

# MOMENTUM

Country and Global Leadership



## ■ Landscape Analysis Brief

# OPPORTUNITIES FOR INTEGRATED CLIMATE AND NUTRITION ACTION

Findings from a Review of National Climate, Health, and Nutrition Policies, Strategies, and Plans in Eight Countries

## BACKGROUND

Climate change and nutrition are interconnected, working multidirectionally through health, food, water, and social protection systems. Climate change exacerbates all forms of malnutrition, while malnutrition challenges the resilience of vulnerable populations to the impacts of climate change. Moreover, dietary decisions both affect human well-being and impact the environment and natural resources upon which all life depends. The global and national policy landscape is undergoing a transformation in recognition of the necessity of coordinated actions and multisectoral initiatives to address the interdependent drivers of climate change, nutrition, and health.

## METHODOLOGY

MOMENTUM Country and Global Leadership conducted a desktop review to identify national climate, health, and nutrition policies in eight U.S. Agency for International Development nutrition priority countries (Bangladesh, Ethiopia, Ghana, Malawi, Nepal, Nigeria, Tanzania, and Uganda) that could guide nutrition and climate adaptation actions. Recent policies, strategies, and action plans published in English and available online were analyzed, including Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs), National Adaptation Plans (NAPs), Climate and Health Vulnerability and Adaptation Assessments (V&As), National Nutrition Plans (NNPs), National Health Sector Plans, World Health Organization Country Cooperation Strategies, Food-Based Dietary Guidelines (FBDGs), and Food Systems Pathways. The review qualitatively analyzed these documents, using search terms related to nutrition, malnutrition, climate change, adaptation, and environmental sustainability, to identify promising entry points to strengthen the enabling environment for action on climate and nutrition. MOMENTUM produced a detailed report of findings and recommendations, which this brief summarizes.

### Objective

Determine which national climate, health, and nutrition policies, action plans, and strategies guide—or have the potential to guide—integrated nutrition and climate actions.



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# KEY FINDINGS

## NUTRITION IN CLIMATE FRAMEWORKS

Nutrition does not prominently feature in the NDCs, but the NAPs available for review incorporate several measures targeting nutrition through health, agriculture, water, and social protection systems. V&As identify populations and specific geographies most vulnerable to various health effects of climate change, including undernutrition in many cases. Recognizing the relevance of climate change adaptation and mitigation to nutrition and given the central role of NDCs and NAPs to investment cases for climate financing, explicit effort to incorporate nutrition into these climate frameworks is critical.

## CLIMATE IN NUTRITION AND HEALTH STRATEGIES AND PLANS

Climate considerations within national nutrition and health plans are limited. While some interventions address the impacts of climate change, they rarely reflect an intentional, integrated approach to climate and nutrition. In addition, the potential impact of certain nutrition interventions—both co-benefits and unintended negative impacts—on climate change mitigation and adaptation is frequently overlooked. Emphasizing the positive outcomes of nutrition interventions on climate resilience could serve as a compelling rationale to leverage existing and emerging climate financing for nutrition-focused adaptation and mitigation efforts.

## SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, BY POLICY TYPE

- **NDCs** are key to the international framework on climate change, yet only three (Bangladesh, Malawi, Nigeria) of the eight NDCs refer to nutrition. Of those, only Malawi specifies the promotion of nutrition-specific practices and connects climate and nutrition with distinct plans to act.
- All three **NAPs** available for review (Bangladesh, Ethiopia, Nepal) recognize the role of nutrition within climate adaptation, but primarily through nutrition-sensitive actions across health, agriculture, water, and social protection systems. Where they exist, **Health National Adaptation Plans (H-NAPs)** offer an invaluable opportunity to integrate nutrition and climate, as H-NAPs are designed to guide a country's actions to adapt health systems and services to the effects of climate change.
- **Climate and Health V&As** explicitly recognize malnutrition as a climate-sensitive disease or health risk and reflect geographically differentiated vulnerabilities to malnutrition, making them critical to a country's adaptation plan. However, V&As do not consider malnutrition in all its forms or identify ways to mitigate and monitor risk of malnutrition over time.
- **Health sector policies and plans, including NNPs**, make minimal reference to climate change mitigation and adaptation. While they include some interventions addressing climate, they are not necessarily framed in the context of climate and nutrition integration or with the purpose of realizing co-benefits.
- While only two **FBDGs** were available for review (Ethiopia, Ghana), both offer examples of how countries can promote healthy diets in the context of environmental sustainability.
- **Food Systems Pathways** include a wide range of nutrition-specific and sensitive interventions, as well as climate smart interventions, and many link clearly to policy and strategy development.

# RECOMMENDATIONS

The nexus of climate change and nutrition presents substantial opportunities for integrated action to enhance both human well-being and environmental health. It is imperative to bolster nutritional considerations within climate frameworks such as NDCs and NAPs; the inclusion of nutrition within V&As and H-NAPs can play a critical role. Likewise, it is necessary to emphasize the vital role of nutrition in climate change adaptation and mitigation within health and nutrition strategies. Sustained advocacy at national and global levels is crucial to raise awareness and deepen understanding of the complex, interdependent relationships between climate change and nutrition. Strengthening the capacity of national stakeholders, identifying climate financing to support nutrition-focused initiatives, and fostering multisectoral coordination are further essential steps to effectively advance this agenda. Across all recommendations, priority should be given to address differential impacts of climate change on nutrition associated with gender, power dynamics, socioeconomic structures, and societal norms.

A summary of the key recommendations from the full report, which countries and partners could consider, are reflected here. In addition, Table 1 provides a list of time-sensitive windows of opportunity to strengthen specific policy instruments, by country, and Table 2 lists key upcoming global conferences and forums.

## 1. STRENGTHEN CLIMATE, HEALTH, AND NUTRITION FRAMEWORKS AND STRATEGIES TO ENHANCE INTEGRATED CLIMATE AND NUTRITION ACTIONS

- **Encourage explicit integration of nutrition into NDCs.** Countries are requested to submit updated NDCs every five years (2025, 2030, etc.) to the United Nation Framework Convention on Climate Change, regardless of their respective implementation frames. Hence, it is crucial to engage with policymakers and decision-makers overseeing NDC development now to emphasize the significance of nutrition for climate change mitigation and adaptation within these plans before their updates are finalized in 2025.
- **Assist NAP development—and advocate for H-NAPs—to ensure that nutrition is considered in reducing vulnerabilities to climate change and to mainstream climate change adaptation in all levels of planning.** Governments typically appoint one agency to lead efforts on climate change adaptation, with the mandate to coordinate the efforts of other ministries and agencies to undertake assessments, planning, and capacity strengthening. Ministries of health, including their nutrition leadership, should contribute to NAP and H-NAP development.
- **Collaborate with and support national authorities conducting Climate and Health V&As to ensure the inclusion of a thematic V&A on nutrition.** The V&As are a key strategic lever to inform NAPs and H-NAPs. V&As that include a thematic study to understand which populations and geographical areas are most vulnerable to malnutrition due to climate-related hazards and the health system’s capacity to manage these challenges should be prioritized. V&As for Ghana and Nigeria were in progress as of May 2024. If their scopes of work are not yet settled, relevant ministries could explicitly include a thematic V&A on nutrition.
- **Support the development of national health sector strategies to ensure inclusion of integrated climate and nutrition action.** Given the increasing global focus and funding directed toward health in the context of climate change, it is vital to recognize health systems as a pivotal link between nutrition and climate.
- **Support the development of NNPs with a climate lens.** With most NNPs requiring renewal in 2025, there is an opportunity to ensure that adaptation to the effects of climate change on nutrition is included, and that opportunities for climate mitigation are identified.

- **Support the development of FBDGs that incorporate sustainability principles.** FBDGs should not only aim to address health and nutrition priorities, but also take a food systems approach to promote healthy diets and consider sociocultural, economic, and environmental sustainability.

**TABLE 1: SELECTED NATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES TO STRENGTHEN CLIMATE AND NUTRITION INTEGRATION**

Opportunity	Timing	Country
NDC updates due	2025	Bangladesh, Ethiopia, Ghana, Malawi, Nepal, Nigeria, Tanzania, Uganda
V&As currently under development	2024	Ghana, Nigeria
NNPs expiring	2022	Malawi, Nepal
	2025	Bangladesh, Ghana, Ethiopia, Nigeria, Uganda
	2026	Tanzania

## 2. STRENGTHEN COLLABORATION BETWEEN THE CLIMATE AND NUTRITION SECTORS AND BOLSTER THE CAPABILITIES OF HEALTH AND NUTRITION STAKEHOLDERS TO ENGAGE EFFECTIVELY IN CLIMATE DISCOURSE.

- **Strengthen the capacity of national health and nutrition stakeholders** to participate in climate discourse by improving understanding of the interdependencies between—and multisectoral impacts of—human activities, climate, health, and nutrition, and to integrate nutrition and climate actions into climate and health frameworks. This could include orientation to the nomenclature, purpose, and function of climate frameworks, assessments, and plans.
- **Increase engagement with the climate community, including climate negotiators,** to amplify representation of nutrition and health priorities in climate dialogues to ensure that climate actions positively impact both human and environmental health. Plan for engagement with country delegations in advance of global meetings.
- **Encourage engagement of the health and nutrition sector in multisectoral coordination mechanisms for climate change.** The health and nutrition sector should be included in climate action and decision-making and support stronger linkages between the nutrition and climate change focal points within ministries of health.

### 3. INCREASE UNDERSTANDING OF THE IMPORTANCE OF INTEGRATED CLIMATE AND NUTRITION ACTION AND ADVOCATE FOR CLIMATE FINANCING FOR NUTRITION.

- **Leverage upcoming global nutrition meetings**, such as the Scaling Up Nutrition (SUN) Global Gathering in Rwanda in November 2024 and the Nutrition for Growth Summit hosted by France in 2025, as well as climate conferences such as the 2024 United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP29) in Azerbaijan and COP30 in Brazil in 2025. The current attention to climate and health could be leveraged to ensure that nutrition is included as an integral part of building resilient health systems.
- **Identify existing and emerging climate financing to support nutrition-focused adaptation and mitigation actions.** At COP28 in Dubai in 2023, an initial \$1 billion in spending was committed for health and climate and a Climate and Health Co-Investment Facility<sup>1</sup> has been established to leverage public and private capital to promote climate-resilient, sustainable, and low-carbon health systems.

**TABLE 2: SELECTED GLOBAL OPPORTUNITIES TO ADVANCE AWARENESS AND ADVOCATE FOR FINANCING FOR INTEGRATED CLIMATE AND NUTRITION ACTION**

Event	Timing	Location
SUN Global Gathering	November 2024	Rwanda
COP29	November 2024	Azerbaijan
Nutrition for Growth Summit	March 2025	France
International Union of Nutritional Sciences' International Congress of Nutrition	August 2025	France
COP30	November 2025	Brazil

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.who.int/news/item/02-12-2023-gcf--undp-and-who-join-forces-to-ramp-up-climate-health-support-for-developing-countries>

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