



Food and Nutrition Strategy baseline survey: preliminary results disseminated Page 5



From April 3–5, 2023, the Ethiopian Public Health Institute (EPHI) and the International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI) jointly organized a training program on data visualization Continue reading (Page 7)



The School Feeding Program (SFP) has been given serious attention by the global community. It has been understood that the SFP has had an impact on the learning achievements of school Continue reading (Page 2)

News

Message from the Coordinator	1
Webinar on Jan 26	6
Webinar on Feb 09	6
NIS-NIPN collaboration	3
Building a Learning Health System through Implementation Research	3
News about 3rd quarter MER SC meeting	4

Articles

Trends and impacts of demographic disparity on JMP ladders for drinking water and sanitation services	8
Situational analysis of the landscape of nutrition data financing in Ethiopia	9



Aregash Samuel (PhD)

Greetings from NIPN Ethiopia!

I hope this message finds you all doing well. NIPN 2.0 is already underway in all eight NIPN countries, namely Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, Ethiopia, Guatemala, Kenya, Niger, Lao PDR, and Uganda. 2023's first quarter flew by as a number of activities were carried out. As we approach the halfway mark of the year, I want to take a moment to highlight our progress.

The NIPN team is working diligently to complete the activities scheduled for 2023. The annual narrative and financial report for the no-cost extension period (2022) were submitted to the EU. We have also submitted a narrative report on the main task accomplishments from NIPN 2.0 to the GIZ. Despite the challenges we've faced, I am proud of the progress we've made so far, especially in this quarter. The support of the NIPN team towards the finalization of the results of the FNS was a magnificent contribution to EPHI.

Some of the activities of this quarter include two webinars, one on "Adolescent Nutrition and Anaemia," which was held on January 26, 2023, and the other on February 9, 2023, with the title "Promoting Sustainable and Healthy Diets: The Role of National Public Health Institutes" on evidence generation. This quarter's capacity-building activity was three days of training on "Data visualization using Power BI" which was held from April 3–5, 2023, and in which 15 researchers participated. Following the training, the revision of the NIPN dashboard will be our main agenda. The training and webinars will continue as planned. The policy question formulation (PQF) or identification of evidence

Message from the coordinator

-needs process will be our next activity. Necessary preparations are being carried out. Members of the national food and nutrition technical committee are expected to provide information on policy- and demand-related questions. A review of the annual plan was also conducted from March 28–29, 2023, in Adama town. This helps the team review our progress and see if we need to take remedial action for the remaining months to get us back on track.

"We've made significant progress in quarter one 2023, and with the continued hard work and dedication of our NIPN team, we are on track to achieve our goals for the year. Let's keep up the momentum and work together to make a positive impact on the nutrition landscape in Ethiopia."

One of the plans for this year is expanding NIPN activities to regional states. To this end, a feasibility study was conducted in six regions of the country to define objectives, scope, financial and material resource implications, human resource requirements, capacities, and the policy environment and interests of those institutions to determine whether they are in a position to host NIPN in their respective regions. Report writing is in progress and will be finalized soon. One of the activities planned for this year is to upload additional data sets to the NIPN data repository so that the repository serves as a useful resource platform. One metadata file was uploaded this quarter.

An end-user interview was conducted among six users of the NIPN output. With this regard, the data collection and analysis are complete, and the report will be finalized in the following quarter. This procedure would assist the NIPN in evaluating how effectively policymakers and programmers are implementing the NIPN's policy recommendations. It would also help in identifying areas for improvement in our future collaboration and response to policy questions to achieve the impact that NIPN intended. As we mentioned in our last issue, the three staff hired for the Ministry of Health, Ministry of Education, and Ministry of Agriculture are continuing to support sectoral activities related to nutrition and act as NIPN focal points at the sector's offices.

The process of phase one evaluation was delayed due to many unforeseen issues. However, among the universities that submitted their expressions of interest, eight universities participated, and Bahir Dar University (BDU) got the highest point based on the pre-determined screening criteria. The award letter has been given to BDU, and the process of signing a Memorandum of Understanding is ongoing, following which the evaluation will commence soon. Once this assessment is finalized, the NIPN dissemination event will be organized.

Let's keep up the momentum as we move forward, working together to achieve our goals.

As we enter the second quarter of the year, we hope to accomplish the highest level of achievement in the yearly plan.

Thank you for your continued efforts and commitment to this project!

African day of School Feeding was celebrated



The School Feeding Program (SFP) has been given serious attention by the global community. It has been understood that the SFP has had an impact on the learning achievements of school children by reducing their absenteeism and school dropouts, besides increasing their academic competence due to the convenient teaching-learning environment and reduced hunger in schools. Various researches revealed that undernutrition among schoolchildren who benefited from the program have declined progressively because of the school feeding program. It has also had an impact on the national economic returns for each respective country that is implementing the program effectively.

Considering such an impact, the African Union (AU) has endorsed the commemoration of the SFP to be celebrated annually by member states in collaboration with the AU and other international stakeholders such as the World Food Programme (WFP) since 2016 at the continental level.

This year's school feeding program has been commemorated for the 8th time in Ethiopia with the collaboration of the AU and WFP. Member states and other dignitaries were invited to attend the annual event. Heads of State, Heads of government, and their delegates have presented the status reports and experiences of the school feeding programs of their countries.

National governments have pledged their commitments to enhance the school feeding program for the betterment of academic achievements as well as reducing the prevalence of undernutrition among school children. H.E. Mrs. Adanech Abiebie, Mayor of the Addis Ababa City Administration, and H.E. Professor Berhanu Nega, Minister of Education, of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia, have addressed, on their parts, the contribution, challenges, and opportunities as well as the current status of the school feeding program in Addis Ababa and the country respectively.

H.E. Professor Berhanu Nega stressed in his speech that school feeding programs significantly improve students' health, nutrition, and academic performance while also providing stability and prosperity to communities. The professor has also emphasized that the national school feeding policy framework has set a vision of providing at least one in-school meal a day to all pre-primary, primary, and middle-level school children by 2030. Furthermore, a national food and personal hygiene protocol for school feeding programs was jointly prepared with the Ministry of Health and launched recently.

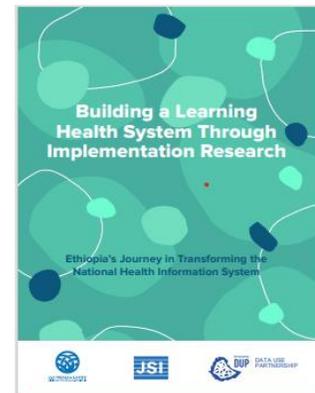
"H.E. Professor Berhanu Nega stressed in his speech that school feeding programs significantly improve students' health, nutrition, and academic performance while also providing stability and prosperity to communities."

Building a Learning Health System through Implementation

Implementation research is a technique in which academia collaborates with implementers in the health system to produce and translate contextual evidences. The Data Use Partnership (DUP), in collaboration with the Ministry of Health, organized a national-level implementation research dissemination workshop on February 22-23, 2023.

The Ethiopian Ministry of Health and John Snow Research and Training, Inc. (JSI) have been implementing the Data Use Partnership (DUP) to transform the nation's health information system and achieve the goals of the Information Revolution with funding primarily from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation (BMGF) and an additional grant from the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation (DDCF).

DUP funded 12 embedded implementation studies and offered technical assistance in order to address data use bottlenecks for evidence-based maternal nutrition and child health interventions. Read more: <https://www.jsi.com/partnering-for-a-cultural-transformation-in-information-use/>



NIS-NIPN Collaboration in Ethiopia

Both the Nutrition Information System (NIS) and the National Information Platform for Nutrition (NIPN) are global initiatives funded by the European Union and GIZ (for NIPN) aimed at strengthening food and nutrition landscapes in Ethiopia through the generation of high-quality nutrition data and evidence-based, informed decision making. To achieve the desired outcomes of the initiatives, well-coordinated and collaborative efforts between the initiatives are essential as they work on the food and nutrition landscapes to minimize the burden of malnutrition in Ethiopia.

Because of this reason, NIPN Ethiopia started collaboration and partnership with the EU-funded Nutrition Information System (NIS), which is hosted by the MOH with the technical support of WHO and UNICEF. To move forward the collaboration between two initiatives, WHO, UNICEF, and EPHI-NIPN focal persons formed a team and began the discussion to reach a shared goal and outcomes. The EU-NIS-NIPN collaboration discussions were held regularly, with common goals and areas of partnership identified.

The two teams met to identify areas for collaboration and developed ways to monitor the overall progress of the commonly identified activities.

EPHI, UNICEF, WHO, and MOH members of the EU NIS-NIPN team regularly met once a month to review how the jointly planned activities were going. In order to track progress and get an update on the overall performance of the two projects, both project team members attended a regular monthly meeting coordinated by the global team at WHO and GIZ. In 2023, the EU NIS-NIPN team developed a term of reference for the collaborative activity in order to establish electronic platforms for food and nutrition and knowledge sharing.

"EU-funded initiatives NIS and NIPN collaborate in Ethiopia to strengthen food and nutrition landscapes through high-quality data and informed decision making."

This is proposed to be a web-based electronic portal used to capture food and nutrition information and would provide easy access and display for stakeholders, provide an up-to-date on FNS progress, share experiences and best practices, and continuously update the country profile in terms of selected indicators that indicate trends.

To ensure the successful establishment of the portal system, the technical working groups assessed the demand for the portal system by taking into account a wide range of sectors, academic institutions, partners, and research institutions charged with implementing FNS in Ethiopia. Additionally, the assessment results were approved by both NIS and NIPN team members to move forward with the establishment of an electronic platform for food and nutrition knowledge sharing in order to track the progress and updates of the implementing sectors and to inform policy and decision makers about the most important high-level FNS indicators. Recently, the establishment of the portal system for FNS is underway.

The third quarter MER SC meeting was held on March 30, 2023, in Bishoftu

The Multi-sectoral National Food and Nutrition Strategy Monitoring, Evaluation, and Research Steering Committee (MER SC) quarterly review meeting was held on March 30, 2023, in Bishoftu town, Oromia region. The meeting was organized by the Ethiopian Public Health Institute (EPHI) with financial support from UNICEF and NIPN Ethiopia. About 31 participants from different sectors attended the meeting, including ministries, universities, research institutes, and partner organizations.

The primary objective of the meeting was to review the progress made in the implementation of the FNS strategy over the past nine months. This presentation highlighted the achievements and challenges encountered by different sectors. The FNS baseline survey findings were also presented and discussed. These findings will be used to make informed decisions to address the country's undernutrition and related challenges.

A study finding on the impact of nutrition interventions in reducing low birth weight was also presented. The study showed that nutrition interventions can significantly



reduce low birth weight, which is a major risk factor for infant mortality and morbidity.

The findings of the joint supportive supervision on FNS implementation, which were aimed at strengthening the coordination and collaboration among different sectors in the implementation of the strategy, was also presented.

Furthermore, the meeting included presentations on studies conducted by Addis Ababa University for the past 15 years. These studies highlighted the challenges and opportunities for improving the implementation of the strategy and provided recommendations for future actions.

“The MER SC held a quarterly review in Bishoftu town to discuss progress made in implementing the FNS strategy over nine months. Achievements, challenges, and recommendations were highlighted.”



Background

- ✓ The Ministry of Agriculture
- ✓ Is among the signatory sectors
- ✓ Given due attention to improve food and nutrition
- ✓ Institutionalized the Food and Nutrition Office (FNO) within the Ministry responsible to coordinate & implement NSA interventions across regions
- ✓ Working to strengthen intra & inter sectoral collaboration
- ✓ Internally, coordinate the different projects/program and directorates mainstream nutrition
- ✓ Implement food and nutrition interventions that contributes to the national nutrition outcomes
- ✓ Focuses on creating enabling environments, capacity building activities and supportive supervisions for the implementation of NSA interventions

Food and Nutrition Strategy baseline survey: preliminary results disseminated

A high-level dissemination workshop was held in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, on March 23, 2023, to present the preliminary results of the Food and Nutrition Strategy Baseline Survey. The survey was conducted by the Ethiopian Public Health Institute in collaboration with the Ministry of Health, UNICEF, and other partners. It aimed to understand the current prevalence of malnutrition among women, children under five years of age, school-age children, and adolescents, and to identify gaps in nutrition service delivery.

The survey covered over 14,000 households and is national and sub-nationally representative. The preliminary results were presented to over 200 participants, including senior government officials from various ministries, officials from development partner organizations, and researchers from different research institutes and universities.

The survey found that there has been a remarkable reduction in the overall malnutrition status of the country since 2000, but malnutrition remains a major public health concern.



The stunting prevalence for under-5-year-old children at the national level is still high at 39 percent, with over 5 million children stunted and 1.5 million wasted. At the country level, over 6.3 million children were affected by any form of malnutrition (under or over-nutrition). The survey also reported low production diversity in all regions.

The study also found high levels of micronutrient deficiencies in all regions, with over half of the women of reproductive age, adolescent girls, and young children affected by one or more micronutrient deficiencies in all regions.

The survey indicated various intervention strategies, such as fortification and strengthening the existing Health and Agriculture Extension Program service delivery. The dissemination workshop emphasized the importance of a strong and coordinated effort with all sector organizations, partners, and the private sector to address malnutrition in the country. The report provides robust data on the food and nutritional status of women, children, and adolescents and will inform the implementation of the strategy across sectors.

This report helps identify national programmatic priorities and the need to accelerate multi-sectoral responses and initiatives to improve food and nutrition security in Ethiopia, including large-scale food fortification, micronutrient supplementation programs, and the delivery of essential services for food and nutrition. The report on preliminary findings will be available soon.

"Malnutrition remains a major public health concern in Ethiopia, with 39% of under-5-children stunted and over 6.3 million children affected by any form of malnutrition. High levels of micronutrient deficiencies were also found in all regions, emphasizing the need for a strong and coordinated effort to address malnutrition in the country."



A webinar on “Adolescent nutrition and Anaemia” held on January 26, 2023

The National Information Platform for Nutrition Ethiopia (NIPN-Ethiopia) is strongly working to generate evidence for informed decision making as well as organize platforms to disseminate evidence for a multi-sectoral nutrition audience in Ethiopia and elsewhere. NIPN, in collaboration with the International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI) and the GIZ, hosted a webinar on “Adolescent Nutrition and Anaemia” on January 26, 2023. In this webinar, more than 87 participants attended from various sectors, including academia and research institutes working in Ethiopia and worldwide.

For the benefit of a larger nutrition community, scientists from various institutes and organizations are invited to share their knowledge and experiences regarding adolescent nutrition and anemia during this webinar. A thorough briefing on the nexus between adolescent nutrition and anemia was given by Mrs. Kesso Gabrielle van Zutphen, who is working as knowledge and research manager for Sight and Life at Wageningen University and Research.

Her presentation specifically covered adolescent anemia that occurs during menstruation and the potential ways to address the issue on a worldwide scale. After her presentation, a number of attendees raised questions that were then discussed and answered in detail. In addition, Dr. Abdulaziz Adish (Ph.D.), Nutrition International, Deputy Regional Director for Africa, and the Nutrition Advisor, briefly presented and discussed the detailed nutritional interventions implemented to address adolescent nutrition, particularly adolescent anaemia.

He also shared different African countries’ experiences in the implementation of nutrition interventions and their success. Moreover, Dr. Sisay Sinamo (Ph.D.), Senior Program Manager, Seqota Declaration, Federal Program Delivery Unit, MOH, Ethiopia, explained what the government of Ethiopia is doing through a multisectoral approach to addressing adolescent nutrition. He shared the achievements obtained during the implementation of the Seqota Declaration in Ethiopia. The details of the presentation power points, recordings, and question and answer for this webinar are available at the NIPN website: <https://www.nipn.ephi.gov.et/node/278>.



Dr. Abdulaziz Adish (Ph.D.)

A webinar on “Promoting Sustainable and Healthy Diets: The Role of National Public Health Institutes” took place on February 9, 2023

The NIPN webinar on "Promoting Sustainable and Healthy Diets: The Role of National Public Health Institutes," held on February 9, 2023, addressed several topics relating to sustainable and healthy diets.

A speaker from the Norwegian Public Health Institute, Dr. Helle Margrete, explained the historical perspective of the Nordic countries’ food-based dietary guidelines, the experience of the Nordic countries’ collaboration regarding dietary recommendations, regulations, and monitoring, as well as environmental issues.



Dr. Helle Margrete (P.h.D)

Dr. Line Småstuen from the Norwegian Public Health Institute also explained the consequences of an unhealthy diet. She also explained what sustainable healthy diets are and recommended developing an innovative and coordinated national program for monitoring the diet and exposure to environmental contaminants.

(Continue reading P7)

Data visualization training using Power BI was held at EPHI, Addis Ababa



From April 3–5, 2023, the Ethiopian Public Health Institute (EPHI) and the International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI) jointly organized a training program on data visualization, using Power BI software. The training was conducted by a senior expert, Prof. James Warner, from IFPRI, who was invited to EPHI's National Training Center in Addis Ababa. The training was attended by a total of 15 participants, including team members from the National Information Platform for Nutrition (NIPN) Ethiopia, representatives from the Food Science and Nutrition Research Directorate at EPHI, IFPRI, GIZ, and the Ministries of Health and Education. The program proved to be very interactive, practical, and useful for the trainees. During the training, the trainer covered a wide range of topics, including an introduction to Power BI, basic concepts, visualizations in Power BI, creating the first visualization, interface exploration, formatting visualizations, creating a dashboard for publication, and concluding with a Power BI and data visualization practical session.

The trainees were encouraged to provide feedback on what they had learned the day before and their expectations for the following session, which enhanced the program's applicability and usefulness. Additionally, at the end of the training, the participants used their own data to practice using Power BI and presented their visualizations to the other participants. Finally, all participants received certification from EPHI and IFPRI for their successful completion of the course.

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Dr. Yewelsew Abebe from Ethiopia delivered a presentation outlining the Ethiopian food-based dietary guidelines for addressing sustainable and healthy diets, their status of implementation, and how to make them sustainable. The challenges and trade-offs of implementing such guidelines were also discussed, along with ways to incorporate

environmental sustainability perspectives into dietary advice. Following the presentation, a Q&A session was held in which different ideas were raised by participants; ultimately, 67 individuals attended this informative webinar. To access the presentations and Q&A session, use this link

<https://www.nipn.eph.gov.et/node/281>.



Dr. Yewelsew Abebe (P.h.D)

Zinabu Assefa, Ermias Alemayehu, Badasa Wagari, Andualem Mekonnen, Tadesse Alemu and Aderajew Mekonnen

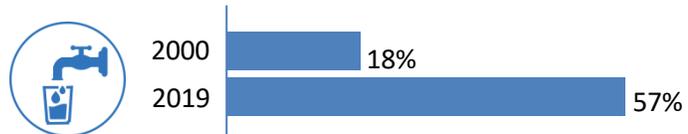
Trends and impacts of demographic disparity on JMP ladders for drinking water and sanitation services: further analysis of the Ethiopia demographic and health surveys

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1007/s43832-023-00028-y>

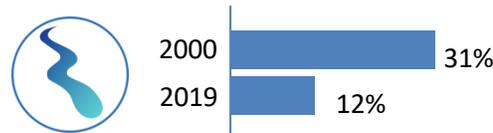
Access to water and sanitation are major issues for many countries, especially for low- and middle-income nations like Ethiopia. The study aims to identify trends in the use of drinking water and sanitation services using Joint Monitoring Programme (JMP) ladders and to assess the impact of demographic factors on that use. A time trend analysis for water and sanitation services was carried out using JMP ladders using household data from the Ethiopia Demographic and Health Survey (EDHS). Likewise, factors affecting the coverage of water and sanitation service ladders were also determined using a multivariate logistic regression analysis. According to a recent survey, the basic drinking water service trend increased significantly from 18% in 2000 to 57% in 2019 by 217%. In contrast, surface water use declined from 31% in 2000 to 12% in 2019 by 61%. Despite the overall coverage of basic sanitation services grew nine times more from 1% in 2000 to 10% in 2019, the coverage of basic sanitation services decreased by 25% from 8% in 2011 to 6% in 2016. Furthermore, the practice of open defecation decreased by 67% from 81% in 2000 to 27% in 2019.

In this study, the availability of drinking water and sanitation services are influenced by many demographic factors. The wealth quantile was used as an example since it has a major impact on the water and sanitation service ladders. Similarly, the age of households' heads difference significantly affects sanitation but has little effect on water service. The essential trend of water and sanitation services increased significantly.

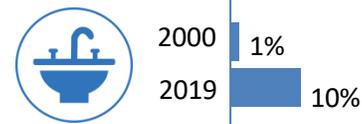
Trends of Basic Drinking Water



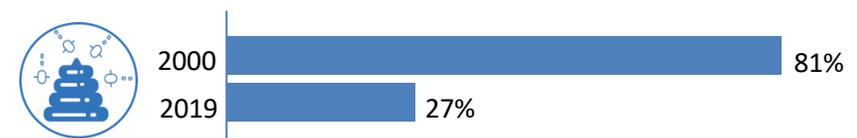
Trends of Surface Water Use



Trends of Basic Water Sanitation



Trends of Open Defecation



Several factors influencing the improvement of water and sanitation service ladders have been observed. As a result, households should replace the unimproved sanitation facilities with improved sanitation facilities and encourage hand-washing habits to reduce health risks associated with poor sanitation. Furthermore, the effect of demographic factors should be considered in the development of strategies to increase access to drinking water and sanitation services.

¹ The Joint Monitoring Programme (JMP) for Water Supply and Sanitation by WHO and UNICEF is the official United Nations mechanism tasked with monitoring progress towards the Sustainable Development Goal Number 6 (SDG 6) since 2016.

Wossen Negash (PhD), from R4D Ethiopia office

Situational analysis of the landscape of nutrition data financing in Ethiopia

The Ethiopian government recently adopted the Food and Nutrition Strategy (FNS) to guide the operation of the Food and Nutrition Policy (FNP), which promotes a coordinated and comprehensive approach to food and nutrition security in order to support improved nutritional status. To support the strategy's successful implementation and equitable advancement, high-quality and timely data are required. To improve evidence-based decision-making, Strategy 12 of the FNS focuses on enhancing nutrition data. Although this strategy has been costed, no funding sources have been identified to support its execution.

In 2022, DataDENT, in collaboration with the Ethiopian Public Health Institute (EPHI), conducted a financing landscape assessment to support the planning and implementation of FNS Strategic Objective 12 which says "Enhance evidence informed decision-making, learning and accountability". The assessment aims to provide information regarding the current state of nutrition data financing. This information is critical for ensuring enough and consistent financing for nutrition information systems, which in turn can enable policies such as the FNS to generate, collect, analyze, and use data for continuous performance improvement towards national nutrition targets.

Twenty key informants from a total of 14 organizations were interviewed to better understand current funding for nutrition data activities as well as the challenges and facilitators of funding nutrition data. The findings indicate that most respondents are involved in activities aligned with Strategic Objective 12 of the FNS, and donors and governments are not intentionally funding these activities. In addition, many organizations were unable or unwilling to share data on amounts and sufficiency of financing.

"A financing landscape assessment conducted in Ethiopia reveals a lack of intentional funding for nutrition data activities aligned with the Food and Nutrition Strategy's Strategic Objective 12. Strengthening capacity and increasing financing for agencies responsible for multisectoral coordination, as well as considering alternative financing options, were recommended as feasible mechanisms to support nutrition data activities."

Furthermore, despite the fact that nutrition data activities are included in an overall federal planning and budgeting process for nutrition, there is a lack of consistency and coordination across sectors in whether and how specific activities are included. Within the Ethiopian context, the mechanisms listed below were recommended as being most feasible: strengthen capacity and increase financing for agencies responsible for multisectoral coordination of Strategic Objective 12 to improve planning and budgeting; strengthen capacity within sectors to monitor and evaluate Strategic Objective 12 activities to keep partners aware and accountable based on the annual FNS operational plan; and consider alternative financing options to support nutrition data activities given funds are limited and each organization has their own priorities. For detailed information, you can visit:

https://datadent.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/11/DataDENT_Ethiopia-Nutrition-Finance-Landscaping.pdf

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