

Introduction, World Nutrition, Volume 12, Issue 2 for 2021

This issue begins with a very concerning report from the World Public Health Nutrition Association External Affairs Secretary, Claudio Schuftan, about corporate capture of the forthcoming Food Systems Summit. Holla provides a relevant commentary, focusing on what she cleverly calls the “malnutrition bazaar,” examining one of major product-based silver bullets Northern donors fixate on and pressure developing countries to adopt.

Galtier et al. present a study looking at the impact in a French location of providing traffic light type labels on foods in a cafeteria setting, with and without simple counseling. Owen et al. evaluate the impact of individualized diet counseling in a pilot study in Madagascar. Ncube-Murakwani examines lessons learned from Care Groups in Zimbabwe for improving diets among adolescent mothers. Edafioghor et al. look at complementary feeding practices and their link to anthropometric measurements of infants and young children in an area of Nigeria. Rahman et al. review the challenges of managing anemia in a setting with endemic malaria.

Two research papers examine public health nutrition issues in the UK. Krivtsova and Keith report on infant feeding issues experienced by working mothers in London. Noonan-Gunning et al. examine the problems affecting England’s ability to achieve food and nutrition security when faced with the COVID-19 pandemic.

World Nutrition has sought to be a place where progressive workers in the field of public health nutrition can openly debate, including in ways and on issues that other scientific journals tend to avoid. Somehow, there is a widespread belief that science and controversy do not mix. To the contrary, as Kuhn taught us, they go hand and hand.

Letters in this issue by Forster, Sussex, Jameson, and Beam plunge into a debate I did not even know existed not until recently. Having worked with breastfeeding at public health level for nearly half a century, I follow some of the literature and some social media groups run by that “community.” To my shock and surprise, I began seeing posts that seemed vaguely similar to right-wing arguments against the trans community—and yet these I knew were coming from politically progressive women. It actually took me quite some time to begin to understand what was going on. Each of these letters illuminates different aspects of struggles going on to deal with potential changes in the use of language in the breastfeeding field. I hope they will speed our readers’ understanding of some aspects of the debate. They are all, roughly, on the same side of the debate. I welcome more inputs from our readers for our next issue. Please do read all four letters before responding however; they are all succinct.

--Ted Greiner, Editor-in-Chief