



World Bank Group Scales Up Support for Global Nutrition Programs in Response to Stunting Crisis, Food Price Volatility

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WASHINGTON, JUNE 6, 2013 - The World Bank Group projects that it will nearly triple direct financing for maternal and early childhood nutrition programs in developing countries in 2013-14 to \$600 million, up from \$230 million in 2011-12. An estimated 90 percent of this new funding (\$540 million) will come from the International Development Association (IDA), the Bank's fund for the poorest countries. The announcement comes in the lead-up to the Nutrition for Growth High-Level Event on June 8 in London ahead of the G-8 Summit in Lough Erne, Northern Ireland, in late June. "Globally, 165 million children under age 5 are stunted as a result of malnutrition. This is the face of poverty," said Jim Yong Kim, President of the World Bank Group. "The UK government should be applauded for its leadership to scale up global investments in maternal and early childhood nutrition, one of the highest-return investments we can make to end poverty and promote shared prosperity." The projected increase is in addition to nutrition-sensitive investments the Bank Group is making in other sectors beyond health, such as agriculture, education, social protection, and water and sanitation. Amid continuing global food price volatility, the Bank Group also announced that it will review agriculture activities with a view toward improving nutrition outcomes, and noted excellent progress through the Global Agriculture and Food Security Program (GAFSP), where more than half of all GAFSP projects explicitly address undernutrition. The Bank Group will also step up technical and analytical support to countries with the greatest prevalence of stunting or underweight children, and add stunting as a new indicator on the Bank Groups Corporate Scorecard. During the past decade from 2002-12, IDA helped at least 52 million vulnerable mothers and young children receive life-saving and life-changing nutrition services. In response to the food crisis, IDA fast-tracked \$836 million through the Global Food Crisis Response Program (GFRP), offering cash-for-work programs, seeds and fertilizers, and food and other safety net support, while encouraging future resilience. Among the results in IDA countries: 923,000 children benefited from school feeding programs; 293,000 pregnant and lactating women received nutritional supplements and education; 696,000 children received nutritional interventions; 1.7 million people were employed as part of cash or food-for-work programs; 86,000 households benefited from cash transfer programs; 244,000 people received food rations; and 8.5 million farm households received seeds and fertilizers. Media Contacts
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