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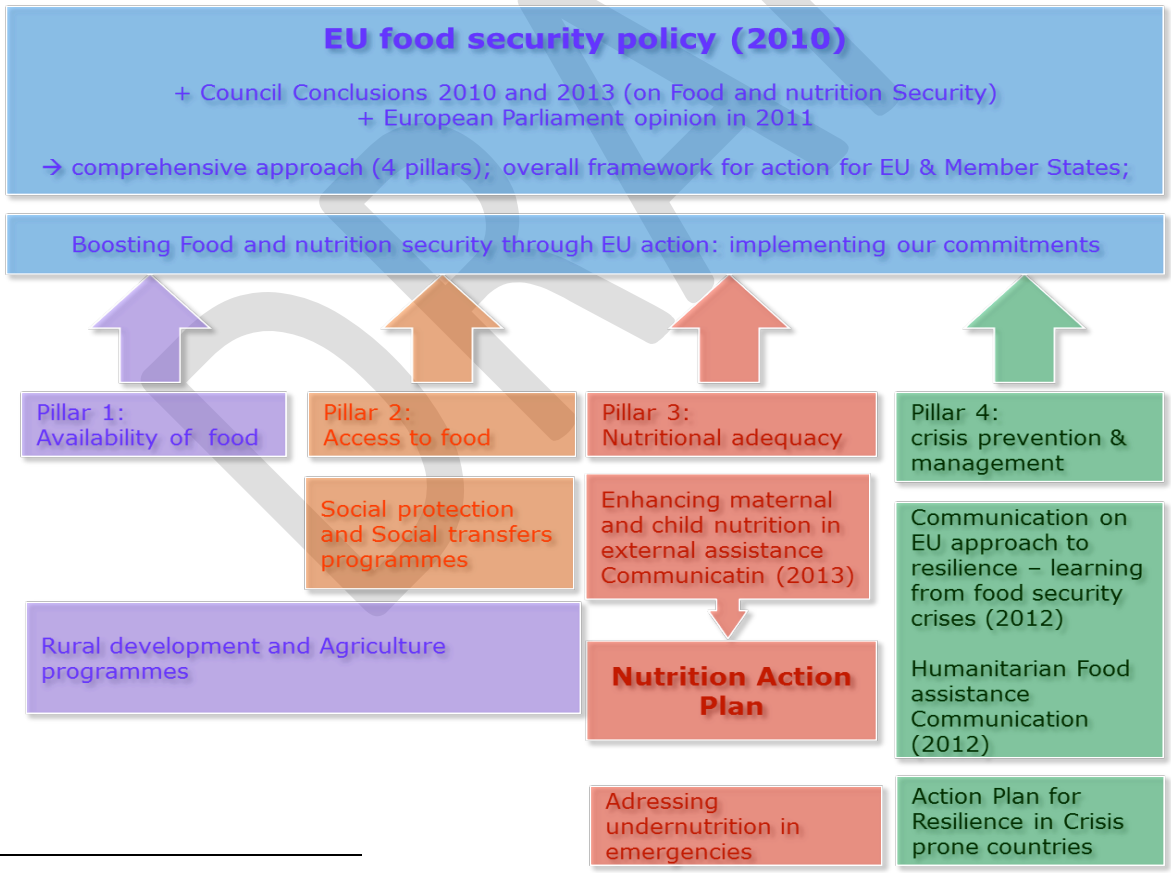
An Action Plan to Reduce the Number of stunted children by 7 million by 2025

1. Rationale

The EU Communication: "*Enhancing Maternal and Child Nutrition in External Assistance: An EU Policy Framework*"[1] was adopted in March 2013. This Action Plan sets out how the European Commission intends to implement the Communication and reduce the global burden of undernutrition (its stunting target). In particular, it describes the actions it intends to take and presents its priorities for its investments in nutrition between now and 2020.

Figure 1 summarises the EU Communications and EC Staff Working Documents (SWD) most closely linked to this Action Plan. The EU has recently developed three interlinked communications on Food Security[2], Resilience[3] and Nutrition[4].

These are translated into operational terms in the Staff Working Document '*Boosting Food and Nutrition Security Through EU Action: Implementing our Commitments*'. This Action Plan provides more details on the nutrition components of the Staff Working Document. Furthermore, it is specifically concerned with one aspect of the Nutrition Communication - achieving the commitment made in August 2012 to reduce the number of stunted children under the age of five years by at least 7 million by the year 2025.



[1] "*Enhancing Maternal and Child Nutrition in External Assistance: An EU Policy Framework*" (http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/documents/enhancing_maternal-child_nutrition_in_external_assistance_en.pdf)
[2] "*An EU Policy Framework to Assist Developing Countries in Addressing Food Security Challenges*" (http://ec.europa.eu/development/icenter/repository/COMM_PDF_COM_2010_0127_EN.PDF)
[3] "*The EU Approach to Resilience: Learning from Food Security Crises*" (http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/what/food-security/documents/20121003-comm_en.pdf)
[4] See link in footnote 1

The EU's strategic direction and priorities in tackling undernutrition will contribute to broader international efforts on nutrition, most notably:

The resolutions passed at the World Health Assembly in 2012, which endorsed 6 global targets focused on maternal and child nutrition[5], the first of which seeks a '40% reduction of the global number of children under five who are stunted'; and

The SUN Movement, that seeks to harness the capability and willingness of international stakeholders in support of national government-led initiatives and priorities to tackle undernutrition.

The WHA target of a 40% reduction in the number of stunted children implies a global reduction of about 70 million (from 171 million in 2010 to approximately 103 million in 2025)[6]. If the current trajectory[7] of global stunting reduction (2.1%) continues, the expected number of stunted children worldwide would be approximately 126 million in 2025 (approximately 23 million short of the 103 million target).

Thus, although the global trend is promising, it won't be enough. The pace of reduction needs to be speeded up if the WHA target is to be achieved.

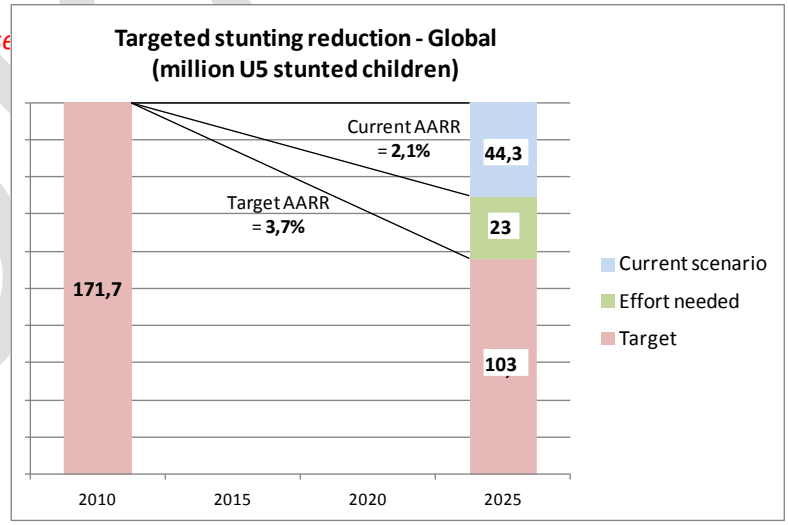
2. Specific Objective

To support countries to reduce the global burden of stunting by at least 7 million children aged under-five by the year 2025.

Achieving the WHA target implies doing more that at present – it means that approximately 23 million more children under the age of five will need to be helped. The EU's target of reducing the number of stunted children under the age of five years by at least 7 million by the year 2025 will contribute significantly to this global target, representing as it does about 30% of the extra reduction envisioned by the WHA (see Figure 1).

Figure 2 – Stunting reduction: WHA target, current trend and extra effort needed.

To be revised according to agreed base



[5] Nutrition. Maternal, infant and young child nutrition. Draft comprehensive implementation plan. 26 April 2012. 65th World Health Assembly.

[6] Proposed Global Targets for Maternal, Infant and Young Child Nutrition. WHO Discussion Paper, 6 February 2012. http://www.who.int/nutrition/events/2012_proposed_globaltargets_backgroundpaper.pdf. However, the paper states "the target implies a relative reduction of 40% of the number of children stunted by the year 2022, compared to the baseline of 2010" (so the end point envisaged here is 2022, not 2025; but figures presented here have been calculated for a 2025 target).

[7] This is described by the average annual reduction rate (AARR): Unlike the comparison of absolute changes, the AARR represents a constant reduction in terms of percentage of the previous value. In that sense, it reflects the fact that as stunting is reduced, further reduction becomes more difficult. So, as lower levels of stunting are attained, the same percentage of reduction represents a lower absolute reduction.

In order to achieve this objective, the EU needs to improve the way it works on undernutrition. The activities envisaged under the 3 strategic priorities will have to be in line with the principles outlined in the nutrition communication i.e.:

- Alignment with country priorities;
- Complementarity and sequencing between humanitarian and development interventions;
- Multisectoral approach to addressing the various determinants of undernutrition;
- Partnerships with the government, the civil society and the private sector.

The EU has to refocus its activities towards the population most affected by undernutrition and to adequately plan and coordinate its activities with its partners so that both the immediate and underlying causes of undernutrition are tackled at the national level.

Priority will be given to creating the right conditions for optimal growth during the 'crucial window of opportunity' - the first '1 000 days' between conception and two years of age by investing in measures that :

1) Improve the nutritional status of **women before pregnancy (paying specific attention to adolescent girls)**;

2) Reduce **foetal undernutrition** by addressing maternal undernutrition; and

3) Reduce **undernutrition in infants and young children**.

Adhering to these principles is a precondition for the achievement of sustainable reductions in stunting levels.

3. Strategic Priorities

The three strategic priorities outlined in the Nutrition Communication give guidance on where the EU should focus its investments and efforts in order to meet the specific objective identified above and to accelerate the rate of progress in reducing stunting. Enhancing mobilisation and political commitment for nutrition (the first priority) will maintain and increase momentum so that the second priority can be achieved (scaling-up actions at country level). The third priority (knowledge for nutrition) will ensure that our work on nutrition is backed up by sound and informed decision making and strengthened capacity at country level.

The relative emphasis placed on each of these strategic priorities will depend on individual country and regional contexts. The EU's role will however always be to support government-determined national priorities.

To be effective, actions will have to be integrated in an overall approach combining actions on the three priorities, in compliance with the principles of good governance and accountability. This approach will have to be implemented at all levels, with a focus at the national level for scaling-up actions on the ground, at the regional level for knowledge and capacity development and at the international level for the promotion of a continued momentum on nutrition.

For national level, country fiches are annexed to this Action Plan. They underline how the 3 strategic priorities will be tackled by identifying the outcomes to be achieved and the related planned actions. They will form the core of this Action Plan by outlining in practice how the EU's stunting target is to be attained.

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Key milestones	
2013	Review of country fiches through regional seminars and finalisation of country fiches for vanguard countries (will already have taken place)
2014, 2015	Further inclusion of additional country fiches in the Action Plan
2016, 2020 and 2024	Organisation of regional seminars to update the country fiches, review progress made towards the achievement of the target and exchange on best practices and lessons learned

3.1 Strategic priority 1: Enhance mobilisation and political commitment for nutrition

3.1.1 Strengthen political commitment and good governance at country level

Leadership, good governance and national ownership are central to tackle undernutrition. The EU will seek national mobilisation as well as political and donor commitment so that:

- Nutrition becomes a priority in the national development policy.
- The good governance of nutrition is enhanced.
- Responsibilities for ensuring nutritional outcomes at national level are clearly defined.Aid effectiveness for nutrition is enhanced.

Actions to achieve these outcomes will include:

- To enter into a policy dialogue on nutrition with the governments at the highest level.
- To support and/or provide advice on the development of effective and functioning multisectoral nutrition strategies, coordination systems and costed action plans based on evidence, including through relevant initiatives such as the SUN or REACH?.
- To identify focal points on nutrition in all relevant ministries.
- To promote policy coherence on nutrition and the mainstreaming of nutrition in relevant policies by explicitly incorporating nutrition objectives when necessary (e.g. on health, contingency plans, water, agriculture, social transfers, etc.);
- To coordinate and align, as far as possible, funding and efforts with the country lead nutrition framework and roadmap;
- To strengthen legal frameworks relevant to nutrition (e.g. encouraging breastfeeding, women's rights, iodisation laws).

EU support will favour policies and strategies that build on and reinforce existing structures/systems.

Good governance will not be possible without effective monitoring and evaluation systems to have a good understanding of the determinants of undernutrition and to gather evidence on the effectiveness of the programmes put in place. Related actions are further detailed under 3.3 – knowledge for nutrition

Regarding aid effectiveness, the EU will:

- Actively participate in donor coordination and alignment, including under the SUN movement;

Such support would be especially pertinent in, but not limited to, countries where the EU is otherwise engaged in nutrition or acting as SUN donor convenor. In addition to supporting the government in a large number of countries, as of August 2013, the EU has taken on the role of SUN donor convenor in four countries (Kenya, Lao PDR, Myanmar and Niger). In this role, the EU will help to increase resources for nutrition at national level, catalyse donor support and harmonise investments and efforts to address

critical gaps. It will also represent the wider donor group in discussions with government so as to maximise international and national efforts. As donor convenor, the EU will uphold the principles[8] agreed by the SUN movement (cf. [add country names] in annex X for country examples of how EU delegations will support political commitment and good governance in the area of nutrition).

Key milestones	
2014, 2015	Engage the policy dialogue on nutrition issues in food insecure countries and promote the systematic inclusion of nutrition concerns in water, health, education, social and agriculture policies (including in the CAADP PNIAs and the AGIR roadmaps).
2014 to 2019	Design a financial mechanism for technical support to governments in setting-up the appropriate policy framework at national and/or regional level (including costed action plans).
2014-2020	Further develop Sector Budget Support programmes with clear nutrition targets, including some related to the nutrition policy framework.
2014, 2015	Promote the systematic inclusion of nutrition concerns in water, health, education, social transfers and agriculture focal sectors in EU programming.
2014 and 2015	Engage as a SUN donor convenor in at least 3 additional SUN countries

3.1.2 Maintain political commitment and strengthen governance at international level

At the international level, the EU will continue to work towards a continued political momentum at the highest level, promoting stronger governance of nutrition, greater coherence and a more effective international response. To this end, the EU will engage with relevant international processes, notably the G8/G20, World Health Assembly, Committee on World Food Security, the UN Standing Committee on Nutrition, REACH and the Scaling Up Nutrition movement. It will also engage with CAADP, and other regional bodies with the potential to influence nutrition outcomes – ASEAN, CARICOM, etc.

More specifically the EU will:

- Encourage Member States to support the SUN movement internationally and to join donor coordination fora at country level;
- Contribute to discussions about successes and challenges in scaling up nutrition so that lessons can inform relevant decision making processes at country and global level, including within the SUN, the WHA, the CFS and the UN SCN;
- Continue its active role in the stewardship of SUN, through membership of the SUN Lead Group (Commissioner Piebalgs is the present member), and deepen its support of the coordination role played by the SUN, including through its funding of the SUN Secretariat.

Key milestones	
2014, 2015	Further engage in the SUN lead Group and in the SUN donor network
2015	Support the revision of the SUN movement mandate
2014	Participation in ICN 21
2016 and 2020	Review of the EU target and donor coordination at EU level – Update of the Action Plan

[8] Strengthening Country Ownership and Leadership; Focusing on Results; Adopting a Multi-Sectoral Approach; Focusing on Effectiveness; Fostering Collaboration and Inclusion; Promoting Accountability

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3.2 Strategic priority 2: Scale up actions at country level

3.2.1 Strengthen human and institutional/system capacity for effective delivery of services relevant to nutrition in high burden countries.

Human and institutional capacities are too often a bottleneck for the effective implementation of country level action. Developing such capacity will be the first step towards scaling up actions.

The EU will help to build managerial, strategic and leadership capacities, especially in government bodies. The EU will also build partners' technical capacity for nutrition in relevant sectors (health, food security/agriculture, water/sanitation, social protection and education) – from planning and design to evaluation and advocacy (i.e. throughout the project cycle).This will include:

- Technical Assistance to and training of government personnel at different levels: (a) the individuals' skills and competences as well as institutional operational capacities, for assessment/analysis, programme design, planning, management, monitoring and evaluation at regional and national levels; and (b) the higher-level leadership and strategic management capacities that are particularly crucial at national level.
- Training of health, agriculture extension and water and sanitation staff, to build relevant skills so that they incorporate nutrition issues in their respective areas (e.g. delivery of nutritional products within vaccination campaigns, hygiene promotion, nutrition campaigns…).
- Training of government personnel on the legal framework relevant to nutrition and its enforcement.
- Sharing best practices and lessons learned from nutrition specific and nutrition sensitive programmes and projects.

See [add country names] in annex ? for country examples of how the EU delegations will strengthen human and institutional capacity.

Key milestones	
2014-2020	Support to CAADP nutrition capacity building programme through the GPGC instrument
2014-2018	Organise regular trainings and seminars for EUDs and HQ on the integration of nutrition in their programming and policy dialogue;
2014-2015	Support the SUN secretariat in encouraging more countries to join the SUN movement
2014-2020	Build a financing mechanism to Provide TA to governments in order to reinforce their capacities
2014-2018	Exchange and disseminate best practices and lessons learned by capitalising on programmes and projects results

3.2.2 Scale-up nutrition specific actions

Nutrition specific activities and investments refer to support for country programmes (or projects) that give strong weight to a set of proven and cost effective interventions that are solely or primarily aimed at reducing undernutrition. Breastfeeding promotion is an example. At present, many of the interventions proven to be globally effective[9] are delivered through the health sector, as well as specific programmes

[9] For more information on nutrition-specific interventions, see 'The Lancet (2013), *The Maternal and Child Nutrition Series*, (http://www.thelancet.com/series/maternal-and-child-nutrition), WHO (2013), 'Essential Nutrition Actions: improving maternal, newborn, infant and young child health and nutrition', (http://www.who.int/nutrition/publications/infantfeeding/essential_nutrition_actions/en/index.html)

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designed in response to acute malnutrition in crises. Thus, these actions lend themselves particularly to contexts where the EU Delegation and government have agreed to work in the health sector or in time of crisis when humanitarian interventions are engaged.

Nutrition specific activities will include: Direct feeding programmes (maternal feeding, breastfeeding and weaning foods, child feeding); determination of micro-nutrient deficiencies; provision of vitamin A, iodine, iron etc.; monitoring of nutritional status; nutrition and food hygiene education; household food security.

New evidence continues to become available so the list of effective interventions is constantly evolving. Constant updates on the latest available information on the effectiveness of interventions will be necessary to adequately guide programming at country level.

See [add country names] in annex ? for country examples of how the EU delegations will support the scale-up.

3.2.4 Scale-up nutrition sensitive actions

Scaling-up the nutrition specific actions is will not be enough. In fact, for instance, the ten proven interventions identified by the Lancet[9] will only tackle 21% of stunting, the rest needs underlying causes to be tackled.

Nutrition-sensitive actions address the underlying and basic causes of undernutrition. They require that nutrition be incorporated within other sector approaches such as health, education, agriculture, water and sanitation, social protection and the use of tools such as social transfers, so as to guide implementation towards improved nutrition outcomes. Nutrition sensitive actions can be effective routes to improve nutrition as long as nutrition objectives are consistently incorporated in programme design, and nutrition criteria and indicators are included in monitoring and evaluations. Such integration needs to commence at the project identification/formulation stage, and continue throughout the project-cycle.

This can be achieved for instance by:

- Refining targeting criteria to take account of nutritional security;
- Incorporating a nutrition-relevant indicator in the monitoring framework;
- Incorporating measures that specifically protect the workload and time-demands of pregnant and lactating mothers;
- Investing in actions that address likely causes of undernutrition.

The EU can play a role by supporting governments to design policies and programmes in those sectors most likely to bring about nutrition improvements (i.e. that are nutrition sensitive).

The EU Reference Document on nutrition[10] provides guidance on how such integration can take place, both in terms of programme design but also in terms of the EU's planning processes.

Key milestones	
2014 and 2018	Revisions of the EU reference document *Addressing Undernutrition in External Assistance* to include more information on nutrition sensitive actions

[10] *EU Reference Document No.13: Addressing Undernutrition in External Assistance*, September 2011.

The outcomes and related activities that can be envisaged at sector level that are most likely to offer opportunities for nutrition-sensitive interventions include:

✓ Agriculture[11] and food security:

In order to achieve impact, the focus of nutrition sensitive actions in the agriculture and food security sector should be placed on smallholder agriculture and rural livelihoods while improving access to quality, diverse, nutrient-dense food. The main outcomes to be achieved are: 1) increasing purchasing power of vulnerable households and women; 2) Improving access to *safe and nutritious food* of vulnerable households and women; 3) Improving the household and/or women's diet in quality and/or quantity;

The EU reference document outlines the types of actions that can help in achieving these outcomes such as:

- The development of home gardens and more productive homestead food production systems to increase the production and consumption of fruits and vegtables;
- The roll out of biofortified crops for smallholders and vulnerable groups;
- Increased access to animal products at the household level;

EU Delegations that choose sustainable agriculture and food security as a focal sector in the 11th EDF will support governments and other partners to systematically incorporate nutrition considerations in their (national) programmes – especially in those countries with a high burden of undernutrition (cf. [add country names] in annex ? for examples).

✓ Health:

For maximum effectiveness, nutrition-relevant actions need to be fully integrated into the health system, health strategy and health budget of a country. These actions should aim at improving access of women and children to primary healthcare, improving access to childcare and better integrating nutrition in the healthcare system.

The EU reference document outlines the types of actions that can help in achieving these outcomes such as:

- Delivery of quality services (especially at primary health care level) with the introduction of nutrition;
- Primary healthcare with hygiene promotion, deworming, nutrition campaigns, etc.;
- Community based management of acute malnutrition;
- Supply chain support;
- Local production of specialised products (such as RUTF) that meet quality standards.

Moreover, a nutrition-sensitive approach within the health sector also entails investing in the prevention and management of diseases such as malaria which can influence nutrition outcomes (See [add country names] in annex ? for country examples of how EU delegations will support the health system to maximise nutrition outcomes).

✓ Social Protection and social transfers:

There has been increasing evidence of the specific contribution that social transfer programmes can make in reducing undernutrition. They help address inequalities and household poverty; they can be used as channels to deliver nutrition-specific actions (for example distributing food supplements to mothers and young children, vouchers for buying nutritional food); and they can also help to build links with other services by if the transfer comes with certain conditions (such as cash transfers linked to attendance at immunisation clinics). Cash transfers can also be an

[11] References to Agriculture include fisheries

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effective way to reduce undernutrition and increase resilience of the most vulnerable.

The EU, together with its partners, will assess the use of social transfers for nutrition and support their use, when they are considered effective in reducing undernutrition. Maternal and child benefits will be prioritised.

See [add country names] in annex ? for country examples of how EU delegations will support nutrition-sensitive social transfers).

- ✓ Water and Sanitation:

  By improving access to water, sanitation and hygiene of vulnerable households, water/sanitation programmes can improve nutrition, especially by addressing the nutritional impact of diarrhoeal disease (e.g. by prioritising areas where undernutrition and/or diarrhoeal diseases are highest). and should seek to measure the impact of interventions in terms of nutritional outcomes.

  There is evidence that the greatest nutritional gains are made through sanitation and hygiene promotion programmes in many instances[12]. See [add country names] in annex ? for country examples of how EU delegations will support nutrition-sensitive water and sanitation).

- ✓ Education:

  Education programmes consistently improve nutrition in the long-term primarily through greater access to education of future parents, and girls in particular, as future mothers. Therefore the EU will seek to improve access to education for adolescent girls and improve knowledge on nutrition for vulnerable groups. The EU will:

  - Support school enrolment and attendance, especially for girls;
  - Support the inclusion of nutrition in school and university curricula;
  - Support the development of knowledge on nutrition for vulnerable groups through agriculture extension services, tertiary health services, community based services, alphabetisation programmes…

  See [add country names] in annex ? for country examples of how EU delegations will support nutrition-sensitive education systems).

  Schoolfeeding programmes are common in developing countries. Although they can diminish hunger and improve learning, the evidence shows that they have a limited effect on anthropometry of school age children let alone of children under the age of two years (and the 1000 days window of opportunity). However, they might offer a platform for specific actions such as addressing iron deficiency anaemia amongst adolescent girls (e.g. through iron-rich meals, coupled with deworming) or an entry point for nutritional education, school garden programmes or diet diversification promotion.

3.3 Strategic priority 3: Knowledge for nutrition (strengthening the expertise and the knowledge-base)

3.3.1 Build the evidence on effective nutrition actions: Information systems

Information on nutrition is currently scattered over different platforms and sectors (health, agriculture, education, water and sanitation…). Overviews at country level are often scarce, incomplete or too weak (limited availability and quality of the information). Information systems should be adequately strengthened so that each country can have a sound understanding of its nutritional situation and the

[12] Esrey, S. A. (1996), Water, waste and well-being — A multi-country study.*Am J Epidemiol*, v 28 ol. 43, No 6, pp. 608–623.

underlying causes of undernutrition. They also should allow the impact of interventions in countries to be monitored to:

- Track progress in reducing stunting;
- Link stunting reductions to in-country nutrition investments;
- Determine the interventions that have been set-up or scaled-up as a result of these investments;
- Monitor how well these interventions are implemented;
- Assess whether changes in stunting levels can be specifically related to any of these interventions.

This is the final aim of the work being undertaken under the SUN on the Networked Information Systems on Nutrition (NISN). A full description of the approach, and the inter-stakeholder process that the EU has led, is given in Annex.

In this regard the EU will:

- Support the adoption of ambitious stunting targets in high burden countries;
- Support the definition of common elements for the follow-up of these targets (baseline, calculation methods…)
- Further support the development of multisectoral information systems on nutrition at national and regional level in collaboration with the SUN and all relevant international and regional organisations;
- Ensure that ongoing EU support to national and regional information systems on sectors such as health, agriculture, education and water and sanitation includes nutrition concerns ;
- Ensure that there is regular and reliable monitoring of nutrition programmes that are undertaken at significant scale, so as to ensure that quality is maintained whilst coverage increases[13].

See [add country names] in annex X for country examples of how EU delegations will support information systems).

Key milestones	
2014-2020	Nutrition is included in related information systems
2014	Definition of baselines and targets at country level
2014-2015	Guidance on inclusion of nutrition monitoring in EU programmes is provided
2014 - 2020	The NISN concept is finalised and some NISN are funded

3.3.2 Build the evidence on effective nutrition actions : Research

As already underlined, future policies, strategies and activities on nutrition will have to be based, as far as possible on evidence. In order to achieve this objective, the EU will support research that should be results oriented and demand-driven, tying it to deliver against stunting reduction goals, notably applied research to identify the utility of actions that are effective in certain contexts only. Synergies will be sought between EU-Funded nutrition for development research and country level initiatives supported through EU funding.

[13]See guidance given in the *EU Reference Document No.13: Addressing Undernutrition in External Assistance*, September 2011, page 49

- ✓ Research on Delivery Methods
  Through various reviews[14], there is a good understanding of nutrition-specific interventions needed for children to grow and develop to their full potential. We have far fewer examples of models that can take these interventions to scale however. The EU will therefore:
  - Support research and documentation of the delivery methods/mechanisms that can best scale up these actions in different contexts.
  - Support links between research and the work undertaken at the country level, including through extension, capacity development, knowledge management and related activities.

- ✓ Research on Nutrition-Sensitive Actions
  There is less evidence overall about the effectiveness of nutrition-sensitive interventions, compared to specific. This is because, until recently, these interventions have rarely included a stated nutrition objective and hence are not being evaluated according to this criterion. Second, it is difficult to ascertain their impact on undernutrition when they are preventative or when a complex causal pathway is involved. Therefore there is a need to expand the evidence base for these actions in various contexts. Therefore the EU will:
  - Support research on the effectiveness of nutrition-sensitive interventions, including social transfers.
  - Support the systematic analysis of the cost-effectiveness of nutrition-sensitive actions.

The EU will work mostly with specialised international and regional research institutions while keeping flexibility to target implementing partners with comparative advantages. It will support a policy dialogue with these institutions in order to promote a results oriented and demand-driven research.

For further details, see Annex ? and See [add country names] in annex X for country examples of how EU delegations will support research.

Key milestones	
2014	Revisions of our support to the CGIAR Agriculture for Nutrition and Health (A4NH) programme
2014	Make sure that country fiches include research actions when necessary/effective
2014-2020	Our strategy to support research on nutrition is supported through the GPGC
2020	Our support to nutrition research is evaluated and updated accordingly

3.33 Provide technical expertise to build capacities

In addition to financial resources, the EU will provide technical expertise and assistance for the implementation of this action plan and in support of the strategic actions described above. Technical assistance will primarily target government counterparts and partners in order to support the strengthening of human and institutional/system capacity for effective delivery of services relevant to nutrition in high burden countries.

Advisory services to the EU should equip EU Delegations to carry out effective policy dialogue, design nutrition sensitive and nutrition specific programmes and projects that will result in the development of

[14] The Lancet (2008), *The Maternal and Child Undernutrition Series* (http://www.thelancet.com/series/maternal-and-child-undernutrition), The Lancet (2013), *The Maternal and Child Nutrition Series* (http://www.thelancet.com/series/maternal-and-child-nutrition), Copenhagen Consensus 2008 and 2012 (http://www.copenhagenconsensus.com/).

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an effective country support. Platforms will be put in place and reinforced so that staff can exchange experiences and lessons learned, and in order to provide guidance in a timely manner.

Key milestones	
2014	A financing mechanism is set-up for technical assistance to governments
2014-2018	Continuation of the EU advisory services
2014-2018	Regional Nutrition Seminars for EUDs are organised and an internal network of practitioners is set-up

4. Geographical scope

The ability of the EU to achieve its stunting reduction target relies heavily on the work of Delegations in countries facing a high rate of undernutrition. We have therefore identified a number of countries where we expect to achieve a significant impact on nutrition through EU interventions. These countries meet the following conditions: (1) countries with a high burden of undernutriton and a strong potential to reduce undernutrition, (2) government political commitment and membership of the country of the Scaling-up Nutrition (SUN) Movement, (3) nutrition relevant focal sectors in the NIP 2014-2020.

5. Working in partnership

Progress towards achievement of the EU's stunting target will be most effective when the EU's investments are in support of country-led plans and aligned with those of other donors and stakeholders.

At the country level, those governments committed to addressing undernutrition as a national priority are considered as key partners for the EU. For instance, the EU will support nutrition activities included in the CAADP PNIAs, where they exist, and seek coordination of these activities with others plans related to nutrition.

At the international and national levels, the EU will work closely with the SUN Movement. SUN has helped galvanise international efforts to combat undernutrition, and has filled a vacuum in international nutrition governance. SUN has bolstered country-level progress by providing a framework for multi-stakeholder and multi-sectoral coordination, and catalysed actions required to establish and/or complete national nutrition plans. It is therefore regarded as a critical enabler for the success of this Action Plan, in which all international stakeholder groups concerned with nutrition have a voice and a role. SUN provides a strategic interface between country-level investments and international-level progress, and includes civil society organisations, private sector entities, donors, UN agencies and international financial institutions.

The EU will also work closely and in a coordinated manner with EU Member States and other donors, in full recognition that most are not actively engaged in the SUN Movement. In-country, for example, it may be appropriate for the EU Delegation to provide a coordinating role so that EU funds and support can be channelled in a complementary and coherent fashion. There is also scope for specific attention to the Rome-based UN agencies, so as to capitalise on the opportunity offered by agriculture for nutrition and to redress the existing predisposition of many donors to focus on health and nutrition.

In countries where humanitarian interventions are ongoing, the principle of complementarity and sequencing between humanitarian and development interventions will be key for the sustainability and effectiveness of nutrition interventions. A clear partnership will have to be developed with humanitarian partners through actions such as:

- Sound risk and vulnerability assessments;
- Common operational assessments and programming.

The EU will integrate support to civil society in its approach to nutrition in order to enable participation/mobilisation and good governance, as well as to ensure awareness raising and communication on nutrition issues.

When efficient, the EU will seek partnerships Private Sector

See [add country names] in annex X for country examples of how EU delegations will support partnerships, including with CSO and the private sector

Key milestones	
2014-2025	Continued information sessions with Member States in the context of HARDs meeting and relevant Council Working Groups (CODEV and FAO Coordination Working Party)
2015	Revision of the SUN secretariat mandate together with partner countries
2014-2020	Ensure that the role of the civil society and private sector are well identified in the nutrition policy dialogue
2014-2020	Include nutrition in the CSO calls for proposals where they can bring added value to the nutrition specific/sensitive activities
2014-2020	Common programming with humanitarian partners in XXX countries
2020	Revision of the action plan - consultations with partners

6. Accountability for Results

The EU is committed to increasing 1) the accuracy of its reporting on nutrition and 2) its accountability to its citizens, partner countries, Member States, partner agencies and ultimate recipients of EU assistance.

"Accountability for Results" has two broad components: 1) tracking financial investments in nutrition, both specific and sensitive and 2) monitoring/measuring results and impact including the tracking of progress towards the 7 million target on stunting. For both components, the EU will work closely with the SUN movement, in particular the Donor Network and will contribute to the movement's accountability framework (cf. annex ? and ? for fuller details on the "Accountability Framework").

7.1 Tracking of financial resources

Donors involved in the SUN Movement have agreed to track their spending on nutrition using a common approach. Three categories of investments will be tracked:

1) Spending on direct nutrition / nutrition-specific interventions
2) Spending on nutrition sensitive interventions
3) Spending that has an impact on the determinants of undernutrition

Reports from each donor will be submitted to the Sun Movement, and they will then be aggregated and compiled in the SUN's annual reporting to the UN General Assembly. This approach is described fully in Annex ?.

Key milestones	
2014	Annual Report to UNGA – baseline is set Methodology is accepted by the SUN donor network

7.2 Monitoring/measuring results

The Commission will operationalize the accountability framework on monitoring and measuring results discussed at the broader level for donors, under the SUN framework. At the same time it will engage in tracking progresses towards its stunting target. In order to achieve this objective the EU will:

- Establish a baseline;
- Develop monitoring and evaluation of EU programmes and projects according to the internationally agreed methodology;
- Regularly follow-up on the progresses.

Key milestones	
2014	Establish the baseline at EU level and provide a first report
2014-2025	Annual progress reports

7.3 Communicating results and lessons

The EU should improve its capacity to communicate its policy objectives to a broader audience and other institutions, to raise awareness concerning the double burden of malnutrition, to influence the development agenda and to enhance its visibility.

A communication plan will be developed and will describe how to improve the communication capacity of the Commission in its role as leader in the area of nutrition in external aid It will describe how the actions of the present action plan will be made available, publicised and disseminated, including communication activities related to the development of our partnerships and activities related to capacity building.

Key milestones	
2014	A communication plan is established

8 Resources

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Annexes

Calendar to 2025 *(more detailed than what is presented in 3.14) – major milestones*

Logframe

Country fiches

Accountability tools/documents

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