



2012-13 NUTRITION FACT SHEET

Key Message

Chronic malnutrition in children is high in Malawi, but it can be prevented

Funding (FY 2012)

\$9.5 million

Partners

Bunda College
Catholic Relief Services
Concern Worldwide
JHPIEGO
Tufts University
DAI

Geographic Location

Country-wide

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Program Overview

USAID, along with other development partners engages the Government of Malawi (GOM) on the Scaling Up Nutrition (SUN) and 1,000 days movements. USAID is a member of various technical working groups on nutrition, and is a key and founding member of the Donor Nutrition Coordination Group (DoNuts). One key outcome of this engagement and coordination with other donors is that there is minimal duplication of effort.

Nutrition remains a serious health and development problem – while stunting and underweight decreased markedly since 2004 (MDHS 2010) from 53% to 47% and 17% to 14% respectively—nearly half of Malawi’s children are stunted, a reflection of chronic shortages in food quantity and quality. USAID’s nutrition programming is a lynchpin across various U.S. Government initiatives, and is thus funded through multiple sources: Feed the Future, Food for Peace, Global Health, and PEPFAR.

Program Impact

USAID’s program focuses on preventing chronic under-nutrition by linking behavior change communication with agricultural value chains and health service delivery; preventing and controlling micronutrient malnutrition through food fortification; institutionalizing community-based management of acute malnutrition; and building the capacity of government staff working in the nutrition sector at all levels. USAID’s program is aligned to the Government of Malawi’s nutrition policies, as well as Malawi’s framework for the SUN and 1000 days initiatives.

The USAID-funded Wellness and Agriculture for Life Advancement (WALA) program transmitted health messages to nearly 140,000 households on improved practices related to nutrition, food preparation, exclusive breastfeeding, complementary feeding and sanitation. As a result, 70% of children aged 0-5 months were exclusively breastfed; and 30% of breast-fed children aged 6-23 months received a minimum acceptable diet, up from a baseline value of 12% in 2009.

USAID is supporting the treatment of severely malnourished children at the community level through the institutionalization of Community-based Management of Acute Malnutrition (CMAM) into existing activities of health facilities. In FY 2012, 61,003 children were treated in the program and 262 people were trained in CMAM. There are now 502 health facilities with established capacity to manage acute under-nutrition, representing 81% of all the health facilities, and surpassing the MOH’s 80% target.

One of the biggest challenges to nutrition is the limited capacity of the GOM to plan and implement nutrition programs. USAID is funding twelve students in the Food and Nutrition Master’s program at Bunda College of Agriculture, which has partnered with USAID’s Nutrition Innovation Laboratory project to develop postgraduate training in dietetics. USAID also trained 3,667 implementing partner and government staff on nutrition, drawn from the Ministries of Health, Agriculture and Gender.