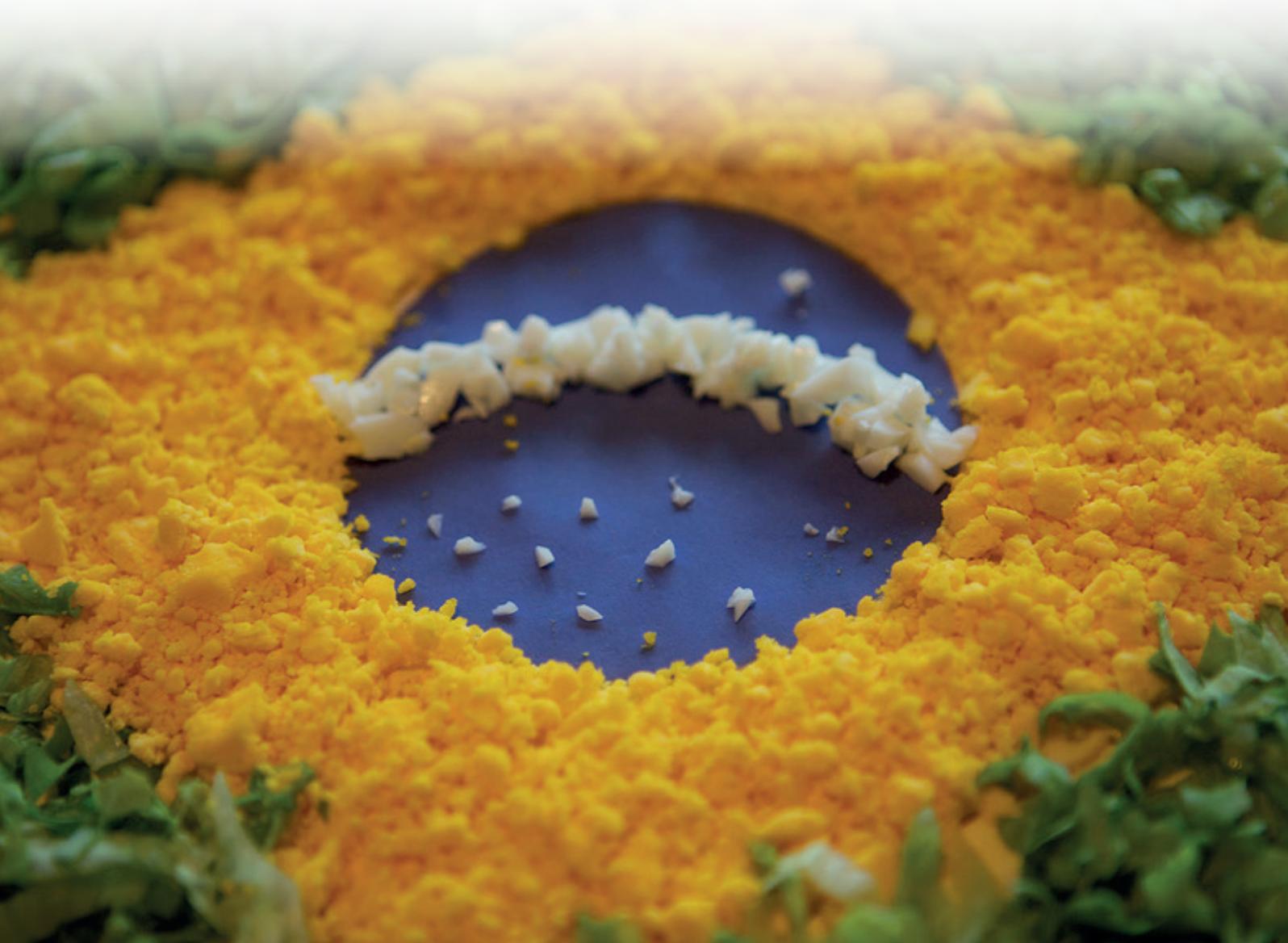


**#MakeRioCount**





## **MALNUTRITION IN THE UK AND ABROAD: MAKING RIO COUNT**

### **THE CHALLENGE**

Malnutrition, including both undernutrition and overweight/obesity, affects more than 1 in 3 people on our planet. It is a global challenge affecting all countries of the world. The UK has been at the forefront of raising the importance of good nutrition internationally. The UK's message to the world has been that good nutrition during pregnancy and the early years of life underpins strong economies, that tackling malnutrition in the first 1000 days of life delivers life-long returns and that preventing malnutrition requires investment in evidence-based interventions and cross-government leadership and action. UK leadership was demonstrated at the Olympic Hunger Event and Nutrition for Growth summit both held in London in 2012 and 2013 respectively.

### **THE OPPORTUNITY**

The follow-up Nutrition for Growth summit being convened by the Government of Brazil in the margins of the Rio Olympics and involving Heads of State from around the world, provides an opportunity to continue this important legacy of the London Olympics.

In the intervening years, between London 2012 and Rio 2016, the international Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) have been agreed by the UN General Assembly. These provide the framework for national action and international cooperation on sustainable development for all UN Member States including the UK for the period up to 2030. Unlike their predecessor, the Millennium Development Goals, the SDGs are for all countries of the world, rich and poor.

### **THESE GOALS INCLUDE**

International Sustainable Development Goal 2: End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture.

#### **TARGET 2.1**

By 2030, end hunger and ensure access by all people, in particular the poor and people in vulnerable situations, including infants, to safe, nutritious and sufficient food all year round.

#### **TARGET 2.2**

By 2030, end all forms of malnutrition, including achieving, by 2025, the internationally agreed targets on stunting and wasting in children under 5 years of age, and address the nutritional needs of adolescent girls, pregnant and lactating women and older persons.

The goals provide the reference point for UK commitments at the Rio Nutrition for Growth summit and an important spur for the UK to progress its leadership on nutrition in international development, and also demonstrate renewed commitment to tackle poor nutrition at home.



## A UK GOLD FOR FOOD AND NUTRITION SECURITY IN RIO

This report proposes two commitments that the UK government should make, in addition to its international development commitments, at the Rio summit. The first (page 4) is a commitment to a new vision for food and nutrition security in the UK – a vision which brings together all relevant government departments and which transforms our food system to deliver healthy, affordable and sustainable diets for all. The second is a targeted package that improves the life chances of women and children in Britain most at risk of poor diets and food insecurity.

### THIS PACKAGE INCLUDES 3 ELEMENTS

Increasing the uptake and voucher value of the Healthy Start programme (page 5), Protecting and improving child nutrition during the school holidays (page 6) and Conducting annual measurement of adult and child food insecurity (page 7). These policy asks are supported by a number of organisations working in collaboration with the Food Foundation including World Cancer Research Fund International, Sustain, Church Action on Poverty and First Steps Nutrition. On April 13th we held an event in parliament to discuss the Rio nutrition summit and the UK government's commitments. Ministers from the Department of Health and Department for International Development spoke, along with Olympian James Cracknell OBE.

To find out more please visit [www.foodfoundation.org.uk](http://www.foodfoundation.org.uk)





## A new vision for food and nutrition security in the UK that delivers access to healthy, affordable and sustainable diets for all

### Why we need this:

The UK has committed to International Sustainable Development Goal #2: “End hunger, achieve food security and improve nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture.”

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are for all countries of the world, rich and poor, with high-income countries expected to take the lead.

**We need a vision for food which helps deliver the SDGs in all UK nations. Feeding a growing and more affluent global population healthily, fairly and sustainably simply isn't possible unless we make some changes.**

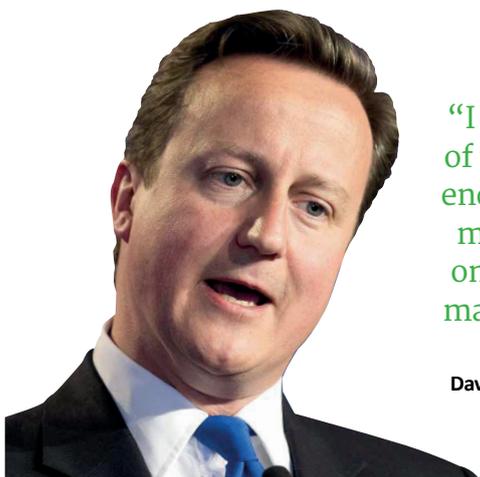
### The new vision should deliver:

- **HEALTHY DIETS:** Diet is the biggest risk factor to death and disability in the UK. Almost one in four children start school already overweight or obese. Excess weight and obesity are linked to an increased risk of at least 10 cancers. Tackling obesity could deliver economic benefits worth £17bn per year, including an £800m annual saving to the NHS.
- **SUSTAINABLE DIETS:** A third of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions are caused by the food system, with meat and animal products accounting for at least 14.5% of global GHG emissions. Healthier diets would reduce our food consumption carbon footprint by at least 17% – carbon savings that are urgently needed to keep the rise in global temperatures below 1.5 degrees

as agreed in Paris 2015. Promoting sustainable diets would protect biodiversity and natural resources and ensure livelihoods for those working in the food system.

- **LEAVE NO-ONE BEHIND:** Currently there are people in Britain who face periods when they are too poor to eat, and many rely on the cheapest sources of calories which are often found in the unhealthiest foods. Children in the most deprived parts of Britain experience more obesity, and don't grow as tall as those in the least deprived. The new vision must ensure that everyone can afford to eat a healthy diet.

This new vision for food and nutrition security must have a dedicated Minister and mobilise action across government departments.



“I am delighted that ending extreme poverty forever is at the heart of these new goals. And I'm delighted that we've recognised that to end extreme poverty, we need to put the poorest, weakest and most marginalised first – to *leave no-one behind*. There can be no attack on poverty without an assault on climate change. So we commit to make progress in a way that is sustainable and protects our one and only planet for the long term”

David Cameron giving a speech about the SDGs, at the UN Sustainable Development Goals Summit 2015



A targeted package to improve the life chances of those UK women and children most at risk of poor diet and food insecurity

**Food & Nutrition Security GOLD**

## A commitment to increase the uptake, support for and voucher value of the UK's Healthy Start programme

### Why we need this:

Healthy Start supports young and low-income pregnant women, and families with children under four years of age. It provides a nutritional safety net by providing free vitamins for pregnant and breastfeeding women and one to four-year-olds, and food vouchers which can be spent on plain fresh or frozen fruit and vegetables, cows' milk and infant formula.

**Government should commit to increase the uptake of the UK's Healthy Start Programme to at least 90% and ensure that eligible families are also supported to use the vouchers to eat well.**

The national average uptake is 75%:

one in four eligible participants do not receive the benefit.

Although child poverty rates have increased, Healthy Start uptake has decreased due to problems with service delivery, lack of training of health professionals and lack of awareness about the benefit. Resources allocated for this programme are consistently underspent.

Healthy Start needs to be streamlined under strong leadership from the Department of Health, barriers to access need to be removed and a clear strategy for raising awareness and monitoring delivery needs to be put in place.

**Government should commit to increase the voucher value and use the scheme better to meet its aims of promoting breastfeeding and offering a nutritional safety net.**

Healthy Start has the potential to make a real difference to the purchasing power of low-income families. However, the food voucher value has remained constant for nearly 10 years and needs to increase. Vouchers should be ring-fenced for fruit and vegetables, and cows' milk during pregnancy and after age one. Consideration should be given to increasing the voucher value when women choose to breastfeed in the first year.

**“For the first time I am able to have a fruit bowl just sitting on the kitchen table for the kids to help themselves whenever they feel like they need it”**

**Hackney participant**

**“Kids are now able to try new veg – like avocado – which are much cheaper on the stall. Vouchers mean we can try new stuff – less risk”**

**Greenwich participant**

**Interventions designed to increase access to healthy produce, such as the Rose Voucher Scheme, are welcomed by beneficiaries**

A targeted package to improve the life chances of those UK women and children most at risk of poor diet and food insecurity



## Protect and improve child nutrition during the school holidays

**Pilot new approaches to holiday food provision for the UK's most vulnerable children, initially in 20 of the country's most deprived local authorities – thereafter scaling up annually to reach all those who need it within 10 years.**

### Why we need this:

For many low-income families and those reliant on free school meals during term time, school holidays can be a time of great stress. Throughout these periods parents have the challenges of managing increased childcare demands, heavier fuel bills and the added cost of the provision of extra meals.

Children living in these circumstances often experience multiple difficulties including hunger, low-cost poor-quality diet, social isolation, learning loss, and family tension.

Public spaces such as underutilised and empty schools during holiday periods should be the test bed of a national, community-led, four-year action research programme, starting with the 20 most deprived local authorities in all UK nations.

### Jack's Story Jane Corbett Liverpool



"Listen to me, you're grown ups. This is bad. You are being bad unless you do something about it."

(Jack aged 7)

The government should fund, plan and help implement this holiday provision programme. The programme must offer access to good food, enrichment activities such as sport, cookery, arts, play and family support, all of which can also contribute to existing government policy on reducing childhood obesity rates and improving children's life chances.

The programme's progress should be informed by research and expand over time as models of good practice develop so that by 2026 families in all areas of the UK have access to good-quality holiday provision.

- A YouGov survey of low-income parents conducted by Kellogg's in 2015 found one third of parents have skipped a meal so their children eat during the school holidays

- NASUWT, the largest teachers' union in the UK, reported that **almost three quarters of teachers have seen pupils coming to school hungry** and more than a quarter said they have given food to hungry pupils. Over half said they had seen their school give food to pupils.

- The Association of Teachers and Lecturers 2016 survey found that **68% of their teacher members noticed a negative impact on pupils** in relation to their attainment following the long summer break.

- The Trussell Trust reported a **21% increase in food bank usage** in August compared to June. A survey of more than 3,000 parents and teachers conducted by the food bank network in 2015 indicates that one in eight children does not get enough food in the holidays.

**"Some families have been so poor staff have donated food and toiletries to help them out"**

Teacher, reported in the NASUWT survey 2016

A targeted package to improve the life chances of those UK women and children most at risk of poor diet and food insecurity

Food & Nutrition Security GOLD

## Conduct annual government-led national measurement of adult and child food insecurity

This measurement programme should be aligned with the recommended Sustainable Development Goal indicator. This will give baseline data and ongoing monitoring of the extent of food insecurity in the UK. Annual measurement will enable more effective planning and use of resources.

### Why we need this:

Food insecurity pushes families to seek out cheaper and less healthy sources of calories. Food insecurity affects life chances and harms the economy. International learning tells us that measurement should be a priority. In Canada, children who experienced two or more episodes of food insecurity during their early years have a three times higher chance of having a chronic health condition as a young adult. Annual health care costs are 121% higher for food-insecure people.



“I would so love a melon. But a melon costs about a £1 and I can get a whole bag of frozen sausage rolls for that”

Caroline Mockford, Glasgow

Since 2007, the cost of food has gone up by 8% while disposable incomes for the poorest people have gone down every year since 2004. However, levels of food insecurity are a mystery. Food insecurity was last nationally measured more than 10 years ago. The absence of regular, accurate data keeps the magnitude of the problem hidden, allowing for government inaction.

13 million people are considered to be at risk of poverty and last year more than one million received food parcels from Trussell Trust foodbanks. However, food bank use is a very poor measure of food insecurity: in Canada, for every one person using a food bank, four more are food insecure.

A globally standardised question module could be incorporated into a national survey for a small marginal cost of £50-75,000/year.

“We recommend that the government collect objective and statistically robust data on the scale of household food insecurity, including through the use of questions in the food costs sections of the UK’s Living Costs and Food Survey. It should also monitor trends over time so that the effectiveness of policies can be accurately gauged and any necessary changes made in response to evidence of need”

Select Committee on Environment, Food and Rural Affairs – 2015



“ideas that change food”



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