

## ZAMBIA

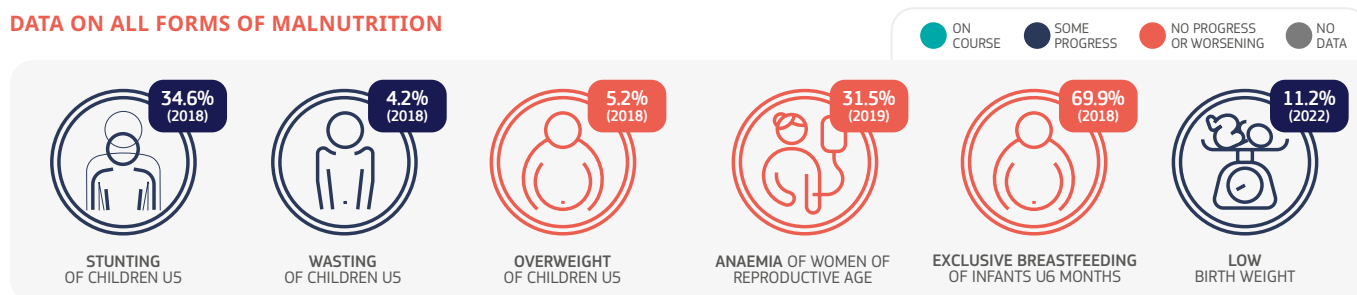
### Nutrition situation in Zambia

#### AT A GLANCE

Zambia has a population of 20.6 million people<sup>1</sup> and a growing economy driven by mining and construction. Agriculture accounts for 10% of GDP and supports the livelihoods of approximately 70% of Zambians. It is the primary source of income and food for the rural poor<sup>2</sup>. The national prevalence of stunting has fallen considerably in the past 25 years, but stunting and anaemia of both women and children remain much higher and persistent in northern areas (compared to the south-west) and in low-income households where dietary diversity and access to clean water and sanitation is limited. Malnutrition is underscored by inequitable gender roles within households upheld by tradition and culture.

Furthermore, the typical household diet in Zambia is over-reliant on maize, the principal staple crop. Only 12% of children aged 6-23 months meet the criteria for a minimum acceptable diet and a Fill The Nutrient Gap report indicates that currently half of households would not be able to afford a nutritious diet, with rural households most at risk. Global food, fuel, and fertiliser prices have risen rapidly recently, driven in large part by the fallout from Russia's war of aggression in Ukraine and are affecting Zambia's potential to address malnutrition. Zambia has a Gender Inequality Index value of 0.526 and is ranked at 137 of 166 countries in the 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

- Zambia was one of the first countries to commit to the Scaling Up Nutrition movement in December 2010.
- The national Food and Nutrition Policy launched in 2006 has been reviewed and a new Food and Nutrition Act was adopted on 23 October 2020.
- A multi-sectoral National Food and Nutrition Strategic Plan (NFNSP) was developed for 2011-2015 and a new NFNSP introduced in June 2019 for 2017-2021.
- Nutrition has been integrated in the 8<sup>th</sup> National Development Plan (8NDP) 2022-2026.
- A national multi-stakeholder platform has the National Food & Nutrition Commission (NFNC) as its secretariat reporting to a permanent Steering Committee on Food and Nutrition of permanent secretaries from different sectors. District Nutrition Coordinating Committees are being expanded beyond the 14 pilot districts.
- The First 1 000 Most Critical Days Programme (Zambia's five-year flagship stunting reduction programme) is now in its second phase (2018-2023/4) and receives EU financing.

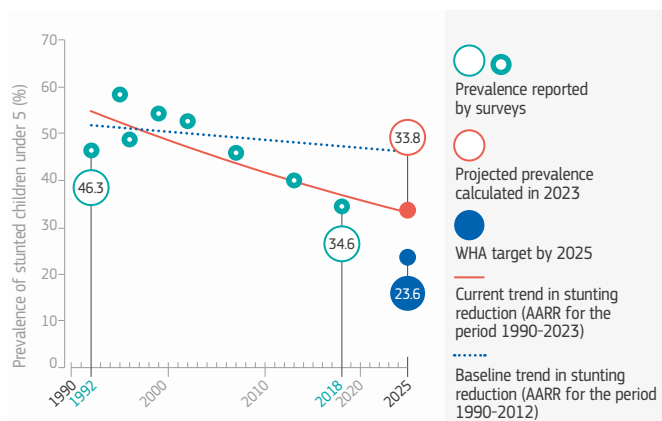
#### Example of EU support

EU supports the Sustainable Commercialisation of Smallholder Farmers in Zambia (EUR 92 million) through inclusive, productive, market-orientated, climate change-adapted and nutrition-sensitive smallholder agriculture. The nutrition element of this intervention is enabled through a contribution to the SUN Phase II programme (in cooperation with other donors).

The fund supports the strategic objectives of the 1000 Most Critical Days Programme II, coordinated by the NFNC, which promotes evidence-based, sustainable, nutrition-specific and nutrition-sensitive services in 17 districts. The intention is to target 90% of households that meet the 1000 days criteria in areas most affected by stunting. The expected results are: (i) sustained practice of optimal nutrition behaviours among adolescents, pregnant women, and mothers and caregivers of children under two; (ii) sustained demand for and use of agriculture, health, and water, sanitation and hygiene interventions for adolescents, pregnant women, mothers and caregivers of children under two and communities; (iii) quality nutrition information is used by communities, government and partners for evidence-based decisions, action and advocacy; and (iv) sustained commitment by government and partners for accountable nutrition governance.

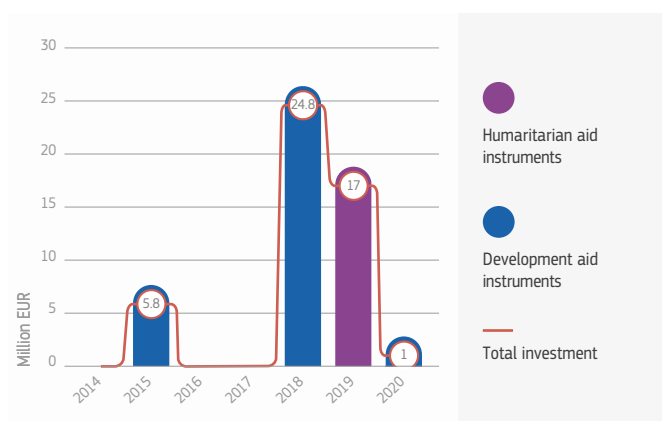


## Progress on the two EU pledges for nutrition



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

The Government of Zambia committed to reduce stunting by 50% by 2023 at the Nutrition for Growth (N4G) summit in London 2013 while the 8th National Development Plan intends to reduce stunting to 25% by 2026. Zambia has experienced a decline in the prevalence of stunting in the last 30 years, but the number of children stunted has increased due to high population growth. The rate in the decline of the number of children stunted has significantly accelerated from 0.33% in 2012 to 1.47% in 2022. However, even if this is maintained, over 1.1 million children are expected to be stunted in 2025, despite the decrease in prevalence of stunting. Recent projections anticipate that Zambia will not meet the government's own target by end 2023.



## EU FINANCIAL COMMITMENTS COMMITMENTS TO NUTRITION BETWEEN 2014 AND 2020 – A TOTAL OF EUR 49 MILLION

Several nutrition-sensitive interventions were committed during 2014-2020: Accelerating Progress to MDGs; the second phase of the Performance Enhancement Programme supporting the Ministries of Agriculture and Livestock; the Agriculture Service Centres project; and Support to the Sustainable Commercialisation of Zambia's Smallholder Farmers (see above); support to four NGOs for nutrition activities through the EU thematic programme in addressing malnutrition. The EU also funds the ENTERPRISE Challenge Fund through its ABSO programme which supports increased participation of smallholder farmers in nutrition-sensitive value chains and improves access to finance and services and inputs as well as investment opportunities.

In 2022 EUR 50.3 million was committed for nutrition under two actions: i) the Green Partnership and Investment Programme along the Agriculture, Forestry, Biodiversity, Water and Climate Nexus (EUR 30.3 m); and ii) Food Production and Resilience of Food Systems in African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) countries (EUR 20 million)<sup>3</sup>.

## Planning for nutrition 2021-2027

Although Zambia did not make renewed commitments at the most recent Nutrition for Growth (N4G) Summit in Tokyo in 2021, at the N4G summit in London (2013) the government committed to reduce stunting by 50% by 2023<sup>4</sup>. At the UN Food Systems Summit (September 2021) H.E. Mr. Hakainde Hichilema, the President of the Government of the Republic of Zambia outlined the following priorities:

- improved varieties of crops and livestock;
- enhance animal disease control and climate mitigating measures such as irrigation schemes;
- expand and improve extension services and equipment;
- provide affordable, tailored financial products to small-scale farmers; and
- regenerate land and protect biodiversity.

Nutrition forms part of the 360-degree approach of the EU's Global Gateway. The EU in Zambia is building upon past achievements of integrated approaches to nutrition through community outreach services and health promotion activities under the MDG<sub>i</sub> and the 1000 Most Critical Days national flagship programme to reduce child stunting through a pooled fund to which the EU contributes.

The Multi-Annual Indicative Programme (MIP) 2021-2027 for Zambia makes the intrinsic link between human development (priority area two) and green, sustainable growth, recovery and decent jobs (priority area one) adopting a 'one health' approach transformative of both people and nature with food and nutrition being a central theme. Underlying this is the promotion of human rights (priority area three) to address both gender and income inequalities which represent significant challenges to achieving nutrition security.

Under the first priority area, the MIP will support the transition to greener and more sustainable, diversified agri-food systems, whilst enhancing resilience of ecosystems along the agriculture-forestry-biodiversity-water and climate nexus. Furthermore, this support is gender-sensitive and adapts to opportunities to provide more adequate and nutritious foods (fruit, vegetables, legumes, small livestock and aquaculture) through domestic and regional markets.

Under the second priority area, the objective is to build a healthier, educated and more resilient population with a focus on women, adolescents and children. Particular attention will be given to integrating and promoting nutrition prevention through the key components of sexual and reproductive health; early childhood education and development; and technical and vocational education and training.

The two Team Europe Initiatives (with Czech Republic, Finland, France, Germany, Ireland, Italy and Sweden) on Climate Action and Human Development also adopt a holistic approach to nutrition through more effective agri-food systems and improved basic services such as education and health which encapsulate nutrition, gender and WASH as key crosscutting themes.

1 - UNDESA World Population Prospects 2022, population estimate as per 1 July 2023.

2 - Rural poverty is around 80% (Central Statistics Office Zambia 2018)

3 - 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. The data are therefore not directly comparable

4 - <https://globalnutritionreport.org/resources/nutrition-growth-commitment-tracking/zambia/>