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# U.S. Investments in Global Nutrition

## FACT SHEET

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Two billion people in the world do not consume enough nutrients to live healthy, productive lives. Nearly 200 million children under age five suffer from chronic undernutrition. Poor communities in developing countries disproportionately bear this burden and its permanent consequences on health, well-being, and economic growth. Tackling this problem requires strong leadership and high-impact interventions in both health and agriculture.

Improving nutrition is a target for Millennium Development Goal (MDG) 1, and is central to the achievement of all of the MDGs. It is one of the critical drivers for economic growth and poverty reduction, making it a key component of promoting international stability and security. Good nutrition in early life builds human and economic capacity through improved learning and productivity, and contributes to a robust, capable workforce. Nutrition programs empower women and girls by increasing their access to assets and education, lessen an individual's susceptibility to disease, and improve their adherence to treatment.

### WHAT WE'RE DOING DIFFERENTLY

Through **Feed the Future** and the **Global Health Initiative**, the United States is supporting country-owned programs to address the root causes of undernutrition and improve the future potential of millions of people. Nutrition is the defining link between the two initiatives, which aim to reduce undernutrition through integrated investments in health, agriculture, and social protection. These investments lead to healthier women and children, more resilient communities, and more productive countries. The U.S. Government is focusing on evidence-based approaches and is engaging in new partnerships to scale-up nutrition programs:

- We are working with diverse partners—governments, civil society, private sector, and multilaterals—to support country-driven programs. Our coordinated efforts aim to strengthen local capacity in a way that helps countries bring programs to national scale and to sustain them.
- We are strategically focusing on improving nutrition during the critical “1,000 day” window of opportunity from pregnancy to two years of age.
- We are now tracking new indicators that measure the impact of our investments on nutritional status, diet quality, diversity and quantity, infant and young child feeding practices, and food insecurity.
- We are balancing prevention and treatment. We support programs that emphasize cost-effective approaches to preventing undernutrition in the first place.
- We are maximizing synergies across health, agriculture, and social protection. We know improving nutrition requires a multi-sectoral approach and mutual accountability.

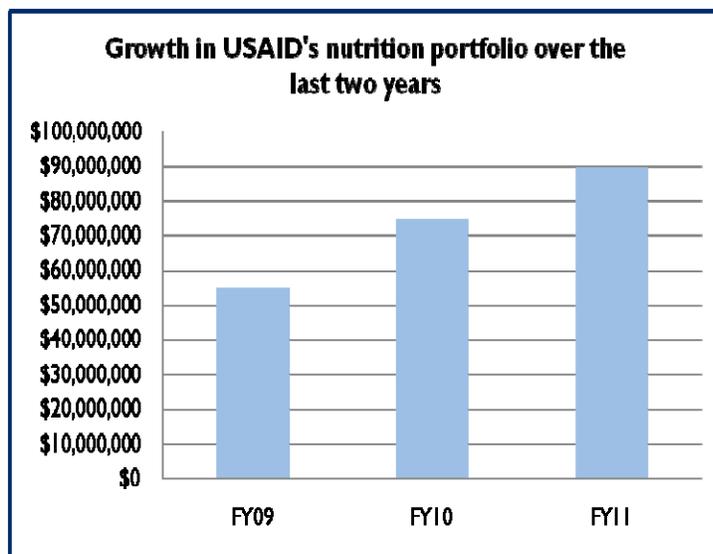


## COUNTRY HIGHLIGHTS

With U.S. support for health and agriculture programs, communities have improved access to diverse foods and increased consumption of quality foods for women and children in places like Bangladesh and Nepal. In Senegal and Uganda, USAID is supporting the country plans to improve nutrition using community-based models that integrate nutrition, gender, agriculture, and sanitation. And Malawi and Ghana, with USAID support, have achieved success in scaling up community management of acute malnutrition.

## GLOBAL TECHNICAL LEADERSHIP

In addition to supporting country-driven programs to scale up nutrition, USAID is investing in research that will identify best practices on programmatic integration of agriculture, health, and safety nets. We are supporting this work through the research-to-use continuum to help translate our research investments into field use as rapidly and effectively as possible. We are innovating in our approach to measurement by including nutritional status as a high-level outcome for both health and agriculture programs, and incorporating new indicators that measure diet quality and diversity for women and young children, and hunger at a household level.



## PARTNERSHIP IN ACTION

The United States is pleased to be part of the Scaling Up Nutrition (SUN) movement, which has been endorsed by over 100 public and private stakeholders and is supporting countries to improve nutrition. Scaling Up Nutrition focuses on increased collaboration, results orientation, harmonized multi-sectoral approaches, and the 1,000 day window of opportunity from pregnancy to a child's second birthday. Children suffering from undernutrition in this period face physical stunting and mental impairment that cannot be reversed, so later in life they experience poorer performance in school and lower incomes. The 1,000 Days partnership seeks to support SUN by increasing advocacy and programming within this window of opportunity.

*“The science of nutrition points to a strategy. If we target that brief critical period during which nutrition has the biggest impact and focus on improving nutrition for expectant mothers, new mothers, and young children, we can accomplish several things at once. We can save lives, we can help children start life on a better path, and we can bolster economic development and learning down the road.*”

*“Our principal concern is our children. Because ultimately, that’s who we’re working to protect – the children whose lives and futures are most vulnerable to the dangers and deprivations of poverty. Their health is a leading indicator of a nation’s stability, security, and prosperity. I often tell people as I travel around the world, **‘If you want to know how stable a country is, don’t count the number of advanced weapons, count the number of malnourished children.’**”*

– U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, 2010

