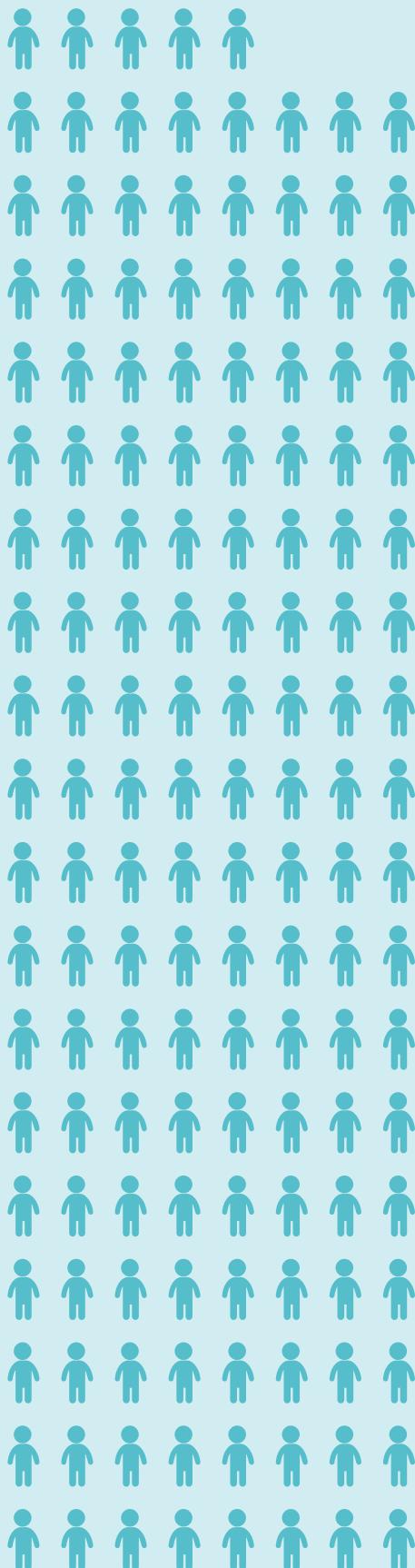




Stunting affected an estimated 21.9 per cent or 149 million children under 5 globally in 2018.

**149 million**



# Levels and trends in child malnutrition

**UNICEF / WHO / World Bank Group  
Joint Child Malnutrition Estimates**

Key findings of the 2019 edition

These new estimates supersede former analyses and results published by UNICEF, WHO and the World Bank Group.



In 2018, wasting continued to threaten the lives of an estimated 7.3 per cent or 49 million children under 5 globally.

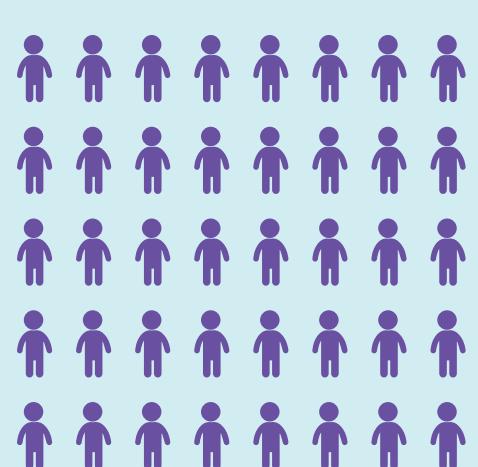
**49 million**

= 1 million children under 5



An estimated 5.9 per cent or 40 million children under 5 around the world were overweight in 2018.

**40 million**



# The ultimate aim is for all children to be free of malnutrition in all its forms



**Good nutrition allows children to survive, grow, develop, learn, play, participate and contribute** – while malnutrition robs children of their futures and leaves young lives hanging in the balance.

Stunting is the devastating result of poor nutrition in-utero and early childhood. Children suffering from stunting may never attain their full possible height and their brains may never develop to their full cognitive potential. Globally, approximately 149 million children under 5 suffer from stunting. These children begin their lives at a marked disadvantage: they face learning difficulties in school, earn less as adults, and face barriers to participation in their communities.

Wasting in children is the life-threatening result of poor nutrient intake and/or disease. Children suffering from wasting have weakened immunity, are susceptible to long term developmental delays, and face an increased risk of death, particularly when wasting is severe. These children require urgent feeding, treatment and care to survive. In 2018, over 49 million children under 5 were wasted and nearly 17 million were severely wasted.

There is also an emerging face of malnutrition: childhood overweight and obesity. There are now over 40 million overweight children globally, an increase of 10 million since 2000. The emergence of overweight and obesity has been

shaped, at least in part, by industry marketing and greater access to processed foods, along with lower levels of physical activity.

While malnutrition can manifest in multiple ways, the path to prevention is virtually identical: adequate maternal nutrition before and during pregnancy and lactation; optimal breastfeeding in the first two years of life; nutritious, diverse and safe foods in early childhood; and a healthy environment, including access to basic health, water, hygiene and sanitation services and opportunities for safe physical activity. These key ingredients can deliver a world where children are free from all forms of malnutrition.

Despite this opportunity, the UNICEF, WHO, World Bank global and regional child malnutrition estimates reveal that we are still far from a world without malnutrition. The joint estimates, published in March 2019, cover indicators of stunting, wasting, severe wasting and overweight among children under 5, and reveal insufficient progress to reach the World Health Assembly targets set for 2025 and the Sustainable Development Goals set for 2030.

Improving children's nutrition requires effective and sustained multi-sectoral nutrition programming over the long term, and many countries are moving in the right direction. Regular data collection is critical to monitor and analyse country, regional and global progress going forward.

## Forms of malnutrition\* highlighted in this key findings report



**Stunting** refers to a child who is too short for his or her age. These children can suffer severe irreversible physical and cognitive damage that accompanies stunted growth. The devastating effects of stunting can last a lifetime and even affect the next generation.



**Overweight** refers to a child who is too heavy for his or her height. This form of malnutrition results from energy intakes from food and beverages that exceed children's energy requirements. Overweight increases the risk of diet-related noncommunicable diseases later in life.



**Wasting** refers to a child who is too thin for his or her height. Wasting is the result of recent rapid weight loss or the failure to gain weight. A child who is moderately or severely wasted has an increased risk of death, but treatment is possible.



**Overweight and stunted**



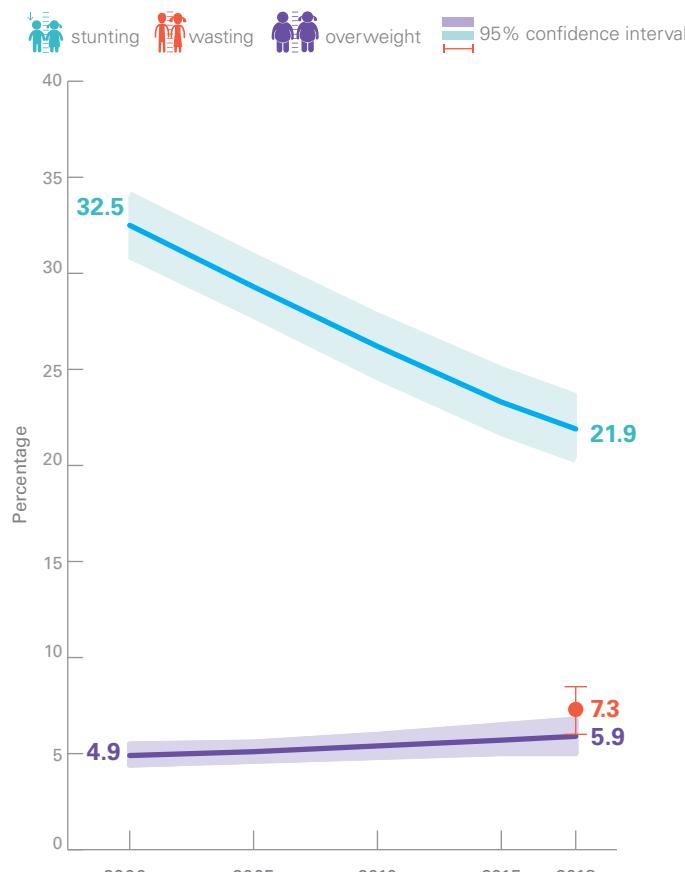
**Stunted and wasted**

\* Some children suffer from more than one form of malnutrition – such as **stunting and overweight** or **stunting and wasting**. There are currently no joint global or regional estimates for these combined conditions.

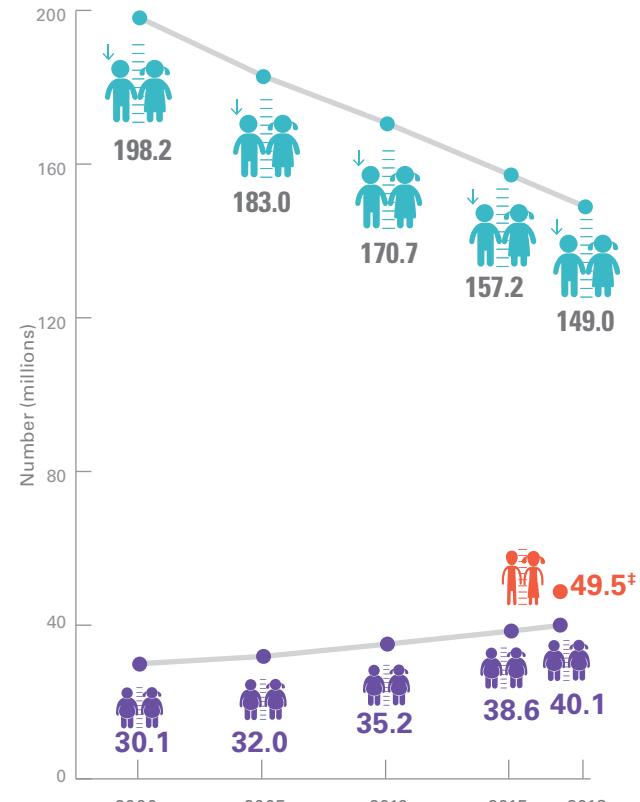
# GLOBAL OVERVIEW



**Malnutrition rates remain alarming: stunting is declining too slowly while wasting still impacts the lives of far too many young children**



Percentage of stunted, overweight and wasted children under 5, global, 2000–2018



Number (millions) of stunted, overweight and wasted children under 5, global, 2000–2018

Source: UNICEF, WHO, World Bank Group joint malnutrition estimates, 2019 edition. See Notes on Data on page 14 on why only one time point is presented for wasting on the graphs above. <sup>‡</sup> The total number of wasted children under 5 is 49.48 million; this becomes 49 million when rounded to the nearest integer (as on the cover page), and 49.5 million when rounded to the nearest tenth.

## Africa and Asia bear the greatest share of all forms of malnutrition



In 2018, more than half of all **stunted** children under 5 lived in Asia and more than one third lived in Africa.



In 2018, more than two thirds of all **wasted** children under 5 lived in Asia and more than one quarter lived in Africa.



In 2018, almost half of all **overweight** children under 5 lived in Asia and one quarter lived in Africa.



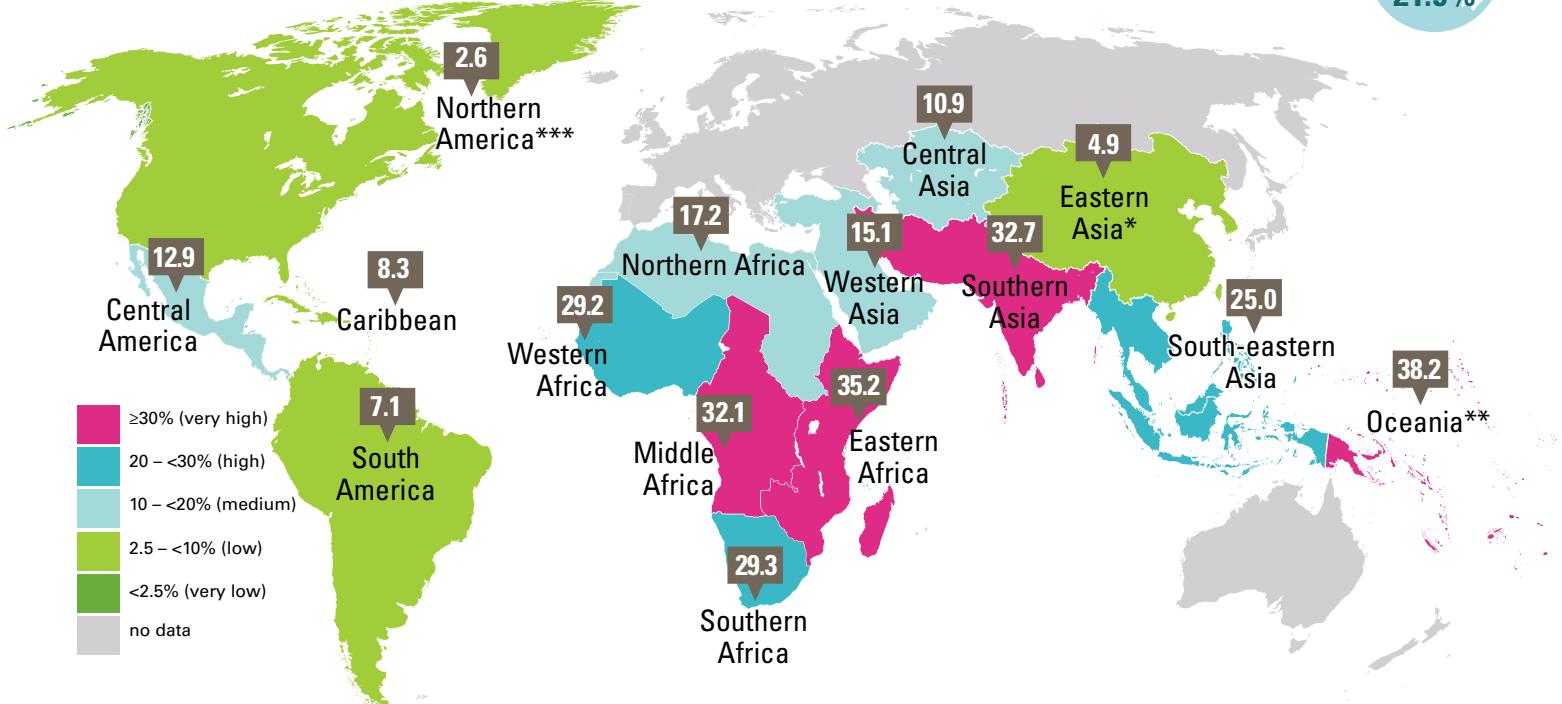
## Stunting

# PREVALENCE

**In 7 sub-regions, at least one in every four children under 5 is stunted**

Percentage of stunted children under 5, by United Nations sub-region, 2018

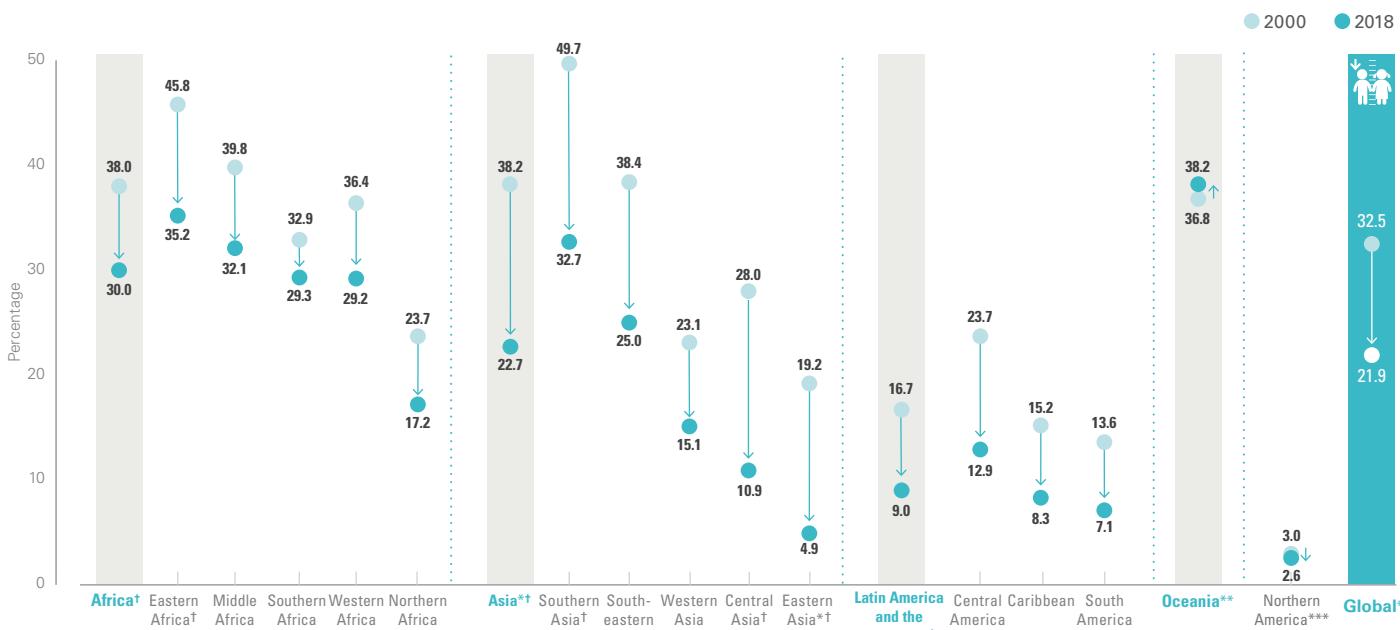
GLOBAL  
21.9%



Source: UNICEF, WHO, World Bank Group joint malnutrition estimates, 2019 edition. Note: \*Eastern Asia excluding Japan; \*\*Oceania excluding Australia and New Zealand; \*\*\*Northern America sub-regional average based on United States data. There is no estimate available for the sub-regions of Europe or Australia and New Zealand due to insufficient population coverage. These maps are stylized and not to scale and do not reflect a position by UNICEF, WHO or World Bank Group on the legal status of any country or territory or the delimitation of any frontiers.

**Large disparities in stunting reduction exist within regions/between sub-regions**

Trends in the percentage of stunted children under 5, by United Nations region/sub-region, 2000 – 2018



Source: UNICEF, WHO, World Bank Group joint malnutrition estimates, 2019 edition. Note: \*Asia and Eastern Asia excluding Japan; \*\*Oceania excluding Australia and New Zealand; \*\*\*Northern America sub-regional average based on United States data only. There is no estimate available for the More Developed Region or for sub-regions of Europe or Australia and New Zealand due to insufficient population coverage. †represents regions/subregions where the change has been statistically significant; see page 12 for the 95% confidence intervals for graphed estimates.

## Stunting

# NUMBERS AFFECTED

### Two out of five stunted children in the world live in Southern Asia

Number (millions) of stunted children under 5, by United Nations sub-region, 2018

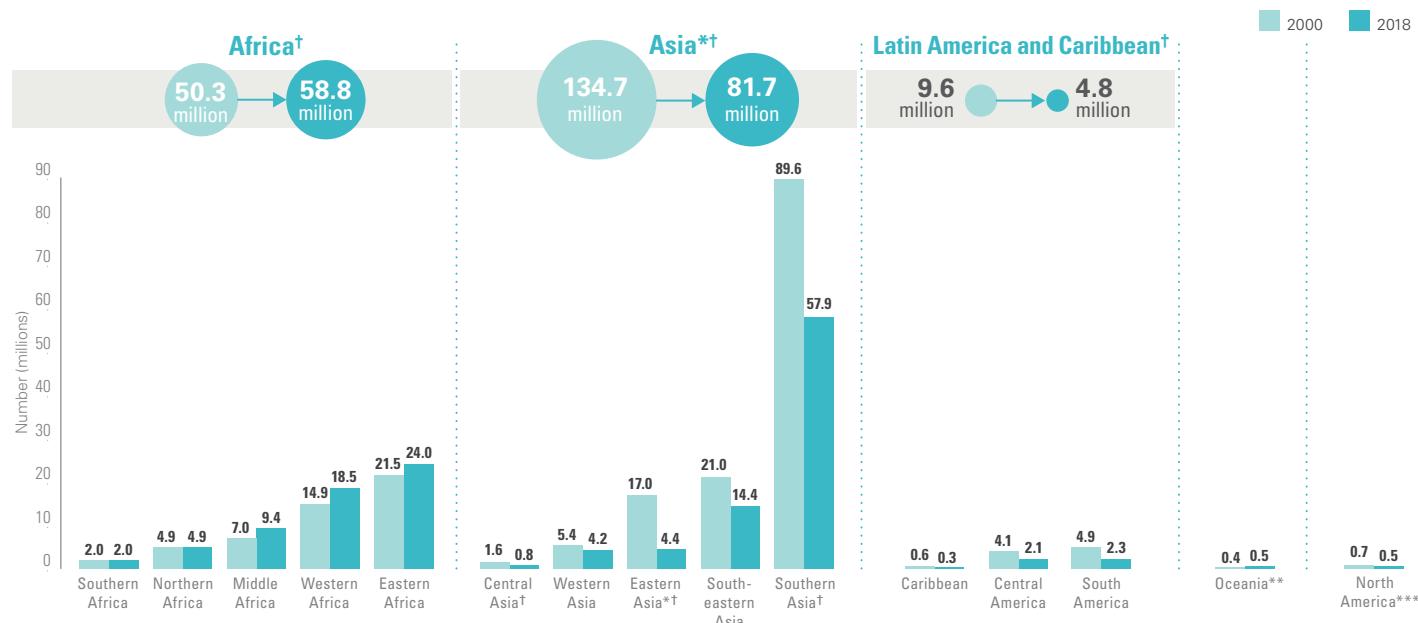


Source: UNICEF, WHO, World Bank Group joint malnutrition estimates, 2019 edition. Note: \*Eastern Asia excluding Japan; \*\*Oceania excluding Australia and New Zealand;

\*\*\*The Northern America sub-regional average based on United States data. There is no estimate available for the More Developed Region or for sub-regions of Europe or Australia and New Zealand due to insufficient population coverage. Aggregates may not add up due to rounding and/or lack of estimates for the More Developed Region.

### Africa is the only region where the number of stunted children has risen

Trends in the number (millions) of stunted children under 5, by United Nations region/sub-region, 2000 and 2018



Source: UNICEF, WHO, World Bank Group joint malnutrition estimates, 2019 edition. Note: \*Asia and Eastern Asia excluding Japan; \*\*Oceania excluding Australia and New Zealand;

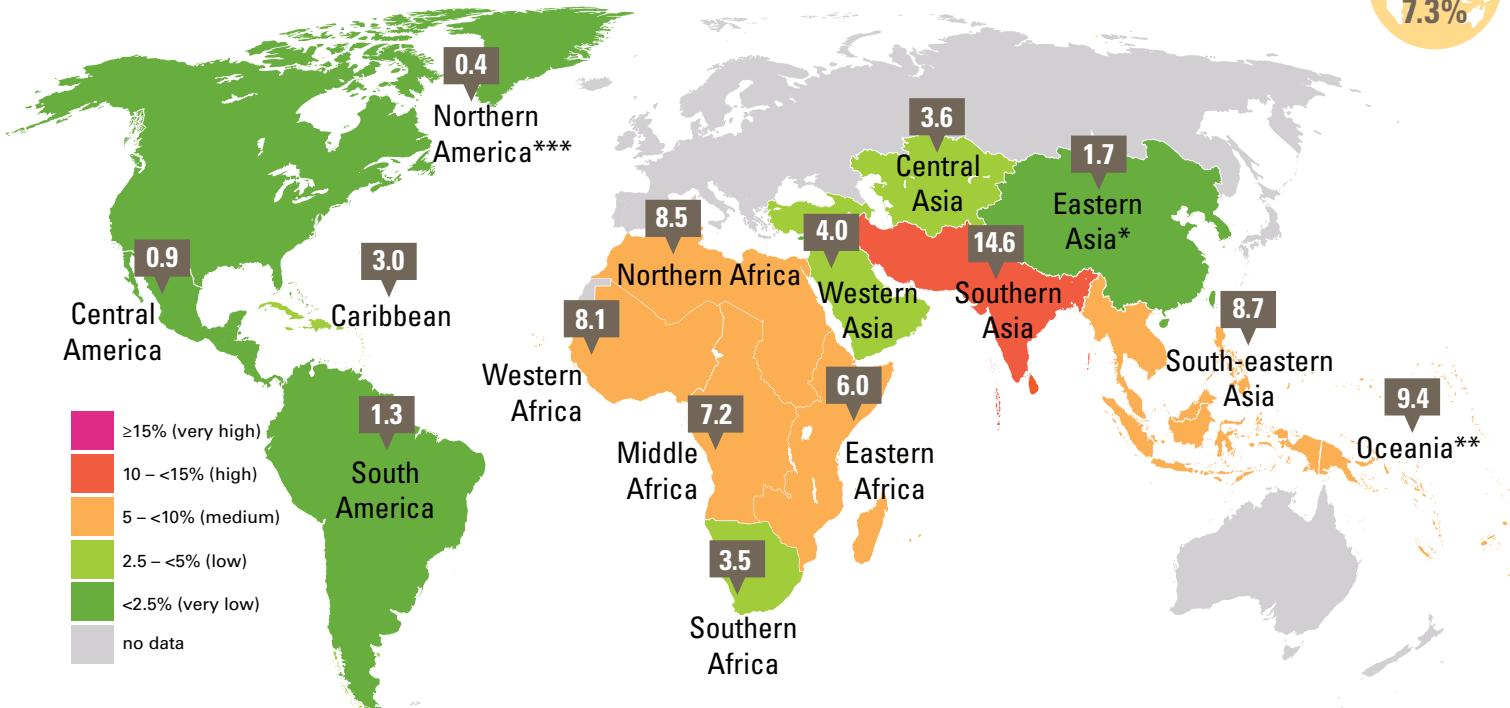
\*\*\*Northern America sub-regional average based on United States data only. There is no estimate available for the More Developed Region or for sub-regions of Europe or Australia and New Zealand due to insufficient population coverage. †represents regions/subregions where the change has been statistically significant; see page 13 for the 95% confidence intervals for graphed estimates.



# Wasting PREVALENCE

**Southern Asia is the only region with a high wasting prevalence**

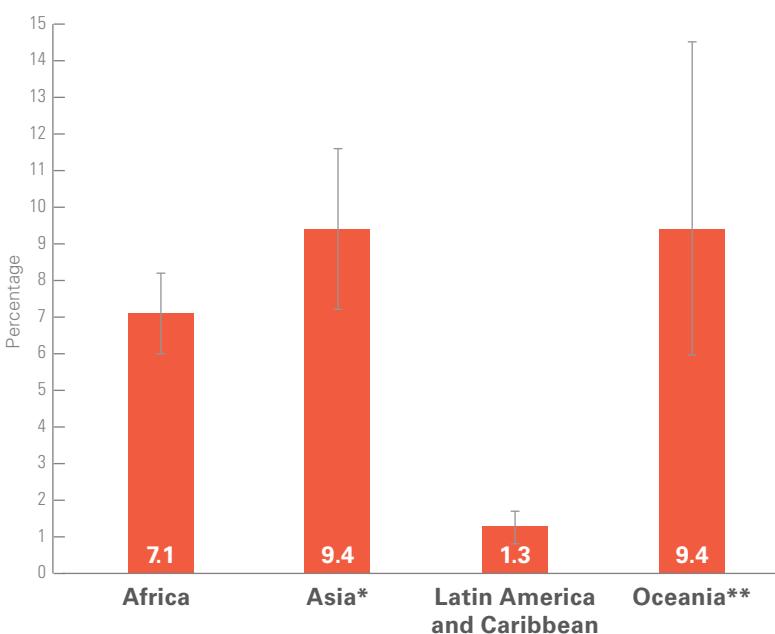
Percentage of wasted children under 5, by United Nations sub-region, 2018



Source: UNICEF, WHO, World Bank Group joint malnutrition estimates, 2019 edition. Note: \*Eastern Asia excluding Japan; \*\*Oceania excluding Australia and New Zealand; \*\*\*Northern America sub-regional average based on United States data. There is no estimate available for the sub-regions of Europe or Australia and New Zealand due to insufficient population coverage. These maps are stylized and not to scale and do not reflect a position by UNICEF, WHO or World Bank Group on the legal status of any country or territory or the delimitation of any frontiers. The legend contains a category for ≥15 per cent (pink) but there is no sub-region with a rate this high.

**Millions of young lives are in jeopardy around the globe due to wasting**

Percentage of wasted children under 5, by United Nations region, 2018



In Asia and Oceania,  
wasting is putting nearly  
**one in ten**  
children under 5 at  
increased risk of death

Source: UNICEF, WHO, World Bank Group joint malnutrition estimates, 2019 edition. Includes 95% confidence interval. Note: \*Asia excluding Japan; \*\*Oceania excluding Australia and New Zealand. There is no estimate available for the More Developed Region due to insufficient population coverage.

## Wasting

# NUMBERS AFFECTED

**More than half of all wasted children in the world live in Southern Asia**

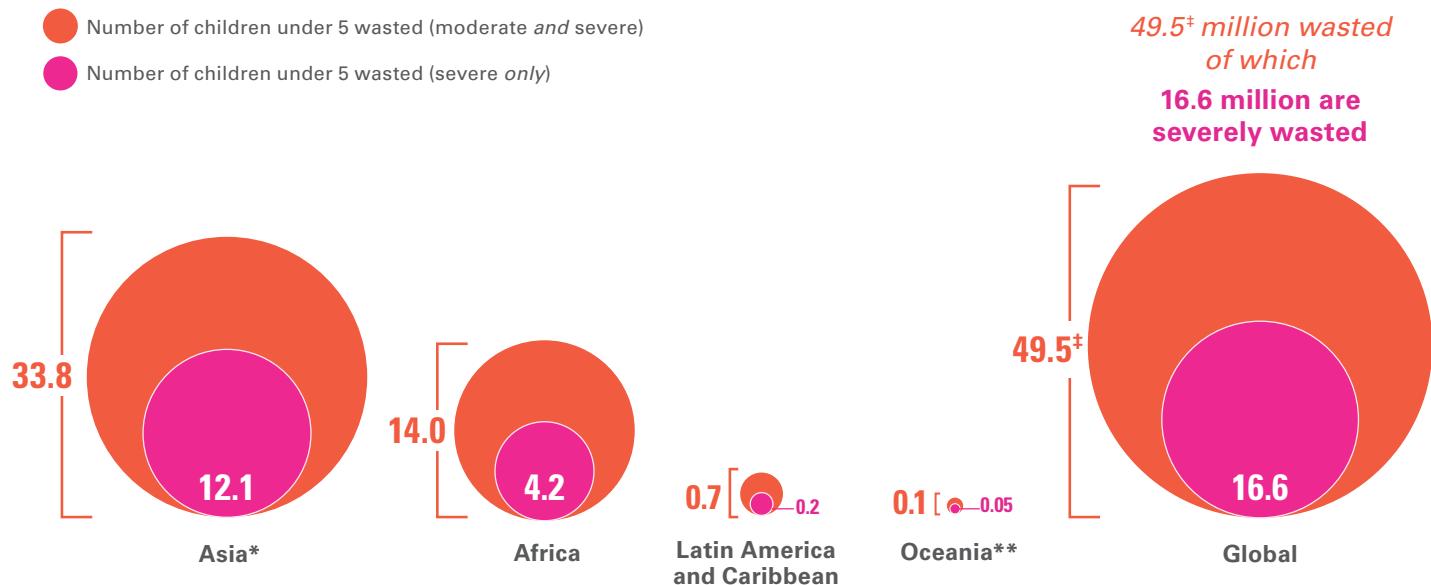
Number (millions) of wasted children under 5, by United Nations sub-region, 2018



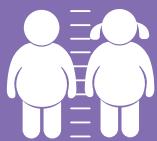
Source: UNICEF, WHO, World Bank Group joint malnutrition estimates, 2019 edition. Note: \*Eastern Asia excluding Japan; \*\*Oceania excluding Australia and New Zealand; \*\*\*The Northern America sub-regional average based on United States data. There is no estimate available for the More Developed Region or for sub-regions of Europe or Australia and New Zealand due to insufficient population coverage. Aggregates may not add up due to rounding and/or lack of estimates for the More Developed Region. <sup>‡</sup> The total number of wasted children under 5 is 49.48 million; this becomes 49 million when rounded to the nearest integer (as on the cover page), and 49.5 million when rounded to the nearest tenth.

**Asia is home to the majority of children under 5 suffering from wasting and severe wasting**

Number of wasted and severely wasted children under 5, by United Nations region, 2018



Source: UNICEF, WHO, World Bank Group joint malnutrition estimates, 2019 edition. Note: \*Asia excluding Japan; \*\*Oceania excluding Australia and New Zealand. There is no estimate available for the More Developed Region due to insufficient population coverage. Aggregates may not add up due to rounding and/or lack of estimates for the More Developed Region. <sup>‡</sup> The total number of wasted children under 5 is 49.48 million; this becomes 49 million when rounded to the nearest integer (as on the cover page), and 49.5 million when rounded to the nearest tenth.

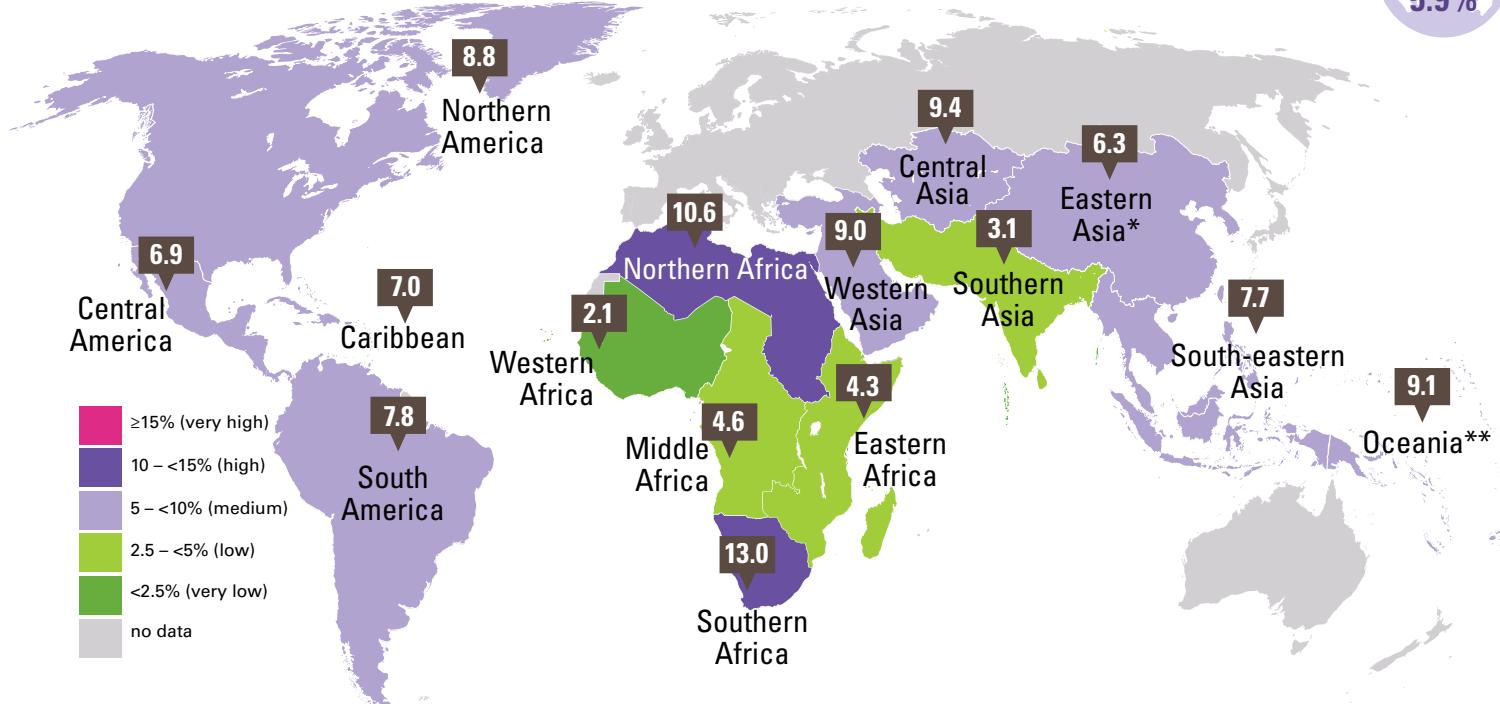


# Overweight PREVALENCE

**11 out of 15 sub-regions have medium or high levels of overweight in children under 5**

Percentage of overweight children under 5, by United Nations sub-region, 2018

GLOBAL  
5.9%



Source: UNICEF, WHO, World Bank Group joint malnutrition estimates, 2019 edition. Note: \*Eastern Asia excluding Japan; \*\*Oceania excluding Australia and New Zealand. There is no estimate available for the sub-regions of Europe or Australia and New Zealand due to insufficient population coverage. These maps are stylized and not to scale and do not reflect a position by UNICEF, WHO or World Bank Group on the legal status of any country or territory or the delimitation of any frontiers. The legend contains a category for ≥15 per cent (pink) but there is no sub-region with a rate this high.

**There has been no progress to stem the rate of overweight in more than 15 years**

Trends in the percentage of overweight children under 5, by United Nations region/sub-region, 2000 – 2018



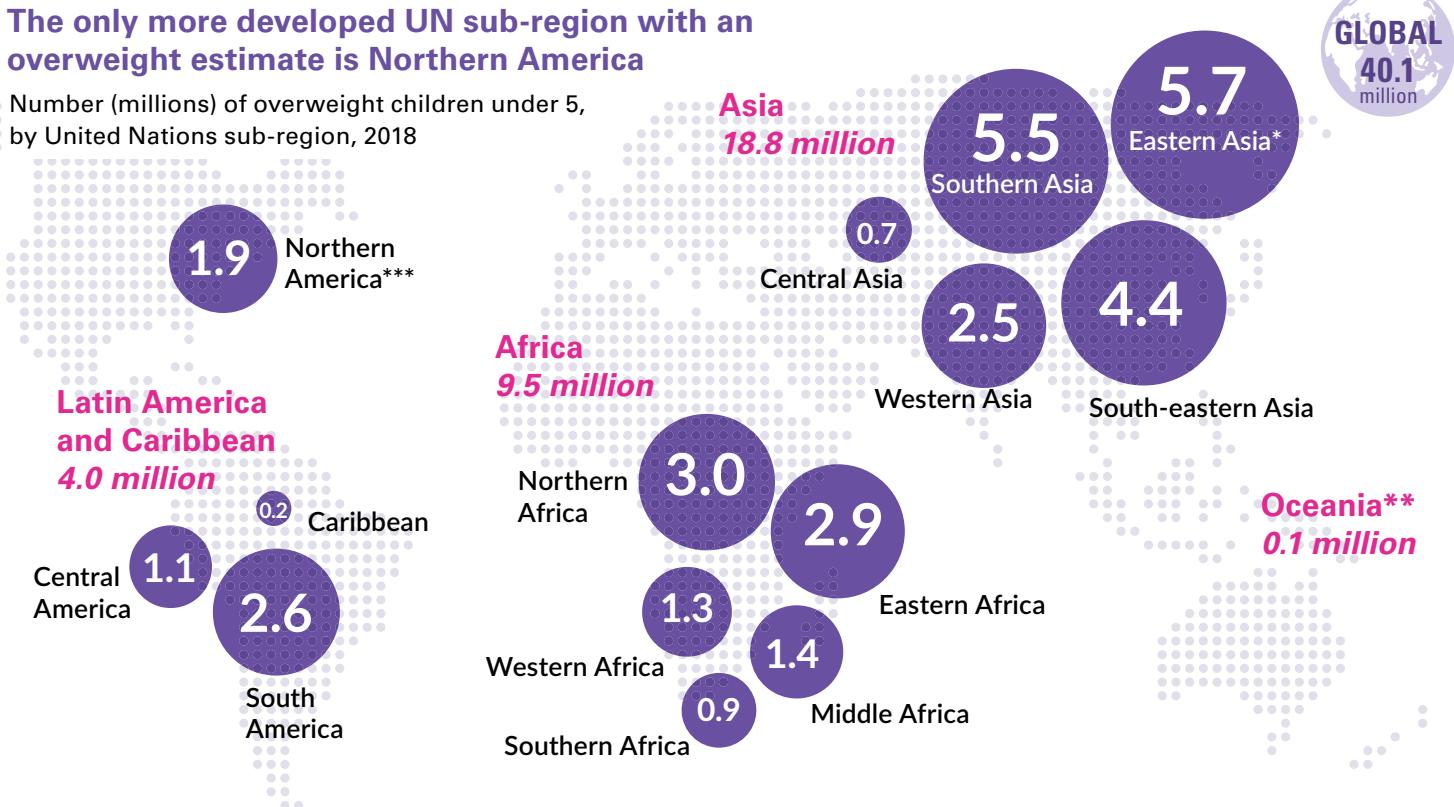
Source: UNICEF, WHO, World Bank Group joint malnutrition estimates, 2019 edition. Note: \*Asia and Eastern Asia excluding Japan; \*\*Oceania excluding Australia and New Zealand. There is no estimate available for the More Developed Region or for sub-regions of Europe or Australia and New Zealand due to insufficient population coverage. †represents regions/subregions where the change has been statistically significant; see page 12 for the 95% confidence intervals for graphed estimates.

## Overweight

# NUMBERS AFFECTED

The only more developed UN sub-region with an overweight estimate is Northern America

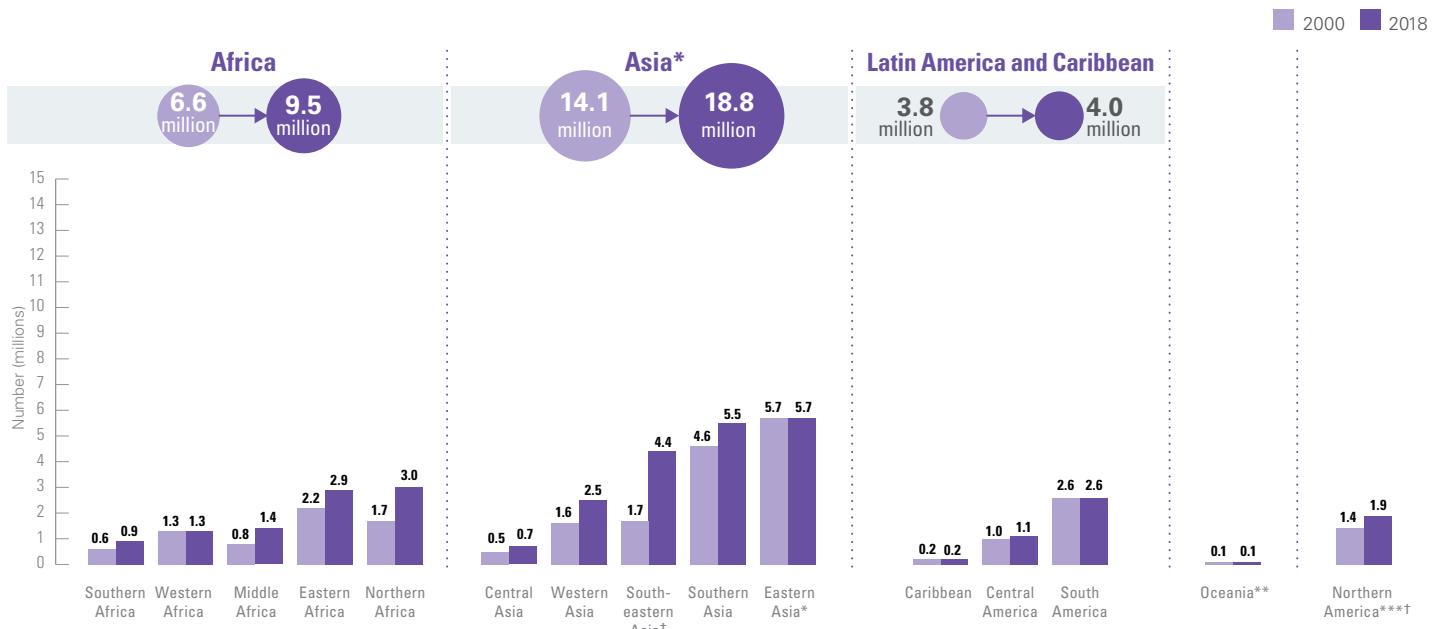
Number (millions) of overweight children under 5, by United Nations sub-region, 2018



Source: UNICEF, WHO, World Bank Group joint malnutrition estimates, 2019 edition. Note: \*Eastern Asia excluding Japan; \*\*Oceania excluding Australia and New Zealand. There is no estimate available for the More Developed Region or for sub-regions of Europe or Australia and New Zealand due to insufficient population coverage. Aggregates may not add up due to rounding and/or lack of estimates for the More Developed Region.

## Two sub-regions have seen a significant increase in the number of overweight children

Number (millions) of overweight children under 5, by United Nations region, 2000 and 2018



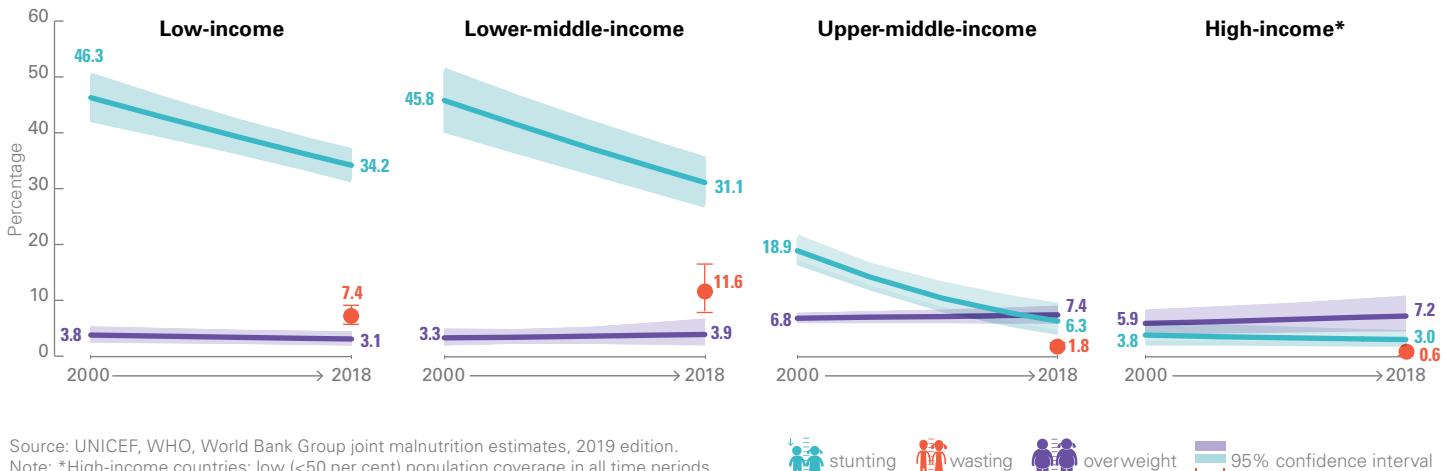
Source: UNICEF, WHO, World Bank Group joint malnutrition estimates, 2019 edition. Note: \*Asia and Eastern Asia excluding Japan; \*\*Oceania excluding Australia and New Zealand. There is no estimate available for the More Developed Region or for sub-regions of Europe or Australia and New Zealand due to insufficient population coverage. †represents regions/subregions where the change has been statistically significant; see page 13 for the 95% confidence intervals for graphed estimates.

# Country Income Classification

## TRENDS

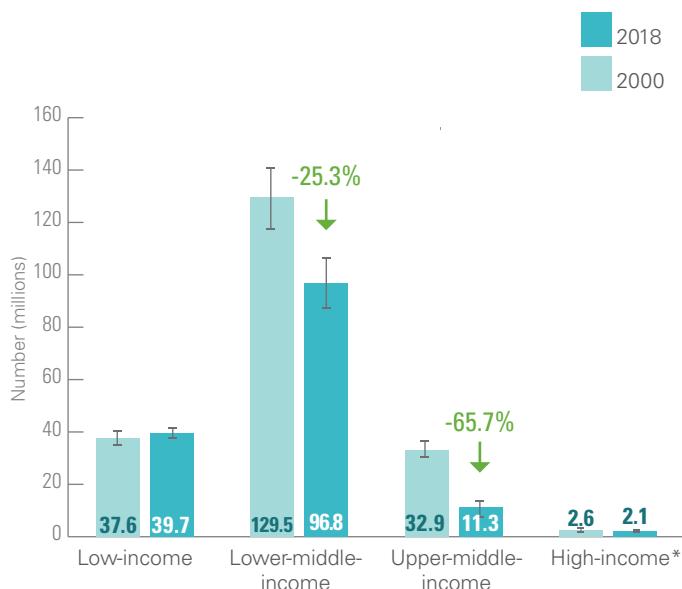
### Upper-middle-income countries reduced their stunting prevalence by two-thirds since 2000

Percentage of stunted, overweight and wasted children under 5, by country income classification, 2000 – 2018



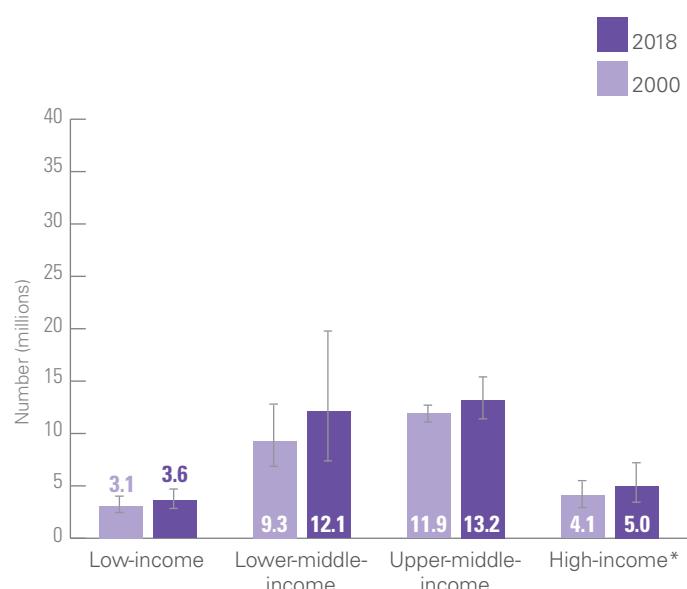
**Upper-middle-income countries have the largest relative declines in the number of stunted children of all income groups**

Number of stunted children under 5, by country income classification, 2000 and 2018



**There has been no progress to stem the rate of overweight in more than 15 years in any country-income group**

Number of overweight children under 5, by country income classification, 2000 and 2018

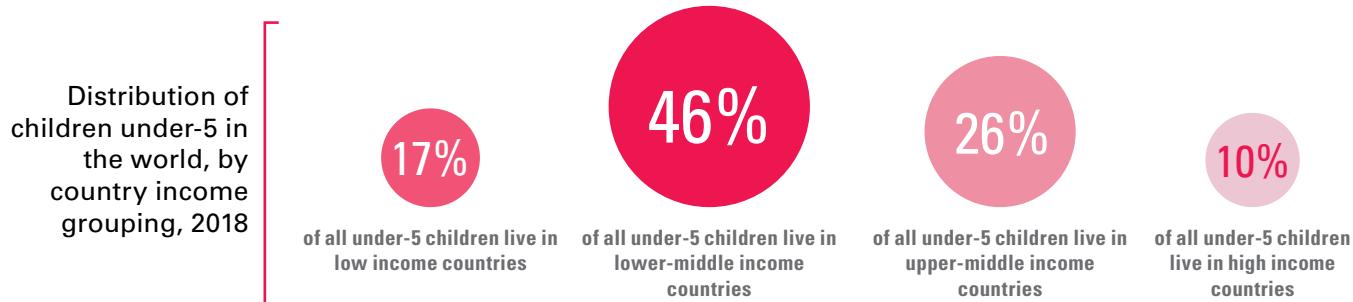


Source: UNICEF, WHO, World Bank Group joint malnutrition estimates, 2019 edition. Note: \*High-income countries: low (<50 per cent) population coverage in all time periods. Based on FY19 World Bank income classification. The values for "percentage change since 2000" are based on calculations using unrounded estimates and therefore might not match values calculated using the rounded estimates presented in this brochure.

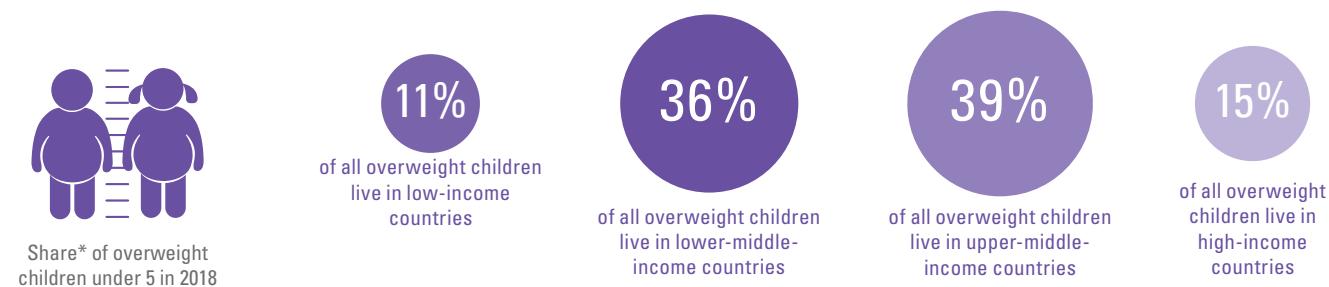
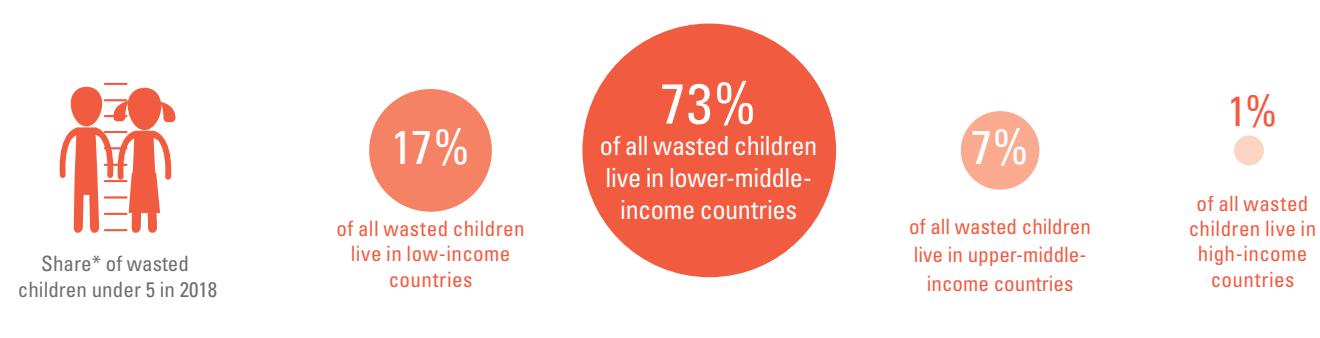
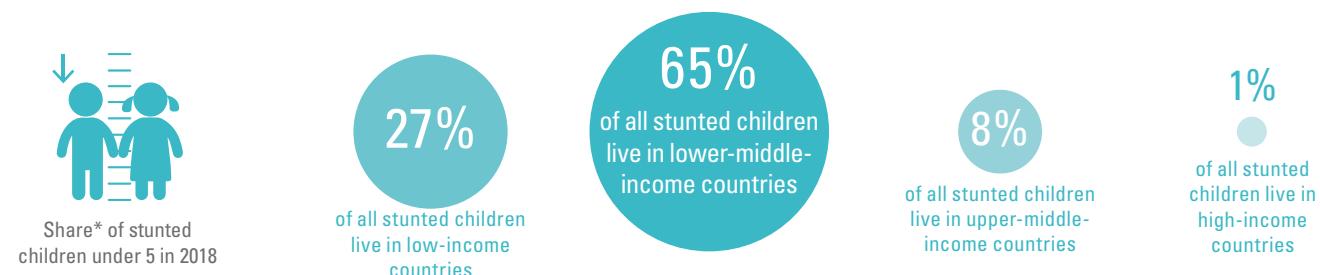
# Country Income Classification

## SHARE BY REGION

**While only about half of all children under-5 live in lower-middle income countries, two-thirds of all stunted children and three-quarters of all wasted children live there**



### Distribution of children under 5 affected by stunting, overweight and wasting in 2018



\*Share is relative to the total number affected across the 4 country-income groups; this varies from the official global estimates presented in other parts of the brochure (Stunting official estimate 149.0 million; sum of 4 country-income groups = 149.9 million. Wasting official estimate 49.5 million; sum of country-income groups = 48.3 million. Overweight official estimate 40.1 million; sum of 4 country-income groups = 33.9 million).

# PREVALENCE ESTIMATES TABLES\*

	Stunting		Overweight		Wasting and Severe Wasting	
	2000	2018	2000	2018	2018	2018
	% stunted (moderate and severe) footnote	% stunted (moderate and severe) footnote	% overweight (moderate and severe) footnote	% overweight (moderate and severe) footnote	% wasted (moderate and severe) footnote	% wasted (severe) footnote
<b>Global</b>	<b>32.5 [30.9-34.1]</b>	<b>21.9 [20.3-23.6]</b>	<b>4.9 [4.4-5.5]</b>	<b>5.9 [5.0-6.8]</b>	<b>7.3 [6.1-8.5]</b>	<b>2.4 [1.9-3.0]</b>
<b>United Nations Regions</b>						
<b>Less Developed Regions<sup>1</sup></b>	35.9 [34.1-37.6]	23.9 [22.1-25.7]	4.5 [4.0-5.0]	5.3 [4.5-6.2]	8.0 [6.6-9.3]	2.7 [2.1-3.3]
Africa	38.0 [35.7-40.3]	30.0 [27.6-32.3]	5.0 [4.0-5.9]	4.9 [3.6-6.1]	7.1 [6.0-8.2]	2.2 [1.7-2.6]
<i>Eastern Africa</i>	45.8 [41.2-50.4]	35.2 [31.4-39.3]	4.7 [3.7-6.1]	4.3 [3.5-5.3]	6.0 [4.3-8.3]	1.6 [1.1-2.2]
<i>Middle Africa</i>	39.8 [34.1-45.7]	32.1 [27.1-37.4]	4.3 [2.8-6.5]	4.6 [3.4-6.3]	7.2 [5.4-9.6]	2.2 [1.5-3.2]
<i>Northern Africa</i>	23.7 [17.5-31.3]	17.2 [11.3-25.3]	8.1 [4.5-14.4]	10.6 [4.8-21.8]	8.5 [4.5-15.2]	3.9 [2.1-7.1]
<i>Southern Africa</i>	32.9 [28.8-37.3]	29.3 [25.8-33.1]	10.4 [7.3-14.5]	13.0 [9.3-17.9]	3.5 [2.4-5.0]	0.9 [0.7-1.3]
<i>Western Africa</i>	36.4 [33.4-39.5]	29.2 [25.0-33.7]	3.1 [2.4-4.1]	2.1 [1.6-2.6]	8.1 [7.0-9.3]	2.1 [1.7-2.7]
<i>Asia<sup>2</sup></i>	38.2 [35.7-40.6]	22.7 [19.9-25.5]	4.0 [3.3-4.7]	5.2 [3.9-6.5]	9.4 [7.2-11.6]	3.4 [2.3-4.4]
<i>Central Asia</i>	28.0 [21.2-36.0]	10.9 [8.9-13.3]	9.0 [5.5-14.4]	9.4 [4.5-18.6]	3.6 [3.0-4.3]	1.3 [0.9-1.9]
<i>Eastern Asia<sup>2</sup></i>	19.2 [17.8-20.6]	4.9 [4.5-5.3]	6.4 [5.7-7.1]	6.3 [5.5-7.2]	1.7 [1.7-1.8]	0.4 [0.4-0.5]
<i>Southern Asia</i>	49.7 [45.5-54.0]	32.7 [27.9-38.0]	2.6 [1.6-4.1]	3.1 [1.9-5.1]	14.6 [10.8-19.5]	4.9 [3.6-6.7]
<i>South-eastern Asia</i>	38.4 [32.6-44.5]	25.0 [18.8-32.5]	3.2 [2.5-3.9]	7.7 [4.0-14.2]	8.7 [6.2-11.9]	4.5 [1.6-12.2]
<i>Western Asia</i>	23.1 [16.0-32.1]	15.1 [7.8-27.1]	6.7 [4.9-9.1]	9.0 [3.5-21.1]	4.0 [1.3-11.2]	1.2 [0.4-3.5]
<i>Latin American and Caribbean</i>	16.7 [13.3-20.2]	9.0 [6.0-12.0]	6.6 [5.5-7.7]	7.5 [6.6-8.4]	1.3 [0.8-1.7]	0.3 [0.2-0.4]
<i>Caribbean</i>	15.2 [7.5-28.5]	8.3 [3.6-18.1]	5.1 [3.9-6.5]	7.0 [3.7-12.8]	3.0 [2.1-4.1]	0.9 [0.8-1.1]
<i>Central America</i>	23.7 [16.6-32.5]	12.9 [8.4-19.5]	5.8 [4.7-7.3]	6.9 [6.0-8.1]	0.9 [0.8-1.1]	0.2 [0.2-0.3]
<i>South America</i>	13.6 [10.1-18.0]	7.1 [4.1-12.1]	<sup>5</sup>	7.1 [5.7-8.9]	7.8 [6.7-9.1]	<sup>5</sup>
Oceania <sup>3</sup>	36.8 [19.8-57.8]	38.2 [21.5-58.2]	4.7 [3.3-6.5]	9.1 [5.9-13.8]	9.4 [5.9-14.5]	3.4 [1.4-7.9]
<b>More Developed Regions</b>						
Australia and New Zealand <sup>4</sup>	0.8	-	-	7.8	-	-
Europe	-	-	-	-	-	-
Northern America <sup>4</sup>	3.0	2.6	6.7 [6.4-6.9]	8.8 [8.5-9.1]	0.4	0.0
<b>UNICEF Regions</b>						
East Asia and Pacific	24.5 [17.2-33.7]	8.4 [3.9-17.3]	5.2 [3.6-7.4]	6.3 [5.1-7.7]	2.9 [1.4-6.0]	0.9 [0.3-2.5]
Europe and Central Asia	-	-	-	-	-	-
<i>Eastern Europe and Central Asia</i>	20.0 [16.3-24.2]	9.0 [7.7-10.5]	<sup>5</sup>	8.2 [5.8-11.5]	14.9 [11.6-19.0]	<sup>5</sup>
<i>Western Europe</i>	-	-	-	-	-	-
Latin America and Caribbean	16.7 [13.3-20.2]	9.0 [6.0-12.0]	6.6 [5.5-7.7]	7.5 [6.6-8.4]	1.3 [0.8-1.7]	0.3 [0.2-0.4]
Middle East and North Africa	22.8 [17.2-29.5]	14.7 [8.9-23.2]	8.9 [6.4-12.2]	11.2 [6.2-19.3]	7.7 [4.9-11.9]	3.2 [1.8-5.7]
North America <sup>4</sup>	3.0	2.6	6.7 [6.4-6.9]	8.8 [8.5-9.1]	0.4	0.0
South Asia	51.4 [49.9-52.9]	34.4 [32.0-37.0]	2.5 [1.5-4.1]	3.1 [1.9-4.9]	15.2 [11.8-19.4]	5.0 [3.8-6.7]
Sub-Saharan Africa	43.0 [39.6-46.4]	33.3 [31.3-35.4]	4.4 [3.6-5.3]	3.5 [2.8-4.3]	7.6 [6.5-8.8]	2.3 [1.8-2.7]
<i>East and Southern Africa</i>	45.4 [39.7-51.1]	33.6 [31.5-35.8]	4.6 [3.4-6.1]	4.2 [3.0-5.9]	6.2 [4.5-8.6]	1.7 [1.2-2.5]
<i>West and Central Africa</i>	40.4 [37.1-43.7]	33.1 [29.8-36.6]	4.2 [3.3-5.4]	2.8 [2.3-3.5]	9.0 [8.0-10.1]	2.8 [2.2-3.6]
<b>WHO Regions</b>						
African Region	42.3 [38.5-46.1]	33.1 [30.6-35.8]	4.6 [3.8-5.5]	3.5 [2.7-4.5]	7.0 [5.7-8.7]	2.1 [1.5-2.8]
Region of the Americas	11.1 [5.8-20.4]	6.5 [3.9-10.4]	6.7 [6.1-7.5]	7.2 [6.0-8.7]	0.8 [0.5-1.4]	0.1 [0.0-0.4]
South-East Asia Region	49.5 [45.7-53.3]	31.9 [27.3-36.8]	2.5 [1.5-4.1]	3.8 [1.7-8.1]	15.0 [11.8-19.0]	5.1 [4.0-6.6]
Eastern Mediterranean Region	33.8 [24.4-44.6]	24.7 [15.8-36.4]	6.0 [4.2-8.6]	5.7 [3.4-9.5]	7.8 [6.1-10.0]	3.3 [2.4-4.5]
Europe Region	-	-	-	-	-	-
Western Pacific Region	20.8 [17.0-25.2]	6.4 [3.8-10.7]	5.6 [4.1-7.6]	6.0 [5.1-7.1]	2.2 [1.4-3.4]	0.5 [0.3-0.8]
<b>World Bank Income</b>						
Low income	46.3 [42.4-50.3]	34.2 [31.6-36.8]	3.8 [2.9-4.9]	3.1 [2.4-4.0]	7.4 [6.0-9.2]	2.1 [1.6-2.7]
Middle Income	35.6 [32.1-39.0]	22.0 [19.3-24.7]	4.6 [4.0-5.3]	5.2 [3.9-6.4]	8.0 [5.2-10.8]	2.7 [1.8-3.6]
<i>Lower-middle income</i>	45.8 [40.5-51.2]	31.1 [27.1-35.3]	3.3 [2.4-4.5]	3.9 [2.4-6.3]	11.6 [7.9-16.7]	4.0 [2.8-5.8]
<i>Upper middle income</i>	18.9 [16.8-21.3]	6.3 [4.3-9.1]	6.8 [6.4-7.3]	7.4 [6.3-8.6]	1.8 [1.5-2.2]	0.4 [0.4-0.6]
High income	3.8 [2.4-5.8]	3.0 [2.2-4.2]	<sup>5</sup>	5.9 [4.3-7.9]	7.2 [4.9-10.4]	<sup>5</sup>
<i>World Bank Regions</i>						
East Asia and Pacific	24.6 [19.4-29.8]	11.6 [7.4-15.9]	4.9 [4.6-5.3]	6.7 [4.7-8.8]	3.9 [2.4-5.5]	1.6 [0.0-3.3]
Europe and Central Asia	-	-	-	-	-	-
Latin America and Caribbean	16.7 [13.3-20.2]	9.0 [6.0-12.0]	6.6 [5.5-7.7]	7.5 [6.6-8.4]	1.3 [0.8-1.7]	0.3 [0.2-0.4]
Middle East and North Africa	22.7 [17.2-29.4]	14.7 [9.0-23.2]	8.9 [6.5-12.3]	11.2 [6.2-19.3]	7.7 [4.9-11.9]	3.2 [1.8-5.8]
North America <sup>4</sup>	3.0	2.6	6.7 [6.4-6.9]	8.8 [8.5-9.1]	0.4	0.0
South Asia	51.4 [49.9-52.9]	34.4 [32.0-37.0]	2.5 [1.5-4.1]	3.1 [1.9-4.9]	15.2 [11.8-19.4]	5.0 [3.8-6.7]
Sub-Saharan Africa	42.8 [39.5-46.2]	33.6 [31.6-35.7]	4.4 [3.7-5.3]	3.3 [2.7-4.2]	7.5 [6.1-9.1]	2.3 [1.7-3.0]

## Footnotes

1. Only Less Developed Regions are displayed, while the aggregates of the More Developed Regions are not displayed due to insufficient population coverage.

2. Asia excluding Japan; Eastern Asia excluding Japan.

3. Oceania excluding Australia and New Zealand.

4. For stunting, wasting and severe wasting estimates, the Northern America regional average is based only on United States data; The Northern America regional estimates for stunting, wasting and severe wasting are based only on United States data; The Australia and New Zealand regional estimates for stunting and overweight are based only on Australian data; hence confidence intervals are not available.

5. Consecutive low population coverage; interpret with caution.

# NUMBER (MILLIONS) AFFECTED TABLES\*

	Stunting		Overweight		Wasting and Severe Wasting					
	2000	2018	2000	2018	2018	2018				
	number (millions) stunted (moderate and severe)	footnote	number (millions) stunted (moderate and severe)	footnote	number (millions) overweight (moder- ate and severe)	footnote	number (millions) wasted (moderate and severe)	footnote	number (millions) wasted (severe)	footnote
<b>Global</b>	<b>198.2 [188.5-207.8]</b>		<b>149.0 [137.6-160.3]</b>		<b>30.1 [26.6-33.6]</b>		<b>40.1 [34.0-46.1]</b>		<b>49.5<sup>‡</sup> [41.2-57.8]</b>	
<b>United Nations Regions</b>										
<b>Less Developed Regions<sup>1</sup></b>	195.0 [185.6-204.3]		145.9 [134.7-157.0]		24.5 [21.8-27.2]		32.4 [27.2-37.7]		48.5 [40.3-56.8]	
Africa	50.3 [47.3-53.4]		58.8 [54.2-63.4]		6.6 [5.3-7.8]		9.5 [7.1-12.0]		14.0 [11.8-16.2]	
<b>Eastern Africa</b>	21.5 [19.4-23.7]		24.0 [21.4-26.8]		2.2 [1.7-2.9]		2.9 [2.4-3.6]		4.1 [2.9-5.7]	
<b>Middle Africa</b>	7.0 [6.0-8.0]		9.4 [8.0-11.0]		0.8 [0.5-1.1]		1.4 [1.0-1.9]		2.1 [1.6-2.8]	
<b>Northern Africa</b>	4.9 [3.6-6.4]		4.9 [3.2-7.2]		1.7 [0.9-3.0]		3.0 [1.4-6.2]		2.4 [1.3-4.3]	
<b>Southern Africa</b>	2.0 [1.8-2.3]		2.0 [1.7-2.2]		0.6 [0.4-0.9]		0.9 [0.6-1.2]		0.2 [0.2-0.3]	
<b>Western Africa</b>	14.9 [13.7-16.2]		18.5 [15.8-21.4]		1.3 [1.0-1.7]		1.3 [1.0-1.7]		5.1 [4.4-5.9]	
<b>Asia<sup>2</sup></b>	134.7 [126.0-143.3]		81.7 [71.7-91.8]		14.1 [11.8-16.4]		18.8 [14.2-23.4]		33.8 [25.8-41.7]	
<b>Central Asia</b>	1.6 [1.2-2.1]		0.8 [0.7-1.0]		0.5 [0.3-0.9]		0.7 [0.3-1.4]		0.3 [0.2-0.3]	
<b>Eastern Asia<sup>2</sup></b>	17.0 [15.8-18.3]		4.4 [4.0-4.8]		5.7 [5.1-6.3]		5.7 [5.0-6.5]		1.6 [1.5-1.6]	
<b>Southern Asia</b>	89.6 [82.0-97.3]		57.9 [49.4-67.2]		4.6 [2.9-7.3]		5.5 [3.3-9.0]		25.8 [19.0-34.5]	
<b>South-eastern Asia</b>	21.0 [17.8-24.3]		14.4 [10.8-18.7]		1.7 [1.4-2.1]		4.4 [2.3-8.2]		5.0 [3.6-6.9]	
<b>Western Asia</b>	5.4 [3.7-7.4]		4.2 [2.2-7.5]		1.6 [1.1-2.1]		2.5 [1.0-5.9]		1.1 [0.4-3.1]	
<b>Latin American and Caribbean</b>	9.6 [7.6-11.6]		4.8 [3.2-6.4]		3.8 [3.2-4.4]		4.0 [3.5-4.4]		0.7 [0.4-0.9]	
<b>Caribbean</b>	0.6 [0.3-1.1]		0.3 [0.1-0.6]		0.2 [0.2-0.3]		0.2 [0.1-0.5]		0.1 [0.1-0.1]	
<b>Central America</b>	4.1 [2.8-5.6]		2.1 [1.4-3.2]		1.0 [0.8-1.2]		1.1 [1.0-1.3]		0.2 [0.1-0.2]	
<b>South America</b>	4.9 [3.7-6.5]		2.3 [1.3-4.0] <sup>5</sup>		2.6 [2.1-3.2]		2.6 [2.2-3.0]	<sup>5</sup>	0.4 [0.2-0.7] <sup>5</sup>	0.1 [0.0-0.2] <sup>5</sup>
<b>Oceania<sup>3</sup></b>	0.4 [0.2-0.7]		0.5 [0.3-0.8]		0.1 [0.0-0.1]		0.1 [0.1-0.2]		0.1 [0.1-0.2]	
<b>More Developed Regions</b>										
Australia and New Zealand <sup>4</sup>	0.0		-		0.1		-		-	
Europe	-		-		-		-		-	
Northern America <sup>4</sup>	0.7		0.6		1.4 [1.4-1.5]		1.9 [1.9-2.0]		0.1	
<b>UNICEF Regions</b>										
East Asia and Pacific	36.9 [25.8-50.7]		13.0 [6.0-26.8]		7.8 [5.4-11.1]		9.7 [7.9-11.9]		4.5 [2.2-9.3]	
Europe and Central Asia	-		-		-		-		-	
<b>Eastern Europe and Central Asia</b>	3.9 [3.2-4.7]		2.8 [2.4-3.2] <sup>5</sup>		1.6 [1.1-2.3]		4.5 [3.5-5.8] <sup>5</sup>		0.6 [0.3-1.2] <sup>5</sup>	0.2 [0.1-0.4] <sup>5</sup>
<b>Western Europe</b>	-		-		-		-		-	
Latin America and Caribbean	9.6 [7.6-11.6]		4.8 [3.2-6.4]		3.8 [3.2-4.4]		4.0 [3.5-4.4]		0.7 [0.4-0.9]	
Middle East and North Africa	8.5 [6.5-11.1]		7.1 [4.3-11.3]		3.4 [2.4-4.6]		5.4 [3.0-9.4]		3.7 [2.4-5.8]	
North America <sup>4</sup>	0.7		0.6		1.4 [1.4-1.5]		1.9 [1.9-2.0]		0.1	
South Asia	89.4 [86.8-92.0]		58.7 [54.5-62.9]		4.4 [2.7-7.1]		5.2 [3.2-8.3]		25.9 [20.1-33.1]	
Sub-Saharan Africa	50.0 [46.1-53.9]		57.9 [54.4-61.5]		5.1 [4.1-6.1]		6.1 [4.8-7.4]		13.3 [11.3-15.2]	
<b>East and Southern Africa</b>	27.6 [24.2-31.1]		29.0 [27.2-30.9]		2.8 [2.1-3.7]		3.6 [2.6-5.1]		5.4 [3.9-7.4]	
<b>West and Central Africa</b>	22.4 [20.6-24.2]		28.9 [26.0-32.0]		2.4 [1.8-3.0]		2.5 [2.0-3.0]		7.9 [7.0-8.9]	
<b>WHO Regions</b>										
African Region	47.7 [43.4-52.0]		56.1 [51.7-60.6]		5.2 [4.3-6.2]		5.9 [4.6-7.6]		11.9 [9.6-14.7]	
Region of the Americas	8.7 [4.5-15.9]		4.8 [2.9-7.8]		5.3 [4.7-5.8]		5.4 [4.5-6.5]		0.6 [0.4-1.0]	
South-East Asia Region	90.6 [83.6-97.6]		55.5 [47.5-64.2]		4.5 [2.7-7.5]		6.6 [3.0-14.1]		26.2 [20.6-33.0]	
Eastern Mediterranean Region	21.6 [15.6-28.5]		20.2 [12.9-29.8]		3.8 [2.7-5.5]		4.7 [2.8-7.8]		6.4 [5.0-8.2]	
Europe Region	-		-		-		-		-	
Western Pacific Region	24.4 [19.9-29.6]		7.7 [4.5-12.8]		6.6 [4.8-9.0]		7.2 [6.2-8.5]		2.6 [1.7-4.1]	
<b>World Bank Income</b>										
Low income	37.6 [34.4-40.8]		39.7 [36.8-42.8]		3.1 [2.4-4.0]		3.6 [2.8-4.7]		8.6 [6.9-10.7]	
Middle Income	162.4 [146.7-178.1]		108.1 [94.6-121.5]		21.2 [18.1-24.3]		25.3 [19.0-31.6]		39.3 [25.8-52.8]	
<b>Lower-middle income</b>	129.5 [114.5-144.8]		96.8 [84.5-110.0]		9.3 [6.8-12.8]		12.1 [7.4-19.7]		36.0 [24.5-51.9]	
<b>Upper middle income</b>	32.9 [29.2-37.0]		11.3 [7.7-16.3]		11.9 [11.1-12.7]		13.2 [11.3-15.4]		3.3 [2.7-3.9]	
High income	2.6 [1.7-4.0]		2.1 [1.5-2.9] <sup>5</sup>		4.1 [3.0-5.5]		5.0 [3.4-7.2] <sup>5</sup>		0.4 [0.2-0.9] <sup>5</sup>	0.0 [0.0-0.1] <sup>5</sup>
<b>World Bank Regions</b>										
East Asia and Pacific	37.1 [29.2-44.9]		17.9 [11.4-24.4]		7.4 [6.9-7.9]		10.4 [7.2-13.5]		6.1 [3.7-8.5]	
Europe and Central Asia	-		-		-		-		-	
Latin America and Caribbean	9.6 [7.6-11.6]		4.8 [3.2-6.4]		3.8 [3.2-4.4]		4.0 [3.5-4.4]		0.7 [0.4-0.9]	
Middle East and North Africa	8.6 [6.5-11.1]		7.2 [4.4-11.3]		3.4 [2.4-4.6]		5.5 [3.0-9.4]		3.8 [2.4-5.8]	
North America <sup>4</sup>	0.7		0.6		1.4 [1.4-1.5]		1.9 [1.9-2.0]		0.1	
South Asia	89.4 [86.8-92.0]		58.7 [54.5-63.0]		4.3 [2.6-7.1]		5.2 [3.2-8.3]		25.9 [20.1-33.1]	
Sub-Saharan Africa	49.7 [45.9-53.6]		58.4 [54.8-62.1]		5.2 [4.3-6.2]		5.8 [4.6-7.3]		13.0 [10.7-15.8]	

\*Complete data series for stunting and overweight (1990, 1995, 2000, 2005, 2010, 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015, 2016, 2017 and 2018) and the latest year for wasting (2018) estimates of prevalence and numbers affected can be found at the websites below for global as well as for the following country groupings: (i) United Nations regions and sub-regions; (ii) UNICEF; (iii) WHO; (iv) World Bank Income; (v) World Bank regions; and (vi) SDG regions. ‡ The total number of wasted children under 5 is 49.48 million; this becomes 49 million when rounded to the nearest integer (as on the cover page), and 49.5 million when rounded to the nearest tenth. These websites also contain a file with the regional or income grouping compositions:

# NOTES ON THE DATA AND METHODOLOGY

## Strengths and weaknesses of malnutrition data

Prevalence estimates for stunting and overweight are relatively stable over the course of a calendar year. It is therefore possible to track global and regional changes in these two conditions over time.

Wasting and severe wasting are acute conditions that can change frequently and rapidly over the course of a calendar year. This makes it difficult to generate reliable trends over time with the input data available, and as such, this report provides only most recent global and regional estimates.

The joint global and regional estimates that make up the UNICEF/WHO/World Bank Group Joint Child Malnutrition Estimates have been generated using a country-level dataset which is mainly comprised of estimates from nationally representative household surveys. These data are collected infrequently (every 3 to 5 years in most countries) and measure malnutrition at one point in time (e.g. during one or several months of field work), making it difficult to capture the rapid fluctuations in wasting that can occur over the course of a given year. Incidence data (i.e. the number of new cases that occur during the calendar year) would allow for better tracking of changes over time; however, these data currently do not exist.

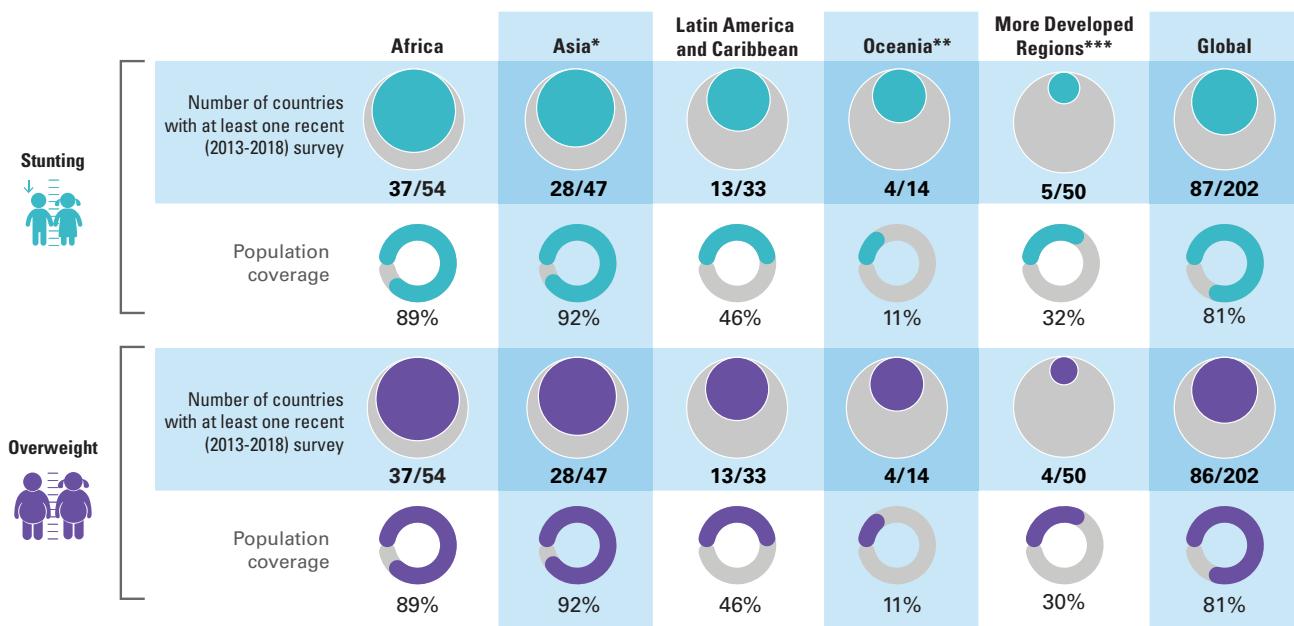
**The analysis methods and presentation have remained unchanged from the 2012 report<sup>1</sup>, except for minor refinements detailed below:**

### 1. Year assigned to each survey

When data collection begins in one calendar year and continues into the next, the survey year assigned is the one in which most of the fieldwork took place. For example, if a survey was conducted between 1 September 2009 and 28 February 2010, the year 2009 would be assigned, since the majority of data collection took place in that year (i.e., four months in 2009 versus two months in 2010). This method has been used since the 2013 edition (prior to that, the latter year was used by default – e.g., 2010 in the example above).

<sup>1</sup> United Nations Children's Fund, World Health Organization, The World Bank, UNICEF-WHO-World Bank Joint Child Malnutrition Estimates. (UNICEF, New York; WHO, Geneva; The World Bank, Washington, DC; 2012).

### Population coverage for the most recent period (2013-2018), by UN regions



Note: \* Asia excluding Japan; \*\*Oceania excluding Australia and New Zealand. \*\*\* The More Developed Region malnutrition estimates are not displayed in the brochure due to lack of adequate population coverage (<50 per cent) in all year ranges since 1990. Also note that figures for wasting are the same as for stunting and therefore not presented.

### 2. Final reports only

As of the 2014 edition, the country-level dataset used to generate the global and regional joint malnutrition estimates is based only on final survey results. Preliminary survey results are no longer included in the dataset since the data are sometimes retracted or change significantly when the final version is released.

### 3. Updated data sources

i. The updated joint dataset includes:

- 854 nationally representative surveys;
- data from 152 countries and territories, representing more than 90 per cent of all children under 5 globally (population coverage varies by regions and periods). The majority of data available are from low- and middle-income countries – more efforts are needed to generate data from high-income countries.

ii. The under 5 population estimates were based on The United Nations World Population Prospects, 2017 Revision. These were used as weighting factors for each country survey to derive the regional and global prevalence estimates and calculate the numbers affected.

iii. Regional and country income classifications were based on FY19 World Bank income classification.

### 4. Footnotes on population coverage

As started in the 2014 edition, a separate exercise was conducted to assess population coverage. This was important in order to alert the reader, via footnotes, to instances where the data should be interpreted with caution due to low population coverage (defined as less than 50 per cent). A conservative method was applied looking at available data within five-year periods around the projected years. Population coverage was calculated as:

$$\frac{\text{the sum of country five-year average populations for which surveys are available in the dataset}}{\text{the total of country five-year average population for all countries in the region}}$$

the total of country five-year average population for all countries in the region

## 5. Prevalence thresholds for wasting, overweight and stunting in children under 5 years

New thresholds, presented in Table 1, were established through the WHO-UNICEF Technical Advisory Group on Nutrition Monitoring (TEAM)<sup>2</sup> and released in 2018. These new thresholds have been used for development of prevalence-based maps in this brochure. The thresholds were developed in relation to standard deviations (SD) of the normative WHO Child Growth Standards. The international definition of ‘normal’ (two SD from the WHO standards median) defines the first threshold, which includes 2.3% of the area under the normalized distribution. Multipliers of this “very low” level (rounded to 2.5%) set the basis to establish subsequent thresholds.

<sup>2</sup> de Onis, M., et al. (2018). Prevalence thresholds for wasting, overweight and stunting in children under 5 years. *Public health nutrition*, 22(1), 175–179.

# ONLINE MATERIALS

This key findings report of the 2019 edition of the Joint Malnutrition Estimates summarizes the new regional and global numbers and main messages for official United Nations data on child malnutrition.

- the latest country-level joint malnutrition dataset, a time series of all country estimates that were used to generate the joint child malnutrition global and regional estimates;
- the joint malnutrition global and regional estimates database by various regional groupings (e.g. United Nations, UNICEF, WHO, etc., regional groupings) and for more years than presented in this brochure;
- a reference document outlining the composition of the various regional groupings for which the joint estimates have been produced.

# DASHBOARD OVERVIEW

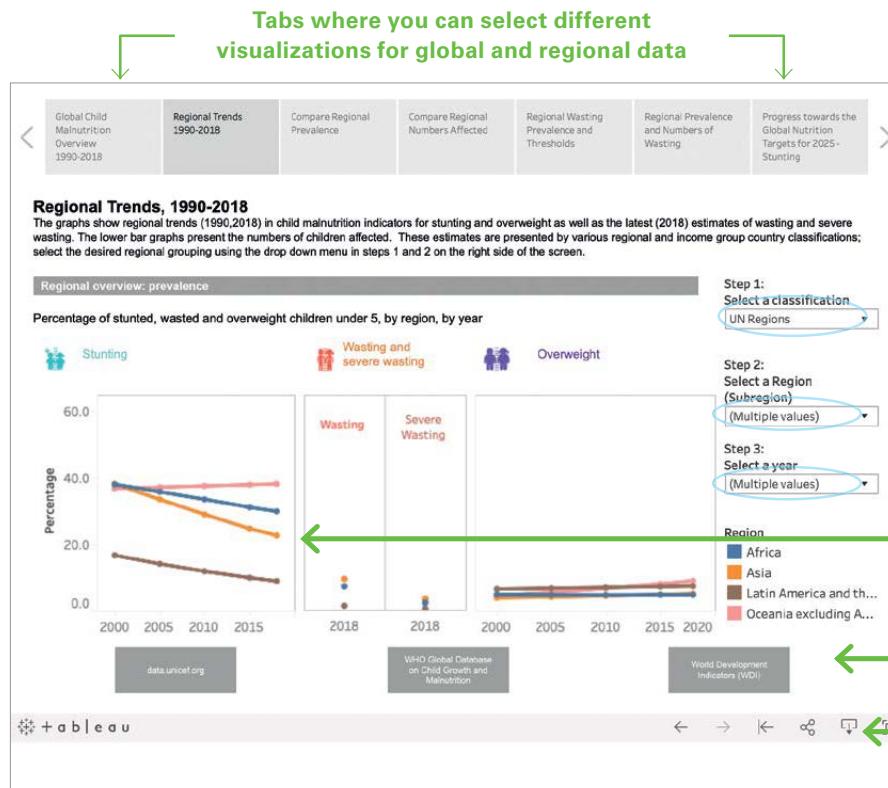


Table 1. Prevalence thresholds and corresponding labels for stunting, overweight and wasting

Labels	Prevalence thresholds (%)	
	Stunting	Overweight and Wasting
Very low	< 2.5	< 2.5
Low	2.5 – < 10	2.5 – < 5
Medium	10 – < 20	5 – < 10
High	20 – < 30	10 – < 15
Very high	≥ 30	≥ 15

- interactive dashboards, which allow users to visualize and export the global and regional estimates for a number of regional groupings.

All of these materials can be downloaded from the links below:

UNICEF: <<https://data.unicef.org/resources/jme>>

WHO: <[www.who.int/nutgrowthdb/estimates](http://www.who.int/nutgrowthdb/estimates)>

World Bank Group: <[data.worldbank.org/child-malnutrition](http://data.worldbank.org/child-malnutrition)>

## Options

Select your regional grouping (UNICEF, WHO, United Nations, World Bank Income)

Select regions to view

Select years to view

Hover over data points for detailed information

With these links you can view the dashboard on the UNICEF, WHO or World Bank Group websites

Download the graphics and data here

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<[data.unicef.org/nutrition](http://data.unicef.org/nutrition)>; <[www.who.int/nutgrowthdb](http://www.who.int/nutgrowthdb)>; <[data.worldbank.org](http://data.worldbank.org)>.



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