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Scaling-Up Nutrition: Implementing Potentials of Nutrition-Sensitive and Diversified Agriculture to Increase Food Security: A Research Framework

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Abstract

Food and nutrition security is still one of the most pressing challenges to constantly growing populations in sub-Saharan Africa. The nutritional situation in Tanzania has only slightly improved in the last decade despite high rates of economic growth. The share of the population with insufficient available calories for consumption was found to be higher than 20 % and stunting prevalence of 40 % in children <5 years are reported. To improve the nutritional status of Tanzania's local poor, the Scale-N project funded by the Federal Ministry of food and agriculture aims to safeguard food and nutrition security by supporting the development of diversified and sustainable agriculture.

Scale-N will perform in regions with highest need: the semi-humid Morogoro and the semi-arid Dodoma region. The participatory research design of Scale-N targets the above problems by applying a holistic integrated approach while using and linking to the existing analytical research framework Trans-SEC. This framework aims to enhance local food security by participatory testing of innovations across various sectors of the food value chains (FVC).

The research concept of Scale-N includes the following steps: (1) local stakeholder involvement will be set up from the beginning as an integral part of most analytical steps (2) in depth analysis of the nutritional status of the local population and access to the sanitation and health care (3) an integrated in depth analysis of nutrition value chain components to identify and inventor nutrient dense plant derived foods with regard to sustainable resource management and production conditions (4) participative field testing of most promising nutrient-dense plant-derived foods and processing techniques (nutrient-sensitive innovations) (5) local implementation of nutrient-sensitive innovations focusing on knowledge transfer and (6) disseminations and policy implementation.

Keywords: Nutrition security, sub-Saharan Africa, Tanzania