NUTRITION
Elimination of malnutrition is a government priority in Rwanda. Undernutrition causes stunted growth, poor health and impaired development, preventing children from reaching their full potential as adults. Good nutrition is therefore a prerequisite for sustainable development.

SITUATION

38% of children under five are stunted,¹ This causes irreversible damage to their physical and mental development.

Boys are significantly more stunted than girls – 43% compared to 33%.

Severe acute malnutrition (SAM) is low; only 0.6% of children under five affected.

However:

Over 15,000 children need lifesaving treatment each year.

Only 60% are receiving treatment.

19% - 1 out of 5 – women suffer from anaemia. This doubles their risk of death during or shortly after pregnancy.

37% of children under five are suffering from anaemia. This impairs their cognitive development.

TARGETS

By 2023, reduce stunting in children under five by 50%.

By 2023, 100% of all children with SAM are reached with quality treatment.

By 2023, reduce the percentage of women suffering from anaemia to less than 5%.

By 2023, half the number of children with anaemia.

CHALLENGES

Increasing coordination, monitoring and evaluation of multi-sectoral nutrition interventions.

Ensuring full coverage comprehensive nutrition interventions.

Increasing quality of nutrition services.

Men’s involvement in nutrition for their children.

Improving supply chain management of nutrition products to ensure availability.

Improving referral, management and follow-up of SAM cases.

Understanding barriers to accessing SAM treatment.

Improving the quality and use of ante-natal care services. This includes provision of iron-folic acid supplements for pregnant women.

Ensure that all young children are reached with micronutrient powders.

1 Stunted: Short for their age, impairing their physical and cognitive development.
2 Rwanda Demographic and Health Survey 2014-15 and HMIS Data
3 Health Sector Strategic Plan 4
4 Severe acute malnutrition: low weight for height, or mid- to upper-arm circumference < 11.5 cm
5 UNICEF Rwanda Country Programme Document 2018-23