



NUTRITION

WFP Cambodia

Background

In Cambodia, undernutrition remains a significant public health problem. Among children under five, 39.9% are chronically malnourished (stunted); 28.3% underweight; 10.9% acutely malnourished (wasted) and 55.1% anemic. Some 19% of women are undernourished.

Undernutrition during the first 1,000 days of life, from conception to two years of age, leads to irreversible damages in physical growth and cognitive development. Undernourished children are more likely to get sick, have trouble concentrating in school, have fewer opportunities to lead productive lives, and are more likely to have undernourished children when adults.

It is estimated that Cambodia loses between US\$250 million and US\$400 million (i.e. 1.5% to 2.5% of GDP) per annum to vitamin and mineral deficiencies, sub-optimal breastfeeding practices and maternal and child undernutrition.

The latest research has shown that a diet of accessible and affordable local products is insufficient in meeting daily nutritional requirements of young children, highlighting the need to increase availability of fortified supplements for the most vulnerable groups.

What we do

From 2004 to June 2014, WFP provided more than 19,000 tons of fortified Corn Soya Blend as monthly food assistance to respond to the specific needs of pregnant and lactating women, and young children.

To ensure a scalable, sustainable and transferable nutrition response, WFP decided to end its food assistance programme and instead transition from the distribution of imported specialized nutritious products to the development of a locally produced ready-to-eat fortified food supplement in collaboration with UNICEF and the Institut de Recherche pour le Developpement (IRD).

Adding to the global evidence on fortified rice, WFP is also engaged in various studies to assess the suitability, effectiveness and potential execution of fortified rice in the Cambodian context.

WFP is working with partners, including the Royal Government of Cambodia, NGOs and other UN agencies to develop sustainable food assistance models, strengthen nutrition research, promote nutrition outcomes, and inform national policy.



In 2011, WFP launched a new five-year Cambodia Country Programme that targets up to **2.76 million** people focusing on food based social safety net in the sector of education, nutrition and productive assets/livelihood support.

For further information visit: www.wfp.org/countries/cambodia

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WFP is working with partners to ensure Cambodian children receive all the nutrients they need to reach their full potential and build future generations in Cambodia.

Micronutrient supplementation – WFP has initiated the development of a locally produced, ready-to-eat fortified supplement to target women and children that fall within the “1000 days window of opportunity.”

This innovative approach has the potential to ensure wide-scale distribution to poor food insecure households through public health delivery mechanisms and social protection channels.

In the long-run, WFP will work with private sector partners to establish a sustainable distribution model ensuring market availability through social marketing.

Rice fortification – WFP, the Program for Appropriate Technology in Health (PATH), Dutch corporate partner DSM, and the France-based Institut de Recherche pour le Developpement (IRD), conducted a research project to build evidence on the impact of different formulations of fortified rice on nutrition, health, and cognition in Cambodian school children.

Among several interesting findings, the study revealed that children were less prone to fever and diarrhea and scored higher on cognitive tests after only six months of regularly eating fortified rice.

In addition, WFP is conducting an acceptability study and landscape analysis to evaluate the readiness of the Cambodian public to consume fortified rice and assess the appropriate supply chain and delivery mechanisms.

Parallel to these activities, WFP is working with the government to facilitate discussions among relevant stakeholders to establish standards and regulations to ensure safety and consistency.

HIV/AIDS and nutrition – WFP is finalizing the second edition of the Good Food Toolkit, to be used by healthcare workers and home-based care workers, to provide nutrition education to people living with HIV, including pregnant women and children. This project is in collaboration with the Core Group on HIV Nutrition, comprising the Cambodian Government, UN agencies and NGOs

Evidence building – WFP is collaborating with partners to conduct a Micronutrients Deficiencies Module attached to the “2014/15 Cambodia Demographic and Health Survey”.

WFP and UNICEF joined forces to document the economic consequences of poor nutrition in Cambodia. In early 2014, the Cost of Undernutrition was released which showed that not consuming the right micronutrients and minerals represents a burden of 1.5 – 2.5% of GDP annually or US\$250 million to US\$400 million annually.

WFP is also supporting a study on the analysis of micronutrients deficiencies in women of reproductive age. The results of this study are expected to be released in 2015.

Partnerships

- ◆ UNICEF
- ◆ Institut de Recherche pour le Developpement (IRD)
- ◆ Helping Address Rural Vulnerabilities and Ecosystem Stability (HARVEST) - USAID funded
- ◆ Program for Appropriate Technology in Health (PATH)
- ◆ CARITAS Cambodia
- ◆ Reproductive and Child Health Alliance (RACHA) Cambodia
- ◆ DSM (WFP corporate partner)