

DEEP DIVES

topics



Spain's nutrition ODA

Spain uses political action to drive nutrition-related issues forward internationally

Spain outlines its position regarding nutrition in its 'Master Plan for Spanish Cooperation for 2018 to 2021' (Master Plan), listing it together with food security among its seven priority sectors. Further orientations and priorities are spelled out in the Spanish Agency for International Development Cooperation's (AECID) 'Sectoral Intervention Plan on Rural Development and Fight against Hunger'. New sectorial strategies will be developed in coming months, according to the 2018-2021 Master Plan. Spain strongly links nutrition-related issues to food security and the fight against hunger. Spain highlights women, children, and vulnerable populations in its support for strengthening nutrition and food security policies in recipient countries, as well as in its humanitarian and other emergency response programming. As a result, Spain's interventions in nutrition aim to work on prevention and risk-management by developing resilience mechanisms and crisis-management tools in recipient countries. The AECID places emphasis on women's empowerment and their participation in decision-making processes within the sector.

The new Master Plan continues to place nutrition (the goal of 'zero hunger' and ending all forms of malnutrition) among its top priorities. It outlines two strategic actions related to nutrition: 1) provide all people suffering from malnutrition with food supplies and 2) support developing countries to build an effective, sustainable agro-food system.

The cross-sectoral nature of nutrition interventions makes it difficult to accurately quantify Spain's overall engagement in this sector. Spain does not participate in the reporting framework set by the 'Scaling Up Nutrition' (SUN) initiative, an international initiative to track nutrition-sensitive interventions (see box). According to OECD data, funding for 'basic nutrition' amounted to US\$5 million in 2016 (in 2016 prices). Funding levels topped US\$45 million in 2008 but have declined fairly steadily since, largely attributable to budget cuts across all sectors.

To compensate for its low funding levels to nutrition, Spain engages increasingly on a political level and pushes the issue forward on the international scene. It did so, for instance, in the development of the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda, where it promoted the importance of food and nutrition security. Spain also hosts the World Food Program's (WFP) logistics center on the Canary Islands, which is an important hub for humanitarian aid to sub-Saharan Africa, particularly for the Sahel region.

MAEC and AECID are key actors in policymaking

Within Spain's Ministry for Foreign Affairs and Cooperation (MAEC), the most relevant department for nutrition when it comes to strategic orientations is the rural development and food security division. Within Spain's development agency AECID, the Directorate for Multilateral and Sectoral Cooperation, and regional departments (i.e. Directorate for Africa and Directorate for Latin America), are in charge of programming and implementing nutrition-related programs. The AECID's Humanitarian Office manages emergency interventions related to food security and nutrition, such as in the Sahel region.

- **Nutrition-specific:** Interventions that address immediate causes of undernutrition and have the improvement of nutrition (i.e., support for exclusive breastfeeding, supplementary feeding, etc.) as their primary objective.
- **Nutrition-sensitive:** Interventions that address underlying causes of malnutrition and that take into account cross-sector actions and impacts (i.e., improving access to diverse foods).