

Introduction to the third issue of World Nutrition for 2021

For those who have been working in public health nutrition in low-income countries for decades, there has been an amazing uptick in the attention and funding it gets in recent years. Sadly, much of this, I believe, is because Big Agriculture and Big Snack realized it was in their interests to further exploit markets in these countries and to put a stop to global activism that threatens their interests. (Not that they provide the money; they provide the bought off policy- and decision-makers.) The “neoliberal revolution” that started in about 1980 has paved the way nicely for them to achieve both of their objectives. WN has published a good deal in the past about the resulting “corporate capture” of relevant international agencies, sadly, even UN agencies. And much of this additional money is going into the purchase of products or nutrients made by giant Northern multinational companies. What could be a better deal than expanding your business on the taxpayer’s dime?

In this issue of the journal, we publish two relevant official World Public Health Nutrition Association statements. The first is our commentary/critique of the first half of the UN Decade on Nutrition. The second is a position paper on strengthened governance and accountability in public health nutrition. In addition, Haile et al. provide a commentary reflecting on the CFS (Committee on World Food Security) Voluntary Guidelines on Food Systems and Nutrition in advance of the United Nations Food Security Summit.

This issue does not include the usual Good Question from George Kent, our Deputy Editor, but does include his book review of “Within our Grasp: Childhood Malnutrition Worldwide and the Revolution Taking Place to End it.” Just a warning for our readership, it is a book likely to be of interest to the general public, not so much for experts in the field of PHN. Ghazi provides another book review, this one on “Pediatric Swallowing and Feeding Assessment and Management.”

In this issue, we continue to publish on the evocative issue of the use of gender identity language in the field of breastfeeding counseling, with a commentary by Munzer and letters from Turner and from Sussex. The issue is complex, problematic, and still in flux.

Among our research papers this time, Beyaz et al. compare nutritional knowledge of dialysis patients in Finland with that of these patients in Turkey. Kutyaaripo et al. provide an equally fascinating look at how Zimbabweans, with little access to expensive drugs and until recently, vaccines, turned to functional foods in hopes that it would help protect them during the COVID-19 pandemic. Aregbeshola et al. explore the prevalence and correlates of anemia among preschool aged children in Nigeria. Then Sully et al. take a look, using qualitative research methods, at awareness of the importance of diet and physical activity on the occurrence of non-communicable diseases among Black British adults, most of whom are African immigrants. Finally, Moyo also uses qualitative methods, including photo elicitation, to explore perspectives of informal food vendors in a high density area of Cape Town.

Ted Greiner, PhD
Editor-in-Chief