Micronutrient FORUM
Turning evidence into collective action

DInA
Micronutrient Data Innovation Alliance

WORLD BANK GROUP
Health, Nutrition & Population

Collective ACTION Plan for Nutrition DATA (ACTION DATA)

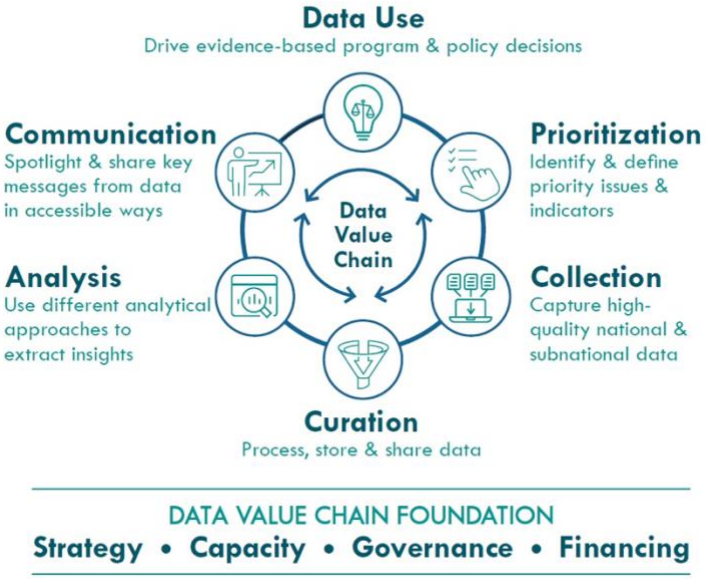
CONCEPT NOTE

BACKGROUND

Despite growing recognition of the importance of multi-sectoral approaches to improving nutrition outcomes, particularly as countries seek to deliver high-quality primary health care at scale, opportunities to leverage sectoral investments effectively remain underutilized.[i,ii] Persistent challenges, such as competing priorities during program design and implementation, insufficient convergence of services, and limited availability of coherent and timely data, continue to hinder progress. [iv,iii] These gaps prevent governments and development partners from optimizing investments and achieving sustainable nutrition impact. [iv,iv]

A strong nutrition data value chain is essential to support policymakers in making informed decisions that improve nutrition and related health outcomes (Figure 1). High-quality data enables a determination of the need for an intervention, selection of intervention strategies, accurate targeting, progress tracking, and accountability—functions that are central to program efficiency, effective governance and financing.[v]

Figure 1. Nutrition data value chain



While donor investments have improved the availability and use of data on dietary intake, nutritional status, and program reach and coverage in multiple countries, these efforts remain fragmented and insufficient to meet the needs of many countries., This fragmentation is compounded by gaps in global guidance and established priorities for nutrition, such as the absence of a core indicator list or clear recommendations on data collection frequency, which complicate coordination across sectors and partners. Recent global funding cuts, combined with systemic barriers such as weak capacity and limited incentives for data use, underscore the urgency of strengthening the nutrition data value chain to ensure coherent, timely, and actionable information reaches decision-makers across sectors.

These challenges do not affect nutrition outcomes alone. They mirror trends noted in broader health system transformation efforts, where fragmented digital investments, weak interoperability, and insufficient data use incentives limit decision making and service readiness at the primary health care level. For countries seeking to deliver quality primary health care at scale, including nutrition services integrated into PHC platforms, such data constraints directly undermine progress toward universal health coverage.

The rise of digital technologies, coupled with declining funding for large-scale surveys, creates an urgency for innovative and collaborative approaches to nutrition information systems. [iii,vi] Fragmented investments across the data value chain and systemic barriers, such as weak institutional capacity and limited incentives for data use, continue to constrain progress. [iv,v] In parallel, global health system reforms emphasize building data systems that can adapt to new service delivery models, including digitally enabled primary care, remote monitoring, and expanded community level engagement. A broader "shake in the system" offers a critical moment for reflection and rethinking priorities in the post-SDG era. [iii] This juncture calls for bold strategies that leverage technology, strengthen governance of nutrition information systems, and foster cross-sectoral collaboration to ensure that data-driven solutions translate into sustainable nutrition impact. [v,vi].

PURPOSE

The World Bank and the Micronutrient Data Innovation Alliance (DInA), a program of the Micronutrient Forum, are convening a consortium of committed partners to develop a Collective Action Plan for Nutrition Data (Plan) to chart a path toward a responsive, country-owned, and user-centric nutrition data and modeling ecosystem. The Plan will serve as a collective reference point for stakeholders, helping them work together more efficiently, align actions and resources, and foster innovations to strengthen the nutrition data value chain in low- and middle-income countries. It will provide an opportunity to review and build upon proven approaches, to help empower countries to being better equipped to face their nutrition data challenges; this will require systematically curating experiences and knowledge to catalyze scalable solutions owned by countries. It will also align advocacy messages to those who have resources, such as governments and donors, ensuring that investments and commitments are directed toward strengthening nutrition data systems. The intended audience for the Plan includes governments, civil society organizations, donor agencies, United Nations bodies, private sector companies, public health and research institutes, and development partners. The Plan will outline a consensus on strategies and priorities to improve how nutrition data are collected, analyzed, and applied, serving as a practical resource that can be continuously updated. This will result in concrete investment opportunities for donors, improved coordination among stakeholders, and stronger cross-country and regional collaboration.

> "*Resources are scarce, it should not be the loudest or fastest voice but a common voice that helps to push the agenda forward and make sure we can get the best data that can support the unique needs countries have for their various purposes*."
>
> Participant from the 'Micronutrient Data in a Changing Landscape: Impacts, Opportunities, and a Collective Way Forward' workshop

SCOPE AND STRUCTURE FOR THE PLAN

The Plan will present a set of prioritized actions addressing both short- and long-term needs across the nutrition data value chain. It will be structured around the stages of this value chain: prioritization, collection, curation, analysis, communication, and use. In addition, a cross-cutting section will focus on the financing of nutrition data systems. Examples of these actions include:

- (prioritization) developing guidance on core indicators and recommended data collection frequency,
- (collection) piloting phone surveys to reduce costs and improve timeliness,
- (curation) developing standards for data storage, interoperability, and metadata documentation,
- (analysis) investing in capacity-strengthening for advanced analytics, including modeling and forecasting,
- (communication) establishing feedback loops so findings inform program adjustments in real time,
- (use) integrating data-driven decision-making into planning and budgeting cycles, and
- (financing) advocating for sustainable domestic financing alongside donor contributions.

The types of data that will be considered include:

- Nutrition status indicators (e.g., anthropometry, micronutrient biomarkers, and nutrition-related disease prevalence).
- Diet quality, nutrition practices, food environment, and other risk factors (e.g., minimum dietary diversity, exclusive breastfeeding, cost of a healthy diet, food insecurity).
- Enabling environment (e.g., landscaping of policies and programs).
- Program coverage and service delivery (e.g., nutrition-related aspects of antenatal, newborn, and postnatal care; breast feeding promotion and support; encouraging a healthy diet and exercise; fortification quality, reach, and coverage; food and nutrient supplementation; prevention and treatment of acute malnutrition; school feeding; and social protection; multisectoral nutrition intervention coverage).
- Nutrition governance, regulatory, and enforcement data (e.g., monitoring front-of-pack labelling, enforcement of marketing regulations for breast-milk substitutes).
- Population descriptive data used to interpret or act on nutrition data (e.g., demographics, socio economic status).

> *"We need to be smarter and more innovative, and we need to be intentional with the collection and use of the data. The opportunities lie in choosing high-impact data, employing innovations, strengthening curation, and focusing on clear communication for policy use."*
>
> Participant from the 'Micronutrient Data in a Changing Landscape: Impacts, Opportunities, and a Collective Way Forward' workshop

Each section of the Plan will begin with a foundational statement that describes the current situation and future opportunities regarding nutrition information systems, including promising innovations. The prioritization section will outline the types of data needed for decision-making; the data collection section will describe existing information systems and data collection methods and platforms along with currently unconventional potential data sources and other innovative approaches; the curation section will examine data storage, harmonization, metadata practices, and standards for ensuring quality, interoperability, and accessibility across platforms; the the analysis section will highlight data processing and reliability checks, individual-level data repositories, descriptive summaries of data, modeling, tools, and dashboards currently in use; the communication section will detail how data are translated and shared through dashboards, scorecards, visualization tools, and feedback mechanisms that support timely policy engagement and course correction; and the decision-making section will explain how data are being applied and how they can be better used to inform decision making.

Each section will pair its analytical overview with a set of specific, actionable steps to strengthen the corresponding component of the nutrition data value chain. For each action, required next steps, key actors and their roles and responsibilities, and an implementation timeline will be described. To help

guide future investments, each proposed action will be accompanied by an estimate of the costs of implementation and whether it is currently unfunded. Across sections, the Plan will synthesize common, transferable success factors drawn from relevant case studies, such as institutional arrangements, governance mechanisms, and data-use incentives, to illustrate what has worked and inform future action.

The document will also describe the processes for implementing and monitoring the Plan, including the use of shared metrics for monitoring, evaluation, and learning. These elements are intended to ensure accountability and facilitate continuous improvement over time. Lastly, the plan will include linkages with related initiatives, including the European Commission's ongoing work on a roadmap for nutrition data in fragile contexts.

PROCESS FOR DEVELOPING PLAN

To ensure that the Plan is informed by diverse perspectives and receives broad buy-in, several approaches will be used to develop it. These include a stock taking exercise of the academic and grey literature through a rapid review, a quantitative assessment of the survey platforms that have collected key nutrition indicators, establishing a core working group, eliciting feedback from existing regional networks and working groups, conducting country and online consultations with stakeholders, and administering an online survey, as well as conducting key informant interviews if additional input is needed. Central to this process is the inclusion of country voices. Consultations and survey tools will engage a wide range of country actors across regions to ensure their perspectives are meaningfully reflected.

CORE WORKING GROUP

A core working group will be established that includes a range of stakeholders (approximately 15 people). This group will be responsible for reviewing and providing input on the foundational sections of the document and assisting with writing specific sections for which they have expertise. The group will also support the prioritization of objectives and related actions, actors, roles and responsibilities, and timeline for inclusion in the Plan. The group will also provide input on the tools to be used to gather stakeholder feedback and help decide which stakeholder input should be incorporated.

REVIEWERS

Key groups will be asked to review the draft Plan, including the DInA Steering Committee, WHO and UNICEF data teams, authors of the Global Nutrition Report, the FAO State of the World's Nutrition, a subset of peer reviewers from the World Bank and those who participated in the "Micronutrient Data in a Changing Landscape: Impacts, Opportunities, and a Collective Way Forward" and the "Unifying Humanitarian and Development Efforts through Nutrition Information Systems" workshops held in Italy in 2025.

MEETINGS AND RELEVANT WORKING GROUPS

The following meetings and working group have been or will be leveraged to solicit input.

- **Micronutrient Data in a Changing Landscape: Impacts, Opportunities, and a Collective Way Forward (Ispra, Italy - June 2025):** The goal of this one-day meeting was to lay the groundwork for a collective action plan on micronutrient data priorities. This was a side-meeting to the "Unifying Humanitarian and Development Efforts through Nutrition Information Systems" workshop. Thirty-eight participants, including country actors, United Nations partners, development partners, and donors shared their perspectives on

micronutrient data losses due to reduced donor funding and future priorities in the face of limited financial resources. They also discussed actions to address micronutrient data gaps, innovations to fill gaps along the spectrum from micronutrient data collection to use, and key actions for moving forward. The meeting report can be found here.

- **Meeting of stakeholders at IUNS (Paris, France - August 2025):** The goal of this one-hour meeting was to follow up on the aforementioned meeting and discuss next steps. At the Paris meeting it was highlighted that this is an opportune time to redesign and strengthen existing nutrition data systems and processes, with an emphasis on innovation, efficiency, and cost-effectiveness, while maintaining data quality. The key outcome of this meeting was achieving consensus on positioning the collective action plan to encompass all aspects of nutrition rather than focusing just on micronutrients. This was seen as important to avoid data system silos and to promote a multisectoral approach, recognizing that nutrition information systems should not be developed in isolation from other sectors or just for specific nutrition topics.

- **7th Annual NIPN Global Gathering (Lusaka, Zambia - September 2025):** This three-day meeting brought together stakeholders to discuss co-creating pathways for sustaining and scaling the progress made in nutrition data systems and policy engagement. DInA presented the aims of the Nutrition Data Collective Action Plan to delegates and hosted a world café, where country actors provided input on the data they use for decision-making.

- **Africa Regional Dialogue on Data for Action in Food Fortification (Addis Ababa Ethiopia - October 2025):** The goal of this two-and-a half day meeting was to provide a platform for countries to share experiences, identify joint solutions to overcome shared challenges, and define priority actions to strengthen national and regional fortification data leadership and governance. Participants included national government officials, food industry associations, and researchers, as well as regional organizations and donors.

- **Multiple Micronutrient Supplementation (MMS) Measurement and Monitoring Convening (Washington DC, United States – April 2026):** This meeting will bring together technical experts, implementing partners, researchers, and country stakeholders to exchange experiences and lessons learned on measuring and monitoring MMS within antenatal care programs. Discussions will focus on practical approaches to indicator selection, integration into routine systems, and identifying shared priorities for guidance, learning, and future research.

- **Working Groups**: Learning Network on Nutrition Surveillance (LeNNS), WHO-UNICEF Technical Expert Advisory group on nutrition Monitoring (TEAM); Global Fortification Technical Advisory Group; Multiple Micronutrient Supplementation in Pregnancy Technical Advisory Group; SUN; and others.

RAPID REVIEW

A rapid review will be conducted to map the nutrition data value chain in LMICs by identifying data sources and tools, examining their use in decision-making, and synthesizing documented gaps, constraints, and innovations. The review applies the PCC framework:

- Participants: Governments, national and subnational decision-making bodies, technical staff, and global/regional institutions engaged in nutrition policy and programming in LMICs.

- Concept: The nutrition data value chain, including stages such as data collection, curation, analysis, interpretation, communication, and use, as well as gaps and innovations.
- Context: LMIC policy and program settings, focusing on multisectoral nutrition governance and decision-making.

The review follows JBI methodology for scoping reviews and PRISMA-ScR guidance, with protocol registration in PROSPERO. Searches will cover bibliographic databases (PubMed, Scopus, ProQuest, Google Scholar) and gray literature sources (DataDENT, World Bank, WHO, UNICEF). Screening and extraction will be managed in Rayyan and Excel, with calibration exercises to ensure consistency. Evidence will be synthesized narratively and presented in structured tables, complemented by thematic analysis using qualitative data analysis software.

ONLINE CONSULTATIONS

A series of online consultations will be convened at key stages in the development of the Plan. The theme of each consultation will be determined based on the issues identified during the initial drafting process. Consultations will potentially focus on key stages of the data value chain, including data prioritization, collection, analysis, and use. They would include multisectoral (nutrition, health, agriculture, economics) and multistakeholder (countries, development partners, multilaterals, donors, private sector) representation. In addition, sessions will be organized, as needed, on specific nutrition topics that are not currently covered under existing consultations.

These consultations will provide stakeholders with opportunities to share their views and propose priority actions. Targeted invitations will be extended to key individuals, and consultations will be open to the public and announced through various channels, such as: the members, the Micronutrient Data Group, the Nutrition Data Partner Group, and the Data for Nutrition LinkedIn Group, depending on the topic.

SURVEY AND KEY INFORMANT INTERVIEWS

A semi-structured online survey will be conducted to gather information on stakeholder perspectives regarding priority actions across the nutrition data value chain, including data prioritization, collection, analysis, and use. The survey will be distributed to key actors from governments, civil society organizations, donor agencies, United Nations bodies, private sector companies, public health and research institutes, and development partners. If needed, key informant interviews will be conducted to deepen insights and fill any gaps.

REGIONAL AND COUNTRY CONSULTATIONS

Consultations will be conducted with a small number of hubs for context-specific insights on nutrition information systems. Current plan includes a mix of country visits and regional workshops to gain a variety of country experiences with nutrition data systems. These consultations will invite government technical teams (in statistics and in nutrition), World Bank task teams, academia, civil society, journalists, and private sector actors. These consultations will help validate findings, identify bottlenecks and innovations across the data value chain, and generate illustrative case studies to inform the Plan.

OUTPUTS

There will be four main outputs:

- **A Collective Action Plan on Nutrition Data,** a living and practical online resource designed to guide stakeholders in prioritizing their activities and strengthening accountability;
- **A peer-reviewed journal article on the systematic rapid review** that synthesizes evidence on the nutrition data value chain in low- and middle-income countries;

- **A peer-reviewed journal article** that summarizes early conclusions of the effort to develop the Plan that would be of interest to the academic community, to be submitted to the Journal of Nutrition for its special issue "Stopping the Rise of World Hunger in an Era of Constrained Humanitarianism: A Call for Academic Insights."; and
- **A short World Bank document** summarizing the action plan as a roadmap on nutrition data to 2035.

INFORMATION SHARING

A dedicated landing page has been developed to host all materials related to this activity and can be found here.

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[i] https://documents1.worldbank.org/curated/en/716431640257867136/pdf/Operationalizing-Multisectoral-Nutrition-Programs-to-Accelerate-Progress-A-Nutrition-Governance-Perspective.pdf

[ii] Lamstein, S., Pomeroy-Stevens, A., Webb, P., & Kennedy, E. (2016). Optimizing the multisectoral nutrition policy cycle: A systems perspective. Food and Nutrition Bulletin, 37(4S), S107–S114.

[iii] Dolan, C. M., Shojam, J., Geniez, P., et al. (2023). Harnessing multisector data to guide policy decision-making to help reduce malnutrition. *Journal of Global Health Economics and Policy*, 3, e2023002.

[iv] https://globalnutritionreport.org/reports/2021-global-nutrition-report/financing-nutrition/

[v] Laur C, Johnsen JT, Bradfield J, Eden T, Mitra S, Ray S. Closing the gap: data-based decisions in food, nutrition and health systems: proceedings of the Fifth International Summit on Medical and Public Health Nutrition Education and Research. BMJ Nutr Prev Health. 2020 Sep 23;3(2):397-402. doi: 10.1136/bmjnph-2020-000118. PMID: 33521551; PMCID: PMC7841819.