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Ninth Progress Report on the Commission's Action Plan on Nutrition 2014-2025

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Acronyms

ACH	Action Against Hunger
AFD	Agence Française de Développement
C4N-SUN	Capacity for Nutrition for the Scaling Up Nutrition Movement
CFS	Committee on World Food Security
CGIAR	Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research
CIRAD	Centre de coopération Internationale en Recherche Agronomique pour le Développement
CMAM	community-based management of acute malnutrition
COP30	30th Conference of the Parties (UN climate negotiations)
DAC	Development Assistance Committee
DG ECHO	Directorate-General for European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations
DG INTPA	Directorate-General for International Partnerships
DHIS2	District Health Information Software 2
EC-NIS	Strengthening National Nutrition Information Systems
EU	European Union
EU4SUN	European Union support to the operationalisation of the SUN 3.0 Strategy
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
FIAP	France International Expertise
GAP III	Gender Action Plan III
GDP	gross domestic product
GIZ	Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit
HDP Nexus	human-development-peace nexus
IFAD	International Fund for Agricultural Development
IHF	integrated homestead farming
ILO	International Labour Organization
IPC	Integrated Food Security Phase Classification
IRD	Institut de Recherche pour le Développement
IYCF-E	infant and young child feeding in emergencies
JME	Joint Child Malnutrition Estimates
JRC	Joint Research Centre
Lao PDR	Lao People's Democratic Republic

MDD-W	Minimum Dietary Diversity for Women
MFF	multiannual financial framework
MIYCN	maternal, infant and young child nutrition
N4G	Nutrition for Growth
NGO	non-governmental organisation
NRF	Nutrition Research Facility
NUS	neglected and underutilised species
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
RUTF	ready-to-use therapeutic food
SAM	severe acute malnutrition
SDG(s)	sustainable development goal(s)
SFVC(s)	specialised food value chain(s)
SG	secretary-general
SRCT	Stunting Reduction Calculation Tool
SUN	Scaling Up Nutrition
TICAF	Team Europe Initiative for Sustainable Trade and Agriculture
UK	United Kingdom
UN	United Nations
UNFSS	United Nations Food Systems Summit
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
USD	United States dollar
WASH	water, sanitation and hygiene
WFP	World Food Programme
WHA	World Health Assembly
WHO	World Health Organization
WPP	World Population Prospects

Key messages

Sustained EU leadership and political commitment: Since the adoption of the European Union Action Plan on Nutrition (2014–2025)[1], the EU has positioned nutrition as a core pillar of its external action. With an ambitious pledge of EUR 3.4 billion at the Nutrition for Growth (N4G) Summit 2025 in Paris, the EU has reaffirmed its global leadership and commitment to nutrition despite the global reduction in overseas development assistance. EU engagement supports partner countries in strengthening national systems while advancing inclusive and sustainable development. It recognises nutrition as both a public health priority and a strategic policy issue requiring coordinated, long-term investment, including through sustainable agri-food systems that improve availability and affordability of healthy diets. It also addresses the interaction between infectious diseases and undernutrition and supports the continued scale-up of life-saving prevention and treatment of acute malnutrition, particularly in fragile and crisis-affected settings.

> *Nutrition has very tangible effects in terms of geopolitics, health and climate. Combating malnutrition also – and perhaps above all – means contributing to global stability and peace.*
>
> **Éléonore Caroit, French Minister Delegate to the Minister for Europe and Foreign Affairs (speaking at the N4G stocktaking event 2026)**

Delivering on measurable results and financial accountability. The EU has consistently translated ambition into tangible results. **Its 2012 pledge to support partner countries in reducing the number of stunted children by at least 7 million by 2025 has been achieved, with 7.2 million children averted from stunting in partner countries, and a decline in average stunting prevalence by 7.1 percentage points.** This is matched by strong financial delivery.

Since 2013, the EU has met and exceeded its Nutrition for Growth pledges across successive cycles, maintaining investment even during periods of global crisis. Based on 2024 OECD/DAC data and preliminary 2025 figures, implementation of **the 2024-2027 pledge is already well advanced (EUR 2.7 billion – 79% of the pledge[2]).** Together, these achievements demonstrate consistent accountability and reinforce the EU's role as a reliable partner for global nutrition in an increasingly constrained and uncertain environment.

From action to impact: lessons from the EU action plan on nutrition (2014–2025). The EU action plan on nutrition has been instrumental in shaping a more coherent and effective approach to nutrition, built around three core pillars: strengthening political mobilisation and governance, scaling up multi-sectoral action (both nutrition-specific and nutrition-sensitive), and advancing knowledge, data and accountability systems. Its implementation reinforced the importance of integrating nutrition across sectors – particularly health, food systems, social protection, education and WASH (water, sanitation and hygiene) – while anchoring action in country ownership and partnerships such as the SUN movement. It also drove progress in tracking financial commitments and results, strengthening transparency and accountability. Experience has further underscored the importance of sustained coordination across sectors and continued efforts to strengthen the evidence-base for nutrition-sensitive approaches. These lessons have informed a growing focus on systems transformation, investment at scale and the strategic use of public finance to mobilise wider resources, while maintaining a commitment to tackling inequality, promoting resilience and strengthening country ownership.

- ⇒ **Nutrition as a strategic investment in a rapidly changing global context:** In a world shaped by conflict, climate shocks, economic volatility, geopolitical tensions and widening inequalities, improving nutrition is not a marginal concern but a strategic priority for building resilient societies and inclusive growth. These pressures disrupt food systems, strain public services, constrain fiscal space and undermine access to healthy diets. Strategic investments in nutrition, healthy diets and sustainable food systems strengthen social cohesion, productivity and economic stability while reducing the rising health and economic costs of malnutrition and diet-related diseases. They also reduce vulnerability to food-related shocks, including the weaponisation of food in conflict settings, thereby strengthening societal resilience and helping populations withstand periods of crisis and instability. Sustained progress requires political leadership that places nutrition at the centre of national policy as both a moral imperative and a sound economic choice.
- ⇒ **Demonstrating impact across diverse country contexts:** The effectiveness of this approach is reflected across a diverse portfolio of EU-supported actions presented in this report. These include sustained engagement via a multi-sectoral approach in 2014-2025 in countries such as Ethiopia, Chad and Guatemala, alongside more recent

[1] EU Action Plan on Nutrition (2015), Reducing the number of stunted children under 5 by 7 million by 2025.
[2] Of this total amount, EUR 1.3 billion is humanitarian assistance.

investment-driven approaches under Global Gateway in Rwanda, Lao PDR and Zambia, and ongoing support in fragile and crisis-affected contexts, including Afghanistan, Mozambique and Somalia.

⇒ **Addressing the full spectrum of malnutrition:** Malnutrition in all its forms remains a defining global challenge. Undernutrition – including micronutrient deficiencies – persists in many regions while overweight and obesity are rising worldwide. These interconnected challenges reflect structural pressures across food systems, health systems and economies, contributing to the growing burden of diet-related non-communicable diseases. Addressing them requires integrated approaches that improve diet quality, align food systems with health outcomes and support more sustainable and resilient societies.

⇒ **Partnerships anchored in shared values and transformative investment:** EU engagement is guided by the Union's core values and its human rights-based approach, recognising access to healthy diets and good nutrition as fundamental to human dignity, equality and social justice. These principles are advanced through transformative investments at scale, including the strategic use of public finance to mobilise private sector engagement and support sustainable and inclusive food systems. In an increasingly uncertain global environment, such investments can also support the diversification of food systems and supply networks, reducing vulnerabilities associated with excessive dependence on fragile supply chains and contributing to greater stability and resilience. By strengthening institutions, expanding inclusive economic opportunities and leveraging investment for social impact, the EU translates its values into practice – recognising that equitable growth and social inclusion are essential for lasting nutrition progress.

⇒ **Inclusion, gender equality and youth are drivers of change:** Nutrition outcomes are shaped by persistent inequalities linked to gender, income, geography and social exclusion. Women's access to resources, education and decision-making power remains a critical determinant of household nutrition, while young people are increasingly driving innovation and entrepreneurship across food systems. The EU therefore supports efforts to promote gender equality, youth engagement and inclusive governance, enabling communities and local actors to play a transformative role in delivering sustainable and shared nutrition gains.

Scaling impact through Global Gateway and Global Europe Partnerships: The EU's external action is delivered through the current Global Europe instrument (NDICI-Global Europe, 2021-2027), which provides a flexible financing framework combining grants, policy dialogue and investment tools to support partner countries across development, humanitarian and fragile contexts. It underpins EU efforts to strengthen sustainable agri-food systems, improve access to healthy diets and address the structural drivers of malnutrition in line with a broader focus on resilient, fair and sustainable food systems that deliver for both producers and consumers[3]. Global Europe is designed as an enabling instrument, with a broad toolbox to serve multiple policy areas, including food security and nutrition. It emphasises continued EU engagement in settings characterised by extreme fragility and conflict through differentiated approaches, addressing the root causes of fragility, ensuring access to basic services, and promoting the resilience of populations and prospects for peaceful, stable societies in line with the humanitarian–development–peace nexus (HDP Nexus).

Through our Global Gateway strategy, we are investing in long-term partnerships to reinforce resilience and reduce vulnerability. We will also maintain political engagement to uphold international humanitarian law, ensure humanitarian access and support pathways to lasting peace.

Jozef Síkela, European Commissioner for International Partnerships, 2026 (Address at the launch of the 2026 Global Report on Food Crises)

Within this framework, Global Gateway serves as the EU's central strategy for scaling impact through transformative investment across key sectors, including energy, transport, digital, health, education and research. By strengthening systems, infrastructure and human development, and mobilising public and private finance, it creates pathways to improve access to healthy diets and contribute to better nutrition outcomes. The Global Gateway Investment Hub further reinforces this approach by connecting the European Commission, EU Member States, development finance institutions, export credit agencies and private investors and donors, helping translate investment opportunities into concrete actions. Looking ahead, the post-2027 Global Europe instrument (under preparation), as part of the proposed 2028-2034 EU budget, is expected to build on this model while further strengthening the investment-driven logic of EU external action, with greater emphasis on flexibility, strategic partnerships and the catalytic use of public finance to crowd in private investment and scale impact across sectors. Within this evolving framework, improved nutrition outcomes will continue to serve as a tangible marker of whether EU-supported action is delivering real improvements in people's lives – reflecting progress in strengthening systems, improving diets and enhancing resilience in partner countries.

[3] This approach is aligned with the European Commission's *Vision for Agriculture and Food* (2025), which highlights the role of sustainable and resilient agri-food systems in ensuring access to affordable, nutritious food and advancing well-being within the EU and globally.

Introduction

Nutrition: The foundation of healthy and resilient societies

Good nutrition is a universal cornerstone of health, human potential, and economic and societal stability. Malnutrition – whether driven by inadequate or unhealthy diets – mirrors social inequalities and undermines wellbeing, productivity and resilience, while placing sustained pressure on public finances. It concerns all actors, across both public and private sectors.

Yet malnutrition is not inevitable. Decisive investment in nutrition generates lasting social and economic gains: it breaks cycles of illness and poverty, strengthens immunity, supports learning and human development, and enhances long-term economic resilience. Research[4] demonstrates that differences in human capital account for a substantial share of global income disparities, underscoring the macroeconomic consequences of early-life deprivation. Addressing malnutrition is therefore central to sustainable development.

For the European Union, this economic rationale is inseparable from its core values and the commitment to human dignity, respect for human rights and addressing structural inequalities. Improving nutrition is both a shared responsibility that cannot be overlooked, and a strategic investment in building inclusive, resilient and equitable societies.

Renewed EU leadership on global nutrition

In 2025, the European Union renewed and strengthened its global commitment to nutrition, reaffirming the leadership role it has sustained since its landmark pledges in 2012-2013[5] to support partner countries in achieving the World Health Assembly (WHA) nutrition targets. Since then, accountability for delivering on these pledges has been systematically ensured by a succession of progress reports, the first being published in 2015. Taken together, these reports trace **a journey from political commitment to delivery at scale.** They document how nutrition has progressively evolved from time-bound commitments toward embedded multi-sectoral action and integrated partnership-based approaches as a cross-cutting pillar of EU external action and a foundation for human development.

The previous Eighth Progress Report (April 2022 to March 2024) highlighted the EU's central role in advancing nutrition and looked ahead to the 2025 N4G Summit in Paris. Convened by the French Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs on 27-28 March 2025, the Summit mobilised almost USD 28 billion in new nutrition commitments across more than 400 entries on the Summit's accountability platform[6], reflecting renewed global engagement on nutrition – including governments and public institutions, development banks, philanthropic organisations, civil society organisations and the private sector – amidst a challenging geopolitical and funding environment.

Nothing is for us without us – we demand to be part of the solutions and decision-making processes. Nutrition should not be a privilege; it should be a right for everyone.

Child and Youth Call to Action presented at the closing ceremony of the N4G Summit, Paris, 28 March 2025

Against this backdrop, the EU together with its Member States and via a Team Europe approach, pledged a collective EUR 6.5 billion for nutrition-related action between 2024 and 2029, including a EUR 3.4 billion contribution from the European Commission for the period 2024-2027, aimed at supporting partner countries' efforts to address high burdens of malnutrition. These commitments reaffirm the EU's leadership in global nutrition and provide the starting point for this Ninth Progress Report, which tracks delivery against the EU's own nutrition pledges and situates EU action within evolving global challenges as the world looks beyond 2025.

2025 was a global stocktake and transition year for nutrition

The year 2025 also marked a broader global stocktaking moment for nutrition. It coincided with the **extension of the United Nations Decade of Action** on Nutrition (2016-2025) **to 2030** and the assessment of progress against the World

[4] See for example Holla, A., Schady, N. and Silva, J. (eds), 2026. Building Human Capital Where It Matters: Homes, Neighborhoods, and Workplaces. World Bank.

[5] One of these pledges focused on the resources to be harnessed for actions with a nutrition objective, while the other referred to the number of children to be averted from being stunted in those countries being supported by these resources.

[6] By late 2025, 586 commitments had been registered from stakeholders in over 80 countries, combining policy and financing pledges to tackle malnutrition in all its forms.

Health Assembly (WHA) global nutrition targets for 2025, including the target to reduce childhood stunting – a goal to which the EU committed in 2012. This ninth progress report therefore represents the capstone of the EU's nutrition progress reporting cycle, building on the series of reports published since the first progress report under the action plan on nutrition in 2015, and providing a consolidated account of results, financing and lessons accumulated over more than a decade of engagement.

The United Nations General Assembly's decision to extend the Decade of Action on Nutrition to 2030 marked explicit recognition that recent stagnation of global hunger and malnutrition trends – driven fundamentally by **poverty and growing inequality as root causes of food insecurity and malnutrition**, **and further exacerbated by conflict, climate change, economic shocks and biodiversity loss** – demanded renewed urgency, coordination and political commitment rather than retreat. It is against this backdrop – of accountability, transition and renewed global resolve – that the ninth progress report situates the EU's nutrition legacy and its future role beyond 2025.

A changing global landscape – renewed engagement on food security and nutrition

The global development landscape continues to evolve, shaped by interconnected pressures affecting progress on poverty reduction, health, equality and sustainable development. At the same time, these dynamics have reinforced international recognition of the central role that food security, healthy diets and nutrition play in stability, human development and resilience. In November 2025, the World Summit for Social Development in Doha reaffirmed global commitments to eradicate poverty and promote inclusive social progress, highlighting employment, universal social protection and equitable access to essential services as essential foundations for resilient societies.

Despite ongoing fiscal pressures in many low- and middle-income countries, there is renewed momentum for political engagement and partnership to sustain progress. Increasing emphasis is being placed on coordinated global action – including collaboration with responsible private sector actors – to mobilise resources, strengthen food systems and expand opportunities for sustainable and inclusive development. Within this context, the European Union continues to play a leading role through its current external action framework, notably the Global Europe instrument (NDICI-Global Europe, 2021-2027). This provides a comprehensive and flexible platform to support partner countries through policy dialogue, investment and development cooperation, including in food security and nutrition. Council conclusions on 'Stepping up Team Europe's support to global food security and nutrition' (December 2024, reaffirmed July 2025) further underline the importance of solidarity, sustainable production, trade, multilateral cooperation and policy coherence. They reaffirm the EU's commitment to addressing humanitarian needs, advancing food systems transformation and ensuring access to safe, affordable and diverse diets, while condemning the use of starvation as a method of warfare.

A significant milestone in this evolving policy landscape is the **2026 Joint Communication on Humanitarian Aid** **which reaffirms the EU's role as a reliable and principled humanitarian actor** in an increasingly complex global environment. Grounded in the humanitarian principles of humanity, impartiality, neutrality and independence, the Communication emphasises the protection of humanitarian space, international humanitarian law and affected populations, while recognising humanitarian action as an important contribution to human security, the protection of human rights and broader stability. Through its complementary priorities of protection, performance and partnership, it reinforces the importance of strengthening resilience, addressing fragility and reducing long-term dependence on humanitarian assistance through closer links between humanitarian, development and peace efforts. The accompanying Staff Working Documents on humanitarian diplomacy, humanitarian supply chains and an integrated approach to fragility provide further operational guidance in these areas, with implications for nutrition and resilience in fragile settings explored further in Part 3.

A sufficient and nutritious diet is essential for children to grow up healthy and learn effectively. It is the foundation for the economic and social development of societies, and it is a human right.

Bärbel Kofler, Parliamentary State Secretary to the Federal Minister for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ), Germany

Looking ahead, the proposed multiannual financial framework (MFF) 2028-2034 is expected to build on this foundation, maintaining food security and nutrition as core priorities of EU external action[7]. In particular, the future Global Europe Instrument – to become the EU's main financing instrument for external action – is expected to integrate these priorities across its global and geographic pillars, enabling sustained support to partner countries through coordinated policy dialogue, investment and development cooperation. Together, these commitments reinforce the recognition of **food security and improved nutrition as key drivers of stability, resilience and human wellbeing**, requiring sustained political engagement and collective international action.

Progress under pressure: global nutrition trends at a critical juncture

Global progress on child stunting has continued over the past decade, albeit too slowly[8]. **Recent gains are increasingly fragile**. Population growth, conflict, climate shocks and economic stress are offsetting improvements, while child wasting persists and childhood overweight continues to rise. Malnutrition today is more complex, intersecting with food systems, health systems and structural inequalities. Despite mounting pressures, sustained investment has helped prevent a sharper reversal. The 2026 State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World confirms that while food insecurity remains high, targeted policies and social protection have mitigated impacts in several regions.

At the same time, acute food insecurity has escalated sharply in fragile and conflict-affected settings, with climate change exacerbating it. Since the first **EU-supported Global Report on Food Crises in 2017, the number of people facing IPC Phase 3+ acute hunger has nearly doubled – and currently stands at 266 million.**[9] Recent analysis further suggests that, under a global temperature increase of 2°C, the number of countries experiencing critical levels of food insecurity could rise to as many as 24 – almost three times current levels. In these contexts, nutrition interventions – including treatment of acute malnutrition, maternal and child nutrition services, and nutrition-sensitive social protection – are indispensable. Effective nutrition responses and social protection in these settings do not only save lives, they also help mitigate social and economic stresses that can fuel instability and protracted crises. These trends underscore that the central challenge is no longer the relevance of nutrition, but how political commitment, financing and delivery models must evolve to protect gains and achieve impact at scale in an increasingly volatile global environment.

Nutrition as a food systems challenge

Nutrition outcomes depend on how well different systems – including food, but also health, education, water, social protection, finance, and governance – perform and work together to ensure access to adequate and healthy food, while also reflecting the interaction between infectious diseases and undernutrition, and the quality of care and protection. The quality of diets and nutrition outcomes are shaped less by isolated interventions than by how food is produced, processed, distributed, marketed and regulated – and by who can access healthy diets in practice, reflecting deeper socio-economic opportunities or inequalities as well as political choices and cultural norms.

Changing diets, rising affordability pressures and the spread of unhealthy food environments have put food systems at the centre of the nutrition debate. Market incentives, policy choices and power imbalances increasingly shape what people eat and the outcomes they experience while persistent challenges such as acute malnutrition and anaemia continue to affect nutrition outcomes in many contexts. This systems perspective links global nutrition trends to everyday realities. UNICEF's work on child food poverty highlights that where access to a diversity of safe, affordable and minimally processed foods has been safeguarded through public policy, health services and social support, children's diets and development outcomes are demonstrably better, even under conditions of stress. More recent UNICEF findings on the rapid spread of ultra-processed foods caution that progress is not self-sustaining: without continued public action, **gains in child nutrition risk being eroded by increasingly unhealthy food environments.**

Food systems transformation is not only a technical or economic task, but a governance imperative that determines who can access healthy diets, under what conditions, and with what degree of agency. Evidence – including from the EAT-

[7] For instance, as underscored in the Commission Staff Working Document accompanying the 2025 proposal for a regulation to establish the new Global Europe instrument, the Global Gateway encompasses investments in sustainable food systems and is expected to accelerate access to food for those in vulnerable situations in support of SDG 2 (End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition).
[8] The number of children under five who are stunted fell from 180 million in 2012 to 150 million in 2024 – well short of the WHA target for 2025. (JME 2025)
[9] The first GRFC (2017) reported around 80 million people in IPC/CH Phase 3+ in 2015. However, figures are not strictly comparable over time due to expanded country coverage, population growth, additional crisis contexts and methodological refinements in subsequent editions.

Lancet Commission – shows that nutrition progress is achievable with sustained commitment, but fragile when systems weaken. In crisis-affected contexts, treatment-oriented and humanitarian interventions remain essential to address acute malnutrition and anaemia, while efforts to make food systems and related service delivery more inclusive and accountable can help reduce grievances linked to inequality, exclusion and shocks, contributing to social cohesion and stability. Ultimately, transforming food systems to deliver healthy, affordable and sustainable diets is essential to address undernutrition, curb diet-related non-communicable diseases and ease long-term pressure on health systems and public finances. **Crucially, the changes needed to improve nutrition also align with environmental sustainability, advancing both human and planetary well-being at a time of heightened global risk.**

Converging global agendas: nutrition across health, food systems, climate and finance

A series of global governance milestones in 2025 has reaffirmed nutrition as a shared international priority while signalling an evolution in how the agenda is framed and advanced. Across health, food systems, social development, climate, economic and governance policy domains, nutrition has increasingly been recognised not as a stand-alone sectoral concern, but as a cross-cutting outcome central to human capital development, resilience and sustainable growth. While these processes have taken place against a backdrop of fiscal constraint, conflict and climate stress, they have also underscored that sustained commitment to nutrition is both feasible and essential to prevent backsliding and to protect hard-won gains. These dynamics were reflected in a dense 2025 calendar of global policy moments – as presented in Annex 1 – collectively reinforcing nutrition as a cross-cutting priority.

Purpose and structure of the Ninth Progress Report – legacy, action and scale

The Ninth Progress Report is both a capstone and a transition point, rather than a routine update. As the final report under the EU Action Plan on Nutrition (2014-2025), it serves three complementary purposes: to provide accountability against the EU's global nutrition commitments; to consolidate the results achieved over more than a decade of sustained engagement; and to situate nutrition within the EU's current external action priorities and delivery frameworks. In doing so, it marks both a point of closure and a moment of transition, linking past achievements with the way the EU is engaging today.

While the report continues to **track progress on child stunting reduction and nutrition financing**, its ambition goes beyond performance monitoring. It **draws out the lessons, insights and strategic implications of EU nutrition engagement**, recognising that accountability at this stage requires not only reporting results, but demonstrating how they inform ongoing policy, partnerships and delivery choices in an increasingly complex global environment.

Reflecting this orientation, the report is organised into three interlinked parts:

Part 1: Leadership, Commitment and Results (2014-2025) provides a high-level overview of achievements over the past decade, presenting headline results on stunting reduction and financing alongside key milestones in the EU's nutrition journey.

Part 2: The EU's Nutrition Legacy in Practice forms the analytical core of the report, examining how these results were achieved through sustained support to political commitment, national leadership and multisectoral coordination, alongside approaches that strengthened systems, partnerships and delivery capacity across diverse country contexts. These efforts have established the policy, institutional and operational foundations on which current and future investment approaches – including those under Global Gateway – can build.

Part 3: Scaling Impact in a Complex World focuses on the current programming period (2021-2027), illustrating how the EU is translating this accumulated experience into action at scale. It shows how the Global Gateway strategy mobilises finance, innovation and partnerships where conditions allow, while engagement in fragile and conflict-affected contexts continues to rely on adaptive approaches that combine humanitarian assistance, resilience-building and systems strengthening.

Taken together, the report frames nutrition as a foundational investment in human development and a key outcome of the EU's integrated approach to external action, demonstrating how sustained commitment and strategic investment can translate into lasting progress in human wellbeing in an increasingly complex global context.

Part 1: Leadership, commitment and results (2014-2025)

1.1 The EU's nutrition journey in a changing world (2010-2025)

Among children, malnutrition is a tragedy – and a moral failure. Meanwhile, millions of people struggle with obesity due to a processed diet, high in sugar and saturated fats, but low in essential nutrients. This dual threat strains our healthcare systems, widens inequalities and hinders sustainable development.

António Guterres, UN Secretary-General

The EU Action Plan on Nutrition (2014-2025) was adopted at a moment when global attention to malnutrition was intensifying, yet progress remained uneven and fragile. While maternal and child undernutrition – particularly **stunting in children under five – had become firmly established as a powerful indicator of chronic deprivation and a global development priority**, nutrition governance was often fragmented, sectorally siloed and insufficiently connected to broader food systems, social protection and resilience agendas. Against this backdrop, the action plan marked the European Union's first comprehensive and explicit effort to address nutrition through a multisectoral, rights-based framework, positioning nutrition as both a life-saving humanitarian imperative and a foundation for sustainable development.

Over the decade that followed, the global nutrition landscape evolved profoundly. Progress was made in reducing child stunting[10], but at a pace far below what was required to meet global targets. Worldwide, stunting prevalence among children under five has declined steadily but very slowly. The estimated 150.2 million children who were stunted globally in 2024 is equivalent to a prevalence of around 23.2% – down only 3.2 percentage points from 26.4% in 2012 (180.4 million)[11]. This modest pace of decline reflects the challenges faced by most countries to meet the 2025 WHA stunting target – with few low- and middle-income countries confirmed to have reached it.

Despite a modest downward trend from 7.4% in 2012 to 6.6% in 2024, child wasting[12] remains a significant global concern with an estimated 42.8 million children under five wasted in 2024. The burden of wasting is concentrated in Asia (70%), particularly South Asia, which has the largest number of wasted children of any region (24.4 million), the highest wasting prevalence in the world (13.6%) and three-quarters of children with severe wasting.

In parallel, micronutrient deficiencies, including iron-deficiency anaemia, remain widespread in all countries. Furthermore, the rapid rise of childhood overweight and obesity signalled a growing double burden of malnutrition in many countries. The steepest increases in childhood overweight are occurring in low- and middle-income countries, which now account for more than 80% of all school aged children and adolescents living with overweight globally. Furthermore, recent analysis warns that nearly half (around 45%) of women in Africa will be overweight or obese by 2030 based on current trends. These trends are compounded by rising food prices, with an estimated 2.7 billion people in the world unable to afford a healthy diet, including two thirds of the population in Africa. Together, these dynamics demonstrate that malnutrition can no longer be understood – or addressed – through single-issue or short-term interventions but instead requires sustained and integrated approaches tackling underlying drivers across food systems, markets and purchasing power.

Since 2014, implementation of the EU action plan has taken place amid intensifying global shocks and structural pressures. Climate stress, conflict, food price volatility and the COVID-19 pandemic disrupted progress, while rising debt and shrinking fiscal space constrained governments' ability to sustain investment in health, social protection and nutrition. In many countries, gains were preserved only through continued public action and stronger national systems. In fragile and crisis-affected settings, humanitarian support proved critical in preventing far worse outcomes. Nutrition progress proved most resilient where countries were able to sustain inclusive food, health and social protection systems

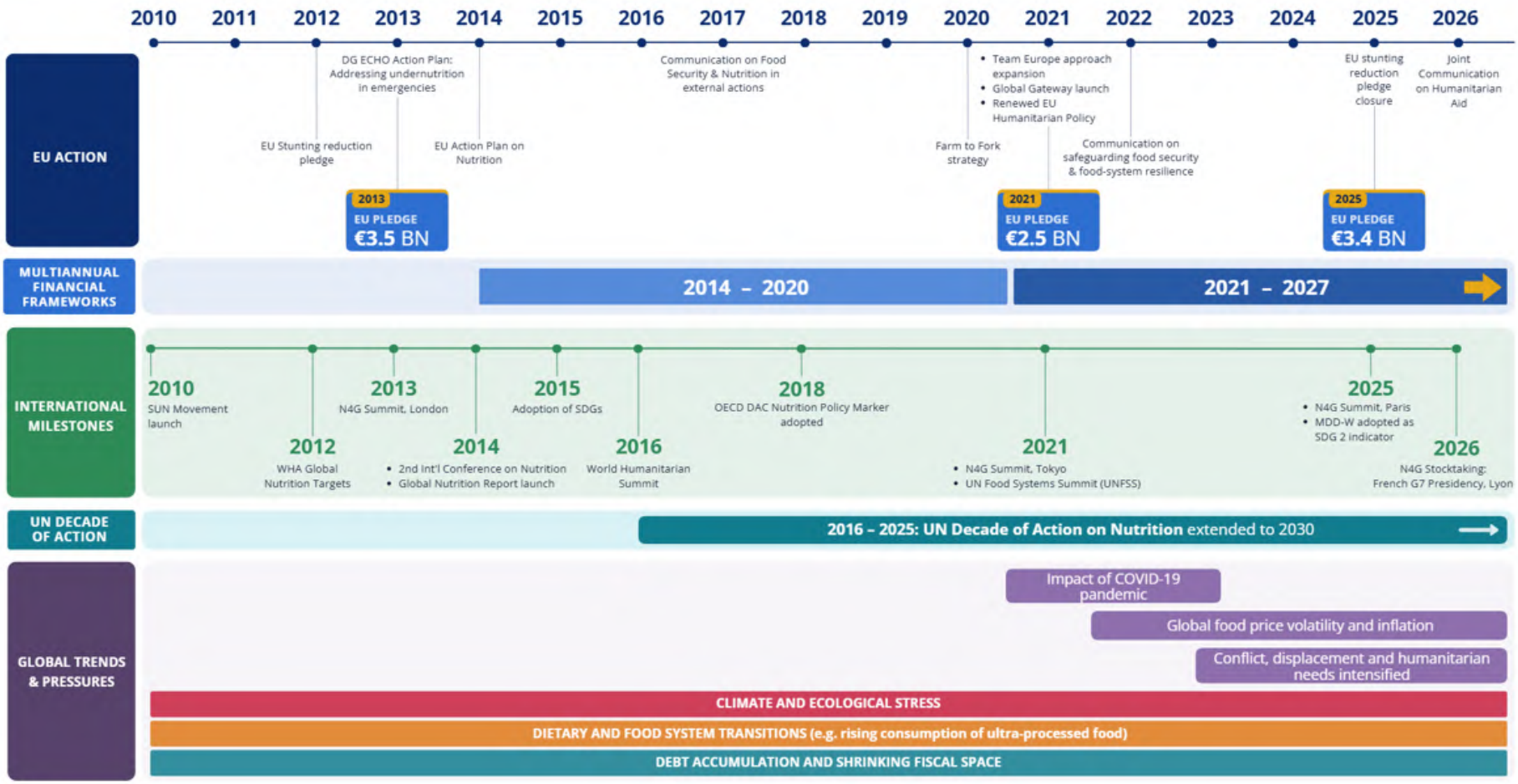
[10] Child stunting (under five): children under five who are too short for their age due to chronic undernutrition and repeated illness.
[11] Out of the 150.2 million children under five who are stunted, 68 million live in South and South-east Asia, while 64.8 million live in Africa. Together these regions comprise 88% of all stunted children in the world. Stunting disproportionately affects boys (81.1 million (54%) globally) compared to girls (69.1 million globally) with this confirmed across all regions. All data estimates in this section on child malnutrition are from UNICEF-WHO-World Bank JME - 2025 edition https://data.unicef.org/resources/jme/.
[12] Child wasting (under five): children under five who are too thin for their height due to acute undernutrition and recent illness or food shortage.

that protected access to affordable healthy diets and essential services. Where these systems came under strain, nutrition vulnerabilities intensified rapidly.

During this period of heightened complexity and uncertainty, EU nutrition engagement continued to deepen and increase in scale. Building on demonstrated results, it strengthened national systems, supported global governance, reinforced humanitarian action and advanced integrated approaches. Over time, nutrition became more firmly embedded across development cooperation, humanitarian assistance and, since 2021, investment-oriented Team Europe partnerships under the Global Gateway strategy.

The EU's nutrition journey is illustrated in Figure 1 through a timeline spanning 2010 to 2025. It situates the EU's sustained commitment within an evolving global landscape, highlighting how its engagement has expanded and adapted in response to shifting challenges and opportunities. The timeline demonstrates the progression from initial political pledges to system-level action, alignment with global frameworks and, ultimately, the consolidation of nutrition as a cross-cutting priority embedded across development, humanitarian and investment partnerships.

Figure 1. Nutrition and EU Action in a Changing World



1.2 Results at scale

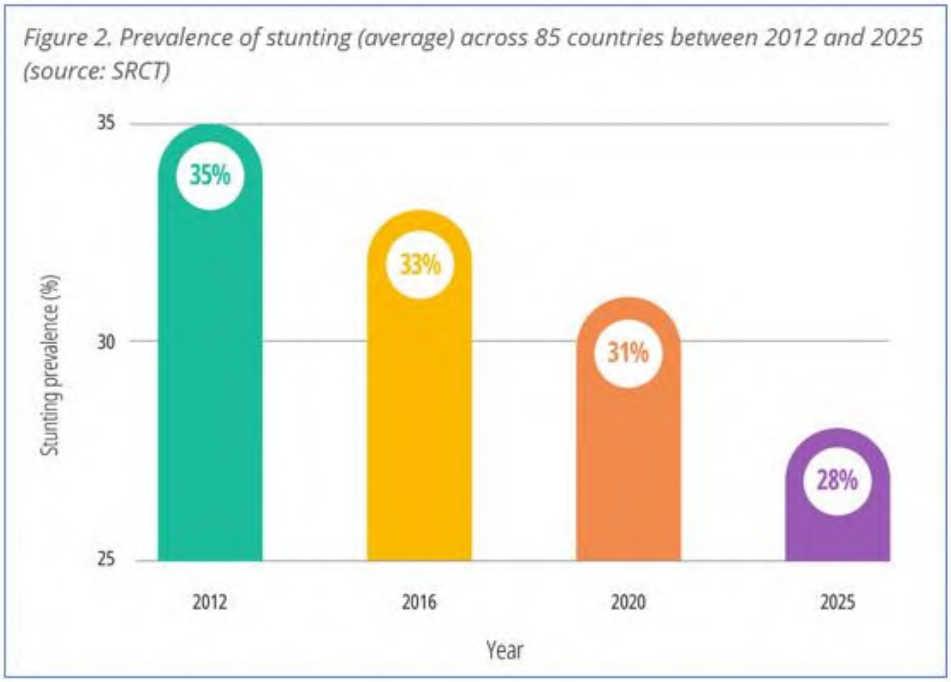
This section brings together the EU's commitments and results on child stunting alongside an overview of resource mobilisation and tracking, situating both within the global nutrition architecture established over the past decade. The EU's nutrition journey is anchored in two pivotal London moments. First, the 2012 Global Hunger Event catalysed high-level political commitment around the WHA global nutrition targets for 2025, providing a shared global reference point for action to reduce child and maternal undernutrition and underpinning the EU's pledge to support stunting reduction. Second, the inaugural 2013 N4G Summit translated this political momentum into a structured framework for financing, accountability and results-based action on nutrition – one that continues to shape global nutrition governance and delivery today.

1.2.1 Tracking the EU's pledge to support partner countries' efforts to reduce the number of stunted children

The EU's stunting reduction pledge and tracking approach

In 2012, at the high-level Global Hunger Event in London, the EU pledged to support partner countries in reducing the number of children under five who are stunted by at least 7 million by 2025**.** This pledge aligned with the global ambition set by the WHA to reduce the burden of child stunting in absolute terms over the same period. Analysis[13] now indicates that by 2025, an estimated 7.2 million cases of child stunting will have been averted in partner countries receiving EU support that includes a nutrition objective. Over the same period, **average stunting prevalence across these 85 countries declined by approximately 7.1 percentage points** (see Figure 2).

Figure 2. Prevalence of stunting (average) across 85 countries between 2012 and 2025 (source: SRCT)



Uneven progress across regions: the role of demographics and context

However, while progress has been real, it has fallen well short of what was hoped for globally. Progress in reducing child stunting has been shaped not only by interventions having a nutrition objective, but also by wider structural and

[13] To track progress against this commitment, the European Commission, in collaboration with the World Health Organization, developed the stunting reduction calculation tool (SRCT). The number of countries covered by the SRCT has expanded in line with the growing portfolio of EU-supported actions with a nutrition objective under the 2021-2027 multiannual financial framework. As a result, stunting trends can be estimated across 85 countries with sufficient data over the period 2012-2025. The SRCT combines two core UN data sources: (i) the Joint Child Malnutrition Estimates (JME) and (ii) the UN World Population Prospects (WPP)**.** The tool enables forecasting of stunting prevalence, the rate of stunting reduction, and changes in the absolute number of stunted children over time.

contextual pressures already mentioned. Additionally, in many countries, even notable reductions in stunting prevalence have not kept up with rapid population growth, making outcomes strongly influenced by demographic dynamics.

These factors help explain why progress has been highly uneven across regions**.** Since 2012, in partner countries supported by EU interventions with a nutrition objective, overall reductions in stunting prevalence have been markedly steeper in Asia (8.9 percentage points), where faster rates of reduction, combined in some cases with slower population growth, have translated into meaningful declines in both prevalence and absolute numbers. By contrast, countries being supported in Africa have experienced a much slower decline in stunting prevalence (5.8 percentage points), with progress in several contexts approaching stagnation. In Latin America and the Caribbean, while the prevalence of stunting fell by only 2.6 percentage points, this can be partially attributed to the relatively low baseline stunting prevalence in this region and hence reduced scope for large absolute reductions.

As a result, South and South-East Asia and Latin America and the Caribbean account for most of the countries currently on track for stunting reduction, while sub-Saharan Africa has the fewest countries on track. In many African countries, gradual reductions in prevalence have been outweighed by population growth, leading to continued increases in the absolute number of stunted children despite ongoing efforts to improve nutrition outcomes. However, this pattern does not apply uniformly across all African countries. For example, several African **countries having received significant nutrition related support from the EU – including Kenya, Madagascar, Malawi, Rwanda and Zambia – have seen declines above the average rate (7.1 percentage points) for EU supported countries since 2012. Kenya stands out as being on track not only for the WHA stunting target, but also for the targets on wasting, exclusive breastfeeding and under five overweight.**[14]

Strengthening confidence in contribution: why monitoring and evaluation matters

Despite the multiple challenges faced, the sustained decline in stunting prevalence and the number of cases of child stunting averted demonstrate meaningful progress. At the same time, the scale, complexity and contextual variability of malnutrition make it difficult to attribute national-level changes in stunting to any single actor or intervention. This has long been a central priority for nutrition policy: while the plausibility of integrated, multisectoral approaches is widely accepted, robust evidence of impact at scale has remained comparatively scarce.

This is why **the EU has not only delivered nutrition-relevant action at scale but also invested deliberately in rigorous monitoring and impact assessments.** Where integrated nutrition-sensitive programmes have been paired from the outset with strong evaluation designs, it has been possible to move beyond association towards credible evidence of contribution. This combination of scale, integration and methodological rigour has helped close the persistent gap between ambition and proof, demonstrating that **well-designed interventions can generate tangible improvements in children's lives and contribute meaningfully to reductions in child stunting.** The Suchana programme in Bangladesh provides an illustration of this approach as shown in Box 1 below.

Box 1: Generating robust evidence of impact on the ground - the Suchana programme in Bangladesh

Suchana was a large-scale, EU and UK-supported, multisectoral nutrition programme implemented in Bangladesh from 2015-2022, targeting chronic undernutrition in Sylhet and Moulvibazar divisions. The programme reached more than 235 000 poor and very poor households, combining nutrition-specific actions with nutrition-sensitive interventions to improve livelihoods, dietary and feeding practices, women's decision-making and access to services. A strong evaluation design was incorporated from the outset – using a stepped-wedge cluster approach with baseline (2016-2017), mid-term, and endline (2020) surveys – to enable robust measurement of impact.

The final evaluation[15] findings show that the programme contributed to substantial improvements in determinants of child nutrition: exclusive breastfeeding among infants 0-5 months rose markedly from around 60% at baseline to nearly 90% at endline, and the share of children aged 12-23 months consuming four or more food groups increased almost threefold, from 12.5% to 35%. The evaluation also documented gains in dietary diversity, household food security and hygiene practices – evidence that integrated, context-adapted approaches can generate sustained improvements in drivers of stunting.

Overall, Suchana demonstrated that well-designed nutrition-sensitive programmes can deliver sustained improvements in behaviours and systems linked to reduced stunting, contributing to broader national progress in Bangladesh, where stunting declined by 13.2 percentage points between 2012 and 2025.

[14] In this report, all data presented on country-level nutrition-related indicators and progress relative to WHA targets is derived from JME 2025.
[15] The final evaluation of the Suchana programme was conducted by the Institute of Development Studies (IDS, based in the UK) in collaboration with the Development Research Initiative (dRi, based in Bangladesh).

1.2.2 Tracking the financial pledges made by the EU at successive Nutrition for Growth summits[16]

From political commitment to financial accountability

Alongside its commitment to support reductions in child stunting, the EU has made a series of financial pledges on nutrition since 2013, primarily through the N4G process. These pledges have provided a crucial framework for political accountability and a reference point for assessing whether commitments have translated into sustained financial effort over time. The N4G process has also served as a platform for reaffirming the EU's political commitment to nutrition in a changing global context, linking financing pledges to broader objectives related to human development, resilience and food systems.

The 2013 London pledge and delivery across 2014-2020

At the first N4G Summit in London in 2013, the EU pledged EUR 3.5 billion for nutrition-related actions to be delivered over 2014-2020. This commitment was made alongside the launch of the WHA nutrition targets and reflected growing international recognition of nutrition as a foundation for sustainable development.

Analysis of EU financing data confirms that this initial pledge was exceeded. Over the 2014-2020 period, EU commitments with a nutrition objective amounted to approximately EUR 4.3 billion, surpassing the 2013 pledge by around EUR 800 million. Financing was channelled through both development cooperation and humanitarian assistance, with a significant share directed to low-income and fragile contexts.

The Tokyo 2021 pledge and sustained financing through crisis

> *The COVID-19 pandemic is compounding the global nutrition crisis. The need for more equitable, resilient, and sustainable food and health systems has never been as urgent. Today's pledge will contribute to addressing malnutrition in a comprehensive manner, by supporting sustainable and resilient food systems. We want to create a healthy future, free from hunger and malnutrition, for all.*
>
> **Jutta Urpilainen, former EU Commissioner for International Partnerships, speaking at the N4G Tokyo Summit**

At the Tokyo N4G Summit in 2021, the EU announced a new pledge of EUR 2.5 billion for the period 2021-2023 to address all forms of malnutrition. This pledge was made against the backdrop of the COVID-19 pandemic and growing global food insecurity. For the first time, it was framed within a broader Team Europe effort, under which combined pledges by the EU and its Member States amounted to EUR 4.3 billion.[17]

Based on OECD/DAC-approved data, the EU exceeded its Tokyo pledge by approximately EUR 1.95 billion over the commitment period. This level of delivery reflects sustained EU engagement in maintaining momentum despite overlapping shocks, including the pandemic, rising food prices and conflict.

The Paris 2025 pledge and the post-2025 horizon

> *Since the first Nutrition for Growth Summit in 2013, the EU has turned bold pledges into bold action, leading the fight against malnutrition. Today's pledge is a renewed testament to our unwavering commitment to ensure better nutrition for mothers and children, stronger food systems, and better health and social protection where they are needed most. The European Union will continue to lead by example, leaving no one behind. We will work with partners to move closer to a world where every child wakes up nourished, grows strong, and dreams without limits.*
>
> **Hadja Lahbib, EU Commissioner for Preparedness and Crisis Management speaking at the N4G Summit, Paris (2025)**

At the N4G Summit in Paris in March 2025, the EU and Member States, in a Team Europe approach, pledged a total of EUR 6.5 billion.[18] Within this overall figure, the EU committed EUR 3.4 billion for the period 2024-2027 to address all forms of malnutrition. The EU underlined that this commitment would prioritise support to partner countries facing high

[16] Financial commitments are presented in rounded values. Consequently, minor differences between subtotals and totals may occur due to rounding and do not affect the underlying reported amounts.

[17] While the focus here is on tracking progress against EU pledges, the introduction of Team Europe framing is significant in several respects. It enables the aggregation of EU, Member States' and European financing institutions' commitments into a single, more visible collective effort at a time of heightened global uncertainty; it reinforces political signalling around the importance of sustaining nutrition investment during crisis; and it supports greater coherence between EU institutions and Member States in engaging partner countries on nutrition priorities. In this sense, the Tokyo pledge marked an important shift from individual commitments towards a more coordinated European contribution to global nutrition.

[18] A country breakdown of this total can be found in Annex 2.

levels of child malnutrition, particularly in sub-Saharan Africa, while including a focus on children under five and pregnant and lactating women affected by severe malnutrition.

Preliminary analysis of actual financial commitments against the EU's EUR 3.4 billion pledge indicates that implementation is well advanced. Based on 2024 OECD/DAC approved data and preliminary 2025 figures, commitments to date amount to EUR 2.7 billion, representing approximately 79% of the total pledge.

As shown below in Table 1, **development-related** financial commitments with a nutrition objective for 2024-2025 totalled EUR 1.37 billion, of which EUR 1.31 billion was scored as nutrition 'significant' and EUR 52.9 million was nutrition 'principal'. Total **humanitarian** financial commitments with a nutrition objective for the same period were EUR 1.3 billion, of which EUR 1.12 billion was scored as nutrition 'significant' and EUR 181 million was nutrition 'principal'.

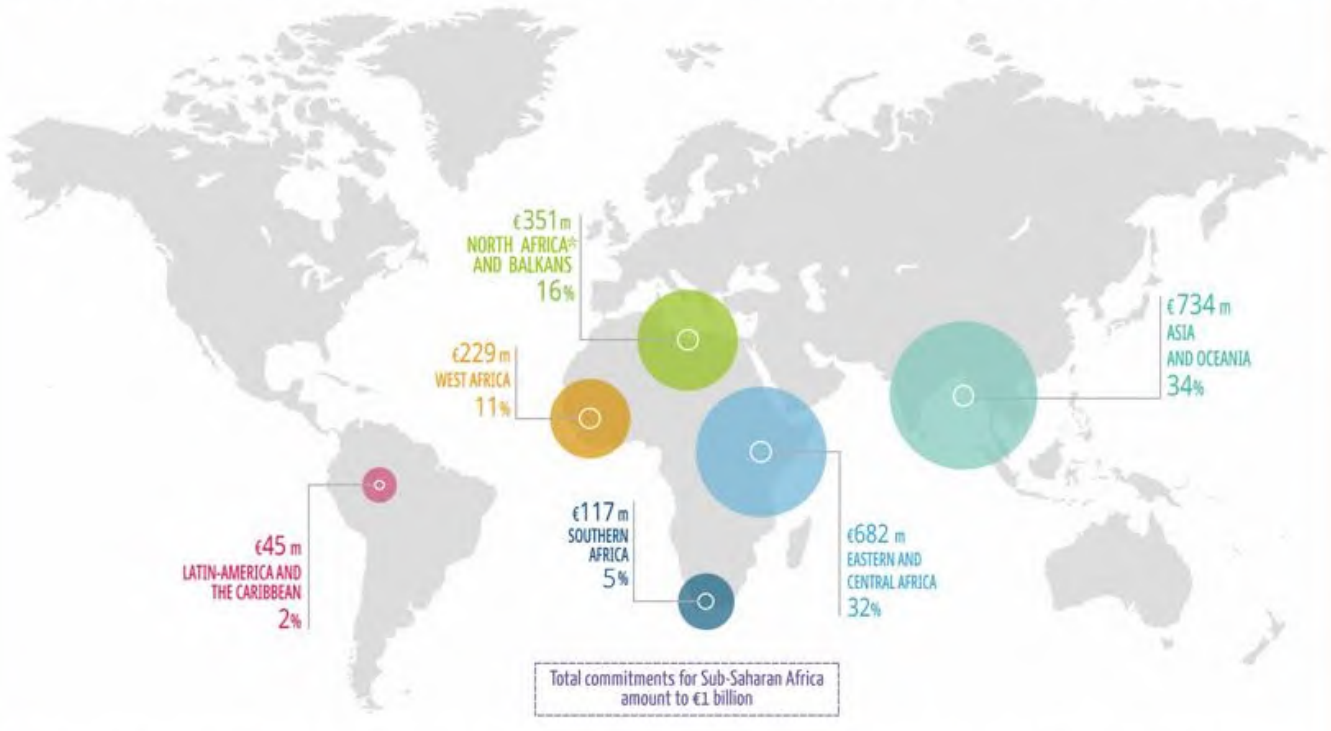
Table 1: Commitments with a nutrition objective by category and funding source, 2024-2025 (million EUR)

Year	Development aid instruments			Humanitarian aid instruments			Total EU
	Significant	Principal	Subtotal	Significant	Principal	Subtotal	
2024	769.1	44.9	**814.0**	576.9	100.4	**677.3**	**1 491.3**
2025*	550.6	8.0	**558.6**	547.0	80.6	**627.5**	**1 186.1**
Total	1 319.7	52.9	**1 372.6**	1 123.9	180.9	**1 304.8**	**2 677.4**

The regional breakdown shows that the four regions of Africa combined received 64% of total financial commitments with a nutrition objective, while Asia and Oceania region received 34% and Latin America and the Caribbean received 2%. (Figure 3)

The regional breakdown shows that the four regions of Africa combined received 64% of total financial commitments with a nutrition objective, while Asia and Oceania region received 34% and Latin America and the Caribbean received 2%. (Figure 3)

Figure 3. Development and humanitarian aid commitments with a nutrition objective by region, 2024-2025 (million EUR)



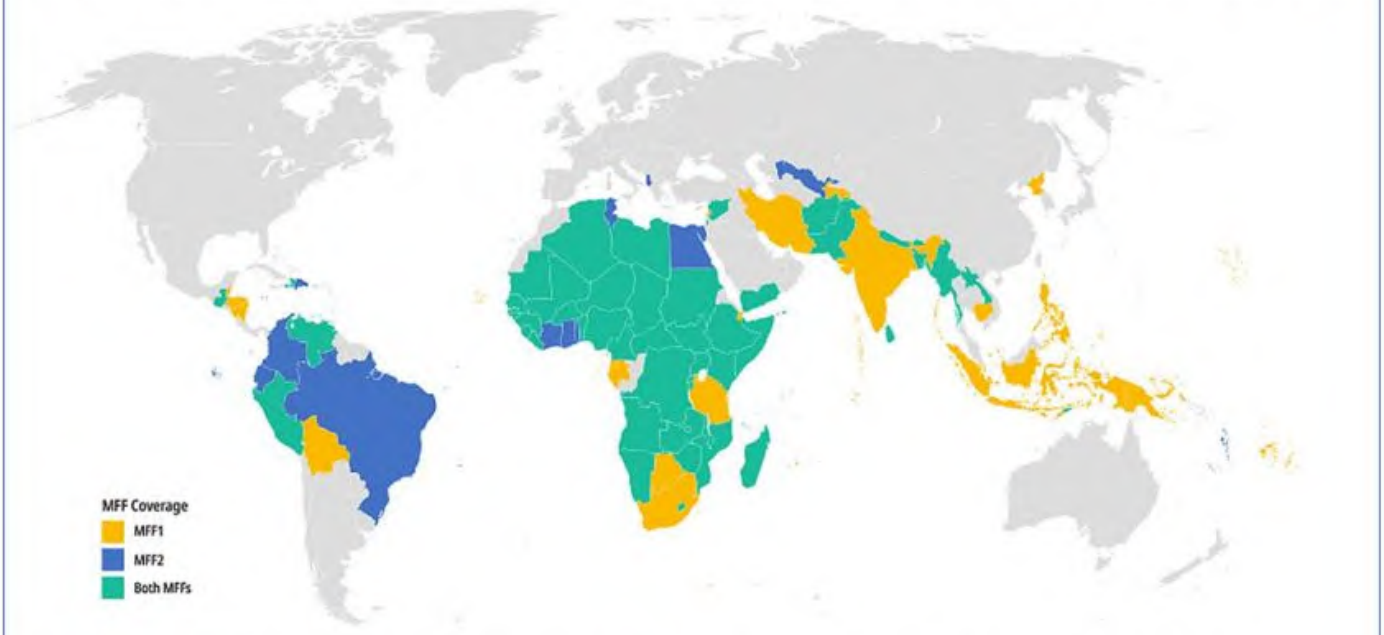
Data is based on 2024 OECD/DAC approved data and preliminary 2025 figures. It excludes commitments that could not be geographically attributed to specific beneficiary countries, including certain regional, global, and policy or research-related actions. This amounts to EUR 518.98 million (19.4% of total nutrition commitments).

**Including Palestinian Territories*

What the full 2014-2025 financing picture shows

For the first time in EU reporting on nutrition, these successive pledges allow an assessment of financing across the full 2014-2025 period[19]. Viewed cumulatively, the data show a sustained level of EU financial engagement in nutrition over more than a decade, including during periods of significant global disruption such as the COVID-19 pandemic, food price shocks and conflict. Moreover, EU financial commitments with a nutrition objective are expanding across an increasing number of countries over time (Figure 4), reflecting the growing recognition of nutrition as central to human development, sustainable growth and resilience.

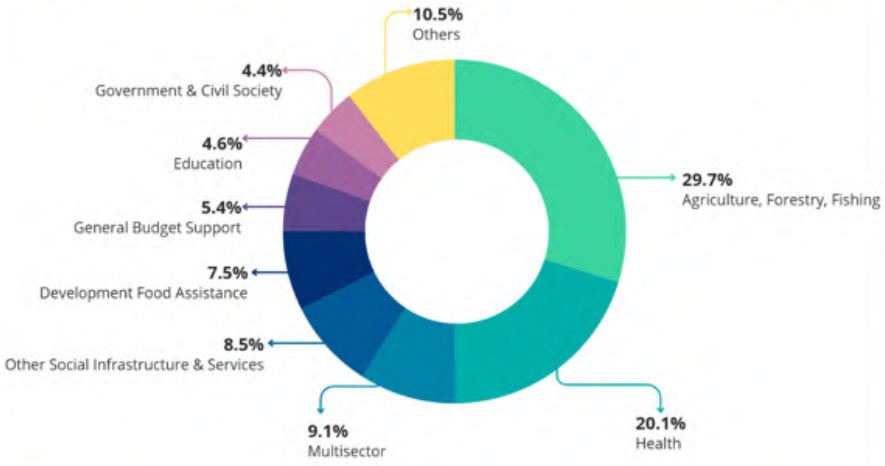
Figure 4. EU financial commitments with a nutrition objective by country and multiannual financial framework (2014-2025)*



Data is based on 2024 OECD/DAC approved data and preliminary 2025 figures. It excludes commitments that could not be geographically attributed to specific beneficiary countries, including certain regional, global, and policy or research-related actions.

As illustrated in Figure 5, this engagement is inherently multisectoral – spanning agriculture, health and social services, amongst others – consistent with the EU action plan on nutrition, which recognises that progress depends on coordinated action across policy areas.

Figure 5. Development aid with a nutrition objective by purpose code 2014-2025 (weighted average)

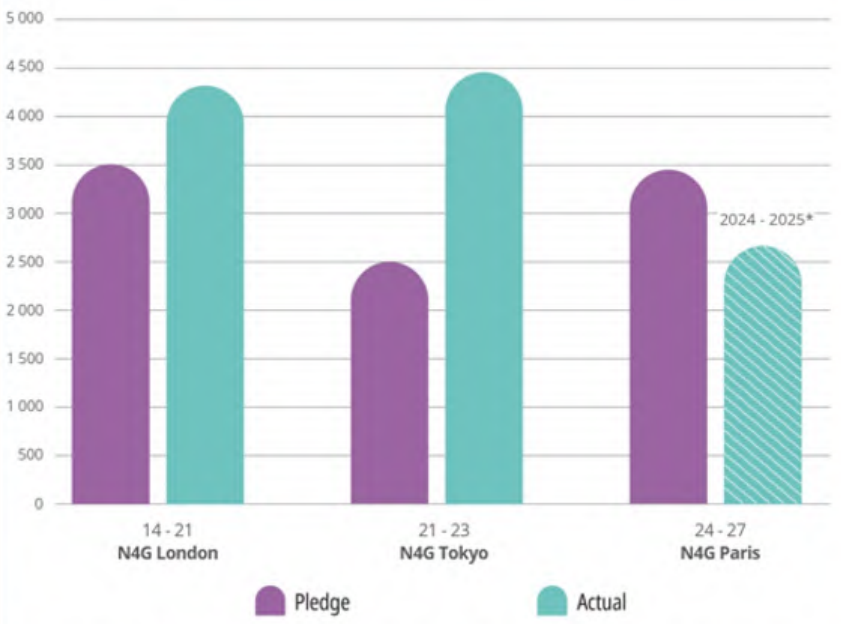


The yellow segment "Others" groups all sectors receiving less than 2.5% in funding, including areas such as Water Supply & Sanitation and General Environmental Protection.

[19] A detailed country-level breakdown of EU commitments with a nutrition objective is provided in Annex 3.

Overall – and as shown in Figure 6 – the evidence from this report confirms that the EU has honoured its nutrition financing commitments over the period 2014-2025. This sustained financial effort has provided an essential foundation for progress in nutrition outcomes, while also underscoring the importance of predictability, transparency and long-term commitment as the nutrition agenda continues to evolve beyond 2025.

Figure 6. EU financial pledges and actual commitments with a nutrition objective (2014-2027, bn €)*



*Data is based on 2024 OECD/DAC approved data and preliminary 2025 figures. It excludes commitments that could not be geographically attributed to specific beneficiary countries, including certain regional, global, and policy or research-related actions.

Part 2: The EU's nutrition legacy in practice

The EU's nutrition legacy is defined not only by the volume of resources mobilised, but by the durable change it has helped set in motion. This section examines the substance of that legacy, focusing on how sustained EU engagement has shaped the conditions for progress by strengthening leadership, coordination and delivery across global, national and thematic levels.

Drawing on concrete examples, Part 2 explores how since 2014, **EU action has consistently combined life-saving humanitarian support with longer-term strengthening of systems**, using complementary instruments to protect nutrition outcomes during periods of crisis while advancing improvements in diets, services and governance. **The emphasis is on how change was achieved – through coherent portfolios, long-term partnerships and adaptive approaches that reinforced institutions and capacities critical for delivering nutrition results at scale.**

2.1 Global leadership and accountability for nutrition

Over the past decade, the **EU has not only delivered nutrition results on the ground but has worked in mutual partnership with partner countries, regional organisations and global institutions to shape and strengthen the global nutrition architecture that underpins collective action**. Moving beyond a donor-recipient model, EU engagement has centred on joint agenda-setting, policy dialogue and **co-investment in national systems**. Together with its partners, the EU has supported the development of shared norms, coordination mechanisms, accountability platforms and technical capacities that enable country-led nutrition action to be delivered at scale, with quality and coherence, across highly diverse and often fragile contexts.

This legacy reflects sustained investment in key system enablers: country-led coordination (such as the Scaling Up Nutrition (SUN) Movement), accountability and reporting, humanitarian nutrition standards, and global political mobilisation. Together, these efforts position the EU as a reliable partner, supporting both effective action and a fit-for-purpose international nutrition system.

Strengthening country-driven nutrition governance through the SUN Movement

EU and Member State support to the Scaling Up Nutrition Movement (SUN) has been central to the EU's global nutrition legacy. As a government-led platform uniting civil society, UN agencies, development partners and the private sector, SUN advances multisectoral action and accountability. Sustained support has strengthened its global role and reinforced the wider political ecosystem – engaging parliamentarians, civil society and youth networks to translate commitments into national policy, budgets and accountability.

> *Nutrition has moved from being an issue that is little noticed and rarely prioritised, to one that is seen to have a central role in human and economic development.*
>
> **David Nabarro, First Coordinator of the SUN Movement, speaking to the International Congress of Nutrition in 2013**

In recent years, **Team Europe support has focused on operationalising the SUN 3.0 Strategy** through initiatives such as (i) EU4SUN, implemented by Expertise France and the International and Ibero-American Foundation for Administration and Public Policies (FIAP) and (ii) the Capacity for Nutrition – SUN (C4N-SUN) initiative, co-financed by Germany and implemented by GIZ (see Annex 4: Strengthening country-led nutrition governance – SUN and EU support at a glance). These initiatives strengthen regional and global capacities while remaining grounded in country demand. Support has delivered concrete outputs including stronger national nutrition coordination platforms, support for countries to develop high-quality commitments for the 2025 Nutrition for Growth Summit, and improved use of public finance and policy dialogue for nutrition. Together, these efforts demonstrate the EU and its Member States' sustained commitment to country-driven nutrition governance – supporting long-term institutional strengthening and nationally owned progress beyond individual funding cycles.

Supporting accountability and global momentum for nutrition

The EU has consistently supported global initiatives to enhance accountability, transparency and collective action for nutrition. **Through successive Nutrition for Growth Summits, the EU has helped sustain high-level political**

attention to malnutrition, while reinforcing the expectation that commitments are followed by measurable action and reporting. It has also supported the Global Nutrition Report to provide an independent evidence base to track progress, highlight gaps and guide policy discussions across countries and partners. In parallel, engagement in the United Nations Food Systems Summit process and its subsequent stocktaking moments has reinforced nutrition and healthy diets as central outcomes of food systems transformation, while promoting alignment between nutrition objectives and broader agendas on climate, resilience, inequality and sustainable development.

A crucial illustration of EU engagement in global norm-setting is its contribution to the development and endorsement of the Committee on World Food Security Voluntary Guidelines on Gender Equality and Women's and Girls' Empowerment in the Context of Food Security and Nutrition. Adopted in 2023 following an extensive and inclusive consultation process, the guidelines constitute an important global policy reference at the intersection of gender equality, food systems and nutrition. In endorsing the guidelines, the EU and its Member States reaffirmed their commitment to advancing gender-transformative approaches in food and nutrition governance, in line with the EU gender action plan III (GAP III).[20]

Finally, a major contribution to global nutrition accountability has been the EU's sustained investment and advocacy – together with participating Member States – in strengthening indicators that capture the quality of diets, not only their adequacy in terms of calories. Building on years of coordinated support to research, methodological development and country uptake of diet quality metrics – through partnerships with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the Nutrition Research Facility and the Scaling Up Nutrition (SUN) Movement, as well as key research collaboration including Wageningen University research – the minimum dietary diversity for women (MDD-W) indicator has now been formally adopted as a sustainable development goal indicator. (see Box 2 below)

Box 2: Measuring what matters: dietary diversity becomes a global SDG indicator

In 2025, FAO endorsed the minimum dietary diversity for women (15–49 years) (MDD-W) as an official indicator under SDG 2. This milestone reflects growing recognition that improving nutrition depends not only on food quantity or child growth, but on the quality and diversity of diets.

MDD-W offers a practical way to track whether women consume a diverse range of foods – an important proxy for adequate micronutrient intake – based on a simple recall-based survey of foods consumed. By focusing directly on diet quality, it helps guide nutrition-sensitive action across sectors, including agri-food systems and value chains, health services, social protection and school food programmes. The indicator also strengthens accountability. Changes in dietary diversity can be observed more quickly and linked more directly to policies and programmes than longer-term outcomes such as stunting.

For the EU, the adoption of MDD-W reinforces longstanding efforts to promote practical, gender-responsive nutrition indicators, linking the EU's action plan on nutrition and its gender action plan III through a shared focus on improving women's empowerment and diets. In practice, MDD-W is increasingly used to inform the screening and design of blending operations, for instance helping promote crop diversification in value chains centred on traditional export commodities in ways that support improved diets.

The Commission's leadership in humanitarian nutrition: shaping norms, standards and coordination

A defining element of the EU's global legacy lies in the leadership of the Commission through the Directorate-General for European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations (DG ECHO) in humanitarian nutrition. **DG ECHO has played a catalytic leadership role in shaping the global humanitarian nutrition ecosystem** – from programme delivery to standard setting, coordination and collective capacity required to respond effectively to acute malnutrition in crises[21]. This leadership was grounded in a clear policy framing of undernutrition as a direct and immediate cause of excess mortality, requiring the same prioritisation as emergency health care and disease control – a position articulated early on in DG ECHO's guiding framework for nutrition in emergencies.

Through predictable financing and technical stewardship, the Commission, through DG ECHO, has consistently ensured that nutrition remains a core life-saving pillar of humanitarian response, even as crises have become more protracted,

[20] https://international-partnerships.ec.europa.eu/system/files/2021-01/join-2020-17-final_en.pdf.

[21] The EU has also contributed to strengthening global analytical foundations for crisis response, including through support to flagship multi-agency reporting on food insecurity and nutrition risks via the Global Report on Food Crises (GRFC), which is further elaborated in Section 2.3 below under the heading 'Knowledge and Information'.

complex and underfunded. Its influence extends well beyond individual grants, underpinning the global humanitarian nutrition architecture that enables scale, quality and coherence across contexts.

A central pillar of this contribution has been **the Commission's long-standing strategic support to the Global Nutrition Cluster**. DG ECHO funding has enabled global coordination, technical guidance, surge deployments and strengthened country-level cluster performance. This support has been critical in ensuring harmonised approaches to the treatment of severe and moderate acute malnutrition, infant and young child feeding in emergencies (IYCF-E), and more integrated nutrition responses across major humanitarian emergencies. Beyond coordination, this support helped stabilise nutrition as a predictable component of humanitarian response plans, even in highly protracted crises where funding pressures and competing priorities often marginalise preventive and treatment services.

In addition to coordination, the Commission, through DG ECHO, has contributed significantly to the **development, dissemination and operationalisation of global humanitarian nutrition standards and guidance**. This includes support to community-based management of acute malnutrition (CMAM) protocols, IYCF-E guidance, and simplified approaches designed to increase coverage and effectiveness in highly constrained settings. EU-supported surge mechanisms have further enabled the rapid deployment of nutrition coordination and technical experts during sudden-onset crises such as droughts and conflict escalation, reinforcing the system's ability to respond quickly and coherently. ECHO's financing has repeatedly allowed new approaches to be tested under real emergency conditions – including simplified treatment protocols and adapted delivery models – helping ensure that global guidance evolves in response to operational realities rather than idealised assumptions.

Importantly, the Commission's role has not been limited to applying existing norms but has actively supported the evolution of humanitarian nutrition practice – helping to test, legitimise and scale innovative approaches that are subsequently embedded in global guidance and cluster tools. In doing so, the Commission has helped ensure that humanitarian nutrition continues to adapt to operational realities while maintaining quality and accountability. **This leadership has translated into large-scale operational uptake, notably through the expansion of community-based management of acute malnutrition (CMAM) across the Sahel and the Horn of Africa and its progressive integration into national health systems** in several crisis-affected contexts. (further discussed in section 2.3 below)

Building a whole-of-society ecosystem for nutrition

The EU, together with EU Member States including France, Germany and Ireland, **has supported broader participation in global nutrition efforts by empowering civil society organisations, youth networks and other non-state actors.** At the 2025 Nutrition for Growth Summit in Paris, a dedicated civil society pavilion brought together more than a hundred organisations to exchange perspectives and issue a joint declaration on strengthening global nutrition action. This approach helps maintain political commitment, improve accountability and ensure nutrition governance is inclusive and responsive to diverse voices, not only technical actors.

Civil society engagement has been reinforced through global and regional coalitions that advocate for stronger action on malnutrition and hold decision-makers to account, including around key political moments such as the Nutrition for Growth summits. Within the Scaling Up Nutrition Movement ecosystem, youth leadership has been increasingly embedded as a strategic priority. SUN-related civil society platforms – in recent years strengthened by EU4SUN – together with initiatives catalysed by the EU supported Nourishing food pathways and the Global alliance for improved nutrition (GAIN), as discussed below in Part 3, have supported youth leadership approaches. These include national youth convening and capacity-building models, strengthening advocacy, inclusive policy dialogue and intergenerational accountability in both national and global nutrition processes[22].

Parliamentary leadership and accountability for nutrition

> *Nutrition cannot be driven in a silo. You need this multistakeholder approach and most certainly you need the political will as parliamentarians.*
>
> **Hon. Neema Lugangira, Member of Parliament of Tanzania**

[22] EU engagement around the UN Food Systems Summit has also provided an entry point for more inclusive participation in food-systems pathways where nutrition and healthy diets are central outcomes. EU partnerships with FAO and CIRAD have contributed to the development and application of food-systems assessment frameworks across a wide range of country contexts, reinforcing the availability and use of comparable evidence to inform policy debate and collective action.

Engagement with parliamentarians forms an important part of the broader architecture for accountability and political mobilisation. Under the auspices of FAO, the European Parliamentary Alliance against Hunger and Malnutrition[23] has brought together Members of the European Parliament and national parliamentarians to raise awareness of the right to adequate food and to promote stronger policy coherence and budgetary attention to food security and nutrition at European and global levels.

In Latin America and the Caribbean, EU4SUN support to policy dialogue has complemented regional efforts to engage legislatures in nutrition governance. Parliamentary platforms such as the Parliamentary Front Against Hunger are leveraging multisectoral nutrition commitments and national SUN processes to strengthen legislative ownership, accountability and resource allocation. This experience is informing similar efforts in other regions, including francophone Africa, where parliamentarians are increasingly mobilised around nutrition commitments and food systems transformation.

At country level, SUN-supported platforms translate global commitments into concrete accountability mechanisms by engaging parliamentarians and budget committees. This helps anchor nutrition within political, legislative and fiscal processes, recognising the role of parliaments in shaping legislation, overseeing government action and strengthening budget transparency. For example, in Mozambique, collaboration between the SUN Civil Society Platform and parliamentarians contributed to the introduction of a dedicated nutrition budget line and the integration of nutrition indicators into national and sectoral budgets. Collectively, these efforts illustrate how EU support – working through SUN mechanisms – has strengthened the governance and accountability foundations of nutrition action, complementing and enabling the results delivered through country programmes and thematic investments presented in this report.

2.2 Nutrition legacy at country level

Over the past decade, the EU has pursued a sustained, strategic and context-responsive approach to nutrition in various countries. In Ethiopia, Chad and Guatemala, EU support has built on experience and progressively shifted towards a strategic, deliberate portfolio logic – combining humanitarian assistance, with development cooperation and longer-term investment to tackle malnutrition's causes. Working in contexts shaped by fragility, inequality, climate stress and protracted food insecurity, the EU has prioritised national leadership while strengthening systems for policy, governance, data, service delivery and food systems transformation.

Since 2014, this engagement has evolved through continuous policy dialogue, learning and partnership. While reducing child stunting remains central, EU action has increasingly addressed multiple forms of malnutrition, diet quality and food system sustainability. These country experiences are presented below to illustrate how a **coherent, multisectoral and rights-based approach has delivered nutrition results at scale, even in the most challenging environments.**[24]

[23] https://www.fao.org/brussels/partners/european-union/european-parliament/en and https://knowledge4policy.ec.europa.eu/publication/european-parliamentary-alliance-against-hunger-malnutrition_en. The First Global Parliamentary Summit on Hunger and Malnutrition (Madrid, 2018), jointly organised by the Spanish Parliament and Senate, AECID, FAO and the Parliamentary Front Against Hunger with support from the European Commission (the then DG DEVCO), brought together over 150 parliamentarians from 80 countries and adopted a global call for action to achieve zero hunger and the right to adequate food.

[24] Details of the EU nutrition portfolio in Ethiopia, Chad and Guatemala can be found in Annexes 5, 6 and 7 respectively.

Ethiopia

Staying the course in a high-risk context (2014 - 2025)

"The NIPN-Ethiopia initiative has played a crucial role in shaping nutrition policies through evidence-based, informed decision-making. To achieve its goal and mission, NIPN works under the national food and nutrition governance system and collaborates with many multi-sectoral food and nutrition stakeholders and partners."

H.E. Dr Mekdes Daba, Minister of Health of the Republic of Ethiopia (2024 NIPN Global Gathering)

How has EU support strengthened national systems for nutrition?

EU engagement in Ethiopia has shifted from project-based interventions to sustained system strengthening anchored in the national nutrition programme. Through health sector budget support, EU+ joint programming and policy dialogue, the EU reinforced decentralised service delivery, public financial management and multisector coordination. Nutrition was embedded in flagship programmes, notably the Productive safety net programme (PSNP4), advancing a rights-based, shock-responsive model of social protection. The Food crisis response & social protection programme further links predictable transfers to nutrition, health services and crisis response, embedding nutrition within national systems. Complementing this systemic framework, DG ECHO delivered shock-responsive nutrition support between 2014 and 2025, evolving from drought response to conflict-adapted lifesaving programming. Through UNICEF and NGO partners, it supported treatment of severe acute malnutrition while strengthening nutrition supply chains, quality of care and last-mile delivery systems.

How has the EU navigated fragility and crisis?

Ethiopia's recurrent shocks - including flooding, conflict and displacement - have driven acute malnutrition risks. EU humanitarian support has sustained life-saving services, with over 4.5 million children treated for severe acute malnutrition (SAM) in the past decade. The RESET programme's 'crisis modifiers' enabled the rapid response required to protect nutrition gains. By aligning humanitarian action with resilience investments and national systems, the EU operationalised the humanitarian-development-peace nexus, demonstrating how principled humanitarian leadership and long-term system strengthening could reinforce each other in fragile settings. These efforts strengthen the National framework for resilient recovery and reconstruction (3RF) 2023-2028.

Through which pathways has EU engagement improved diets and resilience?

EU support addresses both immediate drivers of undernutrition and structural food system constraints. Programmes such as SHARE and RESET combine nutrition-specific and sensitive actions across livelihoods, food security, WASH and services in drought-prone and fragile areas. EU support to the Agricultural Growth Project (AGP II 2018-2025) strengthened nutrition-sensitive agricultural reforms, dietary diversity and women's economic participation in agricultural value chains, while fortification addressed persistent micronutrient gaps. More recent actions, including the Agricultural recovery & food security programme (2023-2028), are strengthening climate-resilient production systems, soil fertility and horticulture while promoting agroecological approaches. In parallel, Global Gateway investments in cold chains, energy and value chains are improving market access, reducing post-harvest losses and supporting healthier diets.

How has Ethiopia's nutrition situation evolved?

Ethiopia has reduced stunting while making progress on wasting and exclusive breastfeeding. However, anaemia, emerging overweight, food insecurity and unaffordable diets reflect persistent structural challenges linked to poverty, inequality, climate and conflict. The next phase of engagement focuses on climate-resilient food systems, humanitarian readiness, gender-transformative action and accountability. Ethiopia is piloting a convergence initiative – the first of its kind in Africa – integrating agriculture, nutrition and climate, and –backed by EU support for grassroots, private sector and smallholder engagement.

How have partnerships, evidence and learning amplified impact?

EU+ joint programming has strengthened alignment among EU Member States and government leadership. Support to the national information platform for nutrition (NIPN) improved multisector data, analysis and accountability. Learning from early resilience models informed the scalable RESET architecture. A portfolio approach - blending humanitarian, development and investment instruments - enhanced coherence and food systems governance. Emerging Global Gateway initiatives, including Green business development for sustainable agro-food systems (2024-2030), are unlocking investment, strengthening SMEs and improving markets, logistics and standards compliance - reinforcing the enabling environment for nutrition-sensitive food systems transformation. At N4G 2025, Ethiopia committed to improved nutrition outcomes, diet quality and stronger accountability systems.

How has EU engagement advanced a gender-transformative and rights-based approach?

EU action moved beyond targeting women as beneficiaries toward addressing structural gender inequalities shaping nutrition outcomes. PSNP4 integrated gender-responsive design, while agricultural and resilience programming promoted women's control over productive assets and income. From 2020 onwards, targeted actions linked nutrition, WASH, reproductive health, education and protection from harmful practices, tackling the structural barriers that undermine women's and girls' agency and nutrition outcomes. By strengthening multisector coordination and giving greater priority to adolescent girls within programming, EU support fostered a more gender-transformative and rights-based approach aligned with Ethiopia's governance reforms.

→ Under the 2014-2020 MFF, EU financial commitments with a nutrition objective to Ethiopia amounted to EUR 111 million in humanitarian assistance and EUR 133 million in development cooperation. Under the current MFF (2021-2027), as of 2025, commitments stand at EUR 106 million for humanitarian assistance and EUR 179 million for development.

→ Between 2012 and 2025, the prevalence of child stunting declined by 6.6 percentage points, while progress has also been made with reduction of child wasting and exclusive breastfeeding (for which Ethiopia has met the 2025 WHA target).

Chad

Saving lives - Building resilience (2014 - 2025)

"Today, my daughter's health has improved; this was possible thanks to the intervention of the PROSSAN. My commitment today is to ensure that mothers understand the disaster that malnutrition can cause in the lives of our children."
Hanane ABDOUL ABDALLAH - mother of severely malnourished child supported by SAN programme (PROSSAN component)

How has EU support strengthened national systems for nutrition?

Sustained EU support has combined emergency response with institutionalised, multisector nutrition governance. Since 2011, EU funding has enabled nationwide, community-based SAM treatment, now integrated into the national health system. Budget support (ACET II/III) strengthened public finance and safeguarded social spending, embedding nutrition in policy, expenditure frameworks and governance, including the National Council. The EU supported programme - Sécurité alimentaire et nutritionnelle au Tchad (SAN) - reinforced decentralised, multisectoral service delivery, while FORMA-NUT expanded prevention and capacity – shifting nutrition towards a core public function. Since 2021, actions have increasingly linked nutrition with employment and rural incomes.

How has the EU navigated fragility and crisis?

EU engagement demonstrates operationalisation of the humanitarian-development-peace (HDP) nexus in a context of climate shocks, insecurity and refugee inflows. A nexus task force, led by the EU Delegation and DG ECHO, has strengthened alignment of humanitarian, resilience and development action. Sustained ECHO support enabled large-scale SAM treatment (over 400 000 children in 2024). EU programming balances treatment with prevention and, since 2018, has increasingly linked nutrition to social cohesion and regional stabilisation under the Sahel Strategy, linked nutrition to social cohesion and regional stabilisation under the Sahel Strategy, the EU's integrated framework for security, resilience and development in the region.

Through which pathways has EU engagement improved diets and resilience?

EU engagement addresses both immediate drivers of wasting and structural determinants of poor diets. Resilience programmes (PRO-ACT, Pro-Resilience, RESTE) combine climate-resilient agriculture, smallholder support, WASH, social protection and nutrition education. The 'Food systems resilience strengthening/Taste of life' programme promotes value chains and agro-processing (including fortification). Since 2021, a shift towards market-oriented, nutrition-sensitive value chains aligns with Global Gateway, with connectivity and regional trade integration strengthening food availability, markets and resilience.

How has Chad's nutrition context evolved?

Stunting has declined with progress in anaemia reduction, exclusive breastfeeding and wasting management. While two-thirds of the population are unable to afford a healthy diet, nationwide scale-up of SAM treatment marks a major systems achievement, demonstrating nutrition as a strategic anchor for long-term engagement in fragile contexts. At N4G 2025, commitments include strengthened governance, a National Nutrition Office, increased financing and expanded community-based programmes.

How have partnerships, evidence and learning amplified impact?

EU engagement has shaped Chad's nutrition ecosystem through strong coordination, notably via the nexus task force and alignment between ECHO, INTPA and partners. Joint analysis and geographic convergence have strengthened coherence between humanitarian and development action. EU support to SUN coordination, SMART surveys and JRC-led assessments of dietary diversity using MDD-W, alongside strengthened early warning systems, has improved evidence use. Surveillance and performance monitoring increasingly informs programming, with further gains expected from strengthened indicators and resilience frameworks.

How has EU engagement advanced gender equality and inclusion?

EU engagement in Chad links nutrition to women's empowerment, access to services and participation in local governance, with humanitarian programmes prioritising pregnant and lactating women and young children. FORMA-NUT, SAN and Food systems resilience strengthening ('Taste of life') promote behaviour change and engage men and community leaders. SAN strengthens women's groups, micro-enterprises and reduces unpaid labour. 'Taste of life' supports women's participation in fortified food value chains, entrepreneurship and income generation.

→ Under the 2014-2020 MFF, EU financial commitments with a nutrition objective to Chad amounted to EUR 92 million in humanitarian assistance and EUR 229 million in development cooperation. Under the current MFF (2021-2027), as of 2025, commitments stand at EUR 69 million for humanitarian assistance and EUR 54 million for development.

→ Between 2012 and 2025, the prevalence of child stunting declined by 5.9 percentage points, while progress has also been made with reduction of child wasting, exclusive breastfeeding and anaemia in women (age 15-49).

Guatemala

Tackling inequality to accelerate nutrition progress (2014 - 2025)

"Joint efforts, along with financial and technical support, have helped the Ministry strengthen the Integrated Health Services Network. This also has a direct impact on the Government's priorities: tackling chronic malnutrition head-on and advancing the right to health, particularly for early childhood."

Dr Joaquin Barnoya, Minister of Public Health and Social Assistance of Guatemala

How has EU support strengthened national systems for nutrition?

EU engagement reinforced Guatemala's nutrition governance architecture. Budget support to the Zero Hunger Plan strengthened the Secretariat for Food and Nutrition Security (SESAN), linked disbursements to stunting indicators, and supported annual nutrition surveys to track results. From 2017, the national information platform for nutrition (NIPN) enhanced data systems and evidence use, while the global FAO facility 'FIRST' strengthened policy coherence, civil society participation and institutional gender integration within agriculture. During COVID-19, EU support improved gender- and nutrition-sensitive budgeting and inter-ministerial coordination contributing to increased allocations for food security and nutrition. Across successive strategies – including the participatory development of the 2022-2037 National Food and Nutrition Security policy (POLSAN), EU engagement embedded nutrition within public finance, multisector platforms and national information systems – strengthening durable institutions to address persistent territorial and socioeconomic disparities in nutrition outcomes.

How has EU support strengthened resilience and addressed structural vulnerability?

Nutrition vulnerability in Guatemala is tied to climate shocks, territorial inequality and poverty, and disproportionally affects indigenous groups. EU engagement increasingly focused on resilience in high-risk and high-burden areas. PRORESILIENCE was designed at the humanitarian-development interface, shifting from short-term assistance to asset creation, income diversification and community-led adaptation in drought-prone regions. PRO-ACT addressed El Niño related food insecurity, while the COVID-19 response action strengthened public expenditure systems and rural livelihoods during fiscal stress. Complementary humanitarian assistance supported food security and WASH needs in crises.

How has EU engagement advanced gender equality and inclusion?

Actions supported efforts to address the structural barriers driving malnutrition with FIRST supporting the creation of a gender unit within the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Food, embedding gender-sensitive planning in agricultural policy. PRORESILIENCE and COVID-19 response action incorporated indicators on women's income control and decision-making, targeting vulnerable indigenous communities. Under the EU-UNICEF comprehensive strategy and the EU-PAHO primary health care action, adolescent girls, pregnant women and mothers were prioritised during the first 1 000 days. The 'Salud Inclusiva' ('Inclusive Health') digital interface enabled health services in Mayan languages, while mobile platforms delivered tailored nutrition messages across seven indigenous languages – strengthening cultural inclusion, women's agency and equitable access to services.

Through which pathways has EU engagement improved diets and resilience?

EU action addressed both structural and immediate drivers of malnutrition. In the 'dry corridor', PRORESILIENCE combined climate-resilient agriculture, cash transfers, micro-insurance and seasonal livelihood plans to protect incomes and promote improved dietary practices. Budget support to a family farming programme (PAFFEC) reinforced diversified smallholder production as a pillar of nutrition strategy, reflecting a broader shift to structural food systems reform. Comprehensive health and nutrition actions with UNICEF and PAHO (the WHO regional office for the Americas) strengthened maternal and child services and behaviour change in high-burden departments. More recently, Global Gateway investments in water and sanitation in Petén have been addressing environmental determinants of undernutrition. Together, these pathways link agriculture, income, health and WASH to nutrition outcomes, closing gaps affecting indigenous, rural and the poorest households.

How has digital innovation helped to support the transformation of nutrition governance and service delivery?

Digital transformation has become a defining feature of Guatemala's portfolio. Through NIPN, a nutrition situation room and digital dashboards strengthened multisector data analysis and accountability including a decentralised levels – reinforcing the translation of nutrition policy into practice. Acute malnutrition monitoring tools and actor-mapping platforms improved coordination. Under the EU-UNICEF comprehensive strategy, the 'Corazón Contento' ('Happy Heart') mobile messaging service reached over 11 000 caregivers with tailored advice, while community monitoring systems and digital data dashboards enhanced real-time tracking of sanitation and behaviour change interventions. Virtual diploma programmes strengthened municipal nutrition governance. This integrated digital ecosystem reinforced evidence use, linguistic inclusion and local ownership across health, agriculture and WASH systems.

How has Guatemala's nutrition context evolved?

While child stunting has reduced only gradually by 3.1 percentage points since 2012, the WHA targets for exclusive breastfeeding, under five overweight and child wasting are on track. Stunting remains concentrated among indigenous, rural and the poorest households with disadvantage compounded when these factors overlap. In 2014-2025, important institutional foundations were strengthened: nutrition remained a national priority accompanied by significantly increased public financing; monitoring systems improved through annual surveys and digital platforms to ensure a better understanding of ethnic inequalities; public finance management became more results-oriented; and climate resilience and environmental health were integrated into programming. At the 2025 Nutrition for Growth Summit, Guatemala committed to multisectoral action in priority municipalities (2025-2028) to tackle the double burden of malnutrition, reducing child stunting from 47% to 43% and containing overweight and obesity among women to 51.9%.

→ Under the 2014-2020 MFF, EU financial commitments with a nutrition objective to Guatemala amounted to EUR 0.6 million in humanitarian assistance and EUR 42 million in development cooperation. Under the current MFF (2021-2027), as of 2025, there are no humanitarian commitments, while development commitments stand at EUR 40 million.

→ Between 2012 and 2025, Guatemala made progress in child nutrition, achieving the 2025 WHA targets for both child wasting and exclusive breastfeeding, alongside a 3.1 percentage point reduction in stunting.

2.3 Embedding nutrition across policies, systems and sectors

Beyond individual countries and programmes, the EU has worked to embed nutrition as a shared objective across public policy, delivery systems and economic sectors that shape how people access food, services and care. This section provides additional insights into how nutrition has been institutionalised within governance, finance, food systems, social protection, humanitarian response and knowledge systems – creating foundations that protect gains, enable scale and continue to matter beyond individual funding cycles.

The EU's budget support for nutrition: a lasting systems legacy

EU budget support for nutrition represents a distinctive element of the EU's nutrition legacy over the past decade. By channelling resources directly through national systems – where contexts were assessed as conducive – this modality has enabled partner governments to move beyond fragmented, project-based interventions and embed nutrition within national planning, budgeting and service delivery frameworks. The experiences in Nepal, Lao PDR and Burkina Faso illustrate the transformative potential of this approach across diverse contexts[25].

Since 2012, child stunting has declined by 12.5 percentage points in Burkina Faso, 13.7 percentage points in Nepal and 10.6 percentage points in Lao PDR[26]

A first legacy contribution lies in the shift from stand-alone projects to support for national systems. In Nepal, EU budget support played a catalytic role in scaling up the multi-sector nutrition plan (MSNP), extending coverage nationwide and embedding nutrition across all provinces. Over time, this partnership has evolved into continued support under successive national plans, reflecting the EU's sustained commitment to strengthening government-led, multisectoral nutrition planning and financing. In Lao PDR, the transition from individual nutrition projects to large-scale budget support marked a similar shift towards working through national systems, aligned with broader development planning and public finance processes.

In Burkina Faso, such a 'systems shift' has followed a sectoral pathway. Through health-sector budget support, the EU played a critical role in strengthening public health systems, including supporting the introduction of free access to healthcare for women of reproductive age and children under five. This created an enabling environment for improved access to nutrition services. At the same time, the EU helped move nutrition – particularly the treatment of severe acute malnutrition – from parallel humanitarian delivery into routine public health systems. This included the establishment of a national budget line for therapeutic food and the integration of quality acute malnutrition care within government health services, marking a decisive step toward state-led provision of life-saving nutrition services.

A second legacy lies in making multisectoral nutrition operational. In Nepal, performance-linked disbursement conditions incentivised concrete actions spanning health, social protection, water and sanitation, education and women's livelihoods. In Lao PDR, complementary technical assistance translated multisectoral ambition into practical tools, including nutrition budget tagging, costed action plans, integrated service delivery models and harmonised monitoring systems. In Burkina Faso, the systematic use of nutrition data within the health sector reinforced political commitment and accountability, helping protect nutrition priorities within constrained fiscal environments.

Finally, budget support proved critical for scale, tackling structural inequality and resilience. In Nepal, nutrition outcomes in EU-supported areas outperformed national averages. In Lao PDR, budget support was adapted during the COVID-19 crisis to safeguard essential nutrition services. In Burkina Faso, multi-annual, predictable financing contributed to continuity of care for the most vulnerable and strengthened the social contract between families and public services. Together, these experiences demonstrate that budget support is an effective vehicle to institutionalise nutrition, strengthen national ownership and embed nutrition at the heart of governance, finance and service delivery.

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[25] In Nepal, the EU provided budget support aligned with the multi-sector nutrition plan (MSNP II) between 2020-2022, amounting to EUR 20 million, complemented by EUR 3 million in accompanying measures and technical assistance implemented with UNICEF.
In Lao PDR, the EU delivered nutrition-focused budget support of EUR 42 million between 2019-2022, complemented by EUR 7.85 million in technical assistance through TANPAN (GIZ) and SICAN (UNICEF) in 2020-2025, aligned with the National Plan of Action for Nutrition (NPAN III). In Burkina Faso, the EU implemented the Sectoral Health Budget Support Programme (PAPS II) between 2016-2020, with a total budget of EUR 84 million (EUR 70 million budget support and EUR 14 million technical assistance), integrating nutrition through routine health services, including a national budget line for therapeutic food.

[26] Joint Malnutrition Estimates 2025.

Nutrition in emergencies – life-saving care in the most fragile contexts

Severe acute malnutrition (SAM) is an immediate and life-threatening condition for children under five in all settings, not only in acute humanitarian crises[27]. Conflict, displacement, climate shocks and disease outbreaks can rapidly undermine food security, health system functioning and care practices, suddenly exposing children – especially those under five – to increasing levels of SAM while decreasing access to life-saving treatment, sharply elevating the risk of death.

Nutrition is a core life-saving intervention in EU humanitarian action. This was clearly articulated in the 2013 Staff Working Document on Addressing Undernutrition in Emergencies, which set out the rationale for prioritising the prevention and treatment of acute malnutrition as part of principled, needs-based humanitarian assistance. The document emphasised predictable financing, adherence to evidence-based approaches, and integration with emergency health, water and sanitation responses.

A central element of this humanitarian approach has been the **widespread adoption of community-based management of acute malnutrition (CMAM).** CMAM marked a decisive shift away from hospital-based treatment towards decentralised, community-level care, allowing most children with uncomplicated SAM to be treated through outpatient services. This shift was made possible by ready-to-use therapeutic food (RUTF) – an energy-dense, micronutrient-fortified product that requires no cooking, refrigeration or clean water for its preparation and can be safely used at home with routine follow-up.

Crucially, CMAM and the use of RUTF did not merely improve clinical outcomes; they fundamentally changed how life-saving nutrition services could be delivered – shifting care out of hospitals and into communities and making large-scale coverage feasible in insecure and resource-constrained environments. They dramatically expanded treatment coverage, improved survival rates, and enabled services to be delivered at scale, including in insecure, remote and logistically constrained settings. Across Africa, experience has shown that sustaining impact depends not only on access, but also on service quality, continuity of care, reliable supply chains and strong links with emergency health services.

With sustained support from the Commission through DG ECHO, CMAM has been scaled up across Africa and beyond, enabling the treatment of large numbers of children affected by acute malnutrition resulting from recurrent droughts, floods, conflict, displacement, disease outbreaks and broader climate-related shocks. Beyond expanding service coverage for those hardest to reach, humanitarian funding has supported the integration of nutrition into national health systems, enhancing the capacity of frontline health workers, and reinforcing community health and nutrition structures that play a critical role in the early identification, screening, referral, and follow-up of vulnerable children and pregnant and breastfeeding women. The humanitarian system has been instrumental in adapting and simplifying national diagnosis and treatment protocols and streamlining service delivery models, including through stronger community engagement and referral pathways. These adjustments have helped maintain continuity of care and expand access to treatment in hard-to-reach, insecure and resource-constrained environments, contributing to increased treatment coverage and improved recovery over time. The realities of delivering CMAM in protracted crises are illustrated most clearly at country level, as shown in the example of South Sudan. (Box 3)

Box 3: Sustaining life-saving nutrition services in South Sudan

South Sudan is one of the world's most severe and persistent nutrition emergencies. Years of armed conflict, inter-communal violence, mass displacement, economic collapse and recurrent flooding have repeatedly disrupted livelihoods and basic services, leaving large numbers of children at risk of severe acute malnutrition[28]. In 2025 alone, 9.3 million people – around 70% of the population – needed humanitarian assistance, with over half being children. UNICEF estimated that the lives of 715 000 children with severe acute malnutrition under the age of five were at risk unless they received urgent nutrition support.

The EU's total humanitarian funding for 2025 amounted to EUR 106 million of which EUR 10.1 million was allocated to actions with a nutrition objective and enabled EU-supported humanitarian partners to focus on maintaining access to SAM treatment in highly insecure and logistically challenging environments. CMAM has been central to this effort, enabling decentralised service delivery through fixed, mobile and outreach modalities that can adapt to population movements and seasonal access constraints.

[27] Globally, the most recent Joint child malnutrition estimates indicate that an estimated 12.2 million children under five were severely wasted in 2024 with most cases occurring in South Asia – outside conflict or natural disaster-driven emergencies and rather reflecting multi-dimensional deprivation and inequality more broadly.

[28] Of the over two million children under five estimated to be at risk of acute malnutrition in South Sudan, over 700 000 children are estimated to be severely wasted. https://www.unicef.org/press-releases/hunger-and-malnutrition-deepen-conflict-and-access-constraints-persist-south-sudan.

Partnerships with UN agencies and non-governmental organisations have prioritised continuity of care, ensuring that children can begin and complete treatment even during displacement or flooding. Community-based screening and referral, combined with the availability of RUTF, have allowed treatment to reach children who would otherwise be excluded from inpatient care.

Experience in South Sudan also highlights the importance of integration. Linking nutrition treatment with emergency health and water and sanitation services as well as humanitarian food assistance has helped address multiple drivers of wasting simultaneously and improve recovery outcomes. While humanitarian nutrition interventions cannot resolve the structural causes of food insecurity and fragility, sustained support to CMAM in South Sudan has been critical in preventing excess child mortality during successive crises – underscoring the indispensable role of life-saving nutrition care in protracted emergencies.

Nutrition-sensitive agriculture

It is not enough simply to produce food to eat; we must also safeguard health for the future.

Hon. Léopold Lokossou, Member of the National Assembly of Benin

Nutrition-sensitive agriculture has been a longstanding strategic priority of EU external action and remains central to its commitment to advancing healthier diets and improved nutrition outcomes. Recognising that malnutrition cannot be addressed through health interventions alone, the EU has consistently invested in agriculture to enhance food availability, affordability and diversity, while strengthening incomes, livelihoods and resilience to ensure sustained access to nutritious diets. Over the past decade, EU support has evolved from integrating agriculture within multisectoral nutrition programmes and strengthening governance frameworks, to adopting a more comprehensive food systems approach. This approach connects agroecology, value chain development, land governance, digitalisation and gender equality to address the structural drivers of malnutrition. In doing so, it supports improved diets, more resilient livelihoods and inclusive, sustainable food systems at scale. Countries such as Malawi and Kenya clearly illustrate this progression.

In Malawi, since 2012, child stunting has fallen by 10.3 percentage points[29]

Malawi: from multi-sectoral nutrition delivery to Team Europe food systems action

In Malawi, the EU's legacy in nutrition-sensitive agriculture is anchored in the **Afikepo[30] nutrition programme**, a government-led, multi-sectoral initiative implemented between 2017 and 2023 with an EU contribution of EUR 86 million. Afikepo integrated agriculture, health, nutrition, WASH and governance across 10 districts, with nutrition-sensitive agriculture playing a strategic enabling role alongside maternal, infant and young child nutrition (MIYCN) and adolescent nutrition interventions. The programme responded directly to Malawi's structural challenge of heavy reliance on maize-based subsistence farming and the resulting risks of poor dietary diversity.

Afikepo taught families about mixed cropping. The heavy rains that came with Cyclone Freddy washed away most of their crops, particularly maize. But due to that type of cropping, they could harvest orange-fleshed sweet potatoes, on which they are subsisting.

Violet Ngulube, Agriculture Extension Development Officer for Thanguzi Section, Mulanje district

A core innovation of Afikepo was its emphasis on Integrated Homestead Farming (IHF) as a practical pathway linking agriculture to improved diets at household level as detailed in Box 4 below. The programme promoted diversified cropping, fruit trees, small livestock and vegetable gardens, while coupling these practices with nutrition education and strengthened extension services. Importantly, this integrated approach was embedded within strengthened district-level nutrition governance and information systems, reinforcing sustainability beyond the life of the programme.

[29] Joint Malnutrition Estimates 2025

[30] Afikepo meaning in Chichewa: 'Let them (the children) develop their full potential'.

Box 4: Afikepo: Evidence of nutrition-sensitive agriculture delivering results at scale in Malawi

What is it? Afikepo nutrition programme (2017-2023). EU contribution: EUR 86 million. Coverage: 10 districts

What changed – and by how much?

Farming systems

- Integrated homestead farming adoption nearly doubled: 9% to 16% of households combining crops, fruit trees, livestock and gardens

Diet quality

- Women's dietary diversity increased from 30% to 43%
- Adolescent girls' dietary diversity increased from 32% to 41%
- Children (6-23 months) receiving a minimum acceptable diet increased from 15% to 28%

Nutrition & care practices

- Exclusive breastfeeding increased from 61% to 72%

Women's empowerment

- Women's empowerment in agriculture index increased from 47% to 59%

Why it matters? Afikepo shows that nutrition-sensitive agriculture works at scale when it is embedded in a coordinated system-linking diversified production, behaviour change, women's empowerment and local governance.

Building on this foundation, EU engagement under the 2021-2027 MFF reflects a Team Europe-driven food systems approach. **The Greening and growing Malawi programme** situates nutrition-sensitive agriculture within a broader green growth agenda, linking agroecology, natural resource management, agribusiness development and value chains to improved dietary diversity and resilience. Rather than focusing on nutrition service delivery alone, the programme aligns land restoration, climate-resilient production and market access with household food consumption outcomes, explicitly recognising the role of local value chains and small and medium agri-businesses in shaping access to the range of foods required for healthy diets.

Kenya: governance foundations enabling nutrition-sensitive food systems

In Kenya, since 2012, child stunting has fallen by 11.1 percentage points and the country achieved the WHA stunting target for 2025[31]

Kenya highlights a distinct pathway, where early EU support prioritised governance and institutional strengthening as a foundation for later food systems action. This reflected structural constraints – including limited arable land (around 17%) and the predominance of small-scale farming – which made secure land access, investment in irrigation and technology, and effective service delivery critical to strengthening food security and resilience.

Under the 2014-2020 MFF, EU-financed **Support to the agriculture sector transformation process and to decentralised land governance,** a dedicated programme aligned with Kenya's post-2010 constitutional reforms and devolution framework. The action supported implementation of the agriculture sector development strategy by strengthening county-level agricultural planning, service delivery and accountability, while improving land tenure security for smallholder farmers and pastoralist communities – particularly in arid and semi-arid lands (ASALs).

Improved access to land and agricultural services laid foundations for diversified livelihoods, more stable household food access and improved nutrition outcomes. This was particularly significant for women and marginalised groups, for whom secure land rights are a key enabler of nutrition-sensitive agricultural investment. In parallel, the EU supported resilience in fragile and drought-prone regions through actions that strengthened drought preparedness, risk management and livelihood resilience in ASAL counties, contributing to improved food and nutrition security while reinforcing local peace and stability.

I want every household in Kalobeyei to have a kitchen garden, grow their own vegetables, and eat healthy foods. This is the campaign I carry with me every day.

Grace, community-based facilitator supporting agri-nutrition training in Turkana County, Kenya

[31] Joint Malnutrition Estimates 2025

While agro-processing can create jobs and add value, Kenya's fragmented smallholder system limits consistent quality and volumes at scale. EU support therefore prioritises **production stability, diversification and resilience**, rather than rapid integration into formal value chains. Under the 2021-2027 MFF, this is reflected in a shift towards **food systems enablers**. The Boosting sustainable food production in Kenya (BSFPK) programme promotes **agroecological practices, improved inputs and climate-resilient farming** to enhance soil health, water efficiency and yield stability. This is complemented by the **Digital land governance programme**, which strengthens land administration through digitisation – improving transparency, enabling investment – and supporting women's and marginalised groups' land rights.

Malawi and Kenya demonstrate a coherent thematic legacy. Early investments in multi-sectoral nutrition delivery, governance and land systems created the foundations for later action – aligning agroecology, value chains, gender equality and digitalisation within a food systems approach.

Building social protection systems for better nutrition

While social protection is designed to protect individuals and their families and ensure they can meet their basic needs throughout their lives, family and child benefits are known to improve nutrition and health, as well as reducing child poverty, and contributing to improved educational outcomes. Despite progress in recent years, ILO data show that still 3.8 billion people worldwide remain uncovered by any social protection benefit, including the majority of children in many regions. Where conducive, the EU therefore promotes access to a basic level of social protection as a right for all, with particular emphasis on children, vulnerable persons of working age and older people. Over the past decade, the EU has played a sustained and distinctive role in strengthening national social protection systems as part of its multisectoral approach to improving nutrition and healthy diets. A recent evaluation of EU programmes on social protection from 2014 to 2023 found concrete links with nutrition objectives, which often took the form of cash transfers to adolescent girls, pregnant and lactating women and young infants (e.g. Bangladesh, Malawi, Lesotho, Nepal, Somalia).

EU support has focused not simply on expanding transfers, but on building sustainable delivery systems – including data systems, payment mechanisms, governance arrangements and policy frameworks – that can address income insecurity, reduce vulnerability to shocks, and improve access to essential services underpinning nutrition outcomes. Experiences in Lesotho and Bangladesh illustrate both the strengths of this system-building approach and the practical considerations involved in delivering nutrition impact through social protection in high-poverty contexts[32]. The reduction in stunting prevalence in both countries reflects the contribution of sustained multisectoral efforts alongside broader social and economic change.

Since 2012, child stunting has fallen in Bangladesh and Lesotho by 13.2 and 2.5 percentage points respectively[33]

In Lesotho, EU support reflects a long-term system-building partnership that has been central to the evolution of the child grant programme (CGP) as a national platform for improving child wellbeing, food security and resilience. While the CGP was formally launched in 2009 as a donor-financed pilot, EU engagement – working closely with UNICEF – has supported social protection development in Lesotho since the mid-2000s, including the design of the CGP, the establishment and capacity development of the Ministry of Social Development, and the progressive strengthening of national delivery systems.

Malnourished children are less likely to enrol in school and those who do are more likely to enrol late. Stunted children tend to achieve lower grades than their peers and are less likely to read or be able to write a basic sentence. They drop out of school earlier, are less successful in the job market and earn lower incomes, contributing less to national economies. The damage caused by stunting, low birth, anaemia, and suboptimal breastfeeding costs the African continent at least USD 153 billion annually in lost productivity.

King Letsie III of Lesotho

[32] In Lesotho, the programme Equitable Lesotho (EUR 8 million, 2022-2028), with UNICEF as the main implementing partner, focuses on nutrition-sensitive and shock-responsive social protection, centred on the Child grant programme and NISSA.
In Bangladesh, EU support to national social security strategy (NSSS) reforms has been via Budget support – initially EUR 132 million and implemented between 2019 and 2024 – with explicit nutrition objectives and indicators and focusing on the mother and child benefit programme. This action was then followed with a budget support operation of EUR 44 million (2024-2029), with the focus now including system consolidation, digital delivery and shock-responsive social protection.
[33] Joint Malnutrition Estimates 2025.

Across successive phases of EU support[34], this partnership has delivered substantial institutional gains. These include the development and near-national expansion of the national information system for social assistance (NISSA), strengthened case management, the introduction of mobile payments, improved monitoring and evaluation, and a reinforced legislative and policy framework. The CGP is now fully financed from the national budget and implemented through government systems, with social protection expenditure averaging around 5% of GDP, among the highest in Africa. In response, EU and UNICEF support has increasingly promoted a 'cash-plus' approach, whereby cash transfers are linked to complementary services and interventions including social behaviour change communication, water and sanitation, birth registration, child protection, energy access and livelihood support. (Box 5)

Box 5: Key findings from the evaluation of the child grants programme (CGP) in Lesotho (2014–2022)

- ⇒ CGP has delivered clear food security benefits. Beneficiary households experience, on average, 18 fewer days of extreme food shortage per year, allocate a higher share of expenditure to food, and report improved child health outcomes, including reduced incidence of illness.
- ⇒ At the same time, evaluations point to scope for strengthening the adequacy and regular adjustment of transfers, and for further reinforcing complementarities with services, to maximise impacts on nutrition, education and longer-term human capital outcomes.
- ⇒ EU support (2019-2020) played a catalytic role in developing shock-responsive social protection mechanisms, strengthening the CGP's capacity to scale during droughts, COVID-19 and other crises.

In Bangladesh, EU support to social protection has focused on long-term system reform rather than stand-alone programmes, through successive budget support operations aligned with the national social protection strategy. This partnership has strengthened the institutional, financing and delivery foundations of a life-cycle and increasingly shock-responsive system.

The initial support positioned social protection as a key entry point for improving maternal and child nutrition, linking support for mothers and young children to better diets and care practices during the first 1 000 days. It strengthened policy coherence, programme coordination and results monitoring, including the use of nutrition-related indicators. The current phase builds on these reforms by consolidating digital governance and delivery systems. EU support has contributed to the development of unified beneficiary registries, expansion of direct government-to-person payments, stronger budget management and improved inter-ministerial coordination. This has enhanced the efficiency, transparency and scalability of social protection programmes supporting mothers, children, persons with disabilities and other vulnerable groups.

Specialised food value chains

Specialised food value chains (SFVCs[35]) have emerged as a distinctive element of the EU's nutrition legacy over the past decade. They respond to a persistent constraint in fragile and low-income contexts: limited access to affordable, culturally appropriate foods that support healthy diets at scale. While the EU's long-term vision is grounded in diversified food systems that enable consumption of safe, unprocessed and minimally processed foods as required for healthy diets, this objective can remain difficult to immediately realise in contexts shaped by poverty, fragility and recurrent shocks. In such settings, EU-supported SFVCs have provided a pragmatic, rights-based interim pathway – strengthening end-to-end systems that link local sourcing, food processing, fortification standards, behaviour change and public policy to help address critical dietary gaps, while laying foundations for more resilient and diversified food systems over time.

In countries such as Chad and Madagascar, EU-supported actions show how fortified complementary foods for young children can be embedded within domestic and regional food systems rather than delivered through stand-alone or import-dependent models. These initiatives deliberately combined agricultural supply, local manufacturing, quality assurance, demand creation and regulatory alignment to stabilise access to foods that support dietary adequacy in contexts highly exposed to climatic, economic and security shocks.

[34] 2013-2019, 2019-2023 and the current 2023-2028 action.

[35] In this report, the term 'specialised food value chains' (SFVCs) refers to the systems supporting the production, processing, quality assurance, distribution and use of foods formulated or fortified to address nutrients gaps among vulnerable population groups. SFVCs encompass products commonly used in nutrition-specific programmes, including fortified complementary foods, ready-to-use therapeutic foods (RUTF), supplementary feeding products, high-energy biscuits and other fortified foods.

Since 2012, child stunting has declined by 5.9 percentage points in Chad and 9.8 percentage points in Madagascar.[36]

In Chad, the ***PRO-FORT* programme** (Local production of fortified complementary foods) demonstrates a highly structured, multi-agency SFVC model. Implemented between 2016 and 2021, the programme targeted provinces with stunting rates above 30% and centred on the production and distribution of a fortified complementary food (*MANISA*). FAO supported farmer organisations to improve production of maize, cowpeas, soya and groundnuts; World Food Programme (WFP) strengthened local processing, fortification and marketing capacity; UNICEF led social marketing and behaviour change based on a socio-anthropological study of infant and young child feeding practices; and WHO supported regulatory strengthening, including enforcement of standards related to foods for children aged 6-24 months. This integrated design explicitly linked nutrition outcomes with local economic development and governance reform.

In Madagascar, EU support to create and launch the social enterprise *Nutri'zaza* under the **Food fortification project for vulnerable populations** demonstrates how specialised food value chains can be strengthened beyond project cycles (Box 6). Implemented between 2017 and 2021 with GRET, the action expanded local production and distribution of fortified complementary foods while reinforcing quality assurance, market structuring and policy alignment. Alongside operational research, the programme supported the Government of Madagascar to advance a national legislative framework for food fortification aligned with their national nutrition action plan, PNAN III, helping to embed fortified foods within the broader nutrition policy architecture.

Box 6: Madagascar - strengthening a sustainable specialised food value chain

Scaling a local social enterprise model

- Expanded production and marketing of fortified complementary foods across more than 45 districts by strengthening Nutri'zaza's technical, managerial and quality control capacities.
- Consolidated a financially viable social enterprise model, combining commercial sales with a social mission based on three complementary distribution channels (retail, institutional and community-based delivery) targeting vulnerable populations.
- Created and stabilised local employment opportunities, including through the expansion of distribution networks, while strengthening local value chains

Embedding quality and regulatory standards

- Supported development of a national legislative and regulatory framework for food fortification.
- Reinforced quality assurance systems, food safety compliance and certification processes, supporting alignment with national standards.

Generating operational learning

- A cluster randomised trial demonstrated some improvements in anaemia and micronutrient status, while also highlighting implementation and contextual challenges.
- This evidence is strengthening knowledge of both the potential and limitations of market-based fortified food approaches in high-burden settings, informing future investments.

By anchoring fortified foods within local value chains, strengthening regulatory frameworks and generating evidence on effectiveness, EU-supported SFVCs have improved supply reliability, reduced import dependence, and strengthened sustainable, inclusive and resilient food systems that can accelerate improved nutrition.

Making knowledge work for nutrition

A crucial yet often overlooked aspect of the EU's impact on nutrition is its **support for countries to improve their ability to manage knowledge.** This involves identifying necessary evidence, generating it effectively, and using it to inform policy, investment, and accountability. By backing analytical platforms, information systems and research, the EU has helped transform **decision-driven knowledge systems for nutrition**, moving away from scattered evidence creation.

[36] Joint Child Malnutrition Estimates (JME) 2025

The establishment and use of the NIPN initiative will help the Lao PDR to strengthen national capacity to manage and analyse information and data from all sectors which have an influence on nutrition, to track progress, and to disseminate and use information to better inform the policies and strategic decisions that prevent undernutrition and its consequences.

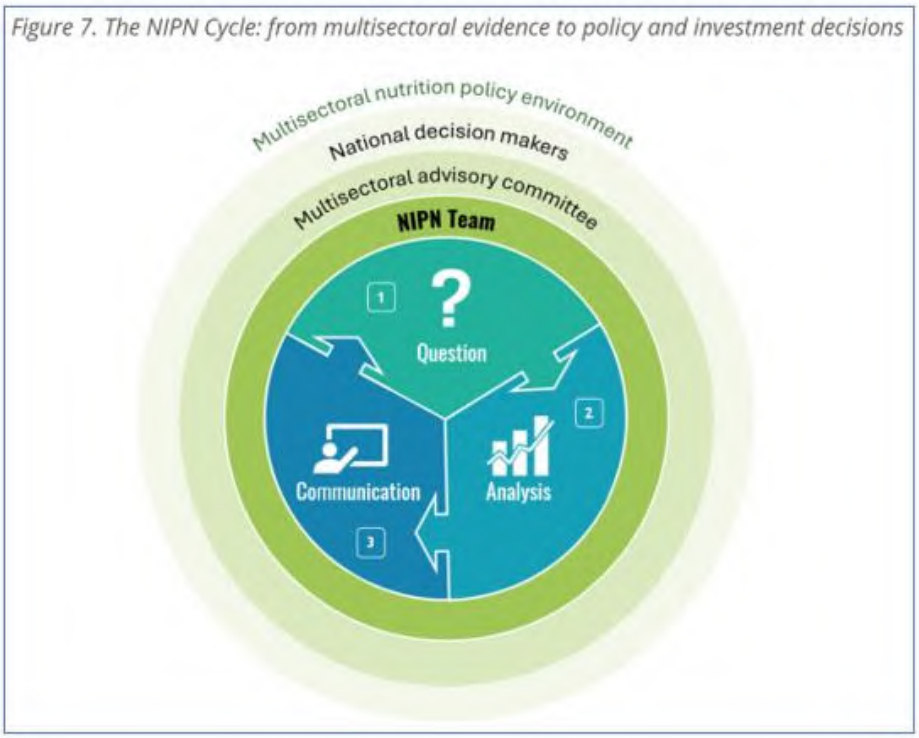
H.E Dr. Souphanh Keomixay, Minister of Planning and Investment, 2018

A central element of this approach is long-term support to **country-owned platforms at the interface of data, analysis and policy**, notably the n**ational information platforms for nutrition (NIPN)**. Implemented across multiple partner countries[37], NIPN focuses less on generating new data and more on strengthening national capacity to **ask the right questions, bring together multisectoral evidence, and inform policy and investment decisions**.

At country level, NIPN is embedded within existing institutions and multisectoral coordination mechanisms, operating through a continuous cycle (Figure 7):

- Formulating policy-relevant questions based on government priorities;
- Analysing available data across sectors;
- Communicating findings to inform policy, programme design, and investment decisions.

Figure 7. The NIPN Cycle: from multisectoral evidence to policy and investment decisions



What distinguishes this approach is its emphasis on the governance of knowledge. By anchoring analytical functions within existing institutions and multisectoral coordination mechanisms, countries have been able to move nutrition discussions into core planning and budgeting spaces, engaging ministries of finance, planning, agriculture and social protection alongside health. This capacity has become particularly important as fiscal space tightens. Sustainability is defined by the institutionalisation of analytical capacity – embedding skills, systems and routines that enable governments to generate, interpret and use evidence to inform policy and investment decisions over time.

This decision-oriented approach has been complemented by another EU investment in strengthening the foundations of routine nutrition information, notably through the **Strengthening national nutrition information systems (EC-NIS) project (2020-2025)**, implemented jointly with UNICEF and the World Health Organization (WHO). Operating in Côte d'Ivoire, Ethiopia, Lao PDR, Uganda and Zambia, EC-NIS has focused on the technical and institutional 'plumbing' of nutrition information systems: assessing existing systems, refining core nutrition indicators, integrating them into routine health information platforms such as DHIS2, strengthening data quality assurance, and improving data visualisation and dissemination. This has strengthened the quality, coverage and management of nutrition services within national health systems by enabling more reliable monitoring, planning and delivery of care.

[37] Countries include Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, Ethiopia, Guatemala, Kenya, Lao PDR, Niger, Uganda and Zambia.

Crucially, EC-NIS has addressed the supply side of nutrition data – improving timeliness, consistency and credibility – while creating the conditions for stronger data use. In several contexts, the convergence between EC-NIS investments in routine systems and broader analytical platforms has helped close the gap between data collection and policy relevance, reinforcing nutrition as a measurable and monitorable development priority rather than an episodic survey-based concern.

Beyond systems and analytics, the EU has also invested in applied research designed to inform real policy choices, most notably through the **Nutrition Research Facility** (NRF). The identification and selection of NRF studies were informed by structured regional consultations, bringing together policymakers, practitioners, researchers and partners to define research questions grounded in country and regional priorities. This process ensured that outputs responded to concrete policy dilemmas rather than abstract knowledge gaps.

The resulting portfolio spans nutrition-sensitive agriculture, agroecology, food environments and ultra-processed foods, adolescent and women's nutrition, school food and nutrition policies, women's empowerment and the political economy of multisectoral nutrition action. Several studies have directly informed EU programming discussions and partner-country debates, particularly by highlighting why well-designed policies often underperform in practice and where governance, incentives or market dynamics constrain impact. The consultative research model itself has strengthened regional communities of practice and analytical capacity beyond individual studies.

At the science-policy interface, the **Joint Research Centre (JRC)** has played a distinctive role in strengthening the evidence and methodological foundations of nutrition policy within wider food systems and economic debates. In particular, JRC research has helped refine how nutrition is measured, monitored and interpreted – integrating nutrition more systematically into global food security and crisis-analysis frameworks, advancing dietary diversity metrics for women and children, assessing the use of acute malnutrition indicators for surveillance, and improving methods for understanding complex food systems. JRC research has also connected nutrition evidence with wider economic and policy questions, including market incentives, labour outcomes, gender-sensitive measurement and analysis, aid contraction and the resilience of nutrition data systems. This work has supported a shift away from calorie-centred framings towards nutrition-relevant measures that better capture diet quality, resilience and equality within food systems, as illustrated in Box 7 below.

Box 7: Making food diversity visible: the role of neglected and underutilised species (NUS)

JRC research has drawn attention to a persistent blind spot in global food and nutrition analysis: the limited visibility of food diversity itself. Despite the centrality of dietary diversity to healthy diets, food systems and nutrition policies have long focused on a narrow set of staple crops, overlooking the contribution of neglected and underutilised species (NUS) to diet quality, resilience and affordability. Through evidence synthesis, food composition analysis and systems modelling, the JRC has demonstrated that many locally adapted crops – such as traditional grains, pulses, leafy vegetables and fruits – are rich in essential micronutrients and may be well-suited to diverse agro-ecological conditions. By examining the links between agrobiodiversity, diets, resilience and equality, the review has helped reposition NUS from marginal foods to potentially strategic assets within food systems transformation. The resulting evidence base supports more context-sensitive nutrition policies that align biodiversity, climate adaptation and the right to healthy diets - particularly in low- and middle-income countries where dietary diversity remains constrained.

EU engagement with CGIAR reflects a deliberate upstream shift towards research that integrates diet quality, affordability and nutrition outcomes within agricultural innovation. In 2021, the European Commission announced a EUR 140 million commitment to CGIAR to support research and innovation in sustainable food systems, reinforcing the centrality of food systems transformation to global food security efforts. Through EU-backed work on nutrition-sensitive food systems, biofortified and underutilised crops, and the cost of healthy diets, productivity, resilience and nutrition objectives are increasingly addressed together within global food systems research.

Horizon Europe – the EU's key funding programme for research and innovation during the period 2021 to 2027 – has further consolidated this approach by embedding nutrition within a new generation of systems-oriented research and innovation, rather than treating it as a downstream health outcome. Through Cluster 6 and linked health and inequality research streams, Horizon Europe-funded projects address food systems transformation, diet-related health outcomes, climate and biodiversity linkages, and unequal access to healthy diets. Its Africa-focused international partnerships emphasise co-creation, local research capacity and policy relevance, positioning nutrition as a shared public good within global research agendas rather than a sectoral or aid-dependent concern. The proposed multiannual financial framework (MFF) for 2028-2034 includes the continuation of the Horizon Europe flagship to fund world-class innovation in close connection with the European Competitiveness Fund.

Part 3: Delivering nutrition at scale: partnerships, finance and innovation

Over recent decades, the global nutrition landscape has undergone a profound shift, accelerating since 2021. **Undernutrition persists alongside rapidly rising diet-related non-communicable diseases,** while many lower-income countries continue to face a significant burden of infectious diseases, particularly in contexts of wasting and stunting. The complexities of tackling all forms of malnutrition are therefore increasingly recognised. Furthermore, climate shocks, geopolitical tensions, conflict and macroeconomic pressures are placing a growing strain on food and health systems while constraining public finances and fiscal space for social investment. At the same time, these shifts are reinforcing the importance of healthy diets and nutrition for human development, economic resilience and sustainable growth.

Improving nutrition increasingly depends on food systems that are more resilient and inclusive, better access to services for the most vulnerable, and broad-based economic growth that raises incomes and reduces inequalities, enabling people to access healthy diets and essential services. This requires coordinated action across sectors, supported by better data, innovation, and stronger partnerships – between governments, development institutions, the private sector and civil society – to address the root causes of malnutrition.

This evolving approach is reflected in how nutrition is increasingly embedded within the European Union's broader external action. As the EU Action Plan on Nutrition (2014-2025) comes to an end, EU engagement is shifting towards more integrated, partnership-based and investment-oriented approaches. Since 2021, this has been implemented through the Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument – Global Europe (NDICI 2021-2027), which brings together previous funding instruments into a single framework aligned with the EU's commitment to reduce poverty and support sustainable development. By improving coherence across sectors and financing tools, NDICI-Global Europe provides a stronger foundation for integrating nutrition across agriculture, health, education, social protection and resilience programmes.

This section shows how the EU puts these principles into practice. It outlines the **current approach, linking nutrition to Global Gateway partnerships and investment-driven cooperation that support food systems transformation**, and the need to adapt in fragile contexts. The chapter illustrates the Global Gateway model through country experiences in Rwanda, Lao PDR and Zambia, and closes by examining EU engagement in the more fragile contexts of Somalia, Afghanistan and Mozambique.

3.1 Global Gateway and nutrition: integrated partnerships for food systems transformation

Within the EU's wider external action architecture, the **Global Gateway strategy provides the strategic framework for mobilising public and private investment** and strengthening international partnerships in support of sustainable development. Designed to boost smart, clean and secure connections across sectors such as digital, energy and transport while strengthening health, education and research systems, Global Gateway reflects **a shift toward integrated, investment-driven cooperation aligned with EU values and global commitments**, including the Sustainable Development Goals and the Paris Agreement. In this sense, Global Gateway reflects a broader 360-degree approach that integrates the social, economic and environmental dimensions of development, advancing human rights, gender equality, youth empowerment and climate resilience alongside improved nutrition outcomes.

The Global Gateway strategy aims to mobilise **over EUR 400 billion in investments worldwide by 2027**, building on the **EUR 306 billion already mobilised** **between 2021 and 2025**. It combines EU and Member States grants, loans and guarantees – including through the External Action Guarantee under NDICI-Global Europe – to catalyse additional public and private finance. Within this framework, nutrition is advanced through investments that strengthen infrastructure, food systems and value chains alongside health and social services, governance, human capital and resilient livelihoods. As presented in Part 1, the EU's 2025 nutrition pledge at the N4G in Paris further reinforces this integrated approach, underlining the Union's determination to address the structural drivers of malnutrition through coordinated partnerships and sustained financing. Financing for nutrition is therefore not **only about closing investment gaps. It is also about ensuring equitable access to healthy diets, essential services and opportunities for human development – placing dignity, equality and social inclusion at the centre of investment strategies.**

In a context of constrained official development assistance and growing geopolitical competition, catalytic finance helps reduce risk, strengthen regulatory clarity and improve data systems, enabling domestic resources, development finance institutions and responsible private capital to contribute to healthier food systems. As cooperation with development finance institutions expands, opportunities arise to integrate nutrition in financing mandates, accountability frameworks and country-led investment strategies to increase the impact of financial instruments.

Strengthening evidence and learning for food systems transformation

A central element of the EU's integrated, investment-driven approach to food systems transformation under Global Gateway is strengthening the knowledge base that guides policy, investment and reform. Through the EU-supported Nourishing food pathways (NFP) programme, implemented by GAIN and also supported by Germany, Ireland and the Netherlands, nutrition is positioned, not as a stand-alone intervention, but as an organising principle for food systems transformation. Operating in 11 countries, NFP works upstream by embedding nutrition within national planning, investment strategies and institutional reform processes.

The programme's added value lies in combining policy coherence, data systems, market activation and financing alignment to enable durable change. Tools such as the Food Systems Dashboard, the Food Systems Countdown Initiative (FSCI), the Policy Coherence Tool, and the Financial Flows for Food Systems (3FS) instrument provide governments with integrated, science-based data to guide reform and investment decisions. (Box 8 below)

As part of NFP's support to policy coherence, the Cost of a Healthy Diet methodology[38] is harnessed to generate evidence on the share of the population unable to afford a healthy diet. This helps to inform national debates on affordability and enables governments to better target policy responses. For example, the provision of social protection – set at an adequate level to sustain a decent standard of living – can allow households to maintain healthy diets as a prerequisite – for human development.

Box 8: Odisha (India): using data to steer food system reform

Under NFP, GAIN works in partnership with the Government of Odisha to use the Food Systems Dashboard as a practical tool for strengthening nutrition-sensitive food system planning. The initiative supports government actors to use integrated food system data to prioritise reforms within existing policy frameworks. In Odisha this includes improving post-harvest systems to reduce food losses, promoting nutrient-rich and indigenous crops and aquaculture to diversify diets, and embedding dashboard analytics into decision-making processes.

Catalytic finance and investment alignment

Beyond policy reform, NFP engages development finance institutions to embed nutrition within large-scale agricultural investment portfolios. Collaboration with the Asian Development Bank (ADB) illustrates this catalytic role. ADB has committed USD 40 billion to support food systems transformation by 2030, with one-quarter of operations expected to become nutrition-sensitive by 2028. In countries such as India, Indonesia and Pakistan, analytical tools and investment dialogue are helping identify entry points for integrating diet quality, climate-resilient value chains and livelihood opportunities into major development finance programmes.

Similarly, supported by the EU, the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) mainstreamed nutrition across 60% of its portfolio by 2024 and is partnering with GAIN in countries such as Benin, Rwanda, Pakistan and Bangladesh to demonstrate how nutrition-sensitive investments can enhance diet quality outcomes. These partnerships illustrate the catalytic leverage that can be achieved when relatively modest technical investments help shape multi-billion-dollar capital flows toward healthier food systems.

Private-sector engagement, innovation and demand for healthy diets

Within NFP, the Nutrition Connect platform convenes innovation challenges to identify and scale new solutions for healthier diets and improved food systems focused on dietary shifts and food fortification. It strengthens micro, small and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs) to improve food environments and creates opportunities for the development

[38] The cost and affordability of a healthy diet (CoAHD) is a metric developed by the Food prices for nutrition project ,led by researchers at Tufts University in collaboration with the World Bank and IFPRI.

of innovations in areas such as safer food processing, value-chain upgrading, reformulation and improved food distribution systems.
Selected applicants receive structured technical assistance, business development support and investment readiness guidance. Public funding reduces early-stage risk and strengthens the investment pipeline so that development finance institutions and private capital can support viable solutions aligned with healthier diets. Stronger SMEs and more resilient value chains increase the availability, safety and affordability of diverse foods, and when aligned with regulatory standards and policy reform these market innovations contribute to sustained improvements in dietary quality.

Demand-side engagement also plays an important role. Through partnerships with youth-oriented media platforms, NFP initiatives recognise that supply-side transformation must be complemented by behaviour change and cultural engagement as illustrated below (Box 9) with the Akili TV initiative in Kenya. Pakistan's youth engagement work under NFP similarly integrates foresight processes with institutional reform and next-generation leadership, illustrating how food systems transformation engages youth, cultural actors and consumers as well as producers and investors.

Box 9: Akili TV (Kenya): building demand for healthier diets through youth media

In Kenya, GAIN's Food Culture Alliance has collaborated with youth-focused media platforms such as Akili TV to promote healthier eating through culturally relevant storytelling and edutainment. By integrating nutrition messaging into engaging youth and family programming, these initiatives contribute to shaping knowledge, attitudes and preferences around food[39]. When healthier foods are available and affordable, reinforcing positive norms and preferences increases demand and supports shifts in dietary quality at household and community level.

Strengthening health systems and food environment governance

The systems approach underpinning the EU's evolving nutrition engagement is also reflected in efforts to strengthen health systems and food environment governance. Addressing malnutrition and diet-related disease requires not only food systems transformation, but also robust health systems capable of preventing, detecting and responding to nutrition-related risks. Evidence increasingly shows that the global shift towards diets dominated by highly processed foods and energy-dense products is a major structural driver of poor dietary quality and rising non-communicable diseases. Responding to these trends therefore requires coordinated action across health systems, food environments and public policy.

This cross-sectoral approach is reflected in ongoing EU support to the WHO-led Universal Health Coverage (UHC) Partnership (now in its fifth phase, 2025-2028). It integrates nutrition within broader health system reform across more than a hundred countries. The partnership strengthens national guidelines, data systems and service capacity so that countries are better equipped to address both communicable diseases and the rising burden of diet-related non-communicable diseases. By embedding nutrition within resilient health systems rather than treating it as a stand-alone programme, the EU helps build durable foundations for long-term impact.

Complementing these efforts to strengthen health systems, the EU-supported Global RECAP initiative addresses another critical dimension of food system governance: regulatory capacity. Implemented by WHO and the International Development Law Organization (IDLO) with support from the EU and Switzerland, Global RECAP provides targeted **legal and technical assistance to help governments design, implement and defend evidence-informed regulatory and fiscal measures that promote healthier diets and physical activity**. These include marketing restrictions to protect children, front-of-pack nutrition labelling, fiscal instruments aligned with health objectives, and product reformulation standards. Such measures are increasingly recognised as essential to addressing the structural drivers of unhealthy diets, including the widespread availability and marketing of products high in sugar, salt and unhealthy fats.

While many governments have adopted such measures, implementation is often delayed or weakened due to limited legal capacity, institutional constraints, or concerns about potential litigation – sometimes referred to as 'regulatory chill'. Global RECAP helps address these barriers by strengthening legal frameworks, improving regulatory coherence, and supporting the operationalisation and enforcement of policies, ensuring that policy ambition translates into effective action. In doing so, it contributes to shaping food environments not only through market forces, but through strong, accountable and evidence-based governance, ultimately improving diet quality and helping prevent diet-related non-communicable diseases.

[39] See for instance: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eoKBuhXAi1s.

Investment in practice: integrated approaches in diverse contexts

As Team Europe, we believe that the Lobito Corridor can have a transformative impact on both economy and people in the whole region. It presents a significant opportunity to the development of local communities. Our aim is to unlock the potential of the corridor not only in critical raw materials, but also in different value chains that can be developed together with the corridor. We are reinforcing the cooperation between public and private key players, both in partner countries and in Europe. This is what Global Gateway is about.

Jozef Síkela, European Commissioner for International Partnerships

Concrete examples show how these principles translate into practice through integrated investment approaches that connect food systems transformation with broader development objectives. A notable illustration is the EU's engagement in the Lobito Corridor in Angola, which forms part of a wider Team Europe effort to support economic diversification, trade facilitation, green transport and private sector development along a strategic regional corridor linking Angola, the Democratic Republic of Congo and Zambia. Within this broader context, the AgrInvest – Lobito Corridor action is strengthening agrifood value chains in provinces affected by both high poverty and significant malnutrition. (Box 10)

Box 10: The Lobito Corridor: unlocking agri-food system transformation and nutrition opportunities in Angola

This initiative aims to strengthen the agrifood system across four linked areas:

- ⇒ increasing climate-resilient agricultural production and productivity;
- ⇒ reducing post-harvest losses and upgrading domestic food distribution systems;
- ⇒ developing agro-logistics and agro-processing facilities;
- ⇒ expanding access to sustainable, gender-responsive finance for MSMEs.

The nutrition pathway operates through structural food system transformation. Increased production improves food availability, while better storage, transport and processing reduce losses and stabilise supply. Strengthened value chains and access to finance support businesses, create jobs and increase household incomes – an essential factor in enabling families to afford diverse, healthy diets.

In Tunisia, EU engagement illustrates a complementary pathway by linking food systems reform with social protection. Even though Tunisia has relatively high levels of food availability, diet quality remains a concern. Nationally, around 26% of children aged 6-18 live in poverty, with extreme poverty reaching 50% in the Centre-West region, while 36% of young children do not meet minimum dietary diversity. At the same time, the economic cost of overweight and obesity is projected to almost double between 2025 and 2040, rising from approximately USD 1.4 billion to USD 2.8 billion.

These trends highlight the dual challenge of improving both food environments and household purchasing power. The EU therefore supports a combined approach through two complementary programmes. PASADI[40] promotes inclusive and sustainable food systems by strengthening value chains, encouraging climate-resilient production and promoting healthier consumption patterns. In parallel, the Amen Social Programme expands targeted child allowances and strengthens social protection reform to reduce child poverty. Together these initiatives address both the availability and affordability of nutritious foods, illustrating how investment, policy reform and social protection can be aligned to tackle the structural drivers of malnutrition.

Fragility, resilience and adaptive engagement

While investment-led partnerships offer significant opportunities for transforming food systems and strengthening the foundations of healthy diets, the EU recognises that fragility is increasingly shaping the global operating environment. Protracted conflict, displacement, climate shocks and political instability disrupt institutions, weaken services and fracture food systems precisely when hunger and malnutrition are intensifying, risking the reversal of development gains. Fragile and conflict-affected settings now account for a growing share of people living in extreme poverty and food insecurity, meaning that these contexts increasingly define the global geography of hunger and vulnerability.

Against a backdrop of rapidly rising humanitarian needs and unprecedented funding constraints, the 2026 Humanitarian Aid Communication sets out a renewed EU approach centred on protection, performance and partnership, with a stronger

[40] PASADI: Programme d'appui aux systèmes alimentaires durables et inclusifs (Support programme for sustainable and inclusive food systems).

focus on resilience, localisation and reducing long-term dependence on humanitarian assistance through closer links between humanitarian, development and peace efforts. The accompanying Staff Working Documents on humanitarian diplomacy, humanitarian supply chains and an integrated approach to fragility provide further operational guidance for delivering this agenda.

In such environments, the EU applies a differentiated and context-sensitive approach. Where conditions allow, long-term systems strengthening can be embedded within national investment frameworks, supporting structural reforms across food systems, health services and social protection. In fragile and crisis-affected settings, however, engagement must remain adaptive – protecting lives, sustaining essential services and preserving institutional capacity while laying the groundwork for recovery and resilience. Consistent with the Integrated Approach to Fragility, the EU recognises that reducing human suffering requires not only responding to immediate crises but also addressing the underlying drivers of fragility. The objective is to strengthen resilience, stability, peace and sustainable development while continuing to meet urgent humanitarian needs, thereby reducing vulnerability, dependence on aid and the structural drivers of fragility over time.

Bridging humanitarian and development action is therefore central to EU engagement. Humanitarian assistance plays a critical role in delivering life-saving nutrition interventions in crisis-affected contexts, particularly for children under five and pregnant and breastfeeding women. At the same time, EU support seeks to strengthen the link between emergency response and longer-term systems strengthening. Preventing and treating acute malnutrition, reinforcing health and social protection systems, maintaining food systems governance and safeguarding national data systems form part of a continuum that links immediate relief with longer-term recovery and resilience. Through a human rights-based approach, the EU also seeks to strengthen capacities to anticipate, prepare for and withstand crises while supporting access to essential services, including nutrition, health, education, water and sanitation, food security and social protection.

The global context for sustaining nutrition action in fragile settings remains challenging, as highlighted in the Global Report on Food Crises, co-funded by the EU. While needs continue to grow, funding constraints are affecting the reach of humanitarian nutrition responses, with potential implications for vulnerable populations. In this evolving financing landscape, recent reductions in funding from some major donors highlight the need for continued and coordinated international engagement. Sustaining investment in early warning and information systems – such as IPC analyses, FEWS NET and national surveys – remains essential to ensure timely, evidence-based responses and to prevent emerging crises from escalating.

In fragile contexts, private capital often remains limited, and public and concessional financing continue to underpin basic services such as health, nutrition, WASH and social protection. EU support therefore combines humanitarian assistance with flexible development cooperation and strong partnerships, including coordination with UN agencies, NGOs, national actors and private-sector platforms such as the Connecting Business Initiative.[41] Particular attention is given to women, children, displaced populations and other vulnerable groups, recognising that nutrition vulnerability is often concentrated where fragility is greatest. The approach also emphasises local ownership and inclusive participation, strengthening the capacities of communities and national institutions as foundations for long-term recovery and resilience. By preserving institutional capacity, maintaining essential services and strengthening collaboration during crises, this approach helps protect human capital, support community resilience and create conditions for longer-term recovery, stability and sustainable development.

3.2 Global Gateway partnerships in practice: country perspectives

Global Gateway partnerships translate the EU's integrated approach to nutrition into concrete country-level cooperation and investments across multiple sectors. While entry points vary according to national priorities and development contexts, these partnerships combine action across food systems, health, education, social protection, infrastructure and governance to strengthen the structural conditions that enable healthier diets, improved nutrition and long-term resilience. The following country experiences illustrate how this integrated approach is being applied in practice. In Rwanda, Lao PDR and Zambia, EU cooperation brings together investments, policy dialogue and partnerships across

[41] The Connecting Business initiative (CBi) engages the private sector strategically before, during and after emergencies, increasing the scale and effectiveness of the response and recovery in a coordinated manner. The CBi was launched at the World Humanitarian Summit (as a joint initiative by UN OCHA and UNDP) in 2016 and by the end of 2024 CBi member networks had responded to 189 crises and mobilised USD 132 million, assisting 55 million people.

sectors to address key drivers of malnutrition while supporting broader food systems transformation and human development.[42]

[42] Details of the EU nutrition portfolio in Lao PDR, Rwanda and Zambia can be found in Annexes 8, 9 and 10 respectively.

Rwanda

Modernising food markets and strengthening inclusive value chains (2021-2025)

"The world is facing economic and political shifts that are testing old assumptions about globalisation. The answer is not to retreat or turn inwards. Our economies and security are intertwined in ways that cannot be reversed. The challenge is to make this integration equitable so that the opportunities and benefits of growth flow both ways."
President of Rwanda, Paul Kagame at the 2025 EU Global Gateway Forum

Why nutrition matters

Addressing nutrition challenges is pivotal for achieving Rwanda's overarching objective of reaching middle-income status by 2035. Child stunting has fallen 11.5 percentage points since 2012, reflecting sustained commitment to multisectoral nutrition policies and investments in health, agriculture and social development. Exclusive breastfeeding, child overweight and wasting targets are on track. However, anaemia and low birthweight show limited improvement, while the affordability of healthy diets remains a major challenge.

EU partnership in action

EU cooperation reinforces Rwanda's multisectoral nutrition approach by strengthening food systems, agriculture and human development. Building on national leadership and policies that have reduced stunting and overall inequalities, EU partnerships address structural drivers of diet quality, food availability and food system performance.

Global Gateway and investment partnerships

A flagship initiative under Global Gateway the Kigali Wholesale Market (KWM) will be the first modern, centralised wholesale market for fresh produce in Eastern Africa. Its implementation is expected to contribute to value chain development, increase revenues for rural producers and other actors along the value chain, create jobs, and improve access to healthy diets. Key components supporting the effective development of this wholesaling infrastructure include both the Kwihaza and Kungahara programmes. Kungahara is already delivering results by linking value chains with community-level nutrition, strengthening production systems, reducing post-harvest losses and improving diets. Kwihaza, meanwhile, aims to ensure a consistent supply of products in the horticulture, fisheries and aquaculture sectors. It follows a strong Team Europe approach and is expected to have a clear positive impact in terms of diversifying diets and improved nutrition.

Pathway to healthier diets

Once realised, the Kigali Wholesale Market (KWM) should provide modernised fresh produce trading infrastructure – including grading, packaging, storage and waste management – strengthening quality control, reducing post-harvest losses and extending shelf life. By improving market efficiency and price transparency across horticulture and fisheries value chains, fairer returns for producers can be supported. Crucially, by linking smallholder farmers and agri-food enterprises to growing urban and regional markets, the investment is expected to contribute to improved availability, affordability and accessibility of fresh food, supporting healthier diets and more resilient food systems.

Inclusion and resilience:

EU budget support – aligned with Rwanda's PSTA5 agricultural transformation strategy and its related climate targets – promotes diversified production, climate-smart agriculture and resilient rural livelihoods, while strengthening monitoring of food security, nutrition and gender inclusion. Complementary initiatives expand women's access to irrigation, inputs, markets and finance, while skills programmes for women and youth create pathways into green and decent jobs across the agri-food economy.

→ Following EU support for nutrition of EUR 61 million between 2014 and 2020, under the current MFF (2021-2027), as of 2025, development commitments stand at EUR 134 million

→ Between 2012 and 2025, Rwanda made progress in child nutrition, achieving the 2025 WHA targets for child wasting, child overweight and exclusive breast feeding, alongside a 11.5 percentage point reduction in stunting.

Lao PDR – TICAF

Transforming Food Systems and Rural Livelihoods for Healthier Diets (2021-2025)

"The government of Lao PDR aims to lower the stunting rate to 25% of children under five by 2030. The impact of food system policies will be assessed through regular surveys, studies, and reports to ensure that those policies are delivering... This effort supports the broader aim of the National Socio-Economic Development Plan (NSEDP) by enhancing child health outcomes, which are vital for long-term economic growth and development."

Pledge made by Government of Lao PDR at N4G Summit, Paris 2025

Why nutrition matters

Child stunting has fallen 10.6 percentage points since 2012, anaemia has declined and exclusive breastfeeding is on track to meet global targets. Yet about one-third of children remain stunted. Progress is uneven, with low birth weight, wasting and child overweight persisting alongside structural constraints including food poverty, low diet diversity, weak rural services, WASH and social protection gaps.

Team Europe in action

EU supports national efforts to strengthen food systems, rural livelihoods and the policy foundations for improved nutrition. Through the Team Europe Initiative for Sustainable Trade and Agriculture (TICAF), the EU works with ministries, producer organisations, SMEs, civil society and the Lao Women's Union to strengthen governance across agriculture, trade, environment and rural development while advancing food systems transformation.

→ Following EU support for nutrition of EUR 100 million between 2014 and 2020, under the current MFF (2021–2027), as of 2025, development commitments currently stand at EUR 23.5 million.

Pathways to healthier diets

Agroecological intercropping integrates nutrient-dense crops within coffee and tea, strengthening ecosystems while expanding the availability of diverse foods. Investments in smallholder production, local value chains and nutrition-sensitive agriculture strengthen rural incomes and purchasing power, improving both the availability and affordability of diverse diets.

Global Gateway and investment partnerships

TICAF combines EU grant funding with French and German technical leadership in a coordinated Team Europe partnership. The programme links EU and Member State financing with potential EFSD+ guarantees, blending operations and development finance institution engagement. This catalytic financing approach helps mobilise investment into sustainable coffee, tea and forest-based value chains.

Inclusion and resilience

TICAF strengthens smallholder livelihoods, producer organisations and rural SMEs. The Lao Women's Union support women's economic participation and agency. Climate-resilient agroecological systems protect natural resources while supporting inclusive green growth. Nutrition and gender equality are significant objectives, with indicators tracking diet quality, crop diversification and households' access to diversified diets.

→ Between 2012 and 2025, Lao PDR made progress in child nutrition, achieving the 2025 WHA target for exclusive breastfeeding, alongside a 10.6 percentage point reduction in stunting.

Zambia

Strengthening human development and resilient food systems for better nutrition (2021-2025)

"We cannot ignore the challenge to decrease child pregnancies in the country and their very negative impact on stunting. There is global evidence that adolescent mothers are more prone to give birth to low weight children perpetuating the intergenerational cycle of malnutrition and putting at stake the nutrition status of future generations. Interventions on nutrition will have very little impact and value for money if the country does not roll out an effective family planning policy."
Helena Guarin, Head of Nutrition Section, INTPA, Lusaka 2024

Why nutrition matters

Child stunting has declined by about 8.5 percentage points since 2012, and low birthweight has fallen. Global targets for exclusive breastfeeding, child overweight and wasting reduction are on track. Yet anaemia among women of reproductive age remains high, reflecting poverty, poor diet quality and gender inequality, highlighting the need for sustained multisectoral action on nutrition.

Global Gateway and investment partnerships

Complementing social investments, the Green partnership and investment programme promotes climate resilient agriculture and sustainable resource management across the agriculture-forest-water nexus. Activities include watershed management, land-use planning and forest governance reforms protecting ecosystems underpinning food production while supporting rural livelihoods. More recently – and cofinanced with Germany – ENTERPRISE Zambia 2.0 will support smallholder farmers to develop inclusive legume and horticulture value chains, access markets and create jobs, while NEWZA 2.0 strengthens water sanitation and energy systems (jointly financed with Germany and EIB).

Inclusion and resilience:

EU cooperation promotes inclusive and sustainable development by strengthening opportunities for smallholder farmers, women and youth. Certification schemes, carbon credit initiatives and nature-based enterprises such as sustainable forest products show how climate and biodiversity objectives align with rural economic development. Together these investments strengthen resilience, support livelihoods and contribute to improved long-term nutrition outcomes for communities and future generations.

EU partnership in action

EU cooperation with Zambia combines human development, social services and resilient food systems to address drivers of malnutrition. The Equal Chances for Human Development programme, implemented with UNICEF, strengthens integrated services across the life course, supporting early childhood development, education, health, nutrition, WASH and social protection. In a country where 54% of adolescents have started childbearing, the programme has a special focus on prevention from SGBV and family planning to decrease adolescents' pregnancy, a major contributor of stunting, and improving quality early education and community nutrition services for vulnerable families and adolescent girls.

Pathway to healthier diets

Early childhood development and community nutrition services strengthen wellbeing during the first years of life. Climate-resilient agriculture, diversified production and improved market access increase food availability and diet diversity. Inclusive value chains, digital market information systems, aggregation services and improved access to finance raise smallholder incomes and purchasing power for rural households nationwide.

→ Following EU support for nutrition of EUR 49 million between 2014 and 2020, under the current MFF (2021-2027), as of 2025, there has been humanitarian support of EUR 2 million, while development commitments currently stand at EUR 100 million.
→ Between 2012 and 2025, Zambia made progress in child nutrition, achieving the 2025 WHA targets for child wasting, child overweight and exclusive breast feeding, alongside an 8.5 percentage point reduction in stunting.

3.3 Acting on nutrition in fragile contexts: country perspectives

Fragile and crisis-affected settings are central to the global challenge of hunger and malnutrition. Sustaining nutrition services requires life-saving humanitarian action alongside efforts to preserve systems for recovery and resilience. Yet funding gaps and pressures on early warning systems are constraining timely responses. With limited private capital, public and concessional financing remain essential. Sustained humanitarian and development support is therefore critical. Country profiles from **Somalia, Mozambique and Afghanistan** illustrate how EU-supported actions sustain nutrition engagement in highly constrained environments, highlighting the importance of adaptive programming, strong partnerships and continued engagement.[43]

[43] Details of the EU nutrition portfolio in Afghanistan, Mozambique and Somalia can be found in Annexes 11, 12 and 13 respectively.

Afghanistan

EU action on nutrition, basic needs and livelihoods (2021-2025)

"With drought conditions and harsh Afghan winters, needs can rise sharply, pushing even more families into destitution. The EU stands in solidarity with the most vulnerable women, men, girls, boys and children of Afghanistan in these difficult moments."
Francois Goemans, Head of the EU's Humanitarian Aid Office in Afghanistan (2025)

Nutrition crisis in fragile contexts

Over 3.5 million children under five are likely to experience acute malnutrition in 2026, including nearly one million with severe acute malnutrition. 42% of children are stunted, with little progress since 2012. Nine in 10 young children experience child food poverty, reflecting extremely poor diet quality. Since the political rupture of 2021, economic contraction, climate shocks and displacement have intensified vulnerabilities.

Protecting essential nutrition services

Since 2021, EU humanitarian assistance has treated over 1.5 million children for acute malnutrition, provided micronutrient supplements to around three million women and children, supported 1 000 health facilities, and reached around 500 000 households with nutrition-linked food or cash assistance. In areas where acute malnutrition exceeds emergency thresholds and 40% of severe cases affect infants under six months, programmes introduced the MAMI approach to detect risks early and support vulnerable mothers and infants.

Linking humanitarian and development action: the HDP nexus approach

The EU operates in Afghanistan with a triple nexus approach including humanitarian aid support, resilience-building actions and peace-building measures within the communities. The EU Asia-Pacific Regional Programme is also supporting displaced populations, returnees and host communities in the country. Together these actions help to sustain essential services, reduce vulnerability and support recovery.

Partnerships delivering in crisis

Programmes are implemented through UN agencies, international and national civil society organisations and private sector actors, ensuring principled and non-discriminatory delivery. Some actions operate under the Regional Team Europe Initiative on the Afghan displacement situation, coordinating EU and Member State support across Afghanistan and neighbouring host countries.

Building resilience for recovery

Nutrition is integrated through community health and nutrition services, support for women and young children, and actions addressing food insecurity and livelihoods. Investments in climate-resilient agriculture, small enterprise development, vocational training and access to finance help households rebuild incomes, access healthier diets and strengthen local economies. Flexible programming, third-party monitoring and risk management systems help maintain services despite insecurity, access constraints and restrictions affecting women's participation.

→ Following EU support for nutrition of EUR 163 million between 2014 and 2020, under the current MFF (2021–2027), and as of 2025, there has been EUR 463 million in humanitarian support, while development commitments currently stand at EUR 425 million.

→ Between 2012 and 2025, Afghanistan has made some progress in child nutrition, achieving the 2025 WHA targets for exclusive breastfeeding, child overweight and child wasting, alongside a 1.5 percentage point reduction in stunting.

Somalia

Strengthening resilience and essential services in a fragile environment (2021-2025)

"The Government of Somalia considers the European Union a true and reliable partner, especially during our most challenging moments in our history. EU support offered in the past 34 years has been deeply appreciated and instrumental in our journey towards stability and growth"

Prime Minister of the Federal Government of Somalia, Hamza Abdi Barre, celebrating Europe Day in May 2025

Nutrition crisis in fragile contexts

Somalia faces persistent food system disruption and nutrition challenges driven by conflict, climate shocks, recurrent droughts and fragile livelihoods. In 2026, around 6.5 million people face high levels of food insecurity (IPC 3+) and over 1.8 million children are suffering from severe acute malnutrition[1]. Yet despite these pressures, since 2012 child stunting has declined by 5.5 percentage points (to 24%) while global targets for exclusive breastfeeding and child overweight are on track.

Protecting essential nutrition services

In this fragile context, the EU is a key player in the treatment and prevention of malnutrition. More than three million children suffering from severe acute malnutrition have been treated in the past decade through EU-supported programmes delivered with humanitarian and development partners. These efforts sustain access to nutrition services while protecting vulnerable populations during repeated climate and food crises.

Linking humanitarian and development action: the HDP nexus approach

EU action combines humanitarian support with development initiatives that strengthen resilience and essential services. This approach reflects the humanitarian-development-peace nexus, linking life-saving nutrition interventions with longer-term investments in livelihoods, food systems and governance. Strengthening resilience to climate shocks and improving access to services are central to stabilising communities in areas affected by conflict and displacement.

→ Following EU support for nutrition of EUR 130 million between 2014 and 2020, under the current MFF (2021–2027), and as of 2025, there has been EUR 68 million in humanitarian support, while development commitments currently stand at EUR 74 million.

→ Between 2012 and 2025, Somalia made progress in child nutrition, achieving the 2025 WHA targets for exclusive breastfeeding and child overweight, alongside a 5.5 percentage point reduction in stunting.

Partnerships delivering in crisis

The EU routinely collaborates with EU Member States, in a Team Europe approach. Programmes are implemented through partnerships with UN agencies, civil society organisations and government institutions, ensuring assistance reaches vulnerable communities while strengthening national systems. Flexible and adaptive programming allows interventions to continue despite insecurity, displacement and operational constraints common in fragile environments.

Building resilience for recovery

EU support addresses structural drivers of food insecurity and fragility. The Boosting resilience and adaptation to climate change in Somalia (BREACH) programme strengthens climate adaptation, water and land management, crisis preparedness and climate-resilient livelihoods in areas affected by displacement and environmental stress. The Social protection, adaptation and resilience to climate change programme expands social protection through cash transfers and 'cash-plus' services linked to health, nutrition and livelihoods. Complementary programmes support sustainable agriculture, climate-smart farming and resilient value chains, while investments in socio-economic infrastructure strengthen local governance and community participation, helping stabilise communities and support long-term recovery.

Mozambique

Protecting nutrition services and strengthening resilience in a fragile context (2021-2025)

"Nearly six years after Cyclone Idai, one of the most devastating climate shocks to hit Mozambique, communities in Sofala's six most affected districts are showing remarkable progress. Thanks to the partnership between the Government of Mozambique, the European Union and UNICEF, recovery efforts and resilience building have translated into concrete, measurable results – including a reduction of up to 35% in chronic malnutrition among children under five in intervention areas."
UNICEF 2025

Nutrition crisis in fragile contexts

Mozambique faces persistent nutrition challenges driven by poverty, inequality, limited diet diversity, weak services and repeated shocks. Child stunting remains high at 37%, despite a decline of 5.6 percentage points since 2012. Anaemia among women and low birthweight show little improvement, while 89% of the population cannot afford a healthy diet. Conflict in the province of Cabo Delgado and recurrent climate disasters intensify fragility. Around 1.3 million internally displaced people and returnees remain vulnerable, while several million people face severe food insecurity during lean seasons.

Protecting essential nutrition services

EU support prioritises sustaining nutrition services in fragile northern and cyclone-affected provinces. For instance, through integrated mobile brigades, health officers visit the communities monthly and ensure essential services. The NutriNorte programme, implemented with UNICEF and civil society partners, strengthens community delivery of nutrition, health and WASH services for women, adolescent girls and children under five. It promotes behaviour change, improves access to services and strengthens nutrition governance, including support to the SUN civil society platform, contributing to increased public investment under Mozambique's national stunting reduction strategy.

Linking humanitarian and development action: the HDP nexus approach

EU engagement combines humanitarian assistance with development support to protect nutrition outcomes. Emergency programmes deliver nutrition, food, health and WASH services to internally displaced people, returnees and host communities, particularly during recurrent climate shocks including tropical cyclones. This integrated approach is vital to address supply chains stock disruptions in conflict- and cyclone-affected areas and links life-saving assistance with investments that strengthen national systems and resilience.

Partnerships delivering in crisis

EU humanitarian partners have sustained life-saving nutrition treatment despite conflict and climate shocks. Since 2021, 210 000 children with severe acute malnutrition have been treated. Strengthened supply systems halved delivery times for therapeutic foods and ensured no stock-outs of life-saving treatment in supported facilities. With UNICEF support, partners resolved import bottlenecks while digital monitoring tools now track treatment needs in real time, enabling rapid supply redistribution to malnutrition hotspots.

Building resilience for recovery

Community-based care expanded treatment in conflict-affected districts by integrating services for at-risk mothers and infants (MAMI) with simplified child malnutrition treatment, increasing lives saved. Complementary initiatives strengthen climate-resilient agriculture, sustainable fisheries and livelihoods, improving access to healthy diets. With a rapidly growing youth population, investments in nutrition, health and livelihoods are critical both for them to thrive and in terms of their future economic contribution. Evidence from an EU-supported post-cyclone programme financed from the previous MFF (2014-2020) showed improved child diets (+9%), reduced stunting (-7%) and strengthened household resilience to climate shocks.

→ Following EU support for nutrition of EUR 72 million between 2014-2020, under the current MFF (2021–2027), and as of 2025, there has been EUR 17 million in humanitarian support, while development commitments stand at EUR 80 million.
→ Between 2012 and 2025, Mozambique made progress in child nutrition, achieving the 2025 WHA targets for child wasting, child overweight and exclusive breastfeeding, alongside a 5.6 percentage point reduction in stunting.

Building on a decade of progress: investing in the future of global nutrition

Sustained commitment, measurable progress

Over more than a decade, the EU's support to nutrition has evolved from ambitious political commitment into a strategic and increasingly integrated model of action to transform systems as well as lives. Early investment under the action plan on nutrition helped scale proven interventions and establish nutrition as a political and development priority, including through sustained support to the Scaling Up Nutrition movement – both directly and through initiatives such as EU4SUN and C4N-SUN – which strengthened national coordination, accountability and multisectoral action.

Over time, this support deepened: nutrition was progressively embedded in public policy, budget processes, health and social protection systems, and humanitarian response. The EU has also strengthened the evidence and data systems needed for effective decision-making – through initiatives such as NIPN, EC-NIS, the Nutrition Research Facility and the Nourishing food pathways programme – helping to integrate nutrition into national food systems planning, investment strategies and institutional reform, while advancing global metrics on diet quality and women's nutrition. In fragile contexts, EU engagement played a catalytic role in scaling life-saving interventions, including community-based management of acute malnutrition, while linking humanitarian response to longer-term resilience and systems strengthening.

More recently, through the Team Europe approach and Global Gateway, this legacy has expanded into a broader food systems and investment agenda. This expansion mobilises catalytic finance and strengthens inclusive value chains – including specialised food value chains that improve access to fortified and nutritious foods in fragile contexts. At the same time, the promotion of agroecology and gender-transformative approaches under the EU Gender Action Plan III in EU external action (GAP III) is supporting partner countries to deliver healthier diets at scale by strengthening women's agency, resources and decision-making in food systems. Complementing these efforts, initiatives such as Global RECAP are strengthening the regulatory and policy frameworks needed to shape healthier food environments.

Together, these shifts are consistent with the measurable progress observed across partner countries – including reductions in child stunting and advances across other forms of malnutrition – while illustrating how sustained, integrated EU engagement has contributed to strengthening the governance, delivery and investment foundations for more equitable and sustainable nutrition outcomes for women and children.

> As the world changes around us, too many critical projects still struggle to secure financing. We all know that governments cannot bridge this gap alone. With the support from Global Gateway, private sector investments are already strengthening Africa's health and food sovereignty.
>
> ***Ursula von der Leyen, President of the European Commission, Global Gateway Forum, 2025***

Global Gateway: a new model for scaling nutrition impact

Global Gateway is translating the EU's long-standing nutrition commitment into a new phase of action focused on scale, partnership and investment-led structural transformation. Under NDICI-Global Europe, and in particular through the EFSD+, the EU deploys a combination of grants, guarantees, concessional finance and technical assistance to support pipeline development and mobilise significantly larger volumes of public and private capital across the systems that shape diets and nutrition outcomes – including food markets, value chains, transport, energy, water, health, education and social protection.

Rather than treating nutrition as a stand-alone sector, this approach promotes direct engagement with the financing sector: partnering with European and partner-country development finance institutions, commercial banks and financial intermediaries to de-risk investment, expand access to credit and strengthen the bankability of investments, including for small and medium-sized agri-food enterprises. In doing so, it addresses not only how food is produced, distributed and accessed, but also how it is financed – enabling businesses, farmers and market actors to invest in more efficient, resilient and nutrition-enhancing activities.

This enables a shift from programme-based support to investment-driven food systems transformation. In Rwanda, for example, the Kigali Wholesale Market will improve grading, storage, packaging and waste management, reduce post-harvest losses and link smallholders to urban markets, while also strengthening the financial viability of agri-food enterprises and improving the availability, affordability and accessibility of fresh foods. Along the Lobito Corridor, EFSD+-supported operations combine infrastructure investment with financial instruments and technical assistance to support climate-resilient production, agro-logistics, agro-processing and access to finance for agri-food SMEs – ensuring that improved connectivity translates into stronger local value chains, higher incomes and better prospects for diverse, healthy diets. In Lao PDR, the TICAF approach similarly combines grant funding, technical assistance and engagement with financial institutions to mobilise investment into sustainable value chains, supporting agroecological production and improving the availability and affordability of nutritious foods.

In this sense, Global Gateway does not mark a break with earlier EU nutrition engagement; it builds on it – carrying forward the same commitment to improved nutrition outcomes, but through deeper partnerships and financing models capable of operating at scale. By aligning blended finance, policy dialogue and technical assistance with market development, it supports partner countries to develop investable pipelines and mobilise capital towards food systems that are more resilient, inclusive and nutrition-sensitive, enabling them and the EU to jointly address the structural constraints that limit access to healthy diets and deliver shared economic, social and human development benefits.

Nutrition and resilience in fragile contexts

Fragility is increasingly a defining context for nutrition action. Conflict, climate shocks, economic instability and weak governance converge to undermine food systems, disrupt essential services and erode livelihoods. These vulnerabilities can be compounded where food and agricultural systems become instruments of coercion or conflict, including through trade restrictions, blockades, attacks on critical infrastructure, disinformation or the obstruction of humanitarian access. Such practices can deepen food insecurity, undermine access to nutritious diets and further erode resilience. In these environments, the drivers of fragility and malnutrition are often deeply interconnected and mutually reinforcing. **Improving nutrition is therefore not only a humanitarian imperative, but also an important investment in resilience, security, stability and human development**. **Improved nutrition enhances the capacity of individuals, households and communities to withstand and recover from shocks, while reducing vulnerability to future crises.** Tackling malnutrition in fragile contexts depends on coordinated action across food systems, health services, social protection and livelihoods, alongside stronger institutions and local systems. In this context, the EU is strengthening its commitment to the HDP nexus, consistent with the 2026 Humanitarian Aid Communication and the Integrated Approach to Fragility. This includes a stronger focus on resilience, localisation and addressing the underlying drivers of vulnerability while sustaining essential services, reducing dependence on humanitarian assistance over time and supporting pathways to recovery, stability and sustainable development.

Partnerships are central to sustaining effective delivery and strengthening resilience, with engagement across governments, local actors, development banks, international financial institutions, the private sector and philanthropic organisations helping to support more integrated responses to fragility. In the nutrition sector, private sector partners play a key role in maintaining reliable supply chains for specialised nutritious foods, micronutrient supplements and other essential commodities, while broader partnerships contribute to strengthening local systems, institutional capacity and service continuity in fragile and crisis-affected settings.

Team Europe: amplifying values through partnerships and collective action

Across these varied contexts, partnerships remain central. **Cooperation between the EU, EU Member States, development finance institutions and partner governments has strengthened the alignment of resources and expertise.** Collaboration with international organisations, civil society and responsible private sector actors has further expanded the reach of programmes and reinforced country-led action. Continued engagement with parliamentarians is playing an important role in strengthening the political foundations of nutrition action, helping place nutrition on the policy agenda, shape legislation, oversee public spending and mobilise stakeholders around commitments to healthier diets and improved nutrition. The launch of the Team Europe Compendium of External Nutrition Action at the N4G summit in Paris demonstrates the **breadth and coherence of European engagement in nutrition**. By bringing together diverse programmes and partnerships under a shared framework, it illustrates how multiple strands of cooperation are contributing to a common objective: improved diets and nutrition for all.

The EU's engagement on nutrition also reflects broader principles that guide its international partnerships. Ensuring that all people can access healthy diets and good nutrition speaks directly to the **EU's human rights-based approach and fundamental human values: dignity, equality and solidarity**. As highlighted in the EU's 2025 Vision for Agriculture and Food, the EU supports partner countries in advancing food sovereignty, resilience and sustainability, ensuring access to the safe and high quality food that supports healthy diets and good nutrition for all, including the most vulnerable through humanitarian assistance and respect for International Humanitarian Law. These principles are intrinsically linked to the EU's gender equality strategy (2026-2030) as fair and inclusive food systems depend on addressing structural inequalities affecting women's and girls' access to resources, opportunities and decision-making. EU action continues to advance a gender-transformative approach, recognising that tackling all forms of malnutrition requires strengthening women's and girls' agency, economic empowerment and equitable access to services across food, health, education and care systems.

By supporting healthier diets, stronger public services and more resilient food systems, EU cooperation contributes to human development while fostering inclusive and equitable growth – conditions that are essential for ensuring that improvements in nutrition can be sustained over time and shared across societies. Such progress depends not only on technical solutions, but also on political leadership and accountable institutions capable of translating commitments into legislation, budgets and sustained action. **In this sense, nutrition is not only a development objective, but also a tangible expression of the EU's values-based approach to global partnership.**

Facing forward: sustaining momentum for nutrition

Looking ahead, the Commission is proposing a new Global Europe instrument for the 2028-2034 multiannual financial framework, with a proposed budget of EUR 200 billion. The proposal aims to strengthen the coherence, flexibility and strategic focus of EU external action financing, while preserving the distinct principles governing humanitarian assistance. In parallel, the Horizon Europe framework programme (2028-2034), with a proposed budget of EUR 175 billion, will continue to support research, innovation and international scientific cooperation, including in areas critical to food systems transformation to deliver on improved quality of diets and nutrition.

At the same time, the global context for nutrition is becoming increasingly uncertain. Conflict, climate pressures, economic volatility and disruptions affecting food, energy and fertiliser markets are placing growing strain on food systems, public finances and households' ability to access healthy diets. These pressures reinforce the need to sustain momentum while adapting approaches to a more complex and resource-constrained environment. Continued global political mobilisation for nutrition remains important, even as the international landscape evolves.

The achievements of the EU action plan on nutrition (2014-2025) provide a clear foundation for future action. The EU's demonstrated track record – combining sustained political commitment, measurable results and consistent financial delivery – positions it as a reliable and credible partner at a time when such leadership is increasingly needed. Looking ahead, this implies a continued focus on scaling approaches that have demonstrated results, while adapting delivery models to operate effectively at greater scale and in more challenging contexts. Three priorities emerge:

⇒ **Scaling investment through Global Gateway** to address structural constraints across food systems and the wider enabling environment – including infrastructure, energy, water and sanitation, health, education and social protection – while harnessing public finance catalytically to mobilise private sector investment and advance inclusive growth, women's empowerment and improved nutrition;

⇒ **Strengthening partnerships and the Team Europe approach**, aligning finance, expertise and delivery across partner governments, development finance institutions, civil society, private sector and other key stakeholders to mobilise investment at scale and support country-led action for healthier diets and improved nutrition;

⇒ **Adapting approaches to fragility and crisis contexts,** reinforcing the HDP nexus to sustain essential services, strengthen social protection, build resilience and advance stability. This includes protecting the most vulnerable through life-saving nutrition interventions, ensuring continuity of prevention and treatment services for acute malnutrition, and maintaining access to priority services for children under five, pregnant and breastfeeding women, and nutritionally at-risk infants under six months.

These priorities reflect not only lessons learned, but a continued commitment to advancing nutrition as part of a broader values-based approach to international partnerships – grounded in human rights, dignity, equality and solidarity. They

reaffirm the importance of addressing all forms of malnutrition through coordinated, multi-sectoral and investment-driven approaches, anchored in country ownership and supported by strong data and evidence systems.

In an increasingly fragile and uncertain world, improving nutrition remains both a moral imperative and a strategic investment in human development, resilience and inclusive growth. Building on its established track record, the EU will continue to translate this commitment into concrete action at scale – strengthening systems, mobilising investment, protecting access to life-saving nutrition services in crisis-affected settings, and working through partnerships to ensure that healthy diets and improved nutrition outcomes are within reach for all.

Annexes

Annex 1. Key global and UN processes shaping nutrition outcomes in 2025

Global process (2025)	Significant outcomes and why they matter
World Health Assembly (Geneva, May)	Formal stocktake of the 2012-2025 WHA nutrition targets, accompanied by agreement to extend the global nutrition targets to 2030. This reset anchors nutrition in the final SDG push, signalling renewed political commitment.
Nutrition for Growth Summit (Paris, March)	The 2025 Nutrition for Growth (N4G) Summit in Paris marked a pivotal moment of renewal and transition. It converted extended global nutrition targets into concrete political and financial commitments, with governments, development banks and private actors mobilising new pledges. The summit reinforced nutrition as a strategic investment in human development, resilience and stability, while positioning healthy diets at the centre of food systems transformation and sustainable growth.
UN Food Systems Summit +4 (Addis Ababa, July)	Marked a decisive shift from agenda-setting to delivery, with strong emphasis on accountability, investment and implementation. Healthy diets and nutrition were positioned as core outcomes of food systems transformation, linked directly to governance, finance and climate resilience.
UN High-Level Political Forum (New York, July)	Ministerial declaration reinforced nutrition's cross-cutting role across SDGs 2, 3 and 12, framing nutrition as an accelerator of progress on health, education and sustainable consumption, rather than a standalone sectoral issue.
Financing for Development Conference (Seville, June/July)	Adoption of the Sevilla Commitment highlighted debt distress and shrinking fiscal space as systemic risks to SDG delivery, while calling for diversified financing approaches to protect social and human capital investments, including nutrition.
World Summit for Social Development (Doha, November)	The Doha Political Declaration reaffirmed nutrition as a foundational social investment, closely linked to poverty eradication, employment, social protection and equity, and underscored the macroeconomic constraints facing low- and middle-income countries.
Committee on World Food Security (Rome, October)	CFS deliberations advanced rights-based and inclusive food security and nutrition approaches, with heightened focus on gender equality, inequalities and data for accountability, reinforced by the International Year of the Woman Farmer.
COP30 (Belém, November)	Climate negotiations further elevated food systems and sustainable diets, reinforcing consensus that climate action must deliver co-benefits for nutrition, health and livelihoods, particularly in vulnerable and fragile contexts.
Scaling Up Nutrition – transition to SUN 4.0	Launch of the Global Compact for Nutrition Integration and transition toward SUN 4.0 signalled a pragmatic evolution of the global nutrition agenda, embedding nutrition objectives across climate action, food systems, health, social protection and economic policy.

Annex 2. Tokyo 2021 Nutrition for Growth – Team Europe pledges

Contributor	Financial pledge	Period	Key focus areas
European Commission	EUR 2.5 billion	2021-2023	Development and humanitarian actions across food assistance, agriculture, WASH, social protection, health and education; focus on women, girls, adolescents and children under 5
Denmark	EUR 28.3 million per year	Until 2022	Nutrition programming; national dietary guidelines (health and climate); hosting 2022 World Food Summit
Finland	EUR 20 million	2022-2024	Support to IFAD Nutrition Action Plan (IFAD12); School Meals Coalition
France	Ambitious earmarking within existing budgets	Up to 2024	50% of food assistance and 25% of Muskoka Fund to nutrition; 15% of Agence Française de Développement (AFD) commitments in WASH, health and agriculture; focus on 8 priority countries; School Meals Coalition
Germany	EUR 580 million	2022-2025	Support to Rome-based agencies and bilateral nutrition-related programmes
Ireland	EUR 800 million	2021-2026	Multilateral and NGO nutrition programmes; focus on wasting in children 0-6 months; food systems transformation
Netherlands	EUR 400 million	Until 2030	Food security budget supporting access to healthy diets for women and young children; excludes humanitarian assistance
Slovenia	EUR 120 000	2021	Emergency nutrition assistance via WFP in Madagascar

Annex 3. Countries receiving EU support with a nutrition objective

Figures based on 2024 OECD/DAC approved data and preliminary 2025 figures and excluding commitments that could not be geographically attributed to specific countries, including certain regional, global and policy or research related actions amounting to EUR 518.98 million.

Country	Nutrition Commitments 2014–2020 (EUR millions)	EU Commission Directorate-General (DG)	Nutrition Commitments 2021–2025 (EUR millions)	of which: 2024–2025 Commitments (EUR millions)	DG
Afghanistan	162.6	ECHO & INTPA	888.1	390.5	ECHO & INTPA
Albania			12.5	12.5	NEAR
Algeria	9.4	ECHO	28.2	10.0	ECHO
Angola	17.0	INTPA	84.0	50.0	ECHO & INTPA
Bangladesh	178.0	ECHO & INTPA	186.8	37.1	ECHO & INTPA
Belize	2.7	INTPA			
Benin	17.5	INTPA	12.5	0.5	ECHO & INTPA
Bhutan	0.7	ECHO	15.0		INTPA
Bolivia	1.8	INTPA			
Botswana	0.5	INTPA			
Brazil			1.8	0.5	ECHO
Burkina Faso	89.1	ECHO & INTPA	199.7	46.1	ECHO & INTPA
Burundi	44.8	ECHO & INTPA	81.9		INTPA
Cabo Verde	0.3	INTPA			
Cambodia	7.5	INTPA			
Cameroon	37.6	ECHO & INTPA	39.4	10.3	ECHO & INTPA
Central African Republic	75.4	ECHO & INTPA	50.5	7.7	ECHO & INTPA
Chad	320.7	ECHO & INTPA	122.9	35.4	ECHO & INTPA
Colombia		ECHO	7.1		ECHO
Comoros	0.3	INTPA	20.4		INTPA
Côte d'Ivoire			10.0		INTPA
Democratic Republic of the Congo	68.7	ECHO & INTPA	333.3	154.2	ECHO & INTPA
Djibouti	8.3	ECHO & INTPA			
Dominican Republic			1.5		ECHO
Ecuador			20.2	5.2	INTPA
Egypt		ECHO	50.0	20.0	NEAR
Eswatini	0.8	ECHO & INTPA			
Ethiopia	243.9	ECHO & INTPA	285.6	110.5	ECHO & INTPA
Fiji	6.3	ECHO & INTPA			
Gabon	0.0	ECHO			
Gambia	19.1	ECHO & INTPA	23.0	20.0	INTPA
Ghana			55.0	45.0	INTPA
Guatemala	42.9	ECHO & INTPA	40.0		INTPA
Guinea	7.8	INTPA	20.0	20.0	INTPA
Guinea-Bissau	14.0	INTPA	21.0	11.0	INTPA
Haiti	81.0	ECHO & INTPA	43.5	15.6	ECHO & INTPA
Honduras	26.9	ECHO & INTPA			
India	2.2	ECHO			

Indonesia	0.3	INTPA			
Iran	13.9	ECHO			
Kenya	51.1	ECHO & INTPA	119.7	6.7	ECHO & INTPA
Lao People's Democratic Republic	100.1	INTPA	23.5	3.5	INTPA
Lebanon	1.3	INTPA			
Lesotho	1.1	ECHO & INTPA	8.0		INTPA
Liberia	8.3	INTPA	22.0		INTPA
Libya	4.0	ECHO & NEAR	16.0		NEAR
Madagascar	28.0	ECHO & INTPA	114.8	8.2	ECHO & INTPA
Malawi	109.2	ECHO & INTPA	104.5	6.0	ECHO & INTPA
Mali	66.5	ECHO & INTPA	94.3	6.9	ECHO & INTPA
Mauritania	49.7	ECHO & INTPA	34.6		ECHO & INTPA
Mozambique	71.9	ECHO & INTPA	97.2	3.5	ECHO & INTPA
Myanmar	153.2	ECHO & INTPA	79.2	42.3	ECHO & INTPA
Namibia	0.5	INTPA	16.0		INTPA
Nepal	67.2	ECHO & INTPA	24.9	24.9	INTPA
Nicaragua	7.0	INTPA			
Niger	157.8	ECHO & INTPA	233.1	2.8	ECHO & INTPA
Nigeria	115.4	ECHO & INTPA	175.7	30.9	ECHO & INTPA
Pakistan	121.6	ECHO & INTPA	4.5	1.0	ECHO
Palestine	1.0	INTPA	224.3	203.3	ECHO
Papua New Guinea	22.0	ECHO & INTPA			
Philippines	0.7	ECHO & INTPA			
Rwanda	61.3	ECHO & INTPA	134.0	74.0	INTPA
Senegal	39.0	ECHO & INTPA	15.0		INTPA
Sierra Leone	2.3	INTPA	125.0	45.3	INTPA
Somalia	130.2	ECHO & INTPA	141.6	33.3	ECHO & INTPA
South Sudan	112.3	ECHO & INTPA	206.4	62.3	ECHO & INTPA
Sri Lanka	9.2	ECHO & INTPA	23.0	8.0	INTPA
Sudan	153.0	ECHO & INTPA	464.4	186.7	ECHO & INTPA
Sudan and South Sudan	21.5	ECHO			
Syrian Arab Republic	8.0	INTPA	88.5	88.5	ECHO
Tajikistan	8.8	INTPA			
Tanzania	38.6	ECHO & INTPA			
Timor-Leste	16.3	INTPA	12.0		INTPA
Togo			10.0		INTPA
Tunisia			130.0	105.0	NEAR
Uganda	76.6	ECHO & INTPA	11.8	1.5	ECHO
Uzbekistan			36.0	9.0	INTPA
Vanuatu		ECHO	0.2		ECHO
Venezuela	39.6	ECHO & INTPA	42.8	24.1	ECHO
Yemen	177.6	ECHO & INTPA	370.2	121.4	ECHO & INTPA & NEAR
Zambia	49.0	ECHO & INTPA	102.3	16.6	ECHO & INTPA
Zimbabwe	50.4	ECHO & INTPA	76.0	33.0	ECHO & INTPA

Annex 4. Strengthening country-led nutrition governance – SUN and EU support at a glance

Scaling Up Nutrition Movement (SUN): A global, country-led partnership supporting governments to advance multisectoral action on nutrition through inclusive governance, coordination and accountability.

- **Established:** 2010
- **Membership:** Over 67 countries (and 4 Indian states) worldwide
- **Current phase:** SUN 3.0 strategy (2021-2025), with a focus on country ownership, food systems, equity and sustainable financing
- **Role:** Provides the primary global platform through which countries align nutrition priorities, coordinate across sectors and engage non-state actors.

EU4SUN – Support to the operationalisation of the SUN 3.0 Strategy: An EU-funded initiative supporting SUN countries to translate political commitment into high-quality, country-owned action.

- **Timeframe:** 2023-2027
- **Implementing partners:** Expertise France and FIAP
- **Geographic coverage:**

⇒ Africa: Benin, Burkina Faso, Chad, Côte d'Ivoire, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Senegal, Togo

⇒ Latin America & Caribbean: Costa Rica, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Haiti, Honduras, Panama, Peru

⇒ Regional support: Anglophone and francophone Africa

- **Focus:** Nutrition governance, multisectoral coordination, policy dialogue and preparation of Nutrition for Growth commitments.

***C4N-SUN – Capacity for Nutrition for the SUN Movement*:** An initiative implemented in a Team Europe approach strengthening the SUN Movement's global and regional capacities to deliver the SUN 3.0 Strategy.

- **Timeframe:** 2023-2026
- **Implementing partner:** GIZ
- **Geographic scope:** Global, with targeted country engagement in Asia and Africa
- **Focus:** Public finance for nutrition, food systems transformation, peer-to-peer learning and cross-cutting priorities including gender equality, youth engagement and climate resilience.

Together, SUN, EU4SUN and C4N-SUN have demonstrated how EU and Team Europe support reinforces country ownership while strengthening the global nutrition architecture for coordinated and accountable action.

Annex 5. Ethiopia: EU nutrition portfolio 2014-2025: key interventions at a glance

Action title	Dates	EU finance	What difference it made for diets and nutrition	Main partners
Productive safety net programme (PSNP4)	2015-2020	EUR 50 million	Protected food consumption for ~8 million people; linked transfers to nutrition counselling, maternal and child health services, and shock-responsive scale-up.	Government of Ethiopia; World Bank; UK, Ireland, Netherlands, Sweden
Agricultural growth programme II (AGP II)	2016-2020	EUR 45 million	Integrated dietary diversity, women's income and nutrition-sensitive extension into agricultural transformation.	Ministry of Agriculture; World Bank; IFAD; EU Member States
EU health sector budget support (SBS)	2016-2018 (+ extensions)	EUR 115 million	Strengthened primary health systems and financing critical for maternal and child nutrition nationwide.	Ministry of Health; Ministry of Finance; World Bank; EU donors
SHARE / ARCE – Integrated nutrition services	2015-2018	EUR 10.7 million	Improved diets of women and young children in drought-prone areas through integrated nutrition and resilience services.	UNICEF; FAO; NGOs; Government of Ethiopia
RESET I & II (resilience building)	2016-2020	EUR 48 million+	Linked humanitarian response with livelihoods and services to protect nutrition outcomes during shocks.	NGOs; FAO; UNICEF; EUTF; EU Member States
EU+ joint action on nutrition	2014-2020	EUR 226.5 million (portfolio)	Strengthened national nutrition governance and mainstreamed nutrition across sectors.	EU Delegation; EU Member States; Norway; Government of Ethiopia
Improving access to safely managed water supply (sub-component of the broader RESET-II initiative)	2017-2023	EUR 5 million	Improved access to safe water in arid regions, reducing disease and supporting nutrition.	EU JRC; UNICEF; Government of Ethiopia
Food fortification support (GPGC)	2014-2020	EUR 4 million	Expanded access to fortified foods to address micronutrient deficiencies.	Government of Ethiopia; private sector; UN partners
Global Gateway – food systems & infrastructure	2019-ongoing	EUR 130 million +	Improved incomes, food availability and diet quality through greener value chains and infrastructure.	AFD; Netherlands; Ethiopian authorities; private sector
Social determinants of	2020-2025	EUR 20 million	Addressed gender, WASH and social barriers to good nutrition for women and girls.	Ministry of Health; regional health

health for gender equality				bureaus; AESA; AMREF
PROACT / crisis response (EUTF)	2016-2018	n/a	Enabled rapid crisis response to prevent deterioration of diets and acute malnutrition.	EUTF for Africa; humanitarian partners
National Information Platform for Nutrition (NIPN)	2015-2026	Phase I (11/2017–12/2022), EUR 3.5 million (directly by EUD) Phase II (01/2022–11/2025), EUR 3 million	Strengthened national nutrition data and evidence use, linking analysis to policy, budgets and programme design across sectors	Institutionalised within the Ethiopian Public Health Institute, MoH, Government of Ethiopia, Phase I: UK, BMGF, EU Delegation, IFPRI Phase II: C4N-NIPN, GIZ, IFPRI
Food crisis response and social protection in rural areas	2022-2026	EUR 75 million	Improved food access and nutrition via safety nets, diverse crop production (including biofortification) and crisis response, preventing acute malnutrition among vulnerable populations.	Government of Ethiopia; World Bank; IFAD; FAO; AFD
Agricultural recovery and improved domestic food production and food security	2023-2028	EUR 40 million	Restored production and supply chains, improving access to nutrient-rich crops, livestock and fertilisers, promoting diets for vulnerable households.	Government of Ethiopia; Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Netherlands; NGOs
Sustainable agri-food systems and green value chains (horticulture & coffee)	2023-2027	EU 64 million	Strengthened agri-food value chains (horticulture and coffee), improving food availability, incomes and diets; promoted agroecology, food safety, market access and resilience.	Ministry of Agriculture; Ethiopian institutions; private sector; EU Member States; civil society
EU humanitarian assistance for nutrition between 2021 and 2025 amounted to EUR 106 million.				

Relevant links:
https://international-partnerships.ec.europa.eu/countries/ethiopia_en
https://civil-protection-humanitarian-aid.ec.europa.eu/where/africa/ethiopia_en
https://documents1.worldbank.org/curated/en/099062223114014041/pdf/P1786960f38c8d051096ac0d915ec0d710a.pdf

Additional notes:

- ⇒ All nutrition data is based on UNICEF-WHO-The World Bank; Joint Child Malnutrition Estimates (JME) – 2025 edition https://data.unicef.org/resources/jme/
- ⇒ 'EU+' generally refers to the European Union, EU Member States - including their implementing agencies and public development banks - and participating European financing institutions engaged in joint-cooperation.
- ⇒ 'Crisis modifiers' are pre-agreed financing mechanisms that enable resources to be rapidly redirected or released for humanitarian response during shocks or crises.

Annex 6. Chad: EU nutrition portfolio 2014-2025: key interventions at a glance

Action title	Dates	EU finance	What difference it made for diets and nutrition	Main partners
Support programme for state consolidation (ACET) – phase II	2015-2020 (60 months)	EUR 88 million (EU 80 million budget support; EUR 8 million complementary measures)	Created fiscal space for food security and nutrition spending; strengthened national nutrition governance (National Council for Nutrition and Food); linked PFM reform to nutrition service coverage.	Government of Chad
Support programme for state consolidation (ACET) – phase III	2018-2021 (36 months)	EUR 54 million (EUR 50 million budget support; EUR 4 million complementary support)	Strengthened resilience and access to food security, health and nutrition services; included malnutrition indicators (stunting, acute malnutrition); reinforced public expenditure for nutrition.	Government of Chad
Formation pour la nutrition (FORMA-NUT)	2019-2026 (78 months)	EUR 10 million (EU) + EUR 400 000 (WFP)	Built national nutrition capacity (2 300 students; 8 000 civil servants trained to date); strengthened behaviour change, MDD-W, SAM management and exclusive breastfeeding; institutionalised nutrition training.	WFP (REACH); UNICEF; FAO; WHO; Ministry of Public Health; universities and training institutes
Food production and resilience of food systems in ACP countries (Chad component)	2022-2029 (90 months)	EUR 10 million (Chad allocation under EUR 336.5 million programme)	Develops nutritious oilseed value chains; supports fortified plant-based foods; strengthens local production, MSMEs and resilience of food systems.	FAO (lead); WFP; public sector; NGOs; private sector actors
Pro-resilience action 2017 (PRO-ACT)	2014-2019 (60 months)	EUR 5 million (Chad allocation under EUR 70 million programme)	Linked post-crisis recovery with nutrition-sensitive agriculture and resilience; improved food access and climate adaptation; strengthened early warning and crisis response.	WFP (Global Network against Food Crises Partnership Programme)
Pro-resilience special measure in response to food insecurity in ACP countries (Chad component)	2016-2020 (48 months)	EUR 550 000 (WFP) EUR 9.45 million (direct grant to NGOs) (Chad allocation under EUR 69.4 million programme)	Enhanced resilience to food shocks; improved dietary diversity and stunting reduction pathways; strengthened national and local nutrition governance, WASH.	WFP (REACH); CARE International consortium
Resilience and employment in the Lake Chad region (RESTE)	2016-2020 (48 months)	EUR 27 million (EU trust fund)	Improved food and nutrition security through livelihoods, WASH, cash transfers and community governance; supported women and young people's economic empowerment.	Oxfam (lead); CARE; Action Against Hunger (ACH)

Sécurité alimentaire et nutritionnelle au Tchad (SAN)	2016-2021 (60 months)	EUR 156 million (EU) + EUR 325 000 (WFP)	Reduced chronic malnutrition; strengthened SUN governance; integrated WASH, agriculture, maternal health and climate-smart agriculture.	WFP (lead partner); UNICEF; AFD; AfDB; World Bank; Swiss Cooperation; others
Food systems resilience strengthening programme ("The Taste of Life")	2021-2027 (72 months)	EUR 54 million (EU)	Strengthens food and nutrition security; develops fortified food chains; increases women's incomes; operationalises HDP nexus and private sector value chain investment.	FAO (lead); WFP; GIZ and AFD –
EU humanitarian assistance for nutrition between 2014 and 2025 amounted to EUR 161 million.				

Relevant links:

https://international-partnerships.ec.europa.eu/countries/chad_en
https://civil-protection-humanitarian-aid.ec.europa.eu/where/africa/chad_en
https://icds.ee/en/europes-forthcoming-sahel-strategy-a-limited-role-in-a-multipolar-region/

Additional note:

⇒ All nutrition data is based on UNICEF-WHO-The World Bank; Joint Child Malnutrition Estimates (JME) – 2025 edition https://data.unicef.org/resources/jme/

Annex 7. Guatemala: EU nutrition portfolio 2014-2025: key interventions at a glance

Action title	Dates	EU finance	What difference it made for diets and nutrition	Main partners
Response to COVID-19 effects in Guatemala	Component 1 2024-2031. Component 2 2023-2026	EUR 14 million	Improved food security and nutrition among vulnerable rural populations by strengthening institutions and livelihoods, while tracking dietary diversity indicators for women and children.	UNDP; UNICEF; FAO; Government of Guatemala.
Budget support for FSN policy and strategy (2008-11) and Zero hunger plan (2012-2015)	2008-– 2011 and 2012-2015	EUR 40 million	Strengthened national response to undernutrition through predictable financing, enhanced SESAN monitoring, annual surveys, and linking budget support directly to stunting reduction outcomes.	Ministry of Finance (MINFIN) and FNS Secretariat (SESAN).
National information platform for nutrition (NIPN) Guatemala	2017-2025	Phase I (07/2017-06/2021), EUR 2.5 million. Phase II (07/2021-11/2025), directly by EUD	Strengthened evidence-based nutrition governance through real-time monitoring tools, analysis and data systems to support prioritisation, policy decisions and programme effectiveness.	Platform implemented by CATIE and hosted by SESAN (coordinates with CONASAN). Globally, the NIPN initiative kicked off with support from UK and Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation
Integral approach to build resilience in communities vulnerable to food insecurity and climatic shocks, especially droughts in Guatemala (PRO RESILIENCE)	2020-2023	EUR 15 million (additional EUR 2 million co-financed by WFP)	Improved dietary pathways for women and children who transitioned from two basic meals a day to three diverse meals, driving significant increases in minimum meal frequency (13% to 69%) and Minimum Acceptable Diet (0% to 23%), while exclusive breastfeeding reached 100%. Additionally, women's dietary diversity improved and household food insecurity declined.	Implemented indirectly by the WFP and led locally by the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Food (MAGA)
Pro-resilience action (PRO-ACT) – Response to the El Niño phenomenon in the Central American Dry Corridor	Phase 1, 2016-2018. A proposed Phase 2, 2019-2021	EUR 4 million in Phase 1 and EUR 4.4 million in Phase 2	Protected nutrition during shocks through cash transfers, nutrition education and livelihood support, strengthening resilience, food access and prevention of acute malnutrition.	WFP-implemented with MAGA executing and SESAN coordinating. Additional partners included ACH for gender and nutrition training, alongside CONRED and local

				community governance structures.
Budgetary support to family farming programme (AP PAFFEC)	2016-2021	EUR 21.1 million	Improved food access and diets through diversified family farming, increased vegetable consumption, strengthened resilience and mobilisation of domestic resources for national nutrition priorities. 59.9% increase in poor rural families diversifying crops to boost vegetable consumption. Included 6 250 mini-irrigation systems and mobilisation of domestic budgets for national nutrition initiatives like the *Cruzada Nacional por la Nutrición* (national nutrition campaign).	The Government of Guatemala, specifically MAGA, executed the project alongside key partners like the Ministry of Public Finance, WFP, COE, SESAN, and MIDES. Additionally, BANRURAL managed trust funds, while ANACAFE and ICTA provided technical agricultural and coffee sector support.
Comprehensive strategy to fight malnutrition (*Estrategia integral para combatir la desnutrición crónica*).	2020-2024	EUR 15 million EU contribution: EUR 1.5 million co-financed by UNICEF	Targeted 22 high-stunting municipalities, the project successfully increased exclusive breastfeeding (55% to 64%) and early childhood development access (4% to 15%). Launched *Corazón Contento* – a multi-language mobile service providing caregivers with vital nutrition education.	UNICEF implemented – partners included SESAN, local authorities, NGOs, and the Ministries of Health, Education, and Social Development.
Food security and nutrition impact, resilience, sustainability and transformation (FIRST)	Phase 1, 2017-2020. Phase 2 (extension) 2020-2022	Phase 1: EUR 740,000; Phase 2: approximately EUR 175,000 per year	Integrated nutrition into national strategies through targeted policy support; led SESAN to update its core food security policies and MAGA to incorporate a strategic nutrition programme and to establish a gender unit in 2021.	The FAO implemented the action, providing technical assistance to key national counterparts: SESAN, MAGA and INCOPAS.
Humanitarian aid and food assistance in Central America from the general budget of the European Union (Guatemala)	2015	EUR 2.4 million	Delivered emergency food, nutrition services and agricultural inputs to protect vulnerable households, prevent acute malnutrition and support recovery from shocks.	WFP, national counterparts, and OCHA.
Supporting the primary health system to fight chronic malnutrition in Guatemala	2020-2025	EUR 20 million	Maternal and child health improvements in 22 targeted municipalities; reduction of stunting; significant increase in children receiving a minimum acceptable diet (42% to 86%);	Implemented indirectly by PAHO/WHO, while main national counterpart was MSPAS (in

			drop in women's anaemia (15% to 7%); > 90% micronutrient coverage for pregnant women.	collaboration with municipal governments and community structures)
Preservation and sustainable development of the Petén Itzá Lake basin and its area of influence (part of: Fostering green transition in Peten)	2024-2030	EUR 16 million (+ EUR 1.8 million from Spain)	Addressing environmental determinants of undernutrition by improving water and sanitation systems and reducing disease risks	AECID (Spain) implements this Global Gateway initiative in partnering with the Ministry of Health and AMPI for the waste and sewage components.
EU humanitarian assistance for nutrition between 2021 and 2025 amounted to EUR 0.6 million.				

Relevant links:

Guatemala - International Partnerships - European Commission
https://globalnutritionreport.org/resources/naf/commitment-tracker/?search=guatemala&org_type=government&sort_by=parent_organisation__title

Additional note:

⇒ All nutrition data is based on UNICEF-WHO-The World Bank; Joint Child Malnutrition Estimates (JME) – 2025 edition https://data.unicef.org/resources/jme/

Annex 8. Lao PDR: EU nutrition portfolio 2021-2025: key interventions at a glance

Action title	Dates	EU finance	What difference it is making for diets and nutrition	Main partners
Team Europe partnership with Lao PDR to increase sustainable and inclusive trade, investment and connectivity in the agriculture and forestry sectors (TICAF)	2024-2029	EUR 23.5 million	Strengthening nutrition-sensitive agriculture and agroecological value chains, improving availability and access to diverse, nutritious foods through intercropping and diversified production. Increasing incomes and resilience of rural households, supporting better diets. Enhancing nutrition awareness, behaviour change and women's decision-making. Improving forest and food system sustainability, helping protect food sources, reduce vulnerability and contributing to improved nutrition outcomes in climate-affected communities.	Government of Lao PDR (MAF, MOH, MPI and others); AFD; GIZ; EU Member States (France, Germany/BMZ); private sector, CSOs and research institutions

Relevant links:

https://international-partnerships.ec.europa.eu/countries/lao-peoples-democratic-republic_en
https://www.eeas.europa.eu/delegations/lao-pdr/team-europe-and-laos-launch-global-gateway-programme-develop-coffee-tea-and-forest-value-chains_en

Additional note:

⇒ All nutrition data is based on UNICEF-WHO-The World Bank; Joint Child Malnutrition Estimates (JME) – 2025 edition https://data.unicef.org/resources/jme/

Annex 9. Rwanda: EU nutrition portfolio 2021-2025: key interventions at a glance

Action title	Dates	EU finance	What difference it is making for diets and nutrition	Main partners
HANGARIBIHE, Transformational climate-smart and inclusive agriculture	2025-2029	EUR 40 million	Improving availability and affordability of diverse, nutritious foods; strengthening agricultural value-chains and market access; supporting food security and dietary diversity through climate-smart agriculture and policy reforms.	Government of Rwanda
Boosting food production in Rwanda, KUNGAHARA	2023-2026	EUR 10 million (financing under the multi-country initiative 'Food Production and Resilience of Food Systems in ACP countries')	Increasing availability and access to diverse and nutrient-rich foods; improving dietary practices and nutrition knowledge at household level; reducing post-harvest losses and strengthening food security, contributing to more stable and diverse diets.	NGOs
Increase access to and quality of early childhood development and education in Rwanda	2023-26	EUR 68 million	Expanding access to school feeding programmes, improving children's access to nutritious meals; strengthening links between early childhood education, nutrition and parental practices; contributing to better nutrition outcomes and reducing inequalities in child malnutrition (including stunting).	Government of Rwanda
Agricultural transformation through skills upgrading of women and youth in Rwanda	2024-2030	EUR 16 million	Improving knowledge and adoption of nutrition-sensitive and climate-resilient farming practices; strengthening skills systems to integrate nutrition into agricultural training; enhancing access to diverse, nutrient-rich foods through better production practices and value-chain linkages, especially for women and youth.	Indirect management with an entrusted entity

Relevant links:

https://international-partnerships.ec.europa.eu/countries/republic-rwanda_en
https://international-partnerships.ec.europa.eu/policies/global-gateway/construction-and-development-kigali-wholesale-market-rwanda_en

Additional note:

⇒ All nutrition data is based on UNICEF-WHO-The World Bank; Joint Child Malnutrition Estimates (JME) – 2025 edition https://data.unicef.org/resources/jme/

Annex 10. Zambia: EU nutrition portfolio 2021-2025: key interventions at a glance

Action title	Dates	EU finance	What difference it is making for diets and nutrition	Main partners
Green partnership and investment programme along the agriculture, forestry, biodiversity, water and climate nexus	2022-2029	EUR 48 million (including Sweden's contribution managed by the Commission)	Strengthening climate-smart, diversified agriculture and market linkages, increasing incomes and access to diverse foods; enhancing resilience, women's and youth participation, and food system performance, supporting improved diet quality and nutrition outcomes.	Czech National Development Agency, GIZ, WFP.
Equal chances for human development	2024-2030	EUR 50 million	Improving maternal and child nutrition through expanded access to nutritious meals and school feeding; strengthening health, hygiene and dietary practices, reducing anaemia and malnutrition and improving equitable access to integrated nutrition services.	Government of Zambia, UN agencies including UNICEF; civil society organisations, private sector service providers and contractors.
Food production and resilience of food systems in African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) countries (Sustainable intensification of smallholder farming systems in Zambia – SIFAZ)	2022-2029	EUR 20 million allocation to Zambia	Applied research programme to increase smallholder productivity, incomes and employment through a gender-sensitive approach. Focused on promoting sustainable intensification practices (SIPs) such as improved soil fertility and diversified cropping and better land management to boost production without degrading natural resources, thereby linking agricultural productivity with resilience, food security and improved nutrition outcomes.	Government of Zambia; FAO; CIMMYT, private sector actors; civil society.
National Information Platform for Nutrition (NIPN) Zambia	2023-2026	EUR 1.6 million	Strengthened evidence-based nutrition governance through real-time monitoring tools, analysis and data systems to support prioritisation, policy decisions and programme effectiveness.	Institutionalised within the National Food and Nutrition Commission (NFNC) as political partner in cooperation with the Office of the Vice President (OVP) and ZamStats.
EU humanitarian assistance for nutrition between 2021 and 2025 amounted to EUR 2 million.				

Relevant links:

https://international-partnerships.ec.europa.eu/countries/zambia_en

Additional note:

⇒ All nutrition data is based on UNICEF-WHO-The World Bank; Joint Child Malnutrition Estimates (JME) – 2025 edition https://data.unicef.org/resources/jme/

Annex 11. Afghanistan: EU nutrition portfolio 2021-2025: key interventions at a glance

Action title	Dates	EU finance	What difference it makes for diets and nutrition	Main partners
Regional programme in support of durable solutions for displaced and returning Afghan and their host communities	2025-2030	EUR 58 million	Improves food security and nutrition services for vulnerable Afghan families in Iran by preventing acute malnutrition, training health workers, and enhancing care for pregnant and lactating women.	Delivered primarily through UN agencies and NGOs, the action involves multiple Team Europe Initiative (TEI) members. Key operational partners include UNHCR, the International Organisation for Migration (IOM), and Iran's Ministry of Health and Medical Education (MoHME).
Addressing basic needs and supporting livelihoods of the people of Afghanistan	2023-2027	EUR 142. 8 million	Addresses food insecurity and malnutrition by supporting essential social services like health and nutrition, alongside livelihood interventions focused on agriculture and food security.	Support delivered through multilateral organisations, NGOs and civil society, and private sector institutions.
Addressing basic needs and supporting livelihoods of the people of Afghanistan – 2024	2024-2029	EUR 146 million	Addresses food insecurity and malnutrition, through a 'for-women-by-women' approach that focuses on improving the uptake of basic services and enhancing resilient livelihoods.	Assistance delivered strictly through multilateral organisations, NGOs, and the private sector, explicitly bypassing the Taliban. The action is also part of the regional TEI, involving 12 EU Member States and the EU.
EU humanitarian assistance for nutrition between 2021 and 2025 amounted to EUR 463 million.				

Relevant links:

https://civil-protection-humanitarian-aid.ec.europa.eu/where/asia-and-pacific/afghanistan_en
https://international-partnerships.ec.europa.eu/countries/afghanistan_en
https://www.nutritioncluster.net/thematic-areas/mami-global-network#:~:text=MAMI%20focuses%20on%20a%20care,development%2C%20ill%20health%20and%20mortality

Additional note:

⇒ All nutrition data is based on UNICEF-WHO-The World Bank; Joint Child Malnutrition Estimates (JME) – 2025 edition https://data.unicef.org/resources/jme/

Annex 12. Mozambique: EU nutrition portfolio 2021-2025: key interventions at a glance

Action title	Dates	EU finance	What difference it makes for diets and nutrition	Main partners
Sustainable blue economy initiative in Mozambique	2023-2028	EUR 35 million	Aims to reduce all forms of malnutrition, particularly stunting and micronutrient deficiencies, to foster better human capital development; enhance food and nutrition security for small-scale producers (especially women) by improving their access to productive assets, services and markets, and by supporting sustainable fisheries and aquaculture value chains.	Implemented through selected entrusted entities, the action is coordinated with Mozambican bodies like MIMAIP, MTA and ProAzul. It also contributes to the Green Deal TEI, involving the EIB and 10 EU Member States.
Food production and resilience of food systems in African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) countries	2022-2029	EUR 15 million	Responds to the global food crisis exacerbated by the war in Ukraine; enhances the social sustainability of food systems; increases the affordability of healthy diets by addressing the root causes of malnutrition across humanitarian, development and peace dimensions.	FAO, WFP, IFAD, ENABEL, DANIDA, CIFOR, SPC
NutriNorte	2023-2028	EUR 30 million (co-financed by UNICEF, EUR 2 million)	Focuses on reducing all forms of malnutrition, specifically stunting and anaemia, to develop human capital; multi-sectoral approach, combining dietary diversification and improved feeding practices with quality nutrition, health, and WASH services, all supported by social behaviour change communication.	Implemented through UNICEF and the SUN civil society platform (chaired by ANSA), in coordination with SETSAN, MISAU, and MOPHRH. It is fully integrated into the Team Europe 'e-Youth' initiative.
EU humanitarian assistance for nutrition between 2021 and 2025 amounted to EUR 17.2 million.				

Relevant links:

https://international-partnerships.ec.europa.eu/countries/mozambique_en
https://civil-protection-humanitarian-aid.ec.europa.eu/where/africa/mozambique_en

Additional note:

⇒ All nutrition data is based on UNICEF-WHO-The World Bank; Joint Child Malnutrition Estimates (JME) – 2025 edition https://data.unicef.org/resources/jme/

Annex 13. Somalia: EU nutrition portfolio 2021-2025: key interventions at a glance

Action title	Dates	EU finance	What difference it makes for diets and nutrition	Main partners
Boosting resilience and adaptation to climate change in Somalia (BREACH)	2022-2026	EUR 35 million	Preventing food crises and transition to sustainable agri-food systems; providing resilient inputs and promoting climate-smart practices to diversify production and improve diet affordability; raising awareness of healthy eating through targeted events and materials in schools and health facilities.	Implemented through NGOs, UN and Member State organisations. The programme is under the TEI 'Green Deal Somalia', which includes contributions from Denmark, Germany, Italy, Netherlands and Sweden.
Social protection for adaptation and resilience to climate change (SPARCC)	2023-2024	EUR 19 million	Improved health and nutrition by providing social transfers to food-insecure pregnant and lactating women during the critical first 1 000 days. Strengthened community health services by equipping clinics with the essential medications and supplies for maternal and childcare.	Implemented through NGOs, UN and Member State organisations, in close coordination with government authorities, specifically the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs (MoLSA).
Food production and resilience of food systems in African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) countries	2022-2029	EUR 20 million	Increased domestic food production through the development of sustainable agri-food, fisheries and livestock value-chains. Strengthened resilience and access to basic services of communities in food crisis.	Implemented through both direct and indirect management. Key partners include FAO, WFP, IFAD, ENABEL, DANIDA, CIFOR, and the Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC).
Strengthening the social contract through socio-economic infrastructure	2025-2029	EUR 20 million	Increased food security by expanding nature-based solutions for water and food production.	Implemented through NGOs and UN, in close coordination with the Somali government, specifically the Ministry of Interior, Federal Affairs & Reconciliation (MOIFAR)
EU humanitarian assistance for nutrition between 2021 and 2025 amounted to EUR 68 million.				

Relevant links:

https://civil-protection-humanitarian-aid.ec.europa.eu/where/africa/somalia_en
https://international-partnerships.ec.europa.eu/countries/somalia_en