

WFP Nutrition Policy (2017-2021)

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Why a new nutrition policy?

The [WFP Nutrition Policy \(2017-2021\)](#) aligns with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (specifically SDG 2 and SDG 17) (Box 1) and the new [WFP Strategic Plan](#). The new policy builds upon the accomplishments achieved since the approval of the first WFP Nutrition Policy in 2012. It also reflects the global nutrition evidence that has emerged in recent years, as well as several key recommendations from the 2015 Nutrition Policy Evaluation, including:

- Emphasize capacity strengthening of national governments and nutrition governance
- Provide evidence to support a prevention approach
- Ensure diverse strategies and approaches beyond product-based solutions
- Highlight the importance of cash-based transfers and vouchers in addition to in-kind
- Address overweight, obesity and the double burden of malnutrition
- Support a shift to new nutrition indicators and improved M&E
- Disseminate guidance to support policy implementation
- Enhance the gender focus

Box 1

SDG 2 - End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture.

SDG 17 - Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development.



How was the new policy developed?

Numerous internal consultations were held with WFP headquarters divisions, regional bureaus, country offices, and sub-offices in order to gather feedback on the new nutrition policy approach. External consultations with other UN agencies, NGOs, foundations, academia, member states,

donors, private sector and diverse stakeholders on international nutrition platforms were invaluable to refining the new policy and ensuring buy-in and support from key partners and donors.

Two informal consultations with the WFP Executive Board (November 25th, 2016 and January 13th, 2017) provided the opportunity for board members to offer key input to the draft of the policy, catalysing further consultations and bilateral conversations that strengthened the policy document.

What is new?

The new policy focuses on adequate nutrient intake as a prerequisite to good nutrition and health. Ending malnutrition in **all its forms** (Box 2) entails increasing the **availability, access, consumption and demand** of safe and nutritious diets that meet, but do not exceed, the nutritional requirements of vulnerable groups. Nutritious diets are tailored to meet nutrient requirements of the targeted population and should hence be age-appropriate, diverse and may include locally available foods, fortified (staple) foods, and specialized nutritious foods as needed and based on context and identified nutrient gaps. Mechanisms for achieving this goal include:

- Supporting governments to design national plans and policies to achieve good nutrition
- Cultivating partnerships to strengthen social protection, education, health/WASH, and agriculture and food systems

Box 2

Malnutrition occurs when nutrient and energy intake does not meet, or exceeds, an individual's requirements to maintain growth, immunity and organ function. Malnutrition is a general term that covers both undernutrition (deficiency) and overweight/obesity (adverse health effects from excess consumption of foods high in fat, sugar and salt).

Box 3

Nutrition-sensitive programming addresses some of the underlying and basic determinants of nutrition, including food security, adequate caregiving, access to and use of health services, and a safe, hygienic environment. These programmes are carried out in a wide variety of sectors, and while their primary objective is not necessarily nutrition-related, they articulate specific nutrition goals, actions and indicators.

- Incorporating nutrition-sensitive concepts and approaches into programming (Box 3), including specific nutrition objectives and indicators, to improve nutrition
- Advocating for multi-sectoral, multi-stakeholder coordination and engaging on global platforms, such as the Scaling Up Nutrition Movement

(SUN) and the Committee on World Food Security (CFS), to improve nutrition governance as well as coverage/delivery of interventions

What stays the same?

While the new policy is full of exciting and timely change, it also reinforces WFP's commitment to:

- Maintain and strengthen nutrition capacity in emergencies
- Prevent malnutrition through nutrition-specific approaches including improving community management of acute malnutrition (CMAM) and the continuum of care
- Focus on the first 1,000 days of life as a critical window of opportunity for stunting prevention

- Conduct context-specific analyses and assessments collaboratively with government and other partners to ensure that interventions effectively and efficiently reach vulnerable groups without duplicating efforts
- Generate evidence around appropriate transfer modalities (in-kind, cash, voucher)
- Support communities to build resilience to shocks that affect nutritional status

How will the new policy be put into action?

The Nutrition Policy (2017-2021) was approved by the Executive Board on February 20th, 2017. The Implementation Plan, as well as the plan for costing, have also been approved. Moving forward, WFP will use various mechanisms to build the capacity of staff to collaborate with governments and partners to implement the new policy. One such mechanism, in addition to the development of tools and guidelines, is the WFP Nutrition Learning Academy which simultaneously serves to strategically fill knowledge gaps and link learning to career development. The Nutrition Learning Academy systematically combines both online and in-person learning opportunities into a package that aligns with WFP strategic objectives and the corporate career development framework.

Summary

WFP recognizes that good nutrition is both an input to and an outcome of 12 out of 17 of the SDGs. The Nutrition Policy (2017-2021) is an extension of, rather than a departure from, the important work begun with the 2012 Nutrition Policy. It serves to update WFP's role in nutrition to reflect needs and programme innovations from the field. The new policy ensures that humanitarian response, treatment and prevention of moderate acute malnutrition, stunting prevention and resilience building will remain priorities for WFP, and simultaneously expands the focus on prevention to include all forms of malnutrition (including overweight/obesity), with an emphasis on physical and economic access to healthy and nutritious diets. It aligns internally with WFP's Integrated Roadmap, externally with the articulated priorities of national governments and other partners, and articulates WFP's plan to support governments in ending malnutrition by 2030.