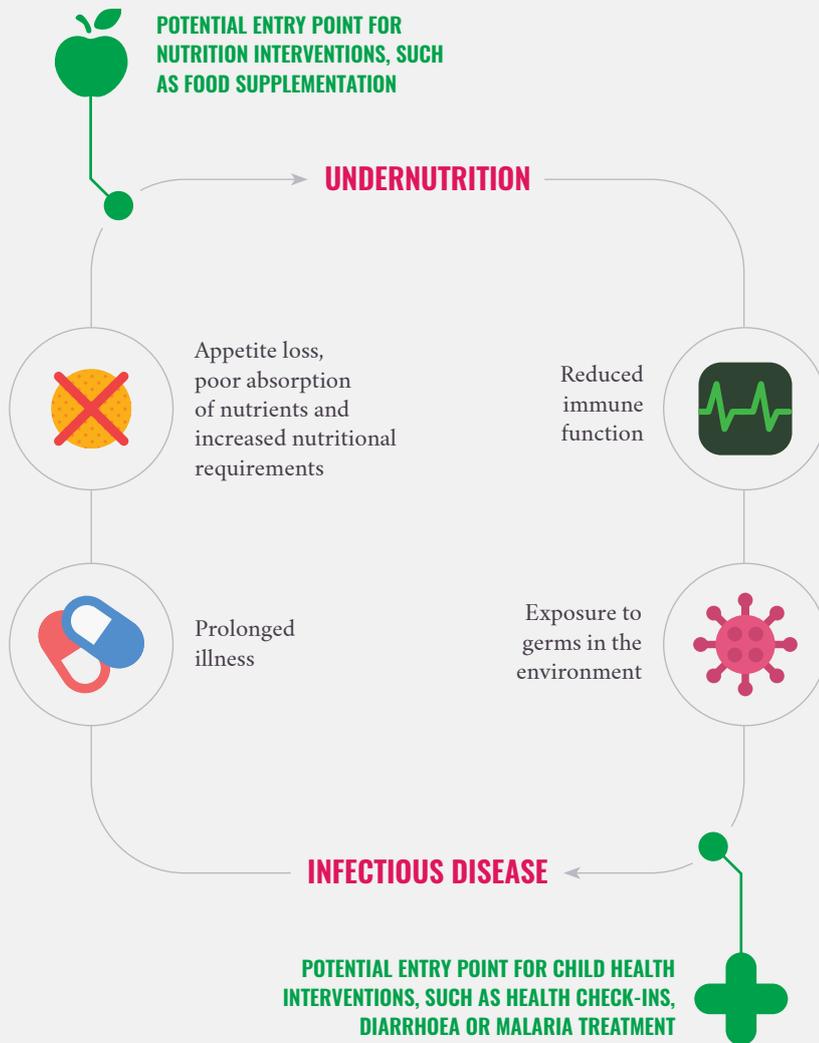




# NUTRITION AND CHILD HEALTH

## THE VICIOUS CYCLE OF INFECTION AND UNDERNUTRITION



Source: Adapted from USAID, 'Multisectoral Nutrition Strategy 2014-2025 Technical Brief: Role of Nutrition in Ending Preventable Child and Maternal Deaths'.

## IMPROVED NUTRITION CAN DISRUPT VICIOUS CYCLES OF UNDERNUTRITION AND INFECTION AND HELP CHILDREN DEVELOP STRONG IMMUNE SYSTEMS THAT WILL PROTECT THEM FROM THE THREATS OF ILLNESS AND INFECTIOUS DISEASE.

- Undernutrition is an underlying cause in 45% of all under-five deaths, and anaemia contributes to 20% of all maternal mortality.<sup>1,2</sup>
- Despite the strong links between nutritional status and mortality, less than 1% of Official Development Assistance is committed to nutrition-specific interventions.<sup>3</sup>
- A child who is stunted is 1.6 times more likely of to die from diseases such as diarrhoea, pneumonia, malaria or measles than an adequately nourished child.<sup>4</sup>
- A child who is severely wasted, or significantly thinner than other children their height, is 9 times more likely to die of those diseases than an adequately nourished child.<sup>5</sup>

**This vicious cycle can be broken through integrated nutrition and infection control programmes that can improve both child health and nutrition outcomes.** A recent study in Burkina Faso, which provided children 9-18 months of age with both complementary food supplements and weekly home visits for health check-ins, diarrhoea and malaria treatment, found that stunting rates decreased by 25% after only 18 months.<sup>6</sup>

### 3 GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING



Investments in nutrition are critical to the achievement of SDG 3 – “ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages” – and especially the targets on reducing national rates of neonatal and child mortality and global maternal mortality.

The Nutrition in the Global Agenda Series, issued by The Power of Nutrition, aims to clarify why and how investments in nutrition can maximise other development objectives and be a major pathway towards the achievement of the world's shared Sustainable Development Goals by 2030.



The Power of Nutrition is a charitable foundation whose primary focus is improving the nutritional welfare and care of young children and adolescent mothers in Africa and Asia. Visit [www.powerofnutrition.org](http://www.powerofnutrition.org) and follow @gofundnutrition to learn more about our work.

<sup>1</sup> Black, Robert E et al., 'Maternal and Child Undernutrition and Overweight in Low-Income and Middle-Income Countries', *The Lancet*, vol. 382, No. 9891, pp. 427-451, 3 August 2013.

<sup>2</sup> USAID, 'Multisectoral Nutrition Strategy 2014-2025 Technical Brief: Role of Nutrition in Ending Preventable Child and Maternal Deaths', last updated 3 December 2015.

<sup>3</sup> Shekar, Meera et al., 'Investing in Nutrition, the Foundation for Development: An Investment Framework to Reach the Global Nutrition Targets', World Bank Group, Results for Development Institute, the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, the Children's Investment Fund Foundation and 1,000 Days, April 2016.

<sup>4</sup> Black, Robert E et al., 'Maternal and Child Undernutrition: Global and Regional Exposures and Health Consequences', *The Lancet*, vol. 371, No. 9608, pp. 243-260, 19 January 2008.

<sup>5</sup> Black, et al. 2008.

<sup>6</sup> Dewey, Kathryn G., 'Reducing Stunting by Improving Maternal, Infant and Young Child Nutrition in Regions Such as South Asia: Evidence, Challenges and Opportunities', *Maternal & Child Nutrition*, vol. 12 Suppl. 1, pp. 27-38, 2016.