



Nourishing the SDGs – Report summary

If readers take away one message from this report, it should be that ending malnutrition in all its forms will catalyse improved outcomes across the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Whoever you are, and whatever you work on, you can make a difference to achieving the SDGs, and you can help end malnutrition. The challenge is huge, but it is dwarfed by the opportunity.

1. The world faces a grave nutrition situation – but the SDGs present an unprecedented opportunity to change that.

A better nourished world is a better world. Yet despite the significant steps the world has taken towards improving nutrition and associated health burdens over recent decades, this year's *Global Nutrition Report* shows what a large-scale and universal problem nutrition is. The global community is grappling with multiple burdens of malnutrition. Our analysis shows that 88% of countries for which we have data face a serious burden of either two or three forms of malnutrition (childhood stunting, anaemia in women of reproductive age and/or overweight in adult women), and progress on global nutrition targets is slow, or moving backwards.

The SDGs, adopted by 193 countries in 2015, offer a tremendous window of opportunity to reverse or stop these trends. The SDGs are telling us loud and clear: we must deliver multiple goals through shared action. Nutrition is part of that shared action.

2. Improving nutrition will be a catalyst for achieving all the other SDGs.

Our analysis shows there are five core areas that run through the SDGs to which nutrition can contribute, and in turn, benefit from:

- sustainable food production
- strong systems of infrastructure
- health systems
- equity and inclusion
- peace and stability.

Through these five areas, the report finds that improving nutrition can have a powerful multiplier effect across the SDGs. Indeed, it indicates that it will be a challenge to achieve any SDG without addressing nutrition.

3. Tackling the underlying causes of malnutrition through the SDGs will unlock significant gains in the fight to end malnutrition.

Nutrition is an indispensable cog without which the SDG machine cannot function smoothly. We will not reach the goal of ending malnutrition without tackling the other important factors that contribute to malnutrition.

4. There is significant opportunity for financing a more integrated approach to improving nutrition universally.

Malnutrition has a high economic and health cost, yet not enough is spent on improving nutrition. New analysis shows domestic spending on undernutrition varies, with some countries spending over 10% of their budget on nutrition and others far less. Global spending by donors on undernutrition increased by 1% between 2014 and 2015, but fell as a *proportion* of official development assistance (ODA) from 0.57% in 2014 to 0.50% in 2015. Spending on prevention and treatment of obesity and diet-related non-communicable diseases (NCDs) represented 0.01% of all ODA in 2015, even though the global burden of these diseases is significant. Some donors are bucking this trend, but considerably more investment is needed.

The bigger opportunity is for governments and others to invest in nutrition in an integrated way. Our analysis this year already shows that governments spend more on sectors that help address the underlying causes of malnutrition than they do on interventions specific to nutrition. Opportunities through innovative financing mechanisms and existing investment flows need to be explored. The world simply cannot afford *not* to take a more integrated approach to investing in nutrition.

5. To leave no one behind, we must fill gaps and change the way we analyse and use data.

The Global Nutrition Report has consistently called for more rigorous data collection to ensure accountability. This year we highlight that data gaps are hindering accountability and progress. To improve nutrition universally we need better, more regular, detailed and disaggregated data.

We identify lack of data disaggregated

by wealth quintile, gender, geography, age and disability as a particular barrier. National averages are not enough to see *who is being left behind*.

We need disaggregated data for *all forms of malnutrition*, in *all countries* as nutritional levels can vary even within households. This will ensure that marginalised, vulnerable populations are not left behind in the SDG agenda. Beyond just collecting data, we need to actively use this data to make better choices and inform decision-making at the policy level.





1

The world faces a grave nutrition situation...



2 billion people lack key micronutrients like iron and vitamin A



155 million children are stunted



52 million children are wasted



2 billion adults are overweight or obese



41 million children are overweight



88% of countries face a serious burden of either two or three forms of malnutrition

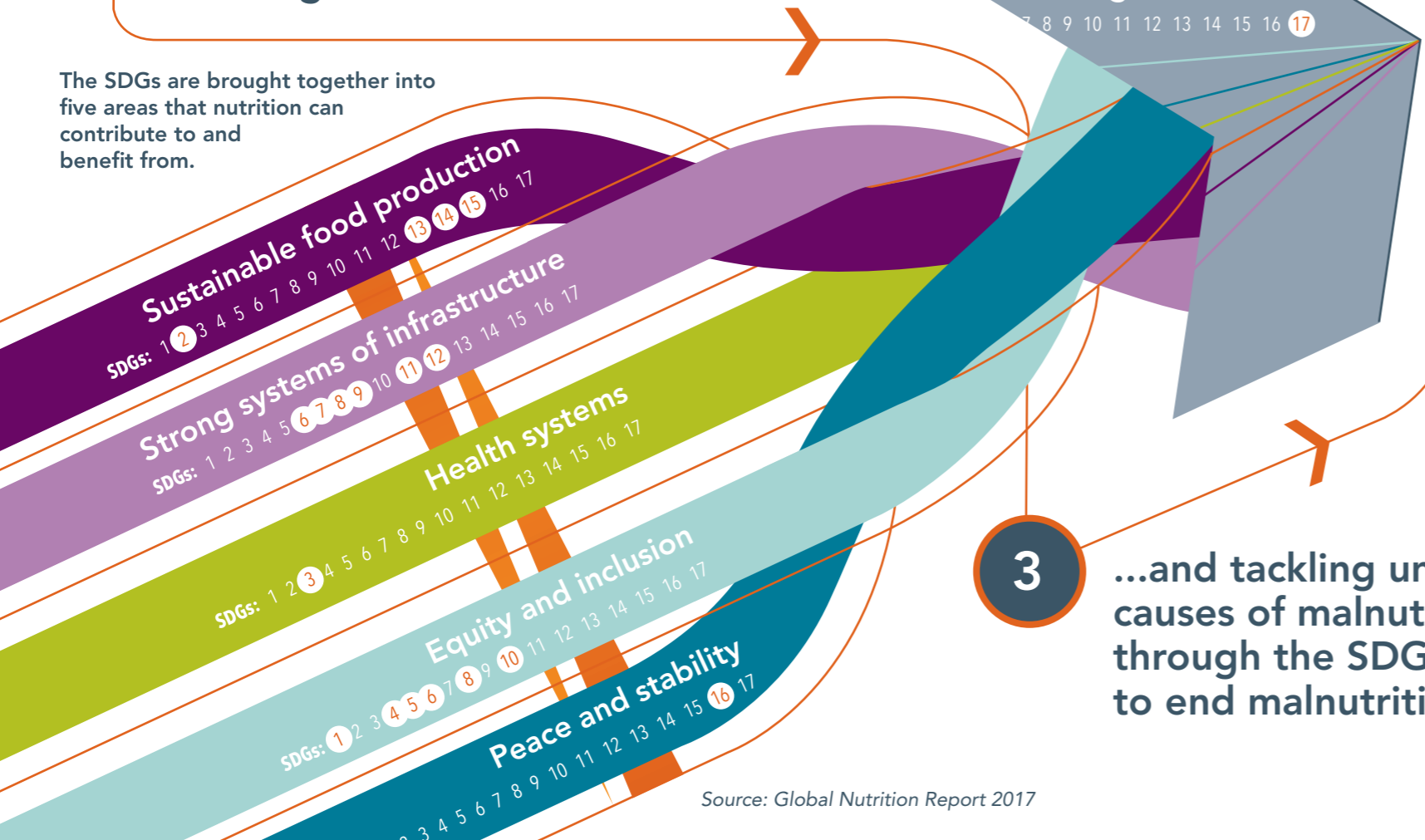
And the world is off track to meet all global nutrition targets

...but the SDGs present an unprecedented opportunity for universal and integrated change.

2

Improving nutrition will be a catalyst for achieving goals throughout the SDGs...

The SDGs are brought together into five areas that nutrition can contribute to and benefit from.



Source: Global Nutrition Report 2017

3

...and tackling underlying causes of malnutrition through the SDGs will help to end malnutrition.

4

There is significant opportunity for financing a more integrated approach to improving nutrition universally



Malnutrition has a high economic and health cost and a return of \$16 for every \$1 invested.



1 in 3 people are malnourished...

0.5%

...but global spending by donors on undernutrition is 0.5% of ODA...



0.01%

...and on NCDs and obesity is 0.01% of global ODA.

The bigger opportunity is for governments and others to invest in nutrition in an integrated way, across sectors that impact nutrition outcomes indirectly, like education, climate change, or water and sanitation.

5

To leave no one behind, we must fill gaps and change the way we analyse and use data

Data gaps are hindering accountability and progress. To improve nutrition universally we need better, more regular, disaggregated data.



6

We must make sure commitments are concrete pledges that are acted on

Deep, embedded political commitment to nutrition will be key to progress. Commitments need to be ambitious and relevant to the problem, leaving no-one behind.

7

There is an exciting opportunity to achieve global nutrition targets while catalysing other development goals

Double duty actions

Tackle more than one form of malnutrition

Will increase the effectiveness and efficiency of investment of time, energy and resources to improve nutrition

Triple duty actions

Tackle malnutrition and other development challenges

Could yield multiple benefits across the SDGs

Ending malnutrition in all its forms will catalyse improved outcomes across the SDGs

6. We must make sure commitments are concrete pledges that are acted on.

Without deep political commitment to nutrition that is rooted in the way governments govern, multilateral agencies coordinate, civil society engages and businesses are run, the act of making commitments to improve nutrition becomes nothing more than empty rhetoric. Accountability mechanisms must be designed to ensure that stated commitments are delivered in practice. Commitments need to be ambitious and relevant to the problem, leaving no one behind.

7. There is an exciting opportunity to achieve global nutrition targets while catalysing other development goals through 'double duty' and 'triple duty' actions.

No country has been able to stop the rise in obesity. Countries with burgeoning prevalence should start early to avoid some of the mistakes of high-income neighbours. There is an opportunity to identify – and take – 'double duty' actions which tackle more than one form of malnutrition at once. These will increase the effectiveness and efficiency of investment of time, energy and resources to improve nutrition. For example, actions to promote and protect breastfeeding in the workplace produce benefits for both sides of the double burden of malnutrition. Likewise, 'triple duty actions' which tackle malnutrition and other development challenges could yield multiple benefits across the SDGs. For example, urban food policies and strategies can be designed to reduce climate change, food waste, food insecurity and poor nutrition.

TAKING ACTION

To realise the opportunity to achieve the SDGs, there must be a critical step-change in how the world approaches nutrition. It is not just about more money; it is also about breaking down silos and addressing nutrition in a joined-up way.

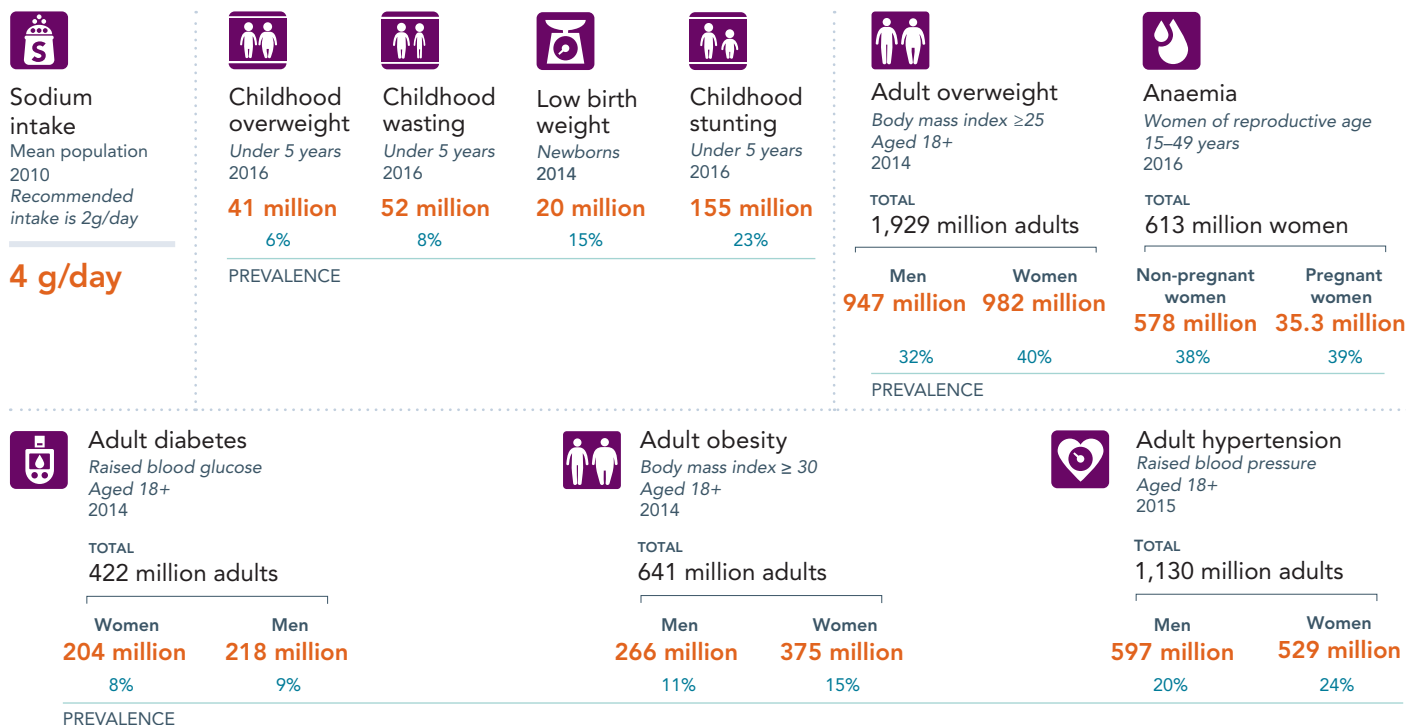
If you are a decision-maker or budget holder: seize the 'multiplier effect' that nutrition offers you to achieve the SDGs. Use this report as a springboard to seek more information on how nutrition can catalyse your outcomes.

If you are an implementer: let this report inform your work. Consider nutrition as you plan your programmes, as you measure your impact, as you gather data. Use data – including nutrition data – to inform stronger programmes and stronger SDG outcomes.

If you are an advocate: use this report as an advocacy tool, demonstrating the impact that can be achieved by investing in nutrition across the SDGs, and working in an integrated manner – 'for all and by everyone'. Use this report to push for genuinely SMART commitments that will make a difference at national and subnational level, and to hold those responsible for delivery to account.

If you are a researcher: help fill the evidence and data gaps holding back the global community's ability to tackle malnutrition. Help us to better understand which double duty actions are best placed to tackle undernutrition, obesity, overweight and NCDs. Help us to see how nutrition's power across the SDGs can be harnessed to address other key human development challenges.

Global statistics for the nutritional status and behavioural measures adopted as global targets for maternal, infant and young child nutrition (MIYCN) and diet-related NCDs



Source and notes: Global Nutrition Report 2017