



# **PUBLIC PRIVATE PARTNERSHIPS FOR FOOD FORTIFICATION: THE ROLE OF FOOD FORTIFICATION ALLIANCES IN WEST AFRICA**

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# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>Acknowledgments</b> .....	<b>i</b>
<b>Disclaimer</b> .....	<b>i</b>
<i>LIST OF TABLES</i> .....	<i>iv</i>
<i>LIST OF FIGURES</i> .....	<i>v</i>
<i>LIST OF ABBREVIATION</i> .....	<i>vi</i>
<i>EXECUTIVE SUMMARY</i> .....	<b>1</b>
<b>1.0- INTRODUCTION</b> .....	<b>4</b>
<b>1.1- Background</b> .....	<b>4</b>
<b>1.2- Objectives and methodology</b> .....	<b>6</b>
<b>1.3- Conceptual / Data Analysis framework (Methodological Guide)</b> .....	<b>7</b>
Stakeholders.....	10
Processes.....	10
Challenges.....	11
Recommendations.....	11
<b>2.0- KEY STAKEHOLDERS AND THEIR IMPACT: AN ASSESSMENT OF THE ROLE OF NATIONAL FORTIFICATION ALLIANCES IN WEST AFRICAN COUNTRIES</b> .....	<b>12</b>
<b>3.0- AN ANALYSIS OF LSFF GOVERNANCE THROUGH PUBLIC-PRIVATE SECTOR ALLIANCES IN WEST AFRICA</b> .....	<b>26</b>
<b>3.1- Stakeholders</b> .....	<b>26</b>
<b>3.2- Structured Processes for Establishing National Alliances for Food Fortification in West Africa</b> .....	<b>27</b>
<b>3.3- Coordination and strategic planning and implementation of food fortification: Standard-Setting</b> .....	<b>30</b>
3.3.1- Public Sector standard setting.....	30
3.3.2- Private Sector standard setting.....	30
3.3.3- Establishing enabling environment through standard setting and compliance enforcement.....	31
<b>3.4- Capacity reinforcement, monitoring, evaluation, and learning</b> .....	<b>32</b>
<b>4.0- CHALLENGES</b> .....	<b>36</b>
<b>4.1- Limited Capacity (Technical Challenge)</b> .....	<b>36</b>
<b>4.2- Political Commitment and Motivation (for fortification and alliance) (Political Challenge)</b> .....	<b>38</b>
<b>4.3- Lack of Information about Alliances (Technical and Administrative Challenge)</b> .....	<b>39</b>
<b>4.4- Sustainability (Administrative Challenge)</b> .....	<b>39</b>
<b>5.0- SWOT ANALYSIS</b> .....	<b>42</b>
<b>5.1- Strengths</b> .....	<b>42</b>
<b>5.2- Weaknesses</b> .....	<b>43</b>
<b>5.3- Opportunities</b> .....	<b>45</b>
<b>5.4- Threats</b> .....	<b>46</b>
<b>6.0- RECOMMENDATIONS</b> .....	<b>47</b>
<b>Capacity Reinforcement</b> .....	<b>48</b>
<b>Coordination Mechanisms</b> .....	<b>48</b>
<b>Reporting Systems</b> .....	<b>48</b>
<b>Implementation Funding</b> .....	<b>48</b>
<b>Advocacy and Communication</b> .....	<b>49</b>
<b>Budgetary Allocation</b> .....	<b>49</b>

<b>Membership Fees .....</b>	<b>49</b>
<b>Fortification Logo Registration.....</b>	<b>49</b>
<b>Donors and Partners.....</b>	<b>50</b>
<i>CONCLUSION .....</i>	<i>51</i>
Appendix 1: Fortification Alliances in West Africa .....	52
Appendix 2: The Roles and Objectives of the National Fortification Alliances .....	55
Appendix 3: Terms of Reference for the Consultancy on Public Private Partnerships for Food Fortification Implementation .....	59
Appendix 4: Interview Checklist.....	63
Appendix 5: List of Institutions and Contacts Visited/Interviewed.....	65
<i>References .....</i>	<i>68</i>
<b>General References .....</b>	<b>68</b>
<b>Country and Regional References.....</b>	<b>69</b>

# LIST OF TABLES

**Table 1: THE MAIN STAKEHOLDERS IN THE LSFF SPACE IN WEST AFRICA .....26**  
**Table 2: CLASSIFICATION OF ALLIANCES OBJECTIVES .....29**  
**Table 3: PROPOSALS FOR INTERVENTION .....47**

# LIST OF FIGURES

- Figure 1: Regulatory Scope and Stakeholder Involvement .....8
- Figure 2: Regulatory Feedback Loop .....9
- Figure 3: Institutional Analysis Framework categories .....10
- Figure 4: Francophone Establishment Structure .....28
- Figure 5: Anglophone Establishment Structure .....28

# LIST OF ABBREVIATION

ABNORM	Agency Burkinabè de Normalisation, de Métrologie et de la Qualité
AIFO-UEMOA	Association des Industrielles de la filière Oléagineuse
AIM	Association des Industries Meunières
ANEA	Alliance Nationale pour la Enrichissement d'Aliments en Côte d'Ivoire
ANF	Alliance Nationale pour la Fortification
BMGF	Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation
CAN	Conseil de l'Alimentation et de la Nutrition
CBFA	Commission Béninoise de Fortification des Aliments
CNCN	Conseil National de Concertation en Nutrition
CNDN	Conseil National de Développement de la Nutrition,
CNFA	Comité National pour la Fortification des Aliments
CODINORM	Cote D'Ivoire Normalization Agency
COSFAM	Comite Sénégalaises pour la Fortification des Aliments en Micronutriments
CRS	Catholic Relief Services
DANA	Direction de l'Alimentation et de la Nutrition Appliquee
DSME	Direction de la Sante de la Mere et de l'Enfant
ECOSHAM	ECOWAS Harmonisation Model
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization
FCCPC:	Federal Competition and Consumer Protection Commission
FMoH	Federal Ministry of Health
GAIN	Global Alliance for Improved Nutrition
Helen Keller Intl	Helen Keller International
LSFF	Large Scale Food Fortification
MI	Micronutrient Initiative
MICE	Ministry of Industry, Commerce and Energy
MND	Micronutrient deficiencies
MoHSW	Ministry of Health and Social Welfare
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
NAFDAC	National Agency for Food and Drug Administration and Control

NAFDAC	National Agency for Food and Drugs Administration and Control
NAFF	National Alliance for Food Fortification
NaNA	National Nutrition Agency
NaSPaT	National Association of Salt Producers and Traders
NFA	National Fortification Alliance
NPC	National Planning Commission
NPHCDA	National Public Health Care and Development Agency
PHC	Project Healthy Children
QAQC	Quality Assurance and Quality Control
SON	Standards Organisation of Nigeria
SWOT	Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats
UEMOA	Union Economique et Monétaire Ouest Africaine
UNICEF	United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund
WAEMU	West African Economic and Monetary Union
WAHO	West African Health Organization
WHO	World Health Organisation



# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

West Africa is the region with highest burden of undernutrition in Africa. The region's prevalence of stunting (30.9%) and wasting (6.9%) are higher than the global averages (22% and 6.7%, respectively). Women of Reproductive Age also suffer a high level of nutrition-related health conditions linked with deficiencies in micronutrients like anaemia (51.8%). The latest data from the Global Nutrition Report shows that no country in West Africa is on track to meeting the anemia target for women of reproductive age. Women are at higher risk of micronutrient deficiencies because of their higher needs, and because of their low dietary diversity when they often eat last. Generally, diets in West Africa are monotonous and lack adequate diversity to improve micronutrient intake.

Large scale food fortification (LSFF), a proven cost-effective method for addressing micronutrient deficiencies at scale, has been promoted as a proven way to address large scale nutritional deficiencies. Starting with salt iodization in the 1990s, West African countries have embraced food fortification, and by the 2000s, additional staples were identified for fortification with more micronutrients including iron, folate, and Vitamin A being mandated in the fortification of selected key food vehicles. Food fortification is recognized and endorsed in national nutrition policies across West Africa.

Large scale food fortification (LSFF) involves multiple stakeholders across various sectors of government, industry, and civil society. It brings together the interests of private sector industries and public institutions in various sectors such as health, trade, industry, research, education, and others. Therefore, it represents a microcosm of a multi-sectoral nutrition outlook that touches on various aspects of social, political and economic life.

LSFF requires concerted effort on the part of all stakeholders to ensure that there is a clear strategy and an actionable plan covering activities across the fortification value chain, from factory to store to table with mutual communication and support throughout. Therefore, all stakeholders must be involved from the beginning and their roles identified and delineated to ensure transparency and accountability in fortification governance.

It is to this end that fortification alliances have been introduced as an inclusive platform for stakeholder engagement for the promotion of fortification implementation. These alliances were established in West African countries with the expansion of fortification in countries across the region, and they were particularly driven by ECOWAS and global partners through public-private sector dialogues for food fortification. While many of these alliances were instrumental to promoting mandatory fortification of food vehicles such as wheat flour and vegetable oil in several countries, they were short-lived and two decades after the first fortification alliances were established, there are few active national

fortification alliances in the region. Therefore, it is important to clarify their role, identify the challenges encountered in the administration of fortification alliances, explore the opportunities for a regional fortification alliance, and propose practical interventions for moving forward with sustainable alliances at national and regional level.

Fortification alliances perform a wide range of functions related to the advancement of food fortification, and these include:

**Coordination of stakeholders:** Ensuring effective public private partnership coordination mechanisms contextualized for food fortification at national level with mutual accountability frameworks to achieve impact of food fortification to reducing and preventing the high burden of vitamin and mineral deficiencies and its related public health consequences.

**Standard-Setting:** facilitating the preparation and adoption of policy, legislative and regulatory measures for the implementation of food fortification; promotion and implementation of research activities for the development of food fortification initiatives; soliciting and maintaining political commitment and support for food fortification at the highest levels of government.

**Standards-Diffusion:** promotion and implementation of advocacy and sensitization of existing standards amongst consumers; ensuring that all stakeholders are informed of the existence of developments in food fortification implementation; development and implementation of social marketing and communication strategies for food fortification amongst all stakeholders at all levels.

**Standards-Implementation:** fostering coordination and monitoring of food fortification programs and projects; supporting the private sector in the quality assurance and certification of fortified foods; evaluating the quality control and the conformity of the products to fortification standards from the production process until consumption; developing innovative monitoring and evaluation tools and methods for ensuring compliance with food fortification standards.

While fortification alliances have performed some of these roles in West Africa, there have been impediments to their success and sustainability, and these challenges include:

- technical challenges such as limited capacity for the sustained implementation of food fortification in both the public and private sector
- political challenges such as low political motivation to advance food fortification as a critical intervention.
- administrative challenges such as the deployment of a comprehensive and effective communication strategy as well as the development of sustainable funding mechanisms to keep alliances functional.

These challenges have led to the dormancy of most of the fortification alliances in the region, necessitating the design of key interventions that will revive and sustain fortification alliances as a key mechanism for fortification governance and implementation in West Africa. Some of these proposals are to:

- Develop a regional fortification strategy to guide states in the development of national fortification strategies, making provision for advancement of fortification through the introduction of capacity building mechanisms; institutional coordination structures; reporting systems; advocacy and communication strategy; and implementation funding plans.
- Steer the development of national fortification strategies in ECOWAS member states.
- Revitalize national fortification alliances in ECOWAS member states.
- Support the development of a sustainability structure for national fortification alliances, focusing on multiple streams of revenue.
- Establish a regional fortification alliance to steer regional stakeholder interests and engagements.
- Develop a fortification funding strategy that will support ECOWAS member states in the implementation of their national fortification strategies.

This study represents the first comprehensive exploration of the role and status of fortification alliances across West Africa, and it will serve as a useful tool for advancing public-private partnerships for food fortification in the region.

# 1.0- INTRODUCTION

## 1.1- Background

Micronutrient deficiencies (MNDs) impact the health and quality of life of a person across different stages of development, from infancy through adulthood. During infancy, MNDs contribute to such conditions as low birth weight and impaired mental development; during childhood and adolescence, they can be responsible for stunting and reduced mental capacity and productivity; and in adulthood, they negatively impact productivity and nourishment (Bailey et al, 2015). Due to the severe health impact of MNDs, they also lead to increased mortality rates at various stages of human development. Therefore, tackling MNDs at scale is critical to improving the health and socio-economic status of whole populations.

For decades, the global health community has identified specific micronutrient deficiencies that have been responsible for health challenges, such as iodine deficiency and its impact on thyroid functions (WHO, 1974). MNDs are widespread, with iodine, iron, and Vitamin A deficiencies recognized as globally endemic, and folate and zinc deficiencies prevalent across the global population (Magee and McCann, 2019). These MNDs account for severe health challenges amongst vulnerable populations, such as women of reproductive age and children. Consequently, several strategies have been identified as critical for addressing MNDs and improving the health and nutrition conditions of affected populations. The most common, cost-effective, and productive methods of tackling MNDs are dietary diversification, food fortification, and supplementation (Han et al, 2022). While dietary diversification and vitamin and mineral supplementation can provide targeted solutions for highly impacted populations, they require behavioral changes and commitment, which could impact their effectiveness where such interventions are not always readily available or where the commitment required to partake cannot be sustained for various socio-economic reasons, for example, access to pre-natal care for pregnant women. Food fortification, on the other hand, requires no behavioral change or commitment on the part of consumers and it is scalable as, where compliance is high, it is accessible to all segments of the population with access to the fortified food vehicles. Therefore, fortification has been recommended for promoting widespread MNDC, alongside dietary diversification and vitamin and mineral supplementation, particularly amongst severely impacted populations (Bailey et al, 2015).

While, as noted above, MNDs are endemic globally, they are particularly prevalent and have a major impact on health conditions in developing countries, mostly amongst women of reproductive age and children (Ohanenye et al, 2021; Walle et al, 2020). It is estimated, albeit with limited certainty, that more than “half of preschool-aged children and two-thirds of non-pregnant women of reproductive age worldwide have micronutrient deficiencies” (Stevens et al, 2022). More particularly, although improvements have been

recorded in the disease burden of MNDs since the 1990s, the burden remains high in sub-Saharan Africa compared to most other regions and to global trends (Han et al, 2022; Stevens et al, 2022).

West Africa, the focus of this study, is recorded as having the lowest prevalence of overweight among children under 5 years of age (2.7%) in Africa, but the region's prevalence of stunting (30.9%) and wasting (6.9%) are higher than the global averages (22% and 6.7%, respectively). Women of Reproductive Age also suffer a high level of nutrition-related health conditions like anaemia (51.8%) and obesity, while adult malnutrition contributes to diseases such as obesity and diabetes, areas where all countries in the region are off course to meeting global targets.<sup>1</sup>

Large scale food fortification (LSFF) is a proven cost-effective method for addressing micronutrient deficiencies at scale, and it has the potential to provide 30-50% of the recommended daily allowance of specific micronutrients. If staple foods are fortified with chosen vitamins and nutrients, a wide section of the population would receive some significant nutritional value without making any behavioral changes and at very minimal cost. This would ensure minimum levels of nutrient availability across the population. Consequently, food fortification has been promoted as a proven way to address large scale nutritional deficiencies for about a century. Starting with salt iodization in the 1990s, West African countries have embraced food fortification, and by the 2000s, more staples were identified for fortification with more nutrients and vitamins, including iron, folic acid, and Vitamin A. Food fortification is recognized and endorsed in national nutrition policies across West Africa with ministerial resolutions for mandatory fortification of wheat flour and vegetable oil as well as universal salt iodization in all member countries of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS).

All 15 ECOWAS member states have national nutrition strategies that outline broad goals to address various nutrition-related challenges, all 15 countries have adopted food fortification of key staples and condiments in their nutrition plans for implementation, and at least 14 ECOWAS member states have multisectoral platforms for food fortification. Nevertheless, commitment and implementation levels vary across some countries in the region. In a 2020 ECOWAS study, nutrition policy commitments differed significantly across countries and nutrition programs in the region were also varied in terms of commitment, implementation, and outcomes. In the area of health and diet promotion and fortification, countries also performed disparately, and dietary diversity in the region was shown as being on the decline, except for countries like Nigeria with between 1% and 3% improvement in dietary diversity. There was no available data for several, so the reporting and analyses were limited. (ECOWAS, 2020) These disparities in nutrition policies and programs, as well as the data limitations, make it necessary to launch a regional agenda for promoting effective and consistent implementation of nutrition programs in West

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<sup>1</sup> Data retrieved from the Global Nutrition Report 2022

Africa. Countries may have also prioritized the mainstreaming of nutrition into agriculture and food security investment plans to advance nutrition sensitive food systems, however comprehensive implementation may remain challenge. A regional agenda will adopt an aggregate approach alongside individual country-level engagements that offer contextual solutions to the challenges faced by states in the region.

Consequently, this project involves a study of the governance structure for food fortification in ECOWAS member states to improve micronutrient intake as part of resilient nutrition sensitive food systems, particularly the role of public-private partnerships in advancing the fortification strategies of national governments. It also explores the role of regional structures in fostering such partnerships and advancing fortification implementation across the region.

## 1.2- Objectives and methodology

The aim of this study is to provide an analytical overview of the regulatory and governance framework for public private partnership alliances for food fortification across West Africa, amongst member states and at the regional level. To this end, this study describes the regulatory and governance landscape in ECOWAS member States and at the ECOWAS Community level, revealing the main stakeholders, the legal and institutional frameworks, and the challenges of existing frameworks for the implementation of largescale food fortification. The objectives of the study include:

- ❖ To identify the key stakeholders in the LSFF landscape across West Africa
- ❖ To present a detailed stakeholder mapping for LSFF governance across West Africa
- ❖ To examine the role of public-private partnerships in LSFF governance in West Africa
- ❖ To present an updated overview of the status of national fortification alliances across West Africa
- ❖ To identify the challenges and opportunities for public-private partnerships in LSFF implementation, particularly the fortification alliances, across West Africa
- ❖ To recommend measures and mechanisms for advancing the role of fortification alliances for LSFF implementation across West Africa

This study, which was undertaken from November 2022 until May 2023, examined the role and status of stakeholders in the LSFF landscape through the following methods: first, a desk review of relevant primary and secondary source was undertaken. Laws, regulations, ministerial orders and decrees, as well as regional and international instruments, where relevant, were consulted for information on the legal and institutional status of the alliances and related governance frameworks that were examined in this study. Reports, manuals, guidelines, and academic materials were used to collect data on the status and activities of alliances and for the analysis of existing frameworks.

The second method employed for this study is the use of semi-structured interviews to collect data from LSFF stakeholders in several West African countries. After a preliminary desk review of primary and secondary sources, some stakeholders were identified in key ECOWAS countries to be visited. The key countries were the Republic of Benin, Burkina Faso, Cote d'Ivoire, Ghana, Nigeria, and Senegal. During the visits to these countries, interviews with public and private sector stakeholders were conducted based on an interview guide (Appendix I) that had been shared with the stakeholders before the interviews so that they could properly understand the objective and scope of the project and familiarize themselves with the questions. While the in-person interviews were conducted based on some of the questions in the interview guide, the discussions were not tailored strictly to the interview guide. Stakeholders were asked to go back to the interview guide after the meetings, spend time thinking about and responding to the questions, and provide written responses to them. These would subsequently be shared with the project team and used in the data analysis.

In addition to the physical visits during which in-person meetings were held, virtual meetings were scheduled with stakeholders from some countries, namely Burkina Faso, the Gambia, Ghana, Senegal, and Togo. The interview guide was shared with stakeholders before the scheduled virtual meetings. While the interviews were conducted based on some of the questions in the interview guide, the discussions were not tailored strictly to the interview guide. Stakeholders were asked to spend time thinking about and responding to the questions in the interview guide, which they provided written responses to and shared with the project team.

In conclusion, both written and oral responses were collected from stakeholders during the study, and at the end of the data collection period, the data was analysed relying on the data analysis framework developed for the study.

### **1.3- Conceptual / Data Analysis framework (Methodological Guide)**

As noted above, LSFF has been recognized as a cost-effective intervention to tackle MNDs at scale. Consequently, over the past two decades, West African governments have introduced mandatory fortification standards of specific food vehicles as a strategic intervention to achieve national nutrition goals. An important aspect of LSFF is the regulatory implementation, which involves standard-setting, standard-diffusion and standard-implementation. These regulatory steps, to be successful, require the involvement of various stakeholders who are critical to regulatory implementation.

These stakeholders operate at the national or the regional level, and sometimes at both levels, depending on the regulatory scope for a particular intervention. In West Africa, there is a regional regulatory program that involves national standard-setting and implementation agencies from across the region in the formulation of regional standards that are then transmitted to the national level through a recognized standard-diffusion

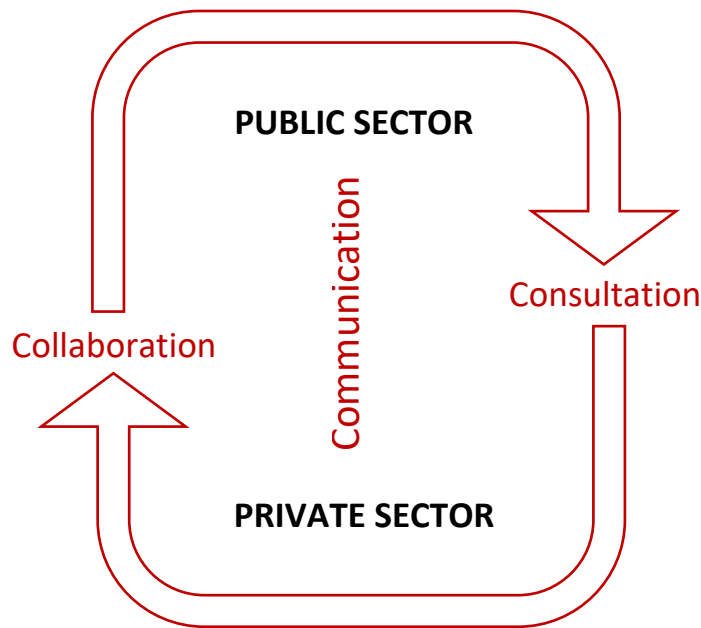
system that involves the approval and adoption of regional standards by the relevant organs of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS). Consequently, standard-setting, standard-diffusion and standard-implementation are established at the national and regional levels of LSFF regulatory implementation in West Africa.



**FIGURE 1: REGULATORY SCOPE AND STAKEHOLDER INVOLVEMENT**

Stakeholder involvement at every stage of the regulatory process is important, and as such, it is important to identify the relevant stakeholders and their role to understand and shape regulatory implementation. Stakeholder involvement in LSFF implementation depends on the category of the stakeholder and the nature of their activity in the LSFF ecosystem. Broadly, stakeholders can be classified into public and private stakeholders, with public stakeholders covering the governmental agencies and organizations involved in LSFF regulatory activities and private stakeholders covering non-governmental organizations involved in and impacted by LSFF regulatory activities. While public stakeholders include government ministries, agencies, commissions, and special government offices responsible for specific undertakings, private stakeholders involve manufacturers, packaging companies, consumer advocacy groups, community-based organizations, and research institutions and consumers. A comprehensive regulatory process involves a governance feedback loop that is consultative, communicative, and collaborative.





**FIGURE 2: REGULATORY FEEDBACK LOOP**

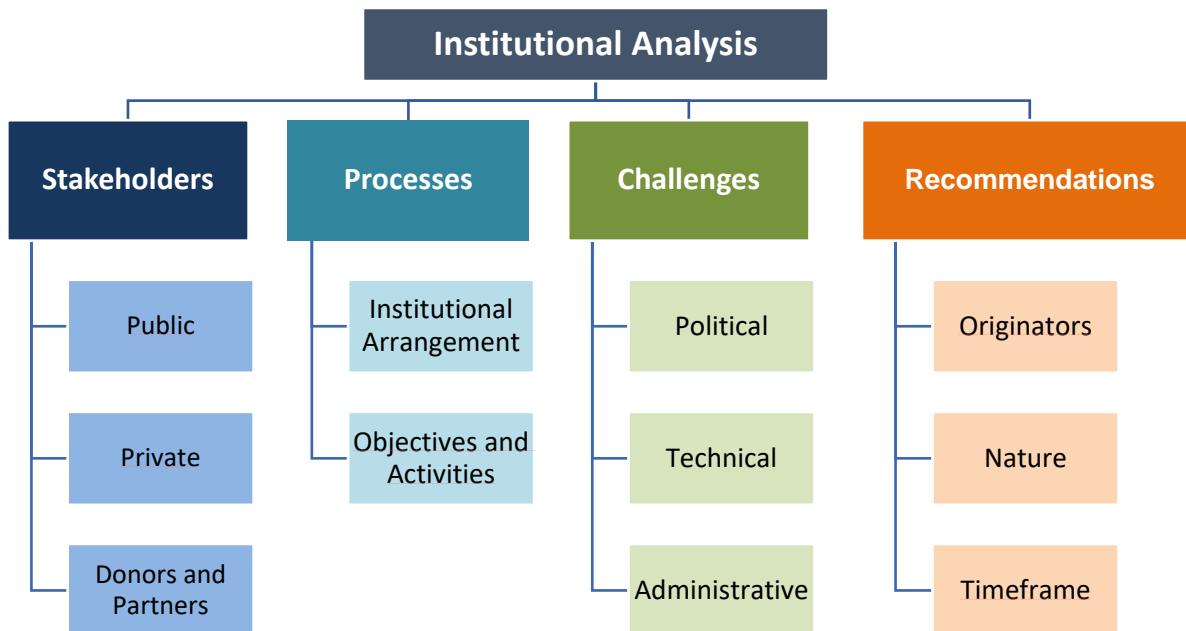
Flowing from the above, this project provides a detailed analysis of the public-private sector engagement in LSFF implementation, particularly through the framework of national fortification alliances that have been set up in several West African countries to improve regulatory and compliance performance by providing a platform for public and private sector stakeholders to engage on issues related to LSFF implementation. These alliances are an important part of the LSFF governance framework since they bring all governance stakeholders together.

This project aims to clarify the governance framework for LSFF implementation by analysing the role and impact of public-private partnerships. This will involve:

- ❖ determining the status of LSFF implementation in West Africa
- ❖ identifying the main stakeholders in LSFF implementation in West Africa and clearly defining their roles, involvement, and impact
- ❖ determining the status and composition of national fortification alliances in the region
- ❖ understanding the role of the fortification alliance in advancing fortification implementation
- ❖ identifying potential LSFF implementation “champions”
- ❖ describing existing advocacy tools and the potential for new and improved tools for enhancing LSFF implementation
- ❖ gauging stakeholder commitment to LSFF implementation
- ❖ identifying challenges to LSFF implementation and possible solutions
- ❖ exploring the current regional regulatory landscape for LSFF
- ❖ exploring the possibility of introducing a regional fortification alliance to promote LSFF implementation across the region.

To this end, the interview guide (Appendix 1) presents the data themes and framework for collecting and analyzing the relevant data.

Based on an existing data analysis framework used for previous projects of a similar nature, the following deductive codes will be adopted, and the categorizations adapted to fit this study. The codes used in the study are:



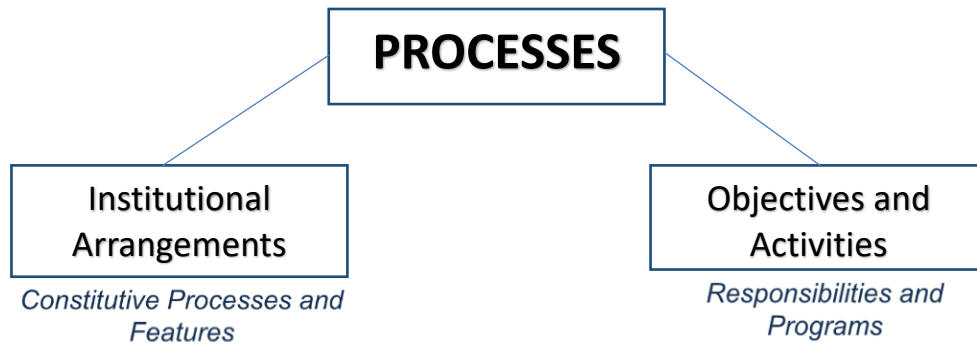
**FIGURE 3: INSTITUTIONAL ANALYSIS FRAMEWORK CATEGORIES**

## Stakeholders

LSFF stakeholders are the public and private sector individuals and institutions involved in or impacted by LSFF regulation. During the interviews, stakeholders were asked to indicate the key stakeholders who impact and are impacted by LSFF regulatory activities, and these stakeholders were categorized based on the role they play in the LSFF implementation landscape. In the following section of this report, the identified stakeholders are categorized accordingly.

## Processes

In coding for the relevant processes involved in the institutional governance of LSFF, particularly the establishment and management of public-private partnerships, the two main categories that will be studied are: institutional arrangements, which explore the establishment and management of these partnerships, and objectives and activities, which explore their performance. Nevertheless, the work focuses significantly on the institutional arrangements, analysing the governance of public private partnership alliances and improving their sustainability and functionality.



## Challenges

Stakeholders were asked about the challenges faced by public and private sector stakeholders in pursuing and promoting LSFF implementation. Given the broad range of stakeholders and activities involved, the challenges will be categorized based on their perceived source. Given that public-private partnerships involve stakeholders with sometimes varying objectives and interests, understanding the source of a challenge can help stakeholders take responsibility for their involvement in such a collaborative enterprise. For instance, political challenges, which would usually involve high-level public-sector engagement, can be channeled through the appropriate public sector avenues, while technical challenges can be addressed by seeking resources to address capacity deficits through public or private sector channels.

## Recommendations

This project aimed to engineer and design solutions based on stakeholder insights and recommendations for improved institutional administration for LSFF implementation. These recommendations will also be categorized as a means of identifying the source of the intervention (which stakeholder(s) will be responsible for the initiation and implementation of this measure?), the nature of the intervention (is it a political, administrative, technical, or composite measure?), and the timeframe for carrying out the intervention (is it a short-term, medium-term, or long-term measure?). This will be useful for designing the implementation phase of an LSFF implementation project for West Africa.

Data collected during this study, from the desk research and from the interviews and responses, was compiled and analyzed along these categories and presented below in this report that will display the institutional framework for LSFF implementation across West Africa.

## 2.0- KEY STAKEHOLDERS AND THEIR IMPACT: AN ASSESSMENT OF THE ROLE OF NATIONAL FORTIFICATION ALLIANCES IN WEST AFRICAN COUNTRIES

Large scale food fortification (LSFF) involves multiple stakeholders across various sectors of government, industry and civil society. It brings together the interests of private and public institutions in various sectors such as health, trade, industry, education, and others. Therefore, it represents a microcosm of a multi-sectoral nutrition outlook that touches on various aspects of social, political, and economic life.

LSFF Governance is not simply a one-sided supply-side activity that involves the pronouncement and enforcement of rules targeted at particular groups. Instead, it requires concerted effort on the part of all stakeholders to ensure that there is a clear strategy and an actionable plan covering activities across the fortification value chain, for mutual accountability from factory to store to table with mutual communication and support throughout.

Therefore, all stakeholders must be involved from the beginning and their roles identified and delineated to ensure transparency and accountability in fortification governance.



LSFF project team visit to the burkina faso minister of communication

This section provides a summary of fortification governance in individual ECOWAS member states before setting out a general overview of fortification stakeholders in West Africa derived from a study of these national systems. Below, LSFF governance frameworks from the 15 ECOWAS member states are described, stating their origin, their objectives, their activities, and their status.



## 2.1- Benin

Food Fortification is an important part of the food and nutrition strategy of the Government of Benin. Within various ministries, there are specialized units and departments responsible for the implementation of food and nutrition projects, or whose functions cover the implementation of some food and nutrition projects. For example, the *Direction de l'Alimentation et de la Nutrition Appliquée* (DANA) – under the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Fisheries, established by Ministerial Order in 2003, is responsible, amongst other things, for the coordination of activities relating to food and nutrition. Additionally, the *Agence nationale de Normalisation, de Métrologie et du Contrôle de la Qualité* (ANM), the National Standardization Agency, situated within the Ministry of Industry and Trade, is responsible for setting and monitoring national standards. The Nutrition Unit of the *Direction de la Santé de la Mère et de l'Enfant* (DSME), situated in the Ministry of Health, is also an important nutrition actor for promoting solutions to nutrition challenges in the country, especially where they affect vulnerable groups.

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***The Commission Béninoise de Fortification des Aliments<sup>3</sup> (CBFA), established in 2009 is a multi-sectoral multi-stakeholder platform to promote food fortification in the country, and it is credited with spearheading the inter-ministerial order for the fortification of edible oil with Vitamin A in 2012.<sup>4</sup>***

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The Government recognizes the multisectoral nature of nutrition and approaches food and nutrition governance through collaborative multi-sectoral platforms and mechanisms. At the apex of nutrition governance in the Country is the *Conseil de l'Alimentation et de la Nutrition* (CAN) (Food and Nutrition Council), which was established by Decree No. 2009-245 of June 2009 as the main body responsible for shaping and ensuring the implementation of the National Policy and Plan on Food and Nutrition in the country as well as coordinating the national activities on food and nutrition. The Council, which is situated in the Office of the President, is a forum for bringing together public and private sector stakeholders at the highest levels to set the nutrition agenda for the country. Its membership includes representatives from the Ministries of Agriculture, Health, Social Protection, Development, Finance, Decentralization, and Trade, as well as the National Association of Municipalities of Benin, the Food Industry Association, Training Institutions for Food and Nutrition, Research Institutions in the field of Food and Nutrition, Civil Society including Consumer Associations, the National Chamber of Agriculture, and Professional Agricultural

Organizations.<sup>2</sup> This is an example of public-private partnership across sectors for the implementation of food and nutrition activities. While the Council represents multi-sectoral public private partnership at the highest levels of decision-making regarding national food and nutrition matters, the *Commission Béninoise de Fortification des Aliments<sup>3</sup>* (CBFA) represents a more targeted partnership for the promotion of food fortification as a food and nutrition strategy.

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<sup>2</sup> Article 5 of the Decree

<sup>3</sup> Beninoise Commission for Food Fortification

<sup>4</sup> Year 2012 N° 0238 MS/MEF/MAEP/MICPME/DE/SEME Containing Modalities of Fortification In Vitamin A from Edible Oils Intended for Human Consumption and Animal in the Republic of Benin.

The CBFA was established in 2009 as a multi-sectoral multi-stakeholder platform to promote food fortification in the country, and it is credited with spearheading the inter-ministerial order for the fortification of edible oil with Vitamin A in 2012.<sup>4</sup> Apart from this, there is limited information about the current status of the CBFA and its membership.



## 2.2- Burkina Faso

In 2002, the *Comité de Pilotage des Programmes et Projets d'Enrichissement d'Aliments en Micronutriments*<sup>5</sup> was established in Burkina Faso by Joint Order no. 102-128 /MS/MPCEA/MEF/M. Agri/MATD of April 26, 2002, to facilitate and coordinate the country's food fortification programs. In 2008, the *Conseil National de Concertation en Nutrition*<sup>6</sup> (CNCN) was established by Decree N°2008-003/PRES/PM/MS/MAHRH/MASSN/MEF. Its management comprised the Ministers of Health; Agriculture, Hydraulics and Fishery Resources; Social Action and National Solidarity; and Economy and Finance, as well as representatives from the World Health Organization (WHO) and Helen Keller Int. Its membership covered a broad range of representations from the public and private sector, including additional ministries such as the Ministry of Animal Resources and Housing and Urban Planning, amongst others, and representatives from the United Nations, the European Union, the International Committee for Drought Control in the Sahel and the Research Institute for Development. The CNCN provides a multisectoral multistakeholder platform for nutrition planning, so that stakeholders can take into consideration the various programs with impacts on nutrition and work to ensure proper alignment and coordination.

In 2014, the *Alliance Nationale pour la Fortification* (ANF) was established by an Interministerial Order originating from the Ministry of Health and endorsed by the Ministries of Health; Trade and Industry; Economy and Finance; and Agriculture and Water Resources with representation from the private sector and civil society organizations. The Alliance was established to assist the CNCN in the planning, implementation, and monitoring of the national food fortification strategy. It was established as a broad multi-stakeholder platform that went beyond the membership of the CNCN, including the



Visit to the Burkina Faso Minister of Health

<sup>4</sup> Year 2012 N° 0238 MS/MEF/MAEP/MICPME/DE/SEME Containing Modalities of Fortification In Vitamin A from Edible Oils Intended for Human Consumption and Animal in the Republic of Benin.

<sup>5</sup> Steering Committee for Micronutrient Food Fortification Programs and Projects

<sup>6</sup> National Consultation Council on Nutrition

Consumer League of Burkina Faso and industry representation. The secretariat of the Alliance is in the Department of Nutrition of the Ministry of Health and the Presidency and Vice Presidency are held by the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Commerce respectively.

The Alliance is responsible for ensuring government commitment to food fortification and ensuring the implementation and monitoring of food fortification standards in the country, while also creating a platform for public-private dialogue and cooperation for the advancement of food fortification in the country, including fostering research to ensure the effective implementation of food fortification programs and quality control mechanisms; advocacy, including legislation and regulatory interventions to protect consumers; and securing funding for the execution of its role, amongst other things. The ANF has a broad mandate to promote political, technical, and institutional progress for the implementation of food fortification in Burkina Faso.



## 2.3- Cabo Verde

Data collected during the study revealed that in Cape Verde, there is no multisectoral platform to coordinate fortification issues. Although there are discussions and engagements between the different actors (Ministry of Health (MOH), Ministry of Industry, Commerce and Energy (MICE), Ministry of Agriculture and Environment (MAA), Ministry of Finance, Directorate General of Customs (DGA), Independent Authority for Health Regulation (ERIS), General Inspectorate of Economic Activities (IGAE), Cooperatives and the private sector), no platform exists to facilitate coordination between the actors.

The Ministry of Health is responsible for the national food fortification program, but there is no legislation covering food fortification. Additionally, there is no text identifying which authority is responsible for the inspection/verification of micronutrients in food vehicles and the recommended dose.

Despite these gaps and limitations, stakeholders have indicated the willingness of the authorities to improve food fortification policy and programs in the country, especially for wheat flour.





## 2.4- Cote d'Ivoire

The *Alliance Nationale pour la Fortification* (ANF) was established in Cote d'Ivoire by an Inter-ministerial Order (Order No. 195/MSHP/MIPSP of October 10, 2006) in 2006 as part of the 2005 launch of the country's Food Fortification Program supported by a \$3m grant from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation through the Global Alliance for Improved Nutrition (GAIN) and implemented by Helen Keller Intl.

In 2014, the *Conseil National pour la Nutrition* (CNN) was established by an Order (Decree No. 2014-433 of July 16, 2014) of the Prime Minister who is the Chair of the Council. The Council was introduced to drive multisectoral coordination of the national nutrition policy. In 2018, the *Alliance Nationale pour la Enrichissement d'Aliments en Cote d'Ivoire* (ANEA) was established by an Order of the Prime Minister (Order No 602/PM/CAB of 02 November 2018) as an organ of the CNN with the main mission of assisting the CNN in the implementation of the national strategy for food fortification. The 2018 Order repealed the 2006 Order creating the ANF and it set up a Technical Committee and a Technical Secretariat as the main organs of the Alliance. Membership of the Technical Committee comprises public and private sector representatives from government departments, civil society, industry, research institutions, laboratories, and the main standard-setting body in the country, CODINORM, amongst others. The Order establishing ANEA does not mention any technical financial partner as a member of the Alliance. In 2019, a decree was signed to replace the CNN with the National Council for Nutrition, Food and Early Childhood Development (CONNAPE) with the same responsibilities.



Work session with the Ivorian brigade for control and the repression of fraud

Since its inception, ANEA has spearheaded the rice fortification agenda in Cote d'Ivoire. Nevertheless, it has a long way to go to fulfil its broad mandate, which includes monitoring and evaluation, investigation and surveys, regulatory supervision, and other activities. The Alliance is expected to promote and enhance food fortification in the country and support regional and cross-border processes building on almost two decades of active engagements in regional and national fortification. For example, the harmonized *ENRICH* logo for branding fortified foods in most countries in West Africa was initially developed in Cote d'Ivoire and a modified version adopted for the eight

UEMOA member countries and later by Cape Verde, Liberia, Gambia, Guinea and Sierra Leone.



## 2.5- The Gambia



In the Gambia, the National Alliance for Food Fortification (NAFF) was established in 2018 by the National Nutrition Council. The Council was established in 2010 as a multistakeholder convening and coordination platform to bring together different actors impacting nutrition from the private and public sector. The Council provides both political and technical leadership around nutrition matters and ensure political commitment and momentum for nutrition in different sectors of the government's agenda, thus prioritising nutrition across the board. To this end, it is headed by the Vice President and situated in the Office of the Vice President.

The NAFF is a broader platform than the Council, including industry actors across the fortification value chain and it is more targeted than the Council, focusing on the implementation of food fortification as a core nutrition strategy. In 2018, stakeholders, led by the National Nutrition Agency (NaNA), the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) and the European Union (EU) gathered to draw up the terms of reference for the NAFF. The proposed ToRs detail the mandate of the NAFF, which include advocacy, information-sharing, coordination, and support for the implementation of food fortification, amongst other things. The NAFF was to be chaired by a representative from the NaNA, which was also to house the NAFF secretariat. The membership of NAFF, according to the terms of reference, was to include representatives from the public sector, including the Office of the Vice President and several ministries and agencies, and the private sector, including academia, civil society and industry.

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*The main public sector player is the National Nutrition Agency (NaNA), which is currently working towards the development of effective food fortification standards and implementation capacity in the country.*

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Although the food fortification landscape in the Gambia is quite nascent when compared to other West African countries, there is considerable interest from the public and private sector as evidenced in the existing structures aimed at promoting food fortification. The main public sector player is the NaNA, which is currently working towards the development of effective food fortification standards and implementation capacity in the country. Private sector stakeholders such as Mauro Farms and the Gambia Horticultural Society are also identified as key stakeholders, as well as the National Association of Salt Producers and Traders (NaSPaT). The WFP has been identified as a major stakeholder as well, supporting the efforts of the public and private sector, including support for regular NAFF meetings, commencing in 2023.

So far, there is a structure and a framework for the NAFF to operate and there appears to be sufficient institutional will to drive the fortification agenda forward, but the actual outcomes are yet to be seen, given the novelty of food fortification as a key nutrition strategy in the Gambia.



## 2.6- Ghana

The National Food Fortification Alliance (NFFA) in Ghana was established in 2002 as a public-private sector platform to strengthen food fortification governance in the country. Its mandate was to promote the development of legislative and regulatory instruments for food fortification and to foster implementation while promoting advocacy amongst various stakeholders. It was established as a platform for consensus-building, information-sharing, monitoring and evaluation, and technical and political advocacy to advance the course of food fortification as a key nutrition intervention. The framework for the NFFA is based on an MoU signed by its members, adopting the structure and mandate of the Alliance.

Five sub-committees were incorporated into the structure of the Alliance: legislation and food control; communication and social marketing; production; monitoring and evaluation; and project management. Members of the Alliance were distributed across these sub-committees, which enhanced participation in the activities of the Alliance. The Alliance was regarded as an important platform for information-sharing (improved transparency); mutual support amongst stakeholders (capacity building and problem solving to address common fortification challenges); advocacy and promotion of fortification standards.

The NFFA was active and effective in several ways. It supported the development of a monitoring strategy for the implementation of food fortification standards, including the monitoring of premix quality, food production processes, and post-production distribution. The Alliance was also proactive about advocacy and consumer education about food fortification, including the adoption of a food fortification logo for branding fortified foods in Ghana.

The work of the Alliance was supported by GAIN, while there was a National Salt Iodization Committee, supported mostly by UNICEF. With the decline in donor funding for these platforms, their activities also declined, impacting the visibility and effectiveness of food fortification programs in the country. In 2022, there was a decision to merge the Food Fortification and Salt Iodization platforms to create a consolidated fortification platform that would promote food fortification in the country. This ongoing process is being spearheaded by the Nutrition Department of the Ministry of Health.



## 2.7- Guinea

In Guinea, the *Alliance Nationale pour la Fortification* (ANF) was established by Decree in 2012 with a general monitoring mandate, targeted mainly at salt iodization at the time. In 2013, the *Comité technique multisectoriel de Nutrition* was established in the Office of the Presidency to oversee the development and implementation of national nutrition policies and programs, including food fortification.

The Alliance is the custodian of the *ENRICH* logo and serves as a platform for stakeholder engagement and coordination of fortification implementation and activities. However, there are communication gaps that have made it difficult for stakeholders to find necessary information and engage effectively with the Alliance, which strongly relied on support from Helen Keller Intl. Without donor support, it is not clear that the Alliance has been able to function effectively or convene regularly—or irregularly. Nevertheless, the period of activity of the Alliance saw some progress in advancing the fortification agenda, especially in creating a structure for fortification implementation in Guinea, disseminating information about fortification amongst stakeholders, promoting the adoption of mandatory fortification standards for various food vehicles, and building the capacity of industry to comply with fortification standards.



## 2.8- Guinea Bissau

There is a National Alliance for Food Fortification in Guinea Bissau. This alliance was established in 2012 through a joint memorandum of understanding between the different stakeholders. The alliance has contributed significantly to the implementation of large-scale salt iodization in Guinea Bissau. The government institution responsible for overseeing the implementation of the fortification program is the Directorate of Nutrition.

The National Alliance for Food Fortification has been in collaboration with and supported by UNICEF since its inception. But in recent years, the Alliance has not received support from partners. As a result, activities have stagnated. The Alliance is mainly composed of associations of monitors of iodized salt and other products. They work in partnership with the Ministries of Commerce, Health, Industry, Agriculture, Fisheries, Finance and other involved entities.



## 2.9- Liberia

Starting in 2006, the Government of Liberia developed a comprehensive Food Security and Nutrition Survey. This involved the effort of the Ministries of Agriculture; Health and Social Welfare; Internal Affairs; and Planning and Economic Affairs in collaboration with partners such as Catholic Relief Services (CRS); the Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO); Project Healthy Children, the United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL); and the World Health Organization (WHO), amongst others. The Survey has been a useful tool for developing the National Food Security and Nutrition Strategy, which recognized food fortification as an important intervention for addressing some of the nutrition challenges in the country.

In 2010, the Government of Liberia entered into a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Project Healthy Children (PHC), a non-governmental organization based in the United States, to develop a national food fortification program. An important outcome of the program was the establishment of a National Fortification Alliance (NFA), which was created in 2012, with MoHSW as the “home” agency. The NFA was established to serve as “the forum for generating policy guidance and coordinating all activities relating to food fortification in Liberia”<sup>7</sup>. Its membership included and was open to both public and private sector stakeholders in the food fortification space, such as the MoHSW; Ministry of Finance (Customs); Ministry of Commerce and Industry; Ministry of Agriculture; Ministry of Information; Ministry of Internal Affairs; Ministry of Justice; civil society; and the private sector. The Chair and Vice Chair of the Alliance could be from any of the member institutions or categories, but the secretary was to be from the home agency.

Focal areas of the Alliance’s activities were identified as: production and distribution; policy and legislation; safety and quality; social marketing, monitoring, evaluation and impact assessment; program management and technical and financial support. The Alliance also developed MoUs between the NFA and organizations involved in food fortification monitoring and evaluation, for the guidance of technicians and inspectors.

In 2013, mandatory national standards for the fortification of wheat flour, oil, salt and sugar were adopted in Liberia, in conformity with ECOWAS standards, owing to efforts made by the NFA. Also in 2013, the NFA adopted the “*ENRICHED*” logo derived from the *ENRICH*” logo adopted by several Francophone West African states for endorsement on fortified foods. And, in 2017, the NFA launched a National Food Fortification Alliance Day, hosted by the Ministry of Commerce and Industry, and it partnered with the National Consumers’ Association of Liberia to execute a largescale advocacy campaign around food fortification in the country. As recently as 2019, the Alliance announced that it was working with the Ministry of Education to introduce “Nutrition” as a subject into the curriculum in Liberian schools.

The Liberian NFA has enjoyed significant support from partners such as PHC, Helen Keller Intl, and many others, and sustained support will advance the already impressive

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<sup>7</sup> Liberia NFA ToR 2012

institutional structures, processes and instruments that have been adopted and administered by the Alliance.



## 2.10- Mali

In 2003, the Malian government established the *Comité Technique de Fortification des Aliments* by virtue of an order of the Prime Minister (Decree No. 03-550 PM-RM of 30 December 2003), made pursuant to the 2002 Accra Consensus Statement on Public-Private Sector Dialogue on Food Fortification in West Africa. The committee is housed within the Ministry of Commerce and industry, and its secretariat is in the National Directorate of Industry, while the Ministry of Commerce and Industry and the Ministry of Health are responsible for the execution of the Decree. The committee has the main responsibility for implementing the country's food fortification program.

Membership of the Committee was drawn from the public and private sector, including the Ministry of Commerce and Industry (which held the Chair of the Committee); the Ministry for Social Development; the Ministry of the Family; the National Director of Industry; the National Director of Trade and Competition; the Director General of Regulation and Control of the Rural Development Sector; the Director of the National Health Laboratory; the Director of the Rural Economy Institute; the Director of the Agricultural Technical High School Institute; the Planning and Statistics Unit of the Ministry of Health; the Malian Nutrition Network; the Chamber of Commerce; the Employers' Association; the Association of Community Health Workers, and Helen Keller Intl, amongst others. The membership does not include individual representation of industry stakeholders, such as flour millers, oil millers, and importers.

The National Multi-Sectoral Plan of Action for Nutrition recognizes the importance of fortification to addressing critical nutrition challenges such as iron deficiency amongst women and children, and it highlights the benefits to the public sector in complying with important nutrition targets and standards, including for fortification. Finally, the Plan notes the role of public-private sector partnerships in advancing the nutrition agenda and achieving important objectives. Although the Malian government has shown an interest in advancing food fortification and building the right structures to advance the fortification agenda, there is limited information about the status and activities of the Technical Committee on Food Fortification.



## 2.11- Niger

The Government of Niger has recognized fortification as an important strategic activity for addressing nutrition challenges in the country. To this end, the government established the *Comité Technique National sur l'Enrichissement Alimentaire* in 2003 by Decree Number 2 and 3, as a public-private sector platform for the advancement of food fortification in the country as part of the country's nutrition strategy. The Technical Committee appears to be the country's provisional version of the National Food Fortification Alliance, also known as *l'Alliance Nationale pour la Fortification des Aliments* (ANFA), and the understanding is that there will be a subsequent Decree to formally establish an Alliance, perhaps with a more robust institutional structure and mandate.

The Technical Committee is established under the Directorate for Nutrition in the Ministry of Public Health, supported by the *Haut Commission l'Initiative 3N* (HC3N), a multi-sectoral initiative of the Government of Niger to address food insecurity in the country by encouraging advancements in food production. The aim is to bring together key public sector institutions, private sector (industry, advocacy, and research) and development partners with an impact on food fortification.

As at 2018, the robust Alliance had not been formed and the Technical Committee remained stagnant with no financial resources allocated to it and a vague institutional structure.



## 2.12- Nigeria

The National Fortification Alliance was established in 2007 to coordinate the implementation of food fortification in Nigeria, given the success of a similar task force that was instrumental in the implementation of the country's salt iodization initiative (the USI-IDD Task Force). The National Fortification Alliance was created by a Memorandum of Understanding amongst stakeholders in food fortification to bring together public and private sector organizations for the advancement of food fortification nationally. The Chair of the Alliance was held by the National Planning Commission, and the membership of the Alliance included the National Planning Commission (NPC); the Standards Organization of Nigeria (SON); the National Agency for Food and Drugs Administration and Control (NAFDAC); the Federal Ministry of Health (FMoH); the Federal Ministry of Industry, Trade and Investments (FMITI); representatives from Industry (Private sector); donors and partners; and academia. The Alliance serves as a useful platform for planning fortification implementation activities; exploring new food vehicles and methods for fortification; sharing fortification compliance data and challenges; and seeking effective ways to improve food fortification implementation.

At the NFA, fortification monitoring was delineated amongst public sector regulatory agencies, with specific monitoring tasks allocated to each agency. SON was responsible for monitoring and inspections at the factory; NAFDAC was responsible for monitoring and inspection at the retail or market level, while the National Public Health Care and Development Agency (NPHCDA) was responsible for monitoring and inspection at the consumer/household level. With the establishment of a Federal Competition and Consumer Protection Commission (FCCPC) in 2018, that agency was designated the agency responsible for monitoring and inspection at the consumer/household level. In 2010, the NFA commissioned the production of a harmonized manual for monitoring and enforcement of fortification standards and regulations in Nigeria. Partners like GAIN have also supported monitoring activities; national food fortification surveys; capacity building and training; and research and development to advance food fortification.

The NFA is currently chaired by the private sector and SON holds the vice-chair of the Alliance, while NAFDAC is the secretariat of the Alliance. Meetings are held biannually, and there have been recent considerations about reviewing the status of the Alliance to ensure greater autonomy and sustainability. The NFA continues to be an essential component of fortification implementation in Nigeria as a platform for all stakeholders across sectors to engage on their impact on and interests in fortification.



## 2.13- Senegal

The *Comite Senegalaise pour la Fortification des Aliments en Micronutriments* (COSFAM) is a sub-committee of the *Conseil National de Developpement de la Nutrition* (CNDN), which was established in 2001 to oversee the development and implementation of the national nutrition policy. The CNDN is situated within the Office of the Prime Minister and headed by the Director of Cabinet. It has a national execution office and regional execution offices to oversee the execution of policies at the national and community levels, supporting 18 community executing agencies, which are NGOs that implement direct and impactful nutrition programs. The Council is composed of 12 key technical ministries such as health, agriculture, education, trade, industry, and others, a civil society representative and a representative of the local authorities. This is the highest level of decision-making on nutrition at the national level.

COSFAM was established by Order No. 001717 of March 10, 2006, of the Prime Minister for the coordination and promotion of fortification implementation in Senegal. Membership of COSFAM includes donors and partners such as Helen Keller Intl, the Institute for Food Technology, Nutrition International former Micronutrient Initiative, Industry, Consumer Associations, as well as key government stakeholders. COSFAM has overseen projects and programs to advance food fortification in Senegal, such as the *Programme Reinforcement de la Fortification* (PRF), which sees to the implementation of fortification standards, particularly in relation to the fortification of oil and flour through monitoring of compliance; capacity building; development of quality assurance systems; distribution of fortified products; and social marketing and communication.

COSFAM has been involved in several major food fortification projects and activities since its inception, including the promotion of vegetable oil and wheat flour fortification in Senegal, the administration of surveys to determine the impact of food fortification in the country, technical assistance and capacity building for food processors to support effective fortification, technical assistance to public sector institutions (Department of Domestic Trade) for monitoring food fortification compliance, production of advocacy and sensitization materials to improve knowledge about fortification amongst consumers, production of guidelines and handbooks to promote and sustain good practices in fortification implementation, and others.



## 2.14- Sierra Leone

The National Food Fortification Alliance (NFFA) in the Government of Sierra Leone was established in 2010 to promote food fortification as an important nutrition intervention. The Alliance was expected to particularly support and drive a social mobilization campaign to ensure the spread of knowledge and understanding of the importance of food fortification.

The Alliance was meant to serve as one of several nutrition interventions to promote fortification in accordance with ECOWAS standards and decisions. However, the Food and Nutrition Security Implementation Plan 2012-2016 notes the need for the Ministry of Health and Social Services to “advocate for the formalization of an active national fortification alliance”. Subsequently, the government announced that it would present a cabinet paper before parliament to facilitate the formation of the National Food Fortification Alliance.

There is limited information about the status, composition and activities of the NFFA.



## 2.15- Togo

The Togolese Government established the *Comité National pour la Fortification des Aliments* (CNFA) in 2009 as a multisectoral committee under the coordination of the Ministry of Health. It serves as a platform to convene representatives from Ministries and various public agencies, representatives from civil society, representatives from academia, and representatives from the relevant industries. Its main objective is to plan and support the implementation of food fortification programs and projects in the country.

A July 2021 study noted that the Committee does not meet regularly due to lack of funds, resulting in low motivation amongst members to engage productively in the fortification space.



## 2.16- ECOWAS

A regional fortification alliance was introduced in West Africa in 2007, following the second dialogue on public-private partnerships for food fortification. While the first Dialogue spurred the establishment of national alliances across the region, the follow-up event focused on the creation of a regional fortification alliance, comprising technical partners such as WAHO, Helen Keller Intl, UNICEF, GAIN, MI, WAEMU and producer associations such as the Association of Industrialists of the Oilseed Sector. The regional alliance for fortification, as it was known, did not remain functional for long, but its existence has been recognized as a key requirement for driving the work of national alliances and, consequently, the cause of fortification across the region.

# 3.0- AN ANALYSIS OF LSFF GOVERNANCE THROUGH PUBLIC-PRIVATE SECTOR ALLIANCES IN WEST AFRICA

## 3.1- Stakeholders

**TABLE 1: THE MAIN STAKEHOLDERS IN THE LSFF SPACE IN WEST AFRICA**

Public Sector	Private Sector	Donors and Partners
Ministry of Health	Oil Industry Association	WHO
Ministry of Commerce and Industry/Ministry of Trade	Flour Industry Association	WFP
Ministry of Agriculture	Salt Industry Association	CRS
Ministry of Education	Sugar Industry Association	USAID
Ministry of Information	Civil Society and Consumer Advocacy Groups	Nutrition International (Formerly Micronutrients Initiative)
Ministry of Finance	Association of Nutrition Journalists	UNICEF
Standards Bureau/Agency	Private Laboratories	Helen Keller Intl
Food and Drugs Authority	Consumers	GRET
Customs	Academia	GAIN
Public Laboratories	Premix Suppliers and Producers	FAO
Public Consumer Protection Agency	Import and Export Associations	

The **public sector** stakeholders are mostly involved in setting fortification standards; monitoring and inspection to ensure compliance with the standards; supply of technical assistance to private sector stakeholders; and advocacy and sensitization to educate various private sector stakeholders of the existing standards and of the importance of fortification.

**Private sector** stakeholders in particular food industries are directly involved in the production, branding and distribution of quality fortified food products that comply with regulatory standards. They are involved in supporting the setting of fortification standards (through consultation); compliance with fortification standards; marketing to convey the benefits of fortification; reporting on the status of fortification; conducting research into new and existing methods of fortification; and offering services to facilitate LSFF

implementation. The private sector ensures effective standard operating procedures, quality control and assurance systems and record keeping systems to advance effective food fortification. The private sector is also involved in the production and distribution of premixes, analytical devices, and food fortification equipment installation for fortification as well as support for commercial marketing of fortified foods.

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*Donors and development partners, including the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation and USAID, have funded technical international organizations to support food fortification efforts in West Africa, providing resources and expertise for capacity building, advocacy, and research.*

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**Donors and development partners** are very key players in the fortification space, as many of the fortification programs in West Africa. Donors such as the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, USAID, Government of Taiwan, Michael and Suzan Dell Foundation and others have funded technical international organizations such as Helen Keller International, Nutrition International, UNFAO, UNICEF, Catholic Relief Services, GAIN, TechnoServe and others to support national governments to advance food fortification in West Africa. Many of these stakeholders, including specific projects such as USAID Advancing Nutrition, have been active in the formal structure for fortification governance. For instance, Helen Keller International is listed as a member of the Fortification Alliance or Technical Committee in some West African countries.

They provide technical and financial resources to advance food fortification implementation, including funding for LSFF initiatives; capacity building for public and private sector stakeholders; advocacy and sensitization; and research and development.

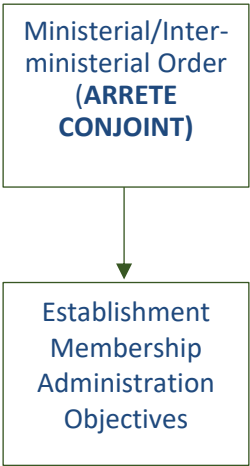
Given the above, each stakeholder has an important role to play in the food fortification ecosystem, and the proper understanding of the role of each stakeholder will promote greater transparency and accountability. One way to ensure that these roles are acknowledged, understood, and discharged has been by the creation of these public-private partnership alliances that bring together all stakeholders under one platform with a common goal of advancing LSFF implementation to contribute to reducing and preventing the high burden of micronutrient deficiencies in West Africa.

## **3.2- Structured Processes for Establishing National Alliances for Food Fortification in West Africa**

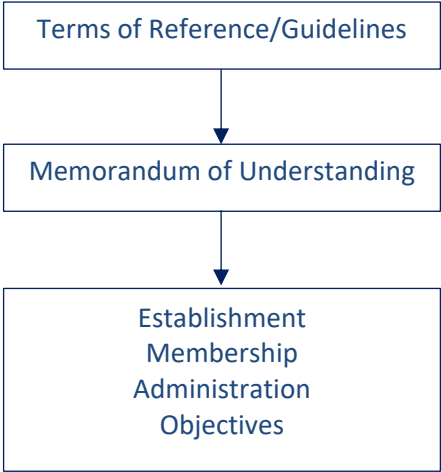
Across West Africa, national governments have incorporated fortification into their nutrition policies and strategic plans. Therefore, it is an important policy component. Additionally, there are legal mandates for fortification across the region, making it an important regulatory subject with authoritative force over the actions of stakeholders. In several countries administrative authority has also been incorporated into the establishment of fortification alliances, which are established by ministerial orders, Acts or Decrees as part of the governance structure for fortification, thus introducing a politically sanctioned institutional framework with public and private sector stakeholders.

In Francophone states in West Africa, the national fortification alliances are established by virtue of a ministerial or inter-ministerial orders, acts or decrees which are instruments of the state, while in Anglophone states, the alliances are mainly established by a

memorandum of understanding, which provides the institutional basis for the establishment of the alliance but is not a legally binding instrument. While the ministerial orders, acts or decrees are comprehensive enough to cover details about the composition, administration, and objectives of the national alliances for food fortification, in the absence of such orders, terms of reference for the operation of the alliance are drawn up by stakeholders who then take responsibility for the institutional details.



**FIGURE 4:  
FRANCOPHONE  
ESTABLISHMENT  
STRUCTURE**



**FIGURE 5: ANGLOPHONE  
ESTABLISHMENT STRUCTURE**

There are advantages and drawbacks to each of these structural processes. A formal, politically sanctioned structure with the details outlined in the body of an instrument of the state provides a distinct institutional framework with an authoritative basis, and such instruments can easily be consulted by consulting government records. The formal government orders are usually published in the official journal of the government. However, this is not flexible enough for members to modify as the need arises, especially in an environment where public resources may not be sufficient to sustain such structures. Consequently, the inter-ministerial orders establishing the alliances have had to be repealed by subsequent ones establishing new structures in countries like Burkina Faso and Cote d’Ivoire. Finally, it is important to note that, while a legally binding instrument provides a level of institutional certainty, it could also endorse power dynamics that place government members at an advantage over other stakeholders.

In the case of memoranda of understanding and terms of reference, a major challenge is accessibility. These documents are not part of the public record and cannot easily be accessed even by members of the alliance. However, there is a level of flexibility that allows members shape and modify their terms of reference as they deem fit. Also, the more flexible structure might be amenable to intervention from members, especially where ownership of the institution is widespread. Where the terms of reference are developed collaboratively, members may be more inclined to engage and participate as well as define the terms for contributing their resources to the operations of the alliance.

Given the experience of states in West Africa, the establishment of public private partnership fortification alliances has been a first step to developing an active mechanism for coordinating and promoting food fortification implementation. Whether the institutional structure has been set up by means of a governmental order or by a memorandum, the drive to form such useful platforms has been productive, especially given the need to define and strengthen implementation processes for food fortification.

The processes involved in LSFF implementation are defined by stakeholder roles. As outlined above, different categories of stakeholders play different roles in the advancement of LSFF implementation. Consequently, the alliance provides a mechanism for consolidating those roles into a collective effort that is aimed at improving coordinated implementation and mutual accountability. The instruments that set up the alliances and the terms of reference that describe the conditions for their functional operations usually state the objectives of the alliances, which can be categorized broadly based on the nature of the object or intervention. In the table below, the objectives of the alliances are categorised in accordance with the data analysis framework, situating them within the regulatory framework that covers the roles of public and private sector stakeholders as well as donors and partners.

(Details of the roles and objectives of some of the national alliances discussed in this study are contained in Appendix 2)

**TABLE 2: CLASSIFICATION OF ALLIANCES OBJECTIVES**

Coordination and strategic planning and implementation ( <i>Consultation amongst stakeholders</i> )	Establishing enabling environment through standard setting and compliance enforcement. ( <i>Communication of standards and regulatory issues</i> )	Capacity reinforcement, monitoring, evaluation, and learning. ( <i>Collaboration to ensure implementation of programs and projects</i> )
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- to foster coordination and monitoring of food fortification programs and projects</li> <li>- to prepare and adopt policy, legislative and regulatory measures for the implementation of food fortification.</li> <li>- to promote and implement research activities for the development of food fortification initiatives.</li> <li>- to solicit and maintain political commitment and support for food fortification at the highest levels of government.</li> <li>- to ensure that all stakeholders are informed of the existence of developments in food fortification implementation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- to support the private sector in the quality assurance and certification of fortified foods.</li> <li>- to promote and implement advocacy and sensitization of existing standards amongst consumers</li> <li>- to develop and implement social marketing and communication strategies for food fortification amongst all stakeholders at all levels.</li> <li>- to evaluate the quality control and the conformity of the products to fortification standards from the production process until consumption</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- to develop innovative monitoring and evaluation methods for ensuring compliance with food fortification standards</li> </ul>
<p><b>Mobilize funding required for the sustenance of the Alliance.</b></p>		

### **3.3- Coordination and strategic planning and implementation of food fortification: Standard-Setting**

The Alliances are responsible for coordinating the efforts of the public and private sector stakeholders to plan and implement large scale food fortification initiatives at the national level. They usually meet every quarter to reflect and deliberate on national food fortification strategy implementation, challenges, opportunities, and mutual accountability for effectiveness. Fortification strategies usually cover five key component areas:

- Partnership building and coordination.
- Enabling environment through standard and compliance enforcement
- Production and distribution of fortified food
- Social marketing and communication
- Monitoring, evaluation and learning across the above four priority areas.

While public sector stakeholders are at the core of most of the objectives and ensuing processes in the fortification regulatory system, effectiveness and success require multi-stakeholder engagement across processes and the entire fortification value chain. Therefore, as noted above, all stakeholders are part of the consultative, communication and collaborative processes, where they identify their various interests and objectives and channel those towards a comprehensive, transparent, and effective food fortification agenda. For instance, in most West African states, the standard-setting body is a public sector actor, but the standard-setting process involves detailed consultation with various stakeholders in the public and private sector, regardless of the status of the standard-setting body.

#### **3.3.1- Public Sector standard setting**

In Nigeria, the Standards Organization of Nigeria (SON) is an agency of the Federal government, established by law in 1970. The Organization is housed under the Federal Ministry of Industry, Trade, and Investments (FMITI) and it has the power to adopt standards for the advancement of the national economy. Section 23 of the SON Act, 2015, provides for the standard-setting procedure, which involves obligatory consultations with stakeholders. These stakeholders are to form part of the committee responsible for deliberating and elaborating on proposed standards and reporting to the Governing Council of the Organization accordingly. Even though the Organization is a government body, it is obligated to include stakeholders, including private sector stakeholders, in this important decision-making process. Consequently, SON has a formal procedure of consultation for standard-setting that is incorporated into its regulatory process.

#### **3.3.2- Private Sector standard setting**

In Côte d'Ivoire, the standards organisation, CODINORM, is a private autonomous organization with some degree of public sector involvement, similar to AFNORM in France. CODINORM has a board that includes public sector representatives and some of its employees are from the public sector. The Government of Côte d'Ivoire is responsible for a percentage of the Organization's budget and, although it is not part of any Ministry or government agency, CODINORM is under the "tutelage" of the Ministry of Trade and

Industry. CODINORM is empowered by the Government of Côte d’Ivoire to set standards, enforce compliance with the standards, and represent Côte d’Ivoire in international standardization. While CODINORM sets industry standards, the government of Côte d’Ivoire makes certain standards mandatory and enacts laws that empower CODINORM to evaluate standards and issue marks and certificates. In setting standards, CODINORM ensures broad consultation of private and public sector stakeholders.

### 3.3.3- Establishing enabling environment through standard setting and compliance enforcement

The Alliance plays a critical oversight role in the creation of an enabling environment through standard setting and compliance enforcement at the national level. The national alliances ensure the establishment of competent technical committees working with competent regulatory authorities to establish mandatory food fortification standards and support their compliance enforcement to achieve impact.



LSFF consultants at Ivorian standards office

Standards diffusion involves the communication of standards and all standards-related matters to stakeholders to ensure proper dissemination of knowledge and information. This involves proper sensitization and advocacy, especially amongst the consumers for whose benefit fortification measures are introduced in the first place. Consumer advocacy groups are essential stakeholders for the diffusion of standards. The Consumer League in Burkina Faso, for instance, is an important stakeholder in the fortification ecosystem. It is a civil society organization that protects the rights of consumers by, amongst other things, ensuring that consumer products meet the established industry standards. They are responsible for sensitizing consumers about the benefits of fortification and the need to purchase fortified products. They may receive support from other stakeholders, such as the Ministry of Health and other partners, for the performance of their role. In Nigeria, the Federal Competition and Consumer Protection Commission (FCCPC), a government agency under the FMITI, is responsible for protecting the rights of consumers and ensuring that consumer products meet the established standards.

Logo certification and application can also be used to improve diffusion amongst stakeholders, to identify fortified foods and to improve awareness about fortification. In West Africa, the *ENRICH* logo was introduced as a regional logo to brand, identify and publicize fortified food products. While it was initially adopted by Francophone countries, members of the West African Economic and Monetary





Regional *ENRICH* logo

Union (WAEMU), it has also been adopted by countries like Cape-Verde, the Gambia, Liberia, and Sierra Leone in an effort to expand the regional fortification agenda and ensure intra-regional trade is centered around the promotion of a common logo for identifying fortified foods in West Africa. With the *ENRICH* logo currently registered and managed by the industry association (AIFO-UEMOA-CEDEAO), it would be critical to ensure joint management of the logo by the national alliances for food fortification and the private sector industry associations.

Communication and social media marketing campaigns are also useful for standards diffusion, as they use communal platforms for engaging the public and spreading information fast and far and wide. Not many West African countries have developed comprehensive communication campaigns for fortification, but there have been some efforts amongst public and private sector stakeholders as well as donors and partners. For example, Liberia launched a National Food Fortification Alliance Day in 2017. The Ministry of Commerce and Industry also launched an advocacy campaign to raise

awareness about food fortification.

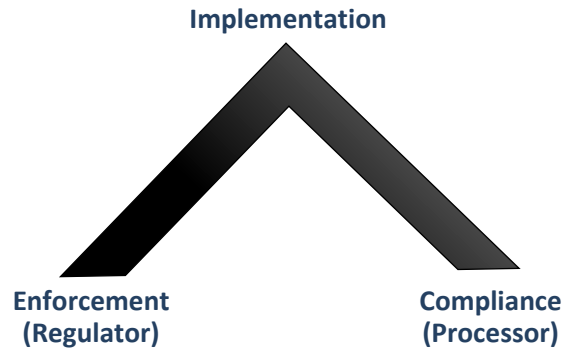
Diffusion can be enhanced through open and transparent communication channels like the fortification alliances, where all stakeholders are represented, and their interests are taken into consideration. Communication amongst stakeholders will ensure that knowledge and information about fortification standards is timely and its use is effective.

### **3.4- Capacity reinforcement, monitoring, evaluation, and learning.**

Identifying, prioritizing and reinforcing the continued capacity of institutions represented under the public private partnership alliances is critical for the continued success of large scale food fortification initiatives.

Standard-setting, which includes, standard review processes, may happen periodically to ensure that the standards remain effective. But, standard diffusion and implementation must be sustained and consistent with capacity reinforcement of regulatory institutions so that stakeholders remain accountable and committed to the fortification agenda. Civil society organizations, including the media, consumer leagues and communications agencies require continued capacity reinforcement to understand the importance of nutrition, food fortification and how to effectively create awareness and sensitization through appropriate messaging and information sharing on food fortification. Implementation of standards and compliance enforcement involves public sector enforcement authorities and auto-regulation by industries for compliance, so there must





be constant engagement between the public sector and the private sector to ensure that compliance and enforcement are mutually reinforced with required capacity strengthening on quality control and assurance systems as well as laboratory capacity for testing for micronutrients in fortified foods.

Standards implementation requires significant resources for stakeholders who must develop technical processes to incorporate fortification into their production processes (for industry stakeholders) and to examine levels of adherence (for regulators). Since fortification involves purchasing fortificant premix and including the dosing requirements into the processing line, it requires additional capacity and effort for food processors. It also requires laboratory equipment and chemical reagents for both processors and regulators to check that micronutrients in fortified foods meet mandatory regulatory standards.

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*The Ghanaian Fortification Alliance developed a monitoring strategy that includes market inventory, premix quality assurance, internal and external monitoring, and collaboration between regulators and processors to ensure compliance and transparency in fortification efforts.*

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In addition to this tangible infrastructure that is required, there is an important intangible infrastructure that underlies implementation: capacity for trust transparency and communication. The Ghanaian Fortification Alliance developed a monitoring strategy to improve fortification implementation, and the strategy identified several features of a monitoring regulatory system: market inventory; premix quality assurance; internal monitoring; and external monitoring. These involve different levels of interface and information-sharing between regulators and processors. For instance, internal monitoring involves the Quality Assurance and Quality Control (QAQC) measures adopted in the factory during food processing. Processors must keep track of those measures, including purchasing the right quality and quantity of premix, handling and storing the premix appropriately,

checking the dosing to make sure it is accurate, storing the fortified product properly and preparing it for distribution. External monitoring involves, amongst other things, regulators' review of the internal monitoring process. This also involves auditing of purchase records and inventories to ensure that the right quantity of premix is bought, and the right dose is fed in. There is a lot of information that is to be passed between stakeholders during implementation, and as such, collaboration is essential to ensuring a

smooth and productive process. The compliance of imported fortified foods that should be fortified under mandatory legislation should also comply to mandatory standards and custom should be capacitated for transparent control and application of compliance enforcements devoid of any fraud by importers.

In Nigeria, regulation is spread out and delineated amongst industries to ensure that there is targeted engagement across the fortification value chain, from the factory to the market to the household. The National Fortification Alliance introduced a multi-level monitoring system where SON monitors for compliance in the factories; NAFDAC monitors for



LSFF project team with the Burkina Faso National Fortification Alliance

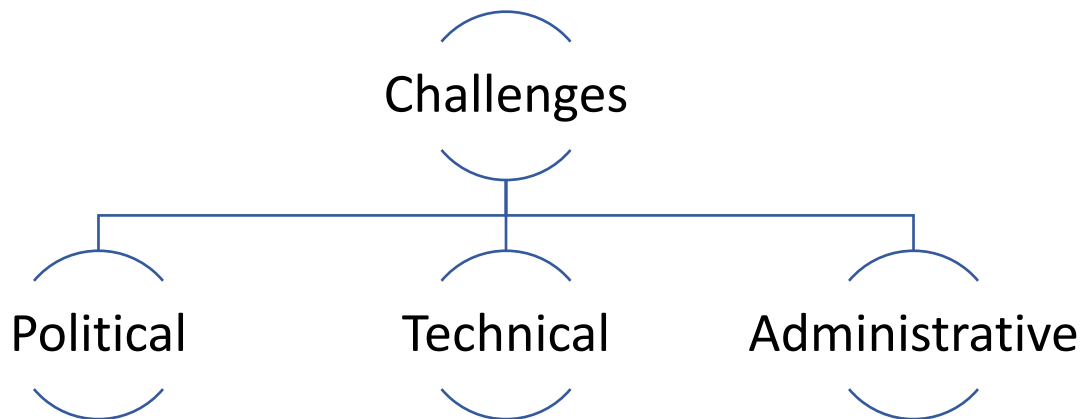
compliance in food that is available in the markets; and the FCCPC monitors for compliance of foods at the household level. This informal delineation forms the basis for information-sharing at the NFA meetings where regulators share data on monitoring outcomes and processors express their concerns. It is also a forum for making suggestions to improve processes, especially for standards diffusions and compliance implementation.

In many West African countries, there are still gaps in the implementation processes amongst stakeholders. For instance, in Burkina Faso, Customs officials have been trained to monitor salt iodization compliance for imports, but there has not been training and sufficient information-sharing about Vitamin A fortification in oil and iron and folic acid fortification in flour, so there are monitoring gaps. Also, with multiple agencies having similar and overlapping mandates, there is limited clarity in many countries as to specialization in compliance monitoring roles.

There are formal and informal processes involved in governance and partnerships. As shown above, the formal aspects are defined in strategic plans, laws, and terms of references, while the informal aspects are left for stakeholders to define based on their experiences. The National Fortification Alliance is an important platform for defining these processes and ensuring that stakeholders remain engaged as they play their respective

roles in advancing food fortification. These should also be complemented and aligned with clearly laid down modalities for enforcing standards by competent regulatory institutions within countries with avoidance of duplication while reinforcing capacity for transparent synergy by stakeholders.

# 4.0- CHALLENGES



During this study, several stakeholders in different countries were asked to identify the challenges experienced with food fortification implementation and with the establishment or maintenance of a national food fortification alliance. Additionally, the observations made during the study revealed some challenges that may not have been expressly identified by stakeholders. Most of the countries appeared to experience similar challenges in fortification implementation, which included:

- limited capacity to implement food fortification standards;
- lack of information about developments in fortification implementation;
- low coordination amongst stakeholders, for fortification challenges,
- dormancy of fortification alliances (no information, no resources);
- low commitment and motivation to sustain an alliance,.

Below, the challenges with fortification are explained, using examples from West Africa, and the role of alliances in addressing such challenges is identified. After having identified the importance of alliances, the challenges of building effective alliances will be noted and explained.

## 4.1- Limited Capacity (Technical Challenge)

As noted above, fortification implementation involves investment in resources by both public and private sector actors. These investments have been supported by donors and partners in many West African countries. For example, the Fortify West Africa project which followed the *Faire Tache d’Huile en Africa de l’Ouest initiative* supported by largely by USAID, the Michael and Suzan Dell Foundation, Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation



Visit to factory producing fortified wheat flour.

through GAIN and the Taiwanese Government, which was implemented through Helen Keller International, invested an estimated amount of more than ten million dollars in ECOWAS member states between 2007 and 2016 to strengthen public and private sector adoption of food fortification. In 2017, the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation invested \$10m in the Strengthening African Processors of Fortified Food (SAPFF) project implemented through Techno serve in three African countries including, to strengthen the capacity of Nigerian food processors to fortify their products.

Donor interventions have been key to advancing food fortification in West Africa and the requisite domestic investments have not been consolidated. It is however important to note that under mandatory legislation in most West African countries, the private sector is the biggest investor in procuring micronutrient premix and putting the required operational systems with equipment and quality control and assurance systems in place to advance food fortification in West Africa. Food fortification is estimated to cost between \$0.05 and \$0.25 per person per year, a relatively minimal cost, especially given the calculated gains of approximately \$16 to \$32 for every dollar spent on fortification. Nevertheless, governments and regulators have not been quick to make the relevant investments to boost the capacity to leverage donor and private sector funding for food

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*Donor interventions have been crucial for food fortification in West Africa, but domestic investments are lacking. The private sector, despite being the biggest investor, faces limited public sector support, leading to a lack of trust in regulatory systems and insufficient maintenance of equipment and testing kits.*

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fortification implementation. Investment by the public sector has remained low in West African countries. In some countries, donors supported the purchase of testing devices such as the rapid test kit, iCheck, manufactured by BioAnalyt, a company based in Germany, as well as more sophisticated analytical devices such as atomic absorption spectrophotometers (AAS) and high-performance liquid chromatography (HPLC) for quantitative mineral and vitamin analysis in fortified foods by public health laboratories and some industries. However, where such equipment and rapid analytical test kits malfunction, they are not repaired or replaced because of the cost involved in purchasing new ones, and the cost of the chemical reagents required to run the tests, all regarded by some stakeholders as prohibitive. Therefore, once donor projects end, there is limited public sector ownership of fortification investments and discouragement by

private sector industries that do not trust the regulatory enforcement systems of the public sector.<sup>8</sup>

In addition to the financial capacity required to be invested in fortification implementation, continuous training and knowledge building is also very important to ensure that the requisite technical know-how and skills are available in the private and public sector. While training programs have been introduced, attrition and inter-departmental exchanges across public sector institutions, for instance, leads to loss of knowledge over time, acquired during fortification training. Therefore, there must be institutional commitment for continuous capacity reinforcement and investment in fortification implementation and this requires political commitment and motivation.

## **4.2- Political Commitment and Motivation (for fortification and alliance) (Political Challenge)**

During a meeting at the public lab LANEMA in Côte d'Ivoire, a technician explained that although the lab has fortification testing facilities, they are not sufficiently utilized.<sup>9</sup> Therefore, even where capacity was available to support fortification implementation, there was limited engagement. This illustrates a larger challenge of waning political commitment or fatigue by policy makers to food fortification as a critical method for addressing micronutrient deficiencies. Technical implementation is driven by capacity, which is in turn driven by investment, which is determined by the level of political commitment attached to a particular issue.

Political commitment must remain consistent for it to deliver impact. While established alliances and standard setting have delivered the foundation for fortification implementation in West Africa, continued sustained commitment to implementation has reduced over time and not been as enduring. While 12 out of 15 and 14 out of 15 West African countries had introduced mandatory regulations for fortification of oil and flour respectively by 2015, there has been limited investment in strengthening the capacity of public sector stakeholders to enforce these measures. Food fortification is one of several measures aimed at addressing MNDs and it appears that it has not been sustained and entrenched in the public sector relative to other public health interventions. At the turn of the century, the introduction of National Micronutrient Days and Child Health Weeks across Africa, supported by government and partners, led to improved Vitamin A supplementation by 2010. This involves visibility for stakeholders involved in supplementation drives, as opposed to fortification implementation, which happens as part of the internal production process of food production and closed-door laboratory analysis by regulators. Therefore, commitment must go beyond project visibility to genuine motivation in the public and private sectors to embrace food fortification as the large-scale cost-effective measure that it has been proven to be.

Consequently, in addition to the multi-stakeholder nutrition councils that have been introduced across West Africa, there should be a targeted multi-stakeholder platform that

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<sup>8</sup> In interviews with the Ministry of Commerce in Côte d'Ivoire, non-functional iCheck devices were displayed

<sup>9</sup> Interview conducted in January 2023



is dedicated to fortification advancement, including the stimulation of public commitment to the advancement of fortification through consistent and enduring institutional engagement and investment.

### **4.3- Lack of Information about Alliances (Technical and Administrative Challenge)**

During the first decade of the 2000s, fortification alliances were established across West Africa, with significant support from donors and partners. The objective of these alliances was to advance fortification agenda, including strategic planning, standard-setting, diffusion, and implementation within and across states.<sup>10</sup> After the creation of these alliances, their administration has been mixed across the region. In some countries, such as Sierra Leone, it is not clear that the alliance ever took off. In Ghana, a particularly active alliance became dormant with the withdrawal of donor support coupled with attrition in the coordinating government department. In Nigeria, there is an active alliance that is supported by GAIN, but which, since 2021, has worked towards strengthening its governance structure and ensuring its usefulness to stakeholders across the fortification value chain.

In many countries, information about the status of the alliances is not easily accessible, mostly because they have become dormant. While stakeholders recognize the importance of having an alliance, they are not always clear about the terms of reference of the alliance in their country. This is especially so in countries where the alliance is formed through a memorandum of association or other non-binding process. Additionally, there are multiple platforms for nutrition and fortification, and salt iodization has been operated under a distinct framework from the broader fortification agenda that came afterwards in many West African countries, further decentralizing fortification operations and partnerships. This makes it difficult to identify and engage with the alliance, especially for stakeholders who are new to fortification or who require information about the national fortification system.

This study is the first comprehensive study of fortification alliances as public-private partnership mechanisms for the advancement of fortification in West Africa. It compiles information about the establishment, objectives, activities, and status of fortification alliances in ECOWAS member states and analyses the landscape for their effectiveness. The absence of this kind of information has made it difficult to track or support the progress of fortification alliance, despite their perceived significance for advancing the successful planning, coordination, implementation, evaluation and learning of food fortification in the West Africa region.

### **4.4- Sustainability (Administrative Challenge)**

One of the major challenges that has been identified as an impediment to the success of fortification alliances in the region is the lack of a sustainability plans and frameworks for ensuring their continued existence. The establishment of fortification alliances was

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<sup>10</sup> There was also a regional fortification alliance set up to bring stakeholders together at the regional level (See Helen Keller Intl Report)

promoted under the auspices of the Accra Consensus, which was the outcome of the first regional Public-Private Sector Dialogue on Food Fortification in West Africa, held in Accra, Ghana in October 2002, driven by Helen Keller International and the then Micronutrient Initiative (MI) through WAHO. Helen Keller Intl supported several countries in establishing their fortification alliances following the Dialogue. For instance, Helen Keller Intl supported the establishment of a National Task Force for Food Fortification with Micronutrients in Mali, and this would subsequently become the Technical Committee on Food Fortification, which was established by Decree. In countries like Burkina Faso and Niger where multi-stakeholder food fortification platforms in the form of technical committees were set up before the Dialogue, they were further strengthened afterwards.

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*Between 2002 and 2012, national fortification alliances were established in several ECOWAS member states, playing a role in introducing mandatory standards, advocacy, and sensitization. However, their sustainability has been inconsistent due to limited government funding, resulting in many alliances becoming dormant.*

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Between 2002 and 2012, at least 10 national fortification alliances were set up in ECOWAS member states through formal legally binding orders or non-binding instruments. These technical committees and alliances were either subsumed under the broader national nutrition councils or set up as distinct platforms with a specific agenda to advance fortification in the country. Some of the alliances remained active for a while and were instrumental to the introduction of mandatory fortification standards in their states, for example, in Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, Senegal, and Liberia. They have also been active in advocacy and sensitization, such as institutional Fortification Alliance Days, endorsing and administering the fortification logo, and executing fortification social marketing and communication drives to educate consumers about the benefits of fortification. However, their involvement in fortification implementation has been quite inconsistent in terms of sustainability, perhaps considering the resource requirements to sustain a constructive implementation support system. It has been reported that, apart from COSFAM, Senegal, no other national fortification alliance receives dedicated funding from the government. Therefore, many of these alliances have become dormant, lacking the resources to conduct regular meetings, except where donor resources are provided, such as the case in Burkina Faso and Nigeria, and while some were able to hold virtual meetings during the COVID pandemic, participation has also dwindled over the years.

Recently, there have been efforts to revive the fortification alliances in some countries, sometimes with the establishment of entirely new entities to replace the old ones. This has happened in Côte d'Ivoire with the replacement of the ANF with ANEA in 2018 and the replacement of the Committee in Burkina Faso with the ANF in 2014. Also, in Ghana, efforts are underway to merge the Salt Iodization Committee with the Food Fortification Alliance to form a comprehensive body that would cover all forms of fortification, including salt iodization. These efforts include plans for the establishment of the bodies and the elaboration of objectives and processes but there must also be clear plans to ensure the sustainability of the alliances through reliable and assured revenue to support both administrative and technical processes. Otherwise, the alliances will make progress in singular activities such as the promotion of mandatory fortification standards but dwindle



in areas requiring sustained attention and investment such as the various standard implementation and overall coordination of stakeholder's activities. There has been some deliberation on how the national alliances could manage the *ENRICH* logo to generate annual payment by the private sector on the use of the logo with resources dedicated to funding the coordination and activities of the fortification alliances beyond donor support.

In the next section, a SWOT analysis will illustrate key areas and opportunities for intervention.

# 5.0- SWOT ANALYSIS

Strengths	Weaknesses	Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>•Existence of institutional structures for fortification alliance</li><li>•Existence of frameworks and tools for fortification implementation</li><li>•Existence of regional framework for fortification</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>•Limited capacity for fortification implementation</li><li>•Poor coordination amongst stakeholders</li><li>•Limited commitment to fortification as a critical intervention requiring critical investment</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>•Renewed interest in nutrition as a key development strategy (eg: 2022, African Union Year of Nutrition)</li><li>•New technologies and food vehicles being discovered to facilitate and improve fortification implementation</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>•Insecurity in parts of the region</li><li>•Economic crisis in some states</li></ul>

## 5.1- Strengths

For the past two decades, there has been sustained engagement on food fortification in West Africa, but there have been fluctuations based on security concerns, including military coups and civil conflicts, and natural crisis such as the 2014 Ebola epidemic and the 2020 COVID-19 pandemic. This has led to instability in the delivery of fortification implementation, but it has not completely wiped the slate clean. At the regional and national levels, frameworks have been put in place to advance fortification implementation through multi-stakeholder platforms. These platforms have not always been very active but in most cases, significant work had gone into defining their structure through the adoption of detailed terms of reference or legislative provisions. While many of the platforms have, over the years, become inactive, their structures have remained intact, with clearly defined objectives so that stakeholders have a foundation to build on rather than start from scratch. This is important because the process of garnering political support to adopt an inter-ministerial order and the bureaucracy needed to pass such instruments could be time-wasting at a time when opportunities are ripe. Therefore, having the basic framework in place is important for stakeholders to bypass bureaucratic and political impediments.

In addition to the fortification alliances that have been set up in West African countries, there are standards and implementation mechanisms in place for the advancement of food fortification. Specific stakeholders have been identified in both the public and private sector and their roles have been defined. Standards bureaus, food administration agencies, consumer advocacy groups, food processors, and premix suppliers, all have a role to play in food fortification implementation. In West African countries where food fortification has been introduced as a strategy for addressing MNDs, standards for mandatory fortification

have been put in place, and more so, where a fortification alliance has been established, stakeholders have systematically been identified. Therefore, there is a baseline understanding of the role of different stakeholders, even if implementation has not been structured and coordinated for effectiveness in some countries. This means that the basic infrastructure for implementation is in place and rather than spending resources setting up institutional frameworks, any intervention at this point will be targeted at defining and delineating roles and strengthening coordinated capacity, thus saving time and resources.

ECOWAS provides a broad umbrella framework for fortification intervention, at the level of health policy intervention through the West African Health Organization (WAHO) and at the level of regional trade facilitation through the ECOWAS Commission. WAHO works with member states to drive health policy and interventions and through the Health Ministers Assembly can advance prioritization for strategies such as food fortification. At the 7<sup>th</sup> Health Ministers Assembly in July 2006, Health Ministers from ECOWAS Member States adopted a resolution on the harmonization of trade, customs, and tax policies for mandatory fortification of food products in ECOWAS states. The Directorate of Industry of the ECOWAS Commission hosts the ECOWAS Standards Harmonization Model (ECOSHAM), which comprises a comprehensive framework for developing regional standards for adoption in member states. ECOSHAM has been used to drive the adoption of regional standards for the fortification of flour, salt, and edible oil, and provided a platform for discussions on the possibility of bouillon fortification in ECOWAS states. The ECOWAS framework has been instrumental towards the adoption of mandatory fortification standards in ECOWAS states, and it continues to provide a platform for the advancement of fortification at the regional level through health and trade interventions.

Additional strengths include: the existing industry association for vegetable oil industries and one established for flour milling industries, though dormant, which are committed to fortification as a precondition for membership and remain committed to ensuring effective fortification with internal control systems for compliance to standards; established tools developed for quality assurance systems with technical committees for standard harmonization; and a harmonized logo for branding fortified foods and facilitating intra-regional trade and economy of scale for industries compliant with harmonized food fortification standards.

These strengths reveal a solid foundational basis for pursuing food fortification through established institutional frameworks at the national and regional levels.

## 5.2- Weaknesses

Despite the existence of institutional structures for the advancement of food fortification in West Africa, there are certain weaknesses that impede the implementation of fortification standards. These include limited sustainable capacity for fortification implementation; poor coordination amongst stakeholders; and limited tax incentives and resource allocation to fortification as a critical intervention requiring critical investment.

Tangible and intangible sustained capacity for fortification implementation is limited in West African states. Both public and private sector stakeholders require assistance to

develop their capacity to undertake effective enforcement and compliance measures. So far, this capacity has been lacking in many West African countries, and this is a major challenge identified by stakeholders in all the countries visited for this study. Stakeholders expressed the need for technical training and equipment at the national and subnational levels, at ports and markets, and amongst private and public sector stakeholders. The existence of technical equipment and expertise to collect and analyse fortification data is also critical to enhancing implementation as well as for ensuring efficient and effective standard-setting. Therefore, resources must be made available to build an enabling environment for fortification implementation.

Although stakeholders are identified through institutional mechanisms for promoting food fortification, such as the fortification alliances, there is not always the requisite coordination to ensure that they complement each other in the exercise of their roles. This is particularly important to maximize efficiency and prevent duplication, which could result in wastage in a context where resources are limited. During meetings in Burkina Faso, it was not clear which agency is responsible for market evaluation of fortification implementation or rather multiple stakeholders are involved in evaluations at different levels with competition and duplication of efforts. While some stakeholders mentioned that this could be the Consumer League, others maintained that the Consumer League does not have a mandate to “control” fortification implementation. In Côte d’Ivoire, the Directorate of Quality Control, Ministry of Commerce, is the government interface with CODINORM, and it also has an inspection mandate similar to that of CODINORM. However, there does not appear to be a clear understanding of how each stakeholder is meant to exercise their mandate in a way that is complementary to the other’s. The National Nutrition Program (PNN) under the Ministry of Health is also a key factor in fortification implementation, and it serves as the secretariat for ANEA and provides support to other stakeholders, but its coordinating role is still limited as some stakeholders interviewed during the visit claimed to not know about ANEA. Therefore, there must be widespread information about the available structures and platforms in place for stakeholders to engage and this must include definition and delineation of roles for increased effectiveness.

Additionally, fortification alliances have not yet been leveraged as a platform for coordination and mutual support, but rather as a tool for controlling the private sector in a top-down regulatory system that provides little room for mutual dialogue. This structural defect undermines the role of industry, the largest technical and financial contributor, in promoting food fortification and isolates them from the Alliances.

Finally, the place of fortification in the national nutrition, health and development agenda must be elevated through proper political engagement at the national and regional level. So far, food fortification is a small part of a large nutrition agenda in countries. For states like Côte d’Ivoire that have a fortification strategy, this is hidden within the nutrition strategy. Most states do not have a distinct fortification strategy, but fortification is regarded as one of several methods for addressing MNDs and other nutrition and health challenges. There must be a realization that given its cost-effectiveness and scale, fortification is a critical intervention for providing baseline nutrition levels across

populations, complementing the need for other more costly interventions. Therefore, the government must give fortification more attention than it currently does, which would improve the level of investment in diffusion and implementation. So far, the critical need for fortification to address long-term nutrition challenges, such as MNDs, is not evident from its level of prioritization.

Regional leadership of ECOWAS through WAHO and the ECOWAS Commission on the issue of fortification has also been minimal. Regional oversight of harmonized texts is not done at the national level. One of the consequences of this inadequacy is the non-existence of a Regional Alliance for Fortification, which has not been supported by the regional authorities, even though the technical partners (Helen Keller Intl, UNICEF, NI, etc.) had initiated the process for such a platform.

### 5.3- Opportunities

Mandatory resolutions have been passed by Assembly of Health Ministers with over two decades of continued engagements at the national and regional levels to capacitate industries and public sector institutions to advance food fortification in West Africa. Mandatory standards have been passed and adopted in all fifteen ECOWAS member countries, with harmonized standards largely in Francophone countries as well as the logo (*ENRICH!*) for branding fortified foods and social marketing and communication around the logo. Industry associations are also committed to fortification and partners continue to galvanise effort to sustain efforts on food fortification. The Catholic Relief Services with funding from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation has been actively supporting WAHO to understand existing gaps, including these current evaluations to support public sector partners and regional institutions to work on addressing these gaps for more effective food fortification. There is growing partnership work to digitalize data monitoring and tracking systems on compliance enforcement and coverage of micronutrient fortified food which can be leveraged for West Africa. The unfinished agenda of large-scale food fortification is an opportunity to re-energize and re-commit to sustainable food fortification in a sustainable way to contribute to making impact on preventing and reducing micronutrient deficiencies in West Africa.

Over the past decade, nutrition has also been elevated as a key policy intervention, especially given the critical health challenges of the past decade. The need to build immunity and tackle noncommunicable diseases, such as anemia, obesity, diabetes, and others, through proper nutrition cannot be overestimated. Therefore, governments have promoted the policy environment and technical systems for introducing nutrition interventions. Goal three of the African Union Agenda 2063 is “Healthy and Well-Nourished Citizens” recognizing nutrition as a key development agenda. In 2021, the government of Côte d’Ivoire submitted a proposal to the African Union Council to strengthen nutrition and food security interventions in the continent. This formed the basis for the adoption of 2022 as the year of nutrition, with dedicated advocacy campaigns to elevate the focus on nutrition, including improving investment in nutrition. This kind of high-level attention provides an opportunity to propel the food fortification agenda as a critical nutrition issue, especially given the focus on public health interventions to prevent NCDs and strengthen the immunity of populations to tackle communicable diseases.

In addition to the high-level attention being given to nutrition and public health, there have also been efforts to advance technology to improve nutrition interventions and fortification implementation. New food vehicles for fortification have been studied over the past decade, including bouillon cubes and rice which are both popular food vehicles consumed by significant proportion of the population in West Africa, creating renewed attention for the growing opportunities. ANEA in Côte d'Ivoire was established on the heels of the rice fortification project and it is spearheading the rice fortification intervention in that country. In other countries like the Gambia, Nigeria, Senegal, studies have been carried out to examine the feasibility of rice fortification as an effective nutrition and health intervention. These developments in research and technology present opportunities for driving the food fortification agenda in ECOWAS member states.

In addition, ECOWAS has frameworks on harmonized regulations (ECOREG) and standard harmonization models (ECOSHAM) that can contribute to regular reviews and adoption of standards on food fortification. Tools developed on quality management systems and social marketing in the French speaking economic monetary union could be scaled to the broader ECOWAS region.

## 5.4- Threats

The major threats to fortification interventions in West Africa are political and economic crisis that sometimes lead to armed conflict. These can directly disrupt planned programs, or they can prevent the planning of programs and interventions. In 2002, the conflict in Côte d'Ivoire delayed the convening of the Public Private Sector Dialogue on Food Fortification in West Africa, which had been scheduled to hold in Abidjan that year. It was subsequently held in Accra after delays and participation, even of partners, was limited. Armed conflicts in Burkina Faso and Mali, as well as in Northern Nigeria, limit the level of intervention that is possible in these areas. They also divert resources that may have been devoted to nutrition and other interventions towards addressing the conflict. This remains a major challenge in West Africa, where political uncertainty remains high and conflict and instability can erupt at any time.

Given this analysis, there are opportunities for intervention to channel the strengths, tackle the weaknesses and leverage opportunities for the advancement of fortification. These will be addressed in the next section.

# 6.0- RECOMMENDATIONS

**TABLE 3: PROPOSALS FOR INTERVENTION**

Intervention	Lead Stakeholder	Activities	Timeframe
Establish a Regional Fortification Alliance	WAHO	Develop the terms of reference for a regional alliance	Immediate
		Draw up a memorandum of understanding to be signed by Alliance members	Immediate
		Call for a meeting of stakeholders to discuss the proposed RFA and validate the institutional instruments	Medium Term
Revive the National Fortification Alliances (and establish new ones where necessary)	All stakeholders, to be led by WAHO and the Alliance-convening Ministry	Review of Alliance Framework (Laws, ToRs, etc)	Immediate
		Meeting of Stakeholders	Medium-Term
		Inauguration of Alliances, where necessary	Medium-Term
Establish a Regional Fortification Alliance	All stakeholders, to be led by WAHO	Develop, in collaboration with Alliance leadership from Member states, terms of reference for a regional alliance	Immediate
		Inaugurate regional fortification alliance	Medium-Term
Develop a regional fortification strategy	WAHO	Develop, in collaboration with stakeholders from member states, a draft regional fortification strategy.	Immediate
		Validate and adopt the regional fortification strategy (with the endorsement of the Assembly of Health Ministers).	Medium-Term
Develop national fortification strategies	All stakeholders, to be led by WAHO and the National Fortification Alliance	Make available the regional fortification strategy as a guide for developing national strategies.	Medium-Long Term
Develop a fortification financing strategy for Member States	WAHO	Engage a nutrition-financing expert to develop a financing strategy that can be modified to suit the needs of member states	Immediate

The development of a regional fortification strategy should cover the following areas:

## Capacity Reinforcement

The fortification strategy should incorporate a comprehensive capacity reinforcement plan, aimed at providing the relevant tangible and intangible infrastructure for effective fortification implementation by both public and private sector stakeholders. The strategy should mandate periodic training for those involved in the direct implementation (enforcement and compliance) of fortification standards. It should also provide a framework for developing a national infrastructure system comprising laboratories and the relevant equipment and appliances relevant for supporting fortification implementation. This could include the identification of a network of laboratories, reliable and cost-effective scientific devices, and technical support systems. This will ensure that stakeholders have access to cutting edge methods for fortifying foods and for monitoring fortification, and it would support the pursuit of cost-effective methods for fortification implementation by engaging the right partners and institutions. The aim of the capacity reinforcement component of the strategy would be to ensure that there is effective local capacity for fortification implementation.

## Coordination Mechanisms

A comprehensive fortification strategy should clearly define the roles of stakeholders and devise flexible systems for promoting cooperation, coordination and mutual accountability amongst stakeholders. The fortification strategy should provide a framework for promoting coordination without necessarily imposing obligatory roles on stakeholders. This has been helpful, for instance, in the Nigerian experience, where stakeholders agreed amongst themselves on a monitoring reporting system that delineated the roles of regulatory agencies to streamline the regulatory process for the benefit of both public and private sector stakeholders. The fortification strategy should prioritize coordination.

## Reporting Systems

The fortification strategy should adopt reporting systems for collecting fortification data to track industry compliance and consumer reach. This is important for ensuring that fortification is effective and that stakeholders can identify gaps in implementation, the reasons for those gaps, and methods for addressing them. Proper coordination can enhance reporting, so the strategy must display the interconnectedness of different components of fortification implementation. The absence of reliable analytical, compliance, coverage and related nutrition data is a challenge across the sector, so the reporting system should be built to cover that gap in the fortification space through the conduct of surveys and the collection of technical data on laboratory analysis and other scientific processes that measure fortification compliance through a digitalized tracking and surveillance system. In summary, there should be digital data collection and reporting systems for real-time evidence-based decision-making.

## Implementation Funding

A key part of the fortification strategy should be clear budget lines for fortification implementation, which includes monitoring and compliance, maintaining secure data systems, research and development, and advocacy, amongst other things. Governments should commit to fortification



spending and devise strategies to ensure that funding channels remain robust, sustainable, and stimulated.

## Advocacy and Communication

A sound fortification strategy must prioritize advocacy and communication with sustainable social marketing because this is what will get fortification on the political and economic agenda of states and corporations, as well as strengthen demand amongst consumers. Therefore, the fortification strategy must incorporate key milestones in terms of high-level political recognition and endorsement of food fortification as a critical health intervention with significant economic impact. There should also be clear benchmarks for consumer awareness goals, such as the rate of demand for fortified foods and consumer identification with the harmonized *ENRICH* and relevant logos for branding fortified foods in West Africa. The reporting system can support the collection of relevant data to measure the impact of advocacy and communication programs and activities.

The Fortification Alliance will monitor implementation of the strategy, amongst other things, and in particular, it will develop a clear framework for financial sustainability of the alliance through sound revenue generation mechanisms. The following are ways through which the alliance can generate revenue:

## Budgetary Allocation

One way to guarantee funding for national fortification alliances is by dedicated funding through the budgets of alliance ministries and agencies. This would illustrate government commitment to fortification and advance the cause significantly through improved performance of the alliances and their members. Effective lobbying and advocacy through ECOWAS (WAHO) and partner forums could advance this approach.

Additionally, a regional alliance would provide a platform for delivering dedicated allocations to the respective national fortification alliances by garnering resources from technical partners.

## Membership Fees

One way for the Alliance to raise funds is by charging institutional and individual membership fees, which would come with membership benefits. Membership levels, fees and benefits can be determined by alliance members, and the revenue generation system should be sufficient to sustain the activities of the alliance, including the periodic meetings.

## Fortification Logo Registration

The alliance can be the custodian of the fortification logo in use in the country, and industry stakeholders will have to pay to use the logo. Implementation of this payment system can be incorporated into other fortification implementation systems so that regulators and other monitors do not duplicate their efforts. While the logo registration can be a broad administrative system within the fortification strategy while alliance members or leadership can design detailed rules and processes for its administration. Resources could also be generated through cost-sharing mechanisms between regulatory institutions charging for analysis of locally produced and imported fortified foods and branded with the *ENRICH* logo to ensure the alliances receive some regular

allocated income from institutions or laboratories analysing micronutrients in fortified food for private sector stakeholders producing or importing fortified foods.

## **Donors and Partners**

Most of the funds that have been used to sustain alliances in West African countries have come from donors and partners. This is one of the challenges that has determined the fate of those alliances, as they become non-functional once the donor funds cease. While donor funds should not be the only source of funds for alliances, they can be a source, and they should be targeted at specific alliance objectives and activities. Donors could also be encouraged to contribute towards a fund for the running of the alliance, but this must have clear objectives, to justify funding.

An alliance trust fund could be the basis for members and partners, as well as governments, to contribute to the running of the alliance, but the fund must be transparently run, and there must be clear objectives for the contributions made to the fund.

The sustainability of alliances will necessitate multiple streams of revenue, so there must be plans to generate revenue through various mechanisms and activities, ensuring that the alliances generate the resources required to sustain their administration and activities.

# CONCLUSION

Starting with salt iodization in the early 1990s, food fortification became a recognized health intervention in African countries. By the early 2000s, fortification was extended to more staples such as flour, sugar and edible oils, with additional nutrients such as Vitamin A, iron, zinc and folic acid. For the past 20 years, governments have introduced relevant regulatory instruments to mandate fortification of identified staples, relying from support from partners. By 2016, almost all West African countries had adopted mandatory fortification of wheat flour and edible oil with various micronutrients. As a critical nutrition strategy, fortification involves multiple stakeholders, and it requires cooperation and coordination. At all levels of the regulatory process, stakeholders should engage in open communication, and it is important to have a platform to facilitate these engagements, which is where fortification alliances come in.

Fortification alliances are multi-stakeholder platforms for the advancement of fortification implementation. They provide an avenue for stakeholders to share information, discuss their experiences and challenges in fortification implementation, collaboratively find solutions to common problems, and promote an enabling environment for effective food fortification. For these kinds of public-private partnerships to work, stakeholders must ensure the following:

- Establish a regional fortification alliance as a platform for stakeholders to support national efforts in food fortification.
- Develop a regional fortification strategy to guide states in the development of national fortification strategies, making provision for advancement of fortification through the introduction of capacity building mechanisms; institutional coordination structures; reporting systems; advocacy and communication strategy; and implementation funding plans.
- Steer the development of national fortification strategies in WAHO member states.
- Revitalize national fortification alliances in WAHO member states.
- Support the development of a sustainability structure for national fortification alliances, focusing on multiple streams of revenue.
- Establish a regional fortification alliance to steer regional stakeholder interests and engagements.
- Develop a fortification funding strategy that will support ECOWAS member states in the implementation of their fortification strategies.

Nutrition has been recognized as a multi-sectoral issue that cuts across diverse sectors of social, political and economic life. It also involves multiple stakeholders who impact and are impacted by nutrition programs; consequently, there must be opportunities for these stakeholders to convene and engage to share information, experiences, and resources for the furtherance of food fortification. Public-private partnerships provide an important mechanism for delivering on the promise of multi-stakeholder engagement. In particular, the fortification alliances have been critical towards the establishment of such platforms, and they have advanced fortification standard-setting and, to some extent, standards diffusion. While there has been progress in standards implementation in some countries in West Africa, this has been slow and difficult due to several challenges, including capacity gaps, low prioritization of fortification, limited coordination amongst stakeholders, and poor communication strategies. These are not insurmountable impediments, and vibrant public-private partnerships through the fortification alliances would go a long way in addressing them.

## Appendix 1: Fortification Alliances in West Africa

Country	Fortification Alliance	Date Established	Nature of Establishment	Supervising Nutrition Body
Benin	Commission Béninoise de Fortification des Aliments - CBFA	2009		Conseil de l'alimentation et de la nutrition (CAN) (Food and Nutrition Council) established by Executive Order No. 2009-245 of June 2009
Burkina Faso	Comité de Pilotage des Programmes et Projets d'Enrichissement d'Aliments en Micronutriments	2002	Joint Order no. 102-128 /MS/MPCEA/MEFM. Agri/MATD of April 26, 2002	CNCN
	Alliance Nationale pour la Fortification (ANF)	2014	Decree No. 2014-587 of June 24, 2014	
Cabo Verde	NDA			
Cote d'Ivoire	Alliance Nationale pour la Fortification (ANF)	2006	Inter-Ministerial Order	CONNAPE (ex-CNN)
	Alliance Nationale pour la Enrichissement d'Aliments en Cote d'Ivoire (ANEA)	2018	Order No 602/PM/CAB of 02 November 2018	
The Gambia	National Alliance for Food Fortification (NAFF)	2018	National Nutrition Council	National Nutrition Council
Ghana	National Food Fortification Alliance (NFFA)			

Guinea	Alliance Nationale pour la Fortification (ANF)	2012*	Order A/2012n083/MSPH/PME/MEF/SGG of July 19 2012	
	Comite technique multisectoriel de Nutrition	2013		Comite technique multisectoriel de Nutrition (Office of the President)
Guinea Bissau	National Alliance for Food Fortification			
Liberia	National Fortification Alliance (NFA)	2012	Terms of Reference for the Establishment of a National Fortification Alliance for Liberia pursuant to a Memorandum of Understanding between the Ministry of Health and Social Welfare (MoHSW) and Project Healthy Children (PHC)	
Mali	Comite Technique de Fortification des Aliments	2003	Decree No. 03-550 PM-RM of 30 December 2003	
Niger	l'Alliance Nationale pour la Fortification des Aliments (ANFA) – established as "Comité National sur l'Enrichissement Alimentaire"	2003	Order 2 and 3 of January 2003 establishing the National Committee for Food Fortification in Niger	
Nigeria	National Fortification Alliance	2007	Ministry of Health	National Council on Nutrition
Senegal	Comite Senegalese pour la Fortification des Aliments en la Micronutriments (COSFAM)	2006	Order No. 001717 of March 10, 2006	Conseil National de Developpement de la Nutrition (CNDN)

Sierra Leone	National Alliance for Food Fortification (NAFF)	2010		
Togo	Comité National pour la Fortification des Aliments (CNFA)	2009	inter-ministerial order n0127 of July 30, 2009	
ECOWAS	Regional Alliance for Food Fortification	2007	Public-Private Sector Dialogue on Food Fortification in West Africa	

## Appendix 2: The Roles and Objectives of the National Fortification Alliances

Country	Alliance Objectives
Burkina Faso	<p>The National Alliance for Food Fortification (ANF-BF) is responsible for the coordination and monitoring of food fortification programs and projects in micronutrients (vitamin A, iron, iodine, zinc, folic acid, selenium,...). These are to :</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. create favorable conditions for a public/private sector dialogue for the implementation of micronutrient food fortification.</li> <li>2. To create and maintain the political commitment of government decision-makers, industrialists and development partners to ensure the institutional, material and financial support needed to guarantee the sustainability of the food fortification strategy.</li> <li>3. Develop action plans and mechanisms for mobilizing the funding required for their implementation.</li> <li>4. To support the implementation of this strategy, particularly in its following components               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- to prepare and adopt legislative and regulatory measures to ensure good consumer protection while guaranteeing the competitiveness of industries in the food fortification process.</li> <li>- to support the private sector in the quality assurance and certification of fortified foods.</li> <li>- to evaluate the quality control and the conformity of the products to the required standards of quality, sanitary and nutritional safety during the production process and their placing on the market by the authorized structures.</li> <li>- to develop, implement and evaluate marketing and social mobilization activities that must accompany micronutrient fortification activities at all levels.</li> <li>- to develop and implement a research, monitoring and evaluation plan for micronutrient fortification activities.</li> </ul> </li> </ol> <p>(Article 2)</p>
The Gambia	<p>The National Alliance for Food Fortification (NAFF) of The Gambia is a multi-sectoral public-private sector collaborative team responsible for the following:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Support in planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the programme activities from partner institution strategies.</li> <li>2. Advocate for political commitment of government policy makers, industry and development partners to ensure the desirable support for the sustainability of the national programme of fortifying foods.</li> <li>3. Advocate for the creation of an enabling environment for food fortification and Bio-fortification</li> <li>4. Develop action plans and strategies for mobilizing resources required for the implementation of food fortification activities.</li> <li>5. Facilitate the adoption of legislative and regulatory measures to ensure good consumer protection while ensuring the competitiveness of industries in the fortification of foods.</li> </ol>

	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>6. Facilitate the development, implementation and evaluation of social and behaviour change communication and mobilization activities to accompany food fortification and bio-fortification.</li> <li>7. Facilitate the development and implementation of a research plans and monitoring and evaluation activities of food fortification and bio-fortification.</li> <li>8. In addition to providing strategic guidance and serving as a governing body for the program, the NAFF is specifically responsible for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Facilitating communication between public, private and civil society regarding fortification, bio-fortification and other nutrition initiatives</li> <li>• Providing a forum for true partnership development and open discussion, particularly regarding the fortification and bio-fortification programmes and changes to and integration of existing national strategies related to Micronutrient Deficiencies.</li> <li>• Addressing challenges as they arise in each step of the fortification and bio-fortification programmes</li> <li>• Facilitating effective and sustainable compliance to program goals</li> </ul> </li> <li>9. Act as a watchdog to ensure implementation of Food Fortification and Bio-fortification programmes through the competent institutions.</li> </ol> <p>(Terms of Reference for the National Alliance for Food Fortification (NAFF))</p>
Ghana	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i) to develop a national strategic plan for fortification</li> <li>ii) to develop appropriate standards</li> <li>iii) to address legislative and enforcement issues</li> <li>iv) to engage in advocacy and consensus building with government and food industries.</li> <li>v) to work as a pressure group at the political and administrative decision-making levels</li> <li>vi) to create awareness among consumers</li> <li>vii) to monitor program implementation and analyze information from the different operating units</li> <li>vii) to coordinate key activities of the various sectors and operating units involved in the fortification process</li> </ol>
Guinea	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o To ensure the planning, execution, monitoring and evaluation of the activities of the food fortification program in Guinea;</li> <li>o To create the most favorable conditions for a permanent and constructive dialogue between the concerned actors of the public and private sectors for the diligent and concerted realization of food fortification in micronutrients;</li> <li>o To generate and maintain political commitment from government decision makers, industry and development partners to ensure the necessary institutional, material and financial support to guarantee the sustainability of the national food fortification strategy;</li> <li>o Develop action plans and mechanisms for mobilizing the funding required for their implementation;</li> </ul>



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o Support the implementation of this strategy, particularly in its following components <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Preparation and adoption of legislative and regulatory measures to ensure good consumer protection while guaranteeing the competitiveness of industries in the food fortification process;</li> <li>- Supporting the private sector in quality assurance and certification of fortified foods;</li> <li>- Evaluation of the quality control and the conformity of the products to the required standards of quality, sanitary and nutritional safety during production and their marketing by the authorized structures;</li> <li>- Development, implementation and evaluation of marketing and social mobilization activities that must accompany micronutrient fortification activities at all levels;</li> <li>- Development and implementation of a research, monitoring and evaluation plan for micronutrient fortification activities.</li> </ul> </li> <li>o Define the criteria and conditions for granting the logo for fortified foods;</li> <li>o To study all the problems related to food fortification;</li> <li>o To promote and encourage the consumption of foods rich or enriched in micronutrients;</li> <li>o To coordinate all actions related to nutrition and health education;</li> <li>o To establish a national nutrition and health education program and to supervise its implementation;</li> <li>o To advise on all studies and surveys related to food fortification.</li> </ul> <p>These terms of reference are subject to change as the fortification program in Guinea evolves.</p> <p>(Draft Terms of Reference for the Guinean Alliance for Food Fortification)</p>
Liberia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o to identify new products appropriate for fortification;</li> <li>o to draft and adopt Liberia-specific food fortification standards using up-to-date deficiency and consumption data, design, adopt and implement a national food fortification strategy;</li> <li>o to help to develop education/advocacy materials and sensitize stakeholders to the importance of food fortification;</li> <li>o to develop, mobilize resources for, and implement specific fortification programs;</li> <li>o to advise on proper regulation, and help coordinate promotion of standards and quality assurance measures;</li> <li>o to monitor these programs and report performance to stakeholders;</li> <li>o to assess the impact of fortification on the nutritional status of the population;</li> <li>o to periodically review established fortification programs and adjust as needed;</li> <li>o to ensure fortification complements ongoing nutrition initiatives.</li> </ul> <p>(Guidelines of the National Fortification Alliance of Liberia)</p>
Mali	<p>The Technical Committee for Food Fortification is responsible for ensuring the implementation of the national food fortification program.</p> <p>As such, it is responsible for ensuring:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- creating an environment conducive to food fortification;</li> <li>-the implementation of the recommendations resulting from the</li> </ul>

meeting of Niamey 1999: “Nutrition Focal Points” and from the Declaration of Consensus of Accra 2002:

“Private Sector-Public Sector Dialogue on Food Fortification”;

-the implementation of the action plan for the fortification of foods with micronutrients;

-monitoring and coordination of food fortification activities with micronutrients;

- give an opinion on all questions relating to the production and/ or import of fortified foods in the Republic of Mali.

(Article 2)

## **Appendix 3: Terms of Reference for the Consultancy on Public Private Partnerships for Food Fortification Implementation**

### **Background**

CRS received funding from the Bill and Melinda GATE Foundation to implement a large-scale regional food fortification project with a focus on Burkina Faso. The main objective of this project is to expand and improve large-scale food fortification in West Africa to close the nutrient gap for women, girls, and vulnerable populations. Specifically, the project is aimed at:

1. Identifying existing capacity gaps to advance and support LSFF in West Africa generally and Burkina Faso specifically,
2. Support WAHO's capacity to undertake a preliminary assessment of the status of national food fortification alliances in West Africa to better understand their functionality and institutionalization processes, and
3. Address certain shortcomings by ensuring sustainable development of public sector capacities for the application of policies and mandatory legislative instruments for compliance with regulatory standards on food fortification with micronutrients in West Africa. Indeed, the burden of malnutrition remains high despite the efforts made by governments and their partners. In west Africa, one out of two women of reproductive age is anemic with high deficiencies in key micronutrients (iron, vitamin A, zinc, folate, and iodine). There is a high burden of undernutrition with one out of three children under five stunted, 15% of infants born with low birth weight and high dependence on monotonous diet with close to 15% undernourished populations and 78% of children under two not meeting minimum dietary diversity mimicked by low minimum dietary diversity score among women and caregivers. Most countries do not have food based dietary guidelines and nutrient intake among populations fall below expectations when compared to targets for fruits, vegetables, legumes, and other micronutrient dense foods.

West Africa has made progress on food fortification, mandating the addition of iron and folate to wheat flour, vitamin A to cooking oil and iodine to salt. Recent effort is also looking into fortifying bouillon cube, a condiment used for preparing food in most households. There are however potential gaps to address for ensuring sustainable food fortification to control and prevent micronutrient deficiencies through a food systems approach. With funding from BMGF, CRS with focus on the fourth Big Bet of the Foundation's Nutrition Strategy seeks to reinforce public sector capacity as pre-condition for LSFF programs to be targeted and effective while integrated into existing food and nutrition security policies and strategies, as well as the regulatory frameworks accompanying these.

### **Purpose**

The overall objective of this assessment is to assess the capacities of public sector institutions in West Africa to fulfill their governance roles in implementing regional food fortification in West Africa in an effective and sustainable manner

The Consultant will undertake thorough situation analysis of large-scale food fortification in the West African region and assess the technical capacities of National Alliances for Food Fortification and WAHO/ECOWAS to support implementation of harmonized regional policies and frameworks on LSFF in West Africa , with a particular focus on the capacity of Francophone countries. The quantitative approach will establish levels of knowledge, practices, and skills in the field of governance, structured coordination of national alliances, capacity of government institutions and regional institutions and relevant public sector

actors in member countries of ECOWAS, the Ministry of health of Burkina Faso and WAHO to advance large-scale food fortification in West Africa.

The qualitative approach will clarify the complexity and diversity of perceptions and practices linked to effective coordination capacity of public-private partnership national alliances, governance of food fortification, social marketing, as well as the challenges that undermine the food fortification sector; the

objective being to understand the gaps and capacity needs of public sector

### **Individual Consultant: Evaluating Public Private Partnership National Alliances Capacities and Governance Mechanisms for Large Scale Food Fortification in West Africa**

Individual-consultant-evaluating-public-private-partnership-national-alliances-capacities-and-governance-mechanisms-for-large institutions and national alliances to advance food fortification in West Africa. The search for opinions, perceptions, values, feelings, prejudices, beliefs and/or attitudes of the subjects of the evaluation assist in adapting the strategic lines of implementation at the operational level and to feed into the design of a second phase to address gaps on public sector capacity and governance of food fortification in West Africa.

#### **Specific Tasks**

Specifically, the consultant will undertake the following:

- Assessment of the situation of LSFF in West Africa with particular emphasis on building partnerships and institutionalizing national alliances for food fortification
- Conduct a capacity needs assessment of WAHO and the ECOWAS Trade Directorate on their respective capacities to work with public and private sector actors in West Africa to address LSFF gaps in the region
- Map the different stakeholders currently or ideally involved in LSFF at the regional level, clarifying their roles and their institutional and human capacities required of each to effectively deliver on their commitments to the LSFF over the long term
- Conduct a needs assessment on the capacity at the level of the Ministries of Health, to advance food fortification
- Review advocacy for increase government support for fortification in ECOWAS member states
- Assess regional food fortification policies and sustainability of political commitment
- Evaluate expansion of partnership network of public-private partners at national/regional level
- Assess the structure required for creating a regional alliance for food fortification to work with national alliances for food fortification in countries of West Africa and assess options for sustainable coordination of partners at regional level on food fortification
- Assess regional and national food fortification policies and sustainability of political commitment and measure political will in implementing these policies

- Assess the expansion of the partnership network of public-private partners at the national/regional level
- Identify local/regional champions to advance micronutrient fortification of staple foods
- Evaluate the options for reviving or creating new alliances for food fortification • Examine capacity gaps of national alliances for food fortification to support food fortification programs in West Africa
- Assess communication tools to promote the consumption of micronutrient fortified foods
- Identification of potential local champions promoting micronutrient fortified foods
- Assess the capacities to organize national events around micronutrient fortified foods with the support of the press
- Assess past national resources leveraged for advertising radio spots and television material on food fortification in the past
- Evaluate the effectiveness of the processes of ratification and application of harmonized common regional standards for national application of regional fortification standards
- Assess regional food fortification policies and sustainability of political commitment
- Assess the expansion of the partnership network of public-private partners at the national/regional level

## Deliverables

The assessment must allow the project to have a quality report in English and French version for wide dissemination on gaps coordination mechanism and effectiveness of national alliances for food fortification in West Africa to inform the design of the second phase of the regional initiative on large scale food fortification in West Africa to sustainably contribute to the prevention and reduction in the high burden of micronutrient deficiencies in the region. Quantitative and qualitative evaluation methods will be used simultaneously to carry out this evaluation after a literature review phase.

The consultancy deliverables include a comprehensive consolidated report that covers:

- i. Prepare a methodological guide for carrying out the evaluation. This guide must be validated by the CRS before the start of the research. The Consultant will make reference and undertake literature review on similar studies.
- ii. Document the capacities of public sector institutions in West Africa to fulfill their governance roles in implementing regional food fortification in West Africa in an effective and sustainable manner
- iii. Document the technical capacities of WAHO/ECOWAS to implement establish and coordinate regional level alliance for food fortification to work with national level alliances for food fortification
- iv. Document institutional capacities, with a focus on public private partnership alliances and governance,
- v. Provide data on the mapping of actors involved in food fortification

- vi. Provide guidance on management of social marketing logo “ENRICH” and recommendations for developing a social and behavior change communication
- vii. Review gaps on the effective coordination of national food fortification alliances to sustain food fortification in West Africa
- viii. Provide detailed consolidated report on assessment with key recommendation and next steps for action in preparation for the second phase of the initiative. Recommendations and must include concrete and realistic measures for their implementation.

The draft Consolidated assessment study report will be submitted to CRS. Observations and amendments will be sent to the consultant for integration within 10 working days after receiving the report. The final documents will be submitted 15 working days at the latest to CRS in three (3) paper copies and one (1) digital copy (electronic file).

The outline for the report should cover:

- A table of contents
- A list of acronyms
- An executive summary: This summary will focus on the main conclusions, a maximum of two paragraphs describing the context of the consultation, summary of the objectives and expected results; major gaps analysis results, determinants that sustainability and effective functioning of national alliances for food fortification and improved governance of large-scale food fortification with recommendations to improving the governance of LSFF.
- A brief description of the gaps as well as the limitations of the assessment.
- A chapter on SWOT analysis on national alliances for food fortification with general recommendations and conclusion.
- An appendix comprising: the terms of reference, one or more summary tables, the tools used, the list of people and institutions engaged, the documents consulted and the work program.

#### **Period of Performance and Deliverable Dates**

The assignment spans the period between October 1, 2022, to January 31, 2023 over a 40- man-days work period.

## Appendix 4: Interview Checklist

Who are the main stakeholders in LSFF implementation in your country/in West Africa

*(Think of those who would be impacted by LSFF Implementation, either because they are involved in implementation or they are the targets of implementation)*

What is the role of each stakeholder?

*(Here, the interviewee will speak about the specific function each stakeholder performs in relation to LSFF implementation)*

How would you rank the influence of each stakeholder in LSFF implementation?

*(This involves the capacity of the stakeholder to shape or impact LSFF implementation and to shape the activities of other stakeholders.)*

What government institution oversees LSFF implementation?

*(Would you change this? Why?)*

What platforms exist for partnerships (consultation, collaboration, cooperation, communication) amongst stakeholders for LSFF implementation?

*(These could be public sector platforms, private sector platforms or public-private platforms)*

Is there a national fortification alliance in your country?

Who are the members of the national fortification alliance in your country?

*(Also whether there is a membership process and what it is)*

Is the national fortification alliance in your country useful/productive? (Why and how?)

How are institutional alliances established for LSFF implementation?

Who is generally responsible for setting up institutional alliances for LSFF implementation?

When was the national fortification alliance in your country established?

Who was responsible for setting up the national fortification alliance in your country?

*(Was this a donor-driven initiative or was it a government-driven initiative or driven by the private sector?)*

How was the national fortification alliance in your country established?

*(Here, the interviewee should think about whether it is a formal or informal alliance, set up by legislation or policy, or incorporated as a corporate entity under the law.)*

What is the leadership structure for the national fortification alliance in your country?

*(This includes the composition of the institutional leadership, rules for leadership selection and progression of membership)*

### Supplementary Questions

Do you have up-to-date data on food consumption and/or fortified foods?

What are the quantities of fortified food imported/produced (for each of the vehicles, % of realization according to the national forecast

What are the realization rates according to the national forecasts

Do you think it is possible to advance food fortification on a large scale in your country? Why?

Do you think it is possible that this will happen in the next 2 years?

Would you be willing to make commitments to the LSFF?



## Appendix 5: List of Institutions and Contacts Visited/Interviewed

Country	Institution	Name and Position/Role	Date visited
Côte d'Ivoire	Commerce Ivoirien et de Services	Sidibe Issa (Transitaire) Aka Armand Victorien (Directeur Commerce) Yaya Coulibaly (Commercial)	24.01.2023
Côte d'Ivoire	Ministre de la Sante (Programme National de Nutrition, PNN)	Dr Akoa (Chef de Service) Karen Emmanuella Josee (Nutritioniste) Yao Ana Eniuenne (Medicin SLCN) Alla A Denise (Medicin SLCN) Amani Jean Paul (Physiologiste) Bonny Stephane (Medicin) Kouame Desire (DCA) Aka Francis (Nutritionist)	23.01.2023 23.01.2023 25.01.2023 25.01.2023
Côte d'Ivoire	CODINORM	Mouroufie Christiane (Chef de Department) Assoumou Canine (Chef de Department) Egar Kouame (DC)	23.01.2023
Côte d'Ivoire	Ministere du Commerce de l'Industrie et de la Promotion des PME, Direction Générale du Commerce Intérieur	Coulibaly K Adolphe Philippe Mungagbeu Ganon Issouf Camara Aissata Gotti Kouassi Josiane	24.01.2023
Côte d'Ivoire	Helen Keller Intl	Dr Sidikou Sambo (Country Director) Amoakan Leonce (Responsible Programmes)	25.01.2023
Ghana	Ghana Standards Authority	Mrs. Joyce Okeree (Director, standards)	26.01.2023
Ghana	Olam Agri	Mustapha Jalali Quality Management Grains Head	26.01.2023

Ghana	Wilmar Africa Gh. Ltd	Moses Adade	26.01.2023
Ghana	Ghana Health Service	Mrs. Veronica Quartey (Ag. Director, nutrition)	27.01.2023
Ghana	Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology	Dr. Herman Lutterodt	27.01.2023
UNICEF - Ghana	UNICEF	Jevaise Abolla (Nutrition officer)	27.01.2023
Ghana	Food and Drugs Authority (FDA)	Mingle Cheatam (head, Nutrition) Gloria Assum-Kwateng (Head, airport control) Banaman Quist	27.01.2023
ECOWAS (Nigeria)	ECOWAS Commission	Lassane Kabore (Director-Industry)  KAFANDO Christian Namalguedzanga (Ind Development and ECOWAS programme officer)	30.01.2023
Nigéria	Federal Ministry of Budget and National Planning	Mrs Nduka C Nelson, Head, Nutrition Desk	31.01.2023
Nigéria	Standards Organisation of Nigeria (SON)	Yunusa B. Muhammed  Mrs Talatu Ethan (Director, Lagos)  Ikhenebome David Ag. Director- lab services	02.02.2023
Nigeria	National Agency for Food and Drugs Administration and Control (NAFDAC)	Charles U. Nwachukwu (Director)	02.02.2023
Burkina Faso		NIKIEMA Fulbert/DCANA	6/2/2023

	Agence nationale de sécurité alimentaire, de l'environnement, de l'alimentation et du travail (ANSSEAT) DCANA	SOMDA Asseto/CDS-SMA	
		SAWADOGO Sandaogo/CDS-SPCA	
		SAMA Ouambila/SNA	
		ILBOUDO Inoussa/CDS-SCAA	
Burkina Faso	Direction de la Nutrition/Lead ANF	GUEYE Abdoulaye/DN-FSSA	6/2/2023
		THIOMBIANO Coulibaly Nana/DN-FSSA	
		BAMBARA Estelle/DN	
Burkina Faso	SN-CITEC	DIALLO Amadou	7/2/2023
Burkina Faso	DOUANE/ Direction de la réglementation, de la facilitation et de la coopération douanière	YAMEOGO Patrick/DGS/DRFC-A	7/2/2023
		DABIRE D Jonas/DRFC	
		BAGRE Raymond/DRFC	
		OUEDRAOGO Kassoum/DRFC	
Burkina Faso	AGENCE BURKINABE DE NORMALISATION	Sawadogo Aissama/DCQ/SLAT	8/2/2023
		Nacanabo Adama/DCQ/SISM	
		Yaguibou Gustave/SC	
Burkina Faso	IRSAT/DTA	KABORE/WARE Larissa Y/Chercheur	9/2/2023
		BATIONO Fabrice	
		KABORE Donatien	

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