

**GLOBAL FORTIFICATION
DATA EXCHANGE**


STAKEHOLDER CONSULTATION


**Understanding the needs of partners
and national implementers to make
informed decisions about their
fortification policies and programs**

**An in-country case study
with Sri Lanka**

7 July 2020

**SPECIAL THANKS TO RENUKA JAYATISSA FOR
ORGANIZING THE CONSULTATION AND
CONSOLIDATING FEEDBACK IN THIS REPORT**

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INTRODUCTION

Food fortification is one of the most scalable, sustainable and cost-effective interventions to combat micronutrient malnutrition.

Vitamin and mineral deficiencies affect people globally – impacting their health and limiting their ability to contribute to the economic well-being of their communities and countries.

The Global Alliance for Improved Nutrition (GAIN) and the Iodine Global Network (IGN) organized virtual orientation meetings in seven countries, to introduce the Global Fortification Data Exchange (GFDx) as a “one-stop shop” for harmonized data on fortification globally. The consultations were attended by representatives from government, development partners, donors, research and academic institutions, food regulators, and premix suppliers.



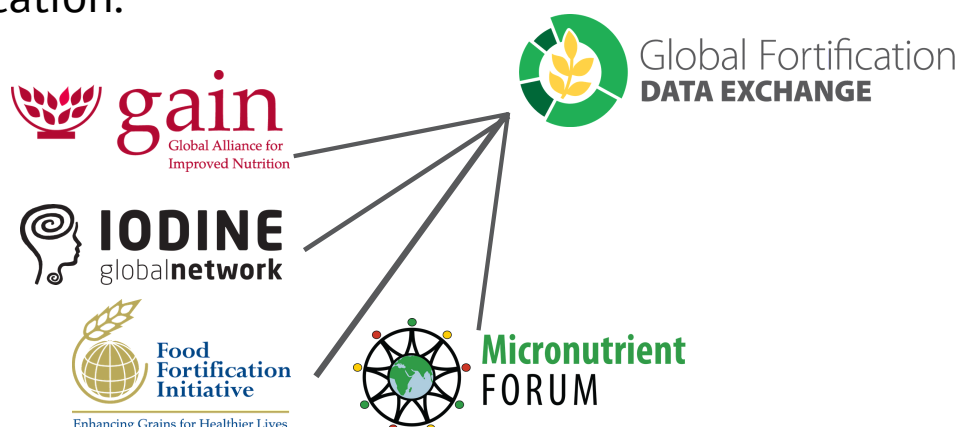
GOAL OF STAKEHOLDER MEETINGS

The goal during these virtual meetings was to get feedback on the GFDx platform from stakeholders, to understand their data needs and processes for decision making, and to find out how the GFDx website might be enhanced or refined to better support their decision-making processes.

RESPONDING TO A FORTIFICATION DATA CHALLENGE

During the first Global Summit on Food Fortification in Arusha, Tanzania, it was highlighted that there were many different stakeholders that collect and house data on fortification in different ways. There was no “one-stop shop” for harmonized data on fortification globally. As more countries began to adopt food fortification programs, stakeholders raised a call for better data accessibility to inform policy and identify populations in need, formalized in the 2015 Arusha Statement on Food Fortification.

As a response to this call for action, the Global Fortification Data Exchange (GFDx) was created, through a collaboration between various organizations: the Food Fortification Initiative (FFI), Global Alliance for Improved Nutrition (GAIN); Iodine Global Network (IGN), and the Micronutrient Forum (MNF), and supported by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation. Designed by the fortification community, the GFDx relies on the cooperation of both providers and users of data to help reach our aspiration for an improved data landscape in food fortification.



WHAT IS THE GFDx?


The GFDx is an online analysis and visualization tool for data on food fortification; it provides all the data necessary to track global progress on food fortification and to enable decision makers to use data to improve the quality of national fortification programs. The GFDx aggregates and visualizes data on five commonly fortified foods: **maize flour, oil, rice, salt, and wheat flour.**

The GFDx includes indicators on food fortification legislation from 1940 to present, fortification standards, food availability and intake, legislation scope, proportion of foods industrially processed, availability of regulatory monitoring protocols, fortification quality, health impact, comparison with WHO recommendations, and population coverage for 196 countries, among others. Within the GFDx site, users can generate custom maps, charts, tables, and plots or download data for offline analysis. The GFDx is continuously updated as new data and information become available.

WHERE DOES THE DATA COME FROM?

All data in the GFDx come from countries and national programs. Some had already been compiled globally, but independently managed, with separate databases for each food vehicle. Other important food fortification data only exist in national databases. Consolidating available data for the most commonly fortified foods allows national decision-makers to more holistically view their fortification programs, identify gaps, and make comparisons across foods and between countries. Importantly, compiling national and global data and consolidating data sets across standardized indicators reflects the need for a collaborative and crosscutting partnership in fortification in order to improve diets globally.

The GFDx represents a significant step forward in the effort to improve the availability, stewardship and presentation of fortification data. From non-profit organizations to government to private industry, a broad range of actors must come together for fortification programs to be successful.

A background image showing a group of people, likely a community or team, in a boat. They are wearing casual clothing, and one person is wearing a headband. The image is faded and serves as a backdrop for the text.

In thinking about this and the data value chain, the goal of the GFDx is to provide actionable information on fortification policies and programs that meets the diverse needs of stakeholders along the decision-making pathway

CONSULTATIVE DIALOGUES WITH IN- COUNTRY FORTIFICATION STAKEHOLDERS TO IMPROVE UPTAKE OF GFDx DATA

The GFDx was designed to empower governments, donors, implementing agencies, and other members of the global health and development community to reach populations affected by vitamin and mineral deficiencies with data-driven policy and programs. Despite global usage of the Global Fortification Data Exchange (GFDx) among various stakeholders (such as technical staff, academics, non-governmental organizations, donors and others) website analytics for the period between 2017-2019 demonstrate that usage is low among most LMICs.

To further increase usage and reinforce the value and use of the GFDx data for key stakeholders in-country for decision making, including governments, implementing agencies, and private sector partners to improve fortification programs, the GFDx held consultative dialogues with fortification stakeholders to better understand:

- 1 their processes for decision making regarding changes to fortification programs;
- 2 their data needs in order to facilitate discussions and decision making for fortification programs;
- 3 whether the GFDx meets those needs already, *or* whether a set of small tweaks/improvements to the site (in presentation of data, added visualizations or existing data as noted above) can be made to the GFDx to meet those decision-making needs; and
- 4 what emerges across country consultations and how do we integrate these elements into cross-country learnings.

TARGET STAKEHOLDERS

- Country stakeholders/key decision makers in government
 - Regional fortification association stakeholders
 - Development agencies or other implementing partners with broad presence and specific mandates in fortification
 - Researchers/academic institutions
 - National Fortification Alliance representatives
 - Industry Associations/grain, salt, oil producers
 - Civic associations that advocate for fortification such as consumer groups, parent associations and human rights groups
 - Other fortification stakeholders and decision makers along the decision-making pathway
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ATTENDEES

With the support of the IGN Regional Office and focal points in Sri Lanka, the GFDx leveraged fortification stakeholder groups to better understand the data needs and their feedback on the GFDx platform.

Attendees included representatives from:

- Medical Research Institute
- Nutrition Division, Ministry of Health
- UNICEF
- WFP
- WHO
- Sri Lanka Standards Institute
- University of Peradeniya
- Consumer Affairs Authority
- Directorate of Environment health, Occupation Health and
- Health Promotion Bureau
- Civil associations

KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations were considered important to the Sri Lanka Stakeholders group for improving the usage of GFDx database for programme discussions, reviews and decisions:

- **Inclusion of Health and Economic Impact data:** GFDx currently includes health impact data by country, but not economic impact.
- **Resources for development community and government:** Stakeholders emphasized the need for studies to convince the government of the potential benefits of implementing fortification in their country to address malnutrition as part of their national nutrition strategy.
- **Guidance on setting standards and choosing vehicles:** Stakeholders recommended that more guidance be available for decision makers on how to set and revise standards, as well as how to choose the best food vehicle for fortification within their country context.
- **Best practices and experiences in other countries:** Case studies of challenges faced by other countries while fortification needed to make decisions on fortifying food e.g., rice fortification.
- **Data on double fortifications of vehicles:** (i.e., salt with Iron and Iodine)

KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

“ —

“It [the GFDx] is really useful, the platform. We can collect most of the data we need for fortification standards; if we can use the experiences of other countries [like rice fortification] that would be very useful. People globally can start working more on these issues.”

-Representative from the Nutrition Division, Ministry of Health

“We are now in the process of selecting vehicles for fortification, so now we can compare with other countries on how to move forward. The database makes it easier for us to find out their decisions taken for legislation. In setting standards, if you have not included the website, the process other countries have followed, if you can kindly share with us, we can proceed with national standard setting processes.”

-Representative from the Sri Lanka Standards Institute

“This is a useful platform for both decision-making and for research purposes.”

-Representative from Medical Research Institute

— ”

CATEGORIZING RECOMMENDATIONS

	MEDIUM PRIORITY	HIGH PRIORITY
WITHIN SCOPE	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Health and Economic Impact data: GFDx currently includes health impact data by country, but not economic impact. Emphasized the need of impact studies to convince the government.• Guidance on setting standards and choosing vehicles	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Case studies of challenges faced by other countries while fortification needed to make decisions on fortifying food, i.e., Provide more information where countries can share more challenges, how they were addressed and success stories so that countries can learn from one another
OUT OF SCOPE		<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Data on double fortification of vehicles (i.e., salt with iron and iodine)

- 1.High Priority and Within Scope: The GFDx has the ability and resources to incorporate this recommendation now or in the near future.
- 2.High Priority and Out of Scope: The GFDx may fulfill this recommendation at a later time but the recommendation may require additional partners.
- 3.Medium Priority and Within Scope: The GFDx has the ability to complete this recommendation but may fulfill the recommendation at a later time with more resources.
- 4.Medium Priority and Out of Scope: The GFDx does not have the ability or resources to do this, but will consider this for future expansion of the GFDx.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

The Sri Lanka stakeholder group agreed on the usefulness of the database and felt that the country fortification dashboard is especially user-friendly. The stakeholder group identified areas where potentially more data would be helpful in their decision-making process, including information on double fortified vehicles; health and economic impacts of fortification to help them in their advocacy for government decision making, and best practices for fortification programming and policy making. Participants emphasized the importance of GFDx as Sri Lanka is in the process of selecting vehicles for fortification so that Sri Lanka can learn and compare the experiences of other countries to move forward.

It would be useful for the GFDx to have further guidance on standards setting and vehicle selection. With that said, best practices and lessons learned from other countries would be very useful, guidance on standards setting from other countries for Sri Lanka to use, choosing a new vehicle for fortification (e.g., rice) and revision of standards when necessary. Challenges faced by other countries with fortification are needed to better help decisions on fortifying food in Sri Lanka so they can learn from other countries' experiences.

NEXT STEPS

The Sri Lanka stakeholder consultation participants outlined several key next steps.

- Sri Lanka is in the process of selecting vehicles for fortification
- Participants emphasized the importance of GFDx in this process so Sri Lanka can learn and compare the experiences of other countries to move forward.
- Participants were also encouraged by the potential for guidance on standard revision and the sources of critical criteria that can be used for national standards on the GFDx in the future.

THE GFDX WILL CONSOLIDATE THE KEY RECOMMENDATIONS FROM EACH OF THE 7 STAKEHOLDER CONSULTATIONS HELD GLOBALLY TO IMPROVE THE GFDX PLATFORM TO BETTER SUPPORT DECISION MAKERS ON FORTIFICATION.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

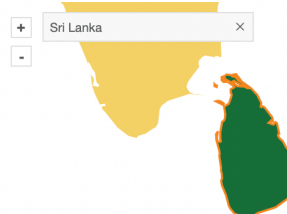
The GFDx team would like to thank the fortification community in coming together for this important meeting to discuss and identify how the GFDx can become beneficial and accessible to stakeholders involved with food fortification in Sri Lanka.

COUNTRY DASHBOARD

Last updated: 04-Feb-2021



Global Fortification
DATA EXCHANGE



Sri Lanka Fortification Dashboard

(Click on Section Headings, Numbers, and Nutrients where you see the hand icon to view more information)

Maize flour

Fortification legislation status unknown

Nutrients in maize flour fortification standard in Sri Lanka

No fortification standards

0 Countries in Asia have maize flour fortification standards

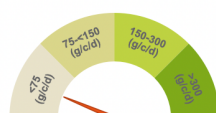
Fortification opportunity for maize flour in Sri Lanka

Population coverage of a food (whether fortified or not) represents the expected population that may benefit from fortification if it is implemented well. However, there are no data available on population coverage of maize flour in Sri Lanka.

Proportion of maize flour industrially processed

0.00 %

Source for industrially processed: Becky Tsang, Food Fortification Initiative. Personal communication. United States of America. 2017.



16.63

(grams/capita/day)
Daily food availability
[1, 3]

Oil

Fortification legislation status unknown

Nutrients in oil fortification standard in Sri Lanka

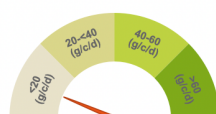
No fortification standards

11 Countries in Asia have oil fortification standards

Fortification opportunity for oil in Sri Lanka

Population coverage of a food (whether fortified or not) represents the expected population that may benefit from fortification if it is implemented well. However, there are no data available on population coverage of oil in Sri Lanka. Industrial processing of a food represents the industry's feasibility to fortify. However, there are no data available on industrial processing of oil in Sri Lanka.

20 40 60 80 100 %



3.6

(grams/capita/day)
Daily food availability
[1]

Rice

Fortification legislation status unknown

Nutrients in rice fortification standard in Sri Lanka

No fortification standards

5 Countries in Asia have rice fortification standards

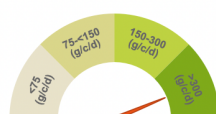
Fortification opportunity for rice in Sri Lanka

Population coverage of a food (whether fortified or not) represents the expected population that may benefit from fortification if it is implemented well. However, there are no data available on population coverage of rice in Sri Lanka.

Proportion of rice industrially processed

34.00 %

Source for industrially processed: World Food Programme. Rice Landscape Analysis, Feasibility of and opportunities for rice fortification in Sri Lanka. Sri Lanka. 2017. https://docs.wfp.org/api/documents/WFP-0000063797/download/?_ga=2.12029684.1544962218.1552061853-18193231.1552061853



456.55

(grams/capita/day)
Daily food availability
[1]

Mandatory Fortification since 1993 ✓

35 Countries in Asia have legislation for mandatory fortification of salt

Nutrients in salt fortification standard in Sri Lanka

Source: Minister of Health. Food (Iodization of Salt) Regulations, 2005. Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka. 05/August/2005. [http://bit.ly/2t9STHM]

38 Countries in Asia have salt fortification standards

Fortification opportunity for salt in Sri Lanka

Source: From UNICEF database:
UNICEF Expanded Global Databases, Salt HH with Salt Jan 2018

Presence of monitoring protocols for salt fortification in Sri Lanka

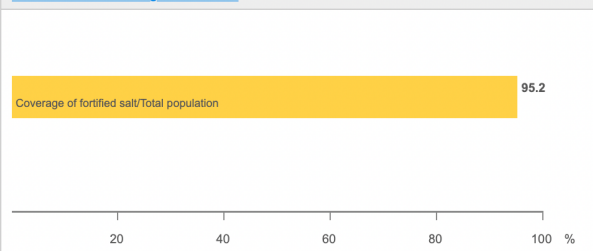
Source for external monitoring protocols: Worldatlas. The World's Top Salt Producing Countries. Extracted 20/August/2020. [<https://bit.ly/2U9Rggb>]. IndexMundi. Salt Production by Country (Thousand metric tons). Extracted 20/August/2020. [<https://bit.ly/2MWKwP>]. British Geological Survey. [more](#)

Source for import monitoring protocols: Minister of Health. Food (Imported Food Inspection) Regulations. 2001. 2001

4 Countries in Asia with mandatory fortification of salt have external monitoring protocols

3 Countries in Asia with mandatory fortification of salt have import monitoring protocols

Salt fortification coverage in Sri Lanka



31 Countries in Asia have fortification coverage data for salt

Wheat flour

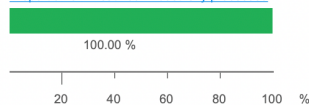
Fortification legislation status unknown

Nutrients in wheat flour fortification standard in Sri Lanka
No fortification standards

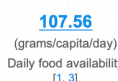
23 Countries in Asia have wheat flour fortification standards

Fortification opportunity for wheat flour in Sri Lanka

Proportion of wheat flour industrially processed



Source for industrially processed: Becky Tsang, Food Fortification Initiative. Personal communication. United States of America. 2017



References

1. **Food Availability (Total and Daily)** figures are from the most recent year available in the FAO Food Balance Sheets: <http://www.fao.org/faostat/en/#data/CL/metadata>.
2. **Daily Food Intake** for salt is from Powles J et al. *BMJ Open* 2013;3:e003733. doi:10.1136/bmjopen-2013-003733.
3. **Daily Food Availability/Intake** categories reflect WHO guidelines for the fortification of wheat and maize flour (http://www.who.int/nutrition/publications/micronutrients/wheat_maize_fortification/en) and for salt (http://www.who.int/nutrition/publications/guidelines/fortification_foodgrade_saltwithiodine/en).

Notes

- **Total Food Availability** refers to the total amount of the commodity available for human consumption during the year, whereas **Daily Food Availability** converts this volume into per capita per day estimates.
- **Daily Food Availability** can be considered a proxy for **Daily Food Intake**; **Daily Food Intake** is a measured estimate of human consumption, usually obtained through dietary surveys.
- **Year noted** refers to the year mandatory fortification legislation was originally passed.
- **Regions** reflect regional definitions by the World Bank: <https://unstats.un.org/unsd/methodology/m49/>.
- Industrial production of foods in manufacturing facilities is defined as: Oil – 5 MT/day rated capacity; Salt – 5,000 MT/year raw salt rated capacity; Rice – 5 MT/hour paddy processing rated capacity; Wheat and Maize Flours - 20 MT/day grain processing rated capacity.