

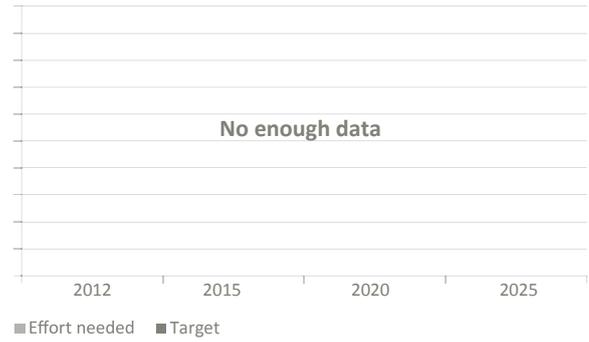
Costa Rica

Joined: March 2014

Highlights

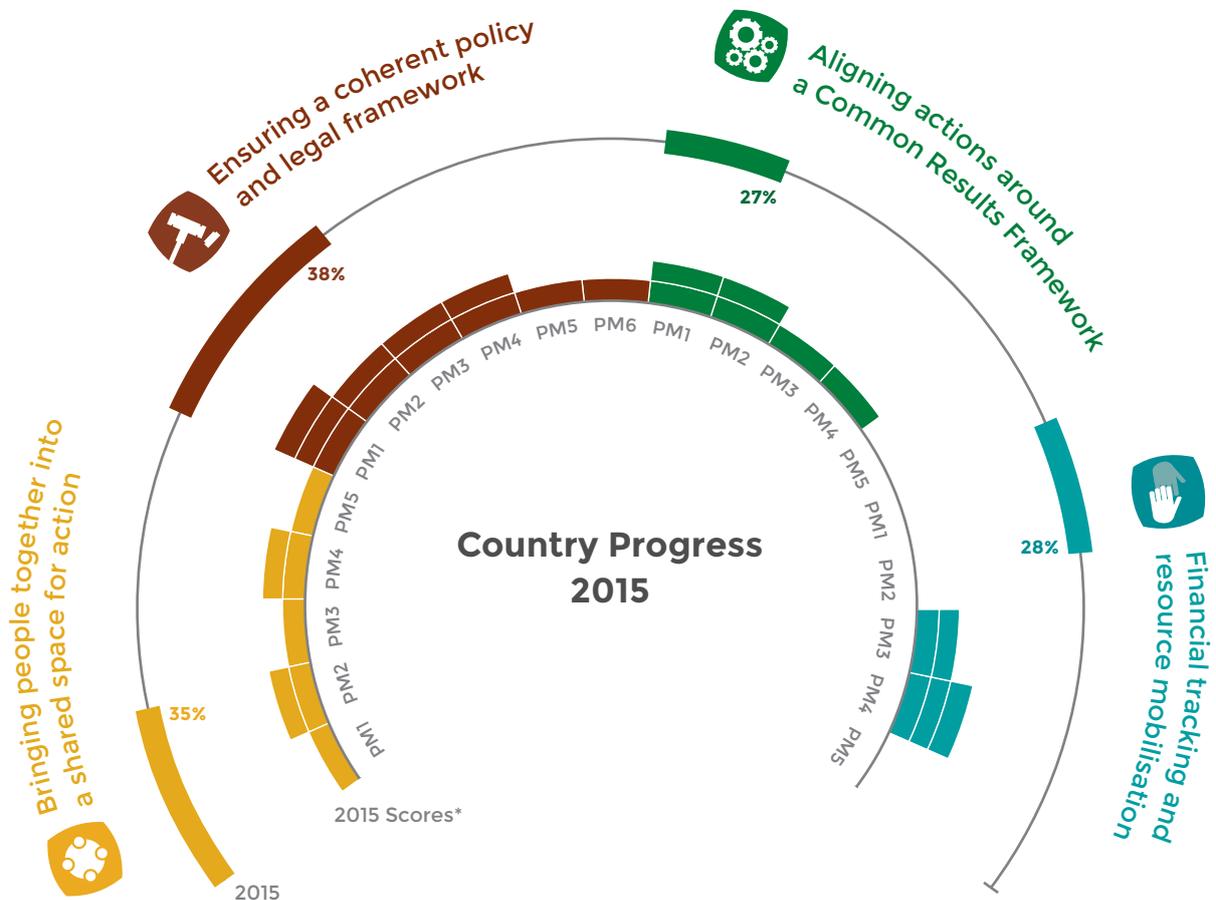
- The National Food Fortification Programme has served as a model for various countries and has contributed mainly to reducing anaemia, the prevalence of neural tube defects (NTD) and the infant mortality rate (IMR) between 1997 and 2009.
- The Education and Nutrition Centre, and the Nutrition and Integrated Care Centres (CEN CINAI) established in the 1950s have contributed to reducing child malnutrition from 57.4 per cent in 1966 to 1.1 per cent in 2009. The Centres are fully funded by the national government.
- The Food and Nutrition Programme for Schoolchildren and Adolescents (PANEA) under the Ministry of Education has been providing the population with additional education about nutrition and food since 1974.

Targeted Stunting Reduction (million US stunted children)



Under five stunting:	5.6%
Low-birth weight:	7.2%
0-5 months old exclusive breastfeeding:	18.7%
Under five wasting:	1.0%
Under five overweight:	8.1%
Women Anaemia 15-49 years:	19.0%

*data sources detailed in Annex 1



*See page 29 for more information about 2015 scoring against each progress marker



Since 1973, the legally established Secretariat for National Policy for Food and Nutrition (SEPAN), under the responsibility of the Ministry of Health, has been in charge of coordinating different sectors and institutions in Costa Rica. Although SEPAN had in the past been undermined by a lack of political support, the current government is committed to strengthening the institution.

Costa Rica does not have just one multi-stakeholder platform but eight technical committees and commissions which serve as shared spaces for action on nutrition issues at a central

level. These bodies have responsibilities in the areas of: breastfeeding, health and nutrition for schoolchildren, child and adolescent undernutrition, nutritional guides, the 5-A-Day Network (for healthy eating), nutritional value of foods, micronutrients and strategy for chronic noncommunicable diseases and obesity, preschool and school food programmes and governance of food security and nutrition. Each of these bodies has its own work plan and specific objectives, which are assessed at the end of the year.

Bringing people together into a shared space for action



The 2011-2021 National Policy on Food Security and Nutrition and the 2011-2015 National Plan for Food Security and Nutrition are the official documents guiding interventions in food and nutrition in the country. The country's government for 2014-2018 has included the nutrition component as a priority in the health section of the National Development Plan. Goals established include a two per cent reduction in obesity for five to 12 year-olds, as well as specific goals relating to the reduction of chronic noncommunicable diseases, the risk factors for which first appear in childhood.

This year, the **National Agreement of the Council of Ministers for a comprehensive approach to dealing with**

chronic noncommunicable diseases and obesity was signed by the President, 16 Ministers and high-level officials of government institutions as well as the Costa Rican Office of the Pan American Health Organization acting as witness.

Costa Rica has a strong regulatory framework of food fortification using micronutrients which are deficient in the population. This framework is the fruit of tough negotiations and advocacy between the Ministry of Health and the food industry on the basis of scientific evidence and the findings of national nutrition surveys. Current executive decrees regulate the production of salt, rice, sugar, wheat and, maize flour and milk.

Ensuring a coherent policy and legal framework



The nutrition programmes and measures are a response to the National Health Policy and the 2014-2018 National Development Plan, which provided for the management of resources and agreements between government institutions, academia and NGOs.

The Policy on Food Security and Nutrition, as well as the Costa Rican Strategy and Action Plan on Tackling Noncommunicable Diseases, are in line with the institutional plans and agreements to which the country is party.

In 2013, a cooperation agreement was signed between the Ministry of Health, Agriculture and Livestock and the National Census and Statistics Institute to create the Food Security and Nutrition Information System (SINSAN). This aim of this system, which is currently in use and being strengthened, is to provide timely and reliable information on the formulation, follow-up and assessment of public policies aimed at strengthening food security and nutrition in Costa Rica.

Aligning actions around a Common Results Framework



Costa Rica's financing for nutrition comes from domestic sources but this funding is inadequate to cover all human resource requirements. In 2015, the country began a process of identifying nutrition-specific and nutrition-sensitive line items of central government entities as published in the 2014 national budget.

Financial tracking and resource mobilisation