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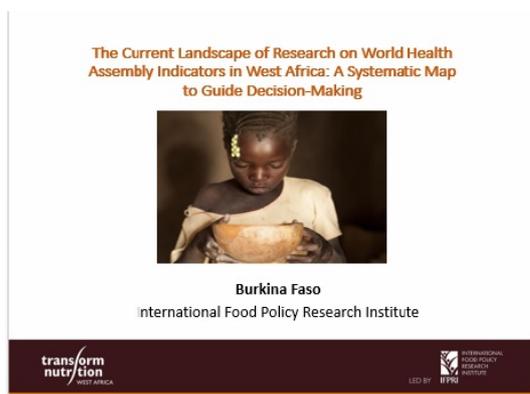
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The Transform Nutrition West Africa team would like to wish our colleagues and partners a happy new year for 2019. In this second issue of our regular update, we bring you a roundup of relevant news, upcoming events, and the most up-to-date nutrition evidence relevant to the West Africa region. Please feel free to share any feedback, news, or events with transform@ids.ac.uk.

NEWS

Evaluation of research on World Health Assembly global nutrition targets



A [new study](#), by Transform Nutrition West Africa identifies trends and gaps in research that cover the World Health Assembly 2025 global nutrition indicators across West Africa. These are potentially valuable insights for nutrition decision makers in the region. An overview of this study is now available in a series of 5 engaging and visual slide decks for the [West Africa Region](#) and focal countries [Nigeria](#), [Ghana](#), [Senegal](#), and [Burkina Faso](#).

Strengthening leadership for nutrition

Our [first short course](#) was held in Ghana in November with 25 participants. Over the course of a week participants developed more advanced leadership capabilities to lead change in multisectoral environments in West Africa. Some reflections from one of the course leaders and two participants are available [in this blog](#). Our next short course will be held in March, also in Ghana, on [Evidence for Policy and Programming](#).



Coordinating efforts in West Africa on undernutrition



The Transform Nutrition West Africa team [met with key partners in Dakar](#), Senegal, on November 5-6 to provide updates on work-to-date and develop future work plans in coordination with key actors and partners on nutrition in the region.

Multiple malnutrition burdens in children under 5

Transform Nutrition West Africa presented the poster, [Multiple malnutrition burdens in children under 5 in West Africa](#), at this recent symposium.



ECOWAS Nutrition Forum

We attended the Regional Mid-Term Review Meeting of ECOWAS Nutrition Forum on November 30 2018 in Monrovia, Liberia and gave [a presentation about Transform Nutrition West Africa](#) and a sample of some of the work currently underway. The event was attended by nutrition government focal points from all West African countries along with other key partners in the region.

NEWS FROM THE REGION

- Through its [2018-2025 Multi-Sectoral Nutrition Action Plan](#), **The African Development Bank** has prioritized investments that are “nutrition smart”, especially in the five sectors that account for over 30% of government spending in Africa and serve as underlying drivers of nutrition.
- **World Food Programme** and Côte d'Ivoire have created a [Centre of Excellence Against Hunger](#) which will serve as an enhanced knowledge management repository of best practices that contribute to achieving the goal of ensuring no one goes hungry in the region.
- A [regional technical consultation](#) was organized by **UNICEF** in collaboration with Nutrition International to bring a spotlight on maternal nutrition issues and boost the maternal nutrition

- The **African Leaders for Nutrition** initiative has launched [a new webpage](#) to regularly inform and inspire us with news and developments on how the ALN initiative is catalysing and sustaining high-level political leadership and commitment to end malnutrition in Africa.
- The **Emergency Nutrition Network**-coordinated Wasting-Stunting (WaSt) Technical Interest Group's Policy and Programme Briefing Note is now available: [Child wasting and stunting: Time to overcome the separation \(2018\)](#). It is for all those concerned with child wasting and stunting and the interaction between the two.
- **Action Against Hunger** has launched its [C-Project: Treatment of Severe Acute Malnutrition by Community Health Workers](#), including a knowledge hub, to share research, lessons learnt, and evaluation of the project.

EVIDENCE

The following six peer-reviewed studies have been selected, as they demonstrate rigor in their methods, highlight areas of concern, and identify new knowledge for future action in the West Africa region:

- A narrative review of [Sustainable development goal 2: Improved targets and indicators for agriculture and food security](#) looks at the existing SDG2 indicators, proposes improvements to facilitate their operationalization, and illustrates their practical implementation in **Nigeria**, Brazil, and the Netherlands.
- The Becoming Breastfeeding Friendly (BBF) evidence-based toolbox was developed to guide countries in effectively scaling up programmes to protect, promote, and support breastfeeding. This review, [Development and pretesting of Becoming Breastfeeding Friendly: Empowering governments for global scaling up of breastfeeding programmes](#), looks at the intensive pretesting in **Ghana** and Mexico, which demonstrated that BBF is a robust and dynamic multisectoral process that, with relatively minor adaptations, can be successfully implemented in countries across world regions.
- [An agriculture-nutrition intervention improved children's diet and growth in a randomized trial in Ghana](#). This cluster-randomized controlled trial shows that integrated interventions that increase access to high-quality foods and nutrition education improve child nutrition.
- A new study, [Relapse after severe acute malnutrition: A systematic literature review and secondary data analysis](#), which includes studies from multiple West African countries (Senegal, Nigeria, Gambia, Niger, Guinea Bissau, and Burkina Faso) concludes that the development of a standard definition of relapse is needed. This will allow for an assessment of programme quality regarding sustained recovery and a better understanding of the contribution of relapse to local and global burden of SAM.
- A randomized controlled trial called the MALINEA project was conducted in four African countries (Madagascar, Niger, Central African Republic, and **Senegal**). [A multi-centre, randomized controlled comparison of three re-nutrition strategies for the management of moderate acute malnutrition among children aged 6 to 24 months](#) provided new insights for the treatment of MAM, as well as original data on the modulation of gut microbiota during the re-nutrition process to support (or not) the microbiota hypothesis of malnutrition.
- A mixed-method study, [Biocultural determinants of overweight and obesity in the context of nutrition transition in Senegal: A holistic anthropological approach](#), suggests the need for local public health interventions that particularly target women and take into account the anthropological specificities of the Senegalese population to tackle the rising obesity epidemic.

We have also highlighted a number of insightful recent reports and web articles, including:

- A new book from IFPRI, [Boosting growth to end hunger by 2025: The Role of Social Protection](#), explains why in settings characterized by chronic food insecurity and conflict, food transfers may have a protective effect on the food security and nutrition of vulnerable populations. Groups enjoying the benefits from rising incomes may still be vulnerable to economic and weather-related shocks that may set them back. Growth alone will, therefore, not be enough to help Africa meet the ambitious hunger and poverty reduction goals of the Malabo declaration and Agenda 2063 of the African Union.
- A 2018 UN report, [The State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World](#), reveals new challenges to ending hunger, food insecurity, and all forms of malnutrition. It explains why there is an urgent need to accelerate and scale up actions that strengthen resilience and adaptive capacity of people and their livelihoods to climate variability and extremes.
- The [Global Nutrition Report 2018](#) was launched at the IFPRI/FAO conference in Bangkok and puts forward five critical steps that are needed to speed up progress to end malnutrition in all its forms.
- The [Global Nutrition Report sub-regional profile: West Africa](#) highlights mixed progress in achieving global nutrition targets. There has been zero progress in achieving male and female adult obesity and diabetes targets, zero progress in achieving anaemia in WRA targets, minimal progress for under 5 stunting and wasting targets, and moderate progress toward under 5 overweight and exclusive breastfeeding targets.
- In the discussion paper, [Urbanization and women's body weight: Evidence from Nigeria](#), satellite-based, night-light intensity data are employed as a proxy for urbanization to investigate the relationship between urbanization and women's body weight.

About Transform Nutrition West Africa

Transform Nutrition West Africa is a regional platform to enable effective policy and programmatic action on nutrition, funded by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation from 2017–2021 and led by the International Food Policy Research Institute. We want you to join us and be part of a network of people and organisations in West Africa using evidence to generate change.

About this update

This Transform Nutrition West Africa Update features news and summaries of articles published in peer-reviewed journals as well as grey literature, including reports, briefs, or other forms of evidence from researchers, NGOs, or other organizations/institutions. The presented studies were selected as they demonstrated rigor in their methods and analysis, and relevance to the region and target audience of Transform Nutrition West Africa. There are two main sections: peer-reviewed article summaries and grey literature summaries (from websites and google scholar). This publication has been prepared by Transform Nutrition West Africa and has not been peer-reviewed. Any opinions stated herein are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the policies of the International Food Policy Research Institute.



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