

## COUNTRY PROFILE ON NUTRITION 01/2021

# UGANDA

### Nutrition situation in Uganda

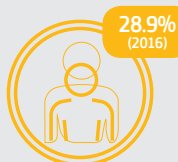
#### AT A GLANCE

Uganda has a population of 45 million<sup>1</sup> 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 nearly one in three 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 prevalence of anaemia among women and children under five is also more significant in the north due to poor diet<sup>2</sup>, water and sanitation. The annual costs associated with child undernutrition are estimated at 5.6% of GDP<sup>3</sup>. There is real concern that any recent progress in reducing malnutrition and food insecurity and malnutrition will be set back by the COVID-19 pandemic. Uganda has a Gender Inequality Index value of 0.535 and is ranked at 131 of 162 countries in the 2019 index.

#### DATA ON ALL FORMS OF MALNUTRITION

ON COURSE SOME PROGRESS NO PROGRESS OR WORSENING



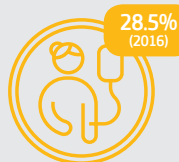
STUNTING  
OF CHILDREN U5



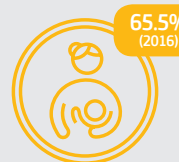
WASTING  
OF CHILDREN U5



OVERWEIGHT  
OF CHILDREN U5



ANAEMIA OF WOMEN OF  
REPRODUCTIVE AGE



EXCLUSIVE BREASTFEEDING  
OF INFANTS U6 MONTHS



LOW  
BIRTH WEIGHT

#### NUTRITION GOVERNANCE

- Uganda was one of the first countries to commit to the Scaling Up Nutrition (SUN) movement in March 2011.
- The original Uganda nutrition action plan (UNAP) 2011-2016 was extended, whilst the UNAPII 2019-2025 (which scales up multi-sectoral actions) has been finalised with a comprehensive monitoring and evaluation framework.
- A draft national nutrition policy was submitted in 2019 and now awaiting Cabinet approval.
- 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 (DNCC), but very few are functional or effective.
- 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.

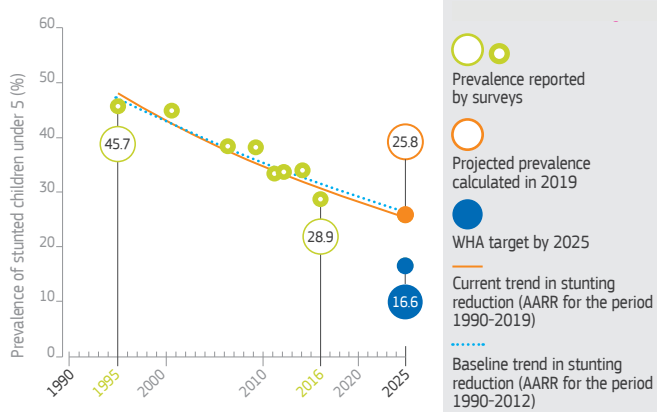
#### Example of EU support

The National Information Platform for Nutrition has been operational for nearly two years. It strives to strengthen the capacity for nutrition data analysis and use across multiple sectors. In 2019, with UNICEF technical support, the initiative built capacity in the Uganda Bureau of Statistics (UBOS) to identify and aggregate data within a central repository. Meanwhile, it has begun strengthening capacity within UBOS, the OPM and other national ministries and institutions to analyse the data to inform policies and programmes for improved nutrition and to track progress in meeting national objectives. To this end, the project (with support from the EU funded NIPN Global Support Facility), has developed a multi-sectoral national nutrition dashboard in consultation with national policy officials. This offers a one-stop centre for over 33 nutrition indicators backed up with analysis, a clear and simple presentation, with key messages that are useable by all disciplines. It also displays regional variations (e.g. stunting and anaemia) to help policymakers identify response priorities. The dashboard is particularly effective at raising awareness of nutrition issues and stimulating discussion about the implications and potential solutions. A district level pilot is planned.

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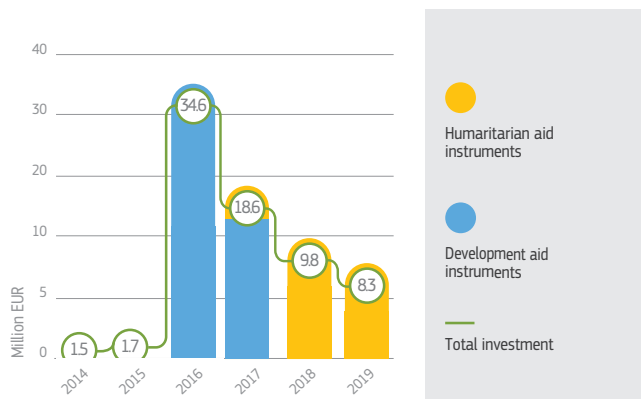
## Progress on the two EU pledges for nutrition

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



The Government has committed to reduce stunting to 25% by 2019/20 and to zero by 2040 as outlined in the second national development plan 2015-2020. Uganda has achieved a steady decline in the prevalence of stunting since the 1990s, but at the same time a large 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 1.89% in 2012 to 2.04% in 2019. If this trend continues, over 2.1 million children are expected to be stunted in 2025, approximately the same number as some 20 years ago.

### EU FINANCIAL COMMITMENTS TO NUTRITION BETWEEN 2014 AND 2019 – 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 include the provision of humanitarian assistance to address both food and nutrition insecurity, especially amongst South Sudanese refugees in the north and their host communities.

<sup>1</sup> UNDESA World Population Prospects 2019 population estimate 2020.

<sup>2</sup> 71% of children in Acholi region are anaemic and only 3% of children aged 6-23 months receive a minimum acceptable diet (UDHS 2016).

<sup>3</sup> The Cost of Hunger Study in Uganda (AU, NEPAD, UNECA, WFP), 2013.