

**Pre-Budget Submission:**  
**NUTRITION INTERNATIONAL**

August 3, 2018  
Ottawa, Ontario

## Recommendations

- 1) Increase Canada's International Assistance Envelope (IAE) allocation to global nutrition from 3.6%, approximately 180M per year, to 5% as its baseline nutrition investment, approximately 270M per year.
- 2) Leverage Canada's leadership position to drive global investments in the lead up to Women Deliver 2019 and Nutrition for Growth in 2020, and emerge as the leading global nutrition investor<sup>1</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> Definition: largest government donor to nutrition as a proportion of the International Assistance Envelope

## Summary

Good nutrition is the foundation for human development. It is the critical ingredient every one of us needs to survive and to thrive. Without it, the brain cannot develop fully, the body cannot grow properly, and the immune system cannot function effectively. Human potential is stunted, success in education and efforts to fight infectious disease slip out of reach, and the cycle of poverty and inequality continues.

Canada is recognized around the world as a leader in nutrition and a champion for gender equality. Being among the largest per capita donors to nutrition has allowed Canada to drive the global agenda, rally international partners and save millions of lives. This leadership also led to the creation, in 1992, of a made-in-Canada global nutrition organization, known today as Nutrition International. Continuing this leadership can put real gender equality gains within reach, harnessing the power of nutrition to unlock women's and girls' potential.

Nutrition investments offer some of the highest returns on investment, at least \$44:1 (Horton & Hordinott, 2014), and fundamentally drive at least 12 of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (Development Initiatives, 2017). Investing in nutrition creates a virtuous circle that fuels improved health, education, economic empowerment, equality, and peace and stability.

From the production of 75% of the global supply of vitamin A capsules in Ontario to cutting-edge research in lentil fortification in Saskatchewan, Canadians lead on nutrition. That is why Nutrition International recommends that Canada (1) increase its International Assistance Envelope (IAE) allocation to global nutrition from 3.6%, approximately 180M per year, to 5% as its baseline nutrition investment, approximately 270M per year and (2) leverage its leadership position to drive global investments in the lead up to Women Deliver 2019 and Nutrition for Growth in 2020, and emerge as the leading global nutrition investor<sup>2</sup>.

## The Case for Nutrition Investments

1. **Malnutrition is a tax on human development that is paid overwhelmingly by women and girls.** It is the critical ingredient needed to ensure the brain develops fully, the body grows properly, and the immune system is able to function effectively. Without it human potential can be stunted for life. Women and girls face the greatest burden of malnutrition, as social norms result in their eating least and last, weak systems are ill-equipped to meet their needs, and political will to prioritize their nutrition is lacking.
2. **Malnutrition is the most prevalent and preventable global health challenge.** Nearly 2 billion people worldwide lack key micronutrients, 155 million children are stunted, and 2 billion adults are overweight or obese (Development Initiatives, 2017). No country is immune and many are burdened by two or more forms of malnutrition.
3. **Malnutrition is the leading cause of disability and death among adolescent girls** (World Health Organization, 2017). The voices of millions of girls are missing from our global conversation, silenced by malnutrition which affects nearly every aspect of their physical, social, and economic wellbeing.
4. **Nutrition is key to achieving the SDGs by 2030.** Nutrition is directly linked to achieving 12 of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (Development Initiatives, 2017). These include key indicators in education, health, peace and security, food security and climate change. The Global Partnership for Education's most recent report called for investments in the essential package of nutrition interventions

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<sup>2</sup> Definition: largest government donor to nutrition as a proportion of the International Assistance Envelope

needed to achieve global education targets (Bundy, 2018). Canada's nutrition investments are vital for securing success across its development portfolio.

5. **Nutrition solutions are proven and cost-effective.** Interventions to prevent and treat malnutrition are amongst the most well-established, low-cost, and successful at scale of any public health intervention. Vitamin A supplementation and universal salt iodization, two of Nutrition International's core interventions, are widely considered the greatest successes in public global health – saving lives and preventing disabilities for pennies per life reached.

## Canada's Legacy in Global Nutrition

1. **A Legacy of Nutrition Leadership.** Canada's multi-decade nutrition investments have allowed us to punch above our weight on the world stage, reaching millions with life-saving and enhancing interventions, and driving nutrition innovation. Canada's approach to global nutrition has resulted in bold action and results, brokering new multi-donor deals to address financing gaps, supporting national governments to sustain and fund their own programs, and maximizing Canada's impact and influence on the world stage.
2. **Leveraging the global nutrition organization that Canada built.** Canada's commitment to global nutrition and child survival led to the creation of Nutrition International, a leading global nutrition organization based in Canada<sup>3</sup>. Working alongside governments as an expert ally, Nutrition International combines deep technical expertise with a flexible approach to support the implementation of proven nutrition programs at scale. Nutrition International serves as a force-multiplier across the development ecosystem, brokering multi-sector partnerships at the highest levels, and increasing domestic resource allocation to drive sustainability.
3. **Canada's global nutrition leadership is fueled by Canadian businesses, academia, and practitioners.** Canadians are at the cutting edge of the global fight against malnutrition. Researchers at the University of Toronto have created new technologies to make foods fortified with key nutrients available to the most marginalized populations. Canadian businesses in Southern Ontario produce the Vitamin A capsules used to prevent child mortality in over 60 countries worldwide. Researchers at the University of Saskatchewan are developing new technologies to fortify Canadian lentils, harnessing Canada's market position as the lead global producer of lentils and exporter to South Asian markets.

## The Current State of Global Nutrition

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<sup>3</sup> Nutrition International was founded in 1992 as the Micronutrient Initiative.

### Gaps in financing and leadership

The 2015 World Bank “Investing in Nutrition” report estimated the cost of reaching the World Health Organization global nutrition targets (WHO, 2014) at \$US70B over 10 years/\$7B annually. Current all source investments in nutrition sit at \$US3.9B as of 2015 (Development Initiatives, 2017). Canada has been a global leader in its investments and achievements in nutrition, having invested at average of CAD\$180M/year since 2010, or 3.6% of total IAE funds.

Canada’s leadership has leveraged investments from other donors, including through the Nutrition for Growth movement, where it launched *the Action Agenda for Women and Girls Nutrition* with DFID and the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation in 2017. It has positioned nutrition within G7

Development narratives, including the 2018 G7 *Whistler Declaration on Unlocking the Power of Adolescent Girls for Sustainable Development*. It has also catalyzed initiatives like the African Leaders for Nutrition, who have witnessed the power of nutrition investments in their own nations, made possible in part through Canadian investments.

Global momentum for nutrition, however, cannot be taken for granted. Canada will face increasing pressure to fill financing gaps left by key G7 actors, and to spread its IAE envelope too thin to see real change. Canada can and should move to a 5% baseline for its nutrition investments, leveraging its nutrition credibility, and the linkages between nutrition, gender equality and the SDGs.

These investments should be made in proven interventions, with proven partners, while seeking opportunities to use Canadian commitments to bring new and existing partners to the table. Every Canadian development dollar should deliver significant impact aligned with Canadian objectives – while seeking to incentivize and scale domestic resource allocations by partner nations.

### Canada’s Nutrition Achievements Through Nutrition International

#### Annual Impact:

- > 150 million children reached with two doses of Vitamin A
- > 400 million people reached with iodized salt each year
- 1.2 M adolescent girls reached with weekly iron and folic acid supplementation (WIFAS) and nutrition education, helping them stay in school longer and remain healthy
- > 1M pregnant women reached with nutrition counselling, iron and folic acid (IFA) supplementation and a package of safe birth interventions

#### 25 years of impact:

- Averted 5 M child deaths
- Prevented 10M cases of stunting
- Averted 1.5 M cases of permanent mental impairments among infants

## Recommendations

1. **Increase Canada's International Assistance Envelope (IAE) allocation to global nutrition from 3.6% or 180M per year to a 5% baseline nutrition investment, or approximately 270M per year.** Since 2010, Canada has spent an average of \$180M a year (137.5M/year USD)<sup>4</sup> on basic nutrition, representing approximately 3.6% of Canada's total IAE envelope<sup>5</sup>. A budget increase would:
  - **Drive gender equality and the achievement of the SDGs.** Increasing Canada's investment in global nutrition will directly contribute to the achievement of the Feminist International Assistance Policy objectives by addressing key barriers to gender equality and undergirding Canada's other gender equality investments in health, education, climate change, and peace and security, while simultaneously contributing to improved global human capital, preparing the workforces and markets of today and the future.
  - **Provide unparalleled return on investment.** Proven nutrition interventions offer one of the highest returns on investment of any global health investments (Horton & Hordinott, 2014). Investments in stunting prevention, for example, yield a ratio of at \$44:1 per person reached, and as much as \$168 per person reached (ibid).
  - **Produce measurable results:** Through modeling developed by Nutrition International, and validated by Johns Hopkins University, we can model results for every dollar invested. As examples, an additional 100M investment could provide 120M additional people with fortified foods, or 10M more adolescent girls with the services they need to thrive.
  - **Reinvest in made-in-Canada solutions for global nutrition challenges.** Canada has built a global nutrition organization here at home, and fostered a community of nutrition innovators, researchers, and practitioners. An investment in global nutrition is an investment in the Canadian institutions and individuals at the forefront of the global fight against malnutrition.
  - **Reaffirm Canada's leadership on the world stage.** Increasing Canada's global nutrition investment will leverage and extend Canada's reach and influence on the world stage as Canada bids for a seat on the Security Council, by putting Canada within reach of becoming the leading global nutrition investor<sup>6</sup>.

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<sup>4</sup> These figures are based on an averaging of Canadian investments in basic nutrition, per OECD DAC code 12240, between 2010 and 2016. See <https://stats.oecd.org/>.

<sup>5</sup> This figure are based on an averaging of Canadian investments in basic nutrition, per OECD DAC code 12240, between 2010 and 2016, divided by the new IAE projection for FY2018/2019 of CAD 5.36B. See <https://ccic.ca/budget-analysis-2018/>

<sup>6</sup> Definition: largest government donor to nutrition as a proportion of the International Assistance Envelope

**2. Leverage Canada’s leadership position to drive global investments in the lead up to Women Deliver 2019 and Nutrition for Growth in 2020.** Canada’s leadership in nutrition and global health can and should be used to secure commitments to prioritize nutrition and scale up donor and government investments. Two key action forcing moments could be leveraged to achieve these new commitments:

- Women Deliver in Vancouver, Canada, where the eyes of the world will be on Canada and Canada’s plans to translate its expressed commitment to women and girls into concrete action and investment.
- Nutrition for Growth in Japan, the largest global meeting on nutrition, taking place just before the Security Council election for 2021.

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