

CASE STUDY:

Activities by the Guatemala Sugar Agroindustry supporting the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goal 1 (SDG 1) of the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.







END POVERTY IN ALL ITS FORMS EVERYWHERE



SUSTAINABLE
**WATER &
ENERGY**
SOLUTIONS
NETWORK



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End Poverty in all its forms everywhere / Asazgua

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CONTENTS

THE GUATEMALA SUGAR AGROINDUSTRY	8
SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY	9
THE GUATEMALA SUGAR AGROINDUSTRY AND THE SDG 1	10
1. Social Strategic Framework Of The Sugar Agroindustry	11
2. Jobs And Economic Development	13
3. Program Of Opportunities To Study (Scholarships)	15
4. My Health First (Mi Salud Primero) Program	17
5. Fortification Of Sugar With Micronutrients: Vitamin A And Iron	19
6. Better Families (Mejores Familias) Program	21
7. Fundazúcar Medical Clinic	23
INTERLINKAGES WITH OTHER SDGs	25
CONCLUSIONS	26
REFERENCES AND SOURCES FOR ADDITIONAL READING	27

SDG 1: END POVERTY IN ALL ITS FORMS EVERYWHERE



Target 1.1: By 2030, eradicate extreme poverty for all people everywhere, currently measured as people living on less than \$1.25 a day.

Target 1.2: By 2030, reduce at least by half the proportion of men, women and children of all ages living in poverty in all its dimensions according to national definitions.

Target 1.3: Implement nationally appropriate social protection systems and measures for all, including floors, and by 2030 achieve substantial coverage of the poor and the vulnerable.

Target 1.4: By 2030, ensure that all men and women, in particular the poor and the vulnerable, have equal rights to economic resources, as well as access to basic services, ownership and control over land and other forms of property, inheritance, natural resources, appropriate new technology and financial services, including microfinance.

Target 1.5: By 2030, build the resilience of the poor and those in vulnerable situations and reduce their exposure and vulnerability to climate-related extreme events and other economic, social and environmental shocks and disasters.

Target: 1.A Ensure significant mobilization of resources from a variety of sources, including through enhanced development cooperation, in order to provide adequate and predictable means for developing countries, in particular least developed countries, to implement programmes and policies to end poverty in all its dimensions.

Target: 1.B Create sound policy frameworks at the national, regional and international levels, based on pro-poor and gender-sensitive development strategies, to support accelerated investment in poverty eradication actions.

Source: United Nations, 2015.



The volcanic soils of southern Guatemala are exceptional for the growth of sugarcane

THE GUATEMALA SUGAR AGROINDUSTRY

As of 2021, Guatemala was the third largest producer in Latin America and the sixth largest exporter of sugar in the world. Sugar is the second agroindustrial product most exported of Guatemala. The Guatemala Sugar Agroindustry generates almost US \$700 million in foreign exchange annually and provides more than 55,000 direct jobs and 278,000 indirect jobs in the country. Besides, the sector receives products and services from more than 6,000 small, medium-sized and large enterprises, which also generate more employment. Only 2.97% of the cultivable land in Guatemala is used for sugarcane production. Asazgua, the Association of Sugar Producers of Guatemala, was created in 1957 to coordinate the activities of the Guatemala Sugar Agroindustry. It includes 11 sugar producers and five technical organizations specialized in research, climate change, sugar exportation and social responsibility (Asazgua, 2020). In addition, since 2022, it counts with an organization specialized in innovation. The sugar producers that are members of Asazgua include: Pantaleón, Concepción, Palo Gordo, Santa Ana, Magdalena, Santa Teresa, La Unión, Madre Tierra, Trinidad (San Diego), La Sonrisa and El Pilar.

The Guatemala Sugar Agroindustry is committed to generating opportunities and prosperity for the people of Guatemala that support the country's sustainable development. It promotes decent and valuable jobs for the wellbeing of the population, while at the same time promoting environmental protection and conservation.

The Guatemala Sugar Agroindustry follows sustainable development principles as reflected by its strategic objectives and integrated actions and programs, supporting social wellbeing, economic growth, industrialization, and environmental protection. The activities of the sugar industry

in Guatemala are recognized as examples of "Good Practices" in the effective implementation of the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Sustainable Development Goals.

Associated organizations supporting specific sustainable objectives of the Guatemala Sugar Agroindustry have been created in the last decades. In 1990 Fundazúcar was launched as the social branch for the development and implementation of programs and projects on health, education and development. In 1992 Cengicaña started research activities to develop new varieties of sugarcane, to have integrated pest management, to study land quality and to implement more efficient processes for the cultivation of sugarcane and for the production of sugar. In 1994 Expogranel, one of the most efficient boarding terminals for sugar export in the world, was launched to cover international markets in a more efficient and competitive manner. In 2010, the Private Institute for Climate Change Research (ICC) was created to perform research, activities and projects related to climate change. In 2022 the Innovation Hub was created to develop a program of innovative projects through the identification and optimization of products, activities, processes and business models of the Sugar Agroindustry.

At the international level, the Guatemala Sugar Agroindustry supports the work of ICC on climate change mitigation and adaptation with other countries of Central America. Also through Asazgua, it participates actively in the Global Network on Sustainable Water and Energy Solutions. This is an initiative led by the Division for Sustainable Development Goals of the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA). The Network promotes integrated water and energy solutions that address climate change objectives worldwide.

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

The Sustainable Development Strategy of the Guatemala Sugar Agroindustry is based on its vision, mission and objectives which promote a comprehensive and forward-looking transformative pathway to prosperity and peace for the people of Guatemala, at the same time supporting a healthy and sustainable planet. It follows an integrated approach based on transformation and adaptation to changes expected in the future due to new challenges. With its inclusive participation policy with multi-stakeholder

partnerships, the Sugar Agroindustry, through Asazgua, is committed to coordinating the work of enterprises, governmental entities and civil society to achieve the final goal of prosperity and sustainable development for Guatemala. The Guatemala Sugar Agroindustry is a global example of efficiency and technological advance representing a very relevant factor for the economy of Guatemala with important positive impacts also on the social and environmental dimensions of sustainable development.

Objectives

1. Increase productivity through development and improvements in the field and in sugar refineries
2. Provide technical training and capacity building for human resources
3. Develop projects and programs that increase the capacity of the production systems in the field and in sugar refineries, in distribution and commercialization of products, and of the export boarding systems.

Vision

Before 2025 the Guatemala Sugar Agroindustry will be the most respected productive sector of the country due to diversification, competitive efficiency, generation of dignified jobs, and respect for the environment, suppliers and communities with whom it relates.

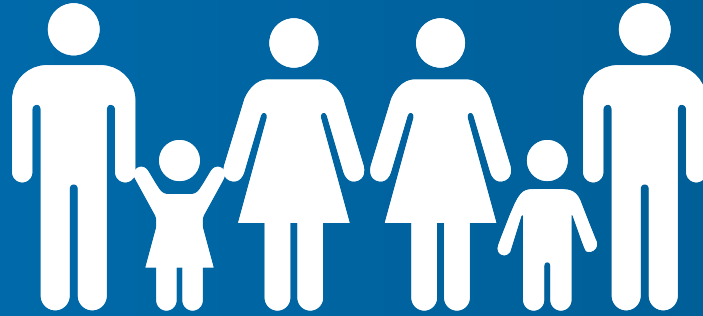
Given its policy of unified action, proactive attitude and strong socioeconomic support, the Sugar Agroindustry leads as a positive agent of change for integral development, boosting the progress of its members and the country.

One of the objectives of the Guatemala Sugar Agroindustry is to increase productivity through development and improvements in the field and in sugar refineries.



Mission

The Guatemala Sugar Agroindustry mission includes the following: to act in united manner to cultivate and process sugarcane to produce sugar, electricity, ethanol and other products; to undertake other activities to increase the value of the associated enterprises with a positive impact on the integrated development of the country; to innovate constantly improving competitive efficiency; to facilitate national and international commercialization of sugar; and to ensure sustainability while building trust responsibly.



THE GUATEMALA SUGAR AGROINDUSTRY AND THE SDG 1

The Guatemala Sugar Agroindustry has multiple initiatives in place that support the objective of SDG 1 on ending or reducing poverty in all its forms. Activities supporting poverty reduction by the Sugar Agroindustry are mainly coordinated through the Foundation of Sugar of Guatemala (Fundazúcar).

Asazgua created Fundazúcar in 1990 as the social branch of the Guatemala Sugar Agroindustry for the development and implementation of programs and projects on health, education, development and the wellbeing of the population. The Foundation implements programs at the community level with a focus on women, youth, teachers, health workers, community leaders and municipal leaders who are all key actors for responsibly citizenship. A considerable number of people in municipalities of interest of the Sugar Agroindustry live in vulnerable communities exposed to poverty in most of its forms. The Social Strategy of the Guatemala Agroindustry emphasizes building human capital with an integrated focus that empowers people to implement changes towards the improvement of their quality of life and wellbeing.

The most important activities of the sustainable development strategy of the Sugar Agroindustry supporting the poverty eradication objectives of SDG 1 include: the Social Strategic Framework of the Sugar Agroindustry, Jobs and Economic Development, the Program of Opportunities to Study (Scholarships), the My Health First Program, Fortification of sugar with vitamin A and iron, Better Families Program and the Fundazúcar Medical Clinic. As a result of the combination of the entirety of these initiatives, the Sugar Agroindustry is able to continuously support efforts to eradicate poverty in Guatemala particularly in the region of influence of the Sugar Agroindustry.

1. SOCIAL STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK OF THE SUGAR AGROINDUSTRY



1.1. Social Strategic Framework of the Sugar Agroindustry

Objectives and Description

The vision of the Social Strategic Framework of the Sugar Agroindustry is that everyone should have equal opportunities to satisfy basic needs. The Mission of Fundazúcar is to become a model for the promotion of social development that the Sugar Agroindustry could share for implementation in other sectors of the country with the objective of supporting the social and economic development of the people of Guatemala. The specific target is to promote the development of the Pacific Lowlands region and of the communities of migrant workers through the development and implementation of programs and projects on education, health and municipal development that aim to reduce poverty, increase prosperity and ensure the wellbeing of the population.

The activities of FUNDAZCAR are based on the formation of human capital with an integral development focus in which each individual has the capabilities and potential to effectively support the prosperity of communities. The sharing of knowledge empowers people allowing a behavioral change that induces greater autonomy and more assertive decisions which in turn improves the quality of life and reduces poverty at all levels.

The experience of Fundazúcar of the last 30 years has demonstrated that better results are obtained when the focus is on the cause of the problems; therefore, each of its programs is designed with a methodology of logical framework that allows the training and empowering of key actors. These actors effectively support the sustainable development of communities allowing the constant identification of solutions for the short, medium and long term. The key actors include women, youth representatives, teachers, school directors, health workers, community leaders and municipal authorities.

Through this strategic framework, Fundazúcar has an active and permanent role in the communities. Today the Sugar Agroindustry represents a strategic partner for the state that promotes a model of responsible citizenship with trained and informed individuals that support a continuous process to eradicate poverty. These individuals play an important role in the sustainability of the communities helping to optimize the use of state resources in priority projects and programs, and to strengthen public institutions.

Related Targets

The Social Strategic Framework of the Sugar Agroindustry supports most of the targets of SDG 1 on poverty eradication. These targets include: Target 1.1 on eradicating extreme poverty; Target 1.3 on implementing appropriate social protection systems and measures; Target 1.4 on ensuring that men and women, in particular the poor and the vulnerable, have equal rights to economic resources as well as access to basic services; and Target 1.5 on building the resilience of the poor and those in vulnerable situations and reduce their exposure and vulnerability to climate-related extreme events and other economic, social and environmental shocks and disasters.

Challenges

One of the major challenges is the need to ensure continuous support to communities so that the objectives of the Social Strategic Framework are achieved in the mid-term and long-term. Poverty eradication is a continuous challenge that needs dynamic intervention not only from the public authorities but also from the private sector for the generation of jobs and for the formation of community leaders as active members of development.

Another important challenge is the coordination of activities between the government and the communities to ensure the implementation of projects based on integrated development planning. The main objective is to define public policies and implement them locally based on priorities with the efficient administration of public resources.

Lessons Learned

An important lesson from the experience of decades is the need to empower and build the capacities of key actors at the local level in order to effectively identify and perform the necessary actions that ensure the prosperity and sustainability of communities participating in the programs. The implementation of programs should support the state institutions strengthening the participation of qualified and informed citizens.

Continuous monitoring of poor and vulnerable communities is key to ensure progress related to the objectives of reducing poverty, increasing prosperity and supporting sustainable development. Therefore, programs are necessary for the continuous monitoring of social and economic indices and indicators that reflect progress in development objectives including on poverty, health, education, nutrition, etc.

Results

The Guatemala Sugar Agroindustry is playing an important role in Guatemala supporting overall efforts on the reduction of poverty and empowering people at all levels through its Social Strategic Framework. Many people are benefiting from the activities related to this social strategy, especially the people from the Pacific Lowlands region which is the area of operation of the Sugar Agroindustry.

2. JOBS AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT



2.1. Jobs and Economic Development

Objective and Description

The Sugar Agroindustry is a strong engine for economic development and job generation in Guatemala. Its activities impact about 90% of the municipalities of the country. The Sugar Agroindustry generates more than \$700 million in foreign exchange annually. Each year it pays more than \$400 million in wages and salaries. The economic dynamics that are generated by the mills with suppliers in populations located in the area of influence provide additional economic growth. A considerable number of jobs and income go to people in poor and vulnerable communities contributing to poverty reduction objectives. The Sugar Agroindustry pays approximately \$30 million in taxes annually.

In Guatemala, the Sugar Industry is responsible for the generation of more than 55,000 direct jobs that include cane cutters, industrial workers and

experts in science and technology, among others. It also generates 278,000 indirect jobs. The sugar industry touches many labor sectors and provides an opportunity for economic growth and poverty eradication. The industry brings jobs to many rural communities, and the harvest season provides jobs for migrant workers from the northern regions in the country. In addition to jobs, the sugar mills and Fundazúcar implement programs that teach cane cutters the skills they need for personal advancement.

Related Targets

Jobs and economic development generated by the Sugar Agroindustry support most of the targets of SDG 1 on poverty eradication. These targets include: Target 1.1 on eradicating extreme poverty;

Target 1.2 on reducing the proportion of men, women and children living in poverty; and Target 1.4 on ensuring that men and women, in particular the poor and the vulnerable, have equal rights to economic resources as well as access to basic services.

Challenges

Given the fact that harvesting activities only last 6 months, a very challenging task is to be able to provide stable jobs in the long-term for seasonal activities within an integrated social framework that supports poverty eradication and sustainable development.

Another major challenge is the coordination of activities with the government given the commitment of the state to attract capital and boost investment projects that will help generate other sources of formal employment that the labor market demand.

Lessons Learned

The experience of the Guatemala Sugar Agroindustry of many decades clearly shows that providing decent and valuable employment is key to achieving the sustainability of the sugar production and the necessary economic growth that supports poverty eradication.

Results

The Guatemala Sugar Agroindustry is a major source of job opportunities and prosperity for the people of Guatemala which is clearly helping to reduce poverty. Its program on Jobs and Economic Development supports the country's poverty eradication objectives and represents a strong engine for sustainable economic growth and productive employment generating over 320,000 direct and indirect jobs. It offers decent and valuable jobs for the wellbeing of the population, while at the same time promoting environmental protection and conservation.



The sugar industry touches many labor sectors and provides an opportunity for economic growth and poverty eradication.

3. PROGRAM OF OPPORTUNITIES TO STUDY (SCHOLARSHIPS)



3.1 Program of Opportunities to Study (Scholarships)

Objectives and Description

The Program of Opportunities to Study of ASAZGUA is a scholarship program that provides the chance to young students to pursue studies in different subjects and at different levels. This initiative is considered very effective in the long-term for inducing a transformational change towards moving families out of poverty.

The program is implemented in different educational institutions including the Technical Institute for Training (INTECAP), the Universidad del Valle de Guatemala (UVG), the Guatemalan Institute of Radiophonic Education (IGER) and others. One of the main areas is technical careers with potential for specialized jobs such as industrial mechanics, automobile electromechanics, industrial electronics, maintenance of hydraulic circuits, computers, etc. The program is open to students between 15 and 25 years old especially for careers that are in high demand in the labor market.

Related Targets

This activity is directly linked to Target 1.2 on reducing the proportion of men, women and children in poverty and Target 1.3 on implementing appropriate social protection systems and measures covering the poor and the vulnerable. By providing scholarships to those with financial needs, the Sugar Agroindustry through ASAZGUA is also supporting Target 1.4 on ensuring that men and women particularly the poor and the vulnerable have equal rights to economic resources and Target 1.A on ensuring significant mobilization of resources from a variety of sources to implement programs and policies to end poverty in all its dimensions.

Challenges

One important challenge faced in the implementation of this program is related to the scholarship selection program. There are many qualified young students with

economic restrictions but only a limited number of scholarships can be awarded every year. Therefore, there is always the need to expand the program and the necessary funding to be able to support more students.

Lessons Learned

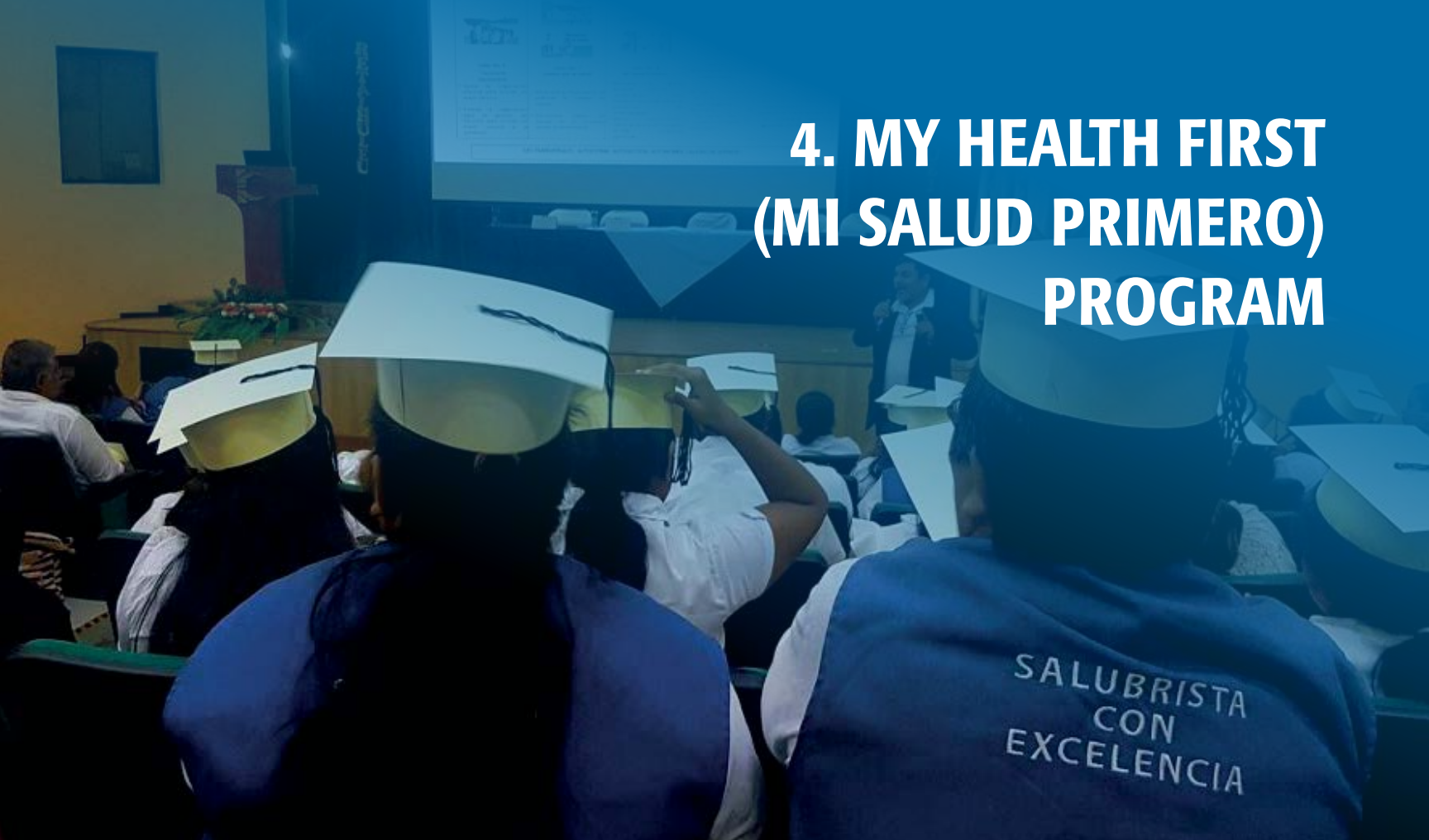
A major lesson learned from the implementation of this program is that scholarships provide unique opportunities that allow students with limited economic means to compete for jobs that are in great demand in the labor force. This program has proved to be effective in reducing inequalities and fomenting economic growth and prosperity in Guatemala.

Results

The Opportunities to Study program has provided scholarships to over 2,700 students who have already graduated in different careers allowing them to find jobs in many areas of interest in the country. The program demonstrates that the private industry can effectively support social objectives related to education that at the same time help to reduce inequalities and poverty.



4. MY HEALTH FIRST (MI SALUD PRIMERO) PROGRAM



4.1 My Health First (Mi Salud Primero) Program

Objectives and Description

Since 2016 Fundazúcar in partnership with the Ministry of Health implements the innovative program “My Health First”. The program is directed to health professionals of the first level of attention of the Ministry of Health in 27 municipalities of the south coast region. The program objective is the development of technical competencies and the improvement of the service attitude for preventive health. This is an important health service that supports the eradication of poverty and improves the wellbeing of the population particularly in poor and vulnerable communities.

The main objectives of the program include healthy children, family medicine and epidemiological registry to ensure that health posts provide an integrated service to good health and to sickness prevention. Around 500 people have been trained who are providing health services in 65 health posts located in the departments of Escuintla, Suchitepéquez, Retalhuleu, Jutiapa and Santa Rosa.

Related Targets

The “My Health First Program” supports the objectives of Target 1.3 on implementing appropriate social protection systems and measures covering the poor and the vulnerable. The activity provides substantive support to the public health agency of Guatemala particularly in vulnerable communities.

Challenges

A major challenge is related to reaching health professionals in very isolated rural communities. Also, there is the need to continue expanding the coverage to more areas with vulnerable communities where effective health services are really needed.

Lessons Learned

One of the main lessons learned is that the health workforce needs to receive continuous training to be able to adapt to the changing conditions of vulnerable

communities and their health needs. Strengthening capacities is indispensable to learn new health procedures, programs and medications that promote sickness prevention and the wellbeing of the population.

Another lesson is that through this program trained health workers recognize and give more importance to the control and actualization of health statistics of the communities they serve in critical issues such as: vaccination control, infant malnutrition, local sicknesses, and pregnant women health data, among others. This allows better health service and more appropriate decisions.

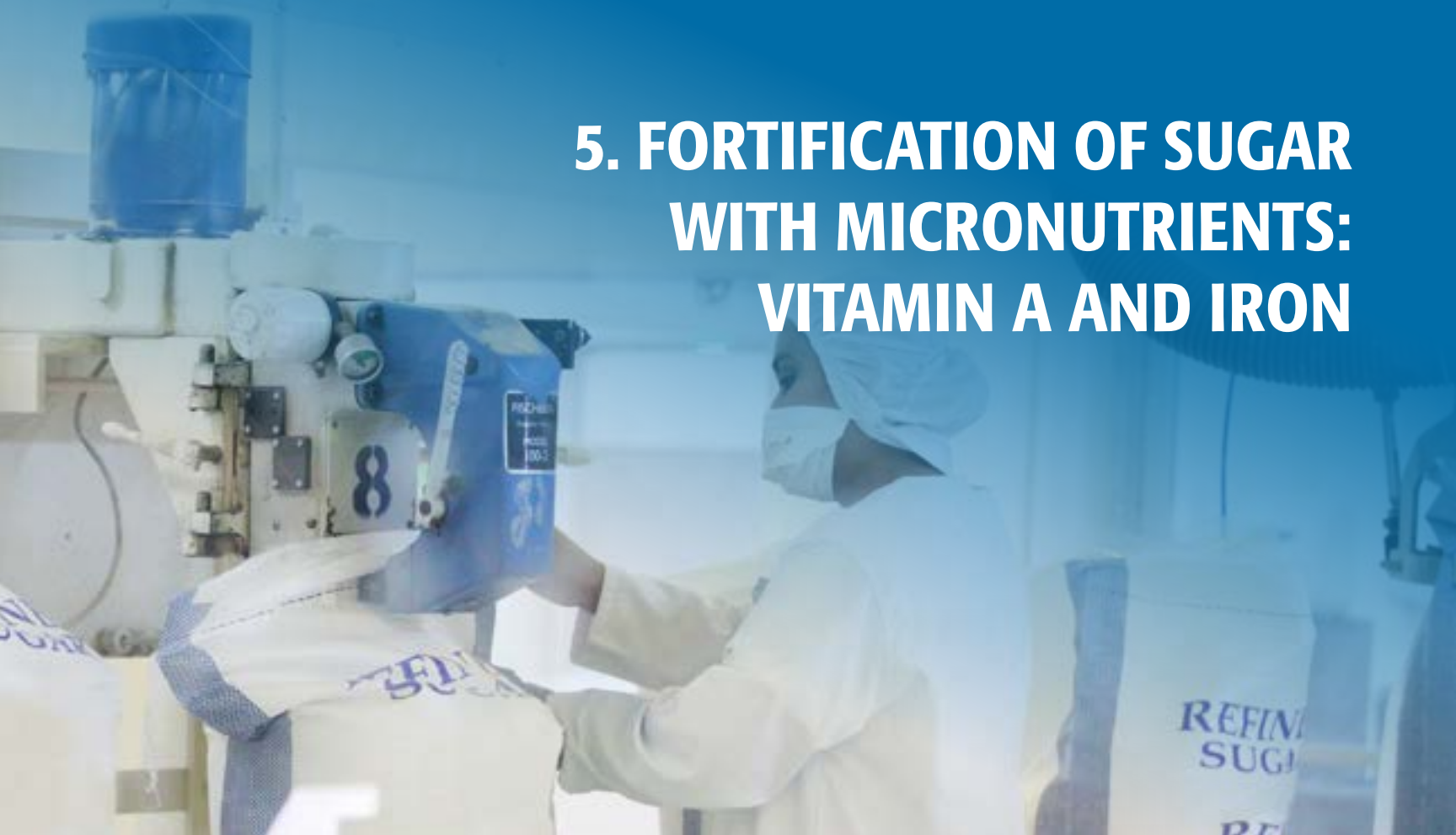
Results

Positive results are observed in the populations of many communities with respect to their health and wellbeing as a consequence of the My Health First program. The 500 health workers who have been trained through this program are strengthening risk reduction and sickness prevention particularly in the poor and vulnerable communities. This is allowing healthier and more productive people for better job opportunities.

Around 500 people have been trained who are providing health services in 65 health posts located in the departments of Escuintla, Suchitepéquez, Retalhuleu, Jutiapa and Santa Rosa.



5. FORTIFICATION OF SUGAR WITH MICRONUTRIENTS: VITAMIN A AND IRON



5.1 Fortification of Sugar With Micronutrients: Vitamin A and Iron

Objectives and Description

Vitamin A deficiency is a public health problem in developing countries, affecting the poorest segments of the population, with serious consequences to children health and survival. Guatemala and other countries in Central America have decades of experience in the application of fortification processes for the reduction of vitamin A deficiency. To reach children in vulnerable families suffering from malnutrition with a micronutrient such as vitamin A, it is essential that a food commodity be chosen that is widely consumed, inexpensive, available for purchase in the local markets and manufactured by relatively few producers. Sugar is one of the few commodities with these characteristics in some developing countries in Central America, Africa and Asia (USAID, 2000).

Vitamin A helps to improve vision, strengthen the immune system, eradicate blindness in children and reduce child mortality. During the 1965-1967 period, a national survey conducted in Guatemala identified

that 26.2% of children under 5 years old suffered from vitamin A deficiency which affected their immune system and produced night blindness. During the 1969-1974 period, the Institute of Nutrition of Central America and Panama (INCAP) determined that sugar was the best vehicle for providing vitamin A to the most vulnerable population and moved forward developing the corresponding technology for the fortification of sugar with this vitamin. The Guatemala Sugar Agroindustry started the fortification of sugar with vitamin A in 1975.

After the fortification of sugar with vitamin A, the percentage of children with blindness was reduced from 26.2% in 1965/1967 to 16% in 1995/1996 and to 0.3% in 2009/2010. In 1996 UNICEF recognized the Guatemala Sugar Agroindustry as a pioneer on the fortification of sugar with vitamin A, given the positive impacts in the health of children.

The Sugar Agroindustry continues to maintain an appropriate level of fortification in some of the sugar produced in Guatemala as recommended by INCAP

and has invested over \$2.3 million in technology updates, process modifications, laboratories, testing, quality control and capacity building since 2008. The Agroindustry has two centers for the fortification of sugar with vitamin A.

Iron deficiency in the nutrition of vulnerable communities prevails in many developing countries. Iron deficiency is a recognized cause of anemia. Iron is a necessary mineral for the transport and storage of oxygen in the blood and muscles. It is also essential for the synthesis of DNA, which is vital for growth, healing, reproduction and immune function. Iron is used by enzymes involved in the synthesis of collagen and hormones. Iron deficiency is more common in premature newborns, infants and preschool children, women of reproductive age, and people with chronic blood loss, such as hemorrhagic gastritis and parasitic infections.

According to data collected in the National Micronutrient Survey of 2009/2010 about 26.3% of children in Guatemala lacked adequate levels of iron. At that time, 47.71% of children in the country suffered from anemia, of which 72.06% between six and eleven months of age had anemia. In the case of women of childbearing age, 18.4% presented iron deficiency, of which anemia was found in 29.12% of pregnant women and 21.43% in non-pregnant women.

The Guatemala Sugar Agroindustry is fortifying sugar with iron since 2008 helping to reduce anemia in vulnerable populations. This activity benefits particularly the western region of the country where people are experiencing the highest nutritional deficiencies.

Related Targets

The fortification of sugar with vitamin A and iron supports the objectives of Target 1.3 on implementing appropriate social protection systems and measures covering the poor and the vulnerable.

Challenges

One of the main challenges of this activity is related to the need to continue monitoring the health of children through time. Many children in vulnerable communities could benefit from the fortification of sugar with vitamin A and iron but still suffer from malnutrition due to other causes with serious implication to their health and wellbeing.

Lessons Learned

An important lesson from the experience of decades of fortification of sugar with micronutrients in Guatemala is that the combined effort of the public and private sectors is critical to achieve success through time and should be responsive to the continuous changes in the social and economic conditions of the country and in particular of the most vulnerable communities.

Another important lesson derived from the experience in Guatemala is that fortification with a locally produce commodity can become a regular practice and can be maintained through time. It is indeed an effective strategy to reduce micronutrients deficiency in the vulnerable communities in developing countries.

Results

The fortification of sugar with micronutrients has proved to be a very successful strategy in Guatemala as demonstrated by the relevant statistics of the last several decades. Today vitamin A deficiency is not a public health problem in Guatemala. The Guatemala Sugar Agroindustry has played a very important role in maintaining the capabilities for the fortification of sugar with micronutrients and is keeping its production for the benefit and wellbeing of the children of Guatemala. The program represents a social protection mechanism covering the poor and vulnerable people.

6. BETTER FAMILIES (MEJORES FAMILIAS) PROGRAM



6.1 Better Families (Mejores Familias) Program

Objectives and Description

The Better Families Program is an innovative model that promotes Food and Nutrition Security, self-confidence, self-management and leadership in women, as agents of change for the development and well-being of their families and their communities. It is aimed at women of childbearing age and children under the age of 5.

The objective is to train women in practices for the adequate selection, preparation and consumption of food, as well as educating mothers in preventive health with sustainable actions that improve mother-child, family and community conditions and support poverty eradication objectives. It also seeks to strengthen community organization to ensure effective processes of self-management and to make food and nutritional security sustainable.

The program places women as the catalyst for development of their families and communities. It also fosters behavioral change and women empowerment. The Food and Nutrition Security part of the program is based on four pillars: (1) availability, (2) access, (3) consumption and (4) biological use of food.

The program has a monitoring and evaluation system, with measurable and quantifiable indicators that allow evaluating the behavioral change in a gradual manner. Due to its positive results, the program has been used by relevant government entities in Guatemala and Honduras. It has also been implemented by 18 social investors which include companies, foundations and

international organizations. Social Investors are individuals or companies that wish to replicate the Fundazúcar programs with their own resources in their geographical area of interest. They are called “Investors” because they provide a social investment with a commitment to the development of human capital.

Better Families / SPOON BID Program

Fundazúcar was selected by the Interamerican Development Bank (IDB) for the implementation of the regional strategy on behavioral change program called Better Families / SPOON BID Program. The objective of this program was to develop capacities of women of childbearing age on behavioral changes for the improvement of infant nutritional practices. The strategy is based on social communication and interpersonal advice focusing on the first 24 months of the lives of children. The program included the distribution of nutritional supplements for children between 6 and 24 months old. The program started in 2019 in partnership with the Ministry of Public Health covering 80 communities in 8 municipalities in the department of Baja Verapaz. The program incorporated monitoring activities of the nutritional state of children. It also included capacity building activities for women on site and through household visits and counseling to participating families.

Related Targets

This initiative supports the objectives of Target 1.3 on implementing appropriate social protection systems and measures covering the poor and the vulnerable.

Challenges

One major challenge of this initiative is related to the need to convince participants about the benefits that can be derived from a change of behavior in

nutritional, health and leadership practices. Also, participation of women in this program has been limited since women are sometimes not allowed to take part in meetings by themselves given gender restrictions due to cultural reasons.

Another main challenge is to ensure that the Law of Food and Nutritional Security of 2005 is implemented as the mechanism that allows the elimination of malnutrition in Guatemala. This law defines the responsibilities of the different institutions that promote the food and nutritional security.

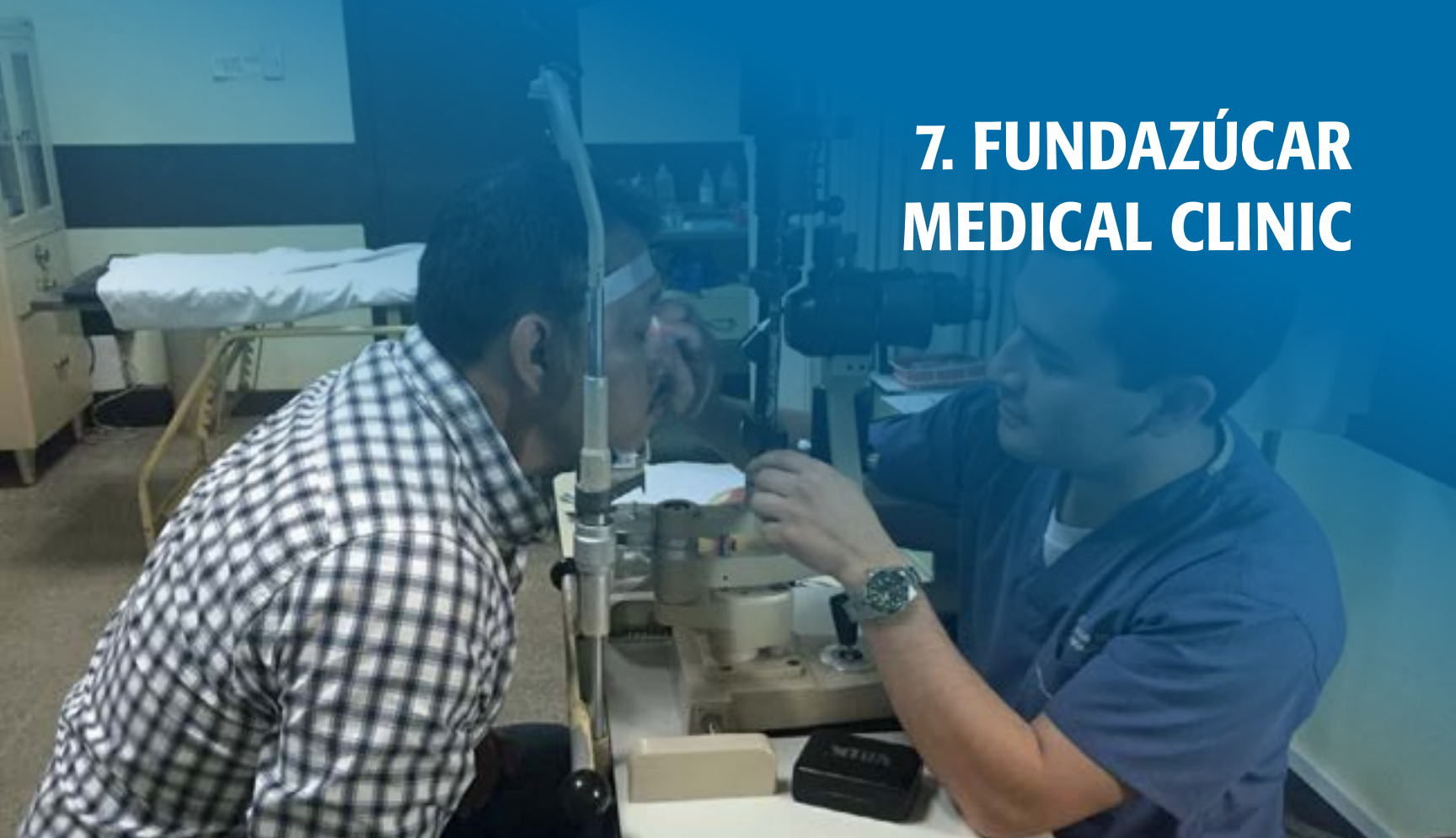
Lessons Learned

A major lesson learned is that positive changes can be achieved for the benefit of women and families when women are empowered with knowledge and skills in nutrition, health, education and leadership prioritizing their freedom, autonomy and self-management. The decades of experience have proved that women who have participated in this program are no longer passive receptors but have become active agents of change achieving major positive transformations of themselves, their families and their communities.

Results

Since 1998, the Guatemala Sugar Agroindustry has supported the implementation of the Better Families Program with measurable and verifiable results that confirm its contribution to the welfare and sustainable development of the population. Since its inception, the program has trained more than 532,000 women in Guatemala and Honduras. The program supports efforts for the reduction of poverty and is making a direct impact in the reduction of chronic child malnutrition by up to 7%.

7. FUNDAZÚCAR MEDICAL CLINIC



7.1 Fundazúcar Medical Clinic

Objectives and Description

The Fundazúcar Medical Clinic is located in Escuintla and operates through an agreement with Ministry of Health of Guatemala. It provides medical attention to over 45,000 patients per year offering to the general public five medical specialties: general medicine, pediatrics, dermatology, ophthalmology and odontology. It also provides pharmacy, laboratories and optic services. Patients pay a symbolic amount of 30 Quetzals (about \$3.9) considering the poverty situation of the target population.

Related Targets

This activity is particularly related to Target 1.3 on implementing appropriate social protection systems and measures covering the poor and the vulnerable. The

initiative is allowing vulnerable and poor communities in Guatemala to have access to essential health services and indispensable medicines.

Challenges

A major challenge is the need to create awareness about the value of preventive health and the need to visit primary health care facilities on a regular basis. These measures prevent the saturation of hospitals and health consultations with sick patients.

Although the Fundazúcar Medical Clinic is able to provide medical attention to a large number of people, there is always the need to continue expanding these services especially in other vulnerable communities of the country.



Lessons Learned

The large number of patients who are benefiting from the health services of the Fundazúcar Medical Clinic proves that health services can be provided efficiently with priority investment in covering as many people as possible especially in vulnerable regions of Guatemala.

Results

The Fundazúcar Medical Clinic is providing quality services in communities in Guatemala allowing access to over 45,000 patients to essential health services every year. The program represents a social protection mechanism covering poor and vulnerable people in Guatemala.

INTERLINKAGES WITH OTHER SDGs

Activities by the Guatemala Sugar Agroindustry related to Poverty (SDG 1) include interlinkages with other SDGs. A major interlinkage is with Economic Growth and Employment (SDG 8) since this agroindustry is a strong engine for the generation of jobs and for economic development in Guatemala. Another clear interlinkage is Health (SDG 3) as the Sugar Agroindustry offers programs for vulnerable and poor communities in its area of influence in order to improve their health and well-being. Health services supported by the Sugar Agroindustry are provided at reduced or no cost to many patients in Guatemala. A strong interlinkage exists with Education (SDG 4) due to the programs that provide the opportunity for education to poor people allowing them to move out of poverty. The activities are also related to Reducing Hunger and Improving Nutrition (SDG 2) since good nutritional programs have impacts on poverty.



CONCLUSIONS



The Guatemala Sugar Agroindustry has important activities in its sustainable development strategy strongly supporting poverty reduction objectives for the population in Guatemala. These activities include: the Social Strategic Framework of the Sugar Agroindustry, Jobs and Economic Development, the Program of Opportunities to Study (Scholarships), the My Health First Program, Fortification of sugar with vitamin A and iron, Better Families Program and the Fundazúcar Medical Clinic. The effort represents a critical part of the integrated approach followed by the Sugar Agroindustry in its social strategy that promotes healthy lives and sustainable development. This effort is also centered

on the development of capacities for agents of change that allow them to be protagonists of programs that improve the quality of life influencing social indicators. Aware of the positive impacts that resilient and poverty-free communities can have in Guatemala, the Sugar Agroindustry has for many years been implementing extensive initiatives for the wellbeing of local communities in its area of influence. These initiatives have resulted in a net improvement of living conditions and in the reduction of poverty. The effort has also helped to strengthen public institutions related to social development in Guatemala.

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