NOURISHED
How Africa Can Build a Future Free from Hunger and Malnutrition

MALAWI
Despite frequent droughts, floods, and high levels of HIV prevalence, Malawi made progress in reducing levels of undernutrition between 2000 and 2016. This progress is evidenced by a reduction in the Global Hunger Index from 45 to 27 (equivalent to a 41 percent change). Although still high, child stunting fell from 55 percent to 42 percent, which means that Malawi currently is off-target to reach the Malabo commitment of reducing stunting to less than 10 percent by 2025. Nevertheless, Malawi scored high in the 2014 Hunger and Nutrition Commitment Index (HANCIC) for Africa, showing commitment to addressing undernutrition. The government’s commitment to reducing levels of undernutrition is reflected both in institutional reforms, including the creation of the Department of Nutrition, HIV and AIDS (DNHA) in 2004. Significant improvements in maternal and child health and in nutrition were largely attributed to the prominence of DNHA’s location in the Office of the President. However, in 2014, the DNHA was moved to the Ministry of Health. DNHA is responsible for providing oversight, policy and technical guidance, and high-level advocacy on the national nutrition agenda. DNHA also acts as a platform for coordination and convergence of multisectoral and multistakeholder efforts to implement the nutrition elements of the Malawi Growth and Development Framework, which assigned strong importance to nutrition. Malawi also established a Nutrition Working Committee (NWC), a multistakeholder platform to mobilize resources and support the implementation of food and nutrition interventions. The committee serves as the convening body for coordinating actions with the Scaling Up Nutrition movement, which Malawi joined in 2011. Further, the Nutrition Working Committee, represented by district nutrition focal points, village development committees, and community leaders for action on nutrition groups. The Civil Society Organization Nutrition Alliance, which forms part of the NNC, is particularly active in engaging nongovernmental organizations and traditional authorities. It also provides support and training to the Parliamentary Committee on Nutrition to ensure that nutrition issues are central to discussions at all levels. A number of institutional elements show the country’s commitment to addressing malnutrition, including the drafting of the Right to Food and Nutrition Bill (currently under consultation), a separate budget line for nutrition through which spending and surveillance can be strengthened, and the Right to Food and Nutrition Bill (currently under consultation), a separate budget line for nutrition through which spending and surveillance can be strengthened.

In parallel to measures in the health sector, agriculture has been elevated to a key national policy priority under the country’s growth and development and nutrition agendas. Between 2006 and 2014 Malawi’s annual average share of total public spending dedicated to agriculture was 18.9 percent, the highest average among Southern African countries, and the country committed to reducing spending to less than 10 percent by 2025. Between 2010 and 2014 Malawi also invested almost 17 percent in the key national policy priority under the country’s growth and development and nutrition agendas.

The recognition of a multisectoral approach and high-level political commitment for malnutrition reduction led to the creation of the Department of Nutrition, HIV and AIDS (DNHA) in 2004. Significant improvements in maternal and child health and in nutrition were largely attributed to the prominence of DNHA’s location in the Office of the President. However, in 2014, the DNHA was moved to the Ministry of Health. DNHA is responsible for providing oversight, policy and technical guidance, and high-level advocacy on the national nutrition agenda. DNHA also acts as a platform for coordination and convergence of multisectoral and multistakeholder efforts to implement the nutrition elements of the Malawi Growth and Development Framework, which assigned strong importance to nutrition. Malawi also established a Nutrition Working Committee (NWC), a multistakeholder platform to mobilize resources and support the implementation of food and nutrition interventions. The committee serves as the convening body for coordinating actions with the Scaling Up Nutrition movement, which Malawi joined in 2011. Further, the Nutrition Working Committee, represented by district nutrition focal points, village development committees, and community leaders for action on nutrition groups.

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Malawi has adopted a multisector program approach to tackle malnutrition. Programs are implemented to address five outcomes in line with the National Nutrition Policy and Strategic Plan, 2007-2012 (currently under review): improved maternal nutrition and care; improved infant and young child feeding practices outlined in the Infant and Young Child Nutrition Strategy 2009-2014; improved intake of essential micronutrients; prevention and treatment of common infectious diseases; and improved management of acute malnutrition. Malawi has also focused on community-based action, with the 1,000 Special Days National Nutrition Education and Communication Strategy prioritized for 2011-2012, followed by the 2017-2020 commitment to addressing undernutrition. The government’s commitment to reducing levels of undernutrition is reflected both in institutional reforms, including the creation of the Department of Nutrition, HIV and AIDS (DNHA) in 2004. Significant improvements in maternal and child health and in nutrition were largely attributed to the prominence of DNHA’s location in the Office of the President. However, in 2014, the DNHA was moved to the Ministry of Health. DNHA is responsible for providing oversight, policy and technical guidance, and high-level advocacy on the national nutrition agenda. DNHA also acts as a platform for coordination and convergence of multisectoral and multistakeholder efforts to implement the nutrition elements of the Malawi Growth and Development Framework, which assigned strong importance to nutrition. Malawi also established a Nutrition Working Committee (NWC), a multistakeholder platform to mobilize resources and support the implementation of food and nutrition interventions. The committee serves as the convening body for coordinating actions with the Scaling Up Nutrition movement, which Malawi joined in 2011. Further, the Nutrition Working Committee, represented by district nutrition focal points, village development committees, and community leaders for action on nutrition groups.

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