



# U.S. GOVERNMENT GLOBAL NUTRITION COORDINATION PLAN 2.0

## YEAR 2 SUMMARY OF ACTIVITIES



**Cover photo**

Photo by Jake Lyell for MCC

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# CONTENTS

- Acronyms \_\_\_\_\_ ii
- Foreword \_\_\_\_\_ iii
- Acknowledgements \_\_\_\_\_ v
- Introduction \_\_\_\_\_ 1
- Interagency Collaboration \_\_\_\_\_ 3
  - Progress on Interagency Collaboration \_\_\_\_\_ 4
- Elevating Nutrition Across the U.S. Government \_\_\_\_\_ 6
  - Legislative Commitment \_\_\_\_\_ 6
  - Accountability of Investments \_\_\_\_\_ 7
- Sub-Working Group (SWG) Progress \_\_\_\_\_ 8
  - Climate/Environmental Change, Health, Agriculture and Nutrition: A Global Ecology (CHANGE) \_\_\_\_\_ 8
  - Ecology of Parental, Infant, and Child Nutrition (EPIC) \_\_\_\_\_ 9
  - Food Safety \_\_\_\_\_ 9
  - Implementation Science (IS) \_\_\_\_\_ 10
  - Social Protection \_\_\_\_\_ 10
  - Wasting \_\_\_\_\_ 10
- Priorities and Next Steps 2024 \_\_\_\_\_ 11

## ACRONYMS

BOND-KIDS	Biomarkers of Nutrition for Development Knowledge Indicating Dietary Sufficiency
CDC	Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
CHANGE	Climate/Environmental Change, Health, Agriculture and Nutrition: A Global Ecology
COP28	United Nations Climate Change Conference
DFC	Development Finance Corporation
EPIC	Ecology of Parental, Infant, and Child Nutrition
FAS	Foreign Agricultural Service
FDA	U.S. Food and Drug Administration
FNS	Food and Nutrition Service
GNCP	U.S. Government Global Nutrition Coordination Plan
HHS	U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
ICHNR	U.S. Interagency Committee on Human Nutrition Research
IS	Implementation Science
MCC	Millennium Challenge Corporation
MNF	Micronutrient Forum
NICHD	National Institute of Child Health and Human Development
NIH	National Institutes of Health
OECD	Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development
SWG	sub-working group
TWG	technical working group
UNICEF	United Nations Children’s Fund
USAID	U.S. Agency for International Development
USDA	U.S. Department of Agriculture
WHO	World Health Organization





Photo credit: S.M. Zafrullah Shamsul, Feed the Future Bangladesh Aquaculture Activity, WorldFish, Bandarban

## FOREWORD

**We are pleased to share this recap of the second year of the Global Nutrition Coordination Plan 2021–2026.**

During Year 2 of the Coordination Plan, members strengthened connections across agencies, leading to collaborations that complement the Coordination Plan work. For instance, the U.S. Interagency Committee on Human Nutrition Research and its newly created global nutrition sub-committee will interact with GNCP to enhance planning and

coordination for federal nutrition research, with a focus on both domestic and global nutrition. Additionally, GNCP members' involvement in the Anaemia Action Alliance has informed the Alliance's work, bridging international and domestic nutrition efforts.

The five GNCP sub-working groups held several webinars during Year 2, sharing both implementation experiences and research with the global nutrition community. The working groups also

identified opportunities for working across groups and used the GNCP meetings to provide updates to all Coordination Plan members. One held an internal webinar to share and discuss new World Health Organization (WHO) wasting guidelines with U.S. government staff.

In this annual summary, we celebrate milestones, joint activities, and new interagency partnerships that have been made possible by or benefited

from the Coordination Plan, as well as recognize key areas where we could explore additional areas of interagency collaboration to strengthen nutrition programming, such as the intersection of climate and nutrition. We are proud of the achievements reached in Year 2 through our collective efforts and optimistic about the opportunities that lay ahead for this interagency platform to advance nutrition impacts around the world.

## **U.S. Government Global Nutrition Coordination Plan Senior Nutrition Champions Group**

**Kechi Achebe**, Director, Office of Global Health and HIV, Peace Corps

**Shawn Baker**, Chief Nutritionist, U.S. Agency for International Development

**Doug Balentine**, Senior Science Advisor for Global Nutrition Policy, Center for Food Safety and Applied Nutrition, Department of Health and Human Services

**Alison Cernich**, Deputy Director of the Eunice Kennedy Shriver National Institute of Child Health and Human Development, National Institutes of Health

**Deirdra Chester**, Director, Office of the Chief Scientist, U.S. Department of Agriculture

**Joseph Clift**, Assistant Deputy Administrator, Office of Policy Support, U.S. Department of Agriculture Food and Nutrition Service

**Shane Danielson**, Senior Director, International Food Assistance Division, Office of Global Programs, U.S. Department of Agriculture Foreign Agricultural Service

**Cary Fowler**, U.S. Special Envoy for Global Food Security, U.S. Department of State

**Nafisa Jiwani**, Managing Director, Health Initiatives, U.S. International Development Finance Corporation

**Colin McIlff**, Deputy Assistant Secretary, Office of Global Affairs, Department of Health and Human Services

**Katerina Ntep**, Acting Deputy Vice President for Sector Operations, Millennium Challenge Corporation

**Ruth Petersen**, Director, Division of Nutrition, Physical Activity, and Obesity, National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion, Center for Disease Control and Prevention

**Kellie Stewart**, Chief, Division of Nutrition and Environmental Health, Office of Maternal and Child Health and Nutrition, Bureau for Global Health, U.S. Agency for International Development (interim)





Photo credit: Jake Lyell

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

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Photo credit: Jake Lyell

## INTRODUCTION

The *U.S. Government Global Nutrition Coordination Plan (GNCP) 2021–2026* (the Coordination Plan), which was predated by the 2016–2021 plan, is an interagency coordination platform to convene domestic and international nutrition technical expertise. The GNCP focuses on strengthening diverse nutrition investments through increased communication, collaboration, support to country-led programs, knowledge sharing, global leadership and partnerships, and linking research to program implementation. The purpose of the plan is to maximize investments across the continuum of nutrition-related policies and programs to accelerate achievement of global nutrition goals and increase whole-of-government responsiveness to emerging evidence, opportunities, and threats.



While the Coordination Plan does not bring funding, it does offer a structure and roadmap for technical experts, from across U.S. government departments and agencies, to build connections to address shared nutrition priorities and lessons learned among policies and programs. The Coordination Plan includes signatories from the highest level of leadership from the 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. International Development Finance Corporation (DFC), Millennium Challenge Corporation (MCC), and Peace Corps, who have joined forces to launch and execute this plan, contributing to a whole of government approach.

The Coordination Plan includes several groups including a senior nutrition champions group that elevates nutrition-related work within and across the U.S. government to upper leadership; a permanent technical working group (TWG) of representatives from participating agencies and departments who meet quarterly to share information on research, programs, and policies; and several sub-working groups (SWG) to address discrete topics of special interest to multiple departments and agencies. The operational

structure is designed to respond to evolving challenges in global nutrition.

The plan is designed to be flexible, enabling coordination that can evolve, as needed, based on U.S. government achievements and changes, both internationally and domestically. The Coordination Plan includes a set of expected results to track accomplishments and promote accountability in achieving the plan's purpose. Accomplishments along the six priority areas (box 1) are aggregated to reflect U.S. government-wide coordination. Plan results are organized under the following action areas.

1. Promote leadership and partnership.
2. Support regional and country-led efforts.
3. Generate, share, and apply knowledge and evidence.

In October 2022, President Biden signed into law the Global Malnutrition Prevention and Treatment Act. A critical component of this legislation was the authorization for the GNCP to be used to “increase cooperation among relevant Federal departments and agencies represented in the Global Nutrition Coordination Plan to better leverage grants, technical assistance, debt, equity, loan guaranties, and public-private partnerships.”

### Box 1. Six Nutrition Priority Areas

- Women's nutrition before and during pregnancy and lactation
- Breastfeeding and complementary feeding (0–24 months)
- Prevention and management of wasting in children aged under 5 years
- Micronutrient sufficiency
- Issues of special emphasis (e.g., COVID 19 and other health emergencies, nutrition during middle childhood and adolescence, overweight/obesity, diet related noncommunicable diseases, environmental health, climate)
- Cross cutting nutrition relevant policies and opportunities for high-level engagement



Photo credit: Caroline Makamto Sobgui, World Vegetable Center

## **INTERAGENCY COLLABORATION**

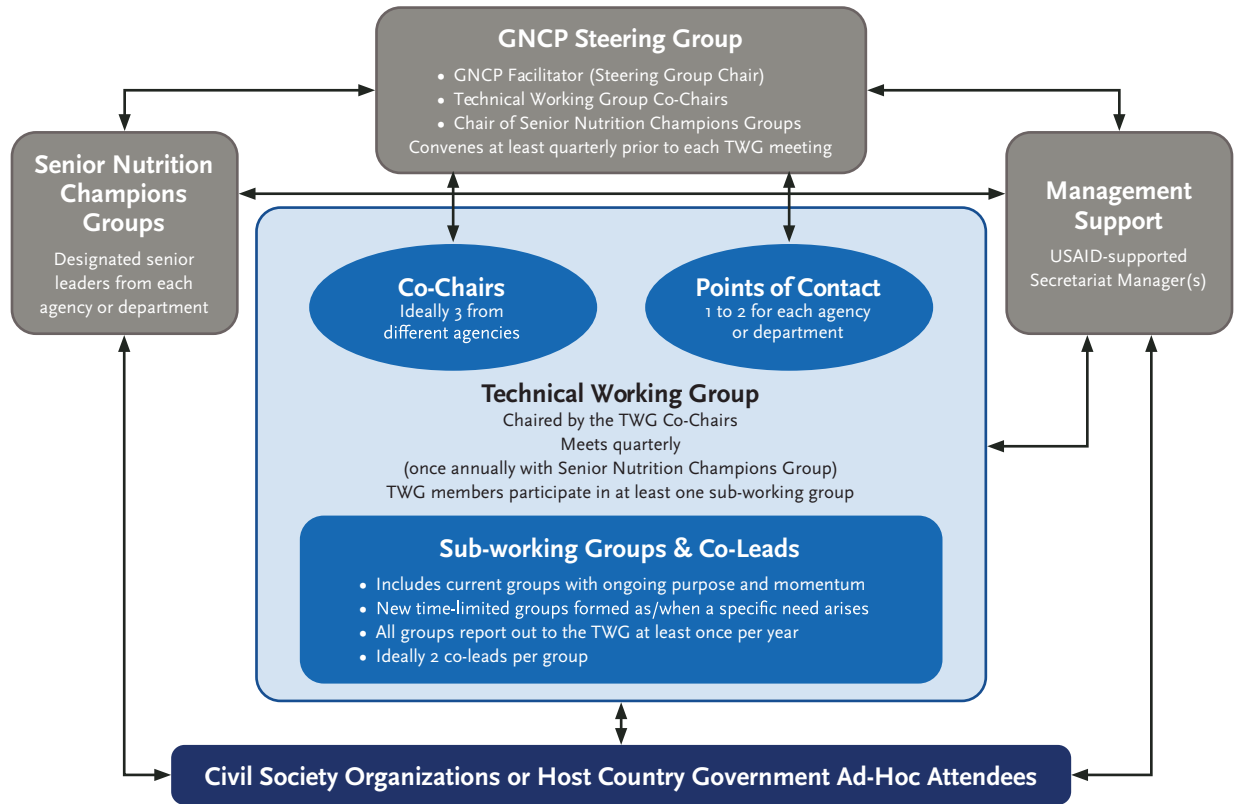
Twelve agencies/departments are participating in the Coordination Plan: DFC; MCC; Peace Corps; USAID; USDA, including the Office of the Chief Scientist, the Foreign Agricultural Service (FAS), and the Food and Nutrition Service (FNS); HHS, including the Office of Global Affairs, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), Food and Drug Administration (FDA), and National Institutes of Health (NIH); and the U.S. Department of State. Each participating agency/department has at least one point of contact.

Under the Coordination Plan, the TWG is led by three co-chairs representing different U.S. departments/agencies. In Year 2, these rotating roles were held by representatives from CDC, NIH, and

USAID. There are currently five standing SWGs, each led by two co-chairs from different agencies. The more than 100 TWG members are encouraged to join one or more SWGs aligned with their interests



**Figure 1. Operating Structure of the Plan**



and expertise. Finally, senior nutrition champions represent each member agency/department.

### **Progress on Interagency Collaboration**

During Year 2 of the Coordination Plan, GNCP members continued to foster connections across the agencies, which led to new areas of collaboration that complement the work of the GNCP. For example, the U.S. Interagency Committee on Human Nutrition Research (ICHNR)—co-chaired by HHS and USAID—leveraged the GNCP platform to engage with agencies involved in global nutrition efforts to strengthen its work. While part of the aim of the ICHNR is to support current and future international nutrition research needs, it has historically focused more on domestic nutrition research. This engagement

with GNCP offers an opportunity to focus on research specifically relevant to global nutrition research, policy, and practice being conducted by agencies and departments.

Involvement of GNCP members in other groups and platforms has helped to inform the work of the GNCP, and vice versa. For example, several of the agencies and departments that are GNCP members are also members of the [Anaemia Action Alliance](#), hosted by the World Health Organization (WHO) in close collaboration with the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF), which brings together a broad range of actors around the prevention and management of anemia to address global targets. GNCP members coordinate together within the Alliance and have used the work led by the Alliance to inform GNCP-led anemia work.

An outstanding priority from Year 1 of the Coordination Plan was to continue to bridge international and domestic nutrition work within and across agencies. The GNCP began to make some headway around this objective in Year 2. One example of this was a technical discussion that took place among TWG members on nutrition social assistance programs for infants and young children in the U.S. and internationally. GNCP members shared learnings from several international and domestic programs and discussed implementation of social assistance programs internationally, evidence needs and research

gaps in this area, and strategies for continuing to learn from these programs. These discussions ultimately led to the establishment of a new Social Protection SWG.

GNCP members also used the platform to plan for interagency presence at large global convenings, including the 2023 United Nations Climate Change Conference (also known as COP28) and the Micronutrient Forum (MNF) 6th Global Conference. This enabled agencies to coordinate joint programming, speak to what other agencies are working on, and have a cohesive U.S. government presence.





Photo credit: Morgana Wingard, ONE

## ELEVATING NUTRITION ACROSS THE U.S. GOVERNMENT

### Legislative Commitment

As noted, President Biden signed the Global Malnutrition Prevention and Treatment Act into law in October 2022, which directs USAID to prevent and treat malnutrition globally, codifying USAID's leadership in global nutrition. During Year 2 of the Coordination Plan, members of the GNCP TWG were invited to provide written and oral feedback into the draft implementation plan.

[The Global Malnutrition Prevention and Treatment Act Implementation Plan](#), published in July 2023, includes USAID's priority technical areas in nutrition; USAID's coordination and collaboration approach internally and with priority countries, other federal agencies, and partners to achieve nutrition goals; and how USAID will hold itself accountable by tracking progress for the period from October 2022 to October 2029.

The White House Conference on Hunger, Nutrition, and Health took place at the end of Year 1 of the Coordination Plan. The [National Strategy](#) includes several priorities that are common across the Coordination Plan, and GNCP members continued to make connections across these areas. To continue the momentum from the conference, in the fall of 2022, the NIH Fogarty International Center hosted a series of webinars titled, “[Lessons Learned from Global Food and Nutrition Insecurity Webinar Series.](#)”

## **Accountability of Investments**

U.S. departments and agencies continued to report on their consolidated financial contributions to global nutrition via central reporting led by USAID, including submission of 2021 disbursements data to the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) Development Assistance Committee’s public reporting system. USAID continues to fund analyses and technical assistance to support the application of the OECD nutrition policy marker to track investments in global nutrition.





Photo credit: Mark Walter, Nathan Associates Inc.

## **SUB-WORKING GROUP (SWG) PROGRESS**

### **Climate/Environmental Change, Health, Agriculture and Nutrition: A Global Ecology (CHANGE)**

#### **Co-leads from NIH and MCC**

The purpose of the CHANGE SWG is to create, implement, and sustain evidence-informed, context-specific, safe, and efficacious interventions, policies, and standards of care to support diet, nutrition, and health in a changing global

environment. It does this by engaging with the Coordination Plan community and civil society to apply an ecological approach and by sharing research, data, and lessons learned to improve global nutrition and health.

Throughout Year 2 of the Coordination Plan, CHANGE identified opportunities across GNCP agencies and departments for integrating climate into GNCP SWGs and other U.S. government work streams. The group also presented to the

TWG to sensitize members on CHANGE and the case for elevating climate as a cross-cutting theme within the Coordination Plan. More work is needed to identify opportunities for strengthening interagency collaboration around climate and nutrition.

## **Ecology of Parental, Infant, and Child Nutrition (EPIC)**

### **Co-leads from NIH, USAID, and USDA**

The EPIC SWG's purpose is to support the Coordination Plan member agencies and global partner efforts to translate and implement current and emerging evidence on parental, infant, child, and adolescent nutrition and its influence on health. Areas of interest include breast milk composition, anemia, biomarkers of micronutrient status, guidance and lessons learned for micronutrient delivery interventions, and frameworks to assess the effects of current and emerging infections on nutrition and health.

In the Coordination Plan Year 2, EPIC hosted three webinars:

- **February 28:** [Exploring the Anemia Ecology PART II: Application of the Ecological Approach to Anemia Assessment—Experiences from the Field Webinar](#)

This webinar built off a past webinar, which presented the results of a review conducted by the USAID Advancing Nutrition Anemia Task Force (ATF) that addressed gaps in understanding of anemia, including biology, assessment, and translation into interventions. During this webinar, researchers and program managers from low- and middle-income countries shared their experiences on assessment and interpretation of anemia, including their opinions on the feasibility of the ATF approach to anemia assessment.

- **August 10:** [The BOND-KIDS Project: Exploring the Nutritional Ecology of School-Aged Children Webinar](#)

EPIC continued their ongoing engagement with the Biomarkers of Nutrition for Development Knowledge Indicating Dietary Sufficiency (BOND-KIDS) project, which emphasizes the need for better tools to measure the necessity for and functional impact of school-based nutritional interventions on the health and development of school-aged children. It is a consortium that includes USDA/FAS/FNS, Agriculture Research Service, CDC, USAID, National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (NICHD)/NIH, WHO, UNICEF, World Food Program, Food and Agriculture Organization, and civil society organizations. This webinar presented the results of Phase I of the project.

- **September 12:** [Accelerating Anaemia Reduction: The WHO Comprehensive Framework for Action and the Anaemia Action Alliance Webinar](#)

This webinar highlighted the WHO comprehensive framework for action to accelerate anemia reduction, recommending five key action areas to improve implementation and coverage of interventions that address context-specific causes and risk factors of anemia. The vision, mission, and activities of the Anaemia Action Alliance were also presented, and speakers described how additional partners can join the Alliance.

## **Food Safety**

### **Co-leads US Department of State and USAID**

The Food Safety SWG provides a platform to exchange information and experiences in food safety and to coordinate communications and learning that will increase and broaden the effec-



tiveness of food safety activities, contributing to the effectiveness of nutrition investments.

During Year 2 of the Coordination Plan, the SWG held a webinar titled, “[Strategies, Standards, and Regulations to Increase Access to Safe and Nutritious Foods](#),” on June 7, 2023, which is World Food Safety Day. The focus of the webinar was on the importance of interagency collaboration in increasing access to safe and nutritious foods through strategies, standards, and regulations. The SWG also held a technical brownbag presentation and an informal virtual networking event for the SWG members.

## **Implementation Science (IS)**

### **Co-leads from NIH and USAID**

The IS SWG aims to identify current IS and global nutrition activities and corresponding points of contact across U.S. government agencies and to build technical skills and knowledge on the role and application of IS in global nutrition. The SWG is a resource for those interested in nutrition IS and connects agency and interagency groups working on it, including the ICHNR and National Collaborative on Childhood Obesity Research.

During Year 2, the IS SWG conducted a landscape review to both understand what each agency and department works on as it relates to IS and global nutrition, and identify challenges that make interagency coordination difficult. The group is now working with a USAID-funded program that has successfully used IS to inform a global nutrition program to develop a case study that articulates the value and benefit of using IS. Once finalized, it will be shared with the TWG. The SWG also co-hosted a webinar with the NIH Fogarty International Center titled, “[Global Food/Nutrition Insecurity: Using Implementation Science to Address Food and Nutrition](#)

[Insecurity](#),” on November 22, 2022. The webinar highlighted innovative research projects on nutrition and food insecurity and health outcomes in global settings and identified lessons learned and opportunities for adaption in the U.S.

## **Social Protection**

### **Co-leads from USDA and USAID**

The Social Protection SWG was conceptualized at the end of Year 2. This group was developed out of the notion that social protection programs are integral to addressing nutrition challenges through a multisectoral approach. The group aims to leverage learnings from the more than 15 domestic social protection programs that target families and individuals throughout the lifespan, including best practices, key components, and successes and challenges in the design of these programs, and identify opportunities to draw on these in the context of the GNCP. Initially, this will be an ad hoc group to serve as a platform for exchange.

## **Wasting**

### **Co-leads from CDC and USAID**

The Wasting SWG is an ad hoc working group that was formed to ensure that members are updated on the WHO wasting guideline review and key developments in wasting programming/ protocols to inform a more strategic, cross-agency approach to programming. The SWG also provides technical leadership and coordination on global wasting initiatives including linking to the Global Action Plan on Child Wasting.

During Year 2 of the Coordination Plan, the SWG focused on the planning of an internal webinar for GNCP TWG members that included presentations from WHO and UNICEF on the new WHO wasting guidelines. The wasting SWG will be dissolved in the first part of Year 3 and rolled into the EPIC SWG.





Photo credit: Morgana Wingard

## PRIORITIES AND NEXT STEPS 2024

Next year will be the third year of the five-year Coordination Plan and is a good opportunity for assessing progress and recommitting to priorities. Over the next year, GNCP leadership and the TWG members are committed to working together to support the GNCP in reaching its goals.

The following Year 3 priorities have been identified by TWG members:

- Re-engage the senior nutrition champions group. With the appointment of the new USAID Chief Nutritionist, it presents a good opportunity to review priorities and build momentum.
- Complete the GNCP mapping exercise from Year 1 to document the international nutrition programming that each agency/department is engaged in. Ensure it is periodically updated to serve as a tool for information sharing and identifying areas of possible collaboration.

- TWG to hold an in-person session to hear directly from the senior nutrition champions group about their priorities for the GNCP and leverage this group to foster collaboration and sharing of new ideas.

Several exciting things are planned for the GNCP in 2024, including the standing up of the newly formed Social Protection SWG, a webinar on adolescent nutrition, and large global convenings where agencies are working together around common priorities, including COP28 and the MNF conference.

The U.S. Government Global Nutrition Coordination Plan 2021–2026 is an interagency 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/global-health/health-areas/nutrition/usgplan](https://www.usaid.gov/global-health/health-areas/nutrition/usgplan)