



Joint News Release

3 July 2018

Mali joins call for increased efforts to end the plight of child undernutrition

Bamako, Mali – The economy of Mali is losing 265 billion CFA francs (US\$450 million) – more than 4 percent of annual GDP – to the effects of child undernutrition, a multi-agency study has found. The *Cost of Hunger in Mali* (COHA), blames the losses on increased healthcare costs, additional burdens on the education system and, further down the line, reduced workforce productivity.

The new study findings also show that:

- 47 per cent of the adult population in Mali were affected by stunting as children
- 34 per cent of infant mortality cases in Mali are associated with undernutrition
- 21 per cent of cases of school grade repetition are due to stunting

The study was undertaken by the government of Mali, under the leadership of the [African Union Commission \(AUC\)](#), in collaboration with the [New Partnership for Africa's Development \(NEPAD\) Agency](#), [United Nations World Food Programme \(WFP\)](#), and the [UN Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean \(ECLAC\)](#). It was made possible by the generous support of the Government of Canada.

The *Cost of Hunger in Mali* calls for nutrition to be made a national priority in national plans, as well as increased resource mobilization to ensure implementation of these plans.

Mali's Minister of Economy and Finance declared "These results demonstrate the urgency for Mali to mobilize more efforts to significantly reduce child malnutrition in order to achieve the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)". He called for increased commitment to achieve the nutrition targets contained in the global 2030 Agenda and Africa Agenda 2063.



As highlighted by the findings of this important study, “malnutrition is an obstacle to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals” said Silvia Caruso, WFP Director and Representative in Mali. “Reducing rates of malnutrition in general and stunting in particular is no longer a choice, but an imperative to finally see Africa rid of malnutrition and all the scourges associated with it, understanding that it is economically profitable to invest in fighting it” she concluded.

The *Cost of Hunger in Africa* study has so far been conducted in 12 countries: they have been shown to suffer losses associated with child undernutrition that range from 1.9 percent to 16.5 percent of GDP.

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