

Commit to global nutrition now!

Organise an advocacy event to urge the UK to commit to tackling global malnutrition.

Malnutrition has permanent and sometimes fatal impacts on health and human development but is usually entirely preventable. The first 'Nutrition for Growth' (N4G) Summit, co-hosted by the UK, was held in 2013 with the aim to galvanise efforts to tackle global malnutrition. At the summit, US \$17 billion was raised, and since 2013, there has been a considerable reduction in rates of childhood undernutrition, including 12 million fewer stunted children (when a child is below average height). The progress made in the last decade is significant. However, the COVID-19 pandemic has worsened malnutrition worldwide, and it is predicted that an additional 3.6 million children will face life-long health problems owing to stunting. At the same time, the UK is making the biggest cuts to global nutrition programmes in history. RESULTS has been calling on the UK Government to commit to reaching 50 million women and children with nutrition programmes by 2025, and to maintain funding at a level equivalent to that in recent years. No commitments have been made yet, and time is running out. The UK has until the start of the N4G Summit in December to officially register its nutrition commitments. Join us for a final push in our nutrition campaigning this year and urge the UK to make and register commitments to tackle malnutrition before the summit. This month, we're asking RESULTS groups to run an advocacy event or activity with the aim of getting as many letters as possible sent to recently-appointed Foreign Secretary Liz Truss.

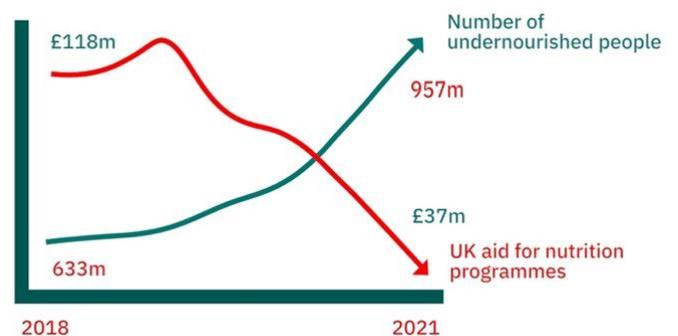
Why is tackling malnutrition important?

Malnutrition refers to deficiencies, excesses or imbalances of nutrients in a person's diet and is an underlying risk factor for health and development, with knock-on effects on education and employment. [Malnutrition is linked to 45% of deaths of children under 5 and is the single biggest risk factor in deaths of women globally](#) – more deadly than risk factors such as alcohol and tobacco. Good nutrition can help strengthen immune systems and resilience against illnesses, and help with healthy brain development, with well-nourished 8-year-old children 20% more likely to be able to read a simple sentence. Tackling malnutrition is crucial for people to live healthy, productive lives and is an investment with high returns.

Why advocate on nutrition now?

The [Nutrition for Growth \(N4G\) Summit](#) in Japan on 7-8 December is 'a global pledging moment to drive greater action toward ending malnutrition'. Since its inception in 2013, N4G has been an important global moment for policy and financial commitments on nutrition. The UK has been a global leader in the fight against malnutrition but its previous financial commitments to nutrition ran out at the end of 2020 and no new commitments have yet been made.

Yet at a time when malnutrition is on the rise owing to multiple factors including the COVID-19 pandemic and climate change, the UK's support for nutrition is in decline. The political decision to [cut Official Development Assistance](#) (ODA, known as aid) budget by approximately a third is set to disproportionately affect nutrition programmes and services. Vital nutrition services may be cut by up to 70%.



What is the impact of funding and commitments on nutrition?

At the N4G Summit in 2013, [\\$17 billion was raised to tackle malnutrition](#) and the importance of the issue received a global platform. The global effort to improve nutrition has had a considerable impact. For example, since 2013, there has been a considerable reduction in rates of child stunting, with 12 million fewer stunted children (when a child is below average height).

In 2015, the UK Government made a commitment to reach 50 million people with nutrition-relevant programmes in the next 5 years. This target encouraged the then Department for International Development to carefully consider and increase its work on nutrition. As a result, [the UK reached 50.6 million women and girls](#) with nutrition-relevant programmes between 2015 and 2020.

Funding for nutrition-relevant programmes is far-reaching and diverse, and includes the strengthening of health-systems, increasing access to basic nutrition services, and improving agriculture and food systems.

For example, In north west Burundi, 58,580 children under 5 were reached through a range of initiatives to tackle malnutrition as part of a [project launched by Concern Worldwide](#). And in Somalia, Halima's child, pictured here, showed signs of recovering from acute malnutrition following [treatment in a medical centre in Mogadishu](#).



Halima from Somalia during her nutrition treatment. Credit: Action Against Hunger

What should the UK commit to and when?

The UK should commit to reaching 50 million women and children with nutrition-relevant programmes by 2025, and maintain a financial commitment equivalent to recent funding levels – at least £120 million per year on 'nutrition-specific' programmes, and at least £680

million per year on nutrition-sensitive programmes that tackle the underlying causes of malnutrition.

The UK has not yet made a commitment to supporting nutrition programmes, but a deadline is looming: countries must register their official commitments ahead of the start of the N4G Summit on 7 December. That means there is about a month for a final push to call on the UK to commit to reaching 50 million women and children with nutrition-relevant programmes by 2025, and maintain the necessary funding levels to do so.

Following the UK's cuts to its ODA budget, resources are more limited. However, ahead of the N4G Summit, the UK must take the issue of nutrition seriously and make the necessary financial commitment.

In the recent Government reshuffle, Liz Truss was announced as the new Foreign Secretary. She has made clear that supporting women and girls is a priority, but her support for nutrition in particular is unclear. Given that malnutrition disproportionately affects women and girls, it is important that the FCDO prioritises nutrition in its plans. It is also important to make our concerns clear to the new Secretary of State.

Take action!

This coming month is the last opportunity we have before the Nutrition for Growth Summit to call on the UK Government to register a commitment to reaching 50 million women and children with nutrition-relevant programmes by 2025, and to maintain funding equivalent to recent years. Please take action as a group by organising an advocacy event or activity with the aim of sending as many letters as possible to recently-appointed Foreign Secretary, Liz Truss. Check out [Background Sheet 1](#) for information and ideas for an event.

Take action!

This month, **organise an event or activity as a group** with the aim of getting as many letters as possible sent to new Foreign Secretary Liz Truss. Start by looking at [Background Sheet 1](#) for more information and ideas.

Address to send letters to: Rt. Hon. Liz Truss MP, Secretary of State, Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office, King Charles Street, London SW1A 2AH. Email fcdo.correspondence@fcdo.gov.uk

Share our e-action at events or with your contacts: <https://results.eaction.org.uk/commit-to-nutrition-2021>

Please let us know that you've taken action by emailing Ruthie Walters at ruthie.walters@results.org.uk