MICS FINAL REPORT

In MICS, weights and heights of all children under 5 years of age were measured using anthropometric equipment recommended by UNICEF (www.childinfo.org). Findings in this section are based on the results of these measurements.

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NUTRITIONAL STATUS

Children's nutritional status is a reflection of their overall health. When children have access to an adequate food supply, are not exposed to repeated illness, and are well cared for, they reach their growth potential and are considered well nourished.

UNDERWEIGHT

Weight-for-age is a measure of both acute and chronic malnutrition. Children whose weight-for-age is more than two standard deviations below the median of the reference population are considered moderately or severely underweight while those whose weight-for-age is more than three standard deviations below the median are classified as severely underweight.
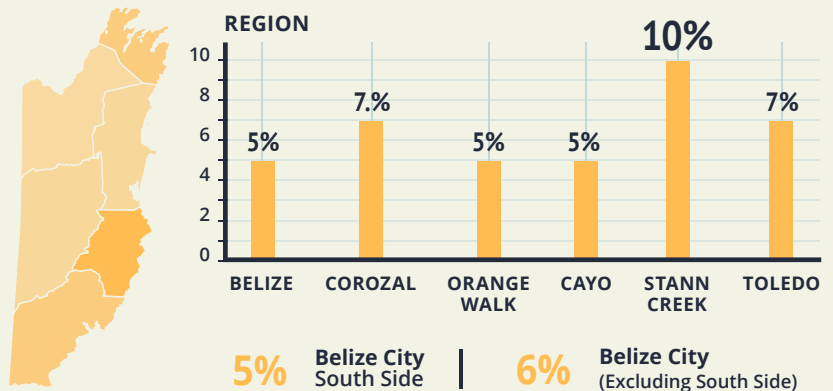
Malnutrition is associated with more than half of all child deaths worldwide. Undernourished children are more likely to die from common childhood ailments, and for those who survive, have recurring sicknesses and faltering growth.

6% MALE

7% FEMALE

% OF CHILDREN UNDER 5 WHO ARE UNDERWEIGHT

REGION

Region	%
BELIZE	5%
COROZAL	7.%
ORANGE WALK	5%
CAYO	5%
STANN CREEK	10%
TOLEDO	7%

5% Belize City South Side | **6%** Belize City (Excluding South Side)

MOTHER'S EDUCATION

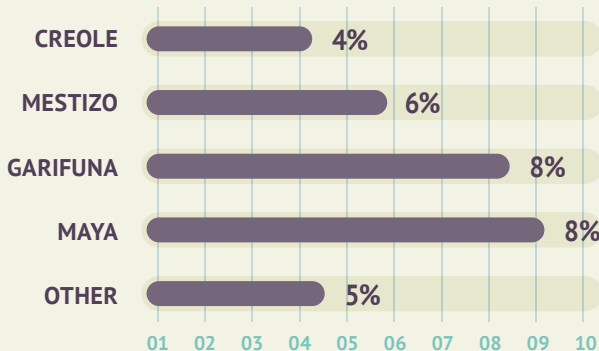**9%** NONE

7% PRIMARY

5% SECONDARY+

RURAL 7%

URBAN 5%

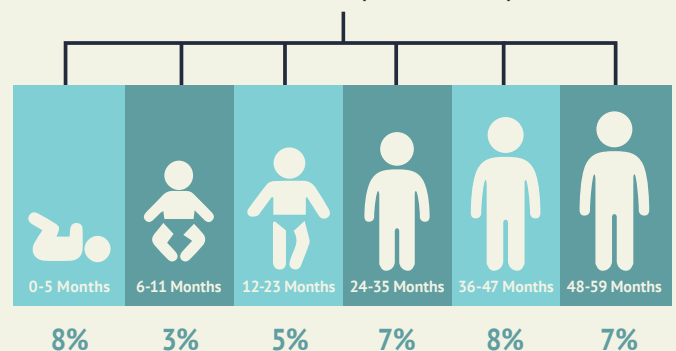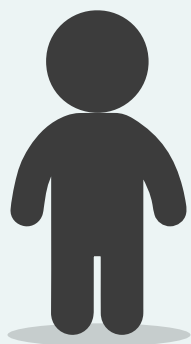**10%** Generally urban children are more obese than rural children with rates of 10 percent urban and 7 percent rural.

FINANCIAL STATUS

POOREST	MIDDLE	RICHEST
9%	5%	3%

% OF CHILDREN UNDERWEIGHT

ETHNICITY OF HEAD OF HOUSEHOLD

	%
CREOLE	4%
MESTIZO	6%
GARIFUNA	8%
MAYA	8%
OTHER	5%

01 02 03 04 05 06 07 08 09 10

AGE OF CHILD (0-59 MONTHS)

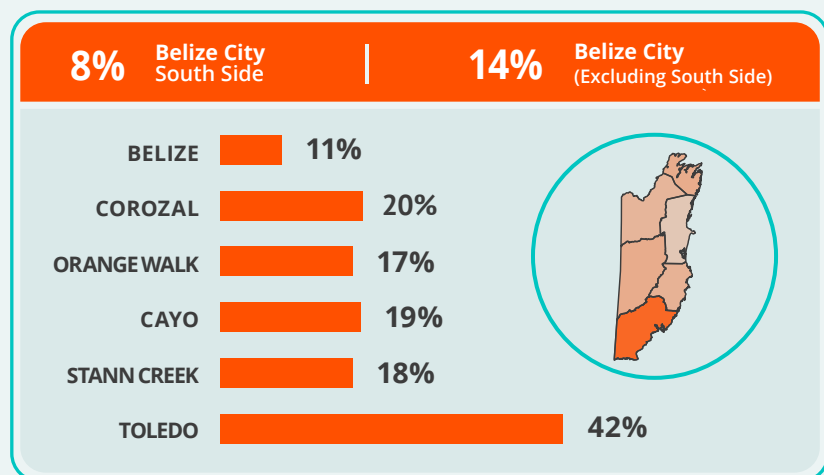| 0-5 Months	6-11 Months	12-23 Months	24-35 Months	36-47 Months	48-59 Months
8%	3%	5%	7%	8%	7%

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NUTRITIONAL STATUS

Children's nutritional status is a reflection of their overall health. When children have access to an adequate food supply, are not exposed to repeated illness, and are well cared for, they reach their growth potential and are considered well nourished.
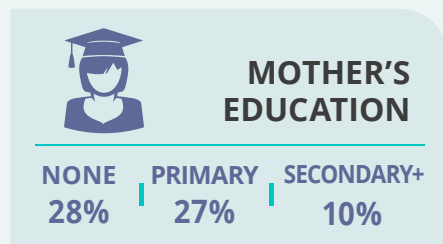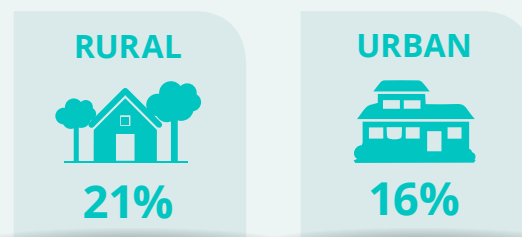
Malnutrition is associated with more than half of all child deaths worldwide. Undernourished children are more likely to die from common childhood ailments, and for those who survive, have recurring sicknesses and faltering growth. Three-quarters of the children who die from causes related to malnutrition were only mildly or moderately malnourished – showing no outward sign of their vulnerability. The Millennium Development target is to reduce by half the proportion of people who suffer from hunger between 1990 and 2015. A reduction in the prevalence of malnutrition will also assist in the goal to reduce child mortality.
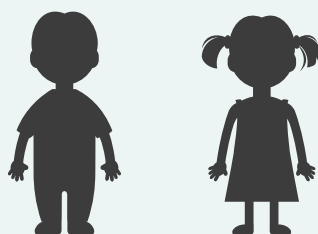
STUNTED

Height-for-age is a measure of linear growth. Children whose height-for-age is more than two standard deviations below the median of the reference population are considered short for their age and are classified as moderately or severely stunted. Those whose height-for-age is more than three standard deviations below the median are classified as severely stunted. Stunting is a reflection of chronic malnutrition as a result of failure to receive adequate nutrition over a long period and recurrent or chronic illness.
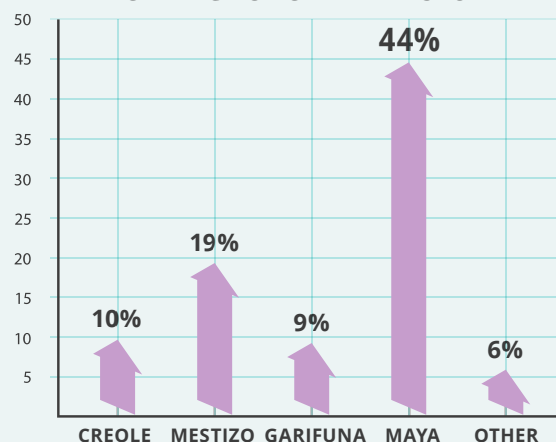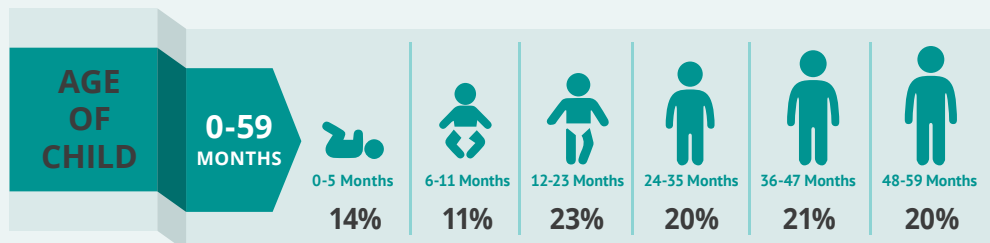
8% Belize City South Side | **14%** Belize City (Excluding South Side)

BELIZE **11%**
COROZAL **20%**
ORANGE WALK **17%**
CAYO **19%**
STANN CREEK **18%**
TOLEDO **42%**

AREA & REGION

RURAL **21%**
URBAN **16%**

PERCENTAGE OF CHILDREN STUNTED

CREOLE **10%**
MESTIZO **19%**
GARIFUNA **9%**
MAYA **44%**
OTHER **6%**

ETHNICITY OF HOUSEHOLD HEAD

Children from Maya headed households have the highest rates for underweight (9 percent), stunting (44 percent) and obesity (10 percent) when compared to children of other ethnicities.

MOTHER'S EDUCATION

NONE **28%**   PRIMARY **27%**   SECONDARY+ **10%**

MALE **19%**   **FEMALE** **20%**

Males and females show approximately the same rates for moderate underweight, stunting and wasting.

FINANCIAL STATUS

POOREST **33%**   RICHEST **9%**   MIDDLE **12%**

A clear distinction can not be made between children in different wealth categories with respect to wasting. In contrast, a trend for higher percentages for wealthier households is evident for obesity.

AGE OF CHILD

0-59 MONTHS

0-5 Months	6-11 Months	12-23 Months	24-35 Months	36-47 Months	48-59 Months
14%	11%	23%	20%	21%	20%

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NUTRITIONAL STATUS

Children's nutritional status is a reflection of their overall health. When children have access to an adequate food supply, are not exposed to repeated illness, and are well cared for, they reach their growth potential and are considered well nourished.

Malnutrition is associated with more than half of all child deaths worldwide. Undernourished children are more likely to die from common childhood ailments, and for those who survive, have recurring sicknesses and faltering growth. Three-quarters of the children who die from causes related to malnutrition were only mildly or moderately malnourished – showing no outward sign of their vulnerability. The Millennium Development target is to reduce by half the proportion of people who suffer from hunger between 1990 and 2015. A reduction in the prevalence of malnutrition will also assist in the goal to reduce child mortality.

OVERWEIGHT

>> Overweight refers to increased body weight in relation to height, when compared to some standard of acceptable or desirable weight.
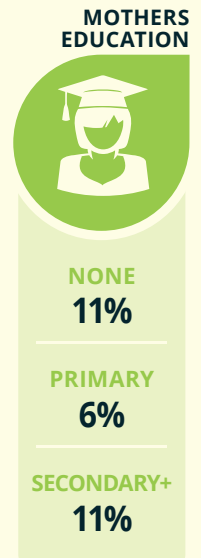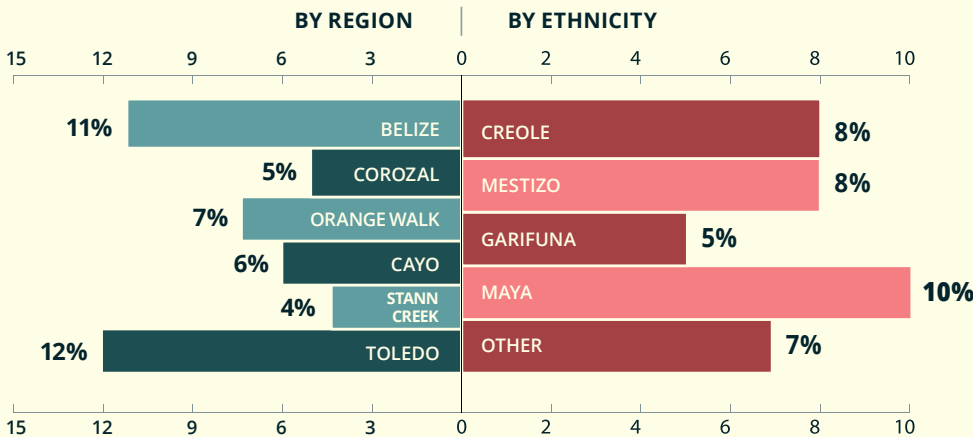
MALE 9% **FEMALE 7%**

URBAN 10% **RURAL 7%**

Generally urban children are more obese than rural children with rates of 10 percent urban and 7 percent rural.

About 6 percent of children under age five in Belize are moderately underweight and 1 percent are classified as severely underweight. Almost 20 percent of children (19 percent) are moderately stunted or too short for their age and 3 percent are moderately wasted or too thin for their height. About 8 percent of children under age 5 years are considered to be obese or overweight.

BY REGION | BY ETHNICITY

Region	%	Ethnicity	%
BELIZE	11%	CREOLE	8%
COROZAL	5%	MESTIZO	8%
ORANGE WALK	7%	GARIFUNA	5%
CAYO	6%	MAYA	10%
STANN CREEK	4%	OTHER	7%
TOLEDO	12%		

BY WEALTH

POOREST 5%
MIDDLE 9%
RICHEST 12%

MOTHERS EDUCATION

NONE 11%
PRIMARY 6%
SECONDARY+ 11%

9% Belize City South Side | **14%** Belize City (Excluding South Side)

Children from poor households are more likely to be underweight and stunted than other children from wealthier households. In contrast, a trend for higher percentages for wealthier households is evident for obesity.

AGE OF CHILD

0-59 MONTHS

| 0-5 Months	6-11 Months	12-23 Months	24-35 Months	36-47 Months	48-59 Months
13%	7%	9%	7%	7%	7%

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NUTRITIONAL STATUS

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WASTED

Finally, children whose weight-for-height is more than two standard deviations below the median of the reference population are classified as moderately or severely wasted, while those who fall more than three standard deviations below the median are classified as severely wasted. Wasting is usually the result of a recent nutritional deficiency. The indicator may exhibit significant seasonal shifts associated with changes in the availability of food or disease prevalence.
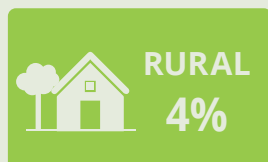
URBAN 3%

RURAL 4%

A small difference in rates occur in urban and rural areas with rural children having higher rates than urban children in all three categories (urban/rural percentages are: 5.4/6.6 underweight, 15.7/21.4 stunting and 2.8/3.6 wasting).

AGE OF CHILD

0-5 Months	6-11 Months	12-23 Months	24-35 Months	36-47 Months	48-59 Months
6%	4%	2%	3%	4%	3%

MALE 3%   **FEMALE 3%**

% OF CHILDREN WASTED

CREOLE	MESTIZO	GARIFUNA	MAYA	OTHER
4%	3%	5%	3%	4%

ETHNICITY OF HOUSEHOLD HEAD

EDUCATION

PRIMARY EDUCATION 3%	NONE EDUCATION 2%	SECONDARY+ EDUCATION 4%

WEALTH

POOREST 9%	RICHEST 3%	MIDDLE 5%

8%
Belize City
South Side

3%
Belize City
(Excluding South Side)

BELIZE	COROZAL	ORANGE WALK	CAYO	STANN CREEK	TOLEDO
4%	3%	2%	3%	5%	3%