Obesity, COVID-19 and food systems: collective action for a healthy recovery

Friday, 10\textsuperscript{th} July 2020

In partnership with the Global Alliance for the Future of Food
Housekeeping

• The webinar will be recorded
• Please use the Q&A function to post comments and questions
• There will be a chance to ask questions during the Q&A sessions
• The recording, slides, feedback form and certificate of attendance will be circulated post-event
Chair

Professor Corinna Hawkes

Director of the Centre for Food Policy at University of London,
Vice Chair of the London Child Obesity Taskforce,
Distinguished Fellow at the George Institute for Global Health.
UK
## Agenda

### Part I: The impacts of COVID-19 on nutrition and food systems

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Session</th>
<th>Speaker(s)</th>
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<tr>
<td>14:30 – 14:35</td>
<td>Welcome and introduction</td>
<td>Corinna Hawkes</td>
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<td>14:35 – 14:45</td>
<td>Impacts of COVID-19 on global nutrition and food system goals</td>
<td>Nancy Aburto</td>
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<td>Opportunities for win-win-win actions towards a healthy recovery</td>
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<td>14:55 – 15:05</td>
<td>Q&amp;A</td>
<td>Corinna Hawkes, Nancy Aburto &amp; William Dietz</td>
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# Agenda

## Part II: Moving forward together: a new narrative for collective action

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<tr>
<th>Time</th>
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<th>Presenter(s)</th>
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<tr>
<td>15:05 – 15:10</td>
<td>Introduction to the Global Alliance and its new food-health narrative</td>
<td>Ruth Richardson</td>
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<td>15:10 – 15:40</td>
<td>Panel discussion with cases from China, Rwanda and USA</td>
<td>Paula Daniels, Solomon Makuza &amp; Shi Yan</td>
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<td>How has COVID-19 impacted action at local level?</td>
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<td>What is the importance of a collective global narrative in the COVID-19 healthy recovery?</td>
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<td>15:40 – 15:50</td>
<td>Q&amp;A</td>
<td>Panel</td>
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<td>15:50 – 16:00</td>
<td>Final remarks</td>
<td>Ruth Richardson &amp; Corinna Hawkes</td>
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Part I: Overview
Meet the speakers

Dr William H. Dietz  
USA

Dr Nancy Jennings Aburto  
Italy
Impacts of COVID-19 on global nutrition and food system goals

Dr Nancy Jennings Aburto, M.S., Ph.D.

Deputy Director, Nutrition and Food Systems Division
Economic and Social Development, Department
Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)
Italy
~2 Billion individuals suffering moderate or severe food insecurity*

~677.6 million adults suffering obesity**

- 284 M (11%) men
- 394 M (15%) women
- 40 M (5.9%) children overweight

*SOFI 2019, **Global Nutrition Report 2020
Nutrition Challenges Increasing

FIGURE 2.4 Map of countries with overlapping forms of stunting in children under 5, anaemia among women of reproductive age, and overweight in adult women

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>COUNTRY BURDEN</th>
<th>Insufficient data</th>
<th>Anaemia only</th>
<th>Overweight and anaemia</th>
<th>Overweight and stunting</th>
<th>Overweight, anaemia and stunting</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
44 countries require external food assistance

FAO Crop Prospects and Food Situation, 02 July 2020
COVID threatening to cause a food crisis

- The pandemic has hit two essential pillars
  - The functioning of the food system
  - The economy

- High value crops are more vulnerable
  - Fragility requires special harvesting, packaging, storage and transport
  - Perishable (short shelf life)
  - Highly labour intensive production and processing
Food Systems Framework for Diets and Nutrition

Adapted from the High Level Panel of Experts on Food Security and Nutrition. HLPE 2017
• **Global** supply & price of key staple commodities stable

• Global cereal stocks expand 6.0%*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Commodity</th>
<th>2020/21 Forecast</th>
<th>Percentage Change</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>WHEAT</td>
<td>762 ▼ 0 (-0.00%)</td>
<td>1,299 ▲ 68 (5.92%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MAIZE</td>
<td></td>
<td>509 ▲ 8 (1.66%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RICE</td>
<td></td>
<td>364 ▲ 26 (7.79%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

• Fresh food supply chain more impacted
• Labour shortages affecting harvesting and planting
• Processing/packaging have been locus for infection
• Traders and distributors of perishables more impacted by restriction of movement

Food Supply Chains

Examples

Libya
- Land crossing with Tunisia not systematically allowing food transport

United States
- Animals culled because closure of processing plants

India
- Milk dumped because limited transport halting distribution

Actions

- Improve efficiency of trade and movement of food
- Promote e-commerce of food and linking supply with demand

www.worldobesity.org
Physical access a challenge – more acute for fresh foods
- Closure of schools/markets
- Restriction of movement

Economic access most worrisome
- Millions out of work
- Tourism halted
- Oil prices plummeted
- Fresh food price increases

*FAO. [https://datalab.review.fao.org/tweets-analysis.html](https://datalab.review.fao.org/tweets-analysis.html) accessed 03 July 2020
Food Environment

Examples
Sao Tome and Principe
• Movement restrictions led to inability to purchase from markets concentrated in the capital

Global
• Closure of schools has >350 Million children without access to food and nutrition services at school*

Actions
- Link local producers to markets
- Global guidance on maintaining school meal programmes

*WFP/FAO/UNICEF. Mitigating the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on food and nutrition of schoolchildren. 2020
Consumer behaviour

• Reduced purchasing power requires buying less expensive foods and more use of food banks
• Fear of food supply depletion and virus transmission results in stockpiling
• Desire to reduce physical interaction with others leads to buying more processed, long-life foods
**Consumer behaviour**

Choosing where and what food to acquire, prepare, cook, store and eat

**Examples**

United States reports stockpiling leads to barren shelves

Italy (in March) reported an increased purchase of
- 60% canned meat
- 55% canned beans
- 22% canned tomato sauce

European Food Banks Federation reported a 25 – 30% increase in food bank use across EU countries*

**Actions**

- Messaging on food supply & healthy diet
- Support to make social protection nutrition sensitive

*https://www.eurofoodbank.org/ 15 May 2020
**Mobilize to save lives and livelihoods**
- Ensure emergency food needs met
- Allow free flow of food assistance

**Strengthen social protection systems for nutrition**
- School feeding programs—without schools
- Provide productivity protecting safety nets
- Adjust social protection programmes to food prices

**Invest in a sustainable future**
- Transform food systems for nature/climate
- Inclusive, Green and resilient recovery

Remove constraints to link small-holders to markets


Dr William H. Dietz, M.D., Ph.D.

Chair of the Redstone Global Center for Prevention and Wellness at George Washington University, former Director of CDC’s Division of Nutrition, Physical Activity, and Obesity.

USA
The Global Syndemic of Obesity, Undernutrition, and Climate Change: Outcomes, Systems and Drivers
The Global Syndemic of Obesity, Undernutrition, and Climate Change: Outcomes, Systems and Drivers

Systems: food and agriculture, transport land use, urban design

Outcomes

Undernutrition

Obesity

Climate Change
The Global Syndemic of Obesity, Undernutrition, and Climate Change: Outcomes, Systems and Drivers

- **Power**: policies, economics, social norms
- **Systems**: food and agriculture, transport, land use, urban design
- **Outcomes**: Obesity, Undernutrition, Climate Change

Governance - Systems - Outcomes

www.worldobesity.org
The Global Syndemic of Obesity, Undernutrition, and COVID-19

COVID-19

 Obesity
  Inequitable impact
  Increased hospitalization
  Increased inactivity
  Ultra-processed foods

 Undernutrition
  Inequitable impact
  Food insecurity
  Lost wages

 Environmental Degradation
The Global Syndemic of Obesity, Undernutrition, and COVID-19

**Workforce**
- Poor living conditions
- Poor nutrition
- Low wages
- Lack PPE

**Agricultural System**
- **Disrupted Food Supply Chain**
  - Decreased harvest
  - Decreased processing
  - Decreased availability
  - Decreased access

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- Inequitable impact
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The Global Syndemic of Obesity, Undernutrition, and COVID-19

Immigration policy
Structural racism
Priority of profit over health

Agricultural System
Disrupted Food Supply Chain
Decreased harvesting
Decreased processing
Decreased availability
Decreased access

Workforce
Poor living conditions
Poor nutrition
Low wages
Lack PPE

Obesity
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Undernutrition
Inequitable impact
Food insecurity
Lost wages

Environmental Degradation

www.worldobesity.org
Triple-duty solutions for the Obesity, Undernutrition and COVID-19 Syndemic

- Improved health of food supply chain workforce; Decreased COVID-19 infections
- Healthier diets for obesity & diabetes; Decreased COVID-19 mortality
- Reduced SARs-CoV-2 exposure; improved nutrition will increase resistance to infection

**Stabilize the food supply chain:** build and strengthen local/regional sustainable plant-based food systems; reduce reliance on ultra-processed food; improve worker conditions - housing, medical coverage, wages, PPE
Questions?
Moderator

Ruth Richardson

Executive Director of the Global Alliance for the Future of Food,
Steering Committee of TEEB for Food and Agriculture led by UNEP,
Advisory Committee of the Global Urban Food Policy Pact
Canada
Meet the panel

Paula Daniels
Co-founder Chief of What’s next, Chair of the board of the Center for Good Food Purchasing.
USA

Solomon Makuza
Executive Director at Gardens for Health International, East African Acumen Fellow.
Rwanda

Dr Shi Yan
Executive director of Shared Harvest farm, China CSA Network.
China
Final remarks

Ruth Richardson
Canada

Corinna Hawkes
UK
Learn more:

**World Obesity Live** will resume in September. Please keep an eye out on our website.

World Obesity Federation have launched an online dossier with a compilation of documents on COVID and obesity. [https://www.worldobesity.org/resources/resource-library/covid-19-obesity-resources](https://www.worldobesity.org/resources/resource-library/covid-19-obesity-resources)

**Other Resources**

- **Global Alliance for the Future of Food** - [https://futureoffood.org/](https://futureoffood.org/)
- **SCOPE E-Learning** [www.scope-elearning.org](http://www.scope-elearning.org)
- **SCOPE twitter**: @SCOPEObesity
Thank you!

Please complete our feedback form.

If you have any queries please contact World Obesity at enquiries@worldobesity.org