Scaling-up home fortification with micronutrient powders (MNP)

MNP contain vitamins and minerals that support the healthy growth and development of children 6-23 months of age.

Not all children in Lesotho eat nutritious foods

- **11%** of children 6-23 months of age are eating an acceptable diet in terms of frequency and diversity.
- **23%** have foods from 4 or more food groups per day.
- **12%** consumed fish, meat, or poultry the previous day.
- **50%** of the population is food insecure.

51% of Basotho children under 5 years have anaemia*... linked to poor cognitive and physical development and reduced school achievement.

The World Health Organization recommends MNP use when the prevalence of anaemia in young children is 20% or higher.

The ultimate return on investment for MNP is $37 for every $1 invested, due to the positive effects of addressing childhood anaemia.

*Data Source: Lesotho Demographic and Health Survey 2014
LESOTHO
THE BENEFITS

Use of MNP improves the quality of a young child’s diet

Benefits of MNP:

- Prevents and treats iron deficiency anemia
- Reinforces appropriate complementary feeding practices
- Supports healthy growth & development
- High acceptability and ease of use

Globally, considered one of the top cost-effective investment priorities to fight hidden hunger

Can be integrated within health systems, food systems, WASH and social protection programs

Included in the World Health Organization’s Model List of Essential Medicines for Children

Counselling on age-appropriate complementary feeding should always be included with the distribution of MNP, along with other actions to address micronutrient deficiencies in children

MNP + Counselling + Adequate Complementary Feeding

Continued Breastfeeding

Malaria Control

Water Sanitation & Hygiene

Food Security Programs

HF-TAG
Home Fortification Technical Advisory Group

UNICEF
**LESOTHO**

**ACTIONS**

Policies and actions to promote the sustainability of MNP

**POLICY DESIGN AND DELIVERY**

Infant & Young Child Feeding (IYCF) policy

- IYCF is included in the National Nutrition policy 2011

MNP included in policy

- Micronutrient supplementation included in the National Nutrition policy 2011

Reach

Total number of children 6-23 months who received micronutrient powders in 2019 was 8,998

- MNP distribution has reached sub-national scale

**ACTIONS TO PROMOTE SUSTAINABILITY**

- The integrated MNP program is reaching two districts...yet, continued efforts are needed to improve effective coverage so that no child is left behind

- Continued advocacy and resource leveraging are needed to ensure a predictable funding stream that will sustain efforts at the sub-national level and scaling-up at the national level