

## WFP And J-PAL Partner To Promote Child Growth And Immunization In Moyamba District

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*FREETOWN - The United Nations World Food Programme (WFP) and the Abdul Latif Jameel Poverty Action Lab for Africa (J-PAL Africa) are partnering on a programme to promote children's health in Moyamba district, one of the districts in Sierra Leone most affected by chronic malnutrition.*

Children born with low birth weight are commonly stunted (displaying low growth for age). Later in life, they are at increased risk of chronic conditions including diabetes, hypertension and coronary heart disease. Much of the damage done by early childhood undernutrition is irreversible after what is known as the “thousand-day window” – the period covering pregnancy up and the first two years of life.

This is why under the pilot programme, set to continue through 2018 in Moyamba district, 60,000 pregnant and nursing women, and 40,000 children aged six to 23 months, will receive monthly rations of specialised nutritious food when they visit a health clinic. During the period between birth and 6 months, support will be given to nursing mothers in order to promote exclusive breast feeding.

“The food ration acts both as an element to prevent stunting and as an incentive for mothers to access health services,” explains J-PAL Africa Executive Director Laura Poswell.

“Malnutrition makes it very difficult to rise out of poverty,” adds Peter Scott-Bowden, WFP Representative in Sierra Leone. “The importance of prevention cannot be overemphasized.”

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WFP is the world's largest humanitarian agency fighting hunger worldwide, delivering food assistance in emergencies and working with communities to improve nutrition and build resilience. Each year, WFP assists some 80 million people in around 80 countries.

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