



Capability Statement

NUTRITION



THE CHALLENGE

Achieving a sustainable healthy diet is essential for the development and well-being of children, mothers, and all people globally. Nutrition is at the core of SDG 2 and access to adequate food is an internationally acknowledged human right; yet hunger and malnutrition persist at high levels. Malnutrition leads to physical and cognitive impairment, slows economic growth, and perpetuates poverty.

In 2022, 148 million children under five were classified as stunted, 45 million as wasted, and 37 million as overweight or obese globally, with undernutrition contributing to nearly half of their deaths.

Micronutrient deficiencies, often due to a lack of dietary diversity, especially iron, zinc, and Vitamin A, are a significant public health issue.¹







The already dire situation is worsened by climate change, rising inequality, conflicts, and the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic, all of which are closely linked to malnutrition and its impacts on food security, WASH, gender equality, health services, and governance. Therefore, integrated, multi-sectoral approaches are essential to address the immediate and underlying causes of malnutrition. Welthungerhilfe (WHH) has an overall mandate to fight hunger and poverty and promotes a systems approach.

RESULTS & KEY INTERVENTIONS

In 2024, WHH's 95 nutrition-related projects directly impacted 3 million people, with a budget of 36 million EUR invested in nutrition. WHH nutrition interventions include:

- **Infant and young child feeding practices** are enhanced by building skills of mothers and caregivers at the community level for better childcare and family behavior change.
- **Acute malnutrition treatment** by bolstering local health systems through e.g. app-based measurements, early identification of malnutrition cases, outreach, mobile clinics, therapeutic feeding, home follow-up, and nutrition counseling.
- **Targeted nutrition interventions** in emergencies include screening, referral of malnutrition cases, family-led MUAC, support for stabilization centers and Management of small and nutritionally at risk infants under six months and their mothers (MAMI).
- **Linking Agriculture and Natural Resource Management (LANN+)** is WHH's flagship approach that addresses sustainable food security through Participatory Learning and Action, helping families identify malnutrition drivers and plan resource.
- **Social and behavior change** promotes dietary diversification and optimal feeding practices through counseling sessions and community health clubs.

SNAPSHOT NUTRITION PORTFOLIO IN 2024²

	No. of countries with active nutrition projects	28 (in Africa: 17)
	No. of active projects with a nutrition component	95 (in Africa: 68)
	Total volume for nutrition interventions in active nutrition projects³	36,2 million EUR (in Africa: 23,8 million EUR)
	Average budget for nutrition interventions in active nutrition projects	381.000 EUR (in Africa: 350.000 EUR)
	No. of direct participants in active nutrition projects	3 million (in Africa: 1,5 million)
	Average project duration	36 months (in Africa: 35)

¹ <https://www.who.int/data/gho/data/themes/topics/joint-child-malnutrition-estimates-unicef-who-wb> & <https://data.unicef.org/topic/nutrition/malnutrition/>

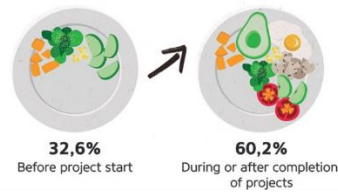
² Snapshot of Welthungerhilfe's Nutrition Portfolio as of August 2024

³ This figure is the total volume of all nutrition-related projects that are currently under implementation multiplied by the thematic weighting for nutrition interventions.

- **Nutrition Gardens and Sustainable Integrated Farming Systems (SIFS)** promote agroecological farming to increase access to diverse, nutritious food for vulnerable families.
- **Collaboration with schools** focuses on nutrition education, improving meal quality, and hands-on learning through school gardens.
- **Nutrition-sensitive value chain development** strengthens production and market linkages of underconsumed nutritious foods through private sector development.
- **Nutrition planning** includes strengthening institutions and nutrition services at the community level and advocating for a conducive governance environment at higher levels.

In continuing this work, WHH aims to continue strengthening the integration between nutrition-related interventions and other sectors, while improving existing capacities to address food systems as a whole.

What we have achieved Nutritional Diversity



An evaluation of 32 WHH projects implemented between 2014 and 2021 showed that the **share of women aged 15 to 49 years** who consumed a minimal diverse diet (at least five out of ten food groups) improved from 32.6 to **60.2 percent**.⁴

© Welthungerhilfe

Hunger and malnutrition are complex challenges. Sustainable food and nutrition security can only be realized if lasting and **systemic change** is pursued. This has motivated WHH to design and refine **Nutrition Smart CommUNITY** for more than 10 years. As one of WHH's largest project approaches, NSC combines activities from **agriculture, nutrition, WASH, community empowerment and gender** in one approach by catalytic impact. Together with **local partners** in rural communities, NSC is implemented particularly in regions severely affected by malnutrition. The project comprises a combination of **systemic measures** at various levels. The aim is to sustainably combat the causes of chronic hunger and malnutrition. It is based on the following four interlocking strategies: (1) promoting **behavior change** at the household level; (2) strengthening and supporting **community-based institutions**; (3) activating and improving **nutrition-related services** at the community level; and (4) advocating and promoting a cross-sectoral, community-based model for implementing the **right to adequate food**. The Nutrition Smart CommUNITY multi-country project in Southeast Asia reached more than 500,000 people in 486 villages. This included 35,000 children aged 6 to 36 months. Over the course of the project, sanitation practices increased by 30 percentage points, diet diversity by women increased by 25 percentage points and significant improvements in crop diversity were reported – all at a relatively low cost of around USD 10 per household. Currently the approach is scaled to 4 countries in Africa where similar achievements are expected.

WELTHUNGERHILFE'S STRATEGIC APPROACH

WHH aims to transform food systems for healthy and sustainable diets. Programmatically, the clear focus is on Programming towards Improved Nutrition guided by:

- **Nutrition program lens:** a nutrition lens is applied to most projects, enabling WHH to address the greater system's root causes that contribute to malnutrition.
- **Sectoral integration:** to bring all relevant sectors systematically to address malnutrition from a holistic perspective.
- **Collaboration and coordination:** with other sectors (e.g., health), various stakeholders, both public and private, at national and sub-national level with nutrition capacity and knowledge to address malnutrition more effectively and efficiently.
- **Capacity sharing:** internal and external capacity sharing, and support is provided to WHH and partners for better sustainability.
- **Contextual Analysis of Nutrition (CAN):** to explore nutrition practices in-depth, factors that contribute to malnutrition, trends of key nutrition metrics and mapping pathways to reach Food and Nutrition Security.

WHH promotes **systemic multi-sectoral program approaches**, working across sectors to address nutrition, including agriculture, WASH, livelihoods, food security, climate resilience, economic adaptation, and skills development.

Specifically, WHH collaborates with system actors in civil society, the private sector and government to foster **nutrition-sensitive and nutrition-specific** policies and programs. This effort is underpinned by **advocacy, civil society and governance strengthening**, and a focus on **making markets work for nutrition**.



NETWORKS & PARTNERS

WHH actively engages within the nutrition community via local, national, and international platforms. This includes UN coordination groups, national Scaling Up Nutrition (SUN) civil society and national nutrition clusters, international forums nutrition networks and engagement with stakeholders to ensure collaboration between important actors at all levels.

CONTACT

Simone Welte

Nutrition Advisor – Global Nutrition Team, simone.welte@whh.de
Sector Strategy, Knowledge & Learning Unit

Deutsche Welthungerhilfe e. V., Friedrich-Ebert-Str. 1, 53173 Bonn, Germany