



# MAKE MALNUTRITION HISTORY

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## HOW THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT CAN CONTRIBUTE TO ZERO HUNGER BEYOND 2020

Hunger is on the rise again for the first time in decades, despite all efforts undertaken by the international community. Now is the time to step up political will and financial commitments that will translate into effective action against hunger and malnutrition.

**GENERATION**  
**NUTRITION**

IN THIS BRIEF PAPER YOU WILL FIND KEY INFORMATION, STARTING WITH IDEAS ON **WHAT YOU CAN DO**:

- Ask a **question related to nutrition to the candidates for Commissioner** in charge of international cooperation and development and humanitarian aid during the hearing, to remind them that nutrition should remain a top priority of the EU;
- Become a champion on nutrition and create an **informal group** to discuss nutrition and on a regular basis to ensure that nutrition stays a major focus of EU's development and humanitarian policy;
- Call on the European Commission to **revise the EU Action Plan on Nutrition** for the period post-2025 to allow the EU to make a strong political commitment for an ambitious approach towards nutrition and to ensure that all forms of malnutrition are addressed;
- Push for an **ambitious pledge from the EU** ahead of the Nutrition for Growth (N4G) summit in Tokyo in 2020 and ensure high-level representation of the EU at the summit;
- **Use any opportunity globally**, such as the Scaling Up Nutrition (SUN) meetings or high-level events, to **raise the profile of nutrition and ensure the current funding gap for undernutrition is addressed**;
- **Use the tools available to you throughout your mandate to put nutrition on the agenda** such as tabling resolutions, parliamentary questions, written declarations, hearings, workshops, meetings and events to raise awareness on nutrition and maintain nutrition at the core of EU development and humanitarian aid;
- **Use Generation Nutrition** – you can rely on us to help you access and understand the latest data and analysis, to understand the role and perspective of civil society at all levels, and to source for you experts and representatives from affected countries to provide evidence and insights to help you establish your view on appropriate EU responses.

# KEY FACTS



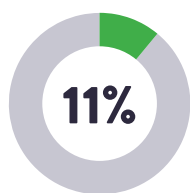
## 3 MILLION

EACH YEAR MALNUTRITION CLAIMS THE LIVES OF **3 MILLION CHILDREN** UNDER THE AGE OF FIVE.



## 820 MILLION

IN 2018, THE NUMBER OF UNDERNOURISHED PEOPLE IS ESTIMATED TO HAVE **INCREASED TO OVER 820 MILLION** – AROUND ONE OUT OF EVERY NINE PEOPLE IN THE WORLD.



THE ECONOMIC COSTS OF UNDERNUTRITION ARE DEVASTATING – **UP TO 11% OF GDP IN AFRICA AND ASIA EACH YEAR.**



## €16

INVESTING IN NUTRITION INTERVENTIONS IS HIGHLY COST-EFFECTIVE AND IMPACTFUL: **EVERY €1 INVESTED IN NUTRITION GENERATES A RETURN OF AT LEAST €16.**



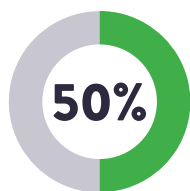
## 70 BILLION

AN **ADDITIONAL INVESTMENT OF US\$ 70 BILLION OVER 10 YEARS** IS NEEDED TO ACHIEVE THE WORLD HEALTH ASSEMBLY (WHA) TARGETS.



## GENDER INEQUALITY

**GENDER INEQUALITY** IN ACCESS TO AND CONTROL OF RESOURCES CAN SEVERELY IMPAIR WOMEN'S ABILITY TO PROVIDE FOOD, CARE, AND HEALTH AND SANITARY SERVICES FOR THEMSELVES, LEADING TO A NEGATIVE IMPACT ON NUTRITION OUTCOMES.



**50% OF UNDERNUTRITION IS ASSOCIATED WITH INFECTIONS CAUSED BY UNSAFE WATER, INADEQUATE SANITATION AND INSUFFICIENT HYGIENE.** DIARRHOEA AND INTESTINAL WORMS SEVERELY HINDER THE BODY'S ABILITY TO ABSORB AND USE NUTRIENTS, RESULTING IN CHRONIC UNDERNUTRITION.

## Definitions

• **MALNUTRITION** is a physical condition, which is a direct consequence of having an inadequate amount of nutrients in one's body (either nutrient consumption or absorption related). Malnutrition refers to both overweight/obesity, undernutrition and micronutrient deficiencies.

• **UNDERNUTRITION** stems from the inadequate quantity or quality of food being consumed, or repeated infection or disease resulting in failure to properly absorb vital nutrients. It manifests itself through wasting, stunting, underweight and micronutrient deficiencies.

• **OVERWEIGHT/OBESITY** are defined as abnormal or excessive fat accumulation that presents a risk to health.

• **WASTING (OR ACUTE MALNUTRITION)** is a condition where a child's weight is too low for his/her height. It is associated with a high risk of mortality in young children.

• **STUNTING (A SIGN OF CHRONIC MALNUTRITION)** is a condition where a child's height is too low for his/her age because of long-term nutritional deprivation. It is associated with long-term development and health risks.

• **MICRONUTRIENT DEFICIENCIES** are the direct outcome of inadequate intake of vital vitamins and minerals, which results in sub-optimal immune function while undermining growth and development.

• **NUTRITION-SPECIFIC INTERVENTIONS** look at the immediate causes of undernutrition, such as the promotion of inappropriate infant and young child feeding practices, elimination of micronutrient deficiencies through fortification and supplementation, therapeutic food to manage acute malnutrition (ready-to-use therapeutic food for example), behavioural change and school nutrition.

• **NUTRITION-SENSITIVE INTERVENTIONS** span several sectors and address the underlying and structural causes of undernutrition. They include interventions in the areas of agriculture, public health, gender equality, water, sanitation and hygiene and education among others.



## WHAT HAS THE EU DONE TO TACKLE MALNUTRITION?

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The global community, with the EU as a leading actor, has made strong commitments to fight hunger and malnutrition including: the **Sustainable Development Goal 2 (SDG 2)** to end all forms of malnutrition by 2030 and to leave no one behind; and the **World Health Assembly (WHA)** global nutrition targets on stunting, anaemia in women, exclusive breastfeeding and scaling up treatment for severe wasting.

In 2013, ahead of the Nutrition for Growth Summit in London, the EU pledged **€3.5 billion for the 2014-2020 period, showing strong leadership on nutrition**. The EU also committed, in the EU Action Plan on Nutrition, to **reduce the number of stunted children by at least 7 million by 2025**.

In the period 2014 to 2017, total funds provided to nutrition-related actions amounted to nearly **EUR 2.5 billion**. Even though the EU is on track to meet its financial commitment, the investment of the international community is insufficient to achieve SDG 2. The World Bank investment framework for nutrition indicated that an additional investment of US\$ 70 billion over 10 years is needed to achieve the global targets. This key figure highlights the urgent **need to increase efforts to eradicate all forms of malnutrition**. In this context, it is even more crucial that the EU continues to act as a champion on nutrition, especially as EU's financial pledge to Nutrition for Growth ends in 2020.

## THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT: AN ACTIVE STAKEHOLDER IN THE FIGHT AGAINST MALNUTRITION

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The European Parliament has been championing food and nutrition security over recent years in its approach towards development policy.

Several **resolutions** have been adopted to call for nutrition to be prioritized as a development goal by the European Commission and EU Member States. In October 2016, the European Parliament endorsed a resolution on the next steps towards attaining global goals and EU commitments on nutrition and food security in the world.

During the last legislature, members of the European Parliament asked numerous **written parliamentary questions** and **questions for oral answers** to the European Commission on nutrition, which were effective to raise awareness regularly on nutrition.



# LET'S FIGHT MALNUTRITION TOGETHER

Generation Nutrition EU is a network of multisectoral civil society organisations, collaborating to end malnutrition in all its forms. Members of Generation Nutrition include Action Against Hunger, Alliance2015, CARE, Global Health Advocates, Save the Children, WaterAid and World Vision. The coalition works with and towards the EU to ensure and enhance its commitments and action towards achieving a world without malnutrition in all its forms by 2030.

Generation Nutrition have built a strong relationship with Members of the European Parliament (MEPs) and hope to engage new MEPs as champions for nutrition as an issue that underpins sustainable growth, development and resilience building. Over the last 3 years, we have regularly met MEPs to exchange on the state of nutrition in the world and policy and programming gaps. Based on these exchanges, the European Parliament hosted several events organized by Generation Nutrition to discuss the role of the European Union in the fight against malnutrition. We'd like to continue this work with you.

The constant engagement of Members of the European Parliament in the next few years will be paramount to keeping nutrition high on the EU agenda and ensure we "leave no one behind".



## KEY REFERENCES:

- 2018 Global Nutrition Report
- 2018 SUN Movement Progress Report
- 2019 Global Report on Food Crises
- The State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World 2019

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