AFRICA REGIONAL DIALOGUE ON DATA FOR ACTION IN FOOD FORTIFICATION

MEETING REPORT

28-30 OCTOBER 2025
ADDIS ABABA, ETHIOPIA



Acknowledgments

This report summarizes the main discussion points, key takeaways and recommended priority actions of the Africa R egional Dialogue on Data for Action in Food Fortification. This meeting was organized by the Micronutrient Forum's Micronutrient Data Innovation Alliance (DInA), in close collaboration with the co-hosts, the Federal Ministry of Health and Ministry of Industry-Ethiopia, the Eastern and Southern Africa (ESA) Regional Coordination Mechanism on Food Fortification and Universal Salt Iodization (ESA RCM) co-chairs—East, Central and Southern African Health Community (ECSA HC) and Southern Africa Development Community (SADC). The meeting was also co-sponsored and supported by the RCM secretariat organizations and other partners, including Food Fortification Initiative (FFI), Global Alliance for Improved Nutrition (GAIN), Helen Keller Intl, Iodine Global Network (IGN), Nutrition International, TechnoServe/Millers for Nutrition, UNICEF, and the World Food Programme (WFP). The convening would not have been possible without the participation of invited representatives from 13 African countries: Ethiopia, Kenya, Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique, Namibia, Nigeria, Rwanda, Senegal, Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia, Zimbabwe. We thank these delegates and all the partners for their participation and expert contributions to the success of the meeting.

We gratefully acknowledge the Gates Foundation, the main funder of the meeting through their grant to DInA, under the Micronutrient Forum, and to GAIN, Nutrition International, TechnoServe, and UNICEF for their financial contributions to make the meeting possible.

Recommended citation: Micronutrient Data Innovation Alliance (DInA). Africa Regional Dialogue on Data for Action in Food Fortification: Meeting Report. Micronutrient Forum, Washington DC, USA; 2026.

Photo credits: MOPIX Media and Communication



Table of Contents

Acknowledgments 2
List of Abbreviations 4
Introduction 5
Meeting Scope and Audiences 7
Meeting Objectives and Outputs 7
Setting the Stage (Day 1) 8
Mapping Countries' LSFF Data Systems 9
LSFF Data Needs for Decision-Making Across Sectors 12
Government and public health 12
Private sector 12
Investors and financing institutions 12
LSFF Data Tools and Resources, and Innovations to Fill Data Gaps (Day 2) 13
Prioritizing LSFF Data Needs and Indicators for Decision Making 13
Selection of nutrients 13
Selection of food vehicle 13
Creating policies, legal, and regulatory environment 14
Monitoring LSFF programs 14
Implementing LSFF programs 15
Evaluating impact of LSFF programs 15
Integrating with other programs 16
Mapping LSFF Tools and Guidance to Support Data Collection, Analysis, and Use 16
Dashboards 17
Regulatory environment 17
Justifying and evaluating fortification 18
Compliance and coverage 19
Innovative Approaches to Filling LSFF Data Gaps 20
Strengthening accountability for premix quality and supply 20
Creating shared terminology to improve cross-sector decision-making 20
Leveraging infectious disease surveillance platforms for micronutrient data 21
Real-time digital compliance and data visualization 21
An equity-focused approach to measure who is reached with fortification 21
Understanding co-coverage of LSFF with other nutrition interventions 21
Advancing Cross-Sector Collaboration and Filling Data Gaps (Day 3) 22
Data Governance and Coordination 22
Filling Data Gaps to Strengthen the LSFF Data Value Chain 23
Conclusion 24
Annexes 25

List of Abbreviations

AUC	African Union Commission
ATNi	Access to Nutrition Initiative
CDC	Centers for Disease Control
COSFAM	Comité Sénégalais pour la fortification Alimentaire
CSO	Civil society organization
DataDENT	Data for Decisions in Nutrition
DFQT+	Digital Fortification Quality Traceability Plus
DHS	Demographic and Health Survey
DInA	Micronutrient Data Innovation Alliance
EFDA	Ethiopian Food and Drug Authority
ESA	Eastern and Southern Africa
ESA RCM	Eastern and Southern Africa Regional Coordination Mechanism on Food Fortification and Universal Salt Iodization
ECSA-HC	East, Central, and Southern Africa Health Community
FACT	Fortification Assessment Coverage Toolkit
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations
FFI	Food Fortification Initiative
FBS	Food Balance Sheets
FortifyMIS	Food Fortification Management Information System
FRAT	Fortification Rapid Assessment Tool
GAIN	Global Alliance for Improve Nutrition
GIFT	Global Food Consumption Data Tool
GFDx	Global Fortification Data Exchange
HCES	Household Consumption and Expenditure Surveys
IES	Institute of Ethiopian Standards
IFC	International Finance Corporation
IGN	Iodine Global Network
IoT	Internet of Things
MFI	Micronutrient Fortification Index
MOH	Ministry of Health
MOI	Ministry of Industry
MOTRI	Ministry of Trade and Regional Integration
IGN	Iodine Global Network
LSFF	Large-scale food fortification
LSMS	Living Standards Measurement Study
M4N	Millers for Nutrition
MAPS	Micronutrient Action Policy Support
MICS	Multiple Indicator Cluster Surveys
MINI	Modelling and Mapping Inadequate Micronutrient Intake
MINIMOD	Micronutrient Intervention Modeling Project
NCD	Non-communicable disease
NFA	National fortification alliance
OECD	Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development
QA/QC	Quality assurance/quality control
SADC	Southern Africa Development Community
SME	Small-and medium-sized enterprises
SUN	Scaling Up Nutrition
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
VAT	Value added tax
VMNIS	Vitamin and Mineral Nutrition Information System
WASH	Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene
WFP	World Food Programme
WHO	World Health Organization

Key Takeaways from the Regional Meeting

1. **LSFF is most effective when it is informed by a strong data value chain** across prioritization, collection, analysis, and use. Without routine, accessible, and actionable data, weak program performance can persist undetected and corrective action is delayed.
2. **Data are needed across the full LSFF program impact pathway** to inform the selection of nutrients and food vehicles, to understand and describe the enabling environment (policies, legal, and regulatory environment), and to implement, monitor, and evaluate the impact of the LSFF program. How these data are used and prioritized vary by stakeholder, but there are also a lot of commonalities in the types of data needed.
3. **"Good enough" evidence can still drive action**, especially when triangulating multiple sources (e.g., routine systems, surveys, dashboards, and modeling) while advocating for more and better data.
4. **Countries need clear guidance and standardized indicators** to support decision making across the data value chain, and enable meaningful cross-country comparison and regional accountability.
5. **Existing LSFF data tools and resources** can address many needs across the data value chain but require guidance and capacity. Countries require clearer direction on which tools to use when, and capacity strengthening on how to adapt the tools to their contexts and interpret outputs for decision making.
6. **Data governance and coordination are ongoing constraints** because LSFF data sits across multiple institutions and sectors, and therefore, agreed roles, data-sharing mechanisms, and trust-building are essential. National and regional fortification alliances offer practical mechanisms to convene stakeholders and support sharing and accountability.

Introduction

Large-scale food fortification (LSFF) is a proven, cost-effective strategy to reduce micronutrient deficiencies and improve public health.[1] LSFF improves micronutrient status and intake, resulting in reduced morbidity and mortality, and supports cognitive development and economic productivity. Over the past decade, political commitment to scaling LSFF has expanded across Africa. The 2015 Arusha Declaration on Food Fortification catalyzed stronger national and regional alignment and action, and the Africa Regional Nutrition Strategy (2016-2025) positioned LSFF as a core food systems strategy to improve nutrition. These regional strategies and declarations reflect strong leadership and commitment to LSFF by governments, regional bodies, the food industry, and development partners.

Yet, despite these successes, micronutrient deficiencies remain widespread throughout Africa,[2] particularly among women and children, and the full potential of LSFF has not yet been realized. A central constraint is the limited availability, accessibility, and use of actionable data to guide LSFF decision-making. Many countries still lack data on critical indicators and where data do exist, they are often fragmented across institutions, inconsistently generated and shared, or insufficiently used to inform policy or regulatory action, program adjustments, or investment decisions.

To address these constraints, public and private sector representatives from 13 African countries,[3] regional organizations, and global partners gathered in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia from 28-30 October 2025 for the Africa Regional Dialogue on Data for Action in Food Fortification. The two and a half-day meeting was organized by the Micronutrient Data Innovation Alliance (DInA), and co-hosted by the Federal Ministry of Health (MOH) and Ministry of Industry (MOI), Ethiopia, the Eastern and Southern Africa Regional Coordination Mechanism on Food Fortification (ESA RCM) co-chairs—the Eastern, Central, and Southern Africa Health Community (ECSA-HC) and the Southern African Development Community (SADC)—and the ESA RCM secretariat organizations.[4]

1. Keats EC, Neufeld LM, Garrett GS, Mbuya MNN, Bhutta ZA. Improved micronutrient status and health outcomes in low- and middle-income countries following large-scale fortification: evidence from a systematic review and meta-analysis. Am J Clin Nutr. 2019;109(6):1696-1708. doi:10.1093/ajcn/nqz023
2. Stevens GA, Beal T, Mbuya MNN, Luo H, Neufeld LM; Global Micronutrient Deficiencies Research Group. Micronutrient deficiencies among preschool-aged children and women of reproductive age worldwide: a pooled analysis of individual-level data from population-representative surveys. Lancet Glob Health. 2022;10(11):e1590-e1599.
3. Countries: Ethiopia, Kenya, Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique, Namibia, Nigeria, Rwanda, Senegal, Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia, Zimbabwe
4. This includes the Food Fortification Initiative (FFI), Global Alliance for Improve Nutrition (GAIN), Iodine Global Network (IGN), Nutrition International, Techno Serve, UNICEF, and the World Food Programme (WFP).



The meeting was held because countries across Africa are at an inflection point. Fortification legislation has expanded and programs are scaling, but persistent data gaps limit the ability of governments and partners to answer critical questions, such as: which micronutrients should be added, and to which food vehicles?; do existing fortified foods meet national and regional standards?; are fortified foods consistently available and affordable in markets?; are fortified foods being consumed by groups most at risk of deficiency?; and does the LSFF program contribute meaningfully to micronutrient intakes and related health outcomes? Moreover, recent changes to the global development funding landscape have heightened the need for evidence-informed prioritization. But without critical data, governments, industry, and partners cannot effectively design and implement LSFF policy and programs, mobilize and focus resources, or monitor progress. In other words, immature information systems translate directly into missed opportunities.

This regional dialogue built on priorities highlighted at recent regional and global meetings. At the LSFF Partner Convening in Cape Town in April 2024, the fortification community identified actionable priorities to strengthen fortification and emphasized that data and knowledge systems must be responsive to program needs, with improved coherence, reliability, and trust in evidence. The recommendations from this meeting also emphasized the need for permanent, government-led platforms for program oversight and to support data-driven decision-making. These recommendations were further reinforced during the kickoff meeting for the ESA RCM in October 2024, where countries and partners highlighted bottlenecks in national capacity to collect, analyze, and use LSFF data, and called for better integration of fortification indicators into existing national surveys, routine use of data platforms for monitoring progress, and regionally supported data systems to strengthen accountability and equity.

Meeting Scope and Audiences

The two and a half-day convening provided a platform for countries to share experiences, identify joint solutions to overcome shared constraints, and define priority actions to strengthen LSFF data systems, leadership, and governance at national and regional levels (see Annex A for the meeting agenda). Participants included representatives from national government institutions responsible for health and nutrition, industry and trade, food regulation and standards, and statistics; national public health research institutions; national food industry associations and fortified food producers; regional organizations; UN agencies other global technical agencies working in fortification and nutrition; and donors and financing institutions.

Meeting Objectives and Outputs

The regional dialogue had the following objectives:

1. Identify opportunities and solutions to strengthen the capacity of countries to collect, access, and use LSFF data.

2. Facilitate the sharing of practical experiences and lessons learned in LSFF data collection, access, and use across Africa.

3. Strengthen regional and national coordination to support harmonization and accountability of LSFF data collection, access, and use.

4. Generate cross-country insights to inform the development of global guidelines on LSFF data indicators and use.

These objectives were translated into four main outputs intended to help support countries and the region in strengthening their LSFF data systems. These included:

- LSFF data landscapes for each participating country.
- Documented best practices and innovative approaches for collecting and using LSFF data.
- Consolidated input to inform the development of guidelines on LSFF indicators that can be used across countries.
- Identification of priority actions to strengthen countries' LSFF data systems.



> "Without data we are assuming, with data we are ensuring."
>
> -Rizwan Yusufali

Setting the Stage (Day 1)

Objectives of Day One:

1. Frame why national and regional LSFF data systems matter.
2. Share country-specific LSFF data landscapes and facilitate cross-country knowledge exchange and learning.
3. Better understand the data needs of different stakeholders.

Micronutrient deficiencies continue to undermine survival, learning, productivity, and economic growth, with particularly serious consequences for children and women. LSFF is an effective strategy to address deficiencies because it can reach large populations quickly through widely consumed staple foods and established market systems. It stands out as a clear example of how the food industry can contribute to improved public health at scale, delivering a strong return on investment. Data are critical for determining whether fortification programs and policies translate into meaningful results.

Effective LSFF programs depend on timely, actionable information across the full program pathway: from selecting appropriate vehicles and nutrients based on micronutrient status, food consumption, and intake patterns; setting nutrient levels that are technically feasible and aligned with public health goals; monitoring compliance to fortification standards at production sites, points of entry, and in markets; to assessing whether fortified foods are reaching and being consumed by populations most at risk of deficiency. Without reliable and routinely available data, weak performance can persist undetected, corrective action is delayed, and investments cannot be targeted where they will deliver the greatest impact.

As the host country, Ethiopia shared its commitment to strengthening delivery and scale up of LSFF across the nation and regionally through multisectoral collaboration, data-informed policy, strong industrial engagement, and regional cooperation. H.E. Dr. Derge Duguma, State Minister, MOH, highlighted that strong political commitment and policy coherence have been central to Ethiopia's progress. The National Nutrition Policy and Food and Nutrition Strategy provide the backbone for multisectoral action, linking health, nutrition, industry and economic development. H.E. Ato Tarekegn Bululta, State Minister, MOI, further emphasized that reliable data are essential, not only to guide fortification policy and monitor compliance, but to support quality assurance, industrial competitiveness, and cross-border trade. Ethiopia has an ambition to serve as a regional hub for fortification, and this vision depends on functional coordination and governance mechanisms, harmonized fortification standards, and robust data systems.

H.E Demeke Mekonen, Former Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs, Ethiopia, reinforced the need for multisectoral strategies to address significant challenges in micronutrient deficiencies, noting that national coordination mechanisms, such as Ethiopia's Food Fortification Steering Committee, are important to ensure there is a functional government governing body, and that establishing accredited labs in the region will help address infrastructure issues. He also specifically acknowledged the pivotal role Beza Beshah played in elevating neural tube defects to the national agenda. After the loss of her son to spina bifida, Beza's leadership and persistence helped drive the collection and use of data on the national burden of birth defects. These data became a powerful advocacy tool, helping to mobilize decision makers and secure legislative commitments to LSFF, demonstrating how the right data can drive concrete policy change.

Regional partners echoed Ethiopia's message. The African Union Commission (AUC) and SADC both agreed that LSFF cannot be strengthened through isolated national efforts and that regional alignment is necessary to address shared challenges in monitoring, compliance, and cross-border trade. Priorities for regional bodies include building



Ethiopia's Approach to Multisectoral Collaboration and Data-Informed LSFF Delivery

Ethiopia's experience shows how LSFF delivery can be accelerated when data systems are developed together with nutrition policy and industry regulation, and when evidence is used to guide successive program decisions. Feasibility work in 2010 helped establish the rationale for LSFF in Ethiopia, beyond salt iodization, within the broader nutrition policy landscape. The following year (2011), salt iodization was made mandatory. In 2015, the Seqota Declaration was launched, a 15-year roadmap to eliminate child undernutrition, which included food fortification as a core strategy. In 2017, wheat and edible oil fortification were introduced on a voluntary basis, creating an initial platform to engage producers, establish feasible fortification standards, and begin building regulatory and quality assurance functions. In 2022, Ethiopia mandated fortification of wheat flour and edible oil and finalized a five-year fortification plan of action to guide implementation. Since 2024, enforcement of all food vehicles has been consolidated across ministries and regulatory bodies and is supported by compulsory standards, labeling requirements, and industry incentives, including a 15% VAT discount for producers that fortify foods (link to presentation here).

Data have been essential to guide Ethiopia's LSFF program overtime, both in demonstrating need and feasibility and providing the evidence to adjust the program where needed. Ethiopia's experience with salt fortification illustrates this. A 2005 micronutrient assessment showed high rates of goiter and informed the implementation of mandatory salt iodization in 2011. Subsequent data from 2025 highlights the success of the iodine program, with high urinary iodine concentration and near elimination of goiter. Yet, recent data also show deficiencies of other micronutrients persisting, poor coverage of fortifiable wheat flour, improved coverage of fortifiable edible oil, with disparities in access across urban and rural populations and wealth quintiles, reinforcing the need to consider additional food vehicles and fortification strategies. These data have guided the Government's fortification priorities, including exploring salt as a vehicle for additional nutrients like folic acid, and strengthening the use of existing routine systems to generate data and guide equitable program design and regulatory action (link to presentation here).

stronger regional data networks, harmonizing standards and monitoring approaches, and strengthening accountability so progress can be tracked and acted on consistently across countries. Continental efforts, such as the AUC's work to develop a sectoral policy framework to secure fortification investments and their Continental Nutrition Accountability Scorecard, which guides Member States in monitoring and evaluating their nutrition goals, as well as ESA RCM's mandate to strengthen food fortification across East, Central, and Southern Africa, were highlighted as important enablers for strengthening regional and national LSFF data systems, and ensuring that decisions on fortification are evidence-based.

Mapping Countries' LSFF Data Systems

To ground discussions in country realities, DInA worked with participating countries and the ESA RCM to develop country LSFF data landscapes in advance of the meeting. These landscapes provided a structured mapping of available and accessible LSFF-related data, identified data owners, described how data are shared and used in national decision-making, and highlighted barriers and opportunities across the LSFF data value chain. During the meeting, the landscapes were presented by country teams and the information helped support facilitated discussion on country-specific priority actions across data prioritization, collection, analysis, and use.



The landscapes were developed through desk-based research and structured engagement with 34 focal points across the13 countries participating in the meeting. Information was compiled and organized using a framework that covers seven domains: (i) assessment of status and intake, (ii) scalability, iii) legal framework, (iv) program monitoring, (v) program implementation, (vi) program evaluation, and (vii) health conditions and programs. Quantitative data were prepopulated in an Excel data tool using publicly available databases, including the Demographic and Health Survey (DHS) Program StatCompiler, FAOSTAT, the Global Fortification Data Exchange (GFDx), the World Health Organization (WHO)'s Vitamin and Mineral Nutrition Information System (VMNIS), and other nationally representative survey reports. Country focal points then validated and updated the pre-populated data, and further information was gathered through interviews to complement the quantitative data by documenting how LSFF information is generated, governed, shared, and used in practice, including institutional roles, coordination mechanisms, and barriers to access.

While not exhaustive, the country landscapes provided a starting point for discussion and helped identify several opportunities to strengthen LSFF data systems across the 13 countries (see Annex B for a copy of each of the 13 country LSFF data landscapes). These include leveraging existing data collection modalities or platforms, such as micronutrient biomarker surveys, health information systems, Household Consumption and Expenditure Surveys (HCES), and regional databases, to generate more timely and cost-effective insights; improving data accessibility through anonymized industry reporting and incentive-based data sharing; and adopting risk-based inspection and monitoring approaches to maximize limited regulatory resources. There is also clear potential for regional collaboration, including harmonization of fortification standards for traded food vehicles, joint approaches to managing cross-border flows of fortified and unfortified foods, and shared digital platforms to collate and interpret LSFF data. Modeling approaches and other analytical tools can be used as complementary methods to bridge gaps between infrequent primary data collection efforts and the need for ongoing program guidance.



Cross-Country Synthesis of the LSFF Data Landscapes

Across the 13 countries participating in the convening, five of the countries have conducted a micronutrient survey within the last five years. Outdated micronutrient status data or reliance on poor proxy measures for status, such as anemia from DHS surveys, limit the ability to understand what programs are needed and to evaluate existing programs. Dietary intake data are even more scarce. Only two countries (Ethiopia and Nigeria) have intake data from the last five years that are derived from 24-hour dietary recall surveys. For the other countries, data on nutrient intake are either outdated or estimated using HCES data. Food vehicle consumption data are also rarely collected routinely, and in some countries HCES or food availability data from FAO are used as a proxy, which are imperfect substitutes for understanding actual consumption of food vehicles.

For the countries that have micronutrient survey data, most countries have biomarker data for iron, vitamin A, folate, and iodine, and these nutrients are commonly included in national fortification standards for maize flour, wheat flour, edible oil, and salt. However, many countries also fortify with B vitamins without corresponding status data, raising questions about prioritization and evidence alignment. Data on other food vehicles, such as rice, bouillon cubes, and milk, are limited.

All 13 countries have national fortification standards in place for at least one fortified food vehicle, with maize flour, wheat flour, oil, salt, and sugar most regulated. However, the presence of fortification standards does not consistently translate into effective monitoring and enforcement data. Enforcement capacity varies substantially across countries. Some systems rely on sporadic inspections with limited laboratory support, while others have more routine monitoring but lack mechanisms to aggregate, analyze, and disseminate findings. Compliance data are frequently treated by industry as confidential business information and used primarily for bilateral enforcement actions to legally ensure food safety, rather than for program oversight and accountability.

Coverage data for salt iodization is universally available and routinely reported, but coverage data for other fortified foods are rarely measured outside of infrequent micronutrient surveys. Qualitative rapid test kits are often used in these surveys, with limited laboratory-based quantitative testing of foods, creating uncertainty about the quality of fortified foods at the point of consumption. Household-level coverage data are also often disconnected from upstream production and import data.

Across countries, impact evaluations are largely absent. While some countries have data collected before and after fortification mandates, these data do not support causal interpretation of LSFF impact on micronutrient status or health outcomes. This gap limits governments' ability to demonstrate returns on investment, adjust programs based on performance, or advocate for sustained domestic financing.

National fortification alliances (NFAs) or similar national coordination mechanisms exist in most countries and provide an important platform for cross-sector engagement. However, their functionality and influence vary, and data collected by different agencies are often stored in incompatible formats, limiting interoperability and use across ministries and institutions (link to presentation here).



LSFF Data Needs for Decision-Making Across Sectors

Effective LSFF programs depend not only on data availability, but on the use of data by different actors along the LSFF value chain. While data for LSFF are collected across health, industry, regulation, and investment sectors, they are often fragmented, not routinely shared, or insufficiently aligned to decision needs. Discussions highlighted the different needs of actors across the LSFF data value chain, what data are missing, and how data gaps can limit investments.

Government and public health

- Nationally owned micronutrient status and intake data are important to guide policy, strategy and prioritization of food vehicles and nutrients, yet reliance on infrequent surveys creates long delays between data collection and use.
- Complementary, lower-cost approaches are needed to support ongoing program evaluation.
- Regional evidence and harmonized fortification standards can support regulatory oversight and reduce duplication of effort.

Private sector

- Data needs are primarily operational and commercial.
- Food producers rely on clear fortification standards from regulators and timely quality data to manage fortification processes, adjust dosage, plan premix procurement, and ensure compliance.
- Market and production volume data are essential for forecasting demand, managing costs, and sustaining supply.
- Program impact data, particularly evidence linking fortification to improved health outcomes, are often lacking but would help to sustain private sector engagement and justify ongoing investment in fortification.

Investors and financing institutions

- Decisions depend on integrated data systems that combine public health need, industry readiness, regulatory capacity, and expected returns.
- Industry data include information on production capacity, access to premix and equipment, quality assurance/quality control (QA/QC) systems, and regulatory enforcement.
- Alongside data on public health need, evidence that fortification investments deliver measurable social and economic benefits at the country-level are also required to support investment decisions.



LSFF Data Tools and Resources, and Innovations to Fill Data Gaps (Day 2)

Objectives of Day Two:

1. Prioritize LSFF data needs and indicators.
2. Share guidance, resources, and tools that support LSFF data collection and use.
3. Strengthen capacity to use the tools and resources through applied country examples and learning country examples of applying these resources and tools.
4. Share innovations for filling persistent data gaps.

Prioritizing LSFF Data Needs and Indicators for Decision Making

Participants worked in seven breakout groups aligned to different areas of the LSFF program pathway to identify priority data needs. The information obtained during this session will inform the development of standardized guidance on LSFF indicators that can be used across settings. (link to presentation here).

Selection of nutrients

Data needed to rationalize the LSFF program and/or to help decide whether target nutrients should be changed over time:

- Micronutrient status and intake data to estimate the burden of deficiency and dietary gaps.
- Other data that help influence nutrient selection in practice, including:
    - Indicators on population's nutritional status and food security, including stunting, wasting, overweight, anemia prevalence;
    - Functional outcome indicators that help convince decision-makers of need (e.g., prevalence of neural tube defects, goiter, and anemia); and
    - Industry readiness and feasibility data such as production capacity, number and scale of facilities, feasibility of adding specific compounds, premix availability and costs, and QA/QC readiness.
- Micronutrient status and dietary intake/food vehicle consumption data to assess which nutrients can be deliverable through which LSFF vehicles, and to anticipate who will benefit (see 'selection of food vehicle'), are often not and should be collected together.

Selection of food vehicle

Data needed to select food vehicles:

- Consumption and intake data to identify food vehicles that are widely consumed and micronutrient deficiency to identify nutritional gaps. These data should be disaggregated by region, wealth, and demographic groups to assess who consumes a vehicle and whether it reaches populations most at risk of micronutrient deficiency.
- Industry data on degree of consolidation, processing technology, readiness to fortify, and supply chain realities.
- Trade and production data on domestic production versus imports, and what that implies for control, enforcement, and implementation challenges.
- Data on policy and regulatory environment, including enabling frameworks, monitoring systems, and enforcement capacity to determine feasibility.
- Information on public acceptability, to balance nutrition objectives of food vehicle selection with non-communicable disease (NCD) risk (e.g., sugar or bouillon as food vehicles).
- Complementary information includes geospatial mapping data of production, trade flows, and distribution networks; affordability and price modeling to anticipate effects on food costs; and improved data accessibility systems so that existing information can be shared and used across sectors rather than remaining siloed.



Creating policies, legal, and regulatory environment

Data needed to rationalize the LSFF program and/or to help decide whether target nutrients should be changed over time:

- Micronutrient status and food consumption data to justify fortification policy and support regulatory decision-making.
- Compound stability, bioavailability, and technological feasibility of fortification processes to inform the development of fortification standards.
- Information on market structure, including the degree of industry consolidation, presence of small- and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), and overall production landscape, since regulatory design and enforcement approaches must reflect industry realities.
- Regional benchmark data, including information on minimum regional fortification standards, and regulatory models from other countries to inform adaptation to national contexts while supporting harmonization.
- Premix availability and supply data, to ensure that regulatory requirements are feasible and sustainable.
- Causal data on non-compliance, including storage, transport, and market conditions, to better understand why fortification standards are not met and to guide corrective enforcement strategies.
- Information on industrial processing, including premix reconciliation to explain variation in fortification levels and improve regulatory oversight.
- Information on laboratory and analytical capacity, including the ability to test micronutrient concentrations in premix and fortified products, as well as in unfortified vehicles, to detect under- or over-fortification and assess overall micronutrient exposure from multiple sources.

Monitoring LSFF programs

Data to determine whether food vehicles are being fortified according to national fortification standards:

- Premix/raw material quality, product volumes, internal and external QA/QC results, and verification documentation for imported food products (including labeling and certificates, with options for spot verification where feasible).
- Monitoring systems often start with basic visibility requirements, such as a producer landscape and an assessment of production volumes, because without these data, regulators cannot plan inspection frequency, target higher-risk producers, or interpret compliance results.
- Using compliance data to support corrective action, capacity strengthening, and recognition of good performance is one way to improve trust and provide incentives, while acknowledging sensitivities around data sharing (especially where production volumes intersect with taxation and commercial confidentiality).

Implementing LSFF programs

Data to assess whether a LSFF program is achieving the intended dietary impact and whether access to the fortified foods is equitable:

- Coverage of the fortified foods by different population groups; whether households, and different vulnerable groups, have access to the fortified foods.
- Consumption data—how much of the vehicle is consumed per person per day by different population groups—and resulting micronutrient intake from consumption of fortified foods.
- Compliance to fortification standards at different assessment points, including factory assessment, market assessment, proportion of foods fortified in the acquisition channel of vulnerable population groups (a proxy for fortified foods consumed by vulnerable population).
- The above three data elements should be interpreted together; coverage without quality can overestimate nutrient delivery, and compliance without consumption data does not show who benefits.

Evaluating impact of LSFF programs

Data to assess the impact of the LSFF program on the target population:

- Population-level micronutrient status and deficiency prevalence, complemented by related functional outcomes where relevant (e.g., neural tube defects, goiter) and broader indicators of morbidity and mortality.
- Coverage data, particularly when disaggregated by vulnerability, are important for identifying inequities and guiding program adjustments, but insufficient on its own to demonstrate impact.
- Cost-effectiveness evidence is a key input for sustaining political and financial support.
- In settings where impact data are limited, pragmatic options could include sentinel surveillance approaches, integrating micronutrient measures into other evaluation platforms (including infectious disease surveys), and use of modeling tools to estimate the likely impact when primary data are not feasible.
- Evaluation depends on being explicit about data sources and their limitations. For example, there may be discrepancies between routine health information systems and surveys data due to differences in who is captured in facility-based setting and how variables are recorded, and these differences require careful interpretation and consideration, rather than simple substitution of one data source for another.





Integrating with other programs

Data to ensure LSFF is coordinated and integrated with other relevant health, nutrition, and agriculture programs:

- Countries need data that shows who is being reached and who is missed, and which complementary programs (e.g., school feeding, social protection, supplementation) can close these gaps.
- Priority data categories span sectors:
    - disaggregated micronutrient status and disease burden data from health systems;
    - infection and WASH-related indicators that may influence absorption and effectiveness; and
    - information from industry, markets, and trade systems (e.g., product and premix volumes, import data, and distribution mapping) to understand where fortified foods circulate and where control points exist.
- Coverage and consumption data are also important for integration because these data indicate whether LSFF can replace, complement, or be layered with other interventions to reach priority groups.
- Strong economic data when LSFF is linked to other programs, since decision makers will want to know the return on investment of replacing unfortified foods with fortified foods.

Mapping LSFF Tools and Guidance to Support Data Collection, Analysis, and Use

Existing tools and resources to support countries in operationalizing data priorities and decision-making span the full fortification pathway. Each has a specific purpose, user group, and set of assumptions. Without clear guidance, the volume of available resources can create confusion about which tools to use when, and how to combine outputs into an evidence base that supports regulatory action, program adjustments, and investment decisions.

The Blueprint for Fortification Planning and Programming is an instructional guide for fortification program managers developed by Nutrition International, FFI and UNICEF. The guide is organized into seven major programmatic themes and actions and provides information on tools and resources for each step: justify (need and feasibility), galvanize (map and motivate stakeholders and ensure political will), enable (establish structures for policy, legislation, standards, and monitoring), operationalize (industry enabling environment and QA support), monitor (inspection/audit/enforcement), evaluate (coverage and impact) and review/reassess (program optimization and harmonization. The stages of the blueprint are not meant to be linear, rather countries can start anywhere along the framework where their most urgent bottleneck lies and use it to ensure that design decisions translate into sustained compliance, coverage, and learning cycles. The blueprint is currently undergoing an update, and will be migrated to a live, accessible online format, and will include additional tools that were missing from the initial version (link to presentation here).

Dashboards

Dashboards are a practical way to make LSFF data more accessible, interpretable, and comparable within and across countries and over time. Dashboards are not simply visualization products; they can function as decision-support tools, as they allow users to filter and disaggregate data and indicators, help distill complex information to identify patterns and derive insights, monitor programs, and benchmark national progress against peers. A range of platforms that support different decisions along the LSFF pathway include: from selection of nutrients (e.g., WHO's VMNIS, WFP's HungerMap Live); to selection of vehicles, policy and regulatory tracking, and monitoring and evaluating programs (e.g., GFDx, Global Individual Food Consumption Data Tool (GIFT), FAOSTAT, and Food Fortification Management Information System (FortifyMIS)); to situating LSFF within broader food systems and health intervention contexts (Food Systems Dashboard, and World Bank's Health, Nutrition and Population Dashboard). Dashboards can help make country data more usable by standardizing and making information more accessible, supporting analysis and interpretation of complex data, and allowing cross-country comparisons (link to presentation here).

Regulatory environment

Many countries have strong policies and technical fortification standards on paper, but still face a large "implementation gap" between mandating fortification and seeing the effectiveness of their policy and regulations in practice. OECD's measurement framework for regulatory governance of LSFF synthesizes country experiences and identifies what matters most for effective regulation. The framework is structured around six pillars which are a result of a consensus on what matters most when regulating fortification: (i) evidence-based policymaking, (ii) policy and regulatory design, (iii) market access, (iv) risk-based enforcement and inspections, including coordinated regulators, proactive inspection systems, risk targeting, and proportionate sanctions; (v) capacity building, and (vi) policy coherence. Across these six pillars, there are practical actions that support program success from a regulatory perspective: clarifying agencies' roles, adopting risk-based inspection approaches, and using simple, published checklists and protocols; harmonizing national fortification standards with WHO and regional standards, while adapting to national context; reducing compliance barriers through streamlined registration and licensing and updated business registries; and addressing supply-side constraints such as premix tariff/value -add-tax (VAT)/customs barriers that can undermine industry's ability to comply. The framework is being applied through work with 22 countries across three regions, using a combination of "light touch" and

Using the GFDx Platform as a Tool to Support Regional Decision Making

The ESA RCM demonstrated how GFDx can be used by regional organizations to compare legislation status of countries, identify coverage and fortification standards alignment gaps, flag "no data" areas for country follow-up, and support regional targeting for technical support and advocacy priorities. GFDx is a global platform that provides data for 196 countries and five food vehicles, and it organizes its information across four categories: fortification opportunity, foundational documents, and program performance. It is structured to support routine updates through stakeholder engagement and recurring surveys (link to presentation here).



A Review of Nigeria's LSFF Regulatory Practices

A Nigeria case study illustrates how the OECD framework can be applied to map institutional roles, and identify good practices and practical improvements that can be made in the regulatory process.

Regulation of Nigeria's fortification program is carried out by two agencies: the National Agency for Food and Drug Administration and Control, which oversees market-level monitoring and product registration, and the Standards Organization of Nigeria, which conducts factory-level inspections and conformity assessments. Both agencies operate laboratories for food testing and enforce legally binding fortification regulations and administratively mandate fortification standards that specify nutrient levels and chemical forms. Inspection manuals and checklists guide monitoring activities, and risk-based inspection approaches are being formalized. Compliance data are shared through the NFA, which convenes stakeholders twice yearly to review fortification status across food vehicles. Recent national micronutrient and food consumption survey data, together with compliance data, are used to inform policy reviews, including updates to fortification standards and exploration of new food vehicles such as rice and bouillon.

The OECD assessment in Nigeria highlighted the value of delineated responsibilities among agencies, the importance of risk-based inspection guidelines and tailored guidance for SMEs to support compliance, and that an active NFA can serve as an important platform for data-sharing and coordination. Challenges identified include the significant time and capacity required to develop risk-based inspection systems and the need to address policy coherence issues that affect industry compliance (for example, customs and tariff barriers related to premix; link to presentation here).

"deep-dive" assessments to document good practices, identify context-specific change pathways for regulatory improvements, and develop practical guidance for technical experts and regulators. Planned outputs include country profiles and thematic publications, alongside tailored guidance. (link to presentation here).

Justifying and evaluating fortification

Different data sources and tools that support LSFF decisions can be described across the "best-to-good evidence" spectrum: from primary micronutrient biomarker and individual dietary recall data to analysis of existing datasets, such as Living Standards Measurement Study (LSMS)/HCES microdata, food security and price proxy data, or food balance sheets (FBS). While LSMS/HCES are not substitutes for individual intake or biomarker surveys, and are not representative of all subgroups, they can be combined with food composition data to approximate household-level micronutrient inadequacy and inform early program choices. There are different modeling approaches, such as the Modelling and Mapping Inadequate Micronutrient Intake (MIMI), that use HCES/LSMS data to map risk of inadequate micronutrient intake at national and sub-national levels, demonstrate need for LSFF, justify selection of food vehicles, target geographies, and tailor fortification standards. The Micronutrient Intervention Modeling (MINIMOD) project is another modeling approach that produces estimates of nutrient density of household diets. Additional modeling





resources include work on costs of nutritious diets, and the Micronutrient Action Policy Support (MAPS) dashboard that uses HCES, FBS, and other data to provide a snapshot of both the scale and geographic distribution of micronutrient deficiencies and intake for specific countries. It is critical to remember there are no perfect data, and rather than relying on any single dataset, information should be triangulated from multiple data sources and national capacity should be strengthened to apply existing tools for decision-making. (link to presentation here).

Compliance and coverage

A range of tools and approaches are available to generate routine, comparable data on whether foods are fortified to standards (compliance) and whether fortified foods reach target populations (coverage). For rapid diagnostics and program monitoring, tools such as the Fortification Rapid Assessment Tool (FRAT) and FORTIMAS can be used to summarize key performance information for LSFF program managers. For more standardized assessment of coverage, consumption, and fortification quality, the Fortification Assessment Coverage Toolkit (FACT) provides a defined set of indicators and guidance on the data required to construct them. FACT includes a market component to assess product availability by brand and measure fortification levels across food vehicles, outlet types, and brands; and a household component to estimate coverage of fortified foods, assess whether foods are fortifiable, and examine equity in access and consumption. Larger survey platforms, such as DHS, UNICEF's Multiple Indicator Cluster Surveys (MICS), and HCES, are other potential platforms that can be used to integrate fortification modules, where feasible.

Digital tools can also strengthen data capture and sharing across compliance and coverage indicators. FortiMApp supports digital data collection for market assessments, while FortifyMIS provides a platform for compiling and sharing fortification compliance information and monitoring of food safety and quality across the supply chain and across fortification stakeholders. The Digital Fortification Quality Traceability Plus (DFQT+) tool, which has been piloted in Bangladesh, Nigeria, and India, is designed to facilitate data sharing and reduce persistent frictions across stakeholders, including high inspection costs, low brand trust, limited market access, and high M&E costs. Across these tools, the recurring implementation need is to harmonize indicators, define priority data needs, and triangulate results so that compliance and coverage data can be interpreted together to inform decision (link to presentation here).

Using Modeled Data in Senegal to Identify Potential Food Vehicles

A Senegal case example demonstrates how modeling can be applied to inform country decisions. Using MIMI, Senegal modeled the risk of inadequate iron intake and assessed scenarios for wheat flour and rice. Results suggested that for wheat flour, even partial compliance with existing fortification standards, could meaningfully reduce inadequacy for iron and folic acid, reinforcing the need to strengthen QA/QC. For rice, the analysis suggested potential reductions in inadequacy for iron, folic acid, vitamin B12, zinc, and vitamin B1, illustrating how modeling can be used to examine the possible contribution of additional food vehicles. (link to presentation here).

Use of the Micronutrient Fortification Index in Nigeria

A Nigeria example illustrates how the Micronutrient Fortification Index (MFI) can be used to improve compliance, product quality, and drive industry accountability. MFI was designed as an industry-led tool to support annual assessment and incentivize self-regulation and continuous improvement in fortification practices. The MFI applies a 4PG framework (personnel, public engagement, production, and procurement and partnerships, with governance embedded across all components) to assess company performance. Scoring combines three weighted elements: a structured self-assessment tool (60%), industry intelligence (20%), and periodic independent testing (20%). This approach evaluates whether products meet national fortification standards, and if internal QA/QC systems, supplier management, leadership commitment, and public accountability mechanisms are in place.

Since its pilot with four major companies (covering sugar, oil, and wheat flour fortification), participation has expanded to over 20 companies within four years. Results show improved compliance scores across brands (for example, Flour Mills of Nigeria increased average compliance from 90.1% in 2021 to 93.4% in 2025), stronger QA systems, and greater alignment between industry and regulators. MFI also creates public recognition through annual awards and high-level government engagement, reinforcing incentives for sustained compliance. The model demonstrates how combining transparent scoring, independent verification, and public recognition can complement regulatory oversight and help improve private sector investment in LSFF (link to presentation here).

Innovative Approaches to Filling LSFF Data Gaps

Several innovations were shared that focus on generating usable LSFF evidence when routine data are missing, difficult to access, or slow to produce. The approaches span accountability mechanisms for upstream inputs, guidance on a shared language to improve data use and communication across sectors, leverage existing systems to fill data gaps, a real-time digital tool to measure compliance, and novel ways of assessing coverage.

Strengthening accountability for premix quality and supply

Access to Nutrition Initiative (ATNi) shared results of their 2025 VitaMin Premix Supplier Assessment. The evaluation profiles large premix suppliers to help them adopt more structured and transparent nutrition-related processes. It consists of a Corporate Profile section that invites companies to provide inputs and supporting evidence, but results remain independent, and case studies to understand how fortification programs work in practice, including the contributions of ingredient suppliers, manufacturers, and government regulators. The goal is to increase transparency and encourage better nutrition-centric business practices among suppliers, addressing a persistent upstream gap in LSFF programs where premix quality and reliability can be difficult for countries to track (link to presentation here).

Creating shared terminology to improve cross-sector decision-making

DInA's Micronutrient and LSFF Lexicon and a Primer on Public Law and Regulation were shared as practical resources designed to align understanding across stakeholders who work with different definitions, legal concepts, and data systems. The materials are intended to reduce misinterpretation of LSFF and micronutrient terminology and support clearer communication on regulatory questions (including how legal instruments function in practice), strengthening the foundation for consistent data reporting and use (link to presentation here).

Leveraging infectious disease surveillance platforms for micronutrient data

The Micronutrient Biomarker Initiative shared a novel approach to generate biomarker data by using existing infectious disease surveillance and health system infrastructure. Uganda's HIV, malaria, and tuberculosis surveillance platforms provide laboratory capacity, trained personnel, sample transport systems, and a national biorepository. Using stored samples from the 2020 Uganda Population-based HIV Impact Assessment, the Central Public Health Laboratories analyzed 10,000 samples locally (using Quansys that is enrolled in the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) method verification program). The approach is designed to provide an affordable and sustainable method

to fill gaps in biomarker data and triangulate micronutrient status results with fortification coverage findings. Ethical approvals and consent procedures for stored samples were also described, along with plans to assess potential selection bias (link to presentation here).

Real-time digital compliance and data visualization

Sanku presented an example of how real-time digital compliance and monitoring dashboards can strengthen LSFF compliance monitoring. Working through the Tanzania NFA, Sanku supported the government to integrate simplified production and market-level indicators into existing data systems, rather than creating parallel platforms. At the production level, Sanku's technology automates premix dosing through sensors that measure grain weight during milling and release precise nutrient quantities according to national fortification standards, reducing human error. The system is connected through an Internet of Things (IoT) platform that transmits production data to a central server every five minutes, enabling remote, real-time monitoring of fortified flour production. Complementary market-level rapid assessments and traceability features allow stakeholders to link production data with marketplace information and nutrient verification. The approach is designed to improve the collection and use of compliance data, support laboratory and governance capacity, and inform decision-making across government and industry. Sanku reported reaching more than 25 million people in Tanzania, with expansion underway in Kenya and Ethiopia (link to presentation here).

An equity-focused approach to measure who is reached with fortification

GAIN presented FACT, a toolkit designed and published in 2019 that provides a standardized approach to generate consumption and coverage data at household and market levels, with explicit attention to assessing equity in access to fortified foods. FACT can support LSFF program design by identifying and confirming consumption patterns at the household level and identifying additional candidate food vehicles. It can also be used to measure the performance of a LSFF program by estimating coverage at the household level and testing fortification quality in markets (link to presentation here).

Understanding co-coverage of LSFF with other nutrition interventions

DataDENT presented a methodological approach to assessing whether target populations are being reached with multiple nutrition interventions (such as LSFF and supplementation) rather than examining each intervention in isolation. The framework provides a stepwise approach to assess co-coverage (one single data source) and composite coverage (multiple data sources) of multi-sectoral nutrition interventions to better interpret impact pathways and nutrition program complementarity.

Work conducted in Ethiopia was provided as an example. Using the 2023 National Baseline Survey, DataDENT conducted a co-coverage analysis for vitamin A interventions in children under five and anemia control interventions in pregnant women, with interventions selected based on national policy documents. Seven interventions were included in each analysis. Differences in coverage were observed. For example, vitamin A-related social protection coverage was higher in lower wealth quintiles, while anemia-related fortifiable wheat flour coverage was higher in Somali region than in Addis Ababa. A composite coverage analysis using indicators drawn from three separate surveys produced similar results to the co-coverage findings, demonstrating that composite approaches can provide useful information when a single data source is unavailable. These findings illustrate how this approach can help policymakers assess whether micronutrient interventions are reaching target populations in a coordinated manner (link to presentation here).



Advancing Cross-Sector Collaboration and Filling Data Gaps (Day 3)

Strengthening LSFF data systems includes focusing on improving data governance and coordination: who produces and owns LSFF data across the value chain, how data move between institutions, and what practical mechanisms can reduce fragmentation and improve decision-making. Country and regional opportunities to improve data governance and coordination, as well priority LSFF data gaps were identified through panel discussions and structured group work, building on information gathered for the country landscapes.

Data Governance and Coordination

Fortification data are inherently multi-institutional and multi-sectoral: health sector actors generally hold nutrition data like micronutrient status and household-level information; regulators and standards bodies hold monitoring and enforcement data; and industry holds production, QA/QC, and market data. Governance is not only about data availability, but also about defining roles, agreeing on protocols for data sharing and use, and cultivating trust and accountability so data can support course correction. A consistent message shared across national and regional perspectives is the need for strong leadership and convening power, ideally anchored at sufficiently senior levels, to reduce silos, promote transparency, and make coordination across institutions feasible.



Objectives of Day Three:

1. Advance data governance and cross-sector collaboration.
2. Strengthen national regional and national LSFF coordination on data.
3. Identify priority actions at the country and regional level to strengthen the data value chain.

Country and regional examples illustrate different governance arrangements and practical entry points for strengthening coordination, data sharing, and improving data use:

- **Kenya**: LSFF data are held across multiple institutional locations (including health-sector surveillance, standards/regulatory monitoring, and household-level data sources), with coordination and exchange supported through the NFA and periodic meetings. These data are used to inform policy and update regulations, such as updating national fortification standards, as was done just recently for rice.
- **Mozambique:** Fortification stakeholders meet monthly through a regular public–private platform to share information, including data from the private sector that can inform program adjustments. A persistent question that continues to be asked during these meetings is about evidence of the impact of existing fortification program, highlighting an important evidence gap that needs to be filled.
- **Tanzania:** The NFA has recently been revitalized. The alliance recognizes the importance of setting clear goals and milestones to benchmark progress and improve accountability over time.
- **Regional:** SADC emphasized that harmonization and integration across countries requires more than shared goals, it requires standardized indicators and routine regional data sharing mechanisms. The ESA RCM, chaired by SADC and ECSA-HC, believes that GFDx can be used as a practical entry point for aligning countries around a common set of indicators, strengthening routine monitoring, and enabling regional scorecards that can motivate action, identify gaps, and support cross-country learning.

Filling Data Gaps to Strengthen the LSFF Data Value Chain

Participants worked in small groups, organized by country, to identify pragmatic actions to fill critical gaps across the LSFF data value chain (see Annex E for breakout session handout). While actions varied by country context, common priorities emerged. Many countries identified the need to update or generate micronutrient status data and clarify standardized indicators to guide decision-making. Several committed to integrating fortification indicators into existing national surveys (e.g., HCES or vulnerability assessments), strengthening routine compliance monitoring systems, and digitizing industry reporting platforms. Others emphasized the need to improve laboratory capacity, risk-based inspection systems, and mechanisms for regular data submission and sharing from industry. On the analysis side, countries proposed expanding modeling capacity (e.g., using MIMI and related modeling tools), building in-country expertise through academia and national public health institutes, and developing user-friendly dashboards and reporting templates. Across all groups, the most consistent theme was the need to translate data into action, through policy revisions, enforcement measures, advocacy materials, cost-effectiveness analyses, and regional coordination to improve cross-border trade. Many countries identified resource gaps, particularly for laboratory strengthening, digital systems, and survey implementation, underscoring the need for both domestic financing and ongoing development partner and donor support (see Annex F for each country's completed priority action template).



Conclusion

The Africa Regional Dialogue on Data for Action in Food Fortification in Addis Ababa underscored a shared commitment to making LSFF programs more effective and equitable by strengthening the data systems that underpin them. The dialogue reflected both meaningful progress (expanding legislation, growing implementation experience, and emerging innovations to collect and use data) and persistent data challenges that limit impact (fragmented data ownership, uneven data quality and timeliness, and limited use of available information to drive regulatory action, program adjustment, and investment decisions). It also reinforced that while ideal data are not always feasible, countries can still act now using existing data while building the case for targeted investments in primary data collection where needed.

Building on the momentum of this meeting, the following were agreed as critical for translating dialogue into concrete action:

1. Develop standardized guidance on LSFF indicators and use informed by the meeting discussions and prioritization exercises, to establish a minimum, standardized set of indicators that can support decisions within countries and enable cross-country comparison. The guidance will clarify what data to collect, how to define indicators, and how each indicator should be used along the LSFF program impact pathway. Work is already underway by DInA to develop a standalone resource that will provide a prioritized indicator list with detailed information on each indicator, data collection considerations, as well as practical guidance on interpretation and use.

2. Strengthen national governance arrangements and coordination platforms to enable routine data sharing across health, industry, and regulatory actors. This includes supporting country-level action planning by convening a broad group of national stakeholders to define country-specific priority actions across the LSFF data value chain, and translate these into costed, time-bound implementation plans. Ensure these actions are formally endorsed, aligned with existing policies and workplans, and that routine progress review and accountability are embedded in existing coordination mechanisms.

3. Advance regional coordination, harmonization, and knowledge exchange, including the use of shared global platforms such as GFDx to benchmark progress, identify consistent data gaps, support development of regional scorecards, and strengthen alignment on regional and national fortification standards, particularly for traded food vehicles and cross-border markets. Regional bodies can serve as conveners to promote standardized indicators, peer learning, and routine exchange of data and experience.

4. Strengthen capacity to apply and adapt existing LSFF data tools to ensure that countries can effectively collect, analyze, and use critical data across the LSFF program pathway. This includes building analytical capacity within national research institutes and academia, regulatory bodies, and NFAs.

5. Accelerate practical approaches to filling critical data gaps, leveraging existing surveillance systems and routine administrative platforms, where feasible, while prioritizing lower-cost data collection and analysis approaches that reduce reliance on infrequent, expensive surveys.

Data are a powerful force for transformation, and Beza's story reminds us that behind every data point, there is a person, a life, a story that matters.



Annexes

Please use this link to review the full annexes.

DInA
Micronutrient Data Innovation Alliance

Micronutrient
FORUM

Contact us: DInA@micronutrientforum.org
Website: www.micronutrientforum.org/micronutrient-data-innovation-alliance/
Follow us:

@MNForum

Micronutrient Forum