



# FIGHTING MALNUTRITION:



Photo: Jennifer Nofah/Concern Worldwide/Sierra Leone/2017

## THE ROLE OF UK PARLIAMENTARIANS

Women from the Tawopaneh (let's hold ourselves together)  
Women's Group attending to their vegetable garden.

### The fight against malnutrition

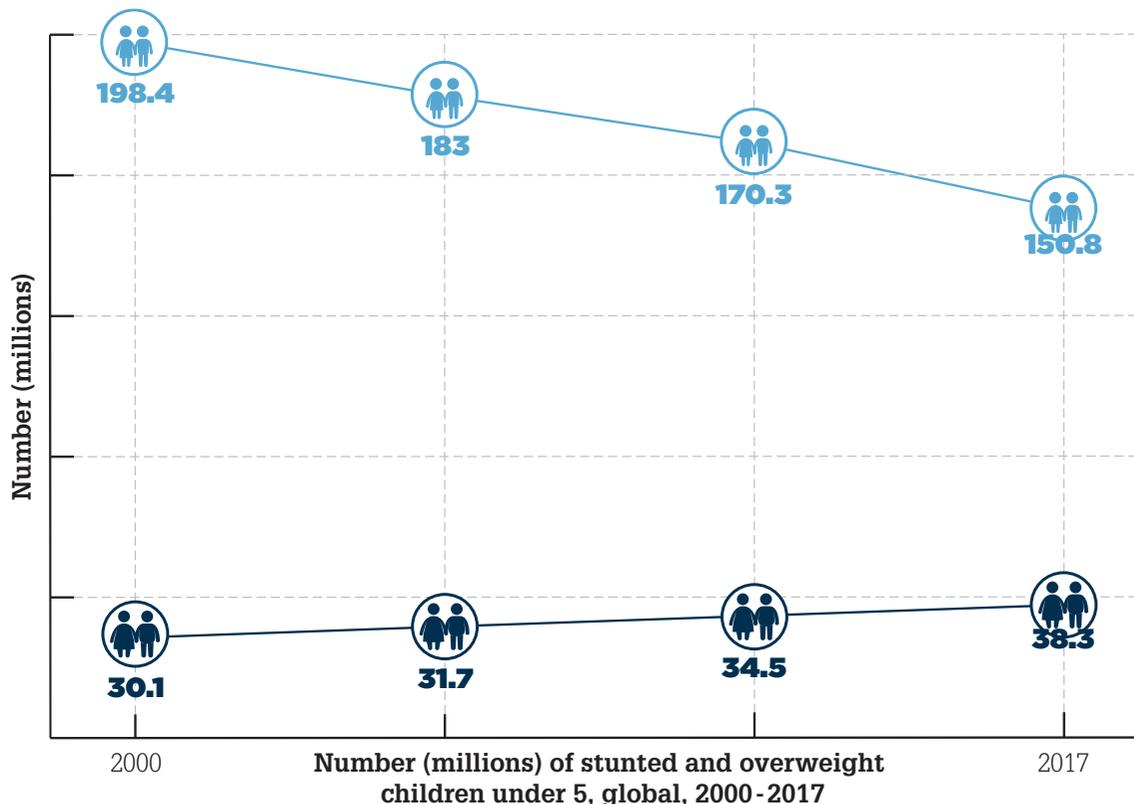
Despite marked progress in recent years malnutrition remains a serious global problem, ending millions of children's lives and preventing millions more reaching their full potential.

The UK Government has been a world leader in the fight against malnutrition. In 2013, the UK hosted the first Nutrition for Growth (N4G) summit, which was fundamental in placing malnutrition in all its forms at the centre of the global development agenda. It brought together a broad array of donors, international NGOs, businesses, and foundations as well as national governments to address the shared goal to save and improve lives through better nutrition.

At the N4G summit an incredible £2.7 billion was committed to programmes that directly improve nutrition outcomes, and £12.5 billion to programmes that indirectly impact nutrition. The UK government pledged a total of £1.2 billion, between 2013 and 2020, to scale up nutrition.

That funding has had a real impact. Today, 10 million fewer children are cognitively or physically stunted than in 2013. This has meant millions more children developing into healthier and productive adults, improving communities' prosperity.





UNICEF/WHO/World Bank Group (2018). Levels and Trends in Child Malnutrition

Overweight      Stunting

## A continuing crisis

Despite the progress, today, different forms of malnutrition co-exist – within the same country, community, households and even in the same individual.

Undernutrition still claims the lives of 3 million children under the age of five every year, and for the first time in years, 2017 saw a rise in the number of hungry people in the world, particularly in conflict-affected countries. While childhood stunting is declining, 151 million children are still too short for their age, no improvement has been made in anaemia rates, and 51 million children are too thin (wasted). Undernutrition not only hinders physical growth but also intellectual development.

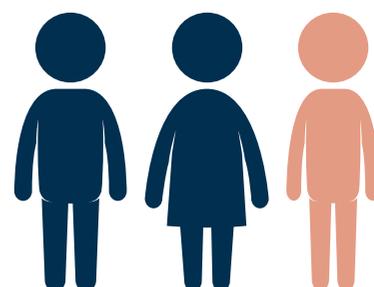
At the same time, another form of malnutrition – overweight and obesity – is on the rise: by 2025, 2.4 billion adults and 270 million school-age children will be above a healthy weight, and of these 850 million adults and 90 million school-age children will be obese. Obesity is a major risk factor for many non-communicable diseases such as cardiovascular disease, cancer and type 2 diabetes: these diseases cause 40 million deaths a year, 15 million among people aged 30–70 (of whom 86% live in low- and middle-income countries).

Poor nutrition costs the global economy trillions in lost productivity and health care costs.

**MALNUTRITION AFFECTS**

**ONE IN THREE**

**PEOPLE AROUND THE WORLD**





## Why invest in improving nutrition?

The United Nations embeds the right to nutritious food in Article 25 of the Universal Declaration on Human Rights. Investing in nutrition not only ensures people are able to realise this fundamental right, but also has many other positive outcomes including:

### Increasing child survival

Every single child death from malnutrition is preventable. Investing in nutrition is an opportunity to save the lives of those 3 million children who currently die before their 5th birthday.

### Boosting prosperity

Investing in nutrition can drive a 10% increase in individual earnings and also to a country's GDP. The bigger the malnutrition burden, the greater the increase in incomes following nutrition improvements.

### Delivering a high return on investment

Every pound of the UK Aid spent on nutrition gives £16 in return, making it a smart economic investment. Nutrition is also fundamental to ensuring the success of all other development interventions such as education, health, and Water Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH).



### Improving stability

Food insecurity and undernutrition can trigger violence, conflict, and instability, particularly in contexts of persistent fragility and inequalities. Post-conflict countries with high levels of food insecurity are 40% more likely to relapse into conflict within a ten-year time span than those with low levels. The vicious cycle of conflict and food insecurity endangers lives and livelihoods, and entrenches poverty.

## Why invest now?

If we do not build on the 2013 commitments, we will put at risk the progress made thus far in reducing malnutrition, and jeopardise further progress that is achieving Sustainable Development Goal 2 (SDG 2) to 'End Malnutrition in all its forms by 2030'.

However, we have an opportunity to ensure the UK continues to save lives and promote sustainable, effective development across the world through improved nutrition. In 2020 the UK's current 2013 N4G commitments, as well as its pledge to improve nutrition for 50 million people between 2015 and 2020, come to an end.

In 2020 governments will come together once again when Japan hosts the 2020 Nutrition Summit. It will be a chance to review progress and also make new meaningful commitments to push us closer to realising the SDGs and ending extreme poverty. It will also be a critical opportunity for the UK to demonstrate its continued leadership on nutrition by encouraging robust commitments from all donors.

While 2020 seems a long way off, it really isn't. The UK parliament must come together now to ensure nutrition does not fall off the radar, and that the UK furthers its commitment to nutrition at the 2020 N4G summit.

## GOOD NUTRITION BUILDS



## What can you do?

### 1 Become a UK Parliamentary Champion on Nutrition

As we look to raise nutrition further up the political agenda we need parliamentary champions like you to help make the case in the UK parliament; to raise awareness and inspire action. When you become a nutrition champion we will keep you updated regarding relevant events, provide evidence-based briefings, and invite you to other opportunities to add your voice to the growing movement to end malnutrition in all its forms.

### 2 Submit Parliamentary Questions and host debates on the UK's role in addressing malnutrition

It is vital to understand how DFID is currently spending its money to improve nutrition and meeting its existing commitments, particularly for the most vulnerable groups. Parliamentary Questions and Debates can help shed light on these, whilst also raising important questions regarding the UK's contribution in the fight against malnutrition in all its forms.

### 3 Write to the Secretary of State for International Development, promoting nutrition as an effective and impactful use of UK Aid

Write to the Secretary of State to emphasise the importance of continued UK investment in improving nutrition for the poorest and most vulnerable, particularly highlighting the deadline of 2020 when current nutrition commitments come to an end.

## Who are we?

The International Coalition for Advocacy on Nutrition (ICAN) was established in 2013 following the first Nutrition for Growth (N4G) Summit. It includes a broad array of international NGOs, advocacy organisations and foundations united around the shared goal to save and improve lives through better nutrition. Through ICAN, member organisations collaborate on advocacy efforts focused on securing political and financial commitments to end malnutrition in all its forms everywhere. The UK working group of ICAN focuses specifically on improving the UK's role in addressing global malnutrition.

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RESULTS

