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Food Aid Quality Review Phase II: Technical Report No. 16

July 2015 - September 2015

This report was produced for the United States Agency for International Development. It was prepared under the terms of contract AFP-C-00-09-00016-00 awarded to the Friedman School of Nutrition Science and Policy at Tufts University.

Acronyms

BMC	Beneficiary's Mother/Caretaker
CSB	Corn Soy Blend
CSB+	Corn Soy Blend Plus/Super Cereal <i>plus</i>
CSBI4	Corn Soy Blend I4
DMAP	Data Management and Analysis Plan
FAQR	Food Aid Quality Review
FBF	Fortified Blended Food
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
FDPs	Food Distribution Points
FFP	Office of Food for Peace (USAID)
GF&N	Global Food and Nutrition
LNS	Lipid-based Nutrition Supplement
MAM	Moderate Acute Malnutrition
MNP	Micronutrient Powders
PL 480	Public Law 480 (Agricultural Trade Development and Assistance Act)
PVO	Private Voluntary Organization
REFINE	Research Engagement on Food Innovation for Nutritional Effectiveness
SBCC	Social and Behavior Change Communication
SC+	Super Cereal <i>plus</i>
SQ	Small Quantity
TOPS	Technical and Operational Performance Support
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
USDA	United States Department of Agriculture
WFP	World Food Programme (United Nations)
WHO	World Health Organization

Background

The Food Aid Quality Review (FAQR) is part of a series USAID and United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) activities aimed at enhancing product choice under Title II of Public Law 480 (PL480), improving quality control and assurance (of both processes and products), and updating technical guidance and the evidence base for programming approaches. The present contract builds on work performed under the original FAQR and focuses on implementing recommendations made in Phase I for changes in food aid products, programming, and processes.

The United States Agency for International Development's (USAID) Office of Food for Peace (FFP) awarded a two-year extension contract (FAQR Phase II) to Tufts University's Friedman School of Nutrition Science and Policy in October 2011, and a third-year extension in 2013 (for a total of five years). FAQR Phase I, conducted from 2009 to 2011, examined the nutritional needs of beneficiary populations across the developing world and the nutritional quality of commodities currently available to meet those needs, with the objective of improving the quality of Title II food aid commodities and programming. The findings of FAQR Phase I were published as a report, *Delivering Improved Nutrition: Recommendations for Changes to U.S. Food Aid Products and Programs* (USAID, April 2011), which is available at www.foodaidquality.org and at <http://www.usaid.gov/what-we-do/agriculture-and-food-security/food-assistance/resources/research-and-policy-papers>.

The work of the FAQR Phase II continues to address three areas of focus: products (development and testing of new or modified nutritionally enhanced food aid commodities); programs (the uses of such foods to meet nutritional goals in the context of Title II programs); and processes (e.g., safety and quality assurance in the supply chain, harmonization of processes among donor agencies, and coordination among agencies within the US Government). Specific areas of concentration include the following.

Products

Phase II is focusing on: the development of specifications of the updated Fortified Blended Foods (FBF) including Corn Soy Blend 14 (CSB14), recommended in the Phase I report, as well as milled flours, enhanced vegetable oil, and the micronutrient premix(es); Corn Soy Blend (CSB) laboratory and pilot production testing; acceptability trials; assessments and recommendations for supply chain and related issues.

Programs

Activities include strengthening the evidence base for food assistance programming through expert consultations and workshops on key topics with representatives of the various Title II implementing agencies and other stakeholders. Multiple activities are being undertaken, including a review of food programming guidance provided to Title II implementing agencies, a review of the data collected from Title II implementing agencies as part of required reporting, and how the data are used and could be

better used to inform programming.

Several field studies are also underway. In Malawi, a study for which field data collection finished at the end of FY14 seeks to assess the extent to which beneficiaries use oil as instructed by implementing partners to prepare CSB porridge for beneficiary children. The study also assesses the impact of packaging changes (providing CSB in 2-kg packages rather than in bulk), in conjunction with behavior change messages, on correct use of CSB and oil, and on intra- and inter-household sharing. Analysis of the data and drafting of a first paper will be completed during 2015.

Research in Burkina Faso is assessing the effectiveness and cost effectiveness of the new CSB14, delivered with oil, as compared with alternatives such as lipid-based nutrition supplement (LNS) products and other fortified blended foods (including Corn Soy Blend *plus* (CSB+) and oil and WFP's formulation of Super Cereal *plus* (SC+) with skim milk powder and oil incorporated into the matrix), in the prevention of moderate wasting (moderate acute malnutrition or MAM), the prevention of stunting, and the promotion of adequate growth in children 6-23 months.

A study in Sierra Leone assessed the effectiveness and cost-effectiveness of these same foods in the treatment of MAM in children under age five. Due to the Ebola Virus Disease outbreak, FAQR closed down the treatment study and began scoping new countries to restart this study. Analysis of the data collected during the Sierra Leone study prior to study cancellation was completed in FY15, and the FAQR team is working on a publishable paper in collaboration with WFP and Washington University collaborators.

Processes

FAQR II focuses on the formation of an Interagency Food Aid Technical Committee as well as implementing regular meetings with major food aid agencies (WFP, UNICEF, USAID, USDA, and others) to address the need for harmonization of food products and related procurement and quality assurance processes used in Title II food aid.

Activities for the period July 1, 2015 – September 30, 2015

Implementation of Phase II

During this quarter, the following activities were undertaken.

A. Products

Overview: Product introduction, rollout and supply chain quality assurance

I. Product Rollout and Supply Chain Quality Assurance

The Tufts team reviewed the product rollout report that analyzes the experience of USAID during the period of FAQR Phase II and makes recommendations for improved processes for

future product rollouts. The team continues to communicate with key players in the rollout process at USAID, USDA, suppliers, WFP, etc. as needed on relevant aspects of the product introduction, updating and roll out and product harmonization.

B. Programs

Overview: Data management and analysis, final report revisions, manuscript preparation and formative research report writing for *Malawi study*; manuscript preparation for *Sierra Leone study*; relocation activities for the treatment study that was terminated in Sierra Leone.

I. FAQR Field Studies

a. Feasibility and Acceptability Study-Malawi

1. Data management and analysis

This quarter, the FAQR Data Manager continued updating the Data Management and Analysis Plans (DMAPs) for the Malawi field study. The Tufts FAQR team continued quantitative and qualitative data analysis. Annex I details the Malawi data analyzed.

2. Final Report

This quarter, the Tufts team revised the Malawi study report based on USAID/FFP feedback and formally submitted it.

3. Manuscripts

The Tufts team continued drafting manuscripts for publications based on the Malawi study. The team completed the first draft of the major manuscript, which addresses the main research objective: change in CSB porridge oil density. Additional draft manuscripts in process include a methodological paper to compare oil estimated by the mother's demonstration with the oil as revealed in the laboratory analysis, a comparison of observed versus self-reported sharing of porridge to explore mothers' willingness to say that they share, validation of the Care Group Model in changing behavior/communicating CSB porridge messages. The Tufts team shared with USAID/FFP and FAQR consultant, Quentin Johnson, the concept for a case study on the experiences related to repacking CSB, to explore hygiene, sanitation, the 'Last Mile' of commodity transport (to the final consumer), and the ground-level challenges of implementing a supplementary feeding program in Southern Malawi.

4. Formative Research Report

The Tufts team continued revising the Social Behavior Change Communication (SBCC) Report. The purpose of this report is to document the processes followed in the development of the SBCC materials and the outcomes achieved

under each activity.

b. Effectiveness and Cost-Effectiveness Study – Treatment

During this quarter, the FAQR team continued to work on the report and manuscript preparation for Sierra Leone and continued scoping for new treatment study sites.

1. Manuscript preparation – Sierra Leone

The team at Tufts continued preparing a manuscript reporting the Sierra Leone findings.

2. Restarting the Treatment Study

This quarter, the FAQR team continued with planning the treatment study, and explored potential locations for restarting the study. This involved communications with USAID/FFP Country Backstop Officers, WFP in-country staff, and other stakeholders. The team consolidated all findings into a decision-making matrix.

c. Effectiveness and Cost-Effectiveness Study – Prevention - Burkina Faso

All Burkina Faso research study activities shifted over to the implementing partner's, ACDI/VOCA, development agreement on June 1, 2015. FAQR Burkina Faso study activities for July-September 2015 can be found in the ACDI/VOCA quarterly report.

C. Processes

Overview: Interagency meeting; Harmonization process; REFINE

1. Interagency Meeting

The FAQR team is planning the 11th interagency meeting, which will likely be held in January 2016.

2. Harmonization process

The team continued follow up on work streams identified during the harmonization meeting held last quarter, specifically the Ready-to-use RUF single formula. The team discussed follow-up on harmonization updates during the team meeting in September. There continues to be ongoing dialogue among key partners (particularly with UNICEF, WFP) on the specifics and process relating to the goal of a unified RUF product. UNICEF is taking the lead in terms of engagement with WHO and CODEX stakeholders, but FAQR members are fully engaged in promoting and furthering this dialogue.

3. Research Engagement of Food Innovation for Nutritional Effectiveness (REFINE)

The FAQR team continued work on the REFINE website by updating the field research matrix and updating the publications library. The intent is to be more proactive in updating this website and adding additional analytical insights, in addition to summaries of protocols. The FAQR team also began posting updates on Twitter via @REFINEnutrition. Annex II summarizes the new studies added this quarter.

Meetings and Events during the period July 1 – September 30, 2015

The team continued to hold working group meetings throughout the quarter to plan for FAQR Phase II activities. Selected specific meetings included the following:

- **Dr. Bea Rogers, Ilana Cliffer, Shelley Marcus and Jocelyn Boiteau
Burkina Faso Trip Debrief
July 7, 2015**
Members of the FAQR team discussed Dr. Rogers' field visit to Burkina Faso during the previous quarter, and identified decisions made, points resolved and next steps.
- **Malawi Manuscript Meeting in Boston, MA
July 9, 2015**
The FAQR team met to discuss draft manuscripts and analysis plans for the Malawi study.
- **Meetings on Treatment Study Relocation
July-September, 2015**
The FAQR team held a series of Skype/phone meetings throughout the quarter with key contacts in a number of countries to gather information on the feasibility of conducting research in each country.
- **SQ-LNS and MNP Workshops
August-September 2015**
Throughout the quarter, Shelley Marcus participated in working groups to plan the upcoming USAID-sponsored Micronutrient Powders (MNP) and Small Quantity-LNS (SQ-LNS) consultations to be held in Washington, DC in mid-October.

The objectives for the MNP meeting are as follows:

1. Using existing documents, reports and country experiences, identify and summarize experiences, with an emphasis on lessons learned from the field within MNP programming.
2. Define essential logistic components that should be included in any MNP's program to ensure national- ownership, context specificity, and sustainability.

3. Prioritize an MNP operational research agenda.

The objectives for the SQ-LNS meeting are as follows:

1. To share the efficacy and effectiveness evidence available on the use of SQ-LNS for the prevention of malnutrition in programmatic settings
2. To discuss and summarize experiences on key operational topics in the use of SQ-LNS for the prevention of malnutrition including challenges and lessons learned.
3. To outline the key operational conditions needed to roll-out programs using SQ-LNS
4. To identify an implementation research agenda

- **USAID/FFP RUF Single Formula**

- **September 2, 2015**

- The Tufts team, Global Food and Nutrition (GF&N) and FAQR consultant Quentin Johnson participated in a conference call with USAID/FFP, USDA and the University of Nebraska to discuss updates about the RUF Single Formula. The meeting concluded with next steps to share the final draft with partner agencies for final review and share with suppliers with full implementation proposed for December 21, 2015.

- **FAQR Team Meeting in Boston, MA**

- **September 8, 2015**

- The Tufts team hosted a team meeting with GF&N, Quentin Johnson and Dr. Stephen Vosti to discuss updates and work plans for field studies, REFINE, Interagency and Harmonization, and product-roll out processes. The FAQR team also discussed the work plan for the Phase II close-out.

- **Shelley Marcus in Washington, DC**

- **Cost of the Diet Trainer Program**

- **September 29 – October 1, 2015**

- FAQR Project Manager, Shelley Marcus, attended the Cost of the Diet train the trainer program hosted by the Technical and Operational Performance Support (TOPS) Program and Save the Children. The Cost of the Diet is software developed by Save the Children UK to understand the extent to which poverty affects nutritional status. The purpose of the three-day workshop was to train nutritionists and food security personnel to be able to lead a full Cost of the Diet assessment and train other practitioners. Annex IV details the workshop agenda.

Administration and Budget

During this quarter, the following activities were undertaken.

A. Budget

The FAQR team continued to monitor the budget and make projections based on real-time expenditures and assessments of fiscal realities. FAQR Phase II is currently funded through October 31, 2015.

Plans for the coming quarter

October 2015 represents the seventeenth quarter of implementation for FAQR Phase II. The following activities are planned:

A. Products

a. Product Introduction and Rollout Activities

- i. Review comments and update report. Add the period of May 2015-September 2015
- ii. Continue to track issues with products specifications, testing, quality assurance, food safety, nutrition profiles and follow these issues through the supply chain
- iii. Prepare Quarterly Issues Update to report on lessons learned about the process based on experience

b. Commodity Reference Guide Quarterly Updates

- i. Continue to work with USAID/FFP to update the Commodity Reference Guide Fact Sheets, and complete Fact Sheets as specifications for new products are approved
- ii. Begin landscape analysis on fact sheet improvements to assess and propose improvement of the USAID Commodities Reference Guide Fact Sheets

c. Provision of Technical Assistance

- i. Continue working with FFP to create and revise specifications for new products, templates for new product introduction and other requested nutritional comparisons and technical items as requested

B. Programs

a. Feasibility/Acceptability Study (Malawi)

- i. Continue data analysis plan and prepare manuscripts for publication
- ii. Continue revising final report and re-submit to USAID/FFP November 2015
- iii. Continue revising formative research report and submit to USAID/FFP

b. Treatment Effectiveness Study (Sierra Leone and Country TBD)

- i. Continue working on Sierra Leone manuscript

- ii. Continue scoping for another new country for relocated treatment study

c. Cost Analysis

- i. Continue revising DMAP for the relocated treatment study
- ii. Continue editing the costing model for all effectiveness study products and product comparisons based on feedback from FAQR team
- iii. Continue developing costing tool User Manual
- iv. Review Cost of the Diet and discuss synergies with the costing model

d. FAQR Phase II Report

- i. Continue working on the comprehensive FAQR Phase II report, which is due to USAID/FFP January 2016

C. Process

a. REFINE

- i. Create two-page brief for circulation at the MNP and SQ-LNS consultations
- ii. Continue with REFINE website updates
- iii. Continue REFINE Twitter posts
- iv. Begin developing evidence map of ongoing studies

b. Harmonization

- i. Continue involvement in follow-up activities
- ii. Host conference call on harmonization work streams
- iii. Start planning for the next Harmonization meeting of USAID, WFP and UNICEF

c. Interagency Work

- i. Continue to follow up on activities and next steps from the last meeting and progress on technical issues
- ii. Plan FY16 Interagency Meeting for January 2016

Annex I. Malawi Field Study Data Analyzed

Quantitative Data

Subject Category	Instrument	Study Phase		
		Baseline	Phase I	Phase 2
Beneficiary Mothers/Caregivers (BMCs)	In-depth interview	Analyzed	-	Analyzed
	In-home observation	Analyzed	-	Analyzed
	Porridge sample collection	-	-	Analyzed
Care Group Lead Mothers	Interview	-	-	Partially cleaned; used some variables for SBCC score
Health Care Workers	Interview	-	-	Partially cleaned; used some variables for SBCC score
Markets	Market Observation	-	-	Preliminary cleaning/analysis (not used)
	Interview with store owner	-	-	-
FDP staff, BMCs	Timing of distribution	-	-	Preliminary cleaning and analysis (used only for costing)
PVO Food Distribution Trucks	Ride along observation	-	-	-

Qualitative Data

Subject Category	Instrument	Study Phase		
		Baseline	Phase I	Phase 2
BMCs	FGD*	-	-	Analyzed but needs inter-rater agreement from another coder
Care Group Lead Mothers	FGD*	Analyzed but needs inter-rater agreement from another coder	Analyzed but needs inter-rater agreement from another coder	-
PVO Staff	Qualitative interview, document analysis	-	-	-

Annex II. New Studies Added to REFINE

1. Effects of Cash Transfers on SAM
 - NCT02460848: This study will investigate the effect of unconditional cash transfers on the management of SAM in children 6-59 mo according to the national protocol in the DRC
2. Benefits of a Household WASH Package to Community-based Management of Acute Malnutrition (CMAM) Program, Chad (OUADINUT)
 - NCT02486523: This study will assess the effectiveness of adding a Household WASH component to the standard outpatient treatment of severe acute malnutrition
3. Stunting Prevention Project in Thatta and Sajawal Districts, Sindh Province, Pakistan
 - NCT02422953: This study evaluates the effectiveness of food-based interventions (WSB, Wawa Mum, MNP, Behavior change interventions) to prevent stunting among children under-five years with focus on window of opportunity (1000 days from conception to 2 years) for addressing stunting
4. Extended Pilot Project Community Based Production of Complementary Food in Ethiopia
 - NCT02484495: The purpose of the study is to evaluate the impact of a package of interventions including production and distribution of locally produced complementary foods (via so-called "Grain-banks") and MNP supplementation, and optimized food based Complementary Feeding Recommendation, on growth and micronutrient status of infants and young children
5. Promoting Physical Growth and Positive Development in Severely Stunted Guatemalan Children
 - NCT02509936: This study seeks to evaluate the impact of an intensive home-based education intervention targeting severely stunted Guatemalan children for catch up growth and improved development
6. Study of Blood Parameters of the Malnourished Children: Before and After Giving Nutritional Biscuit's Treatment
 - NCT02459223: This study will evaluate the efficacy of a nutritional intervention in SAM children and also intends to study possible functional role of gene heme regulated inhibitor as a molecular marker for the early detection of iron deficiency anemia in malnourished children

Annex III. FAQR Team Meeting Agenda

FAQR Team Meeting
Tuesday, September 8, 2015
8:30 AM – 4 PM
Jaharis, Rm. 133

Overall Purpose: *To share brief FAQR updates with team members and map out work plan for the remainder of FAQR Phase II*

Attendees: Bea Rogers, Patrick Webb, Irv Rosenberg, Nina Schlossman (virtually), Quentin Johnson (virtually), Steve Vosti (virtually), Leah Koepfel, Shelley Marcus, Jocelyn Boiteau, Breanne Langlois, Kristine Caiafa, Lauren Jayson (virtually), Devika Suri (virtually), Ilana Cliffer (virtually)

***Virtual participants will be skyped in by Shelley to allow for screen share.**

- | | |
|-----------------------|---|
| 8:30-9 AM | <i>Coffee, light breakfast, and Review Agenda</i> |
| 9-9:15 AM | FAQR Phase III RFP Response Updates -Patrick |
| 9:15-9:30 AM | Tufts Administrative Updates & Mapping Work Plan -Shelley & Jocelyn |
| 9:30- 10 AM | Burkina Faso Field Study Updates & Work Plan - Ilana, Devika, Bree |
| 10-10:15 AM | Malawi Study Output Updates & Work Plan - Devika, Bree, Lauren |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Questions about data sharing policy |
| 10:15-10:30 AM | Sierra Leone Study Output Updates & Work Plan - Devika, Bree |
| 10:30-10:45 AM | <i>Break</i> |
| 10:45-11 AM | REFINE & Communications Updates & Work Plan -Kristine, Jocelyn |
| 11-11:30 AM | Interagency and Harmonization Updates & Work Plan -Patrick |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Date and Focus of Next Interagency Meeting • Date and Focus of Next Harmonization Meeting |
| 11:30-12 PM | GFN Updates & Work Plan -Nina, Leah |
| 12-1PM | <i>Lunch (catered)</i> |
| 1-1:30 PM | Remaining Team Updates & Work Plan |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Steve Vosti Updates and Work Plan • Quentin Johnson Updates and Work Plan • Treatment Study Relocation Site-Bea |

1:30 PM-3:30PM FAQR Phase II Close-Out Work Plan (covering Sept-Dec 2015)

- **Industry Meeting on Vitamin A**
 - Determine main focus, location, and audience
- **Next Team Meeting**
 - Determine date and discuss meeting focus
- **Phase II Report-*Shelley***
- **Comprehensive Work Plan Review**
 - Ensure that all activities are delegated and time bound for close-out of Phase II
- **Discuss Plan for if we don't win Phase III bid**

3:30 PM- 4PM Remaining Issues

Annex IV. Cost of the Diet Workshop Agenda



Train the trainer programme timetable 29th September – 1st October at the Beacon Hotel, Washington D.C

Day 1		Day 2	
9.00	Welcome and introduction	9.00	Welcome and recap
9.30	Introduction to the Cost of the Diet method and how it differs from other Linear Programming tools	9.15	General introduction to the Cost of the Diet software
10.15	Planning an assessment: defining the objectives, scope and location of an assessment	10.00	Viewing and exporting the underlying databases in the software
11.00	Break	10.30	Setting up a new assessment
11.15	Data collection: Writing the food list	11.00	Break
12.00	Data collection: Collecting market survey data	11.15	Adding foods to an assessment
1.00	Lunch	11.45	Entering market survey data
2.00	Data collection: Collecting market survey data (continued)	12.45	Entering dietary habits interview data
2.30	Data collection: Facilitating dietary habit interviews and focus group discussions	1.00	Lunch
3.15	Break	2.00	Viewing and checking market survey and dietary habits data
3.30	The underlying parameters used and assumptions made by the Cost of the Diet software	3.30	Break
4.50	Summary of the day	3.45	Running a standard analysis and generating reports
5.00	End	4.55	Summary of the day
		5.00	End

Day 3	
9.00	Welcome and recap
9.15	Interpreting the results of the standard analyses
11.00	Break
11.15	Understanding the impact of changing the underlying assumptions in the <u>CotD</u> software to generate 'what if?' scenarios
1.00	Lunch
2.00	Generating "what if?" scenarios and interpreting the results
3.30	Break
3.45	Generating "what if?" scenarios and interpreting the results (continued)
4.15	Other software functionality and reporting bugs and issues
4.45	Summary of the training and evaluation
5.00	End