1. OUR GOAL
Our goal is to inform about the status and achievements of the EU+ Joint Programming on Nutrition as well as provide information on upcoming events, national and global developments in nutrition.

2. JOINT STRATEGY ON NUTRITION IN PLACE
In March 2016 the EU+ Nutrition Core Team (EU, ECHO, Germany, Ireland, Italy, Netherlands, Spain and United Kingdom), finalized their Joint Strategy on Nutrition to support the implementation of the second multisectoral National Nutrition Programme overseen by the Federal Ministry of Health. The next step is the development of a Joint Action Framework.

3. MEMBER STATES AGREE ON PRIORITY ACTIONS
During a workshop on July 28, 2016 the EU and seven Member States conducted a participatory mapping exercise to better understand potential complementarities and gaps. Based on this mapping, the group agreed to a set of priority actions, which it would focus on during the next two years. These actions will be a central part of the Joint Action Framework, which will be finalized by the end of 2016.
4. EU+ JOINT EFFORTS TO MAINSTREAM NUTRITION

MAINSTREAMING NUTRITION IN AGRICULTURE PROGRAMMES:

The EU jointly with AgriProFocus has set up an Innovation community on nutrition sensitive agriculture, which has an online platform, open to anybody working in the field. You can register here: [http://agriprofocus.com/innovation-community-nutrition](http://agriprofocus.com/innovation-community-nutrition).

On top of the online exchange, several workshops have been conducted as part of this platform: The first one on “Basics of Nutrition sensitive agriculture” in March 2016, the second one on “Monitoring and Evaluation of agriculture projects” took place in April 2016. A third workshop of the Innovation community took place in August 2016 and discussed the problems around “Post-harvest losses and opportunities for processing”.

USING NUTRITION BEHAVIOUR CHANGE COMMUNICATION IN AGRICULTURE EXTENSION

On 16th of November 2016, the EU Delegation, with the support of Agriprofocus, held its last workshop of the year, linked to Nutrition Sensitive Agriculture. This time the subject was an introduction to Social Behaviour Change Communication (SBCC). After presenting how SBCC is integrated into Government’s programmes and plans for Agriculture extension agents, additional presentations showed the development of SBCC messages and an afternoon exercise allowed participants to try their hands at developing SBCC messages. The Delegation will communicate with implementing partners to collect SBCC material and make it available to partners.

MAINSTREAMING NUTRITION IN PASTORALIST AREAS:

The Italian Agency for Development Cooperation and the EU called for a meeting of experts in the field of nutrition in Pastoralist areas on 28 September 2016 to get an overview of the current activities and get a better understanding of the existing evidence. Presentations from projects like Milk Matters highlighted the impact of community livestock interventions on the nutritional status of young children as well as the costs saved with this approach as opposed to a more curative approach to treat malnutrition.

Twelve other organizations presented their activities and achievements in pastoralist areas. Common interventions seem to be focused around fodder production, using behavior change communication to promote animal source foods to children and processing of milk products to extend their shelf-life and availability.

The meeting concluded that a more permanent structure would be needed for this forum to discuss specific topics in more detail and on the long-term advocate for a stronger nutrition focus in government structures. More information on the project can be found here: [http://fic.tufts.edu/publication-item/milk-matters-3/](http://fic.tufts.edu/publication-item/milk-matters-3/).
The Dutch programme BENEFIT is mainstreaming nutrition: in a workshop in June 2016, four Dutch funded projects (CASCAPE, ISSD, SBN, ENTAG) under the umbrella of BENEFIT discussed their respective nutrition objectives and indicators for their joint Monitoring and Evaluation framework. More information can be found here: https://www.wur.nl/en/project/BENEFIT.htm.

Capacity Needs Assessment for Nutrition Sensitive Agriculture in Ethiopia

The Ethiopian Government’s commitment to improving the nutrition needs of the country is reflected in its National Nutrition Strategy and Program developed since 2008. In the revised National Nutrition Program, nutrition-sensitive agriculture is prioritized as one of its objectives recognizing the role of the agriculture sector to improve nutrition. It is a food-based approach dietary diversity and bio-fortification at the heart of overcoming malnutrition and micronutrient deficiencies. As an approach, nutrition-sensitive agriculture seeks to maximize agriculture’s contribution to nutrition to benefit poor households.

In line with this, the Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations (FAO) has been requested by the EU to organized a capacity needs assessment workshop.

Following the request of the Ministry of Agriculture and Natural Resources, the EU mandated the Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations (FAO) to develop a capacity needs assessment for both the Ministry of Agriculture and Natural Resources and the Ministry of Livestock and Fisheries aimed at identifying Livestock and Fisheries aimed at identifying the capacity needs and priorities of government and other institutions to mainstream nutrition into its agriculture policies and programmes.

To do so, FAO has launched a series of consultative capacity needs assessment workshops at federal and regional levels. The federal level workshop provided a general overview of the country’s capacity gaps for nutrition-sensitive agriculture, while the regional workshops achieved a more in-depth understanding of woreda-level challenges and identified regional differences/priorities.
High level advocacy for political commitment is needed and awareness raising and training on NSA within MoLF, NNP, AGP, SLMP, etc. is needed as well as NSA training materials;
Advocate and assign a budget for NSA within the agriculture sector.

Strengthen government structures for NSA – support the upgrading of the Nutrition case team within MoANR to a directorate level and introduce a Nutrition case team within MoLF.
Strengthen M&E frameworks and systems by incorporating appropriate nutrition sensitive agriculture indicators.

Resilience building in Ethiopia (RESET II), is a joint programme, funded by EU, ECHO, Austria and the Netherlands, which aims to develop projects in “Sustainable agriculture and food security” with an objective of “Improving resilience and long-term nutrition, including through LRRD and safety net/social protection approaches.” Nutrition has been mainstreamed across this programme to ensure better outcomes on nutritional status particular of children and women. These projects will be implemented in eight different regional clusters (Wag Himra, Afar, Siti, Liben, Bale, Borena, Wolayta, South Omo).

5. SUCCESS STORIES OF MEMBER STATES

PRODUCTION OF ORANGE FLESH SWEET POTATOES – AN IRISH-AID FUNDED PROJECT

The Adebra School is located in the Hawzen woreda (district) of Tigray. The school has about 800 students in grades 1-8, and has been one of the target areas for an Orange-Fleshed Sweet Potato (OFSP) school garden project implemented by the International Potato Centre (CIP) through funding from Irish Aid.

The students are learning about OFSP including how to make dishes out of OFSP leaves as well as the roots, and how different parts of the OFSP plant can be mixed with foods they already eat to enhance their nutritional value. Besides taking home skills and knowledge about agronomy and nutrition, the students are encouraged to bring home OFSP vines to plant at their homes and share with their families. Nearly all of the OFSP activities at the Adebra School are structured to carry benefits beyond the gates of the school compound.

GIZ AND ETHIOPIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH WORKING HAND IN HAND ON IMPROVED INFORMATION ABOUT FASTING PRACTICES

Fasting periods in Ethiopia amount to almost seven months a year and have been shown to be harmful to pregnant and breastfeeding women and children. USAID’s Empowering New Generations to Improve Nutrition and Economic opportunities (ENGINE) program has worked with the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewhedo Church (EOTC) to agree on exemptions from fasting for pregnant and lactating women and children under seven years, which resulted in a sermon guide.
GIZ’s Nutrition Sensitive Agriculture Project cooperates closely with the EOTC in the coming 12 months, providing support to conduct sensitization workshops, to strengthen the capacity of theological colleges and clergy training centers for integrating the agreed sermon guidelines into the curriculum related to adequate nutrition of pregnant and breastfeeding women and children on the Church’s print media.

The project is being implemented in three in Tigray - Kola Tembien, Laelay Adiyabo and Ganta Afeshum. In total 150 parish churches (50 from each woreda), one theological college and three clergy training centers will be selected for communication and social mobilization measures. Ultimately pregnant women, lactating mothers, grandmothers and husbands shall be reached by small group discussions lead by representatives of the above mentioned church-related institutions.

6. UPDATES FROM ETHIOPIA

“Dietary habits, food taboos, and perceptions towards weight gain during pregnancy in Arsi, rural central Ethiopia: a qualitative cross-sectional study” from Addis Ababa University

“Dietary diversity during pregnancy is associated with reduced risk of maternal anemia, preterm delivery, and low birth weight in a prospective cohort study in rural Ethiopia” from Addis Ababa University

“Scale up of nutrition and health programs in Ethiopia and their overlap with reductions in child stunting”

New papers from IFPRI-ESSP:

- “Economy-wide impacts of the Productive Safety Net Programme (PSNP)”

- “Cities and agricultural transformation in Africa: Evidence from Ethiopia”
http://ebrary.ifpri.org/cdm/ref/collection/p15738coll2/id/130447

- “Cities and agricultural transformation in Africa: Evidence from Ethiopia”
http://ebrary.ifpri.org/cdm/ref/collection/p15738coll2/id/130447

- “Non-farm income and labor markets in rural Ethiopia”
https://www.ifpri.org/publication/non-farm-income-and-labor-markets-rural-ethiopia

- “Does market access mitigate the impact of seasonality on child growth? – Panel data evidence from northern Ethiopia”
https://www.unicef-irc.org/publications/846/

- “Addressing gender inequalities in Ethiopia’s agriculture sector to reduce poverty”:
https://cgspace.cgiar.org/handle/10568/73390

After discussions during the AHN week in Addis in June 2016, where the Ethiopian community expressed a desire to connect in order to strengthen the community of people working on agriculture-nutrition linkages in Ethiopia, sub-group has been set up. I highly recommend you to join to both the global as well as the Ethiopian group, which both will provide an important forum for anybody working in nutrition and/or agriculture:
Global developments in nutrition

The International Journal for Rural Development has a special edition on Nutrition sensitive agriculture. One of the articles “Walking the talk in nutrition sensitive agriculture”, is featuring the NSA project of GIZ in Ethiopia.

The Ethiopian Public Health Institute (EPHI) issued a new Journal on Public Health and Nutrition. You can access it here:

FAO conducted a national workshop for a Capacity Needs assessment of the agriculture sector 20-22 September. Here is a summary of the event:

The Foresight report has just been launched! “Food systems and diets: Facing the challenges of the 21st century”

The new Lancet Maternal Health Series synthesizes the last decade of evidence on maternal health worldwide and champions vital action on the path to 2030.

The International Journal for Rural Development has a special edition on Nutrition sensitive agriculture. “Walking the talk in nutrition sensitive agriculture”, is featuring the NSA project of GIZ in Ethiopia.

The United Nations General Assembly agreed a resolution proclaiming the UN Decade of Action on Nutrition from 2016 to 2025. The resolution aims to trigger intensified action to end hunger and eradicate malnutrition worldwide, and ensure universal access to healthier and more sustainable diets. Find more here:
http://www.who.int/nutrition/GA_decade_action/en/

The 2016 Global Nutrition Report is out. It documents progress on commitments made on the global stage, and it recommends actions to accelerate that progress.
http://globalnutritionreport.org/the-report/

The Global Panel launched its 3rd technical brief: The Cost of Malnutrition: Why Policy Action is Urgent, which calls on policymakers to invest without delay in more cost-effective nutrition initiatives. You can access the policy brief here:
http://glopan.org/cost-of-malnutrition

The joint WHO/UNICEF/IBFAN status report on “Marketing of breast-milk substitutes: National implementation of the international code” just came out: