

PAVING THE WAY TO COMBAT MALNUTRITION:

Kenya's national preparations for the 2025 Paris N4G Summit

Introduction

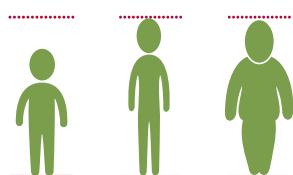
On March 27th and 28th, 2025, France hosted the Nutrition for Growth Summit (N4G) in Paris. Launched in 2013 in London, N4G is a flagship international conference aimed at securing concrete political and financial commitments to combat malnutrition in all its forms. N4G brings together governments, international organisations, philanthropies, businesses, NGOs and other key stakeholders at a global and regional level to elevate nutrition as a key development agenda and accelerate progress against malnutrition. In preparation for the 2025 Nutrition for Growth (N4G) Summit, The Global Alliance for Improved Nutrition (GAIN) in collaboration with The Scaling Up Nutrition (SUN) Movement, the Ministry of Health of Kenya, and other stakeholders, hosted several dialogues over the past months bringing together participants representing a diverse array of sectors, including civil society organizations, private sector (e.g. food production businesses), policy-makers and media. The primary objective was to mobilize and inspire Kenyan government representatives to review and develop Kenya's commitments for the 2025 N4G Summit while reflecting on the commitments it made as a nation during the 2021 Summit.

These dialogues contributed to ongoing efforts to strengthen multi-stakeholder collaboration in food systems policy implementation. Key priorities included integrating nutrition into health programs, enhancing cross-sector coordination, and drawing lessons from past commitments and increasing awareness of the future N4G commitments. Discussions focused on evaluating progress, identifying gaps, and emphasizing the need for greater investment in nutrition to combat malnutrition and hunger. Participants also explored strategies to implement impactful nutrition interventions to enhance health outcomes and foster sustainable development in Kenya.



Context:

Despite being the largest economy in East Africa¹, Kenya carries a triple burden of malnutrition: the coexistence of concerning rates of undernutrition (stunting, wasting and overweight); micronutrient (vitamin and mineral) deficiencies; and overweight or obesity.



Among children under five, rates of wasting are at **5%**; stunting at **18%**; and overweight or obesity at **3%**. More than half of child morbidity and mortality cases result from **zinc, iron, and vitamin A** deficiencies.²

The main forms of micronutrient deficiencies in Kenya include **vitamin A, iron, folate, vitamin B12, iodine, and zinc** deficiencies.³



Kenya is estimated to lose **Ksh 374 billion** – the equivalent of **6.9%** of its Gross Domestic Product (GDP) – annually due to undernutrition.



The estimated health cost of undernutrition in 2021 was **USD 212 million**, with most of the costs being associated with the requirement to nutritionally rehabilitate underweight children through therapeutic feeding.⁴



Given the importance of healthy diets for good nutrition, improving the consumption of healthier diets in Kenya can deliver both **nutritional** and **economic benefits** for the country. It is hoped that these challenges can be addressed through the development and implementation of N4G commitments. To this end, it is important to strengthen partnerships between stakeholders, including the private sector.

GAIN has worked in Kenya since 2010. The interventions mainly focused on supporting the government of Kenya to introduce mandatory food fortification. This resulted in the fortification of Wheat flour, maize flour and edible oil. Some of GAIN's recent work includes the CASCADE program (Catalysing Strengthened Policy Action

for Healthy Diets and Resilience), implemented by CARE and GAIN in countries like Kenya. CASCADE aims to improve access to healthy diets and enhance resilience to economic and climate-related shocks, particularly for women, children, and adolescents.



1 The Cost of Hunger in Africa (COHA) continental report Social and Economic Impact of Child Undernutrition (2019)

2 [GAIN Kenya Business Plan, 2023-2027](#)

3 KNMS. The Kenya national micronutrient survey. 2011.

4 COHA Continental report 2021



INSIGHT 1

Learnings from the 2021 N4G Summit to better prepare for 2025 N4G summit

The first N4G nutrition dialogue in Kenya focused on discussing progress on the implementation of the commitments made during previous N4G Summits and identifying challenges that hindered their effective implementation. A key issue highlighted was low awareness of the previous N4G Summit, its opportunities, and the commitments made by the government in 2021. Another was the issue of insufficient community engagement. This latter was attributed to knowledge gaps among community-based organizations and private sector stakeholders regarding the broader nutrition context and the ongoing nutrition challenges. A bigger challenge was financing the commitments both by the government and other diverse set of stakeholders.

To strengthen the development and execution of commitments for the 2025 N4G Summit, participants outlined a comprehensive framework emphasizing inclusive community engagement, robust monitoring mechanisms, and enhanced collaboration among public and private sector actors to promote a more systematic approach to addressing malnutrition. The group proposed specific actions to help address past implementation gaps and improve likelihood of achieving the intended objectives:

- 1. Establish a dedicated support team** to help with planning, framing and tracking N4G commitments effectively. Such a team would also ensure the relevant stakeholders are involved in the implementation of the commitments.
- 2. Finalize the national roadmap and budget**, ahead of Kenya's engagement at the N4G 2025 Summit, ensuring alignment with national priorities with post-summit engagement actions
- 3. Conduct national consultative meetings and community dialogues.**
- 4. Launch media and communication campaigns** to raise awareness and engage the public on N4G goals and progress made in the country.
- 5. Engage with embassies and high commissions to foster collaboration in preparation to participate in the summit.**

By adopting these measures, participants aim to ensure that the 2025 N4G Summit fosters meaningful, inclusive, and actionable commitments that drive sustainable improvements in nutrition for all in Kenya.





INSIGHT 2

Drafting Kenya's Roadmap for the 2025 N4G Summit and Advancing Universal Health Coverage (UHC)

The second meeting built upon the discussions from the first, focusing on the development of a draft roadmap for Kenya's engagement in the 2025 N4G Summit. Participants delved deeper into the country's healthcare challenges and strategies, aligning on specific actions to strengthen Kenya's commitment to advancing Universal Health Coverage (UHC). In this discussion, the triple burden of malnutrition was articulated as a major public health issue.

Key challenges highlighted, included the fragmented implementation of siloed programs among diverse partners and the inadequacy of resources to support nutrition initiatives effectively. To partially address these issues, stakeholders proposed to strengthen learnings through a public health learning forum to showcase evidence-based progress on health and nutrition. It was also proposed to strengthen the Nutrition Interagency Coordination Committee as a platform for multisectoral engagement.

Conclusion

These productive discussions highlighted commitment and readiness among different important stakeholders to address Kenya's pressing nutrition challenges and advance its nutrition agenda. By reflecting on past experiences and collaboratively developing actionable solutions, stakeholders demonstrated a shared determination to ensure that Kenya's N4G commitments will be comprehensive, measurable, and impactful. In the 2025 N4G Summit, experts gathered to finalize Kenya's nutrition commitments. We anticipate that these commitments will not only address the nutrition challenges the country is facing but also reflect bold steps toward building a healthier and more sustainable food system.

References

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3. The Cost of Hunger in Africa (COHA) continental report Social and Economic Impact of Child Undernutrition ([2019](#))
4. State of the World Food and Nutrition Security Policy, 2024
5. [Kenya Demographic Health Survey report \(2022\)](#)
6. The Kenya national micronutrient survey, KNMS, [2011](#).

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