

DIRECTIONS IN DEVELOPMENT

Repositioning Nutrition
as Central to Development
A Strategy for Large-Scale Action



THE WORLD BANK

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1.1 Global prevalence of underweight among children under age five
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1.3 Global prevalence of vitamin A deficiency and supplementation coverage rates
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“Nearly 4 million people die prematurely in India every year from malnutrition and related problems. That’s more than the number who perished during the entire Bengal famine.”

—Amartya Sen and Jean Dreze, *Hunger and Public Action*, 1989

“The portion of the global burden of disease (mortality and morbidity, 1990 figures) in developing countries that would be removed by eliminating malnutrition is estimated as 32 percent. This includes the effects of malnutrition on the most vulnerable groups’ burden of mortality and morbidity from infectious diseases only. This is therefore a conservative figure...”

—John Mason, Philip Musgrove, and Jean-Pierre Habicht, 2003

“... investments in micronutrients have higher returns than those from investments in trade liberalization, in malaria, or in water and sanitation.... *No other technology offers as large an opportunity to improve lives at such low cost and in such a short time.*”

—Copenhagen Consensus, 2004

“Micronutrient deficiencies alone may cost India US\$2.5 billion annually and the productivity losses (manual work only) from stunting, iodine deficiency, and iron deficiency together are responsible for a total loss of 2.95 percent of GDP.”

—S. Horton, 1999

“Noncommunicable diseases account for almost 60 percent of the 56 million deaths annually and 47 percent of the global burden of disease...the burden of mortality, morbidity, and disability attributable to noncommunicable diseases is currently greatest and continuing to grow in the developing countries, where 66 percent of these deaths occur... the most important risks included high blood pressure, high concentrations of cholesterol in the blood, inadequate intake of fruits and vegetables, overweight or obesity, and physical inactivity that are closely related to diet and physical activity.”

—WHO, 2004

“By 2002, only East Asia and Pacific and Latin America and the Caribbean had fewer undernourished people than 10 years earlier.”

—World Bank, 2005a

“Sub-Saharan Africa is not on track to achieve a single MDG. ... it is off track on the hunger goal—and is the only region where child malnutrition is not declining.... And while malnutrition in the (South Asia) region is dropping sufficiently to achieve the MDG target reduction, *it remains at very high absolute levels*: almost half of children under five are underweight.”

—World Bank, 2005b

“A hungry person is an angry and dangerous person. It is in all our interests to take away the cause of this anger.”

—President Olusegun Obasanjo of Nigeria, *The Guardian*,
June 23, 2005 (UK)