

# KNOW WHAT PEOPLE EAT

**BETTER DATA  
BETTER POLICIES  
BETTER DIETS**



Photo: © FAO/Sergey Kozmin

**TAILORED  
ANSWERS  
FOR DIFFERENT  
NEEDS**

**GLOBAL INDIVIDUAL FOOD CONSUMPTION DATA TOOL (FAO/WHO GIFT)**  
PROVIDING TAILORED ANSWERS FOR HEALTH, NUTRITION AND AGRICULTURE POLICY



**I am a food safety officer in Asia.**

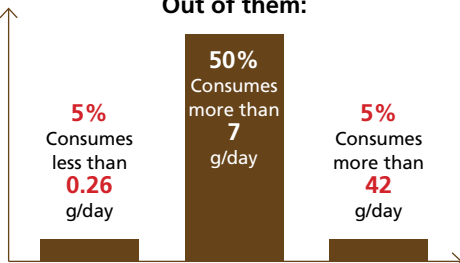
An alert has been disseminated through the International Food Safety Authorities Network (INFOSAN) for an unexpectedly **high level of aflatoxin in tree nuts and peanuts** consumed in the country. I have to **assess the risk related to this contamination** for different population groups, particularly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

**Out of them:**

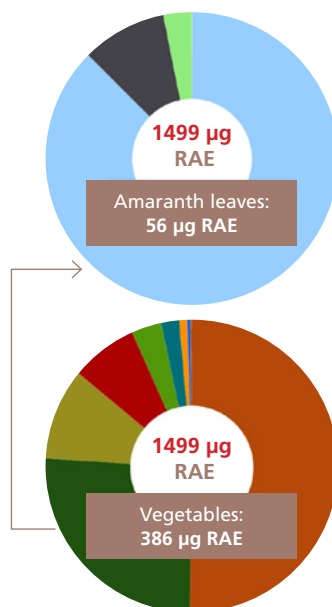


**I am a nutrition officer in Africa**

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.*

## SOURCE OF VITAMIN A IN THE DIET

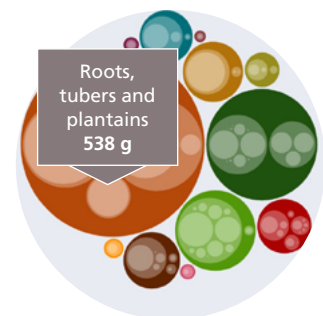


**I am an agriculture-related policy maker in Latin America**

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.*

## 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 SDG2 indicators of stunting, wasting and Body Mass Index, measure the end stage of the problem. We need indicators that would prevent the problem. Through FAO/WHO GIFT, 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, Former Director, Food and Nutrition Division, FAO

The FAO/WHO GIFT platform is being developed in a participatory manner, including regular consultations with potential end-users on their needs, as well as on their feedback regarding the platform’s outputs. Webinars are held annually with international experts and stakeholders in food safety and nutrition. These sessions are offered in different time slots to ensure experts from different

regions and time zones can participate, and as of 2019 they are offered in three languages: English, French and Spanish. To date, feedback has been positive: participants found the platform to be a useful tool that serves the purpose it is being developed for. A key need that continues to be underscored, however, is for the platform to include data from more countries around the world.

## NEXT STEPS FOR FAO/WHO GIFT DEVELOPMENT

Filling the dissemination platform with more data, particularly from low- and middle-income countries

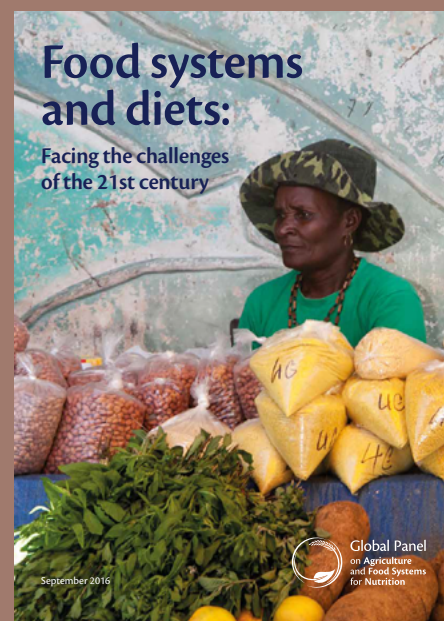
Further development of the data analysis module



One of the ten 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/ifaogift](http://go.nature.com/ifaogift)) — 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. ///*

Haddad, L., Hawkes, C., Webb, P., Thomas, S., Beddington, J., Waage, J. & Flynn, D. 2016. A new global research agenda for food. *Nature*, 540(7631):30–32.



/// *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. ///*

Global Panel on Agriculture and Food Systems for Nutrition. 2016. *Food systems and diets: Facing the challenges of the 21st century*. London.

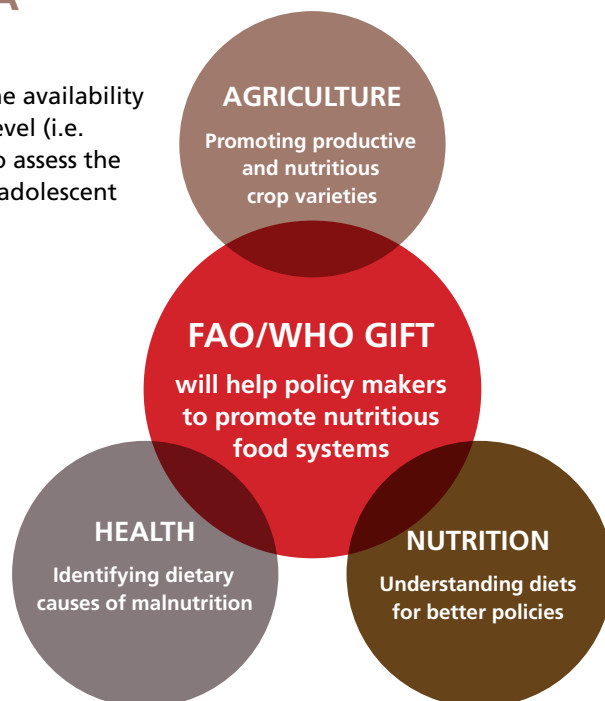
# FAO/WHO GIFT WILL IMPROVE DATA SYSTEMS FOR BETTER AGRICULTURE AND FOOD POLICIES THROUGH COLLATION OF EXISTING DATA

Many policy makers and programme managers rely on data related to the availability of food at national level (i.e. food 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.

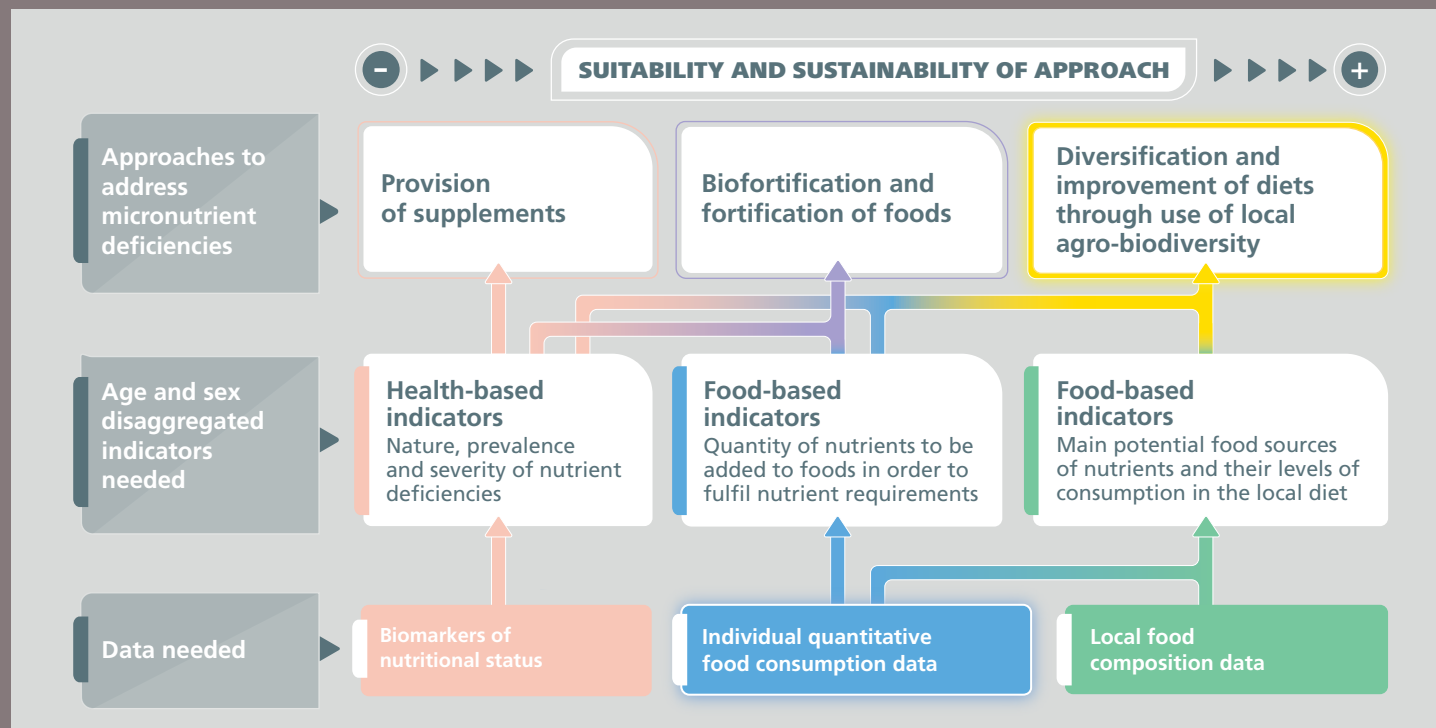
Food is not equally distributed among members of households and even less among households across countries.

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

- » information about existing data on individual food consumption;
- » infographics and visual representations of data for non-specialist users; and
- » free download of microdata for further analysis.



## A THEORY OF CHANGE: HOW INDIVIDUAL QUANTITATIVE FOOD CONSUMPTION DATA IMPACT APPROACHES TO IMPROVE NUTRITION AND FOOD SYSTEMS



The availability of certain data is a key determinant of the approach to be taken in tackling micronutrient deficiencies. If only health-based data and indicators are available, the approach is likely to be that of supplementation. For approaches based on fortification or biofortification, individual quantitative food consumption data are required. Individual quantitative food consumption data are also required – along with local food composition data – to promote diversified diets based on local and biodiverse foods.

Adapted from: Leclercq, C., Allemand, P., Balcerzak, A., Branca, F., Sousa, R., Lartey, A., Lipp, M., Quadros, V.P., Verger, P. 2019. FAO/WHO GIFT (Global Individual Food consumption data Tool): A global repository for harmonised individual quantitative food consumption studies. *Proceedings of the Nutrition Society*, 1–12.

# 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 aims to be a truly global, continuously expanding and regularly updated database. The platform also provides detailed

information on potentially suitable surveys to be inserted in the database (including small-scale surveys), with a particular focus on low- and middle-income countries.

### DATASETS IDENTIFIED GLOBALLY



Source: Snapshot from the FAO/WHO GIFT platform

### TECHNICAL AND RESOURCE PARTNERS OF FAO/WHO GIFT:

- » The European Food Safety Authority (EFSA)
- » International Dietary Data Expansion Project (INDDEX)
- » Global Dietary Database (GDD)
- » Institute of Health Metrics and Evaluation (IHME)
- » *Intake* – Center for Dietary Assessment
- » International Network of Food Data Systems (INFOODS)
- » Global Open Data for Agriculture and Nutrition (GODAN)
- » International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC) – GloboDiet

### THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE FAO/WHO GIFT PLATFORM IS SUPPORTED BY THE BILL & MELINDA GATES FOUNDATION IN ORDER TO:

- » Expand the geographical coverage and increase the number of shared datasets.
- » Improve underlying methods for data processing, analysis and harmonization.
- » Increase the number and variety of indicators included.
- » Improve the user-friendliness of the platform.
- » Stimulate the effective use of the data provided, in particular to improve agriculture and nutrition policies and programmes.
- » Develop capacities at country level in dietary data management, analysis and harmonization.

**BILL & MELINDA**  
*GATES foundation*

The FAO/WHO GIFT platform is funded in part by a four-year grant (2018–2022) from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation.

To sign up as a partner or for more information, please visit:

[www.fao.org/gift-individual-food-consumption](http://www.fao.org/gift-individual-food-consumption)

or contact us at: [fao-who-gift@fao.org](mailto:fao-who-gift@fao.org)



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