PAPUA NEW GUINEA

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CHILD GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT IN RURAL PAPUA NEW GUINEA

The 2023 PNG Rural Household Survey collected weight and height measurements of **1,334 children** from **1,008 households** with at least one child under five years of age.

Children need to eat sufficient nutritious foods

Families require adequate health and education services

Communities need access to proper water, sanitation, and hygiene infrastructure

Deficient Environment

Higher Incidence of Chronic Diseases

Delayed Child Development

Lower Work Capacity

Indirect outcomes

WHAT IS STUNTING?

Stunting, or low height for age, is a measurement of long-term, chronic malnutrition and is associated with short and long-term health and development consequences

Stunting is caused by a deficient environment in which children grow up

Stunting

Difficult Child Birth (for stunted mothers)

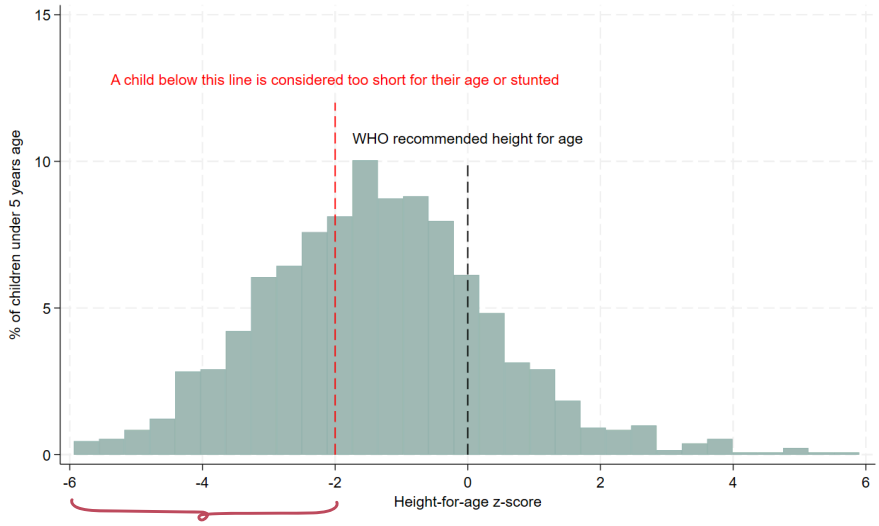
Underweight Birth (for children of stunted mothers)

Direct outcomes

Source: Leroy & Frongillo 2019

KEY FINDINGS

36% of sampled children under 5 years of age are stunted in their growth (demonstrating growth faltering)



Children in this range are considered stunted

Most sample children under seven months old are within the range of WHO-recommended growth standards.

As babies are weaned from exclusive breastfeeding (at 6 months old), average gains in child height decrease rapidly.

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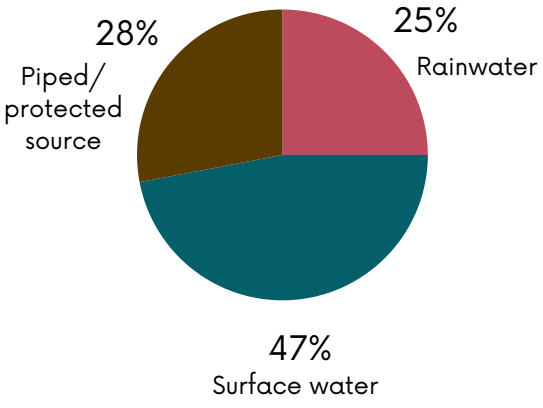
WHAT FACTORS ARE ASSOCIATED WITH IMPROVED CHILD GROWTH ?

- Greater birth spacing: Infants that are born more than 24 mo. after their immediate older sibling
- Infants (age 6 mo. - 2 yrs) who eat more calories
- Infants (age 6 mo. - 2 yrs) who sleep under mosquito nets
- Children (2-5 yrs) who eat at least one serving of meat, fish or one egg per day
- Access to improved toilet infrastructure (latrine with cover)

WATER, SANITATION, AND ACCESS TO HEALTH AND NUTRITION EXTENSION

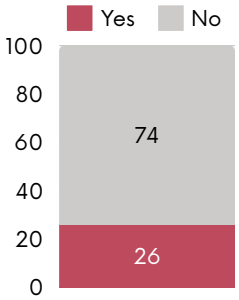
73%

obtained their drinking water from unprotected sources



Less than 25%

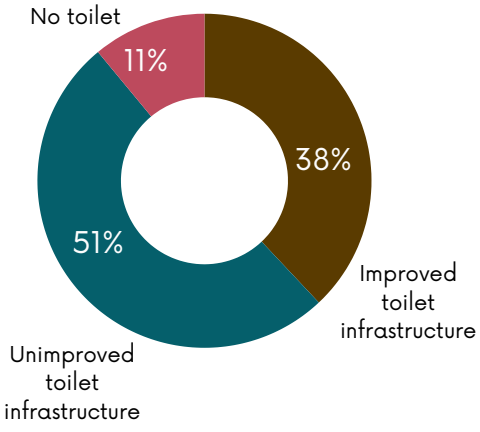
received extension on food preparation or child and maternal nutrition



26%

of children (6m - 2 yrs) eat a sufficiently diverse diet

**Minimum dietary diversity is met if an individual has eaten at least five out of eight defined food groups

38%

used improved toilet infrastructure