

## COUNTRY PROFILE ON NUTRITION 01/2021

# CAMBODIA



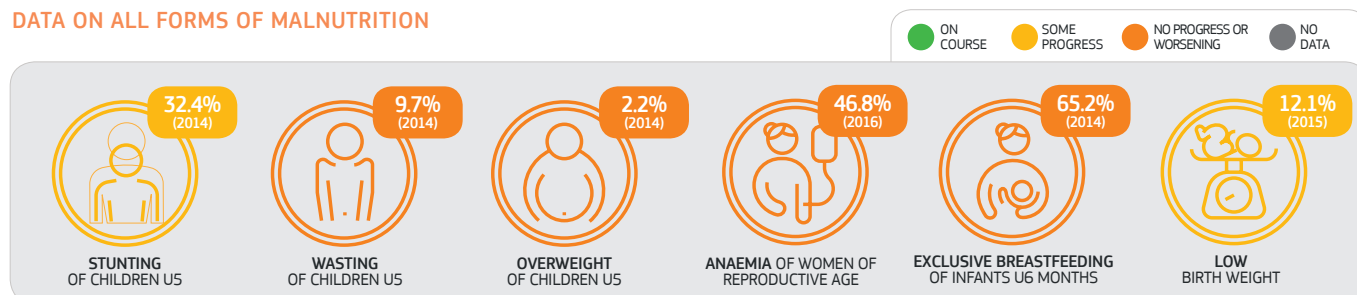
### Nutrition situation in Cambodia

#### AT A GLANCE

The population of Cambodia currently stands at just under 17 million<sup>1</sup>, with around three-quarters of the population living in rural areas. Gender inequality continues to be a challenge to development, as gender-based discrimination and violence are common. Despite impressive economic progress, rates of malnutrition in Cambodia are among the worst in the region (south east Asia). One in every three Cambodian children under five is stunted (with the poorest families suffering stunting rates more than double those of the better off), while one in every 10 children is wasted. Dietary deficiencies in zinc, iodine and B vitamins widely affect women of reproductive age as

well as children. Malnutrition in childhood and pregnancy has many adverse consequences for child survival and long-term wellbeing, and far-reaching consequences for human capital, productivity and national development. Cambodia's adult population also faces a malnutrition burden, with almost half of all women of reproductive age suffering from anaemia while close to one in five adults is overweight or obese. The COVID-19 pandemic is further exacerbating this situation. Cambodia has a Gender Inequality Index value of 0.474 and is ranked at 117 out of 162 countries in the 2019 index.

#### DATA ON ALL FORMS OF MALNUTRITION



#### NUTRITION GOVERNANCE

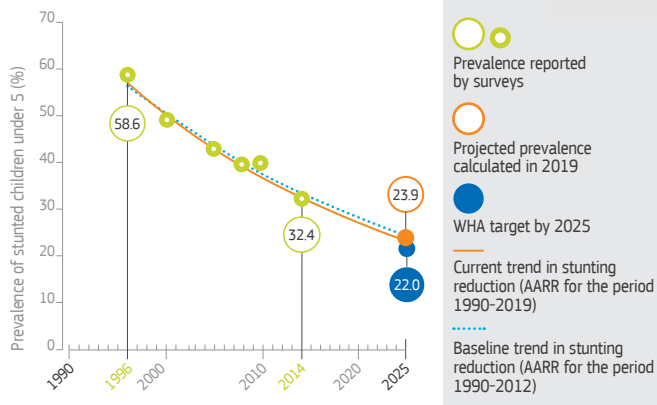
- Cambodia joined the Scaling Up Nutrition (SUN) movement in 2014. Germany and USAID are the joint SUN donor convenors.
- Food security and nutrition remain high on the agenda for the Royal Government of Cambodia. Aligned with the national strategic development plan, the national strategy for food security and nutrition (NSFSN) 2019-2023 (successor to the 2014-2018 strategy) provides the country's framework for progress.
- The Council for Agricultural and Rural Development (CARD) is the body responsible for facilitating effective coordination, policy guidance, monitoring and information management for agriculture and rural development, social protection, food security and nutrition. Priorities include increasing domestic resource allocation; ensuring that key ministries for nutrition have robust costed plans in place; and improving nutrition-sensitive food systems; nutrition-sensitive water, sanitation and hygiene; and strengthening subnational governance, coordination and capacities for nutrition.

#### Example of EU support

The 'Food and Nutrition Security Impact, Resilience, Sustainability and Transformation' programme (FIRST) is implemented in partnership between the EU and the FAO. FIRST works with governments to promote policy development for sustainable agriculture and food systems and creating an enabling environment for public and private investments to contribute to achieving healthy diets and good nutrition. As acknowledged by the Government and other key stakeholders, the FIRST Facility in Cambodia has proved to be a valuable initiative, significantly raising the profile of nutrition through the provision of technical assistance. In recent years FIRST has supported CARD to critically review the initial NSFSN and to finalise the new strategy for 2019-2023. FIRST has also worked closely with CARD, the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries, UN agencies and others through a joint programme of youth engagement in food systems and healthy diets. Recently, FIRST has supported a rapid assessment of the impact of COVID-19 on agriculture, food security and nutrition (including a survey of the impact of COVID-19 on young people), together with assistance to CARD and technical working group members for coordination of a joint response.

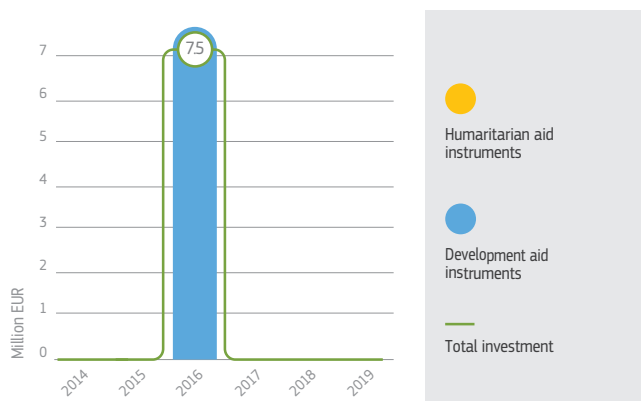
## Progress on the two EU pledges for nutrition

### TREND, PROJECTION AND TARGETS IN THE PREVALENCE AND NUMBER OF CHILDREN (U5) STUNTED



The national strategy 2019-2023 commits to reducing child stunting by seven percentage points to 25% by 2023. Cambodia has experienced a strong decline in the prevalence of stunting since 1994, accompanied by an impressive decline in the number of children stunted. Recent projections anticipate that Cambodia could meet the government's own target as well as, potentially, the World Health Assembly (WHA) target by 2025 (and, by extension, that of the principal indicator for SDG2). The rate of decline in the number of children stunted has accelerated from 2.8% in 2012 to 3% in 2019. If this trend is maintained, then just over 410 000 children are expected to be stunted in 2025. This is slightly over the WHA target.

### EU FINANCIAL COMMITMENTS TO NUTRITION BETWEEN 2014 AND 2019 – TOTAL OF EUR 7.5 MILLION



Cambodia embarked on joint programming with its European partners in 2013; the resulting joint European Development Cooperation Strategy for Cambodia was launched in 2014. The total amount committed for nutrition by the EU since 2014 was provided for the 'Cambodia Programme for Sustainable and Inclusive Growth in the Fisheries Sector: Aquaculture' (CaPFish Aquaculture). CaPFish's overall objective is to support Government efforts to develop the fisheries sector to increase food security, improve nutrition and foster further economic development. It is structured into two components, CaPFish Aquaculture (EUR 30 million) and the more recent Capture component (EUR 87 million), and will ensure a more sustainable, climate-resilient and inclusive development of Cambodia's freshwater and marine fisheries. In addition, the EU/FAO FIRST Programme (described above) has since 2015 provided policy assistance and capacity development to the Government with a focus on support to CARD and related ministries.

<sup>1</sup> World Population Prospects <https://population.un.org/wpp/>