



The Global
Alliance
for Vitamin A



The Unfinished Business of Vitamin A Supplementation in sub-Saharan Africa: *“Business as Usual is NOT AN OPTION”*

Rolf Klemm, VP, Nutrition



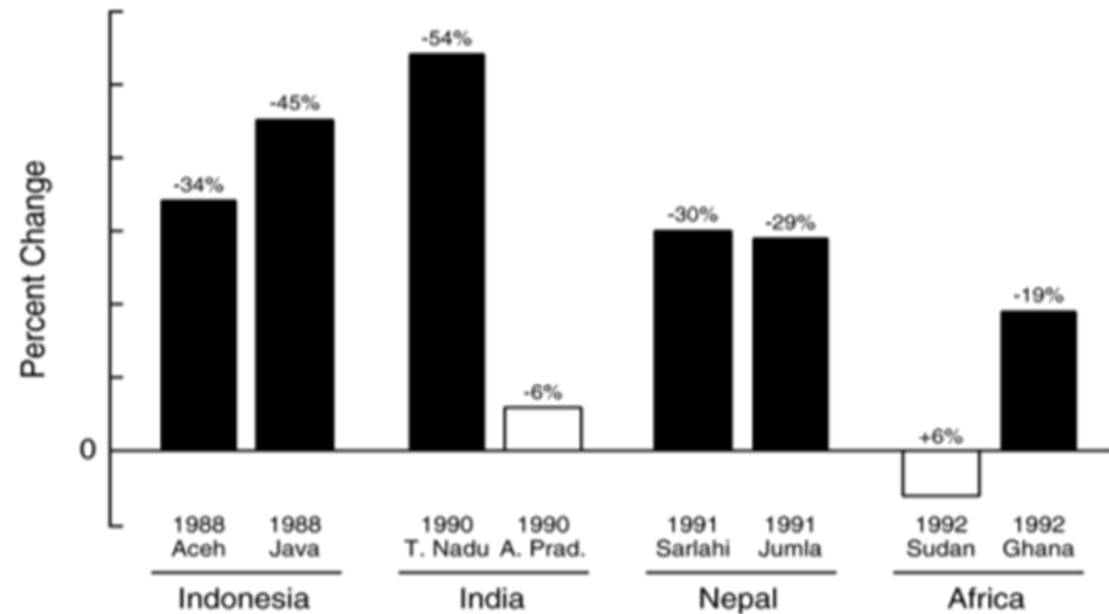
Key Messages

- VAS STILL relevant as a vital life-saving safety-net in most of Africa.
- Polio eradication huge success & has helped high VAS coverage. BUT as polio disappears, new VAS delivery platform needed.
- VAS needs renewed commitment and investment in a dedicated community-based platform.
- Greater investment is needed in strategies that address the root cause of VA deficiency & that assess reach and quality of VA interventions & status.
- Business as Usual is NOT AN OPTION

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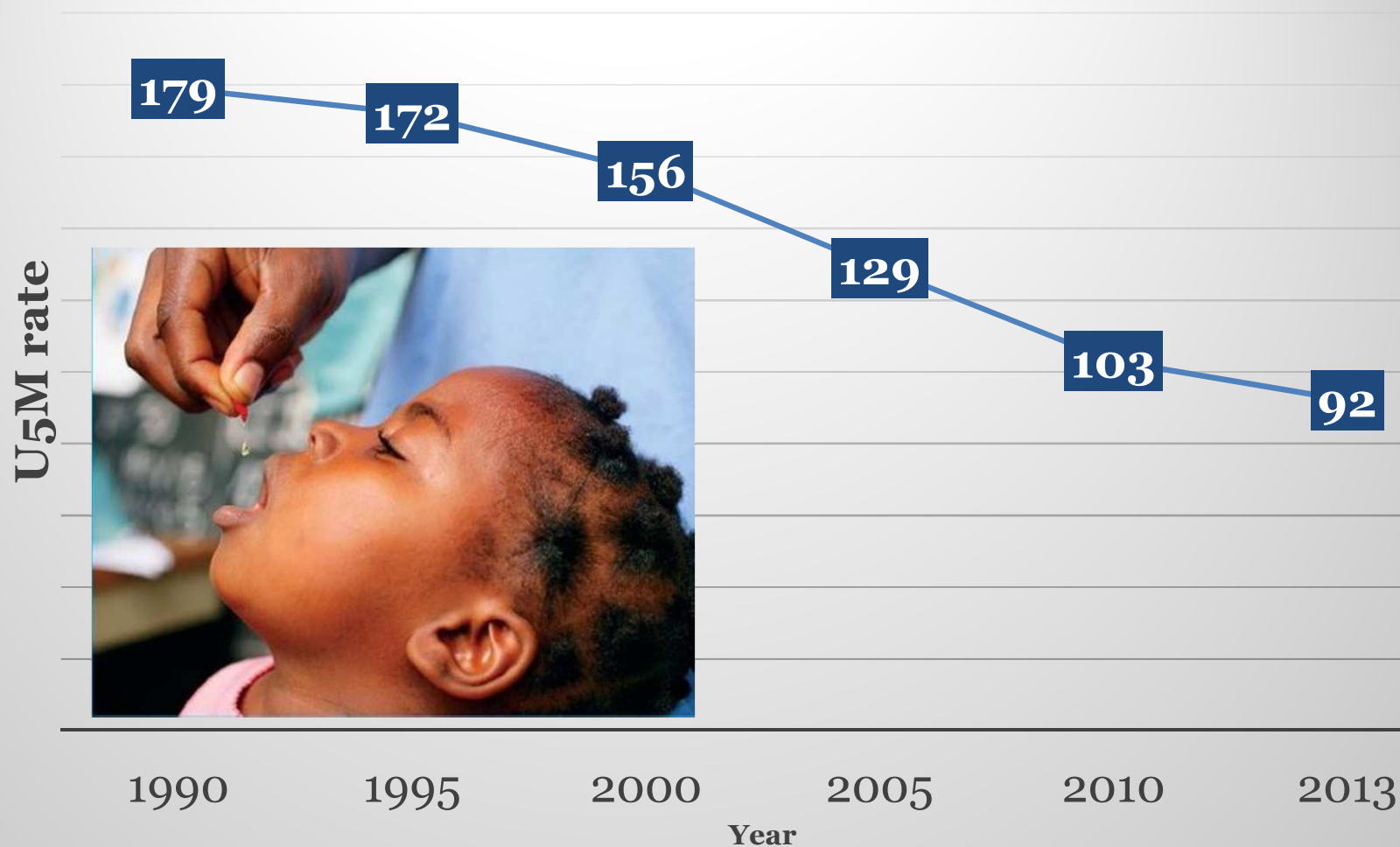
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Vitamin A deficiency (subclinical) affects upwards to 190 million children (WHO)



Improving VA status can reduce all-cause child mortality by 12%-24%

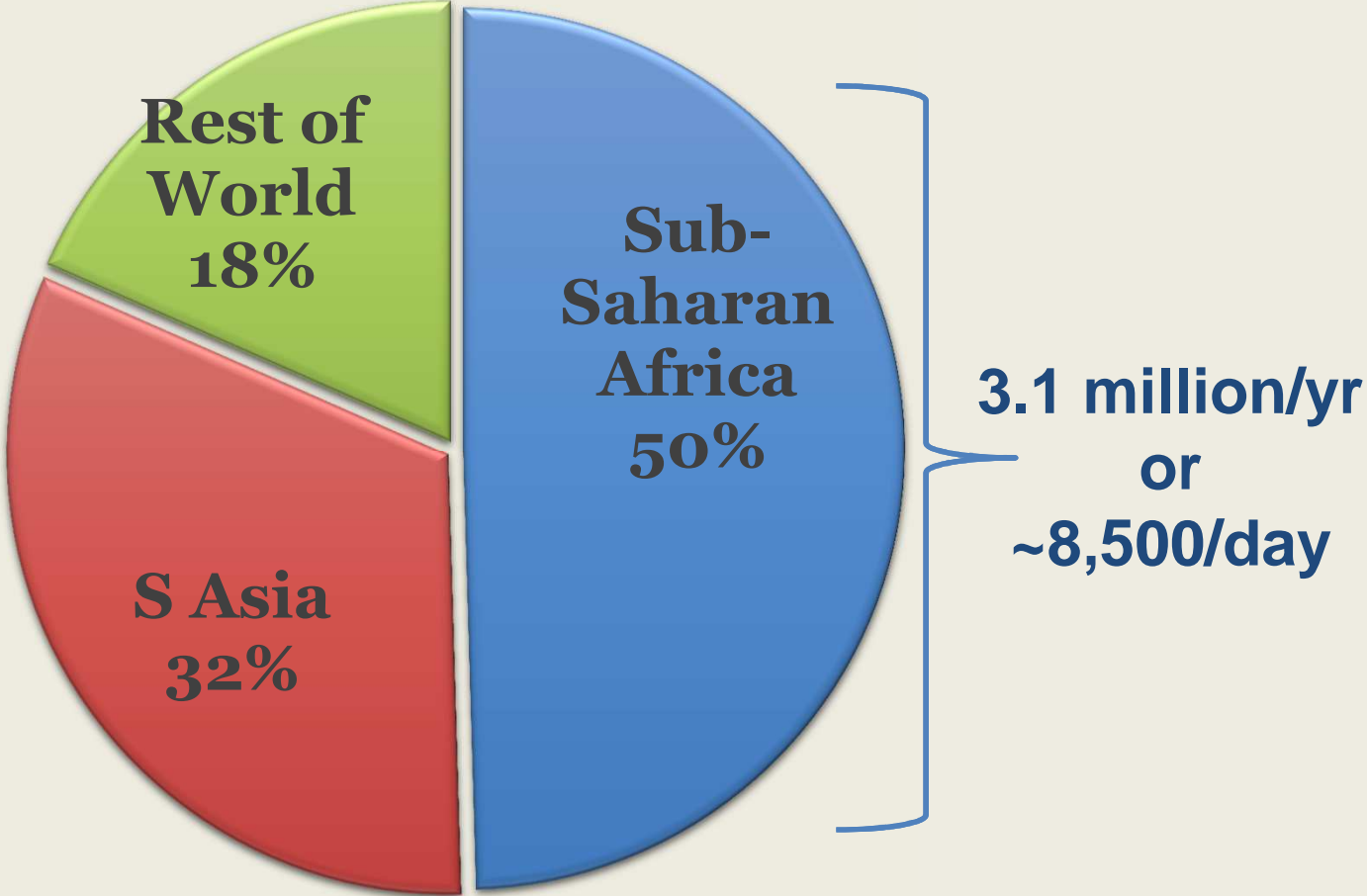
Under-five Mortality Rate (U5MR), *Sub-Saharan Africa, 1990-2013*



UNICEF, Level and Trends in Child Mortality, 2014

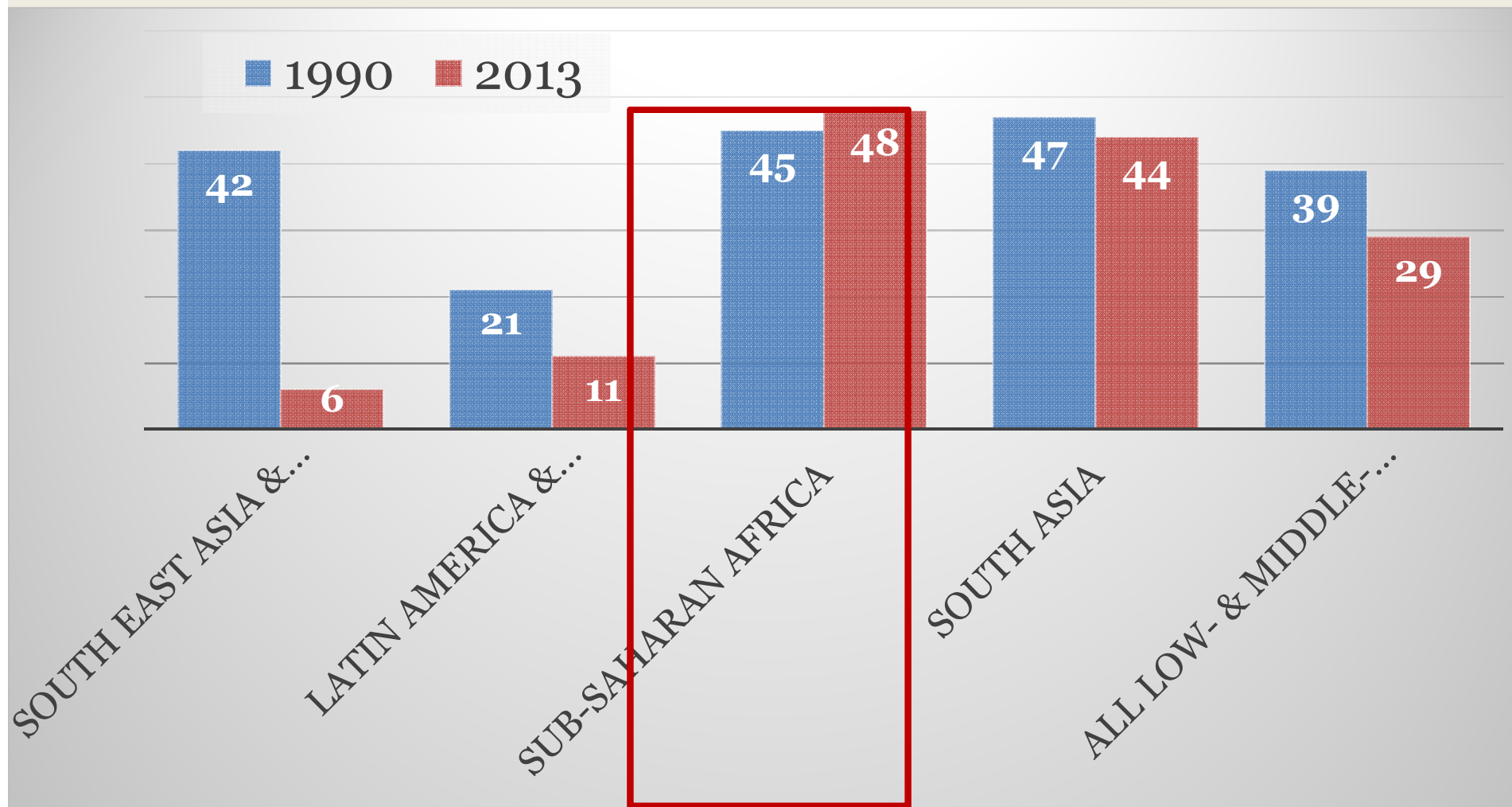
Distribution & number of under-five deaths, 2013

6.2 m deaths globally



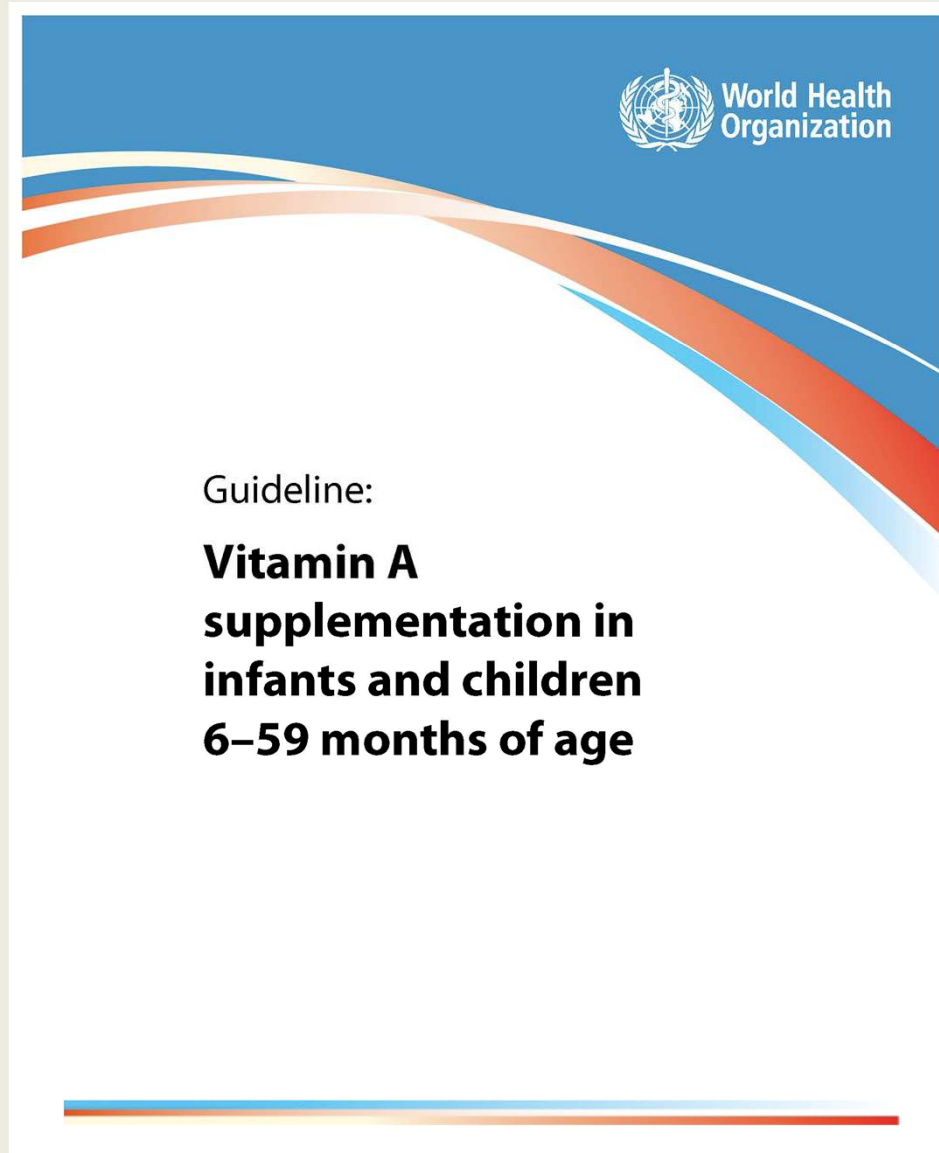
UNICEF, Level and Trends in Child Mortality, 2014

VA Deficiency Prevalence Trends in Preschoolers, 1990-2013



Stevens G et al, Lancet Global Health, 2015

WHO Recommendation



Recommends VAS in infants and children 6-59 months of age as a public health intervention to *reduce child morbidity and mortality in settings where vitamin A deficiency is a public health problem* **(strong recommendation)**

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No more polio in Africa
As of March 2016, 18 months have
passed without any polio cases in
Africa



As polio disappears....

..so too will the engine driving high VAS coverage, unless alternatives are found



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Child Health Days/Weeks



Child Health Service Package

**Vitamin A
Deworming
SAM Screening
Growth Promotion
Iron-folate Tablets**

Moving from Reaching Every District (RED) to Reaching Every Community and Child (REC)

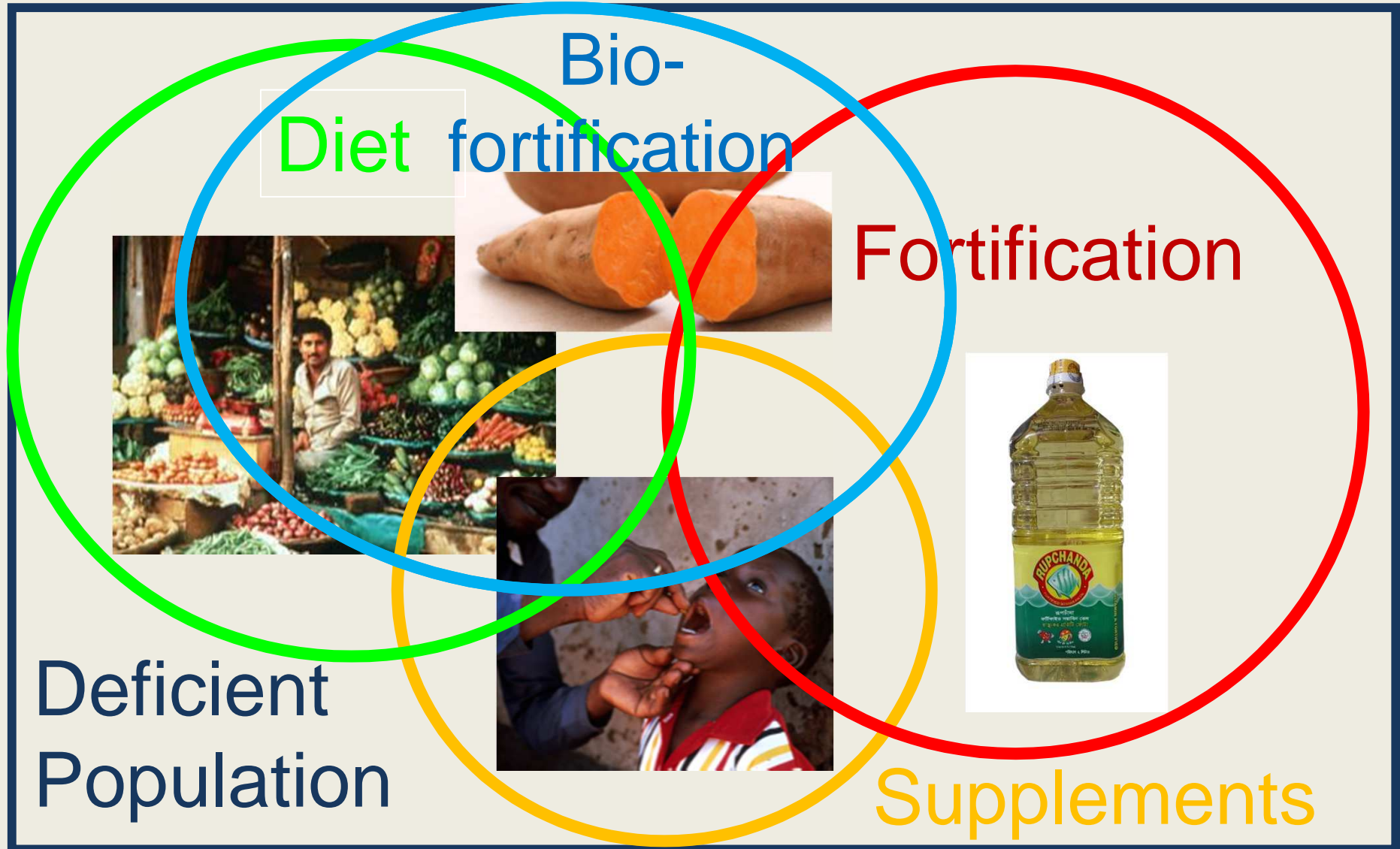


To achieve equity & provide VAS to the most at risk children, flexible approaches and focus on low-performing districts and health coverage areas are needed.

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Complementary Approaches



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The path forward.....Business as usual is NOT AN OPTION

- Right people & right time to act, renew and rethink
- Countries relying on polio infrastructure must start to prepare NOW for a transition
- Community-based platforms provide the best chance at reaching and sustaining high VAS coverage.
- Need to strengthen investment in complementary strategies
- Need to promote investment in generating high-quality, real-time data on program reach and quality to improve program and policy decisions.



THANK YOU.

“Although the world is full of suffering, it is also full of overcoming it.” -Helen Keller