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Newsletter Volume 6
April-June 2025

NUTRITION updates INDONESIA

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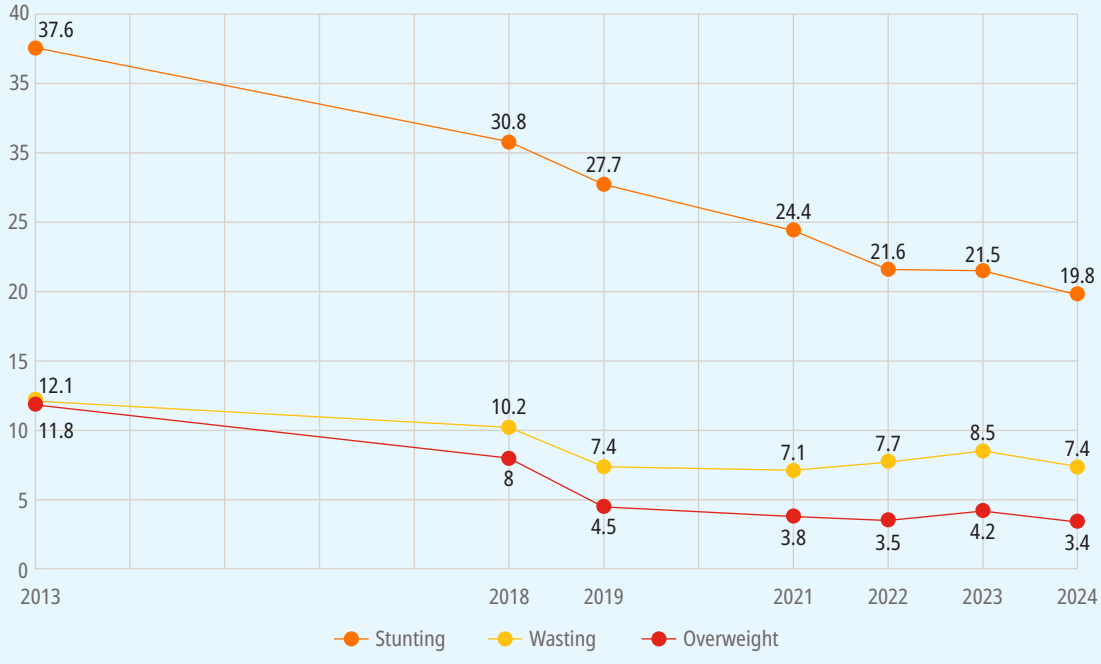
Indonesia Nutritional Status Survey (SSGI) 2024: Continued Progress in Tackling Child Malnutrition

On 27 May 2025, the Ministry of Health publicly released the results of the 2024 Indonesia Nutritional Status Survey (SSGI). Minister of Health Budi Gunadi Sadikin reaffirmed the government's strong commitment to reducing the national stunting rate to 14.2% by 2029, in line with the targets outlined in the National Medium-Term Development Plan (RPJMN).

The data confirm a continued positive national trend in reducing malnutrition among children under five. Compared to 2023, the 2024 findings show further declines in the prevalence of stunting (down 1.7 percentage points), wasting (down 1.1 percentage points), and overweight (down 0.8 percentage points). These improvements reflect steady progress over the past decade. Between 2013 and 2024, stunting among children under five fell from 37.6% to 19.8%, wasting from 12.1% to 7.4%, and overweight from 11.8% to 3.4%—highlighting Indonesia's sustained efforts to address all forms of child malnutrition in this critical age group.

However, challenges remain. As the Minister noted during the launch event, significant disparities persist across provinces, with half of all children affected by stunting—around 2.3 million—concentrated in just six provinces. In addition, limited evidence on the factors driving recent improvements hampers the ability to design targeted interventions that can further accelerate progress.

NUTRITIONAL STATUS OF CHILDREN UNDER 5 IN INDONESIA, 2013-2024



Sources: Basic Health Research Survey (Riskesdas) 2013, 2018; Indonesia Nutritional Status Survey (SSGI) 2019, 2021-2024.

Data collection for the School Nutrition Environment Assessment in Central Java, Indonesia.
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Creating Healthier School Food Environments: Insights to Guide Policies and Programmes in Indonesia

UNICEF recently conducted an assessment of school nutrition environments in Indonesia using the *Nutrition Environment Assessment Toolkit for Schools (NEAT-S)*—a global tool designed to identify strengths and gaps in the promotion of healthy diets within school settings. Implemented across 270 primary schools in Java, South Sulawesi, and Papua, the assessment provides critical evidence to guide national and sub-national policies aimed at promoting healthier lifestyles among children, to promote all forms of malnutrition.

The findings reveal that while some progress has been made, unhealthy food and beverage options remain widespread in and around schools. Canteens often sell packaged snacks and sugar-sweetened drinks due to their affordability, ease of storage, and popularity among students. In contrast, access to healthier alternatives—such as fresh fruit, vegetables, and balanced cooked meals—remains limited in many areas.

The assessment also highlighted significant gaps in the implementation of school food policies. Many schools either lacked clear guidelines for canteen operations or struggled to enforce existing rules. Infrastructural constraints, including inadequate water supply, refrigeration, and food preparation areas, further limited the ability of schools to provide safe and nutritious food options. Physical activity levels were also inadequate, with most schools failing to meet the World Health Organization's recommendations for children in this age group.

Crucially, the assessment also captured the voices of children themselves. In their own words, students called for meaningful change—urging schools and policymakers to limit the sale of unhealthy food, improve access to nutrition education, and create more opportunities for physical activity. Their input reinforces the need to take a child-centred approaches in order to respond to the lived realities of school life and implement effective nutrition programmes.

UNICEF is now working with government partners to translate these findings into action. This includes strengthening national school canteen guidelines, supporting schools to monitor and improve their food environments, and promoting awareness of healthy eating habits among students and their communities. The results of the NEAT-S assessment will be instrumental in shaping future policies and interventions that prioritise children's health and well-being—particularly through integration with ongoing school-based initiatives, such as the ambitious national Free Nutritious Meals programme.

Students fill in the NEAT-S questionnaire in a school in Jayapura city, Papua.
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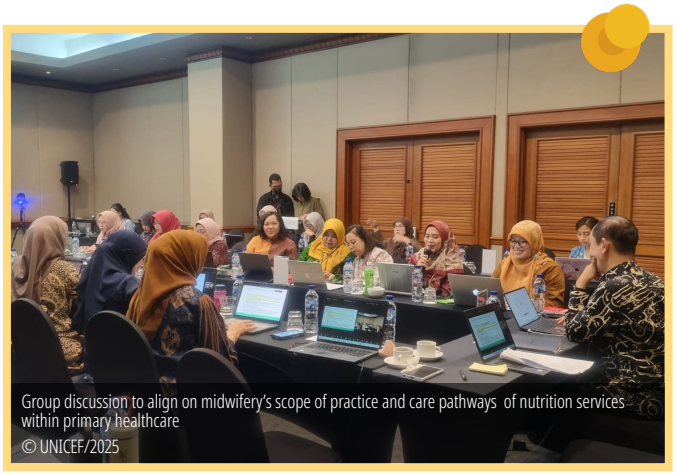
Strengthening Nutrition Education for Frontline Health Workers Across ASEAN

UNICEF is supporting the Government of Indonesia and ASEAN member states to strengthen pre-service nutrition education for frontline health workers. This regional initiative aims to equip future doctors, nurses, and midwives with core nutrition competencies to better respond to national and community-level nutrition challenges.

The effort began in Lao PDR in May 2024, where a regional consultation helped define shared minimum nutrition competencies across health cadres. Indonesia has since taken a leading role in advancing the training curricula for midwifery education while Thailand led Medical Doctors training modules, and the Philippines on Nurses. On 27 May 2025, Indonesia hosted a regional workshop to develop a practical, regionally aligned nutrition competency framework for pre-service midwifery education. The workshop focused on identifying key nutrition competencies, determining the required levels of knowledge and practical skills, and exploring strategies to integrate these into existing midwifery curricula across ASEAN.

As a direct follow-up, from June 2-4, 2025, the Midwifery Collegium, the Indonesian Health Council, the Indonesian Association of Midwifery Education Institutions (AIPKIND), Muhammadiyah's AIPKEMA, and the Midwifery Working Group of the Ministry of Health's Polytechnic Association (APKESI), conducted a joint analysis to develop a national framework for the enhancement of the Indonesian Midwifery education curriculum. The review aligns with the Essential Competencies for Midwifery Practice issued by the International Confederation of Midwives (ICM, 2024) and the emerging regional framework. UNICEF and UNFPA provided technical input to ensure the inclusion of nutrition-related competencies, including those relevant to disability inclusion.



Group discussion to align on midwifery's scope of practice and care pathways of nutrition services within primary healthcare
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In parallel, and in response to a request from the Ministry of Health, UNICEF supported a national consultation to identify priority nutrition training packages—such as Integrated Management of Acute Malnutrition (IMAM), Infant and Young Child Feeding (IYCF), and Nutrition in Emergencies (NiE)—for integration into higher education and polytechnic-level curricula. These efforts aim to reduce reliance on in-service training by ensuring health workers enter the field equipped with essential nutrition knowledge and skills.

Workshop on the Formative Review of ASEAN Nutrition Pre-service Competencies for Midwives
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The Governor's wife (second from left) opens the MSG training in Bireun, calling for continued quality care and highlighting the importance of MSG in early childhood and maternal health.
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A pregnant mother in Bireun's MSG class learns how to breastfeed as she prepares for her first child.
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Echoes from the Field – Advancing Maternal Nutrition, Stunting and Obesity Prevention in Aceh, NTT, and Sulawesi

Across Indonesia, UNICEF has demonstrated ability to work at upstream and downstream level translating policies and guidelines in programmes that respond to the need of the most vulnerable. As a result, UNICEF supported recent initiatives in Aceh, East Nusa Tenggara (NTT), and South Sulawesi to work with local governments, civil society, and communities to strengthen maternal and child nutrition and promote healthier lifestyles.

Children learn about healthy diets through an interactive card game developed by UNICEF, during a public event in Kupang, NTT.
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In **Aceh**, the revitalised Mother Support Group (MSG) programme is helping improve the health and nutrition of pregnant women and their families. With support from UNICEF and the Ministry of Health, the province has introduced enhanced training and mentoring for health workers, including a toolkit to deliver nutrition messages through the MSG sessions. In April 2025, local authorities in Bireun district started scaling up the programme using their own funds— expanding from four health centres to all 20 in the district. The MSG programme also supports health workers in developing stronger communication skills to better engage with families. To date, capacity-building efforts supported by UNICEF have reached 68 community health centres across the province, with training delivered to 5 provincial-level trainers, 50 district-level trainers, and 70 village midwives.

In **East Nusa Tenggara (NTT)**, nearly 1,000 people participated in World Obesity Day 2025 activities. In Kupang, UNICEF collaborated with the provincial School Health Taskforce and PERSAGI to raise awareness and strengthen school capacity around healthy eating. Five primary schools were selected to pilot the initiative, with 15 teachers and 10 students trained in practical strategies to promote good nutrition. The students, trained as "Nutrition Captains," led school-based activities and reached hundreds of their peers with key nutrition messages through engaging games and materials. The campaign concluded with a national webinar on obesity prevention, which brought together over 500 participants from schools and the health sector.

In **South Sulawesi**, UNICEF supported two workshops aimed at strengthening community action to prevent child malnutrition by promoting key stunting prevention messages. In Maros, nearly 70 people attended the launch of a new partnership with the Indonesian Islamic Forum Association (AMTI), which will disseminate these messages through its grassroots network. A separate workshop with the Women's Organisation Network (BKOW) engaged over 80 stakeholders and extended outreach across the province. These efforts form part of UNICEF's behaviour change strategy, which combines advocacy, community engagement, media, and face-to-face communication to promote healthier practices.

From community groups to classrooms, these local efforts are making a difference—bringing nutrition messages to more families and helping children grow up healthier.

The mayor of Maros (centre) with representatives from UNICEF, AMTI, and Jenewa Madani, during the signing of the mutual commitment for stunting prevention.
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