



# Assessing the Role of Embedded Consultation in Enhancing the Functionality of State Committees on Food and Nutrition: A Case Study of Ebonyi State

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# Outline

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# Background

- State Committees for Food and Nutrition (SCFN) play a critical role in addressing food and nutrition challenges at the state level.
- However, their effectiveness and functionality vary across states.
- USAID Advancing Nutrition started with stakeholder engagement in Ebonyi in January 2023 with actual implementation starting in February 2023

# Objective

- This study aims to assess the impact of embedded consultants in improving the functionality of SCFNs.
- It explores the contributions of embedded consultants in building the capacity of SCFN members, facilitating strategic planning, and supporting policy development and implementation.
- It also focused on the functionality of embedded consultants on SCFN including their expertise, technical assistance, and contributions to capacity-building efforts.

## Materials and Methods

- This study employed a pre-post assessment to evaluate the impact of embedded consultation on SCFN functionality in Ebonyi State.
- A baseline organizational capacity assessment was conducted, and the end-line assessment will be completed by September 2023.
- The assessment uses qualitative organizational capacity development tools to assess the perceived effectiveness of embedded consultancy through key informant interviews (KIIs) with Ebonyi SCFN members.
- A purposive sampling strategy was utilized to select participants from diverse Ministries, Departments, and Agencies (MDAs) that make up the SCFN.
- At baseline and end-line, we surveyed 30 participants and interviewed 10 participants and feedback was analyzed using a thematic analytical method.

# Capacity Strengthening Activities

- Support by consultants embedded within the State Committee on Food and Nutrition (SCFN) to facilitate and coordinate training and capacity-strengthening activities
  - Strategic retreat for Ebonyi State Committee on Food and Nutrition
  - Nutrition Leadership Training
  - Development of M&E Framework to monitor implementation
  - Orientation of SCFN Members

## Results and Discussions

- The baseline findings of this study indicated the potential of embedded consultation in enhancing the functionality of SCFNs.
- The embedded consultants were found to provide expertise and technical assistance to Ebonyi SCFNs, supporting committee members' capacity-building efforts.
- They provide demand-driven support and facilitate the development of strategic plans, policy frameworks, and evidence-based interventions to address food and nutrition challenges (**establishment of food & and nutrition departments in MDAs**).
- Moreover, embedded consultants aimed to foster collaboration and coordination among Ebonyi SCFN stakeholders, which promotes knowledge sharing and best practices exchange. Endline data indicates the effectiveness of this embedded consultant approach.
- Support evidence-based decision-making and tracking progress through training and the use of data
- Knowledge, skills and attitudes (KSA) of members changed for good

# Learnings and Recommendation(s)

- Embedding consultants within the SCFN improves the capacity of the SCFN to function optimally
- The study generates learning on how and the extent to which their expertise and support contribute to capacity building, strategic planning, and policy implementation, ultimately enhancing the effectiveness of SCFNs.
- Our initial findings indicate that efforts should focus on identifying consultants with relevant expertise, ensuring effective communication and collaboration between consultants and SCFN members, and fostering a supportive and sustainable consultant-SCFN relationship
- Capacity strengthening of the SCFN by the embedded consultants should be for a certain period and not on a permanent basis



# Success Story

- The adaptation (Domestication) and validation of the National Policies and Multisectoral Plan of Action was concluded within two months
- This was completed before the change of government
- The new government signed off/approved the documents within the first quarter of his assumption of office
  
- The maiden Hidden Hunger Conference was organized by the SCFN in August 2023

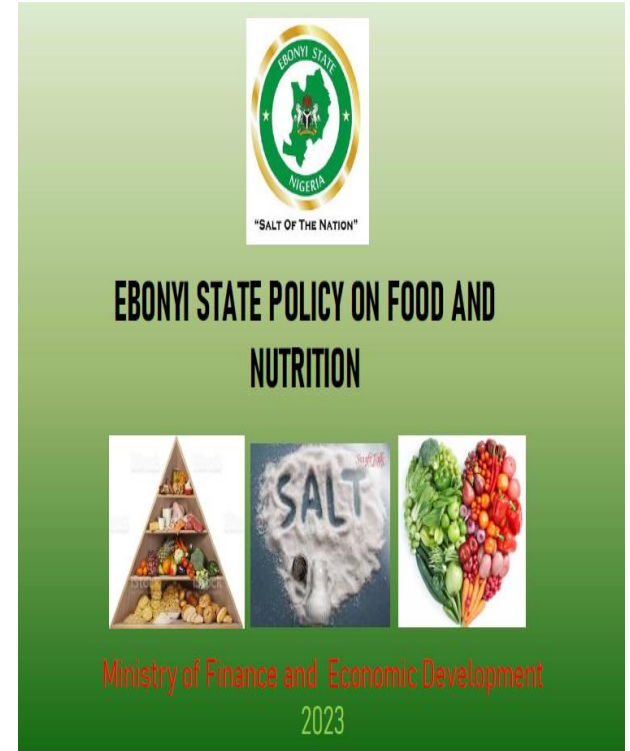




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**Thank  
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