

## COUNTRY PROFILE ON NUTRITION 01/2021

# KENYA



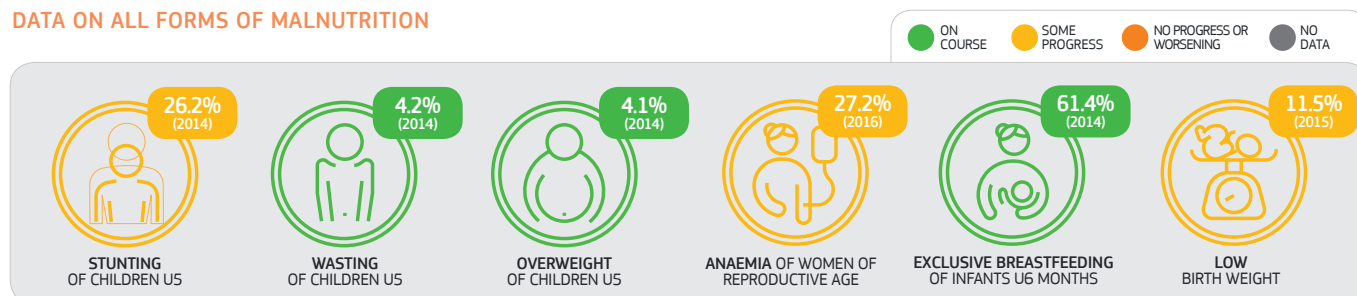
### Nutrition situation in Kenya

#### AT A GLANCE

Kenya has a population of 53 million<sup>1</sup> and by 2050 half the population are expected to be urban. The country hosts half a million refugees. Despite persistent poverty rates (36%), Kenya has made significant progress in reducing the prevalence of all forms of malnutrition. From over 40% in the mid-1990s, the prevalence of stunting at the last survey in 2014 was down to 26%. However, there are significant geographical and socio-demographic variations in stunting, wasting and micro-nutrient deficiencies: the arid semi-arid areas of northern, central and eastern Kenya are the worst

affected. These areas are particularly vulnerable to climate change, gender disparities, limited access to safe water and sanitation, and poor infant feeding practices. Food shortages due to restrictions imposed by the COVID-19 pandemic will particularly affect rural and urban populations on low incomes<sup>2</sup>. Kenya has a Gender Inequality Index value of 0.518 and is ranked at 126 of 162 countries in the 2019 index.

#### DATA ON ALL FORMS OF MALNUTRITION



#### NUTRITION GOVERNANCE

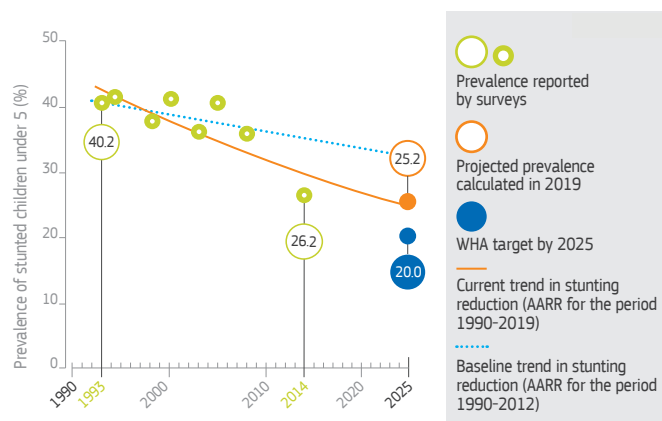
- Kenya became a member of the Scaling Up Nutrition (SUN) movement in August 2012.
- In 2012 the National Food and Nutrition Policy was launched and in 2017 food and nutrition security was selected as one of the President's "Big Four" priorities.
- A costed National Nutrition Action Plan of high impact interventions was rolled out from 2012 to 2017; a capacity development framework and assessment tools for nutrition were developed during its implementation.
- Kenya's new Nutrition Action Plan applies a life-course approach and is a broader, multi-sectoral plan for the period 2018-2022, applying the monitoring, evaluation, accountability and learning (MEAL) framework. The Ministry of Health convenes the Nutrition Interagency Coordinating Committee.
- Until a multi-sectoral steering committee is established under the Food & Nutrition Security Bill (yet to be endorsed), cross-sector coordination is managed by the respective SUN networks.
- The National Information Platforms for Nutrition (NIPN) initiative was launched in 2018 with EU support, progress was initially slow, but key analysis was generated in 2020.
- Mandatory salt iodisation began in 1988 and fortification of maize, wheat flour and oil started in 2012; the EU is supporting fortification at national level in partnership with the JKUAT University.

#### Example of EU support

An EU-funded (EUR 650 000) CSO project under Actions to Enhance Social Development with a particular focus on maternal and child nutrition operated in Migori County and has achieved multiple results between 2016-19. It helped strengthen inter-agency coordination through good governance mechanisms in support of the Migori County Action Plan; improved the capabilities of local health facilities and community health units to prevent, detect and treat maternal and child malnutrition; improved nutrition knowledge, attitudes and practices within vulnerable communities; enhanced food and nutrition security at household level through women's empowerment; and strengthened the county-level nutrition information management system. A mid-term review<sup>3</sup> of the project provided evidence that the intervention has contributed to the local authorities increasing their investment in human nutrition and dietetics, the promotion of nutrition-sensitive agricultural practices and a reduction in the prevalence of stunted children under-five from 33% to 26.5% in Migori County between 2014-2018. The project was implemented by We World Kenya Foundation in partnership with the Kenya Red Cross Society and St. Camillus Dala Kiye.

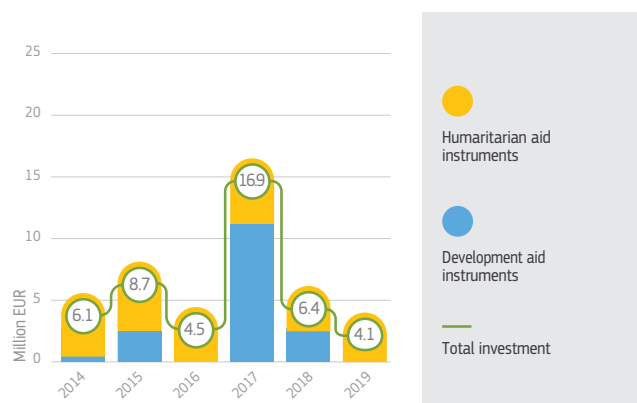
## Progress on the two EU pledges for nutrition

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



Through its Nutrition Action Plan, Kenya is committed to reduce stunting of children under five to 17% by 2022. Overall, Kenya has achieved a significant decline in the prevalence of stunting in the last 30 years, but the number of children stunted has remained the same due to high population growth. The rate of decline in the number of children stunted was estimated in 2019 at 1.63%. If this trend is maintained, nearly 1.9 million children are expected to be stunted in 2025, higher than it has been recently, despite the decrease in prevalence of stunting.

### EU FINANCIAL COMMITMENTS TO NUTRITION BETWEEN 2014 AND 2019 – A TOTAL OF EUR 46.7 MILLION



The most significant recent EU investments for nutrition have been through its Support to Resilient Livelihoods and Drought Risk Management, to which the EU contributes EUR 30.5 million for four resilience projects in Kenya, of which EUR 7.6 million is estimated as funding for nutrition and contributes to the National Drought Management Authority early warning system at county level. Support to the Agriculture Sector Transformation Process and to Decentralised Land Governance amounting to EUR 16 million (including 25% for nutrition) is another nutrition-sensitive programme which aims to support the food security of smallholder farmers and pastoralist communities by improving access to agriculture services and to land. Other EU financial commitments go to the NIPN initiative, food fortification at national level, nutritious agricultural value chains and climate-smart agricultural research.

<sup>1</sup> UNDESA World Population Prospects 2019 population estimate 2020.  
<sup>2</sup> Coronavirus Worsens Malnutrition Burden in Kenya, SUN website, May 2020.

<sup>3</sup> Mid-term Evaluation Survey for the Enhanced Maternal and Child Nutrition in Migori County undertaken by the African Development & Health Research Centre (ADHRC), March 2018.