Multi-sectoral nutrition mapping exercise in the Democratic Republic of Congo highlights opportunities for intensifying nutrition actions at sub-national levels

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A government-led mapping exercise was successfully executed in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), culminating in a validation workshop on 28 September 2018 in the nation’s capital. The exercise drew upon UNN support and a tool initially developed by the Network’s intensive support service, UNN–REACH. Funded by UNICEF, the mapping was an ambitious undertaking that engaged a range of stakeholders, including contributions from the nutrition inter-donor group in-country.

The mapping encompassed a total of 23 actions that support positive nutrition outcomes at national and provincial levels. In addition, it covered health zones in seven provinces to get a better sense of decentralized action intensity. Strategic comparisons were made between geographical intervention coverage, target groups and delivery mechanisms, elucidating vast coverage discrepancies in some cases. For instance, the coverage of complementary feeding counselling considerably varied between health zones with Kasai and Kasai Oriental exceeding 75 percent coverage while others (Sankuru and Sud Kivu) reporting less than 25 percent coverage.

It also underscored the need to focus on results. While the distribution of family planning inputs is carried out by many actors in all provinces, coverage among individuals 15-49 years old was consistently less than 2%. Equally important, the mapping identified data gaps that inhibited the calculation of population coverage for some actions, such as breastfeeding counselling in two regions and animal health services for animal husbandry and aquaculture that have a nutritional objective.
Overall, the exercise indicated that less than half of the actions mapped cover more than 50% of their targets in all provinces, presenting opportunities for scale-up, particularly in provinces with high stunting levels. It, furthermore, highlighted that while coverage is highest in the grand Kasaï and the northwest of the country, chronic problems are elsewhere. Intrigued? More details are available in the mapping report¹ and articles featured in the local press (Agence Congolaise de Presse | Forum des As).²

FIGURE 4.
Excerpt from the Nutrition Stakeholder and Action Mapping in DRC (2017–18)

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2 Visit: https://forumdesas.org/spip.php?article17212