

# Global guidelines on LSFF data indicators and use: Concept note

## Background

Data-driven decision making is essential for the design, implementation, and monitoring of large-scale food fortification (LSFF) programs. Transitioning LSFF from an efficacious intervention to an effective program implemented at scale requires coordinated data inputs from multiple sectors. Despite LSFF's long-standing and widespread implementation, its data landscape remains fragmented and underutilized.

Existing recommendations and guidelines on LSFF programming provide broad direction on the use of data for designing, monitoring, and evaluating programs. However, the breadth of data needs and the diversity of actors call for closer alignment between LSFF data systems and standardized indicator guidance to support countries in implementing their programs effectively. Current resources on LSFF indicators are not sufficiently detailed, harmonized, or fit-for-purpose to generate high-quality and timely evidence that can inform decisions on:

- Designing relevant and effective programs.
- Course-correcting existing programs based on performance.
- Scaling up or scaling back established programs.

The absence of harmonized LSFF indicator definitions and measurement protocols has resulted in inconsistent and incomparable data within and across countries and regions. This misalignment is particularly evident in fortification coverage and compliance, where data vary widely in definitions, sources, and methodologies. For example, a review of data on the Global Fortification Data Exchange (GFDx) highlights significant gaps on LSFF program performance indicators – particularly for certain food vehicles such as edible oil and cereal grains.

Within the broader nutrition community, the WHO-UNICEF Technical Expert Advisory group on nutrition Monitoring (TEAM) is consolidating a prioritized list of nutrition indicators for national and global nutrition monitoring. A review of existing resources revealed a critical gap in standardized indicator guidance specific to LSFF, i.e. a lack of guidance on indicators and their use across all aspects of LSFF data was identified. Tools such as the WHO-CDC e-Catalogue on Micronutrient Indicators and the Fortification Assessment and Coverage Toolkit (FACT) partially address this gap but cover only portions of the LSFF data landscape. They also tend to focus on only a subset of LSFF data indicators and often demand significant investments in surveys or data systems. Comprehensive guidance is needed to prioritize indicators across the entire fortification program pathway.

To address this need, a standalone LSFF indicator guidance document will be developed as a resource for the multidisciplinary stakeholders in LSFF. Establishing global guidance with clear definitions and recommendations on indicator use will help prioritize data needs, promote harmonization and strengthen [commitments](#) to data-driven LSFF programming. This guidance will complement existing LSFF frameworks, support [diverse stakeholders](#) in understanding data requirements and uses, and add to the efforts to build a [fortification lexicon](#) by providing standardized definitions, numerators and denominators for each indicator. Such guidance will also promote alignment across commonly used fortification dashboards ([FortifyMIS](#), [FRAYM](#), [GFDx](#), [GIFNA](#)), clarify indicators used in modeling fortification impact (MIMI, MINIMOD), and inform investment priorities for LSFF data collection and use.

## Purpose and Scope

To develop a standardized, globally endorsed set of LSFF indicators that serves as an actionable resource for countries to design, implement, and evaluate LSFF programs. The resulting guidance will address a critical gap in the global data ecosystem by producing:

- A globally recognized LSFF indicator framework.
- A list of priority indicators and their rationale, as identified by LSFF stakeholders.
- Indicator definitions, including numerator and denominator, and their intended use.
- High-level guidance on how to use these indicators and adapt the indicators according to different country contexts, complemented by a data decision-tree to support stakeholders.

## Audience

This guidance is intended for national governments and related actors involved in designing LSFF interventions; regulatory bodies responsible for monitoring fortification; private sector entities producing and distributing fortified products; development partners, donors, and public health institutes evaluating fortification program impact; and regional bodies that compare programs across countries to inform the creation of standards.

## Development Process

The LSFF indicator guidance document will focus on prioritizing indicators and building consensus on indicator definitions and their intended use, building on the strengths of FACT, WHO-CDC e-catalogue, and other resources that currently exist. A data landscaping activity, collating all existing resources on LSFF indicators and data collection approaches in 13 African countries was presented at the recently concluded Africa Regional LSFF Data Convening in Addis Ababa. At this convening, there was overwhelming support for creating standardized and specific indicators and the need for clear guidance on how these indicators can inform decision-making. At the meeting, there was also recognition that a regionally adopted platform can further support the harmonization of indicators across countries. The insights generated at this meeting will inform DInA efforts to lead the development of the indicator guidance document.

A dedicated **working group** of LSFF domain experts will be established to guide the indicator guideline-development process: prioritize indicators; draft the global LSFF indicator guidelines; solicit and incorporate inputs from experts, practitioners, and country-level stakeholders; gain consensus; and disseminate the guidance. This process will be done in close collaboration with **UN global normative agencies**.

To ensure the guidance is practical and applicable across diverse contexts, DInA will tap existing platforms such as the Global Fortification Technical Advisory Group (GF TAG), WHO Community of Practice, GFDx listserv and webinars to solicit feedback from **external stakeholders** at several points in the process. Through this process, a core set of priority indicators will be identified, and consensus on their definitions and intended use will be finalized.