

# A Food Revolution for Healthy Lives

Help raise awareness of the importance of combating malnutrition in the run-up to a vital summit in Rio de Janeiro in August.

**RESULTS**  
the power to end poverty

Good nutrition is critical for a healthy and productive life. Poor nutrition in early childhood impairs child survival, growth and learning abilities, irreversibly impairs resistance to disease, and prevents children from reaching their full potential later in life. Globally, around 159 million children under the age of five are too short for their age, 50 million are too thin for their height, and a further 41 million are overweight or obese. None of these children are growing up healthy, and all will have a greater likelihood of developing conditions like diabetes, cancer, and coronary heart disease in adulthood. This year is crucial for raising awareness, building momentum and taking concrete action to tackle global malnutrition. This month, we are launching our “Healthy Lives” campaign, asking you to run a local ‘Healthy Lives’ event, if possible in conjunction with Jamie Oliver’s ‘Food revolution’ which works to educate, inspire and empower people worldwide about the importance of good nutrition. You can help by running some of the suggested activities, and by inviting your MP to our event in Parliament on 13<sup>th</sup> April.

## The scale of the problem

Undernutrition is a huge problem affecting millions of children worldwide. Around 3 million under-fives lose their lives due to poor nutrition each year – that’s about 8,000 children every day. This is avoidable both by prevention and through treatment. We know what causes this unnecessary suffering and we know how to end it. Now we need to build the public and political will to take the necessary action.

Globally, around 159 million children under the age of five are too short for their age, 50 million are too thin for their height, and a further 41 million are overweight or obese. In many countries shockingly only a minority of children are growing up healthy.

Many countries are now experiencing both obesity and under-nutrition. We are in the absurd situation where billions of us eat too much and become unhealthy as a result whilst at the same time billions more of us don’t have access to enough good food.

## The impact of poor nutrition

Poor nutrition harms almost every aspect of a child’s early development, from making them more susceptible to deadly illnesses such as pneumonia and diarrhoea, to reducing their ability to learn at school, and to earning a living later in life.

Despite the clear negative consequences of widespread undernutrition, including on a countries economic development, it has been a relatively invisible issue. While we have made progress in tackling global hunger, malnutrition continues to be a stubborn problem.

## What is being done to tackle malnutrition?

In 2012, the World Health Assembly (WHA) set targets to reduce global malnutrition. The new Global Goals for 2016-2030 have also identified improving nutrition for vulnerable groups and meeting the WHA targets as a priority. To achieve these, we need increased and improved resources for nutrition, integrated policies across different development sectors, and greater accountability for commitments.

There are many kinds of interventions that can help tackle malnutrition. These include “nutrition specific” interventions which directly tackle malnutrition, such as vitamin or mineral supplements, and ‘nutrition sensitive’ programmes such as water, sanitation and hygiene or agriculture programmes, which indirectly aid nutrition.

## Nutrition for Growth

Some of you may remember that in June 2013, RESULTS campaigned for the UK to step up its efforts at the first ‘Nutrition for Growth’ Summit, which was co-hosted by the UK and Brazilian Governments. This brought together governments, businesses, scientists, and civil society working to bring an end to hunger and undernutrition, and pledged new resources in the fight, aiming to prevent at least 20 million children from being stunted and save at least 1.7 million lives by 2020.

This year, a follow-up Nutrition for Growth Summit is being planned alongside the Olympic Games in Brazil, to build on the 2013 outcomes. To encourage more ambitious commitments from a wider range of stakeholders, we need to ensure that nutrition is high

on the agenda of governments of donor and high burden countries, businesses, and other stakeholders.

### **Pushing nutrition up the political agenda**

The first step to ensuring we have the necessary resources is to raise nutrition up the political agenda.

The first Nutrition for Growth Summit created a global movement and achieved significant pledges for nutrition, but progress on malnutrition has been both slow and uneven. According to the 2015 Global Nutrition Report, just 39 countries are on course to meet the World Health Assembly chronic malnutrition ('stunting') reduction target, and just 67 out of 130 countries are on course to meet the target to reduce acute malnutrition ('wasting').

Despite strong evidence of the importance and cost-effectiveness of investing in nutrition, current spending on nutrition is still low. Reports suggest that currently only 1.4% of overseas development assistance goes to tackling malnutrition worldwide. Recent calculations show that if global financing for nutrition continues at its current rate, we will miss the global targets on tackling malnutrition. We need to act now.

On 13<sup>th</sup> April, RESULTS is collaborating with other civil society organisations to host an event in Parliament that will highlight domestic and global malnutrition and the importance of a successful Nutrition for Growth 2016 summit.

And on 20<sup>th</sup> May, we will be joining the Jamie Oliver Food Foundation to celebrate 'Food Revolution Day' which aims to bring people together into a bigger movement for change. This year, the Food Revolution Day will focus on celebrating the success achieved to date, whilst sign posting to the opportunities that will sustain and scale up progress. More information on this initiative can be found on the Background Sheet.

### **The road to Rio**

In August 2016, alongside the Olympic Games in Brazil, the international community will gather for the second Nutrition for Growth Summit. At this summit,

governments, businesses and international partners must commit new resources to tackle undernutrition and assess progress.

Ensuring good nutrition is a problem for both developed and developing countries alike and with many experiencing the double burden of obesity and undernutrition at the same time, equitable access to nutrition needs to take centre stage.

### **Take action**

We know that to achieve the Global Goals on nutrition, education, gender, and many others, it is imperative that we improve nutrition for children and women, both in the UK and beyond.

Accountability for the commitments made in 2013, and bold new commitments at the Nutrition for Growth 2016 will ensure all children can grow up healthy. Join us by taking the following actions:

#### **1. Run a local 'Healthy Lives' event**

By linking up with existing food-related activities such as the Food Revolution Day, you'll be able to reach a bigger audience than you could on your own! Perhaps you could run a joint event with a local group with a related interest in nutrition, such as organic food growers?

Some suggestions include engaging with Fair Trade groups, farmers' markets or allotment societies, as well as local fairs and events which you could attend. Ideas for how to do this are in the Background Sheet. Invite your MP to be a part of this event, and also ask your local media to get greater coverage.

#### **2. Ask your MP to attend the April 13<sup>th</sup> event in Parliament**

Please write to your MP, sharing the importance of tackling malnutrition, and inviting them to the event in Parliament "Malnutrition in the UK and abroad: Making Rio count". The event will discuss the importance of tackling malnutrition, and provide a photo-opportunity to show support for the cause.

### **Take action**

- 1. Join the Food Revolution Day by organising a local nutrition event, promoting to or linking up with other groups interested in food and nutrition. Make sure the local media know of your plans, and don't forget to invite your MP!**
- 2. Invite your MP to attend the "Malnutrition in the UK and abroad: Making Rio count" event in the UK parliament on 13<sup>th</sup> April 2016 where will unveil our asks of the government for what we want to see pledged at the Second Nutrition for Growth Summit alongside the Olympic Games in Rio.**