Japan's nutrition ODA

Japan is strengthening its international leadership on nutrition in the lead up to hosting the nutrition summit in 2020

Japan's 'Development Cooperation Charter' highlights food security and nutrition as key global challenges that development activities must address. Japan shows emerging international leadership in nutrition and funded the sector heavily between 2012 and 2014. Within the framework of the 2012 G8 initiative ‘New Alliance for Food Security and Nutrition’, Japan pledged US$453 million to nutrition funding. Between 2012 and 2014, it disbursed US$185 million to the nutrition sector for nutrition-specific activities, according to data from the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development’s (OECD) Development Assistance Committee (DAC) creditor reporting system. Since 2015 Japan disbursed only US$10 million to basic nutrition, US$7 million of which was in 2017.


As part of Japan’s commitment during the sixth Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD VI) in 2016, the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) launched the ‘Initiative for Food and Nutrition Security in Africa’ (IFNA). The initiative aims to collaborate with African governments to speed up action on nutrition, and to encourage international efforts to alleviate hunger and malnutrition in Africa. IFNA involves sharing best practice in rice cultivation to support improved crop yields and thus nutrition. It emphasizes synergies between nutrition, agriculture, health, and education.

In addition, JICA holds the leadership of the ‘Nutrition Japan’ initiative, launched by the Government of Japan in 2016 to foster public-private partnerships to invest in improving nutrition in developing countries. Japan pledged US$20 million to the ‘Scaling Up Nutrition’ (SUN) Fund, an initiative encouraging countries to mobilize and scale up resources for nutrition globally, for the 2016 to 2019 period. Funding is channeled through the World Bank’s International Development Association (IDA).

Looking forward, Japan’s leadership on nutrition is expected to increase. Japan will host the 2020 Nutrition Summit in Tokyo, in the sidelines of the 2020 Tokyo Olympic and Paralympic Games. In the lead up to this event, Japan will likely look for opportunities to strengthen its leadership in the sector. The Government of Japan is calling for commitments across five areas: making nutrition integral to Universal Health Coverage; building food systems that promote nutrition, provide a livelihood for producers, and are climate-smart; address malnutrition in fragile and conflict affected contexts; promote data-driven accountability; and secure new investment and drive innovation in nutrition financing.

At ministerial level, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry, and Fisheries lead on nutrition strategy

At the ministerial level, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA) and the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry, and Fisheries (MAFF) are the decision-makers regarding nutrition policy. The ministries each have their own separate budgets that can be spent at their discretion.

The Cabinet is involved in high-level initiatives, such as the launch of the ‘Nutrition Japan’ platform, which involves other ministries (e.g., the Ministry of Health, Labor and Welfare) and the Cabinet Office. JICA leads on implementation for nutrition initiatives, and sets up its own initiatives, such as IFNA.

\[\text{DEEP DIVES}\]

\[\text{topics}\]

Nutrition-specific: Interventions that address underlying causes of malnutrition and that take into account cross-sector actions and impacts (i.e. improving access to diverse foods).

Nutrition-sensitive: Interventions that address immediate causes of undernutrition and have the improvement of nutrition (i.e. support for exclusive breastfeeding, supplementary feeding, etc.) as their primary objective.

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