

Nutritional Status of Children Under 5 & Age 5-9

Multiple Indicator
Cluster Surveys

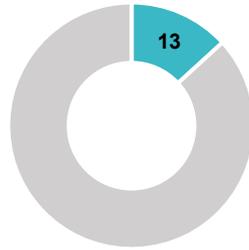
Anthropometric Malnutrition Indicators for Children Under 5



Stunting: SDG 2.2.1



Stunting refers to a child under 5 who is too short for his or her age. Stunting is the failure to grow, is associated with cognitive impairment, and is the result of chronic or recurrent malnutrition.

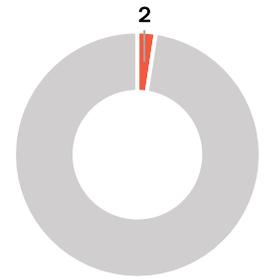


Percentage of children under-5 who are stunted

Wasting: SDG 2.2.2



Wasting refers to a child under 5 who is too thin for his or her height. Wasting, or acute malnutrition, 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.

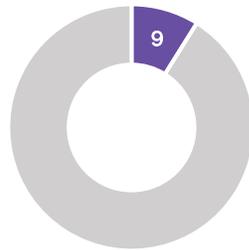


Percentage of children under-5 who are wasted

Overweight: SDG 2.2.2



Overweight refers to a child under 5 who is too heavy for his or her height. This form of malnutrition results from an imbalance between calories consumed and expended, and increases the risk of noncommunicable diseases later in life.

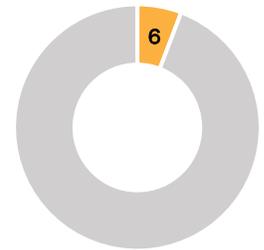


Percentage of children under-5 who are overweight

Underweight

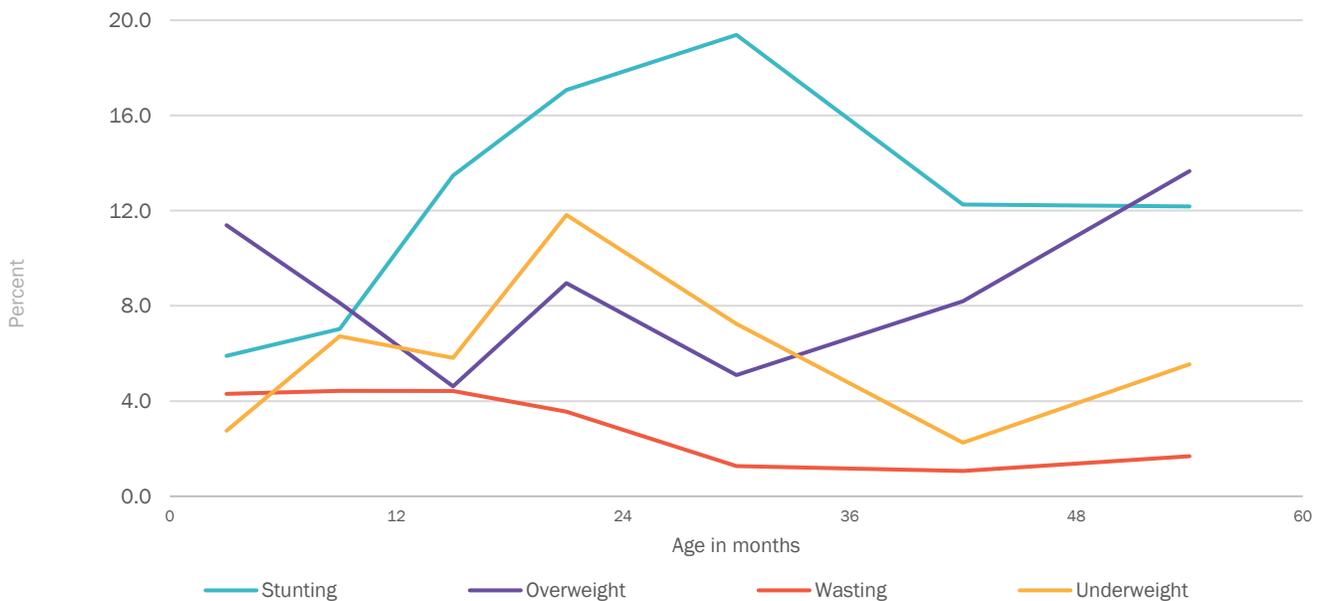


Underweight is a composite form of undernutrition that can include elements of stunting and wasting of children under 5 (i.e., an underweight child can have a reduced weight for their age due to being too short for their age and/or being too thin for their height).



Percentage of children under-5 who are underweight

Prevalence of Malnutrition by Age of Children Under 5



Percentage children who are underweight, stunted, wasted, and overweight, by age in months

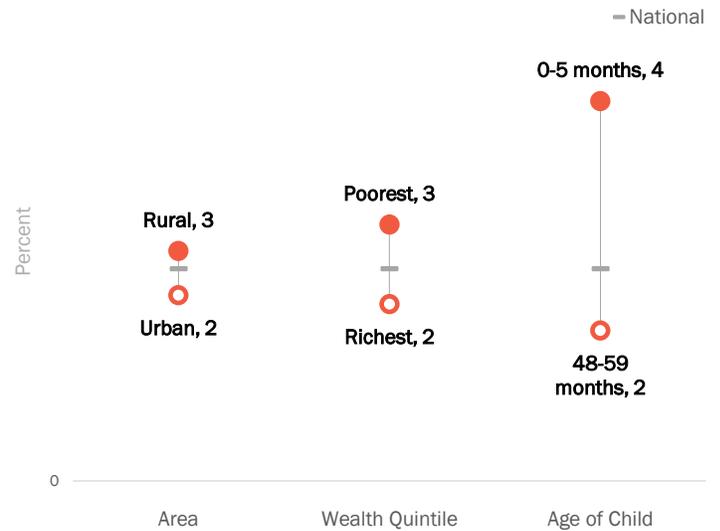
Nutritional Status of Children Under 5: Disaggregates

Stunting: SDG 2.2.1



Percentage of under 5 children who are stunted, by background characteristics

Wasting: SDG 2.2.2



Percentage of under 5 children who are wasted, by background characteristics

Regional Data on Stunting, Overweight & Wasting of Children Under 5

	Stunting: SDG 2.2.1	Overweight: SDG 2.2.2	Wasting	
	% stunted (moderate -2SD)	% overweight (moderate +2SD)	% wasted (moderate -2SD: SDG 2.2.2)	% wasted (severe)
National	13.2	8.9	2.4	0.6
COROZAL	10.4	4.0	3.8	0.7
ORANGE WALK	13.9	8.4	1.8	0.0
BELIZE NORTH	5.5	18.3	1.2	0.6
BELIZE SOUTH	8.8	11.4	3.2	0.0
CAYO	12.8	8.3	2.9	1.3
STANN CREEK	15.6	4.3	1.3	0.0
TOLEDO	28.4	5.6	2.4	0.9

Key Messages

- A notable share of children under 5 years are stunted—13%, meaning they are too short for their age. Toledo district has the highest percentage of children who are stunted (28%) compared to Belize North having the lowest percentage of children who are stunted at 6%
- Among children under 5 years, 9% are overweight, while 6% are underweight.
- However, Belize North has the highest percentage of children who are overweight at 18.3%, while Corozal has the lowest percentage of overweight children at 4%

National and Regional Data on Thinness & Overweight of Children Age 5-9

	Thinness	Overweight
	% low BMI-for-age (moderate -2SD)	% high BMI-for-age (moderate +1SD)
National	2.7	27.8
COROZAL	0.0	35.7
ORANGE WALK	4.8	24.7
BELIZE NORTH	0.9	33.2
BELIZE SOUTH	2.8	31.2
CAYO	4.1	28.1
STANN CREEK	0.4	23.7
TOLEDO	3.3	16.0

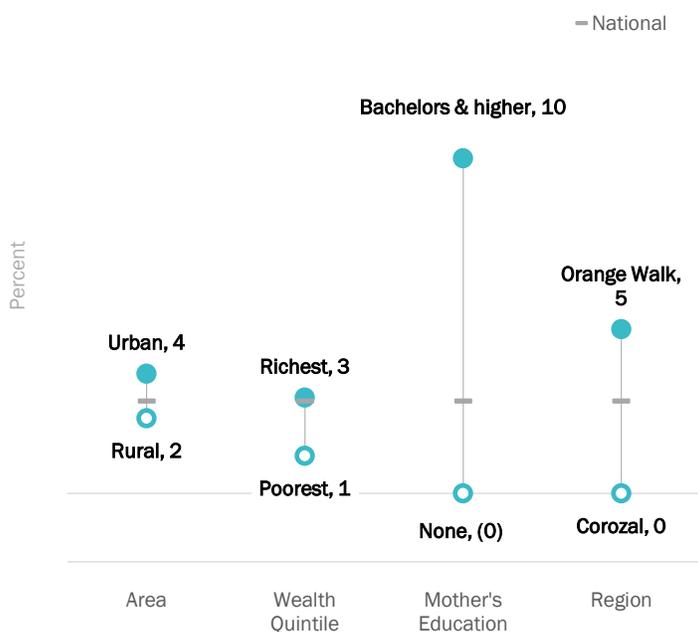
Body Mass Index (BMI) for age is used once children reach age 5 and then throughout life into adulthood.

Similar to weight-for-height for children under 5 (indicating overweight or wasting), BMI is used to assess whether children are overweight or thin for their sex, height, and age.

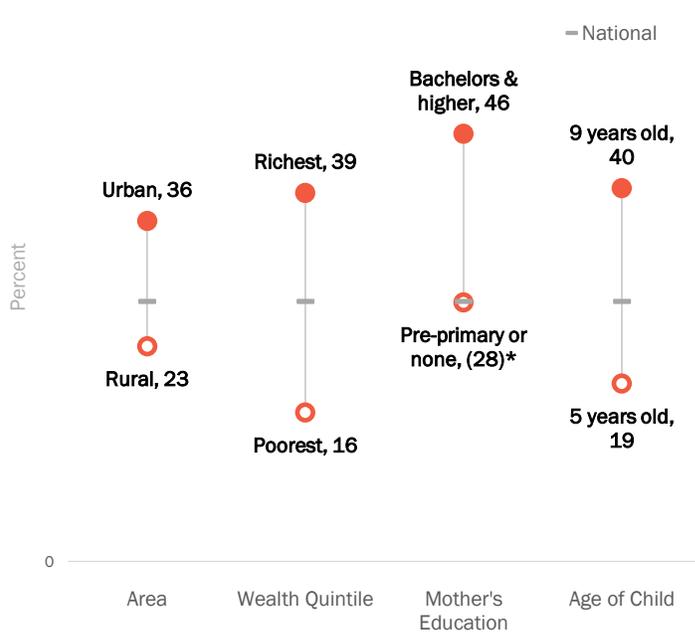
MICS uses the WHO Reference 2007 to compute nutritional indicators for school-age children.

Nutritional Status of Children Age 5-9: Disaggregates

Body Mass Index for Age: Thinness



Body Mass Index for Age: Overweight



Percentage of children age 5-9 who are thin, by background characteristics

Percentage of children age 5-9 who are overweight, by background characteristics

* Values in parentheses indicate findings based on 25-49 unweighted cases

The Belize Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey (MICS) was carried out in 2024 by the Statistical Institute of Belize as part of the global MICS programme. Technical support was provided by the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF). UNICEF, and the Government of Belize provided financial support.

The objective of this snapshot is to disseminate selected findings from the Belize MICS7, 2024 related to the Nutritional Status of Children. Data from this snapshot can be found in tables TC.8.1 and TC.8.2 in the Survey Findings Report.

Further statistical snapshots and the Survey Findings Report for this and other surveys are available on mics.unicef.org/surveys.