



*Better lives through livestock*

# Environmental influences for the double burden of malnutrition for LMICs: an African perspective and current opportunities for action

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*Namukolo Covic, Director General's Representative to Ethiopia*

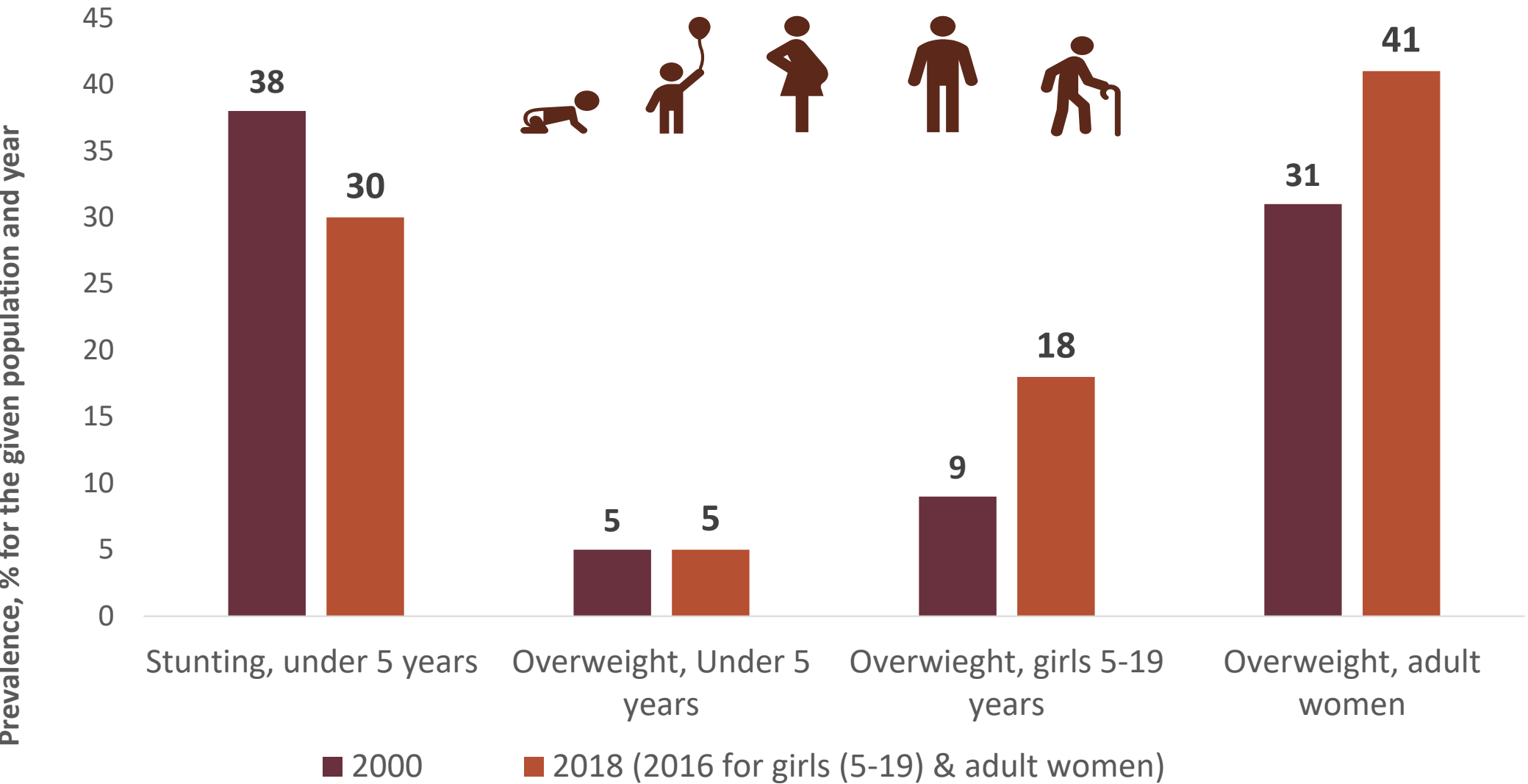
*CGIAR Regional Director, East and Southern Africa*

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# Key messages

- Africa is facing a double burden of malnutrition
- There is not much work that has been done on environmental influences, but this is an emerging area of research.
- We must leverage current momentum on efforts to promote positive food systems transformation to foster better diets and in turn better nutrition and health outcomes.

Africa's current food systems is leading to a clear double burden of malnutrition



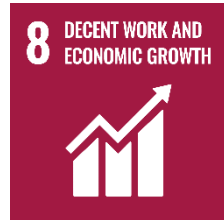
Source, GNR, 2019



# Poor nutrition and health outcomes partly justifies why we needed the UNFSS



- Launch bold new actions to transform the way the world produces and consumes food to promote progress on all SDGs
- The ambitious goals reflect the urgency needed
- Addressed global and local problems from existing food systems
  - Widespread poor diets and different forms of malnutrition
  - The climate crisis and environmental degradation
  - The significant contributions of food systems to climate and environmental challenges
  - Challenges of inequities, safety and sustainability of livelihoods



Our food systems transformation efforts must also seek to address important environmental influences that have been observed in emerging research across the continent

## Example 1: Ethiopia urban school environment for adolescents

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- Plenty of outlets around the school and in the school compounds selling unhealthy food
- Low dietary diversity: average of 3.6 food groups out of 10
- 89.9% of the advertisements were of ultra-processed foods and mostly sugar-sweetened beverages
- Ultra-processed foods and beverages were consumed by 23.5% of adolescents.
- Majority spent their pocket money on sugar sweetened beverages, sweets or fried foods

## Example 2: A study involving urban Ghanaian adolescents

- Though aware of what a healthy diet was the adolescents in this study did not use their knowledge to influence their consumption choices positively
- Though exposed to much advertising they were not aware of the types of marketing influences they were under
- This may imply that the advertising targets subliminal messaging

Rampalli et al., 2022

<https://www.frontiersin.org/articles/10.3389/fpubh.2022.861463/full>

## Example 3: From the South Africa Birth to 20 Study

It was clear that consumption patterns are impacted by the environment at school and in the home

- Adolescents who helped with food tasks at home were at higher risk of excess energy consumption and participating in less exercise
- The helpful adolescents with food tasks had a higher risk of being obese
- Most of foods purchased at school were unhealthy

Sedibe et al., 2018 <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/29382137/>






On exclusive breastfeeding Africa has made relatively good progress  
But the quality of the complementary diet remains a challenge  
in part due to unaffordability of nutritious foods

This study in Ethiopia used dried egg powder to reduce the cost of the complementary diet by 14%. **The question is** – can we be more creative to make nutritious diets more affordable?

SUPPLEMENT ARTICLE

Maternal & Child Nutrition | WILEY

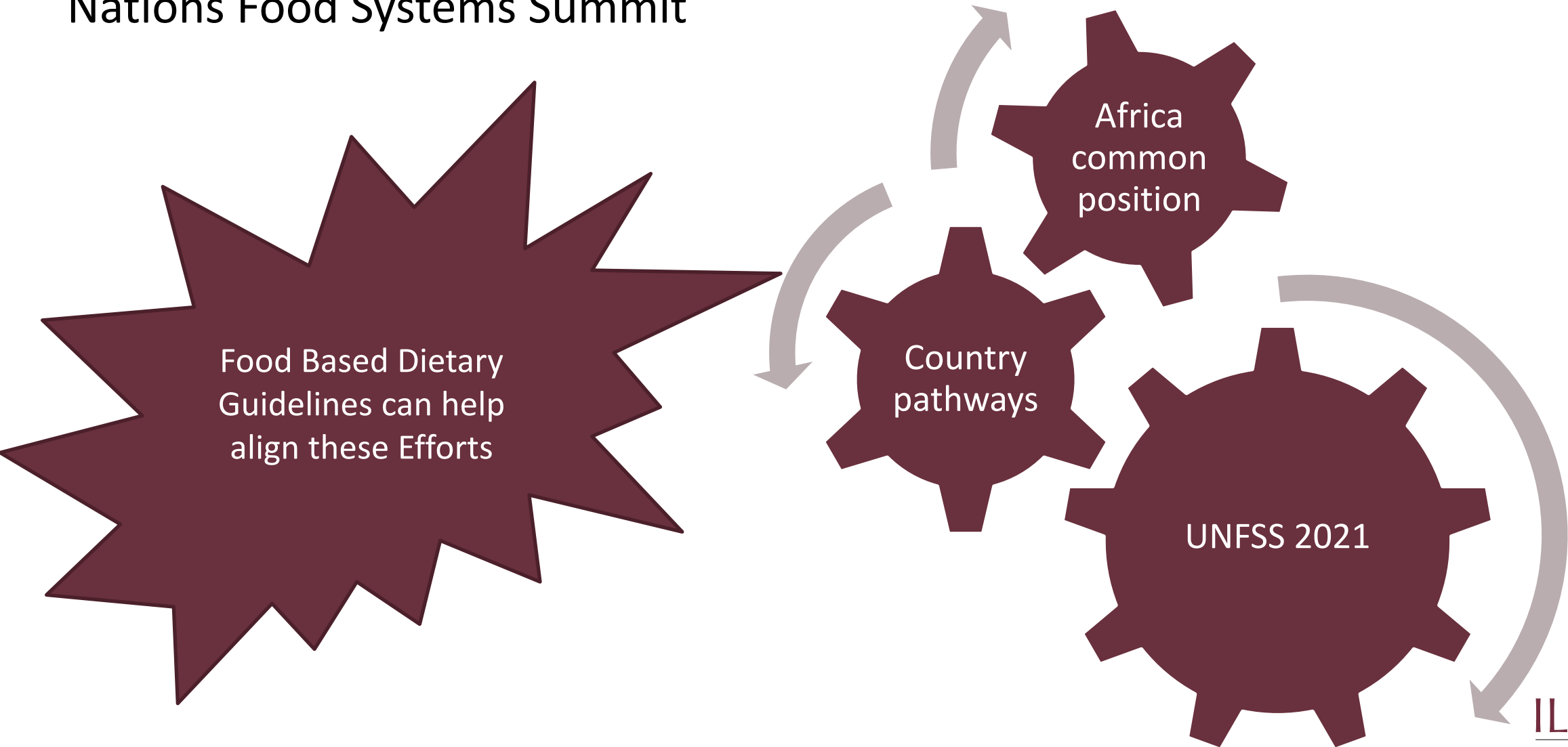
## Whole egg powder makes nutritious diet more affordable for Ethiopia: A cost of the diet and affordability analysis

Kaleab Baye<sup>1,2</sup>  | Andinet Abera<sup>3</sup> | Stanley Chitekwe<sup>4</sup>  | Paulos Getachew<sup>1</sup> |  
Abebe Hailemariam<sup>4</sup> | Filippo Dibari<sup>5</sup> | Arnaud Laillou<sup>4</sup> 

Baye et. al., 2021 <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/34558194/>

- It is clear the transformation of food systems we seek must include attention to environmental influences in and outside the home and on affordability.
- What opportunities does Africa have to do better?

There are clear opportunities to align efforts to foster positive and collective momentum across Africa in response to the United Nations Food Systems Summit



# Example: Ethiopia vision for food systems transformation could help align efforts

*“A holistic transformation of Ethiopia’s food systems from production to consumption that promotes enhanced food safety, nutrition and diets, improved livelihoods, greater land preservation and restoration and greater resilience to shocks and stress.”*

*“We seek to transform our food systems using sustainable and healthy diet-centered lens that minimizes tradeoffs through calling for strong collaboration across all food systems actors, uniting around a common goal of healthy and sustainable diets for all.”*



The food systems transformation countdown to 2030 initiative has proposed  
a monitoring and evaluation framework for food systems transformation  
with attention to better diets and nutrition outcomes

**Outcomes of food systems**

**Diets, nutrition,  
and health**

Diet quality  
Food security  
Food environments  
Policies affecting food environments

**Environment and  
climate**

Land use  
Greenhouse gas emissions  
Water use  
Pollution  
Biosphere integrity

**Livelihoods,  
poverty, and  
equity**

Poverty and income  
Employment  
Social protection  
Rights

**Crosscutting issues**

Shared vision  
Strategic planning and policies  
Effective implementation  
Accountability

**Governance**

Exposure to shocks  
Resilience capacities  
Agrobiodiversity  
Food security stability  
Food system sustainability index

**Resilience and  
sustainability**

Some of these are being considered to monitor Agriculture Development Programmes



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**Thank you!**