

DOUBLE-DUTY ACTIONS TO ADDRESS ALL FORMS OF MALNUTRITION: FROM EVIDENCE TO PROGRAMMES AND POLICY



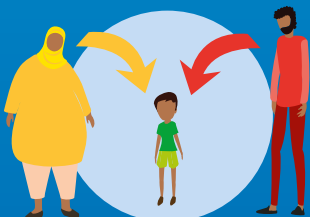
Renowned global health and development academics and practitioners authored *The Lancet Series on the Double Burden of Malnutrition*.



The world is facing a new nutrition reality. Being undernourished or overweight are no longer separate public health issues.



The double burden of malnutrition is growing and disproportionately affecting the poorest and most vulnerable populations.



Both extremes of malnutrition also impact individuals throughout their lifetime and can be passed to the next generation.

DYNAMICS OF THE DOUBLE BURDEN OF MALNUTRITION AND THE CHANGING NUTRITION REALITY (Popkin et al.)

The double burden of malnutrition is growing among individuals, households, communities and nations, disproportionately affecting the poorest and most vulnerable. From 126 low- and middle-income countries studied, 48 faced the double burden of malnutrition in the 2010s – with their population facing simultaneous wasting, stunting, thinness and obesity. This change is driven by a new nutrition reality, characterised by a transformation in the way people grow, live, work, eat, move and age, alongside shifts in our global food systems, from production to marketing, purchasing and consumption.



THE DOUBLE BURDEN OF MALNUTRITION: AETIOLOGICAL PATHWAYS AND CONSEQUENCES FOR HEALTH (Wells et al.)

Undernutrition and overweight/obesity promote themselves and each other, as well as their adverse health effects across the life-course and generations. This is driven through interconnected biological pathways, along with broader societal and ecological factors within the new nutrition reality. Interventions and programmes that seek to address undernutrition and overweight/obesity must do so simultaneously, with a life-course and multi-generational approach.



DOUBLE-DUTY ACTIONS: SEIZING PROGRAMME AND POLICY OPPORTUNITIES TO ADDRESS MALNUTRITION IN ALL ITS FORMS (Hawkes et al.)

Double-duty actions work to address undernutrition and overweight/obesity simultaneously through their shared common drivers. Evidence shows there are ten strong multisectoral opportunities for double-duty actions that must be acted upon, including across health, social protection, education and agriculture platforms.



ECONOMIC EFFECTS OF THE DOUBLE BURDEN OF MALNUTRITION (Nugent et al.)

Current approaches to address and measure malnutrition in all its forms are inadequate and new economic modelling tools are required to accurately estimate the economic impact of the double burden of malnutrition. Double-duty actions may be more economically effective to address malnutrition in its multiple forms than interventions and programmes that focus on undernutrition or overweight/obesity separately.



To read the full Series, please visit:

thelancet.com/series/double-burden-malnutrition

Global efforts must be concentrated on comprehensive approaches addressing the new nutrition reality and all forms of malnutrition simultaneously. The authors propose policy measures including improved breastfeeding, child growth monitoring programmes, and refocussing and supporting agriculture to produce nutritious foods. The authors say this will more effectively tackle malnutrition and may save money, compared to measures that target undernutrition or obesity alone.

10 DOUBLE-DUTY ACTIONS

There are 10 strong opportunities for double-duty actions which could address the double burden of malnutrition more efficiently (see Panel 2 in Hawkes et al. for full list). These are:



1 Scaling up the antenatal care recommendations proposed by the World Health Organization.



2 Comprehensively implementing programmes to protect and promote breastfeeding.



3 Ensuring guidance for introducing foods alongside breastfeeding to make mothers aware of the risks of foods, snacks and beverages high in energy, sugar, fat and salt.



4 Redesigning existing child growth monitoring programmes.



5 Preventing undue harm from energy-dense and micronutrient-fortified foods and ready-to-use supplements.



6 Designing social support and welfare programmes to reduce risks from foods, snacks, and beverages high in energy, sugar, fat, and salt.



7 Redesigning school feeding programmes and devising new nutritional guidelines for food in and around educational institutions to ensure nutritious foods are available instead of foods, snacks, and beverages high in energy, sugar, fat and salt.



8 Extending the number of agricultural development programmes which make nutritious foods available, affordable and appealing.



9 Implementing new large-scale agricultural and food system policies with healthy diets as their primary goal.



10 Delivering public policies to improve food environments to tackle all forms of malnutrition.

