

Action brief

The role of youth organizations in monitoring budgets and public investment for nutrition

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Country: Peru

Themes: Information systems

Sub-themes: Supporting better data management

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Overview



Consulta Amigable (User-Friendly Enquiry) is a platform that collects and provides access to implementation reports of the budgets of social programmes (including nutrition), detailing the institutional opening budget of each programme, the investment balance and the implementing units.

Specifically, *Consulta Amigable* monitors the allocations of nutrition interventions for results-based budgeting for nutrition programming, accountability mechanisms and budget execution for interventions at national, regional and local levels, thereby promoting local procurement. In addition, the government also measures the impact indicators of nutrition interventions.

This initiative is part of the project *Uniendo Fuerzas por la Nutrición en el Perú* (Joining Forces for Nutrition in Peru),

managed by CARE Peru on behalf of the Civil Society Initiative against Child Malnutrition, in seven of the country's 24 regions. It was launched so that youth organizations could monitor public spending on the reduction of chronic malnutrition and anaemia on a subnational level and use this information to promote greater public investment in nutrition and to foster transparency and accountability by subnational governments.

The groundbreaking initiative showed:

- It is possible to scale the effective use of nutrition information systems from the subnational level to the national level.
- Young people have huge potential in playing a role in nutrition advocacy information systems.
- An organized and resonant civil society supports and upholds historical nutrition commitments in times of political instability.
- The support of international bodies such as the Scaling Up Nutrition (SUN) Movement provides a sense of representation that keeps young people highly motivated.



Objectives of the action brief

This action report aims to:

- share lessons learned in Peru through the implementation and use of this information system; and

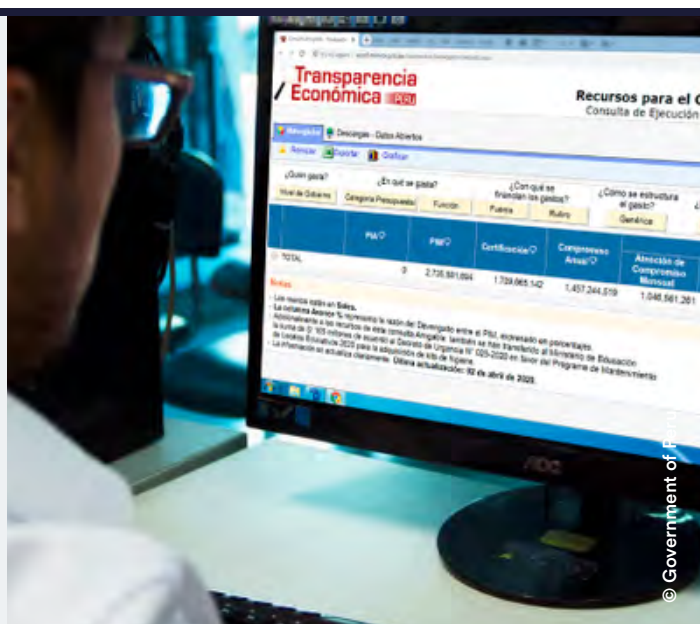
- promote the role of youth organizations in monitoring budget implementation, planning improvement processes and highlighting nutrition investment.



Period covered

In 2008, Peru established a results-based budgeting system to ensure that funds were being well invested and giving the results that politicians had undertaken to achieve.

Preparatory activities began in 2018, and the framework project was completed in June 2021. The initiative continues to operate on an ad hoc basis and mobilizes its own resources. Although the COVID-19 pandemic thwarted face-to-face activities, it created an opportunity to use digital tools, meaning that engagement from multiple geographies was not limited solely to areas that could be covered in person. This also ensured that COVID-19 responses were integrated into nutrition planning.



What action was taken?

Although the national information system in Peru is not specific to nutrition, the *Consulta Amigable* platform of the Integrated Financial Management Information System and the Ministry of Economy and Finance provides access to key indicators on nutritional objectives.

Some non-governmental organizations worked to bolster the capacities of youth organizations to influence policies that address malnutrition. By providing training and education on the use of the digital tools (*Consulta Amigable* in particular) for monitoring regional and national budget allocations, youth organizations can analyse expenditures and determine who spends, how much money is spent, how expenditures are funded and structured, and where expenditures are incurred.

This means that organizations can hold the public sector accountable and apply this information effectively in advocacy campaigns. The impact of this initiative is that it furthers pressure on governments to improve public investment in nutrition.

The use of the platform by young people has promoted the inclusion of nutrition commitments in regional governance agreements and has helped improve the assessment of public expenditures on nutrition by local authorities. Training on the use of nutrition information systems also was expanded to the university level, and the training of public officials was begun. What's more, nutrition was included in the media agenda, and other institutions were encouraged to showcase nutrition issues.



The initiative also scaled up in various ways:

- The monitoring of budgets was expanded from a subnational to a national level.
- Young people consolidated their own platform (*ADN Juvenil*, or Youth DNA), thereby gaining representation in more strategic spaces and more autonomy of management.
- The issue was extended to topics such as overweight and obesity.
- The monitoring of state contracts and public policies was included.
- Training on the use of nutrition information systems also was expanded to the university level.
- The training of public officials began.

The processes triggered transformations beyond the use of information. Young people:

- better understood the determining factors of malnutrition and its implications for the country;

- assumed a jointly responsible role with local authorities;
- became references in collaborative social surveillance, communication and information management; and
- reached formal positions in local governments, giving them power to influence nutrition from within public administration.



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Adaptation and Applicability

In replicating this initiative, challenges could include:

- the digital gap between national and subnational management levels and among information users;
- the elevated time consumption of digital monitoring, communication and mobilization, which could be difficult to balance with university timetables or workloads; and
- the need to decode the information handled into simpler colloquial languages.

An initiative like this is unlikely to succeed only in contexts where there are no open government platforms or where public information is not handled transparently or is outdated. Success also is unlikely where social activists are censored or criminalized or where the collapse of services does not allow for minimal access to electricity and the Internet.

The replicability of such an initiative would require:

- including transparency and accountability mechanisms on a national level;
- incorporating communication experts for the preparation of strategies and messages;
- combining the use of social media with traditional methods for sharing information;
- upholding advocacy messages supported by verifiable evidence; and
- generating more evidence on the impact of the use of information systems on public management and the final nutritional status of the population.



Next steps

For the youth organization ADN Juvenil, the key next steps are:

- Prepare an annual follow-up report on the Articulated Nutritional Programme.
- Generate capacity-building spaces with the National Centre for Strategic Planning to influence institutional operational planning.
- Participate in multisectoral meetings to analyse guidelines where the Articulated Nutritional Programme is considered.
- Review the latest information published by the Ministry of Economy and Finance's Consulta Amigable to publish the first monthly report of the year.
- Continue to influence the reactivation of the Parliamentary Front Against Hunger to contribute to the advocacy efforts.
- Establish open spaces for dialogue and exchange among youth authorities and civil society regarding their functions and work.



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Additional information



https://www.mef.gob.pe/es/?option=com_content&language=es-ES&Itemid=100944&lang=es-ES&view=article&id=504



<https://www.suncivilsociety.com/adn-juvenil-peru-trabaja-en-procesos-de-incidencia-a-favor-de-la-nutricion-en-8-regiones-del-pais/>



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NUTRITION

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