

## Understanding Policy Processes in Nutrition

### Session Description

Research on understanding policy processes that determine the priority of nutrition in national and sub-national agendas is urgently needed. Recently, the journal *Health Policy and Planning* devoted an entire issue to the topic of understanding policy processes in health, emphasizing that there needs to be more explicit focus on the methods for doing policy analysis, better use of the existing but often descriptive body of policy analysis, and future research on agenda setting and policy implementation. This need very much exists for nutrition.

Studies are currently being conducted in several countries that aim to understand policy processes in nutrition and have the potential to substantially inform the nutrition community. These studies were launched to better understand the factors that lead to the creation of sustainable long-term nutrition policies that can effectively tackle malnutrition, as well as to discover practical actions that can stir governments in that direction. Many important lessons are being derived from these activities on some big questions such as to how one builds political commitment, how nutrition becomes a public priority, and what institutional reforms are needed to promote, manage and implement effective nutrition policies and programs. A better understanding of the political economy of nutrition policies is essential to engage with countries effectively on this important issue that is central to the MDGs, poverty reduction, and economic development.

### Objectives

- Summarize findings from recent multiple country case-studies on the sociopolitical aspects of nutrition policy development, including presentation of conceptual frameworks, lessons learned, and recommendations for programs and policies
- Provide understanding of how politics and institutional arrangements affect efforts to work multisectorally and reduce malnutrition

### Outcomes – knowledge and action points

- Identify recurrent challenges to moving nutrition forward and processes to overcome these challenges
- Share recent experiences regarding methodological approaches to both study and influence the movement of nutrition agendas

**Symposium Co-Chairs:** Edward Frongillo, University of South Carolina / James Garrett, International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI)

### Session Topics and Speakers

*Introduction and overview (5 minutes)*

Edward Frongillo, Professor, University of South Carolina

**Topic 1:** *Carrots and Sticks: The Political Economy of Nutrition Policy Reforms (15 minutes)*

**Speaker:** Menno Mulder-Sibanda, Sr. Nutrition Specialist, Africa Region, The World Bank

**Topic 2:** *Working Multisectorally in Nutrition in Colombia (15 minutes)*

**Speaker:** James Garrett, Research Fellow, Food Consumption and Nutrition Division, IFPRI

**Topic 3:** *Managing Programs and Politics Effectively: Senegal's Nutrition Enhancement Program (15 minutes)*

**Speaker:** Biram Ndiaye, Nutrition Specialist, UNICEF, Burkina Faso

**Topic 4:** *Prospective Analysis of Movement in the National Nutrition Agenda in Vietnam (15 minutes)*

**Speaker:** Karin Lapping, Nutrition Advisor, Save the Children USA

**Topic 5:** *The advantages and challenges of interagency partnership (5 minutes)*

**Speaker:** Ian Darnton-Hill, Professor (Adjunct), Tufts University

**Topic 6:** *Modelling more effective coordination: lessons learned from the REACH pilots in Lao PDR and Mauritania (15 minutes)*

Speakers: Senoe Torgerson and Sergio Teixeira

**Topic 7:** *Recurrent Challenges in the Movement of Country Nutrition Agendas (15 minutes)*

Speaker: David Pelletier, Associate Professor, Cornell University

**Discussion with speakers acting as panel members (20 minutes)**

**Contributed papers (20 minutes)**

**Open Discussion (10 minutes)**