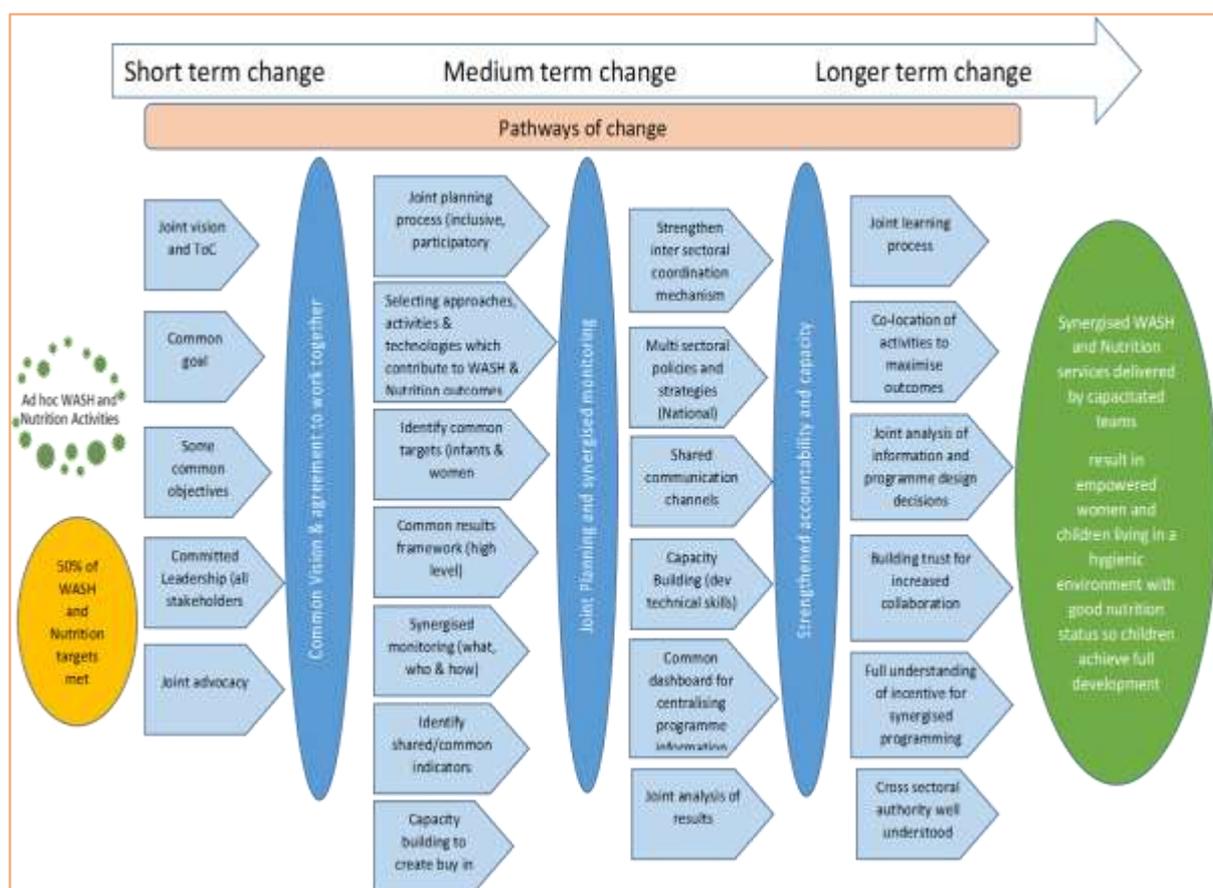


## Additional Resource Intro B

# NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION OF THEORY OF CHANGE FOR SYNERGIZED WASH AND NUTRITION PROGRAMMING

The narrative explains the steps along the pathway from ad hoc, sector-specific WASH and Nutrition programming to achieving our vision for a more synergized program approach. The theory of change anticipates a number of steps between three milestones along the pathway. The steps between the milestones relate to the four core components of synergized programming:

- Leadership, accountability and funding
- People and capacity
- Planning, tracking results and the learning feedback loop
- Action and behavior



## Vision

**Synergized WASH and Nutrition programs delivered by capacitated teams result in empowered women and children living in a hygienic environment with good nutrition status so that children achieve full development potential.**

The vision makes the assumption that by achieving greater synergy between WASH and Nutrition programming we will have a greater impact on the lives of women and children. This causal link has not yet been proved scientifically but there is considerable plausible evidence to suggest that the assumption is valid.

### Milestone 1 - Common vision and agreement to work together

The theory of change starts from the position that current programming is 'siloed' with the sector teams working independently to deliver results in their specific sectors. In Nutrition, these sector-specific actions are having only limited success due to the contribution of other causal factors to the stunting and undernutrition of infants and children under five and the need for nutrition-sensitive actions in other sectors. In WASH there are missed opportunities to achieve some of the behavior change necessary to reduce diarrhea and improve the welfare of women.

The critical starting points for greater synergy and for reaching the first milestone include

- Developing a joint vision and a theory of change – Key stakeholders in both sectors have to agree on why they are working together and what they aim to achieve by doing so (vision). This is often related to the welfare and optimum development of children under five. They can then develop a theory of change for their synergized program which helps to define the processes that are needed to achieve greater synergy as well as the common program components. A theory of change workshop is a good way for stakeholders to come to a common understanding, vision and change process. Resources for facilitating a theory of change workshop are included in the EAPRO toolkit.
- Defining a common goal or some common objectives – It is useful to define a common goal or objectives which can be included in both WASH and Nutrition program plans to begin changing the way in which activities are implemented and to focus efforts on the measurement of joint achievements.
- Committed leadership (all stakeholders) – Leadership at all levels needs to be on board and committed to the change process for WASH and Nutrition actors to move towards more synergized programming. This may require advocacy and training and identifying key individuals to become champions.
- Joint advocacy – Reluctance to change is often related to lack of exposure to the evidence or poor understanding of the issues. Joint advocacy by selected managers in both sectors to build support for a different approach can help generate resources and support for synergized programming.

### Milestone 2 - Joint planning and synergized monitoring

Having reached a common vision and agreed to work together, the next steps are working towards joint planning and more synergized monitoring. Such steps include

- A joint planning process (inclusive and participatory) – Joint planning requires commitment to including other sectors in a planning process but also being prepared to compromise to accommodate other planning parameters. Planning together helps one sector to understand

the other sector's parameters and to identify areas where synergies can be achieved, for example, finding that there is demand for both sector services in schools.

- Selecting approaches, activities and technologies which contribute to both WASH and Nutrition outcomes – Lessons learnt from pilot projects have demonstrated that some simple WASH technologies (e.g., tippy taps) and approaches (e.g., CLTS, social marketing of household water treatment products) are easy to integrate into Nutrition programs. There are many other opportunities for identifying 'low-hanging fruit' or activities which can easily be joined up as a first step to better synergy. Ongoing research is also helping to identify which specific WASH interventions are likely to have a bigger impact on Nutrition outcomes.
- Identify common targets (e.g., infants and women) – Decision makers can examine the current evidence base to identify which target group should be targeted by WASH and Nutrition teams to achieve maximum results. One suggestion is to focus activities on the first 1,000 days of a child's life, including the protection of the health and welfare of the pregnant woman.
- Develop a common results framework at national level to guide the implementation of policies and strategies arising out of such initiatives as SUN and Sanitation and Water for All (SWA). In some cases, inclusion of a key, shared indicator in an existing national plan could be a good first step (e.g., including stunting as a priority indicator in national development plans, or sanitation targets in a Nutrition action plan).
- Finding opportunities for synergized monitoring - Stakeholders from both sectors can agree on what to monitor, whom will monitor it and how to use existing monitoring systems to do so. It should not be necessary to burden field staff with a separate monitoring system for synergized programming.
- Building capacity to create buy-in – The next step, after creating awareness of the value of more synergized programming, is to build the capacity of key individuals to understand the imperative and develop the resources and authority to change the programming approach.

### Milestone 3 – Strengthened accountability and capacity

In order to reach the next milestone there is a need to consolidate some of the skills, resources, processes and authority for synergized programming. Steps along this pathway include

- Strengthening inter-sectoral coordination mechanisms – This can be done through creating dedicated joint coordination forums but success is more likely if mechanisms can be built on to existing, well-functioning coordination systems.
- Developing multi-sectoral policies and strategies at national level – This is often a key component of initiatives such as SUN but it is a logical next step after securing commitment from key leaders and creating demand for better synergy from more exposed sector professionals.
- Finding opportunities for shared communication channels – Regular communication between WASH and Nutrition teams and good coordination is critical for synergized programming. Shared communication channels, such as social media platforms, can help to promote regular contact and facilitate learning.

- Enhancing capacity building – Following on from a basic knowledge of each other's sectors, the next step is for WASH and Nutrition professionals to develop further technical skills which will help them to facilitate synergized programming.
- Developing a common dashboard for centralizing program information – Having synergized monitoring systems, it is important to develop a platform for analyzing and presenting information to make it easy for decision makers to jointly review and strengthen programs.
- This can include a joint analysis of results at key points in a program cycle. Reviewing multi-sectoral results can help to identify where critical gaps, for example, in nutrition-sensitive programming, are constraining achievement of common objectives.

### End Point – Synergized WASH and Nutrition programming

To fully achieve synergized WASH and Nutrition programming, a number of critical barriers must be overcome. Steps to take to make these final changes include

- Creating a joint learning process which allows stakeholders to document and share best practice, carry out regular reviews of programming and use learning in the program cycle. The learning process should be participatory and inclusive.
- Joint analysis of information and joint program design decisions – Key WASH and Nutrition decision makers should be able to jointly analyze relevant information to agree on the design of future interventions and programs.
- This analysis can lead to decisions to co-locate selected activities to maximize outcomes. For example, WASH may decide to focus institutional and community activities on improving water and sanitation coverage around nutrition centers where high levels of malnutrition and stunting are regularly recorded.
- Building trust for increased collaboration – Only after working more closely for a period of time can professional teams build the trust necessary for full collaboration and synergy. Trust requires i) a common understanding of WASH and Nutrition pathways, and ii) a full understanding of the incentive for synergized programming.
- Create a clear understanding of cross-sectoral authority – Effective coordination and synergized programming requires all actors in both sectors to recognize the cross-sectoral authority of the leaders responsible for delivering the results. In some cases, the necessary authority will need to be conferred by a more senior leader