Conceptual Framework for Nutritional Status

Nutrition is directly related to food intake and infectious diseases such as diarrhea, acute respiratory infection, malaria, and measles. Both food intake and infectious diseases reflect underlying social and economic conditions at the household, community, and national levels that are supported by political, economic, and ideological structures within a country.

The following diagram is a conceptual framework for nutrition adapted from UNICEF.\(^1\) It reflects relationships among factors and their influences on children’s nutritional status. Although political, socioeconomic, environmental, and cultural factors (at the national and community levels) and poverty (at the household level) affect the nutritional status of women and children, the only variables included in this chartbook are those that can be collected as part of a national household survey. The highlighted areas of the framework depict selected factors.

These factors are—

- **Immediate influences**, such as food intake (micronutrient status and supplementation) and infectious diseases (diarrhea and respiratory infections)
- **Underlying biological and behavioral influences**, such as maternal fertility, measles vaccinations, and feeding patterns of children under two years
- **Underlying social and economic influences**, such as maternal education, drinking water, and sanitation
- **Basic influences**, such as area of residence.

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\(^1\) State of the World’s Children, 1998
Conceptual Framework for Nutritional Status


Manifestations

Immediate Influences

Underlying Biological and Behavioral Influences

Underlying Social and Economic Influences

Basic Influences

Nutritional Status

Food Intake
(Micronutrient Status/Supplementation)

Infectious Diseases
(Diarrhea and Cough with Rapid Breathing)

Feeding Patterns
(Infants Under 6 Months: Exclusive Breastfeeding, 6-9 Months: Complementary Feeding, 10-24 Months: Continued Breastfeeding)

Intrahousehold Food Distribution

Immunization, Health Care
(Measles Vaccination 12-23 Months)

Hygiene Behavior

Child Care

Maternal Fertility, Age, Antenatal Care, Health Status
(Total Fertility Rate, Birth Interval, Maternal Malnutrition)

Household Assets

Marital Status

Education (Maternal)

Food Availability

Employment
(Parents' Working Status)

Water, Sanitation
(Source of Drinking Water, Type of Toilet)

Political, Economic, and Ideological Structure
(Residence: Urban/Rural, Region)