



NUTRITION ON THE RISE:
RAISING KENYA'S FUTURE

A MULTIMEDIA PRESENTATION

SCRIPT

LONG VERSION

(20 MINUTES)

NUTRITION ON THE RISE: RAISING KENYA'S FUTURE

LONG VERSION: 20 MINUTES

► Slide 1: Click Forward

As we look back across the decades in Kenya, we have witnessed some remarkable changes...

► Slide 2: Click Forward (music starts)

More couples are using family planning, with use of modern methods increasing from 15 percent in 1989 to 53 percent in 2014.¹

More children are surviving—with child deaths dropping from 89 per 1,000 births in 1989 to 52 per 1,000 births in 2014.²

Our economy is growing—with income rising from 120,000 Kenya shillings per person in 1993 to 240,000 Kenya shillings per person in 2013.³

And we are better connected—with about 32 million subscribers using cell phones today.⁴

WE...are a nation on the move!

BUT.....there is one challenge where we are sadly behind...

► Slide 3: Click Forward

.....malnutrition in mothers and children, which continues to impose a staggering cost to the nation—despite having the solutions.

► Slide 4: Click Forward

As of 2014, malnutrition contributes to the deaths of more than **35,000 children under the age of 5 each year in Kenya**—or about one out of every two child deaths.⁵

► Slide 5: Click Forward

One of the indicators of malnutrition is called stunting.....a term I'm going to use throughout this presentation. Stunting means that a child is shorter than normal for his or her age. Stunting happens over time, and can be caused by inadequate maternal nutrition, poor feeding practices, or substandard food quality as well as frequent infections, which can slow down growth.

► Slide 6: Click Forward

So what has the experience and research on nutrition programs taught us over the years?

It's taught us three reasons why it's important to invest in nutrition programs.⁶

► **Slide 7: Click Forward**

The first is that nutrition is a smart investment, because it helps children survive and reach their full potential, providing a lifetime of benefits!

► **Slide 8: Click Forward**

Secondly, nutrition is a smart investment because it accelerates progress on key national health targets.....including reducing deaths and illnesses in mothers and children.

► **Slide 9: Click Forward**

...and thirdly, nutrition is a smart investment, because it accelerates progress on key economic development targets for the country.

► **Slide 10: Click Forward**

It's rare that one investment can achieve this many goals.

Nutrition interventions add value to all of our other investments, taking them up to the next level.

So how **do** nutrition investments help achieve **these three** goals?

► **Slide 11: Click Forward**

Well, the story starts in the 1,000 day window of opportunity between pregnancy and a child's first two years. This period becomes the "best shot" at helping a child reach his or her potential.....and sets the stage for life.⁷

Let's take a closer look at just how critical this period is...

► **Slide 12: Click Forward**

Starting in the womb, before birth, the fetus is at risk if the mother lacks essential vitamins, minerals, and nutrients needed for brain, bone, and organ development. More than half of all women in Kenya suffer from anemia during pregnancy, which can cause health problems for the baby.⁸

Once the baby is born.....from birth to the first six months, early and exclusive breastfeeding without adding any other foods or liquids is the very best way to ensure a healthy baby...

And after the first six months of life, adding sufficient quantities of nutritious solid foods along with continued breastfeeding is absolutely necessary to make sure that the child grows correctly.....most stunting happens in **this** critical period.

► **Slide 13: Click Forward (gong sound)**

(Pause during gong sound)

.....THERE IS NO GOING BACK

The cost of malnutrition during this 1,000 day window is almost always irreversible...

► **Slide 14: Click Forward**

- Damage to the brain, leading to poor educational performance and lower IQ
- Poor growth and development, and... surprisingly...
- This early deprivation increases a child's risk of developing chronic diseases as an adult.⁹

► **Slide 15: Click Forward**

Chronic diseases like diabetes, high blood pressure, and heart disease requiring continued medical attention and care later in life.¹⁰

(Pause)

Another huge challenge is that malnutrition in children can happen and persist for years.....and we can't always see it.

► **Slide 16: Click Forward**

These two little boys are both from the same village.....can you guess how old each boy is?

Both boys are the same age.....they are both eight years old.....but, they show very different levels of development.

The little boy on the left is stunted owing to poor nutrition.....and it's unlikely that he will ever catch up and reach his full height.....or his full potential like his taller village playmate on the right.

► **Slide 17: Click Forward**

The invisible nature of chronic malnutrition also sets up a pattern that we see happening generation after generation...

► **Slide 18: Click Forward**

This intergenerational cycle of growth failure starts with a malnourished woman.

► **Slide 19: Click Forward**

This mother is malnourished and at a greater risk of complications during pregnancy and childbirth. She also has a greater risk of delivering an infant with low birth weight.¹¹

► **Slide 20: Click Forward**

.....like this baby girl, who is at higher risk of illness and death, and at higher risk of delayed emotional and intellectual development, and...

► **Slide 21: Click Forward**

.....she is also likely to suffer from growth failure in those important, early developmental years which....

► **Slide 22: Click Forward**

...in turn lead to low weight and stunting in the teen years.....those **teen years** that are critical for growth and development, and the time when adolescents gain almost 50 percent of their adult body weight and 20 percent of their adult height.

► **Slide 23: Click Forward**

And that takes us back to our malnourished woman.....And the cycle of poor nutrition continues generation after generation.

► **Slide 24: Click Forward**

Adolescent pregnancy also increases the risk of low birth weight and adds to the difficulty in breaking the cycle.

Unfortunately, we see this cycle of growth failure happening over and over with families across the country...

► **Slide 25: Click Forward**

Why does Kenya continue to have such a serious malnutrition problem?

► **Slide 26: Click Forward**

One big reason is that mothers and caregivers simply don't know how to feed their infants and children appropriately. There is not a good understanding of when to start solid foods, and what kinds of foods to prepare to help the body grow correctly.¹²

► **Slide 27: Click Forward**

Another reason the country is plagued with so much malnutrition is inadequate food and nutrition security at the household level.¹³ Many families do not have access to food or sufficient quantities and it is not distributed equally among family members.

And this is **not** just a phenomena of the northern counties where they have been suffering from drought!

► **Slide 28: Click Forward**

Lastly, inadequate access to quality health services, especially by the poor and more vulnerable populations, means that these populations are more susceptible to illness and infectious disease, all of which can inhibit food absorption and contribute to malnutrition.¹⁴

► **Slide 29: Click Forward**

Turning now to our Google Earth Satellite map, we're going to zoom in on Kenya and start our tour of the country coming in to the bustling city of Nairobi. You may recognize the Kenyatta International Conference Center or KICC on the left side of the screen.

► TELEPORT

As we travel a little to the west of KICC, we find ourselves in the middle of Kibera..... a densely populated informal settlement with poor living conditions. Here, malnutrition affects the lives of most families, with more than half of children stunted.¹⁵

Although the rate of malnutrition definitely increases with poverty, it is **not** a problem that is unique to the poor...

► TELEPORT

For instance, as we fly over one of the wealthy suburban areas in Nairobi—with its lush green trees, big houses, and large swimming pools—it is easy to assume that children who live in wealthy areas do not suffer from malnutrition. How could there be malnourished kids in this neighborhood? Yet, about 14 percent of children born to rich families in Kenya are also malnourished.¹⁶

Clearly, malnutrition can affect all children regardless of social or financial status.

► TELEPORT

As we travel outside of Nairobi, we discover that—similar to the wealthy suburban neighborhood—malnutrition continues to have a strong presence in the most unlikely areas...

Like here, in the western region of Kenya where the abundant rainfall supports the farming and agricultural industry, which serves as the main livelihood for most residents in the area. But, despite the abundance of food, including nutrition-rich fruits and vegetables, malnutrition is widespread here as well, with more than one-quarter of children stunted.¹⁷

It is clear that wealth and geography are not enough to evade the expansive reach of malnutrition.

So how is Kenya doing in reducing malnutrition?

► **Slide 30: Click Forward**

For several years, the rate of chronic malnutrition, or stunting, stagnated at around 35 percentbut a 2014 survey revealed that we **are** making progress...

► **Slide 31: Click Forward**

...Stunting has now dropped to 26 percent.

► **Slide 32: Click Forward**

Although chronic malnutrition is decreasing, about one in four children under five still suffer from stunting!¹⁸

► **Slide 33: Click Forward**

The big news is that the exclusive breastfeeding rate has dramatically improved.

► **Slide 34: Click forward**

In 2003, only 13 percent of children under sixth months were exclusively breastfed, which rose to 32 percent in 2008. But by 2014...

► **Slide 35: Click Forward**

...61 percent of children under six months are exclusively breastfed!¹⁹ Quite an achievement!

Unfortunately, we have not seen the same positive gains in other areas. For instance...

► **Slide 36: Click Forward**

According to the World Health Organization's recommendations, after the sixth month of life, children must be fed a variety of foods to make sure they receive all the nutrients they need.²⁰

► **Slide 37: Click Forward**

But, the most recent national survey shows that four in five children are not receiving the right foods.²¹ Many are eating only starches, and they are not eating those vitamin rich fruits and vegetables, or animal source foods like meat, fish, and eggs that provide the bodies' basic building blocks.

(Pause)

But making progress is possible!

(Pause)

We know we can overcome these challenges because.....

► **Slide 38: Click Forward**

We know what makes a difference!

Five well-tested sets of interventions can protect mothers and children²²beginning with.....

► **Slide 39: Click Forward**

Ensuring that pregnant mothers receive vital micronutrients, such as iron and folic acid, which can increase the likelihood of a safe and healthy pregnancy.

► **Slide 40: Click Forward**

Secondly, making sure that babies are put to the breast the first half-hour after birth and are breastfed exclusively for the first six months.

(Pause)

► **Slide 41: Click Forward**

.....Thirdly, that mothers start giving a variety of healthy foods after the first six months of life, in sufficient quantities, along with continued breastfeeding through two years and beyond.

► **Slide 42: Click Forward**

Next we need to ensure that mothers and children have access to the right **amount** of foods(pause)

► **Slide 43: Click Forward**

.....and the right **variety** of foods.

► **Slide 44: Click Forward**

And that they have access to foods rich in vitamins and minerals.....and they are **consuming** those essential vitamins and minerals regularly.

► **Slide 45: Click Forward**

And lastly, making sure that parents and caregivers get information on improved feeding and health care practices, and the support that they need to feed their children in the best way possible.

(Pause)

► **Slide 46: Click Forward**

.....Research shows that nutrition investments are a “best buy” in today’s financially strapped environment...because investments in nutrition pay for themselves.

► **Slide 47: Click Forward**

Healthy nutrition during the 1,000 day window produces a lifetime of benefits for individuals, families, and nations. [And that includes producing stronger football players!!]

► **Slide 48: Click Forward**

Healthier children complete more years in school and have better performance, which leads to increased personal income and can add at least 10 percent to lifetime earnings.²³

► **Slide 49: Click Forward**

Since healthy nutrition in the 1,000 day window can increase educational performance, well-nourished children grow into a more productive labor force as adults..... and that can mean a boost in GDP growth by as much as 11 percent annually for the country.²⁴

► **Slide 50: Click Forward**

And if we look at the cost-to-benefit ratio— the cost of key nutrition interventions compared with the savings—investment in nutrition produces returns up to 16 times greater than the initial investment.

► **Slide 51: Click Forward**

In other words, for every 100,000 Kenya shillings spent on key nutrition interventions....

► **Slide 52: Click Forward**

.....we would generate 1.6 million Kenya shillings in economic returns.²⁵

► **Slide 53: Click Forward**

In fact, scaling up vitamin and mineral interventions alone, could add more than **200 billion Kenya shillings** to the GDP each year.²⁶ So scaling up nutrition interventions can go a long way toward generating broad-based wealth.

(Pause)

As we look ahead to see how we might progress more rapidly, we recognize that...

► **Slide 54: Click Forward**

Today, there are unprecedented opportunities to make a difference and scale up nutrition interventions.....more than ever before.

► **Slide 55: Click Forward**

We have a new National Food and Nutrition Security Policy (pause).....

► **Slide 56: Click Forward**

and a new nutrition action plan to implement our nutrition policy that is designed to focus our objectives and guide us in scaling up the most effective interventions.

► **Slide 57: Click Forward**

.....and we have the Kenya Vision 2030, in which reducing malnutrition is crucial to achieving our national development goals.

► **Slide 58: Click Forward**

We now have a devolved system of governance where leaders in 47 counties can work more closely with local populations to identify nutritional and food security needs and scale up interventions.

► **Slide 59: Click Forward**

We have established a mandate to ensure that foods like, vegetable oil, maize meal, wheat flour, and sugar are well fortified in essential vitamins and minerals...

► **Slide 60: Click Forward**

And we have exciting new movements like the “SUN” which stands for “Scaling Up Nutrition”—a global effort aimed at bringing country and global leaders together to fight against malnutrition.²⁷

Kenya has been a SUN member since 2012.....and we are joining more than 50 countries and over 100 international organizations and donors to.....for the first time.....rally around a common agenda and solutions, with the goal of mobilizing broad commitment and resources to advance our nutrition agenda.

► **Slide 61: Click Forward**

Malnutrition is a national problem.....

.....finding solutions must be a shared responsibility (Pause)

► **Slide 62: Click Forward**

We ask that you speak out and help us advocate for reducing malnutrition in your communities and constituencies.....drawing attention to the urgent nutritional needs of pregnant women and their unborn children and to the importance of community programs to support appropriate nutrition practices.

► **Slide 63: Click Forward**

We ask you to ensure that key nutrition interventions are integrated into development strategies across all sectors, including Treasury, Education, Devolution and Planning, Agriculture, Livestock and Fisheries, and Environment, Water, and Natural Resources.

► **Slide 64: Click Forward**

We ask you to help mobilize more funds for nutrition interventions from government..... specifically, **we need increases for nutrition in the budgets for the Ministries of Health and Agriculture, and we need to establish explicit budget line items** devoted to nutrition at the county level if we are serious about making a difference with malnutrition.

► **Slide 65: Click Forward**

....And we ask that you help us coordinate programs and policy efforts for nutrition among the different ministries and stakeholders. One first step is to support groups like the SUN Civil Society Alliance, which is working to better ensure that nutrition interventions among multiple organizations mutually support and reinforce one another across the country.

(Pause)

We can't afford to lose **any** opportunities.

► **Slide 66: Click Forward**

By investing in simple, cost-effective interventions like appropriate maternal, infant and young child nutrition practices...

► **Slide 67: Click Forward**

We can:

- Ensure that every child reaches his or her full potential;
- Reduce illness and deaths in mothers and children;
- And help ensure stronger economic growth in the future.

► **Slide 68: Click Forward**

By staying positive and working together

(Pause)

.....we can **build** on our past achievements

(Pause)

We can **scale up** nutrition for those **most** in need.....

(Pause)

And we can **wipe out** malnutrition in Kenya once and for all.

[Note: Hold on the last photo of little boy with his thumb up until the music stops.]

► **Slide 69: Click Forward**

**Nutrition is Key.
Take Up Your Role.
Act Now!**

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