

KEY FACTS AND FIGURES

Stunting

- Globally, an estimated 165 million children under-five years of age, or 26%, were stunted (i.e., height-for-age below -2 SD) in 2011 — a 35% decrease from an estimated 253 million in 1990.
- High prevalence levels of stunting among children under-five years of age in Africa (36% in 2011) and Asia (27% in 2011) remain a public health problem, one which often goes unrecognized.
- More than 90% of the world's stunted children live in Africa and Asia.

Underweight

- Globally, an estimated 101 million children under-five years of age, or 16%, were underweight (i.e., weight-for-age below -2 SD) in 2011 — a 36% decrease from an estimated 159 million in 1990.
- Although the prevalences of stunting and underweight among children under-five years of age worldwide have decreased since 1990, overall progress is insufficient and millions of children remain at risk.

Wasting

- Globally, an estimated 52 million children under-five years of age, or 8%, were wasted (i.e., weight-for-height below -2 SD) in 2011 — a 11% decrease from an estimated 58 million in 1990.
- Seventy percent of the world's wasted children live in Asia, most in South-Central Asia. These children are at substantial increased risk of severe acute malnutrition and death.

Overweight

- Globally, an estimated 43 million children under-five years of age, or 7%, were overweight (i.e., weight-for-height above $+2$ SD) in 2011 — a 54% increase from an estimated 28 million in 1990.
- Increasing trends in child overweight have been noted in most world regions, not only developed countries, where prevalence is highest (15% in 2011). In Africa, the estimated prevalence under-five overweight increased from 4% in 1990 to 7% in 2011. The prevalence of overweight was lower in Asia (5% in 2011) than in Africa, but the number of affected children was higher in Asia (17 million) than in Africa (12 million).
- Proper nutrition contributes significantly to declines in under-five mortality rates. Improving nutritional status is essential for achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).