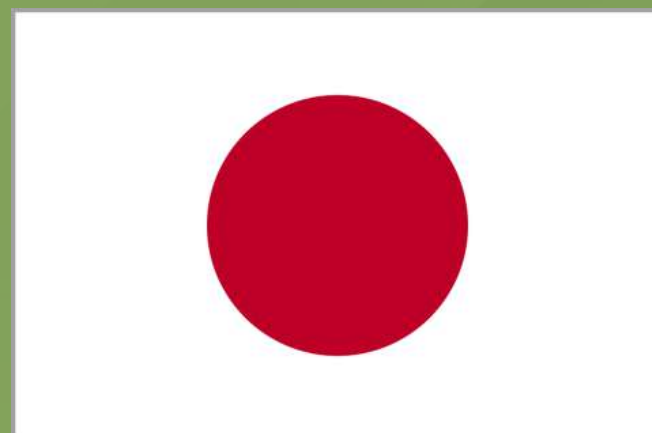




# IFC Fortifying the Future Forum

## Challenges and Opportunities in Food Fortification

March 07, 2024 | HCMC, Viet Nam



BILL & MELINDA  
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 **IFC** | International  
Finance Corporation  
WORLD BANK GROUP  
*Creating Markets, Creating Opportunities*



## #IFCFortifyingTheFutureForum #IFCFoodFortification

On March 7, 2024, IFC hosted the first food fortification forum in Ho Chi Minh City, Viet Nam, sponsored by the Japanese government and the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation.

The forum, titled “**Fortifying the Future: Challenges and Opportunities in Food Fortification**” centered around the theme of working towards a healthier, sustainable, and inclusive world. It brought together key stakeholders to address the existing challenges of micronutrient deficiencies and malnutrition and identify opportunities to scale food fortification.





MINH-NGÂN TRẦN

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Veteran TV Journalist & Master of Ceremonies

## FORUM MODERATOR

Minh-Ngân Trần is a seasoned TV journalist and skilled Master of Ceremonies (MC) with a background in international politics and diplomacy. Since 2014, she has been an MC for significant events, representing governmental and international partners. She is currently collaborating with Bloomberg Businessweek Vietnam and is involved in organizing impactful events.



# KEY THEMES

- Overall malnutrition and nutrient deficiencies around the world and their consequences
- Scaling up food fortification: why, where, and how to monitor global progress
- Global lessons learned: food fortification initiatives and practical solutions
- Fortification and school meal programs: global data, opportunities, and concerns
- The role of women in promoting food fortification as change agents
- Viet Nam's food fortification scoping and actions to address malnutrition and boost food fortification





# OPENING SESSION

IFC's "Fortifying the Future" Forum kicked off with an opening session where IFC officials, along with sponsors, the Japanese Government, and the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, welcomed participants.



Opening Remarks by  
**MR. ERNEST BETHE**

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Asia Upstream, Advisory  
Agribusiness Sector Lead



Welcome Remarks by  
**MR. DARRYL JAMES  
DONG**

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IFC Principal Country  
Officer, Hanoi, Viet Nam



Welcome Remarks by  
**MR. ADITYA JAGATI**

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Senior Program Officer,  
Nutrition, Global Growth  
and Opportunity, Bill and  
Melinda Gates Foundation



Welcome Remarks by  
**MR. YOSHIHITO HIDAKA**

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First Secretary of the  
Embassy of Japan in Hanoi  
to Vietnam



Welcome Remarks by  
**DR. TRUONG TUYET MAI**

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Deputy Director, National  
Institute of Nutrition





## DR. LUZ MARÍA DE-REGIL

Head of the Unit of Multisectoral  
Actions in Food Systems (AFS),  
Department of Nutrition and Food  
Safety at the World Health  
Organization

# KEYNOTE SPEAKER

An update on how, why, and what we can monitor for the progress of food fortification initiatives worldwide was presented by Dr. Luz from WHO. She shared updates on the global fortification status and highlighted the importance and reasoning behind the need to monitor the global food fortification progress, and their community health consequences. She also emphasized the guidelines from WHO to help countries achieve their food fortification goals.





# OPENING CEREMONY



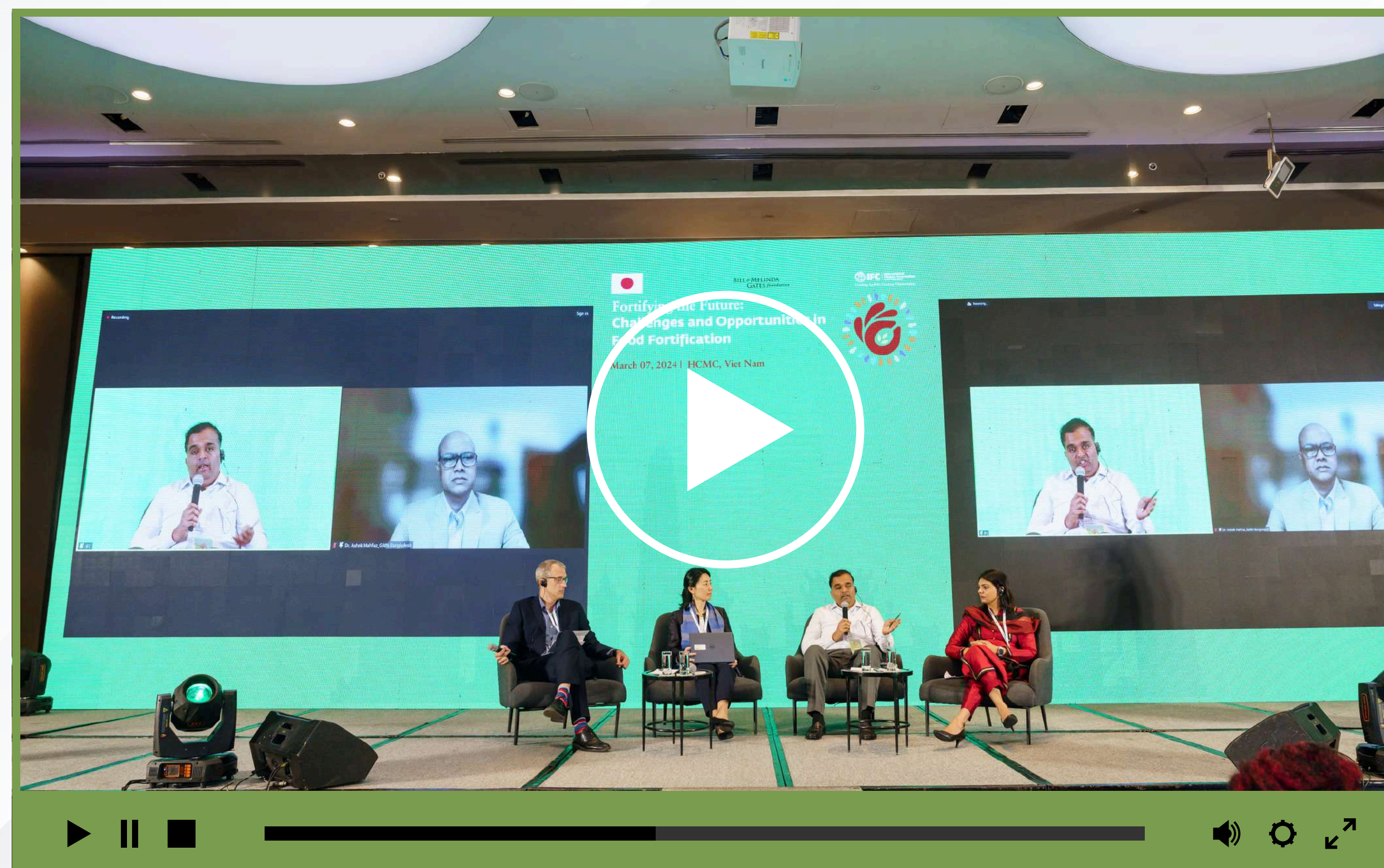


# GLOBAL FOOD FORTIFICATION INITIATIVES: LESSONS LEARNED

The fortification of staple foods is widely recognized as an effective strategy to mitigate micronutrient deficiencies. Considering the growing number of fortification initiatives worldwide, there is an imperative to disseminate practical insights gained from their execution. During this panel, specialists discussed the critical components for the successful deployment of food fortification programs at global, regional, and national levels. The panelists outlined the "Dos and Don'ts" of launching food fortification efforts and identified the respective roles of governments, the private sector, and consumers in these endeavors. Attendees learned about the forthcoming OECD Measurement Framework for Large-Scale Food Fortification Regulation and the significance of a robust national regulatory framework.

A World Bank expert's mentioning of the "Triple E" approach—consisting of excitement, engagement, and enablement—to national food fortification, informed by recent developments in India, sparked interest among participants. Representatives from Global Alliance for Improved Nutrition (GAIN) and World Food Program (WFP) highlighted the role of monitoring systems in assessing the effectiveness of national food fortification programs.

Additionally, participants were briefed on UNICEF's support for mandatory food fortification within the region.



## Panelists:

- Roland Kupka, Regional Nutrition Adviser for East Asia and Pacific, UNICEF
- Kumiko Takanashi, Policy Analyst, Large Scale Food Fortification Regulatory Governance Project, OECD
- Dr. Ashek Mahfuz, Portfolio Lead for Food Fortification and Value Chain program, Global Alliance for Improved Nutrition (GAIN), Bangladesh
- Arvind Betigeri, Regional Food Fortification Advisor for Asia and the Pacific, World Food Programme
- Dr. Deepika Anand, Operations Officer with the Health, Nutrition, and Population Practice, India, World Bank Group
- Moderator: Kateryna Onul, Policy Lead in IFC Food Safety, Food Loss Prevention, and Food Fortification Advisory



# WORLD BANK GROUP AND INTERNATIONAL FINANCE CORPORATION'S POSITION ON NUTRITION (GLOBAL NUTRITION AND FOOD SECURITY CHALLENGE PROGRAM)

**K**yoiko Shibata, World Bank Group (WBG) representative, shared information on the Global Challenge Program on Food and Nutrition Security (GCP-FNS), a WBG initiative that aims to increase food and nutrition security for millions of people by catalyzing new approaches and collaborations.

The GCP-FNS shared insights into how they support the private sector, strengthen institutions, and provide technical assistance and incentives to scale up the production and consumption of fortified foods.

Natia Mgeladze, International Finance Corporation (IFC) representative, reinforced IFC's support for nutrition-sensitive investments, including food fortification projects. IFC, with the support of the Japanese government and the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, initiated the Performance Based Grant Food Fortification Advisory project. This project aims to assist private sector clients in adopting and implementing the best fortification practices, raise awareness among stakeholders about food fortification, and host various knowledge events.



## Panelists:

- Kyoko Shibata, Senior Nutrition Specialist, Health, Nutrition and Population Global Practice, World Bank Group
- Natia Mgeladze, Global Lead, Food Safety, Food Loss Prevention, and Food Fortification Advisory, International Finance Corporation





# FORTIFICATION AND SCHOOL MEAL PROGRAMS: GLOBAL DATA, OPPORTUNITIES, AND CONCERNS

**T**his panel presented information from a global survey conducted by the Global Child Nutrition Foundation on school meal programs worldwide. The survey shed light on multiple aspects of food fortification and school milk programs, including scale, predictability, popularity, ubiquitousness, and nutrition focuses.

Findings on the pros and cons of the school milk programs were presented, as well as on the role that women play in these programs. Both must be studied in greater detail to address concerns.

Panelist:  
Heidi Kessler, Deputy Director,  
Global Child Nutrition  
Foundation





# GENDER: ROLE OF WOMEN IN PROMOTING FOOD FORTIFICATION AS CHANGE AGENTS

**W**omen play a critical role in promoting food fortification as change agents, as highlighted by Lydia Mbevi. She emphasized the importance of gender equity in nutrition and fortification, highlighting key points such as the impact of women's health on themselves and their children, addressing gender disparities, empowering women in decision-making, and the inter-generational and community health benefits.

Mbevi suggested a gender-smart and nutrition-smart fortification framework and emphasized the need for data analysis to design informed solutions for gender equality in fortification efforts.

Panelist:  
Lydia Ndunge Mueni Mbevi,  
Manufacturing, Agribusiness and  
Services (MAS) Gender Team,  
International Finance Corporation





# VIET NAM FOOD FORTIFICATION SCOPING: MAJOR FINDINGS

Viet Nam was among the few countries that underwent a scoping assessment by the International Finance Corporation (IFC) using the IFC Scan Guide to identify policy gaps and private sector needs. The assessment revealed persistent malnutrition issues—particularly stunting and deficiencies of micronutrients—notably in remote, rural, and mountainous regions. Despite having a national nutrition strategy with targets to combat these issues by 2030 and legal frameworks involving multiple ministries and provincial committees, challenges remain.



Viet Nam initiated iodized salt programs in 1993 and voluntary food fortification efforts, followed by a mandatory decree for food fortification in 2016. However, enforcement of this decree has been hindered by concerns such as increased production costs, quality changes, and challenges with exporting. Furthermore, Viet Nam's legal system lacks adequate testing capacities, regulations on micronutrient doses, and enforcement mechanisms. Despite these shortcomings, the private sector identifies opportunities to contribute, highlighting a potential role for them in addressing these challenges.

## Panelists:

- Kateryna Onul, IFC Policy Lead, Food Safety, Food Loss Prevention, and Food Fortification Advisory
- Van Hoang Pham, Project Lead, Viet Nam Agribusiness Competitiveness



# IFC SHOWCASES ON FOOD FORTIFICATION

IFC's showcases on food fortification were an opportunity to highlight IFC's roadmap for efficiency and fortification assessments with our clients. Business cases were presented using current paddy and white rice processing numbers to consider potential investments in operations, where it became evident that fortifying such products would be relatively inexpensive. This presentation highlighted the structure and roadmap of IFC's proprietary milling efficiency project and the best available technologies for food fortification.



Panelist:  
Tiago van Zeller, Senior Fortification Expert, International Finance Corporation





# PRACTICAL SOLUTIONS FOR FOOD FORTIFICATION: GLOBAL LESSONS LEARNED

The panelists shared their experiences and solutions for addressing challenges and opportunities in food fortification worldwide. Private sector manufacturers like DSM and BASF showcased their extensive experience in fortification projects, both as suppliers and stakeholders in national programs. Hystra, a consulting company, presented their work on fortification projects, including maternal and children's interventions and Large-scale food fortification (LSFF) programs. Nonprofit Technoserve highlighted their programs and introduced the Millers for Nutrition coalition.

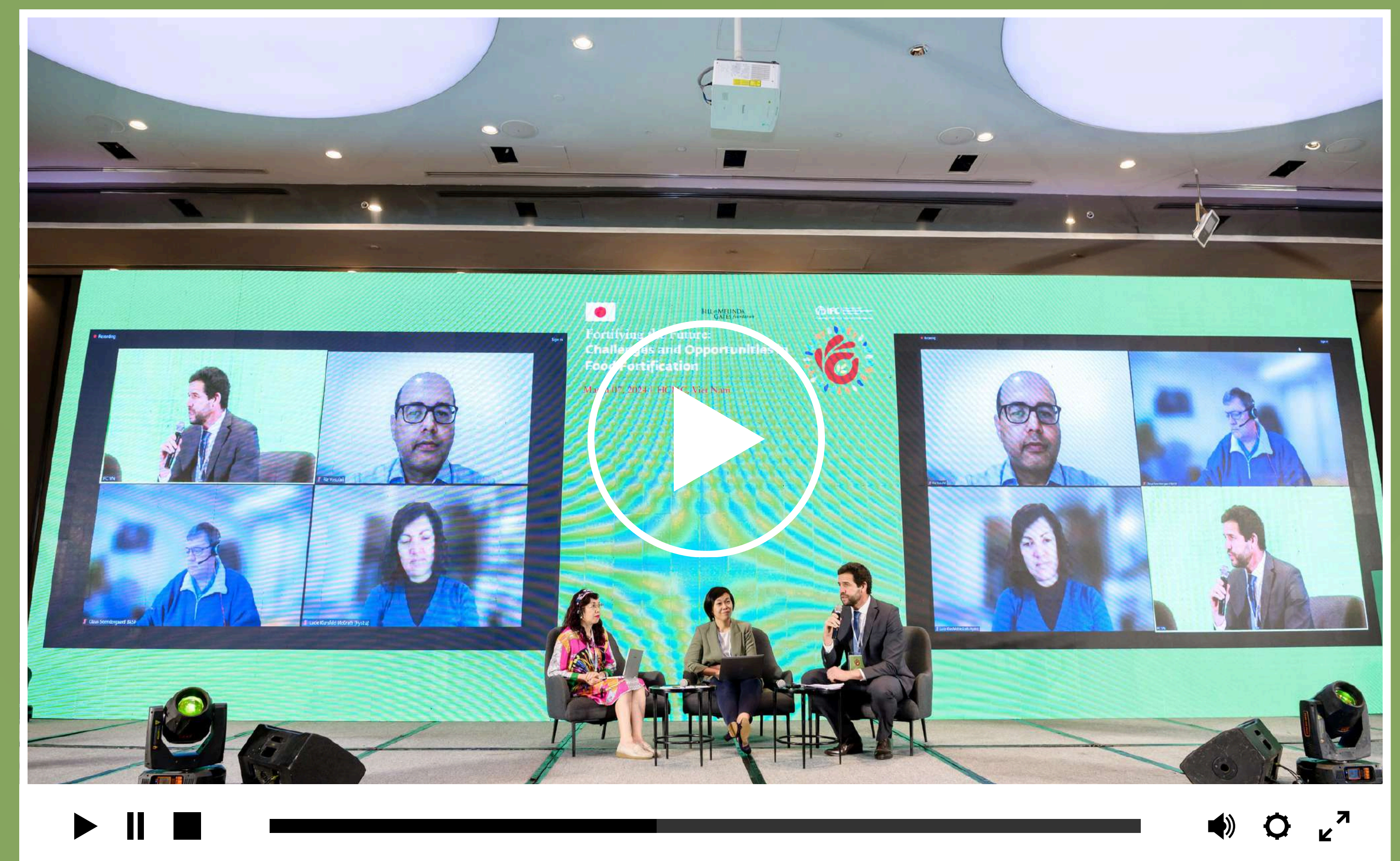
The Vietnam Nutrition Institute provided insights into the fortification landscape in Viet Nam. Additionally, IFC's new milling and fortification efficiency program was discussed as a potential solution to address these challenges.

## Panelists:

- Dr. Tran Khanh Van, Medical doctor and Head of Micronutrients Department, National Institute of Nutrition
- Dr. Claus Soendergaard, Global Application Specialist Food Fortification and Technical Support, BASF
- Lucie Klarsfeld McGrath, Partner, Hystra
- Rizwan Yusufali, IGNITE Program Director, TechnoServe and Millers for Nutrition

## Moderator:

- Tiago van Zeller, Senior Fortification Expert, International Finance Corporation





# VIET NAM'S ACTIONS TO ADDRESS MALNUTRITION AND BOOST FOOD FORTIFICATION

This panel highlighted diverse opinions and challenges regarding Viet Nam's mandatory requirements on food fortification. Private sector representatives discussed the varying demands from their clients, including the need to scale up fortification in domestic markets. Associations expressed support for government fortification programs but highlighted challenges. The panel concluded with a local authority representative emphasizing the government's commitment to community health and addressing malnutrition, stating that food fortification will remain mandatory but remains open to recommendations and aims to find a balanced approach that benefits all stakeholders.



## Panelists:

- Mr. Huynh Huu Trung Kien
- Do Hong Phuong, Nutrition Policy Specialist, UNICEF
- Dr. Truong Tuyet Mai, Deputy Director, National Institute of Nutrition
- Ms. Nguyen Quynh Thuong
- Mr. Nguyen Hoai Nam, Deputy General Secretariat, VASEP
- Mr. Nguyen Hong Uy, Head of Technical Working Group, Nutrition Food Group Committee of EuroCham in Vietnam
- Ms. Ly Kim Chi, Chairwoman of Food and Foodstuff Association of Ho Chi Minh City

## Moderator:

- Uy Duc Pham, Operations Officer, MAS Asia Agri Advisory, International Finance Corporation





**SAMUEL DZOTEFE**

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Senior Manager, Manufacturing,  
Agribusiness and Services, Asia and  
the Pacific, International Finance  
Corporation

## CLOSING REMARKS

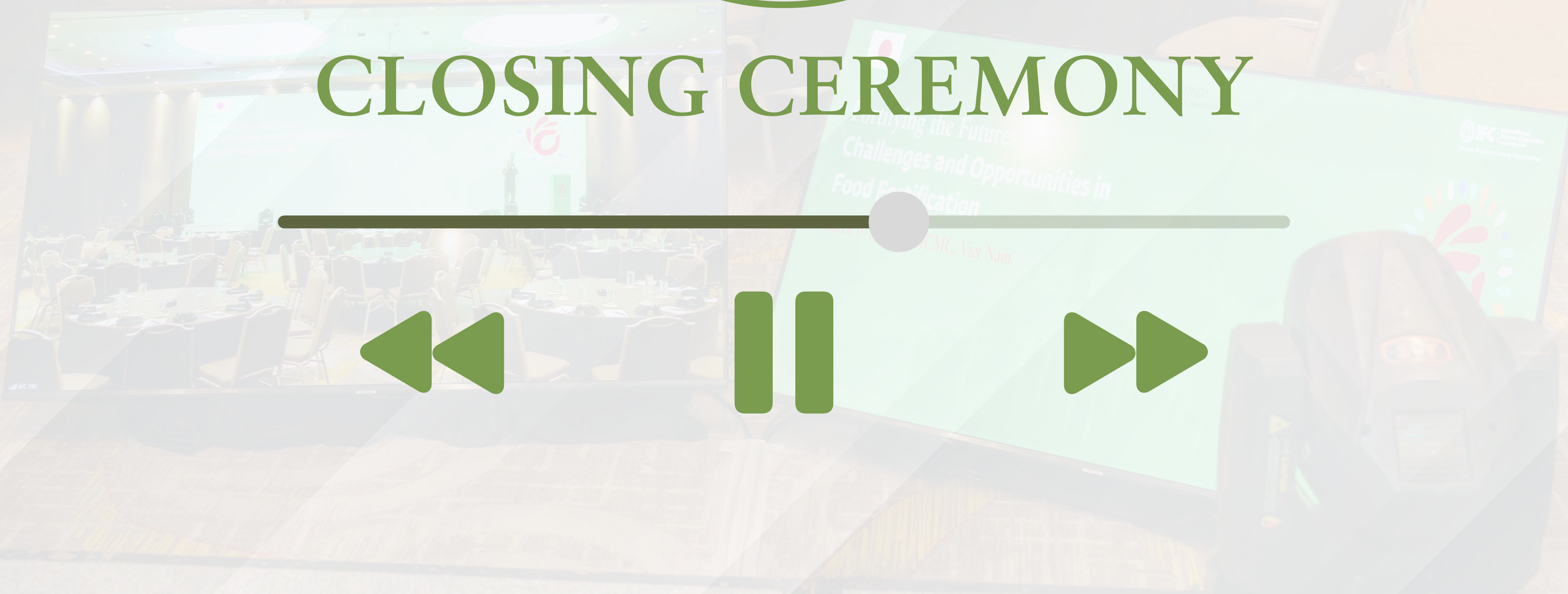
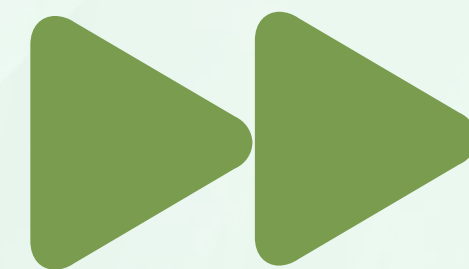
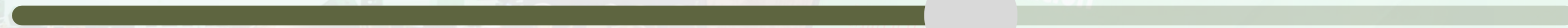
To wrap-up the event, Samuel Dzotefe expressed his gratitude to all participants for their valuable contributions. He highlighted how the discussions emphasized the critical role of food fortification in enhancing global nutritional well-being and creating healthier, more resilient societies. He stated that collaboration among stakeholders is crucial for delving into the topics discussed, overcoming the challenges, and seizing opportunities.

Special thanks were extended to sponsors and partners, as well as to the organizations and individuals who participated in the forum. He also reiterated IFC's commitment to working towards a healthier, sustainable, and inclusive world, with IFC offering support in this endeavor.





# CLOSING CEREMONY





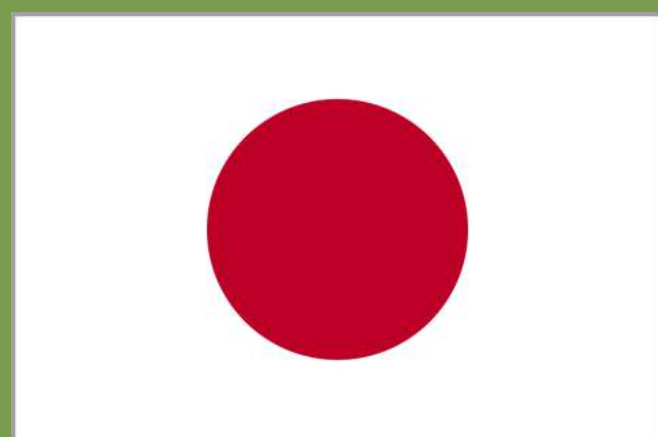


## CONTACT US

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Advisory, International Finance Corporation

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Learn more at [www.ifc.org/foodsafety](http://www.ifc.org/foodsafety).



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