DInA
Micronutrient Data Innovation Alliance

Micronutrient FORUM
Turning evidence into collective action

March 11, 2026

Link to Recording

The Micronutrient Data Group, coordinated by DInA, convenes quarterly to facilitate the sharing of project updates among members and seek feedback from the wider micronutrient data community. The aim of these meetings is to foster a collaborative working environment and cultivate synergies whenever possible. Participation is open to all individuals working with micronutrient data, and participation from those working at regional and national levels is strongly encouraged.

The most recent meeting included three presentations, and the high-level summaries are shared below:

1. **Collective Action Plan on Nutrition Data (ACTION DATA Project)**
   Speakers: Sorrel Namaste (DInA – Micronutrient Forum) and Mireya Vilar (World Bank)
   Slides Linked Here
   - The World Bank and the Micronutrient Forum are convening a consortium of committed partners to develop a Collective Action Plan – ACTION DATA – to chart a path toward a responsive, country-owned, and user-centric nutrition data and modeling ecosystem.
   - Donor funding cuts resulted in a stakeholder consensus to develop ACTION DATA which will support data-driven solutions and be a collective reference point for stakeholders to support collaboration and efficiency, aligning actions and resources to innovations.
   - A concern was also raised that foundational elements (data literacy, capacity, financing, and governance) are not evident in the data value chain and must be incorporated for dashboards/scorecards to be effective.
   - Population descriptive data i.e., demographics and socio-economic status; diet quality; nutrition practices and risk factors such as minimum dietary diversity and exclusive breastfeeding among others; nutrition status; program coverage and quality service delivery; governance, regulations and enforcement data – are the range of information that can be included in a nutrition information system. Data prioritization, collection, curation and analysis, and data communication and use are the focus areas.
   - Several approaches including a core working group, key informant interviews, an online survey, and regional and country consultations, are being used to develop the plan.
   - The content will focus on foundational information that describes current situations and opportunities, case studies, and a priority table that sets out specific actions to strengthen and address short-term and long-term needs. Countries are expected to develop their own action plans. A question was raised as to whether the priority action table being developed will be universal or country specific.
   - Progress: a rapid systematic review is ongoing, with plans to conduct an online survey soon among other activities lined up for October 2026.

2. **Madagascar National Nutrition Micronutrient Survey (ENCM) 2024**
   Speaker: Fabian Rohner (GroundWork)
   Slides Linked Here

- Madagascar delivered national micronutrient survey representative results from across 23 regions. The survey assessed iron, zinc, vitamins A, B1, B2, B12, Vitamin D, folate, and dietary calcium. Anthropometry was excluded.
- Field coverage included 3,600 households, >8,000 blood samples and >4,000 urine samples with questionnaire responses of >80%.
- Anemia among preschool children exceeded 40% (considered a severe health problem), anemia among adolescents and women was of moderate degree (30-37%), anemia associated with malaria was low nationally except among adolescent boys. Iron deficiency was highest among preschoolers and clustered in plateau, central and northern areas. Zinc deficiency affected >33% of the investigative group; riboflavin deficiency was very high, exceeding 75% of all population groups and regions; deficiencies in vitamins B1 and B12 were low. Vitamin D deficiency was nearly absent, with dietary calcium intake inadequate in almost all groups.
- Reflections: emphasis should be on nationally representative datasets; recognition that many datasets differ by context and foundational capacities such as literacy, financing and governance must be addressed and reflected in priority action tables.
- Lessons learned: a comprehensive national micronutrient survey's cost estimated at 2M – 3,3M USD depending on the scope; logistics and lab decisions, procurement, ethics approval and cold-chain are time and resource intensive.

3. **Strengthening Harmonized Biomarker Surveillance for Country Decision Making: The Micronutrient Biomarkers Initiative (MNBI)**

   Slides Linked Here

   Speaker: Kasthuri Sivalogan (Emory University) & Rhona Baingana (Makerere University)

   - Effective surveillance systems are key in public health to be able to track a wide range of indicators, hence the need to integrate biomarker surveillance to better identify high risk populations and support more effective and coordinated public health action.
   - MNBI is a collaborative initiative that aims to harmonize biomarker panels, strengthen in-country lab and analytic capacities, and make data usable to enhance national decision-making processes.
   - Gaps include the use of inconsistent biomarker panels and methods, limited opportunity for comparability across countries, weak integration on micronutrients and infectious disease data, and limited translation of data into programs. What MNBI hopes to do is to promote sustainable country owned surveillance systems, standardized and high-quality measurement and interpretation, and alignment with global benchmarks such as WHO.
   - The goal of the MNBI is also to improve quality and comparability of micronutrient biomarker data to support country owned surveillance systems that inform decision-making, harmonize lab methods, and indicators and analytic approaches to strengthen integration of data and build sustainable national capacity for biomarker interpretation and use, with a focus to leverage existing platforms that collect biological specimens, emphasizing the use of local labs for micronutrient biomarker analysis and integrate micronutrient inflammation and infectious disease data to inform policies particularly in LMICs.
   - MNBI is operational in Uganda; in the process of onboarding Tanzania, and considering Nigeria, India, Ethiopia and Thailand, with the following expected outputs: to provide evidence-based biomarker strategy guidance and generate guidelines for standardized data analysis and governance frameworks.