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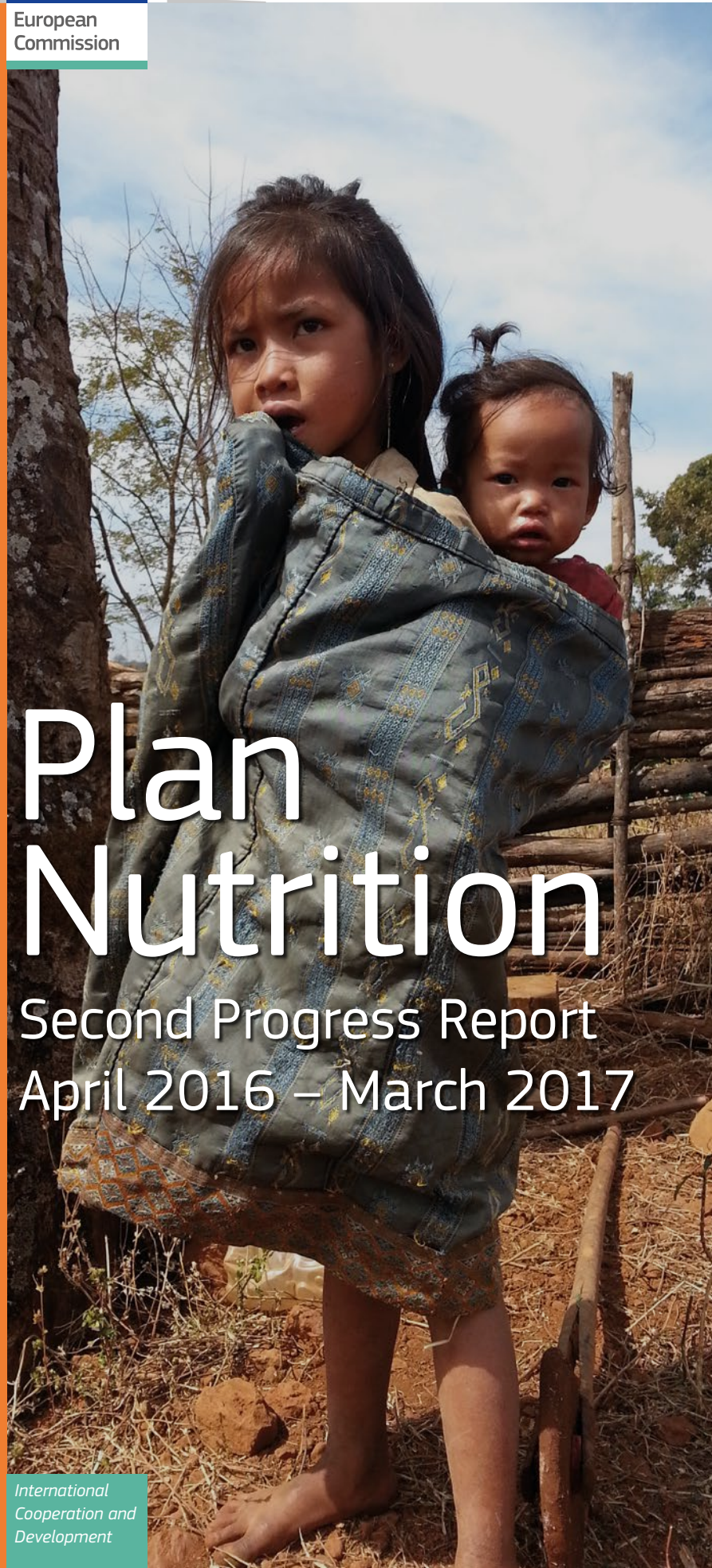
INTERNATIONAL
COOPERATION
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AND COUNCIL CONCLUSIONS
AND
DEVELOPMENT

Action on Plan Nutrition

Second Progress Report
April 2016 – March 2017

Food and Nutrition Security /
Sustainable Agriculture

International
Cooperation and
Development



Cover photograph of children in Lao PDR by Koen Everaert (EU Delegation Vientiane).

Girls affected by undernutrition are more likely to be short women, who are more likely to give birth to small babies, perpetuating undernutrition across generations.

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Acronyms

AFD	Agence Française de Développement
CRIS	Common External Relations Information System
DAC	Development Assistance Committee of the OECD
DFID	Department for International Development, United Kingdom
ECHO	Directorate-General for European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations, European Commission
EDF	European Development Fund
EU	European Union
DEVCO	Directorate-General for International Cooperation and Development, European Commission
FIRST	Food and Nutrition Security Impact, Resilience, Sustainability and Transformation
FNSSA	Food and Nutrition Security and Sustainable Agriculture
GIZ	Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit
GNR	Global Nutrition Report
MDD-W	Minimum Dietary Diversity for Women
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NIPN	National Information Platform for Nutrition
OECD	Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development
SDG	Sustainable Development Goals
SUN	Scaling Up Nutrition movement
UN	United Nations
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
WHA	World Health Assembly
WHO	World Health Organisation

Key Messages

The European Union (EU) is continuing to work strategically to achieve its commitments to help reduce the number of stunted children under the age of five by at least 7 million by 2025 and to allocate EUR 3.5 billion (2014–2020) to improve nutrition.

Preliminary results for 2016 indicate a three-fold increase in the EU's funding commitments to nutrition since 2014. The total amount of funding commitments in the last three years is EUR 1.8 billion, which represents 51 % of the EU overall financial commitment for the period 2014–2020. In 2016 alone, the EU's financial commitments to nutrition have reached EUR 790 million. This is a significant development, but this pace of investment needs to be maintained in order to reach the EUR 3.5 billion target by 2020.

The latest available data from 2016 shows that an additional one million children will be averted from stunting by 2025, in the EU's prioritised countries for nutrition¹. This is double last year's calculation and represents, in total, 2 million extra children averted from stunting, above and beyond what was anticipated when the global nutrition targets were set.

The scope for securing such progress lies in the strategic design of programmes that are still to be funded – especially in the focal sectors of food and nutrition security and sustainable agriculture (FNSSA), Health and Education – so that nutrition is integrated alongside other objectives.

Furthermore, the EU-Africa Research and Innovation Partnership on FNSSA has started to get operational, with funding allocated in Horizon 2020 and through the African Union Research Grant Scheme.

The EU's funding of nutrition interventions is continuing to prioritise nutrition-sensitive² investments, as planned. Nevertheless, the proportion of investments to nutrition-specific (including through the health sector) has increased since 2014. This is in line with the EU's comprehensive approach to reducing stunting.³

Such a comprehensive approach is also evidenced in the EU's integration of nutrition in broader development concerns, such as economic growth, resilience and action on climate change. Nutrition is also sensitive to gender and inequity.

Nearly 90 % of EU funds managed by the Directorate-General for International Cooperation and Development, and committed to nutrition from 2014 to 2016, have been targeted to the 40 countries that the EU has prioritised.

1 See Action Plan on Nutrition SWD(2014) 234 final

2 Interventions targeting the treatment of undernutrition are commonly denominated Nutrition Specific and those addressing the underlying causes of undernutrition are commonly denominated Nutrition Sensitive.

3 See Communication COMM(2013) 141 final

Section 1.

Introduction



European Commissioner for International Cooperation and Development, Neven Mimica; Above, pictured together with Oumar Mamadou Baldé, Governor of the region of Matam, visiting EU-funded projects in Senegal, April 2016. Copyright: European Commission.

Below: addressing the High-Level Event on Innovative Ways for Sustainable Nutrition, Food Security and Inclusive Agricultural Growth. Brussels, 25 April 2016.

“Food and nutrition security is central both as a precondition for sustainable and inclusive development, and also as an outcome of it.”

In April 2016, the First Progress Report⁴ on the implementation of the European Commission's Action Plan on Nutrition⁵ was published. It sounded a cautiously optimistic note about how the Commission is advancing towards its nutrition goals, and pointed to several areas for future focus to help strengthen this progress. This second report covers the period April 2016 to May 2017. These reports are a key demonstration of the EU's accountability for its performance in relation to tackling undernutrition.

Background

The European Union's drive to support the reduction in global stunting, and to demonstrate the effective use of its financial resources in doing so, has become a significant dimension of its international development policy.⁶

The EU's two global commitments have underpinned the strategic and operational focus of the EU's work in nutrition: Firstly, the 2012 commitment to support countries in reducing the number of stunted children under the age of five by at least 7 million by 2025.⁷ This has been integrated into the Commission's Communication on Nutrition.⁸ Secondly, the announcement of the EU, to ensure the allocation of EUR 3.5 billion between 2014 and 2020 to improve nutrition in developing countries.⁹ These are the cornerstones of the European Commission's Action Plan on Nutrition.

⁴ First Progress Report on the Commission's Action Plan on Nutrition 2014- 2016 SWD(2016) 181 final

⁵ SWD (2014) 234 final, Action Plan on Nutrition, 3rd July 2014

⁶ As evidenced in the https://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/policies/european-development-policy/european-consensus-development_en. See paragraphs 22, 24 and 55, for example.

⁷ http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_SPEECH-12-575_en.htm

⁸ The EU's Communication, Enhancing Maternal and Child Nutrition in External Assistance: An EU Policy Framework, states: "In the framework of the 2012 London Global Hunger Event, the Commission has taken a political commitment to support partner countries in reducing the number of children under five who are stunted by at least 7 million by 2025." (page 2)

⁹ Nutrition for Growth, London 2013, including the Global Nutrition for Growth Compact and Commitments.

The EU's commitments, and progress towards their achievement, operate in a much wider context of international engagement in nutrition. Most pertinent is the work undertaken within the framework of the Scaling Up Nutrition (SUN) movement¹⁰ and the Nutrition for Growth event of 2013¹¹, which have created a strong accountability framework for nutrition commitments. Additionally, the international mobilisation on wasting, including that of the European Commission services, should be acknowledged as well as the international recognition that wasting and stunting reduction should be addressed as two interconnected priorities in all contexts.

Scope of the Second Progress Report

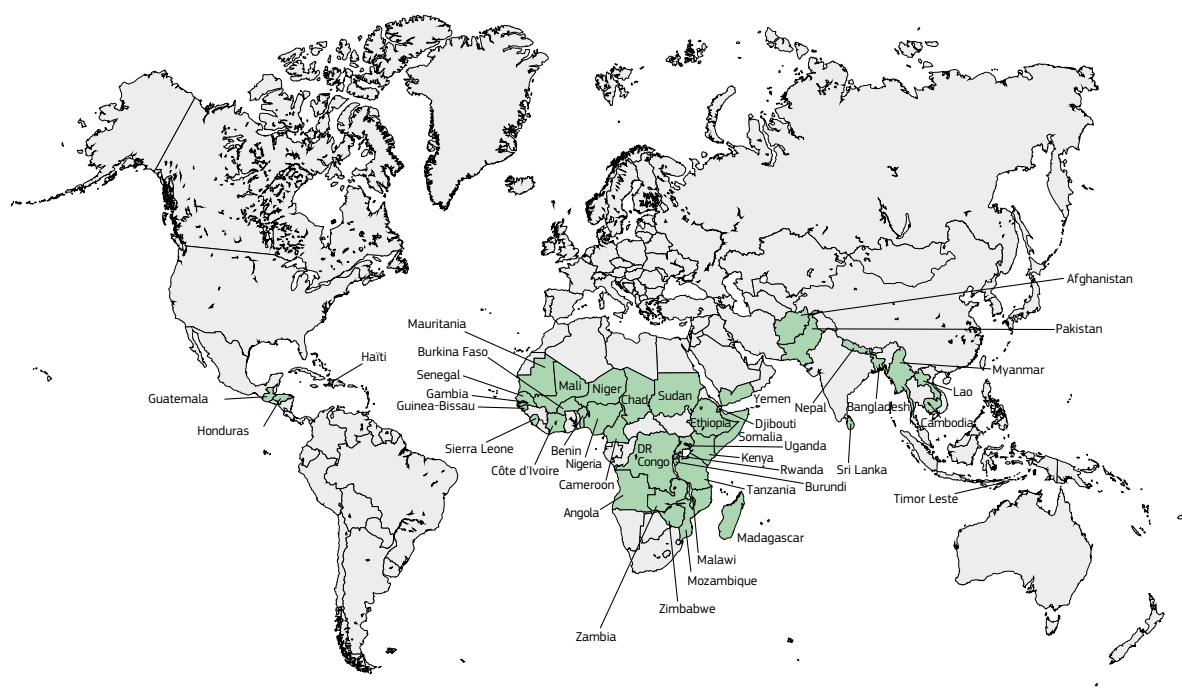
The First Progress Report gave account of the work the European Commission had undertaken in relation to each of the three strategic priorities identified in the Communication on Nutrition¹² and hence in the Action Plan on Nutrition:

- **Strategic priority 1: Enhance mobilisation and political commitment for nutrition**
- **Strategic priority 2: Scale up actions at country level**
- **Strategic priority 3: Knowledge for nutrition (strengthening the expertise and the knowledge-base)**

This Second Progress Report seeks to provide an update of significant achievements. 2017 is a pivotal point in the planning and funding cycles, in the context of the Multiannual Financial Framework. The Multiannual Financial Framework (including the 11th European Development Fund – EDF) runs from 2014 to 2020. So, at this near mid-point, the opportunity should be seized to determine what remains to be done to reach the nutrition commitments as set.

To maximise the impact of the Action Plan on Nutrition, the Commission identified countries of strategic priority for its support for nutrition. These countries had: (i) a high burden of stunting; (ii) a politically committed government; and (iii) requested support from the EU Delegations to address undernutrition. Forty countries were initially included, and two more have been added, at the request of the respective Delegations, in the last 12 months (Sudan and Djibouti), as shown in *Figure 1*.

Figure 1: The EU's 42 Priority Countries for Nutrition



10 All donors in the SUN movement track their own progress towards their own commitments. This includes the EU. The results are self-reported to the Global Nutrition Report (GNR), which compiles and analyses the progress being made. The latest results are available at: <http://ebrary.ifpri.org/utils/getfile/collection/p15738coll2/id/130383/filename/130594.pdf>

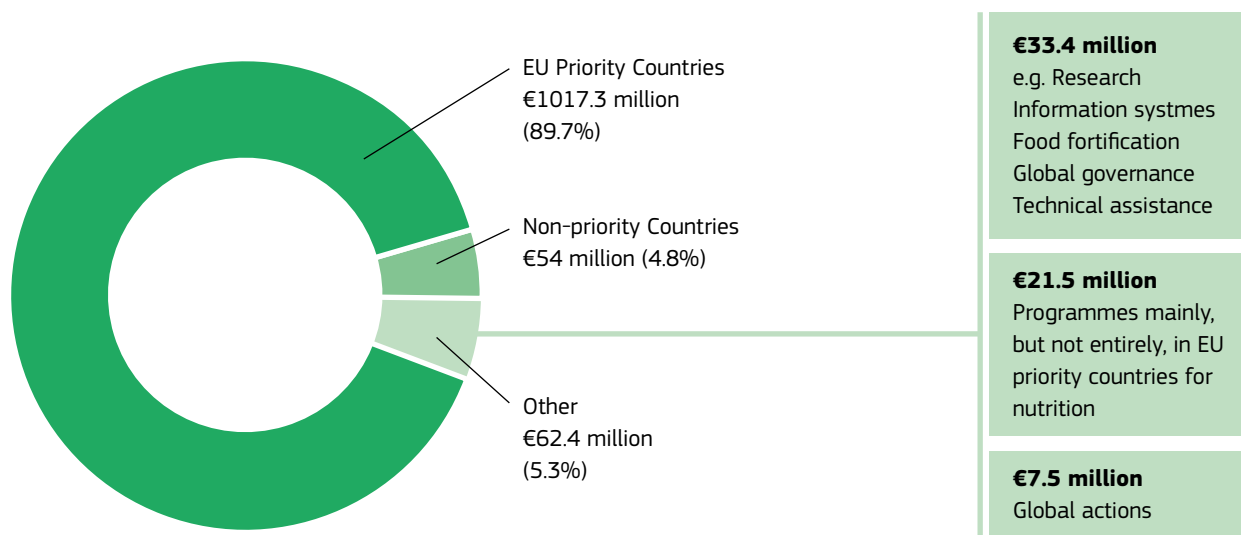
11 <http://scalingupnutrition.org/news/an-historic-moment-for-nutrition-nutrition-for-growth-summit-in-london/>

12 Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament and the Council. Enhancing Maternal and Child Nutrition in External Assistance: an EU Policy Framework (COM (2013) 141). March, 2013.



For each of the countries featured in last year's report, EU Delegations, with the support of the Commission services, produced short papers with: innovative analysis of the current national stunting situation, trends and future projections; described the EU Delegations' engagement and dialogue with Governments and partners in each country; and provided a vision of how to translate the Action Plan on Nutrition into the country situation. These have been updated, and this year specifically features the Commission's nutrition financing profile at country level. The 42 Country Profiles on Nutrition are available at https://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/nutrition-map_en

Figure 2: 2014–2016 Nutrition Commitments to the EU's 42 Priority Countries



The strategic prioritisation of these 42 countries is evidenced in the EU's financing decisions: Between 2014 and 2016, the 42 priority countries received nearly 90% of the EU's nutrition-relevant funding. This is summarised in *Figure 2*. So, the Commission has prioritised those countries most conducive to engagement on reducing stunting, and it has allocated nearly all the resources made available for nutrition to them.

Section 2.

Progress in Implementing the Action Plan on Nutrition

The Action Plan on Nutrition envisaged that: *To be most effective, the EU's assistance will be integrated in an overall approach combining interventions on the three strategic priorities – as indicated by the needs and opportunities in the different country contexts, and in support of government-determined national priorities.*¹³

The European Union's approach in nutrition is to mobilise multiple sectors to contribute to the reduction of stunting. This translates to action across all three of the strategic priorities for nutrition. The geographic coverage of investments in the strategic priorities across the 42 priority countries is shown in Figure 3.

Strategic priority 1:

Enhance mobilization and political commitment for nutrition.

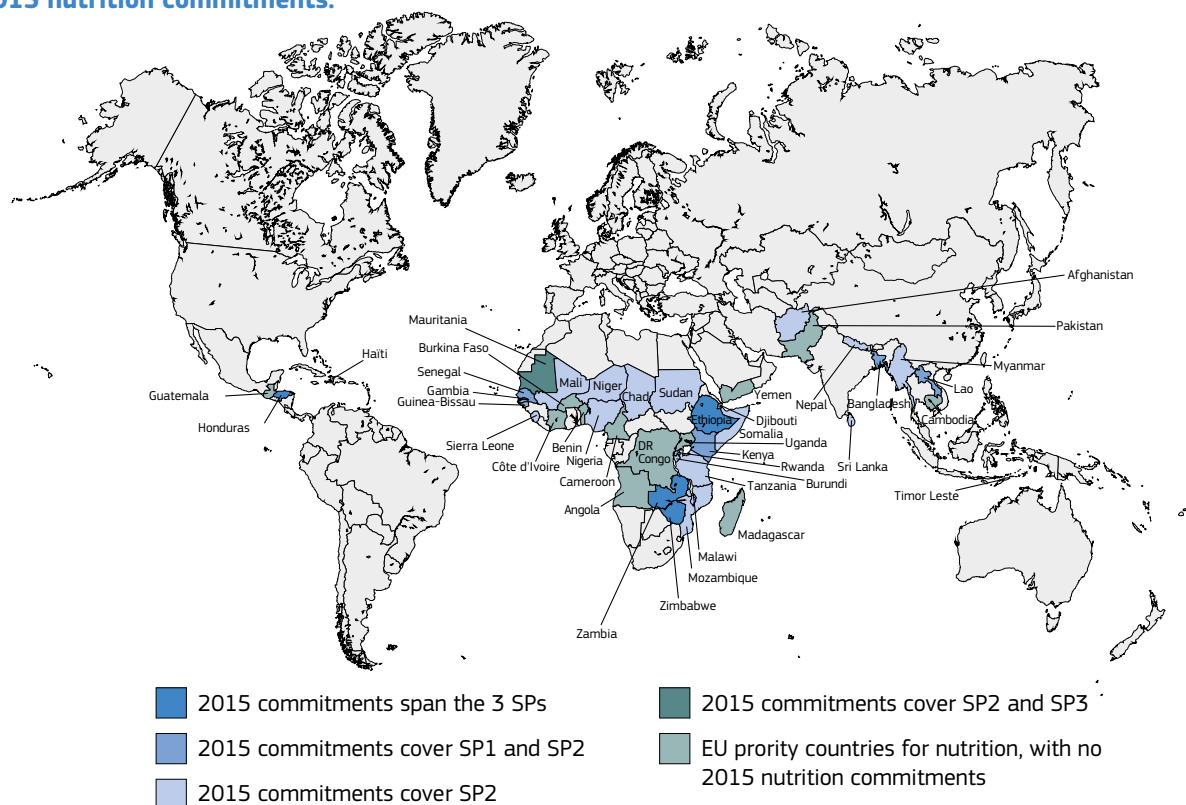
Strategic priority 2:

Scale up actions at country level.

Strategic priority 3:

Knowledge for nutrition (strengthening the expertise and the knowledge-base).

Figure 3: Map showing the Strategic Priorities addressed by the 42 priority EU Delegations in the 2015 nutrition commitments.



13 Page 5. SWD (2014) 234 final, Action Plan on Nutrition. Reducing the number of stunted children under five by 7 million by 2025. 3rd July 2014

The first Progress Report¹⁴ generated six recommendations to further the Union's progress towards its commitments:

- 1) Ensuring continued political momentum for nutrition globally.
- 2) Advancing efforts of governments to define appropriate national commitments.
- 3) Supporting the formulation of quality nutrition-relevant programmes.
- 4) Investing in evidence for nutrition-sensitive activities.
- 5) Investing in services and support that improve child survival — one of the most effective disincentives to high fertility.
- 6) Continuing to work in partnership.

Progress made in the first five recommendations will be discussed in the sections that follow, under the strategic priority they each relate to.

The sixth recommendation, partnership, is a central consideration in the EU's approach to its work across all areas. Examples are given of recent work under each of the Strategic Priorities (presented in sections 2.1 to 2.3) that encompass different partnerships. More specifically, examination of the 2015 commitments reveals that EU Member States were a primary partner in ten financing decisions; national governments were a primary partner in ten; a UN body was a partner in twenty-two¹⁵; and NGOs in eight decisions.

There are several features that emerge across a number of countries, all of which reveal an increasing sensitivity amongst EU Delegations to the relevance of nutrition across several broader development agendas. These include, for example, enhancing gender approaches, strengthening resilience; supporting economic growth by developing a value-chain approach to smallholder agriculture; and action on climate change. Such programmes demonstrate the complementarity and synergy that can be designed, whereby nutrition becomes integral, not an alternative, to other development concerns. This is particularly pertinent in the context of the mid-term review process currently underway, of national and regional multi-annual indicative programmes.

2.1 Progress in Strategic priority 1: Enhance mobilisation and political commitment for nutrition.

This strategic priority is considered as the key underpinning for achieving effective progress in nutrition. Without the political commitment of governments to address undernutrition as a national concern, and the backing of international partners to help maintain momentum, specific actions and investments will have limited sustained impact.

Case example: EU Joint Programming, Lao PDR

The European Joint Indicative Programming for Lao PDR is aligned with the Government's priorities and planning cycle for 2016–2020. The EU Joint Programming includes the EU Delegation to Lao PDR, seven EU Member States (Finland, France, Germany, Ireland, Hungary, Luxembourg, United Kingdom) and Switzerland, cooperating across seven priority sectors.

The majority of the EU's contribution to the Joint Programming covers the nutrition sector (with the Commission channelling approximately EUR 75 million out of the EUR 92.2 million allocated to nutrition). The nutrition sector in the EU Joint Programming for Lao PDR is addressing all three strategic priorities of the Commission's Action Plan on Nutrition. A National Information Platform for Nutrition is included. One of the indicators for the Joint Programming is the prevalence of stunting, in support of the Government's ambition to achieve Sustainable Development Goal 2 (DG2).

¹⁴ SWD (2016) 181 final http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/first-progress-report-commissions-action-plan-nutrition-2014-2016_en

¹⁵ Out of a total of 30 financing decisions, and excluding six decisions where development funds were spent on humanitarian actions. Note: each decision could have more than one primary partner.



*Support for home gardens can improve both diets and household incomes in Lao PDR, Asia.
Photo by: Koen Everaert (EU Delegation).*

Work in this area involves political discourse, technical dialogue and engagement in processes defining policies and priorities. Nutrition is embedded in the approaches the EU takes across all levels, and supports discourse about countries' social development as well as economic growth.

The importance of ensuring continued political momentum for nutrition globally; and, of supporting governments to define appropriate national commitments were included in the recommendations of last year's report. Both have been taken forward.

Firstly, the EU has continued to support and work through the SUN Movement, recognising its leadership in providing an international framework for enhancing cooperation to tackle undernutrition. The Commission was instrumental in SUN's genesis in 2010, and has since played an active role in its strategic and operational work. At the strategic level, European Commissioner for International Cooperation and Development joined the SUN Lead Group in July 2016. Together with 23 other world leaders, the Lead Group is responsible for the overall progress of the Movement and its strategic direction.

At the operational level, nine EU Delegations are acting as SUN donor convenors¹⁶, whilst most EU Delegations in SUN countries are active participants in country-level SUN Donor Networks (37 of the 42 EU priority countries for nutrition are members of the SUN Movement). The EU also continues to support the international SUN Secretariat, which helps SUN countries (currently numbering 58¹⁷) to track their own progress; facilitates collaboration across all stakeholders; and fosters learning.

The Commission contributed to strengthening international attention on nutrition by convening a high-level event in Brussels in April 2016, to explore *Innovative Ways for Sustainable Nutrition, Food Security and Inclusive Agricultural Growth*¹⁸. The event brought together leaders from all domains: government, UN, civil society, private sector, research and private philanthropy. The event centred on a new political vision of undernutrition as a form of inequality that hampers the development of individuals and nations. Amongst the concluding messages was a call to embed nutrition in political, economic as well as social development discourses.

The EU endeavours to support other international initiatives that align with the Action Plan on Nutrition. Notable examples include the Global Nutrition Report (GNR)¹⁹ as well as the UN Decade of Action on Nutrition.²⁰

Secondly, at the country level, progress has been made in setting national stunting reduction targets: A quarter of the 40 countries profiled last year have updated or introduced a new national commitment²¹, and currently, 32 of the 42 priority countries have a national stunting reduction target in place.

¹⁶ Burkina Faso, Burundi (though operations are currently suspended), Chad, Lao PDR, Malawi, Mozambique, Niger, Yemen and Zimbabwe.

¹⁷ As of 1 March 2017. <http://scalingupnutrition.org/>

¹⁸ https://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/news-and-events/innovative-ways-sustainable-nutrition-food-security-and-inclusive-agricultural_en

¹⁹ <http://www.globalnutritionreport.org/>

²⁰ http://www.who.int/nutrition/GA_decade_action

²¹ The 10 countries are: Afghanistan, Chad, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Lao PDR, Malawi, Senegal, Sri Lanka, Uganda, Tanzania and Zambia

2.2 Progress in Strategic priority 2: Scale up actions at country level

In terms of its financial investments, this is a very significant strategic priority for the European Union, and needs to be understood in the context of efforts to create a conducive enabling environment through the work under Strategic Priority 1 on mobilisation and political commitment. Scaling up is an essential strand to achieving impact in alleviating stunting, including by encouraging further investments by partner countries.

The significant rise in the EU's nutrition commitments since 2014, notably through development aid instruments – which will be discussed in section 4 below – is a direct result of the work undertaken by EU Delegations and the Commission services to incorporate nutrition considerations across priority sectors. Attention has been focused on designing programmes so as to improve nutrition by making this explicit through the objectives, indicators and activities planned.

Case example: Afikepo Project, Malawi

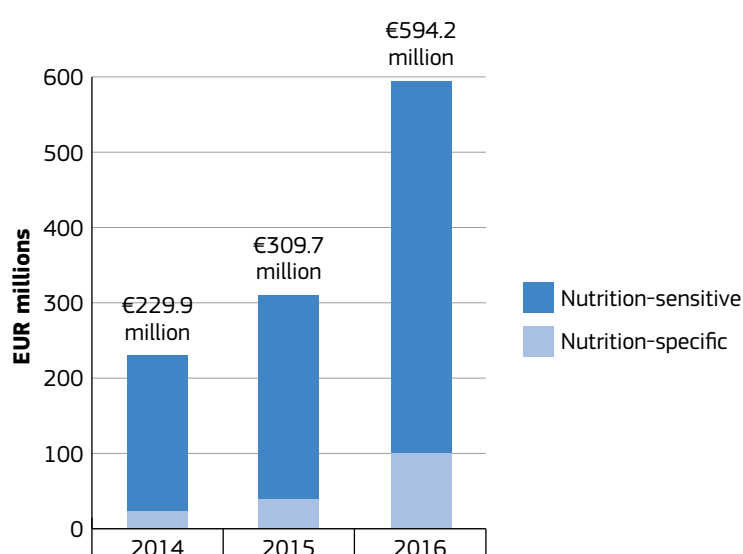
Afikepo is a joint multi-sectoral programme between the Government of Malawi, the EU, DFID, GIZ and FAO, to address undernutrition. It has adopted an integrated approach across four pillars: 1. Nutrition-sensitive agriculture; 2. Primary health care, water and sanitation; 3. Behavioural change and communications for optimal feeding and care practices; and 4. Governance, capacity development, research, monitoring and evaluation, and fortification. The EU Delegation is contributing EUR 70 million of the EUR 75 million total, over six years, specifically to address pillars 1, 2 and 4; and the programme will cover over a third of the country's districts plus its capital city, Lilongwe.

The example from Malawi is a case in point, where a comprehensive, multisectoral, multi-stakeholder collaboration has been designed, to address those priority factors that cause undernutrition in the country.

One of the recommendations from last year's Progress Report was to invest in services and support that improve child survival. Progress on this is most clearly evidenced by the Commission's 2014–2016 commitments for 'basic nutrition'²² interventions, which tend to be nutrition-specific interventions delivered through the health sector. Investments in nutrition-specific programmes have nearly quadrupled between 2014 and 2016 (see Annex 1 for a detailed breakdown).

Figure 4 shows the balance between investments in nutrition-specific and nutrition-sensitive²³ actions since 2014.

Figure 4: Directorate-General for International Cooperation and Development Nutrition-Sensitive/Specific Commitments, 2014–2016. EUR million



The Commission sees specific comparative advantage in EU's leading role as a donor in agriculture, food security and food systems, so it is to be expected that the nutrition-sensitive investments dominate. But, interestingly, as investments in nutrition have increased, so the **proportion** of investments in nutrition-specific have increased (rising from 14.7 % of the total in 2014 to 21.8 % in 2016). This increasing prominence of nutrition-specific programming (including through health) is a positive evolution.

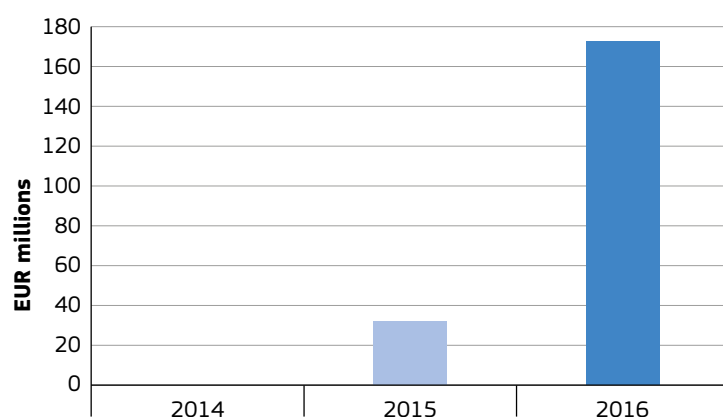
Another development in the Union's support to nutrition has been in the use of the budget support aid modality (see Figure 5).

²² DAC code 12240

²³ https://scalingupnutrition.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/12/RESOURCE_TRACKING_METHODOLOGY_SUN_DONOR_NETWORK.pdf



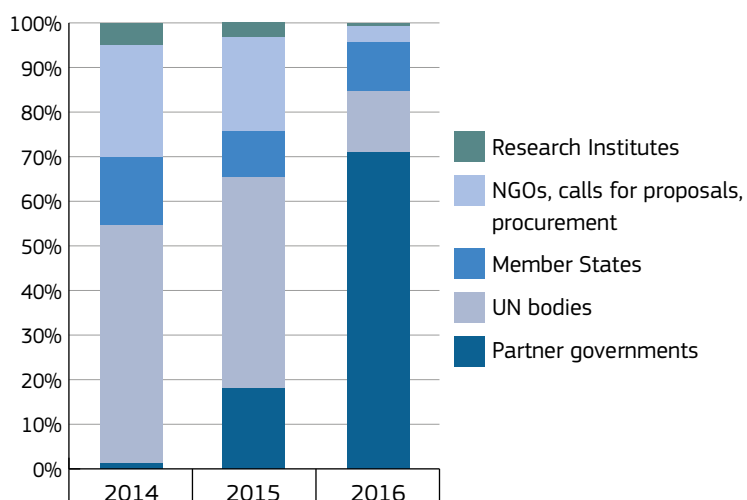
Figure 5: EU's Nutrition Commitments through Budget Support, 2014–2016 (EUR million)



The budget support modality was not used at all in 2014 for nutrition purposes; it was used in four countries²⁴ in 2015; and in five others²⁵ in 2016. Since using budget support for nutrition, the most striking change is in the financial value associated with each budget support commitment, averaging EUR 8.2 million in 2015 (for each of four countries) compared to nearly EUR 35 million in 2016 (for each of five countries). Thus, it is this increase, and not spread over more countries, that has produced the steep ascent to a total of nearly EUR 175 million in 2016.

The profile of implementing partners associated with the EU's funding decisions on nutrition has changed somewhat over the last three years, as shown in Figure 6.

Figure 6: Proportion of EU Funding by Implementing Partner



The biggest shifts are in the proportion of funding going to partner country governments and to UN bodies. In 2016, partner governments received 71.5 % of the funding that included nutrition²⁶ (compared to 1.2 % in 2014). In contrast, the share going to UN bodies has dropped from 54.7 % to 14.1 % in the three years. These shifts in relative importance need to be understood in the context of significant rises in the size of the overall commitments to nutrition.

²⁴ Cape Verde, Honduras, Senegal and Peru.

²⁵ Bolivia, Chad, Burkina Faso (in two separate funding decisions), Niger and Rwanda.

²⁶ This analysis uses the total budgets for the Action Documents, not just the allocation to nutrition within them. This is because it is not possible to determine the precise funding, per implementing partner, for the nutrition component only.

UNICEF and FAO are consistently amongst the top three recipients, both in terms of size of funding and number of programmes. Funding to EU Member States Development Agencies has been relatively consistent in amount and share, though the number of Member States has increased (and thus the average allocation to each Member State has decreased) since 2014. Germany's GIZ is consistently the most important partner, followed by the UK's DFID and France's AFD.

2.3 Progress in Strategic priority 3: Knowledge for nutrition (strengthening the expertise and knowledge-base).

The EU endeavours to ensure that policies, strategies and actions on nutrition should be based, as far as possible, on evidence of their cost-effectiveness and impact. This is crucial if resources are to be used for maximum results. It includes both information systems to capture relevant lessons, as well as applied research to identify the specific contribution that nutrition-sensitive actions can make in addressing undernutrition. In the 2015 commitments, projects that addressed Strategic Priority 3 were equally divided across research and information.

The First Progress Report featured the development of the National Information Platforms for Nutrition (NIPN). NIPNs are designed specifically to support governments to both strengthen the evidence base for national policies and priorities; and to enhance national capacity to produce and use reliable data relevant to nutrition. A group of eminent experts – the Expert Advisory Group – has been convened to provide critical technical and strategic support to the Global Support Facility that manages the NIPN programme.²⁷ The first platforms are expected to start operating in 2017.

In order to enhance knowledge and expertise for nutrition at the country level, the Commission has developed a new programme in partnership with FAO: FIRST (Food and Nutrition Security Impact, Resilience, Sustainability and Transformation). FIRST has deployed officers in 16²⁸ countries which are providing nutrition-focused support and expertise to Ministries of Agriculture in the EU's priority countries.

Case example: Research on Food Fortification and Micronutrient Deficiencies

More evidence is needed to guide the design of policies and programmes concerned with tackling micronutrient deficiencies. The Commission is supporting research and pilot programmes to generate evidence on the relative cost effectiveness and impact of various approaches, including dietary diversification, behaviour change and fortification, on reducing micronutrient deficiencies. In 2016, the Commission services launched 10 pilot programmes in eight countries (Chad, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Ethiopia, The Gambia, Kenya, Madagascar, Niger and Sudan) committing EUR 33.3 million over 4 to 5 years. An additional EUR 2.2 million will address critical evidence gaps. The programmes will explore impact pathways around three key areas: supporting Governments to build robust legal frameworks; increasing the capacities of local private sector operators to fortify foods; and most importantly, to develop strong monitoring frameworks that will generate evidence of impact at the individual level. A Food Fortification Advisory Service has been established to build capacities across the Commission's nutrition priority countries so as to ensure that the learning from the research and projects informs policies and implementation strategies. Crucially, improved surveillance will ensure a strong focus on the poorest and most vulnerable sub-groups.

²⁷ For more information, see <http://www.agropolis.org/project-management/NIPN-project.php>

²⁸ Guatemala, Honduras, Burkina Faso, Niger, Chad, Ethiopia, Rwanda, Kenya, Pakistan, Mozambique, Afghanistan, Cambodia, Timor Leste, Sri-Lanka, Mali and Lao People's Democratic Republic



*This sign is on one of the HELP Germany/CADS project sites – in Shona it says “Give your family a balanced diet”.
Photo by: Liesl Karen Inglis of the EU Delegation Zimbabwe*

FIRST officers facilitate the embedding of nutrition into the countries' agriculture and food security policies. They are providing assistance to support coherent governance and coordination, and to strengthen human and institutional capacities in food and nutrition security. In five of these 16 countries the EU has Budget Support programmes with nutrition objectives for a value of EUR 722 million to enhance policy reforms. The support of the FIRST officer in combination with these Budget Support interventions is likely to have a lasting impact in the way countries design and implement nutrition enhancing policies. The Commission's Nutrition Advisory Service has delivered training to FIRST officers to ensure awareness of global best practices in tackling under nutrition.

Another important development is the Commission's role at the forefront of efforts to provide guidance on improving the nutritional outcomes of agriculture, food and public health policies and programmes. To that end, the Commission co-hosted a meeting with FAO, in September 2016, bringing together researchers, including the Joint Research Centre, UN agencies, NGOs and donors to explore how indicators of individual dietary diversity, particularly the newly developed minimum dietary diversity for women (MDD-W)²⁹, can be incorporated into routine monitoring and regular surveys. The MDD-W is the first simple global tool to assess the dietary quality of women. It thus captures gender dimensions and dietary diversity, which are both central considerations for nutrition-sensitive interventions. A Way Forward for MDD-W³⁰ was developed with the meeting's participants, to promote the dissemination and uptake of the indicator at country, regional and global levels. A Coordination Team of principal stakeholders has been established to maintain momentum, with FAO providing coordination support.



*EU/UNICEF Africa's Nutrition Security Partnership Project, in Rwanda.
Credit: Cornell University*

29 The MDD-W is a dichotomous indicator of whether or not women 15–49 years of age have consumed at least five out of ten defined food groups during the previous day and night (i.e. analysis is in terms of whether it has been achieved or not). The proportion of women 15–49 years of age who reach this minimum threshold of dietary diversity (i.e. five or more food groups) can be used as a proxy indicator for micronutrient adequacy. The MDD-W has been included within the Results Framework of the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP) and the Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC) for acute malnutrition.

30 <http://www.fao.org/nutrition/assessment/tools/minimum-dietary-diversity-women/mdd-w-workshop-sep-2016/en/>

Section 3.

Progress in Reducing Stunting by 7 million by 2025

Careful monitoring of the stunting situation is a critical component of the European Union's work within the framework of the Action Plan on Nutrition. It was this need that led the Commission to develop a tool to monitor stunting, allowing for more timely updates when new survey results become available. Indeed this tool has been integrated into WHO's tracking system that monitors progress of all six global nutrition targets agreed at the WHA in 2012.

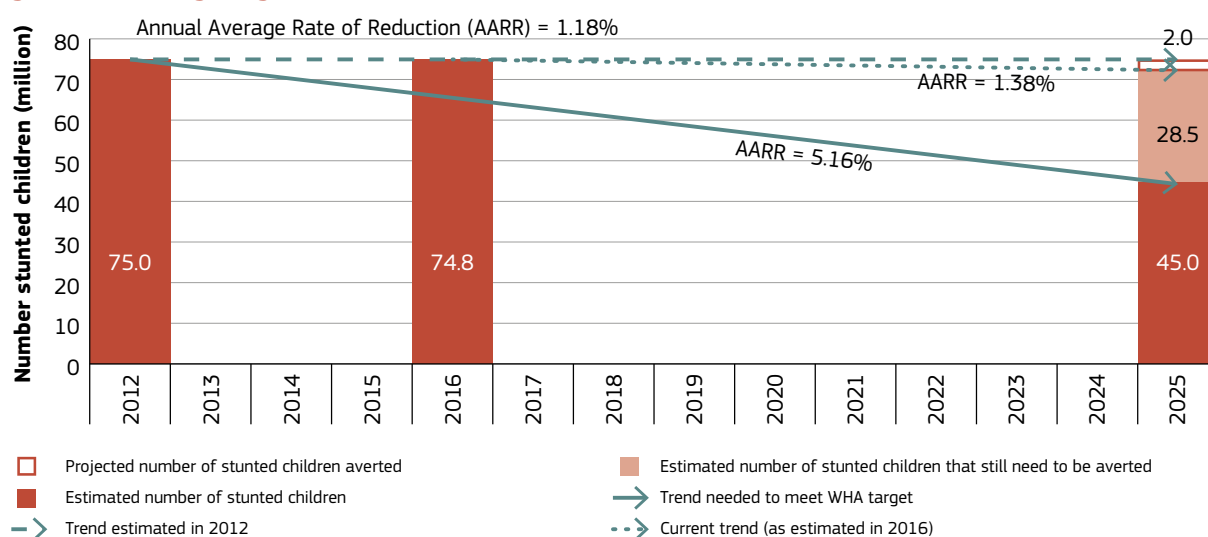
Before examining progress in reducing stunting, two important factors have to be borne in mind:

Firstly, any 'progress' cannot be attributed only to the EU actions or its financing. The reduction of stunting across these high-burden countries has been brought about by the numerous efforts of numerous players, not least each country's government and civil society groups. The efforts of the Commission's services are amongst these many contributions that are bringing about progress. Having said that, Commission services are working closely with partners to develop a methodology that will help improve the understanding of what is the impact of EU funding for nutrition alone on stunting reduction at country level in the priority countries.

Secondly, reducing stunting is a medium-to-long term undertaking. There is an inevitable time lag between increased investments, scaled-up actions and the impact on stunting reduction. Moreover, it cannot be assumed that there is a direct causal relationship between investments and impact on stunting, unless this has been fully evaluated in each context.

So, bearing these caveats in mind, a detailed analysis of the situation in the priority countries of the Action Plan on Nutrition has been made to provide insights into the progress towards the 7 million stunting reduction target.³¹

Figure 7: Stunting Progress in the EU's 40 Countries Prioritised for Nutrition



³¹ The global picture in stunting reduction, and progress towards the 2025 40 % reduction target, will be published by WHO after the publication of this report.



Children in Guatemala, Central America.
Photo by: R. Canessa.

Compared to last year's analysis, it is anticipated that an additional 1 million children will be averted from stunting in 2025. This demonstrates a doubling in the anticipated number of stunted averted, bringing the total calculated this year³² to 2 million (taking account of new survey data as well as revised population projections). *Figure 7* illustrates this graphically.

There is encouraging progress in the accelerating pace of stunting reduction³³: despite demographic growth, the rate of stunting reduction is increasing. It is likely that even greater progress will be seen in the next few years when the increased investments in 2015 and 2016 (that will be discussed in the next section) start to deliver impacts.

Together with Member States, other development partners, as well as partner governments, it is reasonable to be optimistic and anticipate that the number of children averted from stunting will continue to increase over the next nine years. The 7 million reduction target is achievable if nutrition continues to be prioritised as a national and international concern.

The Union's contribution is further explored at the country level, to see what more can be done. This is described in the Country Profiles (https://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/nutrition-map_en), where the actual, planned and potential role of EU Delegations to support partner governments is outlined.

One of the interesting developments in the design of the Union's external assistance is the increased prominence of stunting as an objective of programmes. Looking at the 30 funding decisions taken in 2015, 59 % included stunting reduction as an objective. It is expected that even further integration of stunting will be seen in the coming year's commitments.

*Since last year, an extra
1 million children are
estimated to have been
averted from stunting
by 2025.*

*Since last year,
the rate of
stunting reduction
has accelerated.*

³² Taking this year's group of 42 priority countries, it is estimated that 1.13 million children will be averted from stunting. We calculate that more children will be averted from stunting in the group of 40 countries, than the 42, because of the influence of the large number of stunted children in Sudan (which was not included last year).

³³ The average annual reduction rate of stunting (AARR), calculated last year (for 2015 to 2025) was 1.33 %; this year it is 1.38 % (for 2016 to 2025).

Section 4.

Progress in spending EUR 3.5 billion on nutrition by 2020

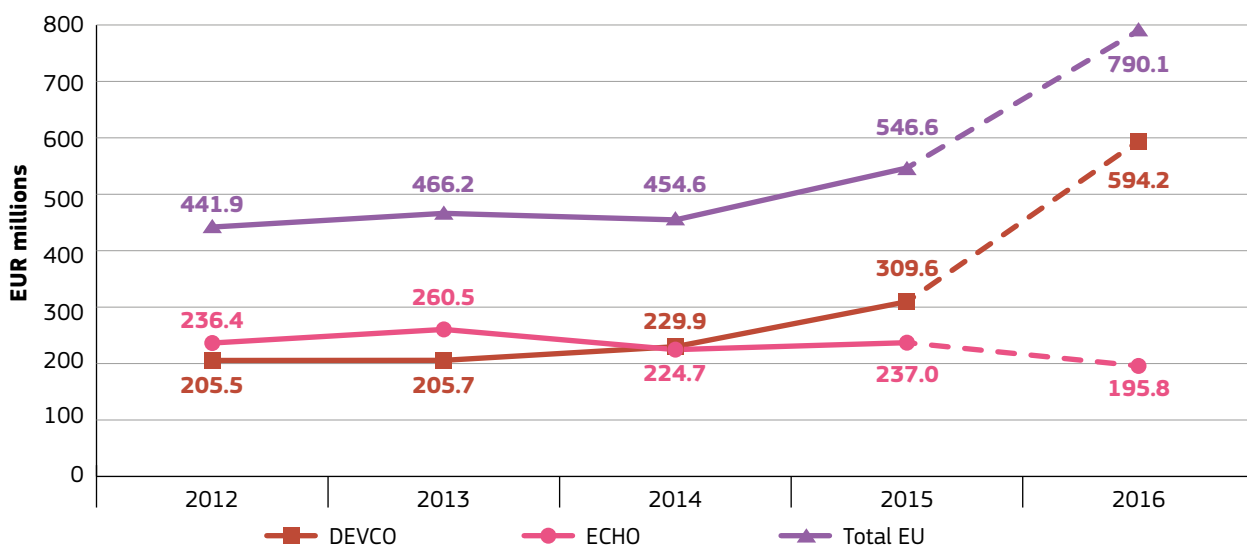
Since 2014 the EU invested EUR 1.8 billion in nutrition, which corresponds to 51% of its financial commitment for 2014-2020.

This section considers EU nutrition investments. Aside from the European Commission services, five EU Member States (France, Germany, Ireland, Netherlands and United Kingdom) are reporting their bilateral investment figures to the Global Nutrition Report (GNR) officially to track their Nutrition for Growth commitments. The amount reported in 2014 for these five EU Member States totalled EUR 413 million.³⁴

Regarding the investments made through the EU budget, analysis has been made across the years 2014, 2015 and 2016. The EU is making important progress in encompassing nutrition within its international development assistance.

Figure 8 shows a particularly marked jump in the EU's nutrition commitments in 2015. These commitments span 30 projects to individual countries or multi-country programmes (with an additional six projects in support of humanitarian operations). Annex 1 provides full tabular breakdown of these figures.

Figure 8: Nutrition Commitments 2008–2016 EUR millions



³⁴ See GNR 2016, <http://ebrary.ifpri.org/utils/getfile/collection/p15738coll2/id/130383/filename/130594.pdf>. Detailed amounts per country for 2014 are as follows (UK: EUR 332 million, Germany: EUR 79 million, Netherlands: EUR 2 million. Ireland only reported disbursements but not commitments for 2014. France reported neither commitments nor disbursements in 2014).

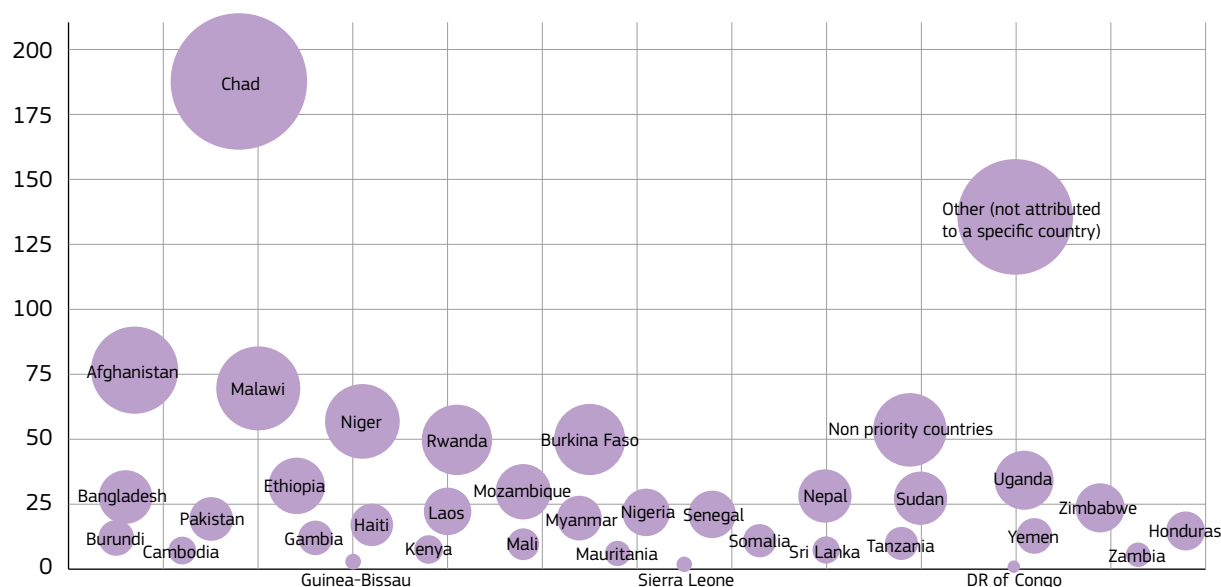


Children in Niger.
Photo by: Hélène Berton.

There has been a three-fold increase in the Union's nutrition commitments in 2016 compared to those of 2014 (the beginning of the commitment period). This increase is a direct result of the concerted efforts by EU Delegations and the Commission services to ensure that the EU's nutrition agenda is translated into action including investments in training and guidance material. Projects supported by the Directorate-General for Humanitarian Aid operations and European Civil Protection focus mainly on wasting prevention but also contribute to stunting reduction.

The EU's investments are being targeted to those countries that are of strategic priority for nutrition. As was shown previously in *Figure 2*, nearly 90 % of EU nutrition commitments managed by Directorate-General for International Cooperation and Development since 2014 have been to the EU's priority countries.

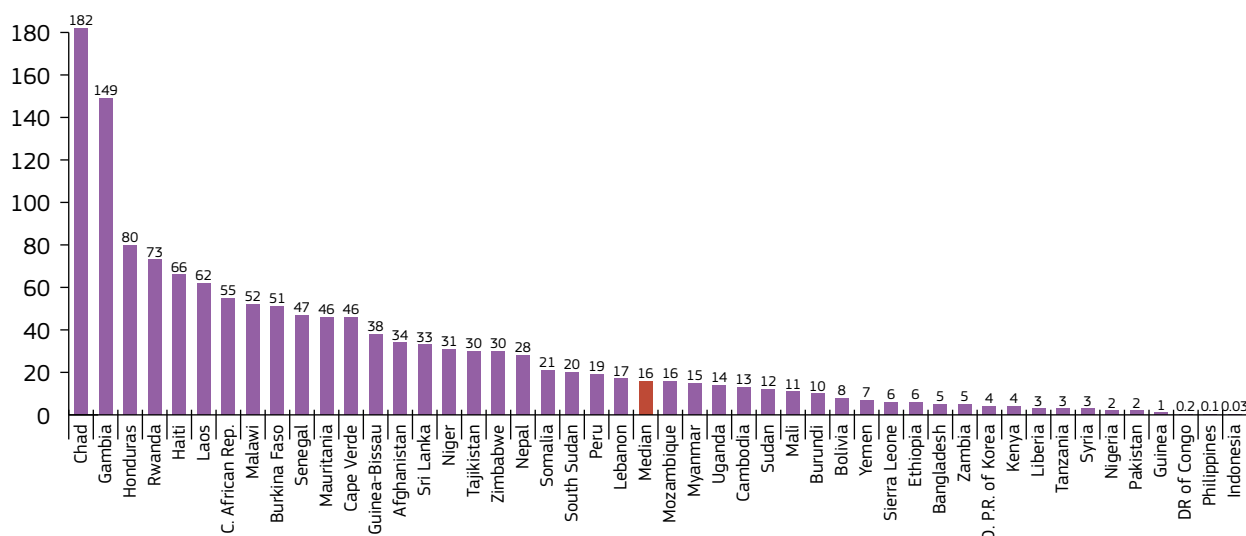
Figure 9: Directorate-General for International Cooperation and Development Nutrition Commitments 2014–2016 (EUR million), in Priority and Non-priority Countries, Proportional to their Share of the Total Allocation of EUR 1133.7 million



The geographic spread of the 2014–2016 commitments is shown in *Figure 9*. The size of each country's bubble corresponds to the percentage share of the total nutrition commitments made across the three years.

Beyond geography, it is also possible to examine the strategic use of these resources in terms of stunting. Comparison of countries' financial commitment to nutrition expressed in relation to their burden of stunting (using 2015 estimates), i.e. euros per stunted child is shown in *Figure 10*.

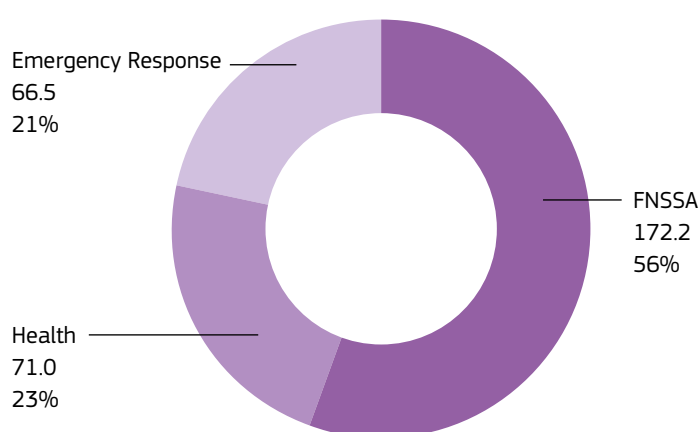
Figure 10: Nutrition Commitments managed by Directorate-General for International Cooperation and Development in 2014–2016 (EUR per stunted child estimated for 2015)



However, the wide range in funding per stunted child per country provides only a crude analysis, since the nature of undernutrition, the opportunities for engagement, and the scale of the problem will all differ markedly country-to-country.

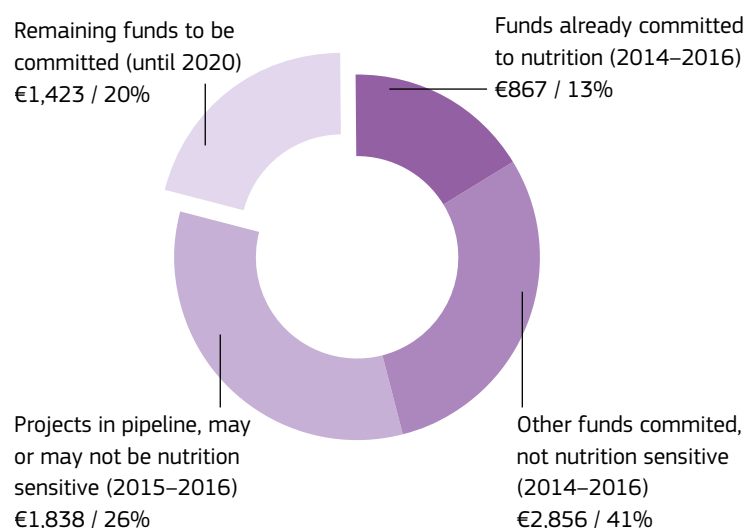
In terms of focal sector, the EU nutrition commitments managed by the Directorate-General for International Cooperation and Development in 2015 (EUR 309.6 million) were mainly through food and nutrition security and sustainable agriculture (FNSSA, 56 %, as shown in *Figure 11*). In 2016, the proportion of nutrition funding through FNSSA increased to 87.9 % (of the EUR 594.2 million total), with 6.5 % through health.

Figure 11: 2015 EU Commitments of the Directorate-General for International Cooperation and Development by Focal Sector, EUR million



In order to ensure that the remaining time in the 2014–2020 programming period is used to its maximum potential to secure the achievement of the EU's commitments, the funding situation for each EU Delegations has been scrutinised. In broad terms, the 42 countries that prioritised nutrition in their focal sectors (FNSSA, Health or Education) still have approximately 20 % of the initial funding allocated to these three sectors remaining to be committed (see *Figure 12*).

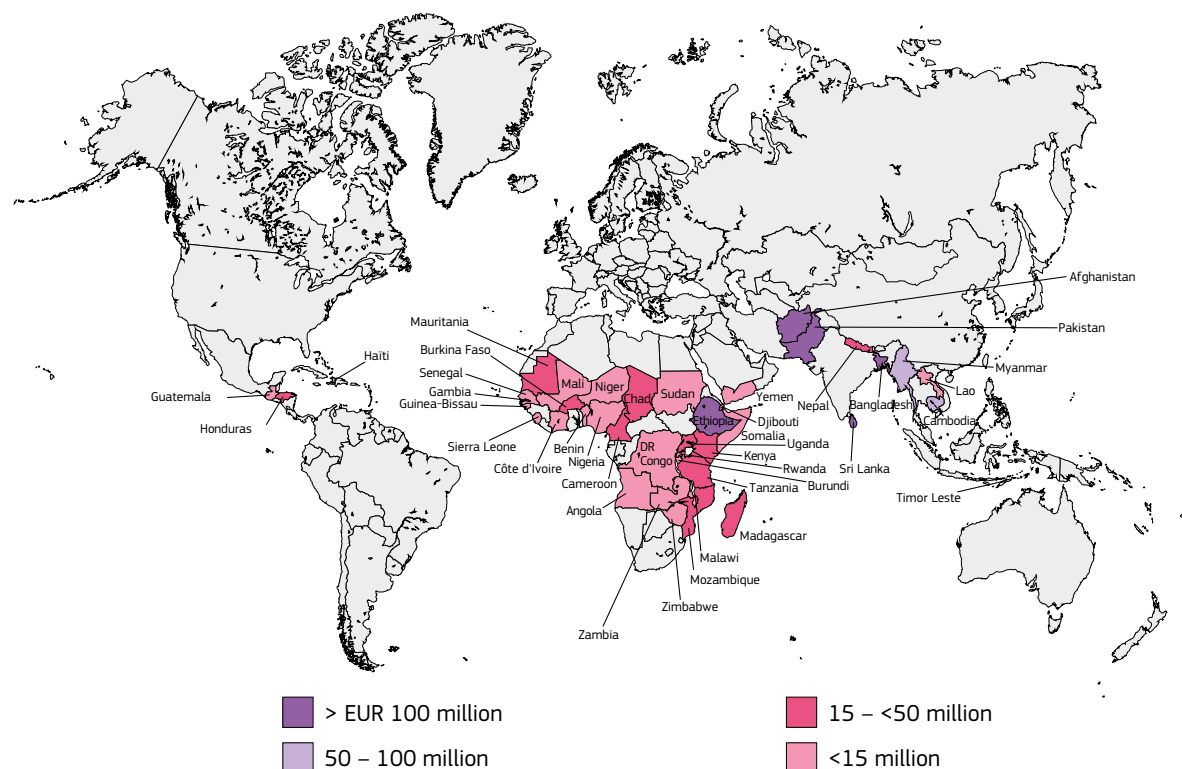
Figure 12 Total commitments, 2014–16, of 42 EU Delegations that prioritised nutrition in FNSSA, Health or Education, out of a total allocation of EUR 6,984 million (as of February 2017)



These EUR 1.423 billion constitute significant strategic potential for nutrition. Future programmes linked to these un-committed funds can be designed to incorporate nutrition considerations alongside other objectives. More specifically, the situation for each EU Delegations is shown in their Country Profile, and summarised in the map in Figure 13.

Five³⁵ of the EU's countries prioritised for nutrition each have in excess of EUR 100 million which have not yet been fully committed; and four³⁶ more have between EUR 50 million and EUR 100 million. These are all high-burden countries in terms of stunting, and signify the potential that can still be leveraged to achieve both of the EU's commitments in nutrition. And this is not about pushing nutrition to the front of the funding queue; it is about incorporating nutrition into the design of programmes in these focal sectors (FNSSA, Value Chains, Health and Education among others). As discussed earlier, nutrition can be integrated to, and help to further, broader objectives around sustainable growth, resilience, climate change adaptation and, crucially, gender.

Figure 13: Remaining Funds to be Fully Committed from the 2014 to 2020 Programming Period in FNSSA, Health and Education



³⁵ Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Ethiopia, Pakistan and Sri Lanka

³⁶ Burundi, Cambodia, Lao PDR and Myanmar

Section 5.

Conclusions and Future Priorities



Ma San Hmwe is a 33-year-old mother of one living in Baw Sa Kaing Village, Ayeyarwady Region of Myanmar.
Copyright: 3MDG/UNOPS

The progress reports provide insights into how the EU is working to help secure success with regard to its nutrition commitments. They describe and analyse the financial contributions that the EU is providing for nutrition as well as the stunting reduction progress evidenced in partner countries.

The European Parliament³⁷ has specifically called on the Commission to:

- ***Mobilise “long-term financial investments in food and nutrition security [...] and to enhance food and nutrition security through enhanced governance and accountability and systemic policies on food and nutrition”;***
- ***“Support the definition and implementation of context-specific, feasible and robust national nutrition targets in line with the SDGs”;***
- ***“[...] report regularly on progress made under the nutrition for growth commitments using a common resource-tracking methodological approach as agreed at the 2013 Scaling up Nutrition Movement (SUN) Network meeting in Lusaka”;* and**
- ***“to honour its commitment to invest EUR 3.5 billion in order to reduce stunting by at least 7 million by 2025”.***

The Commission is taking steps to actively address these requests. The preceding sections provide insights into how the work of the Commission is shifting in incorporating nutrition not only in its actions but in its programme objectives, policy discourse, and wider development ambitions in support of partner countries. The Commission recognises the opportunity to achieve more with its financial and political resources, and will continue incorporating nutrition through all levels of its work.

³⁷ European Parliament resolution on the next steps towards attaining global goals and EU commitments on nutrition and food security in the world (2016/2705(RSP)).
<http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?pubRef=-//EP//TEXT+TA+P8-TA-2016-0375+0+DOC+XML+V0//EN>

The EU-Africa Research and Innovation Partnership on FNSSA is programming Research and Innovation Actions on Food Systems Africa with funding allocated in Horizon 2020.

The EU's nutrition pledge of mobilising EUR 3.5 billion between 2014–2020 is within reach. The Commission needs to be especially strategic over the years that remain to reach the EU's financial target and the nine years to reach the stunting target. Specifically, Commission services will aim to:

1. **Continue and deepen the geographical focus** of the Commission's work in nutrition, by supporting EU Delegations that have significant potential to integrate nutrition-sensitive programme design. Uncommitted funds in key focal sectors such as FNSSA, Health and Education, as well as others such as Governance, could be leveraged to achieve nutrition results, alongside other development goals. As mentioned earlier, this is about creating synergies within programmes, not derailing plans in order to accommodate nutrition. This is a win-win proposition.

2. **Strengthen partnership approaches** in nutrition, including the extension of Joint EU Programming to more countries. Cooperation with EU Member States, and ensuring coordinated support to partner countries, is a priority.

3. Leverage the EU's political capital as an **agent for change in nutrition**, by working in close cooperation with international initiatives such as the SUN movement, to secure the political attention and support needed for nutrition. There are several opportunities in 2017, including under the auspices of the Italian G7 Presidency with a Nutrition for Growth follow-up event in Milan on the 4th of November.



Project for rural development and reinforcement of productive capacities.

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By intercropping of cocoa, food crops and vegetable, farmers like Maria and Isabel can sustain their income and improve food security as well as creating a future additional source of cash income.

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*A nurse giving health and hygiene education in the town of Taknef, Bangladesh.
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*Women selling fruit and vegetables at a street market in Abuja, Nigeria.
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4. Maintain close **monitoring of the stunting situation** in priority countries³⁸ by applying the innovative tools developed by the Commission. The detailed analyses on how stunting has evolved to date, and what needs to be done to reach the country's national and/or World Health Assembly (WHA) target provide partner governments, EU Member States as well as EU Delegations, critical insights that can feed into national plans and priorities. In doing this, the Commission will work in close cooperation with the technical team in WHO responsible for tracking countries' progress in the global WHA nutrition targets.

5. Give greater attention to see that existing **materials and resources concerning nutrition** are known about and used by partner countries, EU Member States and EU Delegations – particularly the new Country Profiles on Nutrition. This also includes material from other Commission services such as the uptake of results of nutrition research, funded by the EU's research and innovation programmes (eg. FP7, Horizon 2020), specifically in the framework of the EU-Africa Research and Innovation Partnership on food and nutrition security and sustainable agriculture.³⁹

6. Further the progress that has already been made in **creating a 'culture' of nutrition-sensitivity** that spans the policy and programming domains. This is seen most clearly in the application of MDD-W, as both a policy objective as well as a nutrition (and gender) sensitive indicator of agriculture and food systems programmes.

These actions are ambitious but also within reach. The Commission will aim to continue the progress that has already started by leveraging EU resources and wider political commitment to nutrition.

³⁸ Indeed the tool developed by the Commission for this purpose has been integrated into WHO's tracking system that monitors progress of all six global nutrition targets agreed at the WHA in 2012.

³⁹ JOIN (2017) 17

Annex 1

EU Commitments to 'basic nutrition' managed by the Directorate-General for International Cooperation and Development (EUR million)

	2014	2015	2016
42 priority countries	23.4	53.0	129.4
Other countries	0.5		
Research, information, fortification, governance	6.5		
Technical assistance /support	3.5		
Total	33.9	53.0	129.4

Annex 2

EU nutrition commitments, 2008–2016.

The table specifies the EU commitments managed respectively by the Directorate-General for International Cooperation and Development and the Directorate-General for European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations as well as the categorisation of the nutrition commitment: specific, dominant or partial. All figures are in EUR million.

Note: Commitments up to and including 2015 reflect those published through the OECD DAC (Development Assistance Committee). The 2016 figures are **preliminary** estimates, using data on the Commission's Information Systems.

The determination of whether the EU's commitments should count as nutrition-specific or nutrition-sensitive is made according to the methodology agreed by the SUN Donor Network in 2013.⁴⁰ Nutrition-specific commitments count in their entirety; Nutrition-sensitive dominant count in their entirety; and nutrition-sensitive partial count for 25% of the total commitment.

In terms of progress towards the EUR 3.5 billion spending commitment, the total across 2014 to 2016 is displayed in blue. It is striking that the EU commitments for the last three years (2014–2016) exceeds that for the previous six years (2008–13). This 'surge' in the 11th EDF signals how seriously the Commission is taking its funding commitment.

	DG DEVCO			Total DEVCO	DG ECHO		Total ECHO	Total EU
	Specific	Dominant	Partial		Dominant	Partial		
2008	-	-	122.8	122.8	7.0	149.2	156.2	279.0
2009	60.8	46.6	150.9	258.3	28.0	161.9	189.9	448.2
2010	50.6	25.2	46.9	122.8	146.1	103.3	249.4	372.2
2011	1.8	11.0	87.1	99.8	51.4	169.9	221.3	321.2
2012	18.7	25.0	161.8	205.5	141.5	94.9	236.4	441.9
2013	66.8	41.1	97.8	205.7	130.0	130.5	260.5	466.2
2014	33.9	25.0	171.0	229.9	91.5	133.2	224.7	454.6
2015	53.0	18.1	237.6	309.6	87.5	149.5	237.0	546.6
2016	129.4	167.5	297.3	594.2	-	195.8	195.8	790.1
All Years	415.0	359.5	1374.2	2148.7	683.0	1288.3	1971.3	4119.9
2014 – 2016	216.3	210.6	706.9	1133.7	179.0	478.5	657.5	1791.2

40 Methodology and Guidance Note to Track Global Investments in Nutrition (http://scalingupnutrition.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/12/RESOURCE_TRACKING_METHODODOLOGY_SUN_DONOR_NETWORK.pdf), December 2013. This is being used by the UK, Germany, Netherlands, France, Ireland, USA, World Bank, Canada etc.

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