Transforming Food Systems to End Hunger, Malnutrition, and Poverty

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Sustainable food system framework, HLPE 2020
Employment in Food Systems

• FAO global estimates:
  • 1.23 billion employed in food systems
  • 3.83 billion live in households linked to livelihoods based on food systems
  • True numbers estimated to be 24 percent higher
  • Approximately half of workers are women and half are under 35 years

Davis et al. 2023
Vulnerability of Food Systems Workers

- Informal employment
- Lack of social protection
- Migration:
  - Rural to urban
  - Across borders
- Implications for families and long-term health
Affordability

- Pre-pandemic median daily cost of a healthy diet: USD 3.75
- The cost of healthy diets is nearly five times the cost of energy sufficient diets
- Before COVID-19:
  - 3 billion people could not afford the least-cost form of healthy diets
  - 1.5 billion people could not afford a nutrient adequate diet

Herforth et al. 2020
Informal food vendors (often women) are an important source of food and nutrition for the poor

Urbanization and changes in livelihoods and gender roles are rapidly changing diets

Women’s time and the cost of water and fuel influence diets

Individual choices are shaped by advertising, health promotion campaigns, norms and beliefs, religion, dietary guidelines and policies, social media, and family needs

Ambikapathi et al. 2021, Boncyk et al. 2022
FAO et al. 2022
Double Burden of Malnutrition

- Diet-related non-communicable diseases (cardiovascular diseases, diabetes, cancers, etc.) are not problems of the wealthy
- 40% of the global adult population is overweight or obese, and no country is on track to meet global targets
- Suboptimal diets are globally responsible for more deaths than any other health risks
- The double burden of malnutrition poses significant current and future challenges for health systems

Development Initiatives 2021, GBD 2017 Diet Collaborators 2019
Leadership and governance

Countries are not prepared to fight both sides of malnutrition at the same time

Percentage of countries with actions related to global nutrition targets in health sector plans

- Low-income
- Lower-middle-income
- Upper-middle-income
- High-income

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Condition</th>
<th>Low-income</th>
<th>Lower-middle-income</th>
<th>Upper-middle-income</th>
<th>High-income</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Anaemia</td>
<td>55.6%</td>
<td>56.3%</td>
<td>56.7%</td>
<td>66.7%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Exclusive breastfeeding</td>
<td>45.2%</td>
<td>43.8%</td>
<td>53.8%</td>
<td>60.0%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Childhood stunting</td>
<td>43.8%</td>
<td>43.8%</td>
<td>53.8%</td>
<td>60.0%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Childhood overweight</td>
<td>46.2%</td>
<td>46.2%</td>
<td>46.2%</td>
<td>72.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adolescent and adult overweight</td>
<td>37.0%</td>
<td>42.3%</td>
<td>42.3%</td>
<td>72.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diabetes</td>
<td>40.7%</td>
<td>34.6%</td>
<td>52.0%</td>
<td>52.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2020 Global Nutrition Report
Food Systems Transformation

• Change food systems qualitatively and at scale:
  • Food security and healthy diets for all people
  • Prosperous livelihoods
  • Sustainable operation within planetary limits

Fanzo et al. 2022
Figure 1: Priority policy actions to transition food systems towards sustainable, healthy diets

**Make sufficient nutrient-rich and staple foods available to all, produced sustainably**
- Rebalance agriculture sector subsidies
- Rebalance agriculture sector R&D
- Promote production of a wide range of nutrient-rich foods

**Ensure foods move along value chains more efficiently, improving accessibility and resulting in lower cost and less loss**
- Co-opt levers of trade
- Cut food loss and waste
- Support job growth across the food system (create jobs beyond agriculture)
- Support technology and financial innovations along food value chains

**Achieving sustainable, healthy diets**

**Transformed food systems**
- Implement safety nets – particularly for the transition
- Promote pro-poor growth
- Reduce costs through tech and innovation
- Adjust taxes and subsidies on key foods

**Empower consumers to make more informed food choices, fueling rising demand for sustainable, healthy diets**

**Ensure sustainable, healthy diets are affordable to all, with lower demand for ultra-processed products**
Questions?

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