

NEPAL

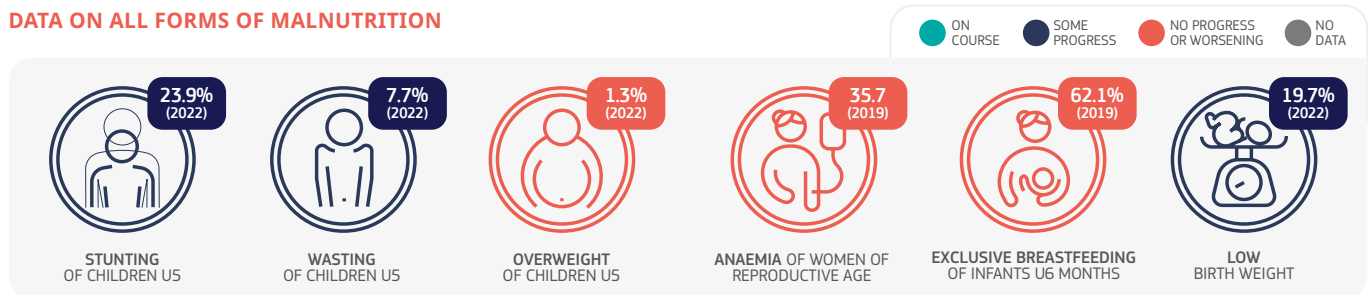
Nutrition situation in Nepal

AT A GLANCE

The population of Nepal is estimated at around 30.9 million people¹, with almost 80% living in rural areas. Women have restricted access to education and employment and there are high rates of domestic violence², both of which contribute to Nepal's high levels of gender inequality. In 2021 Nepal had a Gender Inequality Index value of 0.452 and was ranked at 113 out of 170 countries³. Despite being one of the poorest countries in South Asia, Nepal has achieved an impressive rate of stunting reduction in recent years and is potentially on track to meet the World Health Assembly (WHA) target by 2025. However, with only very limited improvement

in child wasting, one in every four children still stunted, and no improvement in some regions of the country, much remains to be done. The nutrition equality gap is widening, with certain castes, notably the Dalit, being particularly affected by the phenomenon. This highlights the role of multi-dimensional poverty as a key driver of malnutrition. More than one third of children under two do not receive a minimally adequate diet⁴. The rising prevalence of adult obesity, which tripled over the past twenty years⁵ and the COVID-19 pandemic further exacerbate the high social and economic costs associated with malnutrition in the country.

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

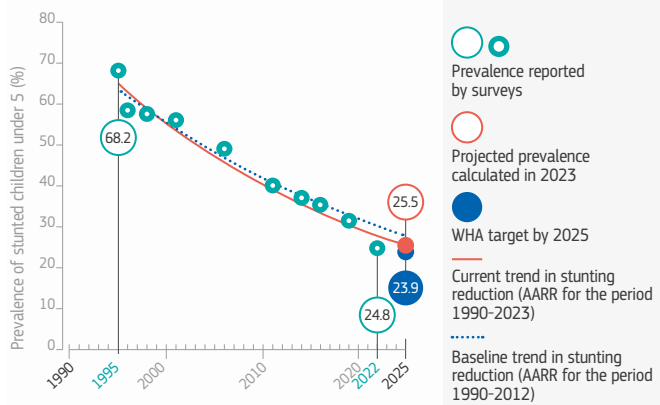
- Nepal joined the Scaling Up Nutrition (SUN) Movement in 2011.
- Nepal's second Multi-Sectoral Nutrition Plan (MSNP) was implemented over the period 2018-2023 and established a coordination mechanism involving six relevant ministries⁶. Now in its third phase, MSNP-III (2023-2030) was designed after a comprehensive consultative process and emphasises the need to promote nutrition equality and inclusion as well as gender transformative approaches.
- MSNP-III is coordinated by the High-Level Nutrition and Food Security Steering Committee, chaired by the Honourable Vice-Chair of the National Planning Commission (the apex advisory body of Government).
- Multi-sectoral coordination committees on nutrition also exist at provincial, municipality and ward levels. These committees generally have a reasonable sectoral representation as well as an encouraging degree of gender balance. Effective implementation of MSNP-III will depend upon the ability of the country's federal system to ensure adequate resources and fiscal autonomy to meet development and service delivery mandates and aspirations.
- Fortification of salt and wheat flour is compulsory since 1998 and 2011 respectively.

Example of EU support

The focus of the budget support operation 'Support to the Multi-Sector Nutrition Plan of the Government of Nepal' (2020-2023) is on ensuring the inclusion of disadvantaged rural communities – particularly women, adolescents and children – so that they can be equitably reached with essential public services. With a total financial value of EUR 23.35 million, EUR 3 million goes to complementary measures implemented by UNICEF for the development of national capacities for effective MSNP implementation at all levels. The logic of the support is to ensure inclusive and nutrition sensitive provision of health and education services together with safe drinking water and sanitation facilities and heightened awareness of the significance of nutrition for health and well-being. The programme also helps to diversify agricultural production and livelihoods to enable people all year round to have improved access to a greater variety of locally produced nutritious foods so as to improve the quality of diet. A key focus for policy dialogue addresses increased coverage of child grants in line with the national vision for a universal child benefit to all children under five.

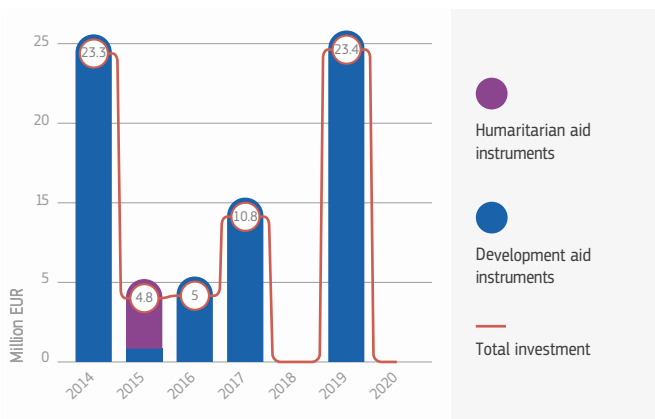


Progress on the two EU pledges for nutrition



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

Nepal has experienced a strong decline in both the prevalence of stunting and in the number of children stunted since the mid-1990s. Recent projections anticipate that Nepal is potentially on track to meet both the government's target and the World Health Assembly (WHA) target by 2025. The rate of decline in the number of children stunted has increased from 2.76% in 2012 to 3.11% in 2022. If this is maintained, then 760 000 children are expected to be stunted in 2025.



EU FINANCIAL COMMITMENTS TO NUTRITION FROM 2014 TO 2020 – A TOTAL OF EUR 67.2 MILLION

On the basis of a 2014 commitment for EUR 22.7 million, the EU supported the design and launch of the Multi-Sectoral Nutrition Plan with a focus on 30 districts. With a shift in modality to budget support via the 2019 commitment of EUR 23.3 million, the scaling up of this approach to all 753 municipalities has been accelerated so that nutrition is more effectively integrated into local workplans and budgetary processes. In addition, the Water, Energy, Agriculture Village Livelihood Enhancement project⁷ was approved in 2016 with the aim of accelerating efforts to tackle the underlying causes of malnutrition and enhancing resilience among particularly vulnerable communities in the mid-west and far-west.

Furthermore, an envelope of EUR 23 million has been earmarked from the Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument to support the implementation of the third phase of the Multi-Sectoral Nutrition Plan (2023-2030) through budget support⁸.

Planning for nutrition 2021-2027

At the [N4G Summit](#) in Tokyo (2021), the Government made a number of commitments relevant to nutrition (c.f. [N4G Compact](#) and its [annex](#)), in particular to increase the allocation for nutrition to approximately USD 80.9 million per annum for the next 9 years. At the [UNFSS Summit](#) (2021), the [national pathway](#) sets the objective of creating sustainable and resilient food systems by 2030 to ensure food and nutritional security for all.

While Nepal remains broadly on track to achieve the WHA target on stunting, this progress needs to be sustained in the face of daunting challenges associated with climate change, environmental degradation and the COVID-19 crisis. In that context, the EU intends to remain an important partner of the government in the fight against malnutrition. Nutrition forms part of the 360-degree approach of the EU's Global Gateway. The Multi-Annual Indicative Programme (MIP) 2021-2027 for Nepal stresses the need to implement multi-sectorial strategies relying on country systems to secure access to relevant nutrition services for all Nepalis. The Team Europe Initiative titled 'Green Recovery' (with Finland and Germany) provides a platform that facilitates the identification of synergies between EU-funded programmes relevant to nutrition and initiatives implemented by Member States operating in-country.

Under Priority Area 2 'Human capital' of the MIP, the EU intends to use budget support and other types of instruments to facilitate the implementation of the national Multi-Sectoral Nutrition Plan for the period 2023-2030. Support will aim at strengthening coordination mechanisms established across key sectors for nutrition such as agriculture, health and social protection. It will facilitate the delivery of nutrition-specific and nutrition-sensitive interventions using a rights-based approach with a special attention given to marginalised groups and gender dynamics. Information systems and oversight mechanisms will also be strengthened to ensure accountability and transparency of public interventions and to facilitate the participation of relevant actors, including CSOs and community groups, in policy design and monitoring.

Other sectors of interventions relevant to nutrition include support to smallholder farmers, which aims at facilitating the access and availability of healthy food products for all. In that context the uptake of farming techniques that are associated with reduced use of chemical intrants are encouraged so as to protect natural resources and future yields of farming systems. The EU also supports the development of WASH infrastructures and related services so as to reduce risks of infections that negatively impact the nutrition status of children. Also, the EU intends to develop education and TVET services with a strong focus on girls, which is critical to breaking the intergenerational cycle that trap women in girls in poverty and malnutrition.

1 - UNDESA [World Population Prospects](#) 2022, medium variant estimate July 2023

2 - More than 25% ever-partnered women aged 15–49 years had experienced physical or sexual, violence at least once in their lifetime – data from [UNWOMEN](#)

3 - data from [UNDP](#)

4 - Data from [Global Nutrition Report](#)

5 - Data from [Global Nutrition Report](#)

6 - Health, Education, Social Welfare, Water Supply & Sanitation, Agriculture, Livestock

7 - EUR 20 million of which EUR 5 million for nutrition

8 - 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. Data for 2022 are preliminary.