

Conflict threatens global nutrition progress, new report warns

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Major progress in tackling child undernutrition in some of the world's toughest countries is under threat as military and security funding takes precedence, a new report from aid agency World Vision warns.

The number of children under five who die every year has decreased by half since 1990. Yet, World Vision's [Fragile but not Helpless](#) report (PDF) finds that this progress is under threat. Countries marred by [conflict](#) or fragility have some of the highest rates of acute and chronic undernutrition in the world.

In Africa alone it is on average 50 percent higher in fragile countries than in more stable ones.

"Striving for peace is vital—but that shouldn't mean pooling all our resources into security and sidelining basic needs like [nutrition](#). Undernutrition kills many more children than conflict, and we need to do a better job of getting the balance right between the security needs of fragile states and the nutrition needs of fragile infants in a tight fiscal environment. When the proposed increase in defense spending by both Congress and the Administration is about double the size of the total amount the U.S.

Government spends on international humanitarian assistance, the balance can be improved within existing resources, it just requires political will and focus," said Robert Zachritz, senior director of Government Relations and Advocacy at World Vision.

Though in many cases child undernutrition is well above acceptable thresholds, nearly two-thirds of fragile and conflict-affected states have not joined up to the global movement to tackle nutrition, known as Scaling Up Nutrition (SUN).

Undernutrition contributes to the deaths of more than two million children every year. Globally, 165 million children, or one in four of all [children](#) under five, are stunted due to undernutrition, chronically undernourished and at risk of long-lasting damage to their cognitive and physical development.

More information: www.worldvision.org/resources...lpless-UK-REPORT.pdf

Provided by World Vision

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