

Nutrition talking points

If you're new to writing to your MP, don't be discouraged! Here [is a handy guide](#) on how to go about it, and here are the key points to include in your letter to your MP:

- Malnutrition is a huge problem globally, causing nearly half of child deaths (children under 5 years old)
- COVID-19 is making malnutrition more widespread, and could mean up to 80 million more people are affected
- Good nutrition helps people's resilience to other diseases, and helps children grow into healthy adults
- The UK Government has long been a leading donor in tackling malnutrition, co-founding the Nutrition for Growth (N4G) agenda in 2013
- Aid programmes funded by the UK Government are making a long-term difference to people living in poverty, but the Government's current financial commitment to nutrition expires at the end of this year
- The 2021 N4G Summit will be an important moment for the world to accelerate progress towards reaching global nutrition targets
- The UK can help mobilise other donors before the summit by pledging now, rather than waiting until December 2021
- The UK should continue its financial support for nutrition after 2020, and maintain its investment of at least £120 million per year in programmes that directly target the reduction of malnutrition.

What is the Spending Review?

The Government regularly undertakes a Spending Review to decide the overall balance of public spending, given the resources available. This is usually for a 3-year period, to help departments plan their work. This sets the overall funding available for the UK's international development work, subject to the legal requirement that we spend 0.7% of our national income on aid (technically, 'Official Development Assistance' or ODA).

This November, the Chancellor will be setting a [one-year set of spending priorities](#), because of the economic uncertainty caused by COVID-19. These priorities will be made public in late November. This means that beyond existing multi-year commitments such as the Global Fund and Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance, the UK is likely to make single-year financial commitments for the time being. [More details from Bond](#).

What do long-term nutrition programmes look like?

When explaining to MPs why it's important for the UK to support improved nutrition for communities experiencing poverty, it's a good idea to show the impact that aid programmes can have. Good nutrition is about more than just providing food in emergencies; it's about building health systems that prioritise nutrition in the long term. But what does that look like?

Karamoja Nutrition Programme

UK aid has funded a [3-year long nutrition programme in Karamoja, Uganda](#), implemented by partners UNICEF and World Food Program. Karamoja is a region where, in 2018, 35% of children were stunted and 45% of households had limited access to food. Malnutrition in the area is caused by a number of factors, including access to food, poor health and maternal health.



A Ugandan television network covers the launch of the Karamoja programme. [UBC, 2018](#)

The programme works with the Ugandan Government to help ensure that nearly 70,000 pregnant and breastfeeding mothers and all malnourished children under the age of 5 in the region receive quality health and nutrition services.

Activities include:

- Developing the skills of nutritionists and health workers
- Home visits from health workers, offering education on hygiene and sanitation and establishing vegetable gardens
- Ensuring acutely malnourished children are referred to health centres and receive better treatment
- Help ensure nutrition is coordinated across multiple Government departments
- Help ensure health centres have a local and reliable supply of nutrition supplies
- Providing iron and folic acid supplements for pregnant and breastfeeding mothers
- Ensuring children receive vitamin A supplements and de-worming medication twice a year

Watch a short video from UNICEF about the programme [here](#), and more coverage from UBC Television Uganda [here](#). There is more information about the programme in this [report from UNICEF](#).