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“Agricultural development within the rural-urban continuum”

## Nutrition-Sensitive Agriculture for Rural and Urban Health

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### Abstract

A growing world population with 9 billion predicted by the year 2050 and rising numbers of malnourished people — currently approximately 870 million people undernourished and more than two billion people nutrient deficient, increasingly in urban areas — put pressure on our current global agrofood systems. Nutrition-sensitive agriculture aims to provide a framework to narrow the gap between available and accessible food and the food needed for a healthy and balanced diet for all people. Nutrition objectives are explicitly incorporated into agriculture and address the utilisation dimension of food and nutrition security, including health, education, economic and social aspects. Based on this concept, a study was carried out to take stock of existing innovative approaches to improve the positive nutrition-related impacts of agriculture and related food systems. An overview on specific cross-cutting themes relevant to nutrition-sensitive agriculture and examples from various countries on how nutrition objectives can be incorporated into rural and urban agriculture and food systems are provided which allowed the identification of commonalities and parameters that are cornerstones, within which local nutrition-sensitive agriculture approaches will have a realistic chance of succeeding. These cornerstones are seen as entry points into systems in which all variables are interlinked and contribute to a balanced nutrition of the population. By changing or fine-tuning one or more of these cornerstones, the entire system can be improved. The study also highlights the current fragmentation in approaches towards more nutrition-sensitivity in agriculture and concludes that, where collaborative approaches are undertaken, there is a greater likelihood that shared projects will be implemented and/or be successful. Recommendations have been formulated to aid the development of future nutrition-sensitive programmes for rural and urban areas.

**Keywords:** Agriculture, agro-food system, biodiversity, gender, health, marketing, nutrition, policies, processing, production