Challenges in the Regulatory Monitoring of Fortified Foods

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GAIN - Global Alliance for Improved Nutrition

International organisation

Established 2002

Delivering solutions to the complex problem of malnutrition

Building alliances with Governments, NGOs, businesses & civil society
Food Fortification

Micronutrient deficiencies

Salt
Vegetable oil
Wheat flour
Maize meal
Rice
Sugar
Condiments

National food fortification programmes

Legislation, regulatory monitoring and enforcement
Benefits of external, regulatory monitoring?

Provides a measure of overall effectiveness of a national fortification program

Links to national health programs

Hold producers and importers accountable

Precursor to prosecution and improvement strategies
Overview of Barriers to Regulatory Monitoring
1. Perceived effectiveness, barriers, and good practices
   - Survey of 39 respondents from food control agencies and industry in 17 countries (Africa and Asia)
   - 11 key informant interviews with donors and development partners

2. Legislative documents, standards, and monitoring manuals
   - Review of 73 mandatory programs for wheat, maize, and rice
   - Assessment based on 44 criteria, including justification, protocols, sampling and testing, and data collection and sharing.

https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4570017/
What are the barriers?

- Low priority and capacity for inspection and follow up.
- Minimal harmonization of standards and legislation.
- Limited funding.
- Limited personnel for legal action.
- Corruption among inspection personnel.
- Poor laboratory capacity.
- Limited training in rapid testing methods or technical auditing.
What are the barriers?

- Poor quality or unsafe inputs.
- Poor processing procedures and expertise.
- Lack of SOPs and documentation.
- Lack of adequate internal laboratory capacity.
- Improper packaging and handling/storage.
- Lack of awareness of standards.
- Purposeful under-fortification
Cited Priorities to Improve Compliance

- **Regulatory Agencies**
- **Food Industries**

- **Clear regulations**: 71%
- **Reg. agency structure**: 60%
- **Reg. agency capacity**: 57%
- **Reg. agency financing**: 50%
- **Laboratory capacity**: 43%
- **Sampling/testing procedures**: 36%
- **Food industry engagement**: 35%
- **Enforcement (incentives/penalties)**: 10%
- **Communication b/w sectors**: 7%
- **Food industry**: 0%
Recommendations from the study

7 broad-reaching recommendations for improving fortification compliance can be synthesized from this study:

- Legislation
- Leadership
- Enforcement
- Financial & Human capacity
- Community
- Data capture
- Relationship building
Enablers to improve regulatory monitoring

- Increasing budgets for inspectorates
- Improving human capacity
- MIS - Management Information System
- Regular independent surveys
- Engaging civil society and academia
- Closing legal loopholes
- Litigation fund?
- Working groups and global guidance
Regulatory Monitoring: Summarizing Priorities and the Enablers

- Human Capacity
- Financial Capacity
- Civil Society
- Political Will
- Better Data Capture & Use
- Legislation
- Lab Capacity
THANK YOU