



AGRILINKS

BREAKING BARRIERS: INTEGRATING GENDER AND NUTRITION INTO EXTENSION SERVICES

PRESENTATION AUDIO TRANSCRIPT

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PRESENTERS

Edye Kuyper, Integrating Gender and Nutrition within Agricultural Extension Services (INGENAES)

Andrea Bohn, Integrating Gender and Nutrition within Agricultural Extension Services (INGENAES)

MODERATOR

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Julie MacCartee:

Good morning, afternoon, or evening everyone. On behalf of the Agrilinks team I'd like to welcome you to the November Ag Sector Council seminar titled *Breaking Barriers: Integrating Gender and Nutrition into Extension Services*. Our speakers today from the INGENAES project are excited to discuss this topic with all of you today. Before we dive into the content I'd like to just provide a few opening reminders. First, Agrilinks seminars are a product of the USAID Bureau for Food Security and are prepared by the Knowledge-Driven Agricultural Development Project.

My name is Julie MacCartee and I'm a knowledge management specialist with the USAID Bureau for Food Security and I'll be facilitating the webinar today so you'll see my name in the chat box and hear my voice during the Q&A session, which will take place after the presentations. The chat box that you see on your screen today is your main way to communicate, and thank you to everyone who has already introduced yourself. It's always really fun to see that we've got a global audience for these events, so please continue to let us know what organization, country, city, etc. you are joining from.

Throughout the webinar we encourage you to use the chat box to share links and resources and to ask questions about the presentations that we'll pose to our speakers in the second half of the webinar today. So please feel free to enter your questions at any time and we'll be collecting them to ask to the presenters, as many as we can get through before we wrap up at the 11:00 hour Eastern Time. Next, today's presentation is available to download right now on the left side of your screen. You'll see a box titled "resources" and one titled "downloads." Those are a lot of different useful resources that we'd like to share with you today.

If you'd like to download the Power Point just to make sure that you have it, outside of this webinar you'll see presentation Power Point listed in the resources box there. We are recording this webinar, and we'll post the recording, the transcript, and other resources to Agrilinks within two weeks of the webinar, and if you're watching the webinar right now that means you're already on the email list to receive a link to the recording. So you'll be able to review anything you missed or pass that along to your colleagues. All right, I think we are going to go ahead and dive into our discussion of gender, nutrition, and extension.

So to give us a brief introduction to the topic today, I would like to introduce Jeannie Harvey. Jeannie is a gender advisor with USAID's Bureau for Food Security providing technical assistance to Feed the Future missions in Asia, Africa, and Latin America. She is kind of the USAID side leader of the INGENAES project, and so she's a very appropriate person to give us an intro today, so I'll go ahead and pass the microphone over to Jeannie.

Jeannie Harvey:

Great. Thanks so much, Julie. Thanks to Agrilinks for this wonderful venue and for learning this information exchange. These are really exciting. I saw that lots of people in the chat box are newbies to these Agrilinks webinars and they're

really great venues, so thank you very much. I'm really excited to be here today to talk about the INGENAES program and to sit and introduce the speakers. It's got a great program. Let me look through a couple of slides here.

I'm gonna clip past these and then I'll come back. INGENAES is an acronym, a great acronym that University of Illinois came up with: Integrating Gender and Nutrition within Agricultural Extension Services, and several years ago at the Bureau for Food Security we recognized that there were many barriers and challenges faced by women farmers who often are left out of programs or activities that focus largely on production or cash crops within the value system, and we felt that there was a need for us to dig deeper in our projects as to how gender and nutrition could be better integrated into our work overall.

One of the things we recognized is that extension systems are an important vehicle to do that since extension and agricultural advisory services are a vehicle by which farmers learn about new techniques, they learn about new seeds, they learn about varieties, they learn farming demonstrations and all sorts of other topics including climate change and other things. To us it seems that this really interesting vehicle to learn about how we might address the barriers and constraints faced by women farmers through extension services.

At that time the modernizing extension advisory services some of you might be familiar with, the MEAS program, was nearing its completion in its last year, and we saw an opportunity to extend that work in a very specific and targeted way to address how we use extension and promote – we thought it was an opportunity to look for ways to use extension as one vehicle to provide and promote both nutrition information as well as doing more, better integration of gender.

So we know that the problem for women farmers, there are many problems for women farmers in terms of access to agricultural inputs, access to credit programs, access to financial services, and many, many other barriers, thus making it really hard for female farmers to be as productive as male farmers, and it matters to USAID because one of the key components of our new global food security strategy and even the old strategy that we worked with is that our work is gonna result in well-nourished populations especially men and women, especially women and children, and then it also will lead to increased gender equality and female empowerment.

So we're really focusing in the work we do on female empowerment and then also the nutrition side. We also seek to increase youth empowerment and livelihood. So INGENAES actually helps us to reach each of these results through its targeted work in Feed the Future countries in Africa, Asia, and Latin America. INGENAES really is about building capacity of institutions and individuals to address the needs of women in agriculture and recognizing that the specific barriers faced by women and using those barriers as a guide to develop tools, to do research, to create activities that are gonna help extension services directly tackle and reduce those barriers.

INGENAES also helps work on the policy level, which we really appreciate because it's a whole different level, so it's working on the policy level, it's working with institutional curriculums and institutions, as well as field level training for local service providers, creates strong communities of practice and that's also a key goal to support extension providers. So today you're gonna hear how INGENAES is doing just those things. You'll learn about the activities and tools that are helping to change how extension providers see their roles and jobs. Speakers for today's webinar are Andrea Bohn and Edye Kuyper.

I'm gonna tell you a little bit about them. I'm gonna go to their bios, which you can actually look at on the – I'm not gonna read the whole thing, but you can look at them and get more information about them, and I think some of you, it sounds like many of you know them already, but Andrea is the associate director of INGENAES. She's based at the University of Illinois. She has a long background working with agricultural services across the globe and has previously managed the MAES program. She leads INGENAES program activities in Bangladesh and is kind of the lead on the entire project, so we're very grateful to Andrea for her work.

Edye Kuyper is at the University of California Davis. She provides nutrition leadership to the entire INGENAES program, which is really exciting for us. She brings years of experience working on nutrition and agriculture and smooth security issues – U.S. and abroad. Edye supports INGENAES nutrition activities in Asia, Africa, and Latin America, and I will now turn the presentation over to Andrea. Thanks so much.

Andrea Bohn:

Yeah, and thank you, Jeannie for that introduction. Welcome to this presentation this morning. I just have to reiterate it's so exciting to see familiar names and also some new names here. So I need to advance to the next slide. Hold on. There we go. So just to give you a high level overview of what we will be talking about, first of all we've sort of learned it's really important at the beginning of a session to make sure everybody is sort of on the same page what we actually mean by agricultural extension. We'll also talk at a very high level about what extension's contribution to gender equity and nutrition may be.

We are currently working in ten countries, not all of them equally intensely, but we will share observations from two of those countries with you so that it provides sort of a reality check of why we're even addressing the issues that we're talking about today. Then in the last part of the presentation we will be presenting to you two specific things that INGENAES has developed and some of which is already being used quite successfully in several of the countries that we're active in, and I'm really looking forward to our dialogue session at the end because we're really hoping to get lots of feedback from the audience today.

So here's some things you should know about agricultural extension. We like to use the term "pluralistic" and by that we mean that there's many different

types of organizations that are providing extension type services. You know, they may not actually be using that word "extension", but I look at them and say yeah, you definitely are in the business of providing extension services. A lot of you will think just of the public sector, the Ministries of Agriculture, the Ministries of Livestock and Fisheries providing extension services to farmers, but nowadays it's really a very important domain for non-governmental organizations and civil society.

The private sector plays a fairly big role. It could be in a certain commodity sector like cocoa, a lot of the cash crops of cocoa and cotton. Sometimes it's linked to the sales of products used by farmers or the contracted purchase of products. There's also models of fee for service. Farmers actually are willing and able to pay for advisory services in specific contexts and for particular needs. Many of you know that in the United States universities really play a very important role in providing extension services, and in many places research is directly involved with working with farmers, extending knowledge to farmers, which brings me to the next thing you really need to understand about extension.

For a lot of people they equate extension with technology transfer, knowledge sharing, bringing information to farmers, but that's just one paradigm. Another really is to develop capacity in much more comprehensive fashion. I would count farmer fields goes into that. It isn't just about teaching farmers something very particular but really educating them and enabling them to solve problems and continue learning by tapping into many resources and learning from each other.

There's also this notion of extension and advisory services where the term "advice" really emphasizes that this is in response to a particular question or need that a farmer or farmer group or organization may be asking, a problem that they need solved, and they turn to agricultural advisors to help fix the problem. And then there's the whole domain of the limitation extension, which is too complicated to explain in the context of this webinar, but it's a lot more about being a catalyst in the system, helping farmers and other actors in the food system be more effective, tap into their own strengths and resources.

What we see though is a lot of what happens in extension is extremely project dependent, and these are mostly international NGOs, developing intriguing innovations in terms of methods and approaches, how they help farmers overcome difficulties and reach their potential. Some really exciting things happening there, but it's very limited to the whole project timeframe and funding base, and so often they're not really implemented at scale nor sustained over an extended period of time. Most unfortunately the skills developed by organizations and staff in this project aren't necessarily made accessible to other actors after the project has ended.

The public sector is often critiqued as being understaffed, under-resourced, male dominated, aging, big issues with governance, and ultimately they're expected to do too much with too few resources and too little support. So

there may be some in this audience that don't have a very high opinion of extensions, but it may not be the function of extension as such but the way it is unfortunately implemented in many contexts. But our expectations of extension are really high. For one, it's no longer just about production and that's a good thing.

For many years, for decades even, the focus was very much on staple crops and cash crops, but nowadays it's clear that farmers need support in developing cultural businesses, fisheries, livestock, and it isn't just about increasing production but the whole thing is only going to work if farmers and other members of the communities are better off when the business is actually profitable. They need farm management skills. We often talked about how advisory services need to be market-oriented, and most recently the term "entrepreneurship" has entered the dialogue.

These are really good things for extension to be involved in, but you see the list is very long. Now add to that the need to assist farmers on better resource management, soil fertility, soil health, adapting to climate change, reducing losses after harvesting, adding value to the raw materials that they've harvested. Wow, the list is really long. Now we're adding another one: nutrition. So the expectation that these many diverse players in the pluralistic system who use different approaches now also help move the needle on nutrition improvements.

The other thing extension needs to become, and this again pertains to all types of actors, they need to be more powerful in the sectors, and there's various things that need to happen for extension to be effective, but a major element of that is to be gender equitable. Gender equity to me in a sense is very much reflections of being an organization that is demand-driven and very client-oriented. We know this very well from the products and services that you purchase in businesses you're familiar with. If they don't understand their clients they can't be successful, and for too long women have been overlooked or their role is misunderstood, and so you can't provide services to all farmers if you don't understand that they're actually just a subset of clients with very different needs, constraints, and opportunities.

So we're gonna focus on nutrition today and these are exciting times. We're right at the beginning of the United Nations decade of nutrition. The global community is really serious about it and it's also reflected in several of the sustainable development goals. There's the fabulous nutrition initiative, which is really very successful in a number of countries, and just from the fact that USAID has set up a multi-sectoral nutrition strategy for the next ten years shows you that there's a real commitment in understanding that it's going to take playing together, it's going to need multiple actors to be successful in this area.

It will cost money, but the signal that this is sending also to lots of organizations in the agricultural space is that, wow, there is money, so there's an opportunity for organizations including those that are in the extension

domain to say we wanna get on this bandwagon, and we dare say, yes, extension has a very significant role to play and we want them to be on the bandwagon. But it's also a question of how to position themselves if this is a domain that they haven't been very active in.

So I like to use this image of the orchestra to purvey this notion that this is a potentially beautiful concert that will be played with many different actors and eventually has taken a seat down there in the violin section, and the question now becomes how can agricultural extension service providers, and again remember we're talking about a very diverse bunch of organizations and people here, what tune do they need to play? What do they need to practice? When do they jump in in this performance to do their part? So definitely an environment has to be such that extension can play its part, but we're not going to talk about that today.

Today we want to present you with some ideas on how to get started on strengthening the institutional capacity of an organization that is getting on the bandwagon and some introductory steps to build individual capacity as well as point out to you some other resources to tap into. With that, I would actually like to hand over to Edye, so Edye, here you go.

Edye Kuyper:

Thank you, Andrea. I'm going to provide a broad-brushed overview of how extension can support gender equity and improve nutrition. I'll share some ways in which extension can play its own instrument and find its voice as the diagram of the extension in the orchestra conveys. The principles on this slide are further described in work that's available on our webpage. Some of the items listed on the slide are not strictly principles but might be better described as actions that ag extension can undertake. I'll highlight just a few of them.

In order to equip all extension officers to address men and women farmers equitably, we've developed a competency framework that we'll come back to later which lists the gender and nutrition related skills, attitudes, and behaviors that extension staff ought to embody. Gender analysis isn't specifically listed here, but it is a cross-cutting skill that enables one to assess how the relations between men and women in a given setting impact their access to resources, time limitations, mobility constraints, and other aspects related to the job at hand. At a bare minimum we'd like to encourage projects to collect sex disaggregated data related to the provision of their extension services which will help lay the foundation for better understanding how we're doing as an extension community, where improvements can be made and how we can measure progress in our efforts to provide inclusive extension.

Moving on to the nutrition sensitive extension principles, similar to the listed gender equitable principles, these principles need to be connected to specific context appropriate actions that address local barriers to nutrition. The list isn't unlike the guiding principles for linking agriculture and nutrition, which the agriculture and nutrition community of practice has developed and FAO has been very vital in promoting, but they are somewhat refocused to better

accommodate and reflect the domain of agricultural extension and production agriculture which is its focus.

We also touch on topics that impact the health of farming households and thus their nutritional status. They might seem ancillary to nutrition, but actually they're quite vital. Those include the very last bullet there of water sanitation and hygiene wash as it's impacted by agriculture, and climate smart or conservation ag for the benefits that it provides to laborers in terms of fewer chemical inputs and improved water supplies, fewer contaminants, among other benefits.

INGENAES has developed materials to meet the training needs of individuals and institutions that are engaged in agricultural extension, and that would be the primary focus of our webinar today. The products that we'll focus on in the context of this webinar include a discussion paper which is available at the resources link or will be available once that's present in our webinar platform, the competency framework, and the institutional review and planning framework. Now I'd like to step back and provide some of the background for why our organization, why our INGENAES project has invested in capacity development.

In addition to developing thought pieces and training materials we as a project are engaged in activities in ten countries as Andrea mentioned. Those include Honduras, Bangladesh, Zambia, Nepal, Tajikistan, Sierra Leone, Uganda, Malawi, and we have plans to enter Liberia and Guinea in the fiscal year 2017. These country-specific activities are demand driven. We enter a country at the invitation of a mission and we engage in-country partners to identify areas of shared interest where we can work to test context specific solutions to better integration of gender nutrition and extension.

One of our intervention countries is Honduras, and in the country of Honduras there is no government entity responsible for extension, so training and extension content are determined by internal strategy or external motivation, which is often donor-driven. A pilot survey was conducted by our colleague Dr. Juan Andrade at the University of Illinois, and he and his research team found in the area around Santa Rosa De Copon and the dry corridor of rural Honduras that most respondents had actually very low nutrition knowledge but much higher understanding of appropriate wash practices.

They suggest that this could partly be because the government is active in extension and so the coordination and nutrition information is not well-disseminated whereas wash messages are conveyed by the health sector. The project is working to fill this void and promote nutrition and gender content that's better harmonized with existing evidence and national and international guidelines, and Dr. Andrade is on the line I believe and will be available to answer questions or provide comments related to his work in Honduras.

Moving on to Zambia, which is the country in which I've been most active in our country level activities, the situation is quite different than that of Zambia, but it's not without its own challenges. The Ministry of Ag employs 1,700 front line extension workers and that does not include many vacant positions, so there's actually quite a large system of front line extension workers in addition to district level supervisors and specialists. That's complimented by pluralistic providers from NGO and private sectors, yet despite these services to farmers and nearly a decade of impressive economic growth and strong ag productivity, the rates of child stunting and food insecurity in Zambia are among the highest in the world.

This is at least partly due to an overemphasis on the country's staple crop of maize both in production and in the consumption and the diets of Zambians. To address this, there is work underway to create stronger national guidance in the form of food-based dietary guidelines that can serve as a policy tool for agriculture as well as nutrition and health information sharing and there's also efforts to motivate organizations to set goals that include gender equity and nutrition.

In addition to the points listed on this slide related to institutional capacity development, many organizations lack the commitment to integrate nutrition and gender in their programming. It might be seen as something that's coming at them from above, again somewhat donor-driven or from an external motivating factor. This will likely lead to less effective integration and if or when funding for nutrition and gender integration run out, it will not be a continued part of the programming they provide. So to address this, we've stepped back with our partners in these various countries and worked to better understand what role extension can play in integrating gender and nutrition instead of it being one more thing piled on the backs of an overstretched, overburdened staff.

We have worked to position gender nutrition integration as a catalyst for realizing organizational mission and outcomes. The way that we've done that is multifaceted, but the aspect that I'll describe today is our institutional review and planning framework, and we agree that that's a mouthful and perhaps we should try to select a more easy to pronounce word with a better acronym, but our IRPF will be the focus of much of our presentation today. This slide is based on a postcard we've developed to promote the IRPF, and the picture hopefully will help you envision how the workshop is intended to be conducted.

The priority audience is organizational management, the individuals who are responsible for setting the institutional strategy, for supervising staff, and who are accountable to donors and other senior staff within their chain of command. The workshop is envisioned to take time, the management takes time to revisit their organizational mission, consider how intentional focus on nutrition and gender can serve as a catalyst towards achieving their mission, and then identifying commit to concrete actions that will help them get there.

In terms of the nutrition integration, this is a longer workshop and so I'm just gonna highlight a couple aspects of it to give you an idea of how we build on the strengths of extension and show that further emphasis and more intentional programming in these areas will only add to their organizational objectives instead of being something that's over-burdensome. So we've worked to integrate nutrition in a way that connects it to the four principles of food security since Ag extension is fundamentally committed to improving food security.

These four pillars include availability, access, utilization, and stability, yet historically extension prioritizes availability and access. So we walk participants through a process of considering what they can do to also improve utilization and stability. To demonstrate how we work to build the motivation, develop motivation amongst our participants to take action, I'm gonna ask Andrea to come back on the line and we'll do a quick role-play that will hopefully help simulate some of the interactive parts of this training. Andrea, are you there?

Andrea Bohn: I am, yes.

Edye Kyuper: Great. So Andrea, I'd like to ask you to consider what you ate yesterday. What was the first thing that you ate or drank in the morning?

Andrea Bohn: Well, I'm a coffee addict, so I had to have my cup of coffee, and sometimes I'll go to bed at night and I'll really look forward to having that cup of coffee the next morning. It's really important to me. The other thing that's really important to me, I'm afraid to say that my breakfast patterns are all very similar so it's not hard for me to remember. Ideally a nice chunk of baguette and I'll cut it open in the middle and in one half I'll put something savory, cheese or salami or some cured meat.

I'm German in case anybody didn't know that, and on the other half I like to have something sweet, some honey, some jam, some marmalade, and that's my breakfast. I know I should change a few things, maybe starting off with using whole wheat bread rather than white flour bread. Have more protein. Add some fruits. It can't be that hard to also add a glass of orange juice, right? But I just find it really, really hard to make those changes.

Edye Kyuper: Thank you, Andrea. Andrea is obviously familiar with – she's been prepped for this, so she's provided a little bit more background than you might expect from another participant that would respond to that question, but she's not only provided an answer that covers the basics of what she ate yesterday, but she's also expanded into how what she eats is connected into emotions and preferences and also her knowledge of what constitutes a healthy diet, and some discomfort with the degree to which her food choices don't necessarily reflect the ideal healthy eating patterns that are recommended, although I'm sure she does a good job throughout the day and we'll not pass any judgment, Andrea.

So this is really just to demonstrate how one objective of the IRPF is to motivate institutions to commit to this integration, and in order to seize the day and ensure that they get on the bandwagon and not miss this opportunity that could just be a passing fad of focus on gender and nutrition. We hope to tap into that emotional component that food and gender offer.

These are two aspects of life that we all deal with in our daily lives and that we can't avoid, so becoming more conscious of how they affect us as individuals and then considering how that impacts the work that we do, the work that the participants in these workshops do. We know that the emotional connection is what can motivate commitment. Making it personal will really bring that home.

So where can you access this? At the resources button, which again will be available I think later in the presentation, and we'd very much like to ask you to access technical assistance from myself or any other member of the INGENAES team that you might have a relationship with, and we are also seeking feedback on this. It's in its beta form right now. It's not finalized, and we hope to continue to integrate experience from those that test these training materials into what will become our final version.

One final product that I'd like to describe today is our competency framework. Generally speaking, a competency framework articulates what enables an individual to do his or her job more effectively. In many other industries identify required competencies. This diagram was actually developed by the Society of Actuaries, not too similar to extension staff, yet the areas of focus have a lot in common with the domains in which extension staff operate. So this next slide here demonstrates one page of the nutrition related competencies that we've developed. I'm gonna walk you through how this operates.

The framework specifies gender and nutrition related skills, attitudes, and behaviors that extension staff require in order to facilitate change. It's an integral part of the IRPF workshop and actually forms the basis for the actions that institutions commit to in the final activities of the workshop. The competency framework provides a menu of options for organizations with evolving levels of engagement or levels of complexity, so an organization can commit to a more basic competency at the outset and then later graduate to a more complex competency as time and training and commitment to gender and nutrition integration further develop.

We developed this competency framework by building backwards and starting with the impact column instead of considering first a basic what they need to know. We wanted to consider the impact. We wanted to see at the level of the farmers, the rural households that extension is engaging, and then how we would get there. So it's intended to be a training design tool with the learning column focusing on what exactly will be done in a training session, and then the transfer column focusing on actions that field level staff will take in order to transfer those skills to the intended clients, beneficiaries, farmers, etc.

The training session attendees can plan for and commit to the transfer or integration actions during the workshop or training, but the transfer actually takes place in the field after the training. We want to make sure that trainings offer an opportunity for participants to practice the learning. The impact column can aid organizations in determining the actual outcomes that could result from the given competency and perhaps monitoring and evaluating based on that impact column. Now I will pass the mic back to Andrea.

Andrea Bohn:

Yeah. Thank you so very much, Edye. The competency framework goes into great detail and it's a little bit like a menu that after you've gone through the institutional review and planning process that you can identify what is best suited to the mission mandate and resources of your organization. I mentioned early on that there are many, many different types of organizations in this extension space, and a lot of them really haven't thought about what role they could or should play in terms of nutrition, and a lot of them are really struggling with this gender thing.

It's so abstract and such language. They realize that their project funded that they have to have a gender advisor on board, and some of them are very good. Mind you, I don't want to dismiss that, but to be very honest for a lot of organizations you need to start at a very simple level. So we've done this workshop with over 150 participants in six different countries now and I'm really pleased with the outcomes that we observe in terms of participant skill level, confidence level, and ability to take what they learned in this workshop and implement it in the communities that they're working with.

We also called this sort of the no Power Point workshop. Really there's no Power Point used except maybe to remind people where the restrooms are. It's all about facilitating active learning, learning by doing. We try to make it practical and relevant. I've had the privilege of sitting in on this workshop as it was conducted in Bangladesh in March this year by Jan Henderson and _____ from our implementing partner there in Bangladesh, and it's just so amazing to see this eye-opening experience that participants have. What they learn is something that can make a difference kind I said the next time they go back to work, and it's also an entry point on which to build.

There's something else that we noticed from the feedback we get from the participants. They're energized, they're motivated, they understand why the things we talked about they talked about with each other during these workshops is actually really relevant for being successful, effective, for being appreciated by the clients that they work with, and so they want to know more. I mean this is literally just introduction and I will turn to how to build on that as we come towards the close of this presentation, but let me tell you first that the workshop is essentially structured around seven different activities, and at the end of the workshop the participants each get this deck of two-pagers, which are basically a reminder of how to structure this activity.

It reminds them what time to schedule, what kind of material to bring along, and introduction of what this is about, the objectives, and the step-by-step things to do. This can be modified, and in fact each time that we've done this training and we've done it in different cultural contexts and with different group setups you have to modify it or you have the opportunity to modify it. So they're very adaptable. They follow a basic outline and this active learning model, but we also talked to the participants about ideas how they can apply it in specific organizations that they're working in and with the clients that they're working in.

There are lots of manuals out there. What's very different about these activity sheets is, and it builds on a tradition that's very common in corporate extension in the United States. It's these one- to two-page handouts that try in a very appropriate language to put together the key information you need to know and then what actions to take as a result of knowing this information. So again, I said there are seven activity sheets. I want to mention to in particular. One is called "Who Eats What?"

Here we have an exercise where we're asking the participants to think about – and again I don't want to go into too much detail of how we actually do this. It's easy for you to read up on this. You end up setting the table with a plate for father, the father-in-law, the mother-in-law perhaps, the son, the daughters, the young children, the older children, the mother in the family, and how the food that is available may be divided up. In all the places where we've done it there were really big discrepancies as to who gets what, and the participants are not necessarily showing how they do in their household but what they think is quite typical of the communities that they work with. Complimenting that then is a longer exercise that talks about what should go on the plate.

So first, what do we actually observe, and then sort of taking quite a long time to talk about what might be the ideal. We use tools such as food plates and others, but we have the participants delve into their own knowledge base and in small groups start drawing these plates or pyramids that they think are ideal. It's very pleasing to see that a lot of them are quite knowledgeable and put together a pretty good plate, but you also see that there's real gaps and that there's things that are misunderstood, and they teach each other what it should be.

Indra, you had asked a question early on when Edye did a role-play with me that maybe she should've also asked about how much my breakfast cost, and indeed this is a really important point and why you have to be so mindful of the context in which you are talking about nutrition needs and what kind of changes may be necessary and even possible. So if you had a conversation with me, the costs may not be a constraining factor; it's more so bad habits. I know the knowledge of what I should do, but it's more how can I structure my environment in such a way that I do better with food choices for myself and cost is not the limiting factor?

But in reality of the clients and even the staff that we work with, the cost of food is a real big determinant in what they feel can and cannot be done. So this active exercise on what should go on the plate there is a big discussion section around this very issue, and in fact participants are asked to do a meal planning for a family with the assumption of a very, very limited budget.

This has often been one of the eye-opening experiences for them as well because they haven't really put themselves into the shoes of their clients in what is doable and not doable looking at constraints such as budgets and seasonal availability, the risk they're exposed to in terms of flooding or ____ draft. So these things are actually quite serious matters, and when we've done these exercises with people who are working with organizations that are pretty savvy in this domain and they themselves are very experienced in working with marginalized communities it gets pretty heartbreaking, but you also hear good ideas. We very much believe in the power of learning from each other and that's how these are designed.

So these are the introductory, this introductory package, and we do believe it's a good starting point for an organization that knows it wants to get on the bandwagon and is using something like institutional review and planning framework to determine what exactly their goal can be, whether they have the capacity in management and the supervisory teams and the field teams to be able to be effective if you use the capacity framework perhaps to identify which are the particular areas of strength and what makes sense in their context. So Jeannie has a whole stack of more one- to two-page tips, facts, and activity sheets, which you're very welcome to download from the website that is provided there, but I'd like to say we stand on the shoulders of giants, and I'm very pleased to give a lot of credit to ____ International and their nurturing connections handbook.

A lot of ideas that are embedded in the seven introductory activities were actually inspired by practices we took from that handbook. I absolutely love the healthy harvest handbook. This is the one that was produced in Zimbabwe. It's in the second edition. It's just so extremely well done. Some organizations even the public sector have come forth and produced very specific handbooks for extension staff working in the field.

Now I'm not here to post judgment on whether this is good or bad or something in-between. Ultimately it depends on how well these are also implemented. While there are some standard key messages, how to interpret that in the context of a specific locale, a specific this is where the real challenge lies for an organization to be effective. It's great it's out there, and we are actually working in several countries to have a nutrition component built into the agricultural diaries for field staff.

Another one I want to point out is farm materials from Bangladesh. So you see the image there, a manual on food-based nutrition. We are working with an organization in Bangladesh that is not funded by USAID, that is not part of that big network of very effective organizations, but they have gotten on that

nutrition bandwagon and they realize that their staff need to sort of go beyond the basic topics that we touch base in something like the introductory workshops.

We are actually using the farm material that is available in English and in Bengali with the staff of that particular organization. So what we're demonstrating is that there's not necessarily the need to reinvent the wheel. There are fantastic resources out there, and whether they're fantastic depends on how suitable they are for the needs that you have or the organization that you're supporting. There's lots of other resources like FSN Network and all the material that the TOPS project has put together.

So we see ourselves as standing on the shoulders of giants and being part of a large community in the nutrition and agriculture space that is coming up with really good material to draw on and we definitely don't think we're the only ones in the game, but we like to credit ourselves with paying attention in particular to extension and for working with organizations where they're just now getting on the bandwagon, and our effort has been to make things accessible. We encourage use of materials that we have created. We try to link experts with others so that we have a more effective network system of actors if you wish to move the needle. With that, I would say we've come to the close and I thank you for your attention so far. I'm not going to read the top takeaways.

This is sort of our interpretation of what we hope the top takeaways are, but I encourage you to review the Power Point stick with others who've not had the chance to be on this presentation, and I do hope there were several takeaways for each and every one of you. So at this point I'd like to hand over to Julie and our facilitator and I'm hoping to be able to answer questions. I think a lot of questions have been posted. We will work through those, but also we're hoping to hear from you or rather read from you what your experience has been with institutional and individual capacity development.

[End of Audio]