



European
Commission

EU progress on tackling food and nutrition security

The European Union (EU) is a global player in tackling the causes of hunger and malnutrition in the world. The EU and Member States work on a wide range of ways to fight hunger and malnutrition.

Our first biennial report, “Implementing EU food and nutrition security policy commitments”, describes what we did to carry out EU policy on food and nutrition security. The report is important for accountability and transparency. This brochure summarises the findings of the report.

*International
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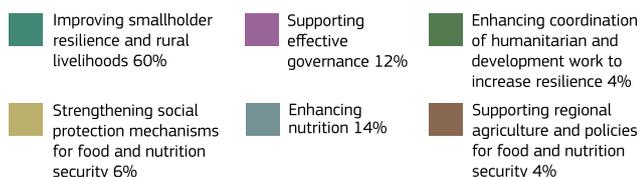
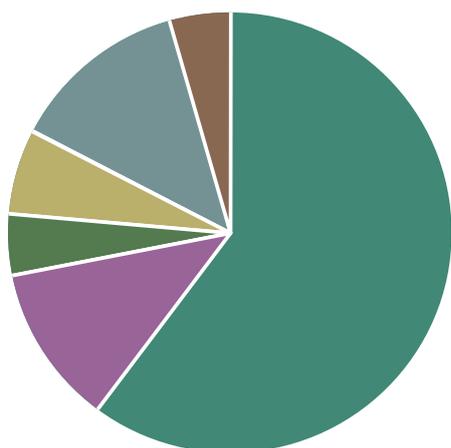
Photo: Natalia Lazarewicz



Targeting food and nutrition security

In 2012, the EU and Member States collectively spent nearly €3.4 billion on food and nutrition security in 115 countries. We directed much of our support to food-insecure countries in Sub-Saharan Africa. In 2012, Africa accounted for over two-fifths (43%) of our contributions. Our contributions targeted six areas, each important for food and nutrition security.

The EU contributed €3 366 million to food and nutrition security in 2012



Investing in small-scale and family farming brings benefits in food and nutrition security – opening up opportunities to earn money, find jobs and sell produce in local markets or in markets further afield

Photo: F. Lefèbvre

Improving smallholder resilience and rural livelihoods

- We spent €2 billion to support 1 560 programmes in 108 countries to improve smallholder resilience and rural livelihoods
- We provided €379 million for national and international research

Investing in helping poorer families to grow more food – and healthier, more nutritious food – achieves great results in helping them climb out of poverty. This includes different kinds of interventions supporting sustainable agricultural intensification and diversification for smallholder farmers, especially women.

Encouraging sustainable land management in Ethiopia

Sustainable land management is a crucial element of improving smallholder livelihoods. In Ethiopia, where a high proportion of rural people are vulnerable to physical and economic stresses, the EU and several Member States are supporting initiatives. For example, the Ethio-German Sustainable Land Management Programme targets the areas of Amhara, Oromia and Tigray, introducing technologies and measures for erosion protection and fostering the formation of user groups to encourage the sustainable management of water catchment areas.

Supporting effective governance

- We spent €395 million on 410 programmes to support effective governance in 87 countries

Our support strengthened civil society and farmers' organisations, empowered women, supported decentralisation and local governance to enhance food security, and strengthened global governance on food and nutrition security.

Supporting regional agriculture and food and nutrition security policies

- We spent €151 million on 98 regional programmes to support regional agriculture and food and nutrition security policies

We funded programmes to help support regions to prepare and put in place policies that boost food and nutrition security, such as policies that integrate markets for agricultural produce, control animal disease, set food standards and ensure food safety. One important area we supported in 2012 was setting up information systems for agriculture.

Supporting regional policies for food security in West Africa

We coordinate support for food security policy in West Africa with institutions such as the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), Union économique et monétaire ouest-africaine (UEMOA) and its technical institution Comité permanent inter-État de lutte contre la sécheresse au Sahel (CILCSS). For example, the EU, France and Spain backstop the ECOWAS regional agricultural policy (ECOWAP) in setting up regional food reserves to improve food security. The EU and France support ECOWAS to combat fruit flies, which is important for making food supplies more secure.

Strengthening social safety nets for food and nutrition security

- We spent €209 million on 94 programmes in 40 countries to strengthen social safety nets for food and nutrition security

Poorer farmers often do not have stores of food or savings to fall back on – nor do they have cattle or other possessions they can sell to help them survive in the short term. Cash transfers, food-for-work programmes and food vouchers help them deal with hungry periods. In 2012, our support for these kinds of schemes was particularly important in Ethiopia, Bangladesh, Kenya and Somalia.

Supporting safety nets for food and nutrition security in Ethiopia

We are a major supporter of the Productive Safety Nets Programme for Ethiopians who are chronically short of food. The safety net catches them when unexpected problems hit, stopping them falling back into hunger and crippling poverty.

Enhancing nutrition

- We spent €467 million on 278 programmes in 63 countries to enhance nutrition

More food is not enough. People need better food too: the right kinds of foods. This is especially important for mothers and young children. We fund projects that encourage breast-feeding, home gardens for growing fruit and vegetables, and growing and eating foods fortified with vitamins and minerals.

Scaling Up Nutrition (SUN)

France, Germany, Ireland, the Netherlands, the United Kingdom and the European Commission work together in the SUN Donor Network to support the SUN Movement and are jointly funding, together with others, the SUN Movement Secretariat. SUN unites governments, civil society, the United Nations, donors and businesses in a collective effort to improve nutrition.



Farmers can lose their crops and animals because of unexpected problems they cannot control. Social safety nets help them deal with hungry periods

Photo: Maria Winnubst

Enhancing coordination between development and humanitarian action

- We spent €122 million on 63 programmes to strengthen resilience in 18 countries
- We carried out eight joint analyses and planning exercises

Recognising how important it is to build resilience, as well as to anticipate, prevent and prepare for food security crises, we have stepped up our drive to tackle the root causes of food insecurity. Building resilience supports people and countries in their development, bridging the gap between emergency food aid and development aid.

We are one of the founders of the Global Alliance for Resilience Initiative in West Africa and Sahel (Alliance Globale pour l'Initiative Résilience, AGIR), launched in December 2012. The EU also supports the multi-donor alliance to help recovery from drought with the Supporting the Horn of Africa's Resilience (SHARE) initiative. Both AGIR and SHARE have successfully brought together parties such as the governments of affected countries, UN agencies, and regional and international partners, to coordinate their efforts.



Globally, about one in four children under 5 years old are stunted. The European Commission has committed to support partner countries to reduce the number of stunted children by 7 million by 2025. In 2013, at the Nutrition for Growth event, London, EU donors pledged €7.9 billion to reduce undernutrition

Where we have been particularly successful

- Our influence led to the adoption of the Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure of Land, Fisheries and Forests (VGGT) by the Committee on World Food Security (CFS)
- According to the 2012 Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development/Development Assistance Committee (OECD/DAC) peer review and the 2013 EU Policy Coherence for Development Report, our policies for development are becoming more coherent
- We stepped up our advocacy for better nutrition in the G8, G20, Scaling Up Nutrition (SUN) Movement and World Health Assembly; 45 developing countries have already joined the SUN Movement

Lessons we have learned

We have learned that by working together we have a stronger voice, and that our development assistance has greater coverage and greater impact. This collective

approach improves our visibility and leads to more efficient development assistance and better results.

Another lesson we have learned is that collaborating with a range of organisations and individuals in our partner countries not only has clear advantages but also helps us to hone our policies and invest in the right areas.

Since 2010 we have gained a better understanding of the value of responding collectively to food security needs and crises to address our shared priorities. EU donors have rallied around global and EU initiatives such as SUN and the Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure of Land, Fisheries and Forests in the Context of National Food Security (VGGT). We can build on this collective approach and will continue to tap into these successes in addressing issues such as climate-smart agriculture, rural transformation and sustainable food systems.

We have learned that we can be more efficient in the way we contribute. In 2012, EU donors supported over 2 500 programmes in 115 countries. Coordinating these contributions would reduce costs and make our assistance more efficient.

We have learned that we need to invest more in research and encourage innovation on food and nutrition in our partner countries, for example in food supply chains. We need to help national extension services to spread better practices to farmers, and health and nutrition workers.

Last but not least, we have found that we need to develop better measures to track progress. In particular, we need to work with our partner countries to find case studies that will give us an in-depth understanding of the difference our programmes are making.

Making more of a difference to food and nutrition security

Working together on food and nutrition security is an opportunity to make the contributions of the EU and Member States more effective – more coordinated, more complementary and smarter in division of labour. The reports on our commitments that we will be preparing every two years will track how we perform collectively and what we achieve against what we plan. The first report shows that although we have made progress, we need to do more to harmonise our programmes to make a significant difference to food and nutrition security.

References: COM(2014) 712, Implementing EU food and nutrition security policy commitments: first biennial report and accompanying Staff working document SWD(2014) 343

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