

PRESS RELEASE

Dangote Foundation and Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation commit to reducing undernutrition in Nigeria in a joint \$100M partnership

Abuja, Nigeria, 21 January 2016 – The Dangote Foundation and Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation announced a combined commitment of \$100 million over the next five years (2016-2020) towards ending undernutrition in Nigeria. This commitment is expected to improve the lives of at least five million families by 2020 and was announced by Alhaji Aliko Dangote and Bill Gates today during a press conference in Abuja, Nigeria.

Despite rapid economic growth, Nigeria is home to the highest number of stunted children in Africa and the second highest globally. Almost one in five Nigerian children is acutely malnourished and more than one in three children suffer from stunting. With its vital role in child health, growth and cognitive development, better nutrition will be essential to unleashing the potential of Nigeria's next generation.

"Nutrition is one of the highest impact investments we can make in Nigeria's future growth and prosperity. We know that well-nourished children are more likely to grow up to be healthy, fend off preventable diseases, achieve more in school and even earn higher income as adults," said Bill Gates. "This partnership builds on our foundation's strong commitment to Nigeria – one of several countries where we are working closely with the government, the private sector and civil society to improve health and development outcomes."

In a joint statement, the two foundations said they will begin a joint planning process to determine the details of the partnership. Programs will include community-based approaches and proven interventions linked to behaviour change, fortification of staple foods with essential micronutrients, the community management of acute malnutrition and investments in the local production of nutritious foods. A key objective will be improving the livelihoods of households by supporting nutrition-sensitive agricultural programs that can increase family income, improve diets and empower women and youth.

The two foundations also welcomed the increased political attention to undernutrition in Nigeria and noted that leadership will be critical to future progress.

"In the spirit of our new partnership, we encourage even more deliberate and significant commitments from the Government of Nigeria at all levels to step up investments in nutrition. It is time to make strategic investments in interventions to eliminate malnutrition in Nigeria. This will be achieved through a massive scale-up of interventions, matched with effective coordination of efforts and innovative sustainable solutions. We have to ensure that children who are already malnourished receive help and are prevented from dying while we improve the conditions that led to them being malnourished in the first place'," said Alhaji Aliko Dangote.

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NOTES TO EDITORS

About the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation

Guided by the belief that all lives have equal value, the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation works to reduce inequity around the globe. We fund new ideas and encourage innovative partnerships so shared resources will do the greatest good for the most people. In developing countries, we focus on improving people's health and giving them the chance to lift themselves out of hunger and extreme poverty. In the United States, we seek to ensure that all people—especially those with the fewest resources—have access to the opportunities they need to succeed in school and life. Our vision is a world in which all people have the chance to live healthy, productive lives.

The foundation invests in proven approaches to improving nutrition, such as focusing on that 1,000-day window, immediate and exclusive breastfeeding, and food fortification and supplementation. Its long-term goals are to prevent 1.8 million malnutrition-related deaths by 2020 and to develop and test new solutions to address the burden of malnutrition that cannot be alleviated using existing interventions.

About the Dangote Foundation

Dangote Foundation, the philanthropic endeavor of Aliko Dangote is the largest private foundation in sub-Saharan Africa.

Aliko Dangote believes that supporting social and economic change through investments and interventions that improve the lives of the less fortunate can make a positive difference in the growth of a nation. His vision is one where no Nigerian child should suffer and die of under nutrition and disease.

Dangote Foundation's goals are to: help reduce the number of lives lost to malnutrition and disease; support income generation activities and education programs that help lift people out of poverty; and be responsive to people who are affected by natural disasters globally, by providing emergency relief.