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. 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.

Guatemala has made the fight against stunting a top State commitment. Half the children in the country are stunted. This is the fifth highest rate in the world. Large inequities exist across social and ethnic groups, with indigenous groups disproportionately affected (stunting rates can reach over 70%). Anaemia is a serious concern and the country also faces emerging problems of obesity and chronic noncommunicable diseases. Extremely low breastfeeding, declining quality of diets as well as limited education and early pregnancies are key contributors to undernutrition. Adding to this, recurrent natural disasters exacerbate social and food vulnerabilities with dramatic deterioration of rural livelihoods. Undernutrition alone costs the country at least 11% of its GDP. In 2016, Guatemala updated its common results framework based on the lessons learned from implementation of the 2012-2016 Zero Hunger Pact Plan, which influenced the design of the 2016-2020 National Strategy for the Prevention of Chronic Malnutrition (ENPDC). The EU and Member States are committed to joint action by making stunting one of the five priority areas for 2014-2020 programming. The EU has also adopted a multi-sectoral approach to nutrition and mobilised nearly half of its allocation for the 2014-2020 programming period to reinforce the health, food security, nutrition and sustainable agriculture sectors.

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

**Implications for development planners**

Guatemala has experienced a limited decline in prevalence of stunting since the mid-1990s, but the numbers of children stunted have remained almost unchanged due to population growth. Recent projections anticipate that Guatemala will not meet the World Health Assembly (WHA) target by 2025. Most significantly, the rate of stunting reduction is well below 1% (decelerating from 0.84% in 2012 to 0.80% in 2016); if this is maintained, then nearly 1 million children are expected to be stunted in 2025. This is nearly twice the WHA target, and by extension, that of the principal indicator for Sustainable Development Goal 2 (SDG 2). Consequently, additional efforts are required by the government and development partners to change Guatemala’s course and secure the level of stunting reduction needed.

**Nutrition governance**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Yes/No</th>
<th>Comment</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Member of SUN Movement</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Since 2010</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Government’s commitment to nutrition (including N4G event)</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Guatemala has set to reduce by 10 percentage points the prevalence of stunting among children under 2 years of age between 2016 and 2020.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multi-sectoral policy framework nutrition</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>The 2016-2020 Strategic Plan for Food and Nutrition Security and the 2016-2020 National Strategy for the Prevention of Chronic Malnutrition (ENPDC) provide the political framework to support the achievement of the stunting target. ENPDC focuses on the scale-up of evidence-based actions in 7 districts with the highest stunting rates.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multi-sectoral platform for nutrition coordination</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>The National Council for Food Security and Nutrition (CONASAN) is the interministerial body that leads policy direction. The Secretariat for Food Security and Nutrition (SESAN) acts as the convening institution. Multi-stakeholder nutrition governance structures have been set up at both departmental and municipal level.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
EU financial commitments to nutrition 2008–2016

Data collected March 2017

The EU commitments to nutrition in Guatemala through DEVCO from 2008 to 2016 are illustrated below in Figure 1. Under the DCI Multi-annual Indicative Programme (MIP) 2014-2020 for Guatemala nutrition is prioritised through the Food and Nutrition Security and Sustainable Agriculture (FNSSA) focal sector to which EUR 80 million have been allocated. By the end of 2016, no funding was committed yet and a total of EUR 80 million is identified for an upcoming programme to emphasize the importance of preventing Chronic Malnutrition in the country.

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.
Support of the EU and Member States

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

- Food security and nutrition

Enhance mobilisation and political commitment for nutrition

- Financial support for the implementation of 2016–2020 National Strategy for the Prevention of Chronic Malnutrition (ENPDC). Budget support is being considered given previous success in helping to spur, sustain and protect funding for nutrition in national budgets.

- Work towards a coherent, coordinated, position on nutrition through joint programming between EU and Member States (stunting is one of the priority areas for 2014-2020 programming).

- Support to the SUN Movement.

Scaling-up actions

- Under review. A dual approach, from both a health and food security perspective, will be adopted. This will ensure different ways to address the emerging problems in nutrition (obesity and chronic diseases related to diet and lifestyle) that already affect Guatemala and are closely linked to stunting. For greater nutrition impact, EU actions will focus on the ENPDC prioritised districts.

- Implementation of nutrition-specific actions in the health sector, by supporting the new integrated primary health care model and prioritising maternal-child health care services (increasing their coverage, cultural sensitivity as well as their demand, and use, by those most in need).

- Implementation of nutrition-sensitive interventions through the agricultural and food security sector, to increase access to quality food by the most vulnerable. In particular, through the Ministry of Agriculture, interventions aimed at sustainably improving small-scale farming by targeting farmers living in the rural areas prioritised in the ENPDC. Given that stunting is closely related to poverty and ethnicity, additional complementary measures will have to be taken to reach the most vulnerable groups.

Strengthen expertise and knowledge-base

- Under review. Significant progress has been made since 2012 to improve the monitoring and evaluation systems for food and nutrition security in Guatemala - including with EU support. For instance, the impact evaluation of the 2012-2016 Zero Hunger Pact Plan (also supported by the EU), prompted Guatemala to refocus its common results framework strategically and programmatically to make progress on reducing stunting. Strengthening Government’s monitoring capacities will continue to be a key area of EU support, including:

- Support research to measure the links between stunting reduction and nutrition investments.

- Strengthen Health Management Information System (HMIS) to capture relevant nutrition indicators.

- Potential establishment of a National Information Platform for Nutrition (NIPN).

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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/)