

Support U.S. Leadership on Global Nutrition

Please join Senators Boozman and Cardin in sending the below letter to President Obama to support U.S. leadership on global nutrition efforts at the upcoming *Nutrition for Growth Summit* before the G-8 in June.

Every year 6.9 million children die of preventable and treatable causes. Undernutrition is attributed to one-third of those child deaths. Without adequate nutrition, 165 million children every year are stunted and face irreversible physical and cognitive damage that limits their abilities to succeed in school and become productive earners.

U.S. nutrition investments that focus on the first thousand days, from pregnancy to a child's second birthday, not only saves lives, but also contributes directly to other development outcomes, including improved economic growth for countries.

Please join us in asking President Obama to maintain U.S. support for plans in poor countries to strengthen nutrition interventions and to commit to developing a nutrition strategy to coordinate and align U.S. nutrition efforts across accounts.

A copy of the letter is below. If you need further information or would like to sign on, please Toni-Marie Higgins in Senator Boozman's office at 4-4843 or toni-marie_higgins@boozman.senate.gov or Algene Sajery in Senator Cardin's office at 4-4524 or algene_sajery@cardin.senate.gov

The Honorable Barack Obama
The White House
Washington, DC 20500

Dear President Obama:

As members of Congress committed to reducing hunger, advancing food security and improving global health, we urge your administration to maintain the strong U.S. commitment at the *Nutrition for Growth* summit being convened by the UK Government on June 8, 2013 in London. This event presents a key opportunity for the U.S. to continue to demonstrate its leadership on nutrition.

Malnutrition remains one of the world's most pressing but preventable problems. Globally, nearly 200 million children are chronically malnourished and suffer from serious, often irreversible, physical and cognitive damage. For 2.5 million young children every year, malnutrition is a death sentence.

While the human and economic costs of under-nutrition are enormous, the solutions are basic, proven, and cost-effective. Nutrition programs – especially those that target women and children during the critical 1,000 day window from pregnancy to age two – offer one of the best returns on

investment. Every \$1 invested in nutrition generates as much as \$138 in better health and increased productivity. In contrast, malnutrition can cost individuals up to 10 percent of their lifetime earnings and countries up to 11 percent of their annual GDP in lost productivity.

We capitalize on other international development investments when we address nutrition. An undernourished child has a diminished capacity to learn and work, therefore, malnourishment puts at risk the potential for continued progress in education, health, and economic growth around the world.

On June 8th, global leaders – from donor and developing countries, foundations, civil society and the private sector – will gather at *the Nutrition for Growth* summit in advance of the G8 Summit to commit to tackling malnutrition. This is a unique opportunity to leverage U.S. leadership on these issues and we urge your administration to seize this opportunity by:

1. pledging support for plans in poor countries to strengthen and expand nutrition interventions;
2. developing a whole-of-government nutrition strategy to coordinate and align U.S. nutrition efforts; and
3. committing to transparency and accountability by reporting and tracking U.S. investments in nutrition across programs and accounts.

The U.S. has a strong, bipartisan history of supporting international nutrition and food security efforts. Such interventions strengthen our national security and the security of our allies. We urge you to make the most of this opportunity by continuing the tradition of U.S. leadership to fight malnutrition.

Sincerely,

CC. The Honorable John Kerry, Secretary of State
The Honorable Rajiv Shah, USAID Administrator
The Honorable Tom Vilsack, Secretary of Agriculture