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## Nutritionflash Newsletter

### Knowledge and developments in nutrition and food security

A service by Capacity for Nutrition (C4N)

*Nutritionflash is developed by Capacity for Nutrition (C4N), part of the GIZ programme Knowledge for Nutrition (K4N), in cooperation with the European Commission Directorate-General for International Partnerships, Unit for Sustainable Agri-Food Systems and Fisheries (INTPA.F.3).*

## From our circle of EC, EU, BMZ and GIZ

**The shift to sustainable food systems needs to be a global movement**, said Frans Timmermans, Executive Vice President of the European Commission at the United Nations Food Systems Summit in New York 24 September 2021. He added 'We need to turn the page on a food system that drives too many people to unhealthy food choices. Easy choice must become the healthy and sustainable choice.' Full [text](#) and video available [here](#).

### Five of six global nutrition targets: off track

The newly launched [Global Nutrition Report](#), calls for 'greatly accelerated progress' to reach global targets on stunting, wasting, low birth weight, anemia and childhood overweight. It also notes that current global targets do not consider poor diets and their health and environmental impact, noting there is 'a clear gap to fill' to track and target poor nutrition for change. The report is the leading data-led appraisal of progress in nutrition.

### 'A world without hunger' – a new BMZ core area strategy

BMZ has recently approved the core area strategy 'A world without hunger'. The three intervention areas (1) Food Security, (2) Rural Development, and (3) Agriculture, represent a holistic and multi-sectoral approach. The strategy stresses that a world without hunger is possible within the planetary boundaries, and envisages cooperation with many partners from governments, civil society, international organisations, science and the private sector. 'A world without hunger' guides one of the five core areas of the [BMZ2030](#) reform strategy. An English translation will be available soon.

**New research report from the [Nutrition Research Facility \(NRF\)](#) highlights that the COVID-19 pandemic has increased food and nutrition insecurity** in low and middle income countries, mainly through income reductions linked to containment measures; and also that policy responses may have limited some of the adverse effects of the sanitary crisis on malnutrition. However, at this stage, the data available for analysis of the impact of the pandemic and the efficiency of policy responses on nutrition outcomes are scarce. The report can be found at [NRF resources database](#).

**Novel Foods:** The GIZ programme Knowledge for Nutrition (K4N) has issued a review on the use of insects as food or feed. Among conclusions: Because of their nutritional composition, accessibility, often simple rearing techniques and quick growth rates, insects can offer a cheap and efficient way for nutritious protein-rich food and feed. For more information or an evidence brief, please contact [boran.altincicek@giz.de](mailto:boran.altincicek@giz.de).

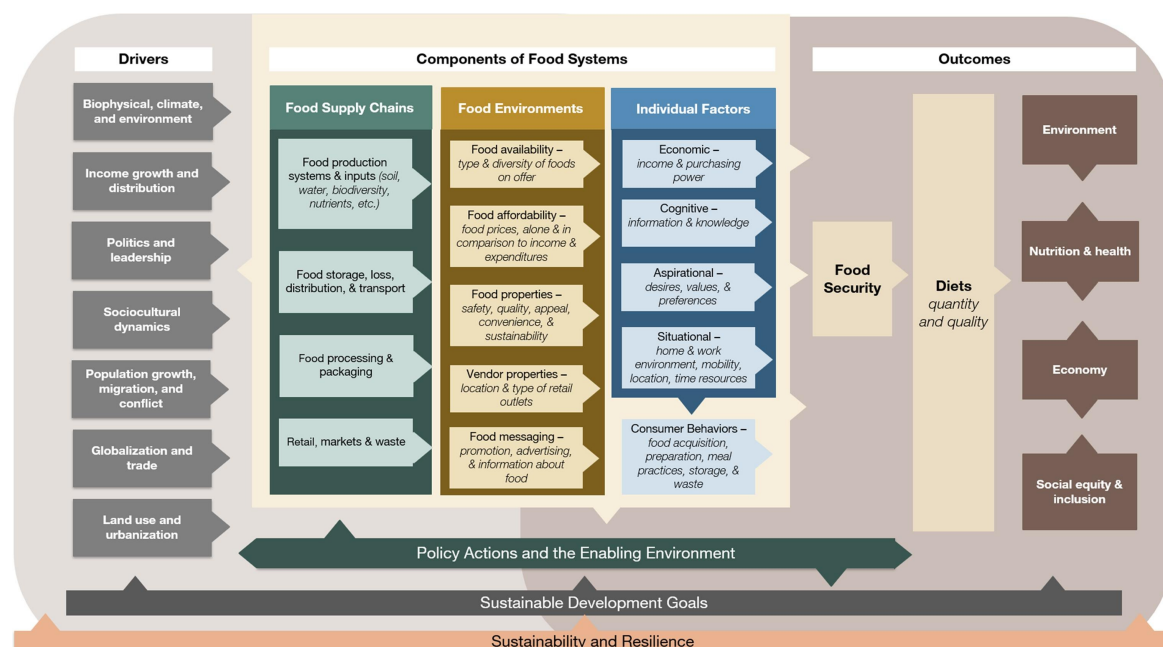
**National Information Platforms for Nutrition (NIPN):** The new report 'Lessons Learned from NIPN Phase I: Designing Effective Multisectoral Nutrition Collaboration' provides insights from the design, set-up and early implementation of highly complex multisectoral NIPNs in nine different country and institutional contexts. The brief in particular analyses conditions for successful collaboration: leadership, alignment of objectives, roles and responsibilities, equal power balance and adequate capacities. For more information see the [NIPN website](#) or contact [perrine.geniez@giz.de](mailto:perrine.geniez@giz.de).

**Effects of social protection on food consumption and nutrition:** Elgar Publishing's new [Handbook on Social Protection Systems](#) devotes a chapter specifically to the impact of social protection systems on food consumption and nutrition. Drawing on country studies, the chapter covers issues such as the link from social protection to nutritional outcomes, cash versus food transfers and the role of programme design and management. Developed with support of the EU and BMZ through GIZ, the report is freely available on-line.

## In a graph

### Food systems components, drivers and outcomes

A visual presentation of food systems from 'Viewpoint: Rigorous monitoring is necessary to guide food system transformation in the countdown to the 2030 global goals'. The authors emphasize that drivers must be seen as processes and that components loop back to each other, and to drivers and outcomes, while power dynamics shape interactions and outcomes. See also under 'New Literature'.



From *Viewpoint: Rigorous monitoring is necessary to guide food system transformation in the countdown to 2030 goals*, by J. Fanzo and others, *Food Policy* 104 (2021).

## In more detail

### Fed to fail: the crisis of children's diets in early life

Most children worldwide are not getting enough of the right food when it matters most, before the age of 2, according to a new report published by UNICEF.

'Fed to fail: the crisis of children's diets in early life', analyses young children's diets between the age of 6 and 23 months, when a lack of nutrients will impact their body and brain development, and when a diet rich in highly processed foods can lay the foundation for poor eating habits, overweight and disease.

According to its findings, young children are getting too little nutritious food, by not being fed either an adequately diverse diet or at sufficient frequency (the 'right food at the right time'). More than two-thirds (71%) of children aged 6-23 months were not fed foods from at least five of the eight recommended food groups – the 'minimum dietary diversity' indicator. And almost half (48%) were not being fed the minimum number of meals or snacks recommended each day – according to the indicator for 'minimum meal frequency'.

All countries worldwide are affected, but the poorest are especially so. With little progress in children's dietary quality over the past decade, or in dietary inequalities within countries, there remain gender, social and cultural barriers to children getting the food they need. A major barrier is the cost of nutritious food, while unhealthy food and drink options are cheap, available, convenient and heavily marketed. At the same time, too little priority is given to policies to improve young children's diets.

However, ten countries – Bangladesh, Burkina Faso, Cambodia, Côte d'Ivoire, the Gambia, Kyrgyzstan, Maldives, Nepal, Sierra Leone and Timor-Leste – have made significant progress in improving young children's diets in the past decade, with the share of children receiving a minimally diverse diet rising by at least 10 percentage points.

Governments need to lead the way and mobilise the food, health and social protection systems to make nutritious diets a reality for every child, the report concludes. Among 10 key actions it recommends making nutritious food more affordable, imposing legislation to protect young children from unhealthy food and drink, improving caregivers' knowledge and strengthening public accountability for young children's diets.

The report is based on surveys in 135 countries, policy analysis, discussions with mothers of young children and a literature review. It was produced with support from the European Union and the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ).

## New literature

**Viewpoint: Rigorous monitoring is necessary to guide food system transformation in the countdown to 2030 goals**, by J. Fanzo and others, Food Policy 104 (2021). The authors of this article argue that food systems transformation is urgent and requires rigorous, science-based monitoring to guide decisions in the public and private spheres and ensure accountability. Monitoring the full extent of food systems and the interactions between their components is essential to support short term corrections required to meet the global sustainable development goals.

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**Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit  
(GIZ) GmbH**

Registered offices  
Bonn and Eschborn, Germany

Friedrich-Ebert-Allee 32 + 36  
53113 Bonn, Germany  
T +49 228 44 60-0  
F +49 228 44 60-17 66

Dag-Hammarskjöld-Weg 1 - 5

65760 Eschborn, Germany  
T +49 61 96 79-0  
F +49 61 96 79-11 15

E [info@giz.de](mailto:info@giz.de)  
I [www.giz.de](http://www.giz.de)

**Registered at**

Local court (Amtsgericht) Bonn, Germany: HRB 18384  
Local court (Amtsgericht) Frankfurt am Main, Germany: HRB  
12394

VAT no. DE 113891176

Tax no. 040 250 56973

**Chairman of the Supervisory Board**

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Ingrid-Gabriela Hoven

Thorsten Schäfer-Gümbel

**In charge of this newsletter:**

Laura Barrington, [laura.barrington@giz.de](mailto:laura.barrington@giz.de)

**Editor(s):**

Kim Clausen, [kim.clausen@giz.de](mailto:kim.clausen@giz.de)

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