

PHILIPPINES

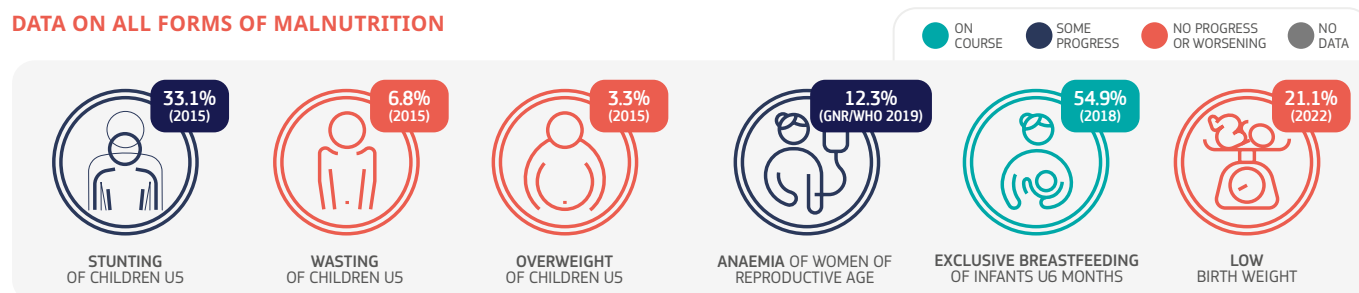
Nutrition situation in Philippines

AT A GLANCE

The Philippines has an estimated population of 117.3 million people¹. For decades, the country has seen very little progress with either stunting (33.1%) or wasting (6.8%) among children under-five, and has remained among the ten countries in the world with the highest number of stunted children (3.8 million²). Socio-economic inequalities are clearly reflected in nutrition data, with stunting as high as 45% in the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (BARMM) following decades of conflict and underinvestment. At the same time, the accelerated consumption of ultra-processed foods is driving overweight and obesity, with the country off course to prevent increasing overweight

in children under-five. Multi-dimensional poverty remains the primary driver of malnutrition in all its forms. Almost three-quarters of Filipinos (84.4 million) were unable to afford a healthy diet in 2021³. Consumption of fruit, vegetables and legumes falls far short of recommended dietary intake while consumption of starchy staples (predominantly white rice) is significantly higher⁴. The burden on the Philippine economy of both child undernutrition and non-communicable diseases (NCDs) driven by unhealthy diets has been estimated as at least USD 19 billion⁵. The Philippines has a Gender Inequality Index value of 0.388 and is ranked at 92 of 166 countries in 2023-24.

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

- The Philippines joined the Scaling Up Nutrition Movement in 2014⁶.
- The National Nutrition Council (NNC) Governing Board and its technical Committee leads the national multi-stakeholder platform.
- The PPAN 2017-2022 focused predominantly on nutrition-specific actions relating to the first 1 000 days of life.
- The new PPAN 2023-2028, launched in September 2023, stresses the fundamental right of all Filipinos to nutrition and comprises approaches to address all forms of malnutrition.
- The Philippine Development Plan (PDP 2023-2028) commits to reduce stunting to 22.3% by 2025 and recognises the need to ensure food security and proper nutrition using a whole of society approach to address malnutrition in all its forms, including promoting the consumption of local and traditional foods.
- Improving nutrition governance is an explicit focus of the PDP with a particular focus on ensuring provision of services and strengthening coordination mechanisms at local level, including the introduction of legislation to establish Local Government Unit nutrition offices, and enhancing the functionality of local level multi-sectoral nutrition committees to mobilise around the development of 3-year nutrition action plans.

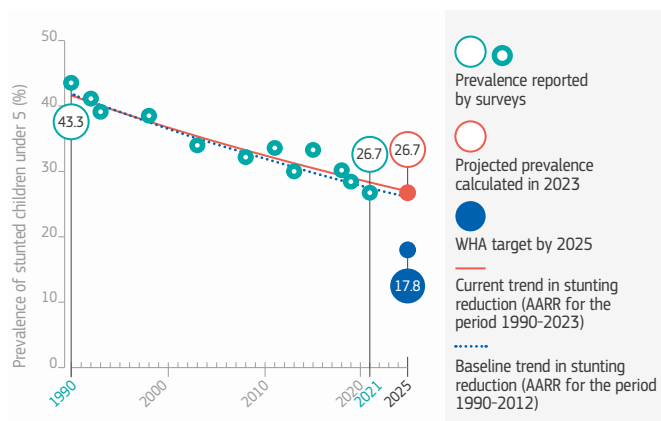
Example of EU support

The EU is working to strengthen a nutrition-sensitive value chain lens across its programmes. Launched in 2022 in the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao, the Bangsamoro Agri-Enterprise Programme (EUR 20 million) works through partnership to demonstrate a multi-pronged value-chain approach to (i) support farmers (women and men) and cooperatives to adopt integrated and productive farming systems with a focus on gender equality and women's empowerment, resilience, agro-ecology and respect for traditional and indigenous knowledge; (ii) assist establishment of product standard quality systems; and, (iii) support women's participation in business, opening up new employment opportunities and improving incomes.

A EUR 35.5 million initiative under the Mindanao Peace and Development Programme (MinPAD RISE 2021-2025), aims to (i) strengthen capacities of agricultural cooperatives for service delivery, (ii) improve community-based infrastructure providing basic economic and social services to communities; and (iii) increase access to knowledge regarding regional conflict-sensitive and climate-smart investment.

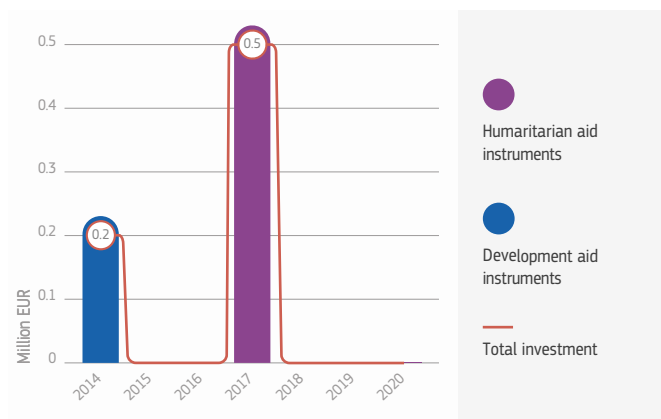
The EU provided over EUR 10 million to families affected by typhoon Rai in December 2021 and severe tropical storm Nalgae ("Paeng") in November 2022⁷.

Progress on the two EU pledges for nutrition



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

The Philippines has achieved a decline in the prevalence of stunting in the last 30 years, although progress has been slow and the rate of decline in the number of children stunted, estimated in 2012 at 1.3% has not improved and may conversely have marginally declined to 1.2% in 2022. If this trend is maintained, over 3.3 million children are expected to be stunted in 2025. The country is off-track to meet the PDP target of 22.3% by 2025.



EU FINANCIAL COMMITMENTS TO NUTRITION BETWEEN 2014 AND 2020 – A TOTAL OF EUR 0.7 MILLION

The EU committed EUR 0.2 million for maternal and young child nutrition security in 2014 and EUR 0.5 million for humanitarian purposes in 2017. There have been no commitments specifically to nutrition in 2021 or 2022. However, EUR 55 million has been committed through ongoing grants for sustainable agriculture, under which there are actions to build in aspects of nutrition sensitivity⁸.

Planning for nutrition 2021-2027

At the 2021 UN [Food Systems Summit](#), the [Philippine Food Systems Transformation Pathway](#) was launched to address the challenge of linking 'sustainable and climate-smart food systems, land security and improved nutrition'. It includes improving access to safe and nutritious food and a shift to healthy and sustainable consumption patterns.

Further commitments were made at the [Tokyo Nutrition for Growth \(N4G\) Summit](#) in December 2021, including: to implement the Philippine Multi-sectoral Project (PMNP) to strengthen the delivery of nutrition interventions through Primary Health Services, community-based nutrition services and multisectoral nutrition convergence; to undertake policy and advocacy actions at the national and sub-national level to increase the number of LGUs with nutrition offices and staff; and to facilitate preparation of regional level and LGU level nutrition action plans anchored in the national PPAN.

Nutrition forms part of the 360-degree approach of the EU's Global Gateway. The EU's Multi-Annual Indicative Programme (MIP 2021-2027) for the Philippines underscores the importance of addressing the rights of women, children, youth and indigenous people. There is no explicit reference to nutrition in the MIP. However, given the close alignment of the MIP with the PDP, there are ongoing opportunities to strengthen the integration of nutrition, as a core dimension of a rights-based, inequality-focused and gender-transformative approach to human development ongoing interventions on agriculture, education, etc. as a cross-cutting theme. Given that the PPAN has established a strong emphasis on nutrition-specific interventions from a health system perspective, the EU's comparative advantage is likely to be found in supporting efforts to ensure a more multi-sectoral approach, for instance by drawing attention to the basic causes of malnutrition (such as poor coverage of social protection, women's economic empowerment and inequality across the food system including access to land). In particular, the EU will continue to support the humanitarian-development-peace nexus in Mindanao in order to support the transition process, pursue human security, poverty alleviation, support development and sustain peace while addressing the effects of climate change. This action will support the creation of an enabling environment for sustainable economic development and job creation with a nutrition-sensitive approach.

1 - United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division [World Population Prospects 2022](#). Population estimate for July 2023.

2 - JME (2023)

3 - [World Bank \(2022\)](#)

4 - [Global Nutrition Report \(2022\)](#)

5 - Child undernutrition USD 4.4 billion ([World Bank, 2020](#)) and NCDs USD14.5 billion ([WHO, 2019](#))

6 - [Scaling Up Nutrition Movement](#)

7 - [European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations \(2023\)](#)

8 - Data in this section excludes some regional, global and policy/research/information commitments that could not be disaggregated by beneficiary country. Data for 2022 are preliminary. 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