

Action brief

# Agricultural and health initiatives for food security and nutrition via the Afghanistan Food Security and Nutrition Agenda

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**Country:** Afghanistan

**Themes:** Policy and Budget  
Cycle Management

**Sub-themes:** Review relevant  
policy & legislation  
documents

**Date:** 2023



## Overview



The Afghanistan Food Security and Nutrition Agenda is an integrated, multisectoral strategy for enhancing food security and nutrition, underpinning the crucial role of agricultural and health initiatives.



## Objectives of the action brief

The objectives of this brief are to:

- Underline the Afghanistan Food Security and Nutrition Agenda's agricultural and health strategies in improving food security and nutrition
- Provide a road map for the adaptation of such integrated initiatives in similar settings



## Period covered

This action brief covers 2017 to the present.



## What action was taken?

The Afghanistan Food Security and Nutrition Agenda was launched in 2017 as a comprehensive national strategy to address food insecurity and malnutrition. It signified a shift from fragmented, sector-based initiatives to an integrated, multisectoral approach. Despite enduring conflict, political instability and the COVID-19 pandemic, it persisted in promoting agricultural and health initiatives for nationwide food security and nutrition.

This national strategy emerged from the recognition of the interconnectedness of agriculture, health and nutrition in ensuring food security. It encompassed actions at various levels – national, subnational, community and household – and integrated the agriculture, health, water and sanitation, education and social protection sectors.

The strategy directly benefited a broad range of stakeholders, from farmers and rural communities who received support for sustainable agricultural practices to children and women who were the focus of nutritional and health interventions. The SUN Civil Society Network supported the Government of Afghanistan in launching the strategy along with other partners,

including the United Nations, other international agencies and Afghan citizens themselves.

Key lessons learned include the importance of a multisectoral, integrated approach to addressing complex challenges like food insecurity and malnutrition. Another important lesson was the significance of stakeholder alignment, with different sectors and partners working towards a common goal.

The Afghanistan Food Security and Nutrition Agenda is considered a good practice because of its comprehensive and integrative nature, addressing food security and nutrition from multiple angles and involving diverse sectors and stakeholders. Its community-based focus and emphasis on sustainable practices make it a replicable model for other countries dealing with similar challenges.

While it was not a direct consequence of a single previous achievement, the strategy built upon lessons from past interventions and the collective understanding of the critical interplay of agriculture, health and nutrition in ensuring food security.



## What would the country do differently?

After the collapse of the Government of Afghanistan in 2021, the Afghanistan Food Security and Nutrition Agenda was suspended. This was largely due to the new Government not being internationally recognized, resulting in a pause in international aid and development programmes. Moreover, the new regime couldn't maintain the Afghanistan Food Security and Nutrition Agenda's multisectoral approach due to increased security issues, weak infrastructure, human resource limitations and financial constraints. As a result, the Afghanistan Food Security and Nutrition Agenda could not continue operation..







## Adaptation and Applicability

→ For countries embarking on this journey, the key recommendation would be to foster a strong multisectoral approach and stakeholder

alignment. Understanding local context and political commitment and fostering international partnerships are critical to success.



## Next steps

- Given the recent changes in Afghanistan's political landscape, it is essential to adapt future efforts to enhance food security and nutrition.
- The next steps for Afghanistan involve bolstering data systems, enhancing local capacity and mobilizing resources. This entails fostering dialogues with current leaders about the importance of food security and health initiatives, strengthening collaborations with

international partners for needed resources, and focusing on community-based strategies.

- Additionally, managing ongoing crises requires prioritizing essential services and emergency aid, developing adaptive policies resilient to sociopolitical changes, and advocating for ongoing international humanitarian assistance concentrated on food security and health.



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## Further information

For more detailed information, refer to the following resources:



Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation, and Livestock. (2017). Afghanistan Food Security and Nutrition Agenda. <https://mail.gov.af/afsen>

This Good Practice was developed in collaboration with the SUN Civil Society Network (SUN CSN). For more information about the SUN CSN, please visit their website: <https://www.suncivilsociety.com/>



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