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Organization of the
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Whole of Syria - SOUTH TURKEY
FOOD SECURITY AND LIVELIHOODS CLUSTER
Strengthening Humanitarian Response



Multisectoral programming for nutrition and nutrition-sensitive agriculture

Training Workshop report

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Table of contents

Table of contents.....	3
1. Introduction.....	4
1. Background.....	4
2. Training objectives	5
3. Participants.....	5
2. Workshop sessions	6
1. Session 1: Setting the scene	6
a. Key concepts for nutrition and food security, and current situation in Syria	6
b. What livelihood groups are at risk of malnutrition in Syria?	7
c. What are the obstacles for more nutrition-sensitive programming?	8
2. Session 2: Situation Analysis	8
3. Session 3: Response analysis and Project design	9
4. Session 4: Monitoring and evaluating the nutrition outcomes of interventions.....	10
3. Focus on group work: malnutrition problem and solution trees	12
1. The Malnutrition problem and solution trees tool	12
2. Trees built during the workshop	12
4. Conclusion	14
1. Workshop evaluation by the participants	14
2. Suggested next steps.....	15
a. Key actions identified by participants	15
b. Proposed actions from FAO facilitation team to support integrated and nutrition-sensitive programming in Northern Syria	16
Annex 1. Agenda overview	17
Annex 2. Key Recommendations for improving Nutrition through agriculture and food system	18
Annex 3. Nutrition-sensitive indicators.....	20
Annex 4. Group work – Obstacles/Barriers for more nutrition-sensitive programming	21
Annex 5. Next steps.....	22
Annex 6. Participant evaluation summary	23

1. Introduction

1. Background

In total, some 9.8 million people in Syria are estimated to be food insecure, with 6.8 million of these severely food insecure with extreme food consumption gaps¹ - a level of need that requires external food assistance. The remaining 2.6 million people can maintain their food needs but at the cost of irreversible coping strategies, forcing them in to the more extreme category.

Since January this year alone, more than half a million people have been displaced. The conflict continues to seriously disrupt agricultural activities and food markets, according to the FAO-WFP report. Syria's relative food security resilience so far is largely due to the country's well-developed farming sector before the crisis. However, the longer the crisis lasts, the bigger the losses to the country's well-developed farming infrastructure, with a sharp contraction in yields that will turn the country into a net importer of many basic food items that were previously produced locally.

While acute malnutrition remains to date fairly marginal, chronic malnutrition is widespread (23%). There is no sign of a short-term solution to the conflict and destitution is on the increase in many areas. It is therefore essential to prevent likely increases in malnutrition rates, including micronutrient deficiencies. Infant and young children feeding practice is also an issue at stake in the context where the pre-exclusive breastfeeding rate before the crisis was low (43%) and widespread donations and untargeted distributions of breastmilk substitutes (BMS) are current. There are also restrictions of complementary foods as well as concern about the poor micronutrient content of food intake.

There is an agreed need to think more holistically about nutrition response in the context of resilience building, based on an assessment of needs looking beyond acute malnutrition. Preventing increases in malnutrition rates requires that interventions be based on a comprehensive understanding of the multisectoral causes of malnutrition, and to work across sectors. This is specifically relevant while focusing on restoring the agriculture sector. People not only need to have access to local sources of food, but also to rely on nutritious and diversified food to attain a complete and adequate diet.

However, while there is huge will, challenges remain due to limited technical capacities at field level for multisectoral and nutrition-sensitive programming within international and local /Syrian NGO partners on the ground. Priority attention should be then given to building capacity in joint planning for food security, nutrition and livelihoods. National and international actors should be put in the condition to plan, implement and monitor their interventions, notably in agriculture, taking into consideration both food security and nutrition aspects. Previous discussions with members of nutrition and food security (agriculture working group) clusters in Gaziantep have also led to the identification of specific capacity-development needs related to the integration of food security and nutrition programming: coordination, indicators for M&E, key approaches and tools to building resilience, response analysis, needs of population in conflict and insecurity.

¹ 2015 Syria Strategic Response Plan

2. Training objectives

FAO in close collaboration with the food security (including the agriculture working group) and nutrition clusters for Northern Syria facilitated a training workshop entitled **Building capacities in multisectoral programming for nutrition and nutrition-sensitive agriculture**. The training workshop intended to address the gaps and challenges that are being faced by partners in integrating nutrition into food security and agriculture in the context of the response to the current Syrian crisis, including the need to build resilience.

More specifically, the specific objectives of the workshop were that, by the end of the training workshop, the participants will have:

- 1) A shared understanding of the linkages between nutrition, food security and agriculture, and identified opportunities for collaboration across sectors
- 2) Strengthened skills in needs assessment, design, implementation and, monitoring and evaluation of nutrition-sensitive food security and agriculture interventions
- 3) Learn from experiences on successful (and unsuccessful) practice in integrating nutrition in food security and agriculture interventions in the Syrian context

3. Participants

The workshop gathered about 30 participants working in Northern Syria and involved in Food Security, agriculture and/or nutrition programmes. The workshop represented a great opportunity to bring participants from diverse backgrounds on a common understanding of basic concepts related to integrated nutrition and food security programming and to nutrition-sensitive agriculture.

2. Workshop sessions

The workshop was facilitated by Domitille Kauffmann (main facilitator) and Marie Streissel, working in the *Policies and Programmes* team of the FAO Nutrition Division (Rome).

The workshop alternated between presentations, plenary and group work sessions. Emphasis was given on maximizing the sharing of experiences between participants and on practically experimenting a methodology for joint planning. The workshop used very participatory methodologies and innovative learning techniques. The workshop agenda overview is provided in Annex 1.

1. Session 1: Setting the scene

a. Key concepts for nutrition and food security, and current situation in Syria

Presenters: Aileen Wynne, Nutrition Cluster North Syria; Attilio Rizzoni, FAO Gaziantep

This section started by looking at what participants from different backgrounds already knew about food security and nutrition. Several statements about food security and nutrition were thus proposed to participants who had to decide which of these statements are true and which are false, and why². This first activity, conducted through group discussion, helped highlight the different perceptions on food security and nutrition that exist between nutritionists and food security experts. This was followed by a presentation on basic concepts of nutrition, malnutrition and its different forms (undernutrition, overweight and obesity, and micronutrient deficiencies), and of the UNICEF conceptual framework for malnutrition. Presentations also provided data about the current nutrition and food security situation in Syria.

Indeed, in 2009, before the crisis, 9.3% of the Syrian population were suffering from Global Acute Malnutrition. Currently, based on available data, 7.2% of people are still suffering from acute malnutrition, in Northern Syria. However, there are remaining gaps in current data, especially for people living in the besieged areas and remote areas. Chronic malnutrition concerns about 23% of the Syrian population with no significant difference between rates before the crisis and today. Prevalence is high in Hama, where 26% of people are chronically malnourished. Syria is not spared from the triple burden of malnutrition and people are affected by micronutrient deficiencies. The prevalence is very high, especially for iron deficiency. 48.7% children from 6 to 59 months are suffering from anaemia among Syrian refugees, and 37% of Internal Displaced Peoples (IDPs) in Idlib and Aleppo.

Moreover, the rate of nutrition-related non-communicable diseases is also high. Before the crisis, 45% of deaths were attributable to cardiovascular diseases, half of the 45-65 year old women had hypertension and 15% of the population had type 2 Diabetes.

The food security and agriculture concepts were also discussed along with the shifting patterns of people's livelihoods in the current context and their implications for humanitarian response. Food production has decreased to 40% below the pre-crisis level due to high labour cost, shortage of

² 1) Agriculture programmes always bring improvement on nutrition as a natural, second effect. True or false? Why? 2) Nutrition is one component of Food Security. Food security is one component of nutrition. Which one of these statements is true? Why? 3) All children under 2 and pregnant women are vulnerable to malnutrition. True or false? Why? 4) Malnutrition exists only in food insecure households. True or false. Why?

workers, crop destruction and fragmented markets with disrupted supply chains and severe damage to mills and bakeries. There are currently 8.7 million people in Syria that are unable to meet their basic food needs. Changes in livelihoods also have impacts on populations' abilities to meet their food needs. Some farmers are shifting their production to new crops; some have stopped selling their production and give priority to self-consumption, although they hardly manage to produce enough to cover their household's food needs. A large number of IDPs have lost all their assets and are highly dependent on food aid to survive. New job opportunities have also emerged as a result of the crisis such as people queuing for others, selling fuel on the street or working for NGOs.

In besieged areas, tens of thousands of people are subsisting on grass and weeds while warring parties prevent access to food and essential medicine. Healthcare facilities got struck by aerial attacks every two days, severely disrupting the provision of services. Only 45% of the pre-conflict health work force is active inside the country. Over 1 million children under five have not been reached by routine immunization and 70% of the population lacks access to safe drinking water. There has been an increase in the spread of water borne diseases, especially acute bloody diarrhoea.

Looking at these data, it is clear that the causes of malnutrition in Northern Syria are multisectoral (food intake, access to food, health, care, water and sanitation, gender) and encompass issues related to agriculture, water and sanitation, and health sectors. In that context, only joint/multisectoral actions can effectively help prevent malnutrition.

b. What livelihood groups are at risk of malnutrition in Syria?

As a second step, participants discussed – building on the presentations and plenary discussions - which livelihood groups they think are the most at risk of malnutrition, considering both physical and socio-economic vulnerabilities. The different livelihoods identified by participants were:

- People living in besieged areas;
- Women- and child-headed households;
- Households living in highland areas (farmers);
- Host communities with no agricultural activities;
- Host communities with agricultural activities;
- IDPs with no assets living in rural areas;
- IDPs with no assets living in urban areas.

From the above list, 3 livelihoods groups were chosen by participants for the group work on building malnutrition problem trees (see *section 3. Focus on group work: problem and solution trees for malnutrition*):

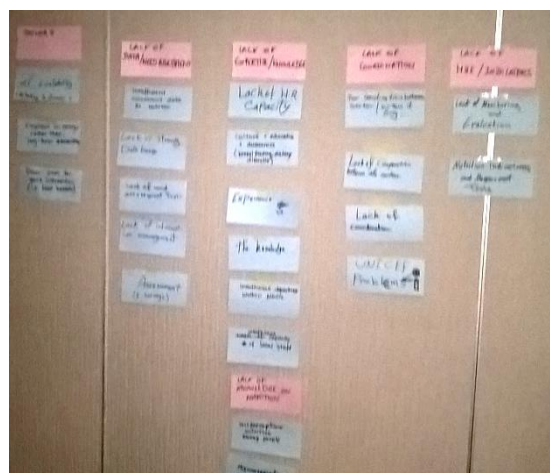
- 1. People living in besieged areas;
- 2. Women and child-headed households;
- 3. Households living in highland areas.

c. What are the obstacles for more nutrition-sensitive programming?

Finally, this session allowed participants to discuss what they see as obstacles for better nutrition-sensitive programming. Below are the main obstacles identified, clustered by theme. More details are provided in annex 4:

Figure 1. Challenges for more nutrition-sensitive programming as identified by participants

- Data collection and needs assessment
- Monitoring tools and indicators
- Lack of knowledge / expertise / capacities
- Donors' commitment and lack of funds for non-emergencies interventions
- Silos mentality and weak coordination
- Security issues



2. Session 2: Situation Analysis

This session aimed to better understand the principal causal pathways of malnutrition in Syria and how they are related to different people's livelihoods, by building malnutrition problem trees. See *section 3. Focus on group work: problem and solution trees for malnutrition* for more details about the methodology and the results of group work.

This section also dealt with methodologies for food security and nutrition assessments and indicators for comprehensive situation analysis. More specifically, it focused on diet-related indicators, food consumption and dietary diversity indicators, which help to understand food access and diet quality. However, these kinds of indicators may be challenging to collect, especially at individual level because food security assessment usually collects only data at household level.

Indicators for diet quality – Individual Level

Indicator	What it measures
MDD-W (Minimum Dietary Diversity – Women)	A partial measure of dietary quality, which reflects nutrient adequacy and dietary diversity
Minimum Dietary Diversity – Young Children	A partial measure of dietary quality, which reflects nutrient adequacy and dietary diversity, and feeding practices

Indicators for food access – Household level

Household Dietary Diversity Score (HDDS)	Household access to and consumption of a variety of foods.
Food Consumption Score (FCS)	Household access to consumption of diverse food; weighted by nutrient density

It is also important to mention that there are no standardized methodologies yet to carry out a joint food security and nutrition assessment. Methodologies are currently being piloted, as for example the Joint Food Security and Nutrition assessment conducted by WFP and UNICEF in Uganda in 2014. Other tools developed and/or tested include the Link NCA: www.linknca.org (by ACF), the Acute Nutrition phase classification: www.ipcinfo.org/ipcinfo-technical-development/ipc-nutrition-phase-classification/en/ (IPC), the Cost of Diet: www.savethechildren.org.uk/resources/online-library/the-minimum-cost-of-a-healthy-diet (by Save the Children). More information on each of these initiatives is available of their project websites.

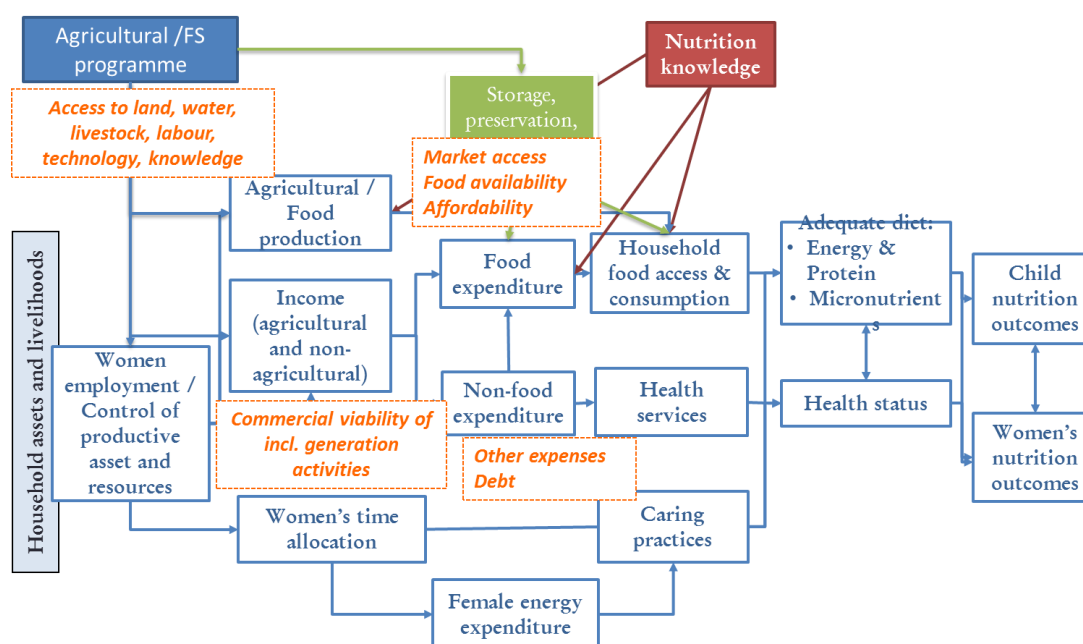
The session 4 on *Monitoring and evaluating the nutrition outcomes of interventions* built on this session and further addressed the issue of which indicators to select.

3. Session 3: Response analysis and Project design

The objectives of this session were to understand how professionals from different sectors and institutions can contribute to achieving common nutrition outcomes, and to learn from and discuss examples of interventions and programmes to maximize nutrition outcomes.

This session first included group work for building malnutrition solution trees, for the 3 livelihood groups, based on the problems identified in the previous session. Secondly, the session allowed participants to learn about the key concepts and issues for improving nutrition through Food Security and Agriculture. It defined nutrition-specific and nutrition-sensitive interventions, and introduced the different pathways (i.e. production, income and women's empowerment pathways) and main entry points for designing nutrition-sensitive interventions. The 10 key recommendations for improving nutrition through agriculture and food systems were explained, and participants were asked to think and discuss about concrete examples from their personal experience to illustrate how each of the recommendations was / can be applied. See the 10 key recommendations in annex 2³.

Figure 2. Different pathways through which agriculture and food security can impact nutrition



Adapted from: Stuart Gillespie, Jody Harris, and Suneetha Kadiyala, 2012

³ Or to download at: www.fao.org/documents/card/en/c/74018245-8bc9-4932-97ab-14fe8e9b496c/

The afternoon session brought out examples of programmes being implemented in Syria. Two projects were presented with a focus on:

- Cooked meals to respond to immediate food needs;
- Kitchen gardens (provision of rich-nutrients vegetables, materials and equipment).

The presentations were followed by group discussions around the following sets of questions: 1) Which are the factors of the project design that maximize the projects' nutritional impact? How can the projects' nutritional impact be further maximized by using the 10 key recommendations? 2) Are there any potential negative impacts on nutrition, and if so, how are/can they be prevented or minimized? 3) Are there any particularly innovative features which you think deserve to be highlighted? One group was asked to discuss the same set of questions but with a focus on complementary feeding projects.

The key elements coming out from the group discussions were:

- **Recommendations for nutrition-sensitive interventions:** it is important:
 - To have access to updated nutrition data and assess the nutrition situation
 - To target the most vulnerable people
 - To explicitly integrate indicators which will measure the nutrition impact of the programme.
- **Do no harm concept:** some potential, unintended, negative impacts were identified including issues related to access to safe water. Indeed, in the current Syrian context, safe water is lacking and it is therefore important to make sure that activities such as kitchen gardens will not reduce safe water for self-consumption. In connection to food basket or voucher distributions, the need to ensure that beneficiaries' basic needs or others (for instance debts) are covered was mentioned. If not, they might sell the food basket content or use the voucher to buy non-food items or reimburse their loans.
- **Suggestions to improve project quality and impact on nutrition:** Kitchen gardens could be improved if they integrate training on how to produce natural fertilizer (compost) and how to reproduce local seeds. It would be interesting to link the kitchen garden activities to the production of complementary food for children from 6 to 24 months. Food basket distribution and use could be improved by providing key nutrition knowledge (by adding awareness advertisements inside the basket) in order to raise awareness on the nutrition value of the different food items. In addition, some food items may be new for the beneficiaries, so it may be useful to add some recipes or notices on how to prepare and cook them.

4. Session 4: Monitoring and evaluating the nutrition outcomes of interventions

This section allowed participants to discuss and learn how to define indicators to measure the nutrition outcomes of food security and agriculture interventions along the impact pathway.

Participants were involved in identifying indicators to measure the different causes of malnutrition (using the conceptual framework of malnutrition as a reference). During the first part of this exercise, they were asked to suggest indicators related to one specific topic (i.e. Nutrition; Diet; Care; Women's empowerment; Household food access; Availability of nutritious food; Health environment). A set of standard indicators was distributed during the second part, and participants were asked to identify if some of these indicators were relevant to their topic or not. The summarized table of indicators (including all proposed indicators) is provided in annex 3.

Take home messages of this session include the necessity of measuring impact on nutrition or on the intended pathways to nutrition if an agriculture programme aims to be nutrition-sensitive. However, there are different pathways through which interventions can address the causes of malnutrition and what a programme measures will depend on the programme aim. The M&E system should help monitor and evaluate these pathways throughout project implementation. It is also crucial to measure the potential negative impacts/unexpected outcomes and external factors of the interventions on nutrition (do no harm).

About the choice of indicators, it was said that stunting is a good impact indicator for multisectoral programmes, but it is not a realistic objective for emergency or resilience programmes. It was also mentioned that iron deficiency is a good proxy for any other micronutrient deficiencies. For food security interventions, it is important to measure impacts at least on household food consumption, and if possible at individual level, because nutrition is about individuals and looking at the individual is the only way to understand maternal and child nutrition. Finally, the choice of indicators depends on the intervention and on what data are feasible to collect.

3. Focus on group work: malnutrition problem and solution trees

1. The Malnutrition problem and solution trees tool

The group work on building malnutrition problem and solution trees was based on the FAO 2013 Manual *“Agreeing on the causes of malnutrition for joint action”*⁴. The problem tree is a very useful tool to better understand the complexity of and the interrelations between causes of malnutrition. The “solution tree” is a mirror of the problem tree. Building the solution tree transforms each problem identified into a positive situation. The interventions are then identified to actualize the solutions and achieve the positive situations. The malnutrition problem and solution trees tool helps to build consensus among participants, to strengthen ownership on nutrition and food security issues, and to identify interventions to solve identified problems. The malnutrition problem and solution trees are specific for each livelihood group.

Malnutrition Problem and Solution trees: when can they be used? The problem and/or solution trees methodology can be adapted to achieve several objectives, for example planning for Nutrition, Food Security and Resilience-building (i.e. the problem tree helps carry out participatory nutrition situation analysis; the solution tree helps design integrating programmes, develop a common M&E framework, map intervention and stakeholders and identify gaps); designing a Food Security and Nutrition information system; training on malnutrition and its causes (depending on local training needs); and for consensus building and conflict resolution.

2. Trees built during the workshop

In this workshop, participants, divided into 3 groups, built problem and solution trees for the following 3 livelihood groups: People living in besieged areas, women and child headed households, and households living in highland areas (see *section 2.1b. What livelihood groups are at risk of malnutrition?*). Hereafter are the pictures of the malnutrition problem trees and, solution and intervention trees for each livelihood group. Problems are represented by the yellow cards, solutions by the purple cards and interventions by the pink ones.

⁴ www.fao.org/3/a-i3516e.pdf

4. Conclusion

1. Workshop evaluation by the participants

At the end of the workshop, participants were asked to fill in an evaluation form, with questions related to their appreciation, on the overall quality of the workshop and of each session, skills and concepts acquired, and recommendations for improving the quality of the training.

Figures 6a and 6b provide an overview of the evaluation results. Overall, the training workshop was very much appreciated by participants (82% rated it from very good to excellent). The design of the workshops has largely responded to participants' needs and expectations. Participants appreciated the general structure of the workshop: the overall process, time allocated for each session, and materials used during the workshop. The participatory approach, including group discussions, was especially perceived as very useful and helped participants to better understand new concepts.

Figure 6a. Overall evaluation of the workshop quality.

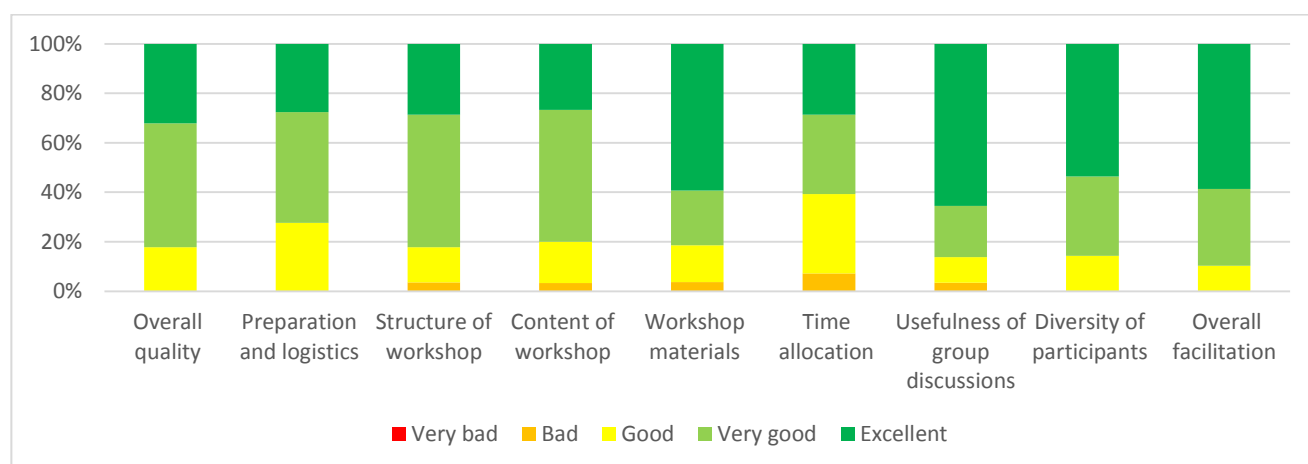
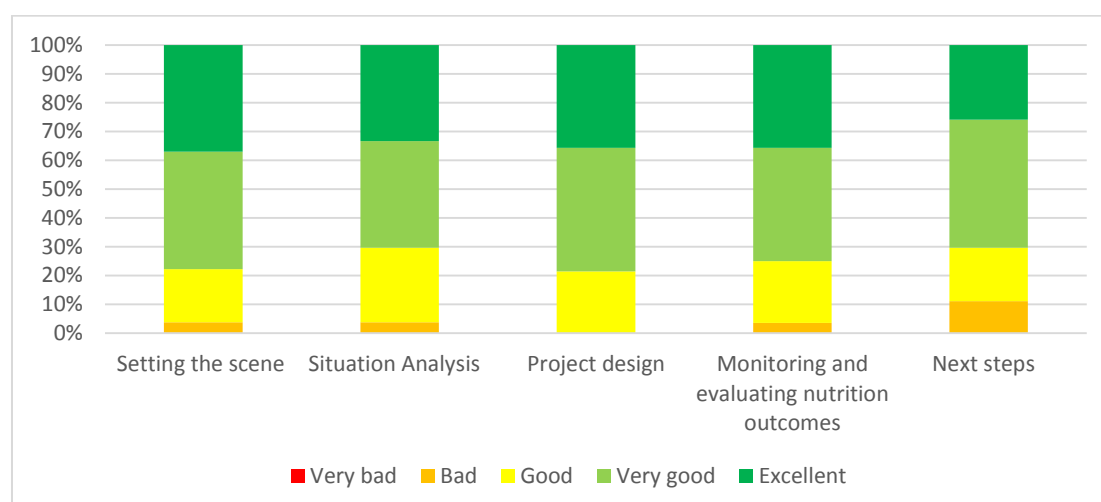


Figure 6b. Evaluation of the quality of the different workshop sessions



Participants have gained a common understanding of nutrition and food security concepts. They are now aware of potential nutrition problems for vulnerable Syrian people and have learnt about key principles to make their food security and agricultural programmes more nutrition-sensitive. The key skills they have acquired include the methodology for malnutrition problem and solution trees, impact pathways and M&E guidance for nutrition-sensitive programmes. The information and concepts that were better understood by the participants include the importance of designing nutrition-sensitive agricultural programmes and to better incorporate explicit nutrition objectives and indicators (diet-related and nutrition indicators).

In order to improve the quality and relevance of future workshops, the participants mainly recommended allowing more time in and between sessions for digestion of information and also to have more concrete examples of nutrition-sensitive agricultural programmes.

More details about workshop evaluation results are also given available in annex 6.

2. Suggested next steps

a. Key actions identified by participants

This workshop is a first step to a joint planning process and it is important to maintain momentum through an adequate follow-up. For that purpose, the last hour of the workshop was dedicated to participant discussions (divided into 6 working group) on future actions to address the challenges/obstacles for more nutrition-sensitive programming (as identified the first day of the workshop, see *section 2.1b*). Recommended actions include:

- Strengthen technical expertise of field staff and community workers on nutrition and nutrition-sensitive agriculture through trainings and workshops; translating training materials and tools into Arabic, use available training online (incl. Agreeing on causes of malnutrition for joint action. www.fao.org/elearning/#/elc/en/course/ACMJA)
- Improve monitoring and evaluation of nutrition outcomes through greater coordination between M&E team and program team (i.e. joint meeting/planning); use of nutrition-sensitive indicators in agriculture and FSL programmes; conducting baselines/control group/triangulation;
- Advocacy at donor level for integrating programmes and long term funding;
- More coordination across sectors through strengthened linkages between clusters, trainings and workshops involving different sectors;
- Greater joint programming between NGOs to avoid overlap and apply a comprehensive approach to identified problems;
- Improve needs assessment through mobilizing experts, collaboration between NGOs and UN agencies.

Participants also identified main person/ organization (s) for taking forward these actions. Annex 5 compiles all actions proposed by the 6 working groups.

b. Proposed actions from FAO facilitation team to support integrated and nutrition-sensitive programming in Northern Syria

FAO has taken the lead in organizing this workshop in collaboration with the FSL and Nutrition clusters for Northern Syria. FAO remains committed to supporting partners in developing nutrition-sensitive agriculture programmes:

- As a first step, FAO will widely disseminate the workshop report to all participants and relevant stakeholders in the area.
- Second, there is clearly a need to continue strengthening partners' capacities, especially in the field of M&E and nutrition-sensitive indicators. It could be useful to develop together with nutrition, FSL, but also wash and health clusters - a set of indicators for nutrition-sensitive interventions to be widely shared with all cluster members.
- Finally, it is proposed to organize a follow up workshop in 4-6 months, involving nutrition and food security / agriculture cluster partners, but also potentially other organizations working in other sectors relevant to nutrition such WASH, health, education. The main objectives of this second workshop will be: to review the progress in nutrition-sensitive programming, draw lessons from successes and challenges faced by organizations and share good practices in designing agricultural nutrition-sensitive programmes.

Annex 1. Agenda overview

Time	Monday 23 rd November	Tuesday 24 th November	Wednesday 25 th November
9:00-10:30am (approx.)	Registration of participants	Session 3: Response analysis and project design	Session 4 (cont'd): Monitoring and evaluating the nutritional outcomes of interventions
	Opening and presentation of the workshop facilitators, objectives of the workshop and introduction of participants	<i>Group exercise – Agreeing on causes of malnutrition for joint action: Building a solution and intervention tree for malnutrition by livelihood groups</i> Identifying project objectives and possible interventions	<i>Group exercise:</i> What indicators to monitor nutrition outcomes of interventions?
	<i>Tea break</i>	<i>Tea break</i>	<i>Tea break</i>
10:45am-12:30pm (approx.)	Session 1: Setting the scene	<i>Presentation – Key concepts and main entry points for Improving Nutrition through Food Security and agriculture</i>	Session 5: Next steps:
	<i>Presentations - Key concepts for nutrition, Food and Nutrition Security, nutrition-sensitive programmes; and current Nutrition challenges</i>		<i>Group exercise:</i> Definition of next steps and follow-up mechanisms: key actions to be taken
	<i>Group exercise:</i> What are the obstacles / barriers for more nutrition-sensitive programming?	<i>Group exercise:</i> Applying the 10 key recommendations for improving nutrition through agriculture	Conclusion of the workshop
	<i>Presentation – Current Food security situation and populations' livelihoods</i>		
12:30–1:30 pm	Lunch	Lunch	
1:30-3:00pm (approx.)	Session 2: Situation analysis	<i>Participants' presentations – Sharing experiences on nutrition-sensitive interventions implemented by organisations</i>	
	<i>Group exercise – Agreeing on causes of malnutrition for joint action: Building a problem tree for malnutrition by livelihood groups</i> Identifying main malnutrition problems by livelihood groups in the Syrian-crisis context	<i>Group discussion:</i> What opportunities for maximizing nutritional outcomes of FS and agriculture interventions?	
	<i>Tea break</i>	<i>Tea break</i>	
3:15-4:30pm (approx.)	<i>Presentations – Situation analysis, some methodologies and indicators</i>	Session 4: Monitoring and evaluating the nutritional outcomes of interventions	
		<i>Presentation – Key concepts for monitoring and evaluation</i>	
4:30-5pm	Conclusion of the day	Conclusion of the day	

Annex 2. Key Recommendations for improving Nutrition through agriculture and food system



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KEY RECOMMENDATIONS FOR IMPROVING NUTRITION THROUGH AGRICULTURE AND FOOD SYSTEMS

Food systems provide for all people's nutritional needs, while at the same time contributing to economic growth. The food and agriculture sector has the primary role in feeding people well by **increasing availability, affordability, and consumption of diverse, safe, nutritious foods and diets** aligned with dietary recommendations and environmental sustainability. Applying these principles helps strengthen resilience and contributes to sustainable development.

Agricultural programmes and investments can strengthen impact on nutrition if they:

- 1 Incorporate explicit nutrition objectives and indicators into their design**, and track and mitigate potential harms, while seeking synergies with economic, social and environmental objectives.
- 2 Assess the context at the local level, to design appropriate activities to address the types and causes of malnutrition**, including chronic or acute undernutrition, vitamin and mineral deficiencies, and obesity and chronic disease. Context assessment can include potential food resources, agro-ecology, seasonality of production and income, access to productive resources such as land, market opportunities and infrastructure, gender dynamics and roles, opportunities for collaboration with other sectors or programmes, and local priorities.
- 3 Target the vulnerable and improve equity** through participation, access to resources, and decent employment. Vulnerable groups include smallholders, women, youth, the landless, urban dwellers, the unemployed.
- 4 Collaborate and coordinate with other sectors** (health, environment, social protection, labour, water and sanitation, education, energy) and programmes, through joint strategies with common goals, to address concurrently the multiple underlying causes of malnutrition.
- 5 Maintain or improve the natural resource base** (water, soil, air, climate, biodiversity), critical to the livelihoods and resilience of vulnerable farmers and to sustainable food and nutrition security for all. Manage water resources in particular to reduce vector-borne illness and to ensure sustainable, safe household water sources.
- 6 Empower women** by ensuring access to productive resources, income opportunities, extension services and information, credit, labour and time-saving technologies (including energy and water services), and supporting their voice in household and farming decisions. Equitable opportunities to earn and learn should be compatible with safe pregnancy and young child feeding.
- 7 Facilitate production diversification, and increase production of nutrient-dense crops and small-scale livestock** (for example, horticultural products, legumes, livestock and fish at a small scale, underutilized crops, and biofortified crops). Diversified production systems are important to vulnerable producers to enable resilience to climate and price shocks, more diverse food consumption, reduction of seasonal food and income fluctuations, and greater and more gender-equitable income generation.
- 8 Improve processing, storage and preservation** to retain nutritional value, shelf-life, and food safety, to reduce seasonality of food insecurity and post-harvest losses, and to make healthy foods convenient to prepare.
- 9 Expand markets and market access for vulnerable groups, particularly for marketing nutritious foods** or products vulnerable groups have a comparative advantage in producing. This can include innovative promotion (such as marketing based on nutrient content), value addition, access to price information, and farmer associations.
- 10 Incorporate nutrition promotion and education** around food and sustainable food systems that builds on existing local knowledge, attitudes and practices. Nutrition knowledge can enhance the impact of production and income in rural households, especially important for women and young children, and can increase demand for nutritious foods in the general population.

Agriculture programmes and investments need to be supported by an **enabling policy environment** if they are to contribute to improving nutrition. Governments can encourage improvements in nutrition through agriculture by taking into consideration the 5 policy actions below.

Food and agriculture policies can have a better impact on nutrition if they:

1

Increase incentives (and decrease disincentives) for availability, access, and consumption of diverse, nutritious and safe foods through environmentally sustainable production, trade, and distribution.

The focus needs to be on horticulture, legumes, and small-scale livestock and fish – foods which are relatively unavailable and expensive, but nutrient-rich – and vastly underutilized as sources of both food and income.

2

Monitor dietary consumption and access to safe, diverse, and nutritious foods. The data could include food prices of diverse foods, and dietary consumption indicators for vulnerable groups.

3

Include measures that protect and empower the poor and women. Safety nets that allow people to access nutritious food during shocks or seasonal times when income is low; land tenure rights; equitable access to productive resources; market access for vulnerable producers (including information and infrastructure). Recognizing that a majority of the poor are women, ensure equitable access to all of the above for women.

4

Develop capacity in human resources and institutions to improve nutrition through the food and agriculture sector, supported with adequate financing.

5

Support multi-sectoral strategies to improve nutrition within national, regional, and local government structures.

These recommendations have been formulated following an extensive review of available guidance on agriculture programming for nutrition, conducted by FAO (see: www.fao.org/docrep/017/aq194e/aq194e00.htm), and through consultation with a broad range of partners (CSOs, NGOs, government staff, donors, UN agencies) in particular through the Ag2Nut Community of Practice. They are also referred to as “guiding principles” by some partners.

The present key recommendations for Improving Nutrition through Agriculture target policy makers and programme planners. These recommendations are based on the current global context, and may be updated over time as challenges and opportunities to improve nutrition through agriculture shift.



Annex 3. Nutrition-sensitive indicators



Indicators suggested **by** the participants



Indicators suggested **to** the participants

Nutrition	Diet	Care	Women's empowerment	Household food access	Availability of nutritious food	Healthy environment
% of HH using iodized salt	% timely and appropriate complementary feeding	% of HH with appropriate handwashing	Women's control of resources	Food prices	Availability of diverse food in the market	Implementation of good hygiene practices
Prevalence of SAM and MAM	Consumption of vitamin A-rich foods	% of child caregivers and food prepare with appropriate handwashing behavior	Number of women who have attended nutrition trainings	Household Dietary Diversity Score (HDDS)	Diversity of food produced on farm	% of income used for accessing health services
Rate of anemia (proxy for MND)	Amount of calories consumed per person per day	Breastfeeding indicators	% of women represented in local committees	% of income spent on food	Production of target nutrient-rich food	% of HH accessing health services
Stunting (Height for Age)	Number of food groups consumed per person per day		Women's time use and labour	Food Consumption Score (FCS)		Access to hygienic sanitation facilities
Low Birth weight	Minimum Dietary Diversity Score for Women (MDD-W)	% of children under 36 months with diarrhoea in the last 2 weeks	Number of women who have increased their income	% of presence of HH members who are able and secure to go to markets		Access to drinking water
	Amount of vitamins and micronutrient consumed per person per day	Women's time and use labour	Number of men represented in gender-balance training	Income		% of children under 5 treated for acute malnutrition (proxy)
	Number of infants exclusively breastfed	% of work hours per week for lactating women				
	Minimum Acceptable Diet (MAD) for children under 2 years	Number of pregnant women who visit health centres during 9 month				
		Number of elders who visit health centre per month				

Annex 4. Group work – Obstacles/Barriers for more nutrition-sensitive programming

1. [Data collection and need assessments](#)

- Insufficient assessment data (*2)
- Lack of strong database
- Lack of need assessment tools
- Lack of information management

2. [Lack of knowledge / expertise / capacities](#)

- Lack of human resources capacity
- Lack of nutrition knowledge and importance of nutrition among non-nutritionists (breastfeeding practices, dietary diversity) (*4)
- Insufficient expertise within NGOs
- Insufficient capacity of local staff
- Gender issue

3. [Silos mentality and weak coordination](#)

- Poor coordination between sectors/organizations (4)

4. [Lack of funds and donors influence/attitude](#)

- Accountability of donors
- Emphasis on emergency rather than long-term interventions (i.e. Food baskets)

5. [Monitoring tools and indicators](#)

- Lack of Monitoring and Evaluation
- Nutrition indicators and measurement tools

6. [Value chain issues](#)

- Poor infrastructures: storage, shelf life, transportation

7. [Security issues](#)

- Access
- Bad security situation and current psychological state

Annex 5. Next steps

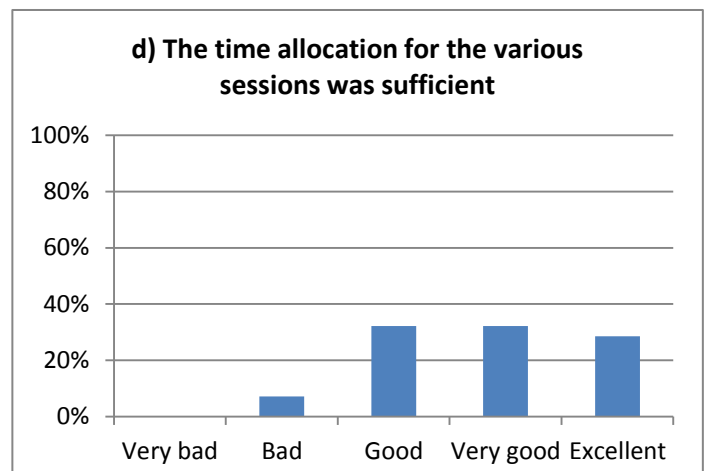
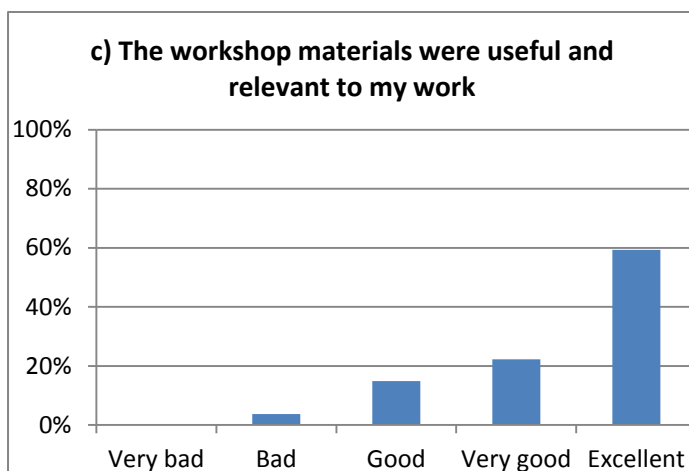
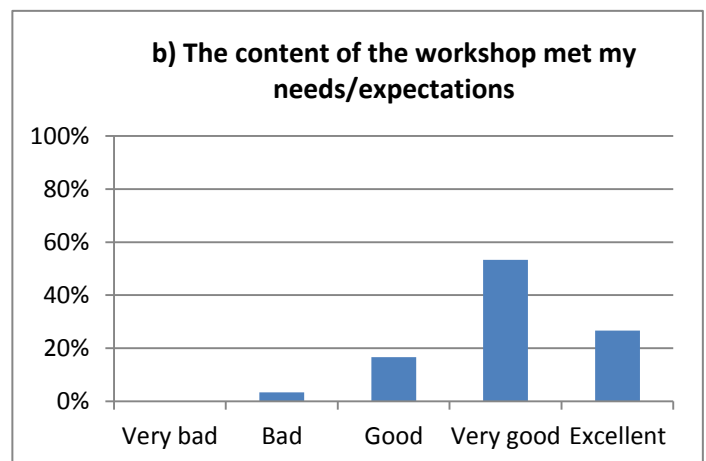
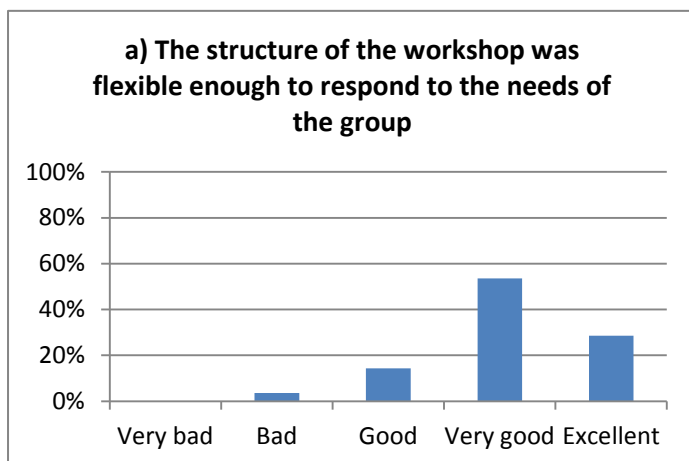
The table below compiles actions identified by participants to address existing challenges for more-nutrition-sensitive programming.

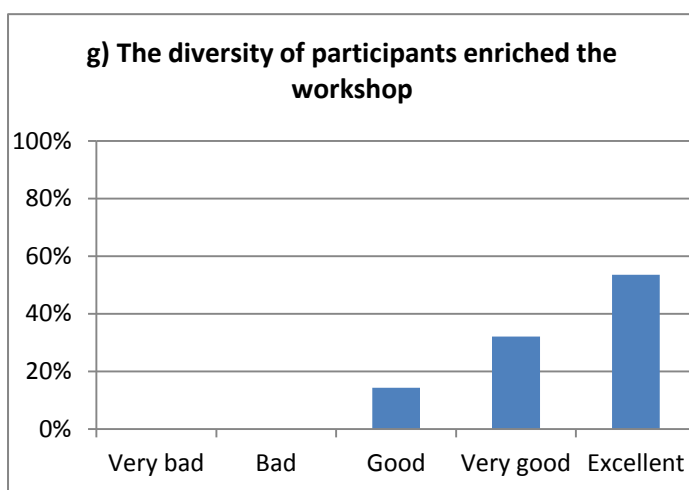
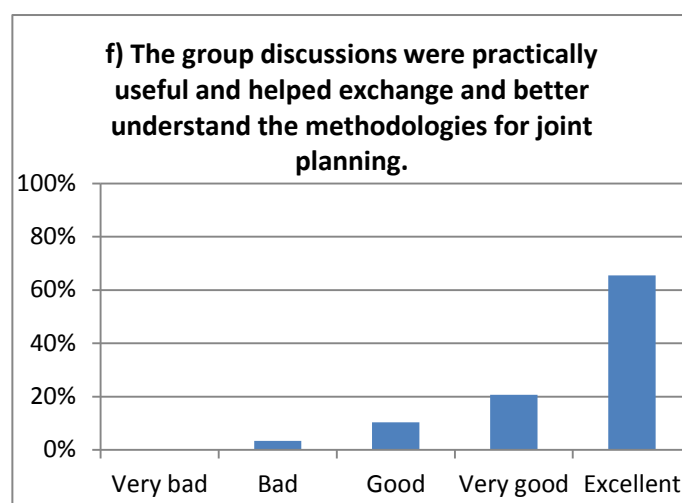
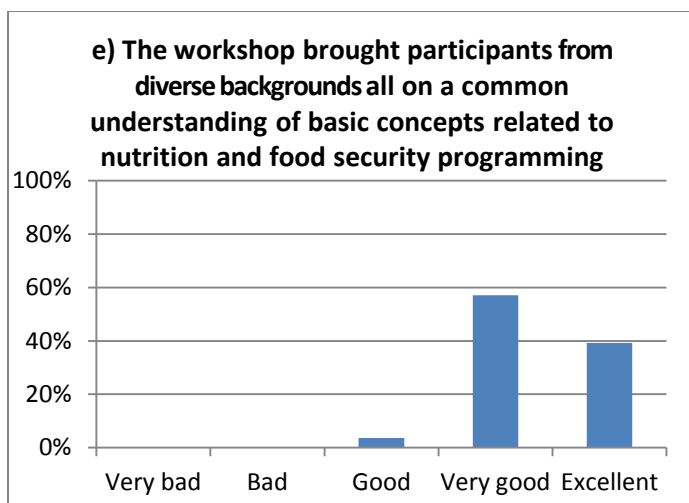
CHALLENGES	ACTIONS	PERSON IN CHARGE
M&E/ indicators	To consider nutrition-sensitive indicators in agriculture and FSL	M&E manager
	Improving the understanding and identification of the suitable indicators	Ag team
	Cluster level guidelines for M&E	Clusters/WG
	Baselines/Control group/ Triangulation	M&E Coordinator
	Reporting and focus group discussion	
	Good Feedback justification	HL Manager
	Coordinating with the M&E team	M&E team
	More coordination between M&E team and program team through joint meeting/planning	Project/program manager
	Workshop participants advocate at organization level to include nutrition outcomes/objectives/M&E	Program manager
Knowledge/ expertise/ capacities	Attend the online e-learning course on "Agreeing on causes of malnutrition"	FS team
	Translation to Arabic - capacity building tools	Cluster/org
	Training/ Workshops/ Exchange expertise	UN agencies
	Train field staff	Program manager
	Building capacities/ training of community workers	NGO (staff)
	Create a nutrition sector/Raise awareness of pregnant women/ Intensive training	Communities leaders
Donors/ funding issues	Inform donors about the long term impact of our project and convince them	Program manager
	Advocacy at donor level for integration	Donors/Cluster coordination
	Donors open to funding assessments	Donors
Silo approach/ Weak coordination	Asking for help and share our knowledge	FS, Nut, WASH, Health teams
	More coordination by meetings	Relationships Manager
	Link between different clusters and exchange experiences	
	Integrated training and workshops	
	Before designing your plan, make sure your coordinate with other NGOs operating in the same area	Cluster Coordinator Donors
	Donors condition this coordination	
	Coordination between organizations to apply a comprehensive or integrated project	
Needs assessment	Joint programming between different NGOs to avoid overlap	NGOs
	Need assessment supported by reports from INGOs and UN agencies	Need assessment Manager
	Hire experts to do assessments and evaluation analysis	Organisation level
	Doing a need assessment (including nutritional status) to integrate Nutrition in our FSL project	FS team
Other issues		
Access to target areas	Coordination with authorities Cross border issues	Governor

Annex 6. Participant evaluation summary

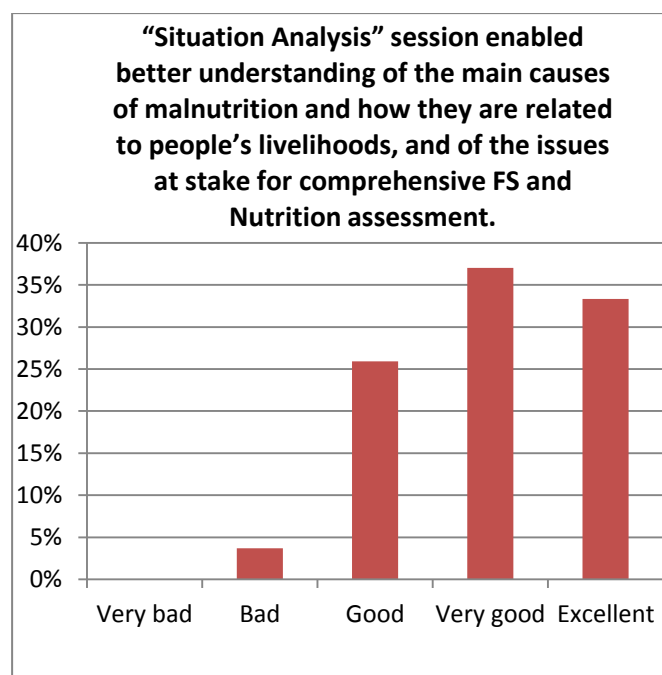
298 evaluation forms were collected at the end of the workshop. The following results are drawn from these forms

1. Overall workshop evaluation

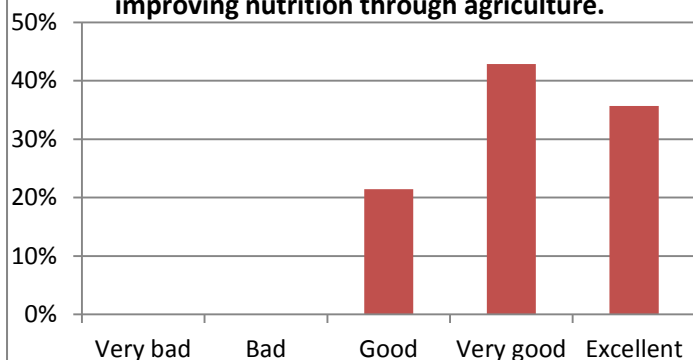




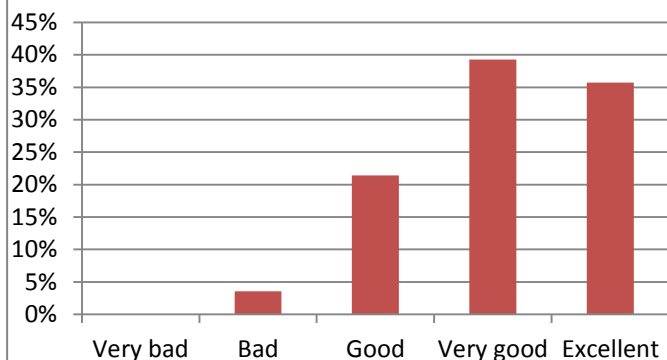
2. Evaluation per workshop session



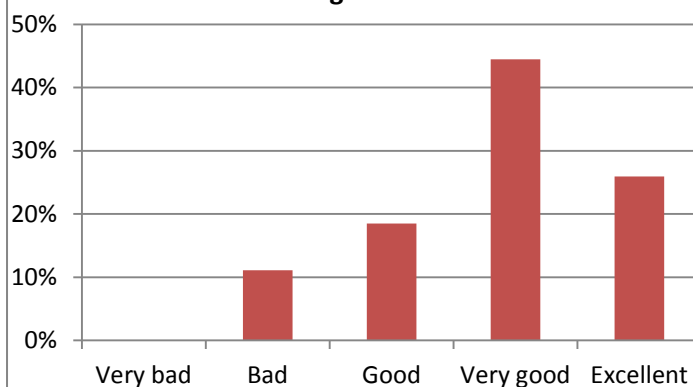
“Project design” helped to better understand the shared roles of different sectors in achieving a common nutritional outcome, and the key principles for improving nutrition through agriculture.



“Monitoring and evaluating nutritional outcomes” helped better understand how to define indicators to measure nutritional impacts.

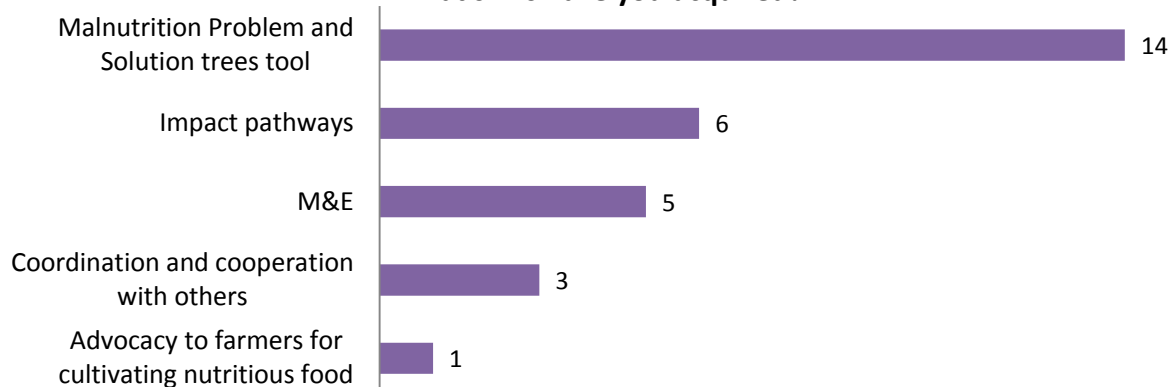


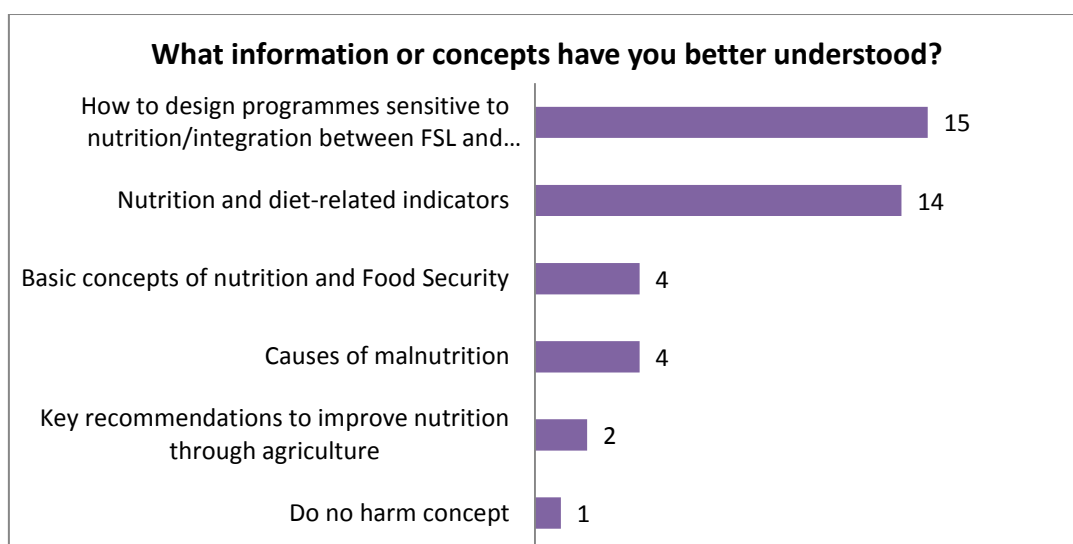
“Next steps” session enabled to come up with recommendations for moving forward the integration of food security and nutrition programming, and nutrition-sensitive agriculture.



3. Skills acquired and concepts better understood

What skills have you acquired?





4. Recommendations to improve the quality / relevance of future workshops

