



Children, food and nutrition: growing well in a changing world

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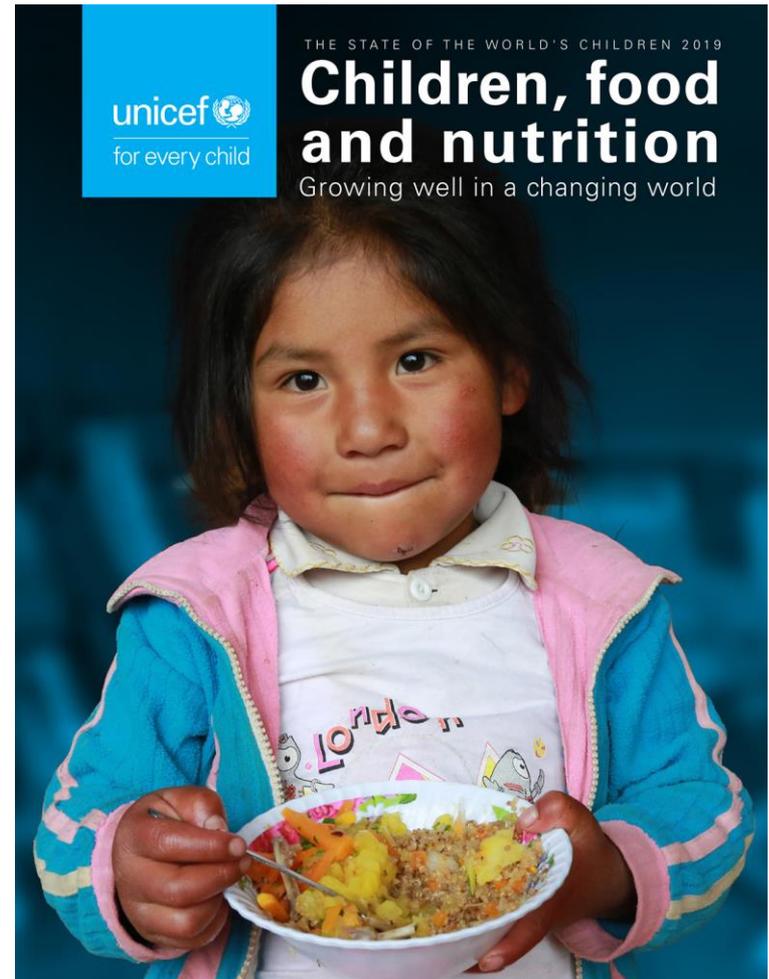
for every child

Food systems are failing children

Globally, at least 1 in 3 children under 5 is malnourished and not growing well:

- 149 million children under 5 suffer from stunting, or are too short for their age
- Almost 50 million under 5 suffer from wasting, or are too thin for their height
- 40 million children over 5 years of age are overweight

The world faces an unfinished agenda of undernutrition but is also battling the emergence of overweight and obesity among children on every continent



Changing face of malnutrition

- Millions of children are eating too little of what they need, millions are eating too much of what they *don't* need
- The rapid rise in overweight is driven by changes to day-to-day environments, including increasing availability, affordability and promotion of foods high in fats, sugar and salt
- Middle income countries account for over three quarters of all overweight children
- Children who have overweight are at a higher risk of developing serious health problems, experience emotional difficulties like depression and can suffer from stigmatization

40 million



An estimated 5.9 per cent or 40 million children under 5 around the world were overweight in 2018.



Of the **638 million** school-age children globally, a total of

131 million are affected by overweight or 20.6%.



Of the **1 billion** adolescents globally, a total of

207 million are affected by overweight or 17.3%.

Food systems must deliver nutritious foods for all

Rapidly changing contexts are shaping and reshaping children's diets:

- Globalization of food supply chains
- Urbanization
- Climate change

Children and caregivers experience the realities of these changes via:

- High costs of healthy foods
- Time pressures
- Limited availability of fruits and vegetables
- Pressures from advertising and promotions

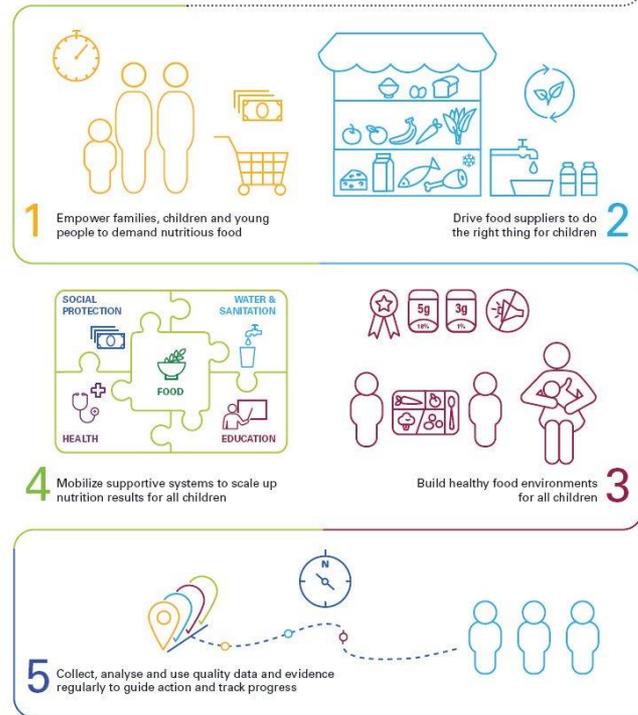
Food systems need to be supported by, not undermined, by all the other systems that affect children's lives

Put children's nutrition first

1 in 3 children is not growing well



For every child to grow well



Prevention of overweight and obesity in context of double burden of malnutrition



In 2018, more than half of all stunted children under 5 lived in Asia and more than one third lived in Africa.



In 2018, more than two thirds of all wasted children under 5 lived in Asia and more than one quarter lived in Africa.



In 2018, almost half of all overweight children under 5 lived in Asia and one quarter lived in Africa.

UNICEF is mindful of the evolving nature of malnutrition and aims to:

- Do no harm with existing actions
- Retro-fit or redesign existing actions to be “double duty”
- Develop new actions, where needed, to address specific risks for overweight

Double duty actions for prevention of multiple forms of malnutrition

	Potential to benefit:	
	undernutrition	overweight prevention
 Restrictions against the harmful impact of marketing on children and adolescents		
 Support for and promotion of exclusive breastfeeding and appropriate complementary feeding		
 Evidence-based mandatory standards for nutritional quality of foods		
 Comprehensive school food policies to ensure availability and promotion of healthy foods while limiting availability of “junk” foods		
 Policies aimed at improving dietary diversity through local production of minimally processed food and healthy retail environments		
 Increased capacity for nutrition counselling and support for via primary care settings		
 Social and behaviour change communication to influence social norms in support of long-term, sustainable behaviour change		
 Fiscal and social protection policies that promote healthier diets		



Policies to influence the obesogenic food environment



Using a child rights approach, UNICEF will advocate for specific regulatory frameworks, such as:

- Full implementation of the Code and WHA 69.9
- Regulating marketing of foods and non-alcoholic beverages to children
- Health-related pricing policies and/or social protection
 - taxes on sugary and sweetened beverages and other unhealthy foods
 - targeted subsidies for healthy foods
- Front of pack labelling to identify foods that are high in saturated fats, free sugars and/or salt
- Healthier food retail environments and check outs
- Restrictions of sales of unhealthy foods in schools



Thank you!