

Nutrition

IMPROVING NUTRITION THROUGH BEHAVIOR CHANGE

BACKGROUND

Around the world, nutrition plays a significant role in children's health and well-being. UNICEF estimates that nearly half of all deaths of children under 5 are attributable to undernutrition, totaling more than 3 million children per year. Inadequate nutrition during a child's first 1,000 days from conception to age 2 can also result in stunting, which is associated with impaired cognitive ability and academic achievement. IMA World Health focuses its nutrition work on children under 5 and pregnant women primarily in sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia, where the vast majority of those most in need of quality nutrition for their health live.

IMA's approach is to support national programs, working with and through local authorities and community organizations to implement evidence-based approaches targeting the range of nutrition-specific and nutrition-sensitive factors that impact child health. IMA works across sectors, including agriculture; water, sanitation and hygiene; education and early childhood development to prevent malnutrition and reduce stunting. IMA's approach also leverages monitoring & evaluation and operations research to strengthen the evidence base around nutrition and to improve program delivery.

OUR PROJECTS

TANZANIA

Addressing Stunting in Tanzania Early (2015-2020)

Through a five-year contract with UK Aid's Department for International Development (DFID), IMA aims to reduce the prevalence of stunting among Tanzanian children under 5 years old. In support of Tanzania's commitment to the Scaling Up Nutrition (SUN) movement, IMA builds the capacity of local government authorities across sectors to address the myriad causes of child stunting and contribute to the evidence base for what works best and most cost-efficiently in the local context. ASTUTE is implemented among a collective population of 11.5 million people and more than 800,000 stunted children in five regions of the Lake Zone: Kagera, Kigoma, Mwanza, Geita and Shinyanga.



IMA implements the DFID-funded ASTUTE project, which supports the Government of Tanzania to reduce the prevalence of stunting among Tanzanian children under 5 years old.

ASTUTE builds the capacity of 50 local civil society organization partners; has trained nearly 7,800 district health workers and non-health sector service providers; and has reached three million mothers, caregivers and decision-makers with improved child feeding information. DFID gave the program an A+ review rating for its third year.

KENYA

Afya Jijini (2015-2020)

In Kenya, the United States Agency for International Development's (USAID)/Kenya and East Africa Afya Jijini program implements activities to strengthen and support Nairobi City County's health department and nutrition stakeholders to improve coordination, planning and advocacy activities in line with the National Nutrition Policy. The project promotes good dietary practices among women of reproductive age and children, counseling on good nutrition for HIV-positive mothers and children, strengthened capacity of health facilities and communities to adequately refer and offer high-impact nutrition interventions and strengthening nutrition surveillance. Since its start in September 2015, nearly one million children have been reached with a variety of nutrition interventions. Over 823,000 children under 5 years of age received Vitamin A supplementation, and over 316,000 pregnant women received iron and folic acid supplementation.

The project is currently supporting 240 facilities including integrated management of acute malnutrition (IMAM) sites, comprehensive care centers targeting people living with HIV and facilities offering maternal and child care services with capacity building activities for health care workers on the prevention and treatment of malnutrition. In addition, in coordination with the County, Afya Jijini supports County Nutrition Technical Fora which bring together stakeholders from the County and Sub-county Health Management teams as well as representatives from Ministries of Education and Agriculture to ensure that nutrition activities are well coordinated in Nairobi.

DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO

Access to Primary Health Care Project/Accès aux Soins de Santé Primaires (2012-2019)

With support from UK Aid's Department for International Development (DFID), IMA provides integrated health assistance to 52 health zones reaching more than 8 million people in five provinces. Reduction of malnutrition is also a key strategy to reduce morbidity and mortality in women and children under 5, and the program's strategies include distributing key nutrition equipment, supplies and materials; strengthening health zone capacity to monitor and support nutrition activities; training and empowering community volunteers to screen for malnutrition in their communities; nutrition education; strengthening health care worker nutrition capacity; home garden development and education; establishing community-based management of acute malnutrition and ready-to-use therapeutic food; and supporting related nutrition campaigns.

To date, more than 8,315 community health workers (CHWs) have been trained to screen for malnutrition in children using mid-upper arm circumference, and 58,519 malnourished children and their caretakers have received five follow-up home visits by a trained community health worker.

SOUTH SUDAN

IDP Emergency Medical Care and Nutrition Response (2014-Present)

With funding from the Office of U.S. Foreign Disaster Assistance (OFDA), IMA conducts nutritional activities in seven facilities in five conflict-affected counties of South Sudan in response to the growing need for an integrated response to acute malnutrition. Activities include community outreach and screening for early detection and treatment of

acute malnutrition; inpatient and outpatient management for children with severe acute malnutrition (SAM); and supplementary feeding programs for children with moderate acute malnutrition (MAM), discharged SAM patients and at-risk pregnant and lactating women. During Phase IV of IMA's OFDA award, September 2017 to October 2018, 144,253 clients were screened for malnutrition, in which there were 6,619 SAM cases admitted (89 percent of target) and 19,243 MAM cases (91 percent of target). Additionally, 22,267 children aged 0-6 months were reported to be exclusively breastfed, and 29,073 children aged 6-24 months were provided with four different food groups. A total of 73,514 people benefitted from the nutrition BCC activities. To ensure that staff and volunteers involved in management of MAM cases follow guidelines, IMA and partners provide continuous training on prevention, identification and management of MAM. A total of 940 staff were trained against a target of 134.

INDONESIA

National Nutrition Communications Campaign (2014-Present)

IMA recently completed work on the National Nutrition Communications Campaign (NNCC), a four-year communications and behavior change project focused on reducing stunting, as part of Indonesia's national strategy within the SUN movement. NNCC was a component of the larger Community-Based Health and Nutrition to Reduce Stunting Project, funded by the Millennium Challenge Corporation. NNCC worked in collaboration with the Government of Indonesia in 11 districts to increase awareness and understanding of the causes, symptoms, long-term implications and prevention of childhood stunting among parents, community members, Ministry of Health personnel, government officials and the general public; gain commitment from a broad array of stakeholders to tackle the problem of stunting; and foster individual and community behavior change related to health and nutrition among parents, caregivers and government staff. Through its strategic television campaign, from November 2015 to June 2017 the NNCC reached more than 44 million viewers with its TV spots on sanitation and infant and young child feeding—far exceeding its goal of reaching 5 million viewers. In March 2018, IMA hosted 34 governors representing every province in Indonesia, 10 ministers and the Vice President of Indonesia at the nation's first Stunting Summit, where the Government of Indonesia committed to prioritizing 106 districts to actively fight stunting.

