

transform nutrition

WEST AFRICA

Led by IFPRI

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Along with our usual roundup of news and evidence, this tenth issue highlights the issue of [wasting in West Africa](#). Please share any feedback, news, or events relevant to the region with Sokhna Sall Seck s.s.seck@cgiar.org

SPOTLIGHT on Wasting in West Africa



Globally, 49 million children under the age of five suffer from wasting and the prevalence of wasting remains high in all West African countries. We have identified [new evidence](#) in the West African region related to wasting screening and treatment.

NEWS from Transform Nutrition West Africa

Francophone short course : Evidence for policy and programming



An [online course](#) will be held from 5-7th May and guide participants through cutting-edge knowledge and evidence on nutrition globally. People who are passionate about strengthening their leadership skills and work within the broader multisectoral nutrition environment are encouraged [to apply](#).

Webinar hosted by WAHO

The West African Health Organisation (WAHO) [organised a webinar](#), in collaboration with UNICEF and IFPRI–Transform Nutrition West Africa, which brought together over 100 participants from the region. The webinar shared country experiences of adopting the Call To Action to invest in the nutrition



Welcome



Dr Kofi Busia
Director, Directorate of Health
care Services
OOAS WAHO

data value chain resulting from the [Together For Nutrition](#) data forum held one year ago.

Nigeria Stories of Change



A [successful meeting](#) was held on 16 December 2020 for the Stories of Change Nigeria Study. 24 participants from the Federal and State level took part in productive discussions. A [one page summary](#) was requested which was shared with the office of the Vice President.

Stories to end malnutrition

The [Stories of Change in Nutrition](#) initiative has been selected as one of CGIAR's most influential projects as part of their [50 years of innovations which changed the world](#). CGIAR, is a global research partnership for a food secure future dedicated to reducing poverty, enhancing food and nutrition security, and improving natural resources.



Senegal's National Dietary Recommendations



TNWA participated in a high-level workshop in December which aimed to assess the food systems and environments for nutrition and health in Senegal as part of the process of developing Senegal's 'National Dietary Recommendations'. During the workshop, a lack of an in-depth understanding of how national nutrition-relevant policies address nutrition issues was identified as a gap. Results of the ongoing work of the TNWA's team in collaboration with ACF on a regional wide landscape exercise were deemed important to inform the process.

NEWS relevant to the West African region

- WHO, UNICEF and partners have launched new expanded 2020 ECD [Countdown to 2030](#) country profiles. The updated profiles cover 42 ECD indicators and 197 countries, including 60 high-income countries, encompassing 99.8% of the world's children younger than 5 years.
 - The European Food Information Council (EUFIC) has launched an interactive and colourful resource covering all [vitamins and minerals](#). The resource provides actionable science-based information and emphasises the importance of a varied and balanced diet to get all the necessary nutrients. The resource is available in English, French, German, Spanish and Italian.
 - In a [recently published call to action](#), UNESCO, UNICEF, WHO and WFP urge national governments and partners to invest in school health and nutrition programmes to avert a learning crisis.
- UN agencies warn that [acute food insecurity and nutrition crisis are surging in the Central Sahel](#).

[Innovative interventions](#) to improve food and nutrition security in Africa were presented at the 2020 Africa Day for Food and Nutrition Security.

EVIDENCE

The following five peer-reviewed studies have been selected, from an evidence search (November 2020 – January 2021), as they demonstrate rigour in their methods, highlight areas of concern, and identify new knowledge for future action in the West Africa region:

- A novel policy analysis considers [Understanding the Impact of Historical Policy Legacies on Nutrition Policy Space: Economic Policy Agendas and Current Food Policy Paradigms in Ghana](#). Authors find that the food policy agendas are strongly focused on production, employment and economic returns, and existing market-based incentives do not support a nutrition-sensitive food supply.
- A qualitative systematic review explores [Factors influencing obesogenic behaviours of adolescent girls and women in low- and middle-income countries](#) and finds that gender norms and failures to recognize the importance of healthy behaviours across the life cycle were important factors.
- In rural Burkina Faso, a randomized controlled trial finds that [Standard minimum dietary diversity indicators for women or infants and young children are good predictors of adequate micronutrient intakes in 24–59-month-old children and their nonpregnant non-breastfeeding mothers](#). Authors note that the inadequacy of micronutrient intakes in pregnant and breastfeeding women warrants urgent action.
- A novel quasi-experimental study takes [An Innovative Grandmother-Inclusive Approach for Addressing Suboptimal Infant and Young Child Feeding Practices \(IYCF\) in Sierra Leone](#). Results suggest that a grandmother inclusive approach that recognizes grandmothers' roles and strengthens their knowledge can contribute to improved IYCF practices.
- [Qualitative assessments of anemia-related programs in Ghana reveal gaps and implementation challenges](#). Authors suggest that food sources of vitamin C or supplements could be promoted in food-based interventions to increase the absorption of nonheme iron consumed.

We also highlight several recent insightful reports and web articles:

- New pre-print research explores the [Coexistence of Mother Overweight and Stunting Children Within the Same Household in West Africa: Associated Factors](#).
- The World Food Programme's latest research looks at: [The Cost of Hunger in Africa series](#).
- The World Food Programme has released their report [Emergency Food Security Monitoring System: Measuring the Impact of Covid-19 on Food Security and Vulnerability in Sierra Leone - June 2020](#).
- Maximizing the [Quality of Scaling Up Nutrition's \(MQSUN+\) toolkit](#) on multi-sectoral planning for nutrition.

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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