

# Funding Nutrition: Building a Healthier Future

## The Value of Investing in Nutrition

Nutrition is vital for social and economic improvements in Uganda. Hence, critical actions are needed to strengthen policy and financing to improve nutrition.



- **15%** of child mortality is caused by malnutrition, and almost **82%** of childhood undernutrition cases go untreated by the health care system in Uganda.
- Childhood undernutrition and hunger cost Uganda up to **5.6%** of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) or UGX **1.8 trillion** every year.
- Stunted children have a higher risk of grade repetition, costing **19,655 million** UGX in 2009 or **1.8%** of the total national investment in education.
- Greater dollars (or shillings) for nutrition will turn into gains in healthy and productive life years. Uganda's Cost of Hunger study found that for every USD **\$1 spent** on nutrition, Uganda can save USD **\$30** through improved health and economic benefits.

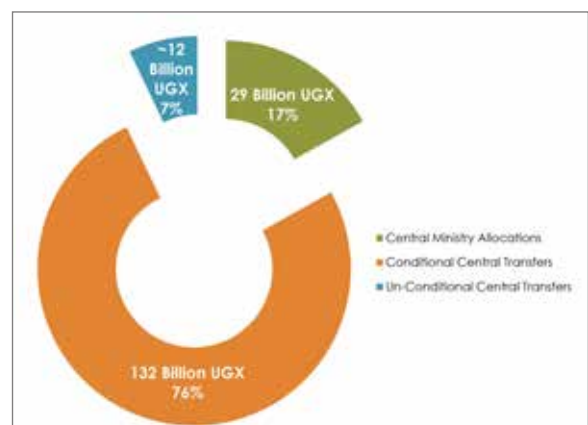
Sources: OPM and FANTA (2014) and WFP, UNECA, & AUC. (2013).



## The Current Context

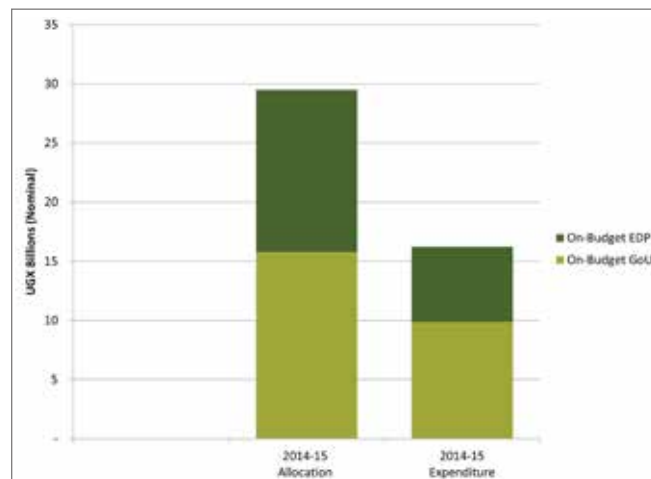
Between 2013 and 2015 the USAID-funded multi-sectoral SPRING project conducted a rigorous analysis of publicly available data on funding and expenditures for nutrition. The "Pathways to Better Nutrition" study revealed important details about the status of nutrition financing in Uganda.

- Funding did not increase over time.
  - Despite a growing need for support, on-budget nutrition funding (managed by the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development,) stayed about the same (27.2 billion UGX in the 2013-2014 budget and 29.5 billion UGX in the 2014-2015 budget).
- Nutrition funding was minimal compared to spending in other areas.
  - The government of Uganda spent **\$9 per child** under 5 on nutrition-specific activities.
  - Nutrition funding was only **1%** of national-level government budget (not including transfers to the district).
  - Nutrition funding made up 5% of the total development assistance to Uganda from external development partners.
- Most nutrition funding was not provided by the government and was off-budget
  - 63% of the funds available for nutrition in 2014-2015 were provided by non-government actors and were not included in the government budgets or managed through the treasury.
- The single largest contributions to on-budget nutrition funding were through central transfers.
  - However, there is significant confusion in how those funds were spent and how ministries contributed.



\*Footnote: SPRING was unable to validate the amount of unconditional funding allocated to nutrition, and therefore took the average of conditional transfers (13 percent).

- Government funding for nutrition was underspent
  - As illustrated in the graphic only around 50% to 60% of allocated government funding was spent each year, due to delayed release of funds or procurement delays. On-budget spending by external development partners varied greatly from year to year.
- Spending on nutrition at the district level is constrained - Only about 6% to 7% of spending in districts was on nutrition activities since the vast majority of district funds are earmarked at the national level.



## Strengthening the Power of Nutrition Funding in Uganda

There are a number of actions stakeholders can take to improve funding for nutrition:



- Increase opportunities for nutrition staff and budget staff to communicate at the national level, within sectors, and at the district level to improve work planning and budgeting for nutrition.
  - Train district officials on why and how to include nutrition in district work plans, institutionalizing the [National Nutrition Planning Guidelines for Uganda](#).
  - Reduce restrictions on district funding and improve reporting on the allocation of these funds.
  - Include nutrition as a priority in each sector's investment and development plans, and within each district's development plans.
- Institutionalize nutrition funding into the Ugandan budget to allow for more consistent and transparent funding from year to year by:
    - including the new nutrition planning guidelines in the budget-call circulars each year
    - naming nutrition as a budget line
    - applying tracking codes across sectors
    - setting targets for the percentage of a sector's yearly budget that should go toward nutrition.
  - Approve and implement the Uganda Nutrition Action Plan (UNAP) monitoring and evaluation framework, which includes nutrition-specific and sensitive indicators, to be able to track and compare progress.

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This document is made possible by the generous support of the American people through the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) under the terms of the Cooperative Agreement AID-OAA-A-11-00031 (SPRING), managed by JSI Research & Training Institute, Inc. (JSI) with partners Helen Keller International, the Manoff Group, Save the Children, and the International Food Policy Research Institute. The contents are the responsibility of JSI, and do not necessarily reflect the views of USAID or the United States Government.

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