



USAID
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

FOOD AID QUALITY REVIEW

Decision Support Tool for Selection Among Nutritionally-Enhanced Food Aid Products

OBJECTIVE

To develop an interactive decision support tool that facilitates users to make more informed decisions when selecting specialized nutritious food aid products for nutrition programming by visualizing how their choices would affect cost and cost-effectiveness. Product and supply chain costs as well as program effectiveness are considered in this tool.

INTENDED USERS

Food aid program officers tasked with the selection of specialized nutritious food aid products for nutrition programming purposes. The tool covers the programming of the following nutritional purposes: Treatment of Severe Acute Malnutrition (SAM), Management of Moderate Acute Malnutrition (MAM), Prevention of Stunting, and Delivery of Micronutrients.

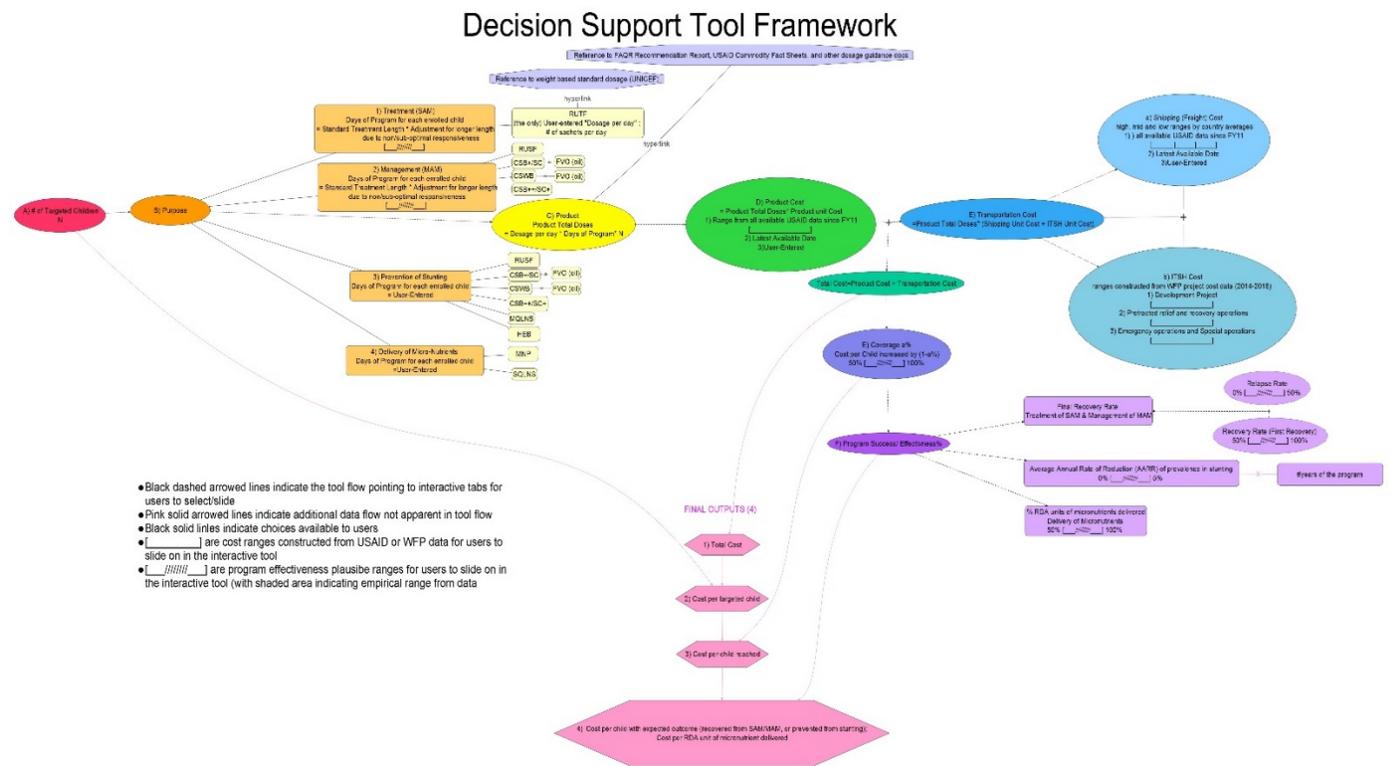
BACKGROUND

The Food Aid Quality Review (FAQR) project, managed by Tufts University and funded by USAID Office of Food for Peace, seeks to provide USAID and its partners with actionable recommendations on ways to improve nutrition among vulnerable people for whom the direct distribution of food aid can make a significant impact. During Phase II of the project, the FAQR team has developed a cost calculator that attempted to gain a better understanding of relevant cost components. Recognition around the necessity to incorporate cost-effectiveness into the complex decision-making around programming specialized nutritious food aid products has called for the current development of a new decision support tool in Phase III of the FAQR project. The tool will produce estimates of costs and cost-effectiveness incorporating product costs, transportation/supply chain costs, and different parameters of program effectiveness. The FAQR team will finalize and disseminate this decision support tool with guidance in its use in such a way that program officers and policy makers can consider not only costs but also the cost-effectiveness of alternative specialized food aid products.

TOOL FRAMEWORK

General Description of the Tool

The decision support tool aims to provide policy makers and program officers with a web-based step-by-step data-driven decision-making framework to generate estimates of final cost and cost-effectiveness indicators for comparison across different specialized nutritious food aid products. As shown in the diagram below, the framework incorporates an array of important factors that can affect the true cost and cost-effectiveness of selecting one product versus another for different programming purposes. Furthermore, corresponding to users' choices of the program purpose and specialized product, the interactive user interface allows users to slide on ranges of estimates for a variety of parameters related to cost or effectiveness ([] or [///] in the diagram). The ranges will contain plausible values of the respective parameter guided by available empirical data. Finally, where users choose to slide on these ranges will in turn influence the cost and cost-effectiveness indicators visualized in the final outputs.



(Please refer to the pdf document for an enlarged view of this framework.)