



# FEED THE FUTURE

The U.S. Government's Global Hunger & Food Security Initiative

## Innovation Lab for Nutrition

### Research that Matters to Individuals' Lives:

Engaging Local Community in the Dissemination of Findings on the Potential for Aquaculture and Horticulture in Improving Nutrition and Diet Quality in Rural Bangladesh



## Regional Dissemination Proceedings September 2019



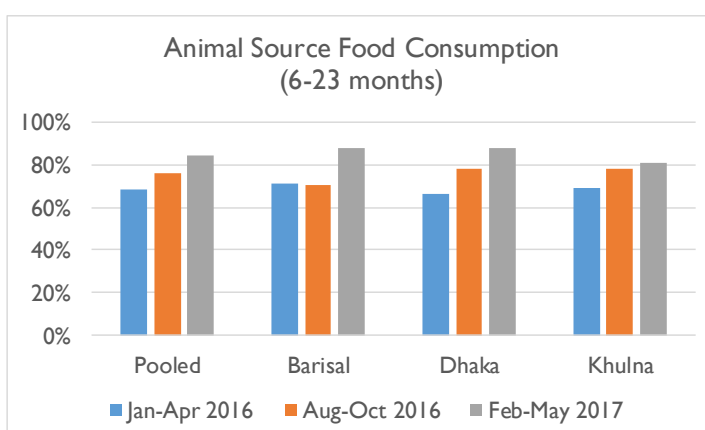
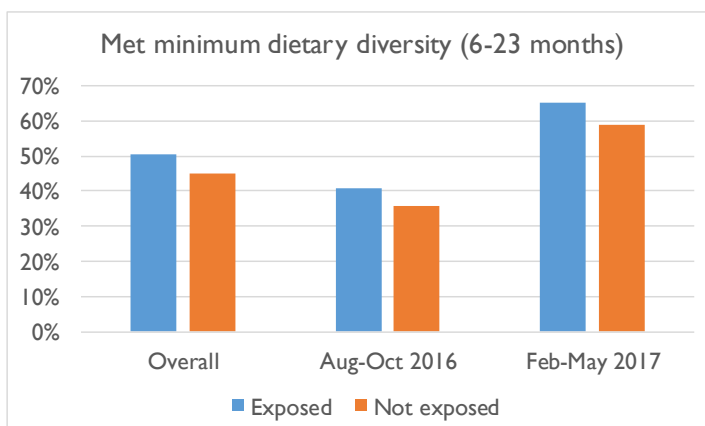
**USAID**  
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE



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## Key Research Findings—Diet

- Household exposure to USAID programs is associated with aquaculture-horticulture engagement and production diversity
- Dietary diversity of children under 2 increased over time across all households, with a greater proportion of children in households exposed to USAID programs meeting the minimum dietary diversity
- Child animal source foods consumption and women's diet is positively associated with aquaculture-horticulture engagement and production diversity
- Animal source food consumption increased over time (after adjustments for age, wealth, and woman's education) in children under 2 in all three divisions
- Dark green leafy vegetables consumption decreased, and Vitamin A rich fruits and vegetables increased, but the rates are still low
- While diets are becoming nutrient dense, consumption of packaged and processed foods is increasing (as measured through expenditure)



## Study Summary



Since 2015, the Feed the Future Innovation Lab for Nutrition, in collaboration with the Horticulture Innovation Lab, Helen Keller International, Aquafish Innovation Lab and other international and local partners in Bangladesh have implemented operations research focusing on unanswered questions regarding appropriate investments in agriculture for improving nutrition and diet quality. To address

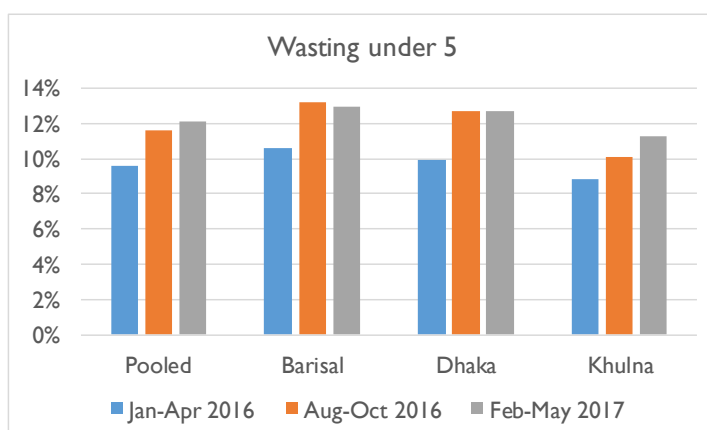
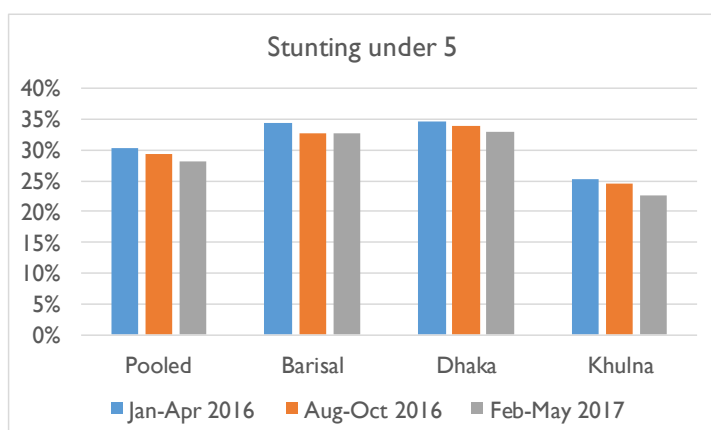
these questions, a study was conducted to understand the population-level effects of exposure to one or more agricultural interventions (specifically horticulture and aquaculture) on income and nutrition in beneficiary and non-beneficiary populations residing in the Feed the Future Zone of Influence between 2016 to 2018. The study also introduced new technologies in horticulture and aquaculture to understand how the technologies can increase the income and improve the nutrition and health of rural Bangladeshi households. Three rounds of data were collected from approximately 3000 households.

## Key Policy and Programmatic Recommendations from Dissemination Events

- All forms of malnutrition co-exist across the three divisions with public health implications of co-existence of under and over-nutrition
- Diet diversity improvements through agricultural investments in nutrition sensitive interventions is critical
- Sustainable diets, reduction of food insecurity and improved nutrition security is achievable but offset by poor purchasing practices and availability of ultra-processed foods. Is this due to poor market linkages for households deriving income from nutrition sensitive agriculture, aquaculture and horticulture?
- Issues around food safety need to be addressed at the national level

## Key Research Findings—Nutritional Outcomes

- Stunting in children under 5 years decreased in all three divisions, while stunting in children under 2 years increased in all three divisions
- Wasting is high and similar to national rates
- Overweight and obesity rates in women are increasing in the three divisions, as is expenditure on sugary beverages, snacks and sweets



## Regional Dissemination Events

The Innovation Lab for Nutrition worked closely with its partners at the Helen Keller International to organize three dissemination events in the three study divisions of Bangladesh (Barisal, Khulna and Dhaka divisions) to share division-level findings from the research.

A one-day dissemination event was held in each division:

- Barisal division on 28 August 2019, chaired by Divisional Directors of Health and Agriculture, attended by 44 stakeholders from government agencies, academic institutions and non-government organizations
- Khulna division on 2 September 2019, chaired by the Director General of Fisheries., attended by 47 participants
- Dhaka division on 5 September 2019, chaired by the Secretary of the Department of Agriculture, attended by 42 participants from various division and central level government and non-government agencies

## Way Forward

The division level dissemination events were successful in achieving their objectives and resulted in sharing of research findings on diet and nutrition with Bangladeshi regional stakeholders. Stakeholders recommended the use of the evidence on diet and nutrition programming at the regional level. The findings will further be shared with national Bangladeshi stakeholders during the national Scientific Symposium in December 2019.



## Acknowledgements

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