Foreword

There is increased acknowledgment in the development community of the links between food insecurity and HIV, and the corresponding need to integrate food and nutritional support into a comprehensive response to the epidemic. In areas of high HIV prevalence,[A] many food assistance agencies have recognized the need to adjust conventional food assistance interventions to respond to vulnerabilities related to HIV's impact on individuals, households and communities.

Efforts to effectively respond to food insecurity and HIV are hindered by the lack of both documented, sector-based promising approaches and field-level evidence on appropriate food assistance interventions in the context of HIV. To address these challenges, the Food and Nutrition Technical Assistance (FANTA) Project, working with Technical Assistance to NGOs (TANGO) and funded by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and the World Food Programme (WFP), has developed this guide on Food Assistance Programming in the Context of HIV.

Why Was the Guide Developed?

The goal of the guide is to improve capacity to design and implement food assistance programs in the context of HIV by providing a set of tools, promising practices and key considerations that enhance the flexibility and appropriateness of program design and implementation modalities. The guide strives to answer these core questions:

1. How can food aid-supported food security programs modify their design and implementation to account for the constraints and needs faced by people living with HIV (PLHIV) and HIV-affected households and help achieve food security outcomes in a high-prevalence context?

2. How can HIV prevention, treatment, and care and support programs better utilize food and food-related resources to help achieve their HIV-related outcomes?

3. How can food security and HIV programs integrate their activities in areas of high food insecurity and high HIV prevalence to maximize complementarities and synergy without compromising the core objectives of either program?

Who Is the Guide for?

The principal audience for Food Assistance Programming in the Context of HIV includes WFP regional and country offices, WFP implementing partners, USAID regional and country Mission Offices of HIV and Food for Peace (FFP), as well as Title II Cooperating Sponsors (CSs), and other governmental and non-governmental organizations that use food assistance to save lives, provide nutrition care and support and enhance resilience and adaptive capacity among food-insecure households and those affected by HIV. The guide is written for program directors, program advisors and senior program managers who are directly involved in the analysis and formulation of food assistance strategies and country program activities at HQ and in regional and field offices.

A The term "high prevalence" is used throughout this guide. It is analogous to the concept of a **generalized epidemic** of HIV. HIV is commonly understood to reach the status of a generalized epidemic where over five percent of high-risk groups and over one percent of pregnant women are HIV-positive.

Particularly in areas where food insecurity and HIV prevalence are high, the guide will help these decision makers respond to the challenges posed by the epidemic through design and implementation of food assistance strategies that are appropriate for managing the interactions among HIV, food security, livelihoods and nutrition.

How Should the Guide Be Used?

The guide is intended to help decision makers ask the right questions about the relevance, appropriateness, effectiveness and impact of food security programs in an HIV context, as well as help them integrate food and nutrition interventions into HIV programs. The guide addresses food security vulnerability assessments, targeting, activity design, program implementation and operational challenges associated with food assistance in the context of HIV.

The guide builds upon what has been learned through WFP and USAID Title II experience with food security and food assistance programs in areas affected by HIV. It discusses complex programmatic and operational strategies, and presents examples of sector-specific approaches that have shown positive results among the most vulnerable individuals, households and communities.

How Is the Guide Organized?

Part I. HIV and Food Security: Conceptual and Institutional Framework

Part I describes the food security conceptual framework, which should be used as the basis for all food assistance interventions. Part I outlines currently known and accepted linkages between food security, livelihoods and HIV; explains food assistance's potential role in addressing related vulnerabilities; and discusses international and national food security and nutrition policies, goals and program resources and mechanisms relevant to food assistance and HIV programs.

Part II. Program Design Steps

Part II provides guidance on the full range of conventional project design steps, with a focus on the specific implications of food assistance programming in HIV-affected areas and populations.

Part III. Sector-Specific Program Design Considerations

Part III reviews the design and implementation of interventions for key sectoral categories, identifies tools and promising practices, and provides key considerations for addressing specific challenges in the context of HIV.