INSPIRING THE SHIFT FROM NUTRITION POLICY TO IMPLEMENTATION: HOW EXISTING DATA ANALYSIS SUPPORT NUTRITION DECISION-MAKING IN GUATEMALA?

GSF Webinar on Guatemala case study, Perrine Geniez on behalf of Guatemala team
5th Dec. 2019
Presentation outline

1. Background on Guatemala & study context
2. Study’s objectives and questions formulation
3. Main results
4. Lessons & Conclusions
5. Using messages to influence high level policy dialogue
1. BACKGROUND ON GUATEMALA & STUDY CONTEXT
NIPN IN GUATEMALA

- **NIPN project**: implemented by the Tropical Agricultural Research and Higher Education Center (CATIE); started in August 2017 & operational mid-2018

- **Objective**: to make better use of existing multi-sectoral data for decision-making re: nutrition policies, programmes, planning and progress tracking of the “new stunting strategy” or ENPDC

- **Positioning**: support the Secretariat of Food and Nutrition Security (SESAN), the national institution responsible for multi-sectoral coordination of Food and Nutrition Security
GUATEMALA CONTEXT

• The ENPDC was designed in 2016 & was two years into implementation

• ENPDC 2016-2020 was a “new strategy”
  Compared to the previous strategy, it zoomed in on three levels:
  ✓ geographically (from 166 to 139 municipalities),
  ✓ target age group (from U5s to U2s),
  ✓ scope of intervention package (from 24 to 14 interventions)

• Little information on the ENPDC’s progress

• 2019 was a year of political transition due to Presidential’s elections

• Election's results to be known mid-2019 & new government to be in place early 2020
THE BIG DRIVING QUESTION
(OR STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE)

• Was the ENDPC achieving its targets and what were the progress at implementation level?
• Were the strategies leading to change in the nutritional status of the population? If no, why?
• Could desegregated data available on budget, expenditures, interventions and nutritional outcomes help answer these questions?
THE WINDOW OF OPPORTUNITY: YEAR 2019

2019 was key to show progress on the ENPDC

– Risk was that efforts of the new government will be focusing on defining a new strategy
– Design of strategies seemed to overcome implementation gains/progresses
– High advocacy messaging based on analysis was needed for the political transition
Framing the analysis: what was known?

- Comprehensive policy frameworks on stunting reduction BUT translating them into effective implementation likely to be the challenge
- HYPOTHESIS = coverage & quality & convergence likely not adequate to reach population impact?
- Analysing existing data needed to be comprehensive to generate a better understanding of what needed to happen, where?

→ Usefulness of the impact pathway approach:
Document where actions may be needed from investments to activities all the way
ASSUMPTIONS ABOUT THE DATA

• Data known to be available on budget allocation & expenditures at disaggregated level
• Data on interventions to be available from sectoral routine system
• Questioning about decentralized data on ENPDC interventions' coverage & progress?
Study’s specific objectives

• To analyse Guatemala’s progress in implementing multi-sectoral stunting reduction strategies,
  1. Programme for the Reduction of Chronic Malnutrition (PRDC 2006-2016)

• To demonstrate the potential of the NIPN approach to track country-level progress and inform decisions based on existing data
Methodology

• Mixed quantitative & qualitative methods
• Quantitative data analysis of food & nutrition security related budget allocations and expenditures to assess progress re: implementation of nutrition strategies over time

Limitations

• Comparable data across sectors are available only from 2012, not before.
• Lack of data on intermediate results (implementation and coverage of interventions)
  ➔ see recommendations
3. MAIN RESULTS
Despite a long history of consecutive policies to reduce stunting, malnutrition remains high: why?

- The pace of reducing stunting prevalence is slower than expected (average annual stunting reduction rate at 0.45% since 2005)

- **Guatemala needs to triple** in order to achieve the target of the Guatemala Development Plan K'atun 2030,
• What were the differences between the consecutive stunting reduction strategies, and how were strategies aligned with global evidence?

• Did public investments match the commitments made in the strategies?
No major changes in intervention package over time - contrary to strategies

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<th>Basic health/nutrition services</th>
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<td>Supplements Iron, FA women</td>
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NiPN: Plateformes Nationales d'information pour la Nutrition
ENPDC prioritizes immediate causes of undernutrition, with less attention for underlying and basic determinants

- Partial alignment to global evidence in Lancet

> The current ENPDC strategy is only partially aligned with global evidence-based recommendations. It includes five of the ten recommended nutrition-specific interventions and only three of the nine recommended nutrition-sensitive interventions. Out of 14 interventions proposed in ENPDC, eight are recommended at global level and the rest are mainly basic health services.

- Priority to interventions addressing immediate causes and some underlying

- No or limited dovetailing with strategies addressing structural determinants of stunting (poverty, improved education for women/girls, access to resources)
Since 2012, public investments trends in FNS policy have decreased in absolute terms, remaining around 2% of GDP.
Only 1/3 of requirements for full service delivery of strategies were fulfilled

• Except for a peak in funding 2012-14, due to the Zero Hunger Pact Plan, most strategies experienced a funding gap and lacked specific budget allocation for both nutrition-specific and sensitive interventions

• Domestic investment corresponded only to one-third of the funding required for adequate service delivery (ICEFI 2014).
POLICY - RELEVANT QUESTIONS - 2

• *How was the Food and Nutrition Security budget distributed across and within sectors?*

• *Were budget allocations and expenditures adequate across the strategy components to fully implement the comprehensive package as per design?*

• *Implementation capacity bottlenecks in achieving expected results?*
Guatemala analysis:
Budget allocation by sectoral intervention, across the strategies
Guatemala analysis:
Budget expenditures by interventions within the health sector, across the strategies
Guatemala analysis:
Budget expenditure on interventions within the health sector, by department (2016, ENPDC)
TAKE AWAY MESSAGES FROM GRAPHS

1. Nutrition strategies have not led to changes in budget over time: funding for direct nutrition interventions remains limited.

2. Despite strategies’ emphasis on multisectoral approach, by far the greatest share of the budget allocation went to the health sector, with much small shares, or none at all, going to interventions in other sectors.

3. No significant change in distribution between 2013 and 2017, indicating implementation of basic health and nutrition services has continued in the same way regardless of strategies.

4. Budget allocation in municipalities reflects national pattern and does not reflect focus on priority municipalities (ENPDC 2016).

5. Multisectorality well established in design but, in practice, sector decisions in planning and programming continue regardless of strategies (primarily through aggregation of sector activities without clear prioritization process by results).
POLICY - RELEVANT QUESTIONS - 3

- Are the Guatemala sectoral monitoring systems capable of tracking implementation and progress of the nutrition strategies?
- Did the data available allow to answer the initial questions?
A strong State Accounting system but weak sectoral monitoring systems

Guatemala has 3 advanced and integrated monitoring systems:
- sectoral monitoring systems
- Integrated System of State Accounting (SICOIN)
- national information system on food and nutrition security (SIINSAN)

Challenges
- Inconsistencies and lack of data compatibility across and within sectors (intervention categories not always comparable for monitoring purposes)
- Most sectors (except health), do not systematically collect or analyse data on coverage of interventions
- Lack of disaggregated information on indicators of outputs and outcomes related to nutrition
TWO PUBLISHED OUTPUTS

1. "Evolución de las estrategias de reducción de la desnutrición crónica en Guatemala"

2. "Inspiring the shift from nutrition policy to implementation: how existing data can support nutrition decision-making in Guatemala"
Conclusion 1:

The sharpened focus of the Guatemala nutrition strategies over time was not matched by a corresponding budget allocation, which was required for adequate implementation of the essential package of nutrition interventions, at the planned scale.

→ The ENPDC was unlikely to be implemented up to plan
Conclusion 2:

Budget allocations across sectors and interventions has not allowed sufficient resources to implement every component of the national strategy and did not address implementation bottlenecks.

➔ It is therefore improbable for the nutrition strategies to achieve their targets
Or
This explains at least partially why stunting reduction targets are not being achieved
Conclusion 3:

Guatemala needs to strengthen its monitoring systems to effectively track implementation and progress of its strategies, especially with regard to output and outcome indicators at the disaggregate level.

Each strategy creates new routine monitoring requirements, which are not captured/aligned by the sectoral monitoring systems, limiting ability to track progress.
Three lessons are drawn from the study findings

1. Align investments (financial and human) to strategy commitments to support implementation of nutrition interventions & achieve expected coverage.

2. Ensure stable and evenly balanced budget allocations across sectors and interventions to implement every component, while at the same time addressing implementation bottlenecks to achieve results.

3. Monitor output & intermediate outcome indicators to effectively track progress on strategy implementation.
Going back to the impact pathway logic: what conclusions can be made?

Insufficient data for analysis

- Financial & human resource investment below the needs of the nutrition strategy commitments

Data sufficient for partial analysis only

- Uneven budget allocations (marginal or unstable for some interventions) and variable implementation capacity

Insufficient data for analysis

- Coverage and/or integration of interventions unlikely to be adequate for effecting change

Outcomes

- Immediate, underlying and basic determinants unlikely to be addressed

Impact

- Stunting rate in 2018: 44.7%
- Nutrition strategy target in 2020: 31%

Insufficient (or lack of) coverage data and outcome level indicators in some sectors unable to influence strategic and operational planning
4. USING MESSAGING FOR HIGH LEVEL POLICY DIALOGUE
BIG POLICY MESSAGES FOR THE TRANSITION PERIOD

1) Actions to accelerate stunting reduction rate in Guatemala must focus on adequate **funding**

2) Focus need to be on **implementation** rather than design
USE OF THE KEY MESSAGING TO INFLUENCE POLICY DIALOGUE

- Presentation of findings to SESAN
- Ownership of the findings by SESAN
- Drafting key messages to relay during the transition period (parties campaigning)
- Support on key messages from EUD and donors’ network
- Presentation of key findings to a Congress session on food and nutrition security
- Working with Congress members to ensure continuity
TIMEFRAME & SUPPORT

Oct. 2018

January - March 2019 (February)

June 2019

September 2019

July 2019

July 2019
THANK YOU!

Questions?