

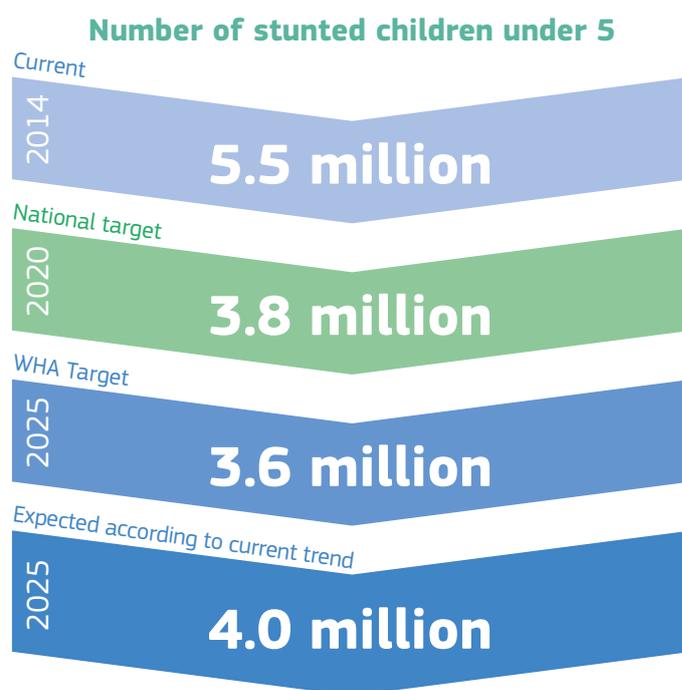
## Country Profile on Nutrition

# Bangladesh

The European Commission (EC) is continuing to work strategically to secure traction on its commitments to reduce stunting and to allocate EUR 3.5 billion (2014–20) for this purpose<sup>1</sup>. Preliminary results for 2016 indicate a three-fold increase in the EC's commitments to nutrition since 2014. This is a significant development, but this pace of investment needs to be maintained in order to reach the pledge by 2020. The scope to achieve this lies in the strategic design of programmes that are still to be funded – especially in the focal sectors of Food & Nutrition Security, Sustainable Agriculture, Health and Education – so that nutrition is integrated alongside other objectives. This approach is particularly relevant to the new EU Consensus on Development which places emphasis on human development and dignity as well as partnership, prosperity, peace and the planet itself.

Bangladesh has experienced one of the fastest prolonged reductions of child stunting in recorded history, halving the number of stunted children since the early 1990s. Yet one in three children remains stunted and progress is highly unequal, especially for children born to the poorest families. Alarming, there has been little improvement with wasting that still affects over two million young children. Low birth weight also remains a significant concern and micronutrient deficiencies are widespread. Recognising no room for complacency, Bangladesh joined the SUN movement in 2012 and the Government's 7th Five Year Plan set an ambitious target for 25% stunting by 2020. Continued political commitment is evident by the 2015 National Nutrition Policy, the National Plan of Action on Nutrition and the inclusion of stunting as a key indicator in the

new National Social Security Strategy. The EU in Bangladesh explicitly maintains food and nutrition security as a focal sector and works in close partnership with other member states, such as the UK and Germany, to support the Government's efforts to eradicate undernutrition. A crucial focus is placed on enhancing the resilience of the most vulnerable as underscored in the new European Consensus. The National Information Platform for Nutrition (NIPN) initiative will play a key role in providing evidence for decision making.



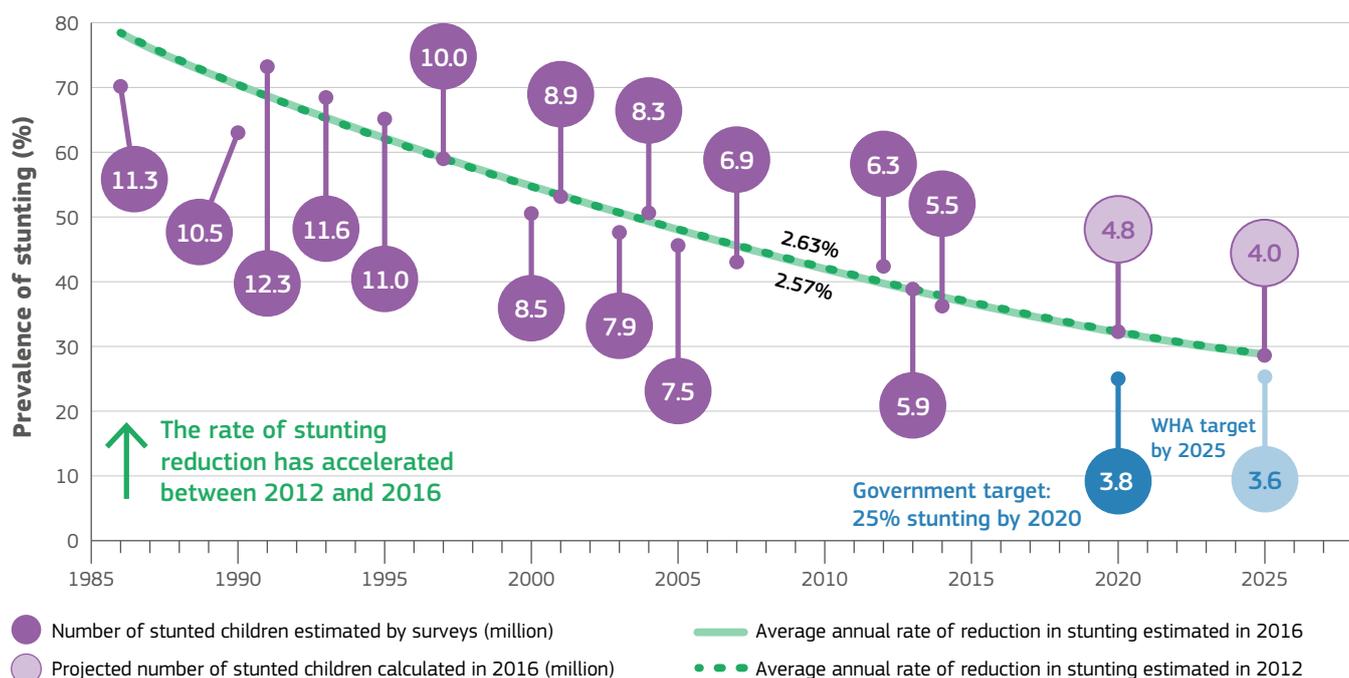
### Progress against the World Health Assembly targets<sup>2</sup>

GNR 2016 <sup>3</sup> analysis of progress	WHA (and SDG) nutrition indicators
On course – Good progress	Stunting of children U5 years of age (SDG2)
Off course	Wasting of children U5 years of age (SDG2)
On course – Good progress	Overweight of children U5 years of age
Currently off course	Anaemia of women of reproductive age
NA	Low birth weight
Off course – No progress	Exclusive breastfeeding of infants U6 months

### Data last referenced by EU

Prevalence	Number	Year
36.1%	5 549 928	2014 <sup>4</sup>
14.3%	2 198 448	2014 <sup>4</sup>
1.4%	215 233	2014 <sup>4</sup>
43.5%	–	2011 <sup>5</sup>
21.6%	–	2006 <sup>6</sup>
55.0%	–	2014 <sup>4</sup>

### Trend, projection and targets in the prevalence and number of children (under-five) stunted



### Implications for development planners

Bangladesh has experienced a strong decline in the prevalence of stunting since the 1990s, accompanied by a significant decline (by half) in the number of children stunted. Recent projections anticipate that Bangladesh could come close to meeting both the government’s own target and the World Health Assembly (WHA) target by 2025 (and, by extension, that of the principal indicator for Sustainable Development Goal 2 (SDG2)). The rate of decline in the number of children stunted has very marginally accelerated from 2.57% in 2012 to 2.63% in 2016; if this is maintained, then 4 million children are expected to be stunted in 2025. This is slightly over the WHA target of 3.6 million. Consequently, additional efforts are required by the government and development partners to accelerate Bangladesh’s course and secure the level of stunting reduction needed.

### Nutrition governance

	Yes/No	Comment
Member of SUN Movement	Yes	Since 2012. The Prime Minister of Bangladesh, Sheikh Hasina, is a member of the SUN Lead Group, as is Sir Fazle Hasan Abed, founder and chair of BRAC.
Government’s commitment to nutrition (including N4G event)	Yes	Since the N4G event, Bangladesh has reset its commitment to reduce stunting of children under five to 25% by 2020 (7th Five Year Plan).
Multi-sectoral policy framework nutrition	Yes	2015 endorsement of the National Nutrition Policy, to be operationalised through the Second National Plan of Action on Nutrition 2016–2025 (NPAN2 – under approval by the Prime Minister). The Bangladesh Second Country Investment Plan 2017–21 – Nutrition-sensitive food systems, is under preparation (EU funds through MUCH project).
Multi-sectoral platform for nutrition coordination	Yes	The Bangladesh National Nutrition Council, chaired by the Prime Minister, is tasked with the responsibility of coordination and oversight of NPAN2. Analysis of nutrition relevant budget allocations is carried out by thematic teams from key ministries.

## EU financial commitments to nutrition 2008–2016

Data collected March 2017

The EU commitments to nutrition in Bangladesh through DEVCO from 2008 to 2016 are illustrated below in Figure 1. Under the DCI Multi-annual Indicative Programme (MIP) 2014–2020 for Bangladesh nutrition is prioritised through the Food and Nutrition Security and Sustainable Agriculture (FNSSA) focal sector to which EUR 310 million have been allocated. By the end of 2016, a total of EUR 138 million is committed under FNSSA sector of which EUR 98.3 million<sup>7</sup> is for nutrition plus EUR 3.5 million<sup>8</sup> from the National Information Platform for Nutrition (NIPN) and EUR 1.8 million<sup>9</sup> from thematic and regional programmes (as per the SUN methodology).

Preliminary results for 2016 indicate a 3-fold increase in the EU’s global funding commitments to nutrition since 2014 as illustrated in Figure 2. The total amount of funding commitments for nutrition globally in the last three years is EUR 1.8 billion, which represents 51 % of the EU overall financial commitment for the period 2014–2020. In 2016 alone, the EU’s financial commitments to nutrition have reached EUR 790 million. This is a significant development, but this pace of investment needs to be maintained in order to reach the EUR 3.5 billion target by 2020.

### Progress against the EU’s financial pledge to reduce stunting 2014–2020:

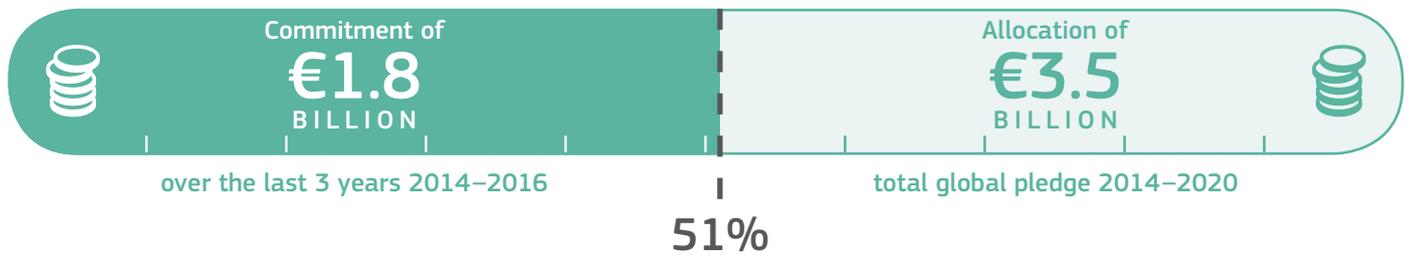


Figure 1

DEVCO Nutrition commitments in Bangladesh (In EUR million) 2008–2016

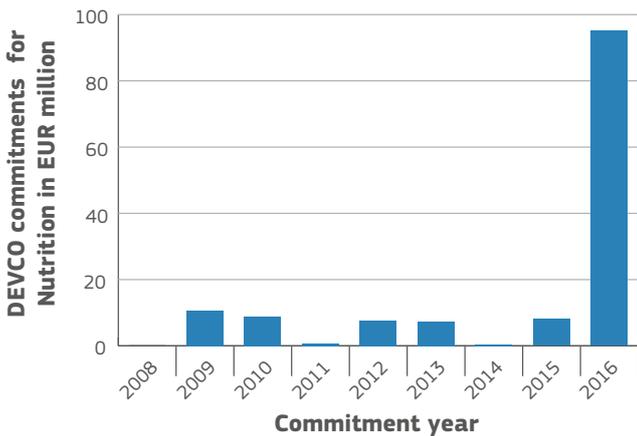
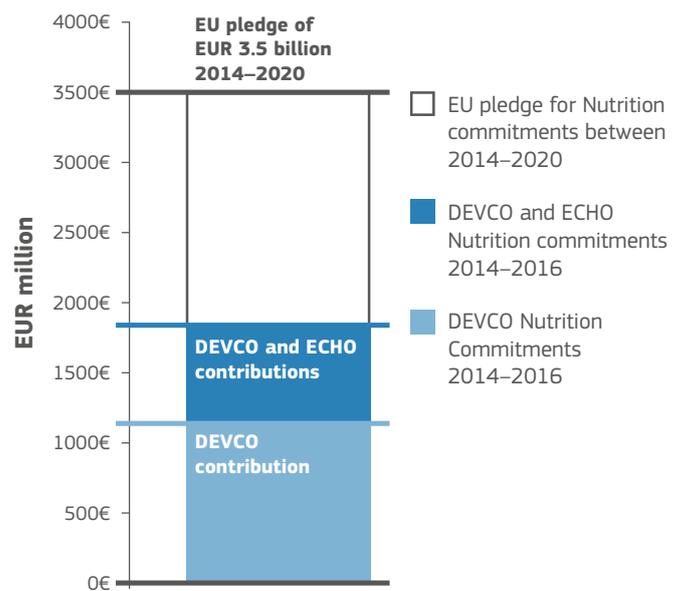


Figure 2

DEVCO and ECHO global commitments 2014–2016 to the EU pledge of EUR 3.5 billion to nutrition 2014–2020



## Support of the EU and Member States

### MIP Focal sector(s) for nutrition 2014–2020

- Food and Nutrition Security and Sustainable Agriculture

### Enhance mobilisation and political commitment for nutrition

- ✓ Through the 'MUCH' initiative, (jointly supported with USAID), the provision of policy assistance and capacity development associated with the formulation and implementation of the National Food and Nutrition Security Policy and updating of the Country Investment Plan (CIP 2016–2020) involving Government (multiple ministries), civil society and private sector.
- ✓ To promote political commitment and develop capacities at local level, a Call for Proposals (EUR 40 million) was launched to support CSOs, NGOs and IOs to design and implement innovative initiatives for enhanced nutrition governance through mobilising and empowering communities.
- ✓ A specific lot of this Call is devoted to the Chittagong Hill Tracts with the geographical and political specificities implied.

### Scaling-up actions

- ✓ Through 'Suchana', in partnership with DfID (EU contribution is EUR 28 million of a total EUR 55 million) delivering and demonstrating a sustainable multi-sectoral approach to tackling undernutrition at scale at district level and, in parallel, building support across government and other stakeholders for a coordinated, multi-sectoral approach to undernutrition at the national level. The 'Suchana' project therefore aims at developing a scalable model which can contribute to scale-up and replication, in full or in part, throughout the life of the project.
- ✓ Also in partnership with DfID, contributing to the creation of sustained pathways out of poverty in the most vulnerable areas, the 'Bangladesh Resilient Livelihoods Programme' (EU contribution EUR 55 million out of an overall budget of EUR 231 million) from a nutrition sensitive perspective foresees simultaneous investments in livelihoods (via private sector value chains and markets) and social protection for long term resilience. The initiative therefore strengthens governance through capacity development and sound policy support around the National Social Security Strategy.
- ✓ Envisaged support to the National Social Security Strategy through a potential Sector Reform Contract, focusing on enhancing the Government's efforts to plan, implement and monitor nutrition-sensitive life-course social assistance programmes.

### Strengthen expertise and knowledge-base

- ✓ Supporting the Government with the NIPN initiative, to inform policies and programmes for improving human nutrition by providing a platform to raise questions governments need to answer to develop or refine their policies and programmes; assemble existing information needed to answer those questions; analyse data and interpret results; and then disseminate findings and evidence to policy makers and programme planners.
- ✓ Contributing to nutrition monitoring and surveillance at local level by improving the modelling of multi-sectoral engagement and coordination at upazila and union level through the 'Suchana' project. This approach is based on significant global evidence that suggests single sector interventions (typically in the health sector) addressing the immediate causes of undernutrition are critical but only a relatively small part of the solution.
- ✓ Via a process of multi-stakeholder participation supported by 'MUCH', identification and implementation of priority policy research issues, leading to thematic dialogues to explore findings and policy implications.

1 The EU stunting reduction target is embodied in the EU's Communication on Enhancing Maternal and Child Nutrition and the Action Plan on Nutrition to operationalise that policy

2 [http://www.who.int/nutrition/topics/nutrition\\_globaltargets2025/en/](http://www.who.int/nutrition/topics/nutrition_globaltargets2025/en/)

3 There are differences in the GNR 2016 and the EU 2017 analysis of progress in achieving the WHA target for stunting; this is because the EU draws upon data over a more extended period (as illustrated in the graphic)

4 Bangladesh Demographic Health Survey 2014 and referenced in Bangladesh SUN movement annual progress report 2016

5 2011 data (Stevens et al) as referenced in GNR 2016 and Bangladesh SUN movement annual progress report 2016

6 2006 data as referenced by UNICEF 2014, GNR 2016 and Bangladesh SUN movement annual progress report 2016

7 CRIS number: 037-414 – EU contribution amount: EUR 85 million – nutrition score: dominant – nutrition amount: EUR 85million (EUR 8 million initially committed in 2015 and EUR 77 million as a top up in 2016. 2016 figures are preliminary and extracted internally. Top ups made in 2016 often don't appear during the internal extraction therefore the EUR 77 million top up wasn't included in the global EUR 1.8 billion)

8 CRIS number: 038-332 – EU contribution amount: EUR 3.5 million – nutrition score: specific – nutrition amount: EUR 3.5 million

9 CRIS number: 258-665 – EU contribution amount: EUR 0.3 million – nutrition score: specific – nutrition amount: EUR 0.3 million

CRIS number: 337-018 – EU contribution amount: EUR 6 million – nutrition score: partial – nutrition amount: EUR 1.5 million