

RMRP 2022 planning process

Lessons learnt from the R4V Nutrition sector

Background

During the RMRP 2022 planning process, the R4V Nutrition sector faced challenges related to the calculation of the sectoral PIN, which increased by 148% (from 1.14 million in 2021 to 2.83 million in 2022), mostly due to the increase in the PIN's estimations for Colombia, with little clarity on the methodology and variables used for the calculation of the national PINs by IM teams of the R4V platform (details on the datasets used, Excel file with calculation etc.).

Upon reception of the RMRP 2022 figures, the Regional R4V Nutrition sector requested some time to review the PIN and requested that the figures are presented as preliminary to the GHO. Despite this, the request was declined twice.

An agreement was reached between UNICEF, the R4V Nutrition sector, and the R4V platform to insert a footnote to explain the reason of the increase in the R4V Nutrition PIN, resulting from a change in methodology. A footnote was also inserted in the Colombia R4V Nutrition chapter, as requested by the national nutrition sector.

In order to avoid a similar situation in the next RMRP planning exercise, the R4V Nutrition sector carried out an exercise to document lessons learnt on the different stages of the RMRP 2022 planning process: good practices, challenges and recommendations.

This document therefore summarizes the inputs from focal points from:

- National R4V nutrition sector coordinators in eight countries (Bolivia, Brazil, Colombia, Ecuador, Peru, Trinidad and Tobago, Guyana and the Dominican Republic) where 13 partners will be implementing nutrition activities to prevent, identify and treat malnutrition in children under 5, pregnant and lactating women and adolescents, who are among the populations groups most vulnerable to malnutrition.
- Regional R4V Nutrition sector coordination.
- R4V information management officers from the regional R4V level.

Needs Assessment and Joint Analysis

Challenges

- Under representation of population groups vulnerable to malnutrition:
 - Children under 5 years of age, with further desegregation of children under 2 and infants under 6 months (per sex).
 - Adolescents (per sex)
 - Pregnant women
 - Women with children under 2 (potential lactating women)
 - Others (school-age children, older people)
- Limited data related to the nutrition situation of vulnerable groups.

Recommendations

- Stronger coordination and collaboration of the R4V Nutrition Sectors and R4V IM officers R4V platform at the regional and country levels to ensure the Nutrition focus is taken into account in this phase (vulnerable groups).
 - Work in line with the [Global Nutrition Cluster Nutrition humanitarian Needs analysis guidance](#) and include a link of these guidelines to the RMRP Planning Guide.
 - Before the next planning process, define sectoral questions and indicators to have a harmonized process across countries (database of questions for all sectors)- regional level¹
 - Even in the absence of specific data on the nutrition situation, ensure the Joint Needs Analysis includes a specific section on nutrition highlining the differentiated needs and risks of population groups vulnerable to malnutrition (risks can be defined from previously available data and data from other sectors)

Population projections

Challenges

- Under representation of population groups vulnerable to malnutrition:

¹ In Colombia's case, the Nutrition sector provided the indicators and questions when asked, but GIFMM's IM group didn't include them and the sector was not informed in a timely manner.

- Children under 5 years of age, with further desegregation of children under 2 and infants under 6 months (per sex).
- Adolescents (per sex)
- Pregnant women
- Women with children under 2 (potential lactating women)
- Others (school-age children, older people)

Recommendations

- Ensure representation of population groups most at risk of malnutrition in population projections. That would allow the nutrition sector to do a stronger analysis of differentiated risks and support needs per population group and subgroup.

PIN calculation

Challenges

- The methodology used, which is led by the R4V platform, is not the methodology normally used by the Nutrition sector. There is a lack of clarity on the methodology used, which does not seem to be documented.
- Lack of nutrition-specific data in some countries regarding the Venezuelan migrant and refugee population and host communities. Hence it is important prioritize nutrition issues in the surveys and needs assessments conducted in migrant people.
- In Colombia, the R4V Nutrition sector provided aggregated data on the nutrition situation of migrant children under 5 and women, which the R4V platform (GIFMM) could not use. The database with individual data (per child, per women) was requested but could not be shared by UNICEF. An R4V protocol on database and anonymization management was not in place and UNICEF avoids sharing databases with individual data in order to avoid risks related to data management (vulnerabilities in data protection, inappropriate use of individual data etc.).
- Lack of or little autonomy of the R4V national sectors in relation the PIN and target calculation, and most importantly, their validation.
- The level of involvement of the R4V nutrition sector varied from country to country, ranging from no to some involvement of the R4V nutrition sectors, e.g. in Bolivia, the R4V platform cut the Nutrition PIN and targets by half; in Chile and Costa Rica, countries where the Nutrition sector does not operate, a PIN was calculated without the knowledge, involvement and guidance of the Regional R4V Nutrition sector.
- No time to review and react to the data presented, not even to correct typing errors, e.g. in Guyana, UNICEF submitted the wrong target due to a typing error.

- The inclusion of the footnotes to clarify the change in PIN had to undergo an approval process from the R4V platform, which required several communications and meetings between platform coordinators, IM officers and nutrition sectors.

Recommendations

- R4V Nutrition sector:
 - Continue advocacy to increase the understanding of what the work of Nutrition sector is and what it is not (in particular vis a vis of food security/food assistance).
 - Work in mobilizing resources for nutrition surveys at the country level to generate more data on the nutrition situation of vulnerable groups. The needs for Nutrition data have been identified before the RMRP 2022 process and have been included as a priority.
 - National Nutrition sectors – Based on the country context, take the lead in the PIN calculation and/or actively participate in the PIN calculation meetings, know the methodology and the criteria used for this calculation.
- R4V platform:
 - Involve more directly the sectoral focal points at the country level in all stages of the process and ensure all decisions regarding sectoral needs assessment, narratives and PIN should be taken in close coordination with the R4V national nutrition sectors.
 - Document the methodology used for the PIN calculation.
 - Provide a time frame for the regional Nutrition sector, or sectors in general, to review the figures submitted, react to them and validate them, as ultimately the sector responsible for the PIN, i.e. ensure that the preliminary sectoral PIN is available for validation at the national and regional level.
 - It would be useful to have a protocol for database management ensuring the adequate use of sectoral data.
 - Give autonomy to the sectors to insert footnotes to explain the PIN (change in variables or datasets used etc.) and other sectoral figures/information given that it is a purely technical sectoral issue. (just as with the content of the narratives of the sectoral chapter).
- Joint:
 - Prioritize nutrition issues in the surveys and needs assessments conducted in migrant people.
 - Ensure the methodology used responds to the Nutrition sector needs and is aligned with the [Global Nutrition Cluster Nutrition humanitarian Needs analysis](#)

[guidance](#)², and that the sectoral focal points are involved in all stages, including validation.

- In preparation to the next planning process, the regional R4V Nutrition Sector and IM officers at the R4V platform to work closely together to ensure agreement on the methodology for the Nutrition PIN calculation to use in the framework of the RMRP. The Global Nutrition Cluster is available to support in that regard, i.e. have working sessions with IMOs at the regional level and then webinars/training sessions targeting country level colleagues (national sectors and IMOs).
- Include the methodology in the RMRP 2023 planning instructions and include notes for Nutrition just as notes were included for Education, Protection and GBV.
- Ensure data generated the by national sector can be used in PIN calculation, i.e. ensure the methodology can use aggregated data (not individual data).

Objectives and indicators definition

Good practices

- The RMRP 2022 guidelines provided an effective guidance to formulate sectoral objectives (outcomes and outputs) and related indicators, including concrete examples of how these should be formulated.
- The presentations provided on the topic in the ISCG were very useful for the R4V Nutrition sector coordinator to understand the process and what was expected from sectors, including the adaptation of SDG goals to sectoral objectives. This permitted to prepare a draft of the results framework that was then proposed to national sectors.
- The R4V regional and national sectors jointly discussed and refined the sectoral objectives and indicators in an open discussion, where inputs were noted and integrated in the results framework.
- The availability and support of regional IM to answer to reply to questions was valued and we thank them.

Challenges

- None.

Recommendations

- Continue the same way, with the regional sectors leading the process with the support of IM officers.

² Online self-paced courses available:

[Using the Nutrition Humanitarian Needs Analysis Calculation Tool](#)
[Calculating the Number of People \(PiN\) in Nutritional Need](#)

Activity submission

Challenge

- The level of details provided in the activities submitted was not standardized in the sector. As a result, some partners provided very few details regarding their, making it therefore difficult to understand the planned activity as a whole.
- The submission template only allows the disaggregation of male and female children and adults, not all the nutrition target groups (or ethnic groups).

Recommendations

- For regional nutrition sector - Provide guidelines regarding the level of detail needed in the activity name and activity description, to ensure a correct understanding of the activity planned and that they are standardized.
- For national nutrition sectors - As in the submission template only allows disaggregation of male and female children and adults, ensure that specific targets and targets groups are described under “activity description”.

Target definition

Challenges

- Some activities were targeted at population groups that are not the focus of the nutrition sector (e.g. male adults).
- The target was established before the PIN calculation/validation, which was then modified afterwards as it was higher vis a vis the PIN (e.g. Bolivia).
- Some of the targets were reduced based on the target reached in the previous year with the available funds.

Recommendations

- Ensure the target submitted is in line with the indicator, e.g. target cannot be included in the column “male” if the indicator is on pregnant and lactating women.
- As much as possible, time permitting, establish the target after the validation of the PIN.
- Ensure that target reflects the number of people to be reached with existing capacities in the country if funds were mobilized, i.e. the number should not reflect the target of beneficiaries that could be reached without funds mobilized.

Validation of activities

Good practice

- Clear and useful validation criteria provided in the RMRP guidelines.

Challenges

- Not all partners that presented nutrition activities are actively participating in the nutrition sector.
- Some activities submitted that do not correspond to the guidelines of the sector (e.g. distribution of breast milk substitutes).
- In Peru, where Nutrition is under the Health sector, the review of the activities was done after those of Health, leaving little time for the review and validation of activities.

Recommendations for R4V nutrition sectors

- Every activity submitted for the RMRP has to go through the validation process where the Sector lead coordinator needs to be present.
- Ensure that activities submitted to the Nutrition sector are validated in a space separate from other sectors (e.g. health, food security). Set up one or several sessions to allow enough time for activity validation.
- Take into account the time needed to send comments to partners and get their modified activities back.
- Ensure to establish a validation committee per country to validate activities submitted to the Nutrition sector, composed by the sector coordinator with one or two nutrition sector partners (depending on the context of the country) to conduct the following activities:
 - Ensure that partners that present nutrition activities under the RMRP are part of the nutrition sector, i.e. have nutrition capacity and participate in sectoral meetings. If not the case, activities should not be approved.
 - Ensure activities submitted are the ones established by the R4V Nutrition sector and contribute to the sector objectives (refer to Result framework).
 - Ensure activities submitted have enough details under “activity description” in a way to allow understanding of the activity and target group (guidelines to be prepared in advance, see previous point).
 - Ensure that activities submitted are targeted at the nutrition sector population groups (i.e., children under 5, pregnant and lactating women and adolescents).

- Ensure that the columns “activity name” and “activity description” of activities submitted match the nutrition indicator.
- Ensure to use the validation criteria included in the RMRP guidelines is followed.
- Submit activities to the national R4V only after the previous steps took place.

Recommendations for R4V platform

- Allow time for the Regional sectors to review activities submitted at the country level for quality assurance (target population vis a vis PIN, target disaggregation vis a vis nutrition target groups, identify a target that is too high or too low etc.)

Narratives

Good practices

- The RMRP 2022 guidelines provided an effective guidance: clear template with guidelines on the content and Word count, including concrete examples and English narrative tips.
- The clear guideline to separate chapters for each sector and sub-sector (based on the Regional Sector structure, not the national structure, e.g. no “Multi-Sector” chapters), e.g. a Food Security Sector and a Nutrition Sector are coordinated under the same national ‘sector grouping’, a separate and distinct chapter needs to be submitted for each Sector.
- The availability and support of regional reports team was valued and we thank them.
- The possibility and time provided to the Regional R4V nutrition sector to review and comment national nutrition chapters.

Challenge

- Some narratives (e.g. sub-regional chapter) did not seem to be written the National nutrition sectors, as they were focused on food security or not aligned with the objectives and target groups of the sector.

Recommendations for the R4V platform

- Ensure that the narrative presented by the nutrition sector is the one developed by the sector coordinator. If support is provided by the national/sub-regional R4V platform, ensure that the chapter to be submitted has been reviewed and validated by national nutrition sectors.

Overall

Challenge

- In sectoral matters (narrative development, PIN calculation etc.) different scenarios are seen: sectors leading, sectors reviewing and validating, sectors not being involved or consulted.
- Information and guidance shared on the RMRP planning from the regional level (e.g. R4V regional sector) did not match the one received by the national nutrition sectors from national R4V platforms (e.g. GTRM).

Recommendations

- Nutrition sectors need to be more involved in all stages of the process. It is suggested that the Regional sector are also aware of the stages progressing at the country level to ensure support as needed.
- Clarify the coordination structure at all levels (regional/country) among the different coordinators (sectors, national R4V platforms, sub-groups) in all countries and clarify roles and responsibilities, and most importantly leadership across the different steps.
- Ensure a single communication channel from the regional and country level structures.
- If issues arise along the planning process, it suggested to raise it at the regional level, i.e. at the Regional R4V Nutrition sector in this case.
- All sectoral matters should be lead, or at least reviewed and validated, by national nutrition sectors. If there is no active nutrition sector in the country, the national R4V platform can contact the R4V nutrition sector for guidance.

Other suggestion

- We suggest differentiating specific sector in multi-sectoral finance reports.

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