

UGANDA

Nutrition situation in Uganda

AT A GLANCE

Uganda has a population of 48.6 million people¹ and with a growth of nearly 3.3%, it is likely to reach 100 million by 2050. Three quarters of the population are under 30 years old. Uganda plays a key role in regional security and as a host country for 1.4 million refugees, principally women and children. Despite sustained economic growth and poverty reduction over the past 20 years, Uganda still has areas where food and nutrition insecurity is chronic. Stunting affects more than one in four children. The regions with the highest prevalence are the north (Karamoja and West Nile) and the south-west, where poorer households are

disproportionately affected, and gender inequality is high. The annual costs associated with child undernutrition are estimated at 5.6% of GDP². A survey conducted in 2021 found very high levels of moderate or severe food insecurity during the COVID-19 pandemic according to the Food Insecurity Experience Scale (77% of caregivers of children < 2 years, 73% of caregivers of children aged 2-18 years, and 77% of pregnant or breastfeeding women)³. Uganda has a Gender Inequality Index value of 0.527 and is ranked 128 of 166 countries in 2022 index.

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

- Uganda was one of the first countries to commit to the Scaling Up Nutrition movement in March 2011.
- The original Uganda nutrition action plan (UNAP) 2011-2016 was extended, whilst the UNAP II 2019-2025 (which scales up multi-sectoral actions) has been finalised with a comprehensive monitoring and evaluation framework.
- A multi-sectoral technical coordination committee chaired by the Office of the Prime Minister (OPM) is the main nutrition platform – it includes eight line ministries, development partners, academia, civil society and the private sector.
- All districts have District Nutrition Coordination Committees, but very few are functional or effective.
- Parish Development Committees have been included as the lowest governance unit for nutrition at the parish level.
- A nutrition donors and partners working group, in which the EU and Member States actively participate, was established in 2017.
- Technical assistance related to the EU-FAO FIRST initiative in the food and agriculture sector has been operationalised since 2018.
- Salt iodisation has been mandatory since 1997; fortification of wheat flour was mandated in 2005; and maize flour and oil in 2011.

Example of EU support

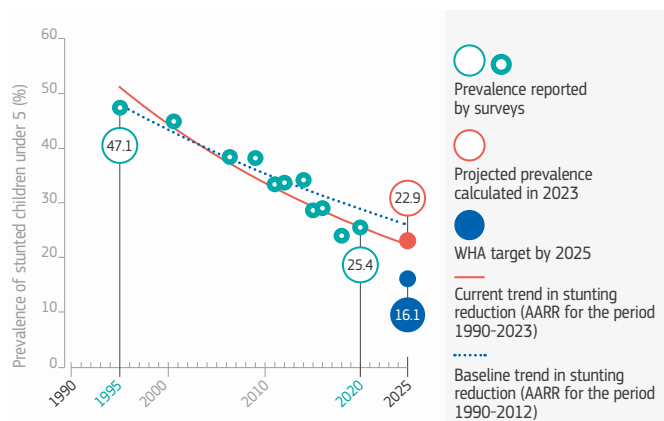
UNICEF and WHO, with financial support from the European Union (EU), are implementing 'Strengthening national nutrition information systems' in five countries in Africa and Asia: Cote d'Ivoire, Ethiopia, Laos, Uganda and Zambia.

This aims to strengthen the national nutrition information systems within the health sector and data on nutrition gathered through routine health services. While the focus is on the collection of good quality data from the health system, data sources and information systems from sectors that may have an impact on people's nutritional status e.g., agriculture and education, are also mapped.

The project supports countries in defining monitoring standards and providing technical assistance to address the nutrition data gaps. The aim is to increase the uptake of nutrition information to better inform policy and programme development and implementation by increasing country capacity in monitoring programmes and national/global nutrition targets.

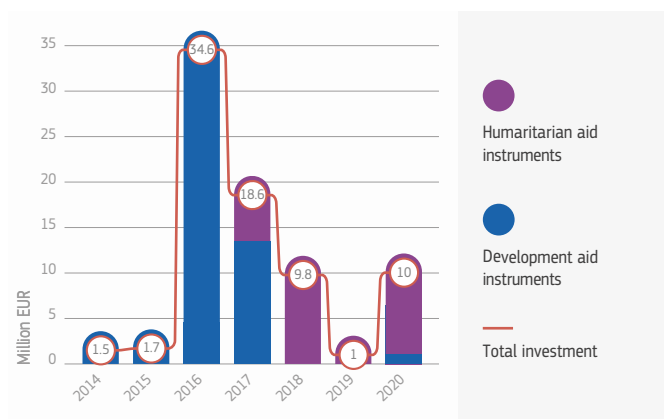
In Uganda, the National Nutrition Monitoring and Evaluation Framework was completed in 2021. The framework is currently being used as a guiding document for monitoring by the MoH on the progress made in the nutrition.

Progress on the two EU pledges for nutrition



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

The Government has committed to reduce stunting to 19% by 2019/20 as outlined in the second National Nutrition Plan 2021-2025. Uganda has achieved a steady decline in the prevalence of stunting since the 1990s, but at the same time an increase in the number of children stunted due to high population growth. The rate of decline in the number of stunted children has accelerated from 2.0% in 2012 to 2.7% in 2022. If this trend continues, approximately 1.88 million children are expected to be stunted in 2025.



EU FINANCIAL COMMITMENTS TO NUTRITION BETWEEN 2014 AND 2020 – A TOTAL OF EUR 74.5 MILLION

The most significant nutrition-sensitive investment during this period was the Development Initiative for Northern Uganda (DINU), a nutrition-sensitive programme for which the total contribution is EUR 133 million, with EUR 33 million for nutrition. DINU includes improved nutrition information systems and governance. Other commitments over the period including the provision of humanitarian assistance to address both food and nutrition insecurity, especially amongst South Sudanese refugees in the north and their host communities. EUR 3.0 million was committed in 2021 and EUR 4.8 million was committed in 2022, both for humanitarian purposes⁴.

Planning for nutrition 2021-2027

At the [Tokyo Nutrition for Growth \(N4G\) Summit 2021](#) the Government of Uganda made the following statement: “Affirmation of the Government of Uganda’s commitment to improved nutrition status among children under five years, school-age children, adolescents, pregnant and lactating women and other vulnerable groups by 2025 as detailed in the Second Uganda Nutrition Action Plan (UNAPII); which is aligned to the country’s overarching development frameworks (Uganda Vision 2040, Third National Development Plan 2020/21-2025/26 (NDPIII) and the National Resistance Movement Party Manifesto 2020/21-2025/26.” All registered and verified N4G commitments can be found in the [N4G Compact](#) and its [Annex](#).

Uganda’s Food Systems Transformation Pathways ([version 15.09.2021](#)) for the UN Food Systems Summit 2021 outlines the following aims over the next three years:

- Establish a food systems multi-stakeholder working group representing players from government, private sector, farmers, civil society and development partners;
- Constitute an inter-ministerial committee to ensure implementation of the recommendations of the Food Systems Summit;
- Create a food systems addendum to the third National Development Plan (NDPIII);
- Undertake a mid-term review of the NDPIII using a food systems lens;
- Increased investment in agricultural processing by both government and private sector through UDC and other agencies;
- Supportive infrastructure such as improvement of the road network, irrigation infrastructure, rural electrification, development of sub-national and cross-border markets, supporting digitalisation and e-commerce;
- An enabling policy environment with SDGs fully integrated into national development plans;
- Increased investment in research as a critical enabler to resilient, sustainable food systems development;
- Fast-track implementation of resolutions and plans of actions from the Food Systems Summit;
- Strengthen partnerships, collaboration and coordination between producers, traders and consumers.

Nutrition forms part of the 360-degree approach of the EU’s Global Gateway. Although there are no upcoming nutrition activities foreseen under the Multi-Annual Indicative Programme (MIP) 2021-2027 for Uganda, the MIP is positioned to contribute to the above commitments through at least two of its three priority areas. These include the specific objective to improve Uganda’s disaster risk management approach (PA1: Green and climate transition) and the specific objective increase inclusive delivery of basic social services (PA3: Promoting democratic governance and social inclusion).

1 - UNDESA [World Population Prospects 2022](#), estimated population by July 2023.

2 - AU, NEPAD, UNECA, WFP: [The Cost of Hunger Study in Uganda](#), 2013.

3 - United Nations Children’s Fund, [Impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on diets, nutrition practices and nutrition services in Uganda](#). UNICEF Eastern and Southern Africa Regional Office, September 2022.

4 - 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.