



Project Summaries

The following projects were selected by Share Our Strength to advance efforts to coordinate Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits and other nutrition support programs and services to reduce childhood hunger. The project focuses vary from coordination of backend data with SNAP and the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC), development of new referral processes, formation of data analytics dashboards, and incorporation of client experience to create more holistic access to food security programs. For any questions about the individual or overall projects, please contact Chloe Green at cgreen@aphsa.org.

Hawai'i

Led by the Hawai'i Department of Human Services (DHS), this project will build foundational capacity to analyze administrative data across nutrition programs—specifically SNAP and WIC—with support from both the Hawai'i Department of Health (DOH) and the Children's Healthy Living Center of Excellence (CHL Center) at the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa. By enabling nutrition programs to understand trends in co-enrollment, identify characteristics of individuals and communities that are vulnerable or have low rates of enrollment in eligible programs, and guide program and policy planning, the initiative will eventually streamline policy, programs, and resources that impact the lives of children and their families. More specifically, DHS anticipates that the project will enhance interagency collaboration, improve eligibility workers' knowledge of SNAP and WIC, allow DHS and DOH to match participant data, and increase the number and percentage of children and families co-enrolled in SNAP and WIC. Funding will be used to hire a project manager, develop interagency data governance agreements, and contract with the CHL Center for technical assistance regarding data integration for future nutrition program analytics. Following the end of the grant period, DHS intends to maintain its contract with the CHL Center to link data systems and conduct additional evaluations of existing nutrition programs. The goals of this project are rooted in Hawai'i's existing 'Ohana Nui framework, which aims to dismantle intergenerational poverty by collaboratively working with government agencies and community organizations to address the needs of multigenerational households.



Kansas

The Kansas SNAP-WIC Partnership—facilitated by Kansas’ Department for Children and Families (DCF) and Department of Health and Environment (KDHE)—will design and build a sustainable process to increase eligible families’ participation in SNAP and WIC, allowing them to obtain adequate nutrition for themselves and their children. Notably, the project will increase food security among low-income Kansans and promote more equitable food security by focusing on Black, Latinx, and Indigenous communities. Both DCF and KDHE will develop an automated data matching process to compare SNAP and WIC participant lists daily and ensure that dually eligible families who are enrolled in only one program are notified and encouraged to utilize both. Once daily data sharing is supported, agencies will be able to track client engagement, develop outreach plans that are tailored to clients’ individual habits, and compare SNAP and WIC data with public sources to examine demographic, ethnic, and racial disparities. As part of this process, particular attention will be paid to the four tribal nations and seven counties within Kansas that contain large Black or Hispanic populations. Overall, the project will increase participation in SNAP and WIC as measured by both the number and percentage of eligible households that are enrolled in these programs. After the grant period has ended, technological changes to Kansas’ SNAP and WIC systems will automate written mail-based outreach and maintain the Kansas SNAP-WIC Partnership without requiring additional support from staff.



Mecklenburg County, North Carolina

The Mecklenburg County Department of Social Services (DSS) will be leading an initiative to coordinate governmental nutrition supports and community partners to create a more holistic way for families to reach food security. Comprised of four programmatic phases, this project will include a comprehensive assessment of need, development of a plan to address service gaps, implementation of applicable service interventions, and overall evaluation. During the initial phase, current food and nutrition data will be analyzed via a review of existing child nutrition programs, eligibility processes, and outreach practices for programs that serve families with children. Using results from this research, the second phase will address and define service and process gaps while exploring best practices to mitigate them. Through the collection of customer and key community stakeholder feedback, Mecklenburg County DSS will also identify existing food deserts in the area to determine which communities the project will serve. Following these efforts, a team of Food Security Navigators will be hired to develop service level agreements with community-based partner organizations, design and oversee the execution of implementation plans for selected best practice models, and support the integration of nutritional services as a preventive measure by including social determinants of health



screening tools for risk. In the fourth and final phase, an evaluation plan that outlines the impact of the interventions and outcome metrics will be developed. Overall, the project will allow Mecklenburg County DSS to make significant progress toward creating a standardized food security screening tool and efficient referral processes that better serve and ensure food security for their most disadvantaged families with children.

Michigan

This project, led by the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS), will invest in data collection, tracking, and analytics to interconnect existing anti-hunger programs within MDHHS, the Michigan Department of Education (MDE), and The Food Bank Council of Michigan (FBCM). Ultimately, MDHHS will funnel information from multiple programs across their partner entities into a shared performance dashboard and establish a common set of metrics to evaluate their progress towards the shared goal of ending childhood hunger in Michigan. Building upon an existing relationship with MDHHS, Poverty Solutions—a research initiative at the University of Michigan’s Ford School for Public Policy—will be responsible for developing the dashboard using data from MDHHS, MDE, FBCM, the U.S. Census Bureau, and relevant non-governmental surveys to illuminate the full picture of food insecurity in Michigan. Eventually, collecting SNAP information from core allies will provide more details about food insecure populations and enable MDHHS to serve Michiganders more equitably by creating clear measures of racial disparities and other gaps in services across the state. MDHHS will also hire a full-time data analyst who will manage the dashboard and ensure that data pertaining to nutrition and other support programs are extracted in a timely manner. Lastly, MDHHS will pilot a new tool to formalize and track the connection between food bank patrons and the formal food support systems that exist. At the end of the project, MDHHS will be able to better identify food insecure Michiganders, the rate at which these individuals are connected to short- and long-term forms of nutrition support, and existing gaps and redundancies between SNAP, food banks, and MDE food programs.



New Jersey

The Food and Nutrition Data Hub Project—directed by the New Jersey Department of Human Services’ Division of Family Development (DFD)—will establish a framework to facilitate electronic data exchanges between the New Jersey SNAP and WIC programs to improve nutrition support services. More specifically, New Jersey will create a system to allow SNAP, WIC, and potentially other state programs to coordinate benefits and services by increasing cross-enrollment via automated outreach content and tracking mechanisms. An online access portal also will be created for WIC professionals to confirm SNAP eligibility. By



leveraging New Jersey SNAP's existing data, the new data hub will allow DFD to match participant information across nutrition assistance programs to identify and contact individuals and households that are not receiving benefits despite being likely eligible for them. Additionally, DFD will be able to confirm participation in nutrition assistance programs through the data hub and use this information to verify eligibility for other forms of support.

New Mexico

With support from both the New Mexico Human Services Department (NMHSD) and Department of Health (NMDOH), this project will establish the interfaces and webservice required to bi-directionally exchange participant data to help streamline and maximize program enrollment.

These connections will be formed between NMHSD's integrated eligibility system Automated System Program and Eligibility Network (ASPEN) and NMDOH's WIC system New Mexico Success Opportunity Legendary (NMSOL). To execute the project, new business rules will be enforced in ASPEN to create a more accurate universe of potentially WIC-eligible participants. Links between heads of households and families will also be added to both ASPEN and NMSOL to enable future synchronicity and reevaluation of potential eligibility as circumstances change.

Moreover, enrollment data will be repatriated from NMSOL to ASPEN to provide visibility and accountability of the referral lifecycle. Subsequent data visualizations of the referral pipeline will also enhance cross-agency collaboration and accountability. Notably, these changes will allow NMHSD and NMDOH to increase WIC enrollment and participation, improve clinic and participant experiences through more outcome-focused interactions, and reduce administrative burdens on staff. Once the project is completed, NMHSD will be able to provide more accurate and specific referral data that allows NMDOH to conduct more proactive and effective outreach. This will drive increased WIC enrollment and consequently help New Mexico improve food security, positively improve children's weight, and provide additional support to diverse communities facing disproportionate levels of poverty.

