

Smarter Futures Project Annual Narrative Report September 2020



Executive Summary

The Smarter Futures grant, received from the Dutch Government and administered through the Global Alliance for Improved Nutrition (GAIN) to the International Federation of Spina Bifida and Hydrocephalus (IF), became effective as of March 1, 2018. The overall objective of this grant is to improve the reach, coverage, and adequacy of fortified grains throughout the African continent in order to improve the nutritional status of target populations. To this end, the Smarter Futures grant consists of a broad range of activities built on rigorous data analyses that identify areas most in need, areas where the fortification of industrially milled grains can have the greatest impact, and key challenge areas for programs already in progress but faltering. Through the grant's targeted efforts and unique partnerships, FFI, as the implementing partner, aims to continue providing direct assistance to 10 countries over the next one year. These countries include (Angola, Botswana, Egypt, Morocco, Mozambique, Mauritius, Namibia, South Africa, Uganda, and Zimbabwe). In addition to direct technical assistance, areas of focus in this grant include providing online fortification trainings, improving how compliance information is collected and acted upon, and convening regional implementing partners and government to ensure efforts are complementary, effectively targeted, and non-duplicative.

In light of the recent funding cut to this Smarter Futures grant, activities that will be affected by the cut have been highlighted in yellow. We will not be able to complete these activities without funding.

Key activities undertaken since the last reporting period in September 2019:

- Conducted additional FortifyMIS trainings in Mozambique, including an additional one-month training for GAIN-Mozambique staff to ensure on-the-ground support to government as they rollout trainings to other provinces outside of Maputo.
- Completed a comprehensive mill mapping assessment and engaged a team of legal experts to advice on legislative next steps in Egypt regarding the mandatory fortification of both open market and social safety net flour. Received official endorsement and go-ahead for implementation of the fortification program from the Ministry of Supply and Internal Trade.
- Initiated and led a virtual Monitoring 'Challenge' Workshop to address persistent and inherent challenges around non-compliance that will put into more effective means of ensuring national level compliance.
- Began and / or completed training 6 participants in the *Introduction to Micronutrients and Fortification Training* course.

- Supported the drafting of South Africa’s national monitoring guidelines and their accompanying audit checklists.
- Identified next steps for technical support after discussions with government and partners in Angola, Botswana, Morocco, Mauritius, Namibia, Uganda, and Zimbabwe.

Top achievement during this reporting period:

Completing the *virtual* Monitoring Challenge Workshop on Slack. Due to the global pandemic, the Fortification Monitoring Challenge Workshop originally planned for May 2020 in Johannesburg, South Africa was postponed. Although the hope is to still hold this workshop in-person in 2021, there was demonstrated need and interest to convene virtually in order to keep the conversation and momentum around this topic going and to create a ‘community of learning’ where regulatory monitoring successes and challenges related to fortification programs could be discussed and where the original ‘challenge’ question could still be answered by country teams. The virtual workshop began on August 2, 2020 and will continue virtually through September 28, 2020.

Continued FortifyMIS Training in Mozambique (despite COVID). At the request of the Ministry of Industry and Trade, FFI with support from GAIN-Mozambique, continues to lead trainings on use of the FortifyMIS. Currently, the trainings are FFI-led virtual trainings for Maputo-based GAIN staff who will lead in-person trainings for inspectors in provinces outside of Maputo starting September 15. FFI is also supporting the revision of Mozambique’s inspection checklists at the producer, importer, and market levels as part of the support requested by government to improve their regulatory monitoring processes.

Initiating Implementation Support in Egypt (despite COVID). Despite the fact that we have not been able to have a formal, in-person signing of the Partner Agreement with government due to travel restrictions, FFI has been given the go-ahead by the Ministry of Supply and Internal Trade to begin the work necessary to move implementation forward. To this end, FFI has completed a comprehensive mill mapping exercise that identified the level of miller support and scale up required, engaged a team of legal experts to advice on how to proceed regarding legislation that may or may not be necessary to ensure mandatory fortification at the open market and social safety net level, and collaborated with Egypt’s new Food Safety Authority around the formal inclusion of fortification into national food safety measures and the creation of national fortification monitoring guidelines.

Challenges faced / variances with what was planned

All activities are on track to be completed as outlined in the original work plan with the exception of: technical assistance to Algeria, the regional workshop, FortifyMIS rollout, and inclusion of fortification trainings in local curriculum. Engagement in Algeria is on hold due to the current political situation. The regional workshop slated for 2019 was supposed to take place in May 2020 due to logistical considerations and was then moved to an August – September 2020 virtual meeting due to COVID travel restrictions. Delays in the rollout of FortifyMIS are due to the decision to “nail it, then scale it” before any further countries are engagement in adopting and adapting the MIS at a national level. Variances in the inclusion

of fortification trainings into local university or milling school curriculum are due to the timeline being pushed out to 2021.

Main focus areas for the Q4 2020 and Q1-Q4 2021:

- Provide direct technical assistance to Angola, Botswana, Namibia, Mauritius, Mozambique, Zimbabwe, Uganda, and South Africa
- Sign a Partner Agreement with the Ministry of Supply and Internal Trade in Egypt and initiating the mandatory fortification of open market and social safety net flour.
- Documentation of the challenges and proposed ‘winning’ solutions from the virtual Monitoring ‘Challenge’ Workshop and extension of support provided to countries in attendance for six months post-workshop to ensure implementation of proposed country plans.
- Prove the viability (or not) of the MIS in Mozambique and Uganda and generating a revised point of view on key next steps globally.
- Engagement with partners and possible donors on a regional West Africa rice fortification strategy that has the potential to reach 157 million people in 12 countries. Work is ongoing in trying to secure funding.

The activities outlined below provide a summary of progress made to date and proposed plans on work plan *objectives slated for Q4 2020 and Q1-Q4 2021*. Activities reported as complete in previous reports are not included in detail in this update. The Smarter Futures work plan can be found [here](#) for reference.

Activity Summary

Section 1: Regional and Country-Specific Trainings

1.1 Organize regional Southern Africa Development Community (SADC) Technical Assistance Workshop

Proposed timeline: Q3 and Q4 2018

Actual timeline: Oct 2018

Status: **Complete**

Output: Training provided to 11-14 SADC countries to address common challenges and country-specific needs.

Outcome: Change in knowledge / capacity per the pre-post assessments; champions identified and developed.

1.2 Organize two regional technical assistance workshops to be informed by the Africa Strategy Refresh.

Proposed timeline: Q3 and Q4 2019

Actual timeline: Q2 2020 (one comprehensive workshop will be held in lieu of two smaller ones)

Status: In progress

Original Output: Training provided to 5-8 regional countries to address common challenges and country-specific needs.

Original Outcome: Change in knowledge / capacity per the pre-post assessments; champions identified and developed

All participants originally invited to the May 2020 workshop will be invited to ‘meet’ on the online platform, *Slack*. A series of synchronous (occurring at the same time) and asynchronous (not occurring at the same time) events will be held between August 2 and September 28, 2020 in order to do just what we hoped to do in the in-person May event: present country-specific successes and challenges around regulatory monitoring, work in teams to answer a challenge question related to current human and financial resources at your disposal, and engage technical experts in the best way of implementing new proposed approaches to collecting and acting upon fortification monitoring information. Workshop objectives and expected outcomes for the virtual meeting remain unchanged from the in-person meeting and are outlined further along with the virtual workshop agenda [here](#).

1.3 FortifyMIS support provided to three countries

Proposed timeline: Q2-Q4 2018

Actual timeline: Q2 2018-Q4 2020

Status: In progress. This activity will not be completed without further funding sources.

Output: FortifyMIS users in each country trained on use of the MIS; MIS is accepted and adapted.

Outcome: MIS used by intended users in all three countries to gather and report nationally on fortification compliance information (confirmed by indicators of use); change in monitoring capacity per pre-post training assessment.

As a result of the Maputo-based trainings conducted in Mozambique in 2019, the Ministry of Industry and Trade is interested in rolling out the MIS nationally in order to improve regulatory monitoring practices and ensure national compliance data is collected regularly and acted upon. This is in continuation of the MIS work done in Mozambique since 2018. In order to enable this in light of COVID travel restrictions, FFI led a one-month long MIS training for new GAIN-Mozambique staff who will then be responsible for training inspectors at the provincial level in person between starting September 15, 2020. In Uganda, UNBS and the MoH determined that they would prefer to use the FortifyMIS to collect market inspection data at the national level and for internal use by producers. FFI is currently working with these two agencies to further define next steps.

Next Steps in Mozambique:

- Provide support to GAIN-Mozambique staff as they conduct in-person inspector trainings at the provincial level.
- Continue to provide support to strengthen the overall fortification monitoring framework in Mozambique.

The following workplan is proposed by FFI as immediate next steps for such a rollout in Mozambique:

- One individual from each agency being trained (i.e. INAE, Municipality, ProConsumers, and national lab) should be identified as the FortifyMIS point person for that agency. This point person should be consistently available for FortifyMIS trainings, rollouts tasks, and coordination and should not change. This individual will be responsible for participating in MoH/GAIN-Mozambique check-ins which will take place once a week for the first month in order to gauge the progress of FortifyMIS use and address any issues or challenges following rollout. This person will also be the point person for any MIS troubleshooting issues that may arise. Ideally, this group of point persons should be drawn from a core team within CONFAM under the leadership of the Ministry of Industry and Trade. This group will also need to take part in the ToT to learn the system.
- A subset of participants from each agency being trained should be chosen from the participants already trained on the FortifyMIS in the July and / or October trainings. These individuals should be those who have demonstrated a strong understanding and ability to use the FortifyMIS, should have adequate teaching / training abilities, be motivated to train others, and should be given permission by their superiors to be ToT trainers for the agency ensuring they have the bandwidth to commit to this. These individuals will be responsible for conducting subsequent trainings (ToTs) for their agency staff on the FortifyMIS. GAIN-Mozambique and Ministry of Industry and Trade should be responsible for identifying the ToT trainers based on past performance.

Next Steps in Uganda:

- Sync the MIS market inspection component with the needs of Uganda's data and decision-making at the market and internal production level.
- Train relevant market inspectors and food producers first in the Kampala region before seeking government approval for a larger roll-out nationally.

1.5 Regional partners trained in the use of FortifyMIS so their staff are knowledgeable on what is available and can present to government counterparts.

Proposed timeline: Q3 2018 – Q1 2019

Actual timeline: Q3 2018 – Q4 2020

***Status:* In progress. This activity will not be completed without further funding sources.**

Output: Staff from three regional partner organizations are trained on use of the MIS so they have a deep understanding of the MIS and are able to make it available at gov't levels.

Outcome: Regional partners train government staff on use and adoption of the MIS in three different countries.

A second GAIN-Mozambique training took place between August and September 2020. The first GAIN-Mozambique training was completed in August 2019.

1.6 Participation in relevant regional fortification meetings to share good practices.

Proposed timeline: Q4 2018 onward
Actual timeline: Q4 2018 onward
Status: **In progress**

Output: Presentations made at regional meetings.
Outcome: New regional partnerships are established.

FFI participated in the Southern African Development Cooperation (SADC) consultative meeting on regional minimum standards that took place virtually in August. FFI provided support to SADC and the hired SADC consultant that drafted these standards and implementing guidelines during the pre-consultation process throughout the month of August to further refine what the regional standards contained and how they should be used by Member States. These regional minimum standards were adopted and endorsed by the SADC Secretariate and Member States in September 2020.

1.7 Participation in IAOM meeting in 2020 venue TBD.

Proposed timeline: Q4 2020
Actual timeline: TBD

Status: **Not completed.** This activity will be pushed to Q4 2021 and will not be completed without further funding sources.

Output: Acceptance is obtained to present at meeting.
Outcome: Presentation at plenary session occurs and new private-sector partnerships solidified.

Next steps: Attend the 2021 MEAIAOM meeting pending availability or funds.

1.9 Cost Benefit Analysis (CBA) training in two countries.

Proposed timeline: Q3 and Q4 2019
Actual timeline: Q4 2019 – Q4 2020

Status: **Extended / In progress.** This activity will not be completed without further funding sources.

Output: Based on the findings of activity 3.1, two countries are identified and trained on the new CBA tool.

Outcome: Country teams use the CBA tool to advocate for fortification at a country level.

Next steps: Once GAIN has finalized the new CBA tools for flour and oil, FFI will identify 1-2 countries in 2021 to use the wheat flour CBA tool in as means of garnering further support for national fortification programing. Countries of interest currently include Mauritius and potentially Namibia.

Section 2: Evaluation of Regional Technical Workshops

2.2 Evaluation conducted of SADC meeting and country-specific follow-up provided to SADC countries following the workshop.

Proposed timeline: Q3 2018 – Q1 2019

Actual timeline: Q3 2018 – Q1 2019

Status: **Complete / In progress.** *This activity will not be completed without further funding sources.*

Output: Evaluation is conducted and priority follow-up countries are identified based on capacity gaps.

Outcome: Change in knowledge/capacity per the pre-post assessments to ensure meeting objectives were met; discussions begun with priority countries to engage in country-specific technical assistance as needed in the coming months.

An evaluation of the virtual Challenge Workshop as well as the proposed 2021 in-person Challenge Workshop will take place.

Section 3. In-Country Capacity Building

3.1 Strategy refresh for all of Africa

Proposed timeline: Q2 2018 – Q1 2019

Actual timeline: Q2 2018 – Q1 2019

Status: **Complete**

Output: Landscape analysis, industry analysis, partner mapping, and current state of fortification are completed for each country.

Outcome: Priority countries and regional activities are identified and inform future work plans.

3.2 Technical assistance to Egypt

Proposed timeline: Q3 2018 – Q1 2019

Actual timeline: Q2 2019- Q1 2021

Status: **Extended / In progress.** *This activity will be limited without further funding sources.*

Output: Discussions begun with government regarding how to address political barriers and re-start fortification; areas of TA identified and provided.

Outcome: Fortification is re-started.

Following the completion of a comprehensive situation assessment by FFI, the Minister of Supply and Internal Trade, Dr. Aly Moselhi, FFI has formally endorsed the re-starting of a national fortification program. To this end, FFI has begun to support the government and industry to ensure a mandatory program is put into place for both open market and social safety net flour. Progress to date includes the creation of a flour fortification committee by the Government of Egypt and FFI to guide program implementation and ensure sustainability; an

assessment of what is required from a legal perspective to make fortification (both through the subsidy program and the open market) mandatory; a comprehensive mill mapping assessment that identifies readiness of mills to begin fortification; and the drafting of national monitoring guidelines with the newly established Food Safety Authority that outlines a realistic means of obtaining compliance information.

Next Steps: The formal signing of the Partner Agreement by the Minister; the training of mill staff as necessary based on the findings of the mill mapping exercise; the training of regulatory monitoring staff as necessary; and engagement with Egypt's new Food Safety Authority regarding the formal inclusion of fortification into national food safety measures.

3.3 Technical assistance to Morocco

Proposed timeline: Q4 2018 – Q1 2019

Actual timeline: Q4 2020 – Q4 2021

Status: **In progress.** This activity will be limited without further funding sources.

Output: Food inspectors and millers trained on regulatory monitoring and FortifyMIS. Other tools may also be considered.

Outcome: Food producers and inspectors collect sufficient monitoring data on a periodic basis; information is used to inform and improve the state of compliance.

In July 2020, FFI took part in a virtual meeting in Morocco organized by Muhlenchemie based on interest from the Milling Federation to improve key programming components. Participants at the virtual meeting included FFI, that National Milling Federation, and Muhlenchemie staff from Morocco and Germany. FFI was asked to support miller awareness around the importance of fortification and its health benefits, improvements in internal and external monitoring approaches, and innovative solutions for financing premix. Muhlenchemie was asked to support a mill webinar on how to fortify and support to AgroLab around testing.

Next steps: The National Milling Federation will organize a larger virtual meeting / seminar in the coming months that will include FFI and Muhlenchemie's suggestions regarding the above-mentioned areas of need.

3.4 Technical assistance to Angola

Proposed timeline: Q3 and Q4 2019

Actual timeline: Q1 – Q4 2020

Status: **Extended / In progress.** This activity will be limited without further funding sources.

Output: Begin discussions with government around the design of a national fortification program. Identify priority areas of need and provide targeted TA.

Outcome: TA results in measurable change in the specific area of support. This may include: initiation of legislation process; standards development; inspector training; and / or advocacy training.

Currently, WFP has a MoU with the Government of Angola to support the design and implementation of large-scale fortification. A detailed workplan that includes phases related to planning, implementation and monitoring, and impact assessment has been drafted by WFP and is currently underway with the Government. After meeting virtually with WFP Angola in July, it was decided that FFI could complement the work WFP is doing, particularly in light of the request FFI received from the Webcor Group (Angola's largest wheat flour producer) regarding a need for technical assistance to begin fortification.

Next steps: Another joint meeting will be held in September that will spell out the specific areas of support that FFI and WFP, respectively, will lead. FFI's support will likely fall largely around supporting the private sector and in putting in place a monitoring framework.

3.5 Technical assistance to Algeria

Proposed timeline: Q4 2018 – Q1 2019

Actual timeline: TBD

Status: **Delayed indefinitely.**

Output: Begin discussions with government around the design of a national fortification program. Identify priority areas of need and provide targeted TA.

Outcome: TA results in measureable change in the specific area of support. This may include: initiation of legislation process; standards development; inspector training; and / or advocacy training.

This activity is on hold due to the current political situation.

Next steps: Complete a desk review of the fortification situation in Algeria; carefully monitor the security situation.

3.6 Technical assistance to Ethiopia

Proposed timeline: Q3 and Q4 2019

Actual timeline: Q1 2019

Status: **Complete**

Outputs: TA provided around QA/QC for government food inspectors and for domestic food producers including appropriate testing protocols.

Outcomes: Food producers and inspectors collect sufficient monitoring data on a periodic basis and conduct appropriate testing; information is used to inform and improve the state of compliance.

Next steps: Support partners and government as necessary on the finalization of standards and mandatory legislation (e.g. on call; FFI has no further specific plans in Ethiopia due to role of multiple other partners in-country).

3.7 Targeted technical assistance provided to two SADC countries as identified in activity 2.1 following the SADC workshop.

Proposed timeline: Q1 – Q3 2019

Actual timeline: Q1 2019 – Q4 2020

Status: **Extended / In progress.** *These activities will be limited without further funding sources.*

Outputs: TA is provided, which may include feasibility and reach, QA/QC, advocacy, or other needs as identified by the government, SF, and partners.

Outcomes: TA results in measureable change in the specific area of support.

Following initial discussions with the SADC Secretariat Partner Coalition team on the outcomes and next steps of the SADC meeting, FFI will serve as lead agency in support to *South Africa, Botswana, Zimbabwe, Namibia, Angola, and Mauritius*. Funding under this Smarter Futures grant will include support to *South Africa, Angola* (already outlined above) and *Zimbabwe* only. Support for Botswana, Namibia, and Mauritius will be funded from other sources; however, an update is still provided below.

South Africa: Per the request of the National Department of Health, FFI's objective in South Africa is to strengthen the national fortification monitoring framework. Throughout 2019 and 2020 this included extensive input throughout the drafting of South Africa's Monitoring Implementation Guidelines. In 2021, it will include technical assistance in the development of tools and training to operationalize the Guidelines. Based on in-depth discussions in 2019 with key stakeholders involved in South Africa's fortification program, FFI's recommendation to the Department of Health was to explore alternative means of determining fortification program compliance using the country's SAGIS system. To this end, the Department of Health petitioned SAGIS in 2020 to include an additional indicator in their data collection process that includes premix usage (they already collect production information). In July 2020, SAGIS accepted this recommendation. When they will begin collecting is additional data point is TBD however, if successful, this approach will serve as an example for the region on how to use existing resources to infer national compliance.

South Africa Next Steps: FFI to provide technical assistance in the development of tools and trainings to operationalize the Guidelines and ensure the necessary next steps are taken to act upon the new SAGIS data. Additionally, FFI will advocate for the promulgation of the new fortification standards, which now include cake flour.

Zimbabwe: Per the request of the Ministry of Health and Child Care (MoHCC) and UNICEF-Zimbabwe, FFI's objective it to guide the country in the development of a national fortification strategy with a particular focus on the drafting of monitoring and communication plans within the strategy. Throughout this process, FFI will also support the country as necessary to ensure adoption of the drafted standards and more effective engagement with the private sector.

In light of COVID travel restrictions, a virtual strategy review meeting was convened by the Ministry of Health and Child Care in Zimbabwe on August 19, 2020. At this meeting, the hired consultant presented an inception report on how she will approach the strategy review process.

Zimbabwe Next Steps: FFI will engage on a weekly basis with the consultant throughout the data collection and writing process. Additionally, FFI will provide salary for one year for a government-based consultant who will shadow the strategy consultant, once hired. Following the completion of the strategy, this government consultant will then be placed permanently within the MoHCC and be responsible for all national fortification activities. Finally, FFI will support standards finalization and adoption, and improved miller engagement.

Botswana: Botswana has shown interest to move forward with a fortification program but wants to generate national-level data that shows need and provides information on best foods and nutrients to target. As a result, FFI's objective in Botswana is to assist in the generation of data and subsequent policy and regulatory support based on data findings. Specifically, the government has requested support in the analysis of national consumption data that has already been collected, however, sees a conflict of interest in FFI completing the analysis in addition to providing primary technical assistance support. Therefore, a decision was made to pursue a cross-university collaboration, although to date, no progress has been made on this potential collaboration despite the involvement of the SADC Secretariat on this matter.

Botswana Next Steps: Identification of an agency to provide data analysis support (likely be delayed until 2021); determine best vehicles to target based on results of the consumption data; work with government to present the case and proposed next steps for mandating and designing a program; and provide technical support in the drafting of policy and regulatory structures.

Namibia: Namibia is interested in pursuing a fortification program after obtaining and reviewing national-level consumption and deficiency data. As a result, FFI's objective in Namibia is to assist in the generation of data and subsequent policy and regulatory support based on data findings. Currently, UNICEF and IGN are leading a situation analysis and fortification strategy development process and FFI is working with IGN to conduct a remote monitoring mapping exercise. The results of this exercise will be used to inform a framework for food inspections that can guide national fortification regulations.

Namibia Next Steps: Complete the monitoring exercise with data collected on the ground by IGN; draft a suggested monitoring framework; and support training related to the suggested framework. Although delayed, these activities are now moving forward albeit remotely.

Mauritius: Mauritius reached out to FFI in early 2019 seeking assistance in the design and implementation of a national wheat flour fortification program after the government approved a fortification proposal and budget for their 2019/2020 fiscal year. As a result, FFI drafted a costed workplan and submitted it to the MoH's Chief Nutritionist for internal government approval. Following national protocol, the MoH submitted a request to SADC for FFI's formal support in the design and implementation of their fortification program.

Mauritius Next Steps: FFI and SADC plan to make a joint trip to Mauritius to begin work when travel is allowed. This activity is likely delayed until late 2021 unless all parties can find a way to move forward remotely, which we are exploring.

3.8 Conduct country-specific trainings for civil society organizations to create demand for fortified products. This will also be informed by 2.1: identified countries struggling with compliance.

Proposed timeline: Q1 2019 – Q4 2021

Actual timeline: Q1 2019 – Q4 2021

Status: Complete / In progress. This activity will be limited without further funding sources.

Outputs: Identify countries that would benefit the most from this; begin discussions with government regarding how to proceed; civil society group trainings occur; civil society groups conduct advocacy for fortification at a national level.

Outcomes: Civil society group advocacy efforts result in increased demand for fortified products as measured by a pre-post assessment.

This activity includes two components:

1. *Pull Project Lessons and Opportunities.* Understand lessons learned and experiences from the Pull Project conducted in Malawi and Uganda to identify opportunities for future Pull Projects in other countries. Funding outside of the Smarter Future's grant will be sought for building on the Malawi and Uganda experience to ensure required next steps are taken that will lead to improved rates of compliance.
2. *Engagement with and Training of SP&H Associations.* Engagement with country-specific spina bifida and hydrocephalus associations in order to build their capacity and train them on how to effectively engage and participate in fortification discussions and efforts. Ultimately the goal is for civil society group advocacy efforts to result in increased demand for fortified products.

Recommended Next Steps in Uganda:

1. Publish a praise list of brands that performed well in the media to encourage consumers to purchase from top-performing brands.
2. Report non-complaint brands to regulators for internal confirmation and enforcement of standard.
3. Strictly enforce fortification requirements for imported goods and encourage the government to notify identified importers about Ugandan import requirement.
4. Organize an in-person meeting between UCPA, SHAUL, and regulators before publishing the praise list of products/brands.
5. Encourage millers who produce both fortified and unfortified brands to develop a new approach to fortify all their maize flour brands.
6. Identify packaged maize brands/producers in the market and ensure they receive a capacity assessment and fortification follow-up.

Recommended Next Steps in Malawi:

Rather than implementing the complete Pull Strategy, advocacy groups in Malawi focused on the strategy's information sharing activities to influence key decision-makers towards improving program performance. As a result of their efforts, the Malawian Government promised to engage various stakeholders to increase enforcement of fortification,

promote fortified food consumption, and ensure that people in rural areas are able to access fortified food at an affordable price.

The Malawi Pull Strategy is incomplete. FFI will seek funding to complete the additional activities suggested in the annex of the [final report](#) and further build the technical capacity of CAMA and PASHL to eventually undertake a market assessment of their own.

Overall Next Steps: Seek additional funding to expand upon the work done in Malawi and scale the approach to a sub-set of further interested countries (e.g. Cote d'Ivoire, Senegal, Tanzania, Zambia, Kenya).

Engagement with and Training of SB&H Associations. IF is actively working with Spina Bifida and Hydrocephalus Associations in Uganda, Malawi, Ethiopia, Nigeria, and Sudan, and continues to actively seek further opportunities for similar engagement in other African countries where the organization has an active SB&H Association presence. Despite the obvious competing priorities during Covid-19, communications and clinic activities have continued with Uganda, Malawi, Ethiopia and Nigeria to help ensure that momentum is maintained and that folic acid fortification and NTD prevention is kept on the agenda.

Activities include:

- a) Development of regular, short trainings with representatives of Spina Bifida Associations to increase their capacity to advocate for and monitor fortification efforts.
 - a. Online meetings to build capacity with member organizations in Uganda, Malawi, Nigeria and Ethiopia
 - b. Facilitating opportunities for peer to peer learning on fortification/NTD prevention advocacy.
 - c. Meetings and consultation with Dr. Aziza Mustafa Alnaeema, IF board member, and representative of the Sudan Federal Spina Bifida Association on the planned fortification meeting for Q4 2019, which, first due to civil unrest, was postponed to 2020 and now due to the Covid-19 Epidemic will be developed in 2021.
- b) New detailed country specific profiles have been created for Malawi and Nigeria in IF's country-specific database that contains information on NTD prevention and the role of representative organizations. The database will continue to be expanded as more information is gained and further country profiles are added.
- c) Translations of folic acid/prevention awareness raising materials.
- d) Direct technical support to the IF member organizations of technical resource persons at IF secretariat apart from Smarter Futures staff:
 - o Martine Austin: consultant, Program Manager Global Prevention Initiative, to support members in development of advocacy strategy, awareness raising/health promotion activity/materials and follow-up with individual countries and development of country profiles.
 - o Sylvia Roozen, to develop country specific advocacy capacity, political support, reporting.

Next Steps: Engage other SBH associations across Africa in country specific prevention clinics to be held quarterly (combination of new and ‘follow- up’ development calls); building knowledge, confidence and capacity among SBH local associations and continuing to develop a progressive network of active, empowered and proficient associations. Support SBH Associations with coordinating awareness raising activity (relative to organizational capacity) in conjunction with World Folic Acid Awareness Week (Jan 2021).

3.9 Facilitation of a workshop in Mozambique entitled 'Surveillance and Monitoring of Fortification Programming: Opportunities, Tools and Constraints'

Proposed timeline: Q4 2018 – Q1 2019

Actual timeline: Q2 2019

Status: Complete

Output: Clarity is provided on the various tools and their intended application; clarity is gained on the status of FORTIMAS implementation in Mozambique and what may have hindered or helped the roll out.

Outcome: Mozambique decides way forward in terms of which tools are more appropriate for their needs (FORTIMAS, FortifyMIS, otherwise).

Upon government request, FortifyMIS trainings were held throughout 2019 and 2020. Further scale-up will be pursued in 2021 has outlined under **activity 1.3**.

3.10 Assessment of TA needed for Mozambique.

Proposed timeline: Q4 2019 – Q1 2020

Actual timeline: Q2 – Q4 2019

Status: Extended / In progress. This activity will not be completed without further funding sources.

Output: Training is provided to the government of Mozambique on identified monitoring and / or surveillance tool.

Outcome: Mozambique effectively monitors and / or conducts surveillance on their national fortification program based on new tools acquired.

In addition to the government’s request to rollout the FortifyMIS in 2020, they have requested FFI’s support in the overall strengthening of their regulatory monitoring framework, particularly in relation to border point inspections. FFI is currently reviewing Mozambique’s inspector checklists used at the producer, importer, and market levels.

Next Steps: FFI to map the current monitoring framework used in Mozambique and suggest means of streamlining and improving how data is obtained and acted upon. FFI hopes this can be done remotely between September and November 2020.

Section 4: Global Resources for Effective Implementation

4.1 Assess all fortification trainings that currently exist and identify a single platform where these trainings can be made available in order to improve use and accessibility.

Proposed timeline: Q3 – Q4 2019

Actual timeline: Q3 – Q4 2019

Status: Complete

Output: A single, consolidated platform is identified and agreed upon by partners.

Outcome: Trainings are moved to this single platform.

As mentioned in the previous report, efforts have been made to make FFI's trainings more readily available to the general public. This has been done in two ways: 1) the *Introduction to Micronutrients and Fortification Training* has been moved to an online platform (Google Classroom), and 2) the GAIN/FFI/KSU training modules have been made available on FFI's website.

4.2. Include one of the above-mentioned trainings in local university or milling school curriculum to provide the information to up and coming professionals.

Proposed timeline: Q2 – Q4 2019

Actual timeline: Q2 – Q4 2021

Status: Extended / In progress.

Outcome: Trainings are included in at least two university curricula.

Output: Up and coming professionals use the fortification knowledge in future work as measured by a pre-post assessment.

Schools with milling curriculum:

Opportunities may and / or do exist in the following curriculums/schools:

- Nairobi's Milling School – This training took place in December 2019 and included training on flour quality and fortification. It was a joint effort between Buhler, BioAnalyt, and Technoserve. Material, supported by content from FFI, can be found [here](#) and [here](#). There are currently plans in place to continue to offer this training in the future.
- Morocco Milling School – FFI to review 2003 curriculum currently in use and update as necessary.
- Others listed on the IAOM website- <https://www.iaom.info/industry-resources/schools/>

Other schools outside of Africa to review include:

- Buhler, Switzerland
- North Dakota State University
- SIGI Canada
- China (three milling schools)
- Northern Crops Institute

Next Steps: FFI will prioritize following up and supporting the Morocco Milling School, as necessary, in 2021.

4.3 Include FORTIMAS indicators into the FortifyMIS platform (funding would be cost-shared with another partner).

Proposed timeline: Q4 2018 – Q2 2019

Actual timeline: Q2 – Q4 2019

Status: On hold

Output: Identify project scope, which indicators should be included, and what the user interface should look like. Secure partner support and funding.

Outcome: FORTIMAS and FortifyMIS are included on the same platform to ease usage and allow for improved data aggregation and comparisons

It still remains to be determined whether or not the FortifyMIS is a useful and scalable tool for use in country-specific settings. Until this is determined, it does not make sense to pursue the inclusion of FORTIMAS indicators into the FortifyMIS platform.

Next Steps: Identify what needs to be done in order to scale the MIS so that it can be used independently in country-specific contexts for the intended purposes; implement these findings; measure progress towards independent use.

Section 5: Organizational Learning

5.1 Develop a system for regular feedback and monitoring of SF workshops including a more systematic follow-up on the usage of the tools, the progress made towards institutionalization, and commitments made by institutions.

Proposed timeline: Q4 2018 – Q1 2019

Actual timeline: Q4 2018 – Q2 2020

Status: Extended / In progress

Outputs: Pre-post training tools developed and SF workshops are assessed regularly using pre-post training knowledge tests.

Outcomes: Results from the pre-post assessments are used to improve SF workshops.

Pre- and post-training tools have been developed for all Smarter Futures workshops. These include pre- and post-training assessments of knowledge retention and six to twelve-month post-workshop evaluations to gauge how the information obtained in the workshop is used in day-to-day work life, how the knowledge may be institutionalization, and any institutional commitments in terms of fortification. The assessments and evaluations have been used to date following the Oct 2018 SADC meeting and the two Ethiopia Training of Trainers events held in March and May 2019. Although the pre / post assessments proved very effective, the 6-12 month follow-up evaluations had a poor return rate necessitating an alternative method (likely phone calls) of obtaining such information. Such an alternative method will be tried following the virtual Monitoring Challenge Workshop.

Next Steps: Identify alternative means of obtaining 6-12-month follow-up evaluation data for use upon completion of the Challenge Workshop.

Section 6: Develop and Expand Rice Fortification Strategies

6.1 Continue the West Africa rice fortification regional efforts to scale up rice fortification in Africa.

Proposed timeline: Q4 2018 – Q1 2021

Actual timeline: Q4 2018 – Q1 2021

***Status:* In progress. This activity will not be completed without further funding sources.**

Outputs: Identify a specific dollar amount needed over a specific period of time to accomplish a core set of priority activities that will scale this effort; establish collaborative network of partners needed to achieve the core outcomes

Outcomes: Funding proposal is finalized; core set of activities identified as priorities amongst partners; timeline set for completing these activities.

In June 2019, FFI held a Partners Coordination Meeting to Scale-up Rice Fortification in West Africa with the goal of aligning on a harmonized approach to a West Africa rice fortification strategy that could reach 147 million people. Partners included WFP, HKI, NI, PATH, and GAIN. The final report can be found [here](#).

The results of the meeting included a three phased approach:

- **Phase 1:** Develop background data necessary for decision-making including cost modeling and sensitization activities with stakeholders. This includes country-specific situational analyses, costing models for the fortification of domestic rice and imported fortified rice and / or fortified rice kernels from countries of origin, and sensitization activities and awareness creations with decision-makers.
- **Phase 2:** Provide country-specific and regional body technical assistance and advocacy based on Phase 1 results.
- **Phase 3:** Support for national and / or regional legislation and standards for introduction of regional mandatory rice fortification.

As part of phase 1, FFI has developed a template for a rice supply chain analysis. In order to complete phase 1 activities and move onto phases 2 and 3, FFI will work with partners in 2021 to establish a Steering Committee of committed actors to continue discussions and move these activities forward. This will build on the work already done by WFP and PATH in The Gambia, Senegal and Cote d'Ivoire in 2019.

Next Steps: FFI to establish a partner Steering Committee and to continue to seek funding for the proposed Strategy.