



# Lao PDR - National Nutrition Sentinel Surveillance

## Introduction

The National Nutrition Sentinel Surveillance in Lao PDR is a comprehensive and an early warning system designed to monitor the nutrition situation of the population and associated determinants. It collects data from 36 defined sentinel sites across all 18 provinces, and the data is statistically representative

at the national level. It provides crucial insights to inform and facilitate evidence-based policymaking and programming to improve overall nutrition outcomes. The data presented here were results of surveillance round 1 2023 (March), round 1 2022 (March) and round 2 2019 (December).

## Methodology



18 provinces



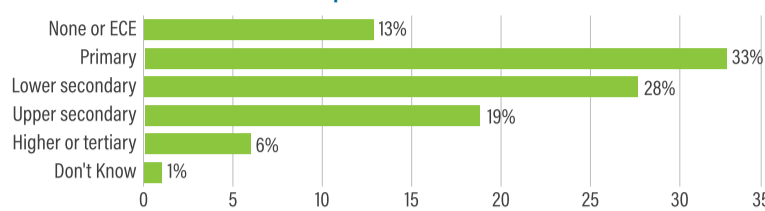
36 sites



900 Household

The National Nutrition Sentinel Surveillance in Lao PDR targets households and mothers with children aged 6-59 months. Eligible households were randomly selected using a systematic random sampling approach. A total of 900 children were sampled in March 2023 assessment. There are two sentinel sites per province

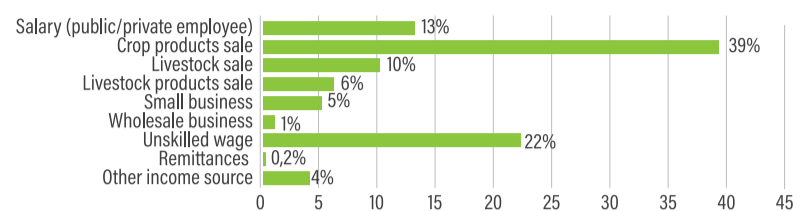
### Educational status of respondents



The data reveals that about 13% of the respondents had none or Early Childhood Education (ECE). The largest group of respondents had completed primary education (33%), followed by lower secondary (28%) and upper secondary (19%), with only 6% completing higher/tertiary education.

(1 village/district), resulting in a total of 36 sentinel sites, each with 25 sampled children. Data was collected on the anthropometry of children and women, food security and water, sanitation and hygiene.

### Household income source



The main sources of household income include crop products sale (39%), unskilled wage (22%), and livestock sale (10%). Other sources include small businesses, wholesale businesses, remittances, and other income sources, each contributing to a smaller proportion of the total income.

## Children 6-59 months



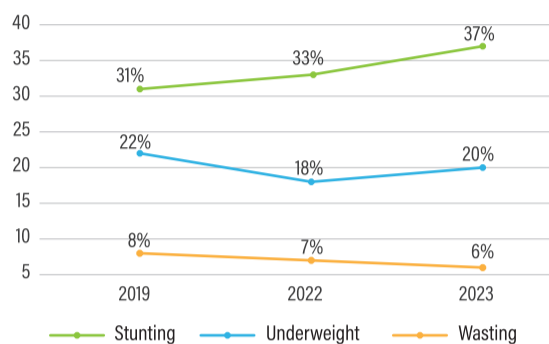
**Stunting:** The prevalence of stunting among children shows an increasing trend from 31% in 2019 to 37% in 2023.



**Underweight:** The prevalence of underweight among children decreased from 22% in 2019 to 18% in 2022, and then slightly increased to 20% in 2023.



**Wasting:** The prevalence of wasting shows a decreasing trend from 8% in 2019 to 6% in 2023.



## Reproductive health of women aged 15-49 years



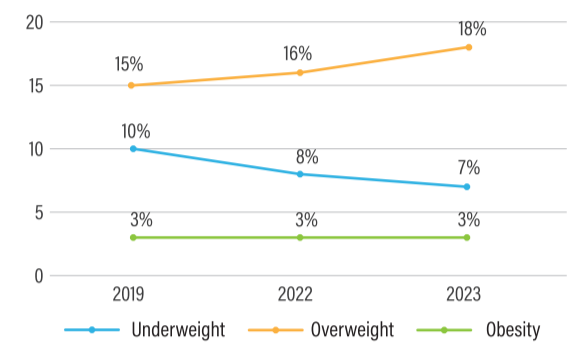
**Underweight:** The prevalence of underweight among women shows a decreasing trend from 10% in 2019 to 7% in 2023.



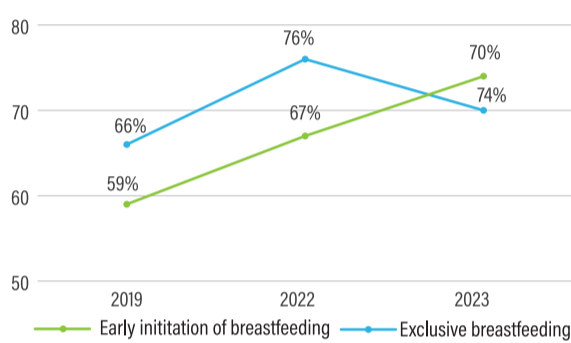
**Overweight:** The prevalence of overweight among women increased steadily from 15% in 2019 to 18% in 2023.



**Obesity:** The prevalence of obesity among women has stagnated at 3% for the past 3 years.

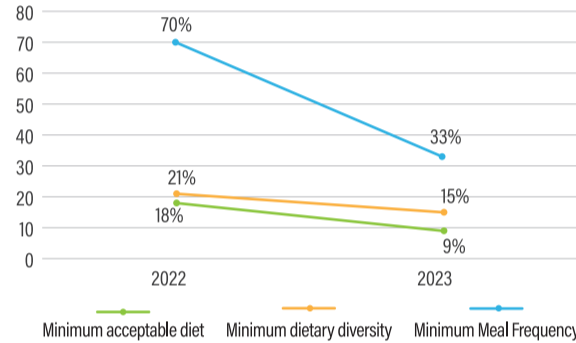


## Breastfeeding among children under 2 years



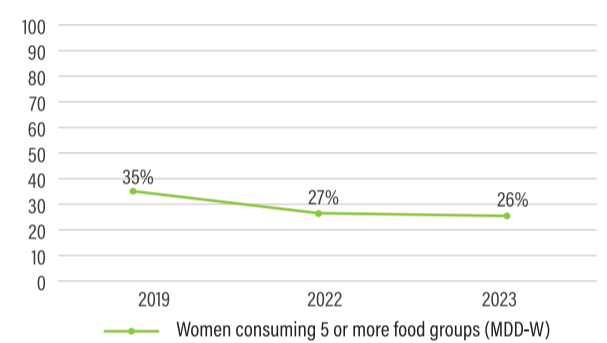
The percentage of children under 2 years who were breastfed within the first hour of birth showed an increasing trend from 59% in 2019 to 74% in 2023. The proportion of children that were exclusively breastfed, thus where infants received only breastmilk without any additional food or drink, increased from 66% in 2019 to 76% in 2022, but, it slightly decreased to 70% in 2023.

## Feeding practices among children 6-23 months



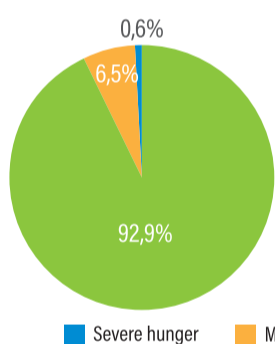
Between 2022 and 2023, the data shows a significant decline in key indicators of feeding practices among children 6-23 months. The percentage of children meeting the minimum meal frequency decreased from 70% to 33%; minimum dietary diversity decreased from 21% to 15%, and the minimum acceptable diet decreased from 18% to 9% during the period

## Minimum dietary diversity for women (MDD-W)

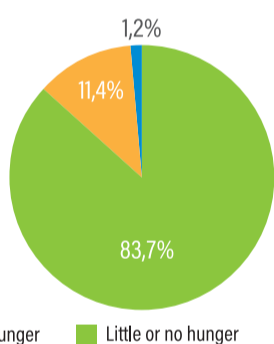


The percentage of women consuming five or more food groups, also known as Minimum Dietary Diversity for Women (MDD-W), decreased from 35% in 2019 to 27% in 2022, and marginally to 26% in 2023.

## Household hunger scale 2022



## Household hunger scale 2023



### Little or no hunger:

The percentage of households experiencing little or no hunger decreased from 92.9% in 2022 to 87.3% in 2023.

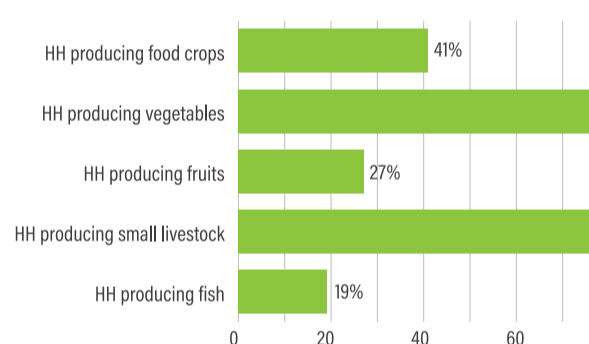
### Moderate hunger:

The prevalence of households experiencing moderate hunger increased from 6.5% in 2022 to 11.4% in 2023.

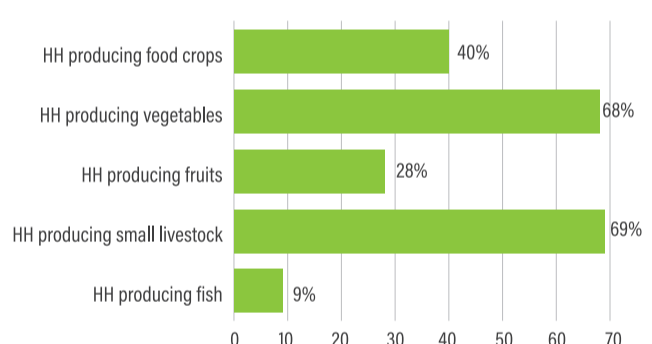
### Severe hunger:

The proportion of households facing severe hunger slightly increased from 0.6% in 2022 to 1.2% in 2023.

## Households producing food 2022



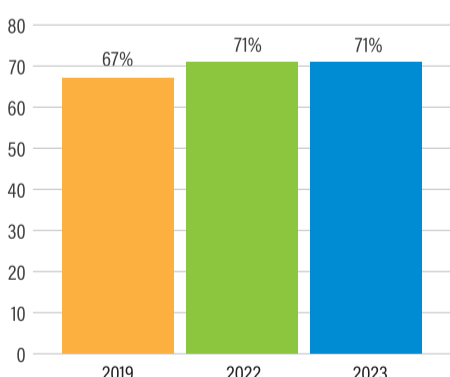
## Households producing food 2023



Households producing fish, vegetables and rearing small livestock recorded significant decreases of about 10 percentage points as compared to the previous year. The percentage of households involved in fish production declined from 19% in 2022 to 9% in 2023; whilst households engaged in small livestock production decreased from 80% in 2022 to 69% in 2023. At the same period, the proportion of households engaged in vegetable production declined from 77% in 2022 to 68% in 2023.

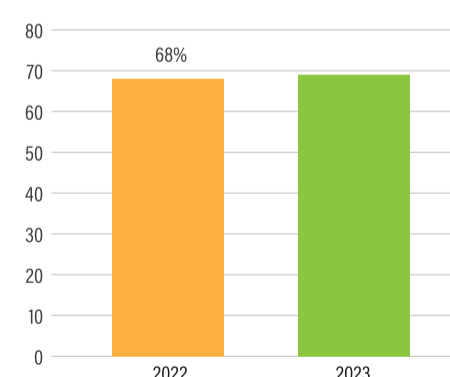


## Vitamin-A supplementation among children 6-59 months



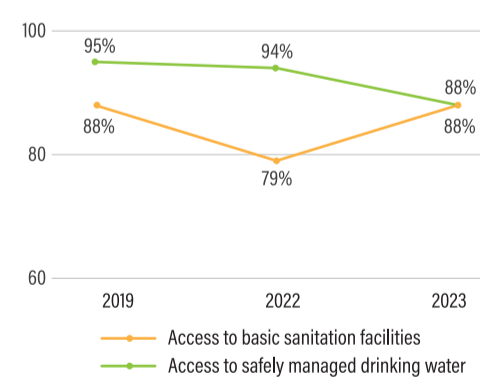
The percentage of children receiving Vitamin A supplementation remained consistent at 71% in both 2022 and 2023.

## Deworming among children 12-59 months



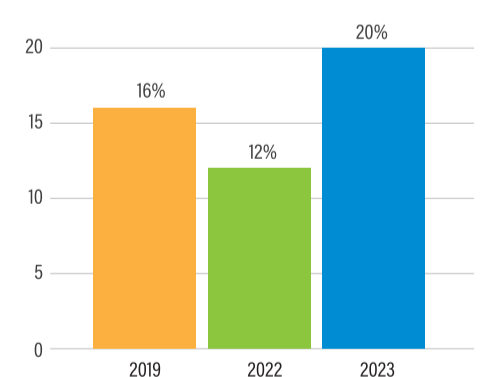
The coverage of deworming among children aged 12-59 months increased slightly from 68% in 2022 to 69% in 2023.

## Access to safely managed drinking water & Access to basic sanitation facilities (WASH)



The percentage of the population with access to safely managed drinking water showed a decreasing trend from 95% in 2019 to 88% in 2023. The prevalence of the population with access to basic sanitation facilities decreased from 88% in 2019 to 79% in 2022, but then improved to 88% in 2023.

## Diarrhoea among children under 5



The incidence of diarrhoea among children under 5 years of age decreased from 16% in 2019 to 12% in 2022, but then increased to 20% in 2023.

## Recommendations

1. An increasing trend in overweight among women is an emerging issue and should be monitored closely with actions to address it put in place.
2. There is an increasing trend in stunting prevalence compared to the same period amidst rising trends in the incidence of diarrhoeal diseases and worsening dietary practices among children under two years. This situation needs to be closely monitored, and the necessary multi-sectoral actions taken.
3. The food security situation remains fragile, with a downward trend in women's minimum dietary diversity score. In-depth analysis is required to understand the drivers for appropriate actions.
4. There is a decreasing trend in wasting prevalence; continued efforts are needed to reduce it below five per cent.
5. Continue prioritizing actions on breastfeeding counselling and support to mothers and communities.
6. Improve dietary diversity among children and women the scale up SBC campaigns/interventions with a focus on improving the quality of diets among children.

### Disclaimer:

This publication has been produced with the assistance of the European Union. The contents of this publication are the sole responsibility of the Center of Nutrition, the Department of Hygiene and Health Promotion, Ministry of Health, Lao PDR, and UNICEF, and can in no way be taken to reflect the views of the European Union.

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