



# Save the Children

10/11/2017

Rate of child deaths due to undernutrition in PH now higher than global average, reveals report by Save the Children



Save the Children's new study "Lives Cut Short" reveals that nearly half or 48% of total child deaths under five years old in Philippines in 2015 were linked to children being underweight, a form of undernutrition caused by food insecurity and extreme hunger. This rate is higher than in 2013 and that of the global average on child deaths related to undernutrition at 45%.

Ned Olney, Country Director of Save the Children says: “Although child mortality has steadily improved over time, our study shows that over 85 children still die each day because they are malnourished and hungry. We are talking here about over 31,000 child deaths in 2015 alone.”

“Unless families get enough food and they are nourished, we will continue to lose more Filipino children. While those who have survived from being malnourished may never be able to reach their full potential.”

Some of the key findings of the study include:

- **Household food insecurity or hunger is a strong predictor of underweight status in children.** Children from urban areas below 6 months of age living in moderately and severely food insecure households are 4 times more likely to be underweight than children from food secure households.
- **Insufficient number of meals per day is associated with stunting.** Children 6 to 23 months living in rural areas and are not able to achieve the minimum meal frequency are twice as likely to be stunted, or short for their age.
- **Maternal health factors were significantly linked to child mortality.**

Mothers who delivered preterm babies are almost 5 times at risk of having child deaths than their counterparts. Some of the maternal factors that affect child deaths among children 0-59 months include preterm birth, maternal age below 20 years and between 40-49 years, 2-3 pregnancies in the past, previous child deaths, and less than 2 years birth interval

“We know that children’s chance at a fair start in life starts in the womb. What the mother eats or if she eats at all ultimately affects a child’s future in the long term. We need to ensure that mothers and their babies are given the best care right in their homes, and in their communities”, Olney added.

Save the Children encourages the Congress to pass the “First 1000 Days” bill, also known as the Healthy Nanay, Healthy Bulilit Bill and ensure sufficient budgetary allocation so that mothers and children are provided with quality pre- and post-natal care, essential early newborn care, micronutrient supplementation and nutrition services from conception up to child’s second birthday.

To show your support and urge lawmakers to make a stand for children, sign Save the Children’s [#StartThemHealthy](https://www.savethechildren.org.ph/StartThemHealthy) petition at [scp.ph/StartThemHealthy](https://www.savethechildren.org.ph/StartThemHealthy)