



# FOOD AID QUALITY REVIEW

## CONCEPT NOTE

### REFINE Research Uptake Strategy – Stakeholder Analysis

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#### INTRODUCTION

A stakeholder is an individual or group who can affect or is affected by the achievement of a project's objectives.<sup>1</sup> The stakeholders of the Research Engagement on Food Interventions for Nutritional Effectiveness (REFINE) project include: bi- and multi-lateral donor agencies, research organizations, industry players, and practitioners involved in the various aspects of nutrition interventions (detailed in Appendix I). Therefore, REFINE will not silo the stakeholders themselves into groups, but will instead distinguish them by the activities they engage in most relevant to REFINE's aims. REFINE will target and communicate with these groups based on their specific characteristics.

#### STAKEHOLDER ACTIVITIES

The four primary stakeholder activities related to REFINE's goals are research, policy-making, programming, and product development. The following sections will identify key players in each activity, determine their potential goals, challenges, and level of interest in the project, discern the ways in which REFINE can inform their work, and summarize REFINE's strategies for engagement.

##### I. Research

Research activities examine the effects of different programs or food aid products on the nutrition status of malnourished populations. Entities that typically perform or fund research activities include research institutions, academic institutions, non-governmental organizations, and private entities. This group likely holds the highest level of interest in the REFINE project, and is therefore REFINE's primary stakeholder target.

##### **What are the goals of research?**

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<sup>1</sup> Derived from the definition of stakeholder in R. Edward Freeman's Strategic Management: A Stakeholder Approach (1984)

Stakeholders involved in research activities are interested in conducting high-quality, methodologically sound, and replicable studies. Their goal is to publish significant research that provides evidence for improving both policy and practice, and to learn new ways of conducting research. They face the challenges of limited resources, exclusion from systematic reviews and meta-analyses, and disengagement from the needs and aims of policymakers and practitioners, which can limit uptake of their work.

#### **How is REFINE relevant to Research?**

REFINE, as a forum that collects relevant ongoing and published studies, can enable stakeholders who engage in research to refer to this information when deciding the themes, design, and methodology of their own studies. Having access to this information repository may facilitate communication and collaboration between stakeholders, positioning REFINE as a knowledge-sharing mechanism.

#### **How will REFINE engage with Research?**

REFINE will contact researchers conducting or overseeing relevant studies. REFINE will seek to ascertain information for its own tracking purposes, share details of similar ongoing studies, invite the researcher to visit [REFINEnutrition.com](http://REFINEnutrition.com), ask them to follow @REFINEnutrition, and give them the option to sign up for the REFINE Resource Update listserv. REFINE will also seek opportunities to interact with researchers at events, conferences, and meetings, informing them of REFINE and methods of communicating with REFINE. Finally, the annual landscape scan and research protocol documents will be distributed to researchers and can inform them of existing gaps and best practice for inclusion in systematic reviews and meta-analyses, which can facilitate their own research uptake.

## **II. Policy-making**

Policy-making activities include those that facilitate broad-based change to nutrition assistance programs or food aid products. Entities that typically perform or fund policy-making activities include individuals within U.S. government and international governments. This group likely has a moderate level of interest in REFINE, as it uses evidence to inform policy but must incorporate other factors into decision making.

#### **What are the goals of policy-making?**

Stakeholders who engage in policy-making activities influence international development and humanitarian goals and policies, as well as interventions to realize those goals. This group is constrained from using evidence and research by other factors, including budgets, policy priorities, and special interest groups.

#### **How is REFINE relevant to policy-making?**

These stakeholders may come to use REFINE's repository as a resource for best practices and lessons learned. By highlighting methodologically sound and rigorous studies, REFINE can offer a more solid evidence base for use in designing and influencing policy. Policymakers can also provide feedback to REFINE as to what evidence in their field is currently lacking, and how researchers can fill those gaps and provide more useful information.

#### **How will REFINE engage with policy-making?**

REFINE will focus attention on four efforts to engage with policy makers: offering updates at and support for the Interagency Harmonization Working Group meetings; providing information to researchers about research presentation opportunities at conferences with policymakers in the audience; coordinating a presentation at the 2018 International Congress on Nutrition; and executing an Evidence Summit at the conclusion of FAQR Phase III. The REFINE RA will consult with other FAQR team members for further avenues for exploration, particularly USAID partners to discern what research they currently follow and non-USAID partners to see which annual meetings and conferences they attend.

### III. Programming

Programming activities involve managing and implementing nutrition assistance programs. Entities that perform programming activities include non-governmental organizations, non-profit organizations, and community groups. This group likely has a moderate level of interest in the REFINE project.

#### **What are the goals of programming?**

Stakeholders who engage in programming aim to implement effective and cost-effective programs to address malnutrition, and conduct high-quality M&E and research. They face the challenges of resource constraints, donor demands, local government requirements, and institutionalized and possibly obstinate strategies.

#### **How is REFINE relevant to programming?**

These stakeholders can use REFINE's collection of ongoing studies to stay up to date on the field's intellectual currents, while referring to the library of materials to improve their strategies. By having access to more effective and cost-effective strategies, they can therefore be empowered to change program design and implementation to the extent possible given donor and local parameters. Programmers can also use the REFINE knowledge-sharing mechanism to communicate evidence gaps to researchers and policymakers via a low-risk, aggregated (and therefore more confidential) communication channel.

#### **How will REFINE engage with programming?**

REFINE will communicate with programmers by sharing the REFINE Resource Update, and any publications or reports produced by REFINE. It is especially important to engage with local and regional programmers to find out if information from the implementation level is lacking in the literature. REFINE will also reach out to NGOs through TOPS, the SPRING resource review, and the CORE Nutrition Working Group by providing quarterly resource reviews and organizing presentations as appropriate.

### IV. Product Development

Product development activities involve the manufacturing and production of "food aid" products. Entities that typically perform product development activities include industry manufacturers and suppliers. This group likely has a moderate to high level of interest in the REFINE project.

#### **What are the goals of product development?**

Stakeholders who engage in product development have the goal of offering high-quality, cost-effective, safe, and effective products, while maximizing profits. They face the challenges of institutionalized production, market demand, and lack of evidence as to improved product specifications.

**How is REFINE relevant to product development?**

Product developers can check REFINE’s repository to learn which product formulations are being tested, and refer to the library of materials to understand which products or formulations best suit their purposes.

**How will REFINE engage with product development?**

REFINE will communicate product-related research findings with product developers and suppliers. REFINE can also engage with these stakeholders to identify their needs and priorities for research going forward, and communicate this information to researchers through the annual landscape scan.

## **CONCLUSION**

REFINE will use the understanding of these stakeholder activities to guide its research uptake activities, detailed in Appendix II.

## APPENDIX I. POTENTIAL STAKEHOLDERS BY ACTIVITY

The following lists will be used to identify partners to follow on Twitter and relevant handles to use when citing ongoing or published studies; to sign the REFINE Gmail account up for relevant listservs and offer inclusion in our listserv; and to reach out to in the identification of relevant conferences and websites. Note that these lists are not exhaustive, nor will all organizations below be contacted.

### RESEARCH

- Research Institutes: International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI), International Centre for Diarrhoeal Disease Research, Bangladesh, Kenya Medical Research Institute, Nutricia Research Fundation, Eunice Kennedy Shriver National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (NICHD), Global Alliance for Improved Nutrition, Institut de Recherche en Sciences de la Sante, Burkina Faso, KEMRI-Wellcome Trust Collaborative Research Program, Institut de Recherche pour le Developpement, Cambodia, Wuqu' Kawoq, Maya Health Alliance, SEAMEO Regional Centre for Food and Nutrition, Reproductive and Child Health Alliance, Centre For International Health, Lawson Health Research Institute, St. John's Research Institute, Center for the Study of Social Change, University Hospital Inselspital, Berne, The Mathile Institute for the Advancement of Human Nutrition, Uni Research, Norway, etc.
- Academic Institutes: Washington University School of Medicine, Baylor College of Medicine University of California, Davis, University of California, Berkeley, London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine, Peking Union Medical College, University of Tampere, University of Malawi College of Medicine, Stanford University, Emory University, University Ghent, Jimma University, VLIR Institutional University Collaboration Programme, Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health, Cornell University, University of London, University of Nottingham, North-West University, South Africa, University of Colorado, Denver, University of San Carlos, Kinshasa School of Public Health, Jawaharlal Nehru Medical College, Aga Khan University, Washington University School of Medicine, University of Copenhagen, Denmark, University College London, Tribhuvan University, Nepal, University of Malawi, University of Maryland, University of Dublin, Trinity College, Liverpool School of Tropical Medicine, Makerere University, Universidad del Valle, Guatemala, Charite University, Berlin, Germany, University of Toronto, Queen Elizabeth Central Hospital, Blantyre, Malawi, Wageningen University, Indonesia University, Institut Pertanian Bogor, University Hospital, Basel, Switzerland, etc.
- Private Companies: Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, Innovations for Poverty Action, Nutrition Tiers Monde, Zvitambo, Wellcome Trust, DSM Ltd, Unilever R&D, RTI International, Nutriset, Terre des Hommes, The Hospital for Sick Children, Schlumberger Foundation - Faculty for the Future Programme, Nestle Foundation, Toddler Food Partners, Abbott Nutrition, PepsiCo Global R&D, Grand Challenges Canada, Vitalnext, Humanitas Global Development, etc.

## POLICY-MAKING

Preliminary stakeholder list:

- European Commission (ECHO), Department of Foreign Affairs, Trade and Development (DFATD), Food Assistance Convention (FAC), Transatlantic Dialogue on Food Assistance, International Committee on Nutrition (ICN), Committee on Global Food Security, the Global Food Security Cluster, Global Nutrition Cluster, the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), the UN World Food Programme's (WFP) World Trade Organization (WTO), the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations (ECOSOC), United States Agency for International Development (USAID), Department for International Development, United Kingdom, ACDI/VOCA, Save the Children, Helen Keller International, International Atomic Energy Agency, Nutrition Third World, Belgium, United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), Action Contra la Faim, Swiss National Science Foundation, Overseas Development Institute (ODI), Humanitarian Policy Group (HPG), Institute of Development Studies (IDS), the Feinstein International Center, Harvard University's Center for International Development and the Harvard Humanitarian Initiative, Columbia University's School of International and Public Affairs, Duke University's Center for International Development, Humanitarian Response Network of Canada, United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA), Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), World Bank, United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), etc.

## PROGRAMMING

Preliminary stakeholder list:

- Medecins Sans Frontieres, Africare, Save the Children, Project Concern International, Concern Worldwide, Office of U.S. Foreign Disaster Assistance (OFDA), Food for Peace, Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, William and Flora Hewlett Foundation, Google, Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF); Asian and African Development Banks, International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), International Federation of the Red Cross (IFRC), Oxfam, Mercy Corps, Scaling Up Nutrition (SUN), CARE International, PATH International, Pakistan Emergency Food Security Alliance (PEFSA), International Rescue Committee (IRC), Cash Learning Partnership (CaLP), Canadian Foodgrains Bank, etc.

## PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT

Preliminary stakeholder list:

- Edesia, Nutriset, Tabachnik, etc.

## APPENDIX II. SUMMARY OF STAKEHOLDER GROUPS

	Goals	Interest	Why	Influence	What to share	Mode
<b>Research</b>	To publish high-quality, methodologically sound research that provides evidence for improving both policy and practice; to learn new ways of conducting research	High	Can use ongoing and published studies to inform their own research questions and design; can use REFINE to enhance research uptake.	Medium	Information on ongoing studies and recent publications; similar work done by others; research protocol guidance document; annual landscape scan.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>REFINE website</li> <li>Resource Review</li> <li>Twitter</li> <li>Email</li> <li>Conferences</li> <li>Webinars</li> <li>Interagency meetings</li> </ul>
<b>Policy Making</b>	To influence international development and humanitarian goals and policies.	Medium	Uses evidence to inform policy but must incorporate other factors into decision making.	High	Information on ongoing studies and recent publications; policy briefs on relevant findings; annual landscape scan.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>REFINE website</li> <li>Resource Review</li> <li>Twitter</li> <li>Email</li> <li>Conferences</li> <li>Webinars</li> <li>Interagency meetings</li> </ul>
<b>Programming</b>	To implement effective and cost-effective programs to address malnutrition; to conduct high-quality M&E and research.	Medium	Implementation strategies may be impacted by research; must incorporate other factors into decision making;	Medium – high	Information on ongoing studies and recent publications; policy briefs on relevant findings; annual landscape scan.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>REFINE website</li> <li>Resource Review</li> <li>Twitter</li> <li>Email</li> <li>Conferences</li> <li>Webinars</li> <li>Interagency meetings</li> </ul>

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<b>Product Development</b>	To offer high-quality, cost-effective, safe, and effective products while maximizing profits.	Medium	Uses evidence to inform product specifications but must incorporate other factors into decision making.	Medium	Information on ongoing studies and recent publications; annual landscape scan.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• REFINE website</li> <li>• Resource Review</li> <li>• Twitter</li> <li>• Email</li> </ul>
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**STAKEHOLDER CHART & COMMUNICATION INDICATOR MATRIX:** This chart represents the different stakeholder groups, their interests, influence, goals, how they fit in with REFINE, what will be shared with them, the method of sharing, what outputs and outcomes will be monitored, and when they will be monitored.

Research	Target Groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Research Community</li> <li>Other NGOs and Networks</li> </ul>		
	Stakeholder Goals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Conduct and publish high-quality, methodologically sound, and replicable studies</li> <li>Learn new ways of conducting research</li> </ul>		
	Reason for Interest	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Fill evidence gaps</li> <li>Enable the involvement of others doing similar research</li> <li>Influence research uptake</li> </ul>		
	What to Share (mode)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Information on ongoing studies and recent publications (social media, newsletter, email, website, events/conferences, interagency meetings)</li> <li>Similar work being done by others (social media, newsletter, website, events/conferences, interagency meetings)</li> <li>Research protocol guidance document (email)</li> <li>Annual landscape scan (email, newsletter, website, social media)</li> </ul>		
	Indicator Concept		Indicator	Collection Frequency
Outputs	An up-to-date contact list of researchers is maintained	Numerator: # of ongoing study PIs REFINE has confirmed contact with Denominator: # of possible PIs to be in contact with	Every 6 months	
	Researchers are made aware of similar ongoing studies	Numerator: # of PIs sent an introductory email from REFINE Denominator: # of possible PIs to communicate this to	Every 6 months	
	Communication are maintained with researchers	Numerator: # of PIs who have engaged in 2-way communication in the previous 6 months Denominator: # of possible PIs to be in contact with	Every 6 months	
	A list of ongoing studies (and the details of these studies) is maintained	Total # of studies being tracked	Every 6 months	
	Information about REFINE is delivered to researchers at events, conferences, and meetings	Total # of meetings, events, and conferences at which REFINE provided information	Every 6 months	
	Researches are given attribution in @REFINEnutrition communication	Numerator: # of tweets attributing a specific researcher or their research organization Denominator: Total number of tweets with the mention of a specific study	Quarterly	

	<b>Outcomes</b>	Researchers seek out information from REFINE via information outlets	Total # of researchers requesting information about REFINE via email Total # of researchers who subscribe to @REFINEnutrition Total # of researchers who subscribe to the REFINE RSS Feed	Every 6 months
		Researchers engage in conversations about related studies on social media	Total # of re-tweets and conversations with researchers and @REFINEnutrition	Quarterly
		Information on new studies and published literature is communicated to researchers	Total # of REFINE Resource Updates sent to researchers	Every 6 months
P o l i c y- M a k i n g	Target groups	• Program Partners: GFN, USAID, WFP		
	Stakeholder Goals	• To influence international development and humanitarian goals and policies.		
	Reason for Interest	• Uses evidence to inform policy and must incorporate other factors into decision making.		
	Influence	High		
	What to Share (mode)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Information on ongoing studies and recent publications (social media, newsletter, email, website, events/conferences, interagency meetings)</li> <li>Policy briefs on relevant findings (email, newsletter, social media, website, interagency meetings)</li> <li>Annual landscape scan (email, newsletter, website, social media)</li> </ul>		
	Indicator Concept		Indicator	Collection Frequency
	<b>Outputs</b>	REFINE produces regularly updated landscape scans of the field of ongoing studies	Total # landscape scans produced in past year	Annually
Updates on REFINE are given at policy-related meetings		Numerator: # meetings where a REFINE update was given in past year Denominator: Total # of meetings attended in past year	Annually	
REFINE engages in one-on-one interaction with policy-makers		# of private audiences with policy-makers	Every 6 months	

	<b>Outcomes</b>	Policy-makers are informed of research gaps in the literature	# of policy-makers attending REFINE presentations in the previous 6 months	Every 6 months
		Policy-makers are aware of the landscape of ongoing studies and how these studies fit into the identified research gaps	# of policy-makers attending REFINE presentations in the previous 6 months # of different policy-making organizations in the audience of REFINE presentation in the previous 6 months	Every 6 months
		Encourage focal points to share REFINE outputs through their dissemination & communication channels	# of re-tweets by policy-makers	Quarterly
Programming	Target Groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Development practitioners</li> <li>Implementation partners</li> </ul>		
	Stakeholder Goals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Implement effective and cost-effective programs to address malnutrition.</li> <li>Conduct high-quality M&amp;E and research.</li> </ul>		
	Reason for Interest	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Uses evidence to inform product specifications.</li> </ul>		
	What to Share (mode)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Information on ongoing studies and recent publications (social media, newsletter, email, website, events/conferences, interagency meetings)</li> <li>Policy briefs on relevant findings (email, newsletter, social media, website, interagency meetings)</li> <li>Annual landscape scan (email, newsletter, website, social media)</li> </ul>		
	Indicator Concept		Indicator	Collection Frequency
	<b>Outputs</b>	REFINE engages in information exchange with programmers	# of email exchanges with programmers responding to information requests in the past year # of social media exchanges with programmers in the past 6 months	Annually Quarterly
		REFINE shares the Resource Update with programmers	# of programmers subscribed to the Resource Update	Every 6 months
<b>Outcomes</b>	Use of REFINEnutrition.com as a programming resource	# of programming professionals subscribed to REFINEnutrition.com and the Resource update	Annually	
Program	Target Groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Product developers</li> </ul>		

a u c t D e v e l o p m e n t	<b>Stakeholder Goals</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Offer high-quality, cost-effective, safe, and effective products while maximizing profits.</li> </ul>		
	<b>Reason for Interest</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Product manufacturing may be impacted by research and ongoing studies</li> </ul>		
	<b>What to Share (mode)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Information on ongoing studies and recent publications related to product development (email, website, events/conferences)</li> <li>Policy briefs on relevant findings (email, newsletter, social media, website)</li> </ul>		
	<b>Indicator Concept</b>		<b>Indicator</b>	<b>Collection Frequency</b>
	<b>Outputs</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>REFINE engages in information exchange with product developers</li> </ul>	# of email exchanges with product developers responding to information requests in the past year # of social media exchanges with product developers in the past 6 months	Annually Quarterly
	<b>Outcomes</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Use REFINEnutrition.com as a resource for product development</li> </ul>	# of product developers who have changed their formulation as a result of REFINE engagement	Annually