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“Global food security and food safety:  
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## **Agriculture Can Improve Nutrition: How Can Countries Leverage Agriculture, Linking with Other Sectors, to Improve Nutrition**

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### **Abstract**

It seems intuitive that agriculture should improve nutrition, but evidence overtime has shown that this requires deliberate efforts to attain. A mismatch has been observed between improvements in agriculture, and nutrition and health outcomes across low and middle-income countries (LMICs). But, research and programme evaluations have demonstrated that agriculture can indeed improve nutrition when programmes are integrated and designed with specific nutrition objectives and sensitivity. The keynote focusses on a synthesis of what we know, challenges and opportunities based on key pieces of work.

Prior to 2013, reviews on agriculture and nutrition were largely inconclusive showing little evidence that agriculture can improve nutrition outcomes. This was attributed, in part, to poor design of projects/programmes making them difficult to evaluate but also due to lack of specific nutrition objectives. Since 2013 additional evidence has emerged that clearly demonstrates that agriculture can indeed improve nutrition for integrated nutrition sensitive agriculture projects/programmes. However, challenges remain on how countries can leverage this knowledge, working with other sectors to create stronger linkages with nutrition and health. Work on Leveraging Agriculture for Nutrition in South Asia (LAN-SA) and East Africa (LANEA) has shown that efforts are needed across several fronts to build commitment and turn commitments into action and impact. These fronts include, evidence, data and related perceptions; policy, politics and governance; and capacity and finance. Ethiopia, Zambia and the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development programme (CAADP) are used as case studies on challenges and opportunities for country led action. The case studies all have policy instruments intended to increase the nutrition sensitivity of agriculture in the given settings. But, both the structuring and the translation of such initiatives to actions for the desired outcomes have been a challenge. Questions are raised on what needs to be done differently.

It is recommended that country ownership of nutrition sensitive agriculture initiatives, bringing on board other relevant sectors, is a critical component to meeting the desired outcomes and that ways of supporting such country ownership are needed.

**Keywords:** Nutrition sensitive agriculture