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WEST AFRICA

Led by IFPRI

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This seventh issue of our regular update highlights a rapid survey from our short course alumni on national responses to the COVID-19 pandemic and outputs following the Together for Nutrition: West African Data Forum alongside our usual roundup of relevant news and new nutrition evidence relevant to the West Africa region. Please share any feedback, news, or events relevant to the region with Nabou Tall N.Tall@cgiar.org

NEWS from Transform Nutrition West Africa

COVID-19, Food and Nutrition in West Africa: potential impacts and resources



In April, Transform Nutrition West Africa conducted a rapid survey of inputs from our short course alumni in West Africa to better understand national responses to the COVID-19 pandemic, and their own views on potential impacts on food and nutrition security in the region. We received 12 detailed responses from 6 countries, which we collated and synthesized. They are summarized in [this blog](#).

Together for Nutrition: West African Data Forum

February saw a number of partners working on nutrition in West Africa join forces at the **Together for Nutrition: West African Data Forum**. Through a mix of plenary and breakout sessions, we took stock of the data value chain for nutrition in the West African region. Namukolo Covic has written this [blog](#) on Nigeria participants experience at the forum and the [full meeting report](#), [photos](#) from the event and [agenda with slideshare presentation](#) links are now available. The next step is to reach out to partners and participants to validate the resulting Call To Action for using the data value chain in West Africa.

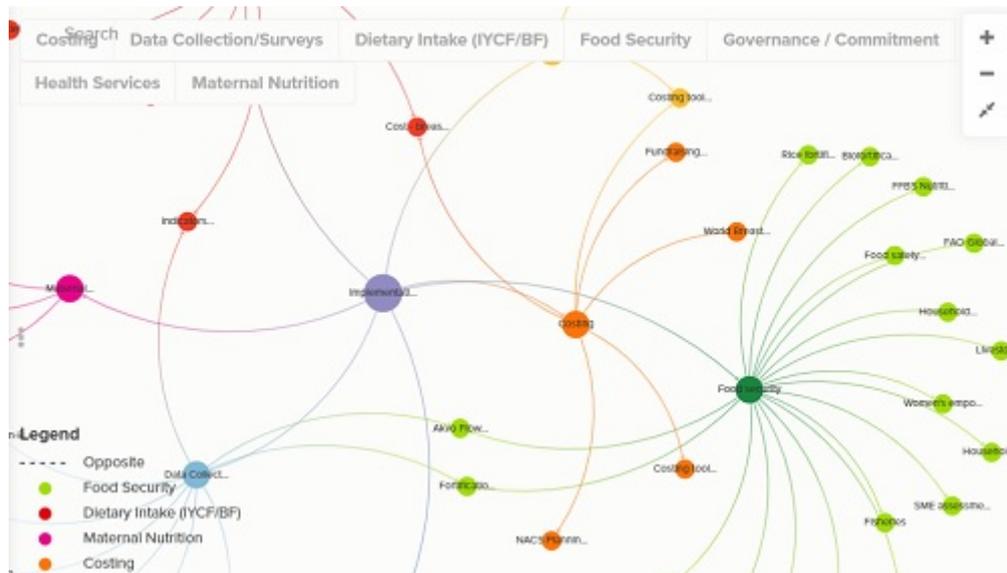


Webinar on nutrition research networks in West Africa

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...to help inform decision-making on effective programs and policies in the West African region. A [recent webinar](#) from Transform Nutrition West Africa, presented the results from a social network analysis of nutrition networks in the region. If you missed it, you can watch the presentation and [listen here](#).

Implementation in Nutrition – A Tools Map



The Knowledge for Implementation and Impact Initiative (KI3) set out to strengthen the availability, access and utilization of implementation knowledge to accelerate progress in scaling up implementation and impact on nutrition. One of its activities focused on the development of an interactive, user friendly, and visually engaging [Tools Map](#), on implementation tools. This [new brief](#) outlines how it can be used and outlines recommendations for its further development. This [slide deck](#) shows a practical example of where the Tools Map has been used to identify implementation tools on IYCF in West Africa.

NEWS from partners and the region

COVID-19 resources

A joint note by UNHCR, UNICEF, WFP, and WHO consolidates [recommendations for Infant and Young Child Feeding for the COVID-19 outbreak in East, Central and Southern Africa](#). This note does not intend to replace national plans but should be seen as a complementary resource on the latest evidence.

Key documents are now available to support implementers on how to prepare and respond to the COVID-19 pandemic:

- **NUTRITION | COVID-19** [Here](#) - is a knowledge dissemination tool to share programmatic guidance, position papers, technical notes, and emerging research and evidence being developed by UNICEF and its partners on understanding and responding to the COVID-19 pandemic's impact on maternal and child nutrition. To be included in the distribution list please [click here](#).

- **Global Nutrition-COVID-19 Webinars** [here](#) - in 4 languages. The Global Technical Assistance Mechanism

[Join Data for Nutrition's webinar 'Measuring Food Insecurity in the era of COVID-19: Practical insights from data collection activities in four global contexts'](#) on 6 May 9-10am ET. Follow [@Data4Nutrition](#) on Twitter for additional activities around nutrition, data, and COVID-19 in the coming weeks.

UNICEF, WHO and the World Bank have released the [Joint Malnutrition Estimates 2020 edition](#) which states that In 2019, there were 144 million stunted children, 47 million wasted children, and 38 million overweight children with variations across and within countries and regions.

[The Nutrition Modelling Consortium](#) brings together teams from various institutions that have developed modelling tools, in-country end users, such as Ministries of Health, Nutrition Departments, and implementers such as NGOs, or technical planners in-country. A resource and communications hub is now available for [Nutrition Modelling Tools](#).

EVIDENCE

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

- A recent narrative review examines [Protein intake adequacy among Nigerian infants, children, adolescents and women and protein quality of commonly consumed foods](#), and finds a mostly adequate protein intake at population level, except for adolescent girls, pregnant and lactating women.
- The study [Energy needs in the treatment of uncomplicated severe acute malnutrition: Secondary analysis to optimize delivery of ready-to-use therapeutic foods](#) compared six therapeutic feeding protocols in outpatient setting in Niger. Results showed that a careful evaluation of these protocols showing adequacy to meet the energy needs of children under treatment, as well as feasibility and cost efficiency is needed before they are implemented.
- New evidence from rural Gambia demonstrates that [Vitamin D Status Increases During Pregnancy and in Response to Vitamin D Supplementation in Rural Gambian Women](#) which has important insights for fortification and supplementation policy in West Africa.
- Analysis of [Maternal and child factors associated with child body fatness in a Ghanaian cohort](#) finds that maternal overweight and child physical activity, especially among girls, may be key factors for addressing child overweight/obesity.
- Authors use qualitative methods to highlight the importance of gender in nutrition interventions: ['If he sees it with his own eyes, he will understand'](#): how gender informed the content and delivery of a maternal nutrition intervention in Burkina Faso. The study recommends inclusion of male partners in these interventions in Burkina Faso.
- A randomized trial in Burkina Faso explored both the Cost-effectiveness ([Cost-Effectiveness of 4 Specialized Nutritious Foods in the Prevention of Stunting and Wasting in Children Aged 6-23 Months in Burkina Faso: A Geographically Randomized Trial](#)) as well as the factors that may influence the effectiveness ([Factors that May Influence the Effectiveness of 4 Specialized Nutritious Foods in the Prevention of Stunting and Wasting in Children Aged 6-23 Months in Burkina Faso](#)) of 4 specialized nutritious foods in the prevention of stunting and wasting in children aged 6-23 months in Burkina Faso. The trial showed that Corn-Soy Blend Plus (CSB+) with oil was the most cost-effective ration in the

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

- A project note from **IFPRI** on their [Multi-Component Cash Transfer Programs: Evidence from Mali's Social Safety Net Program](#) (Jigisémèjiri). The program has succeeded in reducing the vulnerability of poor households. However, this study reinforces lessons from other studies in concluding that cash transfers alone or combined with relatively low intensity accompanying measures have limited impacts on child nutrition.
- A brief from **IFPRI** on [Approaches for leveraging small and medium enterprises to improve nutrition: Net-Map assessment of actors and activities in Ghana](#).
- A report from **The Institute of Development Studies** on an [External Evaluation of Mobile Phone Technology-Based Nutrition and Agriculture Advisory Services in Africa: Mobile Phones, Agriculture, and Nutrition in Ghana: Qualitative Follow-Up Study Report](#).
- A report from the **World Bank Group** and **Cellule de la lutte contre la malnutrition** documents in detail [Nutrition Financing in Senegal](#).

Other news from the region

- [UK provides UNICEF with new funding to tackle child malnutrition in Niger](#)
- The economy of The Gambia is losing about 5.1 percent of the country's annual Gross Domestic Product (GDP) due to the effects of child undernutrition, according to [a new study](#) from the multi-agency Cost of Hunger in Africa (COHA).
- Helen Keller International suggest that across West Africa, [the humble but mighty porridge](#) is a simple remedy for moderate cases of malnutrition in children.

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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