

# Working Together for a Better Future in Uganda

For more information, contact:

The Permanent Secretary, Office of the Prime Minister, Uganda, ps@opm.go.ug

Dr Hanifa Bachou, USAID FANTA Project, FHI 360 at hbachou@fhi360.org

## Fighting Malnutrition: Talking Points for Development Partners

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### Investing in Nutrition Now is Crucial for Uganda's Development

- We share the belief that every Ugandan has the right to good nutrition, health, education, and opportunities for economic growth. All of the projects being funded by development partners stand in support of the government to improve nutrition outcomes.
- We know that reducing malnutrition in Uganda will require a coordinated, multi-sectoral approach and, to that end, we support the implementation of the Uganda Nutrition Action Plan.

### The benefits of investing in nutrition far outweigh the costs

- Between 2013-2025, improved nutrition would:<sup>3,4,5</sup>
  - Save more than 101,000 infants' lives by improving breastfeeding practices.
  - Save more than 60,000 children's lives by decreasing vitamin A deficiency.
  - Save ~119,000 children's lives by preventing stunting.
  - Save ~26,000 infants' lives by reducing low birth weight.
  - Save ~20,000 infants' and ~7,000 mothers' lives by decreasing maternal anaemia.
  - Prevent permanent brain damage in about 236,000 children and increase the average child's IQ by up to 13.5 points through prevention of iodine deficiency.
  - Result in earlier school enrolment, children staying in school longer, and better performance in school. By 2025, this would total 19.8 million equivalent school years of learning gained.
  - Lead to economic gains through increased productivity exceeding 4.3 trillion Ugandan Shillings (US\$1.7 billion) by 2025.
  - Lead to improvement in the health and family planning sectors. Since health, family planning, and nutrition are synergistic, investing in any one sector alone will not lead to the same return as investing in all of them.

### Steps the Government of Uganda Can Take to Improve Nutrition

- Ensure nutrition is captured in national and local government development plans and budgets.
- Integrate activities to improve nutrition in health, agriculture, education, water and environment, and community development sectors, and hold them accountable for improving nutrition.
- Ensure adequate skilled staff are available at all levels to provide nutrition services.
- Develop a strong supervision and monitoring system to assess progress on food security and nutrition.
- Ensure structures are in place to integrate nutrition into all levels of the health system.
- Strengthen multi-sectoral coordination across ministries and local governments to mainstream nutrition.
- Let development partners know how we can support the Government of Uganda more effectively.
- Ensure that the health system has capacity to prevent and treat malnutrition.
- Finalize a food and nutrition policy and action plan to support implementation.
- Improve food storage and processing and reduce waste.
- Implement behaviour change communication strategies to improve hygiene and sanitation practices, including handwashing.
- Increase public-private partnerships to improve nutrition.



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Main data sources include: <sup>1</sup> Uganda Demographic and Health Survey 2011, <sup>2</sup> Lancet Nutrition Series 2013, <sup>3</sup> The Cost of Hunger in Uganda Summary Report, <sup>4</sup> Reducing Malnutrition in Uganda: Estimates to Support Nutrition Advocacy – Uganda PROFILES 2013, and <sup>5</sup> “Effects of Health and Nutrition on Cognitive and Behavioural Development in Children in the First Three Years of Life” (Grantham-McGregor et al. 1999) and “Developmental potential in the first 5 years for children in developing countries” (Grantham-McGregor et al. 2007). All calculations of US\$ to Uganda Shillings are based on an exchange rate of US\$1 = 2504.60 Uganda Shillings.