

MYANMAR

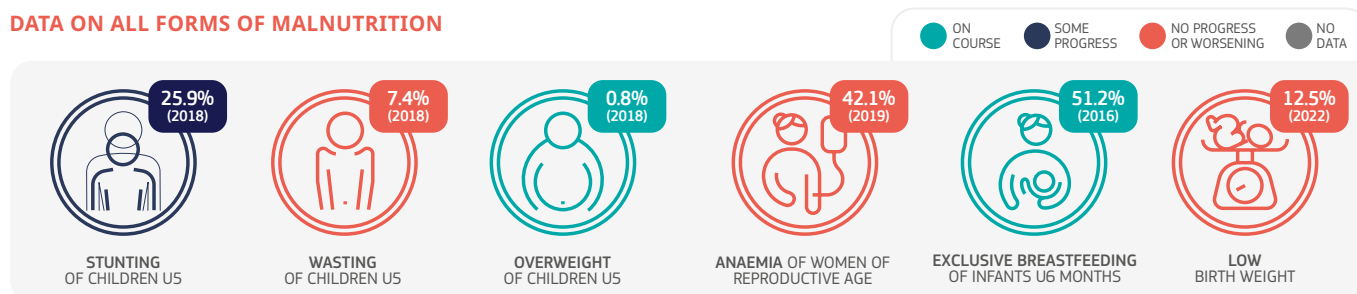
Nutrition situation in Myanmar

AT A GLANCE

With a population of 54.4 million people¹, around two thirds of which are rural, 3 out of 5 people in Myanmar are either living in, or vulnerable to, multidimensional poverty. The prevalence of stunting, although experiencing a huge decline since 1990, is still high, at almost 30% of children under 5 years of age. Stunting prevalence is up to 2.5 times greater among children from the lowest income groups compared with those in higher income groups. At the same time, the population's nutrition status is rapidly changing, with the prevalence of obesity among adolescents and adults rising (25% of all adults are currently overweight or obese). The progress

that Myanmar had made toward meeting the 2025 World Health Assembly targets has not only been halted but also aggravated due to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and the multifactor crisis following the February 2021 coup d'état. Disruptions in the access to basic services due to instability and conflict are causing alarming levels of food insecurity and malnutrition, which particularly affect vulnerable groups such as ethnic minorities, women and children. Gender inequalities persist in Myanmar, although some progress has been made. Myanmar's Gender Inequality Index value is 0.479, ranking at 119 of 166 countries in 2022.

DATA ON ALL FORMS OF MALNUTRITION



The data reported in the 2023 EU Nutrition Country Profiles is drawn from the UNICEF/WHO/World Bank Joint Child Malnutrition Estimates and the Global Nutrition Report (GNR).

NUTRITION GOVERNANCE

- Myanmar joined the Scaling Up Nutrition movement in 2013.
- Prior to the 2021 coup, a multi-stakeholder platform for nutrition brought together the ministries of health, agriculture, education and social welfare. With the support of the National Nutrition Centre (NNC), it developed the government's costed multi-sectoral national plan of action on nutrition (2018-2023). The initial focus was around capacity assessments, building M&E systems and financial tracking for subnational structures. However, following the 2021 coup, the work was put to a halt.
- During the UN [Food Systems Summit](#) (held in September 2021) the Myanmar Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Irrigation, prepared a [Food Systems National Pathway Document](#). This document includes commitments to ensure access to safe and nutritious food for all; to shift to sustainable and healthy consumption patterns and to build resilience to vulnerabilities, shocks and stresses in relation to climate change, economic shocks, pandemic and disease outbreaks, and internal conflict and instability. However, this document is now an empty shell as the military junta lacks legitimacy and the conflict in the country does not allow to follow-up any of the commitments.
- Fortification of salt with iodine is mandatory since 1988.

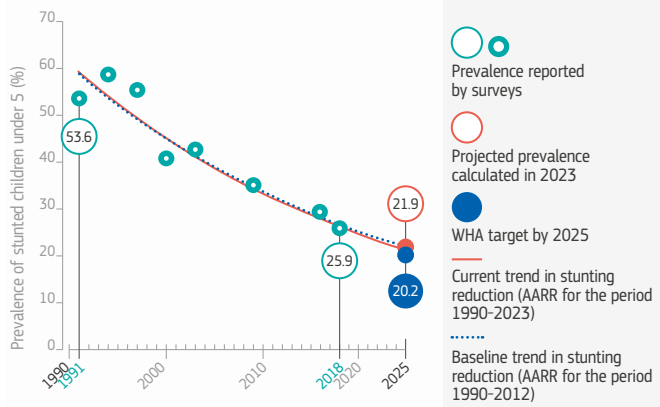
Example of EU support

The action 'Agricultural innovation and inclusive value chains for food and nutrition security in Myanmar (ALIVE-FNS)' is aiming to improve food and nutrition security of vulnerable smallholder farmers and their communities by strengthening the resilience and inclusiveness of value chains in Myanmar. With a budget of EUR 7 million to be disbursed in the period 2021-2025, the intervention will improve the availability and access to safe, nutritious and diversified food for vulnerable producers and consumers in targeted states and improve the awareness of nutrition challenges by value chains stakeholders. The action is being implemented over 46 months and in 2 phases with Action Française de Développement, Groupe de Recherches et d'Echanges Technologiques (GRET), the French agricultural research and cooperation organisation CIRAD and Chokhlei Organization for Rural and Agricultural Development (CORAD) as implementing partners.

The project has a special focus on vulnerable families, pregnant and breastfeeding women and children under 2 with actions such as provision of seed kits of nutritious and diversified food for home consumption, and trainings on improved food practices, the 1 000 days window of opportunity, and nutrition sensitive value chains.

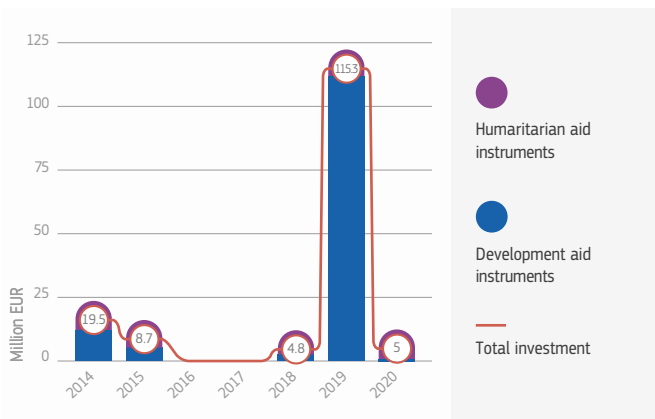


Progress on the two EU pledges for nutrition



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

Since the early 1990s, Myanmar has experienced a strong decline in the prevalence of stunting and in the number of children stunted. The studies shown in the graph indicate improvement since 2012 in stunting prevalence. Based on latest study from 2018 – before the coup – the projected rate of decline in the number of children stunted has slightly increased from 2.75% in 2012 to 2.9% in 2022; if this is maintained, then 962 000 children will be stunted by 2025. Without any recent JME-validated study, it is however not clear how the current crisis affects these numbers.



EU FINANCIAL COMMITMENTS TO NUTRITION BETWEEN 2014 AND 2020 – A TOTAL OF EUR 153 MILLION

EU nutrition commitments in Myanmar from 2014 to 2020 include EUR 18 million for humanitarian assistance and EUR 135 million from development instruments².

Planning for nutrition 2021-2027

Following the 2021 military coup, the EU halted any activities that could support or legitimise the military authorities. After a careful review of the development assistance portfolio, the EU is implementing a ‘back to basics approach’ focused on supporting the most vulnerable population and communities. Under these circumstances, the EU has decided to adopt special measures as a funding mechanism to ensure support to the population and to the civil society, while avoiding directly or indirectly supporting government systems and structures.

EU cooperation in Myanmar has focused on building societal resistance to ease the impact of conflict and set the basis for a future democratic state. Among other programmes funded since 2021 through Special Measures, the EU continues supporting the multi-donor ‘Livelihoods and Food Security Fund (LIFT)’, and specific actions such ‘Strengthen Sustainable Livelihoods in Myanmar’ aiming at improving livelihoods, food and nutrition security of the most vulnerable, whilst protecting natural resources and increasing resilience to climate change, and at strengthening and protecting responsible business practices in urban settings focusing on social, environmental, human rights standards and gender equality. The action contributes to building resilience to vulnerabilities, shocks and stresses in relation to: (i) climate change, environment and ecology; (ii) economic shocks; (iii) pandemic, pest and disease outbreaks; and (iv) internal conflict and instability.

1 - United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, [World Population Prospects 2022](#), medium variant estimate 2023

2 - Data in this section excludes some regional, global and policy/research/information commitments that could not be disaggregated by beneficiary country. The European Commission applied the methodology of the SUN Donor Network for nutrition resource tracking 2014-2020 and the OECD DAC's nutrition policy marker from 2021 onwards.