

# **Nutrition in Pakistan, Challenges and Opportunities**

## **Insights from National Nutrition Survey 2018**

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**NUTRITION WING**

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Government of Pakistan



THE AGA KHAN UNIVERSITY



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- Design & Scale of the National Nutrition Survey 2018
- Key Findings **(FIVE TAKE AWAYS)**
  - Childhood nutrition rates and differentials
  - The close links between maternal & child nutrition in Pakistan
  - The opportunity to improve infant & young child nutrition
  - Primary Care programs & Nutrition
  - The current & emerging triple burden & micronutrient deficiencies
- **THE FIVE KEY ACTIONS** to address nutrition in the context of Sustainable Development Goals

# Design & Scale of the National Nutrition Survey 2018

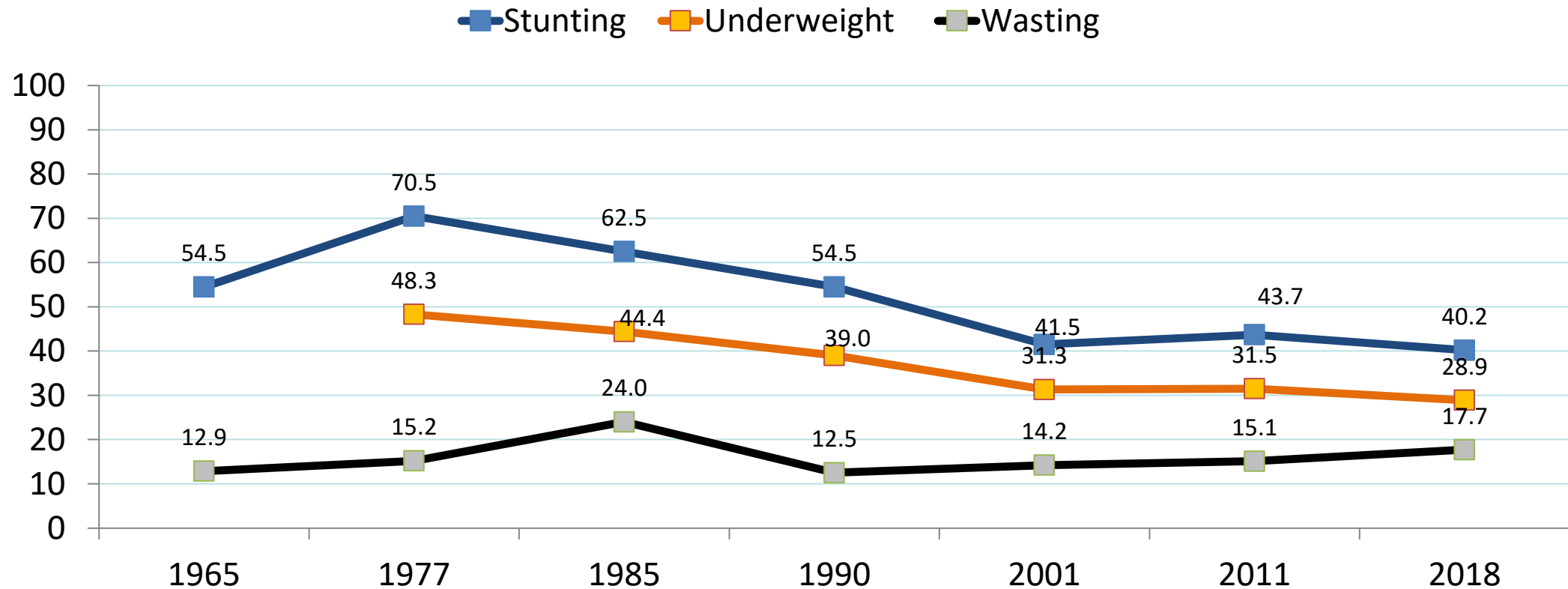
- Cross-sectional survey, mixed method approach was used, both quantitative and qualitative data collections were done
- Largest ever nutrition survey conducted in all areas of Pakistan including Gilgit Baltistan and Azad Jammu and Kashmir
- Total sample size was 115,600 households that provided district level representation
- Women of Reproductive age (15-49), children under five and adolescents were the sample population
- Data was collected on nutritional indicators as well as those which can influence the nutrition
- Blood samples were collected for Hemoglobin, Ferritin, Vitamin A, Zinc, Vitamin D and the results were adjusted for inflammatory markers of CRP and AGP
- Water quality assessment was also done both for microbiological contaminations and trace elements

## **Key Finding # 1**

**Childhood Malnutrition Rates haven't  
changed much in over 50 years!**

# Childhood malnutrition trends in Pakistan

## Hardly any change in stunting and wasting in decades!

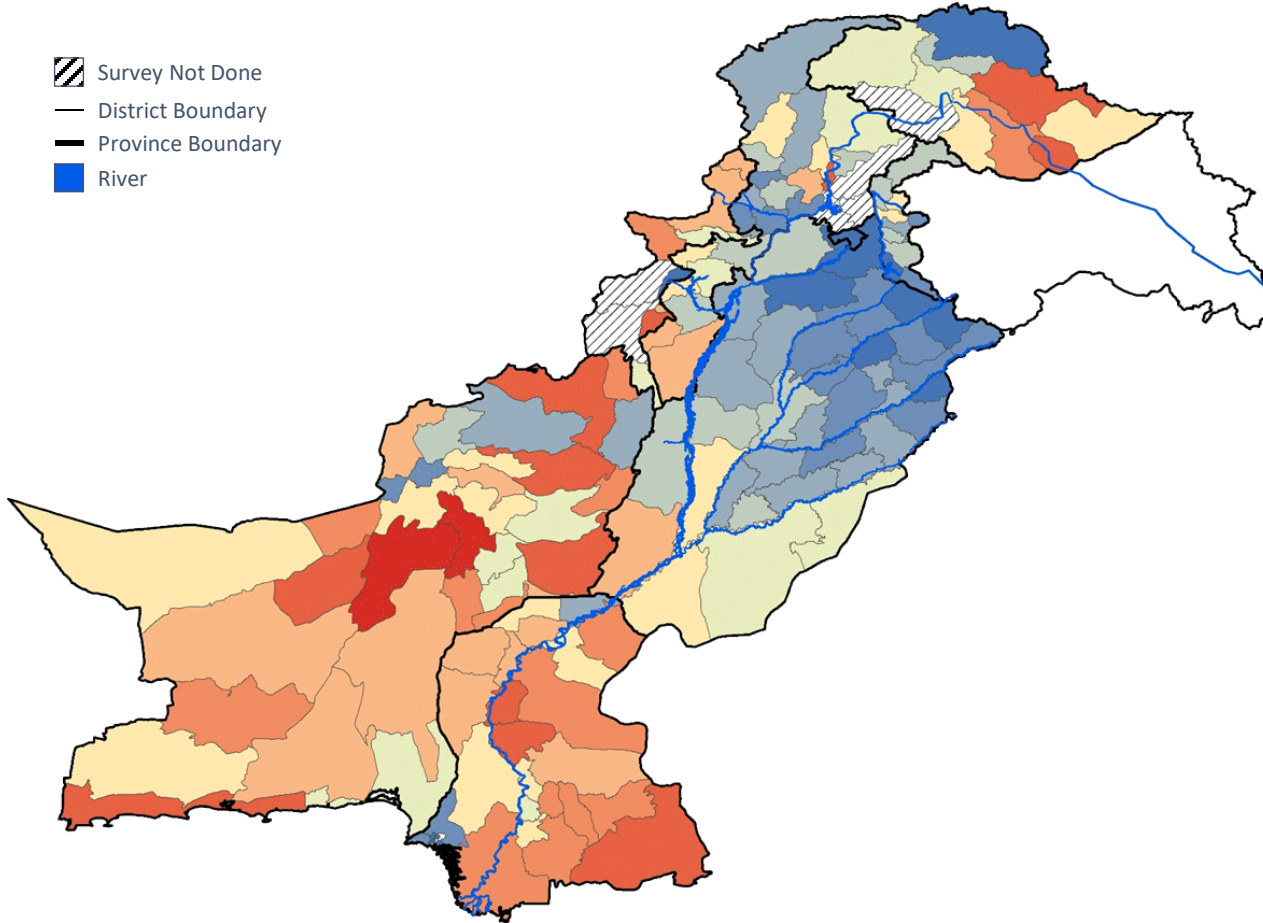
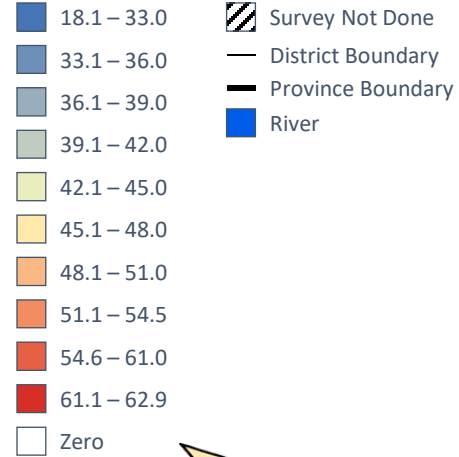


Source: 1965 NS West Pak.; 1977 MNS; 1985-7 NNS, 1990-4 NHS; 2001-2 NNS. 2011 NNS 2012-13, NNS 2018

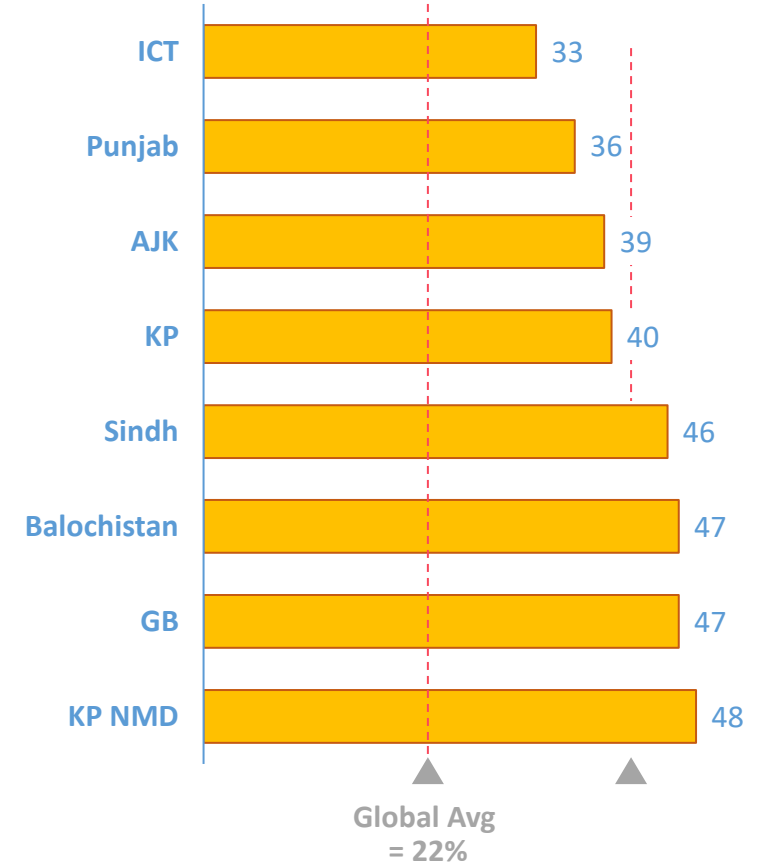
# National Averages mask tremendous disparities & subnational differentials

## National Nutrition Survey 2018 Stunting

### Legend



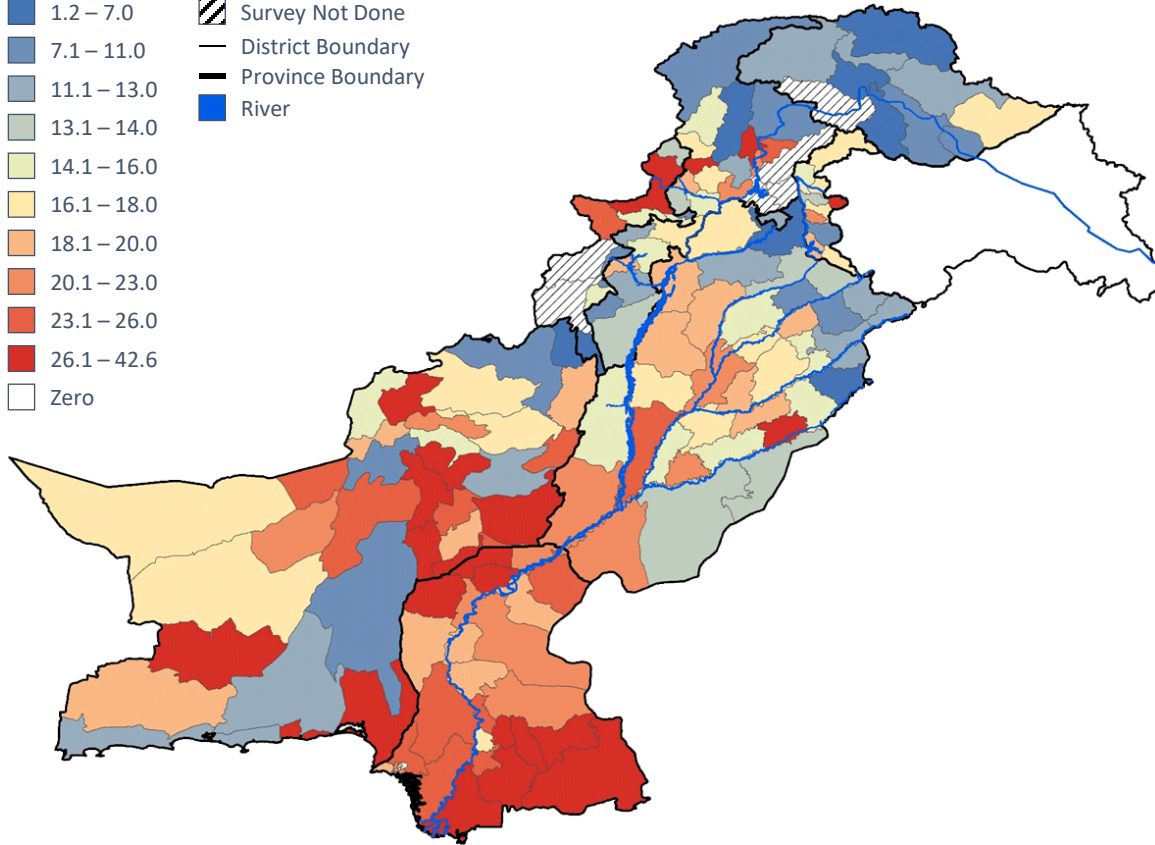
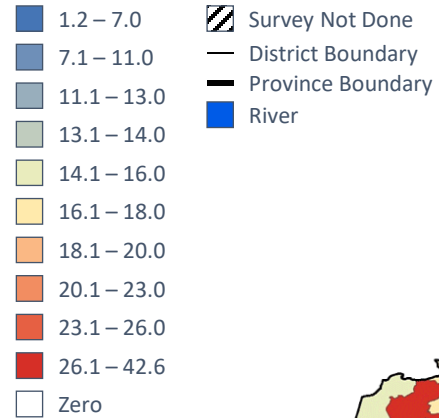
## REGIONAL STUNTING PREVALANCE (%)



# The most egregious forms of childhood malnutrition overlap

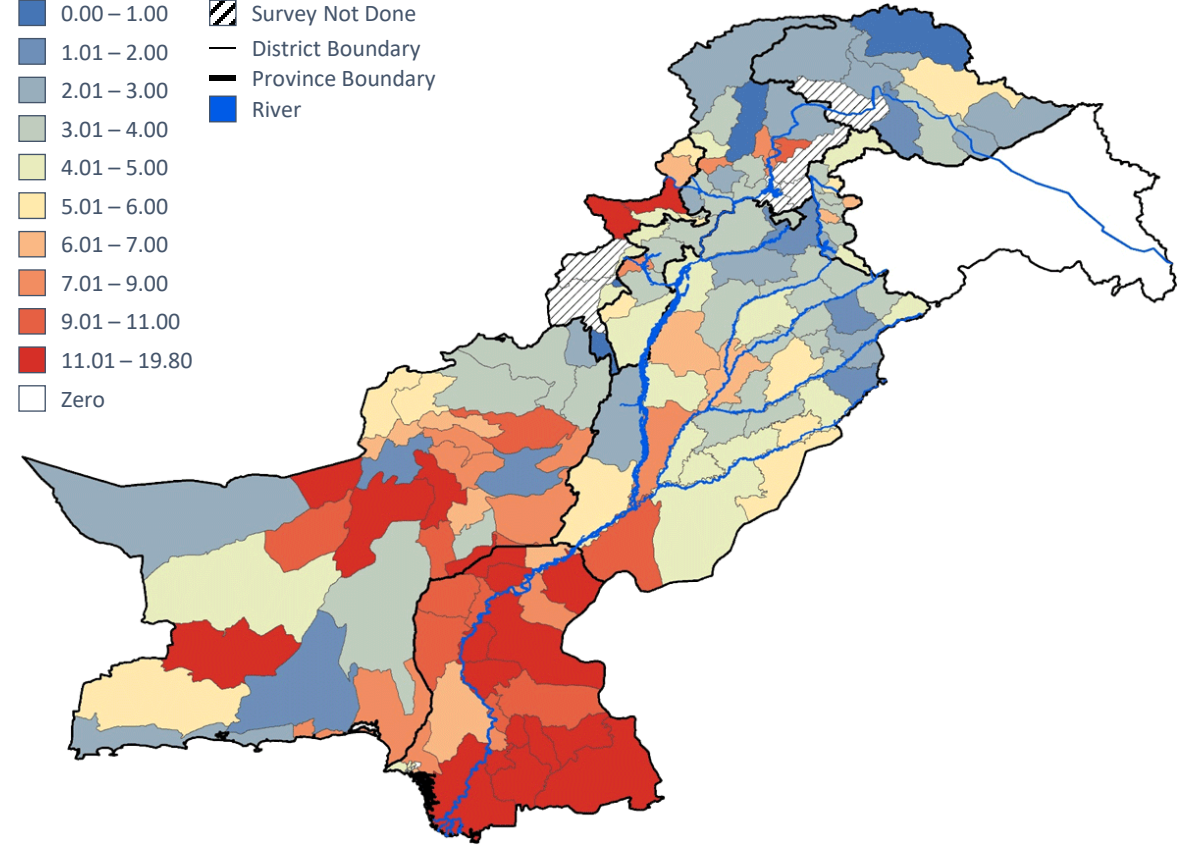
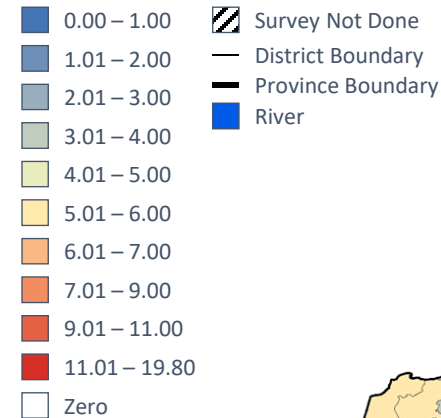
National Nutrition Survey 2018  
**Wasting**

**Legend**



National Nutrition Survey 2018  
**Stunting & Wasting**

**Legend**

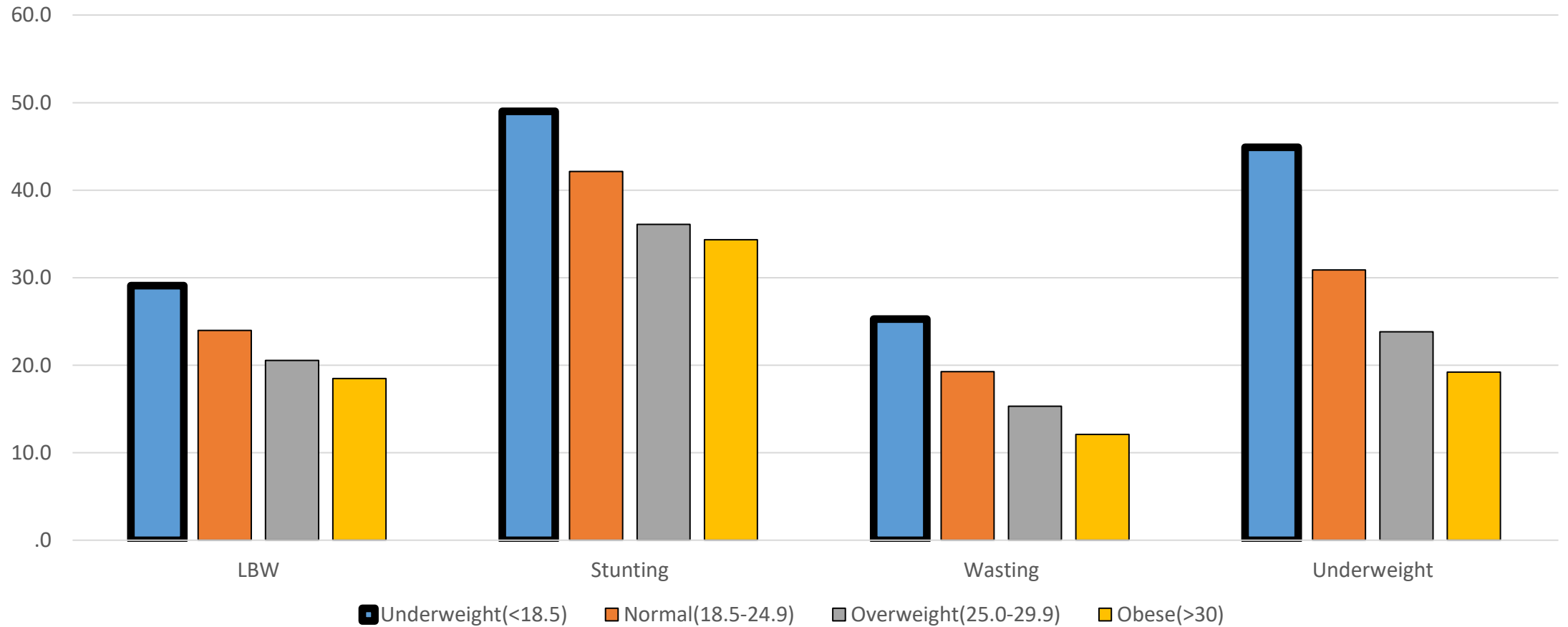


## **Key Finding # 2**

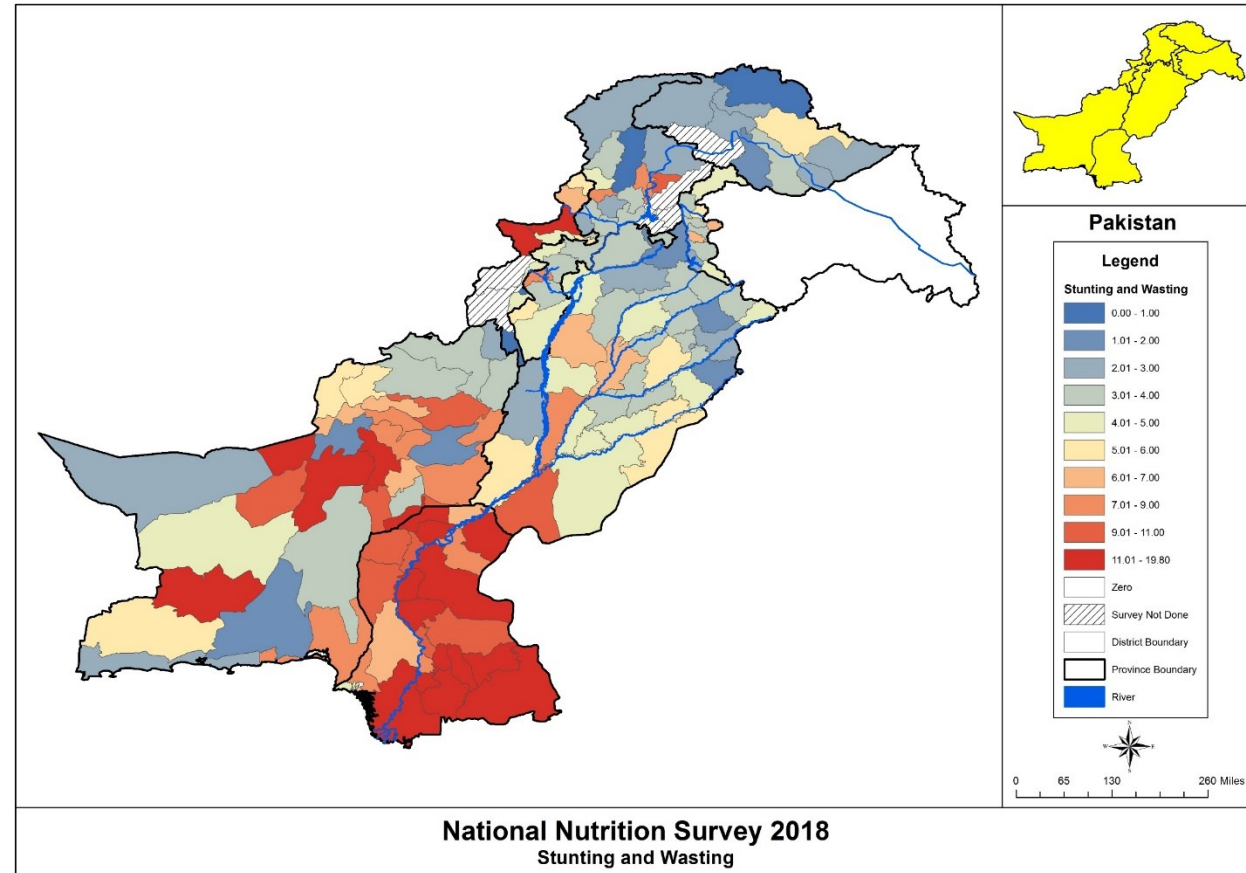
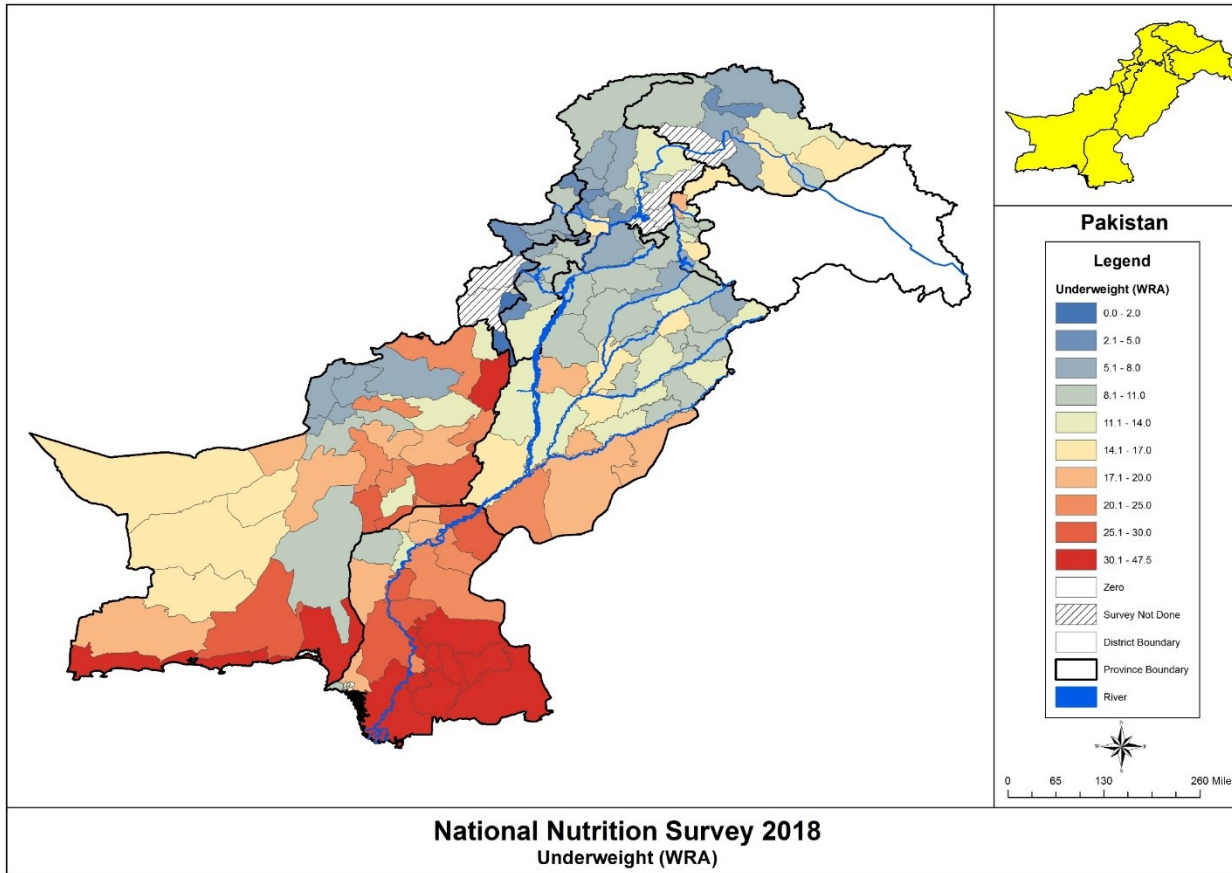
**There is close correlation between  
maternal & early childhood undernutrition**



# Maternal nutrition & birth / child outcomes



# Maternal & child undernutrition are inter-related



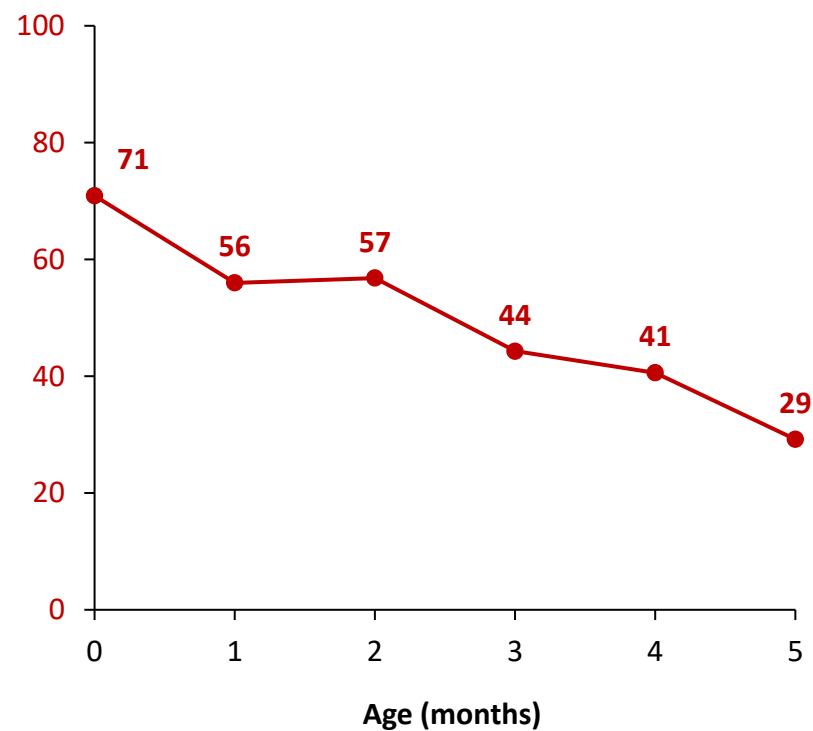
## **Key Finding # 3**

**There is enormous opportunity to improve  
infant & young child nutrition**

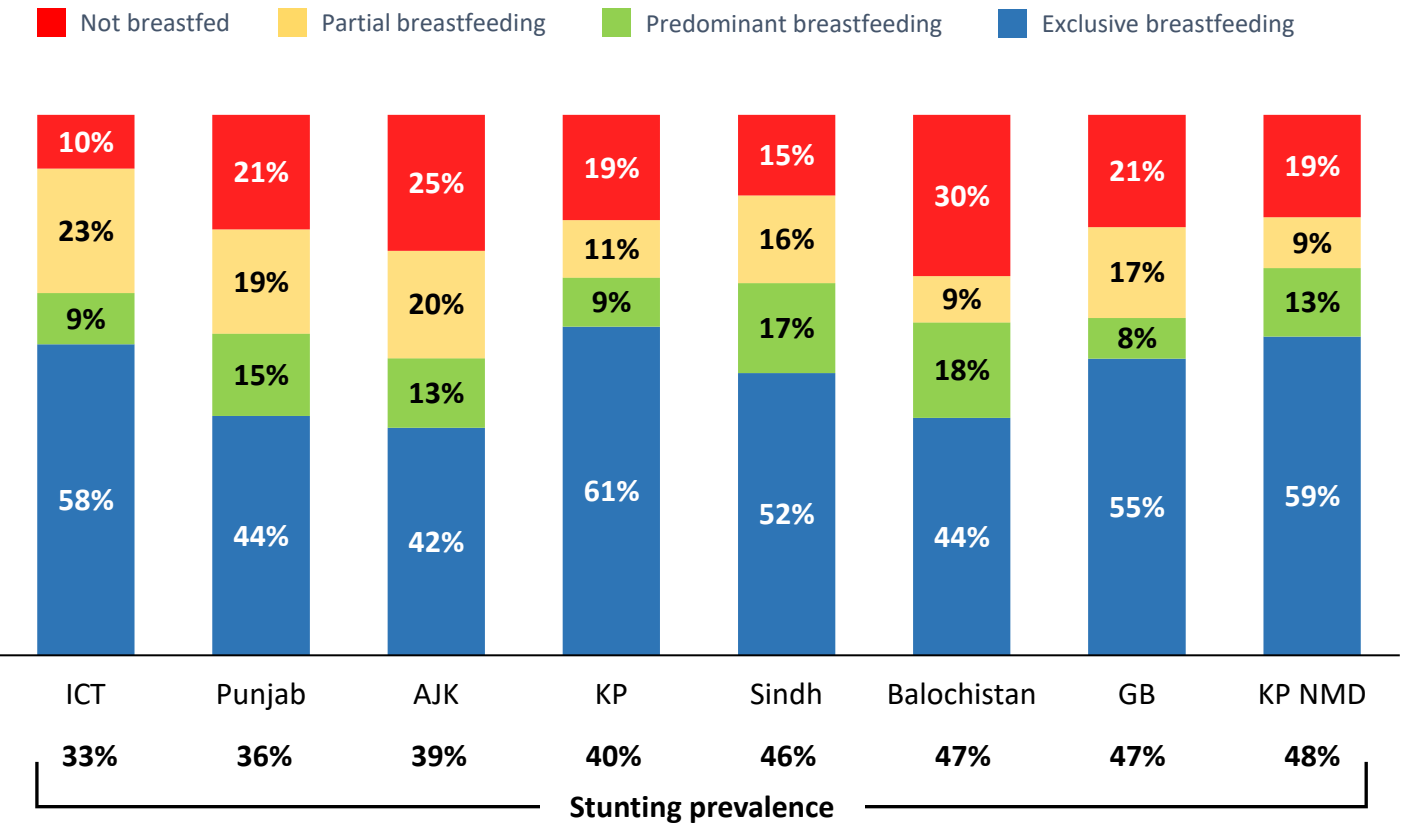
# Much room for improvement on breastfeeding practices and support

NATIONAL EXCLUSIVE BREASTFEEDING RATES FROM 0-5 MONTHS DECLINING...

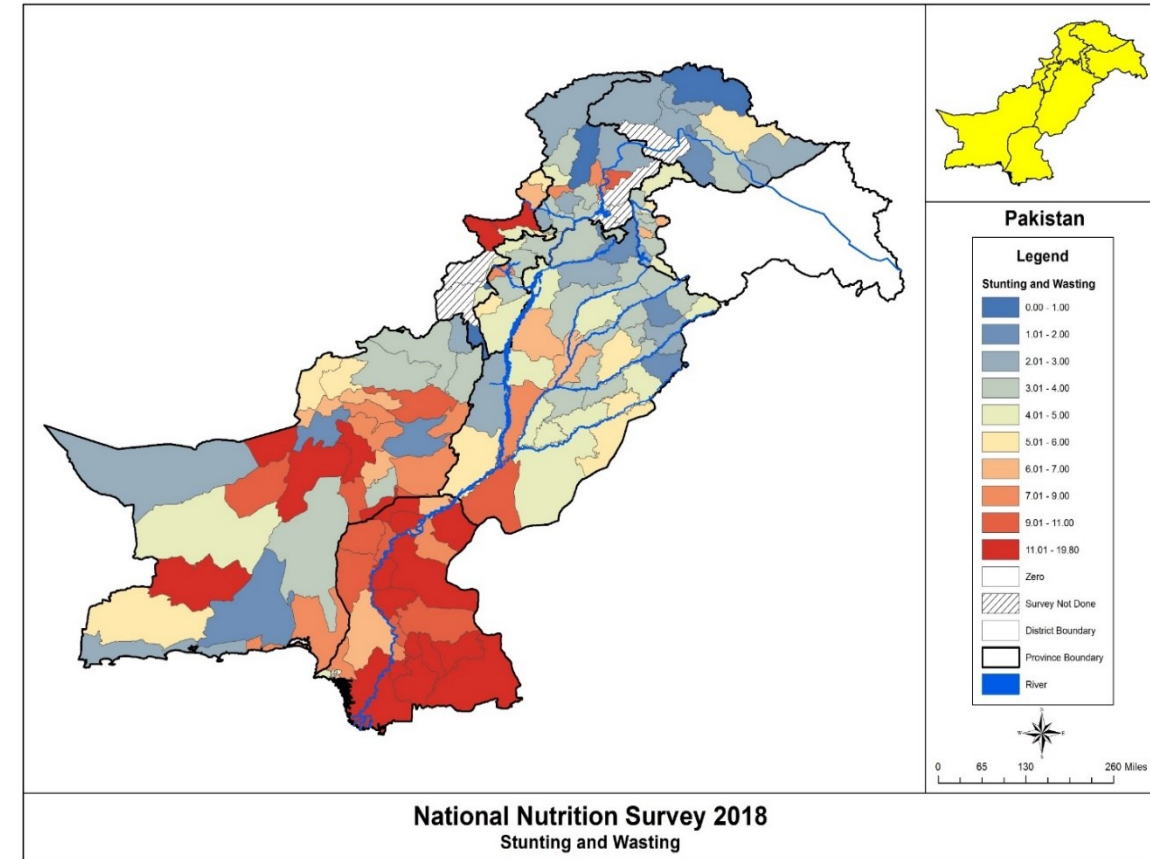
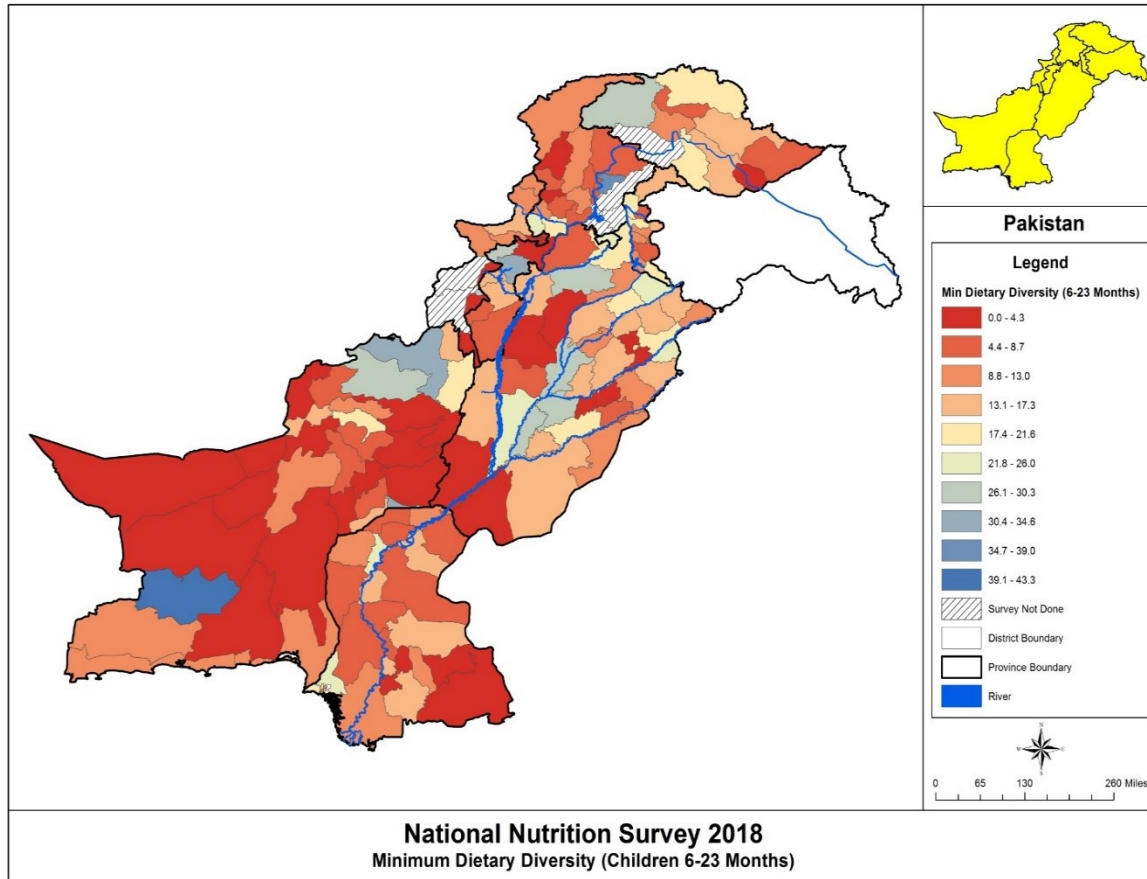
Exclusive Breastfeeding Rate (%)



...WITH WIDE VARIATIONS IN SPECIFIC BREASTFEEDING STATUS BY PROVINCE



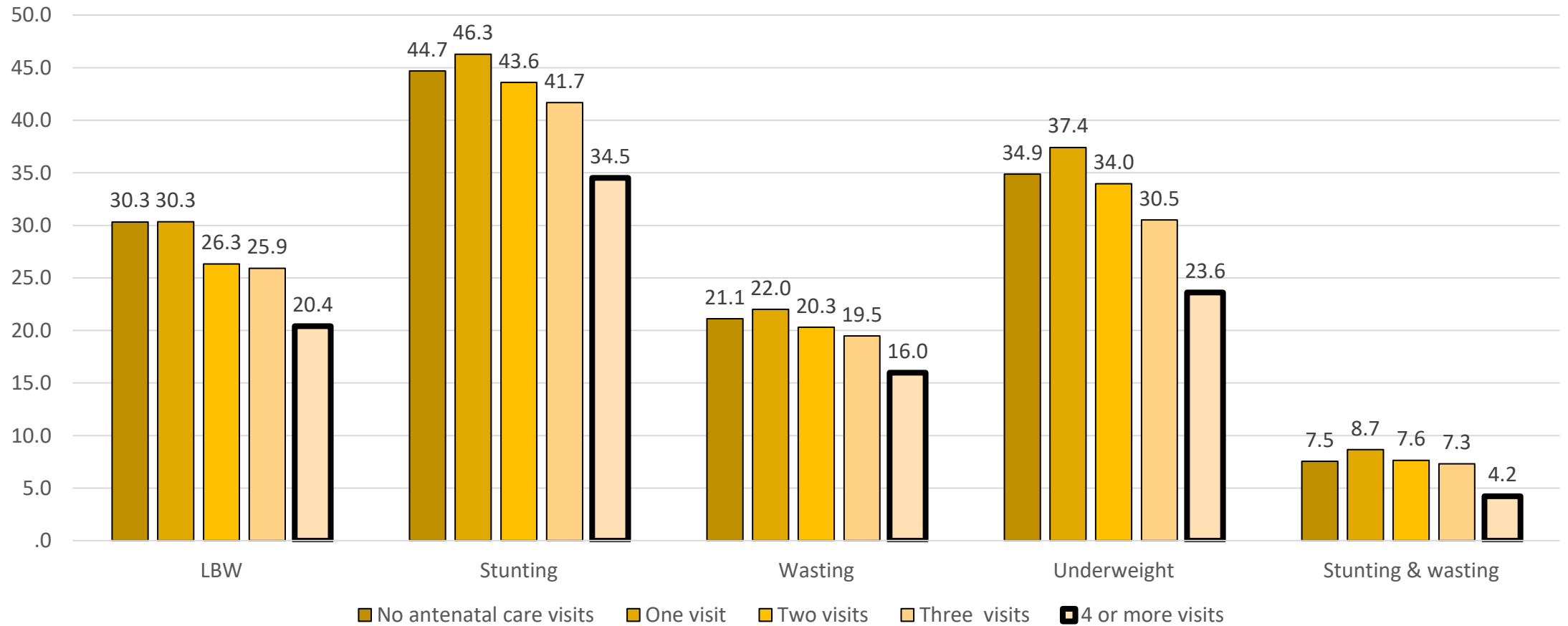
# Status of infant & young child feeding



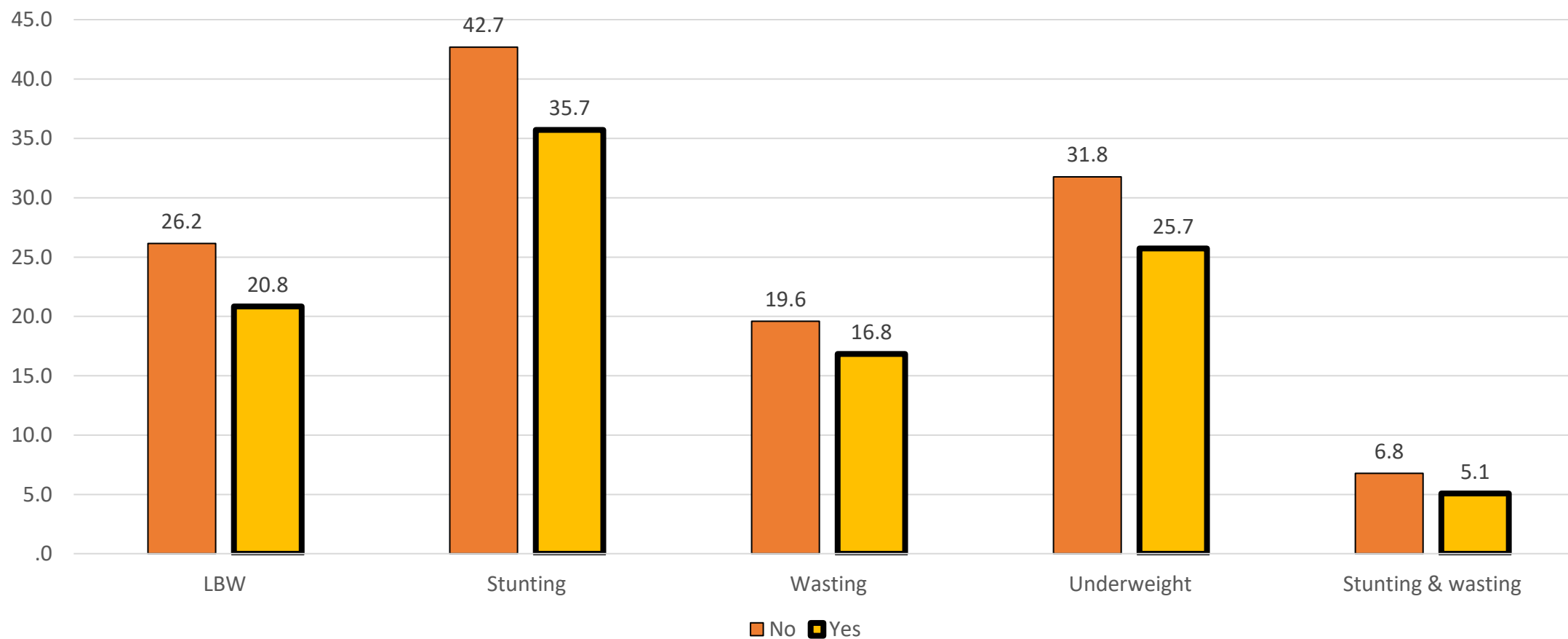
## **Key Finding # 4**

**Primary Care Programs matter for  
nutrition, but coverage & quality is  
variable**

# Child Malnutrition by ANC visits



# Child Malnutrition by IFA intake during pregnancy





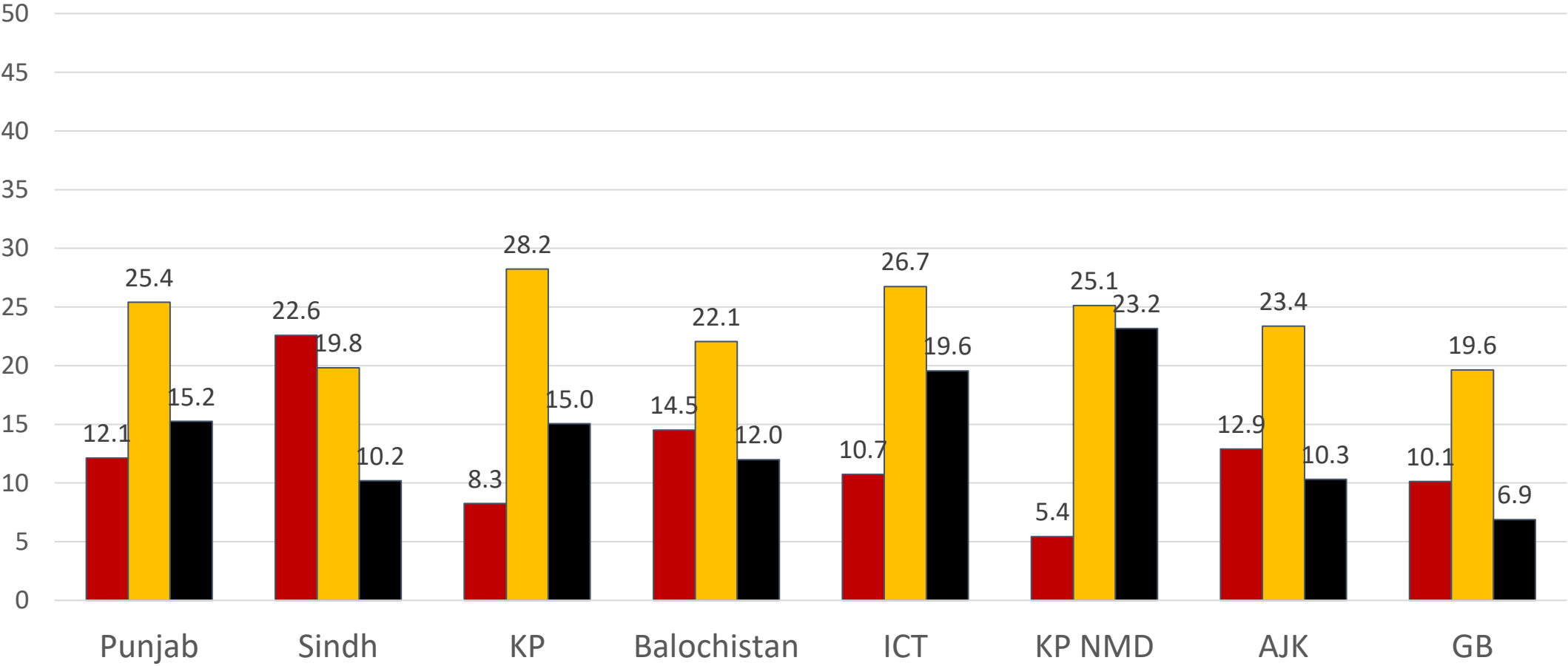
## **Key Finding # 5**

**Pakistan now faces a triple burden of  
malnutrition**

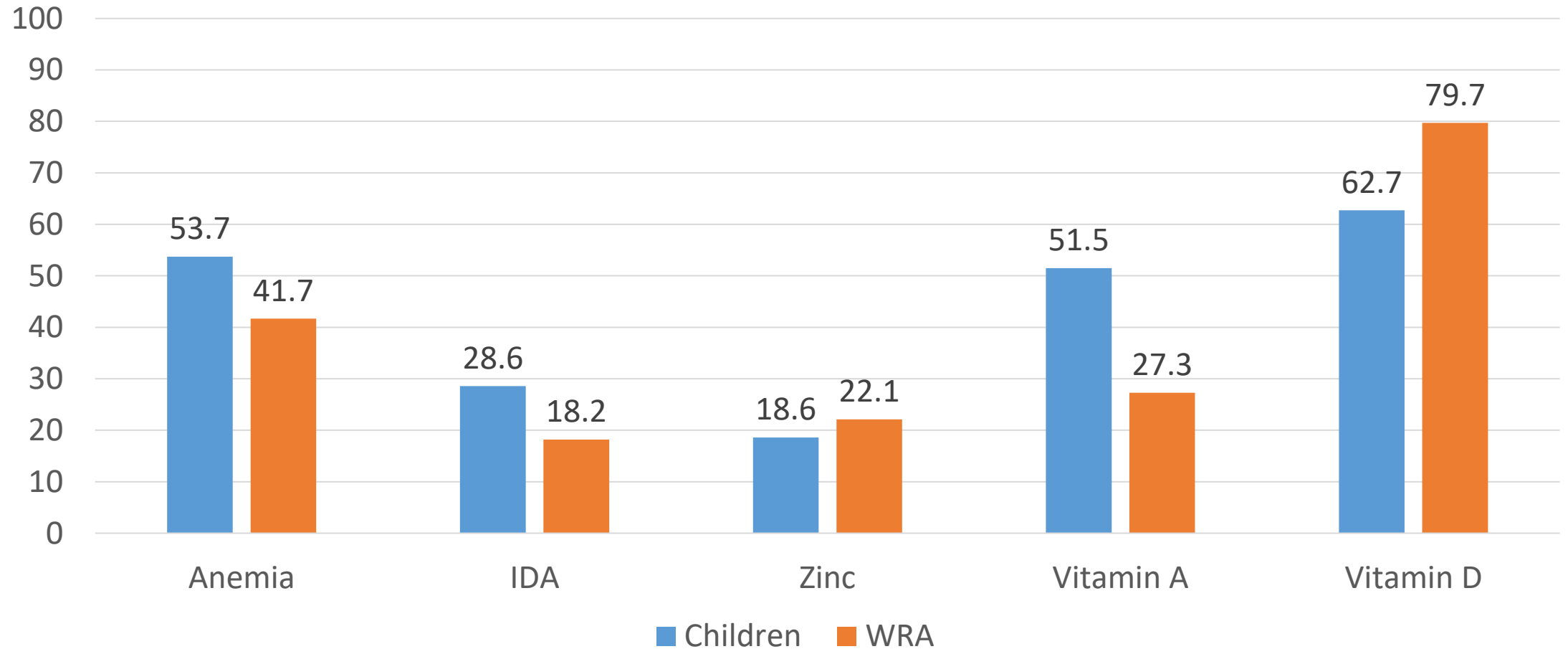
**(undernutrition, overweight/obesity & micronutrient  
deficiencies)**

# Nutritional Status of Women of Reproductive Age

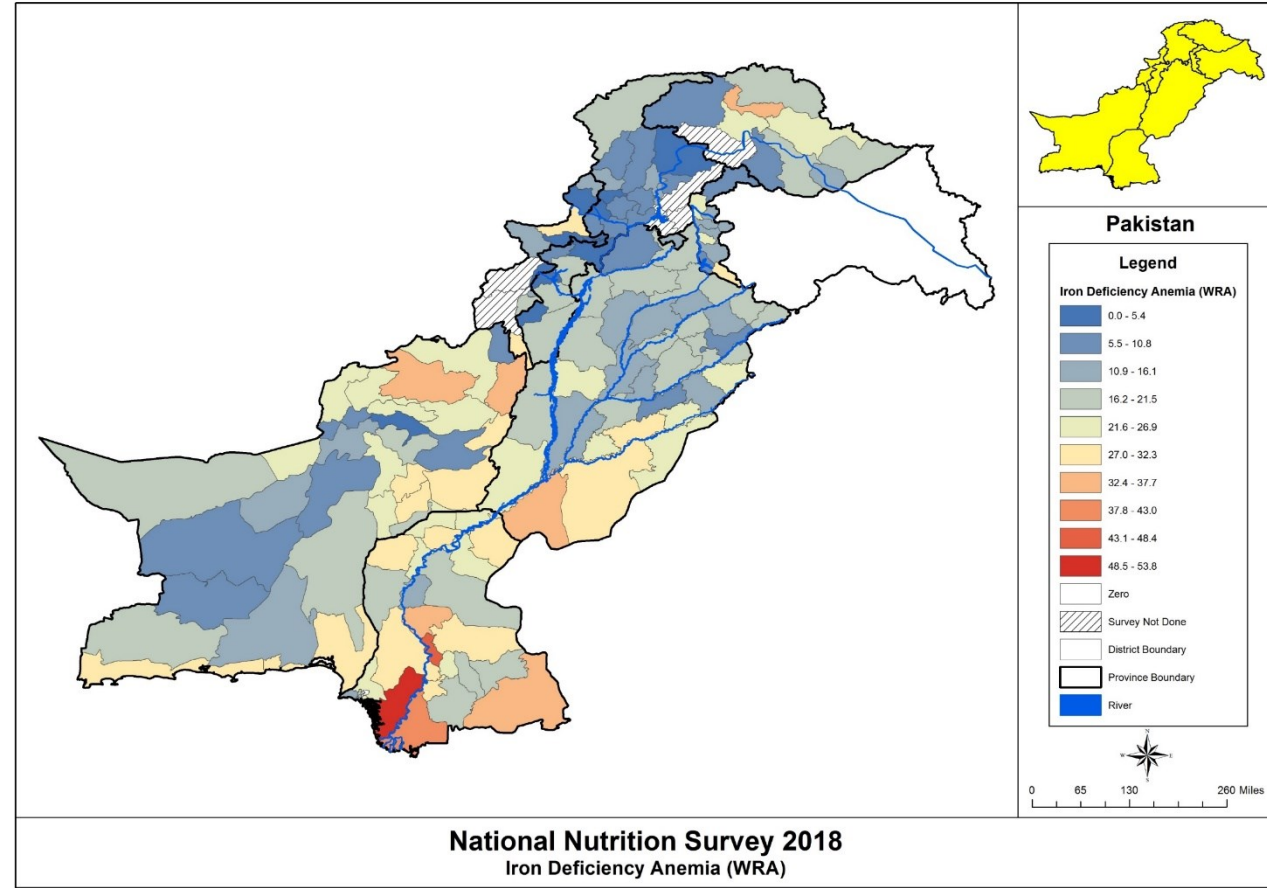
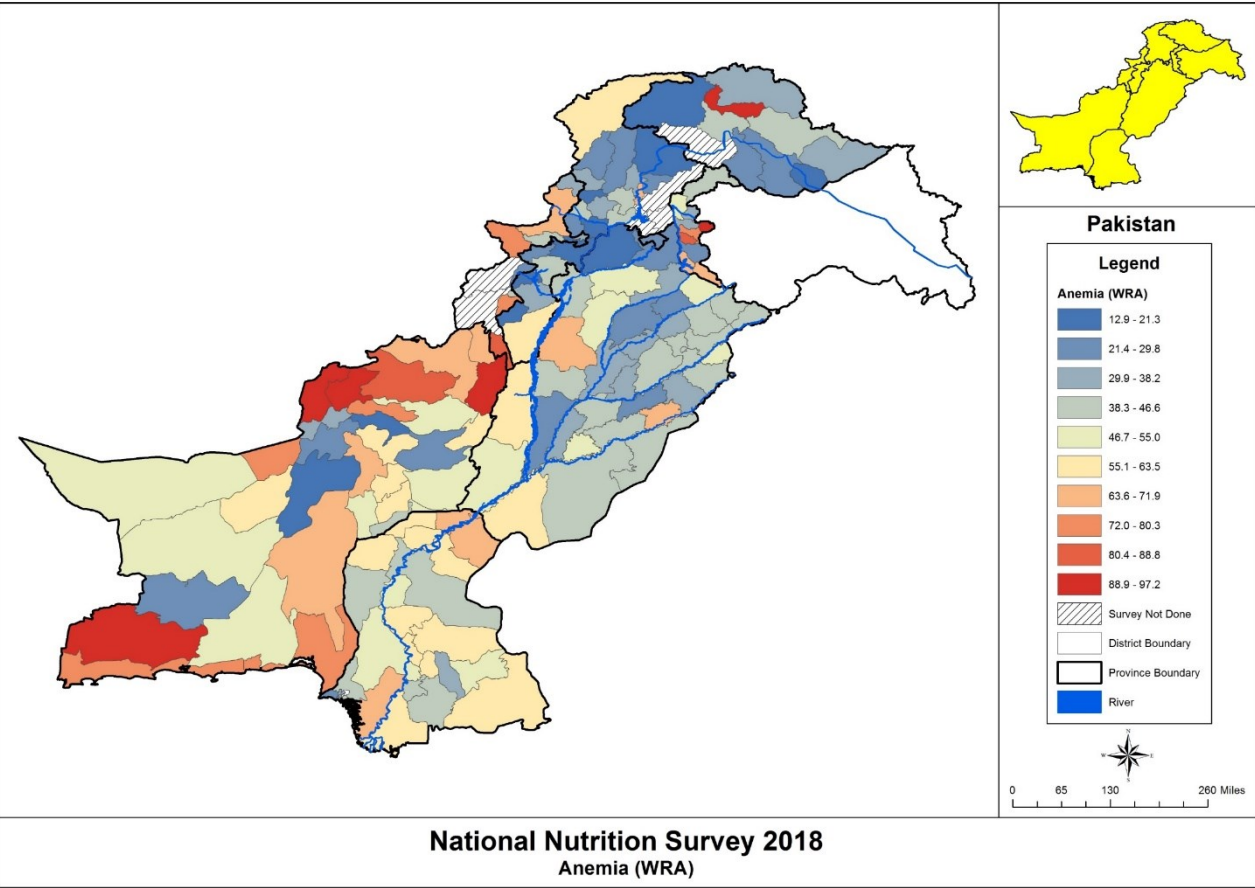
■ Underweight(<18.5)    ■ Overweight(25.0-29.9)    ■ Obese(>30)



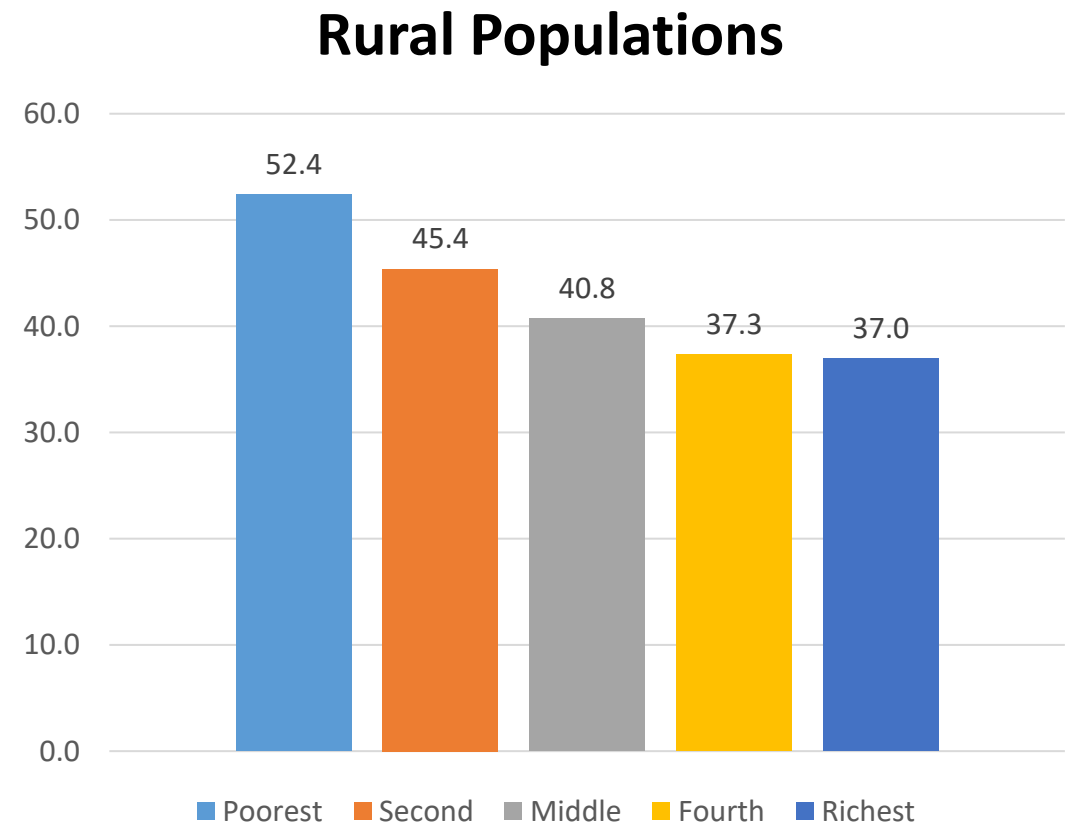
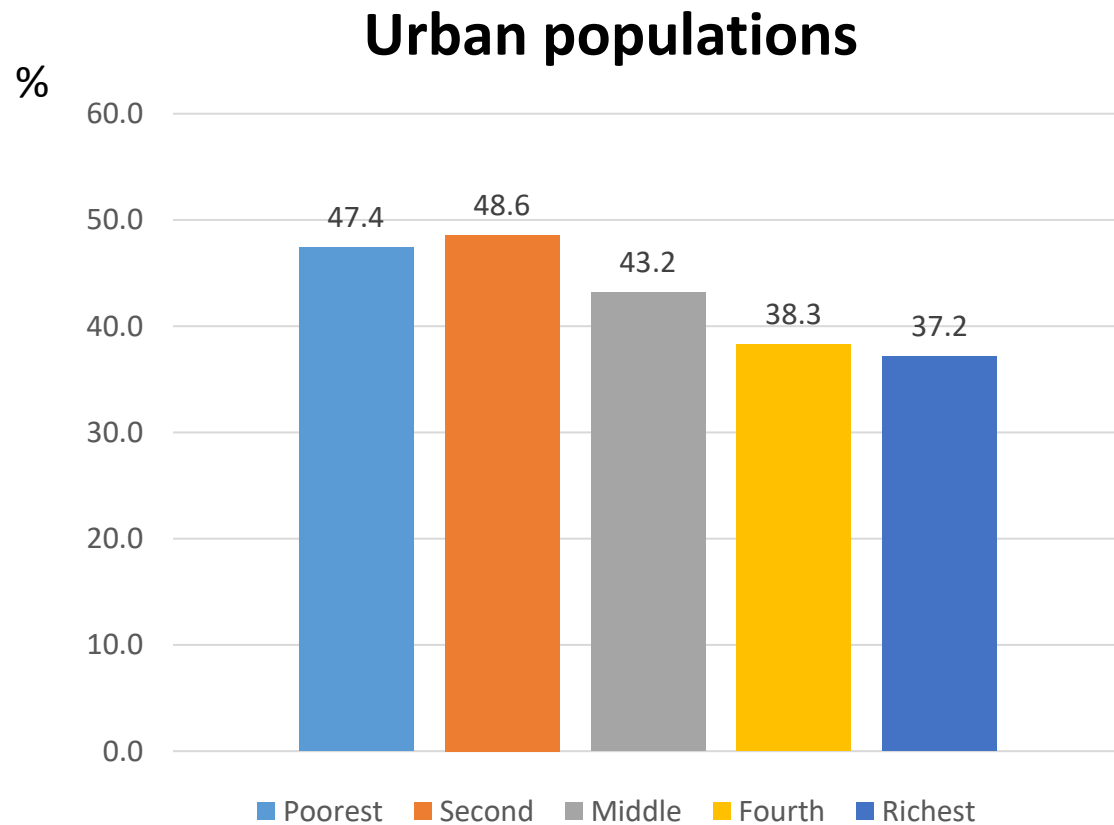
# Micronutrient Deficiencies in Pakistan among Children and Women



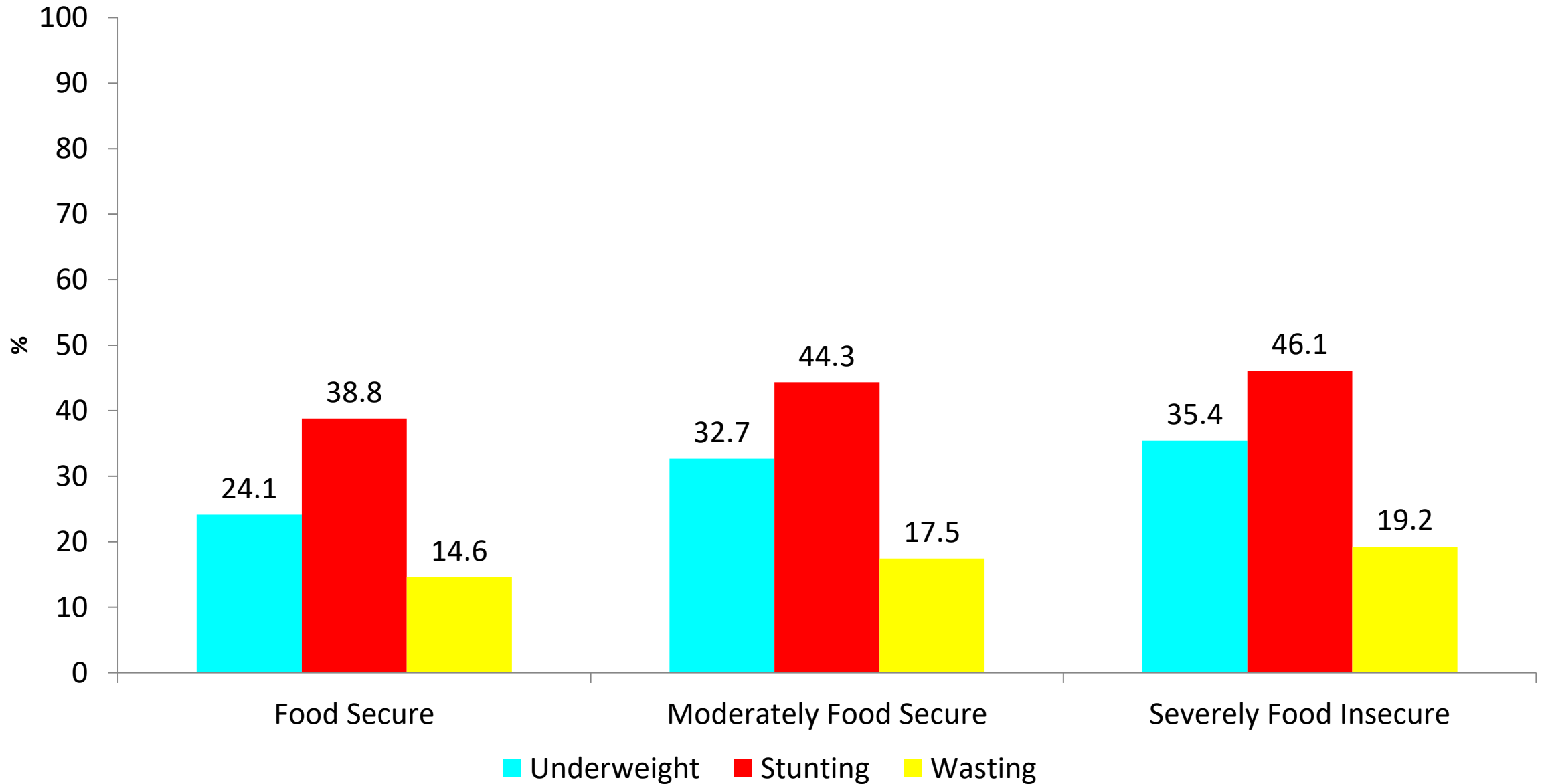
# Subnational distribution of anemia and IDA



# Anemia in urban and rural populations (also widespread among the relatively affluent)



# Malnutrition and Food Security



# Key Conclusions

- Maternal and Child Malnutrition in Pakistan is **multifactorial** in origin, and related to complex socio-economic, cultural and behavioral determinants, as well as environmental risks & food systems.
- While populations living in **extreme poverty and food insecurity** are at greater risk, malnutrition in all its forms cuts across socio-economic strata
- Pakistan faces a **triple burden of malnutrition** with coexisting undernutrition, emerging issues of obesity and ubiquitous micronutrient deficiencies. These are major risks to **Pakistan's Human Capital**
- We have the data we need; addressing these issues will need concerted action and **political will** to address inequities, target populations at risk and multi-sectoral approaches
- We need a **National Nutrition Action Plan** nested firmly within the provinces and owned by all sectors with the health & multi-sectoral nutrition programs playing a key role

**Thanks a lot for your attention**