

Nutrition Data Mapping for Ethiopia: Assessment of the Availability and Accessibility of Nutrition-related Data

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

For the last two decades in Ethiopia, ending malnutrition has been a national government priority. The government of Ethiopia recognizes that high quality and timely data are needed to identify the magnitude of malnutrition and to assess the impact of evidence-based interventions. To contribute to these efforts, the Ethiopian National Information Platform for Nutrition (NIPN), hosted by the Ethiopian Public Health Institute, supports evidence-based decision making through the analysis of existing data and communicating the findings to policy and decision makers. Identifying existing nutrition data sources and determining their accessibility for further analysis and decision making, are NIPN priorities.

Through this nutrition data mapping, we aimed to provide an overview of the availability, accessibility, and quality of nutrition-related data for selected indicators among multisectoral nutrition actors in Ethiopia. We contacted 29 nutrition stakeholders and assessed the availability and accessibility of data for 70 priority nutrition indicators from December 2019 to February 2020. These indicators were drawn from national policy and program documents and global nutrition monitoring frameworks.

KEY FINDINGS

- We identified a total of 62 data sources.
- The main types of data sources were surveys (87%), randomized controlled trials and longitudinal follow-up studies (8%), and routine monitoring information systems (5%).
- Data were available to track progress for five of the six World Health Assembly targets (low birth weight being the exception). Limited data were available to adequately track progress at the regional and sub-regional levels.
- Adolescents and women of reproductive age were the two target groups with the least amount of data available.
- While few of the data sources identified were open access (18%), most of the remaining sources were accessible upon request (73%).
- At the time of this nutrition data mapping, only two NNP-II implementing ministries had information systems that collect, analyze and use routine monitoring data. However, only a limited number of nutrition indicators were included in these systems; eight in the Health Management Information System (HMIS) and none in the Education Management Information System (EMIS). Additionally, the Unified Nutrition Information System in Ethiopia (UNISE) was not yet implemented at national scale.
- Data availability for indicators showed that data for infant and young child feeding (IYCF) indicators were collected the most, and among nutrition-sensitive intervention indicators, water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) indicators had the most data.
- Limited data were available to assess the coverage of nutrition-sensitive interventions, beyond WASH.



RECOMMENDATIONS

- Future surveys and impact evaluations need to focus on filling identified data gaps for priority indicators. More data are needed for specific target groups such as adolescents, for indicators such as women's diets, and on the coverage of nutrition-sensitive interventions.
- Routine monitoring information systems need to be strengthened and expanded. Routine monitoring data can provide useful information on the coverage of nutrition-sensitive and nutrition-specific interventions. As such, more nutrition indicators need to be included in existing information systems such as the HMIS, the implementation of the UNISE needs to be scaled up nationally, and information systems need to be established in all sectors that implement nutrition-sensitive interventions.
- Central data repository systems need to be established to facilitate data use and allow for easy access to data.
- The use of the best data sources for specific information needs should be promoted to enhance evidence-based decision making.
- Nutrition data mapping needs to be conducted periodically as new data and information become available.

FURTHER INFORMATION

The full data mapping report is accessible on the NIPN website (<http://www.nipn.ephi.gov.et/>)

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