WHO ESTABLISHED A NEW DEPARTMENT OF NUTRITION AND FOOD SAFETY

DEPARTMENT OF NUTRITION AND FOOD SAFETY

ACHIEVEMENTS 2020

WHO

Aiming to achieve WHA 2025 nutrition targets

40% REDUCTION of the global number of children under five who are STUNTED

<5% REDUCTION children under five who are WASTED

50% REDUCTION of ANAEMIA in women aged 15–49 years

No increase in childhood OVERWEIGHT

50% Increase in infants EXCLUSIVELY BREASTFED

30% REDUCTION of LOW BIRTH WEIGHT

By bringing nutrition and food safety together, WHO is better positioned to respond to the double burden of malnutrition and its determinants. Through leadership, policies, implementation resources and surveillance tools we work for people’s right to eat safe and nutritious food, and access timely essential nutrition actions through the life cycle.

Dr Francesco Branca
Director, Nutrition and Food Safety
In 2020 we have continued to provide guidance and technical support to countries during the COVID-19 pandemic with the new virtual tools. We have developed evidence-informed guidelines, for competent authorities responsible for national food safety control systems, infant and young child feeding maintenance of health services, nutrition in the clinical management of patients, and treatment of wasting during the pandemic; explained how to eat healthy, maintain food safe for business and consumers.

44 COUNTRIES STRENGTHENED LEGISLATION TO PROTECT BREASTFEEDING

While 44 countries around the world strengthened their legislation to protect breastfeeding in the past two years, the WHO 2020 report shows that only 25 countries currently have measures substantially aligned with the International Code of Marketing of Breast-milk Substitutes.
WHO LAUNCHED GLOBAL ACTION PLAN ON CHILD WASTING

In collaboration with FAO, UNHCR, UNICEF and WFP, WHO released a new framework highlighting priority actions on the prevention and treatment of child wasting, with emphasis on preventing low birthweight, advancing child health, improving infant and young child feeding, and strengthening treatment.

MULTI-SECTORAL APPROACHES TO PREVENTING ANAEMIA IN WOMAN ARE SHOWN TO HELP

Using 461 data sources covering 131 countries over 1995-2020 estimates of the rates of anaemia were done for all 194 member states for the first time. New review highlights the importance of all sectors working synergistically to coordinate anaemia reduction strategies across multiple programmes, including women’s empowerment, community sensitization, and health programmes.

Anaemia still affects:

- One third of all women aged 15–49 years
- 40% of pregnant women aged 15–49 years
- Over 40% of children under 5 years
WHO in partnership with UNICEF and with financial support from the European Commission launched in September 2020 a project titled “Strengthening national nutrition information systems” in five countries in Africa and Asia: Cote d’Ivoire, Ethiopia, Laos, Uganda and Zambia. This is a 7 Million Euros project. Through this initiative WHO and UNICEF will support countries to increase the uptake of nutrition information by increasing country capacities in monitoring programmes and national nutrition targets.

COTE D’IVOIRE, ETHIOPIA, LAOS, UGANDA AND ZAMBIA STRENGTHEN NUTRITION SURVEILLANCE

DIGITAL SOLUTIONS FOR IMPROVED NUTRITIONAL SURVEILLANCE IN NOMADIC POPULATIONS ON THE HORN OF AFRICA

WHO has obtained 1.3 M Euros from the Italian Agency for Development Cooperation Jerusalem Office (AICS) to implement a project in Ethiopia aiming at improving access to health and nutrition services for pastoralist communities in the border with Somalia and Eritrea. For this initiative WHO will partner with WFP for the use of an innovative digital solution (SCOPE-CODA) to facilitate nomadic communities seeking health across borders.
DEPARTMENT OF NUTRITION AND FOOD SAFETY ACHIEVEMENTS 2020

STUNTING DECREASING, WASTING AND OBESITY RISING GLOBALLY: THE CHILD MALNUTRITION ESTIMATES

The Joint UNICEF-WHO-WB project (JME) updated the methodology for estimating the rate of stunting and overweight to allow for country-level model-based estimates and to fill in the countries’ time series gap, and have comparable baseline estimates for monitoring the nutrition, sustainable development goals and Triple Billion targets.

144 million STUNTING CHILDREN
In 2019 was estimated that 21.3% or 144 million children under 5 around the world were STUNTING.

47 Million WASTING CHILDREN
In 2019 was estimated that 6.9% or 47 million children under 5 around the world were WASTING.

38.3 million OVERWEIGHT CHILDREN
In 2019 was estimated that 5.6% or 38.3 million children under 5 around the world were OVERWEIGHT.

NEW INDICATORS ADDED TO GUIDANCE ON INFANT AND YOUNG CHILD FEEDING

The document includes a set of 17 indicators (six breastfeeding and 11 complementary feeding).
Unlike previous recommendations, no distinction is made between core and optional indicators in this set of recommendations. There are seven new indicators that includes four indicators on healthy/unhealthy feeding practices.
More than **125 food safety incidents** have been communicated through INFOSAN in **2020**, more than in any previous year. Virtual regional meetings were organized for INFOSAN members in the Americas, Europe and Africa to strengthen participation in network activities. A series of webinars were organized to commemorate the second **World Food Safety Day**, the sessions in English, French and Spanish were attended by over 250 INFOSAN members. **More than 85 new members joined the network in 2020.** INFOSAN played a key role in sharing information on **food safety and COVID-19** through the organization of webinars to highlight the WHO related guidance documents and by creating a discussion forum concerning COVID-19 and food safety on the INFOSAN Community Website.

**160+ Member states**
*alerted through INFOSAN about contaminated food exported to their country*

**80+ International food safety events**
*communicated through INFOSAN*

**600+ Members**
*from 190 Member States participate in INFOSAN*

**Tropane alkaloids** are a group of compounds occurring in several plant families of the Solanaceae genera that can contaminate staples like cereals and grains. **FAO and WHO convened an Ad-hoc expert consultation** to fill the gap of international guidance and regulation, that will allow for appropriate risk management options for products used by the **World Food Programme** in delivering food assistance in emergencies.
In 2020 the Joint FAO/WHO Expert Committee on Food Additives (JECFA) evaluated 2 food additives, 4 enzymes and conducted an exposure assessment for 1 group of food additives, 2 groups of flavoring agents and revised the specifications for 12 flavoring agents. JECFA also looked at 17 compounds listed as acceptable previous cargoes by the Codex Committee on Fats and Oils (CCFO).

The WHO core assessment group under the Joint FAO/WHO Meeting on Pesticides residues (JMPR) evaluated 17 pesticides for toxicological aspects.


FAO and WHO have started the review of allergens in food through the ad hoc Joint FAO/WHO Expert Consultation on Risk Assessment of Food Allergens. The Codex Committee on Food Labelling is reviewing provisions relevant to allergen labelling in the GSLPF as well as developing guidance on the use of precautionary allergen or advisory labelling (PAL).
Support is given for three-year projects.

### Activities
- Increased knowledge about Codex among policy-makers and experts
- Increased capacity of developing and transition economy countries to engage effectively in Codex
- Developing and transition economy countries sustainably engaged in Codex
- Increased participation in international food trade and improved food safety and public health

### Outputs
- Increased knowledge about Codex among policy-makers and experts
- Increased capacity of developing and transition economy countries to engage effectively in Codex
- Developing and transition economy countries sustainably engaged in Codex
- Increased participation in international food trade and improved food safety and public health

### Outcome
- Increased knowledge about Codex among policy-makers and experts
- Increased capacity of developing and transition economy countries to engage effectively in Codex
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### Project Goals
- Increased knowledge about Codex among policy-makers and experts
- Increased capacity of developing and transition economy countries to engage effectively in Codex
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### Global Development Goal
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### NEW NUTRITION GUIDELINES ON VITAMINS AND MINERALS PUBLISHED

As part of the update of WHO antenatal care recommendations for a positive pregnancy experience, WHO developed guidance on **vitamin D supplements during pregnancy** and on **multiple micronutrient supplements during pregnancy**. WHO also reviewed recommendations on **calcium supplementation before pregnancy for the prevention of pre-eclampsia and its complications**.
WHO has updated the cut-off values of serum ferritin to diagnose iron deficiency and risk of overload. Iron deficiency can result in anaemia, fatigue, lethargy, reduced child development and physical exercise performance, and may suggest serious underlying disease. Iron overload disorders can be either primary or classic haemochromatosis or secondary haemochromatosis and can result in liver, heart and hormonal diseases such as diabetes.

Best-practice trans fatty acids (TFA) policy has come into effect in 14 countries covering 589 million people. This analysis is provided by the 2nd TFA elimination progress report, launched by the Director-General in September 2020. WHO also released the first ever WHO global laboratory protocol for measuring TFA in foods.

17.9 million lives
Cardiovascular diseases are the number one cause of death globally.
DEVELOPING BENCHMARKS FOR SODIUM CONTENT IN FOODS

Setting global sodium benchmarks for different food categories will be used to support countries setting their own sodium reduction targets and to ask for more ambitious commitments by the global food industry.

Excess sodium increases a person’s risk for HIGH BLOOD PRESSURE, which can lead to heart disease and stroke.

FOCUS ON SCHOOL FOOD AND NUTRITION SHOWS EFFECTIVENESS

Evidence of program effectiveness shown in the publication “Assessing the existing evidence base on school food and nutrition policies” to develop new WHO guidance.

Good practices demonstrated in comprehensive school nutrition programs: “The nutrition action in schools: a review of evidence related to the nutrition-friendly schools initiative”
The Action Framework for Developing and Implementing Public Food Procurement and Service Policies for a public is ready for its launch.

12-16 million children are affected by overweight (including 3-4.5 million affected by obesity)

In the context of the 73rd World Health Assembly, this resolution urged Member States to apply a “One Health” approach that promotes the sustainability and availability of safe, sufficient and nutritious food for all populations. This resolution has also triggered the development a new food safety strategy that responds to the current food and health challenges and to update the WHO estimates of foodborne disease; both are underway.

*Source: FAO. 2019. School Food and Nutrition Framework*

**MEMBER STATES ADOPTED WHO RESOLUTION TO STRENGTHEN FOOD SAFETY**

600M lives fall ill after eating contaminated food each year, resulting in 420M deaths and the loss of 33M healthy lifef years
Such was the theme of the second World Food Safety Day 2020. WHO, in collaboration with FAO, developed an action-oriented campaign to reinforce the message that food safety is a shared responsibility between governments, producers and consumers. Everybody has a role to play from farm to table to ensure the food we consume is safe and will not cause damages to our health.

Food insecurity has increased in the last five years and in 2019 affected 690 million people, mainly as a result of the high cost of nutritious foods. COVID can make things worse. The State of Food Security and Nutrition estimated that at a minimum, another 83 million people, and possibly as many as 132 million, may go hungry in 2020 as a result of the economic recession triggered by COVID-19.

This report is produced jointly by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the International Fund for Agriculture (IFAD), the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF), the UN World Food Programme (WFP) and the World Health Organization (WHO).
THE FOOD ASSESSMENT TOOL IS NOW AVAILABLE IN 5 UN LANGUAGES

National food control system plays a pivotal role in protecting the health of consumers and ensuring fair practices in food trade. Now the tool is available in English, Spanish, French, Arabic and Russian, and more Member States will be able to assess performance of the system in a comprehensive way, identify priority areas of improvement and plan sequential and coordinated activities to reach expected outcomes.

PUBLISHED MANUAL TO IMPROVE MEASUREMENT OF VITAMIN AND MINERAL STATUS IN POPULATIONS

This manual contains modules covering all aspects of a cross-sectional micronutrient survey, from planning through implementation to analysing, reporting, disseminating and using the data. The main audience for the manual is programme managers responsible for the design and implementation of a micronutrient survey. Others involved in specific aspects of survey planning and implementation should also find certain procedures and tools useful.
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