



World Vision 
GHANA

ENOUGH
END CHILD HUNGER AND MALNUTRITION

Campaign
Policy Brief

Introduction

The largest global hunger crisis in modern history is unfolding before our eyes. Over 25 million children are at risk of starvation, and 149 million are stunted due to the lack of nutritious food. Hunger and malnutrition question children's right to life, depriving them of their potential and condemning them to poor health, lack of education, and increased exposure to violence – impacting future generations (World Vision's Global Campaign to End Child Hunger & Malnutrition Strategy Paper, 2023).

It's important to remember that there is ENOUGH in this world to provide every child with a life of plenty, joy, and hope. Child hunger levels are the worst they have been in generations due to conflict, climate change, and post-COVID economies, resulting in soaring food prices. Hundreds of millions of children are suffering from treatable illnesses and are experiencing underweight, stunted growth, wasting frailty, and overweight conditions. Many children face challenges such as difficulties focusing in school, early marriage, and being forced to work, limiting their potential. Children have the fundamental right to ENOUGH nutritious food, which is critical for physical growth and cognitive development.

"Article 24 of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child emphasizes the fundamental need for children to be well-nourished." We must act swiftly to save millions of children on the brink of starvation. This systemic failure demands systemic solutions. Our success hinges on feeding the hungry today and preventing future relapses of child hunger and malnutrition crises. However, global leaders have failed to prioritize this issue. Despite establishing nutrition targets, little has been invested in achieving them. Malnutrition has been the underlying cause of most children's deaths for decades, with the World Bank estimating a current cost of productivity loss at \$3 million per year. Yet, less than 1% of all aid goes to supporting children's nutrition. As the world crisis escalates, the number of malnourished children is skyrocketing.

The “ENOUGH: END CHILD HUNGER AND MALNUTRITION” Campaign by World Vision Ghana, aims to ensure that every child enjoys enough nourishing food so they can thrive (End child hunger and malnutrition – SDG2). The three-year campaign will be implemented across all World Vision Ghana Programme Areas.

The campaign's strategic goals are as follows;

- Enabling children to be actively visible and heard in hunger, nutrition and food security related policies at all levels
- Ensuring more children benefit from improved food security, nutrition and resilience, through prioritised services.

ENOUGH CAMPAIGN FOCUS



Strategies to achieve the strategic goals

Outcome 1:

Improved visibility & understanding of the size, dynamics & specifics of child hunger & nutrition at all levels

Government authorities and decision-makers should incorporate measurements and indicators of child hunger in crucial national assessments and population-level surveys. For example, these could be incorporated into national health surveys, national vulnerability assessments, and country-level acute food security assessments such as the Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC). The Government and key multi-lateral mechanisms must consistently and actively consult children and incorporate their needs and perspectives on hunger and nutrition in national and global dialogues and policy making.

Governments and donors must prioritize the integration of prevention and response to child marriage, sexual violence and child labour into relevant food systems and nutrition-related policies and funding commitments.

Outcome 2:

More children consume enough nutritional food provided ethically, sustainably & as locally as possible

Both government and donor policies and funding are being prioritized to address the urgent life-saving food and nutrition needs of children.

The government has made a committed effort to provide universal school meals that strictly adhere to national food-based nutritional guidelines, with a prime focus on locally sourced food, for example, through Home Grown School Feeding approaches, to the maximum extent possible.

Outcome 3:

Children & families increase access to quality comprehensive preventive and curative nutrition services, including to address Wasting

The National health policy/systems are designed to ensure that Community Health Workers (CHWs) are fully integrated as a vital component of delivering Essential Nutrition Action (ENA) services. Additionally, the policy aims to expand and improve CHW coverage (including SBC) interventions, to effectively reach the most vulnerable populations.

ACTION STRATEGIES

-  Amplify Multi-sectorial Programmatic Excellence
-  Facilitate Child Participation
-  Build Evidence Base
-  Focus on the Most Vulnerable
-  Communicate and Influence
-  Fundraise
-  Drive Local to Global Advocacy
-  Go Digital
-  Engage and Partner with External Stakeholders
-  Mobilize the Public & Communities
-  Engage Faith Actors
-  Promote Gender Equality

What is the difference between 'hunger' and, 'food security' and 'malnutrition'?

Hunger characterizes the distress caused by lack of food. Food deprivation, or undernourishment, is defined as consuming fewer than 1,800 calories per day.

Undernutrition goes beyond calorie intake to indicate deficiencies in energy, protein, and/or essential vitamins and minerals.

The most widely accepted definition of 'food insecurity' (often referred to as 'hunger') is when individuals lack physical and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food that fulfils their dietary needs preferences for an active and healthy life".

Malnutrition is defined as “deficiencies, excesses or imbalances in a person's intake of energy and/or nutrients” due to inadequate diets and/or substandard care practices such as limited access to quality health and nutrition services. Malnutrition can lead to lifelong adverse physical and cognitive effects in young children. These consequences can significantly impact families, communities, and national development. The concept of malnutrition encompasses both undernutrition and overnutrition. Extended periods of food insecurity can result in malnutrition, characterized by a lack of essential vitamins, minerals, and nutrients necessary for optimal health.

Malnutrition encompasses:

Undernutrition (wasting, stunting, underweight)
Micronutrient deficiencies, Overweight, obesity, and the associated resulting diet-related non-communicable diseases. Food security is intertwined with food availability, access, and utilization. It denoted consistent and adequate access to enough safe and nutritious food, essential for sustaining an active and healthy life.

The key facts on Food Security, Hunger and Malnutrition in Ghana are as follows:

- › The national stunting rate stands at 18%
- › The current rate of wasting stands at 6%.
- › Underweight is 12%
- › The under-five mortality rate in Ghana stands at 40/1000 live births as against a global target of <25/1000 live births
- › Almost half (49%) of children aged 6–59 months in Ghana are anaemic, with 28% experiencing mild anaemia, 20% moderate anaemia, and 1% severe anaemia. This statistic is very high by WHO standards.
- › 2% per cent of children under 5 are overweight
- › The proportion of the population experiencing moderate to severe food insecurity based on the food insecurity and experience scale (FIES) declined from 49.5 per cent in 2017 to 47.7 per cent in June 2020 and 47.0 per cent in September 2020.
- › Based on the 2020/2021 Comprehensive Food Security and The Vulnerability Analysis (CFSVA) for Ghana the latest results from the March 2023 Cadre Harmonisé reveal persistent food insecurity in the Northern regions.
- › Projections indicate that over 237,000 individuals in the Upper East and Upper West regions are facing food insecurity, classified as IPC/CH Phase 3 and 4. This underscores the urgent need for focused interventions to address food insecurity in these areas.

GOVERNMENT POLICIES AND PROGRAMMES ON HUNGER AND MALNUTRITION

Over the years, the governments of Ghana have diligently crafted and implemented policies aimed at enhancing maternal and child health while striving to reduce child malnutrition. Despite potential implementation challenges, these efforts have significantly enhanced the well-being of children and warrant commendation. Some of the pivotal policies and programmes include:

The National Nutrition Policy, Universal Health Coverage Road Map, National Health Policy, Under Five's Child Health Policy: 2007-2015 Ministry of Health, Ghana, the Reproductive, Maternal, Newborn, Child and Adolescent Health and Nutrition (RMNCAHN) Strategic Plan, Ghana Food and Dietary Based Guidelines etc.

The Food and Agriculture Sector Development Policy (FASDEP) II is a revised policy of FASDEP I (2002) as an implementation framework for strategies to modernize the agricultural sector under the Ministry of Food and Agriculture. FASDEP II emphasizes the sustainable utilization of all resources and commercialization of activities with market-driven growth in mind. To ensure food security, Ghana government policies, past and present include The National Climate Smart Agriculture Food Security Action Plan, The National Climate Change Policy (NCCP) 2014, Access to land and bad farming practices leading to reduced fertility.



World Vision Ghana's Work

World Vision Ghana (WVG) has undeniably made a significant impact on the well-being of children since its inception in Ghana in 1979. WVG has amassed extensive experience and expertise in various crucial areas including child protection programming, advocacy, food security, climate change, health and nutrition, Water and Sanitation, peacebuilding, HEA and faith engagement.

This has laid a strong foundation and enabled the environment for the realization of the vision of the ENOUGH campaign. As a result, WVG's unwavering commitment to reducing hunger and malnutrition is boldly evident through numerous impactful projects implemented across the country:

- 1000 days improved feeding practices project
- Vegetable gardens for Families – and schools
- Savings and Loans groups
- School meals
- LEAN and EVERGREEN projects
- Farmer Managed Natural Regeneration
- Better family incomes
- Linking savings groups to Microfinance institutions or MFIs i.e Vision Fund
- KIA Green Light project

IMPACT OF ENOUGH

By 2027, the ENOUGH campaign will achieve the following outcomes through its primary technical programs focused on health and nutrition, food security and livelihood, and supported by additional technical programs including child protection and advocacy, education, WASH, and humanitarian emergency response.

- Influence at least four (4) policy shifts to improve health and nutrition, enhance food security | promote climate-smart agriculture and social protection.
- Target to provide improved services and implement policies to benefit 12.5 million children.
- Directly reach 1.3 million children with high-quality nutritious food in households and schools.

- Engage 3.5 million parents and caregivers to promote good agricultural practices, address food security, tackle climate change, and improve understanding of hunger and nutrition.
- Decrease the number of households enrolled in WVG programmes that experience food insecurity.
- Lower the percentage of malnourished children (experiencing stunting, wasting, overweight, underweight and micro-nutrient deficiency) in WVG programme areas.
- Enhance household resilience by promoting the adoption of climate-smart agricultural practices in WVG operational areas.

SPECIFIC RECOMMENDATION

World Vision Ghana urges the Government of Ghana and all relevant stakeholders to enact and enforce both existing and new policies, and to boost investment to eradicate child hunger and malnutrition by taking the following measures:

- ✓ Provide ENOUGH nutritious food
- ✓ Ensure ENOUGH funding for hunger and nutrition
- ✓ ENOUGH political will
- ✓ ENOUGH household food security
- ✓ ENOUGH quality school meals for every child
- ✓ ENOUGH nutritious meals for every child

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