Fostering information systems and networks to support LMIC decision makers in addressing the double burden:

Learning from sub-Saharan Africa

Rebecca Heidkamp, PhD
Associate Scientist
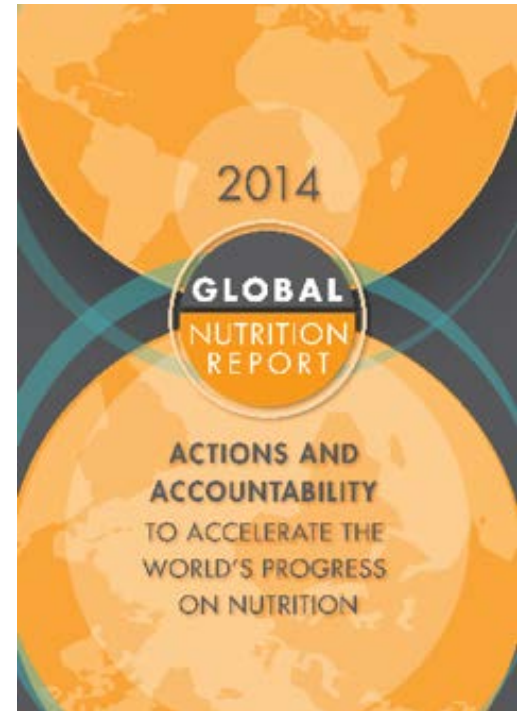Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health

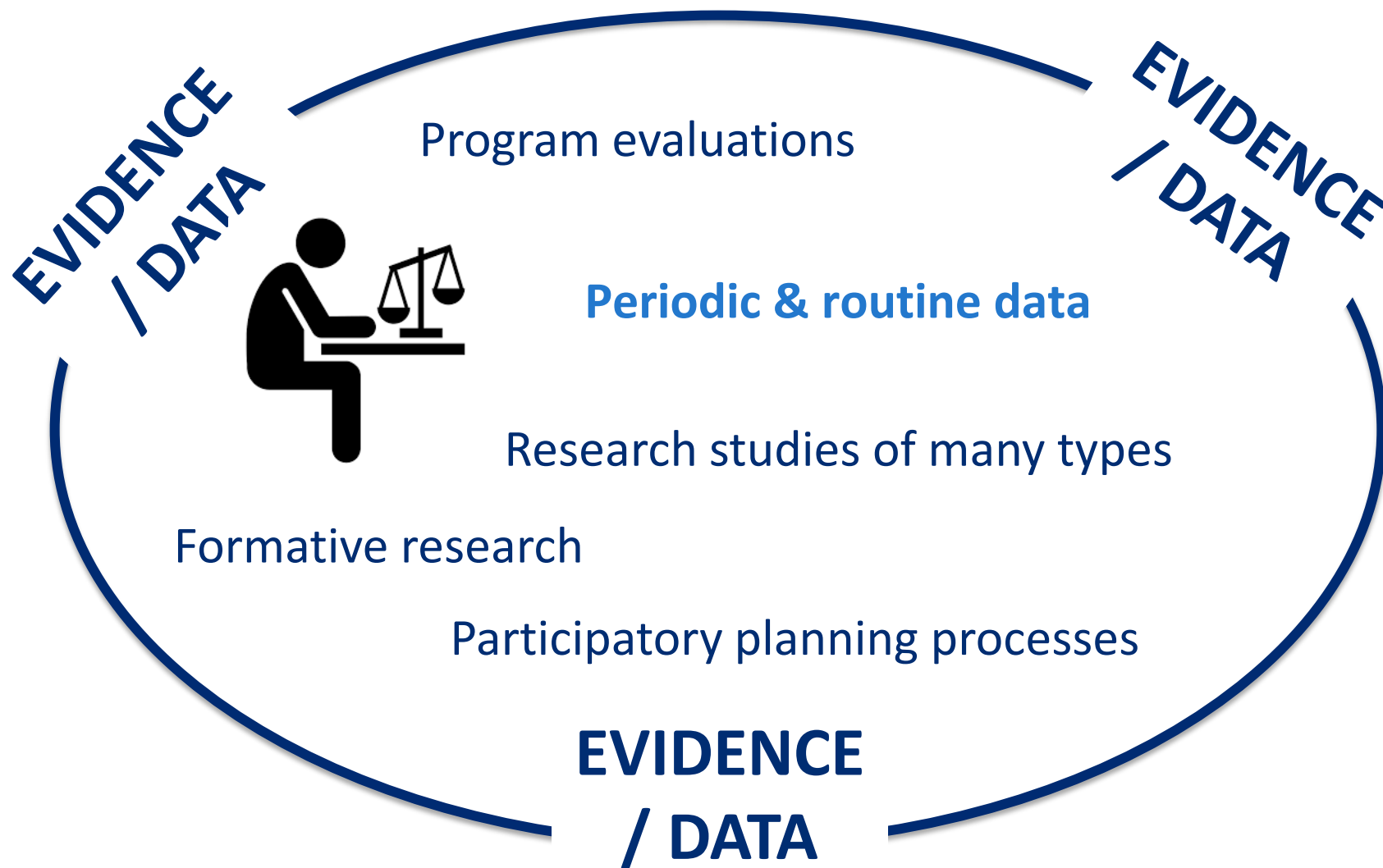# Prioritizing data on 3-18 year olds in National Nutrition Information Systems (NIS)

"Nutrition needs a data revolution. Of the many information gaps the ones most needed to be filled are those that constrain priority action and impede accountability."

- GNR 2014

# Information for action & accountability

Program evaluations

Periodic & routine data

Research studies of many types

Formative research

Participatory planning processes

EVIDENCE / DATA

EVIDENCE / DATA

EVIDENCE / DATA

Periodic & routine data in LMIC
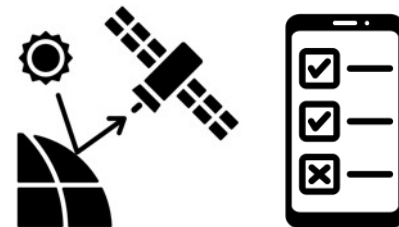
Population-based surveys

- **Multi-topic health, economic & development surveys** (D*HS, MICS, LSMS)*
- **Facility surveys** *(School-based, SPA, SARA)*
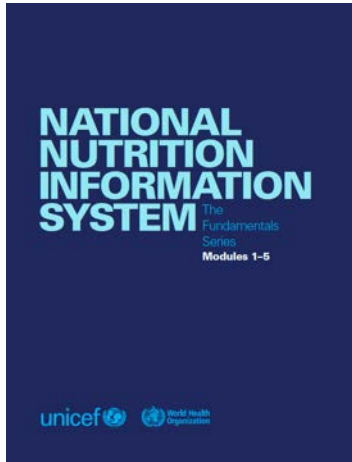- **Nutrition focused surveys** *("SMART", food consumption, micronutrient status, food fortification)*

Administrative data
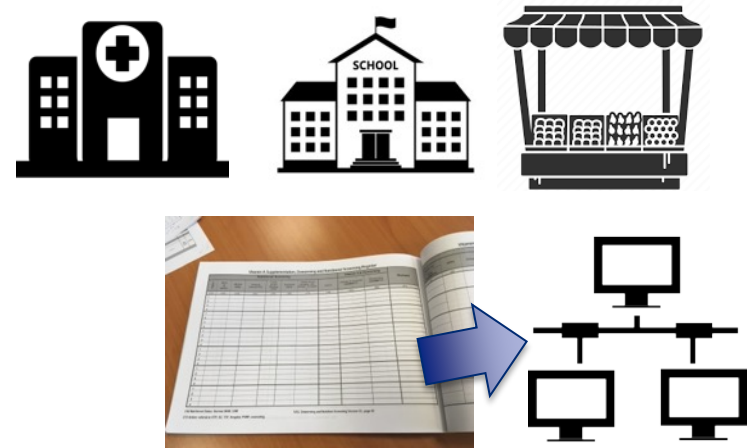
Other potential sources

What do national & subnational stakeholders use a NNIS for?

NATIONAL NUTRITION INFORMATION SYSTEM
The Fundamentals Series
Modules 1–5

unicef · World Health Organization

- Priorities
- Policies, strategies and plans
- Planning processes
- Resource mobilization
- Budgeting

- Implementation
- Quality improvement
- Monitoring and evaluation
- Advocacy
- Emergencies

Different from global accountability priorities

- *High demand for subnational data*
- *Less demand for modeled estimates*

Multi Sector Nutrition Strategies

Multiple interventions addressing priority nutrition problems

Vitamin A Control

Co-coverage & composite coverage across HH & priority populations

What nutrition-relevant data are being routinely / periodically collected on 3-18 year olds in LMIC?
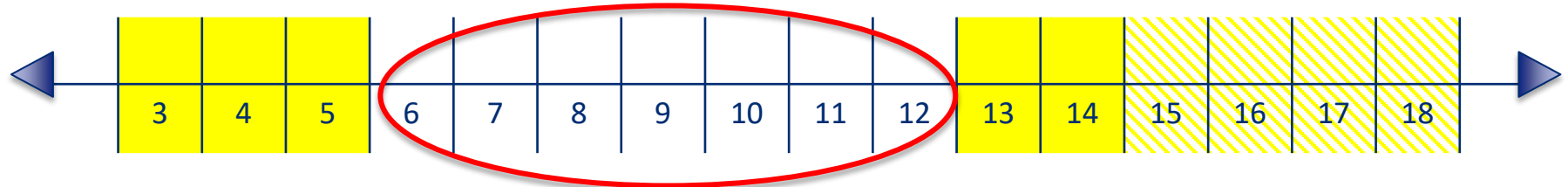
Multi-country periodic surveys with nutrition data

Nutritional status

Intervention coverage

Global School-Based Student Health Survey (13-17y ♂♀)

DHS & MICS (0-5y ♂♀)

DHS & MICS (15-19y ♀)

| 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 |

*Multi-country surveys with **potential to collect***

MICS Child Questionnaire (5-17Y ♂♀)

MICS Social Protection Questionnaire (5-24y HH)

"The limited data available on nutrition of school-age children and adolescents are neither standardised nor comparable."
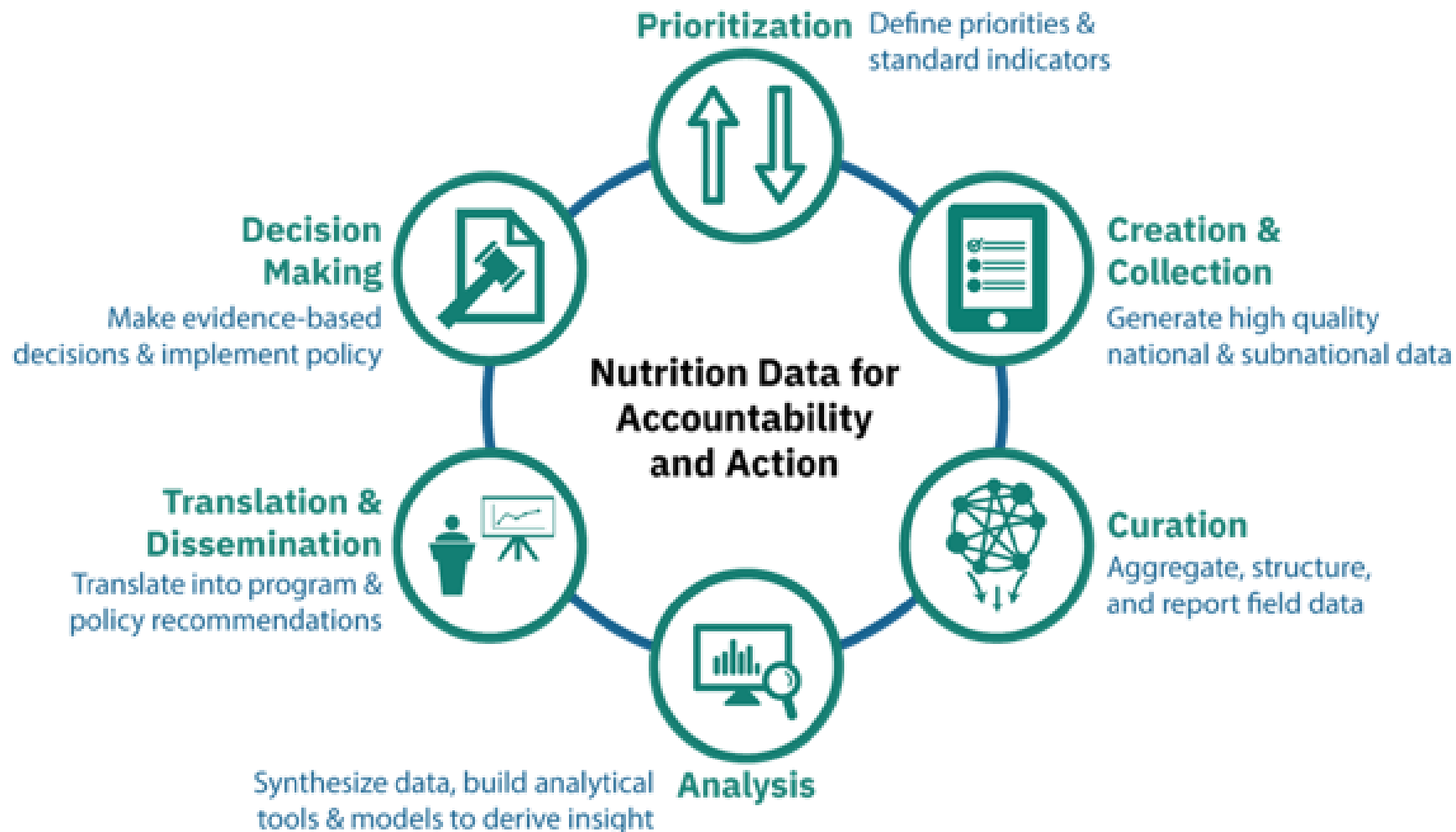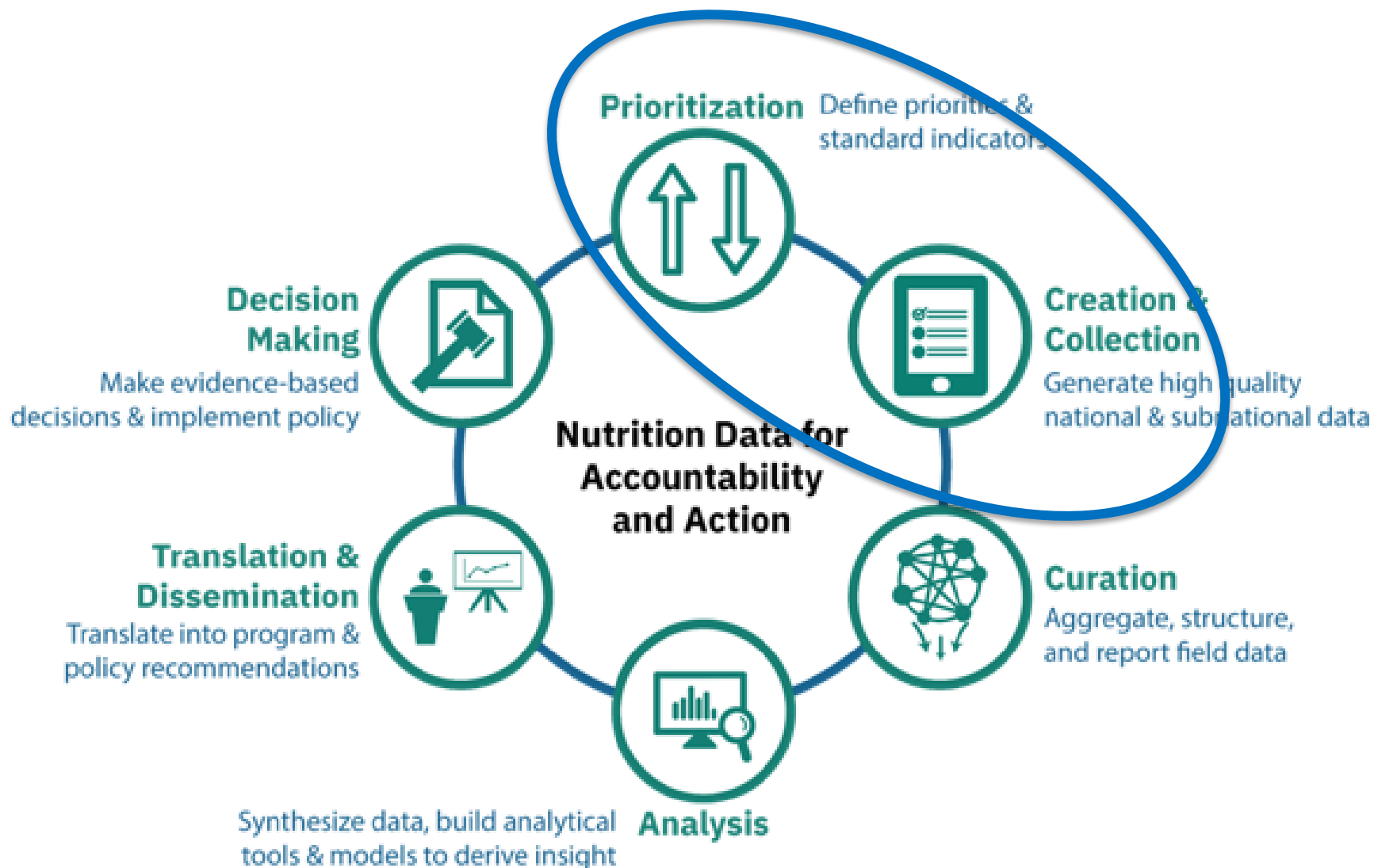- Wrottesley et al (2022). *Public Health Nutrition*

How do we move towards a future with routinely / periodically collected data on 3-18 year olds in LMIC?

Nutrition Data for Accountability and Action

- **Prioritization** — Define priorities & standard indicators
- **Creation & Collection** — Generate high quality national & subnational data
- **Curation** — Aggregate, structure, and report field data
- **Analysis** — Synthesize data, build analytical tools & models to derive insight
- **Translation & Dissemination** — Translate into program & policy recommendations
- **Decision Making** — Make evidence-based decisions & implement policy

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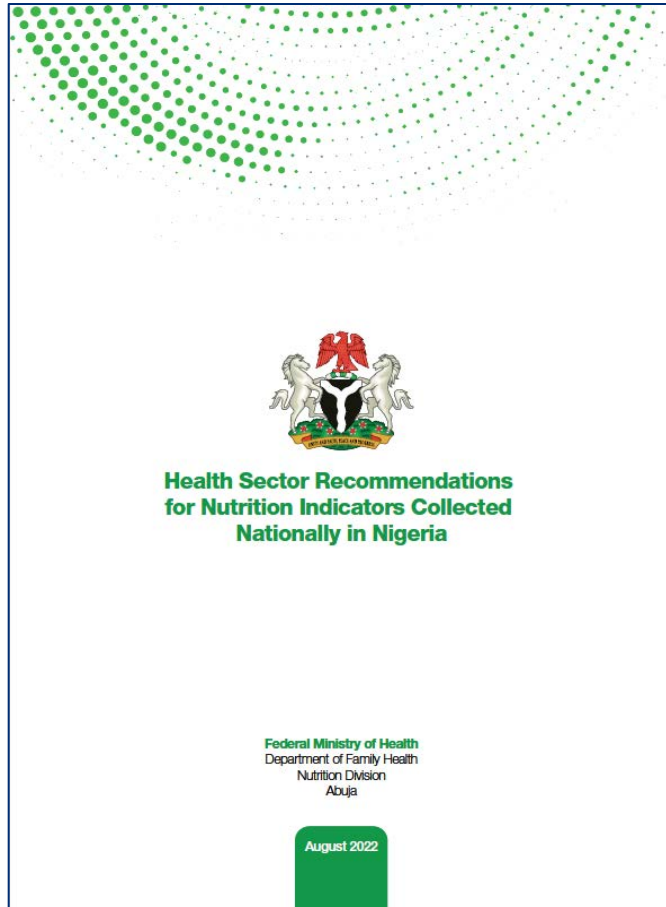
Ongoing Global Metrics Development

Developing global indicators for monitoring school nutrition

- WHO Life Course Quality of Care Metrics Coordination Working Group

- Healthy Diets Monitoring Initiative

- WHO-UNICEF Technical Expert Advisory Group on Nutrition Monitoring

Learning from Nigeria: data coordination

Recommendations address common national data coordination challenges including:

- Nutrition data come from multiple sources that are coordinated & updated by different actors
- Nutrition data collection is relatively costly (anthro; diet; biomarkers)

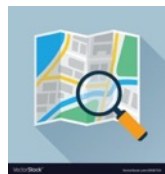# Learning from Nigeria: Facilitating the process

Preparatory Work

NIS Task Team co-created & validated the recommendations

Review Policies and M&E frameworks

Talk to data users

Consult guidance & "experts"

Mapped available data

Identified available costs

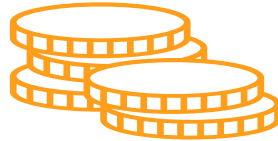10-year horizon

Data DENT

Data for Decisions in Nutrition
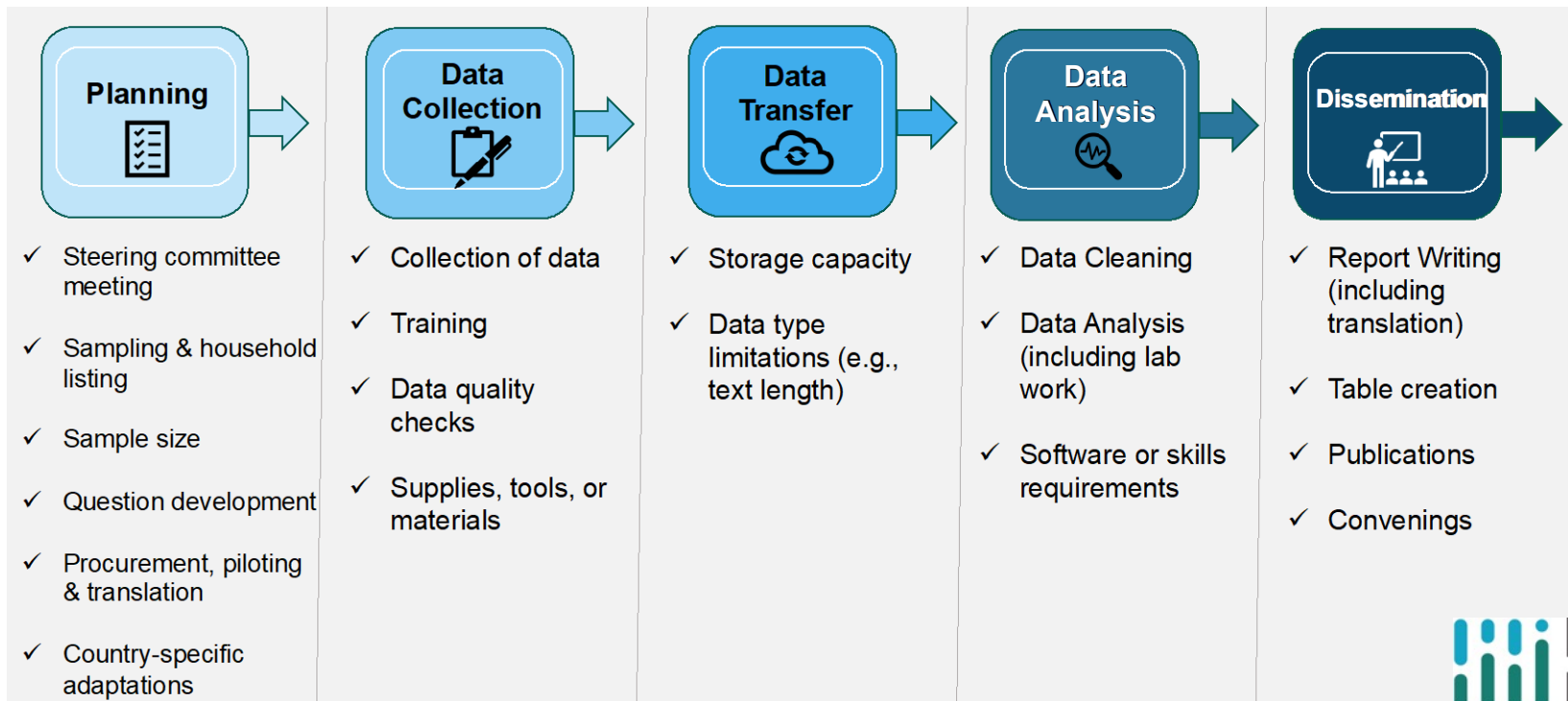
Learning from Nigeria: Counting the costs

Monetary Costs

Ex. Cost of buying equipment, supplies, etc.

Non-monetary Costs

Ex. Data quality which can be impacted if the survey is too long

Planning	Data Collection	Data Transfer	Data Analysis	Dissemination
✓ Steering committee meeting	✓ Collection of data	✓ Storage capacity	✓ Data Cleaning	✓ Report Writing (including translation)
✓ Sampling & household listing	✓ Training	✓ Data type limitations (e.g., text length)	✓ Data Analysis (including lab work)	✓ Table creation
✓ Sample size	✓ Data quality checks		✓ Software or skills requirements	✓ Publications
✓ Question development	✓ Supplies, tools, or materials			✓ Convenings
✓ Procurement, piloting & translation				
✓ Country-specific adaptations				

Data DENT
Data for Decisions in Nutrition

Learning from Nigeria: Financing challenges

Nigeria Food Consumption and Nutrition Survey 2001–2003 Summary
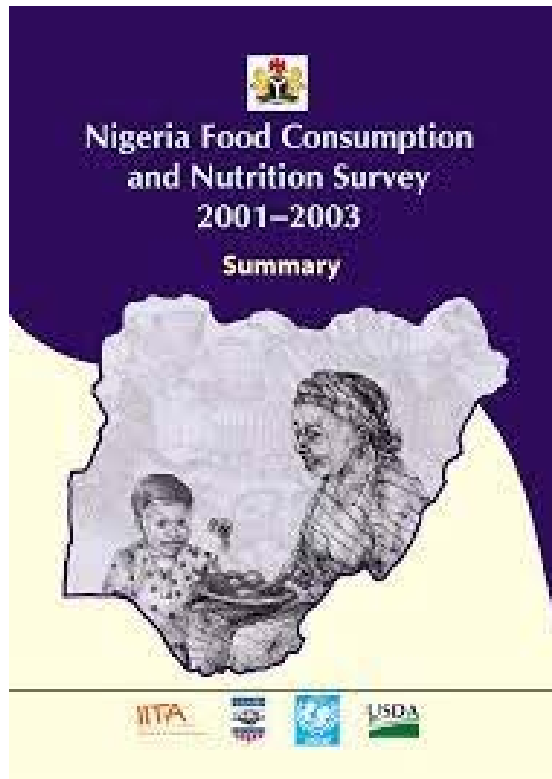
- 2020-2021 Food Consumption & Micronutrient Survey
  - 3 years of planning & fundraising
  - $13+ million budget
  - Still short funding to complete analysis

- First ever national NCD Steps survey also delayed several years due to lack of funding

Data DENT
Data for Decisions in Nutrition

Learning from USA: Sustainability challenges

Figure 1. Screening, interview, and examination response rates: National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey, 2011–2012 through 2017–2018
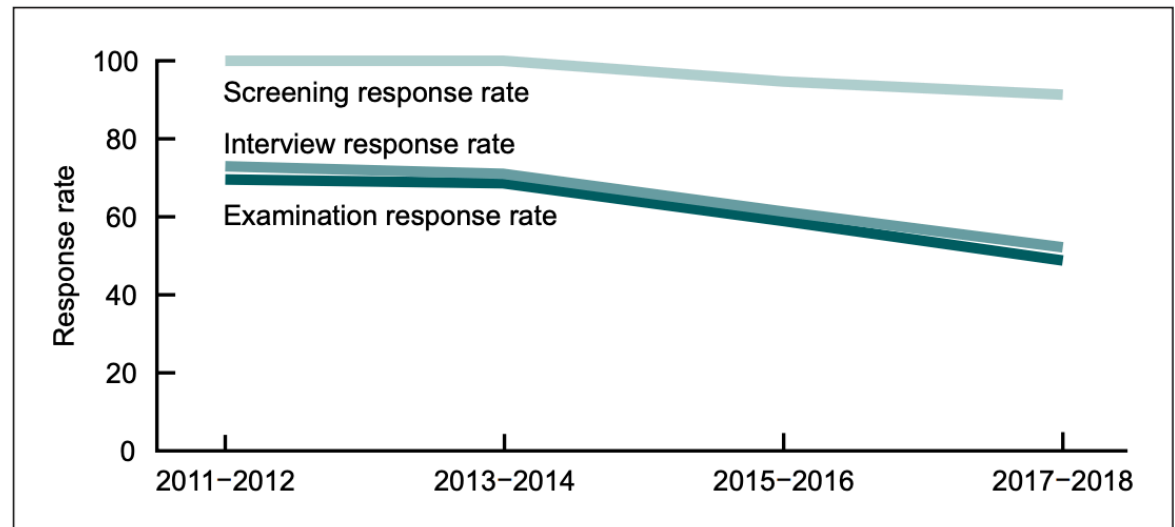
SOURCE: National Center for Health Statistics, National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey, 2011–2018.
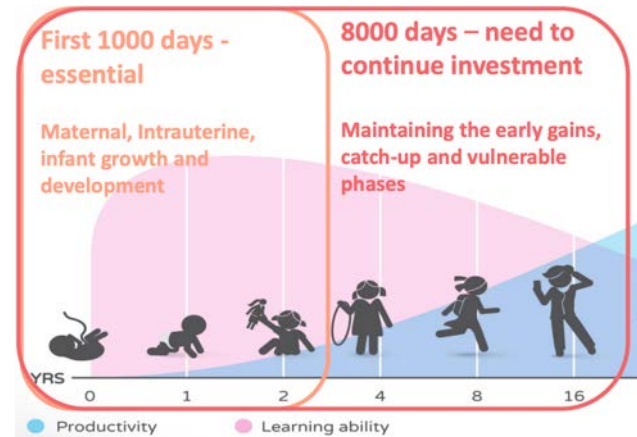
What do we do in the mean time?

Fostering advocacy networks to support LMIC decision makers

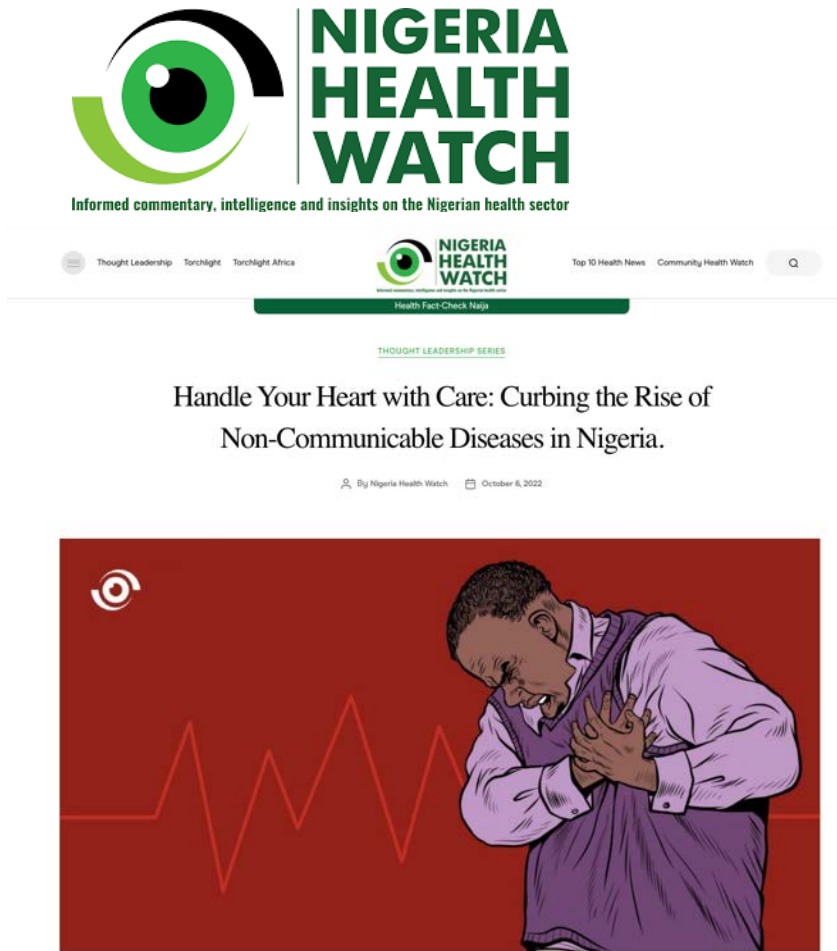# How do networks effectively influence global agendas?

"first 8,000 days"

Engaging national networks