

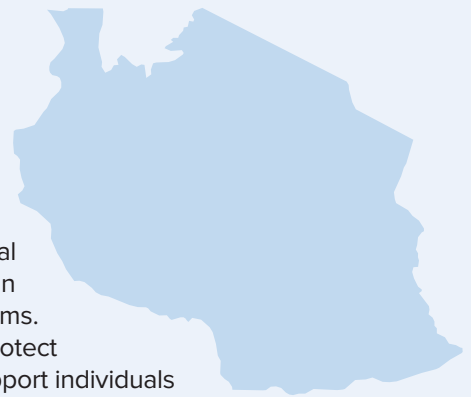


# Social Protection for Improved Nutrition Outcomes in Tanzania

2022/2023

## 1 BACKGROUND

The second National Multi-sectoral Nutrition Action Plan (NMNAP II 2021/22–2025/26) has identified social protection as one of the important systems for realization of positive nutrition outcomes. Understanding this importance, the Government through the Prime Minister Office and Tanzania Food and Nutrition Centre in collaboration with USAID Advancing Nutrition developed this brief to create awareness on the link between social protection and nutrition. This document also highlights opportunities that can be leveraged to improve nutrition outcomes through social protection systems. The social protection system comprises policies, programs, and actors to protect vulnerable people from poverty, fragility, and social exclusion. It is set to support individuals and households to acquire basic social services such as food, health, education, water, and sanitation services through a lifecycle approach. In mainland Tanzania, there has been a progressive reduction in the levels of extreme basic needs poverty, with an average annual 0.8 percentage point decline between the household budget surveys of 2007 and 2017/18. As a result, poverty incidence in the child population (under 18 years) is higher than the rest of population (30 percent compared to 26 percent). Unfortunately, poor households tend to have larger numbers of children and poverty incidence rises from 5 percent in households with no children to 38 percent in households with six or more.



## 2 NUTRITION SITUATION

**3 of 10 children ages 6–23 months receive minimum acceptable diet.**



**26% of the population is living in poverty.**



**8% lives in food (extreme) poverty.**

### 3 SOCIAL PROTECTION LANDSCAPE

The social protection schemes for Tanzania stipulate social assistance across all stages of life and are categorized into contributory and non-contributory services. The contributory scheme entails health insurance, old age pension, survival benefits, invalidity benefits, and cover employment injury and occupational diseases. The scheme also includes maternity benefits and funeral grants. Ten percent of the employed population has pension schemes, and 32 percent has health insurance (25 percent through the Community Health Fund; 7 percent through the National Health Insurance Fund).

The non-contributory scheme includes cash and in-kind transfers for poor and vulnerable groups. Cash transfer programs in Tanzania are mainly delivered through Productive Social Safety Net and local government authorities. In-kind transfers include food supplements programs, school meal subsidies, and school fee abolition. These programs are summarized in Table 1.

**Table 1. Social Protection and Nutrition Pathway/Framework**

Social protection program	Program	Outcome Level 1	Outcomes	Impact	Long-term benefit
<b>Social transfers:</b> • Cash • In-kind	• Conditional cash transfer • Livelihood enhancement • Public work • Child grant • Free maternal and child health care	• Increased access to food • Increased access to health services • Improved water, sanitation, and hygiene services	Improved diet	Improved nutrition status	• Increased productivity • Improved wellbeing
	• Food coupon • Subsidized school meals • Food supplement programs • School meal subsidies • Fee exemption in primary and ordinary secondary school		Reduced morbidity		

### 4 WHY NUTRITION AND SOCIAL PROTECTION?

The causes of malnutrition are multidimensional. At an individual level, poor diet and diseases are the immediate causes. These two factors are aggravated by household food insecurity, poor caring practices, unhealthy environment, and lack of access to health services. Lack of resources such as income and access to education exacerbate the problem. Social protection programs, especially those targeting poor households, have a potential to ameliorate these causes if they are well designed and conditioned to nutrition.

## 5 OPPORTUNITIES FOR LEVERAGING NUTRITION WITHIN SOCIAL PROTECTION SYSTEM



**Modeling:** Social protection is institutionalized in Tanzania and includes various interventions to prevent malnutrition by promoting access to and use of nutrition, health, and education services, and poverty reduction among others. Although various interventions are happening, there is an opportunity to increase delivery of nutrition services through social protection programs by designing or adjusting interventions to respond to nutrition needs. Nutrition interventions, both specific and sensitive, can be integrated in the social protection system to maximize results.



**Data sharing:** Data sharing is an important way to leverage programs and resources. It is important to create a comprehensive and sustainable system to facilitate engagement with other stakeholders and ensure both nutrition and social protection teams at all levels have a common understanding of plans and actions to mainstream nutrition into social protection programming.



**Coverage:** Although the social protection system is well institutionalized, the coverage of social protection schemes is still low in the country. Universal services under social protection are still not accessible to all, and programs targeting specific groups are not reaching all those in need. This increases the chances of prolonged malnutrition. Expanding nutrition-sensitive social protection programs in areas that are more affected will help reduce malnutrition.

## 6 NMNAP II ACTIONS

- Increase engagement and build key actors' capacity to apply a nutrition-sensitive approach to social protection programs.
- Advocate for integration of nutrition in the social protection programs.
- Expand use of social protection programs to deliver nutrition services
- Increase women's access to resources and ability to make decisions through social protection programs.
- Document lessons.

## 7 RECOMMENDATIONS



### Coverage

Increase coverage of nutrition-sensitive social protection programs such as subsidized school meals and supplementary food for children under-five.

To maximize the use of minimal resources, social protection programs should:

- target highly malnutrition-burdened areas.
- base interventions on the causes of malnutrition in each context or community.



### Data sharing

- Create a comprehensive and sustainable information-sharing system to increase engagement with stakeholders and ensure that nutrition and social protection are aligned.
- Programming
- Integrate nutrition education, screening for acute malnutrition, micronutrient supplementation, and vaccination in social protection programs.
- Design nutrition-sensitive social protection programs and projects with objectives, outcome, and indicators that can be tracked.