Making the connection - Agricultural, Nutrition and Health

A/Prof Mu Li
School of Public Health
The University of Sydney

Photos by World Bank staff members: vegetable produce at a Guatemalan market by Curt Carnemark; Senegalese girl carrying cassava leaves by Lianqin Wang; mother in Bangladesh feeding her child a food supplement by Shehzad Noorani
Gaol 5: ensure food security and good nutrition

a) End hunger and protect the rights of everyone to have access to sufficient, safe, affordable and nutritious food

b) Reduce stunting, wasting and anemia in <5

c) Increase agricultural productivity

d) Adopt sustainable agricultural, fishery practices

e) Reduce postharvest loss and food waste
Links Between Agriculture & Health

Complex and bidirectional

– agriculture provides a source of food and income at the household and national level
– helps to ensure food security and to reduce undernutrition
– can contribute to the development of non-communicable diseases
How Can Agriculture Narrow the Nutrition Gap?

- Increasing small scale production of nutrient rich foods
- Increasing commercial production of nutrient rich foods
- Reduction of post harvest losses to maintain nutrient levels in commonly eaten foods
- Plant selection and breeding to increase nutrient levels
Pathway of Agricultural Interventions Impact on Children’s Nutritional Status
Agricultural Interventions & Nutrition Outcomes

Limited evidence of the effectiveness of targeted agricultural interventions on material and child nutrition, because

• Problem has not been addressed through nutrition lens

• Failure to incorporate nutritional assessments in agricultural research
Impact Of Agricultural Interventions On Nutrition Outcomes

• Recent systematic reviews of this evidence
  • A systematic review of 23 studies designed to identify effects of agricultural interventions in improving child nutritional status
  • A systematic review of 9 trials designed to identify effect of biofortified maize on child growth in producer households