



Global Malnutrition Prevention and Treatment Act (H.R.4693/ S.2956)

The Issue: Globally, **690 million people are undernourished** including women and children. More specifically, women and expectant mothers' nutrition is unacceptably low in the most vulnerable countries due to various factors, such as limitations to food access and gender inequality. All the while, **1 in 5 children suffers from malnutrition**. Multiple health organizations [estimate that in 2021](#):

- **149 million children** under the age of 5 are **too short for their age**
- **45 million children** are **too thin for their height**
- **39 million children** have **increased health concerns** due to poor and unhealthy diets.

Moreover, **nearly 14 million more children worldwide** will be **severely malnourished by 2022** due to recent changing weather patterns and the negative effects of the COVID-19 pandemic. For example, in Southern Madagascar alone, [half a million children are expected](#) to be **acutely malnourished due to the current drought and consequences of COVID-19**, such as limitations to food, markets and jobs.

The Solution: In order to create lasting global change, **it is essential to invest** not only in education, health and economic empowerment, but to **curb world hunger and malnutrition**, especially for women and children. **Improving women's nutrition is imperative** to ending malnutrition in all its forms. Providing these services and programs allows children the opportunity to **contribute to their communities** and become productive members of society in the future. Furthermore, for every \$1 invested in global nutrition, there is an estimated \$35 in economic return.

The **Global Malnutrition Prevention and Treatment Act** authorizes USAID to **advance programs that prevent and treat malnutrition around the world**, maintain multi-sectoral nutrition programs and ensure funding for these programs are being used effectively. Specifically, in accordance with the Foreign Aid Transparency and Accountability Act, the [Global Malnutrition and Treatment Act](#) will:

- **target resources and nutrition programs** to support vulnerable populations that are most at risk of severe malnutrition, including children under the age of 5, pregnant women and new mothers;
- **increase program coverage** to such countries that provide nutrient supplements, breastfeeding support, vitamin A supplementation, nutritious food products for acute malnutrition and other necessary evidence-based interventions;
- **further evidence-based programs** that utilize data-driven approaches, best practices and interventions targeted to individual country needs;
- **support partner governments and community health workers** to develop and advance policies and programs to prevent and treat malnutrition; and
- **improve diets** through safe, affordable, nutritious foods in the food system.

Supporters: The **bipartisan Global Malnutrition Prevention and Treatment Act** was introduced on July 26, 2021 by Reps. Meeks (D-NY-05), McCaul (R-TX-10), Kim (R-CA-39) and Houlahan (D-PA-06). The bill passed the Foreign Affairs Committee by voice vote on July 29, 2021. The **companion bill** was introduced in the Senate on October 7, 2021 by Sens. Coons (D-DE), Wicker (R-MS), Kaine (D-VA) and Boozman (R-AR)