



Nutrition

Malnutrition is one of the world's most serious health problems, imposing heavy costs on families, communities, and nations. Nearly 3.6 million children die from malnutrition each year and 2 billion people are estimated to suffer from micronutrient deficiencies. Although there are many causes of malnutrition, access to high-quality foods and food-related practices play an important role.

AED has a long history of introducing innovative approaches to address malnutrition, including engaging the food industry as a key player in this effort. AED has partnered with companies such as Procter & Gamble, Dr. Reddy's, Unilever, Kraft, Coca-Cola, PepsiCo, and BASF to introduce and build demand for high-quality fortified food products. We work with these partners on the full spectrum of product development, including market research, supplementary food formulation and testing, behavior change campaigns, technology transfer, and efforts to build enabling regulatory environments.

Product development research

Our product development research ranges from product acceptability studies to evaluations of the clinical effectiveness of therapeutic foods. AED has worked extensively with Valid, a Swedish/Danish food manufacturing company, to develop nutritious and affordable alternative ready-to-use

therapeutic food (RUTF) formulations. These products, which include three sesame-based recipes, have been tested for nutritional content, quality, and safety. AED transferred RUTF technology to local manufacturers in Ethiopia, Malawi, and Zambia to rehabilitate malnourished children under the USAID-funded Food and Nutritional Technical Assistance (FANTA) Project.

AED has also worked with Athena Foods and Nutriset's Plumpyfield Network in Ghana, to customize a ready-to-use lipid-based nutrition supplement for children under two years old. We helped conduct product tests and market feasibility studies, build local manufacturing capability, and bring the product to market. Under the FANTA Project, AED serves as a technical resource in the development of supplementary and therapeutic foods, as well as



in advising on effective systems for their distribution.

Building markets for fortified food products

AED works with local producers to develop and expand markets for affordable, high-quality fortified food products targeted at vulnerable populations. We brought together Procter & Gamble, Café Soluble, a local

manufacturer, and the Government of Nicaragua to introduce a fortified drink for pregnant women and schoolchildren. AED contributed market research,

demand creation activities, and efforts to improve the regulatory and tax environment. We also work to improve feeding practices for infants and young children in Vietnam, Bangladesh, and Ethiopia by increasing the availability of low-cost fortified foods, and promoting them through demand generation

campaigns in collaboration with public and private partners, under the Alive & Thrive Project funded by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation.

Under USAID’s flagship micronutrient project, A2Z, AED works with the food industry and national governments to deliver critical micronutrients to vulnerable populations, primarily through fortifying staple foods such as salt, flour, and oil with critical missing micronutrients such as iron, folate, zinc, and vitamin A. To date, AED has helped draft provisional standards for the fortification of salt, oil, sugar, maize, and wheat flour, and has provided assistance for quality control and testing systems in East, Central, and Southern Africa.

Addressing the nutritional needs of vulnerable groups

AED has provided global technical leadership and served as a technical resource in the development of supplementary and therapeutic foods for young children, and for people living



with HIV/AIDS. In Kenya, the Speak for the Child Project helped food manufacturer, Proctor & Allan, purchase the food supplement Unimix and develop community-based distribution

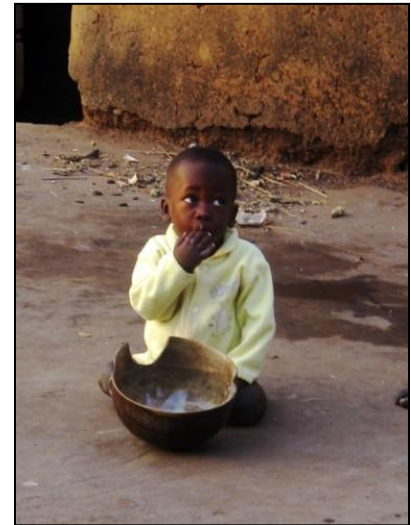
channels as a way to reach vulnerable children. Also, in Kenya, AED’s Kenya Nutrition and HIV Program joined forces with the National AIDS Control Programme and Insta Foods to introduce the first locally manufactured RUTF and expand its availability to 30 percent of health facilities. AED trains community-based organizations, governments, and the private sector to execute all aspects of this food-for-prescription program.

Under the auspices of the Global Alliance to Improve Nutrition (GAIN), AED will soon be working with commercial manufacturers in South Africa to introduce fortified complementary food products—a lipid-based fortified spread and micronutrient powder (“sprinkles”). The products, designed with the help of food technology specialists, will address the specific nutritional needs of infants and young children in low-income population groups. AED will contribute its expertise in consumer research and demand creation, and assist in the development of distribution channels to better reach this socio-demographic group.

Influencing policy through research and tools

In the West Bank, AED conducted a survey to explore mothers’ attitudes toward soft-baby biscuits and porridges, and potential interest in micronutrient powders that could be added to home-prepared foods. The study recommended the development of

a fortification standard for complementary foods and the addition of micronutrient powders to soft baby biscuits, porridges, and dairy puddings, as a way to improve their quality.



Through its policy and advocacy work, AED helps create enabling environments for increasing the availability and use of fortified foods. The A2Z Project developed a food fortification formulator that approximates the potential impact, cost, and criteria for enforcement of food fortification programs. AED is also the creator of the PROFILES process for nutrition policy analysis and advocacy used in more than 20 countries to calculate the costs of poor nutrition, and the potential benefits gained from nutrition programs.

The mission of the AED Center for Private Sector Health Initiatives (CPSHI) is to improve the health and well being of people in developing countries—particularly those at the “base of the pyramid”—by facilitating beneficial partnerships between the public and private sectors to provide information, services, and products that are affordable, accessible, and high quality.

CPSHI is part of AED, a nonprofit organization working globally to improve education, health, civil society, and the environment—the foundation of thriving societies. Focusing on the underserved, AED’s worldwide staff of 2,000 implements more than 300 programs serving people in all 50 United States and more than 150 countries. In collaboration with local and national partners, AED fosters sustainable results through practical, comprehensive approaches to social and economic challenges.



For more information contact:
 Center for Private Sector Health Initiatives
 1875 Connecticut Avenue, NW
 Washington, DC 20009-5721
 Tel: +1 (202) 464-3785
 Email: pshi@aed.org
 Website: <http://psbi.aed.org>
www.aed.org