



WHY NUTRITION?

Investing in global nutrition is one of the [most cost-effective ways](#) to save and improve lives. Good nutrition in early childhood is the foundation for healthy physical and cognitive growth, and underpins that child's future success in school and work. Malnutrition is also the greatest threat to child survival worldwide, killing [roughly 3 million children](#) before their fifth birthday every year. At the societal level, the human potential lost to malnutrition costs low-income nations [up to 16% of their GDP](#) in forgone productivity. Despite being entirely preventable, [nearly 200 million children](#) and [more than 6.9 million pregnant and lactating women](#) suffered from chronic and acute malnutrition in 2022.

Fortunately, [high-impact nutrition interventions](#) can make a big difference. After years of study, scientists have consistently shown the benefit of scaling up [targeted nutrition investments](#) that yield up to \$35 in economic returns for every \$1 spent. **An investment of at least \$300 million in the Global Health Nutrition sub-account for FY2025 is critical to meet the ongoing need for nutrition programming and protect women and children from the death and disability malnutrition continues to cause.**

With an annual investment of \$300 million in a priority package of interventions as outlined in the [World Bank's Nutrition Investment Framework](#), we project that the United States government could annually:

- Prevent stunting for 553,506 people.
- Cure 12,160,519 women from anemia.
- Support mothers to breastfeed 5,525,880 additional children.
- Provide life-saving treatment for 3,000,000 experiencing wasting.

The cost of not investing.

- Malnutrition is the greatest threat to child survival worldwide and is the underlying cause of half of preventable deaths.
- Childhood malnutrition robs individuals of approximately [15% of their annual earnings](#), due to reduced education and productivity.
- Today, [more than 1 in 5 adults is permanently stunted from childhood malnutrition](#).
- Women's nutrition lags behind:
 - More than 1 billion women and adolescent girls suffer from undernutrition, nutrient deficiencies, or anemia.
 - The number of adolescent girls and pregnant and breastfeeding women suffering from acute malnutrition in the 12 hardest-hit countries has increased by 25% since 2020.
 - Progress against anemia, which afflicts almost one-third of women, lags behind other nutrition achievements. 72% of USAID nutrition focus countries have seen anemia rates stagnate or worsen.

THE GOOD NEWS

Our efforts are working

- Since 1990, the percentage of children experiencing [stunting](#) (an irreversible consequence of severe malnutrition) has been almost halved.

We know what works

- Scientists consistently identify the same interventions as most effective for preventing and treating malnutrition, even as they discover more and more efficient ways to deliver them. We can make nutrition investments with high confidence in their efficiency.

US investments make impacts

- In the past 10 years, USAID's maternal and child health and nutrition programs have helped save [over 6 million lives](#).
- Stunting rates have [decreased in 94%](#) of the 18 countries where USAID targets its nutrition investments.

WHAT DO NUTRITION INVESTMENTS ACTUALLY LOOK LIKE?



Continuing large-scale Vitamin A supplementation



Supporting breastfeeding mothers



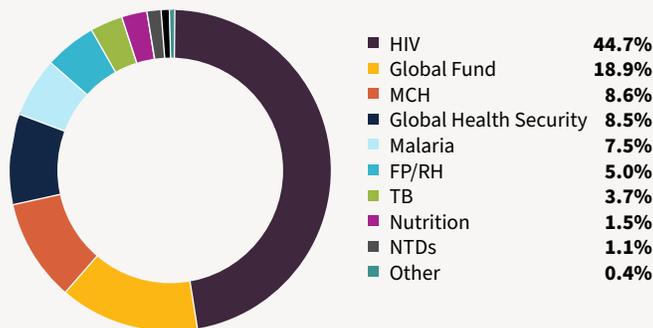
Supplying all pregnant women with prenatal vitamins



Expanding coverage of ready-to-use therapeutic foods (RUTF)

Malnutrition is severely underfunded.

The current level of U.S. Government nutrition funding is not commensurate with the severity of the problem of global malnutrition. Despite malnutrition being the [underlying cause of 45% of all child deaths](#), nutrition received only 1.5% of US global health funding¹ in FY2023.



Good nutrition is a cost-effective way to build global health security and amplify the impact of U.S. foreign assistance.

- Good nutrition provides the building blocks for long-term immunity. Malnourished individuals are at a [far greater risk of contracting and dying from infectious diseases](#), allowing these diseases to spread more easily. Improving nutritional status around the world is a key way to build global health security.
- The benefits of improved nutrition extend far beyond global health. For example:
 - **Nutrition interventions are a cost-effective and under-leveraged resource for women's empowerment.** Women suffer disproportionately from malnutrition, often eating last and least. Well-nourished women and girls are healthier, more productive, and more likely to finish school, be economically independent and have healthy babies.
 - Investing in nutrition could **vastly increase the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of low-and middle-income countries**, paving the road for increased country ownership and resilience.
 - All forms of malnutrition cost businesses in low-and middle-income countries [up to \\$850 billion a year](#) through malnutrition-related productivity reductions. **Smart investments in nutrition now will help build a stronger global economy in the years to come.**
 - Extreme weather is having a [profound effect](#) on people's ability to grow food, and [the food they do grow is less nutritionally dense](#). **Investing in nutrition will help mitigate some of the worst effects of climate shocks.**

U.S. commitments to fighting malnutrition inspires other donors, countries, and philanthropy to invest in nutrition.

- At the 2021 Nutrition for Growth (N4G) summit, [a strong US commitment](#) played a key role in encouraging other countries to make pledges and [seven of USAID's nutrition priority countries made financial commitments](#).
- **A strong U.S. government commitment during the 2025 Nutrition for Growth summit would serve as a rallying call** that encourages other countries to commit and facilitates domestic resource mobilization.
- **A U.S. government commitment focused on women and girls' nutrition could bring us closer to closing the gender nutrition gap** and finally moving the needle on women's nutrition.
- During the 2022 Pledging to Save Lives event at UNGA, the U.S. commitment from USAID to make historic investments in treating child wasting resulted in [more than \\$300 million in additional commitments](#) from other governments and private philanthropies.



¹ Global Health Funding in FY2023 Omnibus (SFOPs Total - GHP Accounts Only)