

NOURISHED

How Africa Can Build a Future Free from Hunger and Malnutrition



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TOGO



After a long period marked by socio-political instability prior to 2000, Togo has made significant progress in terms of reducing malnutrition levels. While the reduction in stunting levels was moderate, with a decrease of just 5 percentage points, from 33 to 28 percent, the level of wasting was nearly halved, from 11 to 7 percent, between 2000 and 2016. Togo's GHI score decreased from 39 in 2000 to 22 in 2016. The government's institutional and programmatic commitment have in part driven this impressive performance.

INSTITUTIONAL REFORMS

The importance of institutional change for malnutrition reduction was recognized by the Togolese government with the creation of the Service National de Nutrition (SNN) within the Ministry of Health in October 1990. However, prior to 2006 the SNN had no clear mission, and operated without a strategic plan to guide and implement its interventions. Following the 2007 nutrition crisis, the government made SNN a priority, and to strengthen the fight against malnutrition further, it created a Nutritional Emergency Response unit within the SNN. National legislation on nutrition is extensive and includes, for example, laws on food fortification (salt, oil, and wheat flour). Furthermore, a multisectoral approach has been adopted to tackle malnutrition by involving the agricultural sector.

POLICY AND PROGRAMMATIC INTERVENTIONS

In 2014, Togo joined the SUN Movement. The Plan Stratégique National d'Alimentation et de Nutrition,¹ which ran from 2012 to 2015 and was led by the Ministry of Health, formed one of the government's key programs for tackling malnutrition. The main elements of the program included:

- Promotion of nutrition and nutritional education and strengthening the implementation of infant and young child feeding;
- Prevention and management of acute malnutrition in the Center for Nutrition Recovery and Education/Health facilities and through a community approach;
- Feeding adolescent women, pregnant women, and lactating women;

- School feeding and nutrition interventions; and
- Management of acute malnutrition.

Additionally, the Ministry of Agriculture ensures food diversification and safety through the Programme National d'Investissement Agricole et de Sécurité Alimentaire and the Programme d'Appui à la Diversification Agricole.²

The government has also been implementing innovative interventions across the country to improve the health and nutritional status of children.³ In 2011, to reduce morbidity and mortality rates among children under age five in the Savannah and Kara regions, community-based high-impact interventions were implemented. The Integrated Management of Newborn Diseases and the Child program trained more than 1,000 community health workers, from villages over 5 kilometers away from the nearest health center, to recognize early signs of childhood illnesses and to either refer patients to community health facilities or to treat some of the most common illnesses, such as malaria, diarrhea, colds, pneumonia, and acute malnutrition, on site.

Furthermore, the implementation of national legislation on food fortification in Togo has ensured that more fortified foods, such as oils, are made available to consumers. A Togolese company, Nioto, manufactures edible oils that meet international standards from local and imported raw materials.⁴ To ensure the quality of its products throughout the production process—from receipt of raw materials to packaging—Nioto works through a well-equipped laboratory and in coordination with other local or international laboratories. Since 2009 the oils have been enriched with vitamin A. Their consumption makes it possible to largely cover 40 IU/g, or 30 percent, of the daily vitamin A requirements recommended by UNICEF and WHO.

Good progress has been made in addressing malnutrition in Togo. The importance of a multisectoral approach has been recognized in Togo's National Nutrition Policy/Strategy and clear time-bound nutrition targets. However, it remains to be translated into effective interventions through involving the agriculture, health, and education sectors and a multisectoral and multisiteholder policy coordination mechanism.

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¹ Ministère De La Santé, République Togolaise, Plan Stratégique National D'alimentation et de Nutrition (2012-2015), 2012, https://extranet.who.int/nutrition/gina/sites/default/files/PSNAN_Avril-Mai2012_Atelier_Validation.pdf.

² Compendium du Mouvement SUN, Togo, 2014, http://docs.scalingupnutrition.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/11/SUN_Compendium_FR_20141026_48Togo.pdf.

³ M. Le Fur, Évaluation Des Interventions à Base Communautaire dans Les Régions des Savanes et de la Kara, UNICEF-TOGO, 2013, https://www.unicef.org/evaldatabase/files/Evaluation_des_interventions_a_base_communautaire_Togo_Final_Report.pdf.

⁴ Nioto l'huile du Togo, accessed on 5 July, 2017, <http://www.nioto-togo.com/spip.php?article1>.