

## AGRICULTURE, FOOD AND NUTRITION

### BACKGROUND

**theguardian**

#### Beating hunger will need more nutrition aid, says report

Nutrition spending falling short as new report highlights role that empowering female farmers can play in tackling hunger

[Mark Tran](#) - [guardian.co.uk](http://guardian.co.uk), Wednesday 1 May 2013 07.00 BST



The Shouhardoprogramme in Bangladesh reduced stunting among children aged between six and 24 months.  
Photograph: Care Bangladesh

Ambitions to eradicate world [hunger](#) will not be realised if [aid](#) for basic nutrition remains at only 0.4% of total official development assistance (ODA), according to the research group Development Initiatives (DI).

Even though nutrition aid is rising, it remains far below what is needed, [the DI report](#)<sup>1</sup> says. The World Bank estimated in 2010 that an increase of \$10.3bn in annual resources would end

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<sup>1</sup>Under-nutrition is a major challenge for both low and middle income countries and significantly affects the lives of individuals and communities. It is the underlying cause of 35% of all deaths among children under five. Under-nourished children are also more likely to be vulnerable to illnesses and earn about 10% less as adults if they survive. In 2006, the World Bank found that under-nutrition could result in a loss of about 2–3% of national GDP, thus reducing the domestic revenue available for investing in infrastructure and public services. Investments in nutrition are essential to achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and ultimately the eradication of poverty.

This [report](#) focuses on funding flows on nutrition from existing donors. It shows that current volumes, while increasing, remain at odds with the scale of need. In 2011, aid to basic nutrition was only 0.4% of total official development assistance. At an aggregate level, basic nutrition spending is targeted at 36 countries where 90% of stunted children live. However, the distribution of aid within those 36 countries does not reflect need.

<http://www.devinit.org/reports/the-nutrition-aid-financing-landscape>

undernutrition. But since these estimates, basic ODA for nutrition has increased by only \$139m (£90m), according to DI.

The research group acknowledges, however, the difficulty in identifying aid for nutrition. Programmes in health, agriculture or education can have an important impact on nutrition, but the nutrition components are hard to identify and measure. For example, more than 3,300 aid projects reported to the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development in 2011, valued at \$1.4bn in total, had nutrition components, but were not recorded as nutrition ODA.

DI notes that at aggregate level, funding for nutrition is targeted at the 36 countries where 90% of stunted (low weight to height) children live. However, the distribution of aid among those countries does not reflect regional or national need. South Asia received 28% of all ODA for basic nutrition, although it represents 56% of the global gap in funds. India, which has most of the region's stunted children, receives comparably low levels of nutrition ODA.

Projections suggest that the number of undernourished people will fall by only 82 million by 2050 if current commitments are met, leaving 766 million people undernourished.

Combating hunger and [malnutrition](#) is the [centrepiece of the If campaign](#), launched by a coalition of 100 UK NGOs and faith groups in January. Campaigners are lobbying David Cameron, the UK prime minister, to use Britain's presidency of the G8 this year to push hard on ending hunger.

The British government and the [Children's Investment Fund Foundation](#) will co-host a high-level meeting, Nutrition for Growth: Beating Hunger through Business and Science, in London on 8 June, coinciding with an [event in Hyde Park organised by the If coalition](#). The meeting will bring together business leaders, scientists, government representatives and civil society groups to make commitments to tackle undernutrition in some of the poorest countries.

A [separate report from the Overseas Development Institute](#)<sup>2</sup> (ODI) thinktank stressed the importance of smallholder agriculture in improving food security and reducing undernutrition. The report said empowering female farmers through legislation on rights and education, promoting home gardens and small-scale livestock rearing, and complementary programmes in health, water and sanitation would improve the lives of smallholder farmers.

Steve Wiggins, co-author of the report, emphasised the importance of the public sector. "We need a reasonably effective state pointing in the right direction," he said. "We are not going to remedy this with nicer businesses. Nestlé can do things with dairy supplies – that is part of the picture – but businesses are not going to put in the water [infrastructure] and educate girls. Businesses can help at the margins, but it needs public sector responsibilities."

Wiggins pointed to the success of the [Shouhardoprogramme](#)<sup>3</sup> in Bangladesh, run by the NGO Care between 2006 and 2010, funded by the US government's [Food for Peace programme](#).

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<sup>2</sup> <http://www.odi.org.uk/publications/7317-smallholder-agriculture-nutrition-food-security>

<sup>3</sup> **Project Name:SHOUHARDO**

**Project Description :**Project List of Activities: A number of levels of activities are envisioned in SHOUHARDO. Most activities will be implemented at the Union, Pourashava, village and slum levels. The program will facilitate linkages between these and the district and Upazilla level service providers and advocates for development. The activities related to achieving results on the entitlement issues that have been identified will be implemented at multiple levels from villages and slums through the national level. The major types of activities associated with each Specific and sub-Specific Objective are discussed below. Each set of activities will lead to goods and services (Intermediate Results) needed to make planned behavioral and systemic changes at the Sub-specific and Specific Objective levels.

Final Goal: Program Goal is to sustainably reduce chronic and transitory food insecurity of 400,000 vulnerable households in 18 districts of Bangladesh, by 2009. Targeted participants and # of beneficiaries Targeted participants is 400,000 vulnerable household and to be achieved in 2000 villages and 130 urban slums, by the

Shouhardo covered 400,000 households in the most marginal areas of the country, the seasonally flooded Haor lands, the Charlands (sand and silt islands) of the big rivers and the coast – all highly vulnerable to river flooding, cyclones or both.

In four years, the programme reduced stunting among children aged between six and 24 months by 16 percentage points despite hardly any improvement nationally. Female empowerment was the strongest single determinant of success, according to ODI, but it was the programme's combination with mother and child healthcare, sanitation, agriculture and fisheries that made it so effective.

Shouhardo's success suggests that significant progress can be made on underlying factors such as female empowerment, ODI said. By contrast, the influential [Scaling Up Nutrition](#) framework<sup>4</sup> focuses on highly targeted interventions such as micro-nutrient supplements and therapeutic feeding, on the grounds that tackling the fundamental problems of poverty, access to food, health and sanitation would take too long.

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year 2009. Also the target participants will be the poorest and most vulnerable households, and within them women and girls, living in the remote and difficult areas. The total # of beneficiaries will be 2 million.

**Targeted Community:** The target Community of the program will be the poorest and most vulnerable households, and within them women and girls, living in the most vulnerable and remote areas. It is expected that, the program would collaborate with 30 partner organizations /agencies including NGO, CBOs, Research Institutions, University, Private Sector, CSGs, etc.

The program will be implemented in the following geographical areas: North Chars Region. The northern chars includes the 5 Districts of Nilphamari, Lalmonirhat, Rangpur, Kurigram and Gaibandha in the Brahmaputra River drainage. Middle Chars Region. The middle chars includes the 5 Districts of Bogra, Jamalpur, Tangail, Sirajganj, Sherpur and Pabna in the Jamuna River drainage and the north bank of the Padma River. Haor Region. The haor region includes the 4 Districts of Sunamganj, Habiganj, Kishoreganj, and Netrokona in the northeast part of the country. Eastern Coastal Zone. The eastern coastal zone includes the 5 Districts of Noakhali, Chittagong, and Cox's Bazar. Islands: Moheshkhali, Kutubdia, Sandwip, Hatiya.

<sup>4</sup><http://scalingupnutrition.org/fr>