



World Food Programme

SAVING  
LIVES  
CHANGING  
LIVES

# Malnutrition Prevention

## Background

According to the SMART nutrition survey conducted in 2019 and 2020, the Global Acute Malnutrition (GAM) rate remains low showing that investments in nutrition are paying off. However, stunting prevalence—a sign of chronic malnutrition—still remains high at 37%. Even with the decline in undernutrition, continued efforts are needed to address micronutrient deficiencies and the high rates of stunting.

In early childhood, under nutrition has negative life-long and intergenerational consequences; undernourished children are more likely to require medical care as a result of under nutrition-related diseases and deficiencies. This increases the burden on public social services and health costs incurred by the government and communities.

## Towards Zero Hunger and Malnutrition

Stunting has to be prevented through multi-sectoral approach through interventions that promote healthy growth in the young child especially in the early years of life.

In this context, and analysing the gains so far in the reduction of undernutrition, WFP reshaped its nutrition strategy to focus on the prevention of undernutrition, particularly stunting and micronutrient deficiencies with an emphasis on nutrition sensitive programming, evidence generation and capacity strengthening for Government at national, district and community levels.

WFP is working with Department of Nutrition, HIV and AIDS (DNHA) on strengthening local governance, leadership and management towards nutrition and domestic resourcing for nutrition.

## Geographic Prioritization

In order to enhance synergies with existing investments, particularly in social protection, livelihoods and school meals, WFP is strengthening nutrition-sensitive prevention activities in 5 districts (Chikwawa, Phalombe, Balaka, Mangochi and Neno) in the Southern region.

## A Different Approach to Nutrition

**Design and implementation:** WFP activities are deliberately designed to broker partnerships for delivery of nutrition services at district level to create a common vision for nutrition, community stewardship, and sustained commitment to end hunger and malnutrition.

**Building Partnerships:** WFP is building strong alliances with the Government, NGOs, the UN, and bilateral partners at both the national and district level. The SUN Business Network is also an important catalyst of private sector engagement in nutrition.

**Social Behaviour Change Communication (SBCC)** focusing on nutrition is integrated across all WFP programmes as a sustainable approach to improve family, maternal, and child nutrition practices.



## 2020 in Numbers



**3.7 million**  
people reached with SBCC\*  
messaging on nutrition and COVID-  
19 prevention



Supported the development of two key documents: (i) **Food and Nutrition Bill Guidelines** and (ii) **Management of Nutrition-related Non-Communicable Diseases (NCDs) Guidelines**



**82%**  
of households reported having **acceptable food consumption** and being **care group members**

## VOICES FROM THE FIELD



"While my son, Chrispine, was being treated for malnutrition at the hospital, I received orange-fleshed potato vines which I planted the same year," says Dorica Samson, from Nambirikira Village in Malawi's Dedza District.

William Magombo, a health surveillance assistant at Mtendere Community Hospital, has seen many stories like Dorica's. "To sustain children on the path to recovery, we train them to grow and prepare locally available foods"

Dorica has all nutritional solutions for her family right at her doorstep "I make porridge and fritters from the potato and Chrispine likes it so much — it is delicious and full of nutrients", she says. "I feed the entire family and they love it," she says. "With this potato and other crops I grow, I have enough food and even with the little baby, I do not go to the hospital for nutrition support."

Full story : <https://www.wfp.org/stories/growing-food-tackle-coronavirus-and-child-malnutrition-malawi>

Get a glimpse of how WFP's Malnutrition Prevention programme has been adjusted in Malawi. [See it here.](#)

## Key Results

1. Ntchisi Pilot. WFP piloted a multi-year prevention of stunting pilot in Ntchisi District (2014-2017), which developed a holistic approach to tackling chronic undernutrition:

- Before the programme started, only 15% of children aged 6-23 months had adequate dietary diversity. By 2017 – a year before the project end – this figure had risen to nearly 50%. The final evaluation provided evidence that the programme improved weight gain and reduced wasting and underweight among children 6 to 23 months of age.

2. Stunting Prevention Programme. Thanks to the support of several donors, WFP scaled up this model to contribute to a reduction of under nutrition and break the inter-generational cycle of hunger :

- There is an improvement in food access as indicated by a higher percentage of households classified as having acceptable food consumption (82% in 2020 compared to 75% in 2019).
- There is an improvement in the percentage of children (6-23 months) who met their Minimum Acceptable Diet from 5% at baseline in 2016 to 14% in 2020 and above the national average of 11%.



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