



TAJIKISTAN

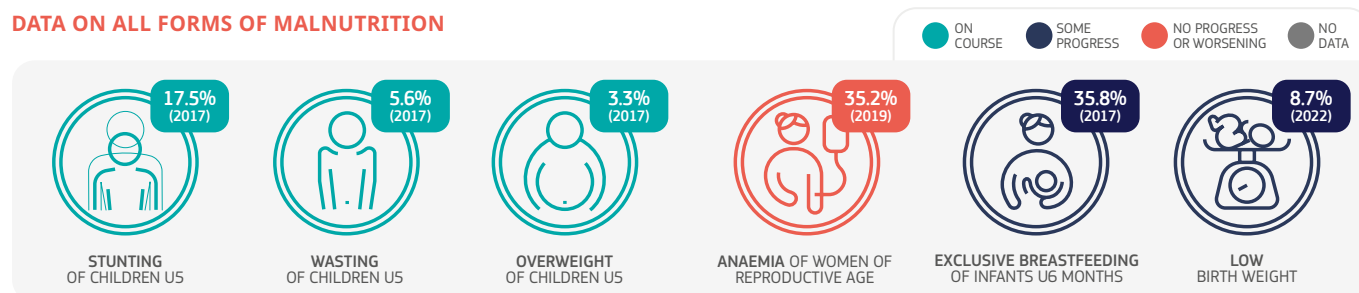
Nutrition situation in Tajikistan

AT A GLANCE

The population of Tajikistan is currently 10.14 million¹. Tajikistan is on track to reach the international stunting target for 2025 and is also on track to achieve targets on wasting and overweight in children under 5 years of age². However, stunting rates vary across provinces with highest rates in the Gorno-Badakhshan Autonomous Oblast (GBAO) region, where almost one third of children under 5 years are stunted. The prevalence of wasting in the capital, Dushanbe is also high at 17%. Only 8.3% of children in Tajikistan aged 6-23 months receive a minimally adequate diet. Some progress has been made towards targets on exclusive breastfeeding and prevalence of low

birthweight, while no progress has been made in reducing rates of anemia in women of reproductive age. Rates of anemia in this group are greater in the poorest households (43%) and highest in GBAO at around 55%. In addition, around 19.3% of adult women in Tajikistan are estimated to be living with obesity. Causes of malnutrition include chronic poverty, drought, gender inequality, inadequate diets, poor infant and young child feeding and caring practices, lack of safe water, hygiene and sanitation and low access to basic health services. Tajikistan has a Gender Inequality Index of 0.269, ranking 62nd of 166 countries (2022)³.

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).

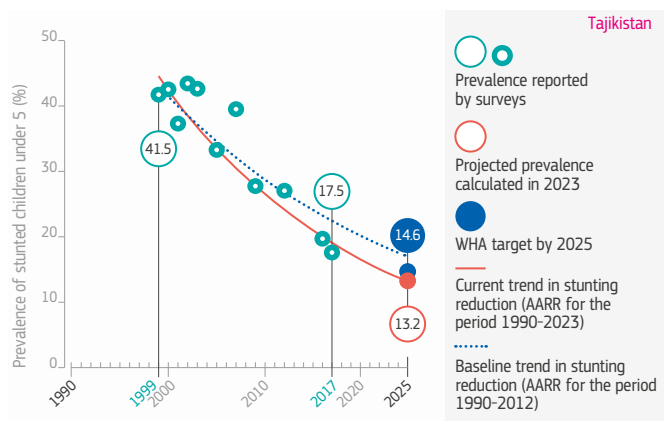
NUTRITION GOVERNANCE

- Tajikistan joined the Scaling Up Nutrition (SUN) movement in 2013
- A Multi-stakeholder Coordination Council for the governance of SUN in Tajikistan was established in 2016. The Focal Point for SUN is the Deputy Minister (Maternal and Child Health) in the Ministry of Health and Social Protection of Population. Sub-national multi-stakeholder platforms for the coordination of nutrition across sectors also exist.
- Several SUN networks are operational in Tajikistan including a Civil Society Network, SUN Donor Network and the UN Nutrition Network.
- At the beginning of 2021, Tajikistan adopted the Multisectoral Action Plan on Nutrition (MSAPN) of the Republic of Tajikistan for 2021-2025, signed by the President, demonstrating political commitment for nutrition.
- Tajikistan set a number of nutritional priorities in 2022, which included: implementation of the MSAPN at regional and district level; flour fortification; assessment of maternal and child nutrition status, strengthening state budget tracking on nutrition; advocacy and strengthening human resource capacity in nutrition.

Example of EU support

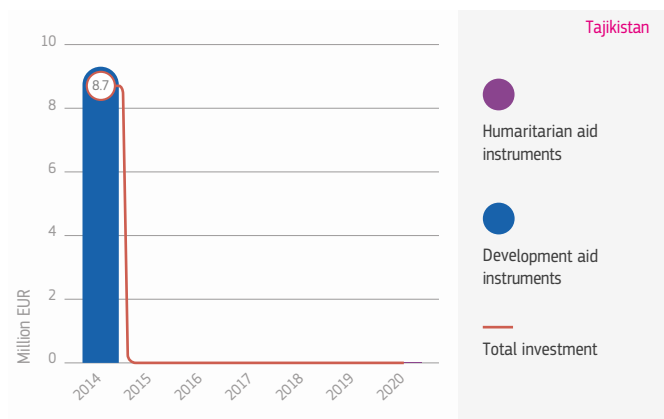
- Rural Drinking Water Supply and Sanitation Project* (MIP 2021-2027). Malnutrition and lack of access to safe water are linked. Activities improve the access to drinking water and adequate sanitation for disadvantaged population in rural Tajikistan. This also gives women more time for productive and childcare activities, narrowing a critical gender gap.
- Second phase of the Rural Development Programme* (2019-2027, EUR 59 million). Activities will: 1. strengthen productivity in relevant value chains (potato, rice), improving food security and nutrition; 2. support rural livelihoods and reduce food insecurity of rural populations reliant on fragile ecosystems; 3. promote efficient use of water resources, ensuring access to water supply and sanitation and stabilising food production in the face of climatic shocks.
- Integrated Natural Resources Management in Zarafshon Valley for Equitable and Sustainable Development* (2022-2027, EUR 16.6 million). This forms part of the rural development programme mentioned above and is implemented by Aga Khan Foundation in Northwest Tajikistan to protect natural resources and improve food security. Activities include the construction of drinking water supply systems and dissemination of awareness-raising SMS texts developed by the National Healthy Lifestyle Centre⁴.

Progress on the two EU pledges for nutrition



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

Within the framework of the country's Multisector Plan of Action on Nutrition, the Government of Tajikistan has committed to reduce stunting by 40% by 2025. Since 2012, there has been a significant reduction in stunting rates in Tajikistan. As seen in the graphic, Tajikistan is expected to achieve a stunting prevalence of 13.2% in 2025, which goes beyond the WHA target of 14.6%, although this is still below the government target.



EU FINANCIAL COMMITMENTS TO NUTRITION BETWEEN 2014 AND 2020 – TOTAL OF EUR 8.7 MILLION

The European Union invested 8.7 million in nutrition through development aid instruments in 2014⁵, under the Rural Development Programme I for Tajikistan.

Planning for nutrition 2021-2027

Following the UN Food Systems Summit in September 2021, the Committee for Food Security under the Government of the Republic of Tajikistan and the United Nations hosted a high-level meeting in November 2021 to launch the National Food Systems Pathway, with the participation of government, UN, development partners, civil society and the private sector. The launch reaffirmed food security as one of the five key priorities of National Development Strategy and the importance of building sustainable food systems for Tajikistan was highlighted as key for promoting food security and nutrition, as well as for green growth and jobs. The Chairperson of the Committee for Food Security noted how the national pathway initiative should urge ministries and agencies to take the necessary measures to eradicate hunger, malnutrition and poverty. The objectives and activities of the pathway include:

- ensuring access to safe and nutritious food for all;
- sustainable use of natural resources;
- environmentally friendly food production and consumption behaviours;
- well-being and equity;
- sustainability (rehabilitation/regeneration).

Nutrition forms part of the 360-degree approach of the EU's Global Gateway. The MIP for Tajikistan is well placed to support the above commitments, working in synergy with all the three priority areas (PA): Under PA 1 (Inclusive Green and Digital Economy) better incomes and diversified agricultural production can result in improved quality and diversity of diets, also contributing to better nutrition outcomes. Actions that support the achievement of universal health coverage under PA2 (Human Development (Health and Education)), and supporting the Government with health financing reforms, are an investment for the achievement of well-being and equity. Actions to improve the standards of primary health care (PHC) facilities, both in terms of infrastructure and training of family doctors and nurses, will also improve nutritional standards: PHC facilities in poorest districts, promote family medicine and increase the health literacy of the population. Under PA3 (Efficient Management of Natural resources), actions to improve access to drinking water and sanitation in the country, including in schools, and the cross-cutting gender approach, offer additional opportunities to address malnutrition in Tajikistan.

The EU (via the 2FAS Advisory Service) has supported the Ministry of Health in Tajikistan on an analysis, country case study and workshop on food fortification in the country. More recently, it has supported research on salt iodisation and flour and oil fortification. The outcomes of this research will be instrumental in the achievement of the first of the food systems pathways.

1 - UN Department of Social and Economic Affairs World Population Prospects 2022, estimate of July 2023.

2 - Tajikistan Demographic Health Survey 2017.

3 - UNDP Gender Inequality Index

4 - NB, these projects do not appear in the EU financing graph below, as they were not marked in the financial reporting system as nutrition-related

5 - 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.