



World Health
Organization



JOHNS HOPKINS
UNIVERSITY



**Countdown to 2030 – Regional Initiative to Strengthen the
Analytical Capacity and Evidence for Nutrition in West Africa
- Advanced Analytical Workshop:
Dakar, 10 – 14 June 2019**



Report of the first workshop

JUNE 2019

INTRODUCTION

The Countdown to 2030 is an international consortium of institutions, UN agencies and individuals that aims to accelerate the momentum for ending preventable maternal, newborn and child deaths, and to help catalyze efforts to achieve the health-related Sustainable Development Goals.

The West and Central Africa Regional Initiative involves analytical workshops with intermediate phases for data compilation and analysis. The West African Health Organization (WAHO) has been leading the coordination of the WA initiative in collaboration with a consortium of institutions providing technical support.

Year 1 of the project, which started in 2018, focused on the progress and challenges that countries face in their attempt to achieve universal coverage for the continuum of care for RMNCH interventions.

Year 2 of the project is being implemented throughout 2019, and focuses on nutrition-related issues for women, children and adolescents in West Africa. Again, WAHO is serving as the regional lead organization, working closely with UNICEF, WHO, Alive & Thrive, and IFPRI/Transform Project.

This nutrition data analysis series, also involves two analytical workshops with an intermediate data compilation phase.

The first workshop of the series, which was held in Dakar, Senegal from 10 -14 June, 2019, brought together representatives of National Nutrition Programs, Health Information Units and research/statistics institutions from all the 15 ECOWAS Member States (2 participants per country). In all, there were about 53 participants (see attached list).

The workshop was facilitated by a team of experts from the Johns Hopkins University, International Center for Equity in Health at Federal University of Pelotas (Brazil), African Population and Health Research Center (APHRC), WHO, UNICEF, Alive and Thrive/FHI360, IFPRI/Transform Nutrition West Africa and WAHO. It was supported by Alive & Thrive/FHI360.

The main objectives of this first workshop were to:

- enhance evidence for nutrition interventions and coverage for women, children and adolescents in West Africa;
- strengthen the capacity for analysis of nutrition data from household surveys (e.g. DHS, MICS, others) and other sources;
- consider pathways to translate evidence into programming and policy.

At the end of 5 working days, participants were expected to answer the four questions below:

1. What are the levels and trends in national and subnational indicators of nutrition coverage interventions and status among women, children, and adolescents in West Africa?
2. Who are being left behind? What are socio-economic and geographic inequalities in nutrition coverage and status within and between countries in West Africa?
3. What are the current policy and data gaps associated with nutrition measurement?

4. What are the factors contributing to (a) present performance (good or poor), (b) progress over time, including:
- Socioeconomic and contextual factors,
 - Program and policy strength,
 - Intervention coverage?

The opening session was chaired by Dr Kofi Busia, the Director of Healthcare Services, who represented the DG of WAHO, and was assisted by representatives from WHO, UNICEF, IFPRI, APHR and Countdown 2030 Project Coordinator.

WORKING SESSIONS

During the five days, several sessions were covered with different topics such as:

- 1) Nutrition measurement,
- 2) Levels and trends in nutrition indicators,
- 3) Equity analysis in nutrition,
- 4) Subnational analysis of nutrition indicators.

In addition, current definitions of nutrition indicators were discussed. Participants were introduced to the Global Nutrition Targets

Tracking Tool, to assess the performance of their country. The concepts of absolute and relative inequality as well as simple calculations and analytical methods were presented and discussed in detail. The countries were then introduced to the use of several stratifiers such as regions, wealth, age group, gender, etc.



Session Photo

Participants then worked in groups to use the learned concepts and available data to observe trends for their own countries and to compare with other countries in the region. The findings were presented and discussed in plenary sessions.



Poster Session

They also made poster presentations, which were exhibited for assessment. These posters were rated by both the participants and the facilitators and the two best posters were rewarded (Ghana and Benin).

The last session consisted of the presentation of a data collection tool for the next workshop. An excel spreadsheet, which will be used to collect the

potential associated factors, was presented to the participants and discussed. Participants will have to fill it in according to their country's national and subnational data during the interim phase between the first and second workshop. This will be used to compute more elaborate indicators and to run more comprehensive analyses in the upcoming session.

At the end of this training workshop, the participants were given certificates of participation.

MAIN FINDINGS OF THE WORKSHOP

Research question 1: Levels and trends in national and subnational indicators of nutrition coverage interventions and status among women, children, and adolescents in West Africa

- Coverage of IYCF is generally low in West Africa: Only about a third of babies are exclusively breastfed and 13% are fed a minimum acceptable diet,
- Trends in exclusive breastfeeding are increasing but too slowly,
- Stunting levels remain high and declining only slowly,
- Obesity among Women in West Africa: Rising trend in obesity in West African region particularly rapid in Ghana and Togo, with few exceptions: Sierra Leone 2008-2013 & Senegal 2005-2010,

- Levels of Obesity by a woman's place of residence: Large capital disadvantage in all countries. The average regional capital level of obesity are 15%; double the regional mean prevalence of 7%,
- Half of all women 15-49 years are anemic in West Africa. During pregnancy, around 60% of women are anemic in the region;

Research question 2: Who are being left behind?

- Exclusive Breastfeeding by subnational unit in West Africa: At the subnational level, there are consistently wide inequalities in exclusive breastfeeding across countries,
- U5 stunting by subnational unit in West Africa: Large subnational inequities in stunting with no apparent consistent patterns,

Research question 3: The current policy and data gaps associated with nutrition measurement

- Major data gaps remain, especially for adolescents and adult women,
- Only 2 countries have some data for 2017 or 2018 in this category of population all others for 2010 and 2011;

Research question 4: the factors contributing to (a) present performance (good or poor), (b) progress over time, including socioeconomic and contextual factors, program and policy strength and Intervention coverage:

- For this question, an Excel sheet was introduced for the intermediate phase. The countries' participants will collect the data that can contribute to answering this question,
- The requested supplementary information covers:
 - Context (Epidemiological, Socio-economic and Cultural)
 - Natural context (Climate, environment)
 - Policy environment and financing
 - Food production
 - Health system strength
 - Population dynamics.

CONCLUSION AND KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

Overall, the first Regional Initiative to Strengthen the Analytical Capacity and Evidence for Nutrition in West Africa workshop was satisfactory. From the daily evaluation of the workshop, participants were generally satisfied with the content and the knowledge gained. They agreed to continue working during the intermediate phase, in preparation for the next workshop.

Suggested Publications

As a result of the workshop analyses, the following publication topics were proposed by the facilitators (country participants were invited to share additional publication ideas if interested):

- Paper 1: Trends, inequalities and determinants of nutrition status among adolescent girls and adult women in West Africa,
- Paper 2: Subnational inequalities in infant and child nutrition in West Africa,
- Paper 3: Monitoring nutrition status in West Africa: data, policy and program gaps.

Key recommendations for WAHO management

- ✓ Improve inter-country collaboration with such initiatives in order to strengthen the health information management systems of the region;
- ✓ Provide orientation about regional priorities and focus for Data Analysis;
- ✓ Guide the preparation of a regional report using identified key Nutrition indicators and priorities ;
- ✓ Follow up and provide technical support (when necessary) to countries to enable them to improve their data collection skills for developing good country profiles;
- ✓ Encourage countries to gather evidence which could be discussed at the ECOWAS nutrition forum.

NEXT STEPS

For the intermediate phase, participants were asked to collect useful and complementary information on each country's health system facility data.

The facilitators met after the end of the workshop to propose the following next steps:

1. Send the Excel sheet to countries for feedback by Friday June 21 2019;
2. Support countries during the intermediate phase, to obtain information on contextual factors (spreadsheet should be filled and sent by August 30 2019;
3. The second workshop will be held in October 2019 (probably 14th – 18th) in Dakar or Accra (tbc);
4. A first draft of the regional data report should be proposed by the end of August and finalized after the second workshop.

5. The final findings of the data analysis will be shared during the ECOWAS Nutrition Forum in November, at the Data Summit during the first quarter of 2020 and at other political and technical fora.

WORKSHOP MATERIAL

All the workshop material can be accessed via the following dropbox link:

<https://www.dropbox.com/sh/a0cf4hknprztbpj/AAA2I9NAyPVtDfcK7KBAbEUGa?dl=0>

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ANNEX

Annex 1: Workshop agenda

Countdown to 2030 – Regional Initiative to strengthen the analytical capacity and evidence for Nutrition in West Africa: Advanced Analytical Workshop

Summary Agenda

10-14 June, 2019

Dakar, Senegal

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
	Moderator: WAHO	Moderator: JHU	Moderator: APHRC	Moderator: A&T	Moderator: UNICEF
Morning part 1	Opening remarks 1. Objectives and general conceptual framework: Main research questions, expected products (JHU/MANITOBA) Country profile template (JHU)	4. Levels and trends: Analysis of anthropometric indicators in children (<i>Lecture and group work</i>) (UNICEF & WHO)	6. Country presentations of analysis results: levels and trends in nutrition intervention coverage and status (<i>selected country presentations</i>) (JHU)	8. Subnational analysis of nutrition indicators (<i>Lecture and group work</i>) (APHRC)	9. Country poster presentations (JHU)
Morning part 2	2a. Nutrition measurement: indicators, data sources and gaps (TRANSFORM&WHO) 2b. Nutrition Global Policy Reform (WHO)	4. Levels and trends: Analysis of anthropometric indicators in children (<i>Lecture and group work</i>) (UNICEF & WHO)	7. Equity analysis in nutrition: introduction and data analysis; HEAT and HEAT Plus (<i>Lecture, PELOTAS</i>)	8. Subnational analysis of nutrition indicators (<i>Group work</i>)	10. Data compilation during the intermediate phase in preparation for the next workshop (policy, financing, programs, routine data) (TRANSFORM) Closing remarks
Lunch break					
Afternoon part 3	3. Levels and trends in IYCF, and nutrition intervention coverage in children (<i>Lecture and group work</i>) (UNICEF)	5. Levels and trends: Analysis of nutrition indicators and nutrition intervention coverage among women and adolescent girls (<i>Lecture and group work</i>) (JHU)	7. Equity data analysis in nutrition (<i>group work and presentation, PELOTAS</i>)	Continued Preparation country posters	
Afternoon part 4	Group work (continued)	Group work (continued)	Poster Preparation	Continued poster preparation	
	Evaluation and wrap up (WHO/JHU)	Evaluation and wrap up (WHO/JHU)	Evaluation and wrap up (WHO/JHU)	Evaluation and wrap up (WHO/JHU)	

Annex 2: List of participants

LISTE DE PRESENCE/ATTENDANCE SHEET

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