



Evidence for Improving Nutrition through Agriculture and Food Systems

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2010: Launch of the Scaling Up Nutrition (SUN) movement

“Nutrition-sensitive agriculture” coined

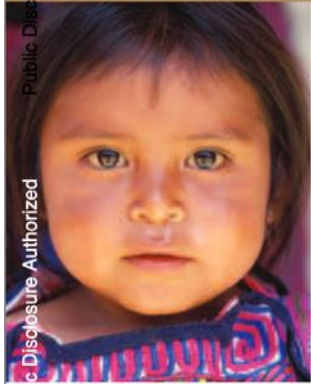


Public Disclosure Authorized

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NUTRITION
at a **GLANCE**

GUATEMALA



Public Disclosure Authorized

Country Context

HDI ranking: 122nd out of 182 countries¹

Life expectancy: 70 years²

Lifetime risk of maternal death: 1 in 71²

The Costs of Malnutrition

- Underweight in Guatemala (at 18%) cost the country \$3.1 million, or 11.4% of GDP, in lost productivity in 2004. This is over half the combined cost of undernutrition for all of Central America.¹
- Over one-third of child deaths are due to undernutrition, mostly from increased severity of disease.²
- Children who are undernourished between conception and age two are at high risk for impaired cognitive development, which adversely affects the country's productivity and growth.
- Childhood anemia alone is associated with a 2.5% drop in adult wages.⁴
- The Latin America and Caribbean region is anticipated to lose a cumulative US\$8 billion to chronic disease by 2015.⁵

Where Does Guatemala Stand?

- Guatemala has the third highest rate of chronic malnutrition (stunting) in the world (54.5%).²
- Indigenous children suffer disproportionately, with rates of stunting and underweight almost

Annually, Guatemala in GDP to vitamin a Scaling up core micron would cost less than (See Technical No

Key Actions to Address

Improve infant and young effective education and regular growth monitoring

Reduce anemia among pregnant women through fortification of staple foods

Address the growing trend of obesity through policies and physical activity.

Ethnicity and nutrition

Indigenous groups have of malnutrition. Nearly

Solutions to Primary Causes of Undernutrition

GUATEMALA



Poor Infant Feeding Practices

- Just over one-half (60%) of all newborns receive breast milk within one hour of birth.²
- One-half (51%) of infants under six months are exclusively breastfed.²
- During the important transition from breastfeeding to a mix of breast milk and solid foods between 6 and 9 months of age, one-third of infants are not fed appropriately with *both* breast milk and other foods.²

Solution: Support women and their families to exclusively breastfeed up to six months, and to introduce adequate complementary foods when children are six months of age, while still breastfeeding.

High Disease Burden

- Malnutrition increases the likelihood of falling sick and the severity of disease.
- Undernourished children who fall sick are much more likely to die from illness than well-nourished children.
- Parasitic infestation diverts nutrients from the body and can cause blood loss and anemia.

Solution: Prevent and treat childhood infection and disease through hand-washing, deworming, zinc supplements during and after diarrhea, and continued feeding during illness.

Limited Access to Nutritious Food

- For most households in Guatemala, access to calories is not a problem.
- Dietary diversity is essential for food security.
- Achieving a diverse and nutritious diet seems to be a problem reflected in high rates of anemia, overweight and obesity.

Solution: Involve multiple sectors including education, health, agriculture, gender, the food industry, and other sectors, to ensure that diverse, nutritious diets are available and accessible to all household members. Examine food policies and the country regulatory system as they relate to overweight and obesity.

WB nutrition country profiles

We couldn't say anything about food / diet quality in a country. We had no indicators.

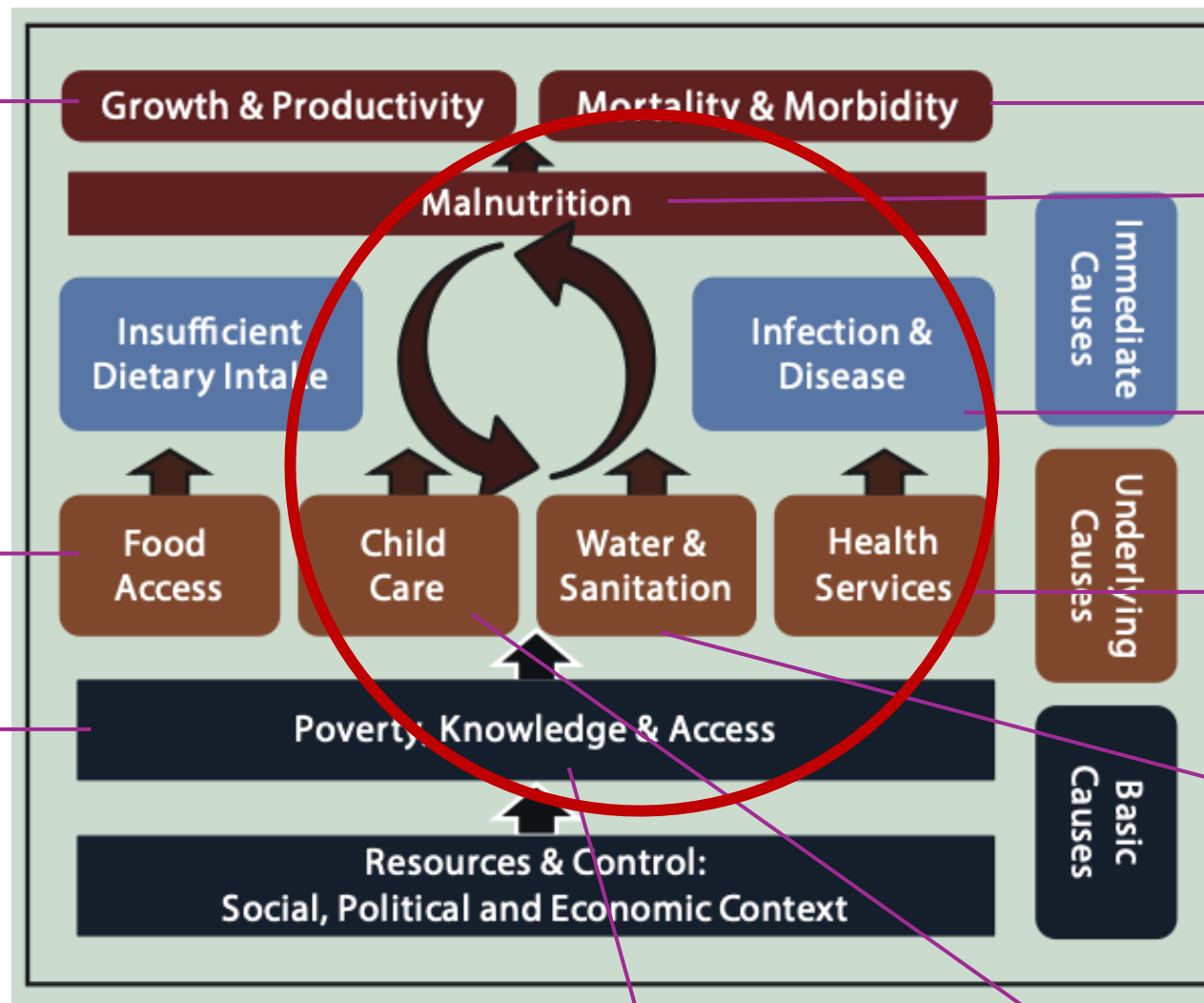
1990s: the birth of global survey data

- Demographic and Health Surveys (DHS)
 - Anthropometry
 - Health sector data
- Household Consumption and Expenditure Surveys
 - Allowed poverty headcounts and Prevalence of Undernourishment indicator
- Lessons learned:
 - Data and indicators can change: new methods for new evidence.
 - With new evidence, we can learn a lot more! Advocacy for nutrition, and effective nutrition interventions took off.
 - Culminating in 2008 Lancet series on maternal and child undernutrition

Core economic statistics

Hunger
(Prevalence of Undernourishment)

Poverty
Lines constructed using dietary energy as the criterion for the cost of basic needs for food



Graphic design credit: Pakistan Multisectoral Nutrition Strategy, 2018-2025

(BCC on WASH, ANC, and FBDG)

The field of international nutrition in 2010

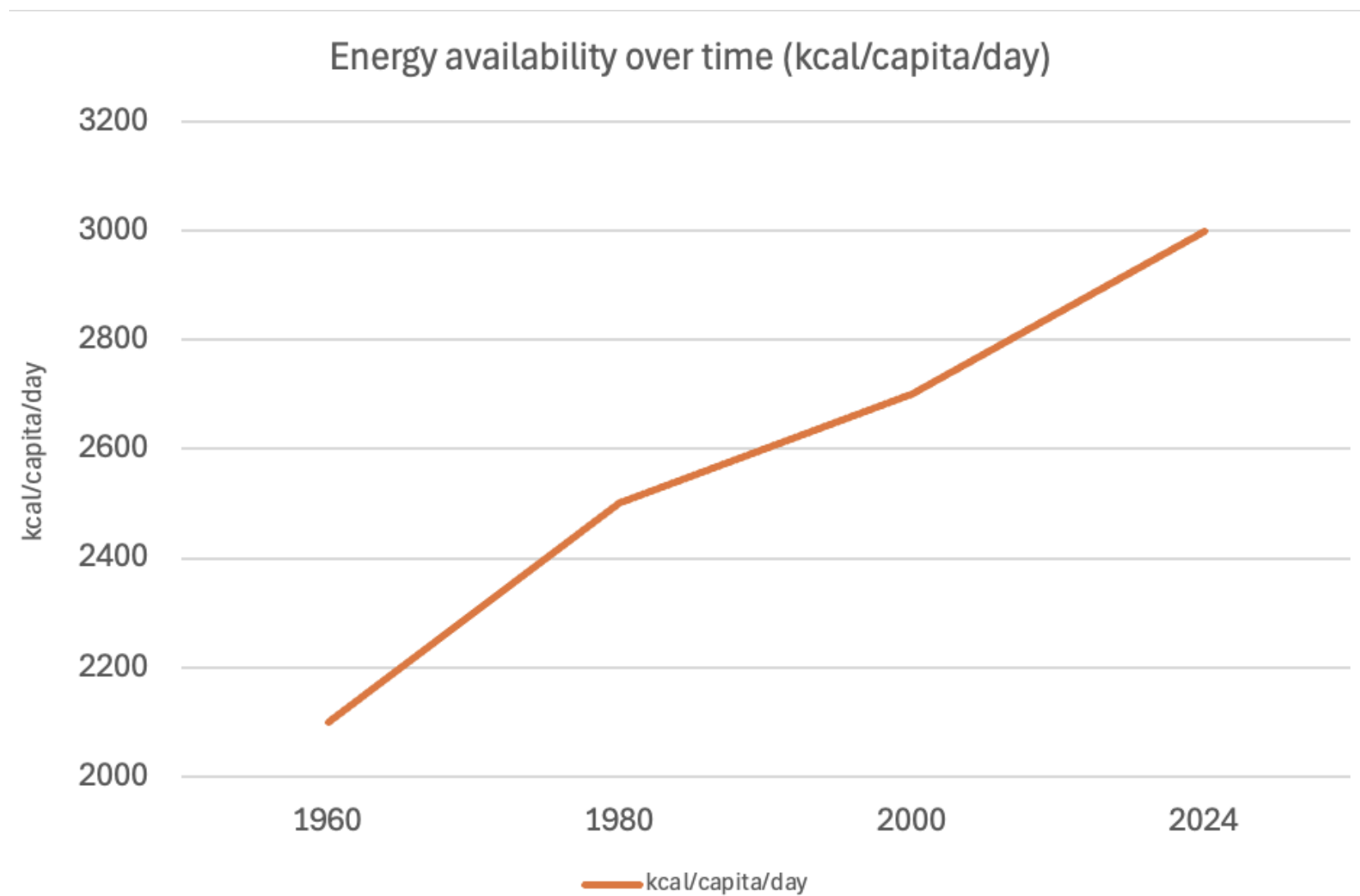
Global monitoring of malnutrition before ~1990

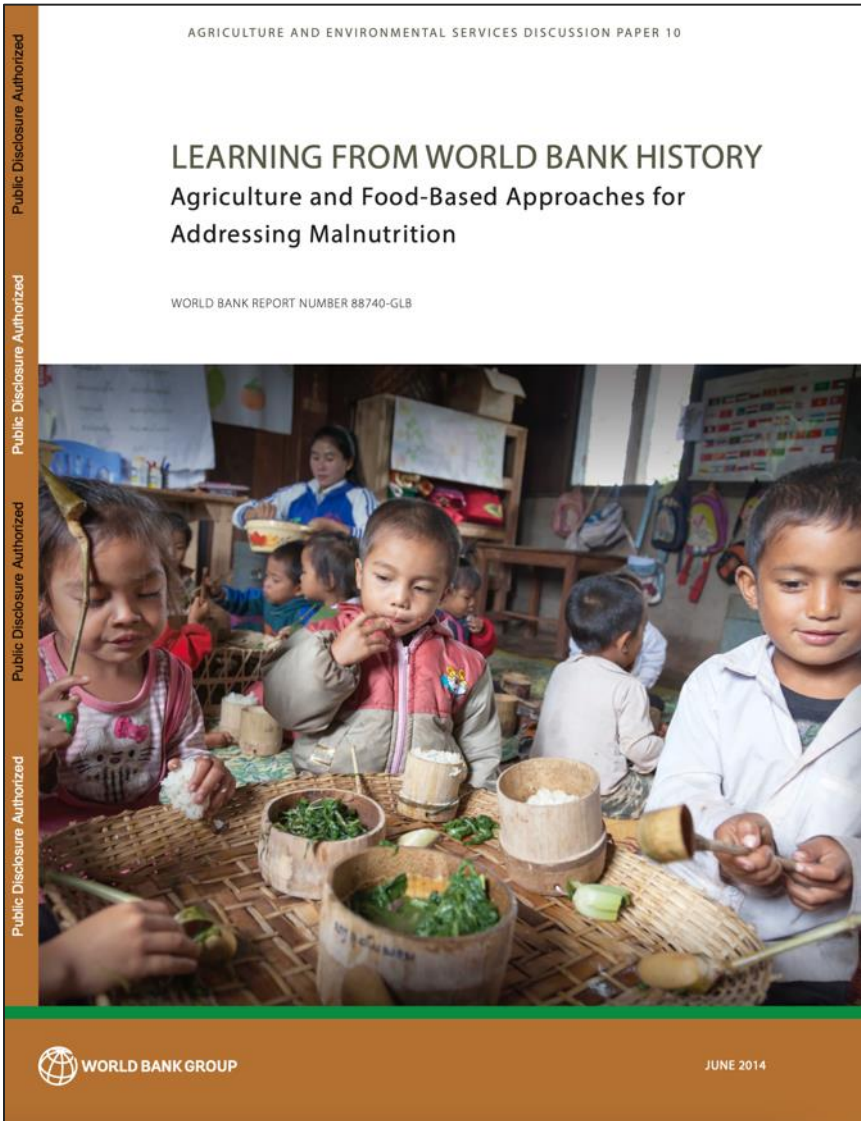
First world food survey: 1946

- Could be considered the first global monitoring framework toward development ideals
- Hunger = poverty = malnutrition
- One goal, one indicator
- *In practice*, malnutrition was synonymous with inadequate food supply.
- Therefore: to solve the malnutrition problem, increase food supply.

1973

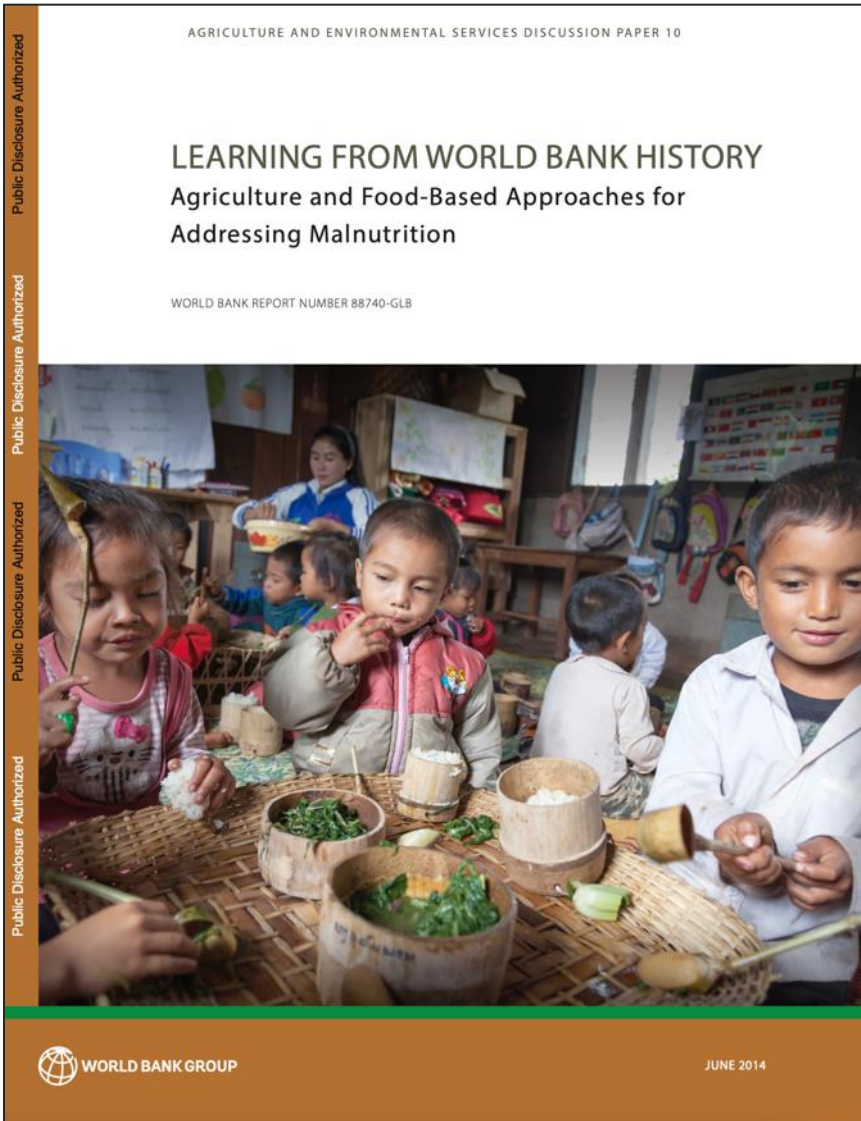
- World Bank mission: Poverty reduction
- Formation of the CGIAR, Green Revolution





6.3 AGRICULTURE AT THE BANK 1980s–2008

“The rhetoric around “a major shift in the way [the Bank was] going to do business,” and significant mention of nutrition within the Bank’s agriculture strategies, was not aligned with the deliverables toward which agriculture project task managers were held (and held themselves) accountable, particularly as there was no evaluation of how well the agriculture strategies had addressed food security or nutrition.” (p22)



8.2 MISSING FACTORS: WHAT WAS LACKING TO DEVELOP SUSTAINED ACTION AND OWNERSHIP?

Clarity in vision.

Targets for success and accountability that make sense for agriculture.

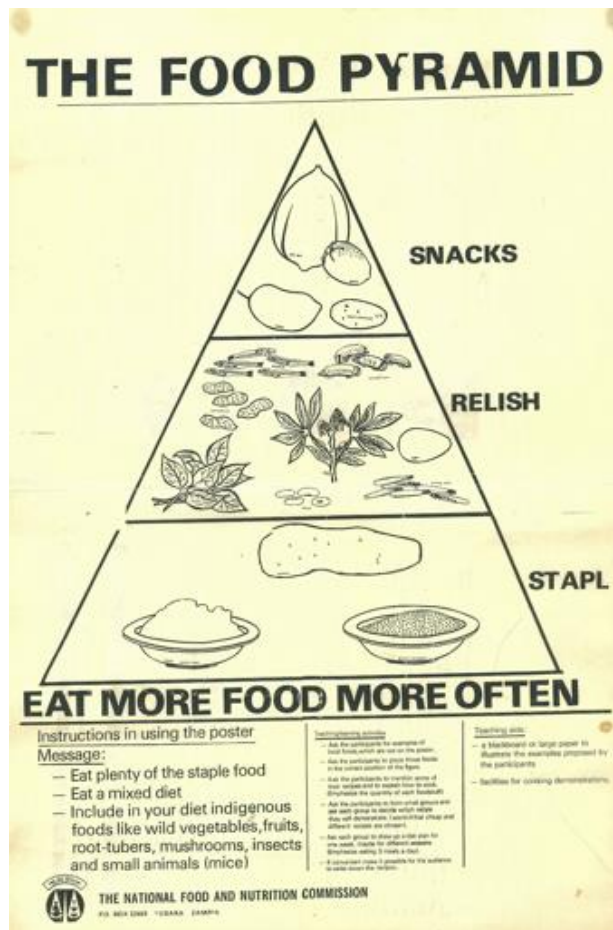
“If agriculture is to respond to a problem different from lack of calories and income, then there is a need to collect and report data on the problem that needs to be solved.”

How to support people to consume healthy diets

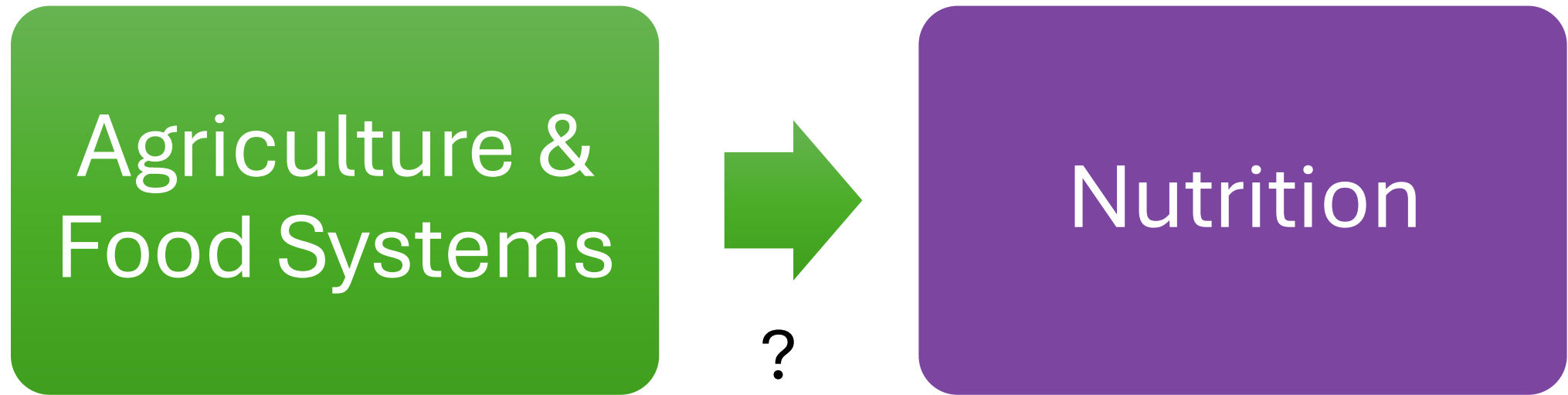
Zambia food guide 1980s



Zambia food guide 2021



What indicators and targets could guide action and measure success in agriculture and food systems?





Food and Agriculture
Organization of the
United Nations

KEY RECOMMENDATIONS FOR IMPROVING NUTRITION THROUGH AGRICULTURE AND FOOD SYSTEMS

Food systems provide for all people's nutritional needs, while at the same time contributing to economic growth. The food and agriculture sector has the primary role in feeding people well by **increasing availability, affordability, and consumption of diverse, safe, nutritious foods and diets** aligned with dietary recommendations and environmental sustainability. Applying these principles helps strengthen resilience and contributes to sustainable development.





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Agricultural programmes and investments can strengthen impact on nutrition if they:

- 1 Incorporate explicit nutrition objectives and indicators into their design**, and track and mitigate potential harms, while seeking synergies with economic, social and environmental objectives.
- 2 Assess the context at the local level, to design appropriate activities to address the types and causes of malnutrition**, including chronic or acute undernutrition, vitamin and mineral deficiencies, and obesity and chronic disease. Context assessment can include potential food resources, agro-ecology, seasonality of production and income, access to productive resources such as land, market opportunities and infrastructure, gender dynamics and roles, opportunities for collaboration with other sectors or programmes, and local priorities.
- 3 Target the vulnerable and improve equity** through participation, access to resources, and decent employment. Vulnerable groups include smallholders, women, youth, the landless, urban dwellers, the unemployed.
- 4 Collaborate and coordinate with other sectors** (health, environment, social protection, labour, water and sanitation, education, energy) and programmes, through joint strategies with common goals, to address concurrently the multiple underlying causes of malnutrition.
- 5 Maintain or improve the natural resource base** (water, soil, air, climate, biodiversity), critical to the livelihoods and resilience of vulnerable farmers and to sustainable food and nutrition security for all. Manage water resources in particular to reduce vector-borne illness and to ensure sustainable, safe household water sources.
- 6 Empower women** by ensuring access to productive resources, income opportunities, extension services and information, credit, labour and time-saving technologies (including energy and water services), and supporting their voice in household and farming decisions. Equitable opportunities to earn and learn should be compatible with safe pregnancy and young child feeding.
- 7 Facilitate production diversification, and increase production of nutrient-dense crops and small-scale livestock** (for example, horticultural products, legumes, livestock and fish at a small scale, underutilized crops, and biofortified crops). Diversified production systems are important to vulnerable producers to enable resilience to climate and price shocks, more diverse food consumption, reduction of seasonal food and income fluctuations, and greater and more gender-equitable income generation.
- 8 Improve processing, storage and preservation** to retain nutritional value, shelf-life, and food safety, to reduce seasonality of food insecurity and post-harvest losses, and to make healthy foods convenient to prepare.
- 9 Expand markets and market access for vulnerable groups, particularly for marketing nutritious foods or products** vulnerable groups have a comparative advantage in producing. This can include innovative promotion (such as marketing based on nutrient content), value addition, access to price information, and farmer associations.
- 10 Incorporate nutrition promotion and education** around food and sustainable food systems that builds on existing local knowledge, attitudes and practices. Nutrition knowledge can enhance the impact of production and income in rural households, especially important for women and young children, and can increase demand for nutritious foods in the general population.

Key recommendations for improving nutrition through agriculture and food systems

Agriculture programmes and investments need to be supported by an **enabling policy environment** if they are to contribute to improving nutrition. Governments can encourage improvements in nutrition through agriculture by taking into consideration the 5 policy actions below.

Food and agriculture policies can have a better impact on nutrition if they:

- 1 Increase incentives (and decrease disincentives) for availability, access, and consumption of diverse, nutritious and safe foods through environmentally sustainable production, trade, and distribution.** The focus needs to be on horticulture, legumes, and small-scale livestock and fish – foods which are relatively unavailable and expensive, but nutrient-rich – and vastly underutilized as sources of both food and income.
- 2 Monitor dietary consumption and access to safe, diverse, and nutritious foods.** The data could include food prices of diverse foods, and dietary consumption indicators for vulnerable groups.
- 3 Include measures that protect and empower the poor and women.** Safety nets that allow people to access nutritious food during shocks or seasonal times when income is low; land tenure rights; equitable access to productive resources; market access for vulnerable producers (including information and infrastructure). Recognizing that a majority of the poor are women, ensure equitable access to all of the above for women.
- 4 Develop capacity** in human resources and institutions to improve nutrition through the food and agriculture sector, supported with adequate financing.
- 5 Support multi-sectoral strategies to improve nutrition** within national, regional, and local government structures.

These recommendations have been formulated following an extensive review of available guidance on agriculture programming for nutrition, conducted by FAO (see: www.fao.org/docrep/017/aq194e/aq194e00.htm), and through consultation with a broad range of partners (CSOs, NGOs, government staff, donors, UN agencies) in particular through the Ag2Nut Community of Practice. They are also referred to as "guiding principles" by some partners.

The present key recommendations for Improving Nutrition through Agriculture target policy makers and programme planners. These recommendations are based on the current global context, and may be updated over time as challenges and opportunities to improve nutrition through agriculture shift.

© FAO, 2015

For more information, visit www.fao.org/nutrition



Food and agriculture policies can have a better impact on nutrition if they:

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The focus needs to be on horticulture, legumes, and small-scale livestock and fish – foods which are relatively unavailable and expensive, but nutrient-rich – and vastly underutilized as sources of both food and income.

2

Monitor dietary consumption and access to safe, diverse, and nutritious foods. The data could include food prices of diverse foods, and dietary consumption indicators for vulnerable groups.

Key evidence gap: data on food access and diets.

3

Include measures that protect and empower the poor and women. Safety nets that allow people to access nutritious food during shocks or seasonal times when income is low; land tenure rights; equitable access to productive resources; market access for vulnerable producers (including information and infrastructure). Recognizing that a majority of the poor are women, ensure equitable access to all of the above for women.

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Develop capacity in human resources and institutions to improve nutrition through the food and agriculture sector, supported with adequate financing.

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Support multi-sectoral strategies to improve nutrition within national, regional, and local government structures.

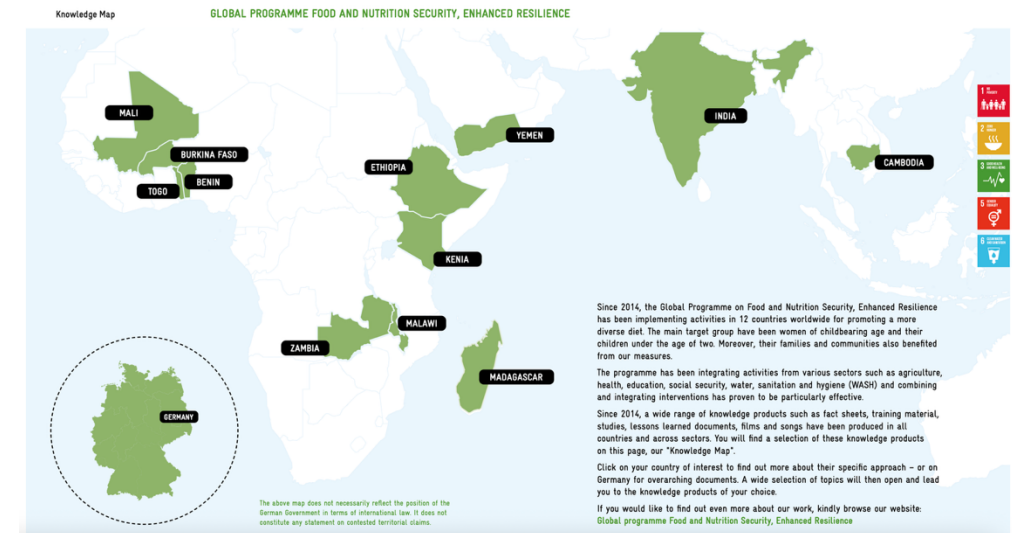
Source: *Key Recommendations for Improving Nutrition through Agriculture and Food Systems*

FAO, 2015. Developed by the Agriculture-Nutrition Community of Practice (Ag2Nut).

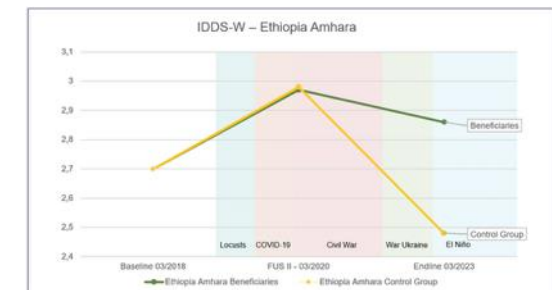
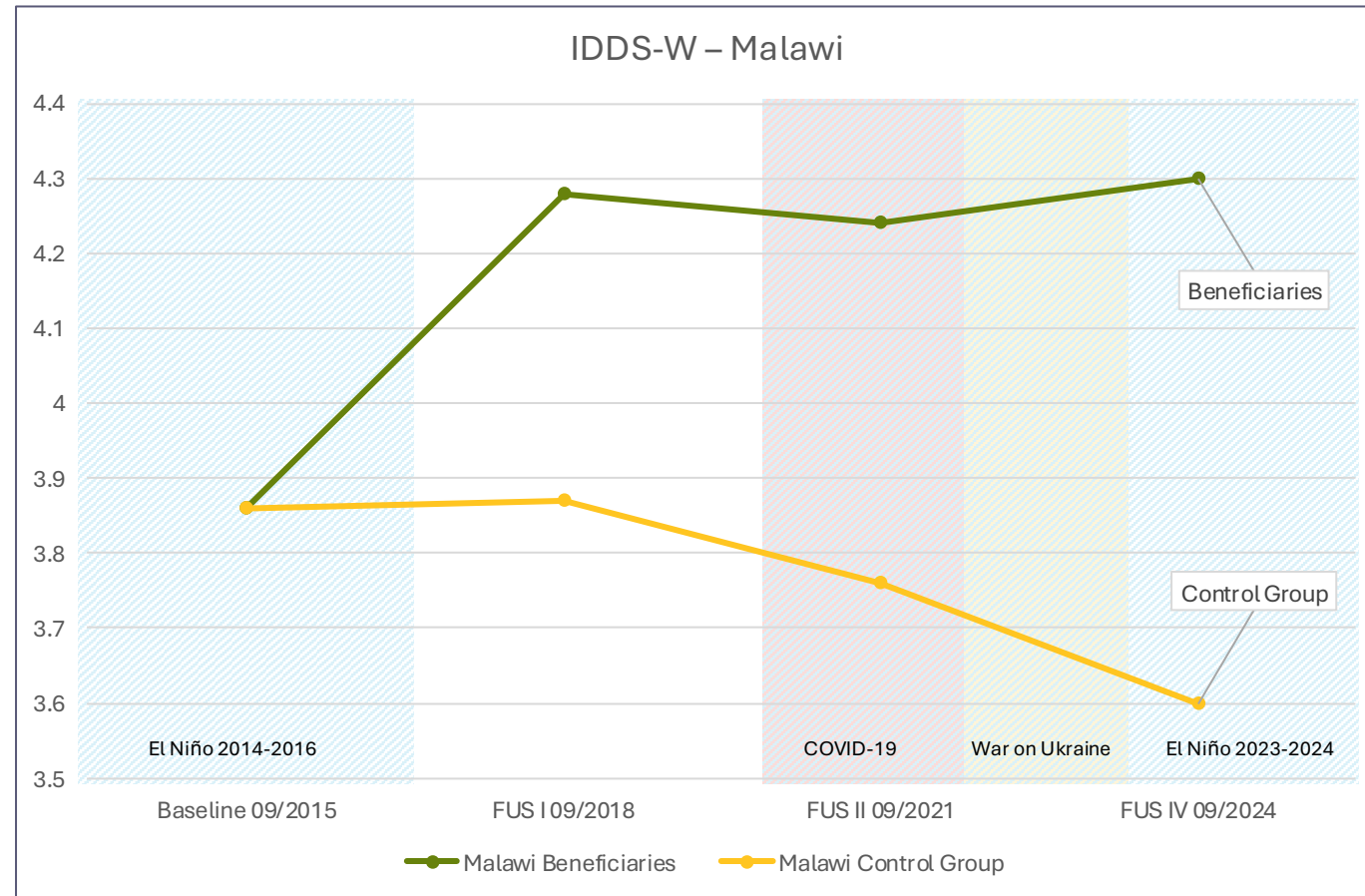
<https://openknowledge.fao.org/handle/20.500.14283/i4922e>

GIZ Global Programme (2014-2026) designed based on Key Recommendations

- 12 years, 12 countries
- EUR 285 million
- Activities were designed according to Key Recommendations
- Diet: key outcome
- At the start of the GP , MDD-W was new along with other indicators such as food insecurity and women's empowerment. This made it a new generation of ag investment!



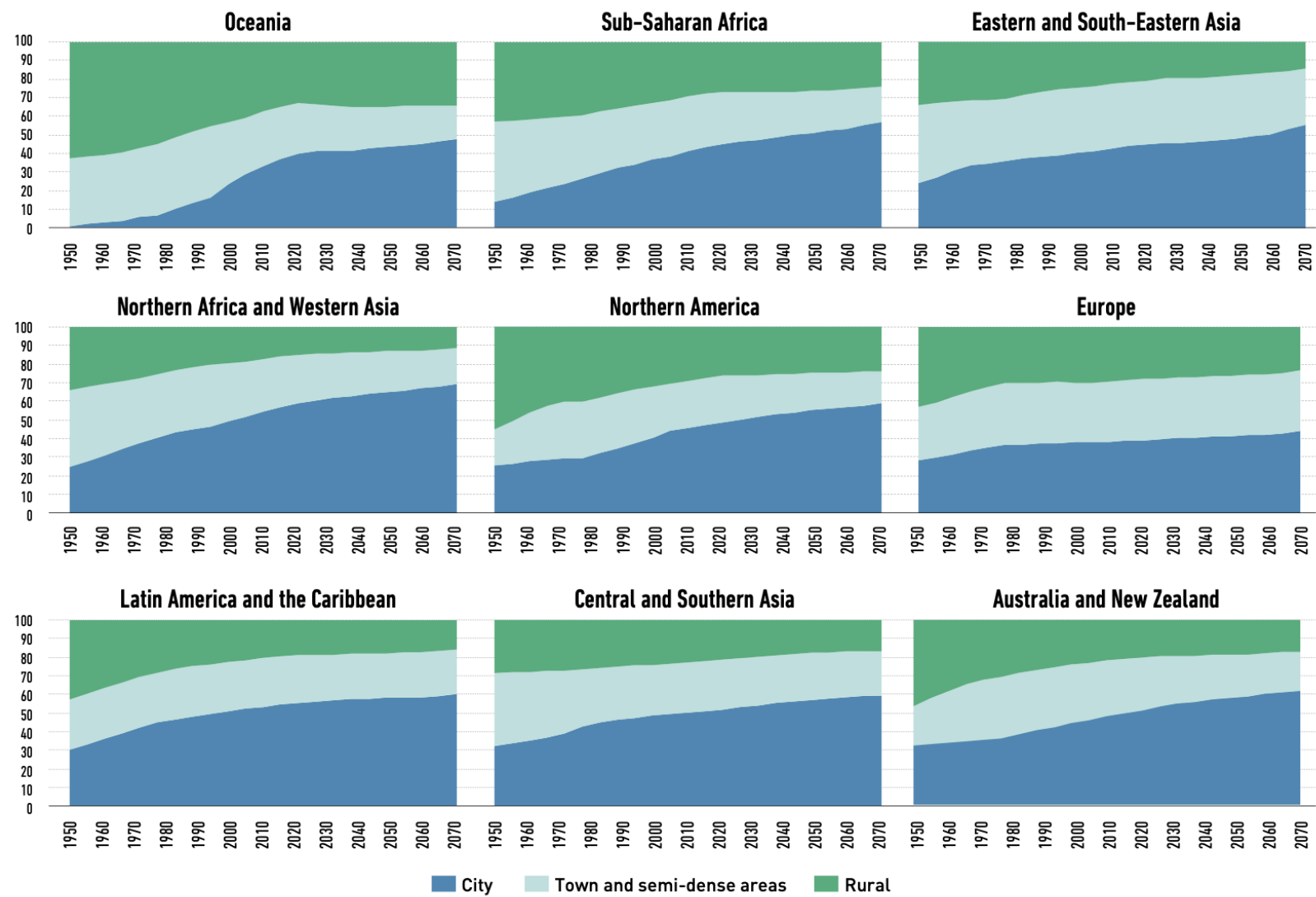
Women's dietary diversity in Malawi



Outside programme scope?

- Food market environment
- Impact on food systems transformation beyond farming households
- Diet quality in the wider population

POPULATION SHARE BY DEGREE OF URBANISATION AND SDG REGION (1950-2070), ORDERED BY CITY
POPULATION SHARE IN 1950



Source: UN-Habitat (United Nations Human Settlements Programme). 2022b. *Envisaging the Future of Cities. World Cities Report 2022*. Nairobi.

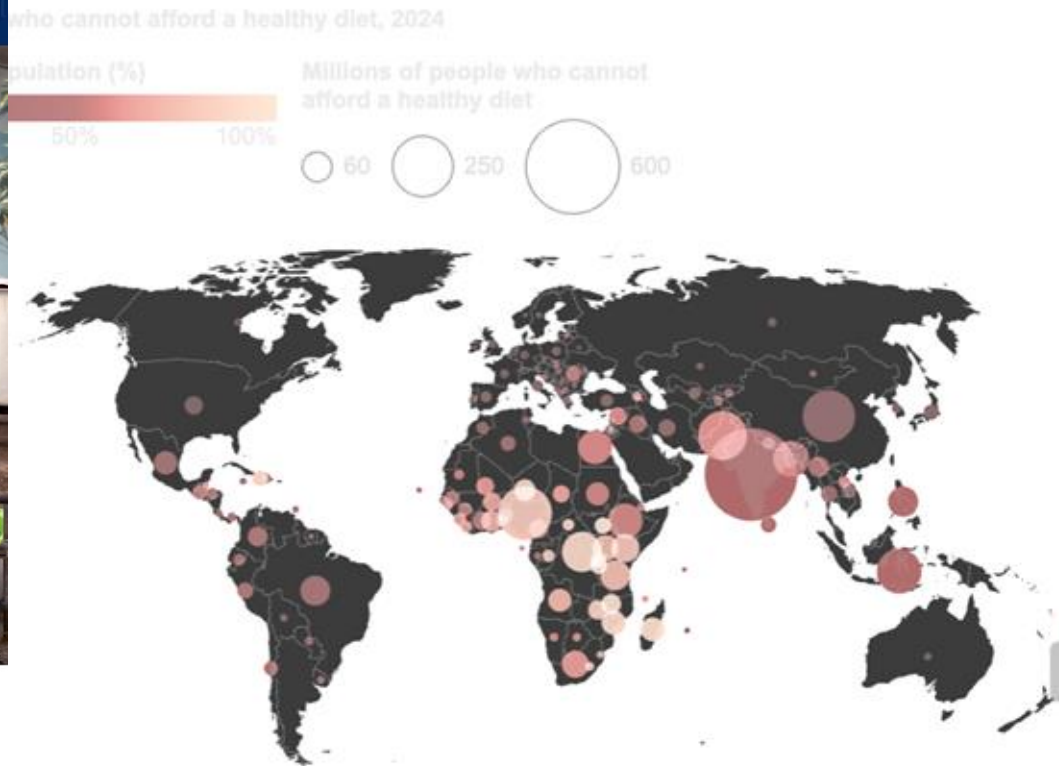


Global development

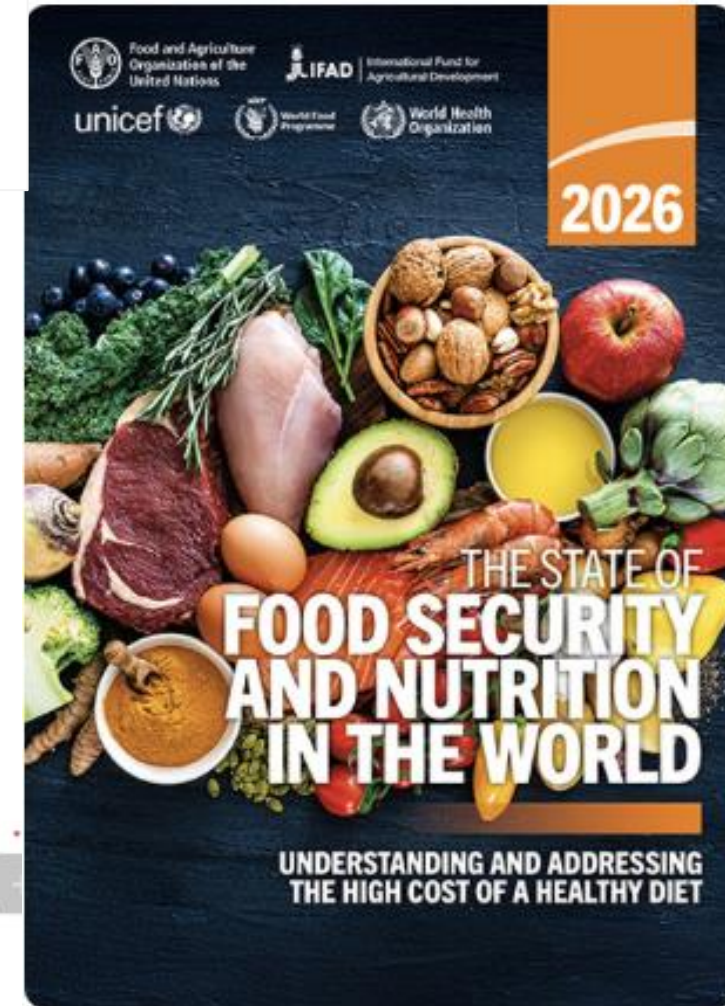
Healthy diet too expensive for one in three people globally, UN report finds

Global hunger declined for the third year in a row in 2025 but experts call for action to bring down costs of fruit, vegetables and dairy as report shows 2.69bn people can't afford to eat well

Around 2.7 billion people – nearly 1 in 3 people – could not afford a healthy diet in 2025

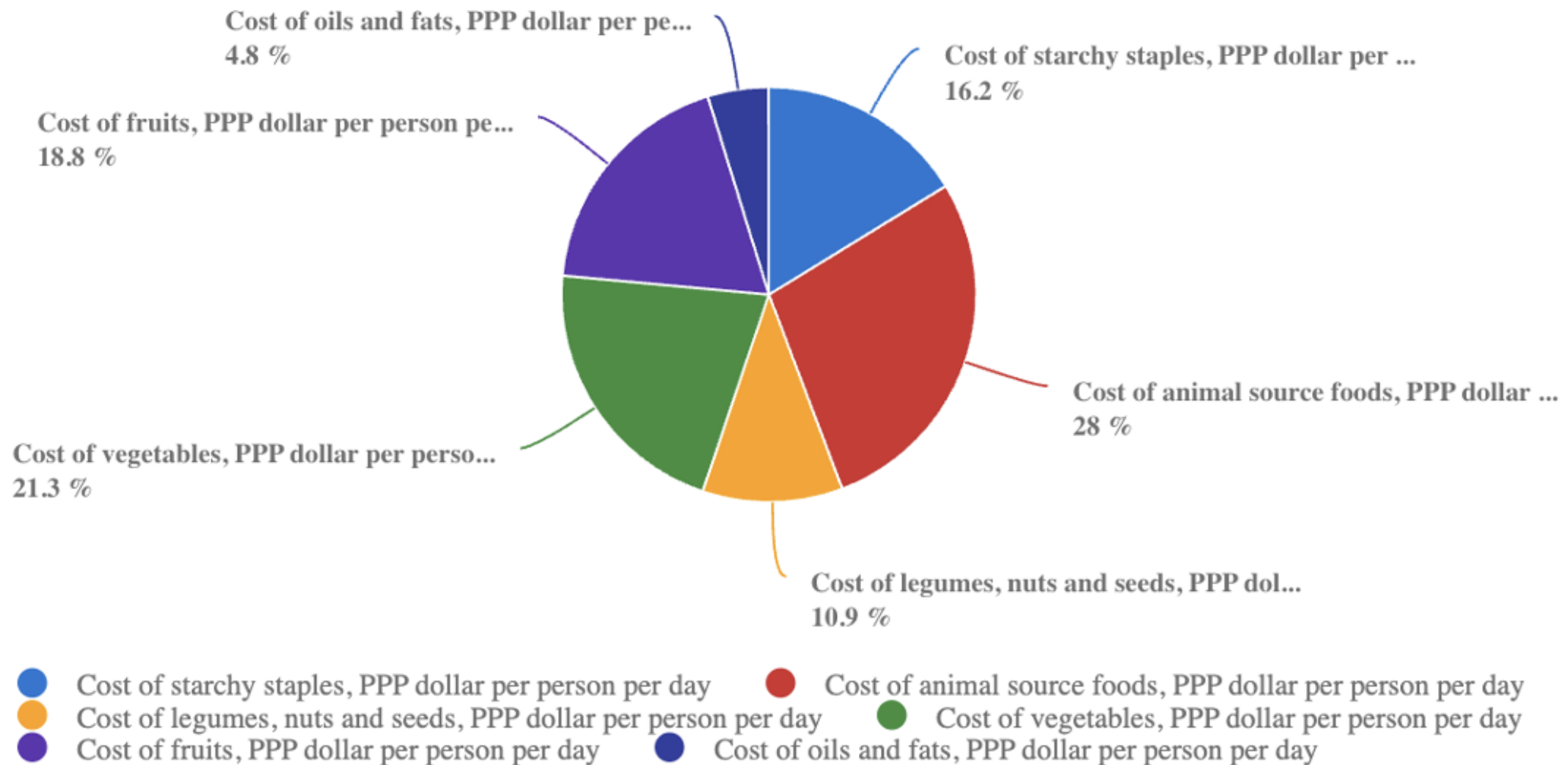


<https://www.worldbank.org/foodpricesfornutrition>



<https://www.fao.org/faostat/en/#data/CAHD/>

Cost of a Healthy Diet, mean proportion of cost from each food group, 2021



Source: FAOSTAT

About 80% of the cost is from food groups that have received the least investment.

Launch event of the 2026 edition of The State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World (SOFI)

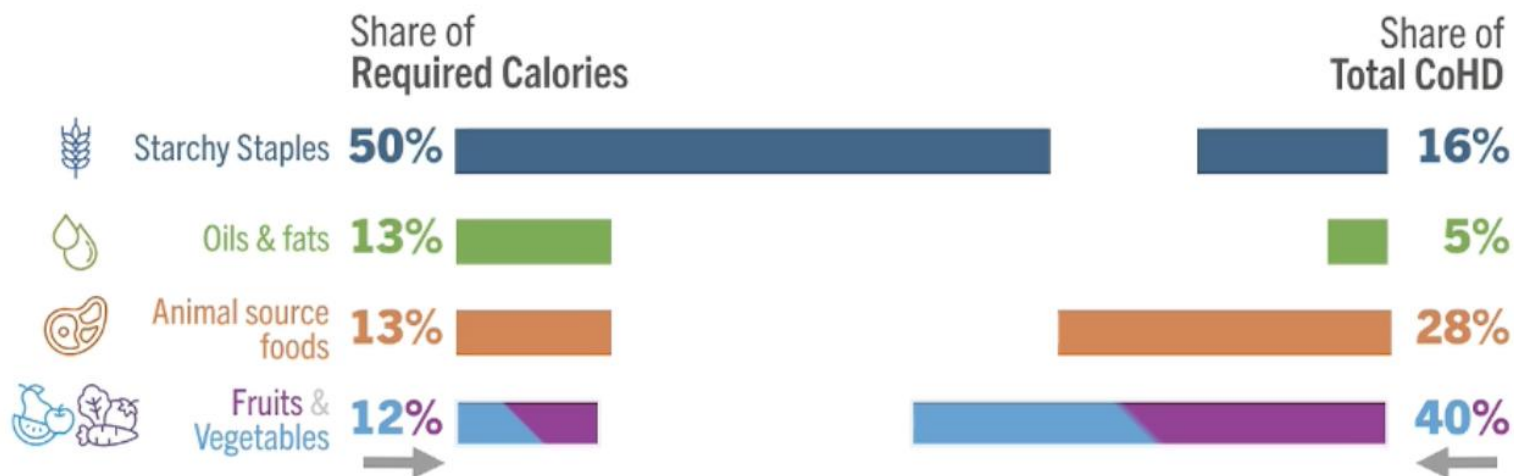
21 JUL 2026, 12:00 (Rome Time) 📍 RED ROOM (FAO HEADQUARTERS)

LIVE

THE STATE OF FOOD SECURITY AND NUTRITION IN THE WORLD 2026

UNDERSTANDING AND
ADDRESSING THE HIGH
COST OF A HEALTHY DIET

THE CALORIES VS COST PARADOX:



Global Average



Launch event of the 2026 edition of The State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World (SOFI)

21 JUL 2026, 12:00 (Rome Time) 📍 RED ROOM (FAO HEADQUARTERS)

LIVE

THE STATE OF
**FOOD SECURITY AND NUTRITION
IN THE WORLD 2026** | UNDERSTANDING AND
ADDRESSING THE HIGH
COST OF A HEALTHY DIET

**WE ARE WINNING THE BATTLE FOR CALORIES
BUT LOSING THE WAR FOR NUTRITION.**

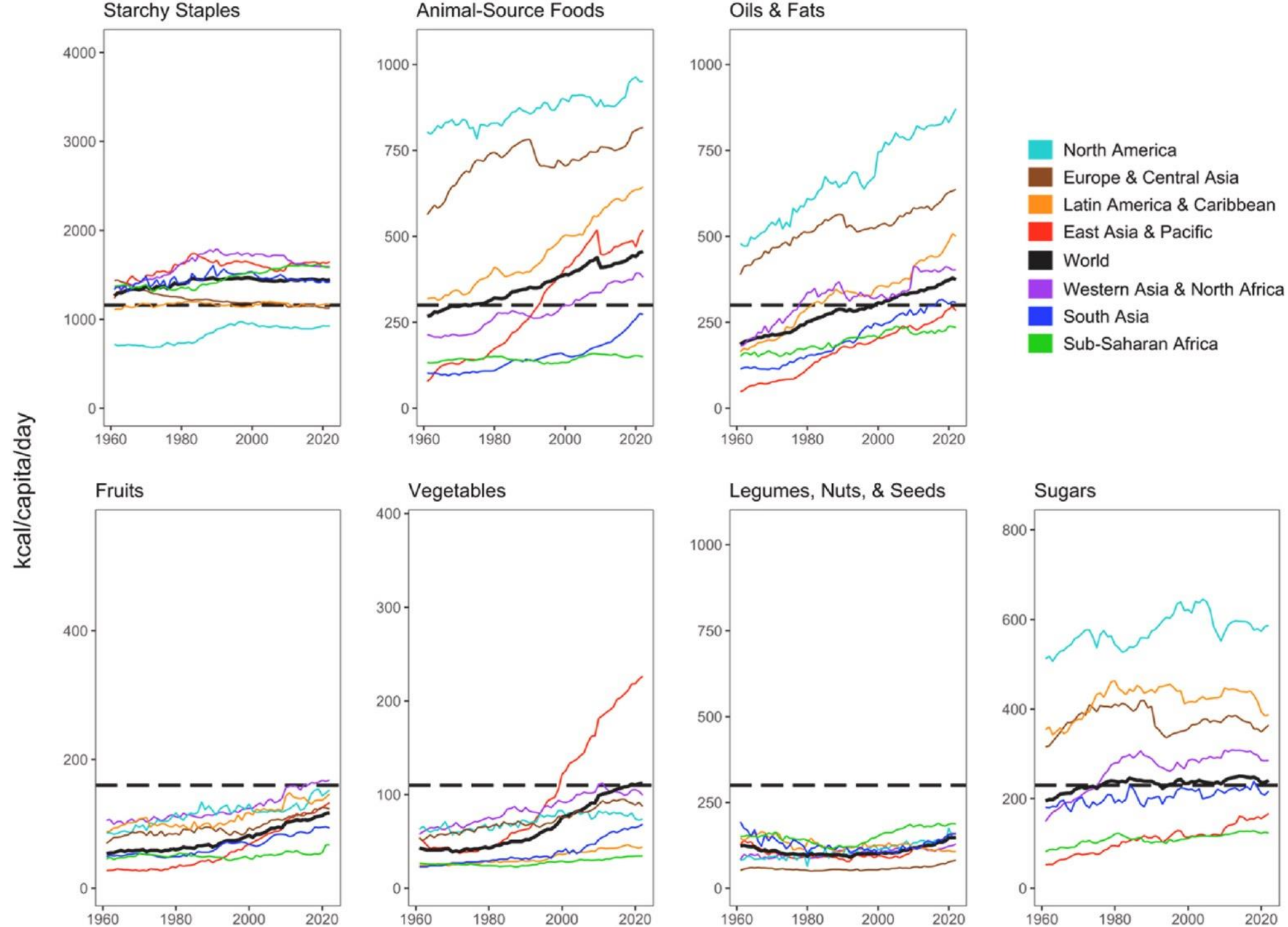
True food security requires systemic shifts to
make nutrient-dense foods accessible to all.

Sustain calories availability
Protect the 7.8% PoU progress against shocks.

Scale Healthy Diets Affordability
Targeted interventions to lower the 4.28 PPP CoHD.

21





“A body and a land are not two different things”

-Korean proverb

- 2.6 billion cannot afford a healthy diet
- 2.9 billion do not consume minimum dietary diversity
- 4.7 billion are consuming insufficient plant source foods to prevent NCDs (fruits, vegetables, pulses, whole grains)
- 4.9 billion are consuming unhealthy foods exceeding the WHO recommendations on sugar, salt, processed meat

Launch event of the 2026 edition of The State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World (SOFI)

21 JUL 2026, 12:00 (Rome Time) 📍 RED ROOM (FAO HEADQUARTERS)

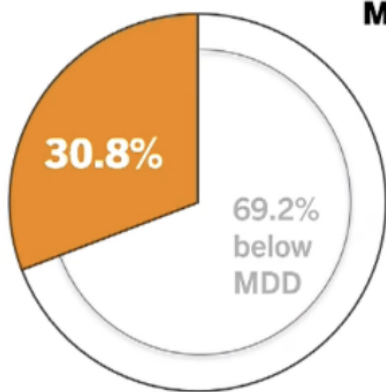
LIVE

THE STATE OF FOOD SECURITY AND NUTRITION IN THE WORLD 2026

UNDERSTANDING AND
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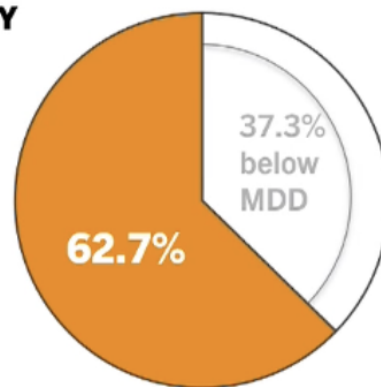
DIET QUALITY REMAINS CRITICALLY INADEQUATE DURING KEY STAGES OF LIFE.

MINIMUM DIETARY DIVERSITY



Children (6-23 months)

Less than 1/3 achieve Minimum Dietary Diversity.



Women (14-49 years)

Nearly 40% fail to achieve Minimum Dietary Diversity.



Diet Quality Questionnaire (DQQ) is a survey module to rapidly assess diet quality at population level.

DIET QUALITY QUESTIONNAIRE (DQQ)

GHANA

Read: Now I'd like to ask you some yes-or-no questions about foods and drinks that you consumed yesterday during the day or night, whether you had it at home or somewhere else.

First, I would like you to think about yesterday, from the time you woke up through the night. Think to yourself about the first thing you ate or drank after you woke up in the morning ... Think about where you were when you had any food or drink in the middle of the day ... Think about where you were when you had any evening meal ... and any food or drink you may have had in the evening or late-night... and any other snacks or drinks you may have had between meals throughout the day or night.

I am interested in whether you had the food items I will mention even if they were combined with other foods.

Please listen to the list of foods and drinks, and if you ate or drank ANY ONE OF THEM, say yes.

Yesterday, did you eat any of the following foods:	(circle answer)
1 Bread, rice, waakye, jollof, fried rice, omutuo, or rice porridge?	YES or NO
2 Kenkey, banku, tou zaafi, Hausa koko, akple, roasted maize, boiled maize, or tom brown?	YES or NO
3 Fufu, gari, kokonte, cassava, yam, cocoyam, plantain, or sweet potato?	YES or NO
4 Beans, or bambara beans?	YES or NO
Yesterday, did you eat any of the following vegetables:	
5 Carrots, or sweet potatoes that are orange inside?	YES or NO
6.1 Cocoyam leaves, amaranth leaves, ademe, ayoyo, potato leaves, cassava leaves, or bokoboko?	YES or NO
7.1 Tomatoes, okro, garden eggs, or cabbage?	YES or NO
7.2 Sweet green pepper, lettuce, cucumber, or mushrooms?	YES or NO
Yesterday, did you eat any of the following fruits:	
8 Mango, papaya, or African star apple?	YES or NO
9 Orange or tangerine?	YES or NO
10.1 Banana, pineapple, avocado pear, watermelon, apple, or guava?	YES or NO
10.2 Soursop, coconut, velvet tamarind, baobab, ebony fruit, or shea fruit?	YES or NO
Yesterday, did you eat any of the following sweets:	
11 Cakes, biscuits, rock bun, toogbee or bofrot?	YES or NO
12 Toffees, chocolates, ice cream, or FanYogo?	YES or NO
Yesterday, did you eat any of the following foods of animal origin:	
13 Eggs?	YES or NO
14 Cheese curds or wagashi?	YES or NO
15 Brukina or drink yogurt?	YES or NO
16 Sausages or corned beef?	YES or NO
17 Beef, goat, sheep, liver, or intestine?	YES or NO
18 Pork, grasscutter, rabbit, or bush meat?	YES or NO
19 Chicken, gizzard, or Guinea fowl?	YES or NO
20 Fish, dried fish, koobi, anchovies, smoked herring, crab, or shrimp?	YES or NO
Yesterday, did you eat any of the following other foods:	
21 Groundnuts, kuli kuli, groundnut paste, groundnut soup, agushi stew, neri soup, or cashews?	YES or NO
22 Packaged yellow plantain chips or potato chips or Pringles?	YES or NO
23 Indomie?	YES or NO
24 French fries, fried yam, fried potato, atomo, spring rolls, fried chicken, or fried fish?	YES or NO
Yesterday, did you have any of the following beverages:	
25 Tin milk or powdered milk?	YES or NO
26 Milo, tea with sugar, or coffee with sugar?	YES or NO
27 Fruit juice, fruit drinks, or sobolo?	YES or NO
28 Soft drinks or malts, such as, Coke, Fanta, Sprite, Alvaro, or Malta Guinness?	YES or NO
Yesterday, did you get food from any place like...	
29 KFC, Papaye, Pizza Inn, a mall food court, or other places that serve burgers or pizza?	YES or NO

Adapted by the Global Diet Quality Project, www.dietquality.org, 2021.
Supported by the EU and BMZ (through GIZ), USAID, The Rockefeller Foundation, and SDC.



DQQ approach:

“Yes or No” questions about foods consumed in the previous day.

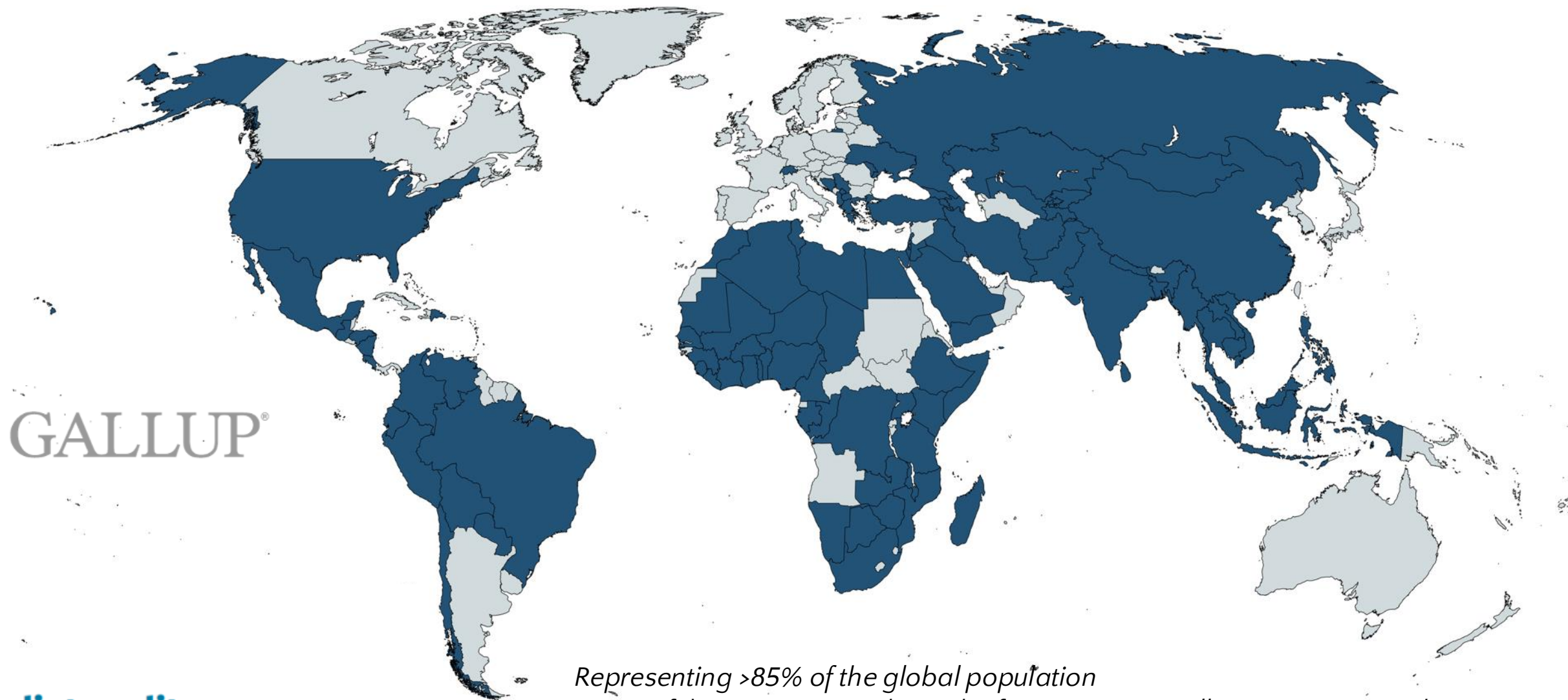
29 universal food groups, country-adapted items

Read aloud the same way each time in person or by phone

Takes 5 minutes to administer

DQQ implemented in nationally representative surveys in 94 countries

Gallup World Poll 2021-2024



GALLUP®



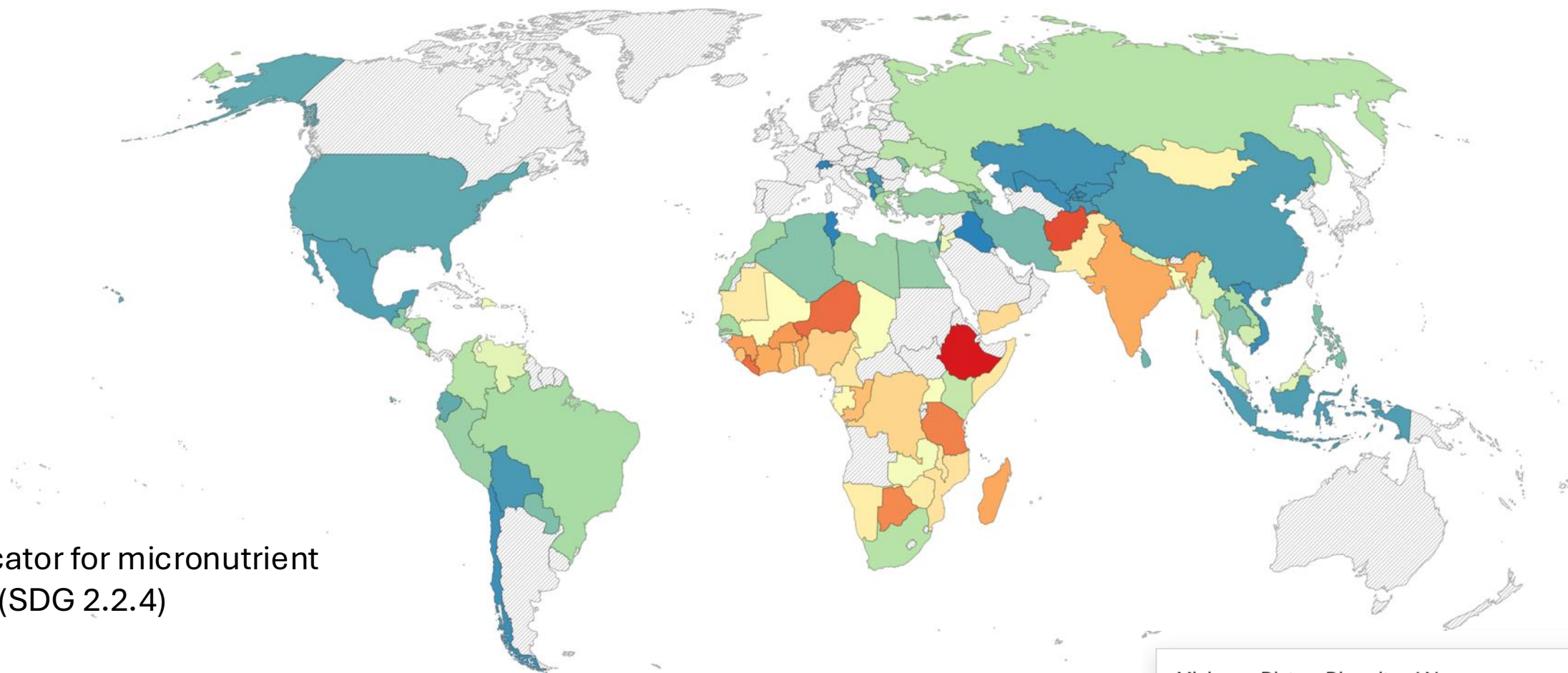
Minimum Dietary Diversity - Women (MDD-W) ▾

Map View Gra

Indicator definitions

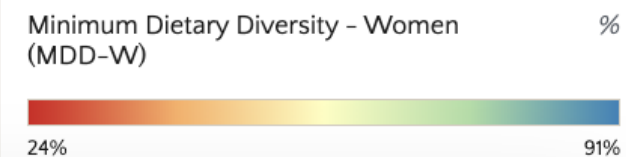
Minimum Dietary Diversity - Women (MDD-W)

☒ Total ☐ Rural ☐ Urban ☐ Female ☐ Male



MDD-W

Proxy indicator for micronutrient adequacy (SDG 2.2.4)





Indicator definitions

Protective Food Consumption (PFC)

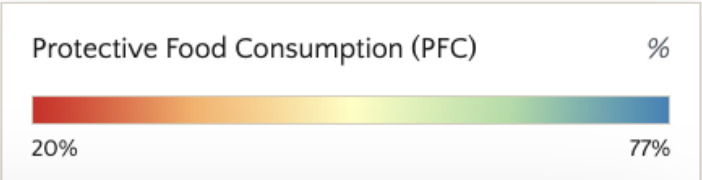
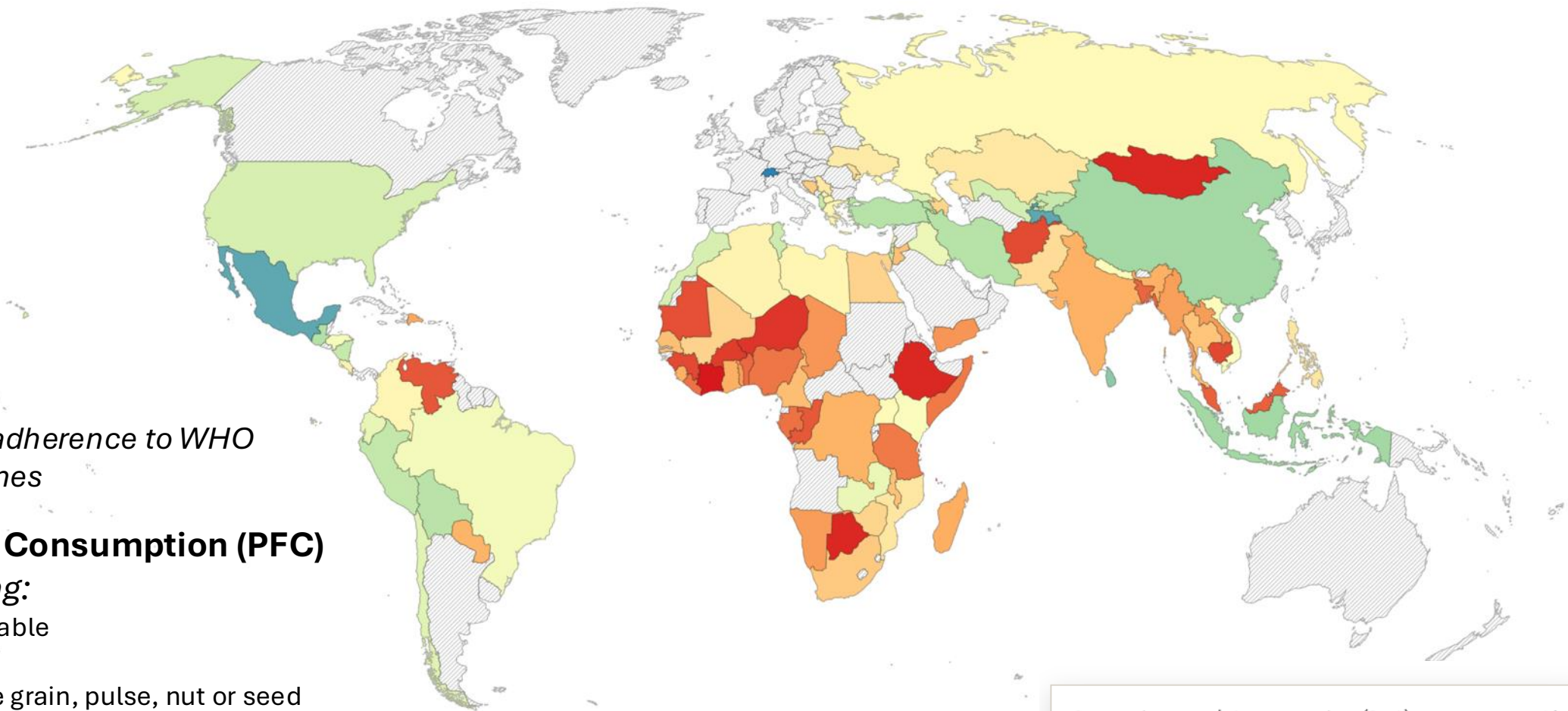
☒ Total ☐ Rural ☐ Urban ☐ Female ☐ Male

Proxy indicator for adherence to WHO healthy diet guidelines

Protective Food Consumption (PFC)

All of the following:

- At least one vegetable
- At least one fruit
- At least one whole grain, pulse, nut or seed





Unhealthy Food Consumption (UFC) ▾

Map View

Gra

Indicator definitions

Unhealthy Food Consumption (UFC)

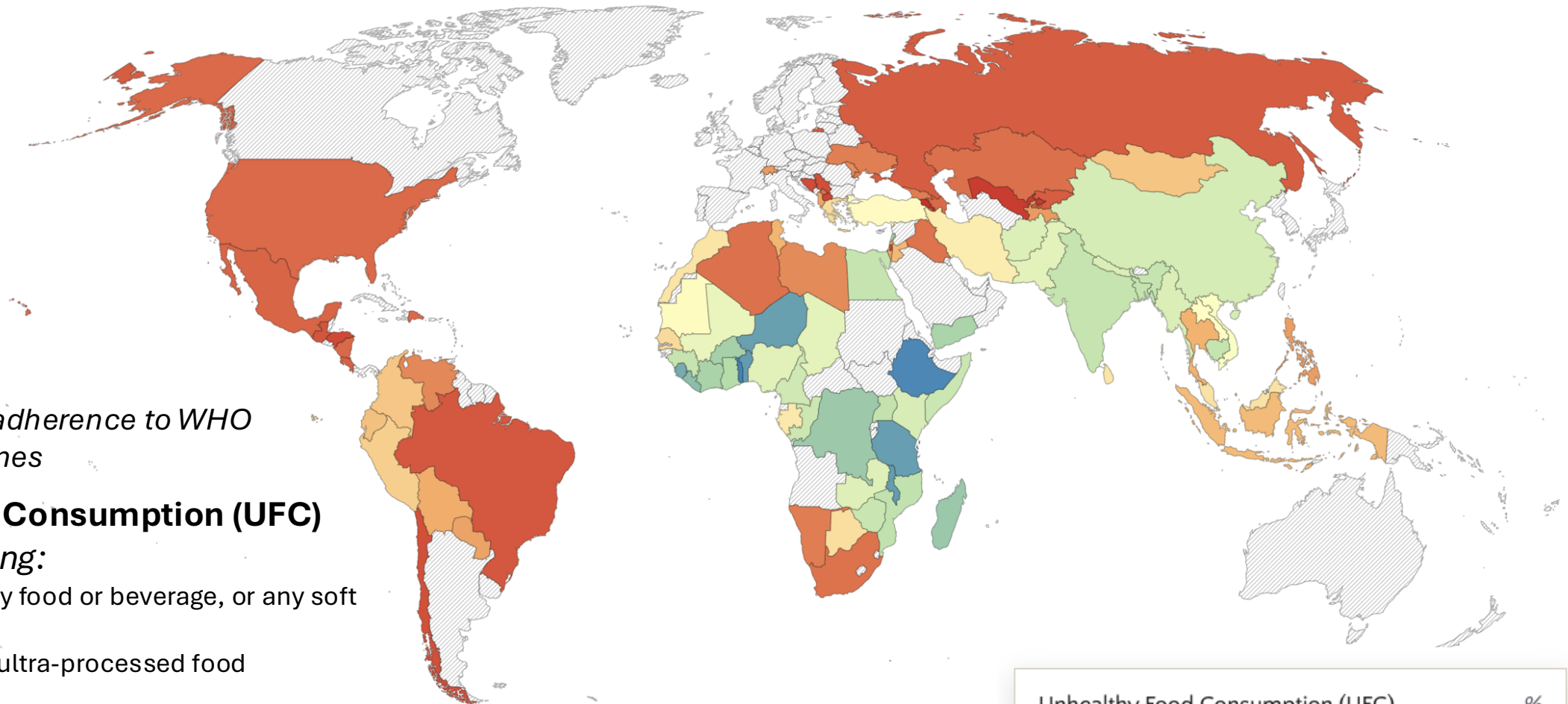
☒ Total ☐ Rural ☐ Urban ☐ Female ☐ Male

Proxy indicator for adherence to WHO healthy diet guidelines

Unhealthy Food Consumption (UFC)

Any of the following:

- More than 1 sugary food or beverage, or any soft drinks
- More than 1 salty ultra-processed food
- Processed meat



Unhealthy Food Consumption (UFC)

%







Nutrition education vs. food environments

- ...like a snow shovel against an avalanche.
- **We are expecting consumers to act counter to all market signals:** availability, price, convenience, marketing
 - Healthy diets are not available or affordable to all.
 - For almost everyone, they are less convenient and less aspirational than unhealthy foods and diets.
- Education cannot compete against prices, convenience, marketing and social norms and aspirations.



Photo: Anna Herforth, Arusha, Tanzania

*“Kids...
remember to
make good
choices, soft
drinks are not
healthy!”*

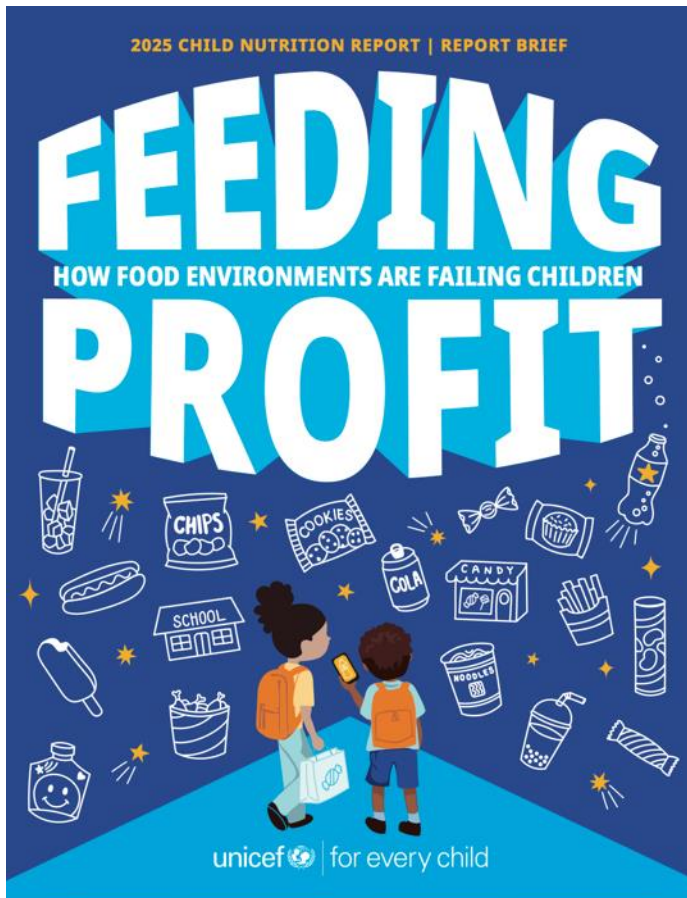
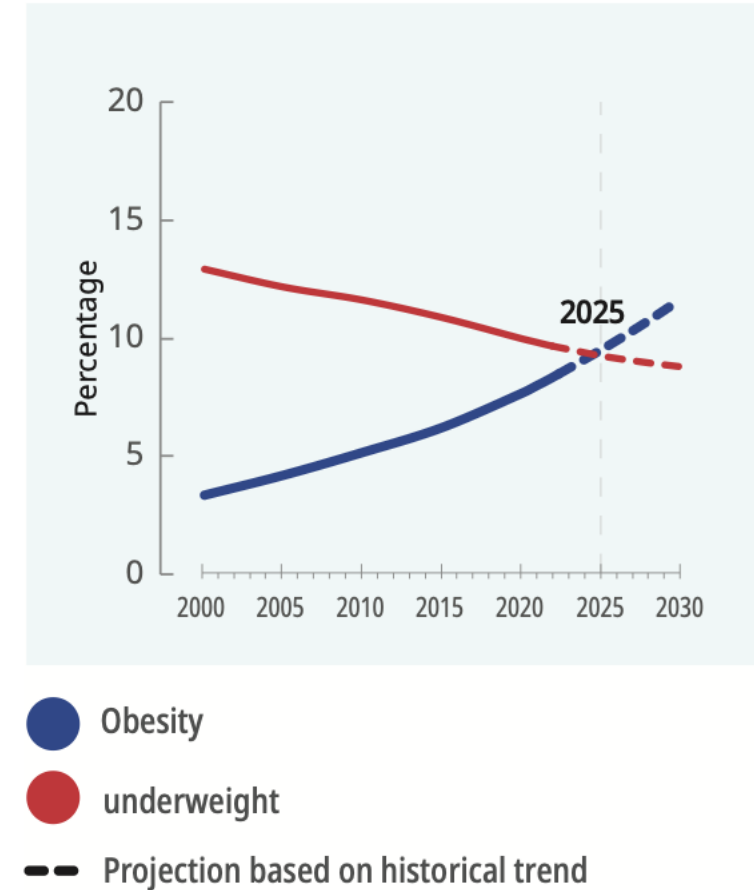


FIGURE 2: Trends in the percentage of children and adolescents aged 5–19 years with (a) obesity, (b) underweight, and projections to 2030, globally

Source: UNICEF analysis of data from NCD-RisC for children and adolescents 5–19 years.



UNICEF Child Nutrition Report 2025

- Low- and middle-income countries are experiencing the steepest rise in overweight in school-age children and adolescents.

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Ultra-Processed Foods and Human Health

Published: November 18, 2025

Executive summary

This 3-paper Series reviews the evidence about the increase in ultra-processed foods in diets globally and highlights the association with many non-communicable diseases. This rise in ultra-processed foods is driven by powerful global corporations who employ sophisticated political tactics to protect and maximise profits. Education and relying on behaviour change by individuals is insufficient. Deteriorating diets are an urgent public health threat that requires coordinated policies and advocacy to regulate and reduce ultra-processed foods and improve access to fresh and minimally processed foods. The Series provides a different vision for the food system with emphasis on local food producers, preserving cultural foods transitions and economic benefits for communities.

Editorial

[Ultra-processed foods: time to put health before profit](#)

The Lancet

Ultra-processed foods: time to put health before profit



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The rise of ultra-processed foods (UPFs) in human diets is damaging public health, fuelling chronic diseases worldwide, and deepening health inequalities. Addressing this challenge requires a unified global response that confronts corporate power and transforms food systems to promote healthier, more sustainable diets, according to a new *Lancet* Series on UPFs and human health, published on Nov 19.

UPFs are the most processed group of foods in the Nova classification system, which categorises foods by the extent and purpose of processing. UPFs are identified by the presence of sensory-related additives that enhance the texture, flavour, or appearance of foods. High UPF intake is associated with an increased risk of obesity, cardiovascular disease, and other conditions. However, the value of the UPF concept is not universally accepted. Some critics argue that grouping foods that might have nutritional value into the UPF category, including fortified breakfast cereals and flavoured yoghurts, together with products such as reconstituted meats or sugary drinks, is unhelpful. But UPFs are rarely consumed in isolation. It is the overall UPF dietary pattern, whereby whole and minimally processed foods are replaced by processed alternatives, and the interaction between multiple harmful additives, that drives adverse health effects.

At the core of the UPF industry is the large-scale processing of cheap commodities, such as maize, wheat, soy, and palm oil, into a wide array of food-derived substances and additives, controlled by a small number of transnational corporations. UPFs are aggressively marketed and engineered to be hyperpalatable, driving repeated consumption and often displacing traditional, nutrient-rich foods. In many high-income countries, UPFs comprise about 50% of household food intake, and consumption is rising quickly in low-income and middle-income countries. The harms extend to planetary health. Industrial production, processing, and transport of agri-commodities are fossil-fuel intensive systems, and plastic packaging is ubiquitous in UPFs.

The UPF industry generates enormous revenues that support continued growth and fund corporate political activities to counter attempts at UPF regulation. A handful of manufacturers dominate the market, including Nestlé, PepsiCo, Unilever, and Coca-Cola. A comprehensive, government-led approach is needed to reverse the rise

in UPF consumption. Priority actions include adding ultra-processed markers, such as colours, flavours, and non-sugar sweeteners, to nutrient profiling models used to identify unhealthy foods; mandatory front-of-pack warning labels; bans on marketing aimed at children; restrictions on these types of foods in public institutions; and higher taxes on UPFs. The market dominance and political power of the UPF industry must also be addressed by stronger competition policy, replacing self-regulation with mandatory regulation, and combating corporate interference. Civil society can also help to accelerate change, as epitomised by Bloomberg Philanthropies' Food Policy Program, which has facilitated policy wins throughout Latin America and sub-Saharan Africa by building coalitions to promote industry regulation, evaluating policies once implemented, and providing support when countries face corporate interference when adopting and implementing policies to curb UPF consumption.

Equity must be central when addressing the challenge of UPFs. Consumption tends to be higher among people facing economic hardship. Efforts to transition away from diets that are high in UPFs must not deepen gender inequities in cooking or food insecurity among populations who are dependent on cheap UPF options. Echoing the recommendations of the *EAT–Lancet Commission*, transforming food systems will require redirecting agricultural subsidies away from large, transnational corporations. Instead, a diverse range of food producers should be supported in creating locally sourced, affordable, minimally processed foods and meals that are convenient and appealing to consumers. Taxation on UPFs could help to fund cash transfers for whole foods and other minimally processed foods to help protect low-income households.

The UPF industry is emblematic of a food system that is increasingly controlled by transnational corporations that prioritise corporate profit ahead of public health. The *Lancet* Series strengthens the case for immediate implementation of policies to address the UPF challenge. This requires a well resourced, coordinated global response with comprehensive, mutually reinforcing policies that address harmful corporate practices and break the grip of the UPF industry on food systems worldwide. ■ [The Lancet](#)

For more on Bloomberg's Food Policy Program see <https://www.bloomberg.org/public-health/promoting-healthy-food-choices/food-policy-program/>
For the EAT–Lancet Commission on healthy, sustainable, and just food systems see *Lancet* 2025 406: 1625–1700

Need to invert food environment trajectories

Right now, *unhealthy, unsustainable* diets are getting more available, affordable, convenient, and desirable

Healthy traditional foods – whole grains, legumes, nuts, dark green leafy vegetables – are being dropped as incomes grow. Convenience and desirability are big problems, in addition to supply constraints.

Shift mentality of agriculture investments

From growing cash

→ to growing ***health and wealth*** at once

- Cultivated food environments + Market food environments
- **If we do not shift food environments, growing cash *will not* solve the nutrition problem.**

Promotion of healthy traditional foods

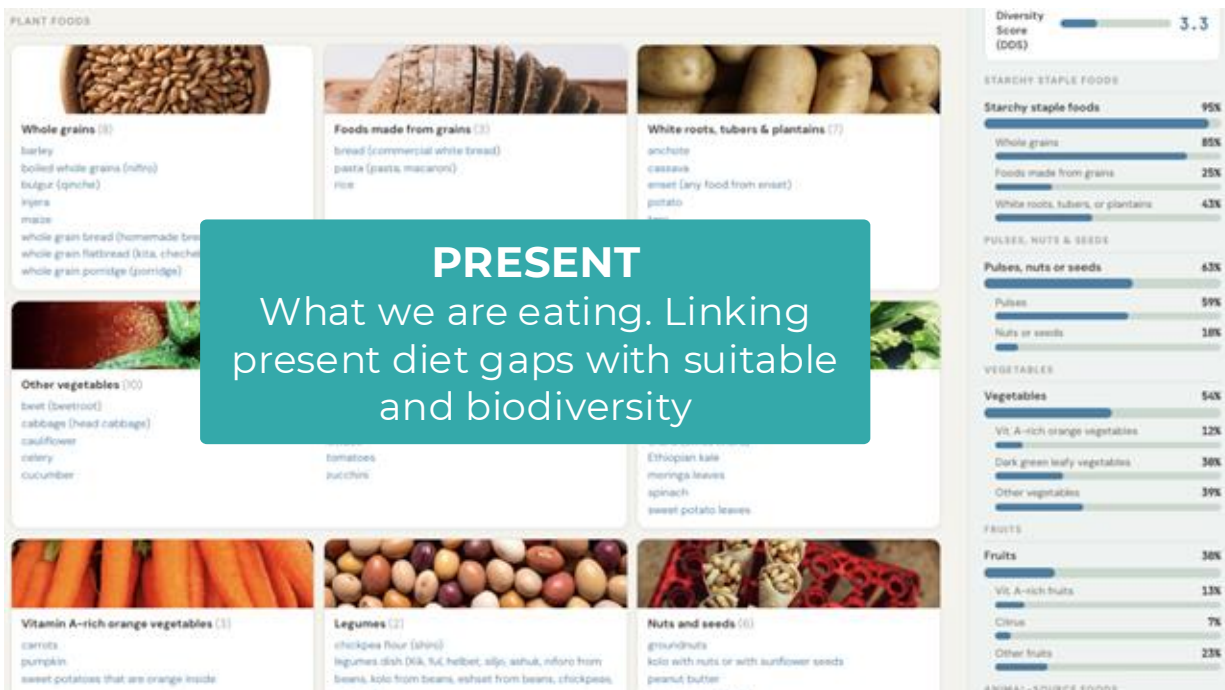


Farmer sharing spider flower plant, Kiambu. Photo: A Herforth

- **These are market opportunities**
 - Use biodiversity, instead of displacing it in pursuit of homogeneous commodities
- **Diversifying Food Systems** through data-driven advocacy and promotion.
 - Increased policy focus on neglected and underutilized species as nutrient-dense, climate-resilient food sources.
- **Data to empower decision makers** (e.g., governments, farmers, NGOs, researchers) with 'best-bet investments', to make informed investment decisions that promote sustainable food systems.

For example, the **Power of Diversity Funding Facility** at Crop Trust

The **World Food Map** of global edible biodiversity shows how diets could be improved with locally available species



2026 and Beyond

- Support the new **Global Conservation Consortium for Food Plants** (GCCFP) to convene a network of those who are already conserving and revitalizing local biodiversity, and integrate efforts into countries' Agriculture and Health strategies.
- The network would strengthen entrepreneurship and economic opportunities around underutilized species for healthy diets, in the context of countries' healthy diet policies and agriculture strategies.
- Collaborate with **PTFI** to showcase expanded knowledge of bioactive food components, accounting for varietal diversity of common and underutilized species.
- Work with **Global RECAP** under its strategic objective of healthy lives and well-being for all, including data, advocacy, regulatory and social mobilization efforts to prevent and manage non-communicable diseases.



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CROP DIVERSITY DAY 2026

September 25, 2026

9:30 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Celebrating Food Diversity for Healthy Diets

Join us for Crop Diversity Day 2026! Held during Climate Week NYC, the event will contribute to global dialogue on food systems transformation by elevating the role of crop diversity as a foundation for healthy diets. Crop Diversity Day 2026 will feature:

- The launch of the **World Food Map**, a collaborative platform showcasing how biodiversity underpins diverse, healthy diets. Drawn from new global data, we highlight how dietary gaps can be addressed with diverse local foods that are culturally relevant, nutritionally rich, and climate resilient.



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Three key principles for transforming food environments

1. Expand markets for diverse, nutritious foods *that are missing from diets*
 - Increase opportunities for small and medium scale producers
 - Public procurement
 - Marketing: satisfy latent demand **while it still exists!!** *Before it is lost*
 - Invest in quality and efficiency gains for indigenous vegetables, fruits, beans, whole grains
 - seed systems, connectivity, cold chains
2. Foster effective governance for food systems and nutrition
 - National action plans, multisectoral committees, evidence-based decisions
 - Regulation of worst offenders – food companies, products, marketing of unhealthy food
 - Social protection (including home gardens)
3. Monitor progress toward the goal of healthy diets for all

Tracking progress: Implement healthy diet monitoring in countries

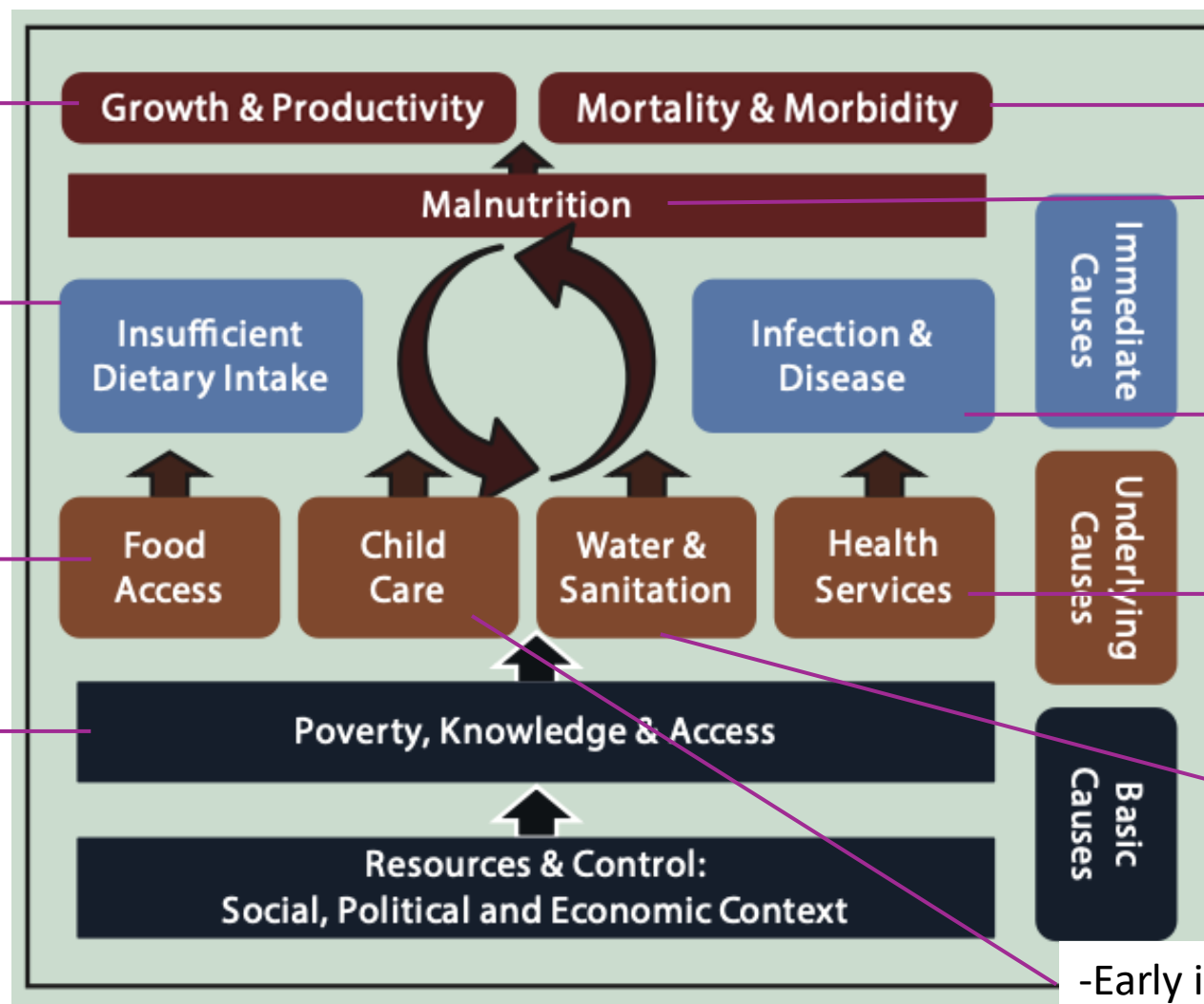
- Diet Quality can be monitored using a 5-minute questionnaire, DQQ
 - Minimum Dietary Diversity (SDG 2.2.4)
 - Alongside MDD, complementary WHO and UNICEF indicators related to NCD risks (unhealthy food consumption, protective food consumption) in adults and young children
 - Support to countries is needed to start monitoring
- Cost and Affordability of a Healthy Diet can be monitored using existing data
 - Food price data collected monthly by National Statistical Offices
 - <https://www.fao.org/in-action/coahd/en>

Core economic
statistics

Diet quality monitoring:
MDD-W – 2025
WHO indicators – 2025

Hunger (PoU) - 1990
Food Insecurity (FIES) - 2017
Cost and Affordability of a
Healthy Diet (CoAHD) - 2020

Poverty
Lines constructed using
dietary energy as the
criterion for the cost of basic
needs for food



Graphic design credit: Pakistan Multisectoral Nutrition Strategy, 2018-2025

Core health statistics

-Stunting and wasting
-Nutrient deficiencies
-Overweight and obesity

-Cases tracked by
WHO (e.g. malaria,
diarrheal disease)

-Immunization
-ORS use
-VAS coverage

-Access to safe water
-Access to adequate
sanitation

-Early initiation of breastfeeding
-Exclusive BF to 6mos
-Breastfeeding at age 1 year
-Complementary feeding 6-8mos
-MDD-C 6-23mos - 2007
-ZfV, sweet beverage and unhealthy
food consumption 6-23mos - 2021

We can use evidence on food access and diets
to guide action for improving nutrition through
agriculture and food systems



ANNOUNCEMENTS

- Presentation soon available on our website : <https://www.sdc-foodsystems.ch/en/thoughts-for-food>
- Upcoming events :



Don't hesitate to share news,
topics and ideas with us!



Q&A

Time for questions!



Agriculture & Food Systems
SDC Thematic Network

NUTRITION



DEEP DIVE
INTO FOOD SYSTEMS

Thank you!
Stay well, and stay connected!