

COUNTRY PROFILE ON NUTRITION 01/2021

GUINEA-BISSAU

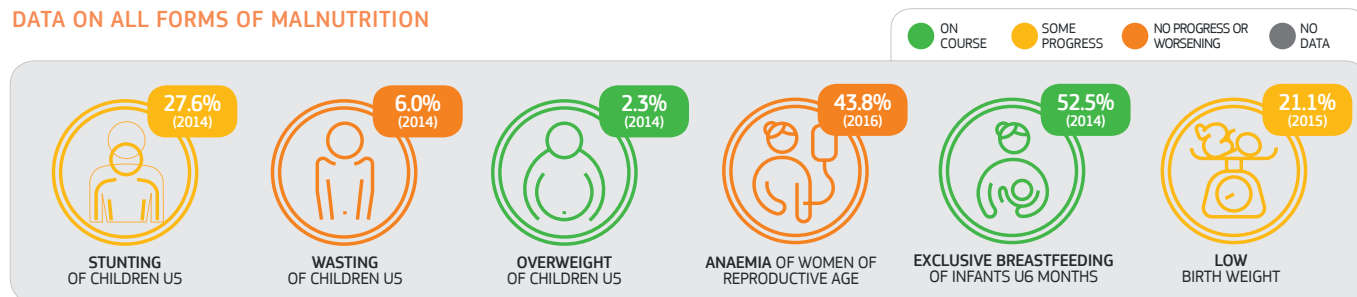
Nutrition situation in Guinea-Bissau

AT A GLANCE

Guinea-Bissau has a population of 1.9 million, which is estimated to reach 2.5 million in 2030. The country has been plagued by political instability since independence in 1974. It has set ambitious targets to tackle high levels of undernutrition, while also facing the triple burden of malnutrition including anaemia, overweight and obesity. The main causes of malnutrition are related to low-quality diets, inadequate access to food, infectious diseases, poor hygiene and inadequate health care for mothers and children as well as inequalities (including gender¹). Widespread food insecurity and

economic vulnerabilities are compounded by a marked seasonality and price volatility (imported rice and local cashew nut production). The COVID-19 crisis risks further deteriorating food and nutrition security, especially in the agricultural sector, the main income and food source for the most vulnerable. Malnutrition comes with a high social and economic cost, disproportionately affecting the poorest households. Undernutrition alone was estimated to cost Guinea-Bissau up to 9.4% of annual GDP².

DATA ON ALL FORMS OF MALNUTRITION



NUTRITION GOVERNANCE

- Guinea-Bissau signalled its commitment to nutrition in 2014 by joining the Scaling Up Nutrition (SUN) movement.
- The revised national nutrition policy (2014) provides a multi-sectoral framework for nutrition actions. A strategy (Plano Estratégico de Nutrição) for 2016-2020 was adopted in 2016 (budget still to be approved). Its operationalisation has made insufficient progress (except for the development of a statistical system) and a common results framework remains to be developed. Through the strategy, the Government aims to reduce the rate of stunting by 40% by 2025.
- The National Council on Food and Nutritional Security has been approved by the cabinet but is awaiting Presidential agreement.
- A number of specific policies which relate to the promotion of good nutritional practices have been introduced, such as the School Canteens Act and food fortification laws (salt iodisation has been mandatory since 2004 and a National Network of Iodized Salt Producers was established in 2016).

Example of EU support

The EU-funded 'Ianda Guiné' programme (2018-2024) to build resilience and create economic opportunities in Guinea-Bissau is aimed at reducing food and nutrition insecurity and promoting sustainable agriculture. Several components are integrated through a multi-sector approach including support for improved agricultural production and diversification (through recovery of mangrove rice production areas and development of horticultural production), increased income generation (through diversification of economic opportunities), rehabilitating access to water and energy infrastructure and better access to the domestic market (small feeder roads).

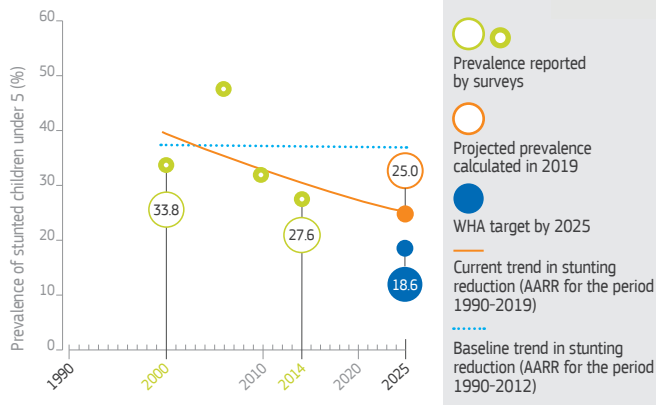
Together, these contribute to increasing the purchasing power of families and nutrition education is promoting healthy eating habits. A technical assistance component (implemented by WFP) targets national government capacities by:

- 1) strengthening the quality and use of food security, nutrition, and market price information through the establishment of an enhanced information system; and
- 2) increasing awareness, knowledge, and political commitment for nutrition supported by social behavioural change communication initiatives.

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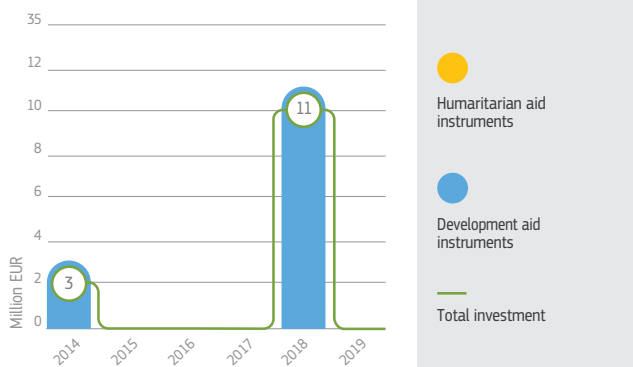
Progress on the two EU pledges for nutrition

TREND, PROJECTION AND TARGETS IN THE PREVALENCE AND NUMBER OF CHILDREN (U5) STUNTED



Guinea-Bissau has experienced a marked decline in the prevalence of stunting since 2000, but only a nominal decline in the number of children stunted due to population growth³. The rate of decline in the number of children stunted has accelerated from 0.06% in 2012 to 1.83% in 2019. If this trend is maintained, then about 80 000 children are expected to be stunted in 2025.

EU FINANCIAL COMMITMENTS TO NUTRITION BETWEEN 2014 AND 2019 – TOTAL OF EUR 14 MILLION



The EU contributes up to EUR 44 million (including 11 million for nutrition) for the programme 'landa Guiné' (2018-2024) to build resilience and create economic opportunities in Guinea-Bissau. This multi-sector action addresses different integrated domains to leverage the interlinkages between SDGs – in particular, SDG2 (zero hunger) and SDG11 (sustainable cities and communities) – and sectors, to multiply effects across SDGs. The EU also contributes EUR 8 million (including 2 million for nutrition) for a health sector programme ('PIMI II') aimed at contributing to the reduction of maternal, neonatal and child mortality in Guinea Bissau. Specifically, actions are scaled in different regions to improve access to quality health care services for pregnant women and children under 5 years of age.

¹ Teenage pregnancies are high (28% of early childbearing by age 18), female secondary education enrolment is low (6%), only 50% literacy rates in women 15-24 year (70% in men) (GNR 2019, MICS 2014). There is no value or ranking for Guinea Bissau in the 2019 Gender Inequality Index.

² Cost of Hunger in Africa Guinea-Bissau Study (forthcoming) supported by WFP and funded by the Government of Guinea Bissau and the EU.

³ The last population census dates back to 2009.