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PD-ABR-008

# **SANA**

**Sustainable Approaches to Nutrition in Africa**

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## **Planning Regional Nutrition Activities in West Africa**

*Dakar, Senegal  
November 3-14, 1998*

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**Planning Regional Nutrition  
Activities in West Africa**

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### **Introduction**

The Sustainable Approaches to Nutrition in Africa (SANA) project is a four-year cooperative agreement between the Academy for Educational Development (AED) and USAID's Africa Bureau Office of Sustainable Development (AFR/SD) to strengthen and improve program-oriented, nutrition training and research in Africa. In West Africa, SANA employs a full-time regional advisor and other regional consultants to work in collaboration with the BASICS Project and the Organization for Applied Nutrition Research in Africa (ORANA) to carry out activities to improve nutrition policies, program-related skills, and information dissemination, networking, and advocacy.

In November 1998, SANA project director, Ellen Piwoz, and SANA nutrition associate, Micheline Nturu, traveled to Senegal to work with the BASICS regional nutrition advisor, Dr. Serigne Diene, SANA regional advisor, Mr. Lamine Thiam, SANA training consultant, Mrs. Maty Ndiaye Sy, and SARA consultant, Mrs. Kinday Samba-Ndure to discuss issues related to the implementation of SANA activities in West Africa and to discuss plans for SANA Project Year 4. This visit was carried out in conjunction with the BASICS West Africa Regional planning meeting to discuss the results and work plan for the last months of the BASICS project.

The specific objectives of the visit were to: 1) finalize plans for the November, 1998, ORANA/CRAN focal point meeting, 2) review progress on the community nutrition reference manual (with SARA consultant Samba-Ndure) and discuss next steps for reviewing and producing the document, 3) discuss progress on the Senegal Food Box adaptation research and plan for the closing of the SANA regional office (with SANA advisor, Lamine Thiam), 4) discuss progress and next steps for finalizing the IMCI Food Box training curriculum (with SANA consultant Maty Ndiaye Sy), 5) discuss outstanding issues related to the regional training on nutrition advocacy and PROFILES, to be held in December 1998, and 6) participate in the BASICS regional planning meeting.

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## **RESULTS**

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#### **Planning Meetings for the ORANA/CRAN Focal Point Meeting**

The ORANA/CRAN focal point meeting was scheduled for November 23-27, 1998 in Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire. During this visit, several meetings were held to discuss the technical agenda and logistical arrangements for that meeting. This year's meeting will include a recap of activities over the past 12 months (on community nutrition, vitamin A, and the nutrition minimum package), and technical presentations on iron (as requested at last year's meeting). Unfortunately, Dr. Godwin Ndossi, who was invited to make a presentation on the rapid anaemia assessment protocol, wrote to say that he will not be able to attend the meeting. With the short lead time, it is unlikely that a substitute presenter will be identified, however, all of Dr. Ndossi's materials, including the protocol and report of findings, were translated into French and will be distributed to participants.

#### **Reviewing the Community Nutrition Reference Manual**

Ms. Samba-Ndure circulated a first draft of the Community Nutrition Reference Manual prior to the November visit with a list of questions for the reviewers to answer. Several working sessions were held during the visit to discuss the draft and the steps needed to prepare it for external review. The primary recommendations for improving the document were as follows:

- ◆ the amount of detail of each topic in all chapters should be standardized,
- ◆ diverse examples of program experiences from various African countries need to be included throughout, using boxes and other reader-friendly formats, and
- ◆ the sections of the document which are repetitive should be removed.

The comments and suggestions made during these meetings will be incorporated into the document by Ms. Samba-Ndure by the end of the year (December 1998). This draft will then be circulated among a group of community nutrition experts, their feedback and advice will be requested by the end of February 1999. The second draft, incorporating changes from this group, is expected to be completed by the end of March 1999, final editing, production, and translation should be completed by mid-May 1999.

Ms Samba-Ndure prepared a preliminary budget for the translation, production, and dissemination of the document, which was discussed, and is currently being revised. A final budget estimate is expected by the end of December 1998.

### **Senegal Food Box Adaptation Research**

A meeting was held with SANA regional advisor, Mr Lamine Thiam, to review the progress of the consultative research for the IMCI Food Box adaptation. Mr Thiam has been actively involved in this research, in collaboration with the BASICS Senegal country team and the Ministry of Health (SANAS), in Kaolack and Louga regions since September 1998. The research process has developed a market study of available foods, prices and nutritional values, a five-day training of field supervisors and investigators, and three-visit trials of improved practices in 44 households per region, including families with children under 24 months of age in rural and peri-urban areas.

Mr Thiam submitted a detailed review of existing information on feeding practices, the modules used to train field teams in the consultative research methodology, and results from the dietary and market studies completed to-date. Mr Thiam, working in collaboration with BASICS and the Ministry of Health, expects to complete the field research in mid-December 1998. The final recommendations for the IMCI Food Box adaptation will be ready by the end of the year, and the report on the research findings will be finished by mid-January 1999.

### **Closing of SANA Regional Office**

Preliminary arrangements have begun for closing the SANA regional office. It was agreed that Mr Thiam will close down the office and return the equipment to SANA/AED by the end of January, when his contract ends. SANA/AED will inquire about the procedures for returning furniture and equipment as well as other issues related to office space and inform Mr Thiam of the necessary procedures as soon as possible.

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## **RESULTS**

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### **IMCI Food Box Adaptation Training Curriculum**

SANA consultant, Ms Maty Ndiaye Sy, has been in the process of finalizing the training curriculum that was used during the July 1997, regional training course on the IMCI Food Box adaptation process. Changes have been made based on subsequent, country-level training courses held in Senegal, Morocco, and Benin. Ms Ndiaye Sy expects to complete the modules by January 1999, with the assistance of Ms Micheline Ntru.

### **Planning of PROFILES Training**

Logistical, administrative, and technical preparations for the regional workshop on nutrition advocacy are currently underway (scheduled for December 8-17 in Dakar). The purpose of this workshop is to introduce participants (three-member teams from Niger, Togo, Guinea, Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, and Benin) to the principles of nutrition advocacy and the use of PROFILES for reaching consensus on priority nutrition problems and developing advocacy arguments and materials.

The meeting will be co-financed by BASICS (with funds from REDSO/FHA), Linkages, and the SARA and SANA projects. The facilitators for the course will include Dr Jay Ross, Policy Advisor, Linkages/AED, Dr Victor Aguayo, PROFILES Coordinator, Linkages/AED, Dr Serigne Diene, BASICS regional nutrition advisor, Mr Barky Diallo and Ms Maty Ndiaye Sy, SANA consultants (for overall facilitation services), and SARA consultant, Ms Kinday Samba-Ndure. Mrs Aïssatou Wade will assist with workshop documentation. SARA and BASICS will share the costs for participants.

### **Participation in the BASICS Regional Planning Meeting**

From November 11-13, 1998, a meeting was held at the BASICS Regional office to discuss the results of the past 12 months and to develop the FY 1999 country work plans for four countries (Benin, Mali, Niger, and Senegal) and for each of the regional advisors. During the meeting, which was also attended by local counterparts from Benin, Mali, and Senegal, each country presented their FY 1998 programmatic activities—successes, failures, and constraints faced. This was followed by individual planning meetings to determine the technical assistance visits that will be required from both the regional advisors and others during the next six months (close-out period for the project).

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Nutrition activities are prominent features in each country represented. These activities include consultative research for the IMCI Food Box adaptation (Senegal, Mali), radio message development (Benin, Mali), introduction and expansion of the nutrition minimum package at the health facility and community levels (Senegal and Benin), and nutrition policy analysis, advocacy, and strategy development (Mali).

One purpose for the SANA representation at the BASICS regional planning meeting was to identify areas where SANA and SARA could provide supplementary support and technical assistance for the remaining months of the project. It was agreed at the meeting that SANA and SARA would provide financial support for participants and facilitators for the regional training on nutrition advocacy (described above). SANA and SARA will also provide technical assistance to the Senegal country program to complete the Food Box adaptation research, to strengthen the community component of the nutrition minimum package, and to evaluate the MinPak activities. This assistance will be provided by SARA/SANA consultant, Ms. Kinday Samba-Ndure. Additional support for IMCI training and information dissemination will be discussed.

**Site Visits to The World Bank-Supported Community Nutrition Programme (executed by Agence d'Execution des Travaux d'Interet Public (AGETIP))**

Dr. Piwoz and Ms. Nturu spent a half-day visiting the AGETIP Projet de Nutrition Communautaire (PNC) in Taiba on November 16th. This visit was led by the Head of Supervision for AGETIP, Dr. Cisse. They attended a health and nutrition IEC session and reviewed the project's data collection system (growth charts, registers) with project staff and the Supervisor. In addition, they discussed specific activities of the project, challenges and constraints faced, etc. They learned during this visit that the PNC is a community-based food distribution program targeting pregnant and lactating women and malnourished children. Participants of this project not only receive a food ration, but participate in health education sessions, growth monitoring and nutritional counseling.

Overall, the trip was successful vis-a-vis the objectives. In addition, the impromptu site visit with AGETIP provided pertinent information on the nature of community nutrition activities in Senegal.

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## ***NEXT STEPS***

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### **Next Steps**

- ◆ Ms Samba-Ndure will complete the next draft of the Community Nutrition manual by December 1998. In addition, a final draft estimate for this document will be finalized by this date.
- ◆ Mr Thiam will complete the Senegal Food Box adaptation research in mid-December 1998.
- ◆ Ms Ndiaye Sy will finalize the modules for the IMCI Food Box adaptation training curriculum by January 1999, with the assistance of Ms Nuru.

**PERSONS CONTACTED**

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