CHAPTER 5

Senegal's Fight against Malnutrition: The Nutrition Enhancement Program

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Malnutrition in Sub-Saharan Africa is increasing—but Senegal shines as an exception to this rule. According to data from Demographic and Health Surveys, between 1992 and 2005, stunting (low height for age) in children under five years of age in Senegal declined from 22 to 16 percent, and the prevalence of underweight for the same age group went from 20 to 17 percent (Republic of Senegal 2006). Senegal is on track to be one of the few countries in the region that will reach the Millennium Development Goal (MDG) for nutrition.

The implementation of the Nutrition Enhancement Program (Programme de Renforcement Nutritionnel, or NEP) has undoubtedly contributed to these achievements. During the first phase of NEP, from 2002 to 2006, malnutrition in NEP zones decreased by 42 percent. More than 200,000 mother-child pairs benefited from the program, some 20 percent of children five years of age or younger (Republic of Senegal 2006).

NEP is the principal nutrition program in Senegal and is an element of the poverty reduction strategy of the government, part of its investment in human development aimed at improving the nutritional status of women and children. Now in its second phase (2007–11), NEP is scaling up, so that by the end of the second phase NEP will cover all of the country's 11 regions, with a focus on rural areas and regions with the highest prevalence of malnutrition. By the end of the second phase, NEP should have reached 700,000 children under five years of age, more than 50,000 pregnant women, 65,000 lactating women, and 177,000 teenagers (Republic of Senegal 2006).

NEP represents the Government of Senegal's strong belief in using a multisectoral approach to reduce malnutrition. NEP works using a multisectoral and multiactor approach, coordinating actions across ministries, donors, and nongovernmental organizations (NGOs). As such, NEP operates under the super-

vision of the Coordination Unit for the Reduction of Malnutrition (Cellule de Lutte contre la Malnutrition, or CLM). CLM, attached to the Prime Minister's Office, coordinates programs and actions to reduce malnutrition by means of both the public and private sectors.

This chapter examines NEP using the framework established and testing the hypotheses developed in Chapters 3 and 4. As a multisectoral program operating under a multisectoral coordinating committee and based in a nonsectoral home (the Prime Minister's Office), NEP provides an important case for study of how to work multisectorally in nutrition, even in resource-limited conditions.

In this chapter I first present country characteristics for Senegal, describe the methods used to collect and analyze the data for this case, and then follow with an in-depth analysis of the initiation and evolution of NEP. The case is organized around three main questions in rough chronological order:

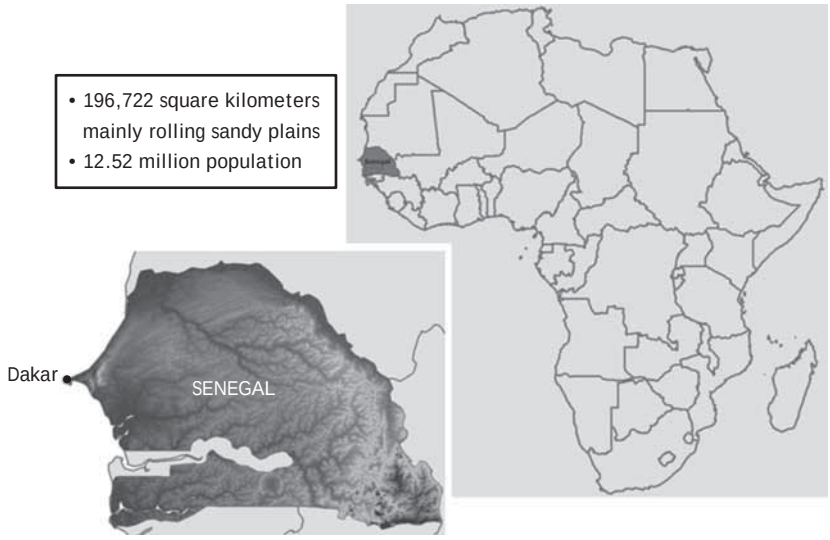
- How and why did the collaboration begin?
- How have factors internal to the participating organizations and the program itself influenced the development of the collaboration over time? How have factors in the external environment influenced the collaboration?
- How have internal and external factors affected the sustainability or fragility of the collaboration over time?

By answering these questions, which cover different phases of collaboration, I explore how internal and external contexts and the design of institutional links, presented in Chapter 3, have affected NEP's ability to work multisectorally.

Country Description

Senegal is a Sahelian country, located at the western extremity of the African continent, with an area of 196,722 square kilometers (Figure 5.1). It is subdivided into 11 regions, 34 departments, 67 communes, 103 *arrondissements,* and 324 rural communities (Republic of Senegal 2006). In 2007 Senegal had an estimated population of 12,521,851, about 75 percent of whom lived in rural areas (U.S. Department of State 2008). Population density varies from about 77 inhabitants per square kilometer in the west-central region to 2 per square kilometer in the arid eastern section. The Senegalese landscape consists mainly of the rolling sandy plains of the western Sahel, which rise to foothills in the southeast. Senegal's highest point of 584 meters (1,926 feet) is found here, an otherwise unnamed feature near Nepen Diakha. The northern border is formed by the Senegal River, and other important waterways include the Gambia and Casamance rivers. The capital, Dakar, lies on the Cap-Vert peninsula, the westernmost point of continental Africa (Britannica 2009).

Figure 5.1 Physical and topographical maps of Senegal



Sources: GADM (2010), Jarvis et al. (2008).

Senegal is a democracy. It has several competitive political parties and a free press. A process of decentralization has been launched with the transfer of central-government responsibilities to local governments, but difficulties with resource transfers still exist.

Senegal's main industries include food processing, mining, cement, artificial fertilizer, chemicals, textiles, imported petroleum refining, and tourism (EIU 2005; UNECA 2009). Agriculture is the largest economic sector, representing 18 percent of gross domestic product (GDP). Of the workforce of 4 million, 70 percent are employed in agriculture. Exports include fish, chemicals, cotton, fabrics, groundnuts, and calcium phosphate. Major foreign markets include France, other European Union members, and West Africa (U.S. Department of State 2008).

By historical and regional standards, Senegal has achieved good economic results over the past decade, although its performance weakened in 2006. GDP growth has recently averaged almost 5 percent per year. As a member of the West African Economic and Monetary Union, Senegal is working toward greater regional integration and a unified external tariff (Boogaerde and Tsangarides 2005; UNECA 2009). The World Bank considers, despite a relatively good political environment, that the enabling environment for growth remains limited. It notes continued weaknesses in governance, obstacles for the private sector to doing business, and lagging technology development

along with substantial deficiencies in infrastructure and human development, all of which are crucial for a country that cannot rely on significant natural resources (World Bank 2006b).

With a 2.2 percent annual population growth rate and a crude birthrate of 37 per 1,000, 43 percent of the population is under 15 years of age. Life expectancy at birth is 59 years (61 for women and 57 for men) (UNFPA 2006). The adult mortality rate for those between 15 and 60 years of age is still high at 271 per 1,000. The infant mortality rate is 53 per 1,000 live births (WHO 2008). The main causes of child mortality are diarrheal diseases, malaria, acute respiratory infections, and diseases that can be prevented by immunization.

The large majority of the Senegalese population is Muslim (94 percent) (CIA 2005). The adult literacy rate is estimated at 42 percent, with 53 percent of men and only 32 percent of women being literate (UNESCO 2008).

Despite economic and political progress, Senegal remains a poor country, with a GDP per capita of US$710 in 2005. Fifty-seven percent of the population is poor, but this percentage is higher among women (Republic of Senegal 2004). Vulnerability is even more widespread, as studies find that 65 percent of households consider themselves poor (WHO 2006).

The probability of being poor in Senegal is highly correlated with access to basic infrastructure services. The regions with the highest levels of poverty (Diourbel, Kaoloack, Kolda, and Ziguinchor) are those with the lowest access to water and sanitation and electricity. For the rural population, and for the poor in both the urban and rural areas, gaps in terms of access to services are large and simply reinforce their vulnerability (World Bank 2006b). The sum of these conditions can be found in Senegal's rank as 156 out of 177 countries, according to the *Human Development Report* (UNDP 2008).

Senegal has made substantial progress in reducing malnutrition, although 16 percent of children under five in Senegal remain stunted. Even more worrisome is that micronutrient deficiencies remain high. Anemia (iron deficiency) prevails among 84 percent of children under five years of age and among 61 percent of women. Goiter (iodine deficiency) is endemic in the southeastern part of the country, with a prevalence of 34 percent and reaching 51 percent in some places (Republic of Senegal 2000). Sixty-one percent of children six years of age and younger are vitamin A deficient. Micronutrient deficiencies are the underlying cause of 30 percent of child mortalities (Republic of Senegal 2006).

Senegal must import food to cover its needs, especially cereals. National cereal production covered only 35 percent of the needs for 2002/03. For 2004/05, internal availability, including net national production and stocks, was estimated at 1,007,004 metric tons and covered only 44 percent of human consumption needs. The average daily per capita availability of calories and proteins was satisfactory at 2,861 kcal (adequacy is considered to be 2,400

kcal), but this average hides a tremendous disparity in terms of individual consumption and access to food.

Methods and Data for the Case Study

This case study is based on primary and secondary data. For the primary data, the principal researcher conducted interviews in Senegal during October and November 2007 with key players in the nutrition field. The information was primarily collected for a comparative investigation of the political economy of nutrition in Africa (Ndiaye 2007), which overlapped in content and focus with this institutional study.

The interviews carried out for that investigation and subsequently used for this case study were 36 in total and included (1) three advisers to the Prime Minister's Office who had participated in the negotiations of NEP I and II with the World Bank; (2) two public officials from the Ministry of Health who work on nutrition; (3) two public officials from the Ministry of Education; (4) one public official from the Ministry of Industry; (5) 14 representatives of the local communities, civil society, and NGOs; (6) eight representatives of international agencies and donors; (7) three academics; (8) three staff members of NEP and the Community Nutrition Program (Programme de Nutrition Communautaire, or PNC); and (9) two nutritionists who had participated in the field of nutrition in the past 30 years. Additional interviews and personal communications were conducted in Washington, D.C., with two World Bank staff associated with NEP during its launch and development.

All interviewees consented to participate in the research and to be quoted, except when explicitly requested to remain anonymous if discussing a sensitive issue. Note-taking was used during the interviews. Follow-up with interviewees was agreed on during the first interview and was done when information was lacking or needed clarification. Note-taking was preferred to tape recording, as the researcher finds that interviewees feel more at ease and are more open in their testimonies without a tape recorder. The veracity of the testimonies was tested by triangulation with other informants and documentation. In addition, the researcher made extensive use of secondary data, including documents from the Government of Senegal and the World Bank, as well as the study of the political economy of nutrition in Senegal carried out by Alfred Ndiaye under supervision of the primary researcher (Ndiaye 2007).

Getting Started

The origins of NEP owe much to PNC, a previous nutrition project. Because Senegal's experience with PNC provided a significant opening for NEP and useful lessons on how to work multisectorally in nutrition, I describe this program in some detail.

PNC functioned from 1995 to 2001, and NEP, which began in 2002, is in a real sense its follow up. PNC was really the first program in Senegal to promote collaboration on nutrition among national agencies. This collaboration did not include the participation of NGOs, as NEP would. According to some views, PNC did not work very well, but it did bring the notion of the importance of multisectoral cooperation in nutrition to the forefront of the government agenda. Professor Galaye Sall, the director of the Nutrition Unit in the Ministry of Health at the time and a national leader in nutrition, said, "One of the advantages of PNC was that it considered other environmental aspects related to nutrition, such as the distribution of potable water, although the program still revolved a lot around the idea of food distribution" (GS).[1]

The Government of Senegal started PNC in 1995 with funding from the World Bank. The program officially ended on June 30, 2001. The project was aligned with the objectives of the five-year National Nutrition Program, but its design fundamentally represented a response to concerns about urban unrest after the devaluation of the African Financial Community (Communauté Financière d'Afrique, or CFA) franc in 1994. The PNC targeted poor urban areas where economic conditions and food and nutrition security had been deteriorating. Underweight in urban areas, for example, had increased from 14.1 percent to 16.5 percent between 1992 and 1996 (World Bank 2006b).

At the time of preparation of the project, the Government of Senegal was particularly concerned about the high unemployment rate among young urban professionals. It was thought that economic and social conditions would deteriorate even faster and further following a currency devaluation (which could quickly and dramatically increase the cost of living), perhaps sparking protests and a challenge to political stability and to plans for longer-term economic adjustment. As part of the government's response to this situation, PNC attempted to provide an employment safety net for some of these urban youths. From the beginning, then, PNC was an employment scheme as well as a nutrition program.

By 2000, economic conditions had improved, and PNC was coming to a close. The Government of Senegal began to engage in renegotiation of the PNC project with the World Bank. As described in more detail later in this chapter, several factors came together to provide an opportunity to alter the nature of Senegal's fight against malnutrition. In some ways, these factors represent exactly the types of changes and opportunities—particularly in terms of shifting perceptions across a range of stakeholders—that have occurred throughout the world and now enable implementing a more multisectoral approach to reducing malnutrition. In Senegal, among the most impor-

[1] The codes for the interviews are listed in the references.

tant factors that provided such an environment for change included a change in government administration, findings of corruption in the initial program, and the arrival of a new Task Team Leader (TTL) for the World Bank. These changes occurred as PNC was coming to a close, and thus as discussions and renegotiations about how the government and the World Bank would deal with malnutrition were beginning.

Although perhaps limited from the perspective of nutrition, in general PNC was very popular and quite successful. PNC provided nutritional services and employment in the urban areas at a time of economic and social hardship. PNC was also very effective in providing potable water, again an important achievement in urban areas, where safe water and good sanitation are often scarce and their lack is a significant contributor to poor health and nutrition. PNC also had a community focus. Over time, it managed to mobilize communities to take responsibility for their nutritional and other needs.

In devising the management for PNC, the Government of Senegal and the World Bank arrived at a rather innovative arrangement for the time. Although a nutrition program would often be placed under the aegis of the Ministry of Health, in this case the government and the World Bank did not believe that the Ministry of Health had sufficiently strong implementation capacity, management structures, or practices to deliver good results for the project. As a result, they turned to the Executing Agency for Works of Public Interest against Unemployment (Agence d'Exécution des Travaux d'Intéret Public Contre le Sous-Emploi, or AGETIP).

AGETIP was an uncommon organization. Although a state agency, it had managerial autonomy from the government bureaucracy and a private-sector orientation. That is, it was not officially or hierarchically part of the bureaucracy, but it was responsible for executing government programs. It worked under private-sector management principles and offered salaries that were more competitive with the private sector than was typical of public agencies. AGETIP had previously managed projects for the World Bank and demonstrated institutional and absorptive capacity, essentially meaning it could disburse money effectively. The placement of PNC under the management of AGETIP represented stronger confidence in AGETIP's implementing capacities than in those of the Ministry of Health, an affinity for its private-sector management qualities, and a perception of PNC as a program to address unemployment and not only malnutrition.

AGETIP had more experience in managing infrastructure projects than in implementing social interventions, although it had managed the construction of rural community health centers run by local women's organizations. Because the agency did not have any specific expertise in nutrition, it recruited nutrition experts with backgrounds in implementing social programs at the com-

munity level. In addition, a Technical Advisory Committee was created to support AGETIP on technical matters during implementation. The Technical Advisory Committee was composed of leading professionals from Senegalese universities and medical schools and representatives from international technical agencies. In addition, several microenterprises (MICs) were created to provide services in the community nutrition centers. Per the conceptualization of PNC, these MICs hired young professionals who had previously been unemployed.

PNC consisted of three major components: (1) a nutrition program, (2) a water program, and (3) a food-security program. The nutrition program was the main component of the project and targeted children under three years of age and pregnant and lactating women in poor urban areas. AGETIP contracted MICs to manage the program's activities, which were based in urban community nutrition centers. Each MIC was made up of four young people approved by the local steering committee representing the community.

The community nutrition activities included (1) growth monitoring of children under three; (2) provision of a weekly take-home food supplement during six months for children whose weight-for-age was more than 2 standard deviations of the mean *Z*-score (a standard indicator of malnutrition using underweight); (3) Information-Education-Communication (IEC) sessions for pregnant and lactating women; and (4) provision of a weekly take-home food supplement for three months for pregnant women during the last trimester of their first pregnancy and for six months for lactating women with a child in the program or with an infant less than six months old. Participants received nutrition services for six months. Severely malnourished and sick children were referred to nearby health centers. Thus some coordination between the community nutrition centers and the health system was necessary.

The water program installed drinking-water standpipes and waterpipe networks in the urban areas targeted by the nutrition program. The food-security program provided food and nutrition information, advice, and food supplements to beneficiaries. PNC also supported improved food and nutrition security by providing employment in labor-intensive infrastructure works or supporting other income-generating activities through cash- or food-for-work schemes. However, as this component was delayed in start-up, much of its funds were reallocated to the nutrition component.

Problems with PNC

The project became very popular and achieved many of its objectives, although it had shortcomings. By the time of renegotiation, the Ministry of Health and the World Bank had become quite critical of it and were moving to take these concerns into account in the renegotiation. These criticisms revolved

around costs, targeting, and, of particular interest for our study, interagency coordination. Specifically, some of the main criticisms were that (1) PNC focused on the urban areas, whereas the rate of malnutrition was higher in rural areas; (2) the interventions were based in the nutrition centers, making them expensive compared to other alternatives that might make more intensive use of community agents; (3) the interventions themselves were also more expensive, as they relied heavily on food distribution; (4) coordination with the Ministry of Health, meant to be a main partner, did not work; (5) line ministries were not substantially involved, and there was therefore little capacity building at the state level.

Interagency coordination was a particular problem. In 1994, just after the devaluation of the CFA franc, a presidential decree had created a national commission, the National Commission for the Fight against Malnutrition (Commission Nationale de Lutte Contre la Malnutrition, or CNLM). The mandate of CNLM was to provide a safety net for the poor. In particular, CNLM was tasked with coordinating and guiding activities that would prevent malnutrition from increasing in Senegal. Before the establishment of CNLM, there were no multisectoral coordination mechanisms in Senegal. CNLM was set up following recommendations that, because of the multisectoral nature of nutrition, no one line ministry or institution could, or should, be solely responsible for nutrition.

As explained in Chapter 2, by the 1990s, at least the idea of a multisectoral conceptualization of nutrition was changing the way policymakers, programmers, and advocates were thinking about nutrition, even if they did not yet have a viable implementation structure. Following this idea, CNLM was placed in the President's Office. It was composed of representatives from the Prime Minister's Office; the Ministries of Economy, Planning and Finance, Health and Social Action, Women's, Children's and Family Affairs; AGETIP; and NGOs and civil society organizations.

A technical subcommission of CNLM was actively involved in the design and preparation of PNC and provided general policy guidance. At the time, Senegal did not have a country-level strategy or policy, and CNLM did not produce one. Rather, throughout PNC, CNLM simply met and offered tactical rather than strategic guidance. In its mandate for coordination and its composition, CNLM was not so different from myriad other failed attempts to work multisectorally in nutrition. And indeed, CNLM did not function very well either.

After initial involvement in design of PNC, CNLM participated only to a certain degree in monitoring and evaluating project implementation. But in critical differences with NEP, CNLM had only limited operational responsibility for PNC, and the Ministry of Health—a key player in nutrition—was left out of management. Management was AGETIP's responsibility, and AGETIP, with

its limited nutritional knowledge but otherwise proven capacity for implementation, was largely able to implement the program by itself.

Beyond CNLM, the line ministries did not help much during the execution of the project, even though their representatives attended regular meetings. They had limited participation and so a limited sense of ownership of PNC. In one sense, their exclusion from implementation was intentional. But these ministries also acknowledged that their own limited capacities made it hard for them to participate more actively. Their lack of human and financial resources impeded their ability to effectively supervise activities and training. Given these limitations, the reliance on AGETIP to implement the program made sense, but it also prevented the various cooperating agencies from actually working together.

AGETIP's implementation of this program largely by itself at first might seem to offer a model of multisectoral action by means of directing or contracting others to do the work. Whereas the programs in both Senegal and Colombia (described in Chapter 6) did indeed contract out much of program implementation, suggesting such a model is viable, the AGETIP model did not actually integrate action across institutions, the focus of this study.

In addition, considering AGETIP as a success is highly questionable. It failed to integrate institutions, and it effectively created a body that duplicated existing interventions and coordinating mechanisms. In so doing, it simply emphasized the existing disconnects among institutions and sowed confusion. In these terms, it does not seem a likely model to emulate.

The experience also provides further evidence that an institutionally separate program is a weak basis for sustained action. Of course, this tactic is always an option, but because such a program exists independently and largely outside government agencies, it loses the integrative value of a multiagency program and the benefits that accompany interagency collaboration. It effectively has to build the entire structure for implementation, disregarding existing government programs and capabilities. Faced with likely institutional opposition, when the political or financial support is gone, the program will also disappear. This sequence of events is illustrated by AGETIP's experience. When stakeholders, including donors, NGOS, and public organizations, met to discuss technical and organizational aspects of a national nutrition program, AGETIP ardently defended its model of intervention but failed to carry the discussion.

Perhaps partially as a result of factors (both the locus of implementation being placed elsewhere and the participants' feeling they had little capacity to respond to the demands of implementation), CNLM meetings tended to be formal and did not stimulate discussion. Interest and impetus were lost. As a result, coordination among stakeholders in nutrition continued to be poor, even though it was a primary responsibility of CNLM.

The disconnect among potential partners is well illustrated by the fact that the National Food and Nutrition Service (Service National d'Alimentation et Nutrition), a division dedicated to nutrition in the Ministry of Health, initiated and implemented another national nutrition program alongside PNC, using separate funds raised by the Ministry and with no coordination with CNLM or PNC. The two interventions used different approaches and conveyed distinct messages. These programs thus not only duplicated work and failed to benefit from potential synergies, but they also actively contributed to disorganization and confusion among policy actors trying to reduce malnutrition, despite the existence of a supraministerial body intended to coordinate those efforts.

Not surprisingly, coordination between PNC and the Ministry of Health also failed on a programmatic level. As part of PNC, the severely malnourished were to be referred to health centers dependent on the Ministry of Health. Yet the World Bank's end-of-project assessment highlighted lack of expertise in nutrition case management, inadequate materials, and failure to provide needed special nutritional supplements among the many problems in making such coordination effective (World Bank 2001).

Opportunity for Change

Several factors coalesced to create a golden window of opportunity for change. First, the political context was highly favorable to a renewed engagement with nutrition. Although formally a multiparty democracy with more than 40 political parties and a history of entrenched civil liberties, Senegal was, in practice, a one-party state from independence until the March 2000 presidential election. The victory of Abdoulaye Wade in that election changed the political scene dramatically.

Wade's Parti Démocratique Sénégalais, which described itself as a liberal party, replaced the long-dominant Parti Socialiste, which espoused socialism and state control. The Parti Démocratique Sénégalais operated in a more pluralistic environment, and the new president was keen on embracing new ideas for development. In particular, Wade placed much greater emphasis on human development as a key element for getting Senegal out of poverty. Wade was more committed than his predecessor to promotion of the private sector, but he repeatedly emphasized the importance of addressing social concerns, such as healthcare, education, and unemployment. Wade himself advocated a decidedly Keynesian approach, assigning the state a major role in developing Senegal's infrastructure and in educating and training its workforce to compete in global markets. For Wade, improving nutrition was a critical component of creating a more productive workforce, essential to the

future economic and social development of Senegal. This personal commitment may be key for creating higher political visibility for nutrition, as the presidency is the most powerful institution in Senegal's political system.

The First Lady, Viviane Wade, also became personally interested in the issue of nutrition. She asked Dr. Sall (at the time director of the Nutrition Unit in the Ministry of Health and known for his work on nutrition in the country) to enlighten her on the issue of nutrition. She was particularly interested in learning about a product named "spirulina," a highly nutritious local product. Dr. Sall used the opportunity to advocate for a preventive approach to nutrition, and the importance of having such a policy in the country. Since then the First Lady has remained a strong supporter of nutrition, making at least three presentations a year on the importance of nutrition as a public policy concern.

Deeper political commitment alone might not have led to a new approach to dealing with nutrition, if the current approaches had been effective. But as a second major factor, corruption in PNC provoked further calls for restructuring. Corruption within the organization weakened the position of those who would defend PNC. At least organizationally if not conceptually, this opened the door to substantial rethinking and replanning of future investments in nutrition.

In a way, just as earlier the devaluation of the CFA franc and its negative social effects had created a window of opportunity for the World Bank to introduce PNC and the notion of a multisectoral approach, the corruption scandal around PNC now favored a new discussion on the best way to reduce malnutrition, instead of a defense or simply a continuation of PNC. The end-of-project evaluation set out additional problems with PNC in addressing malnutrition—and significantly, gave some guidance on what a new approach should look like. For Claudia Rokx, the World Bank official in charge of the end-of-project assessment of the PNC, "the crisis situation in which PNC was involved . . . created the ideal scenario to start over" (CR).

And, indeed, Rokx used the situation to do exactly that. Rokx, an energetic nutritionist trained in Holland with a holistic view of nutrition, had replaced the previous World Bank staff who had designed, supervised, and promoted PNC. Assigned to review PNC as part of the end-of-project assessment in 2000, Rokx found PNC flawed in many respects. Now, named as TTL for the negotiations, she had the opportunity to make changes and implement her own vision. Dr. Sall, who was in charge of the Nutrition Department at the time, said he "felt a big change in the World Bank's views in regard to nutrition. Before, they insisted on food distribution but then they changed to a more global view" (GS).

Thus it is important to note that criticism of PNC and subsequent changes were due not only to some implementation issues, which might rightly be attributed to the Senegalese government, but also because the World Bank staff in charge of the renegotiation had a different conceptualization of how to understand and respond to malnutrition than the strategy encapsulated in PNC.

Moving Change Forward: Starting NEP

For Rokx and a small coalition of people, the predominant approach in Senegal to attacking malnutrition, furthered by PNC, revolved excessively around the idea of food distribution. Based on their technical knowledge of more effective interventions in nutrition, they believed that this focus needed to change. They organized a series of workshops with participants from all relevant ministries, representatives from the Ministry of Finance, donors, and NGOs. This platform was ideal for creating a common view of the causes of and most appropriate solution for malnutrition.

In these workshops among a relatively small, well-informed group, the participants discussed their ideas about the most appropriate approach for fighting malnutrition. According to the participants, the most difficult part was not creating a common view about the multicausality of malnutrition. Rather, it was for the actors in this group to agree on how to operationalize the idea.

Even the nonnutrition actors were already convinced that a multisectoral approach was needed, a point illustrated by PNC. This view was shared by the professional association of nutritionists in Senegal, the Directorate of Nutrition in the Ministry of Health, and other key donors, such as UNICEF. To them, working across sectors was an obvious requirement for reducing malnutrition. But how to do that was much less clear. So the operational questions became: How would they design, organize, and implement such a program? What, particularly, would be its institutional setup?

Helped by a new World Bank TTL for nutrition programs in Senegal, and coupled with the opening of a new space for action by President Wade, this core group, including representatives from the World Bank, the Ministry of Health, and other donors (such as the United States Agency for International Development [USAID] and UNICEF) urged a move away from food distribution to a stronger focus on prevention, behavioral change, and education. They wanted to target rural areas, where malnutrition rates were higher; they wanted to draw more on the collaboration of community agents and the participation of NGOs; and they wanted to institute a better setup to improve interagency collaboration.

To obtain the support of the Ministry of Finance and the Prime Minister's Office, this informal coalition employed strategic communications to make

their case. One advocacy tool they used was PROFILES.[2] PROFILES was an approach and a tool developed by the U.S-based Academy for Educational Development (AED) and funded by USAID. PROFILES was designed to help decisionmakers at the national level understand the benefits to the overall economy of fighting malnutrition. Using PROFILES tools, an analyst can estimate economic and social benefits and also program costs, so that policymakers can see for themselves the return on investment in nutrition. According to participants in these sessions, these presentations were quite successful and helped to convince nonspecialists of the importance of giving nutrition highest priority. The audiences for these presentations were people in government who could make decisions on nutrition policies, such as the representatives of the Ministry of Finance and Ministry of Health.

In addition to the use of advocacy tools, the informal coalition also organized workshops to discuss ways forward. One important result was that government officials who participated in these workshops also joined in negotiations with the World Bank over the new loan, meeting in Washington, D.C., and Dakar. The workshop discussions had clearly targeted, educated, and conferred ownership on those who could ultimately influence the government's decisions about the program.

The Senegalese government and the World Bank drew on lessons from the PNC experience to design NEP. First, CNLM was revamped and became CLM. Under the new project, this former coordinating committee became much more. CLM was now to serve as the main anchor for collaboration, not just as an advisory or networking body. Under the new loan, CLM gained significant operational responsibilities. Its roles were more clearly delineated than were those of its predecessor. CLM now had direct responsibility for implementing NEP, creating greater integration of action across sectors.

Second, NEP worked to gain the confidence and strengthen the implementing capacities of operational partners. The government and the World Bank recognized that in the previous project, the Ministry of Health felt excluded. As a result, the Ministry had created its own parallel program. This time, the Ministry of Health was central to the preparation of NEP and CLM and therefore had a greater sense of ownership from the outset. As detailed later in this chapter, NEP also provided operational and financial support for collaborating partners, including ministries and local governments.

Third, the government decided to place CLM under the Prime Minister's Office, not that of the president, where PNC was located. On one hand, participants felt the program needed a fresh start, institutionally speaking.

[2] See http://www.aedprofiles.org/. Accessed February 12, 2011.

They wanted to remove the new program from the President's Office, where AGETIP was located. On the other hand, to promote intersectoral collaboration and avoid giving ownership to any one ministry, they hesitated to place CLM in a single ministry, for example, the Ministry of Health. After substantial discussions, they agreed to place the new program in the Prime Minister's Office, a more logical choice than the President's Office, because the Prime Minister's Office was responsible for coordinating among ministries and often functioned as the locus of interministerial collaborations.

Fourth, these organizational arrangements were supported by a legal framework and fiduciary obligations. Executive Decree 2001-770, passed in 2001, created CLM and gave legal effect to the arrangements noted above. The financial contract (the loan) between the Government of Senegal and the World Bank to finance NEP obligated the government to fulfill these agreements and ensure interagency cooperation.

Transforming the Approach to Nutrition

In discussing NEP, government staff consistently make the point that NEP represents a substantive and critical transformation in the Government of Senegal's fight against malnutrition. With NEP the government went from a project approach to a program approach. For politicians, policymakers, and civil servants, this is a significant reorientation in institutional thinking. A project operates in a relatively isolated fashion, usually within one sector, and most likely has a finite life. Until NEP, and even with PNC, nutrition was treated through projects. A program, however, connotes a broader initiative and is usually embedded in a larger policy framework. A program approach helps generate cooperation among actors and sectors dealing with nutrition. The creation of NEP and CLM, then, was not conceived of as simply another nutrition project, but as the beginning of a process of the institutionalization of nutrition as a cross-sectoral effort in Senegal.

In this context, the first task of CLM was to finish the work of CNLM and draft a national nutrition policy. CLM would then be responsible for its implementation. In this way, NEP would be one of the instruments to achieve the goals set out in the policy document. Furthermore, even if CLM later discontinued NEP, CLM would still be responsible in the long term for implementing policies to reduce malnutrition.

Before the initiation of NEP, Senegal did not have a national nutrition policy. Believing such a policy was important to the long-term institutionalization of nutrition policies, the World Bank made creation of a nutrition policy a prerequisite for its loan. NEP could only begin after the Government of Senegal had drafted a nutrition policy for the country.

As experience with CNLM had shown, a mandate alone is not sufficient to ensure that things work well, especially multisectorally. Even under NEP, smooth multisectoral functioning depended less on interagency cooperation at the national level than on good performance of NGOs and cooperation among partners at the local level, as detailed later in the chapter.

Unsurprisingly, these new proposals for rather dramatic institutional change generated significant opposition. AGETIP and the young professionals hired for MICs vigorously defended PNC, as they clearly had something to lose from restructuring. Their points of view on the organizational structure and placement of NEP were debated heatedly in the workshops. The young professionals who were part of PNC and who would soon be unemployed organized demonstrations and strikes that were publicized by the media. They demanded to be recruited by the new program. The new manager of NEP did not want to hire them, as NEP did not need them. To settle the dispute, NEP agreed to pay salaries to former employees of PNC for two years, even if they did not work. With the young professionals quieted, the new organizational structure favored by the Ministry of Health and the World Bank was put into place.

Strains of the debates surrounding the creation of NEP exist even today. For example, historically, nutrition policies in Senegal were associated with food distribution. Although the core group and close allies now fully recognized that attaining nutrition security meant going beyond food security, not all influential actors were aware of or shared this perspective. Most still associated nutrition policies with food policy: for them a food distribution program was a perfectly adequate nutrition program. In addition, from a politician's point of view, a food distribution program not only attacked the problem but also provided visible proof of government action, with the politicians reaping benefits. Beneficiaries also liked receiving food, which fit with the traditional and widely understood conceptualization of the socialist state as provider. Moving away from food distribution was therefore not only a matter of changing the understanding of a few people but also one of overcoming resistance from groups with political interests in maintaining the existing system and its complex of food programs. Replacing the focus on food distribution with the idea that prevention, education, and behavior change should be the main pillars of a program against malnutrition was the most difficult part.

According to Dr. Sall, implementing this "new idea" remains difficult today. Debate on this issue is still "part of their fight," particularly with regard to the wider public, as the politicians are now mostly convinced that food distribution is not the answer to malnutrition. Of course, politicians

continue to reap benefits from food distribution, even if it is not part of a nutrition program. For example, food is still distributed as part of the religious celebrations of the Muslim brotherhoods. The World Food Programme also undertakes some limited food distribution.

Summing Up: Getting Started

The creation of NEP built significantly on a previous project (PNC), but various influences in the internal and external contexts, along with key decisions about institutional design, were crucial to the initiation of NEP as a genuine, sustainable, and successful multisectoral collaboration. The framework presented in Chapter 3 has already indicated that many of these factors might be harbingers of success.

Internal Context

- Although an external agent, the World Bank functioned as an internal player—taking leadership to maintain investment in nutrition even after the closing of PNC.
- Top leaders created a policy space. Other actors stepped in to fill the space with policy frameworks and programs and to forge collaborations, new approaches, and new structures.
- Advocates worked to create a common view about the causes of malnutrition and appropriate policy responses among a wide range of actors, with special inclusion of and support from the Ministry of Health.
- Although not perfectly designed for nutrition, a previous program (PNC) had helped create a shared conceptualization among donors and ministries about the causes of malnutrition and the need to work multisectorally. It also highlighted challenges for such work, giving the NEP designers some clues as to what obstacles they needed to address (such as implementation capacity, strength of coordinating mechanisms, and community involvement).

External Context

- Key actors, including the new president and the donor community, believed nutrition was central to development and prioritized action on improving nutrition.
- The project timelines imposed a sense of urgency for action. PNC was ending, and a new investment needed to take its place. A decision had to be made to continue, renegotiate, or terminate PNC.
- A corruption scandal in PNC weakened any potential initiative to preserve the PNC structure.

- The program framework (as opposed to a more limited project approach) favored intersectoral collaboration, elevated visibility, and supported the idea of a long-term commitment.
- Various other factors in the economic, political, and legal environments favored start-up of NEP:
  - A favorable political context developed, stemming from political change-over, interest of the First Lady in nutrition, and commitment to the MDGs, and the appearance of a new TTL for the World Bank.
  - Donors, especially the World Bank, pressured the government to adopt a multisectoral, long-term policy in nutrition.
  - Project preparation funds were available for activities to build vision and commitment among partners during the design phase.
  - Legal frameworks, such as the government's new nutrition policy and the decree to form CLM, supported efforts to install NEP. The financial commitment with the World Bank reinforced these frameworks through legal obligations.
  - A coalition for reform came together as donors and government officials advocated for a preventive multisectoral approach to nutrition.

Institutional Links

- Design activities were broadly inclusive, involving ministries, NGOs, and donors, and even government officials not usually associated with nutrition —thus providing a basis for dialogue and stakeholder ownership of the program.
- Placing NEP under the highest authority provided a sign to other actors of the priority to be given to nutrition and its multisectoral nature. This placement provided a known, common space for coordination and operation.
- The coordinating mechanism had operational capacity and not merely coordinating responsibility.
- NEP could provide funding and capacity building as incentives to partners.
- Actions were taken to neutralize opposition from MICs and AGETIP to the new institutional mechanism.

Structuring Multisectoral Collaboration

The Government of Senegal intended to use the World Bank loan to pursue two main objectives. One objective was to anchor the program and policies in an institutional framework that sought not only high political visibility (through its association with the Prime Minister's Office) but also coordinated actions with relevant ministries in the area of nutrition. This objective resulted in the creation of CLM. The second objective was to establish a

long-term, nationwide, community-based program to combat malnutrition in the country and achieve the MDGs. Basically, this objective resulted in the establishment of NEP.

The government seems to have accomplished both objectives. The program has transitioned successfully from a project to a program approach within an established policy framework. And the government's poverty reduction strategy explicitly mentions NEP as part of its investment in human development.

The overall objective of NEP was to assist Senegal in reaching the MDGs by supporting its nutrition policy, which was mandated to improve the nutritional status of specific target groups (children under five years of age and pregnant and lactating women). Two subobjectives of NEP were (1) to improve the population's nutritional status, particularly that of children under two years of age and living in poor or rural areas; and (2) to build the country's institutional and organizational capacities in the area of nutrition so as to improve policy implementation and evaluation.

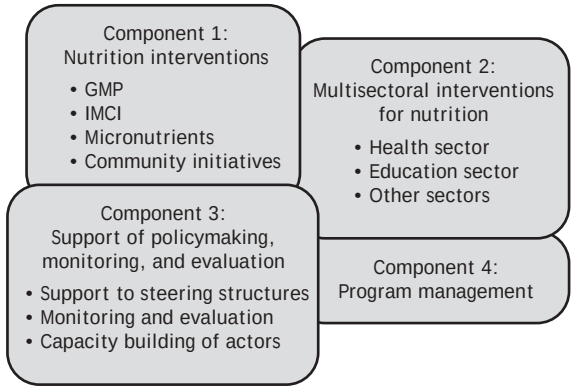
NEP was conceived of as a long-term program and is the foundation of the nutrition policy of Senegal. It was designed to operate in three phases: Phase One (2002–05), Phase Two (2007–11), and Phase Three (2011–16). During Phase One (already concluded), the program was set up, and implementation concentrated on targeted areas of the country. NEP conducted pilot activities during this phase, experimenting with alternative modalities of interventions and learning which approaches were most effective. During Phase Two (currently under way), NEP is scaling up to cover all 11 regions of the country. It nevertheless maintains a focus on rural areas and regions with the highest prevalence of malnutrition. Phase Three was envisioned as a consolidation stage to allow time for institutionalizing what had been accomplished in Phases One and Two. However, as explained in more detail later in the chapter, despite the operational and financial success of NEP, the realization of this phase will depend largely on the willingness of the World Bank to continue to provide financial support.

NEP works across sectors and across levels of government, from the national government down to community leaders. Institutionally, NEP has its own personnel, but for operation it relies on multilevel and cross-sectoral collaboration with several ministries, NGOs, the private sector, local governments, and the communities themselves. NEP is not part of any line ministry but falls under the purview of CLM.

NEP has four activity components with various subcomponents (Figure 5.2):

1. Nutrition interventions, including growth monitoring and promotion (GMP), Integrated Management of Childhood Illness (IMCI), micronutrient supplementation, and community initiatives

Figure 5.2 Components and subcomponents of NEP



Source: Republic of Senegal, Nutrition Enhancement Program (n.d.).
Notes: GMP means growth monitoring and promotion; IMCI means Integrated Management of Childhood Illness; NEP means Programme de Renforcement Nutritionnel (Nutrition Enhancement Program).

2. Multisectoral interventions for nutrition, involving primarily the health and education sectors
3. Support of policymaking and monitoring and evaluation, including capacity building and support to steering committees involved in the program
4. Program management

Table 5.1 is more specific about the strategies that relate to these components and that NEP uses to reach its two major objectives. As Table 5.1 makes clear, although CLM exists to coordinate among national actors and strives to do so through coordination of strategic plans, much of the multisectoral nature of NEP occurs at the community level. This is in effect the ground level of implementation of a multisectoral program.

The organizational structure is slightly complicated, with intertwined and overlapping functions. Essentially CLM is the institutional mechanism that brings together the main actors in nutrition to coordinate nutrition policies and programs in a multisectoral way. It is supposed to plan, coordinate, and oversee nutrition policies in the country.

Specifically, the legal mandate of CLM is to assist the prime minister in defining national nutrition policies and strategies; ensure that the government's nutrition policy is implemented, including reviewing and approving project proposals and developing protocols with implementing agencies; facilitate cooperation among ministries, NGOs, and the private sector; approve the organizational structure of the National Executive Bureau (Bureau Exécutif

Table 5.1 Strategic orientation of the Nutrition Enhancement Program (Programme de Renforcement Nutritionnel, or NEP)

Objective	Strategy		
Improvement of the population's nutritional status	Growth monitoring and promotion (GMP of children zero to two years of age) Vitamin A supplementation for children, iron and vitamin A supplementation for women	Promotion of key caring and feeding behaviors among mothers and child caretakers Food fortification	Community-based distribution of products, such as bed nets and oral rehydration salts Promotion of foods rich in micronutrients
The country's capacity building in the area of nutrition	Support to sectors (health and education) through strategic plans	Development of multisectorality at the community level	Synergy building among programs

Source: Republic of Senegal Nutrition Enhancement Program (n.d.).

National, or BEN) and its annual plan and budget; provide technical advice on nutrition, design technical reference guides, and conduct studies and surveys as needed; manage national nutrition programs; and ensure the monitoring and coordination of funded projects in liaison with donors.[3]

The director of the Cabinet of the Prime Minister's Office chairs CLM. The members of CLM include key technical ministries involved in nutrition (such as Health and Education) and representatives of the mayors' association, rural communities' presidents association, and an umbrella association of NGOs associated with nutrition. CLM is thus similar in structure to the national nutrition coordinating committees in many other countries.

CLM oversees NEP, and from this perspective, NEP appears to be simply one more nutrition program in the panoply of nutrition interventions in Senegal. But NEP is not just one more program. Its size and operational and structural relations make it unique and have contributed to its success as a multisectoral organization. What are some of these structural characteristics?

First, NEP is a program under CLM, and therefore under the prime minister, rather than either simply a program of a separate ministry or a coordinating mechanism. It thus has a direct link to the prime minister, who has authority to coordinate among ministries and whose office is a logical locus of such efforts.

Second, CLM has BEN, which is composed of a subset of CLM members. BEN functions as a secretariat for CLM, providing administrative and technical support to the more inclusive policymaking body.

BEN's responsibilities are to assist CLM to (1) define the national nutrition policy, (2) design appropriate strategies for the implementation of national nutrition programs, and (3) manage nutrition programs. BEN develops an annual action plan and budget and submits it to CLM for approval. It also prepares a quarterly progress report for CLM and accompanies CLM during its visits to the field.

These activities and this structure are not so different from institutional arrangements in other countries. But BEN is not just a technical advisory council or administrative support for the supraministerial body. Rather, BEN has direct operational responsibilities for NEP.

The director of NEP, for example, is the chair of BEN. Thus BEN creates a very close connection between CLM and NEP. Importantly, BEN also functions

[3] It is clear that CLM and NEP gather multiple participants, but not all of them actually collaborate in the sense in which I use the term here. Even though the intention of CLM is to include many stakeholders in collaboration, some are actively involved (such as NGOs and the Ministry of Health), and others are less integrated into collaborative relationships (such as the Ministries of Education and of Industry).

as the Project Implementation Unit (PIU) of the loan from the World Bank. BEN is therefore also directly responsible for implementation of NEP. BEN is in fact essentially indistinguishable from the NEP implementation structure. This operational facet of BEN's responsibility, with its subsidiary but close connection to CLM, has been instrumental in its multisectoral work because BEN, in its role as implementer responsible to the prime minister and the World Bank, makes sure CLM fulfills its functions. Because it serves CLM and is also responsible for implementation of NEP, BEN can quickly access individuals and decisionmaking processes within the ministries when NEP needs support.

Those who designed NEP knew that multisectoral collaboration would not be easy. Consequently, they incorporated key lessons of development into the structure of the program, key lessons many donors have yet to learn. They understood partners would need time to develop capacities and learn how to work together. They knew developing capacities and effective institutional relationships would take time. They therefore thought of the development of collaboration among different technical ministries and other key actors in nutrition as a process. NEP was intentionally created as a program in three phases, with a 15-year horizon before it reached full strength.

This sort of approach, however, also must fit the standard operating procedures and philosophy of the donor agency. In fact, the World Bank has different loan products, and Bank staff chose a product known as an Adaptable Program Loan (APL). This product allows for a long-term commitment along with adaptations at the end of each phase (every five years). The intent was to allow for flexibility as needs changed and to learn and develop capacities as the program went along. And the 15-year time horizon demonstrated the commitment of the World Bank to the idea, which meant various political administrations could come and go, but the priority given to nutrition, as expressed by the loan, would remain.

But the World Bank team implementing the program later discovered that the loan did not function exactly as they thought. Instead of a continuous but adaptable loan, every five years the loan was actually renewed, not simply extended. New discussions about whether to extend the loan would take place at each juncture, with the possibility that the loan might not be extended beyond the current phase. In fact, that is what happened during the negotiation between Phase One and Phase Two. World Bank managers at the time did not want to continue financing a stand-alone nutrition project that looked small in the Bank's portfolio, despite the government's continued interest. The managers ultimately conceded to financing Phase Two, but with only a US$10 million investment, a considerable reduction from Phase One. In return, TTL and the government agreed that the Bank would not fund Phase

Three as a stand-alone project. As a result, efforts are being made to have the government take on more permanent ownership of the program (MMS29).

Figure 5.3A shows this organizational structure in some detail. The figure shows the two arms of NEP. Dialogue among national actors about coordination of their programs takes place as part of the ministerial arm. Theoretically the members of CLM, which essentially include all major players in nutrition in the country, can coordinate their actions, be it through the government, the private sector, or civil society. They reach the community through their own institutional arrangements, such as market structures (private sector), public–private partnerships, or decentralized services (such as local health clinics).

For implementation of the integrated program of NEP, the program works largely through the local government arm, and it is here that the multisectoral nature of NEP comes into full play. Here the integrated multisectoral package of components is implemented through BEN and more specifically the Regional Executive Bureaus (Bureau Exécutif Regional, or BER), local government structures, and NGOs. BERs are the regional-level implementation subunits of BEN. BERs work with local governments to determine implementation plans, which are then implemented by community implementation organizations (that is, NGOs).

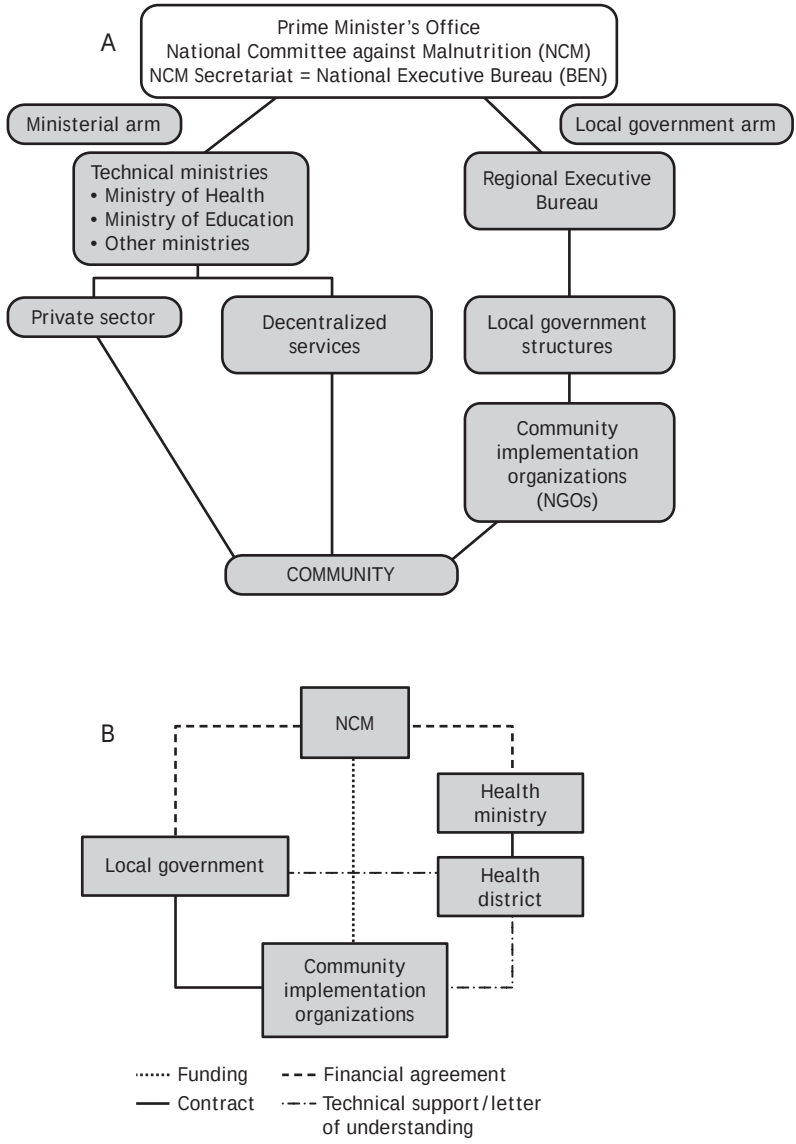
Figure 5.3B gives more detail on the contractual and implementation arrangements for this local government arm. It shows the large responsibility assumed by the local governments and NGOs in implementing NEP and also how NEP coordinates and works through the ministries even for the local government arm. Working with BEN and BER, local governments contract local community-based organizations (which are also NGOs), who serve as implementing partners. CLM (BEN) pays the NGOs and also has financial understandings with the local government and the Ministry of Health, for example, on budget and how the program will be implemented. The Ministry of Health may work vertically and implement some of its decentralized services through providers at the district level. Using technical support and letters of understanding, these district-level providers coordinate with the local government and NGOs. The long-term goal is to have BEN turn over full responsibility for finances and administration (including selection, approval, supervision, and payment of the NGOs) to the local governments (MMS29).

Working Together: The Dynamics of Multisectoral Connections

Institutional Coordination and Operation

CLM is the central mechanism of institutional collaboration. It links and integrates nutrition actions both horizontally and vertically. An important charac-

Figure 5.3 Implementation structure of NEP



Source: Republic of Senegal, Nutrition Enhancement Program (n.d.).
Note: BEN means Bureau Exécutif National (National Executive Bureau); NEP means Programme de Renforcement Nutritionnel (Nutrition Enhancement Program); NGO means nongovernmental organization.

teristic of CLM—and one that many other multisectoral coordinating bodies do not have—is that CLM also manages the implementation of NEP. Thus CLM not only coordinates but also directly allocates and manages resources to develop and strengthen collaboration around nutrition. NEP and its structure gain further credibility because its national coverage and information monitoring system have allowed it to have a demonstrated impact on reducing malnutrition in the country. Thus it can show results on investment to government, civil society, and donors. Because CLM manages the implementation of NEP, it can bring together partners around concrete actions and can garner enough resources to develop activities that enhance the collaboration.

Through their participation in CLM at the national level, the ministries can become involved in the planning, design, and supervision of nutrition projects and programs. The perspective of Menno Mulder-Sibanda, the World Bank's TTL for NEP and Senior Nutrition Specialist for Africa, is crucial. He argues that even without specific instances of programmatic integration, cooperating in this way can lead to integration of nutrition considerations in their other work.

Multisectorality at the national level requires involving many stakeholders in the process. The aim is to involve all stakeholders, so that their perception of nutrition is positive and they take responsibility for their allotted tasks. Multisectorality at the national level requires involving all sectors, so that they recognize their role in nutrition and see it as part of overall development (MMS29).

Of course, such consciousness raising and mainstreaming are important but are not the same thing as integrated collaboration. As noted in Chapters 2 and 3, such cross-sectoral participation does not happen easily. Consequently, even though the conceptualization of NEP assumed different ministries would participate in order to influence nutrition policy in the country and that ministries would align their own policies with NEP, the program still had to actively pursue this participation. Fortunately, NEP had a budget specifically assigned to promote the participation of ministries and local governments and to strengthen their institutional capacities to carry out nutrition programs.

Collaboration of the ministries at the national level is still difficult. Although six years into NEP the local level understands the process, understanding at the ministerial level still lags. The local level has developed so much that as a general rule NGOs do not have to impose themselves on communities to lead or integrate efforts—the local government leads implementation (MMS29).

However, the line ministries have hesitated, perhaps because they are more capable and can function independently in their institutional routines. The Ministry of Health, for instance, still sees NEP to some extent as a competitor (MMS29). Yet even though the Ministry of Health "doesn't care," the

Ministry of Economy and Finance "gets it" and is "keen to see things work" (MMS29). From the perspective of institutional missions, this state of affairs is not surprising, as Ministry of Economy and Finance would favor a program that achieves social results at lower cost and has no stake in maintaining sectoral silos. But the Ministry of Health does.

In sum, the ministerial arm is working, though perhaps not optimally. At this stage, this ministerial harmonization "is important but least essential. The community is more important" (MMS29).

Still, with time the ministries seem to have developed more interest in collaboration through NEP, partly because it has shown results and so has become relevant to their own institutional missions. A recent example of a national-level coordination is the creation of the Committee for Food Fortification. The Committee includes public and private partners as well as donors and has been able to make good progress in a short time. NEP's structures have also allowed the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Health to increase participation in implementation at the community level. Salt iodization under the Committee, for example, is working better than previous initiatives with UNICEF because through NEP, it can work directly at the local level to obtain cooperation from the salt cooperatives. And although the nutrition mandate of the Ministry of Education seems less obvious than that of the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Education has arguably proceeded further. Starting with a pilot for health-nutrition education in schools, the Ministry has now scaled up and integrated the program into its own budget (MMS29). Simultaneously, NEP is aware of what is happening at the regional and community levels and so can work with the ministries at the national level to seek ways to complement their actions.

Effective Leadership

The institutional design and control of resources are undoubtedly crucial, but it is highly unlikely that CLM would have been as effective as it has been without strong, innovative leadership. A key factor in developing and strengthening cooperation over time was the emergence of effective and clear leadership from Biram Ndiaye, director of NEP and head of BEN.

BEN has served as the engine of CLM, taking the lead in all of CLM's activities and in the relationships with key ministries, such as the Ministry of Finance. As secretariat of the CLM, BEN has been responsible for disbursing the budget, keeping CLM abreast of the accomplishments of the program, and reminding ministers of their budget commitments to nutrition.

Thanks to this leadership CLM has emerged as a clear reference point for nutrition policy for the government. Donors now turn first to CLM when they

wish to fund a nutrition program. They look to CLM to make sure their activities coordinate with national policies and with NEP. Formerly they might have negotiated a one-to-one relationship with specific ministries, a common problem that conspires against having a consistent and effective nutrition policy in many countries. The judgment of the representative of the World Food Programme (WFP) is typical:

> CLM and its coordinator (Biram Ndiaye) are very active, serious, and it is a pleasure to work with them. Before the CLM, [WFP] had a program that was halted for five years because the government did not know what to do with it. Now the government sends them to the CLM to discuss their programs and coordinate their actions around the NEP. (JNG)

Leading Values: Technical Competence, Transparency, Team Building

One important element in creating this effective leadership was the transparent process used to hire the director of NEP. As a result, NEP not only acquired a qualified manager in Ndiaye but also one who was not seen as a political appointee. Ndiaye was technically solid, with a Ph.D. in nutrition from a prestigious university and international experience in nutrition programs. He had worked in Senegal on a previous nutrition project (PNC), so he knew the structures and the players. In addition, he emphasized developing managerial skills for himself and his team and spent time and resources in team building. Ndiaye believed in creating a sense of common purpose and a system of rewards based on performance. He took this job as a personal challenge. He wanted to show that "we can do a good and serious job in Senegal" (BN).

Ndiaye took responsibility not only for making sure that the NEP delivered results, but also for making CLM visible and functional. He oversaw all aspects of administration of CLM and NEP, organized the meetings, submitted progress reports, organized field trips to monitor the program, and made sure that all partners participated in it. Through his hands-on but respectful and transparent leadership style, he gained the respect of the different ministries with whom he worked.

Orientation and Organizational Flexibility

That leadership of interagency cooperation was not a formal part of government bureaucracy gave CLM greater discretion to act in a results-oriented manner and circumvent bureaucratic procedures and protocol. Personally, too, Ndiaye seems not to have harbored career political ambitions—and remained much more focused on achievement as measured by results rather than on political gain. This orientation reduced his need to respond to politi-

cal pressures. These are the types of managerial skills that have been identified as producing successful results in coordination in developed countries as well (Bardach 1998).

Such discretion is in part because CLM is accountable to the prime minister directly, so there is room for flexibility if the prime minister allows it. It also comes about because NEP is a World Bank–funded project with a separate management unit (the Project Implementation Unit). Thus specific targets are monitored not only by the government but also by the World Bank, and the NEP is responsible to both.

Operational flexibility is most apparent in the contractual arrangements used with local community-based organizations to implement the program. However, it is also reflected in the use of a performance-based system for evaluation of staff, a system outside the norm of government bureaucracy. Under this system, theoretically the director can fire an employee who is consistently underperforming.

Clearly Ndiaye was concerned about the capacity of his own staff, and he pushed them for results. At the same time, he believed in building their capacities to work as a team. This practice was not typical of the government, but it was an element of leadership that helped NEP staff deliver better results. One factor in NEP's favor is that CLM did not seem to suffer as much as other agencies from turnover among staff. Staff at BEN during Ndiaye's tenure, for example, did not change.

Working with the Community: Creating the Capacity for Flexibility

Genuine multisectoral collaboration under NEP has so far occurred largely at the community level, as NGOs, communities, and workers from the Ministries of Health and Education cooperate to implement NEP's components. It is worth noting, too, that different NGOs work in different geographic areas where the program was established, potentially allowing for variation in implementation.

Empowering the local level to implement the program (within the bounds of their capacities, the components, and the strategy of the program) has contributed to the organizational flexibility needed for success in working multisectorally. As has been observed elsewhere, collaboration among sectors tends to be more successful at the more decentralized levels (where workers on the ground interact on implementation) than at higher levels (where policy discussion and planning occurs).

These local workers appear to be closer to their clients and their needs and have a greater, perhaps personal, incentive to collaborate with one another to make their actions more effective. Because they are directly in charge of delivering the services, they can see problems more quickly.

Staff from the various cooperating agencies (local government, NGOs, and the clinics or educational institutions) often know one another. They can readily size up the local situation and suggest ways for partners to do their jobs better—independently or in collaboration—adapting solutions to local conditions and capacities. The results can be synergistic and extend beyond the performance of one organization. By improving the efficiency of health posts, for example, these posts may, in turn, extend the services provided by the community workers, increasing accomplishment and job satisfaction. Of course, this train of events assumes that higher authorities have given local workers the necessary flexibility and discretion to make judgments, and also assumes that local workers have sufficient capacity to do so.

For NEP, the presence of capable NGOs at the community level thus helped to enable this flexibility and build up local community capacities. NEP purposefully built this discretion and flexibility into the program. Those who designed NEP wanted to allow NGOs to develop their own ways of working with their communities, because community characteristics and capacities varied by region. However, NEP monitored the work to make sure actions led to good results and chose NGOs on a competitive basis, so the ones selected had a proven record of results at the community level.

The expectation is that local governments may take over many NEP functions in the future. Decentralization is progressing in Senegal, and it is planned for local governments to take more responsibilities in the implementation of public policies and programs, including nutrition. Before this handoff can happen, however, local capacities still need to be strengthened, and the role of CLM will have to be stronger than it is now.

Results Orientation, Monitoring, and Learning

A results orientation was also purposely built into the design of NEP. The design paid particular attention to the elaboration of monitoring and evaluation tools that the World Bank had found sound and comprehensive (World Bank 2007). Management used these tools to track results against expectations, helping them to improve performance and introduce modifications when needed. "Much emphasis was put on learning by doing which implied that the central level provided the bare minimum of instructions but maximum support, thereby allowing each implementing partner to develop its own strategies and solutions" (World Bank 2007, 9).

BEN's decentralized structure with six regional executive bureaus also helped. Closer to the action, BERs focused on strengthening the ability of implementing agencies and other stakeholders to contribute to outputs and outcomes. NEP's monitoring and learning system involved every partner and stakeholder in measuring and discussing results. Each partner was allowed

to make their own contributions and take credit for results, thus enhancing ownership and incentives for participation (and, as part of a joint effort, providing a framework to pressure others to do a good job).

Monitoring takes place at three levels: (1) monthly monitoring of data collected at the community level, communicated to the regional and national levels and used for conducting regular supervision missions to project sites; (2) performance evaluation of each community subproject by before-and-after population-based representative surveys, which formed the basis of the performance evaluation of the implementing partners when preparing Phase Two; and (3) an independent impact evaluation.

Program feedback, for learning and sharing in success, was also important in keeping the partners interested in cooperation. As a result of the strong commitment of Ndiaye and NEP partners to having a successful program and their administrative and political savvy to make it work on the ground, NEP was able to reduce malnutrition significantly while costing less than PNC. In PNC, the cost per beneficiary for six months was US$40; it was US$67.70 if the child received food supplements. For Phase One NEP, the costs were much lower: a median cost per child of US$3.70 in rural areas and US$5.00 in urban areas. Routine monitoring data showed a clear decline in malnutrition rates from 18 percent in December 2004 to 10 percent in December 2005 in the geographic areas of intervention (World Bank 2007).

Success Leads to Success

The program is considered the best performing program in the World Bank portfolio in Senegal and an example of good implementation elsewhere. Through CLM, BEN shared this accomplishment with all participating ministries, making them feel integral to the effort. Partners were thus able to benefit from the good image of the program. This sharing in success also applied to the Government of Senegal in general and to the Office of the Prime Minister, to which CLM and NEP were directly attached. The good results of the program gave a sense of pride to the government, which committed publicly in international forums to the achievement of the MDGs and in particular to the reduction of malnutrition. It was also a good negotiating point with donors, as the government could show them impact and return on their investments. The ability to bring in more resources, in turn, reinforced the government's commitment to reducing malnutrition and to NEP in particular.

One specific example is how participation in the program helped the Ministry of Health improve its own performance, creating a strong incentive to remain in the partnership. Based on proven success, and using links with the Ministry of Health, NEP became a major mechanism to roll out programs in infant and young child feeding, IMCI, and mass and routine distribution of

vitamin A supplements. Using the NEP structure, the public service delivery of vitamin A supplements and insecticide-treated bed nets greatly improved. NEP also improved the delivery of health services to poor areas.

The collaborative structure of NEP allowed for program integration that had not been possible before. According to the World Bank's (2007) end-of-project assessment for Phase One, NEP integrated GMP with community-level IMCI. NEP also integrated promotion of feeding practices, delivery of essential health services (such as immunization, vitamin A supplementation, and deworming), and the prevention and treatment of malaria. "This approach was a strategic way to work more closely with the health service delivery system and to promote measures that help prevent malnutrition" (World Bank 2007, 7). This integration further promotes collaboration with the Ministry of Health by demonstrating the value of NEP. In the estimation of at least one World Bank staff member (MMS29), such demonstrations of success have prompted interministerial coordination, rather than first having institutional coordination that then led to success. In this view, coordination and success are synergistic over time. Working together for a specific objective of mutual interest forges ways of working. Achieving success solidifies and incentivizes the collaboration.

Paying Attention to Partners: Incentivizing Collaboration

Partners involved in a collaboration need to remain satisfied with their involvement in it, and NEP provided financial and personal incentives for staying involved. Ndiaye remained personally attentive to the needs of partners, and NEP funded training, equipment, and technical support for participating ministries. These activities helped NEP achieve its objectives by strengthening ministerial capacities, so they could fulfill their roles and responsibilities. But funding also helped to maintain ministerial interest in the collaboration. As noted in Chapter 3, money may be an important lubricant for intersectoral collaboration. That seems to be the case in Senegal, where organizational and personal incentives can be weak and where actors, such as the ministries, are only now seeing how they can use NEP's structures to accomplish their goals.

NEP worked to strengthen capacities across the board, however, and not just with ministries. NEP has systematically strengthened implementing capacities for NGOs, for example. Participating NGOs, which played a key role in the implementation of NEP at the community level, benefited from extensive training and received technical assistance when monitoring detected problems. They also benefited from their involvement in a national program, which gave them more visibility.

Thus part of the maintenance management of the collaboration was allowing partners to share in the prestige that NEP acquired. Even though the

creation of CLM was key for coordination, it was the successful management for results and an intelligent use of strategic communication to make those results known that brought more players on board. NEP could also personalize these results by encouraging partners to visit the field. Partners could then monitor and understand what was going on and could show success to donors and other possible supporters. The NGOs, in fact, have become a strong constituency for NEP.

Government Commitment

The overall political environment is also favorable to NEP. The Government of Senegal, through the Prime Minister's Office, has shown a high level of commitment to the country's nutrition policy and programs in different ways: (1) strong commitment to the MDGs related to nutrition, (2) incorporation of nutrition as a development priority in the national Poverty Reduction Strategy Credit (PRSC), (3) design and approval of the national nutrition policy with defined objectives to reduce malnutrition, (4) creation of CLM, and (5) financial resources through the budget, which should cover one-third of the expenses of NEP in Phase Two. The rest of the funding comes from the World Bank loan, which, of course, is government money as well. However, given the history of many of these programs and the difficulty of sustaining them once external funding ceases, incorporation of part of the funding into the government budget may be important to sustain expenditures over time. Traditionally, items that get incorporated in the budget are not easily taken out of it. That is what makes visibility of success and initial steps by ministries to take on nutrition in their own budgets so important.

Sustainability: Potential and Challenges

Several factors, some of which have contributed to the functioning of this collaboration, are also responsible for its sustainability so far. First, the Government of Senegal has a strong commitment to the MDGs, particularly the reduction of malnutrition. NEP's demonstrated success has contributed to strengthening this commitment. Success has made partners in the collaboration interested in seeing NEP continued. It has made the program credible to donors and the government, which improves the chances for continued support. The continued flow of financial resources for funding of CLM and NEP has undoubtedly contributed to sustaining collaboration, especially because financial resources are part of the incentives that help promote the collaboration.

Based on this success, the government publicizes this commitment, thus creating an environment that favors keeping nutrition on the policy agenda. It also creates support for continuation of the current institutional arrange-

ments. A Senegalese delegation headed by the Minister of Planning and Sustainable Development, for example, proudly presented the NEP achievements at the "Countdown to 2015: Tracking Progress in Child Survival" Conference in London in December 2005. The international recognition that followed led Senegal to offer to host the next countdown conference in Dakar. At the same time, the prime ministers of Madagascar and Senegal published a letter to the editor in *The Lancet,* one of the top international journals for health, describing their activities and asking their peers on the continent to follow in their footsteps. A national seminar on maternal-child health was organized in December 2006 with support from all parties involved.

As discussed, the interest of national-level partners (the ministries) also seems to be growing. The small-money funding of specific activities in the ministries was intended to support their involvement with NEP. But it also means that nutrition activities have been present in their work and minds for many years. They have examples of how to integrate activities to support nutrition in their own actions and in collaboration with others. The experience, success, and consistent presence of NEP are slowly accomplishing what the short experience of the nutrition cells in past years could not. And now the ministries are beginning to lobby for their own budgets to support their own nutrition activities (MMS29).

Second, because this collaboration depends on the availability of financial resources to sustain the activities—both the nutrition activities at the community level and the ones related to incentives, institutional strengthening, and collaboration—a long-term commitment of external funds is very important. The initial commitment of external funds over an extended period (in this case 15 years) has been key. The long-term commitment allowed partners to believe that they had time to develop a program, learn from mistakes, and institutionalize NEP in the government structure. The long time frame also gave participants a different reference point: instead of creating and defending a project, they could work across sectoral and organizational boundaries to create a program, one that government officials knew would extend beyond their elected or appointed mandates, but also one that, through the external partners, they could continue to participate in even after they left government.

This long-term approach is not often taken, but it seems essential to sustainability of investment. Low-income developing countries like Senegal have very limited budgets and limited capacities. It takes time for them to build capacities for decisionmaking, management, and implementation, even if the political commitment is there. The World Bank had promised a loan with a long-term horizon of 15 years, which was expected to be enough for the government to find resources to fully fund the program in the future. In Phase Two, although the World Bank's commitment is uncertain, the government

has already committed to funding one-third of the program's total budget, and the NEP is seeking to raise other external funds.

Third, the continued support of the World Bank and other international organizations (such as UNICEF) for Senegal's efforts has helped keep the government's attention on nutrition. These organizations have provided an enabling environment for collaboration among agencies on nutrition. Together with domestic stakeholders, they have created an informal coalition for nutrition. Through informal coordination and advocacy, they have kept nutrition high on the development and investment agenda and have defended NEP when needed.

These interested parties have not only put nutrition on their action agendas, but they have also reached a common understanding that reducing malnutrition requires a multisectoral approach. This convergence creates a uniform discourse coming from the agencies, donors, and other stakeholders with the government and pushes them toward finding ways to implement the concept in practice. In some cases, agencies, such as WFP, cannot easily integrate into the nutrition paradigm, but neither do they oppose the approach. In fact, WFP has been willing to cooperate with CLM and provide food to communities during periods of shortage, but they have agreed not to otherwise intervene.

At the same time, CLM has several weaknesses that work against sustainability. One of the fragilities is the possible dependence on external funds to sustain nutrition programs. In this case, the commitment of the World Bank in financing NEP is important, as it is currently the only donor that can provide the amount of money required to sustain action at a national scale. The World Bank's commitment to nutrition cannot be taken for granted, as the number of nutritionists on the staff is quite small and there are different views in the Bank on the importance of nutrition vis-à-vis other issues.

A second weakness is that the Ministries of Health and Education are still not fully integrated in implementing NEP. Lack of involvement of other ministries (such as Agriculture and Water and Sanitation) in nutrition makes the continuation of multisectoral collaboration at the ministerial level for nutrition more vulnerable if World Bank funding ceases. The lack of ministerial ownership also makes an exit strategy for the World Bank more difficult.

Third, what appeared as a strong point for collaboration among agencies could have turned into a drawback if NEP had grown to depend too much on strong leadership, such as that of Ndiaye. In 2008, Ndiaye left the program and was succeeded by his deputy. But Ndiaye had prepared her to continue his management style. The training and mentoring effort worked, and the NEP and BEN are still strong.

Fourth, in Senegal, the turnover of public officials is high. The president exercises a great deal of discretion in appointments and other administrative

decisions, which means public administration is unpredictable. Although NEP has experienced some stability because the party in power has not changed since its initiation, prime ministers still change often. Each one has had a different style and policy preference, and many of the bureaucrats with which NEP interacts have also been replaced. New decisionmakers are constantly arriving, each with different levels of technical ability and understanding of nutrition. Cooperative arrangements in such organizations as BEN and CLM tend to be the informal creation of a particular political moment. This political turbulence makes the management of a largely voluntary collaboration more challenging.

A savvy manager who can handle this changing environment is very important for the survival of these types of interagency collaborations. Ndiaye, for instance, noted that he had to invest substantial time in educating every new public official who arrived at CLM. The advocacy work had to be done again and again: explaining the importance of nutrition, showing the value and success of NEP, and gaining their understanding and commitment. It also helped that Ndiaye was more a technician than a politician. He was not afraid of losing his post. As a result, he could be bold and assertive and was more able to resist some of the pressures to politicize the program.

An example of this pressure, which also illustrates the importance of having a strong coalition of support, was an attempt to move CLM from the Prime Minister's Office to the Ministry of Solidarity. NEP and World Bank staff both judged this change to be detrimental to keeping nutrition as a high priority on the agenda, given that it would take NEP out of the Prime Minister's Office. This move would undermine the priority given to nutrition and weaken its multisectoral nature—and place it in a relatively weak ministry. Members of the donor coalition, NEP staff, World Bank officials, NGOs, and the media mobilized against the change, and so the government relented. NEP remains in the Prime Minister's Office.

A fifth fragility of the sustainability of the collaboration is maintaining the incorporation of nutritionists in the collaboration, as they are the professionals with the best understanding of the problem. Ideally, each ministry should have a nutritionist on staff as a way of establishing a better dialogue among different disciplines. Senegal has a university that trains nutritionists, but the number of graduates is not yet enough to cover the country's needs.

Summing Up: Working Together

Internal Context

- Strong leadership and interest continued after start-up, from internal management, the World Bank, and the donor community.

- The first director of NEP was a highly effective leader, with strong skills in negotiation, maintenance management, and building internal capacity. Further, he ensured continuity in leadership by mentoring and training his successor in these same skills. She was able to take over and keep NEP running strong.
- The director was effective at maintenance management and was always attentive to partner demands. He educated newcomers as needed and created incentives for continued participation, such as complementary funding, training, and public acknowledgment of their contributions to success.
- A focus on results and the use of a monitoring system to measure and learn from them helped manage and incentivize the collaboration. Learning by doing was a key principle as the program modified implementation over time. It is unclear whether this focus helped to reduce sectoral divisions.
- The program had sufficient financial resources to carry out activities and to encourage participation from partners.
- Local capacity was a known weakness, but reliance on qualified NGOs and emphasis on training allowed the program to work well at the local level.
- Flexibility was a hallmark of the program. The government gave NEP substantial administrative flexibility, outside normal rules, and NEP allowed significant flexibility in implementation, adapting to the local level and implicitly empowering operating partners (NGOs and local government).

External Context

- Shifts in the political landscape (especially changes in bureaucracy and decisionmakers) posed challenges to program stability, but the group of advocates provided pushback to threats. This experience may provide some indication of how to weave nutrition as a priority into the social fabric and preserve focus and institutions in the face of change.
- Lack of World Bank support for NEP as a stand-alone program has challenged its financial sustainability. But the success of the program may support continued prioritization in the government budget and make financing more attractive to other donors.
- Urgency was instilled by the program and project timelines. Nevertheless, obligations to the World Bank are important for maintaining focus on achieving planned outputs and outcomes.

Institutional Links

- As a program that could provide operating funds and that shared success with partners, NEP operationalized the links among CLM, BEN, and itself in a way that simply trying to coordinate or align efforts would not.

- Quarterly meetings kept nutrition on the minds of the core group in BEN and CLM.
- Ministries had initially little interest in the program, except as perhaps interested but supervisory parties. The success of NEP has now prompted them to establish more integrated cooperative links, as NEP now provides a structure for addressing malnutrition that is of interest to donors and provides a way to improve delivery of their own programs.
- There is still less integration among sectors at the national level—and perhaps more skepticism and resistance—than at the local level. Vertical implementation of a multisectoral package, with some local representation of national ministries, still seems easier than trying to coordinate across ministries. However, the success of the local government arm and of BEN now gives ministries ideas and opportunities for collaboration.
- Insisting on a long-term perspective and emphasizing the concept of process when instigating institutional development and collaboration represent good development practice.
- The linking mechanism is complicated and has overlapping structures and a division between a ministerial arm and a local government arm. But the stronger local arm has led to increased integration of national actors. The inclusion of national actors in program development, attentiveness from BEN, and mechanisms for coordination (CLM) that have actual supervisory responsibilities are among the factors that have prevented these high-level actors from establishing parallel structures.

The case of Senegal demonstrates how a nutrition program can work across sectors and levels even under difficult constraints, including limited capacities and a resource-scarce environment. The experience of NEP reflects many of the elements that the framework discussed in Chapter 3 suggested should be present for success—particularly the importance of creating a common vision, promoting joint ownership, paying attention to capacity, and having the mandate to operationalize the collaboration. Having a strong manager of the collaboration mechanism who incorporates these values also seems critical, as does pushing integration down to the local government level.

Of course, several challenges exist to the sustainability and effective operation of NEP. Despite these challenges, NEP continues, with reasonably bright perspectives that financing will be found for Phase Three and scaling up. But it is a shining certainty that Senegal has demonstrated a way to work effectively and multisectorally to make a real impact on malnutrition.