



GLOBAL HEALTH NUTRITION

According to the World Health Organization, malnutrition is the underlying cause of 3.1 million child deaths each year and leads to lasting damage for millions of other children. Chronic malnutrition or stunting—when children are too short for their age because they have not been adequately nourished, received inadequate care and/or live in unhygienic environments—can leave a **devastating and permanent impact on a child’s physical and cognitive capabilities.**

Improving nutrition is key to ending preventable child deaths. Well-nourished children are better equipped to fight disease, grow and thrive, learn, and contribute to their communities. Healthy mothers have healthier children and more prosperous families, and societies with well-nourished populations are more productive, economically viable and secure. The **first 1,000 days—**from the start of a woman’s pregnancy through her child’s second birthday—is the timeframe we emphasize as the **“window of opportunity”** for nutrition to improve survival and build healthy futures for children. Damage done during these early years is largely irreversible, making the first 1,000 days critical to child development and future success.

OUR APPROACHES TO PREVENT MALNUTRITION

Save the Children USA **works with partners** at global, regional, national, community and household levels **to prevent malnutrition by bringing multi-sectoral nutrition interventions to the most disadvantaged families.** Reaching women before they become pregnant, or even earlier as adolescents, is part of an effective, life-cycle approach to ensure that girls reach adulthood well-nourished and equipped with skills to care for their future children and achieve their full potential. While our main focus is mothers and children, our strategies actively foster family support from fathers, grandmothers and other caregivers.

KEY FACTS

- In 2016, 155 million children under age 5 were stunted, 52 million wasted and 16.9 million were severely wasted (UNICEF).
- Malnutrition makes children more vulnerable to severe diseases and was the underlying contributing factor in about 45% of child deaths in 2016 (WHO).

OUR IMPACT

- We have trained 150,000 providers on nutrition-related topics and made 16 million beneficiary contacts since 2012.
- Our programs have reduced stunting by 20% in four of the five largest regions of Ethiopia since 2011.
- In Cambodia, 25,000 children have been screened for malnutrition and 10,000 home gardens established to promote nutritious diets since 2014.
- In Nepal, our programs increased the percentage of households with soap and water at a handwashing station from 49.1% to 74.5%.

Save the Children believes every child deserves a future. In the United States and around the world, we give children a healthy start in life, the opportunity to learn and protection from harm. We do whatever it takes for children - every day and in times of crisis - transforming their lives and the future we share.

We emphasize **effective, integrated approaches** to address the range of underlying causes of malnutrition and increase our reach. Our programs include **evidence-based strategies to improve access to safe food and food production** through the integration of nutrition-sensitive agriculture; water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH); social protection; and livelihoods interventions.

Through such integrated activities, we take a transformative **approach to gender, building women's resources, skills and participation** in households and communities, including financial inclusion. **Empowering women** can lead to beneficial changes in diets, practices and care-seeking behaviors within the first 1,000 days period and beyond.

Save the Children supports **optimal infant and young child feeding** through exclusive and continued breastfeeding and appropriate complementary feeding beginning at six months, along with other critical practices such as feeding during and after illness, food safety and health care-seeking.

We also support families with young children to access quality nutrition services delivered through health workers and volunteers in the community. Working through existing structures, our projects **build the capacity of local health systems to deliver nutrition services** in communities and at facilities, such as management of acute malnutrition, supplementation and complementary feeding.

Social and behavior change (SBC) is an essential element of our approach for preventing and alleviating malnutrition. Through our SBC strategies, we **increase demand for nutrition and health services and better nutrition**

NUTRITION IN HUMANITARIAN SETTINGS

In humanitarian settings, we focus on the detection and treatment of acute malnutrition and infant and young child feeding (IYCF) among the world's most vulnerable populations. Through a community-based management approach, we treat acute malnutrition with ready-to-use therapeutic foods and medical treatment on an outpatient basis, close to home. We also work with parents and communities to protect, promote and support safe and appropriate IYCF practices. Programs include training volunteers to conduct support and education sessions for women with young children, establishing private and secure breastfeeding areas in temporary settlements, and training health workers to enable mothers to initiate and continue optimal IYCF practices.



When Phavin was born, his mother, Oeub, worried about finances **while living in one of Cambodia's most impoverished provinces**. Fortunately, she enrolled in **USAID's Conditional Cash Transfer Initiative** for families with pregnant women and children under two. Eligible beneficiaries receive money over the first 1,000 days if they meet conditions such as attending prenatal/postnatal care visits or monthly growth monitoring checks for children.

As a beneficiary, Oeub participated in a village fair where she learned how to make fish powder from small rice-field fish, build a handwashing station, and set up a nutrient-rich micro-garden. She applied what she learned and has used her payments to buy vegetable seeds to plant, chickens, and fish to make fish powder and soap. Phavin is now one and is a quick learner—his future is looking brighter every day.

practices by tailoring approaches to local strengths and resources, and fostering positive social and gender norms related to nutrition. We use traditional print and mass media, technologies such as cell phones and community videos, and our vast experience in community mobilization to strengthen community systems and engage grandparents, siblings, traditional leaders and other key influencers in the community.

POLICY AND ADVOCACY INITIATIVES

Galvanizing and capitalizing on political commitment for nutrition at global and national levels is critical to ensure progress within communities. In pursuit of these aims, we support the Scaling Up Nutrition (SUN) movement, a global network active in 60 countries that unites civil society, governments, businesses and other partners to work toward a world without hunger or malnutrition. We host the SUN Civil Society Network at the global level and facilitate coalitions in several countries to build capacity in nutrition planning and policy. We also support the U.S.-based 1,000 Days partnership and play a pivotal role in revising and strengthening national nutrition policies and plans in numerous countries.

NUTRITION PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

GROWTH THROUGH NUTRITION

In **Ethiopia**, we lead the USAID Feed the Future-funded **Growth through Nutrition** project, a six-year (2016–2022), multi-sector, integrated **nutrition program that builds and expands on the success and achievements of USAID's** flagship multi-sector nutrition project in Ethiopia, Empowering New Generations to Improve Nutrition and Economic Opportunities (ENGINE). Focusing on first 1,000 days households, the project works with the Government of Ethiopia (GOE) to reduce stunting/chronic undernutrition by 20% and reach 28,000 poor/vulnerable households with nutrition and livelihoods support in 100 districts ('*Woredas*') in **four** of the five largest regions of Ethiopia. Growth through Nutrition strengthens GOE capacity to develop and institutionalize national nutrition programs and policies; increases access to diverse, safe and quality foods for rural communities; improves nutrition and healthcare services; implements comprehensive SBCC to promote optimal nutrition, WASH and agriculture behaviors; increases access to safe water; leverages the private sector to increase access to products needed for improved uptake of WASH practices; and supports gender and a robust nutrition learning agenda. The program recently launched a website (<https://gtn-learning.org/>) to widely disseminate project information and materials in an easily accessible and understandable manner, and to encourage improved generation and use of evidence to inform programs and policy in the nutrition, agriculture and WASH sectors in Ethiopia and globally.

LISHE ENDELEVU

In **Tanzania**, Save the Children leads **Lishe Endelevu**, a four-year (2018–2022) USAID-funded activity, to intensify and integrate multi-sectoral nutrition support to decrease stunting and increase dietary diversity across four regions of Tanzania. Swahili for *sustainable nutrition*, Lishe Endelevu works at all levels to improve the nutritional status of women of reproductive age, children under five and adolescent girls through capacity building to improve government coordination, quality of health services, and community based SBC platforms to promote optimal nutrition and health behaviors and positive shifts in gender norms. Save the Children works closely with consortium partners and the Government of Tanzania in 1,755 villages and more than 300 health facilities to: 1) strengthen multi-sectoral coordination for improved nutrition at local government level; 2) improve health, nutrition, caregiving and WASH behaviors; and 3) increase access and availability of diverse, safe and nutritious foods.

NURTURE

In **Laos**, we lead the **USAID Nurture** project (2016–2021), which is focused on improving the nutritional status of women and children through an integrated nutrition and WASH approach in 471 villages across six districts in Khammouane and Savannakhet provinces. The project establishes interpersonal communication, strengthens linkages between and improves the quality of health services, and utilizes community mobilization approaches for integrated nutrition and WASH that incorporate modified CLTS. Communities appraise and analyze their own nutrition and WASH environment in order to strengthen local systems to engage adolescent girls, first 1,000 days households including fathers and grandmothers, and the wider community to improve maternal, infant and young child nutrition and WASH behaviors. The project leverages private sector relationships to facilitate the ready supply and marketing of products needed for improved uptake of WASH practices. Through human resource capacity building and multi-sectoral coordination and planning, particularly at provincial and district levels, USAID Nurture strengthens the enabling environment for scale up within and beyond operational provinces.

NOURISH

In **Cambodia**, we lead **NOURISH**, a six-year (2014–2020) USAID Feed the Future multi-sectoral nutrition, WASH and agriculture project. NOURISH aims to improve the nutritional status of women and children in underserved, rural communities during the first 1,000 days. The project works with the Royal Government of Cambodia from the national to local levels to accelerate stunting reduction by focusing directly on several of the key causal factors of chronic malnutrition. In pursuit of this goal, NOURISH has four key strategies: 1) improving community delivery platforms to support better nutrition; 2) creating demand for health, WASH and agriculture practices, services and products through SBC, conditional cash transfers and vouchers to incentivize use of key health and nutrition services and products, and community-led total sanitation (CLTS); 3) engaging the private sector to expand supply of agriculture and WASH products; and 4) building government and civil society

capacity in integrated nutrition. NOURISH supports 563 villages across three provinces, reaching 500,000 women and children each year.

USAID ADVANCING NUTRITION

As a partner on [USAID Advancing Nutrition](#), the five-year (2018-2023) flagship nutrition project, we assist in the implementation of USAID's Multi-Sectoral Nutrition Strategy 2014-2025 and build on the work conducted through current and previous nutrition investments. USAID Advancing Nutrition focuses on strengthening the enabling environment for and support to country-led scale-up of effective, integrated, sustainable nutrition-specific and nutrition-sensitive policies, programs and systems in order to improve the nutritional status and health in countries around the world.

PROJET NUTRITION ET HYGIÈNE

In the Sikasso region of [Mali](#), we lead the six-year (2013–2019) USAID-funded [Projet Nutrition et Hygiène \(PNH\)](#) project, which supports harmonizing the actions of Malian communities, the Malian Ministry of Health and the private sector toward the improved growth and development of Malian children. The project aims to assist the Ministry of Health to improve services for children with acute malnutrition by supporting the integration of quality nutrition counseling into routine service delivery in six health districts covering 236 villages. PNH includes a variety of community-based approaches that enable community members and groups to take actions that effectively promote and support optimal nutrition behaviors and practices. The project integrates WASH interventions that engage the private sector in increasing the supply of WASH products, and the community in implementing CLTS and other means to increase the demand for latrine construction and household water treatment. SBC interventions work through community structures and promote specific behaviors, engaging community members in Women Support Groups, Women Farmers' Groups, Farmer Field Schools, and Family Farmer Management Systems.

GOOD NUTRITION ON TEA ESTATES

The [Good Nutrition on Tea Estates](#) project in [Sri Lanka](#), funded by the Margaret A. Cargill Foundation (2016–2019), aims to improve maternal and child nutrition among some of the most vulnerable women—those living and working on tea estates, primarily tea pluckers—and their children. The project addresses key barriers to good nutrition among these working mothers and their children in the first 1,000 days by: 1) increasing access to and improving the quality of pre-conception nutrition services, pregnancy and postnatal care, as well as child care in estate-managed centers; 2) improving maternal, infant and young child nutrition practices at home and in the workplace; and 3) strengthening public-private partnerships with tea companies to support the adoption of workplace policies and practices that translate into sustainable standards of maternal and child services and care for working mothers, including spaces and support to express breastmilk and take full maternity leave entitlements. The project uses its learning to increase the national and global body of evidence on effectively improving nutrition among working mothers and their children. We will directly reach over 200,000 working mothers and their children on 350 tea estates by 2019.

ADDITIONAL PROGRAMS

Along with partners, we implement multi-year, USAID-funded [Development Food Security Activities](#) in [Burkina Faso](#), [Malawi](#), [Mali](#), [Nepal](#), [Niger](#) and [South Sudan](#). These projects support interventions that address undernutrition and chronic food insecurity through targeted food assistance and/or cash and multi-sectoral interventions that include the promotion of optimal IYCF and care practices, healthy timing and spacing of pregnancies, and improvements in WASH.

Working with partners, we also implement projects that contain specific nutrition components. In [Tanzania](#), we are a partner on an [EU-funded award](#) (2017-2021) with the World Food Program (WFP), implementing community-based nutrition and agriculture SBCC activities to complement the WFP facility-based interventions. In [Mali](#), we lead the USAID-funded [Services de Santé à Grand Impact](#) project (2014-2020), which includes a maternal and child nutrition component. In [Nigeria](#), Save the Children is a partner on the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation-funded [Alive & Thrive](#) global initiative, implementing facility and community level interpersonal communication and community mobilization in Kaduna and Lagos states.