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Malnutrition Rises in Zimbabwe

By Staff Reporter

HARARE - Zimbabwe's malnutrition rate has reached almost 30 percent amid galloping inflation and unemployment, compounded by an acute shortage of basic goods, the government said.

"Malnutrition has slightly increased," a government demographic survey for the 2005-2006 period said.

"Stunting, a measure of chronic malnutrition, is reported to be 29.4% in 2005-06 compared to 26.5% in 1999 survey."

It said that the mortality rate for children under five had dwindled from 102 per 1,000 births in 1999 to 82 between last year and 2006.

But vaccination coverage for children fell to 53% from 67 percent, it said.

Over the last five years, Zimbabwe has experienced a serious food shortage attributed to drought and chaotic land reforms that saw the seizure of thousands of white-owned commercial farms handed over to landless blacks.

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