

The impact of COVID-19 on malnutrition

One Virus, Many Consequences

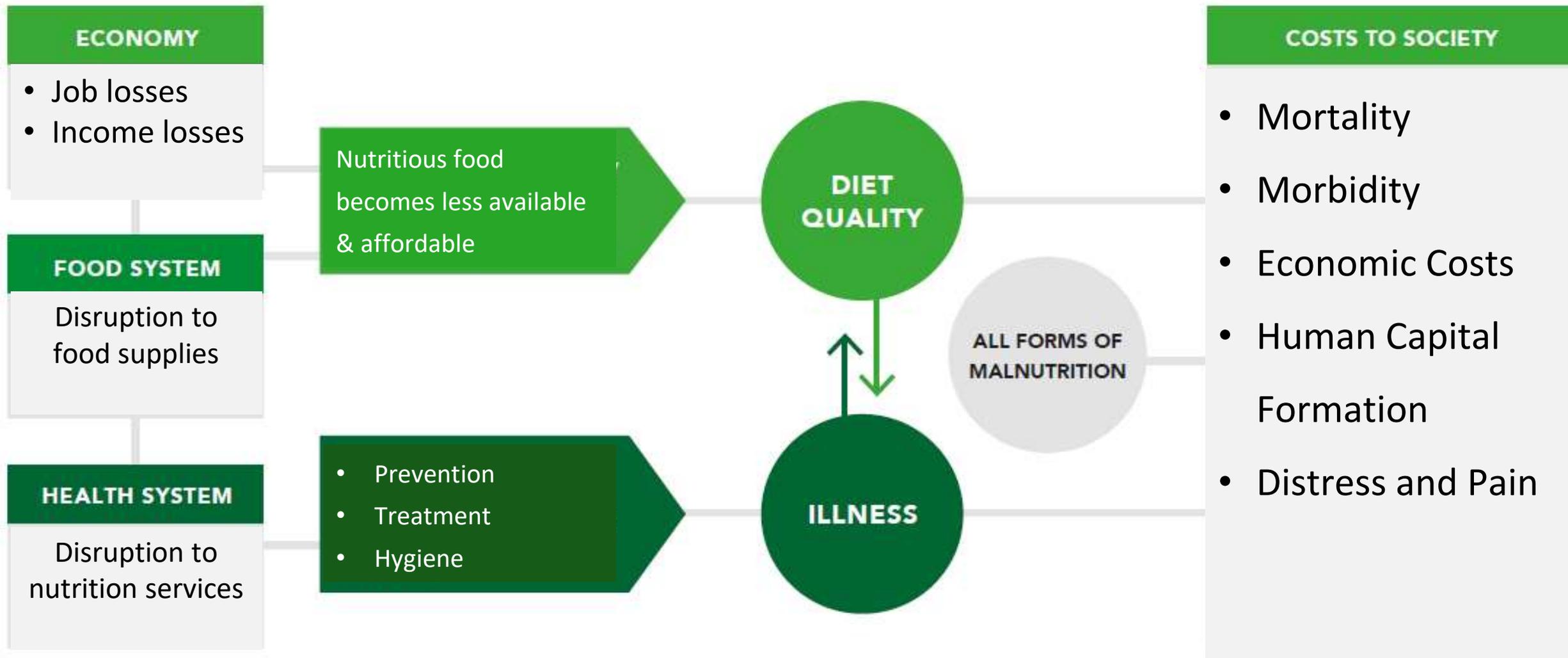
A Call to Action for the global nutrition and food systems research community to come together to connect and build evidence for nutrition action in the context of COVID-19.



Standing
Together for
Nutrition
(STfN)

Saskia Osendarp
Micronutrient Forum

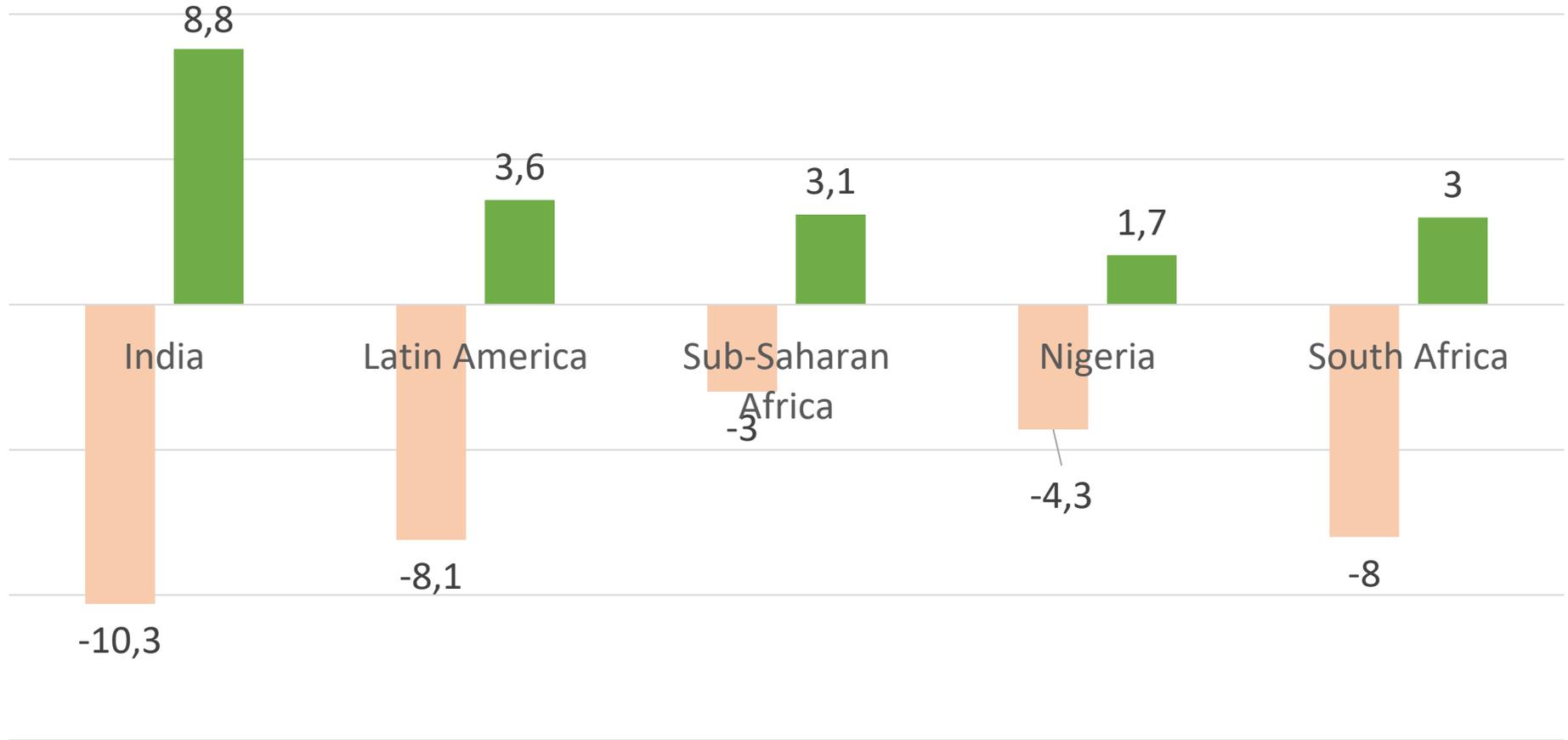
Conceptual Framework on how COVID-19 & Lockdowns Impact Malnutrition



GDP declines in 2020 will be large

Overview of the World Economic Outlook GDP Projections (% change)

(October 2020 Estimates)



2020 2021

Child malnutrition is strongly correlated with GDP per capita, while current projections predict an average 7.9% of GDP decline due to COVID19.

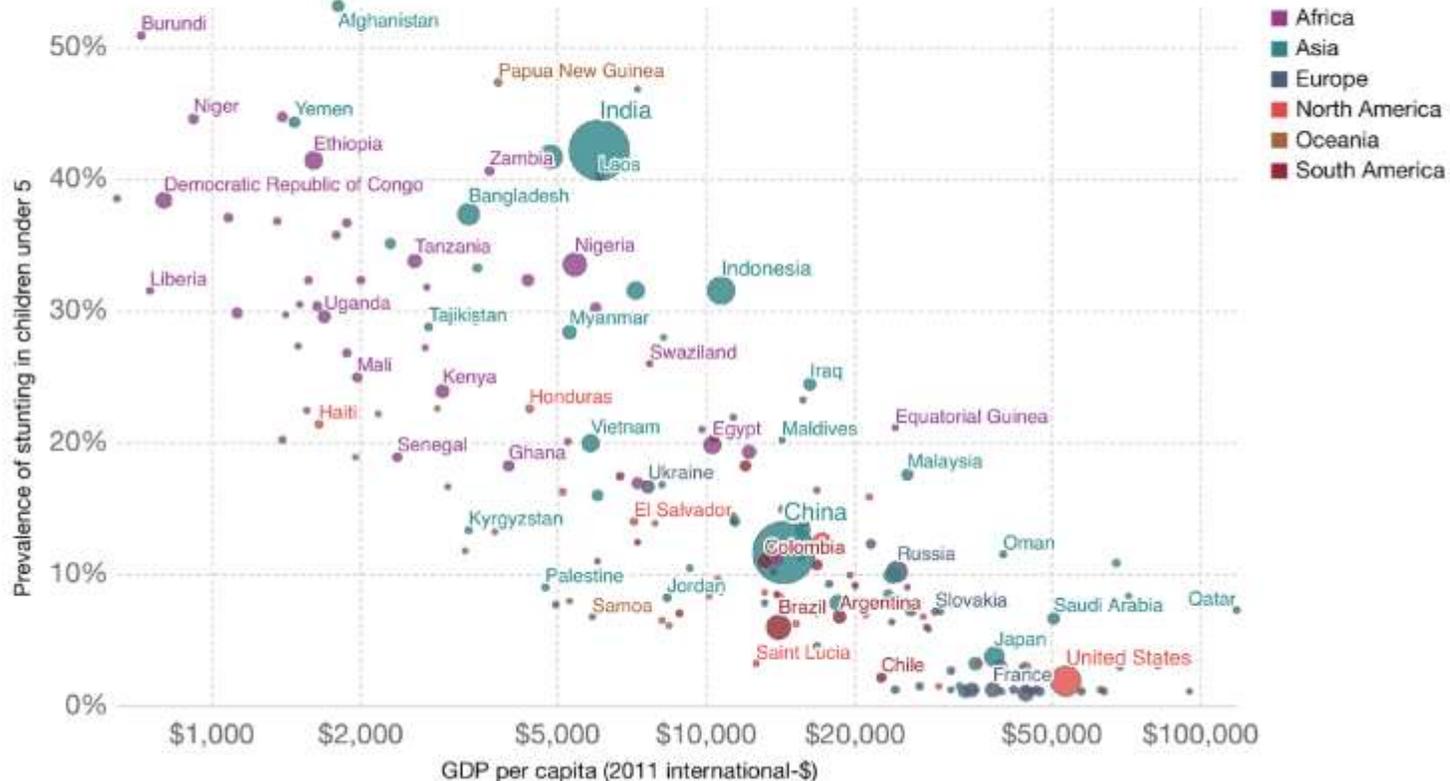
ECONOMY

Incomes
Food prices
Migration
Social Protection

Share of children who are stunted vs GDP per capita, 2016

Stunting measures the share of children younger than 5 years whose growth is severely impaired (two standard deviations below the median). It is a consequence of poor nutrition and repeated infection. GDP per capita is adjusted for price changes over time and between countries (presented in international-\$ in 2011 prices).

Our World
in Data



Source: IHME

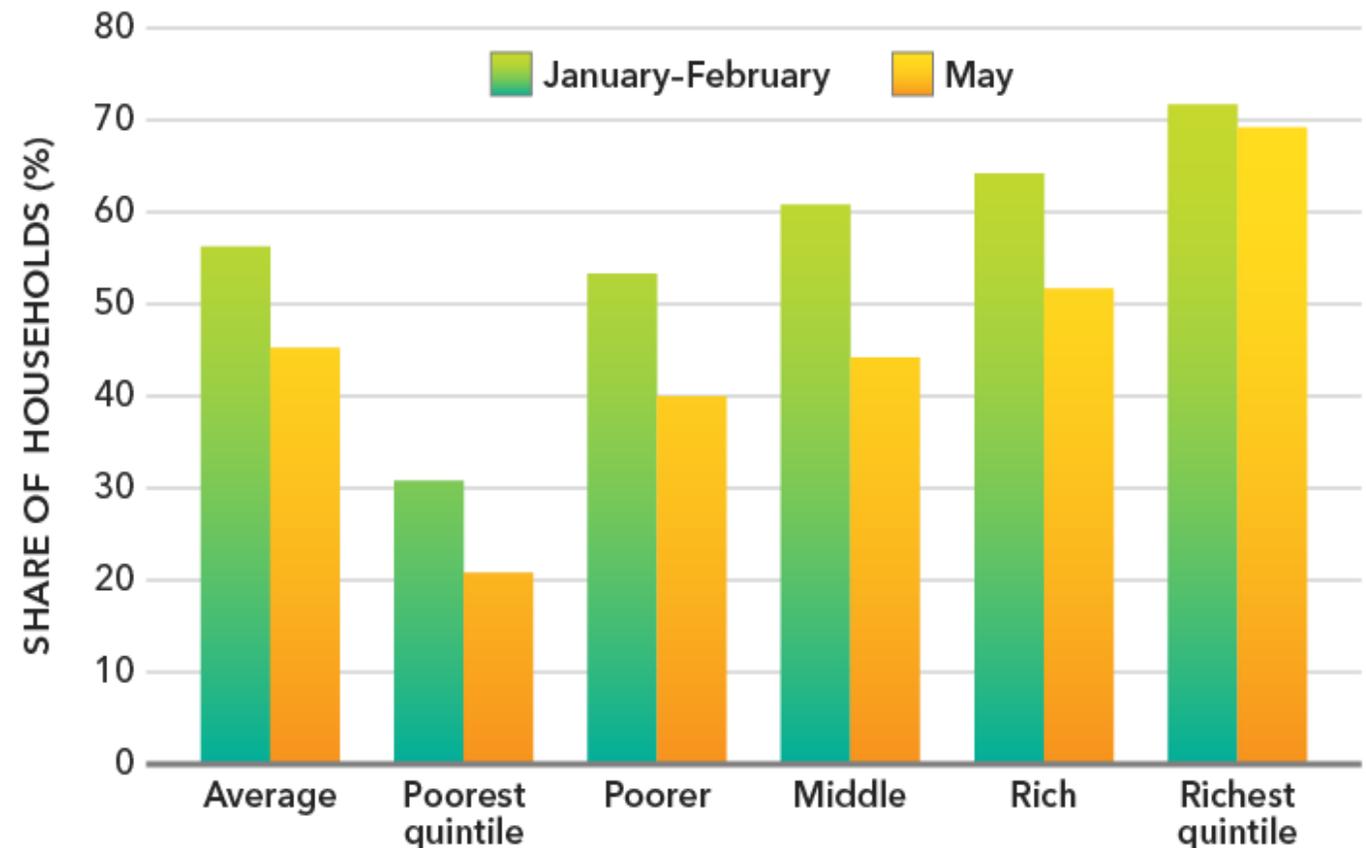
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Access to nutritious foods is affected by COVID19 measures

- Production of these foods is labor intensive and more impacted by physical distancing
- These foods are more likely to perish when markets are disrupted
- These foods are more expensive and the first to be dropped from the household menu when incomes fall

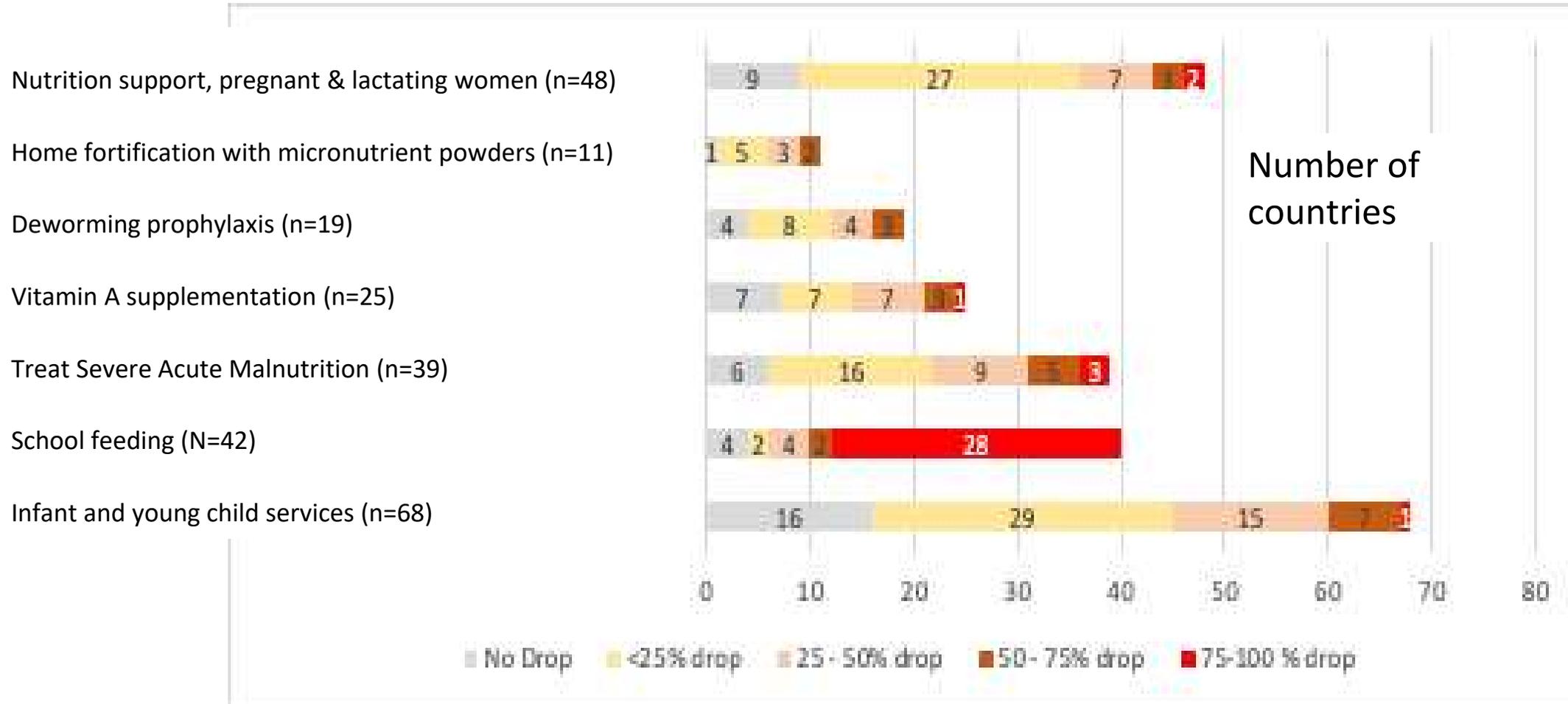


FIGURE 1
Dairy consumption in Addis, 2020,
January-February versus May

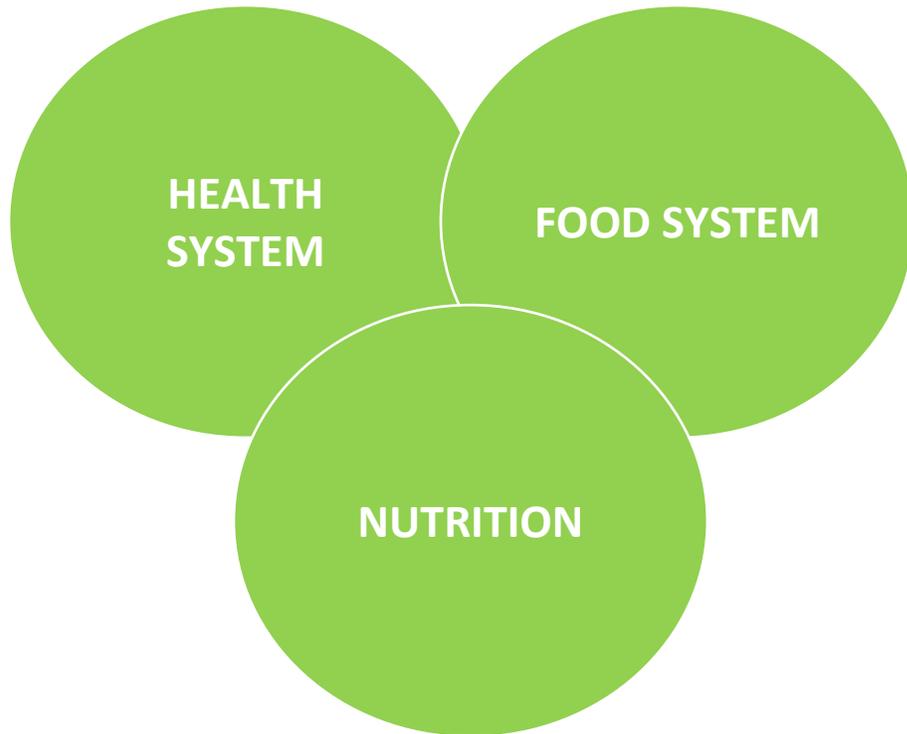


Source: Wolle et al. (2020); Hirvonen et al. (2020)

Essential nutrition services are disrupted by COVID and the lockdown



Standing Together for Nutrition Consortium

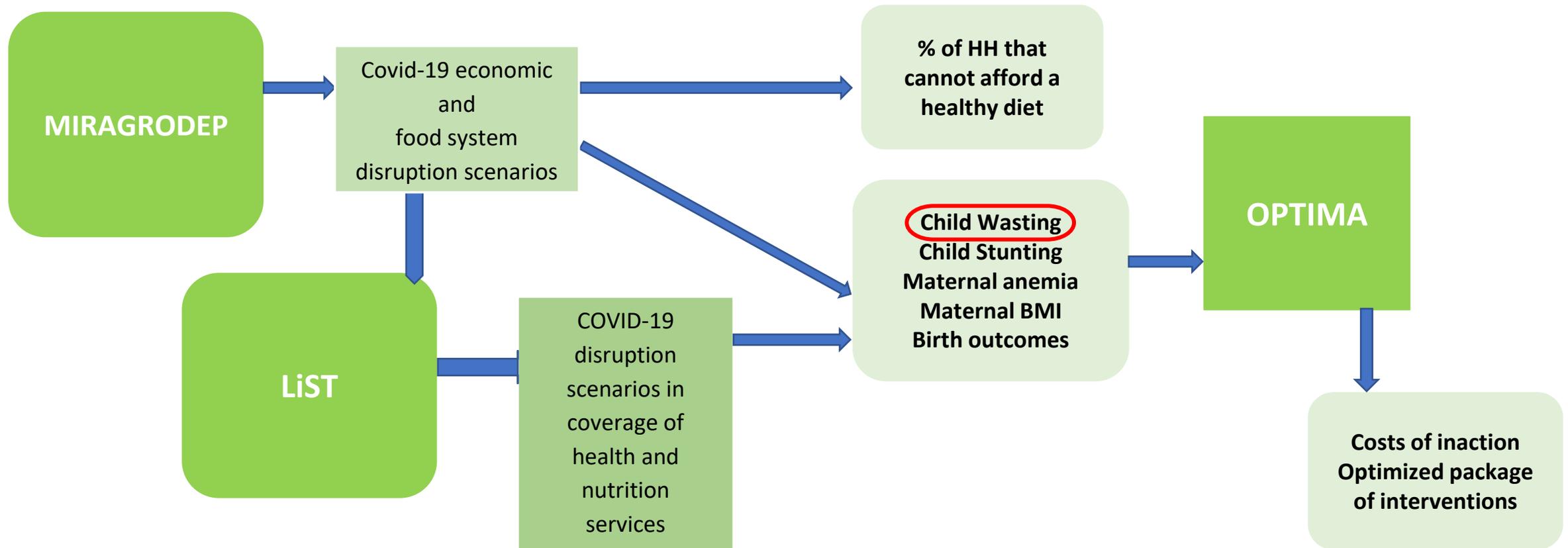


STfN is a unique collaboration that brings together experts from the fields of nutrition, food and health systems to work together to mitigate the damage of COVID-19 on malnutrition and build back better.

Standing Together for Nutrition Consortium

- Multi-disciplinary research consortium:
 - 55 coregroup members representing 35 organisations and covering the globe
 - Led by **Saskia Osendarp** (MNF) and **Lawrence Haddad** (GAIN)
- In response to COVID-19: tackling malnutrition is even more critical
- Lots of stakeholders involved: adopting an **inclusive approach**:
 - More than 590 signatories and counting from the research, program and implementation communities from all regions of the world committed to greater collaboration to strengthen data, models, and teams
- Aim: working to increase **investment in** and **political commitment to nutrition**, especially ahead of the **Food Systems Summit** and **N4G**
- Target audience: **Donors, Decision-makers** and **Governments**

Estimating the combined economic, food and health systems disruptions on malnutrition



Standing Together for Nutrition Consortium

- **Two publications** in The Lancet so far:
 - Technical Commentary on wasting, authored by the STfN consortium
 - Call to Action on the impact of COVID-19 on malnutrition, authored by the leaders of four UN Agencies (WFP, WHO, UNICEF, FAO)

THE LANCET



THE LANCET



Child malnutrition and COVID-19: global coverage

NEWS WEBSITE OF THE YEAR
The Telegraph Coronavirus News Politics Sport Business Money Opinion Tech Life Style Travel Culture
UK news World news Royals Health Defence Science Education Investigations Global Health Security

Pandemic fallout will leave 6.7m children dangerously undernourished, Unicef warns

The report is the latest in a series of grim predictions about the knock on effects of the pandemic on the world's poorest communities

10:37 p.m. ET, July 27, 2020



Nearly 7 million more children could suffer from acute malnutrition due to Covid-19 pandemic, analysis says

From CNN's Gisela Crespo



The Washington Post
Democracy Dies in Darkness

Virus-linked hunger tied to 10,000 child deaths each month

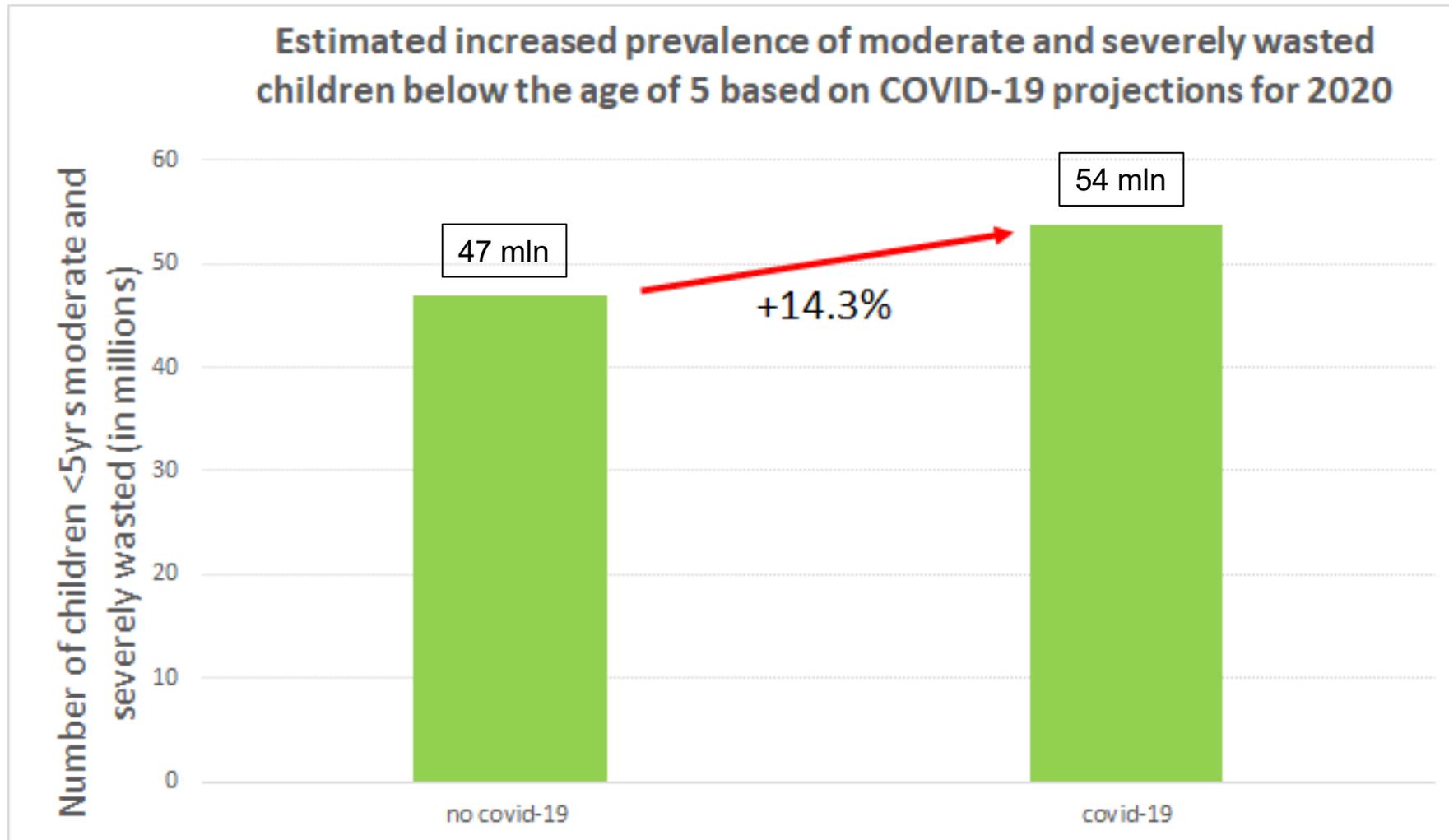
AP

Virus-linked hunger tied to 10,000 child deaths each month

By LORI HINNANT and SAM MEDNICK July 27, 2020

The two *Lancet* commentaries were widely shared on social media: [Child Malnutrition and COVID-19: The Time to Act is Now](#) was shared 866 times across social media platforms; and [Impacts of COVID-19 on Childhood Malnutrition and Nutrition-Related Mortality](#) was shared 170 times across all social media platforms and was in the top 5% of all research outputs scored by [Altmetric](#).

COVID-19 could result in an additional 6.7 million children with wasting in 2020.



COVID-19 could result in around 130,000 additional deaths in children < 5 yrs in 2020

- Combined increase in wasting and a change in coverage of nutrition and health services (see Robertson et al., 2020) results in a significant number of additional deaths:

Change in coverage of health and nutrition services	-15%	-25%	-50%
Additional deaths	111,193	128,605	178,510

Coverage in health and nutrition services includes: treatment of severe wasting, Vit A supplementation, promotion of improved young child feeding, provision of micronutrient supplements to pregnant women

- 80% of these deaths will be in Sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia



Without timely action, 6.7M additional children will become wasted in 2020 as a result of COVID-19

Stunting, micronutrient deficiencies, overweight, and lives lost will also increase drastically without immediate investments

THE TIME TO ACT IS NOW.

**STANDING TOGETHER
FOR NUTRITION**

Join us at StandingTogetherForNutrition.org

Upcoming publication with new results:

- The impact of COVID-19 is modelled for several diet and nutrition outcomes:
 - Child stunting
 - Child wasting (updated)
 - Anemia during pregnancy
 - Maternal low BMI
 - % of population that cannot afford a healthy diet
 - Child mortality
- Using a pessimistic, moderate and optimistic scenario for 2020, 2021 and 2022 based on:
 - Changes in GNI
 - Changes in coverage of essential nutrition services
- With costed recommendations on how to mitigate and build back better

Call to Action: Child malnutrition and COVID-19: the time is to act now

A Call to Action by the leaders of the four UN Agencies: WFP, UNICEF, FAO and WHO.

A minimum of US\$2.4 billion is needed for four live-saving interventions:

1. Prevention of wasting in children at risk
2. Treatment for wasted children
3. Biannual vit A supplementation for children aged 6-59 months
4. Mass campaigns for breastfeeding

Reduced health services due to COVID-19
has created a minimum need of

US\$2.4B¹ to



¹The Lancet: Child Malnutrition and COVID-19: The Time to Act is Now

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Call to Action: Five other urgent actions to protect children's right to nutrition in the COVID-19 pandemic:

- Safeguard and promote **access to nutritious, safe and affordable diets**
- Invest in **improving maternal and child nutrition** through pregnancy, infancy and early childhood
- **Re-active and scale up services** for the early detection and treatment of child wasting
- Maintain the **provision of nutritious and safe school meals** for vulnerable children
- **Expand social protection** to safeguard access to nutritious diets and essential services

Thank you

"Standing Together for Nutrition represents a global coming together of experts who are deeply worried about the impacts of the COVID-19 crisis on the nutrition status of the most vulnerable. Working together, using their databases, models, and vast field experience they have given us a clear picture of the horrifying consequences of the crisis if we fail to act and have given us clear recommendations on the actions needed to be taken immediately to avert this tragedy in the making."

DR. LAWRENCE HADDAD
GAIN

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[StandingTogetherforNutrition.org](https://StandingTogetherForNutrition.org)

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