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# BANGLADESH

## FY 2010 Implementation Plan

### U.S. Government Working Document

The Feed the Future (FTF) FY 2010 implementation plans are working documents outlining U.S. government planning for the first year of the Global Hunger and Food Security Initiative. These plans represent a transition towards the development of multiyear strategies and are targeted at investments that lay the foundation for a new country-level and coordinated approach with a diversity of partners. Multiyear strategies are under development that will span development and diplomatic actions across multiple USG agencies.

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## Abbreviations and Acronyms

<b>ABSP II</b>	Agriculture Biotechnology Support Project
<b>ADB</b>	Asian Development Bank
<b>ATDP II</b>	Agro-based Industries and Technology Development Project
<b>AusAID</b>	Australian Agency for International Development
<b>BARI</b>	Bangladesh Agricultural Research Institute
<b>BCCSAP</b>	Bangladesh's Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan
<b>BDF</b>	Bangladesh Development Forum
<b>BIDS</b>	Bangladesh Institute of Development Studies
<b>BRAC</b>	Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee
<b>CAARP</b>	Cyclone Affected Aquaculture Rehabilitation Project
<b>CDC</b>	Center for Disease Control
<b>CMAM</b>	Community-based Management of Acute Malnutrition
<b>CMO</b>	Co-management Organization
<b>CNP</b>	Community Nutrition Promoter
<b>COP-15</b>	15 <sup>th</sup> Climate Change Conferences of the Parties
<b>CPD</b>	Center for Policy Dialogue
<b>CSISA</b>	Cereal System Initiative for South Asia
<b>DAE</b>	Department of Agricultural Extension
<b>DAP</b>	Development Assistance Program
<b>DANIDA</b>	Danish International Development Agency
<b>DFID</b>	Department for International Development
<b>DLI</b>	Development Leadership Initiative
<b>DoS</b>	US Department of State
<b>EG</b>	Economic Growth
<b>ERD</b>	Economic Relations Division
<b>EU</b>	European Union
<b>FAO</b>	Food & Agriculture Organization
<b>FAS</b>	Foreign Agricultural Service
<b>FPMC</b>	Food Planning and Monitoring Committee
<b>FPMU</b>	Food Planning and Monitoring Unit
<b>FPWG</b>	Food Policy Working Group
<b>FSN</b>	Foreign Service National
<b>FTF</b>	Feed the Future
<b>FTFI</b>	Feed the Future Initiative
<b>FTFI-IP</b>	Feed the Future Initiative-Implementation Plan
<b>GCC</b>	Global Climate Change
<b>GDP</b>	Gross Domestic Product
<b>GHG</b>	Global Greenhouse Gases
<b>GoB</b>	Government of Bangladesh
<b>HKI</b>	Helen Keller International
<b>HNPSP</b>	Health, Nutrition and Population Sector Program
<b>ICDDR, B</b>	International Center for Diarrheal Disease Research, Bangladesh

<b>IFAD</b>	International Fund for Agriculture Development
<b>IFPRI</b>	International Food Policy Research Institute
<b>IMED</b>	Implementation Monitoring and Evaluation Division
<b>IP</b>	Implementation Plan
<b>IPM</b>	Integrated Pest Management
<b>IYCF</b>	Infant and Young Child Feeding
<b>JICA</b>	Japan International Cooperation Agency
<b>JCS</b>	Joint Cooperation Strategy
<b>LCG</b>	Local Consultative Group
<b>LES</b>	Locally Engaged Staff
<b>LNS</b>	Lipid-nutrient Supplement
<b>MACH</b>	Management of Aquatic Ecosystems through Community Husbandry
<b>MDG</b>	Millennium Development Goals
<b>MoA</b>	Ministry of Agriculture
<b>MoC</b>	Ministry of Commerce
<b>MoEF</b>	Ministry of Environment and Forests
<b>MoFDM</b>	Ministry of Food and Disaster Management
<b>MoF</b>	Ministry of Finance
<b>MoFL</b>	Ministry of Fisheries & Livestock
<b>MoHFW</b>	Ministry of Health and Family Welfare
<b>MoI</b>	Ministry of Industry
<b>MoL</b>	Ministry of Land
<b>MoLE</b>	Ministry of Labor and Employment
<b>MoLGRDC</b>	Ministry of Local Government Rural Development and Cooperatives
<b>MoLJPA</b>	Ministry of Law, Justice and Parliamentary Affairs
<b>MoP</b>	Ministry of Planning
<b>MoS</b>	Ministry of Shipping
<b>MoSICT</b>	Ministry of Science and Information & Communication Technology
<b>MoSW</b>	Ministry of Social Welfare
<b>MoWCA</b>	Ministry of Women and Children Affairs
<b>MoWR</b>	Ministry of Water Resources
<b>MSP</b>	Mission Strategic Plan
<b>MoYS</b>	Ministry of Youth and Sports
<b>MYAP</b>	Multi-Year Assistance Program
<b>NARS</b>	National Agricultural Research Systems
<b>NSAPR II</b>	National Strategy for Accelerated Poverty Reduction
<b>NFPCSP</b>	National Food Policy Capacity Strengthening Program
<b>NFP PoA</b>	National Food Policy Plan of Action
<b>NGO</b>	Non-Government Organization
<b>NNP</b>	National Nutrition Program
<b>ODA</b>	Official Development Assistance
<b>PA</b>	Program Area
<b>PIO</b>	Public International Organization
<b>PM2A</b>	Preventing Malnutrition in Children Under 2 Approach

<b>PoA</b>	Plan of Action
<b>PRICE</b>	Poverty Reduction by Increasing the Competitiveness of Enterprises
<b>PRSP</b>	Poverty Reduction Strategy Program
<b>REDD I</b>	Reducing Emission from Deforestation in Developing Countries
<b>RUTF</b>	Ready-to-Use Therapeutic Foods
<b>SARI/Energy</b>	South Asia Regional Initiative for Energy Cooperation and Development
<b>SMC</b>	Social Marketing Company
<b>S/CRS</b>	Office of the Coordinator for Stabilization and Reconstruction
<b>TT</b>	Thematic Themes
<b>UDP</b>	Urea Deep Placement
<b>UNICEF</b>	United Nations Children's Fund
<b>USAID</b>	United States Agency for International Development
<b>USDA</b>	United States Department of Agriculture
<b>USDH</b>	United State Direct Hire
<b>USG</b>	United State Government
<b>WB</b>	World Bank
<b>WFP</b>	World Food Program
<b>WHO</b>	World Health Organization

# I. INTRODUCTION

## I.1. UNDERLYING CAUSES OF HUNGER AND POVERTY AND THE ROLE OF AGRICULTURE AND CLIMATE CHANGE

*“Hot, Flat and Crowded.”* It is a phrase coined by Thomas Friedman in the title of his latest book on the crisis of climate change. But it also conjures up the stark image of Bangladesh today, a country struggling against the scourge of hunger and poverty since independence and regularly affected by natural disasters.

Bangladesh is the most densely populated country in the world (three times that of India and seven times that of China) with 150 million people and demographic trends indicating that this number will grow to 250 million by 2050. This population growth threatens to outpace that of rice production. Arable land loss and extreme weather patterns due in part to climate change only compound the threats facing food security in Bangladesh. It is imperative that agricultural production, diversification, natural resource management, markets and trade, adaptation to climate change, nutrition and social safety nets be drastically improved to meet this growing challenge. The Government of Bangladesh made food security (primarily rice) an election mandate in the last election and now has a national strategy and action plan. The other donors are also focused in this area, and the USG’s sustained assistance will help materialize this strategy and plan.

Bangladesh has weathered the recent global economic downturn, posting respectable economic growth averaging around 5-6 percent over the last few years, primarily through garment exports and remittances. The country has shown remarkable achievements over the last three decades by tripling annual production of rice – the main food staple – to 30 million metric tons, reaching self sufficiency in rice in

most years. However, these impressive statistics mask the fundamental underlying condition of Bangladesh – its low starting base. Agriculture accounts for 48 percent of the actively employed labor force and 21 percent of GDP, and plays an integral part in the lives of the people, 72 percent of whom live in rural areas. While the harmful effects of high food prices are sharply felt by the poor throughout the year, they are particularly acute in the lean seasons occurring in September-November (such as the *monga* period in the northwest of the country) and in March-April, due to a chronic lack of employment opportunities for the extreme poor, who usually work as agricultural or day laborers.

Over the course of 2007 and 2008, price increases of fuel and food commodities exposed the vulnerability of the poorest segment of society and the precipitous nature of their food security, further exacerbated by two severe floods and a major cyclone. During this period, an additional 7.5 million people joined the ranks of the hungry, largely as a result of high food prices, bringing the number of people who consume less than the minimum daily recommended amount of food calories to 65 million, or 45 percent of the population. The depth of food insecurity has also worsened. Food expenditures are increasingly dominating household budgets, the poor are consuming even less than before and the quality of their diet has deteriorated further. To cope, the poor have fallen into a deeper downward spiral of debt, from which it will take many months to recover.

Despite the large gains in agricultural production, malnutrition levels in Bangladesh are amongst the highest in the world. Approximately half of Bangladesh’s population lives below the food poverty line and the dietary intake of both children and adults is severely deficient in key vitamins and minerals. Forty percent of the population is undernourished (consuming less than 2,122 Kcal/day) and 20 percent severely malnourished (less than 1,805 Kcal/day). Acute malnutrition

levels in Bangladesh exceed the emergency threshold and are higher than those in many parts of sub-Saharan Africa. More than 2 million children are acutely malnourished. In addition to causing maternal and child mortality, malnutrition exacts heavy costs from the health care system through excess morbidity, increased premature births, and elevated risks of heart disease and diabetes. The economic consequences of Bangladesh's malnutrition problem are profound, resulting in lost productivity and reduced intellectual and learning capacity.

Climate change poses significant risks for Bangladesh. Lying in the largest delta in the world where three major rivers drain into the Bay of Bengal, Bangladesh may be the country with the largest number of people to be affected by the debilitating effects of climate change. Between 20-30 percent of the country is normally flooded each year. Rising sea levels have increased soil salinity in coastal areas, making them less suitable for agriculture. It is estimated that by 2050 Bangladesh will lose 20 percent of its landmass, displacing 6-8 million people who are destined to become "environmental refugees." Climate change compounds the threats to food security where agricultural land is already at a premium due to population pressure.

Degradation of land, water bodies, wetlands and forests are significant threats to Bangladesh's already precarious food security. Bangladesh has the third-largest fresh-water fisheries in the world. A large majority (80 percent) of the rural people is involved in this sector, and 60 percent of all protein consumption comes from fish. Poor management has led to the degradation of 50 percent of the country's wetlands, jeopardizing this critical link to the food system. Furthermore, 90 percent of all forests have been destroyed, and the people who live around forests – who are poorer than average – are becoming even more vulnerable.

During the 2007-08 world food price crisis, Bangladesh had difficulties procuring rice in the international market. Export bans and trade

restrictions by grain exporting countries had a pronounced unsettling effect on many importing countries, but were very strongly felt by the Government of Bangladesh (GoB), prompting calls for self-sufficiency and renewed attention to rice production, in particular.

In order to increase overall agricultural production, rice productivity has to be intensified so that land and other resources can be released to other crops. There is great potential for diversification toward pulses, oilseeds, vegetables and fruit, meat, fish and eggs, many of which are currently imported). This will lead to the greater local availability and variety of nutritious foods and will also help strengthen the role of agriculture as an engine of growth for the rural economy. Moreover, Bangladesh needs to rely on a vibrant private sector to diversify production, add value and expand marketing and trade.

However, it is clear that improved availability of rice is a necessary but not sufficient condition to ensure food security. Achieving food security requires a comprehensive approach, encompassing availability, access and effective utilization of food for balanced nutrition over time. Attention needs also to be placed on diversifying crops and diets, improving the natural resource management, increasing purchasing power, and improving household nutrition practices.

To comprehensively address sustainable food security, the GoB's National Food Policy and Plan of Action needs close coordination between numerous relevant government bodies: the Planning Commission; Ministry of Agriculture; Ministry of Food and Disaster Management; Ministry of Environment and Forest, Ministry of Fisheries and Livestock; and Ministry of Health. Furthermore, all other development partners (donors, NGOs, think tanks, academia, and private sector) will need to closely align their activities with a common plan. The Feed the Future (FTF) Initiative will elevate food security discussions to the highest level with the Prime Minister through the participation of the Ambassador, and to various

other GoB levels and development partners through the State Department, USAID, USDA and other USG agencies. FTF will work with the GoB to promote sustainable intensification and diversification of agriculture, conserve natural resources, integrate small and marginal farmers into the market, reduce farmers' exposure to climatic risks, enhance rural institutions and governance, adapt agricultural technologies, carry out programs and policies based on sound analysis, and improve nutrition and safety net programs.

This FTF Implementation Plan (IP) for FY 2010 will provide a framework for all USG funded programs to address the underlying causes of poverty, hunger, and under-nutrition in Bangladesh. Although FTF will receive targeted funding to support predominantly agricultural programs that promote food security, USAID/Bangladesh will also use resources from other initiatives and on-going programs, such as the Global Health Initiative, the Climate Change Initiative, Global Engagement Initiative, and Food for Peace Title II resources, to fund other core investment areas such as family planning, health approaches to nutrition, social safety nets, and to support relevant governance issues, as described in this Implementation Plan.

The bulk of efforts for Phase I in FY2010 is expected to involve: (1) implementing specific projects that offer quick gains – ones that fit into the overall GoB/FTF framework; whose foundations are already laid and that will provide rapid progress. Where applicable, a landscape approach will be used to develop synergies between FTF and other USAID projects related to natural resource management, health, and disaster/humanitarian assistance; (2) developing a mutual accountability framework and mechanisms for monitoring and evaluation; (3) developing a comprehensive plan for an analytical agenda leading to an evidence-based strategic vision for promoting food security at the macro policy level and to support programs targeting household food security; and (4) engaging the GoB and development partners in policy level discussions on food security, sharing

information on state-of-the-art technical approaches, and combining efforts on analyses, studies and surveys, making maximum use of and revitalizing existing mechanisms whenever possible. This Initiative will be kick-started by a national Food Security Forum in late May 2010, where a technical review of the GoB food security plan, achievements and capacity will be conducted. USG will provide assistance to the GoB in this high-level event. The results of the review will be presented at the June G8 Summit.

## **I.2. STATUS OF COUNTRY-LED PLANS**

Food security and agriculture rank high on the development agenda of the GoB. A number of national plans have been developed in recent years, some with US assistance, to address various aspects of the food security challenge. The most significant of these plans are: the Revised Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper II (PRSP II, 2009-2011); the National Food Policy Plan of Action (2008-2015), developed by an I I-ministry task force led by the Ministry of Food and Disaster Management (MoFDM) with US and European Union (EU) support; the Bangladesh Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan (BCCSAP, 2008-09), supported by the U.K.'s Department for International Development (DFID); the National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (NBSAP, 2003); the Fisheries Policy; the National Fisheries Strategy and Inland Capture Fisheries Strategy (2006); and the *Jalmahal* (Water Body) Management Policy (2009).

While these policies, strategies and plans inventory development challenges well and identify key areas of intervention to address those challenges, they are not always adequately focused in terms of achievable priorities, implementation modalities, necessary resources, and results monitoring.

In line with the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness, the FTF IP for Bangladesh ensures national ownership by aligning with the objectives identified in national policies and



plans. The IP will harmonize with other donors' programs to avoid duplication of efforts and maximize synergies to achieve tangible and measurable results using a comprehensive and multi-sectoral approach to address poverty and food insecurity.

### **I.3. STRATEGIC COORDINATION**

#### **I.3.1. EXTERNAL COORDINATION**

The Government of Bangladesh and a large number of donors currently support development investments in agriculture, health and nutrition, water and sanitation, climate change adaptation, and other sectors related to food security. Donor coordination of food security issues and related sector activities takes place on a regular basis through the Local Consultative Group (LCG) and its sub-groups. Recently, due to the leadership of the USG and DFID, GoB officials have been encouraged to participate in LCG sub-groups. An "Executive Committee" (ExCom) composed of the most active and largest donor members of the LCG leads a Joint Cooperation Strategy (JCS) process to reduce duplication of effort, invite greater GoB participation and leadership, align donor investment with GoB priorities and improve aid effectiveness.

As part of the JCS process, donors plan to revitalize the LCG sub-groups and use them more effectively as platforms for government/donor consultation, resource alignment and improved development impact through better accountability. USAID/Bangladesh is an active member of the LCG ExCom and USAID staff often plays a leadership role within the sub-group structure. The GoB itself relies on a system of steering committees tied to national plans of action for internal coordination. As part of Phase I implementation, USAID/Bangladesh will continue to take a leadership role in linking the coordination mechanisms of the government and donors.

#### **I.3.2. US GOVERNMENT COORDINATION**

As the only U.S. government agency working on agricultural development with a full-time presence in Bangladesh, USAID will coordinate all FTF Initiative activities in collaboration with the US Department of State (DoS). US Agencies operating in Bangladesh enjoy a high level of inter-agency collaboration, most recently evidenced by the highly effective broad-based USG response to Cyclone Sidr. In addition, the FY 2010-13 Mission Strategic Plan won special recognition within DoS as an example of a highly collaborative and integrated strategic planning process. USG coordination specific to the FTF Initiative will take place within an interagency Food Security Task Force established in July 2009 to develop this Implementation Plan.

#### **I.4. LEVERAGING THE CAPACITY OF MULTILATERAL ORGANIZATIONS**

The World Bank (WB), the Asian Development Bank (ADB), and other major UN organizations such as United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), World Food Program (WFP), the United Nations Development Program (UNDP), and the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research (CGIAR) have a long history of operations, research and analysis in Bangladesh. Their sustained involvement, along with that of the USG, in the development of Bangladesh since independence has produced a wealth of development experience captured in studies, evaluations, and analyses. The following identify a few of the major sources of collective wisdom to inform our on-going development efforts:

- I. Sector Analyses and Experiences in Nutrition and Agriculture: Over the past 10-15 years, the WB has helped finance different programs in nutrition and agriculture under the National Nutrition Project and the National Agricultural Technology Project. As of 2008, \$540

million of the ADB's active loan portfolio of \$4.4 billion supports programs in agriculture, natural resource management, and clean water supply. These project experiences are well documented and form a sound basis to inform future initiatives. In addition, ADB conducted a midterm evaluation of its current Country Assistance Program earlier this year and will soon release the final report.

2. **National Food Policy and Multi-Sectoral Approaches:** The FAO, in collaboration with the EU and USAID, has been working since 2005 to build the capacity of the GoB in food security and policy analysis through technical assistance to the Food Planning and Monitoring Unit within the MoFDM. This unit provides the analytical underpinnings for the National Food Policy and more recently, helped bring together a wide range of government agencies to formulate and monitor implementation of the National Food Policy Plan of Action, encompassing availability, economic and social access to food as well as nutrition. In consultation with the GOB, and building upon its body of knowledge on the Bangladesh agricultural sector, the International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI) has developed a detailed research and technical assistance proposal to help with analysis of policy options, identification of high impact interventions for the agriculture sector, development of targeting strategies, and monitoring and evaluation systems.
3. **Social Safety Nets:** WFP has worked extensively with the GoB on social safety net programs at both operational and policy levels. From this work, much is known about the strengths of the GoB's national program and those areas requiring reform and capacity building. WFP's credibility and good collaborative relationships with the relevant government institutions make it an excellent potential collaborator in policy dialogue for social safety nets.

4. **Resource Targeting:** In collaboration with the WB and the Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics, the WFP recently conducted a major poverty mapping exercise disaggregated to the district and *upazila* (sub-district) levels. The Food for Peace program currently collaborates with the WFP to strengthen safety net program efficiency at the national and local levels. This work will continue over the next five years.

During Phase I implementation of the FTF Initiative, USAID/Bangladesh will engage in continued discussions with multilateral development partners to establish concrete methods of coordination through the JCS process, the LCG and through special-focus fora designed specifically to generate linkages between on-going and new programs.

### **I.5. SUSTAINING LONG TERM COMMITMENT AND ACCOUNTABILITY**

Sustaining long-term commitment and accountability will require continued efforts on the part of all development partners and the GoB. USAID/Bangladesh is committed to keeping food security and poverty reduction at the center of development concerns. The main challenge in Bangladesh lies not in making the case for the gravity of the food insecurity and poverty indicators, but urging decision makers *to use evidence based analysis to target resources in a more disciplined way*. Development programs must comprehensively address the underlying causes of poverty, hunger and undernutrition and acknowledge the role of agriculture in generating economic growth. Raising incomes to provide access to food, increasing agricultural productivity, focusing on sustainable and equitable natural resource management, diversifying the food basket, establishing market-based systems, changing infant and young child feeding practices and food consumption patterns, must all be elements of a successful, long-term sustainable food security program. Building Bangladesh's internal capacity to implement policies to support these

interventions and account for results will also require substantial reform and effective allocation of public resources. This will require sustained political will, both in Bangladesh and in donor countries, to keep hunger and poverty at the top of the development agenda.

## **I.6. NEXT STEPS FOR FY 2010**

The current US foreign assistance portfolio in Bangladesh is broad and spans the spectrum of major development sectors, with the greatest resources devoted to non-emergency food aid programs for the poor and ultra-poor (Title II) and to health. Other programs address democracy and governance, natural resource management, and private sector development. On-going, integrated USAID programs directly related to food security increase household food security by raising income, improving nutritional status of children under five and mitigating the effects of climate change on agricultural productivity (Title II); support the Food Planning and Monitoring Unit at the MoFDM; pilot projects in better fertilizer use; fund biotechnology research with Bangladesh Agriculture Research Institute (BARI), promote livelihoods activities for recovery from disaster, and advocate for natural resource co-management.

USAID/Bangladesh's planning process has identified a number of analytical and data gaps, opportunities for synergy between activities in related sectors, and under-resourced development subsectors, notably in the areas of agriculture, nutrition, and family planning.

Next steps for FY 2010, Phase I of FTF implementation:

- I. **Build consensus around a government-led plan** that prioritizes investment, implementation and monitoring and evaluation. Engage the GOB in dialogue to identify and prioritize key policy constraints and build consensus with other donors, civic society, private sector and academia around these issues. Adopting the National Food Policy Plan of Action as

the common, key reference document in this process would be a logical starting point. Continue to expand the scope and depth of engagement with various government institutions with an aim to assess capacity, identify political and technical champions for a comprehensive approach to hunger and food security, and begin to mobilize the development community toward a donor and government consensus on a 1) targeted capacity building plan, 2) common analytical foundation for policy reform and implementation, 3) set of investment priorities with achievable results, and 4) mutually-agreed accountability framework for monitoring and evaluating progress.

2. **Use on-going programs as a foundation for FTF:** A) Deep Urea Placement program; B) Agricultural Biotechnology Support Program; C) National Food Policy Capacity Strengthening Program; D) Protected Area Co-management Program; E) Health and Nutrition Program; and F) PL 480 Title II Program. All are described in section 4.3. In addition, the Mission will reengage with the CGIAR and Bangladesh Agricultural Research Institutes to explore areas of mutual interest.
3. **Conduct a Desk Study and Gap Analysis:** Complete a more comprehensive gap analysis through a review of available development literature, public and government databases and analyses, USAID assessments/evaluations and project operational research reports, and other public sources of information. The gap analysis will focus on strategic areas relating to availability, access and utilization of food. Analyses will track the incidence of hunger, food production trends, the role of women in agriculture, technology innovation, trade and investment, nutrition and household behavior, effects of climate change on food security, the role of natural resource management and wild (capture) fisheries. The USG will identify studies that

need to be conducted immediately, and those in years 2 and beyond, following consultations with GoB and other partners and evaluation of available material.

4. **Design and implement specific projects:** In Phase I, FTF will focus on activities that will yield immediate impact, meet the overarching FTF objectives and align with the GoB National Food Policy Plan of Action. This might include expansion of ongoing projects that were limited in scope due to funding constraints and/or initiation of new projects where gaps are identified.

Expandable ongoing projects include:

- Food security policy analysis and capacity building,
- Improved fertilizer application scaled up,
- Biotechnology research and development.

New projects might include:

- Broad-based agriculture and food security policy analysis,
- Agricultural value chain development,
- Co-management of ecological and economic landscapes for climate change adaptation,
- Agri-business development in the private sector,
- Wild fisheries,
- Linking poor and ultra-poor receiving assistance under Title II programs to markets and on-farm/off-farm value chains.

5. **Link with other USG priorities:** The Mission will modify on-going programs to achieve greater impact on food security:
  - Incorporating nutrition into existing health programs in anticipation of increased interaction with the Global Health Initiative for FY2010.
  - Developing a new clean water supply project using funds earmarked by Congress.

- Creating more opportunities for our contractors and grantees to exchange information and co-locate or coordinate project activities.
- Providing training, market linkages with other USAID partners (such as the PRICE project) and technology transfer support to Title II partners.

These actions will be catalogued and reported as part of Phase I accomplishments.

6. **Measure Phase I Progress:** To facilitate results reporting for Phase I, identify and create an inventory of program results and targets related to food security that have already been established as part of on-going projects. New process indicators should also be established for Phase I implementation

## 2. FY 2010 OBJECTIVES

### 2.1. COUNTRY-LED COMPREHENSIVE STRATEGY

National planning in Bangladesh, although extensive, is a highly fragmented process characterized by a proliferation of policy papers and plans, often developed as a prelude to, or a focus on, donor-funded technical assistance programs. This section provides a broad overview of only the most relevant, current, and known policy papers developed and endorsed by the GoB on subjects closely related to food security. USAID/Bangladesh plans to conduct a more thorough review and analysis of the food security policy landscape as part of the analytical agenda to support the policy dialogue with the GoB during Phase I of the FTF Initiative.

The most comprehensive national development plan is embodied in the Government's Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP). The GoB's Ministry of Planning, with guidance from a multi-ministerial National Steering Committee, is

responsible for coordinating the planning process and monitoring implementation progress. Through the endorsement and ratification of the PRSP, successive national governments have committed themselves to reducing poverty and meeting the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

The latest version of the PRSP, the Revised National Strategy for Accelerated Poverty Reduction 2009-2011 – “Steps Towards Change” (NSAPR II, revised), reflects the electoral manifesto of the current ruling party (Awami League). The NSAPR II, revised, is a precursor to the Long Term Perspective Plan (2010-2021), under preparation now. For realizing this long-term vision, the government will start the implementation of the sixth Five Year Plan (FY2011-2015) starting in July 2010. The present NSAPR II shall remain in force until FY 2011 and its performance will be reviewed each year.

NSAPR II consists of five strategic blocks and five supporting strategies. The strategic blocks are:

- macroeconomic environment for pro-poor growth
- critical areas for pro-poor growth
- essential infrastructure for pro-poor growth
- social protection for the vulnerable; and
- human development.

The supporting strategies comprise:

- ensuring participation, social inclusion, and empowerment;
- promoting good governance;
- ensuring efficient delivery of public services;
- caring for environment and tackling climate change; and
- enhancing productivity and efficiency through science and technology.

As noted in the NSARP II, “the critical concern of the strategy is to achieve higher growth as well as equity and poverty reduction simultaneously. In this context, the focus is on agriculture and rural life, expansion of social

safety nets for the ultra poor and a targeted approach towards employment generation.”

Similar to previous PRSPs, NSAPR II presents the analytical basis for a comprehensive development program, with strategic goals, key policy targets, actions taken or underway, and a policy agenda for 2009-11 set out in 18 policy matrices. The results are linked to the achievement of MDGs. The preliminary budget shows a shortfall of US \$12.5 billion that the government plans to cover by mobilizing US \$2.0 billion per year through Official Development Assistance, a sum in line with recent ODA levels, while the other part of the gap is expected to be mobilized through public-private partnerships and Foreign Direct Investment.

NSAPR II gives prominence to food security, recognizing it as “a core issue in the struggle against poverty.” In line with the National Food Policy, it takes a comprehensive approach to food security, encompassing availability, access and utilization for balanced nutrition. Food security is covered under *Policy Matrix 3: Agricultural Growth for Poverty Reduction* as well as *Policy Matrix 11: Social Safety Net, Food Security, Disaster Management, Scaling up of Micro-credit and Rural Non-farm Activities*. The document makes extensive reference to the National Food Policy (NFP) and to the NFP Plan of Action (NFP PoA, 2008-15). The Plan of Action outlines priority policy options designed to achieve the GoB’s three primary objectives: improve food availability, access to food, and nutrition.

Under each of the 26 key areas of intervention, the PoA details targets, indicators, actions, time frame, means of verification, responsibilities and assumptions based on a logical framework for clearly tracking implementing ministry responsibilities, while providing standards for measuring success. The Food Planning Monitoring Unit (FPMU) within the MoFDM is responsible for monitoring the NFP PoA implementation in coordination with the other 11 ministries and department, reporting to the



ministerial-level Food Planning and Monitoring Committee.

Another national plan incorporated in the NSAPR II relevant to the FTF Initiative is Bangladesh's Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan (BCCSAP, 2008-2009), which identifies "Food Security, Social Protection and Health" as the first of its six priority pillars. The BCCSAP includes two additional pillars potentially relevant to public organizations that aim to address food security: Research and Knowledge Management, and Capacity Building and Institutional Strengthening. The BCCSAP, whose development was supported by DFID, represents one of the best cross-sector strategies. The BCCSAP includes a list of 44 potential programs requiring support from the GoB and donors. The Mission plans to evaluate the BCCSAP as part of Phase I implementation to determine how USG assistance can support its implementation.

The BCCSAP lays out clearly the links between poverty reduction and climate change. Bangladesh has ratified the Copenhagen Accord and the GoB has established a \$100 million Climate Adaptation Fund for suitable proposals. A board of trustees, headed by the Environment Minister, will review and approve projects submitted by government agencies, NGOs, academia and civil society. With political support from the highest level of the government, the project approval process to access the Fund has been simplified. The policy environment, at least at the outset, has been more enabling in the area of climate change adaptation than in other crosscutting development areas. FTF will carefully leverage this enabling policy environment.

### **2.1.1. CONSULTATIVE PROCESS**

The National Food Policy (NFP) was endorsed by the Food Planning and Monitoring Committee (FPMC) and approved by the Cabinet in August 2006. Preparation of the NFP PoA involved numerous consultations with officials of partner ministries/divisions. MoFDM organized three seminars in April-May 2007 to

review the action agendas towards achieving the three core objectives of the NFP. A technical workshop was held in May 2007 to discuss the contents of a more comprehensive version of the document, including the action agenda, implementation and monitoring strategies. The workshop brought together more than 50 representatives of partner ministries, NGOs, academia and development partners. The PoA was revised based on the outcomes of the workshop. The revised document then was submitted to the Secretaries of 12 ministries represented in the Food Planning and Monitoring Committee and the Food Policy Working Group for comments. A workshop in May 2008 brought together MoFDM, MoA, MoF (Finance), MoP, MoLGRDC (Local Government) and the donor community to "validate" the PoA.

In December 2009 the MoFDM issued its first annual report on the NFP PoA. A subsequent GoB-donor Bangladesh Development Forum, held on February 15, 2010 (the first in five years) discussed policy and progress related to Food Security, Agriculture and Water Resources. Senior GoB officials and donors agreed on top food security priorities. This public commitment by key GoB leaders to priorities first outlined by previous governments was an important step in moving Bangladesh's country-led strategy forward and a powerful symbol of continuity.

### **2.1.2. STATUS OF EXISTING FOOD SECURITY STRATEGY AND NATIONAL NUTRITION STRATEGY PROCESS**

The NFP PoA takes the GoB's food security program another step toward better articulation of specific objectives and desired results. But it is still in the nascent stage of implementation as it is gradually being incorporated into the GoB annual development budget and medium-term budgetary framework. During Phase I of the FTF Initiative, USAID will work actively with the GoB to increase the prominence of food security as a development imperative and to help coordinate and focus

government and donor actions. Translating the PoA into the national budget has been slow, but is more indicative of an imperfect planning and budget process than it is a lack of interest or commitment.

In fact, the national budget currently funds a broad spectrum of public programs with primary or secondary objectives related to alleviating poverty and improving food security. As USG-funded programs continue to work with the new government on governance and transparency in its budget process, we anticipate opportunities to create greater linkages between the government's articulated development priorities and its national budget during the 2010-11 budget cycle. Given the importance of food security and its central role in the government's development platform, USAID and the EU recently renewed their commitment to working with the GoB to implement and monitor the Plan of Action by increasing support for the National Food Policy Capacity Strengthening Program (NFPCSP).

Overall, the NFP PoA is the outgrowth of a good comprehensive strategy but it may be difficult to implement. The indicators are numerous and some targets are overly ambitious; in some cases actions are quite broad and it is unclear how they will be implemented. The GoB will also need to be much more inclusive of other potential development partners and must establish clear leadership to ensure broad commitment from all of the responsible ministries.

The Food Planning and Monitoring Committee (FPMC) is the national policy body that monitors the implementation of the food policies. Following the approval of the NFP in 2006, an inter-ministerial coordination mechanism was established through the Food Policy Working Group (FPWG). The FPWG consists of Thematic Teams (TTs) including representatives from planning units or policy wings of the ministries involved in food security. Its overall responsibility is to facilitate the implementation of the NFP by guiding, coordinating and monitoring progress. Through

the NFPCSP, USAID will continue to work with the FPWG and the FPMC to develop the government's capacity to provide information and analytical support to coordinate and monitor the implementation of the NFP Plan of Action.

The NFP PoA is also closely linked in its nutrition component to the National Nutrition Program (NNP), the GoB's primary vehicle for addressing the challenges of under and malnutrition at a national level. In 2004 the NNP was integrated into the new Health, Nutrition and Population Sector Program (HNPPSP), a \$4.2 billion, four-year initiative. The WB administers the funds contributed by the GoB (66 percent) and several major donors. The consensus among stakeholders is that the NNP is a well-designed program with key community based interventions and approaches to tackle malnutrition at the household and health facility level. The NNP, however, lacks strong GoB commitment and suffers from fragmented implementation. The NNP is implemented as a vertical program separate from the two most powerful directorates in the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (MoHFW), Health Services and Family Planning. It has insufficient staff, capacity, visibility and influence, all of which have limited the NNP's impact on nutritional status.

There are, however, some positive aspects of the NNP implementation infrastructure. Community Nutrition Promoters (CNP) under the NNP are all educated women and are valued members of the community. The NNP has 24,000 community nutrition centers, and covers about 25 percent of the country. The NNP contracts 11 NGOs to provide nutrition services. Its field structure could be a valuable physical and human infrastructure for a "bottom-up" approach in building the capacity of local NGOs to improve nutrition and increase coverage.

A Nutrition Working Group comprised of GoB, donors and civil society has tried hard over the years to become effectively functional. USAID, working closely with UNICEF, the WB and the

NNP, initiated a consultative process to restructure and revitalize the Working Group by launching a nutrition roundtable meeting in June 2009. USAID's ongoing health program provides an excellent platform to strengthen integration of nutrition into maternal and child health services and initiate policy dialogue with the GoB to mainstream NNP activities into the rest of the MoHFW. This would strengthen implementation and monitoring and evaluation systems and better utilize health workers and resources to provide a comprehensive package of services. Nutrition can serve as a bridge between agriculture, food security and health to strengthen a coordinated approach across sectors. Through extensive consultations with the government, NGOs, and other donors, USAID program managers are in the process of developing a new strategic plan that integrates nutrition within health.

## **2.2. CAPACITY BUILDING**

Capacity building needs are great. The GoB institutional landscape for promoting food security in Bangladesh is characterized by fragmented approaches implemented by a multitude of institutions; lack of integration or coordination; unclear delineation of responsibilities; uneven or outdated analytical bases for decision making; and in some cases, lack of accountability for achieving results. Officials in various government agencies have differing perspectives on food security and the underlying causes of hunger and, as a result, propose and implement programs that may be counterproductive or achieve limited impact.

During Phase I implementation, USAID/Bangladesh will assess capacity requirements and, with the government, develop a viable capacity building plan that is linked to specific outputs and results. Capacity building activities will likely focus on the areas of education and awareness raising, professional development, data analysis, strategic, evidenced-based policy and program design.

## **2.3. INVEST IN PRIORITY ACTIONS**

USAID plays a leadership role in donor coordination groups that address issues of food security. The USG has engaged the GoB at the highest levels since President Obama's announcement of the FTF Initiative at the L'Aquila Summit in July 2009. In October 2009, the Ambassador, USAID Mission Director and high-level USG officials from Washington held discussions at the ministerial level to launch the Initiative and establish a framework for future dialogue. Through the USG Inter-agency Food Security Task Force, USAID will work across sectors to bring the full energy and resources of US foreign assistance to bear on the issue of food security and hunger in Bangladesh.

Achieving a national consensus on a single, multi-sector approach to food security and poverty reduction will not be easy, given divergent views and individual institutional agendas within the GoB and among development partners. But the additional resources committed under the FTF Initiative will allow the USG to be a credible partner. In FY 2010 the USAID Mission will work with other donors as well as the MoFDM and Ministry of Agriculture to prioritize essential actions in support of the NFP PoA. USAID will continue to strengthen the link between the NFP PoA, a medium-term investment framework, and Bangladesh's national development budget through USAID's NFPCSP and a new governance project aimed at creating greater transparency in the GOB budget process.

Through the creation of a national platform for policy dialogue, USAID will also work with other donors and USG agencies to raise the awareness of gross under-nutrition and population growth as major constraints to food security in Bangladesh. During Phase I, USAID will work to focus the national dialogue on linking these issues to persistent poverty and targeting resources to harness the potential of agricultural based economic growth. Development of a national investment plan as a complement to the NFP Plan of Action must



take place in conjunction with GoB and development partner consultations. Given the challenges of developing a consensus within the government, it is difficult to predict when this national investment plan will be ready. Meanwhile, we may need to proceed on the basis of identified priorities as part of a phased approach toward building consensus.

Investment priorities linking food security and poverty alleviation to climate change may be clearer. The GoB went to the 15<sup>th</sup> Climate Change Conference of Parties (COP-15) in Copenhagen in December 2009 with a well prepared strategy, the Bangladesh Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan (BCCSAP). The BCCSAP highlights adaptation measures to ensure food security and social protection for the most vulnerable; better comprehensive disaster management; climate-proofing of infrastructure; more research and knowledge; investment in low carbon development and mitigation; and appropriate institutions and capacity building to help the country tackle climate change. Bangladesh actively pressed the case for additional, dedicated financing from the international community for countries most affected by global climate change.

### 3. TARGET GROUPS BY LOCATION AND INCOME

Bangladesh has made significant progress in reducing poverty levels in the last two decades, but the number percentage of people living in poverty is still very high (Table 1). According to the World Bank "Poverty Assessment for Bangladesh," more than 56 million people were living in poverty in 2005. Of these, 35 million were living in extreme poverty.

**Table 1. Poverty and Extreme Poverty (Percent of Population)**

	1991-1992	1995-1996	2000	2005
Poverty	56.8	50.1	48.9	40.0
Extreme Poverty	41.3	35.1	34.3	25.1

Source: World Bank, "Poverty Assessment," 2008

#### 3.1. MOTHERS AND CHILDREN

Bangladesh saw remarkable improvements in nutrition between 1990 and 2005. Between 2004 and 2007, stunting (too short for age) among children declined from 51 to 43 percent and underweight children decreased from 43 to 41 percent. Still, Bangladesh has some of the highest malnutrition rates in the world and is making insufficient progress toward achieving MDG 1.

Lack of access to adequate quality and quantity of food, particularly for pregnant women, as well as poor feeding practices are the primary causes of malnutrition of infant and young children. Over 10 million children under age 5 suffer from malnutrition, which contributes to two in three child deaths. There is some evidence that after the 2007-08 price hike and food crisis, the prevalence of underweight status increased to 54 percent and wasting increased to 26 percent, while stunting increased to 49 percent. Both chronic and acute malnutrition levels are above WHO's threshold for public health emergencies. In Bangladesh, chronic under-nutrition and childhood malnutrition are not only products of extreme poverty, but major causes of persistent poverty for a large portion of the next generation.

#### 3.2. AGRICULTURAL PRODUCERS

Recognition of the links between hunger, poverty and agriculture is critical if MDG 1 targets are to be achieved. Poor people typically do not possess the means to produce or acquire sufficient food necessary for an active and healthy life. Poverty and small landholdings are closely correlated (Table 2). The poor are more vulnerable to devastation in the event of adverse shocks. Hunger – and malnutrition – can trap poor people into an endless cycle of poverty that passes on to their children (the so-called "hunger/low productivity/extreme poverty" trap).

Roughly 72 per cent of poor people in Bangladesh live in rural areas and depend

directly or indirectly on agriculture for their livelihoods, including those with little land (Table 3). Agriculture accounts for more than

50 per cent of the country's available livelihood opportunities and remains vital for the sustainable reduction of poverty and hunger.

**Table 2. Poverty and Land Ownership in Rural Areas, 2005**

Land Size	Poverty Rate (percent)	Population Share (percent)
Landless <0.05 acre (0.02 ha)	56.8	45.8
Functionally landless 0.05-0.5 acre (0.02-0.2 ha)	48.8	15.9
Marginal 0.5-1.5 acres (0.2-0.6 ha)	35.1	18.8
Small 1.5-2.5 acres (0.6-1.0 ha)	23.7	8.8
Medium/large 2.5 acres or more (>1 ha)	12.8	10.7

Source: World Bank, "Poverty Assessment," 2008

**Table 3. Poverty Rate and Population Share by Occupation of Head of Household in 2005**

Occupation of Head of Household	Poverty Rate (percent)			Population Share (percent)		
	Rural	Urban	Total	Rural	Urban	Total
Self employed: agriculture	33	27	33	29	6	23
Self employed: non-agriculture	38	23	33	17	31	20
Salaried employee	27	17	22	10	31	15
Daily wage: agriculture	72	72	72	19	5	16
Daily wage: non-agriculture	60	55	59	12	15	13

Source: World Bank, "Poverty Assessment," 2008

### 3.3. CIVIL SERVICE

Capacity building is a critical component of the Mission's FTF strategy. Institutional capacity for food security in Bangladesh is hindered by lack of coordination among multiple institutions, lacking data for evidence-based initiatives, and accountability and transparency challenges.

During Phase I implementation, USAID/Bangladesh will assess the ministries involved with the National Food Policy Plan of Action and determine where investments can be made to improve integration, accountability and access to quality data. Further discussions

with the GoB will be required to construct a capacity building plan that is linked to specific outputs and results in key areas for food security.

### 3.4. CIVIL SOCIETY

USAID/Bangladesh has a wealth of experience working in cooperation with civil society, NGOs, and the private sector. Often we are viewed as the go-between for government and the non-government sectors. The USG has a long history advocating for those who are poor and who have the least access to governmental services. USAID will facilitate and promote a

healthy and transparent debate over food security issues between the government, NGOs, civil societies, academics, private sector and the public at large. To achieve this, USAID will assist the various stakeholders with exchange study tours, facilitation, or technical assistance that leads to dialogue on food policy issues. Further review will determine what form additional assistance should take.

### **3.5. THOSE VULNERABLE TO CLIMATE CHANGE**

Rural workers and farmers involved in domestic agriculture, people employed in the fishing and aquaculture industry, and those who depend on an endangered natural resource base represent groups most vulnerable to climatic disasters, environmental degradation, land loss, and poverty. Increasing the productivity of their labors, reducing the costs of production and improving local market and trade conditions must be addressed as part of Phase II of the FTF Initiative.

### **3.6. WOMEN-HEADED HOUSEHOLDS**

Women heads of household and the extremely poor constitute a special target group as they are even more vulnerable to all the factors that contribute to persistent poverty. Women are heavily engaged in the production of vegetables, livestock, poultry, shrimp, fish, and rice but to a large extent do not financially benefit from the sale of these crops and livestock, because marketing tends to be dominated by male family members. FTF programs developed under Phase I will need to take into consideration the role of women in agriculture, as they carry the primary responsibility for many labor-intensive activities in agricultural production. To begin gathering data on the role of women in agriculture, the Mission undertook a gender assessment in January 2010 with assistance from USAID/Washington; findings are not yet available. This assessment supports the broader analytical agenda to develop an evidence-based strategy and portfolio of interventions under the FTF Initiative.

### **3.7. GEOGRAPHIC TARGETING**

The USG's FTF initiative will be targeted to the areas of Bangladesh that are most vulnerable to food insecurity and where interventions can be expected to have a significant impact on a relatively large number of people. The Mission will work with the GoB to select areas that take into consideration not only the severity of the food insecurity and poverty, but also the total numbers of people who are affected. The Mission will examine two indicators of food insecurity that are the closest proxies available for lack of access to food (percent of poor/extreme poor) and poor food utilization (percent of children under five who are chronically malnourished). Information on both these indicators is available down to the district and *upazila* through WFP's poverty mapping. These two indicators work particularly well in concert, because poverty/extreme poverty correlates with lack of access to markets, low agricultural wage rates, as well as vulnerability to natural disaster as a result of climate change.

To support better targeting of food security programs toward activities and particularly at-risk groups, USAID plans a Phase I analytical agenda that will include a series of studies to improve our understanding of the factors that influence rural families' food consumption patterns and participation in agricultural or other productive activities. A recent USAID/Bangladesh nutrition strategy assessment recommended that a near-term research agenda include studies on 1) new complementary food products – such as lipid-nutrient supplement (LNS) to be used in critical feeding programs for improving the nutritional status and 2) newborn vitamin A supplementation delivery platforms. The assessment recommended against mounting a costly national nutrition and food consumption survey at this time, since household-level surveys and smaller scale individual consumption surveys are available and can be used as a first source of information to inform program design. Depending on how Phase II programming evolves, the Mission may consider undertaking such a national study if a more

extensive literature review identifies significant information gaps that cannot be filled through operational research during implementation.

### **3.8. USING A SUSTAINABLE LANDSCAPE APPROACH**

Interactions matter for targeting. Food security in any geographical location is a conglomerate function of many technical areas and development sectors. While sustainable agriculture will be of primary importance in addressing food security, the Mission will also give natural resources a focused importance. The interplay of agriculture, ecosystem functions and services, natural resources capital, vulnerability and livelihood challenges, and, importantly, demographic and socioeconomic factors all define the success of food security initiatives. The FTF Initiative will be cognizant of these crucial interactions and will use a “sustainable landscape” approach for appropriate and geographic targeting.

There is empirical evidence that one of the poorest sections of the Bangladesh population lives in degraded areas, once characterized by vibrant ecosystems that sustained livelihoods. The Mission’s previous and ongoing interventions in natural resource co-management in wetland and forest protected areas show that a sustainably managed landscape is capable of enhancing biodiversity, increasing ecosystem productivity, improving food security of the poor, and contributing to poverty reduction.

USAID/Bangladesh is working to create protected area-centered sustainable landscapes. Activities focus on community-driven conservation enhancement for sustainable natural resource management and investment in conservation-related resource development. The Mission will carefully design activities under the FTF Initiative to expand the protected area-centered landscape as a means of increasing productivity and incomes of the rural poor. Using environmentally sustainable approaches will also help reduce net greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and enhance sequestration of carbon

associated with land use and management, including forestry and aquatic systems.

Using a landscape approach, the Mission will work with the GoB to select areas that take into consideration not only the severity of the problem, but also the total numbers of people who are affected.

## **4. CORE INVESTMENTS**

### **4.1. CORE INVESTMENT AREAS**

USAID/Bangladesh’s plans to modify its overall development approach under the new FTF Initiative in two significant ways. First, the availability of new resources from several new global initiatives (health, food security, climate change, global engagement) comes at a critical juncture in the political development of Bangladesh as the GoB leadership seeks to achieve a lasting legacy of poverty eradication. The magnitude of possible funding for Bangladesh will enable the USG to play a significant leadership role in engaging the GOB and other donors and to reinforce national policies and programs to achieve broad and lasting improvements in food security in Bangladesh.

Second, the Mission will develop a single plan for food security to maximize its impact, ensuring that activities carried out in different sectors work together effectively to create and sustain positive change. Resources from all the new initiatives will fund programs that are specifically linked to improving food security and reducing poverty for target groups and critical areas.

Agriculture is the engine of growth best placed to accelerate rural economic development and promote national food security. Agriculture is also a priority for the GoB, which has clearly articulated its plan for improving availability; accesses and utilization of food. USAID will help the GoB achieve this plan by improving

productivity, diversifying the food basket, expanding markets and trade, encouraging regional integration, harnessing global innovation and research, adapting agricultural practices to the new challenges posed by climate change, enhancing nutritional status and improving the link between sustainable agriculture and social safety nets.

The core investment areas are briefly described below and further explained in section 4.3 (Building on Earlier Investments).

1. Intensify, increase and diversify agricultural production;
2. Develop agricultural markets, value addition and regional trade;
3. Support research capacity and enhance extension outreach;
4. Support food and agriculture policy reform;
5. Improve nutritional status;
6. Link agricultural development with safety net and non-emergency food aid programs;
7. Improve adaptation to climate change; and
8. Build stakeholder capacity for effective aid.

Investment in these areas will contribute towards food security, hunger mitigation, poverty reduction, and improved nutrition in Bangladesh.

#### **4.1.1. INTENSIFY AND DIVERSIFY AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTION**

The 2007-08 world food crisis, compounded by two major floods and a cyclone, resulted in an additional 7.5 million people becoming undernourished (consuming less than 2,122 Kcal/day) and 6.9 percent severely undernourished (less than 1,805 Kcal/day). During this period Bangladesh was unable to import rice at affordable prices despite good global production. This has reinforced the GoB's focus on self-sufficiency, especially in rice. At the same time, diversification of agricultural production is sought as a means to increase household incomes and improve household nutrition. This will necessitate more land be shifted away from rice production to other crops. Both self-sustainability in rice and diversification of production are only possible if

rice productivity increases substantially, releasing land and resources to other crops. Supporting the intensification of rice production and the diversification of production into high-potential crops such as pulses, oilseeds, fruits and vegetables, will be a primary focus of USAID/Bangladesh.

Under the FTF Initiative, USAID will also begin to address livestock production and expand work in aquaculture. This is especially important because women are more involved in the raising of animals and the entire family benefits from improved nutrition and increased incomes. About 80 percent of the rural population depends directly or indirectly on wetlands for fish and other aquatic resources for food and income but these resources have been declining steadily over the last three decades due to loss and degradation of the wetlands. Establishing best practices for fisheries management can restore and increase productivity and facilitate long-term sustainable capture fisheries.

#### **4.1.2. DEVELOP MARKETS FOR AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTS, VALUE ADDITION AND REGIONAL TRADE**

The agricultural marketing systems and infrastructure in Bangladesh do not currently facilitate the participation of smaller, poorer farmers or create any incentive for diversification away from rice. With the growing middle class in large cities, demand for high quality agricultural products is increasing. Producing to this demand could raise small farmers' incomes, but will require improving the quality of production, organizing producer associations to reduce transaction costs and disseminate market information, strengthening value chain relationships, improving post-harvest storage, transportation and processing, and a host of other measures that will encourage farmers to produce more diverse, higher-value items.

Regional integration, with India playing an important role, is another essential component for achieving food security in Bangladesh.

Although there is some official regional trade, unofficial trade is thought to be more significant. A regional trade and policy coordination mechanism could benefit all countries in the region by reducing unregulated, black-market activity, moderating price volatility and improving response to emergencies.

#### **4.1.3. SUPPORT RESEARCH CAPACITY AND ENHANCE EXTENSION OUTREACH**

Research and extension will be key to Bangladesh's achievement of food security. Intensification of rice production, successful diversification of agricultural production and adaptation to challenges brought about by climate change will all require localized innovation and the dissemination of best practices.

Development of varieties specifically adapted to Bangladesh's needs will improve resistance to insect/disease, as well as improve tolerance to drought, increased salinity and the floods that are becoming more frequent as the climate shifts. Innovation and dissemination of best practices in efficient fertilizer use, water-saving irrigation, soil fertility management, and post harvest and agro-processing techniques will increase production, increasing incomes and better utilize resources.

To promote innovations in diet-based nutrition, the Mission may also support the development of new rice varieties that incorporate trace elements for diet deficiencies such as vitamin A, Zinc, Iron and folic acid. Development and promotion of short-season (or between-season) crops such as pulses and edible oil crops might fit into an environment of prolonged flooding or short duration droughts. Expansion of aquaculture in coastal areas that are too saline to grow crops could help coastal communities economically adapt to climate changes. Fish and shellfish research is urgently needed to increase production yields to profitable levels.

Bangladesh has a very good National Agricultural Research System (NARS) with world renowned scientists. However, the research facilities are in need of upgrading and senior scientific staff is rapidly approaching retirement. Clearly the NARS are in need of investments for both physical infrastructure and human capacity building.

#### **4.1.4. SUPPORT FOOD AND AGRICULTURE POLICY REFORM**

Achievement of food security in Bangladesh will require policy adjustments and a restructuring of the role that the government takes in promoting agricultural development and providing social safety nets. These should be based upon rigorous data collection and sound analysis.

Currently, the GoB is heavily involved in the agricultural sector. Policy signals promote rice production, often at the expense of other crops, aquaculture or livestock production. A disproportionate amount of resources are channeled towards this crop, which has come to define national food security. The government also intervenes substantially in the market for agricultural inputs (especially fertilizers and fuel), resulting in market distortions and disincentives for private sector activities. These programs need to be carefully monitored with evaluation of efficacy informing further policy refinements. Recently, the GoB has begun exploring alternatives to how it intervenes in these markets. The GoB also influences food imports and exports through tariffs and non tariff interventions. These policies need to be evaluated from a food security perspective.

There is a positive role for more GoB involvement in such areas as the establishment and enforcement of grades, standards and food safety; monitoring and early warning on climatic and market risks; and rice market performance. While the government has recently begun to explore alternative modalities for providing social safety nets, closer attention also needs to



be placed on these programs to improve monitoring capacity, ensure better targeting, and reduce “leakage.” Carrying out these public sector functions requires reliable and comprehensive data for monitoring, evaluation, analysis and policy recommendations. Under the FTF Initiative, USAID/Bangladesh will support institutional strengthening of food security related data collection and analysis necessary for sound policy formulation.

#### **4.1.5. IMPROVE NUTRITIONAL STATUS**

In the area of nutrition, USAID/Bangladesh’s strategy is to work with the government to raise the profile of nutrition and better integrate nutrition interventions into its national health policy and programs. Attention will also be given to activities where health and education approaches intersect with agricultural approaches to nutrition to maximize synergy of investments made from different funding sources.

In the immediate term we will better integrate nutrition into all USAID/Bangladesh health activities, focus on behavior change communication, increase stakeholder collaboration and align core indicators across USAID/Bangladesh programs.

In the longer term we plan to improve implementation of the National Nutrition Program (NNP) through building central and local level government capacity for NNP, focusing on better implementation to improve nutritional outcomes, integrating community management of acute malnutrition (CMAM) into the national health system, and developing a model for NNP to scale up.

In the area of humanitarian food assistance, preparations for the next five-year Food for Peace PL 480 Title II program are now underway. The new program, scheduled to begin in FY 2010, will address food security for the poor at the household level through integrated development activities, with a special

focus on nutrition and agriculture-based economic growth.

Under social safety nets, the Mission will likely target capacity building to improve the functioning of the GoB’s food and emergency feeding systems. Specific programs to be supported in nutrition, humanitarian assistance, and social safety nets will be developed in conjunction with the GoB and future directions are described further in Section 4.3.

#### **4.1.6. LINK AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT WITH SAFETY NET AND NON-EMERGENCY FOOD AID PROGRAMS**

In terms of food relief, USAID’s current PL 480 Title II non-emergency program offers safety net programs that complement GoB programs to provide cash for work and food for work in the aftermath of disaster, as well as during annual “lean” seasons when vulnerable populations are most food insecure. USAID will continue these safety net programs under its new multi-year non-emergency P.L. 480 assistance program (Section 4.1.5.). Through these programs, USAID also seeks to improve household food production and increase incomes by promoting appropriate technologies, improved inputs and best practices, and expanding beneficiary access to service-providers and markets. Wherever possible, USAID will seek to maximize synergies between Title II PL 480 non-emergency programs and programs funded with development assistance.

The USDA-sponsored school feeding programs implemented by Land O’ Lakes and the World Food Program in Bangladesh have been highly successful and well-received by the GoB. The GoB is trying to maintain school feeding in some areas previously covered by USDA programs.

#### **4.1.7. IMPROVE ADAPTATION TO CLIMATE CHANGE**

Adapting to climate change is a key food security challenge for low-lying Bangladesh (Section 1.1.). A large area has become salt affected over the last 35 years; more than 170,000 hectares have been affected in 11 coastal districts. As much as 8 percent of the low-lying lands may become permanently inundated, making the soil unproductive due to increased salinity. Seventy million people could be affected annually by floods by 2050 and an additional 8 million by drought. Rice production may decline by 8 percent and wheat by 32 percent.

Adaptation to climate change will be an essential component of FTF activities in Bangladesh. Intensification and diversification of agriculture, improving wetland production and intensifying aquaculture, development and dissemination of climate-adaptive (such as salt- and drought-tolerant) crop varieties, increasing input efficiency, and so on will be the core adaptation techniques. A landscape-level, pro-poor, economic growth model will help communities build a climate resilient micro-economy and, importantly, benefit from climate mitigation transactions such as selling carbon credits earned from natural resource conservation. Programming will also assist communities to develop mechanisms for risk reduction, such as infrastructure to protect crops from flooding, and risk transfer mechanisms to help protect productive assets in the face of extreme shocks.

#### **4.1.8. BUILD STAKEHOLDER CAPACITY FOR EFFECTIVE AID**

The GoB must take a strong leadership role to make agriculture a major economic growth driver and an instrument for poverty and hunger reduction. The Ministry of Food and Disaster Management currently holds responsibility for implementing the National Food Policy, which involves a large number of other government Ministries through a National Steering Committee. To promote an active and transparent debate over food security issues, NGOs, civil societies, academics, private sector actors and consumers need to exchange ideas and work together to find solutions that serve the welfare of the citizens of Bangladesh. In this spirit, US foreign assistance to Bangladesh, through USAID, USDA and the Embassy's Public Affairs Section, will assist the GoB, NGOs, civil society, and the private sector, with exchange study tours, facilitation, and/or technical assistance that leads to dialogue on food policy issues.

#### **4.2. BANGLADESH PRIORITIES**

USG core investment areas are consistent with the GOB National Food Policy and Plan of Action (Table 4).



**Table 4. Summary of GoB National Food Policy Plan of Action and USAID Aligned or Planned Activities**

PoA Areas of Interventions	Priorities for Action	USAID Activities	Responsible Ministries
NFP Objective I:	Adequate and stable supply of safe and nutritious food		
I.1. Agricultural Research and Extension	Developing and disseminating demand-driven crop and non-crop new technologies; Expanding demand-led and pro-poor extension services	Yes	Ministry of Agriculture (MoA), Ministry of Fisheries and Livestock (MoFL)
I.2. Use and Management of Water Resources	Increasing irrigation coverage; improving delivery and efficient use of safe irrigation water; reducing dependency on ground water; reducing cost of irrigation water	Yes	MoA, Ministry of Land (MoL), Ministry of Water Resources (MoWR)
I.3. Supply and sustainable use of agricultural inputs	Increasing supply of quality crop and non-crop seeds, timely supply of fertilizers and balanced use of agricultural land use; increasing efficiency and sustainability of agricultural land use; effectively regulating the use of agricultural land for non-agricultural purposes; improving availability and affordability of agricultural machinery and equipment; strengthening Integrated Pest Management (IPM) and Integrated Crop Management (ICM) practices	Yes	MoA, MoFL, MoL, Ministry of Environment and Forest (MoEF), Ministry of Industries (MoI), Ministry of Commerce (MoC)
I.4. Agricultural Diversification	Increasing and improving management of production of high value crops, fish and livestock products	Yes	MoA, MoFL, MoL
I.5. Agricultural Credit and Insurance	Increasing formal credit to agriculture, especially small and marginal farmers; improving coverage of financial loss due to production failures	Maybe	Ministry of Finance (MoF), Bangladesh Bank (BB, the central bank of Bangladesh)
I.6. Physical Market infrastructure development	Improving private storage, market and transportation facilities, improving market connectivity at local, national and international levels	Yes	MoA, MoF, Ministry of Local Government, Rural Development and Cooperatives (MoLGRDC), MoC, Ministry of Food and Disaster Management (MoFDM), Ministry of Shipping (MoS)
I.7. Agricultural Marketing and Trade	Reducing marketing costs of agricultural products and strengthening market integration	Yes	MoA, MoFDM, Food Planning and Monitoring Unit (FPMU), Ministry of Science and Information and Communication Technology (MoSICT)

1.8. Policy/Regulatory Environment	Updating, enacting and enforcing legislation regulating food markets	Yes	MoF, MoA, MoC, MoLGRDC, Ministry of Law, Justice and Parliamentary Affairs (MoLJPA)
1.9. Early Warning system development	Establishment of well-functioning domestic Early Warning System integrated/coordinated with the global Early Warning System	Yes	MoFDM/FPMU, MoSICT, MoLGRDC, MoA, MoC
1.10. Producer Price Support	Enhancing effectiveness of the public procurement system; providing effective support to producer price during post harvest seasons	No	MoFDM/FPMU, MoF, MoC, Ministry of Social Welfare (MoSW)
1.11. Public Food Stock Management/ Price Stabilization	Improving public stock management, public storage facilities and capacities and enhancing effectiveness of Open Market Sale (OMS) operations	Yes	MoFDM, MoF, MoC, MoSICT
<b>NFP Objective 2:</b>	<b>Increased purchasing power and access to food of the people</b>		
2.1. Agricultural Disaster Management	Enhancing disaster preparedness and post-disaster rehabilitation in agricultural systems	Yes	MoFDM, MoA, MoFL, MoL, MoLGRDC, MoF
2.2. Emergency food distribution for public stocks	Improving coverage and effectiveness of emergency distribution programs	Yes	MoFDM, MoSW, MoA, MoC, MoF, Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (MoHFW)
2.3. Enabling Environment for Private Food Trade and Stock (see 1.8.)	See Areas of Intervention 1.6. to 1.8.	Yes	See 1.6 to 1.8.
2.4. Effectiveness of targeted food security programs and other safety nets	Improving coverage of vulnerable and disadvantaged people and areas (especially <i>Monga</i> famine-prone areas); targeting; cost-effectiveness; reducing leakage; enhancing adequacy to vulnerable people's nutritional needs.	Yes	MoFDM, MoSW, Ministry of Women and Children Affairs (MoWCA), MoLGRDC, MoHFW, MoF
2.5. Income generation for women and the disabled	Enhancing participation of women and disabled people in rural agricultural and other rural activities	Yes	MoWCA, MoLGRDC, MoA, MoFL, MoSW, Ministry of Labor and Employment (MoLE)
2.6. Agro-based/ agro-processing Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) development	Supporting the expansion of agro-based/ agro-processing industries and Micro, Small and Medium sized Enterprises (MSMEs)	Yes	MoA, MoF, MoFL, MoL, MoLGRDC, MoWCA
2.7. Market driven education, skills and human development	Enhancing quality of technical and vocational education and training (TVET) to meet skill requirements of domestic and international markets	Maybe	MoLE, Ministry of Youth and Sports (MoYS), MoI

### **4.3. HOW AREAS BUILD ON EARLIER INVESTMENTS**

This section illustrates USAID/Bangladesh's strengths and past experiences in the core investment areas (section 4.1.). All core areas align with the National Food Policy Plan of Action (Table 4). However, the GoB is currently prioritizing Investments Areas and they will present GoB's Investment Plan at a conference in Manila, Philippines, in July 2010. The ADB, FAO, IFAD and USAID are sponsoring the event to highlight food security. After GoB prioritizes its Investment Areas, the USG will then re-prioritize its Core Investment Areas to align with the GoB Investment Plan.

#### **4.3.1. INTENSIFY, INCREASE AND DIVERSIFY AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTION**

Bangladesh is nearly self-sufficient in rice and is making substantial progress on improving infrastructure, making food delivery to the poor more efficient and inputs more affordable. Rice self-sufficiency was achieved due to four factors 1) investments in cereals, notably rice research, over the last 35 years; 2) privatization of input suppliers in the late 1980s and food grain trade in the late 1990s; 3) high rice support prices, and 4) heavy subsidies on fertilizer, tillage equipment and irrigation pumps. USAID contributed significantly to the first two factors: where our investments in rice research are well known, particularly in Bangladesh, for helping bring about the Green Revolution and setting the stage for improved access to inputs and introduction of high yielding varieties. Equally important were investments by USAID in Bangladesh's research capacity, scientist training, and infrastructure, as well as lower population growth.

Currently, IFDC is promoting urea deep placement technology that increases rice yields by 30 percent and requires one-third less fertilizer than the broadcast method, thereby leading to greater profitability. USAID and USDA have tested this technology with farmers and Bangladesh's Department of Agricultural Extension (DAE). Bangladesh is now ready to

scale up this technology, saving millions of dollars in fertilizer costs to both farmers (lower input costs) and the government (lower subsidy budget), increasing rice output substantially and reducing negative impact on the environment. More importantly, increasing rice yields will free up land to diversify into other crops.

One way to increase nutritional quality in the diet is to make more varieties of food available both on the farm and in the market. US assistance will promote crop diversification not only for dietary benefits but also income diversification. Researchers will need to work on other crop varieties that meet the needs of farmers and markets. Better outreach by Bangladesh's extension service will also be needed to meet this challenge

A World Bank project that ushered in privatization of input suppliers propelled Bangladesh to rice self-sufficiency mainly through policy reform that allowed duty-free imports of farm machinery, like tractor tillers and shallow tubewell pumps. The use of shallow tubewell pumps revolutionized rice production in Bangladesh, making it possible to grow rice during the *boro* (dry) season. This doubled the country's annual rice production. USAID's project (Fertilizer Distribution Improvement Project I & II-1978-94; Agro-based Industries and Technology Development Project I & II-1995-2004; and Financial Sector Reform Program-1991-96) convinced the government to import hybrid rice seed germplasm and provided assistance to banks to finance the pumps. This project was highlighted in the "Millions Fed" IFPRI publication (2009) as one of the twenty most proven successes in agricultural development in the last fifty years.

Though hunger is not the scourge it once was in Bangladesh, nearly one-third of the population is still malnourished mainly due to an unbalanced diet. The poor nutritional quality of food, in addition to low caloric intake, is one of the main causes of malnourishment in the country. Most Bangladeshis consume the recommended caloric intake, but 75 percent of most diets consists of rice. Greater attention needs to be placed on dietary diversification, more

consumption of plant and animal/fish proteins, edible oils, legumes, vegetables and fruits.

Various programs by donors such as ADB and USAID have had limited success in diversifying crops, mainly due to the heavy emphasis on rice production. Research on oil, pulses, vegetables and even fish and animal production has lagged as a result. Nutrition improvement and food security require expanding non-food grain availability while maintaining food grain availability. Continued efforts are required to sustainably intensify cropping systems and enhance the efficiency of food production and marketing systems.

Blessed with an abundance of rivers, coastlines, ocean access, estuaries, oxbows, and lakes, as well as systems of man-made ponds and seasonally flooded fields, Bangladesh is well-suited for wild fisheries and aquaculture. Fish have always been an integral part of the Bangladeshi diet. Demand for fish is growing as it is a relatively cheap source of protein and is an alternative to poultry, which has been affected by avian influenza. This high demand for fish has put tremendous pressure on wild fisheries already under threat of ecosystem degradation.

USAID/Bangladesh is considered the leader in capture fisheries and aquaculture development with a strong historical presence in the sector, through such programs as Integrated Aquaculture-Agriculture Sustainable Practices (1992-2000); Development of Sustainable Aquaculture Project (2000-05); Management of Aquatic Ecosystems through Community Husbandry (MACH, 1998-2003 and 2003-07); Poverty Reduction by Increasing the Competitiveness of Enterprises (PRICE, 2008-2012); and Cyclone Affected Aquaculture Rehabilitation Project (CAARP, 2008-10). The Mission's current programs emphasize increasing production and improving farming system technologies (using fish as a rotational "crop" following rice as well as year-round management practices in ponds and cage culture). USAID is also engaged in value chain development of fish and shrimp, including production, processing, marketing and trade.

USAID's extensive network of organized, legally established community-based co-management organizations (CMO) in natural resource management (NRM) were developed by USAID: MACH, 1998-2007; Nishorgo Support Project, 2003-08; and Integrated Protected Area Co-Management (IPAC)-2008-present. These CMOs provide platforms for a "Landscape/Watershed Approach" that combines natural resource management and agricultural development to increase food security, income, and environmental protection. The FTF Initiative will continue to promote the CMO model, assisting at the policy and implementation levels, to sustainably manage landscapes. These ecosystems will become more bio-diverse and productive as the FTF Initiative introduces better practices for agriculture, horticulture, agroforestry and fisheries value chains.

USAID/Bangladesh has not concentrated exclusively on women's empowerment for nearly a decade. Past projects were quite creative in moving women into higher status. For example, the Women in Development (1977) and the Women Enterprise Development (1992-97) projects focused exclusively on women's empowerment. USAID also has provided funds for strengthening the National Women's Development Academy, and the Women Enterprise Development Project (1992-97) which was a credit program for women. USAID now carries out a gender impact assessment when designing all its new activities.

The family approach has been used in some USAID activities, such as the Whole Family Wheat and Maize Production Training Program (1997-2003) and CAARP (2008-10). The principle underlying these programs is that the whole family benefits from the training by understanding the full range of pre- and post-harvest tasks and practices to improve productivity. Furthermore a focus on families is a more effective way to reach women. However, many questions remain about how best to reach women farmers and how to best train women to take a greater role in agricultural research, extension, production,

and marketing. Women graduates of agricultural universities tend to go into teaching and research, rather than extension, making it difficult to find role models for women in the field. The Role of Women in Agriculture Study will assist the Mission in better designing activities to reach women more effectively.

#### **4.3.2. DEVELOP MARKETS FOR AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTS, VALUE ADDITION AND REGIONAL TRADE**

Efficient market development is needed to move inputs to farmers and outputs from farmers to consumers. Distortions in input prices and policies (such as fertilizer, credit, seeds) and outputs (especially food grains) can inhibit adoption of improved technologies as well as reduce farmer incomes through low producer prices. USAID's past successes, such as the Agro-based Industries and Technology Development Project- ATDP (1995-2004) and Fertilizer Distribution Improvements (1979-94), have built a foundation for private sector-led input markets. Less distortionary input subsidies by the government would go a long way in strengthening the private agro-inputs sector. Though much work remains, a step in the right direction would be the use of fertilizer vouchers or cash transfers directly to farmers for making purchases from local dealers. The Prime Minister recently announced that she intends to switch from direct fertilizer distribution by the Department of Agricultural Extension (DAE) to a debit card system that ensures that the subsidy reaches small farmers directly.

Poverty Reduction by Increasing the Competitiveness of Enterprises (PRICE, 2008-12) is a USAID project working with private sector input suppliers in developing new product lines and services for farmers. In addition, PRICE also works along value chains to link farmers to buyers/processors, exporters and markets.

There is great potential for developing and disseminating market information, organizing rural small producers, forming collection

centers, improved storage and transportation techniques, processing and value addition. The Mission can draw on USAID's worldwide experience to develop marketing information and grades and standards related to product quality and a host of other measures that will encourage farmers to produce diverse, higher-value items.

Output market inefficiencies, including those caused by high storage losses, lack of information and high transport costs, can be important for fruits and vegetables, pulses and other non-grain crops. The efficiency of food production and marketing structures/systems must go hand in hand to stabilize markets. Market stabilization entails efficient stock policy, appropriate public interventions, effective international trade policy and development of non-cereal food markets.

The USG will work with various players in the marketing systems for agricultural produce/products by building capacity in processing, product development, infrastructure such as cold storage and packing sheds, marketing information systems, trade, financing, input suppliers and farmer groups. The USG will work closely with government policy decision makers to develop sound and rational policies to attract the private sector investments in agricultural markets.

The GOB and other donors look increasingly to USAID to help fill the void in marketing assistance. All donors consulted for this Implementation Plan acknowledges USAID strengths in market development. As the middle class grows, there is increasing demand for supermarkets and one-stop shopping, creating substantial potential for contract farming that will strengthen backward and forward linkages between growers and distributors. This will result in higher incomes and also increased household consumption of more diversified nutritious food. In the first phase of FTF, Mission Dhaka will explore ways to best use resources to strengthen markets and expand contract farming.

The recent State visit by the Prime Minister to India, where bilateral trade issues were on the agenda, is encouraging. Opportunities exist for further discussions on trade. Based on the experience of the regional USAID/SARI energy program, it is clear that improving trade relations between India and Bangladesh will face major challenges. However, USAID Missions in Bangladesh and India should explore means to capitalize on this new opening.

#### **4.3.3. SUPPORT RESEARCH CAPACITY AND ENHANCE EXTENSION OUTREACH**

Over the past three decades USAID has made investments in the agriculture sector that have yielded significant results in areas such as rice research, biotechnology research review, field trials and seed dissemination through the Development Services and Training Project (1974-79); Agricultural Research Project (1976-93); Introduction and Development Technology for Sustainable Year-round Production in Bangladesh (1992-2000); and Agricultural Biotechnology Support Program (2005-12). USAID has supported agricultural research almost continuously since 1974. This has paid off with one of the best NARS in the world. The NARS is a capable partner with significant USAID involvement over the years.

USAID's strategy for lasting extension information dissemination has been to embed these services within NGOs, or the private sector. USAID has not worked on extension directly with the government since the Agricultural Assistance program ended in 1980. That has changed since the Urea Deep Placement project began, with USAID and USDA working directly with the GoB's Agricultural Extension Services. This project has the potential to save the GoB millions of dollars in fertilizer subsidies, increase yields, increase farmers' income and save both land and groundwater from environment degradation. The GoB and the USG are now ready for a large-scale adoption of UDP technology.

The Cereal System Initiative for South Asia (CSISA), funded by USAID and the Gates Foundation, has two research and extension hubs in country. During Phase I, FTF will consider working with CSISA on an extension capacity building strategy and research into crop diversification and rotation systems.

Effective dissemination of information to farmers is crucial for adoption of new technologies, varieties, inputs and best practices to increase production and when, where, and how to market their products. Over the years, organizations and agencies in Bangladesh have tested agricultural crop varieties, practices, and improved technologies in crops, livestock, fisheries and forests. However, the small scale or local focus of these innovations limits their expansion. To make farmers, agri-businesses and others aware, Bangladesh will need to scale up successful pilot practices and technologies to achieve national impact.

Improving the extension service and raising the education level of the country's farmers is a long-standing priority. Extension services in Bangladesh need to refocus on technology transfer through multiple approaches, effective outreach through a better balance of resources and partnerships, training of women extensionists, and a commitment to raise the education level of farmers. Bangladesh extension services could be improved in several ways:

- Rededicate extension services to service delivery and technology transfer;
- Extend the reach and targeting of extension services to specific user groups;
- Align and balance personnel and operational budgets to achieve objectives;
- Equip rural people with the agricultural skills they will need for the next generation; and
- Free extension agents from distribution and administration of fertilizer and fuel subsidies.



#### **4.3.4. SUPPORT FOOD SECURITY AND AGRICULTURAL POLICY REFORM**

USAID's experience in policy strengthening has resulted in significant and meaningful changes in the past: ATDP (1995-2004); Food Management and Research Support Project (1997-2002); Financial Sector Reform (1991-96); and National Food Policy Capacity Strengthening Program (2005-12). USAID's policy assistance has helped to double rice production, improve financial services for millions of poor people, and increase the amount of food for tens of thousands of people covered under social safety nets by reducing costs.

Global climate change is expected to have substantial negative effects on agriculture in Bangladesh. During Phase I, USAID will undertake a comprehensive research review to have an informed discussion with the GoB on priority investments in climate change adaptation. Much work remains to be done to identify specific approaches and activities to maximize the impact of future investments.

USAID anticipates that future climate change adaptation programs will be much more policy driven and be closely aligned with government priorities, as outlined in the NFP Plan of Action. Research on technology development and on market policies and incentives must be integrated to maximize program benefits.

The essence of public policy for food security is to ensure that the appropriate investments are made, and that these are pro-poor, reaching out to those with little capital and who cannot help themselves, thereby reversing the transmission of poverty from one generation to the next.

#### **4.3.5. IMPROVE NUTRITIONAL STATUS**

Infant and young child feeding practices are especially poor in Bangladesh and are the major contributing factor to malnutrition. The negative consequences of these poor practices are irreversible, causing permanent damage to

cognitive development and physical well-being. The window of opportunity for improved nutrition begins at conception and continues through the first two years of life. In order to prevent malnutrition, two infant and young child feeding practices are critical: feeding babies only breast milk from 0 to 5 months and appropriate complementary feeding from 6 to 23 months with continued breastfeeding. The majority of mothers in Bangladesh do not exclusively breastfeed, introducing harmful items into an infant's diet far too early. Poor rates of exclusive breastfeeding and other recommended feeding practices have persisted at the same levels (around 40 percent) for over a decade, indicating the need for more effective communication and behavior change strategies.

Activities that promote more balanced household food consumption and equitable distribution of food within the household with a special focus on women and children need to be promoted. In Bangladesh, nearly one-third of women are underweight, and over half are anemic. Poor nutritional status of Bangladeshi women leads to lower birth weight babies and a higher probability of child malnutrition. In addition, high rates of anemia and malnutrition among women reduce their productive capacity.

The FTF Initiative's nutrition objectives will be implemented in concert with USAID's non-emergency food program and focus on improving the nutrition of children 0-2 years and pregnant and nursing mothers, as well as diversifying the food basket. The FTF Initiative's nutrition objectives will be supported through resources from the Global Health Initiative and implemented as part of the Mission's health and education portfolio to take advantage of synergies with on-going USG investments and introduce more effective nutrition programming through social service delivery networks.

For example, a new joint Embassy/USAID-funded education project will include the addition of health funds to promote good nutrition and improve nutritional status of school children. In addition, more interventions need to target adolescent girls to improve their nutritional status and delay early marriage and

pregnancy through linkages with the health program. More opportunities will be explored to include linkages with USAID's education programs to include nutrition messages for promoting healthy eating behaviors targeting parents, teachers, and caregivers to support improved nutrition.

To support better targeting of food security programs and particularly at-risk groups, the Mission plans a Phase I analytical agenda to improve our understanding of the factors that influence rural families' food consumption patterns and participation in agricultural or other productive activities.

A recent USAID/Bangladesh nutrition strategy assessment recommended that a near-term operational research agenda include studies on 1) new complementary food products, such as lipid-nutrient supplement (LNS), to be used in critical feeding programs for improving the nutritional status of children, and 2) newborn vitamin A supplementation delivery platforms. Depending on how Phase II programming evolves, we may consider undertaking such a national nutrition and food consumption survey if an extensive literature review identifies significant information gaps that cannot be filled through operational research during implementation. ICDDR, B is a renowned Bangladeshi research institute which has conducted a wealth of research on nutrition and will be an important partner for the FTF and the GHI for scaling up proven interventions that improve nutrition outcomes.

Even with limited funding, USAID's largest social marketing program has demonstrated its ability to provide micronutrients at an affordable cost through its 200,000 sales outlets. A small but important pilot nutrition activity implemented by Helen Keller International demonstrated the effectiveness of focusing on 7 essential nutrition actions to improve nutrition among 5,600 households. USAID plans to capitalize on this niche of field-based programming through partner NGOs with a focus on comprehensive nutrition programs in targeted *upazillas*.

In addition to the activities listed above, we also plan a broad assault on poor health and malnutrition by supporting a range of models, strategies and delivery mechanisms:

- maternal and child malnutrition prevention programs;
- effective training on appropriate Infant and Young Child Feeding (IYCF) practices;
- growth monitoring to track rates of malnutrition in target communities;
- community-based social and behavior change communication programs promoting key nutrition practices and consumption of fortified staple foods and micronutrient powders;
- woman-centered training programs that improve dietary quality for women and children;
- improved nutrition service delivery as part of primary health care systems;
- GoB-sponsored micronutrient supplementation programs such as the vitamin-A campaigns;
- Ready to Use Therapeutic Food (RUTF) products for treating moderate malnutrition;
- "life cycle" approaches from pre-conception to improve the nutritional status of adolescent girls, healthy eating habits for pregnant and lactating women, and recommended breastfeeding and weaning foods;
- school feeding programs through the USDA-sponsored McGovern-Dole school feeding program;
- supplemental rations through the multi-year PL 480 Title II programs to prevent malnutrition; and
- home gardening for a diversified diet and higher income.

It is important to build the capacity of the government to collect, analyze and interpret nutrition surveillance data. Through building the capacity of the National Nutrition Program, we hope to also partner with ICDDR, B to provide logistical support regarding gathering surveillance data. In addition, we will continue to partner with Helen Keller International to support its recently launched nutrition



surveillance system. USAID will continue to fund the Demographic and Health Survey in Bangladesh which provides essential nutrition surveillance information.

#### **4.3.6. LINK AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT WITH SAFETY NET AND NON-EMERGENCY FOOD AID PROGRAMS**

Since 1976 Title II has operated in Bangladesh providing assistance for agricultural development, rural infrastructure improvement, income generation activities and educating and feeding people through nutrition intervention programs. Eighty percent of the commodities are monetized through sale to the GoB; the food is then used by the GoB in its social safety net programs – essentially doing double duty. The remaining 20 percent of commodities are distributed as food for work during the yearly agricultural lean season or as supplemental rations to pregnant and lactating mothers with children under two.

USAID/Bangladesh has always supported Title II with complementary Development Assistance (DA) funding. One very successful USAID project, NGO Gardening and Nutrition Education Surveillance Project (1991-2003), administered by Helen Keller International, is another example given in the *Millions Fed* publication. This homestead food production program succeeded in increasing participants' production and consumption of micronutrient-rich foods, empowering women, and promoting community development. In two decades of operation in Bangladesh it has improved food security for nearly 5 million vulnerable people, nearly 4 percent of the population.

USAID/Bangladesh's current Title II, five-year non-emergency development assistance programs (DAPs) are ending in 2010. Final evaluations from each program indicate significant improvement in overall food security among the 4.6 million participants. Average monthly income was increased by 128 percent from \$22 to \$50, increasing purchasing power and food access. Access to food was also increased through food for work and cash for

work safety net programs, increasing the number of months that poor and extreme poor participants had adequate food from 5 to 7.8 months per year. Nutrition significantly improved as one of the programs decreased stunting (too low height for age) in children under five by 30 percent and the other program decreased stunting by 12 percent. The number of underweight children decreased by 21 percent. The DAPs also assisted the GoB increase the length of early warning of its flood forecasting system from 72 hours to ten days, allowing agricultural communities more time to prepare and protect crops, seed, livestock and other assets.

To mitigate the impact of climate change and to promote adaptation, the Title II program assists communities in building disaster-mitigating infrastructure to save crops during the flood season (building submersible embankments), protect productive assets (raising homesteads and communal lands above flood levels), and ensure better access to markets (repairing farm to market roads). Since the ultra-poor in Bangladesh are the most susceptible to the effects of climate change, the non-emergency humanitarian food assistance program will continue to emphasize disaster preparedness and mitigation activities.

The new Title II 5-year program will directly distribute at least 25 percent of its commodities to pregnant and lactating women with children under two. Nutrition, particularly of mothers and children under two, will be addressed through implementation of seven essential nutrition actions. In addition, greater emphasis will be placed on income generation and linking the ultra-poor to markets in a more systematic way. Linkages to value chains will also be pursued.

New agricultural technologies will be introduced, some of which have been developed under USAID/Bangladesh's Economic Growth program and some of which will be developed under FTF Initiative programming in future years.

The GoB operates a large safety net program, which reaches 30-50 million poor each year. The program suffers from poor targeting and lack of oversight and accountability at the local level, as well as inefficiency and a lack of transparency at the national level. Several USAID governance programs are beginning to address these weaknesses. One program is working with the Ministry of Food and Disaster Management to increase transparency and accountability in the management and logistics of public food stocks. USAID anticipates that another governance program will work with local government in FY2010 to improve beneficiary targeting and efficiency in food distribution. During Phase I implementation, the USG will engage the GoB on the efficiency of safety nets as part of broader food security issues. There is great potential for the USG to expand partnerships with other donors, such as WFP, that has been more involved in strengthening the GoB's social safety net programs.

#### **4.3.7. IMPROVE NRM AND ADAPTATION TO CLIMATE CHANGE**

USAID's past and ongoing interventions in agriculture, environmental management and food security have built institutions that can be champions in climate change adaptation research and program implementation. USAID has pioneered a collaborative management, or co-management approach, to preserve the wetlands and tropical forest resources of Bangladesh. In addition to their carbon offsetting roles through conservation of forests and wetlands, USAID's natural resources management programs are great examples of community-based climate change adaptation. The USAID program provides training and technical assistance to communities in and around protected areas to develop new income generating activities that provide alternatives to overdependence on the use and extraction of natural resources. As the alternative income generating (AIG) activities provide income for individuals dependent on natural resources, individuals are able to better cope with flooding or other climatic variability that negatively

affects natural resources. Current USAID and GoB joint environment programs will provide direct economic benefit to 500,000 rural poor. The efforts are expected to have a multiplier effect on Bangladesh's overall conservation efforts, promoting climate change mitigation through improved land use and adaptation to climate change-related vulnerabilities by communities.

The USG is a pioneer in helping Bangladesh address climate issues. Following the Rio Earth Summit in 1992, the GoB and Bangladesh's vibrant civil society assembled together under USAID's pioneering initiative, the U.S. Climate Change Country Studies Program, and produced most of the data on Bangladesh's vulnerability to GCC. The study led to the first Bangladesh Climate Change National Communiqué. In 2003 Bangladesh developed its first Climate Change Action Plan with U.S. support. More recently, USAID played a key role in preparing a Policy Note on GCC mitigation and adaptation on behalf of the Executive Committee of the Local Consultative Group, the apex coordination body of the country's development partners.

USAID is helping the Bangladesh Forest Department develop forestry projects to tap into the carbon market. Through management and conservation, Bangladesh can earn carbon "credits" that will be marketed to high carbon emitting countries to "pay" for their excessive carbon emissions. The carbon credits derived from forest conservation will increase the economic value of Bangladesh's protected areas. With USAID assistance, the GoB will put in place a portfolio of projects for forests and wetlands by 2011 and will work to secure funds to implement them. USAID will assist the Ministry of Environment and Forests to improve its overall conservation of climate change mitigation efforts through improved land use under the Reducing Emissions from Deforestation in Developing Countries (REDD) framework. USAID is also funding certificate courses for various GoB agencies.

#### **4.3.8. BUILD CAPACITY FOR EFFECTIVE AID**

Based on lessons from the National Food Policy Capacity Strengthening Program (NFPCSP), greater attention must be given to capacity building, coordination and dialogue with various ministries involved in the National Food Policy Plan of Action. USAID/Bangladesh will conduct a careful review of the eleven ministries that supported the drafting and approval of the NFP Plan of Action. Substantial improvements can be made through relatively limited investment in improving integration, quality and access to existing data relevant for policy making and early warning. Further investments are needed to increase quality of data and information systems in key areas such as agricultural production, food pricing, early warning, safety net benefits and beneficiaries targeting.

The USG can assist the various ministries to build their capacity, enabling them to take a more active role in strategically guiding agricultural development. Given the broad need for reforms, USG support of capacity and institutional building must be strategic and judicious in its use of program resources. The initial set of GoB agencies receiving support would likely be: the Ministry of Food and Disaster Management; Ministry of Agriculture, and Ministry of Fisheries and Livestock, followed later by the Ministry of Environment and Forestry, and the Ministry of Planning. (The Ministry of Planning will be kept informed at all stages due to its planning advisory role in the previous ministries.)

USAID/Bangladesh will work to strengthen the relationship between the GoB, NGOs, civil societies, academics and the private sector. In order to achieve robust and transparent debate on food security issues, the Mission will incorporate all stakeholders in Local Consultative Group (LCG) meetings, as well as assist the GoB with any technical or facilitation assistance it may require.

#### **4.4. LINK TO FOREIGN ASSISTANCE FRAMEWORK**

In the Foreign Assistance program area of Private Sector Competitiveness, USAID's current program supports value chain development in the aquaculture, leather and horticultural sectors and will continue until 2012. In Maternal and Child Health, Food for Peace Title II partners will continue to address nutrition, humanitarian assistance, and agriculture through its integrated development approach. Although new programs under the FTF Initiative have not yet been designed or agreed upon with the GoB, we anticipate that FTF results reporting for Phase I implementation will fall under many of the Foreign Assistance Framework Program Areas and Elements. To determine specific milestones for Phase I implementation, a detailed set of Program Areas and Elements will be developed as part of a larger process (see Section 5 FY 2010 Results/Indicators/Targets) to establish performance targets for the first two years of implementing the FTF Initiative.

#### **4.5. NEXT STEPS IN 2010: ADDITIONAL ANALYSES, CONSULTATIONS AND EXPECTED PROGRAM DESIGN**

USAID has conducted a number of key studies/assessments (such as the Bangladesh Food Security and Agricultural Productivity Assessment, October 2009) that provide valuable insights. In addition, USAID plans to undertake a literature review of existing studies and evaluations that will help identify gaps in the knowledge base. Some of the areas identified for further analysis include food security and urbanization; climate change and adaptation; relationship between incomes and nutrition; diversification away from rice; reducing post-harvest losses; and promoting agribusiness. The outcome of discussions with the GoB on priority investment areas will also play a key role in determining how we shape this literature review and research agenda.

Further analysis is also needed to help prioritize areas of intervention and planning for

investment. In addition, extensive discussions will be held with other development partners, such as the WB, ADB, FAO and DFID, to coordinate and leverage our efforts. While we have a good understanding of the factors contributing to poverty and hunger, some key gaps remain so we will seek to target our research to help make strategic decisions on programming directions. We anticipate that some of the Mission's level of effort during Phase I implementation will be devoted to developing designs for the analytical and operations research agenda.

## 5. FY 2010 RESULTS/INDICATORS/TARGETS

During Phase I implementation, the USAID-led Food Security Task Force will develop a set of indicators and targets, along with an inventory of targets for on-going and proposed new programs which fall under the FTF Initiative. We also expect to develop a more specific 12-24-month timeline along with a set of benchmarks, or process indicators, to measure progress during Phase I implementation, since planning, consultations, and analytical work represent the bulk of these new efforts. Key Issues and Analytical Activities Looking Toward FY2011

Phase I implementation includes the launching of a major policy dialogue with the GoB, the outcome of which will inform future analytical activities. It is important to note that while there is no shortage of information about the problems that Bangladesh faces in the various sectors related to food security, the challenge lies in making strategic choices to maximize the returns on development investments – of the government and the donors. Creating an effective consensus on strategic choices will involve addressing both the political and technical dimensions of resource allocation for strengthening food security.

## 6. KEY ISSUES AND ANALYTICAL ACTIVITIES LOOKING TOWARD FY2011

Phase I implementation includes the launching of a major policy dialogue with the GoB, the outcome of which will inform future analytical activities. It is important to note that while there is no shortage of information about the problems that Bangladesh faces in the various sectors related to food security, the challenge lies in making strategic choices to maximize the returns on development investments – of the government and the donors. Creating an effective consensus on strategic choices will involve addressing both the political and technical dimensions of resource allocation for strengthening food security.

## 7. PARTNERSHIP PLAN

### 7.1. DIPLOMATIC STRATEGY

The USG enjoys unparalleled access to key decision-makers in Bangladesh, and we already are engaging on food security at all levels, from the Prime Minister on down. As we engage with the GoB, donors and other partners, we also will implement a public outreach strategy to ensure public support and highlight U.S. assistance to Bangladesh.

The USG engaged with the GoB, civil society, and donors on food security during the February 15-16, 2010 Bangladesh Development Forum. Government, donors and civil society representatives agreed on the need to work together to address the priorities outlined in Bangladesh's food security plans. The USG's diplomatic strategy is aligned with the five principles of the Feed the Future Initiative.

### 7.1.1. COMPREHENSIVE APPROACH

A comprehensive approach to food security advances agriculture-led growth, reduces under-nutrition, and increases the impact of humanitarian food assistance. The Government of Bangladesh's National Food Policy Plan of Action has three thematic areas: food availability, economic access to food, and nutrition/utilization of food. Guided by both the GoB's plans and the USG's food security principles, the USG's food security task force has identified eight areas for potential USG action, through key USG agencies (Table 5).

#### Increase and Diversify Agricultural Production

The GoB's current focus on agricultural productivity centers on rice production and managing disasters. The USG will work with the GoB to broaden this emphasis and expand the environment for diversified agricultural production. Strategies include support for biotechnology, leveraging private sector expertise, and better use of technology. The

USG has long supported Bangladesh's efforts to develop its fisheries and aquaculture sector; Bangladesh recognizes USAID as the leading development partner in this area.

#### Develop Markets for Agricultural Products, Value Addition and Regional Trade

The USG, in conjunction with the Office of the U.S. Trade Representative (USTR) and other relevant USG agencies, will continue efforts to urge Bangladesh to liberalize its trading regime.

The USG is in the final stages of creating a State-Commerce Partnership Program to support our commercial activities; this plus our support of President Obama's National Export Initiative will bolster FTF efforts to improve agricultural technology and private sector activity in Bangladesh.

The USG also supports the GoB's efforts to build its relations with India. The USG will seek opportunities to bolster these interactions, including, for example, USDA-sponsored

**Table 5. Key USG Agencies Involved in Food Security Related Programming in Bangladesh**

USG Agency	Comparative Advantage
US Agency for International Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Significant physical presence and in-country technical and management expertise to support implementation of large and complex policy dialogue and program implementation initiative.</li> <li>Strong relationships with ministries involved in food security</li> <li>Credibility and long-standing relationship with GoB and development partners</li> <li>Large network of program implementation partners with strong technical capacity in a variety of different sectors related to Food Security</li> <li>Ability to leverage significant development resources from the GoB, private sector, and other development partners</li> </ul>
US Department of State	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provides important political and economic analysis to support policy dialogue</li> <li>Strong relationship with foreign policy ministries and the Office of the Prime Minister</li> </ul>
US Department of Agriculture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Brings specialized expertise and additional resources to complement food security programming in Bangladesh</li> </ul>
Centers for Disease Control	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Treatment and management of parasitic diseases</li> <li>Treatment of diarrheal diseases</li> <li>Partnership with ICDDR, B a large research facility which provides data on infectious disease treatment and surveillance in Bangladesh</li> </ul>



Cochran fellowships involving teams of scientists from Bangladesh and India to work in areas like crop forecasting, food safety and biotechnology.

### **Support Research Capacity and Enhance Extension Outreach**

The USG will pursue an integrated approach to building Bangladesh's research and extension capacity that capitalizes on the comparative advantages of all USG agencies, including USAID, USDA, State and others. The GoB is already streamlining its fertilizer subsidy system through direct transfers to farmers, freeing up Bangladesh's agriculture extension staff to spend more time working with farmers on new technologies and best practices.

### **Support Food Security and Agriculture Policy Reform**

The USG will also continue its efforts to encourage market-based solutions to food security. Many in Bangladesh identify philosophically with public-sector solutions despite widespread evidence that the private sector is the best driver for growth.

The USG will address cross-cutting issues like the role of women, inclusion of the ultra-poor, improved investment climate, and broad-based economic growth. Bangladesh's success with micro-credit could provide lessons learned for better incorporating women and the ultra-poor into FTF programs.

### **Improve Nutritional Status**

Severe under-nutrition in Bangladesh fosters a recurring cycle of poverty. Child nutrition and maternal health practices are especially weak in Bangladesh, in part because of cultural beliefs that harm, rather than help, women and children. Changing these beliefs and behaviors will require active engagement at a variety of levels, through development programs, outreach to government and community leaders, and public diplomacy.

### **Increase the Impact of Humanitarian Food Assistance and Social Safety Nets**

In the area of safety net programs and non-emergency food aid programming, the USG will

seek to support efforts to make social safety net programs more efficient, better targeted and transparent. Bangladesh's leaders use social safety net programs as a political as well as an economic and social tool. It will require efforts at all levels of the USG to ensure the GoB focuses on economic and social, rather than political outcomes.

### **Improve Adaptation to Climate Change**

Bangladesh already is playing a leadership role globally on the issue of climate change, taking a stand on behalf of countries most vulnerable to climate change and urging other developing, as well as developed countries to act responsibly on this issue.

### **Build Capacity for Effective Aid**

The politicization of issues of national interest, over-centralization of government, and weak capacity and polarization within the bureaucracy are major challenges to the success of the food security initiative. The USG will also need to serve as an "institutional memory" on food security for succeeding governments and will need to ensure that successive GoB leaders are consistent in their support for food security.

## **7.1.2. COUNTRY-LED PLAN**

Bangladesh's Awami League government has proclaimed food security its top priority. A number of national plans already focus on food security in Bangladesh, including:

- the Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper II;
- the National Food Policy Plan of Action;
- the National Plan of Action for Nutrition; and,
- the Bangladesh Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan.

While these plans are comprehensive inventories of problems and potential solutions, they fail to target resources, specify achievable priorities, identify resources or spell out implementation mechanisms. The USG's diplomacy strategy has identified aspects of these plans the USG is best-positioned to support. At the same time we will encourage the GoB and other partners to fill gaps and

pursue a comprehensive approach to poverty and food insecurity.

One of the many challenges to tackling food security in Bangladesh is the high number of GoB agencies involved in various aspects of food security. GoB agencies need to better communicate with each other and possess differing views on food security among the ministries and officials, leading to inconsistency, overlapping and lack of accountability for results.

The USG, which actively engages most of Bangladesh's 30-plus ministries, already works to promote inter-ministerial communication. The USG will encourage consensus within government and among other partners on Bangladesh's food security activities.

Since August 2009, the USG has engaged at all levels with government, civil society and the private sector to highlight President Obama's commitment to global food security. The USG will continue to seek such opportunities to shape Bangladesh food security policy, in addition to regular engagement.

### **7.1.3. GLOBAL, REGIONAL, LOCAL COORDINATION**

The USG's integrated working environment makes it ideally suited to the food security initiative's whole-of-government approach and seek coordination at all levels. The USG's working group mechanism ensures a high degree of coordination and minimizes gaps.

As part of our FTF implementation plan, USAID Bangladesh intends to create a new, full-time position to serve as country coordinator for all Feed the Future activities.

### **7.1.4. LEVERAGING MULTILATERAL INSTITUTIONS**

Bangladesh has a large and active donor community of which the USG is a leading member. Donors, including the main multilateral institutions, interact regularly with the GoB and each other through a Local

Consultative Group (LCG) structure that includes topic-focused sub-groups. The LCG sub-group most relevant to the GHFS Initiative is the Agriculture and Food Security sub-group.

The USG's food security task force also has identified a number of bilateral and multi-lateral institutions that will be key partners in the four priority areas identified for USG investment: family planning and nutrition, sustainable agriculture, safety net and non-emergency food aid programs, and governance and capacity-building.

In addition to working through the LCG structure, the USG will continue to interact with bilateral and multilateral counterparts.

### **7.1.5. SUSTAINED AND ACCOUNTABLE COMMITMENT**

U.S. support for Bangladesh and its development, including food security, dates to Bangladesh's independence. Since 1971, the United States has provided Bangladesh with more than \$5.5 billion in assistance, more than half of that food aid. GoB leaders and Bangladeshis more broadly recognize the vital role we have played in its development, and they welcome further engagement, particularly on food security.

The strong U.S.-Bangladesh relationship will aid efforts to encourage and shape Bangladesh's response to food insecurity. Raising incomes, increasing agricultural productivity, mitigating the effects of climate change on agricultural productivity, diversifying the food basket, establishing market-based systems, changing infant and young child feeding practices, and more transparent and reliable safety net programs are all elements of a successful, long-term food security program.

Building Bangladesh's internal capacity to meet these goals and be accountable for results will also require substantial reform and intelligent allocation of public resources.

The magnitude of the potential funding for Bangladesh on food security and other

development initiatives will allow the USG to play an even stronger leadership role in engaging other donors and the GoB to shape national policies that can significantly impact the long term food security situation in Bangladesh.

## **7.2. CONSULTATION AND COORDINATION WITH GOVERNMENT**

As part of preparations for the new 5-year humanitarian assistance program under Food for Peace, USAID entered into consultations with the GoB on issues of food security and hunger reduction. All teams carrying out the USAID food security, agriculture, economic growth, and nutrition assessments conducted in 2009 consulted with relevant ministerial, donor, and NGO partner counterparts.

In October 2009, the Mission conducted a round of high-level consultations, with USAID/Washington participation, to solicit input and begin developing a platform for policy dialogue on food security. The following GoB ministries and agencies have been identified as key institutions for engagement:

- Ministry of Finance – Economic Relations Division
- Ministry of Planning/Planning Commission
- Ministry of Agriculture
- Ministry of Food and Disaster Management
- Ministry of Health and Family Welfare
- Ministry of Local Government, Rural Development and Cooperatives
- Ministry of Commerce
- Ministry of Women and Children Affairs
- Ministry of Fisheries and Livestock
- Ministry of Environment and Forest
- Bangladesh Agricultural Research Institute
- Parliament

The Mission has begun negotiations with the GoB for the bilateral agreement for FTF with four ministries: Agriculture; Food and Disaster Management; Livestock and Fisheries; and Environment and Forestry. The Ministry of Agriculture will be the lead ministry. Regular meetings will be conducted between USAID and

the line ministries to collaborate on the FTF bilateral agreement.

The GoB is actively promoting FTF as a model for the way forward. In February 2010, the GoB convened the Bangladesh Development Forum (BDF), which prominently featured discussions on agriculture, food security and water resources. The GoB is also anticipating a successful high-level event, or Food Security Summit, to discuss the government's food security strategy with stakeholders, scheduled for May 26-27, 2010. The Mission is highly supportive of the Summit and is exploring ways to assist the government in convening it. At the Summit, the GoB will consult stakeholders on priority areas for the National Food Policy Plan of Action.

## **7.3. MULTILATERAL AND BILATERAL DONOR CONSULTATION AND COORDINATION**

Donor coordination in Bangladesh occurs in a well-developed system of LCGs. The LCG Plenary has open membership, allowing broad participation at high levels. The LCG sub-groups are formed around sector areas related to development issues. Group activity and the level of technical exchange and program coordination vary widely. In addition, some groups have GoB representation, others do not. The LCG sub-group most relevant to the FTF Initiative is the Food Security, Agriculture and Rural Development group, of which USAID is an active member. This LCG meets quarterly and more often if warranted. The GoB attends occasionally but thus far has not used the LCG as a forum for coordination with donors and NGO partners. The LCG will continue to encourage the GoB to participate fully.

The LCG is an important forum for the donors and NGO partners to exchange ideas, share information and coordinate projects. Discussion has begun on ways to jointly report, monitor and evaluate progress, primarily through the NFP Plan of Action. Several members represent USAID in this group, including the Mission's health, agriculture,



disaster and humanitarian assistance, and economic growth offices. Through these representatives, USAID has presented the broad outlines of the Feed the Future Initiative and will continue to use this sub-group for communicating with donor partners. Key donor members include: DFID, EU, JICA, DANIDA, FAO, WFP, WB, and ADB.

The donor community, in conjunction with the GoB, is currently undergoing a major process to align development priorities and investments under a joint cooperation strategy (JCS) planning process. This process, begun in 2008, is anticipated to result in a JCS document that will be signed by a large number of donors and the GoB sometime in 2010. In addition, the Food Security, Agriculture and Rural Development LCG is starting the process of aligning investments with the NFP PoA. Many donor programs are coming to an end donors have begun aligning their new investments with the PoA, as shown in Table 6.

#### **7.4. CIVIL SOCIETY AND PRIVATE SECTOR CONSULTATION AND COORDINATION**

USAID uses various mechanisms for reaching out to civil society and private sector partners, recognized as essential development allies. Contacts and consultations occur on a regular basis through the implementation and of USAID programs across all sectors. We fully expect our civil society and private sector partners to play an important role in implementing food security programs and investing in activities with high returns for food security. USAID will seek to bring these partners into the national policy dialogue on food security and encourage the GOB to establish more institutionalized platforms for their participation.

## **8. FY 2010 CAPACITY BUILDING PLAN**

The institutional landscape for managing food security in Bangladesh is characterized by:

- a multiplicity, and inadequate integration, of policy frameworks that are not always fully consistent with each other;
- an institutional fragmentation of responsibilities and inadequate or ineffective coordination mechanisms; and
- inadequate or untimely information and analytical bases for decision making; and
- personnel limitations in terms of technical and analytical skills, incentives and opportunities.

For issues of food production, responsibilities are divided between the Ministry of Agriculture, Ministry of Fisheries and Livestock, Ministry of Water and Ministry of Land. For marketing, public food stock management and trade issues, responsibilities are split between MoFDM, Ministry of Agriculture and Ministry of Commerce and Industry. In nutrition, responsibilities are divided between units within the Ministries of Agriculture, Health and Family Welfare, and Women and Children's affairs. The Food Planning and Monitoring Committee (FPMC) currently holds the responsibility for coordinating, planning, and monitoring overall national food security efforts as identified in the National Food Policy Plan of Action. The FPMC is chaired by the minister of MoFDM and includes the ministers or secretaries of all the ministries that have a main stake in the implementation of national food policies. In the NFP, the FPMC has been given a mandate to direct the formulation and implementation of food policy related programs. The Food Planning and Monitoring Unit of the MoFDM provides technical support to the FPMC.

USAID/Bangladesh's support for capacity development in food security is currently focused on three specific areas: 1) agriculture research with the Ministry of Agriculture on bio-technology, 2) technical support to develop the capacity the FPMU of the MoFDM in food analysis and policy formation through the National Food Policy Capacity Strengthening Program (co-funded with the EU), and 3) Urea Deep Placement for rice with the MoA.

**Table 6. Donor Activities that are Aligned with the Plan of Action Areas of Interventions**

Areas of Interventions	WB	DAN-IDA	ADB	FAO	IFAD	DFID	EU	JICA	USAID
1.1. Agricultural Research and Extension	X	X				X	X	X	X
1.2. Use and Management of Water Resources	X							X	
1.3. Supply and Sustainable Use of Agricultural Inputs		X		X		X	X		X
1.4. Agricultural Diversification		X	X					X	X
1.5. Agricultural Credit and Insurance			X						
1.6. Physical Market infrastructure		X						X	
1.7. Agricultural Marketing and Trade	X						X	X	X
1.8. Policy/Regulatory Environment			X		X				X
1.9. Early Warning System development				X					X
1.10. Producer Price Support									
1.11. Public Stock Management/Price Stabilizations									
2.1. Agricultural Disaster Management	X		X						X
2.2. Emergency Food Distribution for Public Stocks						X			X
2.3. Enabling Environment for Private Food Trade and Stock									
2.4. Effectiveness of Targeted Food Security Programs and Other Safety Nets			X			X			
2.5. Income Generation for Women and the Disabled							X		X
2.6. Agro-based/Agro-processing/MSMEs Development							X		X

Based on lessons from the NFPCSP, at least three levels of institutional and capacity development needs can be identified:

- The overall capacity of the public administration needs to be strengthened to perform routing functions in a results-oriented approach. Simplification of procedures for approval, implementation and monitoring of projects is an essential element for the success of the FTF. FTF will strengthen capacity and streamline operating modalities in the Ministry of Finance Economic Relations Division (ERD) and Implementation, Monitoring and Evaluation Division (IMED).
- Policy analysis, formulation and monitoring capacity should be strengthened. Greater attention must be given to capacity building within the Ministry of Planning (Agriculture, Water Resource and Rural Institutions wing of the Planning Commission). The Ministry of Planning has representatives housed in a planning wing within each line ministry. Often under-resourced and marginalized within host ministries, these Planning wing personnel can sometimes impede implementation by slowing down the project review and approval process required for every project involving government implementation. Targeting planning units that are institutionally important to food security is a viable strategy. The GoB has requested technical assistance in the form of program design and implementation, opening a window of opportunity to connect with the planning units of each ministry.
- Develop availability, reliability and accessibility of data and information as well as the capacity to use this information for producing top quality, timely and relevant research and analysis to support science-based policy making. This requires developing innovative means for data sharing and targeted training, as well as institutional arrangements to provide high-level advisory support to policy making, involving national expertise supported by a solid technical secretariat built on existing institutions.

During 2010 USAID/Bangladesh will conduct a careful review of the institutional and capacity needs of the eleven ministries that developed the NFP Plan of Action. This review will identify policy formulation and monitoring requirements and key institutional reforms to receive priority attention. Results will be incorporated into a capacity building plan linked to specific outputs and results.

As part of the design of new programs, and to ensure synergy and consistency with institutional and capacity development for policy formulation and monitoring, USAID will also identify technical and operational skills requirements at the research and policy implementation level (such as universities, research institutions, the Department of Agricultural Extension, and the Department of Agricultural Marketing).

## 9. MANAGEMENT PLAN

### 9.1. WHOLE OF GOVERNMENT COORDINATION STRUCTURE

USAID will coordinate all FTF Initiative activities in collaboration with the US Department of State (DoS). USAID/Bangladesh's Deputy Director of the Office of Economic Growth serves as the chair for the FTF Initiative Task Force which is comprised of representatives from the USAID Offices of Population, Health, Nutrition and Education; Economic Growth; Food, Disaster and Humanitarian Assistance; Democracy and Governance; and Program Office; the Embassy (DoS) Political/Economic section; and USDA. The FTF Taskforce will meet quarterly (and more often when necessary) to track progress and to identify and address potential implementation issues.

In addition to providing input on the implementation plan and taking the lead on the Embassy's diplomacy strategy, State sections at Embassy are coordinating high-level GoB engagement, the Ambassador's role in advancing the FTF initiative in Bangladesh, engagement

with the private sector and public diplomacy efforts. The Political/Economic section will also work on the broader policy changes required to support the Initiative, including trade liberalization, regional integration, and women's rights.

The FTF Initiative Task Force and the Embassy's Political/Economic section maintain regular contact with USG agencies that do not have a presence in Dhaka, such as the Office of the U.S. Trade Representative, the Department of Commerce and the Department of Treasury. With regard to USDA, the Foreign Agricultural Service (FAS) maintains a small office in the Embassy whose Locally Engaged Staff (LES) participate in Task Force meetings and the Mission's economic working group. USDA's India-based Agricultural Attaché visits Bangladesh on a quarterly basis and participates in Task Force and working group meetings when available. The FTF Task Force also traveled to New Delhi in the early stages of drafting the IP to consult with USDA and others. However, the scope and scale of the FTF Initiative and other USDA priorities in Bangladesh make it increasingly necessary for FAS to maintain a full time American presence in Dhaka, a move we would strongly support.

In conjunction with the annual Mission Strategic Plan (MSP), the Embassy also conducts quarterly strategic reviews of USG objectives and vision in Bangladesh with the support of the Office of the Coordinator for Reconstruction and Stabilization (S/CRS). We have already restructured our Economic Growth and Development Goal to reflect the increased importance of food security and the upcoming MSP will do the same.

USAID plans to create a new, full-time position to serve as country coordinator for all FTF activities. The Country Coordinator will be responsible for the overall coordination of FTF activities at post through meetings with representatives from the FTF Task Force to keep them abreast of program progress. The FTF Country Coordinator will prepare a monthly FTF activity report and provide monthly briefings to the heads of all USG

agencies involved in the initiative in Bangladesh. The FTF Task Force can be expanded to include GoB representatives and other development partners from the donor, business, and NGO sectors. As needed and appropriate, the FTF Country Coordinator will also facilitate public outreach actions to support FTF program objectives.

## **9.2. MONITORING, REVIEW AND EVALUATION SCHEDULE**

Developing joint monitoring mechanisms and building the institutional infrastructure required to properly evaluate progress under FTF will be an important element of Phase I implementation. Due in part to the limited resources available for monitoring and evaluation, and in part to the weak capacity on the part of the GoB to assess its development programming, efforts to monitor and evaluate USG assistance have not been as systemic as desired but characterized by ad hoc responses to specific circumstances and information requirements as they arise.

The Joint Cooperation Strategy currently under development will provide a macro-level framework for monitoring and evaluation against mutually agreed upon objectives. Given the uncertainties inherent in such large coordination efforts among so many players with different institutional agendas, however, it may not provide sufficient utility for assessing FTF progress. Phase I implementation will include the development of a mutually-agreed upon monitoring and evaluation schedule.

## **9.3. STAFFING REQUIREMENTS**

### **Economic Growth Office:**

- Office Director – Agriculture Economist (USDH)
- Deputy Office Director – Agronomist (USDH)
- Food Policy Specialist (USPSC)
- Environment Team Leader (FSN)
- NRM/Climate Change Specialist (USPSC)
- Private Sector Specialist (DLI)
- Agriculture Economist (FSN)
- Private Sector Specialist (FSN)

**Food & Disaster Management Office**

Office Director (USDH)

Agronomist (TCN)

Food for Peace Specialist (FSN)

**Health Office**

Office Director (USDH)

Nutrition Specialist (DLI)

**Program Office**

Office Director (USDH)

Program Economist (DLI)

Monitoring & Evaluation Specialist (FSN)

**Future Staffing**

Agriculture Specialist (FSN) EGO

Acquisition & Assistance Specialist (USPSC)

Nutrition Specialist (USPSC/FSN)

USAID/Bangladesh, located within the Embassy compound, is experiencing a space shortage. Accommodating increased staff due to the FTF Initiative will require building modifications that have to be approved by the Office of Building Operations at DoS in Washington.