



Save the Children

**ENGINE: Empowering New Generations to
Improve Nutrition and Economic Opportunities**

A project supported by the US Global Health and Feed the Future Initiatives

Year III Semi-Annual Progress Report

October 1, 2013 – March 31, 2014



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Acronyms

ACoE	Academic Center of Excellence
AEWs	Agriculture Extension Workers
AGP	Agriculture Growth Program
AMde	Agribusiness and Market Development in Ethiopia
ATVET	Agriculture Technical and Vocational Education and Training
CBM	Community-based management
CC	Community Conversation
CF	Combined feeding
CHDs	Child Health Days
CQI	Continuous Quality Improvement
DAs	Development Agents
DFID	UK Department for International Development
DZARC	Debre Zeit Agricultural Research Center
EBF	Exclusive breastfeeding
ECCs	Enhanced Community Conversations
EIAR	Ethiopia Institute of Agricultural Research
ENGINE	Empowering New Generations to Improve Nutrition and Economic Opportunities
EPHI	Ethiopian Public Health Institute
FANTA-3	Food and Nutrition Technical Assistance III Project
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization
FBP	Food by Prescription
FCD	Food-cooking demonstrations
FGDs	Focus Group Discussions
FMoH	Federal Ministry of Health
FRI	Farm Radio International
FTC	Farmer training center
FtF	Feed the Future
GoE	Government of Ethiopia
GRAD	Graduation with Resilience to Achieve Sustainable Development
HDA	Health Development Army
HEWs	Health Extension Workers
HF	Health Facilities
HH	Household
HMIS	Health Management Information System
HP	Health Post
HWs	Health Workers
IFHP	Integrated Family Health Program
ICCM	Integrated Community-based Case Management
IRT	Integrated refresher training
IRB	Institutional Review Board
IYCF	Infant and Young Child Feeding

JHU-CCP	Johns Hopkins University-Center for Communication Programs
LES	Livelihood and economic opportunities
LNGOs	local non-governmental organizations
LOE	Level of effort
LOL	Land O' Lakes, Inc.
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MAIYCN	Maternal, Adolescent, Infant and Young Child Nutrition
MASHAV	Israeli Agency for International Development Cooperation
MFI	Microfinance Institutions
MIYCN	Maternal, Infant and Young Child Nutrition
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
MSG	Mothers Support Group
MVHHs	Most Vulnerable Households
NACS	Nutrition Assessment, Counseling and Support
NGO	Non-governmental Organization
NNCB	National Nutrition Coordinating Body
NNP	National Nutrition Program
NNTC	National Nutrition Technical Committee
OFDA	Office of U.S. Foreign Disaster Assistance
OR	Operations research
ORS	Oral rehydration salts
OTP	Outpatient Therapeutic Program
PC	Peace Corps
PCV	Peace Corps Volunteer
PI	Principal Investigator
PSE	Pre-service Education
QI	Quality Improvement
RDQA	Routine Data Quality Assessment
RFP	Request for Proposal
RNCBs	Regional Nutrition Coordinating Bodies
RNTCs	Regional Nutrition Technical Committees
SAM	Severe Acute Malnutrition
SBCC	Social and Behavior Change Communication
SBM-R	Standards-Based Management and Recognition
SC	Save the Children
SNNPR	Southern Nations, Nationalities and People's Region
SOW	Scope of Work
TOT	Training of Trainers
TSFP	Targeted Supplementary Feeding Program
TVET	Technical and Vocational Education and Training
TWG	Technical Working Group
UNICEF	United Nations International Children's Education Fund
VAT	Value Added Tax
VI	Valid International
WASH	Water, Sanitation and Hygiene
ZC	Zonal Coordinator

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Executive summary

Project overview

ENGINE – Empowering New Generations to Improve Nutrition and Economic Opportunities – is USAID’s \$53 million, flagship nutrition project in Ethiopia. The core initiative of this large-scale, five-year project (2011 – 2016) is to prevent undernutrition during the first 1,000 days, from the start of pregnancy until the child is 2 years old, by focusing on social and behavior change communication (SBCC), including linkages to livelihood and economic strengthening (LES). The project aims to strengthen capacity for and institutionalize nutrition programs and policies; improve the quality and delivery of nutrition and health care services; prevent undernutrition through improved community-based nutrition care practices; and embrace a rigorous and innovative learning agenda.

Save the Children (SC) drives the implementation of ENGINE using a powerful, multi-sector platform comprised of evidence-based direct nutrition and nutrition sensitive interventions, fueled by existing government structures and synergistic partnerships with other USAID-funded projects. ENGINE has accelerated implementation of its integrated nutrition package to 83 Agriculture Growth Program (AGP) (food secure) *woredas* and will soon reach 17 non-AGP (food insecure) *woredas*.

SC effectively manages the integrated nutrition project interventions through a consortium of highly specialized and reputable technical experts including: Jhpiego, Tufts University, Valid International (VI), Land O’Lakes (LOL) and The Manoff Group. In the first quarter, Johns Hopkins University-Center for Communication Programs (JHU-CCP) phased-out its SBCC activities and transitioned these responsibilities to The Manoff Group and SC. In the second quarter, VI handed-over its field research activities to SC and developed a scope of work and budget for international technical assistance (TA).

Achievements and successes

ENGINE made significant progress toward reaching its objectives in Year III covering the period from October 1, 2013 to March 31, 2014.

Nutrition multi-sector coordination

ENGINE was instrumental in strategically shaping and cascading the revised National Nutrition Program (NNP) to Amhara, Oromia, SNNP and Tigray regions. Based on the project’s successful track record, the State Minister of Health appointed ENGINE to support the creation and implementation of regional nutrition coordination bodies and technical committees in all regions, as well as expedite regional NNP diffusion in close partnership with UNICEF. To facilitate an enabling environment for NNP coordination, ENGINE contributed toward the successful launch of a national nutrition advocacy workshop for policymakers. It was the first time in the history of Ethiopia that 58 parliamentarians from eight standing committees had ever come together in one forum to discuss the magnitude of childhood stunting and its devastating impact on the health, education and economy of the country. ENGINE provided this highly influential target audience with timely *woreda*-level nutrition data from the project’s baseline survey that

directly impacts their constituencies and election platforms. ENGINE also developed a flyer, banner and information packet with key messages for parliamentarians to use as tools to advocate for increased resources to reduce stunting. By the end of the workshop, policymakers had developed clear action plans to bring nutrition high on the national agenda.

Feed the Future (FtF) multi-sector nutrition partnerships – ENGINE and Peace Corps

ENGINE forged a successful multi-sector FtF partnership with the Peace Corps (PC) on an innovative WASH action-research study to delve deeper into current household WASH practices to identify culturally relevant, doable actions to reduce childhood diarrhea and prevent stunting. ENGINE developed the qualitative research protocol and instruments to support rapid WASH observations and interviews and facilitated qualitative research training and field testing for 24 Peace Corps Volunteers (PCVs) and ENGINE zonal coordinators (ZCs). At the end of March 2014, the 12 research teams (one PCV paired with one ZC) began data collection in 24 selected households from 12 *woredas* in the four big regions, where PCVs live and work. Next quarter data analysis will be completed and findings and recommendations compiled for ENGINE's WASH SBCC strategy to support rapid implementation of WASH-related materials and implementation. (See Annex I for excerpts of field notes.)

According to Jade Bryant, PCV based in the Amhara region:

"One of the highlights of my service as a volunteer in Ethiopia was collaborating with ENGINE and SC on their WASH research study. The ENGINE ZC I was paired with, Aniley Keri and I both learned a great deal about the everyday challenges rural families face in keeping their children healthy. Aniley and I both enjoyed the opportunity to connect and learn from such open and hospitable families. As a Community Health PCV, I am eager to collaborate with PC Ethiopia partner organizations in their efforts to understand hygiene and sanitation practices at the grassroots level. Participating in ENGINE's WASH study enlightened me on projects I can do to promote healthy sanitation and nutrition behaviors in my community. It was a pleasure to have been a part of this multi-organizational effort to help Ethiopia meet its Millennium Development Goals."

Nutrition pre-service education (PSE)

ENGINE has made significant strides toward creating a nutrition academic center of excellence (ACoE) at Hawassa University to advance the revised NNP and foster research on new and improved approaches to reduce stunting. In December, the PSE team organized a ACoE exchange visit to a well-established ACoE at North West University in South Africa with the participation of government, research and project stakeholders. At the end of the trip, the team learned that a successful ACoE requires strong government buy-in; dedicated university leadership; adequate budget and facilities; and effective incentives to motivate staff such as access to knowledge; increased respect and status; and rewards for best performers. Following the visit, ENGINE has identified the critical materials needed to equip the ACoE, and North West University has offered to provide technical support in building the research and laboratory capacity of Hawassa University staff.

Capacity building

Over the past six months, ENGINE trained 2,369 (1,109 female) health and agricultural workers in nutrition. The project also integrated nutrition into 69 *woreda*, seven *zonal* and one *regional* level review meetings, and conducted joint supervision visits at 462 health centers (373 first visits), 711 health posts (658 first visits) and 1,690 households (HHs) with government counterparts. In building the local capacity of HHs and agriculture workers in nutrition-sensitive agriculture, ENGINE trained 11,256 farmers (6,594 female) and government workers out of the 44,217 annual planned.¹ ENGINE organized 90 agronomic demonstration events at farmers training centers (FTCs), schools and model farmer gardens with active participation from 7,116 farmers (3,014 female).² ENGINE built the capacity of health workers (HWs), health extension workers (HEWs), agricultural extension workers (AEWs) and school teachers by conducting 878 interactive cooking events at health facilities, FTCs and schools to demonstrate optimal nutrition behaviors for 49,652 parents in the target communities (39,436 female). At health centers, 90,765 pregnant women and 42,905 lactating mothers were counseled on optimal nutrition behaviors and 105,534 received iron supplementation. In addition, ENGINE also supported 80 target *woredas* with the provision of vitamin A and de-worming to children.³ At routine programs, trained HWs and HEWs assessed 171,063 children for malnutrition at health centres and treated 14,795 children suffering from diarrhea with oral rehydration salt and zinc.

Social and behavior change communication (SBCC) strategy

ENGINE conducted a rigorous analysis of the expansive dataset from the project's formative research study to better understand maternal dietary practices and behavioral influences in the four target regions – addressing a critical gap in the evidence base. Based on the in-depth analysis, the project developed a customized maternal SBCC strategy, as a supplement to ENGINE's overall SBCC road map. The team also completed a research report and research brief on maternal diet and nutrition behavioral influences, which was shared with USAID and FtF partners. Furthermore, the SBCC team recruited a creative agency to fast-track the development of nutrition messages and materials for target audiences, beginning with creative concept testing. ENGINE implemented rapid nutrition concept testing using innovative research methods such as *Diagnostic Role Plays* to understand gender dynamics and couple communication practices at household levels related to nutrition practices. Finally, ENGINE selected local non-government organizations (NGOs) to implement Enhanced Community Conversations (ECCs) to stimulate behavior change through peer groups, multi-media SBCC materials and interactive adult learning methods.

¹ More than ¾ of the agronomic sessions were planned for Quarters III and IV; after the school and FTC performance assessment.

² The annual target is 35,590.

³ The number of children who received vitamin A and de-worming will be reported in the last quarter to avoid double counting.

Baseline survey, operations research (OR) and internal mid-term assessment

ENGINE completed data analysis from its baseline impact evaluation and finalized the draft report. The acute malnutrition studies continue to be implemented smoothly in Jimma zone. The birth cohort and agriculture nutrition OR studies were launched in the second quarter with active participation from ENGINE-supported PhD students who enrolled in the newly formed Human Nutrition Department PhD program at Jimma University. The students participated in the training of trainers (TOT) workshop for the project's birth cohort study and agriculture-nutrition survey panel and oversaw data collection for the two cohort studies using innovative digital tablets. In addition to PhD students, ENGINE financially and technically supported 21 students with their MSc thesis nutrition research studies at Hawassa, Jimma and Mekele Universities. Finally, ENGINE has developed the terms of reference (TOR) for its internal midterm assessment planned for next quarter, including the research team, questions and methodology.

Reporting period

This is the ENGINE project's **Year III Semi-Annual Report** covering the reporting period from **October 1, 2013 to March 31, 2014**.

Publication/reports

Did your organization support the production of publications, reports, guidelines or assessments during the reporting period? (*Copies of final reports available upon request*)

No/Not Applicable

Yes If yes, please list below:

Title	Author	Date
SBCC Strategy Supplement: Maternal Nutrition Social and Behavior Change Communication Strategy (Draft)	The Manoff Group with ENGINE advisors	December 2013
Formative Research Report: Maternal Diet and Nutrition Practices and their Determinants: Formative Research Findings and Recommendations for SBCC Programming in Amhara, SNNP and Tigray regions	The Manoff Group with ENGINE input	March 2014
WASH Training Guide: WASH Qualitative Research and Behavior Observation	The Manoff Group and ENGINE	March 2014
WASH Research Tools: <i>WASH Qualitative Research Objectives, Protocol and Instruments</i>	The Manoff Group and ENGINE	March 2014
Technical Report: Assessment of Quality of Nutrition Services in four regions	Technopack Business Solutions & ENGINE	March 2014
Draft report: ENGINE revised baseline impact survey	Valid International with ENGINE input	March 2014
Project Strategy Document: Gender Mainstreaming Guidelines	ENGINE	March 2014
Secondary Analysis: Factors associated with stunting in Ethiopian children under-5	Tufts University with ENGINE input	March 2014
Secondary Analysis: Agricultural Commercialization, Production Diversity and Consumption Diversity among Smallholders in Ethiopia: <i>Results from 2012 National Integrated Agriculture and Socio-economic Survey</i>	Tufts University with ENGINE input	March 2014

Technical assistance (TA)

Did your organization utilize short-term TA during the reporting period?

No/Not Applicable

Yes Please list below:

If yes, please attach an electronic copy of the TA report as part of your submission (Annex II).⁴

TA Consultants

Name	Arrival	Departure	Organization	Type of TA provided
Lydia Clemmons	30 Sept 2013 26 Jan 2014	11 Oct 2013 07 Feb 2014	The Manoff Group	Supported transition of the SBCC portfolio from JHU-CCP to SC and The Manoff Group.
Tina Galante	05 Nov 2013	14 Nov 2013	Tufts University	Worked with researchers at Jimma and Hawassa universities on secondary data analyses.
Meghan Loraditch	05 Nov 2013 07 Jan 2014 16 Mar 2014	13 Dec 2013 18 Jan 2014 22 Mar 2014	Tufts University	Coordinated birth cohort study and agriculture-nutrition panel.
Shibani Ghosh	6 Nov 2013 16 Mar 2014	17 Nov 2013 22 Mar 2014	Tufts University	Worked with local researchers to implement birth cohort study; shared findings of secondary analysis on stunting determinants.
Berhane Gebru	15 Nov 2013	22 Nov 2013	Tufts University	Conducted training on electric tablets for data collection.
Jennifer Coates	07 Jan 2014	18 Jan 2014	Tufts University	Presented findings of agriculture commercialization secondary data analysis and supported agriculture-nutrition panel survey.
Mara Russell	07 Feb 2014	23 Feb 2014	Land O' Lakes	Provided managerial oversight for livelihood effectiveness study.
Waddington Chinogwenya	10 Feb 2014	21 Feb 2014	SC-US	Provided TA for livelihood study design, implementation and data analysis.
Mayling Simpson	22 Mar 2014	05 Apr 2014	The Manoff Group	Facilitated training workshop on WASH qualitative research for PCVs and ENGINE ZCs.
Gail Naimoli	24 Mar 2014	04 Apr 2014	The Manoff Group	Developed and implemented "Start-up Workshop" for ENGINE and partnering NGOs on roll-out of enhanced Community Conversations (ECCs).

⁴ Only trip reports from January-March are included in the annex for this semi-annual report because October-December TA reports were included with the Quarter I report submission.

Travel and visits

Did your organization support international travel during the reporting period?

No/Not Applicable

Yes

All international travel to conferences, workshops, trainings, HQ or meetings

Name	Destination	Departure from Ethiopia	Arrival in Ethiopia	Host Organization	Purpose of the travel
Belaynesh Yifru, SC-ENGINE Endris Mekonnen, Jphiego-ENGINE	South Africa	3 Dec 2013	8 Dec 2013	North West University -Center of Excellence (CoE)	Exchange visit to learn from the university about the process of establishing a CoE and identifying areas of collaboration.
Habtamu Fekadu, COP ENGINE	Nepal	9 Mar 2014	15 Mar 2014	SC-US	To participate in SC's global program learning group workshop to learn and share best practices on nutrition and WASH and present ENGINE's multi-sector nutrition activities (Annex II).

Field monitoring and supervision visits

Have any program **monitoring visits/supervisions** been made during the reporting period?

No/Not Applicable

Yes Please list below:

Description of Monitoring Team	Start Date	End Date	Sites Visited	Written recommendations provided
Health and Nutrition	01 Oct	01 Oct	Oromia region: Woliso <i>woreda</i>	Observed Community Conversation (CC) sessions on nutrition and recommended enhanced CC group format based on findings (see IR 3.1).
	17 Feb	21 Feb	Oromia region: Sinana and Dodola <i>woredas</i> SNNPR: Malga <i>woreda</i>	Mentored <i>woreda</i> health offices and the facility staffs on how to improve nutrition services in their respective localities.
FtF Joint Monitoring Team	20 Nov	22 Nov	Amhara region Dera <i>woreda</i>	Identified potential areas for integrating and coordinating FtF nutrition activities and improving quality of the nutrition activities.
Gender cross-cutting teams (M&E, LES)	13 Nov	17 Nov	Tigray region Ofa <i>woreda</i>	Piloted gender supervision checklists to mainstream gender into project activities.
	14 Mar	14 Mar	Oromia region: Woliso <i>woreda</i>	Developed recommendations for women's savings groups.
Livelihood and Economic Strengthening (LES)	18 Nov	29 Nov	Oromia and Amhara: Ambo, Andassa, & Kombolcha farms Ambo, Toke Kutaye Womberima, South Achefer, Bahir Dar town, Zuria	Identified producers for improved chicken supply strategy. Recommended that the project identify FTCs that can produce forage and link with beneficiaries.
	03 Feb 17 Feb	04 Feb 22 Feb	Poultry farms, feed processors and MVHs in Oromia and SNNP regions	Monitored the supply and access of livestock inputs for target beneficiaries.
Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E)	13 Nov	27 Nov	Amhara, Oromia, SNNP and Tigray regions	Assessed data quality and provided results and recommendations to regional project staff, health facilities, FTCs and school teams.
	03 Mar	07 Mar	SNNPR, Hawassa regional office	Provided recommendations on recording, reporting and documentation for ENGINE's regional sub-office.

Accomplishments and successes during the reporting period

Project management

Staff recruitment

During this reporting period, SC hired highly qualified and creative SBCC regional coordinators, material development, media development and graphic design experts, as well as a professional photographer, to facilitate the rapid implementation of SBCC activities. ENGINE also recruited a senior nutrition and HIV quality improvement (QI) advisor, a communications advisor and a senior WASH advisor. ENGINE retained all key personnel positions.

Sub-grantee management

ENGINE continued its regular bi-weekly staff meetings to discuss progress toward completing planned activities as outlined in the sub-grantee Year III work plans. ENGINE also met individually with sub-primaries to resolve any outstanding issues to achieve optimal project performance. In addition, ENGINE conducted a review meeting with all the sub-primaries to provide technical updates and discuss performance and priorities for the year.

To avoid high-risk tax liabilities, SC terminated its sub-grant agreement with Valid International (VI) and expedited the seamless transition of VI operations research (OR) activities to SC. ENGINE promptly transferred the Jimma University sub-agreement and research staff to SC and the OR continued without major interruption. SC also finalized the scope of work (SOW) and budget for VI to continue international TA for OR. They will be submitted to USAID for approval next quarter.

Technical assistance

Over the past six months, ENGINE received TA from The Manoff Group in moving forward the SBCC activities and WASH observational assessment; Land O' Lakes (LOL) and SC-US in designing and conducting a livelihood effectiveness study (LES); Tufts University (TU) in launching the agriculture nutrition and birth cohort OR studies and dissemination of secondary analyses results (Annex II).

Start-up activities in non-AGP woredas

ENGINE, in consultation with Graduation with Resilience to Achieve Sustainable Development (GRAD) and GOAL, proposed 17 non-AGP woredas to USAID and the Office of U.S. Foreign Disaster Assistance (OFDA), which were accepted in Year II. During the first quarter of Year III, Amhara and Oromia regional health bureaus approved ENGINE project implementation in non-AGP woredas. SNNP, on the other hand, did not approve. The region sent a letter to the FMoH expressing concern that ENGINE's selected non-AGP woredas overlapped with UNICEF-supported community-based nutrition activities. Next quarter, USAID and ENGINE will continue dialogue with SNNP about the advantages of forging a complementary partnership. If approval is not granted, ENGINE will expand to new AGP woredas.

Last quarter, ENGINE and GRAD developed a detailed work plan to roll-out project activities in two woredas in Amhara (Libo Kemkem and Lay Gaint) and two woredas in Oromia (Arsi Negele and Adami

Tulu). GOAL and ENGINE followed the same planning process as GRAD, but the partnership did not progress as far as expected because of the short-term nature of GOAL’s mandate. GOAL is limited to short-term emergency grants dependent on GoE decisions and OFDA funding based on rapid surveys that justify support for community-based management of acute malnutrition (CMAM). However, ENGINE feels that the partnership should be piloted for at least one year to allow enough time for quality implementation and documentation of lessons-learned. By the end of the second quarter, ENGINE and GOAL reached a consensus to drop the *woredas* in Amhara and scale-up to Oromia, including two new *woredas*.

Partnership and multi-sector coordination

During the semi-annual reporting period, ENGINE, as the chair of FtF nutrition technical working group (TWG), facilitated one TWG meeting and organized a joint field visit to Amhara region to monitor the progress of nutrition activities of FtF projects (GRAD, Agribusiness and Market Development in Ethiopia (AMde), Israeli Agency for International Development Cooperation (MASHAV) and ENGINE). As a follow-up from the visit, the TWG will conduct a capacity building training for the regional FtF team and conduct a joint visit to Oromia next quarter. The second TWG meeting was postponed until next quarter because of competing priorities and several TA requests from the FMoH to support multi-sector coordination and development of training manuals and guidelines.

Under FMoH leadership, ENGINE, in partnership with UNICEF and FANTA-III, organized a two-day nutrition advocacy workshop for 58 highly influential parliamentarians and policymakers from eight standing committees. The focus was to discuss the magnitude of childhood stunting and its devastating impact on the health, education and economy of the country to prioritize nutrition on the national agenda. ENGINE played a key role by developing a flyer agenda (Figure 1) with key messages for parliamentarians and by presenting on the magnitude of the problem using data from ENGINE’s baseline survey report (see IR 1.1).



Figure 1. ENGINE flyer for parliamentarians and policy makers to increase awareness about the importance of investing in nutrition for national development

Peace Corps (PC): ENGINE partnered with the PC to conduct an observational WASH assessment in 24 households in 12 woredas from four regions (Amhara, SNNP, Oromia and Tigray) where Peace Corps volunteers (PCVs) live and work (see IR 2.1). The study was designed to understand current household WASH practices and to then identify doable actions to reduce diarrhea among children under-2 and contribute to reduction of stunting. It created a concrete collaboration between ENGINE and the PC and improved the WASH knowledge and skills of PCVs and Zonal Coordinators (ZCs) (Figure 2). See excerpt from WASH observation and interview field notes in Annex I.

Figure 2. Getachew Asradew, ENGINE ZC (Barhir Dar, South Gondar) and Caitlin Caruso, PCV (Community Health)



UNICEF: NNCB requested that UNICEF, USAID and ENGINE support the multi-sector coordination of the NNP and its regional roll-out at regional, zonal, and *woreda* levels. ENGINE and UNICEF prepared the NNP launch guidelines and TOR for the RNCB and provided TA for the development of multi-sector implementation guidelines. SNNPR and Amhara were supported to establish RNCBs, but to no avail because of several competing priorities within the regional health bureaus and GoE (see IR 1.1).

IR 1: Capacity for and institutionalization of nutrition programs and policies

Planned activities

- Support national and regional nutrition multi-sector coordination mechanisms
- Develop nutrition advocacy strategy with FMoH and other partners
- Address gaps in existing nutrition-related policies and guidelines
- Implement quality improvement process to strengthen nutrition education
- Develop competency-based tools for nutrition teaching and assessment
- Strengthen nutrition curriculum at project-supported institutions
- Facilitate nutrition technical updates and effective teaching skills
- Continue the process of establishing nutrition academic center of excellence (ACoE)
- Conduct nutrition training for health and agriculture program managers

IR 1.1: Strengthened policy environment

Strategy 1.1.1: Strengthen existing nutrition multi-sector coordination

Support national nutrition multi-sector coordination mechanisms

In quarter one, ENGINE facilitated and participated in three monthly National Nutrition Technical Committee (NNTC) meetings to identify priority activities for inclusion in the annual work plans of the National Nutrition Coordinating Body (NNCB) and National Nutrition Technical Committee (NNTC). ENGINE also supported the preparation of the NNTC bi-annual progress report before it was submitted to the NNCB for approval. In December 2013, ENGINE helped to organize and facilitate the third NNCB meeting. To move forward the national agenda for nutrition multi-sector coordination, the NNCB asked USAID, ENGINE and UNICEF to provide intensive technical support for the NNTC and regional coordination and technical teams. Since the December NNCB meeting, ENGINE has worked closely with UNICEF to accomplish the following requested activities over the past three months:

- Prepared guidelines on how to launch the NNP at the regional level and how to establish Regional Nutrition Coordinating Bodies (RNCBs) and Regional Nutrition Technical Committees (RNTCs). Drafted regional NNP multi-sector guidelines, which are currently being reviewed by the FMoH and partners.
- Supported the launch and establishment of RNTCs and RNCBs in three regions (Table 1). Despite concerted TA from UNICEF and ENGINE at both country and regional levels, the launch in the fourth region (SNNP) was delayed because of competing government priorities and lack of commitment from the regional health bureau (RHB).

- Translated and shared the TOR for the NNCB, NNTC and RNCB and RNTC into four official working languages (Oromifa, Tigrigna, Amharic, and Somaligna).
- Met with H.E Ato Mitiku, State Minister of Agriculture, on how to support the coordination and implementation of NNP in the Federal Ministry of Agriculture (FMoA). As an outcome of the discussion with USAID/ENGINE, the State Minister agreed to establish a nutrition working group under the FMoA that will be chaired by the FMoA nutrition focal person. ENGINE, UNICEF and the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) are working together to prepare the TOR for the working group with engagement of the FMoA extension and livestock sectors.
- Prepared a concept note and TOR to identify possible countries for a NNCB multi-sector coordination exchange visit (Uganda and Rwanda), which was submitted to FMoH to be presented at the next NNCB meeting for approval.

Support regional nutrition multi-sector coordination mechanisms

Over the past six months, ENGINE has dedicated strong technical and financial support for successful roll-out of the NNP and RNCB and RNTC structures in Amhara, Oromia and Tigray.

The regional NNP launch in Oromia was attended by key stakeholders from health, agriculture, education, women, youth and child Affairs, trade and industry, UNICEF, Ethiopian Public Health Institute (EPHI), ENGINE and NGOs, while in Amhara and Tigray regions there was full participation from all eight NNP sectors: health; agriculture; women, youth and children's affairs; social and labor affairs; trade and industry; transport; water and energy; and civil society.

In addition to regional launches, ENGINE has supported NNP kick-offs in four zones of Amhara, and five zones of Oromia (Table 1). The Amhara launch was chaired by zonal administrators and in some areas the multi-sector coordination body was headed by the zonal administrators. In Tigray, the RNCB and RNTC were chaired by the regional deputy head and regional health bureau head respectively. *Woreda* NNP multi-sector coordination bodies and committees were established in 12 *woredas* of Oromia region through the active leadership of zonal and *woreda* administrations. In SNNPR, regional and zonal dissemination was delayed as well as zonal level dissemination in Tigray due to other government commitments.

Table I. NNP launches at regional and zonal levels

Regions	ENGINE target for NNP launches for this reporting period (regions and zones)	NNP launches done (%)	Type of activities conducted during NNP launches (presentations and discussions)
Amhara	6	5(83%)	-NNP dissemination to sectors at the zonal level -Emphasis on each sector's mandate to contribute to the achievement of the targets laid out in the revised NNP -Rationale for multi-sector collaboration -Role of ENGINE in nutrition multi-sector collaboration
Oromia	11	6(73%)	-Cost of hunger in Ethiopia -NNP strategic objectives and initiatives -Rationale for multi-sector collaboration -Role of ENGINE in nutrition multi-sector collaboration
Tigray	3	1(33%)	-Cost of hunger in Ethiopia -NNP strategic objectives and initiatives -Rationale for multi-sector collaboration -Role of ENGINE in nutrition multi-sector coordination

Develop nutrition advocacy strategy

FMoH, in collaboration with nutrition partners, has been working on the national nutrition advocacy plan and PROFILES advocacy tool since the launch of the NNP, early last year. During the first quarter, FMoH provided the “green light” to roll-out the national nutrition advocacy plan and established two task forces, one for social and behavior change communication (SBCC) and one for advocacy. ENGINE and FANTA-3 were appointed to be the lead partners to support the implementation of the advocacy plan with parliamentarians prioritized as the first target audience.

Under FMoH leadership, ENGINE with UNICEF and FANTA-III, organized a two-day nutrition advocacy workshop in March 2014 for highly influential 58 parliamentarians and policymakers from eight standing committees (see project management section). The workshop was called to discuss the magnitude of childhood stunting and its devastating impact on the health, education and economy of the country, as well as to position nutrition high on the national agenda. ENGINE played a key role by developing a flyer and information packet with key messages for parliamentarians. ENGINE highlighted the magnitude of the problem by using data from ENGINE’s baseline survey report. The vibrant three-fold flyer provided statistical information on the cost of hunger and captured the effects on the country’s economy, health and educational development. In addition to identifying the critical period to curb undernutrition over the first 1000 days, the brochure encapsulated the key areas for parliamentarians to take action and enforce laws to support the NNP. The parliamentarians prepared short, mid and long-term plan of actions and recommended the same advocacy work for regional parliamentarians. ENGINE is working with the FMoH to monitor their implementation.

Some of the key actions were:

Short-term actions:

- Spreading the word to other parliamentarians about the nutrition situation in Ethiopia and depth of the problem
- Making nutrition a bigger priority in the House of Representatives
- Devising a plan on how to divide up nutrition activities within the eight standing committees
- Adding nutrition to parliamentarian's checklists so they can document how local authorities are performing on nutrition activities when they visit their constituencies

Mid-term actions:

- Including nutrition in the sector plans and allocating adequate budgets for nutrition
- Monitoring and following-up NNP implementation in the respective sector ministries

Long-term actions:

- Reviewing the law on nutrition and proposing proclamation or legislation on nutrition
- Reviewing career prospects for nutrition professionals in each sector
- Analyzing the effectiveness of collaboration among the different sectors
- Mainstreaming nutrition in each sector's work plan

Strategy I.1.2 Support development and revision of nutrition policies, guidelines and standards

Address gaps in existing nutrition-related policies and guidelines

Blended integrated nutrition module for health workers

In the first quarter, ENGINE continued to provide technical support to the FMoH in designing and developing a comprehensive, 'blended integrated nutrition module for health workers.' Five thematic areas were identified: micronutrient supplementation; Maternal, Adolescent, Infant and Young Child Nutrition (MAIYCN); management of acute malnutrition; nutrition and communicable and non-communicable-related diseases; and nutrition program management. In December 2013, the ENGINE team participated in a two-week writing workshop to assist the FMoH in developing draft sessions for each thematic area. Working with UNICEF and FMoH, ENGINE supported the overall coordination of the revisions, and ENGINE was the technical lead on MAIYCN, nutrition multi-sector coordination and food-based approaches. In the second quarter, the final blended training manual was submitted to FMoH for approval and ENGINE helped to prepare Power Point presentations for supplementary CD-based remote learning sessions.

National micronutrient guideline revision

Over the past two quarters, ENGINE with FMoH and partners, continued revision of the ‘National Micronutrient Intervention guidelines’ – initially developed more than a decade ago. The nine sub-groups prepared a draft document on nine thematic areas: iron-folate, zinc, iodine, vitamin A, food fortification, dietary diversification, public health approaches to prevention and control of micronutrient deficiencies, program communication, and M&E. The guideline revisions were recently finalized during a technical workshop in March 2014 and submitted to FMoH for approval.

National nutrition guidelines

ENGINE, in close partnership with FMoH, led the revision and development of the following national nutrition guidelines: MAIYCN, management of acute malnutrition (both severe and moderate) and multi-sector nutrition implementation. The final guidelines, discussed and finalized by the workshop were submitted to the FMoH.

Food fortification plan of action

In the first quarter, ENGINE facilitated the development of the food fortification plan of action. The working group has prepared a draft document, shared for review and approval by FMoH and other sectors. In March 2014, a consultative workshop was organized by the EPHI to set quality standards for flour fortification with iron. ENGINE along with officials and scholars from government offices, research institutes, and other partners participated in the discussion and contributed to establishing standards for flour fortification. The workshop was concluded with a pledge to provide all Ethiopian consumers with access to fortified flour products by 2015.

Micronutrient forum

In this reporting period, ENGINE continued facilitating and supporting committee meetings for the Micronutrient Forum – a global conference to be held in Ethiopia, June 2014. As a local steering committee and sub-committee member, ENGINE provided support in developing the agenda, creating sub-committee TORs, fundraising, reviewing local abstracts and arranging logistics for plenary and concurrent sessions. ENGINE also submitted an abstract on nutrition policy research findings (multinational: Ethiopia, Uganda and Nepal) entitled “Effect of Governance structures in Ethiopia on the implementation of nutrition interventions” that was accepted for oral presentation.

Central nutrition database and national nutrition TWG

In the first quarter, the FMoH took the lead in establishing a central nutrition database. ENGINE, as a member of the working group, contributed to the preparation of the TOR for the sub-group and implementation process, and identification of key indicators to be included in the database. In quarter two, FMoH called another partners meeting in which ENGINE participated and contributed to the revision and finalization of indicators to be included in the data collection checklist. As an outcome of the meeting, it was suggested that FMoH draft data reporting mechanism from facilities up to the FMoH. This will be discussed in the next meeting to be called by FMoH in quarter three.

IR 1.2 Strengthening pre-service and in-service nutrition training for health care agents

Strategy 1.2.1: Pre-service education (PSE) for health care providers and agriculture agents strengthened

Implement quality improvement process to strengthen nutrition education

The aim of the PSE component of ENGINE is to improve the quality of pre-service nutrition education by strengthening the nutrition curriculum, enhancing facility capacity in instructional design and creating an enabling environment for nutrition education using the Standard-Based Management and Recognition (SBM-R)⁵ methodology. In Year I, ENGINE introduced the SBM-R process at 12 higher institutions⁶ and continued supporting these institutions in Year II and Year III using the SBM-R tool to monitor the quality of nutrition education in five areas – classroom instruction, clinical practice, student assessment (e.g., exams), infrastructure (e.g., nutrition labs) and management.

In the first quarter of Year III, the 12 target institutions conducted their second internal SBM-R monitoring assessments and shared their results at the SBM-R review meeting in December 2013. A total of 36 participants (9 females) composed of deans/vice-deans, SBM-R focal persons and instructors attended the workshop. All 12 institutions improved their annual performance by an average of 25 percent from their baseline SBM-R in the areas of classroom instruction, student assessment and management. Most notably, all 12 schools began systematically integrating nutrition into their courses.

Specific SBM-R achievements documented over the reporting period include the following:

- Shire Agriculture Technical and Vocational Education and Training (ATVET) institution started provision of nutrition information by every instructor for five minutes per class.
- All 12 schools mobilized internal funds to encourage skills-based nutrition learning such as finding building space for nutrition labs and anthropometric measurements for practical use.
- The four health science institutions started nutrition skills teaching and assessment, which was not previously in place.
- The four ATVET institutions established nutrition clubs where up-to-date nutrition information was shared among students.
- The exam qualification exam pass rate (at the end of academic program) increased at Shire ATVET college from 61 to 97 percent and at Bahir Dar health science college from 25 to 91 percent due to improvements in the overall quality of education using SBM-R.

As a way forward, all 12 institutions revised their action plans focusing on persistent gaps that need to be addressed to improve nutrition education using internal and external resources, including ENGINE

⁵ SBM-R is a methodology developed by Jhpiego to improve the performance and quality of nutrition education.

⁶ The 12 target institutions include four health universities (Jimma, Hawassa, Gondar and Mekelle), four regional health science colleges (Hawassa, Shashemene, Bahir Dar and Araya Kahu (Axum) and four agricultural TVET colleges (Dilla, Alage, Bure and Shire).

support. ENGINE also conducted 11 out of 12 rounds of supportive supervision to project-supported institutions and provided on-site TA on implementation of nutrition PSE strengthening activities. Classroom teaching and assessment, skills lab corners for nutrition, SBM-R team building and institutional management were the main areas covered by supportive supervision. As a result, documentation of ENGINE-related activities, arrangement and use of nutrition skills lab corners and SBM-R team performance has improved. In addition, institutions started using donated skills lab materials and reference books for teaching nutrition classes.

Develop competency-based tools for nutrition teaching and assessment

In the first quarter, ENGINE conducted two workshops to develop competency-based nutrition teaching and assessment tools for health science and agriculture TVET institutions. The PSE team developed teaching and assessment tools such as checklists and learning guides for strengthening skill-based teaching at the four health science institutions. In addition, focused nutrition teaching and learning materials were created to support the delivery of integrated nutrition content for health and agriculture cadres. Institutions started using these tools for teaching and assessing their students in the classroom, skills labs and at field sites. In the second quarter, ENGINE designed standardized PowerPoint slides with defined nutrition core competencies to strengthen the delivery of nutrition courses for agriculture students at the four ATVET colleges.

Strengthen nutrition curriculum at project-supported institutions

ENGINE continued strengthening the nutrition curriculum at the 12 institutions over the last two quarters, making a significant contribution towards achieving the PSE objectives of the revised NNP. In March 2014, ENGINE conducted a review workshop for the four target AVET colleges to evaluate progress of the implementation of the nutrition integrated syllabi and to create an opportunity for institutions to share their successes, challenges and lessons learned from implementation. Similarly, ENGINE continued follow-up for the four project-supported universities effort to integrate revised nutrition syllabi into their main curriculum.

Distribute nutrition teaching materials to institutions

ENGINE PSE initiated activities aimed at establishing new nutrition skills labs or creating nutrition corners in the existing skills labs at the eight project-supported health science institutions. To strengthen this initiative and the overall teaching process, ENGINE distributed nutrition teaching materials including reference books, skills lab materials and audio-visual aids to all 12 institutions. In addition, ENGINE printed nutrition core competency documents and nutrition program planning and supervision training packages and began distributing to pre-service institutions and nutrition stakeholders. The unavailability of most skills lab materials on the local market presented a challenge in fully executing this activity. As a solution, ENGINE shifted to international procurement and currently is in the process of purchasing the second batch of nutrition materials.

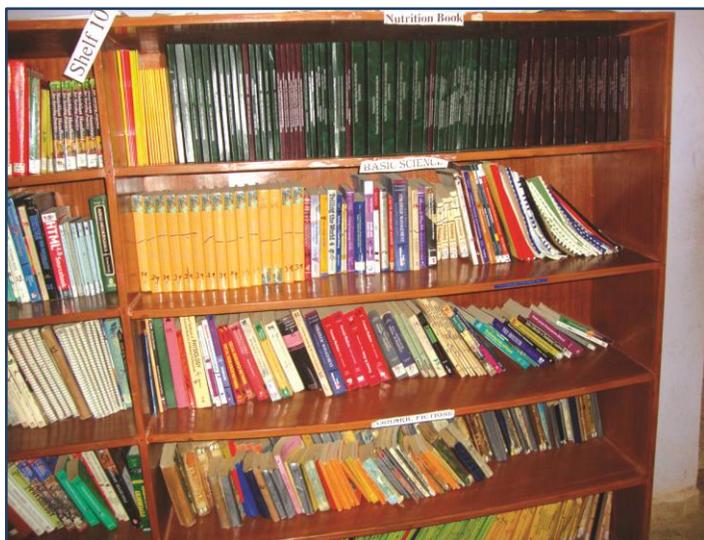


Figure 3. ENGINE donated reference books for the library at Bahir Dar Health Science College

Facilitate nutrition technical update training and effective teaching skills

Over this reporting period, ENGINE provided 11 nutrition technical update training sessions, including Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH), for 268 (34 females) health and agriculture instructors (out of the planned target of 270) enabling them to deliver nutrition-sensitive content integrated into their curriculum. Forty-four (out of 268) participants attended the advanced second round nutrition technical update training on nutrition software and lab nutrition skills and visited practical attachment sites.

ENGINE also provided nutrition and WASH updates for 24 (11 female) clinicians (out of 24 planned) working at health institutions, including teaching and assessment skills to effectively coach students during clinical attachment. Furthermore, all four AVET institutions started integrating nutrition-sensitive agriculture into their courses following the nutrition updates. Moreover, two AVET institutions integrated nutrition into their informal training courses for 419 agriculture development agents (DAs) and 496 model farmers.

In March 2014, ENGINE conducted one effective teaching skills (ETS) training for 23 (2 female) newly recruited ATVET instructors (out of 24 planned) from Algae and Bure colleges to maintain the uniformity of course delivery. The training motivated instructors to take part in the delivery of nutrition integrated courses and contribute to overall quality improvement initiatives at their respective institutions.

Continue process to establish academic center of excellence (ACoE) for nutrition

As part of the process to establish an ACoE for nutrition education, ENGINE continued working closely with Hawassa University. A committee comprised of five members conducted a benchmarking visit to North-West University, South Africa, to share experience on the organizational structure, human resource development and management, basic facilities required and funding mechanisms. The visit was instrumental in establishing links for future partnerships and strengthening collaboration between the two institutions. In addition, ENGINE supported Hawassa University in the identification of skills lab materials to strengthen nutrition skills teaching and research, and in developing an action

plan to speed up the establishment of the center. ENGINE also started procuring identified skills lab materials for the center and is supporting the ongoing renovation of the existing skills lab.

Conduct nutrition training for program managers

In November 2013, ENGINE delivered the first round of a five-day Training of Trainers (ToT) course on “Nutrition Program Planning and Supervision” for 17 (5 female) regional/zonal/*woreda* health and agriculture officers and ENGINE coordinators from the four regions. The training equipped participants with up-to-date nutrition information and basic training facilitation skills as evaluated by post-test and teach-back sessions. As a result, a pool of trainers has been created to cascade basic training on nutrition programming and supervision for regional, zonal and *woreda* health and agriculture officers (see section IR 2).

IR 2: Quality and delivery of nutrition and health care services improved

Planned activities:

- Develop QI model to improve quality of nutritional services
- Promote coaching/mentoring and supportive supervision for health service providers
- Build capacity of frontline health and agriculture workers to provide high quality services
- Improve tools for frontline health and agriculture workers
- Implement LNGO-led enhanced community conversations (ECCs)
- Strengthen referral systems and link nutrition with other programs
- Support target *woredas* in Child Health Day (CHD) implementation

Strategy 2.1.1 Facilitate the integration of quality improvement process with GoE coordination entities

Develop QI model to improve quality of nutrition services

ENGINE finalized the QI report on the assessment of the quality of nutrition services at selected health centers, health posts and communities conducted by a local research firm. The findings were shared with the four regional teams and used to select nutrition QI indicators. The project developed a QI model using Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) and Lot Quality Assurance Sampling (LQAS) techniques. The project also drafted a QI sub-team TOR, a QI assessment tool and action plan for QI sub-teams to improve the quality of nutrition services. Next quarter, ENGINE will pre-test the nutrition QI tool in selected health facilities. The project team will strengthen health performance monitoring teams and establish QI sub-teams to pilot the QI model at selected health centers from the four regions.

Promote coaching/mentoring and supportive supervision for health service providers

ENGINE teams in all four regions trained 586 HWs (119 female) on coaching and mentorship skills integrated⁷ with *woreda* review meetings reaching 66 percent (586/888) of the target for the reporting period. At the facility level, ENGINE zonal coordinators (ZCs) mentored 685 HWs (287 female) and 575 HEWs (554 female) to improve Maternal Infant and Young Child Nutrition (MIYCN) services reaching 80 percent (1,260/1,571) of the target for the reporting period. As a result of the training and mentorship, pregnant women, lactating mothers and children started receiving MIYCN services at Health Centers (HCs) and Health Posts (HPs), during routine services (Table 2.1).

Over the past six months, ENGINE ZCs, in collaboration with *woreda* and zonal health offices, conducted the first supervision visits to 82 percent (373/457) of the total HCs and 30 percent (658/2171) of the total HPs. Oromia also conducted follow-up visits to 103 HCs and 53 HPs (Table 2.2). Amhara, SNNP and Tigray planned the follow-up visits in Quarters II and III. The supportive supervision visits aimed to improve the delivery of nutrition and health services provided by HWs and HEWs and to address challenges faced by frontline HWs. The team used checklists to assess and provide on-site feedback and developed action plans based on the findings. The number of target HPs reached was low (30 percent) because the regions calculated the number of supervision visits rather than the number of HFs reached in their initial work plans. This issue will be addressed during the next quarterly review meeting. The team also reached a large number of beneficiary households in the facility catchment areas. Even though the HH visits were deemed important and will continue, it was noted that this took away from time spent supervising the targeted HPs. As a result, the regional teams will revisit the annual target to reach more HPs over the next two quarters.

Table 2.1: Total number of HFs reached through joint supportive supervision by regions

Health Facilities (HFs) reached ⁸	Amhara Region		Oromia Region		SNNP Region		Tigray Region		Total (Q=Quarter)		
	QI	QII	QI	QII	QI	QII	QI	QII	QI	QII	Total
First HCs	21	82	70	63	58	45	10	10	159	214	373
Follow up (HCs)	0	0	0	49	0	14	0	40	0	89	103
First HPs	47	235	7	87	76	104	11	91	141	517	658
Follow up (HPs)	0	0	0	53	0	0	0	0	0	53	53
Total(HFs)	68	317	77	252	134	163	21	141	300	873	1173

Improvements were observed at HFs regarding availability of micronutrients and job aids, quality of nutrition counseling and iron-folate supplementation (Table 2.2). Improved participation in food cooking demonstrations (FCD) and counseling helped the target groups to improve MIYCN knowledge and optimal practices. HFs also integrated nutrition into their regular plans and started reporting to their respective *woreda* offices on a monthly basis. All regional teams also added HH visits to their HF supervision visits to observe the benefits of the cooking demonstrations and MIYCN trainings. Next

⁷ Coaching and mentoring topics is also integrated in to MIYCN training. This number does not include the number of participants trained through MIYCN integration to avoid double counting.

⁸ Total HFs by region: Amhara=133 HCs & 522 HPs; Oromia=171HCs & 920HPs; SNNPR=103HCs & 599HPs and Tigray=50HCs & 130HP.

quarter, ENGINE's QI advisor will develop a systematic tool to document and share the findings. As the HH visits involve HEWs, the supervision team used them as an opportunity to mentor HEWs and to provide on-the-spot feedback on optimal MIYCN and WASH practices. The team then provided feedback to the primary health care unit heads and respective *woreda* officials.

Table 2.2: Summary of joint supportive supervision findings

Improvements	Existing gaps	Actions taken
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Improved availability of micronutrients, timely prescription and use -Supplementation of vitamin A for all eligible children at HP level with routine health service provision -Nutritional counseling conducted at under-5, ANC and PNC units; all children checked for their nutritional status during visits -MIYCN counseling service provision including planning and reporting has improved, teaching aids available at all entry points -Nutrition education and cooking demonstrations integrated with pregnant mother's conference⁹; FCD conducted at sub-kebele level -Improvement in awareness and knowledge of HHs on recommended maternal and child feeding and WASH practices observed -Improved quality of MIYCN service delivery: all pregnant mothers visited supplied with iron-folate during antenatal visits; service delivered by trained HWs MIYCN care service integrated with other services and improvement observed in institutional/skilled delivery services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Limitation of trained HWs in following all MIYCN counseling skills; Problem in message selection during counseling -Turnover of MIYCN trained HWs, services provided by untrained staff -Supply shortage in some HFs; gaps in iron-folate supplementation during postnatal and de-worming is not given for eligible pregnant mothers starting from the second trimester -Lack of locally available iodized salt (Amhara) -Lack of community discussions on nutrition in some regions (e.g. Amhara), limited quality of nutrition sessions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -The regional team with discussed with regional, zonal and <i>woreda</i> health offices, identified supply chain gaps and supported the distribution of micronutrients to respective facilities where the gaps were observed. New zinc supply is currently under distribution Some facilities started using health system financing to cope up with iron shortage -HWs and HEWs workers mentored (demonstrated) on MYICN counseling steps, message selection and appropriate use of counseling cards, recording and documentation, -Provided registration books for documentation based on the identified gaps -Mentoring and MIYCN gap-filling training is underway to address staff turnover -Facility level food cooking demonstrations, women conferences and nutrition community conversation (through existing government structure and contracted local non-governmental organizations (LNGOs)

Next quarter, ENGINE regional teams will address the identified gaps above with regional, zonal and *woreda* counterparts. The project will also conduct the first visits to the remaining 89 HCs and follow-up visits to 275 HCs; first visits to 753 HPs and follow-up visits to 300 HPs.

Strategy 2.1.2: Build the capacity of health facility staff and frontline workers to provide high quality services

Conduct assessment of MIYCN training (post training follow-up)

Over the past six months, ENGINE conducted MIYCN post training follow-up for 805 HWs in the four regions to check whether the trained HWs implemented the action plans developed during the

⁹ The Pregnant Mother Conference is one of the strategic initiatives taken by the government to deliver messages related to maternal and child health to prevent delivery related complications and ultimately reduce maternal and newborn deaths.

ENGINE-supported MIYCN training and to monitor MIYCN integration into health facility systems. The regional team observed improvement in integrating nutrition into HCs annual plans, improved nutritional counseling at antenatal, postnatal and under-5 units with appropriate counseling set-up (removing barriers such as tables) and improving provider-client interaction. The trained HWs used SBCC materials¹⁰ appropriately and recorded key nutrition indicators for reporting.

However, the follow up the team also found:

- High trained staff turnover at under-5 and ANC units
- Untrained staff providing MIYCN counseling in some facilities
- Some trained health workers not assigned to the right department
- Nutrition counseling registration inconsistent, with incomplete documentation and reporting in some facilities
- Inconsistent and inappropriate use of nutrition counseling cards

ENGINE zonal coordinators mentored HWs on the gaps and provided feedback to primary health care unit heads, after which consensus was reached on how to address the gaps based on the action plan developed at the end of the visits. The implementation of the action plan will be monitored during follow-up visits planned for the next two quarters.

Provide training to program managers and health and agriculture workers

In the past six months, ENGINE trained a total of 2,369 health and agriculture staff (1,109 female) out of 3,114 planned in health and nutrition, in MIYCN basic concepts and on-the-job nutrition program planning and monitoring; CMAM, nutrition assessment, counseling and support (NACS) and nutrition-sensitive agriculture (NSA) (Table 2.3). The overall nutrition performance for the reporting period is period, excluding Health Development Army (had) training, was 76 percent (2,369/3,114)¹¹ from the semi-annual target and 61 percent from annual target (2,369/3,909).

Table 2.3: Total number of people trained in child health and nutrition by region

Region	QI			QII			Total (QI+QII)		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
Amhara	30	16	46	152	79	231	182	95	277
Oromia	161	148	309	474	457	931	635	605	1,240
SNNPR	39	19	58	240	317	557	279	336	615
Tigray	81	7	88	49	24	73	130	31	161
National (TOT)	8	37	45	26	5	31	34	42	76
Total	319	227	546	941	882	1,823	1,260	1,109	2,369

¹⁰ Alive & Thrive materials adapted and re-printed by ENGINE

¹¹ The HDA training was removed from Year III regional plan.

A brief summary of the trainings by training component is presented below:

Provide training for health and agriculture program managers on nutrition program management

ENGINE provided TOT nutrition program planning and supervision, including crosscutting sessions on WASH and gender, using ENGINE's integrated training package for 17 (5 female) health and agriculture managers from Oromia, Tigray, Amhara, and SNNP Regions. Following the TOT, ENGINE teams in all four regions cascaded the training to 212 (29 female) participants out of 325 planned for the reporting period (see IR 1.2).

Provide basic MIYCN gap-filing and on job training for HWs and HEWs

ENGINE provided TOT on MIYCN for 28 HWs (3 female) participants from all four regions. The objective of the training was to build regional capacity by having a pool of trainers in nutrition. ENGINE and TOT trainers facilitated MIYCN workshops for 1,189 HWs and HEWs in all four regions, reaching 90 percent (1,189/1,322) of the target for this reporting period. The majority, 68 percent (807/1,189) of the trainees were reached through on-the-job training.

Support Integrated Refresher Training (IRT) training

ENGINE supported integrated refresher training (IRT) in the first and second year. In Year III, the regional team planned to support government IRT gap filling and cascading the same to members of the Health Development Army (HDA). However, the regional teams have not received a request from the government for HWs for gap filling training during the past six months. ENGINE removed the HDA training from its regional work plan based on government direction and USAID request; it will amend demand-based IRT training for the remaining period. Instead of HDA training, ENGINE in collaboration with government counterparts, is using effective strategies such as women conferences and facility level FCDs to reach a large number of pregnant and lactating women in target *woredas*. ENGINE incorporated HH observation into supervision and mentorship visits to monitor the outcomes of MIYCN trainings and FCDs.

Support training to HWs in Community-Based Management of Acute Malnutrition (CMAM)

During the second quarter, Outpatient Therapeutic Program (OTP) training was provided to 110 health workers (34 female) in Amhara and East Oromia, based on government requests and need. The overall coverage for the reporting period was 61 percent (110/179). The objective of the training was to build the capacity of HWs on basic anthropometric measurements for screening of acute malnutrition at the community level, to interpret the values and give prevention and therapeutic activities to the community at a grass root level. ENGINE collaborated with the government health sector and UNICEF to conduct the training.

Provide DA/AEW gap-filling training on nutrition-sensitive agriculture (NSA)

ENGINE teams in Amhara and Oromia trained 124 development agents/agriculture extension workers (DAs/AEWs), (22 female) in NSA training to integrate nutrition into agriculture to advance their capacity and tools to promote NSA. The achievement for this training component was low, 33 percent (124/375) since the AEWs were occupied with watershed management and other necessary government

meetings during the reporting period. The regional team will assess the training needs and provide the gap filling training in the next two quarters.

Provide NACS training for HWs and case managers

During the reporting period, the Amhara regional team provided NACS training for 32 HWs (19 female), 43 percent (32/75) according to the annual target, from non-Food by Prescription (FBP) antiretroviral treatment (ART) health centers in ENGINE intervention *woredas*. In Amhara region, trained case managers provided nutrition counseling for 5,519 HIV positive clients. Oromia, SNNPR and Tigray planned to conduct the training in the next quarter, to reach the overall annual regional target of 75 individuals.

Train mothers support group (MSG) in MIYCN

In the past six months, ENGINE provided MIYCN training to 40 MSG members in Amhara Region to improve members' knowledge and skills on nutrition counseling in the context of HIV/AIDS. During the post training follow-up visits, the trained MSG members facilitated 351 sessions attended by 571 members. Eighteen children (8 female) were delivered HIV-free under the follow-up of Bichena HC MSGs in Amhara region. The *woreda* held a graduation ceremony, which was attended by 37 (29 female and 8 male) participants, to recognize those involved in the process (mothers, mother support groups and health workers). Oromia, SNNPR and Tigray planned to conduct the training in the next quarter to reach the overall annual target of 326 for all regions.

Monitor and report MIYCN counseling for mothers by trained HWs

As reported under the capacity building sections, ENGINE regional teams provided capacity building through coaching/mentoring and formal trainings. During joint supportive supervision, the team assessed HWs and HEWs routine nutrition service performance in their respective catchment areas. As a result of ENGINE's capacity building activities, HWs counselled 133,670 mothers (90,765 pregnant women and 42,905 lactating mothers) on EBF, complementary feeding (CF) and dietary diversity at HCs and HPs. The report from Oromia is incomplete as the number for West Oromia is only partly entered due to competing priorities in the field. The remaining numbers will be included in the next quarterly report. Overall, the achievement is higher (133,670 /53,276 for trained HWs at the HC level) and ENGINE will reconsider the assumption and will set new targets after discussing with the regions at the next quarterly review meeting. The availability of micronutrients was "on and off" across regions, which contributed to variations in the targets reached across regions.

Table 2.4: Total number of pregnant, lactating mothers & children received direct nutrition service

Health post nutrition	Amhara Region	Oromia Region ⁱ	SNNP Region	Tigray Region	Total
# of children with diarrhoea provided with zinc	8,529	2,004	1,654	2,608	14,795
# of women provide with iron-folate	20,230	14,166	16,678	7,894	58,968
# of postnatal women counselled on EBF and CF	39,134	9,910	11,040	9,268	69,352
Health centre nutrition					
# of pregnant women counselled	35,087	18,751	17,685	19,242	90,765
# of ANC women supplemented with iron-folate	31,816	17,694	14,770	18,865	83,145
# of lactating women counselled	14,266	12,522	7,828	8,289	42,905
# of lactating women supplemented with iron-folate	6,586	6,306	3,414	6,083	22,389
# of babies (0-59 months) assessed for malnutrition	67,892	23,192	27,502	52,477	171,063
HCs and HPs summary					
Pregnant and lactating mother counselling on nutrition	88,487	41,183	36,553	36,799	203,022
Mothers received iron supplementation	58,632	38,166	34,862	32,842	164,502
Children with diarrhoea treated with oral rehydration salts (ORS) and zinc	8,529	2,004	1,654	2,608	14,795

Use pregnant women conferences to educate mothers on key nutrition messages

In collaboration with government HFs, ENGINE used pregnant mother conferences to address nutrition practices during pregnancy and lactation, and demonstrated preparation of complementary foods from locally available foods. In the past six months, ENGINE regional teams in Amhara, Oromia and SNNP used 188 pregnant mothers' conferences as a platform to promote key MIYCN behaviors, 7,407 pregnant women and 1,034 male partners attended the conference. The overall achievement for the reporting period was 80 percent (151/188). In Tigray region, the pregnant women conference day has different names in different *woredas* and *kebeles* and was not reported consistently from zonal teams. Therefore, the Tigray team discussed the issue during their second quarterly review meeting and agreed to start reporting from the third quarter.

Conduct food (nutrition) cooking demonstrations (FCD) to promote dietary diversity

ENGINE is using FCDs at the community level to address low dietary diversity for mothers and children. During the last six months, ENGINE supported 878 FCD events (682 in Quarter II) HPs, FTCs and schools. The coverage from the semi-annual target is 76 percent (878/1152). Some of the FCD sessions are also integrating FGDs with women conferences. A total of 49, 652 individuals, out of which 39,436 were pregnant and lactating mothers attended the demonstration events (Table 2.5). ENGINE promoted the importance of using iodized salt in 958 sessions (747 in Quarter II) of FCDs, women conferences and review meetings. ENGINE incorporated HH visits to mentorship and supportive supervision visits to monitor the outcome of FCDs.



Figure 4. Cooking demonstration event, Wenchi Woreda, West Oromia

Table 2.5: Total participants of FCD events by regions

Region	Quarter I			Quarter II			Total		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
Amhara	1,186	5,308	6,494	1,919	7,395	9,314	3,105	12,703	15,808
Oromia	1,063	1,386	2,449	3,274	8,974	12,248	4,337	10,360	14,697
SNNPR	1,406	8,358	9,764	1,158	5,041	6,199	2,564	13,399	15,963
Tigray	79	34	113	131	2,940	3,071	210	2,974	3,184
Total	3,734	15,086	18,820	6,482	24,350	30,832	10,216	39,436	49,652

Improve tools used by frontline health and agriculture workers to harmonize nutrition messaging

Distribute and monitor proper use of MIYCN SBCC job aids

ENGINE's regional Amhara, Oromia and SNNP teams distributed counseling cards and briefcases to 1,217 HCs and HPs, reaching 66 percent (1,217/1,836) of the HFs planned for the reporting period (Table 2.6). The joint supportive supervisor team monitored and confirmed that HWs and HEWs are using the materials for routine nutrition counseling. Tigray completed the distribution of job aids the last quarter of Year II.

Table 2.6: Total number of HFs received MIYCN SBCC job aids

Regions	Quarter I	Quarter II	Total	Remarks
	HFs received	HFs received	HFs received	
Amhara	204	551	755	
Oromia	10	99	109	
SNNP	0	353	353	
Total	214	1,003	1,217	

Launch innovative mNutrition service to improve tools for health and agriculture workers

While the prevalence of cell phones remains relatively low in Ethiopia's general population, nearly 90 percent of HEWs have a cell phone¹² and anecdotal evidence indicates that the large majority of AEWs do as well. AEWs working with ENGINE have informally reported that they receive routine bulk SMS text messages from the FMoA primarily about mandatory ministry meetings and workshops. Some HEWs are also using their cell phones to report health data through mHealth implementers in Ethiopia.

To leverage this untapped communication channel for promoting optimal nutrition behaviors, ENGINE explored options for establishing a cell phone service for HEWs and AEWs to access nutrition information and advice to support their work in households and communities. Online research and information gathering meetings with cell phone service providers in the first quarter confirmed that ENGINE can offer regular SMS text messages and pre-recorded voice information through a new "mNutrition" service, which can be set up and run in-house. The mNutrition service has the potential of reaching thousands of frontline workers to help improve their performance in delivering nutrition and agriculture-nutrition extension services.

In the second quarter, ENGINE prepared the concept paper for the "mNutrition" service (nutrition SBCC delivered through cell phone technology) to reach AEWs and HEWs with pre-recorded nutrition information and advice through an interactive voice response and SMS text messages to support their extension work with families and smallholder farmers. The concept included a draft menu option tree, draft targets, a draft budget, a training plan for ENGINE staff, a procurement list for mNutrition equipment and free downloadable software. The SBCC team prepared a formal proposal and PowerPoint presentation for ENGINE to present to Ethiopia Telecom to win support for the project's plans to launch the mNutrition service this year.

IR 2.2 Health and nutrition service seeking behaviors increased

STRATEGY 2.2.1: Mobilize communities to seek health/nutrition services

Strategy 2.1.4: Develop the SBCC strategy as it relates to health-seeking behaviors (discussed in IR3.1 in detail)

Strategy 2.1.5: Mobilize communities to seek health/nutrition services

In the first quarter of year three, JHU-CCP piloted community conversations (CCs) through locally contracted non-governmental organizations (LNGOs). ENGINE closely monitored the CCs and garnered valuable lessons-learned to develop an even more robust Enhanced Community Conversation (ECC) approach, which will stimulate behavior change through peer groups, multi-media SBCC materials (print, audio, audio-visual), and interactive adult learning methods including role-plays, games and other skills-building activities. ENGINE developed a request for proposal (RFP) to identify and procure LNGOs to implement these innovative community-based 1000 Day Nutrition Program.

¹² mHealth in Ethiopia: *Strategies for a New Framework*. Vital Wave Consulting, 2011.

In the second quarter, the SBBC team developed a draft manual entitled, “How to Implement Enhanced Community Conversations” for higher-level NGO staff to fully understand the new approaches for the 1000 Day Nutrition Program implementation, which includes ECCs and working with religious leaders. The project also designed a 1000 Day Nutrition Program start-up workshop for new LNGO sub-grantees. The workshop will help to clarify the implementation strategy, define expectations for the NGOs’ targets and performance and revisit the LNGOs’ proposals in order to refine their work plans and implementation approaches.

Next quarter, ENGINE will conduct the NGO start-up workshop and support the training of the NGOs’ trainers and supervisors of Community Change Agents (CCAs), using a training package of materials developed for this purpose. Training materials will include job aids for CCAs to know how to conduct ECCs and to use the nutrition SBCC materials that will also be developed in quarter three.

IR 2.3 Access to health and nutrition services increased

Strategy 2.1.6: Strengthen the referral system and access to essential supplies with maternal and child health services

Support referral linkages of Severe Acute Malnutrition (SAM) cases

During this reporting period, 764 children with SAM cases (488 in the second quarter) were referred to HCs and hospitals. Tigray and West Oromia reported more than two-thirds of the referral cases and follow-up visits. Other regions will apply the lessons learned from these regions to improve their systems over the next quarters.

Link nutrition with other programs

Over the past six months, the ENGINE regional teams integrated promotion of WASH behaviors into ongoing community level nutrition interventions including FCD events, community discussions, trainings and review meetings to improve linkages with other sectors. All cooking demonstration participants learned about the importance of WASH at 879 FCD events (more than the planned 672 events). The FCD platform was used to model and promote improved hygiene best practices in the areas of hand washing and sanitation. More than 49,706 community members benefited from WASH interventions (Table 2.5 above). In addition, ENGINE conducted nutrition and WASH-integrated community discussions to educate and promote MIYCN and WASH practices in Oromia and SNNPR regions. HEWs and their supervisors organized and facilitated 79 sessions involving 4,885 community members (2,538 female). Most of the community discussions, 84 percent (66/79), were conducted in Oromia. ENGINE will emphasize quality for the sessions and will share practice from Oromia and SNNPR to Amhara and Tigray so that they can also employ similar approaches in their respective regions.

At the facility level, WASH was integrated with Integrated Community-based Case Management (ICCM) and treated 14,795 children suffering from diarrhea with oral rehydration salts and zinc capsules (Table 2.4 above). In addition, ENGINE collaborated with 12 PCVs to conduct a WASH observation assessment in 12 *woredas* to identify evidence-based WASH doable actions. The results of the study will be used to refine the project’s WASH behavior-change strategy and strengthen ongoing WASH-

nutrition integration at the regional level (see project management section). ENGINE also provided livelihood inputs for 118 new households with persons affected by HIV/AIDS (see section IR 3.2).

Support woreda Child Health Days (CHD) implementation

CHD is a community-based implementation modality organized every quarter to screen malnutrition in under-5 children and pregnant and lactating women and provide group education for women and children and provide vitamin A, de-worming every six months. Over the past six months, the project supported 80 target woredas with the provision vitamin A and de-worming for children. ENGINE will support the remaining three woredas with vitamin A and de-worming and will continue supporting the remaining woredas in quarterly nutrition screenings. ENGINE provided support in transporting nutrition commodities to sites, supporting CHD monitoring visits and review meetings and conducting post-CHD quality checks. ENGINE also facilitated referral of SAM cases to HCs and hospitals. In the next two quarters, ENGINE will support selected target woredas focusing on CHD nutrition screening in coordination with other FtF partners.

IR 3: Prevention of undernutrition through community-based practices improved

Planned activities:

- Analyze formative research data to develop SBCC strategy
- Package and disseminate formative research summaries into multi-format packages
- Conduct cultural resources inventories for nutrition SBCC strategy and materials
- Broadcast 1000 day radio magazine show
- Hire creative agency to support rapid development of SBCC job aids
- Identify additional beneficiaries for LES and support existing MVHHs
- Support schools and FTCs in agronomic practices and cooking demonstrations
- Support the establishment of improved chicken multiplication interventions

IR 3.1 MIYCN knowledge and practices improved

Strategy 3.1.1: Develop SBCC strategy through powerful formative research

Analyze formative research to develop SBCC strategy

The first quarter was dedicated to the analysis of the dataset from ENGINE's formative research in all four regions to identify dietary practices and behavioral influences, relevant to maternal, adolescent, infant, and young child nutrition. Nearly three thousand pages of transcripts from 48 focus group discussions (FGDs) and 192 in-depth interviews were entered into qualitative data analysis software

programs (NVivo and Axis.ti), coded and analyzed. Due to the large number of topics and participants, the findings and recommendations from the formative data analysis will be written and packaged as a series of long reports and short briefs.

Package and disseminate formative research summaries into multi-format nutrition SBCC packages

In Quarter II, ENGINE finalized a formative research report on maternal diet and nutrition behavioral influences and presented the findings to USAID and FtF partners. Also in Quarter II, the SBCC team prepared two draft IYCF formative research reports. The reports were developed to supplement recent formative research findings generated by Alive & Thrive's (A&T) study on mothers' IYCF practices in Tigray and SNNP regions by addressing gaps identified. One of the reports focuses on mothers' IYCF practices in Amhara and Oromia, since A&T had not addressed mothers' IYCF practices in these regions. The other report focuses on fathers' IYCF practices in all four regions (Amhara, Oromia, Tigray and SNNP), since A&T's research had very limited information on fathers.

Last quarter, the SBCC team analyzed data from ENGINE's formative research using the Household Agriculture-Nutrition Doable Actions (HANDs) framework to identify ideal practices, current behaviors, barriers and motivators for each of the five action areas: (1) Raise & Grow; (2) Earn & Buy; (3) Prepare, Preserve & Store; (4) Rest, Share & Eat; and (5) Discuss & Decide together. The agriculture-nutrition formative research report will be finalized in Quarter III. Findings from the formative research will be used in Quarter III to update ENGINE's overall SBCC strategy and will support the development of SBCC materials.

Conduct and compile cultural resource inventories for nutrition SBCC strategy and materials

Last quarter ENGINE finalized a three-minute video on cultural resources and developed a cultural resources inventory template. The team used the mini-video and template to train ENGINE staff during a session at the regional quarterly review meeting. Each regional team developed preliminary cultural resource inventories which will be shared with ENGINE's new LNGO sub-grantees and newly hired SBCC regional coordinators for further development in community mobilization and SBCC programming.

Strategy 3.1.2: Promote optimal nutrition practices through dynamic communication channels

Broadcast 1,000 Days radio magazine show

In Quarter I, JHU:CCP produced and aired the remaining episodes of the 1,000 days radio magazine. Evidence from ENGINE's gender analysis shows that only 13.5 percent of women and 23 percent of men have frequent access to nutrition information through radio and television. This finding has led to the decision to redesign the strategic approach for radio. The program will target husbands and fathers as a primary audience. As such, ENGINE held a series of information gathering discussions with Farm Radio International (FRI), which has conducted agriculture and agriculture-nutrition radio broadcasts in Amhara, Oromia, Tigray and SNNP regions. A review of FRI's research reports on listenership and

audience preferences in these regions has led to the decision that developing a multi-format program that combines nutrition and agriculture-nutrition news, entertainment and participatory formats will be more effective than a radio serial drama.

Hire creative agency to support rapid development of SBCC job aids for frontline workers

In this reporting period, ENGINE developed a Request for Proposal (RFP) to engage the services of a creative agency to support the rapid development of SBCC job aids for frontline workers; materials to facilitate dialogue and skills-building during the ECCs; and take-home materials for pregnant women and their husbands, as well as for the parents of infants and young children. Final selection of the winning agency was completed in the second quarter, enabling ENGINE to move ahead with the rapid development of maternal nutrition SBCC materials (first priority) as well as messages and materials promoting improved IYCF practices and household actions to enhance MIYCN through the agriculture sector.

Last quarter, the SBCC team worked with the winning creative agency to fast-track the development of nutrition messages and materials for target audiences, beginning with creative concept testing. ENGINE implemented rapid nutrition concept testing using innovative research methods such as *Diagnostic Role Plays* to understand gender dynamics and couple communication practices at household levels related to nutrition practices. Rapid concept testing included several options for creative concepts to help facilitate understanding of the first 1000 Days and diet diversity. Other concepts identified through the formative research as priorities for further testing, such as “snacking” vs. “eat an extra meal” for pregnant and lactating women and their families, were also tested during Quarter II. Findings from the concept testing will be documented in Quarter III and used in to design SBCC materials.

ENGINE’s SBCC team also recruited a professional photographer to take high quality photographs of pregnant and lactating women and children under-2 in ENGINE’s operational regions, depicting some of the doable actions that will be promoted at the household level, as part of ENGINE’s SBCC material development process. In addition, ENGINE’s agricultural nutrition activities such as homestead gardening, school gardens, livestock and poultry were captured.

SBCC materials designed by ENGINE will complement those developed by the A&T project.¹³ ENGINE will use similar content information provided in A&T’s materials. For example, songs, audio-recorded narratives, demonstration videos and a menu planning game will use content similar to that provided through A&T. The added-value in ENGINE’s materials is that they will present the nutrition content in a variety of interactive media formats designed for low-literate audiences and focus on strengthening self-efficacy, skills and behavior change. ENGINE will also address gaps in A&T’s IYCF material such as the concept of diet diversity and how to facilitate effective communication about it. ENGINE’s baseline indicates that children’s consumption of legumes, seeds and nuts across the four regions are generally much higher than their consumption of animal source foods, however the A&T materials¹⁴ have grouped

¹³ A&T has produced a series of print materials on IYCF, including a quick reference book, posters, counseling tool and several television spots.

¹⁴ A&T’s materials present three food groups: (1) foods for growth and brain development (animal source foods and legumes); (2) foods for energy (cereals, grains, butter and oil), and (3) foods for protection from disease (green and yellow fruits and vegetables).

these together in the same category (foods for growth and brain development). ENGINE has tested various creative concepts for explaining diet diversity in light of evidence-based priorities, such as emphasizing animal source foods. Following the development of the materials, HEWs, AEWs and ENGINE's implementing partner NGOs will be oriented in their use alongside the A&T materials.

IR 3.2: Increased access to food and economic strengthening opportunities through programming and cross-sector linkage

Strategy 3.2.1: Apply economic strengthening activities in target geographical areas to address specific household vulnerabilities

Map livelihood and economic activities of Year I and II woredas

ENGINE analyzed and consolidated results from the LES mapping exercise in all 83 target AGP woredas.

Set targeting criteria to conduct household vulnerability analysis and selection

During this reporting period, ENGINE, in partnership with kebele development committees, selected 4,148 most vulnerable households (MVHs) for LES support. This was 100 percent of the annual target. All the selected MVHs received orientation on project-related support and their roles and responsibilities.

Match economic opportunities with household interest and capabilities

ENGINE provided TA in the areas of livestock management, vegetable and fruit production to Year I and Year II project beneficiaries. Accordingly, a total of 3,193 MVHs were provided with TA in the regions of all four regions, representing 127 percent of the semi-annual target and 63 percent of the annual target. As a result, the feeding, housing and the health condition of the animals provided improved and fruit seedling management during the dry season showed improvement through mulching to retain water.

Strengthen MVHs saving groups organized in Year I and Year II and initiate saving

Over the past two quarters, ENGINE strengthened MVH savings groups through providing locally made safe boxes and register books. TA was also provided to assist savings groups develop by-laws and establish a group management committee to promote savings and enable access to financial services. Moreover, the LES team drafted savings group formation guidelines to facilitate linkages to formal micro financial service providers. A total of 159 saving groups were strengthened in collaboration with formal microfinance institutes and the cooperative promotion office. This is 103 percent of the semi-annual target and 80 percent of the annual target. Out of the 159 strengthened saving groups, 43 were formally linked to microfinance institutions (MFIs) or savings and credit associations, constituting 43 percent of the semi-annual target. The groups open saving accounts at MFIs and start savings with their names and have access to loans as required. The MFIs also offer support in business planning and financial management, benefiting the saving group members.

Establish MVHHs savings groups in Year I, Year II and Year III woredas

ENGINE established a total of 152 saving groups in all four regions. This is 52 percent of the semi-annual target. This accomplishment is encouraging as it is dependent on the interest of the targeted households and is implemented with the support of the *woreda* office of cooperative promotion. A group will be linked to a formal MFI after saving the required amount to enable it to join a MFI or saving and credited association, and to obtain loans to expand businesses. The LES team will continue to place emphasis on this activity in the upcoming quarter to reach the target.

Initiate regular group meetings to promote optimal vegetable and livestock productivity, gender, MIYCN and WASH behaviors

ENGINE conducted a series of group discussions to promote vegetable and livestock productivity, gender, and optimal MIYCN and WASH practices. A total of 945 community meetings (representing 39 percent of the semi-annual target of 2,396) were conducted in the four regions. This target was not achieved because of the delay in the selection process for Year III MVHHs.

Train MVHHs in LES inputs

During this reporting period, the LES team trained 3,513 participants from Year III selected MVHHs in vegetable and fruit production, irrigation, water management and livestock management (feed preparation, forage production and animal health) representing 86 percent of the annual target. Particular emphasis was placed on introducing improved practices for horticulture and livestock management to MVHHs, as well as nutrition and gender as cross-cutting themes that focused on dietary diversification and the role of women in household decision-making. The training will help the participants to utilize the support effectively and efficiently. Next quarter, the LES team will conduct a rapid market assessment to design market-related activities for MVHH beneficiaries.

Strategy 3.2.2: Facilitate community-based learning on agriculture techniques for increased production of diverse foods

Review performance of FTCs and Schools

In the last quarter, ENGINE collected data from schools and Farmer Training Centers (FTCs) supported in Year I & II, to ascertain which schools and FTCs were able to continue to conduct agronomic and cooking practices demonstrations without the material support of ENGINE, while still benefiting from the program during the remaining years of the project. During the reporting period, the LES team analyzed the data and prepared a report with recommended actions. The report was communicated to the respective field offices to take appropriate actions based on the recommendations. During the reporting period, a fruit seedling survival assessment was conducted in schools, FTCs and HHs in Amhara Region. Results are indicated in table 3.1 below, which shows encouraging results.

Table 3.1: Fruit Survival Rate in Amhara Region

Type of fruit	Number of seedling provided	Number survived	% survived
Avocado	1978	1847	93.3%
Papaya	310	310	100%
Mango	9	7	77.8%
Total	2297	2164	94.2%

Support schools in gardening, agronomic and cooking demonstrations

Over the past six months, ENGINE provided a variety of vegetable seeds and fruit seedlings to 98 schools in the four regions (Table 3.2), which is 106 percent of the semi-annual target and 62 percent of the annual target. Besides material support, the ENGINE team from head office, ENGINE regional team and *woreda* agriculture office experts provided on-site TA to 160 schools. The technical support focused on vegetable production and management of fruit seedlings.

ENGINE also provided nutrition and school gardening training for the newly assigned 57 teachers who replaced the previously assigned teachers; this totals 34 percent of the semi-annual accomplishment. The performance of this activity is low, as the regions of Tigray and Amhara were prioritized, Oromia and SNNP will be the focus for the third quarter.

Table 3.2: Number of schools supported by regions

Region	Year III target	Semi-annual target	Number of schools supported			Semi-annual % accomplishment	Annual % accomplishment
			Quarter I	Quarter II	Total to date		
Tigray	16	16	16		16	100%	100%
Amhara	44	22	24	16	40	182%	91%
Oromia	69	60	2	14	16	27%	23%
SNNP	38	38		38	38	100%	100%
Total	167	98	42	62	104	106%	62%

ENGINE also organized agronomic practice and cooking demonstration events in schools in the four regions to promote dietary diversification and MIYCN to the wider communities. As shown in tables 3.3 & 3.4 below, a total of 5,702 individuals attended agronomic practice sessions at 38 events and 2,583 individuals attended cooking demonstrations at 21 events in schools that have access to irrigation. Achievement of targets to date is low because such demonstration events can only be conducted in schools that have access to wells and use irrigation systems. The remaining demonstrations will be conducted in the remaining quarters following the rain-fed production.

Table 3.3: Number of individuals participating in agronomic practice demonstration events in schools

Region	Year III target		Semi-annual target		Semi-annual accomplishment		Semi-annual % accomplishment		Annual % accomplishment	
	# of events	# of individuals	# of events	# of individuals	# of events	# of individuals	# of events	# of individuals	# of events	# of individuals
Tigray	12	1980	6	990	10	1721	167%	174%	83%	87%
Amhara	33	5445	16	2722	4	612	25%	22%	12%	11%
Oromia	52	8580	12	1980	12	2021	100%	102%	23%	24%
SNNP	28	4620	8	1500	12	1348	150%	90%	43%	29%
Total	125	20625	42	7192	38	5702	90%	79%	30%	28%

Table 3.4: Number of individuals participating in cooking demonstration events in schools

Region	Year III target		Semi-annual target		Semi-annual accomplishment		Semi-annual % accomplishment		Annual % accomplishment	
	# of events	# of individuals	# of events	# of individuals	# of events	# of individuals	# of events	# of individuals	# of events	# of individuals
Tigray	12	1980	6	990	3	102	50%	10%	25.00%	5.15%
Amhara	33	5445	16	2722	1	89	6%	3%	3.03%	1.63%
Oromia	52	8580	12	1980	7	1325	58%	67%	13.46%	15.44%
SNNP	28	4620	8	1500	10	1067	125%	71%	35.71%	23.10%
Total	125	20625	42	7192	21	2583	50%	36%	16.80%	12.52%

Support FTCs in agronomic and cooking demonstration

ENGINE supported a total of 70 FTCs with vegetable seeds and fruit seedlings during the reporting period (Table 3.5), which is 73 percent of the semi-annual and 63 percent of the annual target. In addition to the planting material support, the ENGINE team together with *woreda* agriculture office experts provided on-site TA to 85 FTCs as per work plan matrix. Technical support focused on vegetable production and fruit seedling management.

Table 3.5: Number of FTCs supported by regions

Region	Year III target	Semi-annual target	Number of FTCs supported			Semi-annual % accomplishment	Annual % accomplishment
			Quarter I	Quarter II	Total to date		
Tigray	12	12	11	1	12	100%	100%
Amhara	29	29	5	9	14	48%	48%
Oromia	43	27	1	15	16	59%	37%
SNNP	28	28	3	25	28	100%	100%
Total	112	96	20	50	70	73%	63%

ENGINE also organized agronomic practice and cooking demonstration events at FTCs in all four regions. A total of 3,749 individuals attended 32 agronomic practice demonstration events and 3,614 individuals attended 27 cooking demonstration events (Table 3.6 and 3.7). The demonstrations focused primarily on selecting and cultivating nutritious vegetables. The accomplishment of both activities in terms of number of events and attendees was quite low. This is because demonstration events were conducted in FTCs that have access to irrigation. The remaining demonstrations will be conducted in the coming quarters through rain-fed production.

Table 3.6: Number of individuals participating in agronomic practice demonstration events in FTCs

Region	Year III target		Semi-annual target		Semi-annual accomplishment		Semi-annual % accomplishment		Annual % accomplishment	
	# of events	# of individuals	# of events	# of individuals	# of events	# of individuals	# of events	# of individuals	# of events	# of individuals
Tigray	9	1800	9	1800	8	1080	89%	60%	89%	60%
Amhara	22	4400	11	2200	17	1879	155%	85%	77%	43%
Oromia	34	6800	9	1800	3	425	33%	24%	9%	6%
SNNP	21	4200	14	2800	4	365	29%	13%	19%	9%
Total	86	17200	43	10000	32	3749	74%	37%	37%	22%

Table 3.7: Number of individuals participating in cooking demonstration events in FTC

Region	Year III target		Semi-annual target		Semi-annual accomplishment		Semi-annual % accomplishment		Annual % accomplishment	
	# of events	# of individuals	# of events	# of individuals	# of events	# of individuals	# of events	# of individuals	# of events	# of individuals
Tigray	9	1800	4	800			0%	0%	0%	0%
Amhara	22	4400	11	2200	12	1735	109%	79%	55%	39%
Oromia	34	6800	6	1200	7	795	117%	66%	21%	12%
SNNP	21	4200	14	2800	8	1084	57%	39%	38%	26%
Total	86	17200	35	7000	27	3614	77%	52%	31%	21%

Support the establishment of improved chicken multiplication interventions through private groups or associations already engaged in chicken production

During the reporting period, ENGINE identified eight prospective private groups or associations engaged in chicken production. Two of the eight selected groups are for chicken multiplication units, one in West Oromia and one in Amhara. Both will be equipped with incubators and parent stock of chicken to produce day-old chickens of the respective farmers' preference. The remaining six chicken growers, three in Amhara and three in West Oromia, will purchase day-old chickens from the multiplication unit and raise them for two months, which will ultimately lead to additional revenue for ENGINE-supported MVHHs. To access the chicken and parent stock, a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was signed between ENGINE, the Ethiopia Institute of Agricultural Research (EIAR) and Debre Zeit Agricultural Research Center (DZARC). Similarly, a quadripartite MoU has been drafted to be signed by the following partners: ENGINE, the *woreda* Livestock Agency, a selected chicken multiplication unit and chicken growers. Procurement of an incubator-hatchery combined machine is in process. In addition, parent stock chickens were hatched and have started growing in DZARC.

Support MVHHs in homestead production

ENGINE provided 5,653 MVHHs (selected in Years I, II and III) with vegetable seeds including cabbage, carrot, Swiss chard, Irish potato, sweet potato (orange and white flesh), pumpkin, green beans and kale in the four regions (Table 3.8). As observed during field visits, the HHs that were able to diversify their diets sold excess vegetable products after consumption. Some of the HHs reported that with the money obtained from the sale of excess vegetable products, they purchased additional animal source foods for the household, vegetable seeds for future production seasons, educational materials for children, household equipment, and livestock treatment expenses, as well as depositing savings.

Table 3.8: Number of MVHHs provided with vegetable seeds and fruit seedlings by regions

Region	Year III target	Semi-annual target	Number of MVHHs			Semi-annual % accomplishment	Annual % accomplishment
			Quarter I	Quarter II	Total to date		
Tigray	999	0				0% ¹⁵	0%
Amhara	2526	1263	702	582	1284	102%	51%
Oromia	3794	2714	66	2291	2357	87%	62%
SNNP	1895	948	119	1893	2012	212%	106%
Total	9214	4925	887	4766	5653	115%	61 %

In the reporting period, ENGINE also drafted a sustainable vegetable seed supply strategy, which provides possible mechanisms to acquire vegetable seeds by MVHHs and other communities for sustainable production in ENGINE project areas.

Support MVHHs with productive livestock

During the reporting period, ENGINE provided 1,584 MVHHs with productive livestock (heifers, sheep and goats) based on their interest and capacity (Table 3.9). The livestock distribution during the reporting period is below the plan (51 percent). This is because targeting, training and procurement of livestock took a considerable time prior to delivery of the animals to the targeted households. ENGINE is of the opinion that supporting HHs in chicken production has higher nutrition outcome than supplying large animals, as chicken eggs and meat are the most affordable animal source food for the rural poor. Targeted HHs' preferences were found to be towards large animals since large animals possession is a sign of prestige and wealth. Emphasis on chicken provision also contributed to the low performance of livestock provision. Finally, those HHs interested in chicken production were identified and locally adaptable chicken breed suppliers were selected, which will potentially speed-up livestock distribution in the third quarter.

¹⁵ Since HHs do not have access to irrigation in Tigray region, there are plans to provide them with vegetable seeds in the rainy seasons in Quarters III and IV.

Table 3.9: Number of MVHHs provided with productive livestock by regions

Region	Year III target	Semi-annual target	Number of MVHHs			Semi-annual % accomplishment	Annual % accomplishment
			Quarter I	Quarter II	Total to date		
Tigray	400	400	125	278	403	101%	101%
Amhara	1100	1100	122	482	604	55%	55%
Oromia	2191	1265	63	283	346	27%	16%
SNNP	950	320	100	131	231	72%	24%
Total	4641	3085	410	1174	1584	51%	34%

In West Oromia, ENGINE assessed sheep and goat reproductive performance as a measure of fertility, re-productivity and flock increasing rate. Results showed 75.7 percent, 88 percent and 59 percent respectively on a flock raised 13 months since provision. The HHs benefited from income generated (45,560 Birr) from the sale of 100 newborns. HHs provided with chickens showed 60-80 percent egg production.¹⁶ These were used for household consumption, hatching to replace the old stock and generate income from surplus egg selling. From the 28 dairy cattle provided to 28 MVHHs in Oromia and SNNP regions in Year II, nine gave birth and households started consuming milk and milk products and generated income from selling surplus milk.

Support post-harvest technology workshops and/or demonstrations

In Quarter I, the LES team developed training materials on pre and post-harvest handling and storage of fresh vegetables and fruits which are now included in the vegetable and fruit production guideline training package.

Support agricultural research on nutrition

ENGINE has decided to offer financial support to federal and regional agricultural research institutes involved in nutrition-sensitive areas of research on a competitive basis. To this end, ENGINE invited selected research institutes to submit their technical and financial proposals before April 21, 2014. It is expected that program participants will benefit from the research in areas such as post-harvest handling and nutrition-sensitive agriculture (NSA).

Introduce micro-insurance mechanisms for livestock among targeted MVHHs

Saving groups received orientation on the benefit of contributing money for livestock health insurance as part of an introduction to micro-insurance mechanisms. To date, seven group members started contributing money in addition to their regular savings. The remaining groups will be encouraged to contribute in the coming quarters.

¹⁶ Six to eight eggs per day from 10 layers were provided per household.

Livelihood effectiveness study

In order to ascertain the extent to which ENGINE intervention packages contribute to consumption and expenditure of products produced by the household and to assess the effectiveness of the various livelihoods packages delivered to beneficiaries, LOL conducted a livelihood effectiveness study in selected project-supported *woredas* in Quarter II. The research team collected and entered the data and the data analysis and results will be completed in Quarter III.

IR4 Rigorous and innovative learning agenda adopted

Planned activities:

- Implement Operational Research (OR)
- Build capacity of MSc students in nutrition
- Establish PhD program in nutrition
- Conduct baseline survey data collection, analysis and report writing
- Prepare for internal mid-term assessment
- Assist *woredas* in evidence-based health sector planning

IR 4.1: Design and delivery of a research strategy

Strategy 4.1.1: Design and delivery of a OR strategy

Birth cohort study

This birth cohort study aims to determine the effectiveness of interventions targeting maternal and child nutrition and health outcomes. ENGINE finalized the study proposal and obtained IRB approval from both Tufts and Jimma Universities in the first quarter. During the second quarter, all the preparatory activities for the birth cohort study were completed. The research team (Tufts, Jimma and Hawassa Universities) developed the study questionnaire and translated it into Oromifa. They pre-tested the tools and uploaded them to digital tablets for data collection. Twenty participants from Tufts, Hawassa and Jimma Universities and EPHI successfully completed the birth cohort training of trainers (TOT) in Jimma. Training was provided on study protocol, use of digital tablets, data collection tools, data uploading and management. The TOTs, in turn, trained the six recruited supervisors and 33 enumerators. Data collection was initiated in March 2014.

Agriculture-nutrition survey panel

The agriculture-nutrition survey panel will examine ENGINE's role in affecting nutrition, food security and livelihoods outcomes through its multi-sector approach. In the first quarter, the agriculture-nutrition OR preparations were finalized and data collection was initiated in December 2013. In the second quarter, survey teams collected pre-harvest quantitative data from 1,080 out of 1,200 total households in 10 *woredas* across SNNP and Oromia regions. In addition, a supplementary agriculture-nutrition qualitative study was launched in early March 2014. The team conducted 32 FGDs and 30 key informant interviews in five *woredas*.

Nutrition policy research

The nutrition policy research aims to elicit insights from key policymakers and stakeholders about implementing nutrition interventions along a chain leading from the central (government) to the frontline (*woreda*) level in Ethiopia. It examines cross-sector coordination at all levels. The national and sub-national data collection was completed during the fourth quarter of Year II and the first quarter of Year III and the national policy narrative report was written. An abstract on this policy research entitled "*Effect of Governance structures in Ethiopia on the implementation of nutrition interventions*" was accepted for presentation at the June 2014 global micronutrient forum conference.

The Ethiopia Public Health Institute (EPHI)¹⁷ co-investigators planned to finalize the sub-national data transcription and report writing by mid-December 2013. However, this was delayed due to the assignment of EPHI team members' to different regions of Ethiopia for a national micronutrient survey. By the end of the second quarter, transcription and data entry were completed. The final report, including the national and sub-national data, will be finalized in the third quarter.

Secondary data analysis research

During this reporting period, ENGINE finalized secondary analysis reports on the factors associated with stunting and food consumption and commercialization. Three abstracts from the stunting findings were submitted and accepted for presentation at the annual multi-disciplinary Experimental Biology meeting. Furthermore, the results from both studies were shared with ENGINE and USAID. The stunting paper was presented at USAID for the representatives from nutrition, health and economic growth and transformation. In addition, ENGINE used the findings to design agriculture and nutrition OR and to reprogram activities to address gaps. Next quarter, Jimma and Hawassa researchers will complete data analysis and reports from their individual studies.

Research capacity building

ENGINE continued research capacity building for local universities and research institutes. This reporting period, the project financially supported 13 MSc students with their thesis research from Hawassa and Jimma Universities. ENGINE also supported four new MSc students from Hawassa University in their thesis investigative research on food-based micronutrient supplementation approaches and development of complementary food from locally available food products. To date, ENGINE has supported 48 students from Jimma, Hawassa, Mekele, Gondar and Haromaya Universities.

¹⁷ The Ethiopian Health and Nutrition Research Institute has been renamed as EPHI – Ethiopian Public Health Institute.

Of these, 20 students completed their thesis work and defended their research with strong academic performance. The universities have submitted their final thesis documents to ENGINE.

Seven PhD students (two from EPHI, two from Hawassa University and three from Jimma Universities) were registered for a joint PhD Human Nutrition program at Jimma University, Ethiopia and Ghent University, Belgium. All students have started their course work and attended some classes at Jimma University (Nutrition Anthropology and General Linear Model-GLM) and participated in STATA¹⁸ training for secondary analysis research. One of the PhD students went to Ghent University and returned in March 2014. During his stay, he worked on his proposal with his PhD advisor and took courses on systematic review and data quality management.

MAM and SAM OR Studies

During this reporting period, SC took over the management of the country-level implementation of two OR studies on moderate and severe acute malnutrition (SAM), which VI started in Year II. ENGINE and Jimma University continued implementing the two ORs and conducted four rounds of supportive supervision trips to study sites to ensure quality data collection. VI will continue its international TA support upon approval from USAID.

Moderate Acute Malnutrition (MAM)

The purpose of the MAM OR is to provide evidence as to whether there is need for a Targeted Supplementary Feeding Program (TSFP) in food-secure settings of rural Ethiopia. The study began in August 2013 in Dedo and Mana *woredas* of Jimma zone, where 927 moderately acutely malnourished children aged 6-59 months were enrolled to be followed for seven months. During this reporting period, data collection was completed for Dedo *woreda* and will be completed for Mana *woreda* in April 2014. A total of 918 children were in the study at the end of March 2014 and data was entered for statistical analysis. Children who were lost to follow-up during the previous reporting period were traced to reduce the drop-out rate.

Severe Acute Malnutrition (SAM)

The objective of the SAM OR is to determine the long-term health outcomes of children age 6-59 months successfully treated for SAM in a community-based management of acute malnutrition (CMAM) program. Recruitment of eligible children started in September 2013 in three *woredas* (Dedo, Seka Chekorsa and Tiro Afata) in Jimma zone and continued until the end of February 2014. During the reporting period, 296 children (148 cases and 148 controls) were enrolled in the study. The project was successful in recruiting 62.4 percent of children planned to be enrolled during the entire duration of the study, while it was expected to be at 100 percent at end of March 2014. This is attributed to the slow rate of discharge of SAM children as “cured” from health facilities and temporary interruption of data collection during the transfer of responsibility from VI to SC.

¹⁸ STATA is a statistical package for data management, data analysis and graphics.

Qualitative study

A qualitative study looking at community perceptions of malnutrition was planned to be finalized at the start of Year III, with both an internal report and a journal article produced. The data was collected, but analysis and write-up have been delayed because the process to define the new SOW and budget, in addition, procuring VIs international TA took longer than expected. Once USAID approves the international TA mechanism for VI, this activity will continue in the third quarter.

IR 4.2: Develop and manage an innovative documentation and dissemination strategy

Baseline survey

In September 2013, ENGINE completed *woreda*-level surveys in 42 *woredas* (28 intervention and 14 control *woredas*) as part the baseline for the project's multi-year stepped wedge impact evaluation. In this reporting period, VI submitted the final baseline report, which is under review by ENGINE. Next quarter the report will be shared with USAID and disseminated to key stakeholders, including the regional governments.

Internal mid-term assessment

Last quarter, ENGINE developed the TOR for its internal mid-term assessment with full participation from sub-primes and technical advisors. The project developed research questions and data collection methods; identified the assessment team; clarified team roles and responsibilities; and designed the methodology and tools for special assessments such as an LQAS survey and Participatory Impact Assessment. The internal mid-term will be conducted in Quarter III and findings will be used for the external assessment in June/July 2014.

Woreda level planning and review meetings

ENGINE, with *woreda*, zonal desk and regional bureau health and agricultural offices, supported and facilitated planning and regular performance review meetings in 49 *woredas* in Quarter I and 53 *woredas* in Quarter II. Totals of 1474 (561 female) and 4269 (2505 female) participants from the four regions participated in Quarter I and Quarter II respectively. ENGINE presented project overviews, project performance and initiated discussion among the participants of the meetings. *Woreda* education, women's affairs, administration offices and AGP focal persons also participated in the discussions. The meetings conducted were integrated with regular *woreda*-level meetings to plan and review the performance and quality of CHDs, health and nutrition activities, and LES activities with the ultimate goal of generating lessons and identifying gaps in the project implementation to improve project performance. The *woredas* also developed action plans to address identified gaps.

Cross cutting activities: Gender

Planned activities:

- Organize gender dissemination workshop for national stakeholders
- Finalize gender mainstreaming strategy for the project
- Create supervision checklists for gender mainstreaming
- Integrate gender into MIYCN and nutrition sensitive agriculture (NSA) training sessions

Gender is one of the crosscutting elements of the project. As such, ENGINE hired a consulting firm to conduct a gender analysis to assess gender dynamics at the community level and determine the extent to which nutrition interventions are influenced by power dynamics between women and men. The findings showed that gender issues need to be fully integrated into nutrition activities such as involving men; targeting interventions that are controlled by women; empowering women to take an active role in community structures; and improving women's access to nutrition information.

Conduct gender dissemination workshop for national stakeholders

As part of its robust learning agenda, ENGINE organized a national level gender workshop to disseminate the gender analysis findings for health, nutrition and agriculture stakeholders in March 2014. The workshop provided an opportunity for the 13 participants (mainly gender focal persons) to discuss the role of gender relations in household nutrition and its implications on nutrition programming. As a result of the rich discussions and group work, ENGINE received valuable input for its draft gender strategy, which was revised based on shared experiences from FtF and GHI partners (Annex x).

Finalize gender mainstreaming strategy

ENGINE planned to launch the project gender strategy last year. However, due to the poor quality of the gender report submitted by the external consulting firm, it took longer than expected to finalize this deliverable. In the first quarter, the document was reviewed by the ENGINE team to produce a practical gender mainstreaming strategy relevant to the field reality. The strategy was designed to provide guidance to ENGINE staff on how to integrate gender concerns into ENGINE's multi-sector project components. The strategy was finalized in Quarter II based on feedback from the gender workshop and will be shared with regional stakeholders next quarter.

Create supportive supervision checklists for gender mainstreaming

This checklist was created to facilitate and ensure the mainstreaming of gender into ENGINE programming during field visits and supportive supervisions conducted by the ENGINE team at all levels. Orientation was provided for some regional teams in quarter II and will continue in Quarter III.

Integrate gender into MIYCN and program managers training

The gender awareness training was integrated into the MIYCN TOT provided for health workers. Program manager training was provided for agriculture and health supervisors and nutrition sensitive agriculture training for agriculture workers from the four regions (see IR2).

Challenges and constraints and plans to overcome them during the reporting period

IR 1: Capacity for and institutionalization of programs and policies

Nutrition multi-sector coordination

Main challenges and constraints

Even with regional multi-sector TA from ENGINE and UNICEF, only three out of the four ENGINE-supported regions have launched the NNP and only two regions have established RNCBs and RNTCs, which are critical structures for successful NNP implementation and oversight. Despite receiving official letters from the NNCB chair to facilitate NNP roll-out, there is limited engagement from regional presidential offices and conflicting government priorities and campaigns. Another constraint is the limited coordination of nutrition and NNP among the four FMoA departments, which is critical for effective NNP implementation from FMoA and for appropriate TA from ENGINE.

Plans to overcome challenges and constraints

FMoH requested that ENGINE prepare standard guidelines on how to conduct regional launches and establish RNTCs and RNCBs. ENGINE prepared the guidelines, which the FMoH shared with the regions. ENGINE and UNICEF encourage the FMoH to facilitate the engagement of the regional president office and the regional health bureaus to take on more proactive and leading roles. In addition, ENGINE worked with UNICEF and other partners to prepare multi-sector implementation guides. Furthermore, ENGINE and USAID met with H.E Ato Mitiku, State Minister of FMoA and deputy chair of NNCB, to brief him about ENGINE and scale-up of ENGINE to the 17 non-AGP *woredas*; and how we can support the FMoA in rolling out, integrating and coordinating the NNP. An agreement was reached to establish a nutrition working group from the four FMoA departments and key partners, such as ENGINE, FAO and UNICEF, to improve NNP coordination and technical support from partners. ENGINE and UNICEF prepared a draft TOR and shared with the NNTC focal person for FMoA. The TOR will be finalized next quarter.

IR 2: Quality and delivery of nutrition and health services improved

Strengthen integration of WASH into nutrition interventions

Main challenges and constraints

It took longer than expected to recruit a highly qualified and motivated WASH advisor to rapidly move forward the integration of WASH into ENGINE's nutrition interventions.

Plans to overcome challenges and constraints

ENGINE finally selected an experienced candidate in February 2014, but he was not able to start until late April 2014. To fill this gap, ENGINE requested technical support from the Save/Ethiopia WASH department in conducting a national WASH mapping exercise to identify gaps and areas for collaboration. The project also identified TA from the newly hired SC-US WASH advisor who assisted the regional teams in identifying criteria for selecting pilot WASH-focused *kebeles*.¹⁹ The Save-US WASH advisor will also travel to Ethiopia next quarter with the president of The Manoff Group to work with the new ENGINE WASH advisor and regional teams to develop the SBCC WASH strategy and detailed plan for WASH integration based on the findings from the mapping process and ENGINE-Peace Corps WASH observation study.

IR3: Prevention of undernutrition through community-based practices

Finalize formative research findings and launch enhanced community conversations

Main challenges and constraints

The level of effort required for the analysis of the formative research data collected under the direction of JHU-CCP was significantly underestimated. The dataset was over three thousand pages, and included numerous topics and nine different categories of research participants. This meant that considerable time was dedicated to the preliminary work required to enter and code the datasets to conduct the analysis and report writing. In addition to formative research, it was challenging to identify the appropriate local NGOs to implement enhanced community conversations (ECC), clarify their SOWs, finalize their sub-agreements and build their capacity to deliver the 1000 day nutrition project. This delayed the start-up of ECC by the local NGOs.

Plans to overcome challenges and constraints

By the second quarter, the ENGINE SBCC team, with technical leadership from The Manoff Group, completed the analysis and report writing of the formative research data on maternal nutrition, child dietary diversity and agriculture and nutrition. Also in the second quarter, ENGINE organized a start-up and capacity building workshop for all new local NGOs to create a common understanding of the project expectations and to finalize their work plans and budgets.

IR 4 Rigorous and innovative learning agenda adopted

Launch of birth cohort study

Main challenges and constraints

Tufts University's IRB approval for the birth cohort study was delayed and Jimma University's IRB was conditional upon receiving approval from Tufts University. USAID approval for the purchase of motorbikes for data collectors is also pending.

¹⁹ The regional team selected *kebeles* that have a functioning water point, which has been recently repaired with community participation.

Plans to overcome challenges and constraints

ENGINE facilitated the approval for the motorbikes and IRB approval was secured. The birth cohort study data collection was initiated in March. All motorbikes have been delivered and supervisors are using them for supportive supervision.

Transfer of VI OR responsibilities to SC

Main challenges and constraints

VI was registered as a for-profit organization in Ethiopia and potentially liable for GOE income tax and VAT for ENGINE project costs, which are not allowable under USAID rules and regulations.

Plans to overcome challenges and constraints

To avoid financial risk and liability, SC terminated the agreement with VI during this reporting period. ENGINE rapidly transferred OR responsibilities to the SC project team to facilitate a smooth transition of OR activities from VI to SC. ENGINE has also developed a SOW and budget for VI to provide international TA, which is pending USAID approval.

Data quality issues during the reporting period

In Quarter I of this reporting period, ENGINE conducted a quarterly data quality assessment in service delivery sites (school, FTCs, health centers and health posts) in the four target regions. The objective of the assessment was to verify the quality of reported data; assess the reporting and recording system; and implement corrective action based on the findings. In Quarter II, ENGINE continued regular supportive supervision and mentoring on recording, reporting and data quality using the regional M&E team and zonal coordinators. However, the central M&E team was not able to conduct regional Quarter II data quality checks because of competing priorities and instead provided technical support and monitoring through telephone and e-mail. The M&E team will conduct a comprehensive data quality assessment in Quarter III.

Major activities planned in the next reporting period

Project management

- Conduct quarterly regional and subprime review meetings
- Work with regions to launch activities in non-AGP *woredas*
- Facilitate FtF nutrition technical working group meeting
- Implement FtF linkages and experience sharing visits with partners at the regional level

IR1: Capacity for and institutionalization of nutrition programs and policies strengthened

- Support national, regional and *woreda* level nutrition NNP multi-sector coordination
- Provide TA to FMoH in finalizing national nutrition training materials and guidelines
- Support national food fortification, micronutrient survey and universal salt iodization
- Implement national nutrition advocacy strategy with FMoH and partners
- Conduct SBM-R module workshops and benchmarking visits for project institutions
- Organize nutrition and WASH forums for graduating nutrition students
- Continue supporting academic center of excellence (ACoE) for nutrition at Hawassa University
- Consider expanding to three additional universities providing nutrition programs

IR2. Quality and delivery of nutrition and health care services improved

- Implement QI activities for nutrition services at selected health facilities
- Conduct training on coaching/mentoring for health service providers
- Support joint integrated nutrition supportive supervision with *woreda* health offices
- Support IRT gap-filling training for HEWs
- Conduct post training follow-up of MIYCN training
- Provide multi-sector nutrition and nutrition-sensitive agriculture training for program managers and frontline health and agriculture workers
- Develop job aids for CCAs on how to conduct ECCs and use nutrition SBCC materials
- Train NGO trainers and supervisors of Community Change Agents (CCAs)
- Support *woreda* level CHD implementation through planning, logistics management, mentorship and post CHD monitoring and reviews
- Conduct nutrition and WASH cooking demonstrations at community levels

IR3. Improved prevention of under-nutrition through community-based nutrition practices

- Finalize SBCC strategy and fast-track development of SBCC materials for HEWs/AEWs
- Follow-up and provide TA for MVHH beneficiaries
- Provide improved/local sheep and/or goats or chicken heifers to Year III MVHH
- Establish MVHHs saving groups and link with micro finance institutions

- Establish marketing committee, link committee with local market, and support vegetable and fruits marketing corners
- Promote diversified food production at FTCs and school gardens through demonstration of agronomic practices and food preparation
- Support establishment of improved poultry multiplication interventions through private groups or associations already engaged in poultry production
- Promote asset protection through micro–insurance.

IR4 Rigorous and innovative learning agenda adopted

- Continue implementation of ENGINE OR studies
- Continue nutrition policy research, secondary data analysis and documentation
- Provide nutrition M&E training for *woreda* agricultural and health offices and facilities
- Carry out data quality assessment and supportive supervision for M&E officers
- Build research capacity for researchers and postgraduate students (MSc & PhD)
- Conduct internal ENGINE project assessment and assist with external mid-term
- Provide TA for regional M&E officers and zonal coordinators on program data quality
- Conduct quarterly data quality assessment (DQA) in all four regions

Crosscutting

- Develop detailed plan for WASH integration based on mapping and observation study
- Integrate gender strategy mainstreaming guidelines into project activities

Environmental compliance

Animal feed and feeding: ENGINE has continued purchasing animals from the local market to avoid additional pressure on the existing pasture. In addition, 1,584 MVHHs received training and planted multipurpose forage trees in their backyard boundaries.

Animal Health: In order to protect distributed animals from rampant livestock diseases and maximize their productivity, 6,419 animals received vaccination against Anthrax, Black leg, Pastureullosis, PPR, and Pox, according to type of animal and area prevalence.

Activity description	Mitigation measures	Monitoring Indicator(s)	Output	Comments
			# of people trained	
Provide selected VHHS and women's groups with livestock and seedlings for production of fruits and vegetables	Provide training of feed preparation, forage production, livestock management and veterinary services	# of people trained on feed and livestock management	1584	1584 HHs received training on forage production and feed reserve
	Provide required vaccinations for livestock	# of animals vaccinated	6419	During the reporting period, 6419 animals have been vaccinated. All animals received a thorough animal health examination by a government veterinary officer.

Financial accomplishment

Life of Project budget (a)	Obligated to date (b)	Expenditure (Accrual and actual disbursement) to date (c)	Remaining balance (d) = (b) – (c)	Remarks
50,891,422.26	33,834,765.25	20,315,593.83	13,519,171.42	

Issues requiring the attention of USAID management

N/A

Data sharing with host government

Have you shared this report with the host government?

Yes

No

ENGINE will share the annual report with the host government at the annual performance review meeting.
