

Case Study 3B.

Mozambique — Establishing a nutrition task team within UNICEF

Context

The Mozambique Council of Ministers adopted a Multisectoral Action Plan for the Reduction of Chronic Undernutrition (PAMRDC). It has seven strategic objectives, three of which relate directly to the first 1,000 days of life in which stunting largely develops. Research has shown that unless nutrition interventions are implemented at a large scale, in a coordinated multi-sectoral manner and with the necessary resources and institutional structures for sustainability, they will not be able to significantly affect national rates of malnutrition. In recognition of this, UNICEF Mozambique wanted to strengthen coordination between sectors in order to make the greatest impact on the child's nutritional state. Key sections within the Country Office, including Health, Nutrition, WASH and Communication for Development (C4D), can make a greater, synergistic impact if nutrition actions are coordinated across internal structures. Therefore the UNICEF team conceived the internal UNICEF Nutrition Working Group (Convergence Team).

Activities and channels

The overall aim of the Nutrition Working Group is to lead programmatic convergence planning and priorities at the central and provincial levels, in support of the Country Office's programme convergence strategy.

Specific objectives:

- Ensure a well-designed, coordinated, multi-sectoral response to nutrition needs
- Monitor the implementation of the UNICEF actions and serve as a platform for discussion of lessons learned, reflection moments and response strategy debate
- Mobilize (and implement) funding for multi-sectoral nutrition responses
- Provide technical knowledge on national and sectoral policies, strategies, plans and activities.
- Support provincial teams in Tete and Zambézia in the relevant area of convergence (Nutrition)

The Nutrition Working Group comprises staff members from Health and Nutrition, Social Policy, WASH and Communication, Advocacy, Participation and Partnership (CAPP). The meetings are co-chaired by the Chiefs of the Health and Nutrition and WASH sections. Meetings are held on a monthly basis and ad hoc meetings are convened when necessary. In addition, the group has committed to visit the focus provinces of Tete and Zambézia twice a year. Members are expected to participate in the meetings and report back on proceedings to their respective sections. The group develops an action plan with clearly

assigned responsibilities, based on the annual work plans. The task team reports regularly to the country office management team.

Results

This initiative is relatively new, having been conceived in April 2016 in order to support actions for the Southern Africa emergency. However, the team already feels there is more cohesion between the two sections as a result. The presence of a clear and mandated forum to discuss, debate and analyze key issues will hopefully yield positive results for synergy.

Lessons learned

It is likely too soon to extract much in the way of lessons. However, it has been noted that the information discussed within the task team is not yet trickling effectively through the sections. The internal section-wide dissemination of key information needs to be refined.