

transform nutrition

WEST AFRICA

Led by IFPRI

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This eighth issue of our regular update highlights our work on Adolescent nutrition in West Africa. 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 Sokna Sall Seck s.s.seck@cgiar.org

NEWS from Transform Nutrition West Africa

Adolescent Nutrition in West Africa



Adolescents have often been overlooked in nutrition policy and programming so Transform Nutrition West Africa have brought together recent outputs on [Adolescent Nutrition in West Africa](#) including an Evidence Note, Database, Technical Note, and presentation. These resources aim to inform the West Africa Health Organization and other decision-makers in West Africa to support policy and program development for adolescents in the region.

Investing in the Data Value Chain for nutrition in West Africa: a Call To Action

Following the [Together for Nutrition: West African Data Forum](#), participants from 15 ECOWAS countries, developed a common [Call To Action](#) for strengthening nutrition data value chains directed to national and regional governments, donors, UN agencies, implementing partners, and researchers. This [Call To Action](#) has undergone a thorough review process and reflects the priorities of individuals and institutions working with and for nutrition data across West Africa.



Making akitibogɛ* unfashionable in Ghana

[A blog](#) by Richmond Aryeetey and new [research](#)



[brief](#) focusing on Ghana's nutrition story of change helps to explore and understand the differences between child stunting and anaemia reduction. The research also identifies outstanding challenges for nutrition in Ghana.

*means 'small and fashionable'.

NEWS from partners and the region

COVID-19 resources

- [NUTRITION | COVID-19](#) 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 IYCF Guidance](#) This UNICEF/GNC/GTAM brief provides information specific to infant and young child feeding (IYCF) in the context of COVID-19. This brief consolidates recommendations on Infant and Young Child Feeding in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Answers to [Frequently Asked Questions](#) for Health Workers on Breastfeeding and COVID-19 is now available from the WHO.
- A counseling package on [Infant and Young Child Feeding Recommendations when COVID-19 is Suspected or Confirmed](#) is now available. The set developed by UNICEF and USAID-funded *Advancing Nutrition* with technical support by the Infant Feeding in Emergencies Core Group, represented by Save the Children and Safely Fed Canada – includes *10 Counselling Cards* and a *Recommended Practices Booklet*. These materials reflect the global recommendations from on IYCF in the context of COVID-19 and may be periodically updated to reflect new or emerging evidence. The package provides both easy-to-understand recommended practices for counsellors and user-friendly graphics.
- The Global Breastfeeding Collective, led by UNICEF and WHO, has developed [key messages](#) critical to advocate for an optimal protection, support and promotion of IYCF practices in the COVID-19 context.
- [COVID-19 & Global Food Security](#) brings together key pieces from IFPRI's blog series on the impacts of COVID-19 and the early policy responses in Africa and elsewhere.

Other resources

- The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, The Global Alliance for Improved Nutrition, and The Johns Hopkins Alliance for a Healthier World have launched a new easy-to-navigate [online tool](#) designed to help decision makers understand their food systems, identify their levers of change, and decide which ones to pull.

- WHO have launched a [Call for experts: WHO technical advisory group on food safety](#). Deadline 21 August.

NEW EVIDENCE

The following six peer-reviewed studies have been selected, from an evidence search March-July 2020, as they demonstrate rigour in their methods, highlight areas of concern, and identify new knowledge for future action in the West Africa region:

- [Implementation of healthy food environment policies to prevent nutrition-related non-communicable diseases in Ghana: National experts' assessment of government action](#). This is a landmark analysis that proves the Food-EPI policy tool can be applied within Africa and the findings provide a baseline for measuring government progress towards implementing effective policies to prevent NR-NCDs.
- A novel trial explores [a New approach to simplifying and optimising acute malnutrition treatment in children aged 6-59 months: the OptiMA single-arm proof-of-concept trial in Burkina Faso](#). Successful implementation at scale was achieved through training mothers to use mid upper arm circumference (MUAC) bracelets for screening.
- [Comparing video and poster-based education for improving 6-17 months children feeding practices: a cluster randomized trial in rural Benin](#) finds that the nutrition education program using posters and videos performed the same in improving complementary feeding practices.
- A new study aims to fill the adolescent nutrition knowledge gap through [Validation of 24-h dietary recall for estimating nutrient intakes and adequacy in adolescents in Burkina Faso](#). This study showed that adolescents underestimated intakes; however, the degree of underestimation was generally acceptable for 12-14-year-olds within a bound of 15%.
- [The silent epidemic of obesity in The Gambia: evidence from a nationwide, population-based, cross-sectional health examination survey](#) finds a high burden of overweight/ obesity and recommends preventative strategies be put in place to raise awareness, discourage harmful beliefs about weight, and promote healthy diets and physical activity.
- [Rainfall risks, source of food and nutritional insecurity in Niger](#) uses qualitative methods to explore these interconnections in three regions of the county.

We also highlight a number of recent insightful reports and web articles:

[Women's empowerment in agriculture and nutritional outcomes: Evidence from six countries in Africa and Asia](#) – an IFPRI discussion paper.

[The Permanent Inter-State Committee for Drought Control in the Sahel \(CILSS\) report on the Food and nutrition situation in the context of the covid-19 pandemic](#) in the Sahel and West Africa.

The World Food Program (WFP) have published a case study reporting on [Strengthening nutrition in schools supported by the school feeding program in Togo](#).

Feed the Future Innovation Lab for Food Security Policy have released a policy brief reporting that [Poor dietary quality is Nigeria's key nutrition problem](#).

[Gendered participation in poultry value chains: Qualitative findings from an impact evaluation of nutrition-sensitive poultry value chain intervention in Burkina Faso](#) – IFPRI discussion paper.

Online regional events

Upcoming Events

- [Global Nutrition COVID-19 Webinars](#). The Global Technical Assistance Mechanism for Nutrition (GTAM) and partners bring you a series of webinars to support practitioners with infant and young child feeding in emergencies (IYCF-E), wasting and nutrition information systems in the COVID-19 context, in English, French, Spanish and Arabic.
- UNICEF, Alive & Thrive and WHO are glad to invite you all to participate in a 90-minute **Learning & Sharing Café** on ‘**Stronger With Breastmilk Only during the COVID-19 pandemic**’. Join us, **11-12:30 GMT on Wednesday 19th August** ([Register here](#)). There will be live translation in English & French. Burkina Faso and Ghana experiences will be presented.
- **MQSUN+** webinar will explore the role of technical assistance in catalysing progress for SUN countries’ multisectoral nutrition planning and actions as well as positive practices and key learnings for the design and provision of technical assistance to maximise its benefit and sustainability to SUN countries. **Aug 12, 2020 08:00 AM** in [Eastern Time](#) - Please use the link [here](#) to register.

Past events

- **The Global Alliance for Vitamin A (GAVA)** held a webinar on **Thursday July 9th** on [Operationalizing Vitamin A supplementation in the context of COVID-19](#). GAVA and its core partner agencies, **Nutrition International, UNICEF** and **Helen Keller International**, have been working together to provide guidance to governments on how to continue to safely deliver Vitamin A supplements (VAS) to preschool-aged children in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic. As a result, GAVA developed operational guidance on the administration of VAS for preschool-aged children in the context of COVID-19, available in [English](#) and [French](#).
- IFE Core Group, GTAM, UNICEF, WFP, Save the Children, Tech RRT and USAID Advancing Nutrition held a **learning and sharing “café”** on Monday 10th August that provided an opportunity for nutrition practitioners to share their lessons learned and experiences in [adapting IYCF programmes to the COVID-19 context](#).
- A virtual event was held on 11 August titled [COVID-19’s Short-term Impacts on Economies, Food Systems and Poverty in African and Asian Countries: Economywide Estimates from Economywide Models](#) co-organized by IFPRI and the CGIAR Research Program on Policies, Institutions, and Markets (PIM). Video of the event is now available.

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.