



World Food Programme

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# Nutrition Integration: A cross-cutting WFP priority

## What is Nutrition Integration?

As the world's largest humanitarian organisation, WFP prevents, detects, and treats malnutrition among some of the most vulnerable groups in the world. Reducing malnutrition to achieve zero hunger is the core of SDG 2 and improving diets and building human capital are foundational elements that interconnect multiple 2030 Agenda goals. However, after years of modest progress in reducing malnutrition, there is a worsening nutrition situation globally which will erode resilience and exacerbate malnutrition rates, overload the already strained food and health systems and hold back progress on SDG 2.

Recognizing this, WFP has committed to integrating nutrition as a key cross-cutting component of its Strategic Plan. Building on WFP's expertise as an organisation able to reach those furthest behind, nutrition integration is about a focus on shifting, extending, and adjusting approaches to ensure that they support improved outcomes for the most vulnerable.

The inclusion of nutrition as a cross-cutting priority in WFP's 2022-2025 Strategic Plan is a commitment to maximize the contribution WFP makes to treating and preventing malnutrition and improving diets – including in the face of shocks and crises. Integrating nutrition across WFP's systems, services and capacity will enable the organization to have greater impact in support of governments and on global efforts to achieve SDG 2. Effective integration ultimately plays out through WFP Country Strategic Plans (CSPs), with enhanced and expanded programmes supported by shifts in global and regional systems and appropriate staffing and skills to enable an improved impact on reducing malnutrition

There are three fundamental aspects to nutrition integration:

- 1 WFP Programmes:** Country Strategic Plans must be designed with an explicit objective to address malnutrition and/or to improve diets. Delivering lifesaving nutrition support to help prevent and treat malnutrition remains a core focus and capacity, but WFP will also work to maximize the contribution that all programmes, analysis, transfers, technical assistance, and advocacy make towards improving nutrition outcomes. In addition, WFP aims to harness the complementarity of the organizations' varied work in-country so that demand for healthier, more nutritious diets is met with better supply of nutritious foods, and so that gains can be sustained in the face of shocks and crises – including those linked to climate change.

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- 2** **WFP Systems:** As WFP has learned from its experience supporting national systems, making systems work for the most vulnerable often requires new effort and focus both analytically and operationally. The equivalent is true for necessary adjustments to WFP internal frameworks and systems to ensure that platforms, processes, and system capabilities work for nutrition. This includes, for example, having procurement approaches and supply chains that get specialized nutritious foods and fortified staples to where they are needed, when they are needed. It includes having early warning systems that can highlight where malnutrition risks are of particular concern; financial processes that account for nutrition investments and returns; and, having reporting systems that can track whether WFP is reaching its targets to address malnutrition and to improve diets in an efficient and effective manner.
- 3** **WFP People:** Nutrition integration requires a workforce that is equipped to maximize opportunities to improve nutrition through every aspect of what WFP does. Developing nutrition capabilities across WFP will ensure we are able to optimize how the organization supports a world free of malnutrition. It requires an upskilled workforce at the right levels with the capacity to identify opportunities for nutrition integration, strategically overcome barriers, and deliver improved nutrition outcomes.

## Why do we need to maximize WFP's impact on malnutrition and diets?

WFP works with governments to ensure that critical food assistance reaches those who are most in need. This means WFP targets the most vulnerable households, identifies vulnerabilities, and builds strategies and programmes to address and prevent these. Fundamentally, inadequate diets make people vulnerable, and vulnerable people are the most at risk of having inadequate diets, creating a cycle of poor outcomes and recurring need. At the same time, there is an ever-increasing global burden of all forms of malnutrition, increased humanitarian needs and recurrence of shocks and stressors. Poor quality diets are creating health crises, undermining human capital development and jeopardizing the economic prosperity of nations. To reverse this trend and improve impact of all food assistance efforts, WFP's nutrition goal is to contribute to sustained reductions in malnutrition in all its forms and to improve diets, particularly in the face of shocks and crises, with a focus on reaching those most left behind.

## What are we aiming to achieve?

In line with the Strategic Plan, by 2025 all WFP Country Strategic Plans must meet expectations for nutrition integration and core systems must ensure addressing malnutrition and poor quality diets is on an equal footing to addressing hunger. Through 2025, WFP aims to help reduce malnutrition and improve diets by expanding access to direct nutrition services in close collaboration with other nutrition actors and simultaneously integrating nutrition objectives and activities across its portfolio. WFP commits to increasing the percentage of people supported by WFP operations and services that are able to meet their nutritional needs to 80% through an effective combination of fortified foods, specialized nutritious foods and actions to support diet diversification. This entails a scale up of direct nutrition interventions when and where relevant, a transformation of all operations and services to contribute towards supporting diet diversification, and a maximization of convergence between systems and activities.

## What does good look like?

WFP Nutrition has developed several measures of success for WFP Country Strategic Plans to integrate nutrition across country activities beginning from the strategic analysis and including staffing, programme design, and budget considerations, among others. These programme-related elements are needed to reach the Strategic Plan's high level target of at least 80% of the people WFP serves benefiting from support that addresses their nutritional needs.

At the same time, enabling shifts in WFP systems and capacities must also be prioritized and implemented to fully support CSP operationalization. This includes actioning the recommendations of the Strategic Workforce Planning exercise to increase nutrition staffing and enhance technical and strategic skillsets; as well as continuing progress in improving or adjusting internal data, finance, and procurement systems to adequately monitor nutrition situations, fund appropriate responses at scale, and deliver adequate assistance to protect nutritional status, particularly in the face of shocks.