



children first.

Nutrition

Some 155 million children under five — about 1 in 4 worldwide — are chronically malnourished.

Every day, 16,000 children under age five die from things we can prevent — that's about 11 children every minute. Nearly half of these deaths are attributable to malnutrition. Some 155 million children — about 1 in 4 worldwide — are chronically malnourished; their brains and bodies are stunted.

Nutrition is critical for a child's mental and physical development, particularly in the first 1,000 days of life. After this golden window of opportunity, if malnutrition is not addressed, children will be at a higher risk of infection, disease and long-term health risks, and will be less likely to do well in school and reach their full potential. Meanwhile, millions of children suffer from a lack of essential vitamins and minerals, such as vitamin A, folic acid, iodine, iron and zinc, which leaves them prone to infection and disease.

Some 17 million children under age five were severely acutely malnourished in 2016, putting them at high risk of death. In early 2017, a famine struck Somalia, South Sudan, Yemen and Nigeria, with a famine looming in nine other countries, tipping the scale of severe malnutrition even higher. Many countries are saddled with a double burden of under- and over-nutrition, with 41 million overweight children in 2016 — an increase of 11 million children since 2000 — putting them at higher risk for diabetes and heart disease. Millions of mothers are also malnourished, which increases the risks for impaired fetal development, low birth weight and suboptimal breastfeeding.

Globally, 2.1 billion people do not have safe drinking water at home. For babies and young



Girls in Ethiopia cook nutritious food together. In 2016, El Niño had devastating effects for child nutrition in Ethiopia and other eastern and southern African countries.

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children, this can be lethal. The lack of safe drinking water, sanitation and hygiene leads to nearly 1,000 child deaths every day. The best way to prevent these deaths and chronic malnutrition among young children is to breastfeed. Breastmilk is a baby's first vaccine — the first and best protection infants have against illness and disease.

UNICEF Nutrition Programs

UNICEF is working in 127 countries to carry out maternal and child nutrition programs. Working in direct partnership with governments, UNICEF is helping drive policies and budgets, while also partnering at the

About UNICEF

The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) works in more than 190 countries and territories to put children first. UNICEF has helped save more children's lives than any other humanitarian organization by providing health care and immunizations, clean water and sanitation, nutrition, education, emergency relief and more. UNICEF USA supports UNICEF's work through fundraising, advocacy and education in the United States. Together, we are working toward the day when no children die from preventable causes and every child has a safe and healthy childhood.

For more information, visit unicefusa.org.

grassroots level with community leaders and families themselves to ensure nutrition for the most vulnerable.

As the leader of the global Scaling Up Nutrition (SUN) movement, UNICEF is working with 59 SUN countries to expand proven, cost-effective nutrition interventions to ensure good maternal and child nutrition. Priorities include:

- Promotion of breastfeeding, including counseling and support for mothers.
- Food fortification, such as salt iodization and micronutrient supplementation, including vitamin A and zinc for children, and iron and folic acid for pregnant women.
- Linking nutrition programs to WASH, early childhood health, education, and social protection programs.
- Communicating with families and communities to raise awareness and demand for maternal and child nutrition support.
- Preventing and treating life-threatening severe acute malnutrition (SAM) among young children.
- Generating malnutrition data and raising awareness with governments, civil society and community leaders on proven, cost-effective nutrition solutions.

UNICEF is also the global leader when it comes to nutrition emergency preparedness and response. In 2016, UNICEF responded

to 344 humanitarian situations in 108 countries, including 78 nutrition crises. UNICEF works to build communities' resilience to disasters before they strike, and strengthen government health and nutrition systems to reduce the risks of malnutrition in times of man-made and natural disasters. For example, drawing on lessons learned from the nutrition crisis in the Sahel, UNICEF strengthened contingency plans in eastern and southern Africa in preparation for widespread floods and droughts caused by El Niño in 2015, equipping 21 country offices in the region with early warning action plans to quickly respond to malnutrition crises and save lives. UNICEF also scaled up a rapid response to the famines in Somalia, South Sudan, Yemen, and Nigeria in 2017.

2016 UNICEF Nutrition Snapshot

In 2016, UNICEF:

- Invested \$624 million in nutrition programs, with approximately 600 nutrition experts around the world.
- Treated 3.4 million children for severe acute malnutrition in 71 countries.
- Was the largest global supplier of Ready-to-Use Therapeutic Food (RUTF), purchasing 80% of the world's RUTF and purchasing the majority of therapeutic milk.
- Was the largest procurer of micronutrient powders, reaching 8.3 million children with micronutrient powders across 65 countries.
- Was the main provider of vitamin A capsules in over 50 countries. ●

The reduction of stunting is one of the most cost-effective development tools. On average, one dollar invested in the prevention of stunting leads to a \$16 return on productivity.



Over 117,000 children with severe acute malnutrition (SAM) in northeast Nigeria have been admitted to therapeutic feeding programs run by UNICEF and partners.