I am a food safety officer in Asia.

An alert has been disseminated through the International Food Safety Authorities Network (INFOSAN) for an unexpectedly high level of aflatoxin in tree nuts and peanuts consumed in the country. I have to assess the risk related to this contamination for different population groups, particularly in children.

I need to know the level of tree nuts and peanuts consumption among high consumers in different population groups to calculate potential exposure and estimate the health threat.

10% of the population consumed NUTS AND SEEDS AND PRODUCTS BASED ON THEM during the survey days.

10% of the population
Consumed nuts and seeds
Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations

I am a nutrition officer in Africa.

New data show an unexpectedly high level of vitamin A deficiency among women in one area of the country. The Ministry of Health wants to increase vitamin A intake through local foods.

I need to know the main food sources of Vitamin A in women’s usual diet in that area.

I am an agriculture-related policy maker in Latin America.

The Ministry of Agriculture wants to promote a biofortified variety of a staple crop which proved to be particularly productive in smallholder settings. I need to know the current level of consumption of the conventional varieties of this crop in the different age and sex groups.

I need age- and sex-disaggregated data on food consumption of staple crops.

SOURCE OF VITAMIN A IN THE DIET

1499 μg RAE
Amaranth leaves: 56 μg RAE

1499 μg RAE
Vegetables: 386 μg RAE

1499 μg RAE
Roots, tubers and plantains 538 g

FOODS

BEVERAGES
**WHY THE WORLD NEEDS FAO/WHO GIFT**

The Sustainable Development Goal 2 (SDG2) calls on countries to “end hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture” by 2030. Improved nutrition starts with a healthy diet. To assess diet as healthy we need to know what people are eating. The SGD2 indicators of stunting, wasting and Body Mass Index, measure the end stage of the problem. We need indicators that would prevent the problem- dietary indicators. Through the FAO/WHO GIFT platform, we are determined to change this by providing the data the world needs to understand what people eat and to develop policies on healthy diets for all.”

Anna Lartey, Director, Nutrition and Food Systems Division, FAO

The FAO/WHO GIFT platform is being developed in a participatory manner, regularly consulting potential end users on their needs, and asking for their feedback on its outputs. A series of webinars with stakeholders from 4 pilot countries and international experts in food safety and nutrition has provided feedback on the platform. Altogether, 175 stakeholders participated in 26 webinars. They found the platform to be a useful tool, which will serve the purpose it has been designed and developed for. However, it was underlined by several participants that the platform needs to be rapidly filled with data from countries worldwide.

**NEXT STEPS FOR FAO/WHO GIFT DEVELOPMENT**

- Filling the dissemination platform with data from low and middle income countries
- Further development of the data analysis module

**One of the 10 priorities:**

“Make more data on diets widely available. It is currently difficult to compare diets across cultures, geographies and time. This has hampered a global consensus on what constitutes a healthy diet. A pilot project — the FAO/WHO Global Individual Food consumption data Tool (FAO/WHO GIFT; see go.nature.com/faogift) — aims to answer some elements, but has too few resources to be truly effective. The project needs a larger team to collate many more national surveys and develop guidelines for future surveys.”


“More and better data Effort is urgently needed to substantially improve the quantity and quality of dietary data. [...] Recent efforts to gather data such as the Global Dietary Database (GDD) and FAO/WHO GIFT (FAO/ WHO Global Individual Food Consumption data Tool), [...] should be built upon.”

FAO/WHO GIFT will help policy makers to promote nutritious food systems through collation of existing data

Many policy makers and programme managers rely on data related to the availability of food at national level (i.e. balance sheet data) or at household level (i.e. household survey data). While important, these data are not sufficient to assess the nutritional adequacy of the diet of different population groups, such as adolescent girls, pregnant and lactating women, small children, adult males, etc.

Food is not equally distributed among members of households and even less among households across countries.

FAO/WHO GIFT is an interactive, simple to use online platform providing:

- information about existing data on individual food consumption;
- visual data in a form of infographic for users with low scientific literacy;
- free download of microdata for further analysis.

The theory of change is that dietary data from FAO/WHO GIFT will inform decision making at country level so that the food consumption patterns are modified towards a healthier diet.
WE MAKE INDIVIDUAL FOOD CONSUMPTION DATA AVAILABLE – for better policies that lead to more nutritious and healthy diets everywhere, every day.

The FAO/WHO GIFT dissemination platform is conceptualized to be truly global and continuously expands: The platform provides detailed information on potentially suitable surveys from low- and middle-income countries that meet requirements to be inserted in the database. Many are small scale surveys, but data exist. So far, 98 individual quantitative food consumption surveys were found in 53 countries.

TECHNICAL AND RESOURCE PARTNERS OF FAO/WHO GIFT:

- The European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) - sharing their experience from collation of existing data from European countries and supporting data harmonisation processes.

- Centres and initiatives under the CGIAR Research Program on Agriculture for Nutrition and Health (Bioversity and HarvestPlus) - supporting the data inventory and acquisition of data.

- The International Dietary Data Expansion (INDDEX) Project (2015-2018), implemented by Tufts University’s Gerald J. and Dorothy R. Friedman School of Nutrition Science and Policy, with funding from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation.

- The Codex Trust Fund from EU for ASEAN countries.

- The Global nutrition surveillance initiative (GloboDiet), International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC-WHO).

- The Global Dietary Database (GDD), at Tufts University.

To sign up as a partner or for more information, please visit: www.fao.org/nutrition/assessment/food-consumption-database or contact us at: fao-who-gift@fao.org