

Action brief

Moving towards a unified and universal monitoring system in Ecuador to address child malnutrition

Country: Ecuador

Themes: Information systems

Sub-themes: Interconnected multi-sectoral databases

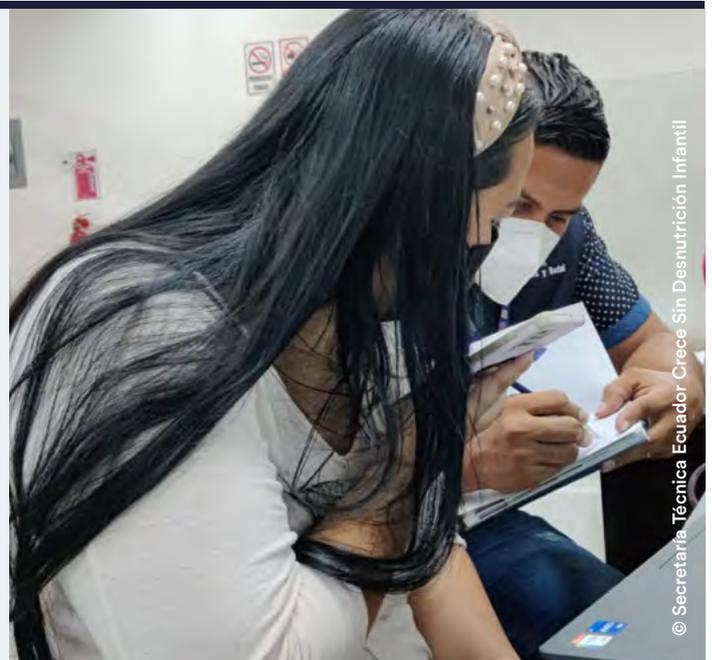
Date: August 2022



Overview



The Unified and Universal Nominal Tracking System is the result of intersectorality and the importance of information exchange among institutions, as information collected by one institution can be of vital importance for the management of another. The system's usefulness also is motivated by the need for a multidimensional view that addresses the causality and consequences of social problems such as chronic child malnutrition. The concept of "universal" indicates that this is a system designed to include all people, every day. As such, in its first pilot project, the Unified and Universal System of Nominal Monitoring (SUUSEN) integrates information from the Ministry of Public Health (MSP), the Ministry of Economic and Social Inclusion (MIES), the social registry, the civil



registry, the Ministry of Education, and the Ecuador Grows Without Child Malnutrition Technical Secretariat (STECSDI). The scope of the pilot will continue to be expanded in the future.



Objectives of the action brief

- Efficient information management systems in place in order to provide timely attention when needs are identified on the basis of individual follow-up.
- Generate statistics and indicators that enable decision-making based on continuously updated information to prevent and reduce chronic child malnutrition.
- Highlight the importance of efficient and complementary management of intersectoral and universal information as one of the main pillars of articulation and focus and thereby develop less bureaucratic reporting processes to meet the needs of the population.
- As with many social and health problems, it is better to prevent chronic child malnutrition than to fight it once it occurs. It is therefore critical that the implementation of services carried out in a timely manner. The best window of opportunity to prevent is pregnancy and the first two years of life (the first 1000 days).



Period covered

With the presentation of the Ecuador a prioritized package of goods and services is planned a comprehensive commitment with an intersectoral vision. As malnutrition is a multidimensional challenge, its eradication requires work in areas health, economic and social inclusion, housing, early identification, the education communication component, changing attitudes and behaviours in families.

As the coordinating body, STECSDI has a guiding and facilitating role.

The presentation of the Unified and Universal Nominal Tracing System coincides with the launch of the Secretariat, which is based on the following principles:

- management
- coordination
- and improvement of investment management
- management focus

SUUSEN's main project links the administrative records of six institutions into one large database to track care needs and generate statistics and indicators.



What action was taken?

This new SUUSEN initiative supports the themes of regional management and intersectoral articulation.

The aim in the first instance is not only to improve the way information is managed, but also the way services are delivered. There already were a variety of data sources in public institutions, but these data were not shared in a consistent way. For this purpose, the first SUUSEN module is the operational alerts platform. Interacting with data from the various sources available, work has been done with each institution to define when a person requires care and who will provide it. The notification is sent directly to the head of the care unit, breaking the excessive bureaucratization in inter-sectoral referrals.

The regional branches generate information, identify needs and, through the alert platform, notify the corresponding institution in order to respond to the need.

The circular process of identifying information to providing support lasts a maximum of 24 hours. Information on trends by province, canton and parish is produced and, in turn, is connected to an alert system that allows for the nominal monitoring of families, identifying people by name and surname and even by georeferencing.

The alert platform provides the contact information and status of the person requiring the service and records how received alerts are handled. The management record will allow for the identification of opportunities for improvement in care units and so complete the traceability from referral to actual care. The care data are captured through each institution's own systems, to which SUUSEN is already connected, thus closing the information loop. The alert platform was launched nationwide in July 2022 among operators of the Ministry of Economic and Social Inclusion (MIES), the Ministry



of Public Health (MSP), the General Directorate of Civil Registry (DIGERCIC), and the Ministry of Urban Development and Housing (MIDUVI). It was incorporated in September 2022 with the Ministry of Education (MINEDUC) and the Social Registration Unit (URS).

Additionally, thanks to the interoperability of data, it has been possible to identify and qualify thousands of beneficiaries for the 1,000 days bonus and for the integral child development services of the MIES.

The best practice is the Unified and Universal Nominal Tracking System, which integrates the records of six institutions: MSP, MINEDUC, URS, DIGERCIC, MIES and STECSDI. The system is being funded by multiple sources,

including an international non-governmental organization and a bilateral donor.

Some of the achievements identified are:

- steady version in production
- synchronisation in hours between the generation of information and the notification of the national deployment with MIES, MIDUVI, DIGERCIC
- deployment together with regional brigades
- 57,000 alerts sent and 11,000 attended in a timely manner



© Secretaría Técnica Ecuador Crece Sin Desnutrición Infantil



Adaptation and applicability

- **Es importante plantear el sistema como una plataforma gerencial de indicadores: todos los componentes del SUUSEN se derivarán y alimentarán a una plataforma de monitoreo y seguimiento con indicadores e información de procesos, gestión y resultados. Esta plataforma será el mecanismo donde las autoridades, los operadores y la ciudadanía podrán comprender el estado de situación de la estrategia con una visión integral y universal. La información presentada será el resultado tanto de la prestación de servicios y la gestión para su prestación. El resultado de estas prestaciones en forma de indicadores es fundamental para avanzar en la toma de decisiones basadas en información.**



What would the country do differently?

- One of the challenges relates to the administrative processes for accessing data. In the longer term, the system needs to be more institutionalised.



Next steps

- Open data for research: A critical focus for SUUSEN will be to make integrated information available to citizens, researchers and other relevant stakeholders for study and research. This does not imply compromising the private information of individuals, as it will be done following all the criteria of security and anonymization of information to limit the misuse of the information collected. In this area, the
 - National Institute of Statistics and Census (INEC) plays a key role, as an agreement is being worked on to strengthen SUUSEN and national statistical management simultaneously. The country will thus be able to use, for statistical purposes, the enhanced information obtained from the cross-referencing of SUUSEN with other instruments, such as surveys and censuses. This empowerment will allow the country to learn about previously unknown realities, such as identifying differences in the anthropometric measurement of boys and girls and the accuracy of the social registry as a tool for targeting social programmes, among others that have not yet been addressed.
 - Platform for linking with beneficiaries: The purpose of SUUSEN and of public management is the provision of goods and services to the population in a timely and efficient manner. Consequently, the public also can benefit from efficient information management – directly and securely accessing or updating their information and receiving relevant notifications. As of August 2022, this platform remained under construction, but it is a fundamental element for the complete management of information and services provided by state institutions to citizens.
- “Ask once” policy: Efficient information management can benefit many parties at the same time, so a short-term objective of SUUSEN will be the implementation of an “ask once” policy among SUUSEN-related institutions. Once a citizen updates his or her contact, address and identity information with one institution, other service providers will be made aware of the changes and will be able to approach the citizen to provide goods and services without time or efficiency losses.
- Beyond chronic childhood malnutrition: Using SUUSEN to address chronic childhood malnutrition is a first sign of the potential for efficient and timely management of interconnected information in the delivery of goods and services to vulnerable populations. However, many other social and even non-social problems – such as school dropout issues, gender-based violence, teenage pregnancy and more – also can benefit from a similar information management model. Therefore, it is one of SUUSEN’s objectives to be the seed for similar initiatives that can benefit from the road already travelled and, at the same time, improve, strengthen and expand it.



© Secretaría Técnica Ecuador
Crece Sin Desnutrición Infantil



INVOLUCRAR • INSPIRAR • INVERTIR

Scaling Up Nutrition Movement
c/o SUN Movement Secretariat
Villa Le Bocage, Palais des Nations
CH-1211 Geneva, Switzerland
+41 (0) 22 917 7283
info@scalingupnutrition.org
www.scalingupnutrition.org