

#### 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 and undernutrition.

#### UNDERNUTRITION

stems from the inadequate quantity and/or quality of food being consumed, and/or repeated infection or disease results in improper absorption of vital nutrients. It manifests itself through wasting, stunting, and micronutrient deficiencies.

#### WASTING (OR ACUTE MALNUTRITION)

is a condition where a child's weight is too low for his/her height, and his/her body wastes away. 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 as a consequence of long-term nutritional deprivation. It is associated with long-term developmental and health risks.

#### HIDDEN HUNGER OR MICRONUTRIENT DEFICIENCIES

is 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 appropriate infant and young child feeding practices, elimination of micronutrient deficiencies through fortification and supplementation, therapeutic food to manage acute malnutrition, behavioural change and school nutrition.

#### NUTRITION-SENSITIVE INTERVENTIONS

span several sectors and address the underlying and structural causes of undernutrition. They encompass interventions in the areas of agriculture, public health, gender equality, water, sanitation and hygiene, and education among others.

GENERATION NUTRITION EU IS A COALITION OF CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANISATIONS WORKING TO END MALNUTRITION IN ALL ITS FORMS. MEMBERS OF THE COALITION WORK IN DIFFERENT SECTORS AND DIFFERENT COUNTRIES ACROSS THE GLOBE BUT ARE UNITED IN SUPPORTING EUROPEAN LEADERSHIP IN THE FIGHT AGAINST MALNUTRITION, ENSURING ADEQUATE AND EFFECTIVE NUTRITION INTERVENTIONS WHICH ARE FIRMLY GROUNDED IN HUMAN RIGHTS AND WHICH LEAVE NO-ONE BEHIND.

WE BELIEVE THE WORLD CAN BE FREED OF MALNUTRITION WITHIN A GENERATION AND THAT THE EU HAS A UNIQUE AND CRITICAL ROLE TO PLAY IN THIS ENDEAVOUR.



# TACKLING THE ROOT CAUSES OF POVERTY EU'S ROLE IN THE FIGHT AGAINST UNDERNUTRITION

**GENERATION  
NUTRITION**



**Save the  
Children**



**GENERATION  
NUTRITION**





## FAST FACTS

Each year malnutrition claims the lives of **3 MILLION CHILDREN** under the age of five.

In 2015, **159 MILLION CHILDREN** under age 5 were **CHRONICALLY MALNOURISHED** (stunted): this is costing the global economy an average **GDP LOSS OF 10%** every year.<sup>1</sup>

Only around **0,57%**<sup>2</sup> of global development aid is spent on nutrition-specific interventions.

To reach the World Health Assembly (WHA) targets to reduce stunting, wasting and anaemia, and to increase exclusive breastfeeding, an **ADDITIONAL \$70 BILLION**<sup>3</sup> investment in nutrition interventions in the next 10 years is needed.

Investing in nutrition interventions is highly cost-effective and impactful: **EVERY \$1 INVESTED IN NUTRITION GENERATES A RETURN OF AT LEAST \$16**<sup>4</sup>.

The European Union (EU) has been championing food and nutrition security over recent years in its development policies. The EU adopted in this regard different frameworks to coordinate and guide its action: the Food Security Policy Framework, the Policy Framework on Enhancing Maternal and Child Nutrition in External Assistance and the subsequent Action Plan on Nutrition, adopted in 2014 and endorsed by EU Member States. As the world's largest aid donor, the EU demonstrated its commitment to substantially reduce undernutrition when, **at the Nutrition for Growth Summit in 2013, it committed to reducing stunting by at least 7 million children by 2025 and pledged €3.5 billion for the 2014-2020 period to achieve this target.**

The European Parliament, with the adoption of the resolution on **NEXT STEPS TOWARDS ATTAINING GLOBAL GOALS AND EU COMMITMENTS ON NUTRITION AND FOOD SECURITY IN THE WORLD** in October 2016, is increasingly taking a strong stand, inviting the European Commission to scale up its efforts in the fight against undernutrition. In particular, the European Parliament is asking the Commission to invest an additional €1 billion in nutrition-specific interventions by 2020, developing at the same time a strategy to reduce wasting within its development programmes.

As civil society, **we very much welcome and value EU's strong leadership in food and nutrition security.** Given the current global context and the need for increased efforts to meet SDGs and WHA nutrition targets, we are committed to working alongside and supporting the EU to enhance and improve its action. We see a need for :

- ▶ **A SCALE UP OF INVESTMENTS IN NUTRITION-SENSITIVE AND NUTRITION-SPECIFIC INTERVENTIONS**, contributing to filling the gap needed to reach the WHA nutrition targets. Considering that around 90% of the €3.5 billion pledged by the EU at the Nutrition 4 Growth Summit in 2013 consist of nutrition-sensitive interventions<sup>5</sup>, a more robust increase in EU nutrition-specific spending in development programmes is needed. Nutrition-specific interventions are a set of proven actions to address the immediate causes of undernutrition, like inadequate dietary intake and some of the underlying causes like feeding practices and access to food. If fully scaled up, these interventions could potentially save the lives of 3.7 million children by 2025 and result in 67 million fewer cases of stunting<sup>6</sup>.

- ▶ **THE DEVELOPMENT OF A STRATEGY TO REDUCE WASTING IN DEVELOPMENT CONTEXT**, while currently most of European Commission's programmes to fight acute malnutrition are part of its humanitarian response, with short-term emergency programmes. We see the need of longer-term development strategies, integrating humanitarian responses where necessary, to reduce and prevent wasting with a sustainable approach, considering that less than 20% of children affected are able to access the treatment they need<sup>7</sup> and that wasting rates have been decreasing at a significantly slower speed than stunting over the past 15 years<sup>8</sup>.

- ▶ **ENSURING A NUTRITION-SENSITIVE PROGRAMMING APPROACH ACROSS DIFFERENT EU DEVELOPMENT SECTORS (HEALTH, GENDER, AGRICULTURE, EDUCATION, WATER, SANITATION AND HYGIENE)**, to ensure positive nutrition outcomes from different and multi-sectorial interventions.

- ▶ **IMPROVED TRACKING OF NUTRITION SPENDING.** While both nutrition-specific and nutrition-sensitive interventions are important to allow for sustainable and long-term change, it is imperative that disbursement and impact is tracked adequately. The methodology the EU and some other donors use to track these cross-cutting nutrition-sensitive investments could be strengthened to enhance accuracy and reduce subjectivity. Producing accurate and reliable data on all nutrition investments is central to ensuring accountability. Accountability in turn is key in order for the EU to achieve the SDGs.

## OPPORTUNITIES TO SCALE UP EFFORTS TO END UNDERNUTRITION

In 2016, the United Nations proclaimed 2016-2025 the **DECADE OF ACTION ON NUTRITION**, an unprecedented opportunity for nutrition action, which serves as a framework to increase activities conducted at national, regional and global levels to achieve existing global targets for nutrition. The Framework of Action of the ICN2 (Second International Conference on Nutrition, organised by FAO and WHO in 2014) also serves as a reference for governments to take responsibility for addressing undernourishment and ensuring access to food that meets people's nutrition needs and promote safe and diversified diets. In addition, the **ITALIAN G7 IN 2017** will have a strong focus on Food Security and Nutrition. It should be a key occasion for world leaders to take concrete actions to deliver on the commitments of lifting 500 million people out of hunger by 2030, taken at the G7 Elmau Summit in 2015. Moreover, the **NUTRITION 4 GROWTH** initiative, that started in London in 2013 and will culminate in Japan in 2020, represents an opportunity for governments, civil society, donors to come together to invest in solutions to end malnutrition.

**The EU should work to ensure these future opportunities at global level can strengthen the political momentum towards ending undernutrition, building on past commitments, evaluating the progress and pledging additional financial resources, in order to fill the funding gap and ensure the ambition of the SDGs to end malnutrition in all its forms can be realised.**

## WE CALL ON THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION AND ALL MEMBER STATES TO :

### ADOPT POLICY

- ▶ Develop a specific strategy and target to reduce wasting in under-fives in development contexts, as previously done with stunting, so to prevent and treat acute malnutrition with a long-term sustainable approach.
- ▶ Ensuring a nutrition-sensitive programming approach across different EU development sectors (health, gender, agriculture, education, water, sanitation and hygiene).
- ▶ Develop concrete plans to increase cooperation across sectors at headquarters and EU Delegation level in order to reach WHA and SDG nutrition targets in both humanitarian and development contexts.
- ▶ Ensure policy coherence across all nutrition programmes, interventions and any other EU development, economic and foreign policies, without any forms of aid conditionality based on migration indicators.

### SHOW STRONG POLITICAL LEADERSHIP

- ▶ Play a strong leadership role at the global level to ensure high level moments to strengthen the political and financial commitments to end undernutrition and continue to act as a champion among donors.
- ▶ Show leadership within the Italian G7 in 2017, ensuring that nutrition will be incorporated in a robust way into any G7 initiative on food security and agriculture, contributing to deliver on the commitment of lifting 500 million people out of hunger by 2030.
- ▶ Continue to actively engage with local civil society organisations, especially from developing countries, to ensure their voices are heard and taken into account at the global level.

### SECURE FINANCIAL COMMITMENTS

- ▶ Pledge an additional €1 billion to nutrition-specific interventions by 2020, to fill the funding gap and contribute to meet the global nutrition targets.
- ▶ Ensure increased funding for food and nutrition security interventions within the development instruments in the next EU Multiannual Financial Framework.

### ENSURE ACCOUNTABILITY

- ▶ Secure wider political commitment to the improvement of current tracking of nutrition-sensitive and nutrition-specific spending by aligning the DAC basic nutrition code to the Lancet list of nutrition-specific interventions and developing a DAC marker for both nutrition specific and nutrition-sensitive interventions.
- ▶ Ensure full disbursement of the €3.5 billion pledge for nutrition interventions, through keeping track of the progress and ensuring priority countries also provide reliable data, especially for all the WHA global nutrition targets.
- ▶ Continue to effectively and adequately track the progress on the EU Action Plan on Nutrition, tracking the Nutrition 4 Growth disbursement and the commitment of reducing stunting by at least 7 million by 2025.

**AS CIVIL SOCIETY, WE STAND READY TO WORK ALONGSIDE THE EU TO ENSURE GLOBAL LEADERSHIP TO END UNDERNUTRITION.**

1 Global Nutrition Report 2016: From Promise to Impact: Ending Malnutrition by 2030. <http://ebrary.ifpri.org/utis/getfile/collection/p15738coll2/id/130354/filename/130565.pdf>

2 Ibid

3 World Bank. 2016. Investing in nutrition: the foundation for development - an investment framework to reach the global nutrition targets. Washington, D.C.: World Bank Group. <http://documents.worldbank.org/curated/en/963161467989517289/Investing-in-nutrition-the-foundation-for-development-an-investment-framework-to-reach-the-global-nutrition-targets>

4 Global Nutrition Report 2014: Actions and Accountability to accelerate the world's progress on Nutrition. <http://ebrary.ifpri.org/utis/getfile/collection/p15738coll2/id/128484/filename/128695.pdf>

5 First Progress Report on the Commission's Action Plan on Nutrition. July 2014 - March 2016. European Commission Staff Working Document, Brussels 20/05/2016 [http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/sites/devco/files/swd-first-progress-report-action-plan-nutrition-2014-2016\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/sites/devco/files/swd-first-progress-report-action-plan-nutrition-2014-2016_en.pdf)

6 Shekar, Meera; Kakietek, Jakub Jan; Dayton, Julia M.; Walters, Dylan David. 2016. An Investment Framework for Nutrition. Reaching the Global Targets for Stunting, Anemia, Breastfeeding and Wasting. Washington, D.C.: World Bank Group. <http://documents.worldbank.org/curated/en/758331475269503930/main-report>

7 Figures from the No Wasted Lives coalition, a joint initiative supported by Action Against Hunger, UNICEF, the Children's Investment Fund Foundation, the United Kingdom government, and the European Union, with the goal of ensuring that six million severely malnourished children are able to get access to lifesaving treatment every year by 2020. <http://www.nowastedlives.org/>

8 IFPRI, Concern Worldwide, Welthungerhilfe, Global Hunger Index - getting to zero hunger, October 2016, Washington DC. <http://www.ifpri.org/publication/2016-global-hunger-index-getting-zero-hunger>