Optima Nutrition is a quantitative tool that can provide practical advice to governments to assist with the allocation of current or projected budgets across nutrition programs. The model contains a geospatial component to determine funding allocations that minimize stunting, wasting, anaemia or under-five mortality at both the national and regional levels. The model has a flexible intervention set that includes a variety of vitamin supplementation programs, infant and young child feeding education, treatment of severe acute malnutrition, treatment and prevention of diarrhoea, fortification of foods, water sanitation and hygiene (WASH), family planning and malaria prevention interventions.

**Summary**
Optima Nutrition is a quantitative tool that can provide practical advice to governments to assist with the allocation of current or projected budgets across nutrition programs. The model contains a geospatial component to determine funding allocations that minimize stunting, wasting, anaemia or under-five mortality at both the national and regional levels. The model has a flexible intervention set that includes a variety of vitamin supplementation programs, infant and young child feeding education, treatment of severe acute malnutrition, treatment and prevention of diarrhoea, fortification of foods, water sanitation and hygiene (WASH), family planning and malaria prevention interventions.

**Key Questions Addressed**
- How can a fixed budget be allocated across programs and geographical regions to minimize malnutrition and associated conditions?
- Which programs and geographical regions should receive priority additional funding, if it were available?
- How might trends in undernutrition change under different funding scenarios?
- How close is a country likely to get to their nutrition targets?
- What is the minimum funding required, if allocated optimally, to meet the nutrition targets?

**Figure 1: What is the optimal allocation of funding, across available programs, to minimize stunting in Bangladesh?**
The Optima Nutrition model can be of value to country stakeholders in several ways:

- Determining the optimal allocation of nutrition budgets for different levels of total funding.
- Projecting medium- to long-term impacts of current investments.
- Providing confidence among donors and stakeholders that funding is being used in a way that maximizes impact.
- Through its integrated analysis of long-term financial implications, the Optima Nutrition tool can make the case for appropriate domestic investment.

Data availability varies between countries and there is flexibility for shortening or extending the process in line with requirements and availability of key in-country participants. Time and technical assistance needs can range from one to four months depending on the level of stakeholder engagement.

Strengths:

Optima Nutrition can provide quantitative evidence for the prioritisation of nutrition programs in the context of limited funding. The model can also assist with the development of investment cases and national planning.

Limitations:

The model is heavily influenced by the effect size estimates of each program, which are obtained from the sparse (but growing) academic literature and are not always setting-specific. Analyses also require estimates on the costs of scaling up interventions, which have inherent uncertainty.

How does this help nutrition decision making?

How long does it take?

Strengths and limitations?

What are the data needs?

What technical resources are needed to implement this tool?

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https://www.nyas.org/NMC