

DInA 2025 Small Grant Program

A snapshot of five locally-led projects advancing micronutrient data to improve programs and policies.

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About the Small Grants Program

Launched in 2023, DInA's Small Grants Program supports its alliance members in low-and middle-income countries to strengthen the micronutrient data value chain, from generation and analysis to communication and use. Grants of up to US$15,000 fund one-year projects that build capacity, foster knowledge mobilization and exchange, and support advocacy efforts so decision-makers can act on better evidence for vulnerable populations. Each round focuses on a priority theme and is designed to equip grantees with seed funding for their micronutrient data-focused research, or communication and advocacy efforts. Funding can be used to cover activities, such as stakeholder workshops, survey or intervention design, laboratory and analytical capacity strengthening, secondary data analysis, or dissemination of research results. A summary of 2024 grantees' activities is also available on the Micronutrient Forum's website.

About DInA

The Micronutrient Data Innovation Alliance (DInA), hosted by the Micronutrient Forum, is a member-based coalition that drives collective action to improve the availability, quality, accessibility, and use of micronutrient data, to ensure national leaders can make data-driven policy and program decisions.

Ethiopia — Ambo University

Strengthening the Large-Scale Food Fortification Data Ecosystem

The research team combined household surveys, market audits, industry assessments, and stakeholder interviews across five regions to assess food fortification coverage, consumption, and compliance. Findings showed stronger implementation for edible oil than wheat flour, with full compliance reported by half of surveyed oil processors and one-third of flour mills. Low consumer awareness, affordability barriers, and fragmented governance and data-sharing systems constrained equitable access to fortified foods. Recommendations include strengthening regulatory monitoring, supporting processors with equipment and training, integrating fortification indicators into national information systems, and expanding consumer education.



Ethiopia Team at a Glance

The College of Medicine and Health Sciences at Ambo University conducts teaching, research, and community service, with an emphasis on nutrition, public health, specialized health care services, and evidence-based policy. Team included: Mitsiwat Abebe Gebremichael, PhD (Lead); Masresha Tessema, PhD (EPHI, Mentor); Melese Nigusse, PhD; Zenebu Begna, PhD; and Lemi Abebe, MSc.



The team lead, Mitsiwat Abebe Gebremichael, is an Associate Professor of Nutrition at Ambo University and holds a PhD in Human Nutrition. His research spans maternal and child nutrition, micronutrient deficiencies, food insecurity, and clinical nutrition. He also brings experience in social and behavior change communication and has collaborated with international partners to connect research with policy and improve nutrition outcomes in Ethiopia.



Ghana — Ghana Health Service

Mapping Data Gaps to Strengthen Food Fortification Monitoring

The Ghana Health Service reviewed national surveys, administrative reports, and published research, alongside stakeholder consultations, to map data availability across the food fortification value chain. The assessment found an established regulatory framework and available household coverage data for wheat flour, oil, and salt, but major gaps in routine compliance monitoring, dietary intake, and program evaluation data. Stakeholders identified fragmented reporting and limited institutional ownership of fortification data as persistent barriers. Recommendations include harmonizing monitoring systems, integrating fortification indicators into routine national reporting, strengthening multisectoral coordination, and conducting periodic nationally representative micronutrient and dietary intake surveys.


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Ghana Team at a Glance

The Ghana Health Service is the main public institution responsible for delivering healthcare services under Ghana's Ministry of Health. Its work includes maternal and child health, nutrition, disease prevention, immunization, and health systems strengthening at national, regional, district, and community levels. Team included: Mutala Abdulai (Lead); Issah Shani, PhD candidate, University of Ghana; and Abdellah Yussif Ibn-Yahaya, independent public health and nutrition researcher.



The team lead, Mutala Abdulai, is a Principal Nutrition Officer at the Ghana Health Service. He led the landscape analysis of Ghana's large-scale food fortification data systems to identify gaps and inform recommendations for stronger monitoring, reporting, and evidence-based decision-making.

Kenya — Scaling Up Nutrition Civil Society Alliance

Strengthening the Food Fortification Data Ecosystem for Better Decisions

Scaling Up Nutrition Civil Society Alliance (SUN CSA) Kenya surveyed 26 stakeholders and engaged government, regulators, industry, academia, and communities to identify barriers to accessing and using food fortification data. Only 19% of respondents described data access as easy, and gaps in analytical capacity and coordination further limited use. Visits to eight manufacturers informed understanding of industry data systems, and youth dialogues expanded community engagement. The project contributed civil society input to premix standards consultations, established a pathway for integrating fortification indicators into the National Information Platform for Food and Nutrition, and advanced a University of Nairobi-led community of practice to sustain evidence sharing and coordination. These efforts are laying the foundation for a more coordinated, evidence-informed food fortification system in Kenya.


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Kenya Team at a Glance

SUN CSA Kenya is a national alliance that advances optimal health through advocacy, policy engagement, accountability, and multisectoral collaboration. Team included: Charlyne Kirui, (Lead), Edgar Okoth, Executive Director; Margaret Akinyi, Program Manager; Damaris Ngeso, External Relations Officer; and John Mwai, Food Fortification Program Manager, Ministry of Health.

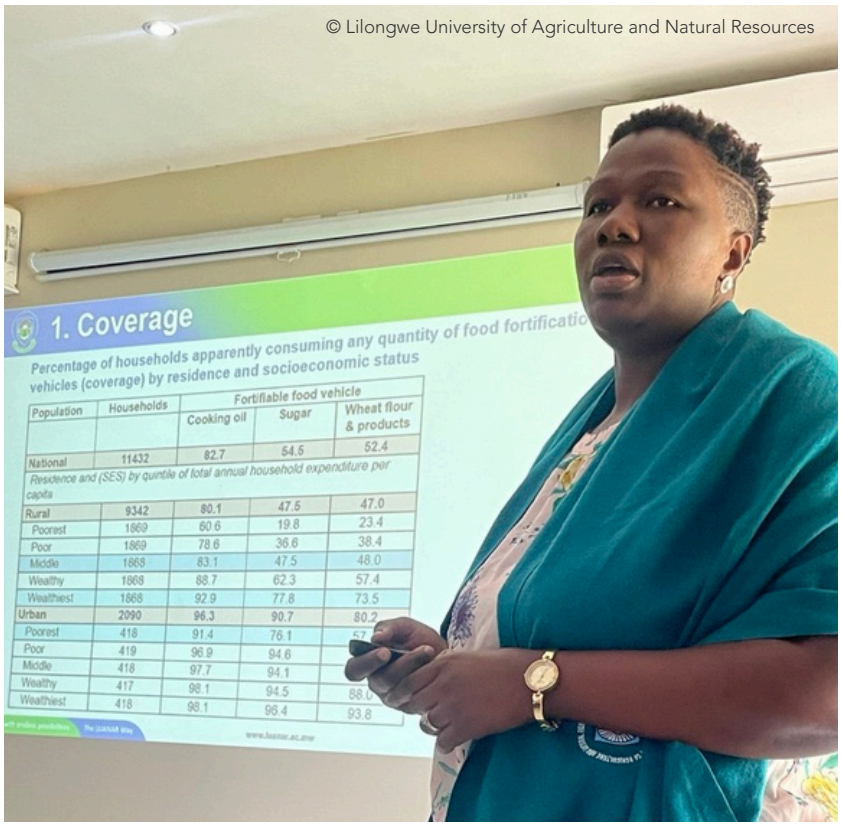


The team lead, Charlyne Kirui, is a food science and nutrition graduate, Food Fortification Champion, and Advocacy and Communications Officer at SUN CSA Kenya. Her work focuses on nutrition advocacy, stakeholder engagement, and strategic communication to address malnutrition and micronutrient deficiencies. As a youth advocate, she champions meaningful youth participation in food systems and inclusive nutrition governance to drive sustainable improvements in nutritional outcomes in Kenya.

Malawi — Lilongwe University of Agriculture and Natural Resources

Assessing the Contribution and Equity of Food Fortification

Using food consumption data from Malawi's Fifth Integrated Household Survey, the research team modeled how fortification of sugar, cooking oil, and wheat flour could reduce apparent micronutrient inadequacy under current and improved compliance scenarios. Vitamin A fortification offered the greatest potential gains, and benefits for several other micronutrients remained limited. Rural and poorer households faced greater inadequacy and lower coverage of fortified food vehicles, particularly wheat flour. Findings, validated by Malawi's Micronutrient Technical Working Group, point to the need to strengthen compliance monitoring, review food vehicle selection and coverage, and pursue complementary strategies to reach underserved populations.



Malawi Team at a Glance

Lilongwe University of Agriculture and Natural Resources (LUANAR) is Malawi's leading agricultural and natural resource academic institution, offering degrees in agribusiness, crop science, animal science, veterinary medicine, engineering, and more. It also has a growing digital learning school through the LUANAR eCAMPUS. Team included: Gareth Osman (Lead); Zione Kalumikiza-Chikumbu; and Alexander Kalimbira, PhD.



The team lead, Gareth Osman, is an Assistant Lecturer and PhD candidate in Food Systems at LUANAR, with a background in nutrition, agriculture, and food systems. His work combines dietary and food composition data with statistical and econometric methods to inform policy and programming. He has contributed to nutrition modeling frameworks, analytical guidance, and decision-support tools for interventions including large-scale food fortification.



Mozambique — Eduardo Mondlane University

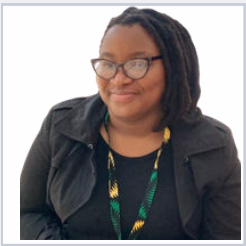
Examining How Fortification Policies Shape Food Processing and Value Addition

The Eduardo Mondlane University team reviewed policies, mapped institutions, and engaged food processors and regulators to compare fortification implementation in Malawi and Mozambique. Findings showed that Malawi's earlier adoption of mandatory fortification still faced implementation bottlenecks, and Mozambique's growing institutional commitment required stronger enforcement. Larger processors generally demonstrated higher compliance, and smaller enterprises faced high premix and equipment costs, limited technical guidance, and inconsistent inspections. The project produced a comparative report and published systematic review. Recommendations include strengthening regulatory coordination and monitoring, supporting smaller processors, harmonizing regional standards, and investing in integrated fortification data systems.



Mozambique Team at a Glance

Eduardo Mondlane University led a comparative study examining how food fortification policies influence food processing and value addition in Malawi and Mozambique, bringing together expertise from academia, government, and fortification coordination. Team included: Lydia Jade Makonda, MSc (Lead); Dr Elsa Maria Salvador, Senior Lecturer; Dr Eduarda Mungoi, CONFAM Coordinator; and Lusungu Mwaungulu, Malawi Ministry of Trade and Commerce.



The team lead, Lydia Jade Makonda, is a Researcher and Food Scientist at Eduardo Mondlane University whose work focuses on food fortification, particularly monitoring and compliance. Her work examines the effectiveness and implementation of large-scale food fortification within broader policy and food systems. Through the Small Grants Program, she led research on how fortification policies shape food processing practices in Malawi and Mozambique.





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