

Report



NiPN

National Information
Platforms for Nutrition

2nd NIPN Global Gathering

Amsterdam, The Netherlands
22-24 May, 2019

Meeting report
NIPN Global Support Facility



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Summary

The 2nd NIPN Global Gathering took place in Amsterdam on May 22-24, bringing together 62 participants from 8 NIPN countries, members of the Expert Advisory Group and the initiative's donors. A lot of progress was made over the past year in implementation of the NIPN operational cycle: seven countries are on track with fully operational NIPN teams, in which policy and data components are working together. A massive amount of preparatory work has been done or is on-going in many of the NIPN countries, such as data landscapes, policy reviews, capacity strengthening, formulation of relevant policy questions, data analyses, engagement with policy makers... The countries were therefore in the driver's seat of this second Global Gathering, which was almost entirely organized and animated around a 'body of experience' showcased across fourteen presentations.

The objectives of the meeting were threefold: 1) to share implementation lessons learned across the NIPN countries; 2) to take steps towards institutionalising the NIPN approach in country policy cycle and 3) to identify needs for support in the next phase of NIPN implementation.

During the meeting, presentations, exchanges and discussions were organised around four main themes, for which recommendations and possible actions, both at country and global levels, have been put forward:

1. Implementation experiences, challenges and solutions (in relation to nutrition policy question formulation, data analysis and data management)
2. Continuous learning & adaptation
3. The road towards institutionalization of the evidence-informed policy dialogue
4. Working together (multisectoral/multi-stakeholders collaboration)

This report presents the key discussions points along these four themes, as well as the recommendations and action points that have been proposed.

Participants in the NIPN Global Gathering, Amsterdam, May 22-24 2019



Background

The **National Information Platforms for Nutrition** or ‘NIPN’ is a flagship programme funded by the European Commission, the UK Department for International Development and the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. It is part of the Nutrition Action Plan of the European Union which comprises two major commitments: reduce by 7 million the number of stunted children by 2025, and invest €3,5B in nutrition-specific and sensitive programmes. NIPN's purpose is to establish a policy dialogue between multisectoral policy makers and data owners/ analysts, analyse data and provide evidence in order to inform and strengthen decisions with respect to nutrition policies, programmes and investments, in 10 countries: Bangladesh, Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, Ethiopia, Guatemala, Kenya, Lao PDR, Niger, Uganda and Zambia.

At country level, NIPN is rooted within existing institutions and national multisectoral coordination systems for nutrition. From the analysis of available and shared data, it generates evidence that is used by (sub-)national stakeholders for developing policy, designing programmes and allocating investments, through the NIPN operational cycle consisting of three elements that constantly revolve and feed into each other:

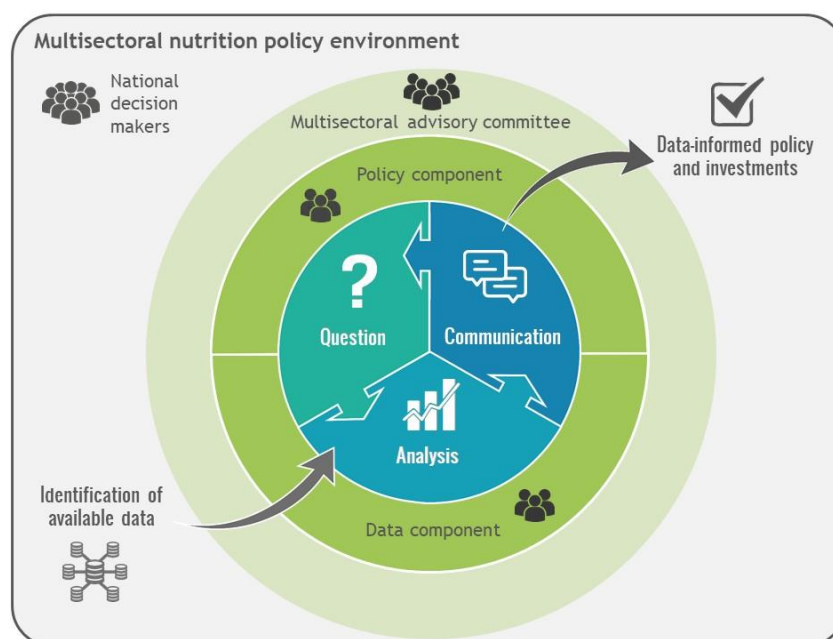
1. **Question** formulation based on government priorities;
2. **Analysis** of data to inform the questions;
3. **Communication** of the findings back to government.

The NIPN operational cycle is supported by the national NIPN structure made up of:

- Actors within a policy component which convenes and facilitates a multisectoral advisory committee, playing a key role in policy question formulation, interpretation of the results of data analysis and communication of findings.
- Actors within a data component that collates multisectoral data in a central repository and analyses the data.

Both components are hosted by national organisations. The NIPN country team, comprising staff from the national host organisations, staff on contract and technical advisors, is embedded within these two components and is responsible for implementing the NIPN approach.

NIPN set-up and operational cycle



A NIPN Global Support Facility (GSF) has been set up to guide countries in their approach and to organise cross-country exchanges, learning and adaptation of the NIPN approach.

Introduction & objectives

From 22-24 May, the 2nd NIPN Global Gathering took place in Amsterdam, which brought together 62 participants from 8 NIPN countries, members of the Expert Advisory Group and the initiative's donors (EU, DFID, BMGF) (see the full list of participants in **Appendix A**).

The nature of this meeting was quite different from the first global meeting in July 2018, as a lot of progress was made over the past year in implementation of the NIPN operational cycle. Seven countries are on track with fully operational NIPN teams, in which policy and data components are working together. Though it took longer than planned to set up the platforms at country level, this time was in many cases needed for consultation and creating ownership. It is important for the success of NIPN to carefully embed the platform in existing national nutrition systems and obtaining high-level political support (presentations by Lao PDR, Uganda, Niger, Ethiopia, Côte d'Ivoire). A massive amount of preparatory work has been done or is on-going in many of the NIPN countries, such as data landscapes, policy reviews, capacity strengthening. Guatemala shared its approach to setting up the NIPN platform at the subnational level. Ethiopia shared its short and long term approach to capacity building, which takes into account individual, institutional and systemic levels. Formulation of relevant policy questions is being undertaken in close engagement with key actors from various sectors. Two countries have undertaken data analyses and have engaged or are about to engage with policy makers about the findings. The countries were therefore in the driver's seat of this second Global Gathering, which was almost entirely organized and animated around a 'body of experience' showcased across fourteen presentations.

Three countries have not yet been able to catch up with implementation. Kenya, though present, has not been able to start implementation due to administrative issues of fund transfer to the implementing institutions, though team recruitment has started. Bangladesh and Zambia did not participate in the Global Gathering: the Bangladesh team wanted to focus their efforts on implementation which has just started and Zambia is awaiting a decision by the country's EU Delegation.

A number of the members of the Expert Advisory Group (EAG) participated in the Global Gathering sessions, which followed the EAG meeting in the same location.

The objectives of the meeting were to:

- Share implementation lessons learned across the NIPN countries
- Take steps towards institutionalising the NIPN approach in country policy cycle
- Identify needs for support in the next phase of NIPN implementation

Four larger themes were discussed during this meeting:

1. Implementation experiences, challenges and solutions (in relation to nutrition policy question formulation, data analysis and data management)
2. Continuous learning & adaptation
3. The road towards institutionalization of the evidence-informed policy dialogue
4. Working together (multisectoral/multi-stakeholders collaboration)

This report is structured around the key discussion points, recommendations and possible actions for each of the themes.

The detailed agenda is provided in **Appendix B** and the presentations are available online: <http://www.nipn-nutrition-platforms.org/2nd-NIPN-Global-Gathering-Amsterdam-May-22-24-2019>

1. Implementation experiences, challenges and solutions

Countries presented their success stories, experiences and challenges over multiple sessions throughout the meeting. The experiences related to the different steps in the NIPN operational cycle, such as:

- Institutional set-up of NIPN, embedded in existing structures
- Formulation of nutrition policy questions
- Data analysis
- Data management

A number of challenges were highlighted during these presentations. On the last day, countries rated their main priorities: the highest rates related to immediate and practical operational challenges (see Table 1 below). Countries found it most challenging to concretely involve the sectors in the NIPN, which also resonates in the second challenge on getting data from the sectors. The third key challenge was how identify strategic priorities.

Subsequent plenary and group discussions were then geared towards discussing potential solutions to these challenges. Key points of these discussions are presented below.

Table 1: Main challenges encountered as rated by countries

Main Challenges identified	Priority 1	Priority 2	Priority 3	Overall Score*
Engaging with sectors	5	1		17
Identifying strategic priorities	2	1		8
Getting data from sectors		3	2	8
Harmonising data	1	1		5
Producing reliable data		2	1	5
Using the impact pathways approach			2	2
Telling a story			2	2
Valuing the background work as an output			1	1
Selecting a target audience				0

Engaging with sectors

Five countries out of 8 identified this challenge as their number 1 priority. There is a real challenge to engage with sectors other than Health and get sectors that implement nutrition-sensitive interventions on board, but also ministries such as Justice, Planning and Finance. Some positive concrete experiences were shared during the meeting.

- Ethiopia decided to purposefully focus on collaboration with the WASH sector for the first year of the NIPN to concentrate their efforts and learn in a first phase, with the objective to involve other sectors in a second phase.
- Niger shared their strategy in working with different line ministries, which is based on three axes: 1. Governance and coordination of the sectors' contributions to the National Plan of Action on Nutrition; 2. Supporting the quality of routine data and management of information systems of key nutrition sensitive sectors; and 3. Involving staff from different sectors in capacity building efforts. NIPN in Niger also raised awareness during parliamentary sessions on nutrition and evidence based decision-making. Subsequently they involved the sectors at every step of the question formulation process to get their buy-in.
- Several countries (Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, Ethiopia, Kenya, Niger) mentioned that assigning focal persons for nutrition in each ministry plays in favour of engagement and sustainability.

Identifying strategic priorities

Identifying strategic priorities and formulating policy-relevant questions are key challenges for countries. As stated by Kenya: “*Formulating questions is not an easy business*”. However, whereas the guidance may seem overwhelming, once teams go through the process it becomes clearer. The following key points were made:

- Broad concerns / questions by decision makers are highly political and need to be translated into more specific technical ones, using impact models - this is the role of the policy experts working at technical level (Niger, Guatemala).
- It is not easy to engage sectors in the question formulation process: a relevant entry point can help to kick-start the question formulation process. Such a window of opportunity can be the development of a new strategic plan, the analysis of a recent survey (Lao PDR) or new data (Ethiopia on nutrition resource mapping), upcoming elections (Guatemala). A NIPN Dashboard could also provide an entry point for discussion with policy decision makers, and is very useful to show data gaps in terms of availability and quality of data. This needs to be planned from the start.
- The question may come from any source, as long as it is a nutrition relevant policy question, answerable with existing data and leading to ‘action’.
- Mobilise the MAC or use the existing framework for multisectoral nutrition dialogue (inter-ministry consultation in Niger, National Nutrition Council in Burkina Faso or National Nutrition Plan Steering Committee in Ethiopia) to identify strategic priorities and formulate questions based on consensus. Systematic methods to assess priority exist (e.g. WHO) but may not be sufficient to replace a qualitative discussion with key actors about the priorities.
- The ‘quality’ of the questions (in terms of relevance, specification) is a pre-condition of the quality of the analysis.

Getting data from sectors

This remains a concern for NIPN teams, even in countries where there is an enabling legal framework (Guatemala, Ethiopia, Lao PDR and Uganda). Good practices on how to stimulate and enhance data sharing were discussed:

- There are potentially hundreds of indicators to consider (see extensive work of Niger). To avoid a long discussion, it is recommended to start with the indicators identified in the Multisectoral Plan of Action for Nutrition.
- There is a need to build trust and create individual relationships with data stakeholders and explain why and how their data will be used (Ethiopia, Uganda).
- In Côte d’Ivoire, the NIPN host organisation has the mandate to monitor the progress of nutrition multisectoral indicators. They work with sectors to improve sectoral routine information systems, provide adequate IT hardware and software and support sectors in capacity strengthening related to data quality, data harmonization workshop and data analysis.
- NIPN dashboards can be quite useful in identifying and showing data gaps in terms of availability and quality and stimulate a discussion around potential steps towards filling these data gaps with key nutrition actors and data producers/owners.

Harmonisation of data

Burkina Faso, Niger and Côte d'Ivoire shared their respective experience and progress in the design of a centralised information system. Burkina Faso and Niger made use of an existing data management system at INS, and implement a validation process for uploading any new dataset.

The harmonisation of data and data presentation (e.g. the use of cut-off values in maps) is essential to the analysis and interpretation of data. One also needs to take into account the issue of missing data - e.g. for stunting as most stunted children may not come to the health centres and are not included in the statistics.

Producing reliable data / results

A key theme throughout the meeting was the recognition that the platforms' credibility will be judged by the quality (at least perceived quality) of its outputs: the information provided by the NIPN needs to be reliable, credible and actionable.

- The selection and presentation of indicators in the NIPN dashboard needs to be done carefully to avoid that data are interpreted wrongly. The complexity of data cannot be presented in a dashboard so there are judgment calls to be made on which data to present or not (e.g. in case confidence intervals around averages are too wide or overlapping), and accompany the visuals with key messages and related questions.
- It is important not to 'air your dirty laundry in public' - meaning that when the story is not clear or too complex or we do not know the answer to the next question (pre-empt) - one should refrain from telling that story.

In this regard, the next years of implementation and technical assistance will be key in ensuring that NIPN operational cycle is not only being implemented but also has the ability to generate 'good quality outputs'. NIPN country teams realize the importance of having good data quality but may not focus enough on conducting the adequate data analysis and provide careful interpretation, yet.

A number of experts also considered that the platforms' credibility will be judged by the quality of its outputs and for that matter, do regard the next one to two years of implementation and GSF support as crucial. As one expert put in "*the model is now operational, but it remains to see if it is viable*".

Using the impact pathway approach

The added value of NIPN is to interpret the results and frame contextualised information in relation to development issues. Impact pathways are helpful to unpack the questions and make the link with the data. NIPN teams need to be critical about the (sectoral) nutrition pathways in their country, asking: what changed or did not change? Why did this happen and how? This will help to shape the story of strategic issues: for instance, describe the situation or changes in financial or human resource inputs at the beginning of the impact model and tell the story on how this relates to changes over time in policy and programme implementation. Or starting from the impact end of the model: what are the geographic / time variations in nutritional indicators and how do they relate to geographic / time variations in determinants of nutrition or implementation of nutrition programmes or interventions. Yet, country teams struggle with how to use the impact pathway in practice.

It is recommended that the GSF elaborates additional guidance, documents and shared experiences between NIPN countries.

Telling a story

The importance of the “storytelling” was a recurrent theme both during the EAG meeting and the Global Gathering: both meetings emphasized the need of ‘having a story to tell’ from the very beginning of the process, starting with the identification of strategic priorities and question formulation up to the dissemination of findings.

At the start of the process, there is a need to have a vision on 1) what is being studied, 2) why, 3) who is the target audience for the findings and 4) what are the findings trying to influence.

At the end of the process, there is a need to have the capacity to interpret results and to formulate/package messages: they need to be told in a way that resonates for decisions makers and that allows them to take appropriate actions. Skills in verbal and written communication may need to be strengthened or outsourced from external specialists.

Strategic allies are important to help NIPN to get the messages right and to get the messages out.

Value background work as an output

Before conducting multisectoral nutrition analyses, some preparatory work is necessary. Several countries presented the vast amount of preparatory work that already took place in the first year of implementation: policy review, assessment of nutrition strategic priorities, inventory of information systems, diagnostic of data environment, structural work on data quality issues from national systems. The experts of the EAG recognise the value of preparatory work and recommend capturing this work in concrete NIPN outputs, which could be shared at country level, amongst NIPN countries or with a broader set of interested actors.

The work of Niger, which has no official list of indicators to monitor the progress of the National Plan for Action for Nutrition, offers a good example. The NIPN team reviewed, with an initial GSF support, around 1,000 indicators from the sectoral routine monitoring systems, assessing their quality against different criteria. The results show that when applying all quality criteria, 98 of those indicators qualify while around 300 do when applying a less stringent set of criteria. As mentioned by a member of the EAG: *“I have been working 30 years on nutrition and health data. I perfectly understand the vast amount of preparatory work that is needed and it is always under-estimated. The work you are doing is both ambitious and very much needed.”*

Niger and Guatemala both shared documents capturing their progress with the other countries in the meeting.

2. Continuous learning and adaptation

Both the EAG meeting and the Global Gathering concurred in recognizing that ‘learning and adaptation’ at country and global level is a theme of major importance for NIPN to sustain current efforts.

Ethiopia shared their practice with the example of the demonstration pilot focusing on WASH & Nutrition. For this pilot:

- The entire process is captured, documented and archived;
- Reflection moments for the entire team are built-in into the planning;
- Gaps in expertise are identified which can then immediately be addressed; and
- Team composition is continuously adapted to respond to evolving needs.

‘Learning and adaptation’ is not a new concept, and exists in multiple forms (a member of the EAG referred amongst others to UNICEF’s triple A cycle: Assessment, Analysis, Action).

However it was concluded that learning by doing is not sufficient and it is important to put in place a purposeful and systematic learning and adaptation strategy at both country and global level.

It is recommended that each country should, at regular intervals, step back, reflect and document: 1) what are the problems; 2) why does this problem exist; and 3) what can be done about it? Documenting failures is equally important to learning as documenting successes. NIPN teams may involve their extended network of nutrition stakeholders in these reflections (not only government, but civil society, academia, UN) as they bring additional expertise and strategic thinking.

Simultaneously the GSF will play a key role to support countries in developing and implementing / guiding a ‘learning and adaptation strategy’ and to develop a solid learning strategy at global level by capturing the variability across countries in order to maximize the learning from this experience: what works where?

Panel session at the NIPN Global Gathering, Amsterdam, May 22-24



3. The road towards institutionalisation

While a lot of work still needs to be done to ensure the NIPN operational cycle is being well implemented in the different countries it is important to start reflecting about the future beyond project support. Over the coming years, the GSF would like to encourage each NIPN country to develop its own roadmap towards institutionalisation. The goal is to institutionalise an evidence-based dialogue and decision-making in nutrition.

Three countries at different implementation stages (Niger, Côte d'Ivoire and Uganda) were able to present elements of institutionalization / sustainability for which they are already putting concrete activities in place. Their actions include:

- NIPN team is already embedded inside the existing structure (INS) and now needs to be transformed in a department or direction (Niger).
- The government contributes to the funding of NIPN through provision of human resources (Côte d'Ivoire) and project-based staff has the same benefits as other staff (Uganda).
- Through the provision of high quality services, ensure that NIPN becomes indispensable.
- A study on sustainability is planned in Niger.

The NIPN team cannot do this alone, it needs to have very active engagement with other stakeholders such as the UN agencies which provide strong support to collectively share data and information. There was a consensus on the need to further frame and guide 'institutionalisation' / 'sustainability' so that all countries work towards that end.

However, several experts reiterated word of caution about this objective and advised to bring expectations to a realistic and achievable level for the NIPN initiative over the next two years. Experts and countries also stressed that 'institutionalisation' / 'sustainability' will depend on the quality of NIPN outputs and its ability to respond to stakeholders' demand, making those implementation priorities the conditions of 'institutionalisation' / 'sustainability'.

Presentation at the NIPN Global Gathering, Amsterdam, May 22-24 2019



4. Working together

Capacity development remains a key objective of the initiative, as expressed by the country teams. The elaboration of the Ethiopia's capacity building strategy was an example of good practice shared with all: the strategy tackles both immediate, short and longer term needs. It also illustrates how it addressed individual, organisational and systemic levels. It also shows the challenge in advancing concomitantly capacity development's needs and activities generating valuable outputs.

As part of the capacity development needs, the meeting confirmed that the 'soft skills acquisition' like strategic influencing, partnership brokering, negotiation and consensus building, leadership and facilitation is a focus area. Some countries expressed difficulties, as these skills may not be sufficiently available within the teams (Côte d'Ivoire, Burkina Faso). The GSF may consider playing a key role in this; other resources from existing initiatives could be tapped into (e.g. the UN network which has material for REACH facilitators or the leadership training of SUN focal points) as discussed at the EAG meeting.

Country group work at the NIPN Global Gathering, Amsterdam, May 22-24



Recommendations

The Global Gathering concluded that NIPN has the potential to be a ‘game changer’ in the use of data and influencing decision making in nutrition. Key conclusions and recommendations, based on the presentations and discussions, are listed below.

1. Valuing intermediate preparatory work and capturing concrete outputs

- A vast amount of work has already been done by NIPN countries, which will facilitate the implementation of the operational cycle. This work, encompassing nutrition policy cycle reviews, data landscapes and reviews of nutrition indicators, is of relevance to many other nutrition actors and should therefore be valued and turned into concrete outputs for sharing within and across countries.

2. Strengthening implementation to move from theory to practice is the key priority of NIPN over the next 2 years

- The process of identification of strategic priorities needs to be facilitated, GSF shall strengthen country skills and share best practices.
- NIPN must develop capacities for using the ‘impact pathways approach’ in order to enable question formulation and storytelling.
- NIPN must create strategic opportunities, learn from and document experiences in implementing the NIPN approach at subnational level (Guatemala, Lao PDR, Kenya), as example for other countries.
- It is essential to go through the NIPN operational cycle repeatedly, to learn from and document experiences in order to be able to change behaviours and ways of working and sustain or institutionalise the approach. It is highly recommended that support to NIPN continues beyond the current 2020/21 contracts.
- To overcome the number 1 challenge, countries and the GSF must identify best practices to engage sectors and identify windows of opportunity to enter into a policy dialogue.

3. Capacity strengthening is a key investment and should include strategic functional skills

- Capacities development is a key element of NIPN and each country needs to define what can be realistically achieved during the first phase, depending on their starting point. The guidance note on the capacity development plan is useful to this respect.
- NIPN also plays a key role in strengthening capacities of national partner institutions and actors in the extended nutrition system. This work is continuous and may need sustaining beyond 2020/21.
- Strategic capacity, leadership and communication skills are equally important as technical skills.
- The NIPN country teams need to tap into the expertise and experience of the extensive nutrition network, such as the UN agencies, or other stakeholders in the SUN movement to strengthen their own capacity, but also collaborate to strengthen the capacity of the extended nutrition system.

4. NIPN's must use data and information to tell a clear and simple story

- It is of paramount importance to include and encourage active participation of key stakeholders and actors of the extensive network in analysing, interpreting and communicating findings of data analysis. This will also create demand for NIPN services over time.
- The NIPN country teams must develop capacity in interpretation of findings, writing and communicating to decisions makers.
- The use, interpretation and dissemination of NIPN dashboards to decision makers must be improved. Presentation of findings should be carefully thought through and not lead to misinterpretation.
- The NIPN country teams must focus on 'storytelling' from the start of the process, as the story is defined by the choice of strategic priorities and corresponding policy questions, and the possible actions the findings may influence.

5. Producing high quality NIPN outputs is required to establish the credibility of the platform

- Though NIPN teams currently focus on issues around raw data quality and data collection, there is an additional challenge in doing high quality and relevant data analysis and careful interpretation. This message needs to be reinforced to ensure that there is no room for misinterpretation by policy makers.
- There is a need to set up a quality control mechanism for NIPN outputs, par example peer review with key researchers at national level, institutional review process when working with a research organisation, peer review by international experts including EAG members.
- Key priority for 2020/21 is to create a body of evidence to demonstrate to a key primary audience at national level that the NIPN concept works and is viable. This means planning and generating outputs for each NIPN country. The GSF must support countries in this process. Moreover, the GSF shall consolidate the knowledge and cross-countries learning for a secondary global audience.

6. NIPN teams should implement a systematic and purposeful learning and adaptation strategy

- A learning and adaptation strategy does not have to be a complicated additional activity but it does require careful documentation and archiving, planning reflection, and adapting where needed.
- Countries, with GSF support, must agree on their priority learning objectives regarding what is working and what is not working, and how they can best identify lessons and adaptation solutions.
- The key word here is 'adaptation' and its importance to course-correct implementation, as adaptation is not only key to improve quality of implementation but also to the team's empowerment and ultimately to the institutionalisation of the approach.

7. Institutionalization

- The GSF together with NIPN country teams shall engage in the discussion of the appropriate terminology ('institutionalisation', 'sustainability') and agree on a useful and feasible framework.
- As done in the meeting, lessons can be learnt and best practices documented in a number of countries (Côte d'Ivoire, Niger, Uganda).
- Donors need to be engaged early on in discussions with the local partner organisations, as they will play an important role in encouraging and enabling the road towards institutionalisation.

Next steps and action points

On the basis of the outcomes of this Global Gathering and the recommendations as formulated above, the GSF has identified next steps and actions points to implement the recommendations, which may also lead to or require action to be taken by the NIPN teams in-country. During group work sessions, country teams also discussed a number of actions they could take to overcome some of the challenges faced. Those 'country commitments' are provided in **Appendix C**.

- Countries must capitalise on the preparatory work done as part of the NIPN operational cycle and identify which ones can be turned into concrete outputs for dissemination, for which purpose and which audience. The GSF will support countries in the selection, development and review of the outputs, and in sharing with other NIPN countries or beyond (if applicable)
- The GSF should provide continued support to countries to strengthen implementation of the NIPN operational cycle specifically with regard to the challenges identified in this meeting (e.g. engaging with sectors, data sharing, using impact pathway, prioritisation of policy questions, creating demand for information) amongst others through in-country and long-distance support, capturing and sharing practical examples, country case studies and lessons learnt, and strengthening the TA networks.
- In collaboration with countries and EAG members, the GSF must develop a quality review framework, to ensure that the produced outputs are timely, of satisfactory quality, and avoiding misleading conclusions. The framework will allow independent peer review of key milestones along the NIPN operational cycle. The GSF will work with each country to resolve how to apply the framework in their country context.
- The NIPN country teams should map out and actively engage the key actors of the extended network which can support NIPN to provide technical assistance, to strengthen capacity, to do analyses that NIPN cannot do, or to help tell the story. The GSF will support the countries in this and will seek active support from donors and experts to mobilise this network of other nutrition actors.
- The GSF will support NIPN countries to identify windows of opportunity requiring concrete quality outputs that can be produced as low-hanging fruits to establish NIPN credibility as soon as possible
- The GSF must develop a Global Learning and Adaptation strategy till end of first phase country contracts (2022), including the identification of key outputs / publications. At the same time the GSF will work with countries to identify which Learning and Adaptation activities they could undertake and how they could capture, document and reflect on challenges and solutions.
- The GSF will support countries to improve collaboration within the NIPN team and between NIPN and other nutrition actors, for example, by capturing examples and lessons learnt.
- The GSF will organise a functional and strategic capacity skills training for selected individuals of NIPN partner organisations before end of 2019, addressing skills in leadership, communication, building a team, storytelling and knowledge brokering.
- The GSF must move the discussion on institutionalisation of the NIPN approach forward and develop a broad framework for use at country level, in close collaboration with country partners, donors and experts.

In conclusion: this 2nd NIPN Global Gathering was an amazing source of inspiration. Its agenda was owned by the participating countries, which shared concrete progress and successes and were not afraid to discuss their challenges in order to identify solutions and opportunities. The presence and contributions of the experts of the EAG enriched the plenary and individual discussions. With continued progress, the National Information Platforms for Nutrition have huge potential to become a game changer in use of data for nutrition and influencing decision-making.

Appendix A: List of participants

Title	Surname	Name	Country	Organisation
M	Abera	Andinet	Ethiopia	Ethiopian Public Health Institute
M	Aboubacar	Mahamadou	Niger	Haut Commissariat à l'Initiative 3N
M	Ahmed	Abel	Ethiopia	Ethiopian Public Health Institute
Mrs	Samuel	Aregash	Ethiopia	Ethiopian Public Health Institute
M	Arévalo	Emerson	Guatemala	Ministry of Social Development
M	Assemian	Ake Arthur Gislain	Côte d'Ivoire	Secrétariat Technique Permanent du Conseil National de la Nutrition
M	Aweke	Temesgen	Ethiopia	Ethiopian Public Health Institute
Mrs	Badham	Jane	South Africa	JB Consult
Mrs	Bossuyt	Anne	Ethiopia	IFPRI
M	Boussari	Landry	Burkina Faso	Institut National de la Statistique et de la Démographie
Mrs	Broin	Mélanie	France	Agropolis International
Mrs	Brown	Lindsay Jane	UK	DFID
M	Chalimbaud	Julien	France	Agropolis International
Mrs	Chanthalanouvong	Thiraka	Lao PDR	Lao Statistics Bureau
Mrs	Compaore	Ella	Burkina Faso	Ministère de la Santé
Mrs	Da Silva Sorneta	Carla	Belgium	European Commission
M	Dakurah	Prosper	Lao PDR	UNICEF
Mrs	De Bustos	Cecilia	Uganda	UNICEF
Mrs	De Onis	Mercedes	Switzerland	WHO
Mrs	Dury	Sandrine	France	Cirad
M	Eshetu	Solomon	Ethiopia	Ethiopian Public Health Institute
M	Figueroa	Marlon	Guatemala	Ministry of Health
M	Fornari	Bryan	Lao PDR	European Commission
M	Garnier	Denis	Côte d'Ivoire	UNICEF
Mrs	Geniez	Perrine	France	Agropolis International
Mrs	Genye	Tirsit	Ethiopia	IFPRI
Mrs	González	Mina	Guatemala	CATIE
Mrs	Gostelow	Lola	UK	Consultant
Mrs	Gounabou	Liliane Marie Aline	Burkina Faso	Ministère de la Santé
Mrs	Hayashi	Chika	USA	UNICEF
Mrs	Heidkamp	Rebecca	USA	Johns Hopkins University

Mrs	Jalliet	Elise	France	Agropolis International
M	Kabunga	Nassul	Uganda	UNICEF
Mrs	Kashyap	Purnima	Italy	SUN UN Network
M	Katembu	Titus	Kenya	European Commission
M	Keita	Youssef	France	Agropolis International
Mrs	Kihyu	Evelyne	Kenya	Kenya Institute for Public Policy research
M	Koffi	Paulin	Côte d'Ivoire	UNICEF
M	Lemma	Ferew	Ethiopia	Ministry of Health
M	Mahamane	Balarabé Issiak	Niger	Institut National de la Statistique
M	Martinez Farfan	René	Guatemala	SESAN
M	Muwonge	James	Uganda	Uganda Bureau of Statistics
M	Nakelse	Pascal	Burkina Faso	Institut National de la Statistique et de la Démographie
M	Nderitu	Paul Maina	Kenya	Kenya National Bureau of Statistics
M	N'Dri	Ahoutou Louis	Côte d'Ivoire	Secrétariat Technique Permanent du Conseil National de la Nutrition
M	N'Dri	Konan Faustin	Côte d'Ivoire	Secrétariat Technique Permanent du Conseil National de la Nutrition
M	Nganzi	Patrick	Uganda	Office of the Prime Minister
Mrs	N'Goran	Yboue Patricia	Côte d'Ivoire	Secrétariat Technique Permanent du Conseil National de la Nutrition
Mrs	Omar Ibrahim	Haoua	Niger	Institut National de la Statistique
M	Ouedraogo	Boureima	Burkina Faso	Institut National de la Statistique et de la Démographie
Mrs	Ounavong	Sisomboun	Lao PDR	Ministry of Planning and Investment
M	Pelletier	David	USA	Cornell University
Mrs	Perry	Abigail	UK	DFID
M	Poirlé	Guillaume	Niger	SOFRECO
M	Rasphone	Sitthiroth	Lao PDR	Centre for Development Policy Research
M	Rawat	Rahul	USA	Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation
Mrs	Recinos	Sandra	Guatemala	CATIE
M	Sani Abdou	Mahaman	Niger	Haut Commissariat à l'Initiative 3N
M	Say	Eduardo	Guatemala	CATIE
Mrs	Van Liere	Marti	France	Agropolis International
M	Vanhaeverbeke	Pierre-Luc	Ethiopia	European Commission
M	Voladet	Saykham	Lao PDR	National Institute for Economic Research

Appendix B: Meeting agenda

Day1: Wednesday, May 22 nd	
09.00-12.30	Celebrating progress
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ 09.00-09.30 - Welcome addresses and introduction ■ 09.30-10.30 - Sharing countries' success stories: Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, Ethiopia, Guatemala ■ 10.30-11.00 - Coffee/tea break ■ 11.00-12.00 - Sharing countries' success stories: Kenya, Lao PDR, Niger, Uganda ■ 12.00-12.30 - Successes and lessons across NIPN countries: presentation by GSF + panel session 	
12.30-14.00	Lunch break
14.00-17.40	What does the future looks like?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ 14.00-15.30 - Institutionalization of NIPN: presentations and panel session ■ 15.30-16.00 - Coffee/tea break ■ 16.00-17.30 - Learning & adaptation at country level: presentations, group work and plenary discussion ■ 17.30-17.40 - Wrap-up 	
Day2: Thursday, May 23 rd	
08.30-12.30	Sharing experiences and lessons from the question formulation process
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ 08.30-09.00 - Introduction and framing ■ 09.00-10.30 - Country experiences, challenges and solutions: presentations ■ 10.30-11.00 - Coffee/tea break ■ 11.00-11.30 - Panel session on challenges and solutions ■ 11.30-12.30 - Group work by country 	
12.30-13.30	Lunch break
13.30-17.30	Sharing experiences and lessons learnt from the data analysis process
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ 13.30-13.45 - Introduction and framing ■ 13.45-14.45 - Country experiences with dashboard: presentations and panel session ■ 14.45-16.00 - Country experiences with data analysis: presentations and panel session ■ 16.00-16.30 - Coffee/tea break ■ 16.30-17.30 - Group work by country 	
Day3: Friday, May 24 th	
08.30-09.45	Data management: How far have we come? Presentations and panel session
09.45-10.30	Review of challenges and solutions in relation to question formulation and data analysis
10.30-11.00	Coffee/tea break
11.00-12.00	Working together and how to sustain? Group work
12.00-12.30	Plenary discussion of solutions
12.30-13.00	Closing session
13.00-14.00	Lunch break

Appendix C: Country commitments

Team commitments

- **Guatemala:** revisar datos administrativos y fortalecer las capacidades para el análisis de la calidad de los datos y fortalecer el registro social de hogares (MIDES).
- **Niger:** poursuivre et renforcer l'engagement des secteurs: 1) poursuivre les ateliers de formations et de présentation de la PNIN; 2) faire une communication intensifiée autour du portail de la PNIN; 3) activer le réseau des points focaux Nutrition dans les Ministères (HCI3N + stratégie interne); 4) suivre avec les correspondances adressées aux SG des Ministères.
- **Côte d'Ivoire:** activité spécifique : organiser des rencontres bilatérales avec les secteurs, les partenaires, les réseaux SUN (société civile et recherche/académie), ainsi qu'avec les partenaires technique et financier pour susciter leur engagement.
- **Burkina Faso:** collecte des données auprès des secteurs: 1) formalisation & signature d'un protocole d'échange des données; 2) désignation des points focaux; 3) atelier de collecte des données.
- **LAO PDR:** activity: strengthen horizontal linkages and engagement with sectors: 1) meetings and consultations; 2) using ownership mechanism.
- **Uganda:** engaging with sectors: 1) letter to be sent by OMP PS to sectors to establish two focal points per sector; 2) SPA and SDA to go to sectors and explain NIPN and the related role of sectors within it: 3) organize inception workshop with all sectors and stakeholders.
- **Kenya:** "we will identify, meet and sensitize focal persons in existing multi-sectoral committees on the NIPN initiative; this will be done through 1) sensitization workshops and 2) meetings".

Individual commitments

- I will work on improving communication between data specialists and data users
- Je vais travailler à améliorer les relations interpersonnelles
- Relever le niveau de l'ancrage de la nutrition dans les Ministères + relever le niveau d'influence décisionnelle des point focaux nutrition au sein de ces mêmes Ministères afin d'augmenter leur possibilité de 'levier'
- Importance de continuer la sensibilisation et la communication sur ce que sont les objectifs nutritionnels et quels sont leurs implications pour les Ministères ; traduire les objectifs en langage compréhensible aux Ministères et les partager
- Increasing my personal motivation within NIPN
- Raising the nutrition anchorage of the NIPN initiative
- Appoint a 'nutrition champion' at the highest level
- Work forward acceptance of data / information by policy makers: increase communication & understanding between policy makers and data analysts through policy briefs production
- Commit to reach out to each sector and sensitize about the NIPN specifically through: 1) meetings (quarterly); 2) workshops (twice a year); briefs (quarterly)
- Maintenir et alimenter le dialogue inter-secteur/inter-acteur pour travailler à l'atteinte d'un objectif commun (présentation / brief ou brèves via les cadres de concertations et de réunions existants) - niveau des instances politiques et technique en parallèle

- Identifier une institution / un acteur qui pourrait mieux jouer le rôle de facilitateur entre les secteurs + Evaluer s'il est possible de séparer le rôle de facilitateur du rôle d'acteur/implémentation au sein de l'organisation de la NIPN
- Fortalecer y ampliar nuestra comunicación con actores claves / mantener el capital humano es fundamental para promover la implementación del PINN
- Développer et consolider des relations avec des acteurs stratégiques qui peuvent être mobilisés pour influencer indirectement (les représentants de la société civile, du monde académique et de la recherche ainsi que les partenaires techniques et financiers notamment). Construire un 'capital humain' via des opportunités formelles et informelles
- Engager les acteurs a tous les niveaux du processus de la prise de décision et de l'analyse PNIN + impliquer les deux composantes (stratégique et technique) dans les activités afin qu'elles travaillent mieux ensemble
- Support the NIPN team in advocating and sensitizing actors about the role of NIPN and its scope' what NIPN can do and can't do, what is its added value and how it is complementary to other initiatives / contribute to avoid wrong expectations about the initiative
- Contribute to convince sectors that NIPN can help with making value with data and improve analysis so that they are more interested and do contribute when data are needed



NiPN

National Information
Platforms for Nutrition

The National Information Platforms for Nutrition (NIPN) initiative is supported by the European Union, the United Kingdom Department for International Development and the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation.



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