrition resources.

Coordination with Country-Based Nutrition Initiatives

Through the Coordination Plan, the U.S. Government has maximized its country-based initiatives by facilitating communication and collaboration. Following are examples.

- The Nutrition Information Systems sub-group is supporting the planning, design, and implementation of national surveys to collect data in Rwanda, Burkina Faso, Nigeria, Tanzania, and Vietnam in fiscal years 2020 and 2021. The survey in Rwanda is integrating a micronutrient status assessment component into the country’s Demographic and Health Survey. The results will be used to prioritize nutrition surveillance activities to support timely, high-quality, nationally-representative nutrition data.

- The GFSS sub-group built on previous years’ activities by supporting for the implementation of Feed the Future country strategies, resulting in increased transparency and coordination, and accelerating impact. Sub-group members also supported the development and review of GFSS regional plans in Southern and West Africa.
- USAID and CDC are supporting nutrition surveillance activities in Uganda and Guatemala that provide data on all large-scale nutrition-specific programs in the two countries. The U.S. Government’s technical assistance is focused on designing future data collection cycles and analyzing surveillance data for policy and program decision-making.

Reflections on the Coordination Plan Mid-Way through Implementation

Throughout the year, the TWG discussed the Coordination Plan’s value in members’ ongoing work and ways to ensure the platform achieves cross-agency coordination while respecting the voluntary nature of the group. One matter raised repeatedly was how to ensure collaboration across the sub-groups and technical areas to avoid silos. This is both an operational and conceptual consideration: operational in how the sub-groups are organized, and conceptual in how members make the technical connections and points for collaboration.

“This group and all those involved...have done a tremendous amount of work. This is the most valuable exercise I’ve been involved in as far as U.S. Government-wide exercise in my 20 years [of working with the U.S. Government].”

—Coordination Plan Member



Kate Consavage/USAID

“We are here today because we have interest [in this type of forum]. The interaction is good. I have had more contact with colleagues from other agencies, and this is important.”

—Coordination Plan Member

The TWG also discussed the division of the groups, and whether there were ways to streamline the topics, both to maximize technical coordination and ensure active participation in all groups. Some sub-groups may be re-organized or combined in the coming year to respond to these needs, and others may alter their scope. These conversations will continue into the next year, as the TWG looks to the final two years of the Coordination Plan and prepares for a follow-on plan.

The TWG also expressed a desire to elevate nutrition and the Coordination Plan within their agencies at senior levels, so that senior officials in interagency fora are coordinated in emphasizing the importance of nutrition globally and domestically and in sectors in which U.S. Government agencies are involved. During the implementation year, the TWG began planning an information-sharing meeting in November 2019 for agency senior leaders, the TWG, and civil society to discuss updates on the



Karen Kasmauski/MCSP

Coordination Plan.

The TWG also expressed a desire to elevate nutrition and the Coordination Plan within their agencies at senior levels, so that senior officials in interagency fora emphasize the importance of nutrition globally and domestically and in sectors in which U.S. Government agencies are involved. There is an opportunity to capitalize on existing momentum as USAID elevated nutrition through the Agency's transformation in 2019; appointing the first ever Chief Nutritionist to lead the newly created Center for Nutrition and the USAID Nutrition Leadership Council.

Priorities and Plans for 2020

In 2020, the Coordination Plan TWG will continue building upon the U.S. Government's nutrition leadership and partnerships through the sub-groups and secretariat. TWG members will continue their support to Scaling Up Nutrition (SUN) as the next phase of the moment is developed. Recognizing that the current COVID-19 situation may require restructuring or delaying planned events, plans are underway to support the Tokyo Nutrition for Growth Summit 2020, Micronutrient Forum 2020, Global Summit on Food Fortification and the 2021 Food Systems Summit. The sub-groups will continue regular meetings and initiatives, examples of which follow.

- The Nutrition and Infectious Diseases sub-group is planning a webinar on the development of nutritional guidelines during infectious disease outbreaks using examples from the 2017 cholera outbreak and 2014 Ebola virus epidemic.
- The Implementation Science sub-group will explore connections with the U.S. Government’s Interagency Committee on Human Nutrition Research and continue collaborating with the Society for Implementation Science for Nutrition.
- The Food Safety sub-group is working on a food technology brief.
- The Micronutrient Delivery Platforms and Nutrition Information Systems sub-groups will continue supporting country-based initiatives.
- The First 1,000 Days sub-group is planning webinars on stunting and anemia as well as other global and country-focused activities promoting the essential nutrition actions.

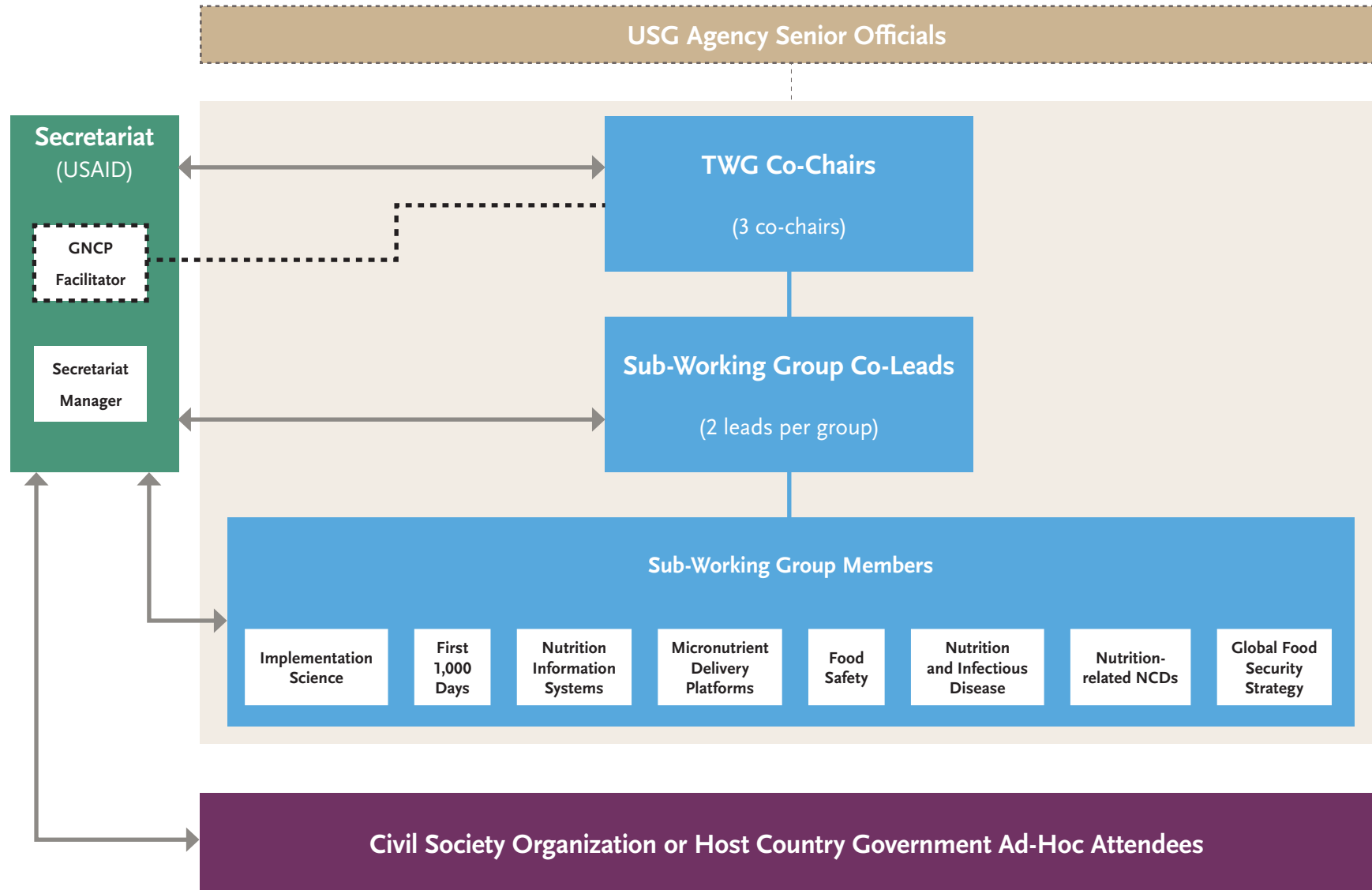
The TWG will also support U.S. Government agencies working in global nutrition to continue making nutrition data publically available in machine-readable formats, per the U.S. Government’s Open Data Policy codified into law in the 2019 [Foundations for Evidence-Based Policymaking Act](#). To comply with the law, government agencies must maintain comprehensive data catalogs and designate a nonpolitical chief data officer. The White House Office of Management and Budget is required to create a Chief Data Officer Council, comprised of chief data officers from across the government to “establish Government-wide best practices for the use, protection, dissemination, and generation of data.”



Ananya Singh/USAID India

Finally, as mentioned, the TWG is planning an information-sharing meeting with U.S. Government senior officials, the TWG, and civil society on knowledge and evidence generation and dissemination; U.S. Government country-led progress; and nutrition leadership and partnerships within and across U.S. Government agencies and departments. The meeting will be another important reflection point as the TWG begins planning for the next generation of the Coordination Plan when the current one ends in 2021.

Annex 1. Global Nutrition Coordination Plan Technical Working Group Structure



Secretariat

- *Facilitator:* Anne Peniston, USAID
- *Manager:* Tina Lloren, USAID Advancing Nutrition

TWG co-chairs:

- Carolyn Wetzel Chen, MCC
- Diane De Bernardo, USDA
- Elaine Gray, USAID

Sub-working group co-leads:

- **Implementation Science**
 - Susan Vorkoper, NIH
 - Yibo Wood, USDA
- **The First 1,000 Days**
 - Lindy Fenlason, USAID
 - Dan Raiten, NIH
- **Nutrition Information Systems**
 - Maria Elena Jefferds, CDC
 - Rafael Flores-Ayala, CDC
- **Micronutrient Delivery Platforms**
 - Diane De Bernardo, USDA
 - Omar Dary, USAID
- **Food Safety**
 - Ahmed Kablan, USAID
 - Lee Gross, USDA
- **Nutrition and Infectious Disease**
 - Dan Raiten, NIH
 - Tim Quick, USAID
- **Nutrition-Related Non-Communicable Diseases**
 - Gabrielle Lamourelle, HHS
 - Maya Levine, HHS
- **Global Food Security Strategy**
 - Ingrid Weiss, USAID
 - Sally Abbott, USAID
 - Diane De Bernardo, USDA



Amy Fowler/USAID

The U.S. Government Global Nutrition Coordination Plan (GNCP) 2016–2021 is an inter-agency effort to strengthen both domestic and international nutrition interventions thereby ensuring efficient and effective use of American investments. The GNCP aims to harness the power of the many diverse investments across the U.S. Government through better communication and collaboration and by linking research to program implementation. By embracing cross-U.S. Government partnerships and coordination, the impact of resources can be enhanced to improve nutrition worldwide.

Learn more at www.usaid.gov/what-we-do/global-health/nutrition/usgplan