

# Multi-sectoral Nutrition:

## A case for joint action

“Aligned implementation across sectors achieves results far greater than what could have been achieved alone.”

-- Tanzania National Multi-sectoral Nutrition Strategy



### Malnutrition

is caused by eating too little, too much, not eating the right foods, or the body’s inability to process nutrients because of illness.



### A Multi-sectoral Approach

addresses malnutrition by including nutrition goals and actions within multiple key sectors.

## Nutrition Profile of Infants and Young Children in Tanzania



### Low breastfeeding rates

Infant and young child feeding practices are a challenge. Babies under 6 months of age need breastmilk only – not water, other liquids or foods, which can cause illness.

**41% of infants under 6 months are not exclusively breastfed**



### Too few meals per day

As a baby reaches 6 months of age, other kinds of foods are needed besides breastmilk. Foods should be prepared in a safe environment and offered several times a day.

**60% of children 6 to 23 months do not receive enough food**



### Lack of diverse foods

Eating a variety of quality foods is important for a healthy diet. There is often a gap between what foods are grown and available and what foods are needed to maintain health.

**74% of children 6 to 23 months do not eat enough different kinds of food**



### Reduced growth rate

Stunting is caused by long-term lack of nutrients. Children who are stunted are too short for their age and also have differences in their brains that can affect the ability to learn, even as an adult.

**34% of children under 5 years are stunted**

## Hidden Causes of Malnutrition

Malnutrition is a complex issue. It is strongly affected by a child’s environment. While **direct causes** of malnutrition include lack of nutritious food and different diseases, there are several **hidden causes**, including:

- Poverty, lack of economic independence
- Inadequate access to education and resources
- Lack of safe water and sanitary environments
- Barriers to healthcare
- Lack of behaviour change communication
- Political and social injustice



Facilitating Factors for Good Nutrition Requires Many Sectors to Work Together

*Malnutrition is a diverse challenge—if not addressed it can have lasting effects on individuals and whole societies.*

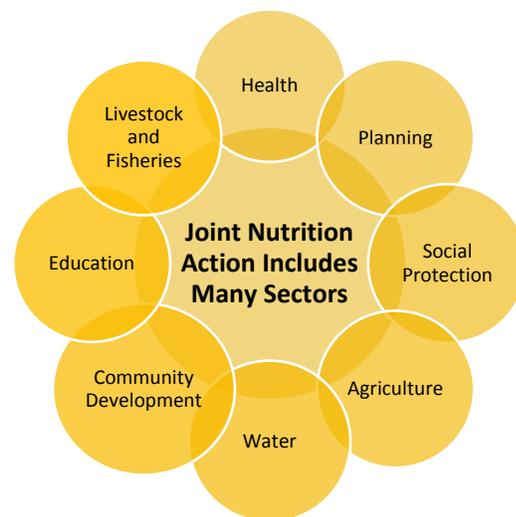
# Scaling up Nutrition through a Multi-sector Approach



of stunting can be addressed by increasing the intake of nutritious food.



of stunting can be addressed by improving agriculture, infrastructure, education, water and sanitation, health care, and more.



## Sectors not focused on nutrition can significantly reduce malnutrition through their actions. Sectors can:

- ▶ Strengthen nutrition focused goals; integrate a specific health concern (e.g., stunting) into relevant policies and activities.
- ▶ Improve targeting, timing, and duration of exposure to key programs; to enhance the nutritional benefits of the most vulnerable.
- ▶ Optimize focus on women’s nutrition and empowerment; design programs to increase women’s decision-making power and autonomy.
- ▶ Use conditions to increase demand for program services; for example cash transfer services can require utilization of nutrition counselling.

## Multi-sectoral Nutrition Strategies: “How can my sector improve nutrition?”

 <b>AGRICULTURE</b> Facilitate access to storage technologies; provide guidance on anti-pest techniques; promote diversified cropping	 <b>EDUCATION</b> Expand school gardens; promote cooking/safe food storage demonstrations; use school feeding programs as a platform for nutrition education
 <b>LIVESTOCK &amp; FISHERIES</b> Increase use of community fish ponds and improved poultry pens; promote meat and egg consumption among children 6 to 24 months	 <b>COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT</b> Create father’s support groups to promote men’s participation in infant feeding; support programs that address teen pregnancy; sensitize the private sector (e.g., textile industry) by linking women’s productivity to good nutrition
 <b>WATER SANITATION &amp; HYGIENE</b> Promote water treatment, education on hygiene practices, and safe disposal of child faeces	 <b>HEALTH</b> Deliver nutritional services and counselling through antenatal care, routine immunisation, and family planning

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