

# Improving nutrition during middle childhood and adolescence by 2032: A research roadmap

Authors: Stephanie V. Wrottesley and  
Natasha Lelijveld





# Roadmap content

For the 6 priority research areas from the CHNRI exercise:

- ▶ ***What we know:*** Collates current knowledge, evidence gaps and lessons learnt
- ▶ ***Way forward:*** Detailed, global research agenda to address identified gaps and achieve impact over the next 10 years (by 2032)



# Research areas covered

1. How should ANC/PNC interventions be adapted to effectively, and cost-effectively, support the specific health and nutritional needs of pregnant adolescents?
2. What strategies are effective for delivering interventions in schools to improve the quality of diets and the nutritional outcomes of school-age children and adolescents?
3. What strategies are effective at involving SAC and adolescents in defining their own context-specific solutions to nutrition problems, and does their involvement result in more effective interventions?
4. What are effective, context-specific behaviour change communication strategies to improve the diets and nutritional status of SAC and adolescents?
5. What improvements can be made to local food systems to support access to healthy diets in schools?
6. What are the optimal cross-sector partnerships and delivery platforms (health, education, social protection, digital platforms, media/technology, etc.) for the effective uptake of nutrition interventions for SAC and adolescents, considering scale, sustainability and youth engagement?



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Top 5  
overall



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Highest for pregnant adolescents

Highest for in-school adolescents

Highest for out-of-school adolescents

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Improve equity

Answerable  
Effective  
Deliverable



## 1. ANC and PNC for pregnant adolescents

### *What we know:*

- ▶ Uptake of general ANC services by adolescent girls
- ▶ Barriers to accessing ANC services

### *Research gaps:*

- ▶ Uptake of general PNC services and barriers
- ▶ Impacts/cost-effectiveness of tailored ANC/PNC services
- ▶ Application of other adolescent-responsive health service strategies to ANC/PNC





## 1. ANC & PNC for pregnant adolescents

### *Way forward - suggested research:*

- ▶ Adolescent-responsive, cost-effective, ANC/PNC service packages/delivery platforms
- ▶ Benefits of including family members/healthcare providers in SBCC interventions
- ▶ Delivery via existing community-based services or platforms
- ▶ Use of electronic/mobile health platforms to educate, inform and engage adolescent girls during pregnancy and postpartum





## 2. School-based nutrition intervention strategies

### *What we know:*

- ▶ School feeding programmes
- ▶ WIFAS

### *Research gaps:*

- ▶ Prevalence of anaemia/ micronutrient deficiencies and impacts of supplementation at 5-9y
- ▶ Minimum quality standards for school meals
- ▶ How to address barriers to delivering WIFAS programmes
- ▶ Potential transition from WIFAS to weekly MMS




## 2. School-based nutrition intervention strategies

### *Way forward - suggested research:*

- ▶ Minimum standards for school feeding programmes and tailoring by context, age and sex
- ▶ Contextualisation and scalability of WIFAS programmes
- ▶ Benefits/cost-effectiveness of transitioning to MMS
- ▶ Burden of anaemia and other micronutrient deficiencies between 5-9y
- ▶ Benefits of micronutrient supplementation from 5-9y






### 3. Effective youth engagement strategies

#### *What we know:*

- ▶ Benefits of youth engagement
- ▶ Examples of youth engagement strategies and supporting guidance/ tools

#### *Research gaps:*

- ▶ Strategies, models and tools for youth engagement in nutrition interventions in LMICs
- ▶ Context-specific barriers/enablers to sustained/effective engagement
- ▶ Lack of consensus on how to describe youth engagement in research and how to measure impact

A young boy with dark hair, seen from the side and back, is looking towards a group of children in the background. The children are standing outdoors on a paved area, with trees and foliage in the background. The image is partially obscured by a dark blue and green geometric overlay on the right side.

### 3. Effective youth engagement strategies

#### *Way forward - suggested research:*

- ▶ Optimal strategies for nutrition interventions in LMICs and adaptation by context, age & sex
- ▶ Barriers/enablers to sustainably engaging children and adolescents and how they vary by context, age and sex





## 4. Effective, context-specific SBCC strategies

### *Research gaps:*

- ▶ Mechanisms of behaviour change to support improved diets
- ▶ Guidance on developing context-specific content and intervention materials
- ▶ Understanding of effective mobilisation strategies in and out of school
- ▶ Examples that engage community members in programme design/implementation
- ▶ Guidance on SBCC training for teachers/staff at scale
- ▶ Feasible, acceptable and effective media-based approaches in LMICs

A photograph of a young girl with dark skin and braided hair, wearing a red and white patterned top, clapping her hands and smiling. In the background, other people are visible, including a woman in an orange top. The image is partially obscured by a dark blue and green geometric overlay on the right side.

## 4. Effective, context-specific SBCC strategies

### *Way forward - suggested research:*

- ▶ Common framework to design contextualised and effective SBCC programmes for improving nutrition in middle childhood and adolescence
- ▶ Effective SBCC strategies for rural adolescents and out-of-school adolescents
- ▶ Feasibility, acceptability and effectiveness of large-scale media-based campaigns in LMICs





## 5. School food systems

### *What we know:*

- ▶ School food systems should promote healthy, micronutrient-dense foods and restrict less healthy food items

### *Research gaps:*

Evidence on acceptability, feasibility and impact of interventions in LMICs:

- ▶ Food standard regulations
- ▶ Restrictions on unhealthy food/beverage vendors/marketing
- ▶ Nutrition education and links with local food producers
- ▶ Good WASH practices
- ▶ Adequate food storage, food safety and hygiene



## 5. School food systems

### *Way forward - suggested research:*

- ▶ Aspects of school food environments associated with dietary/ anthropometric outcomes in LMICs
- ▶ Impacts of school regulation interventions on adolescent diet/nutrition outcomes in LMICs
- ▶ Potential benefits of interventions to support supply chains between local farming systems and school feeding programmes





## 6. Cross-sector partnerships and delivery platforms

### *What we know:*

- ▶ Structural interventions: legislation, taxation, policy implementation
- ▶ Community-based interventions: target social norms and nutrition environments; reach those out of school

### *Research gaps:*

- ▶ Impacts of legislative policies
- ▶ Examples of social protection programmes
- ▶ Evidence on barriers/enablers to accessing services for those out of school
- ▶ Impacts of contextualised community-based platforms



## 6. Cross-sector partnerships and delivery platforms

### *Way forward - suggested research:*

- ▶ Social protection programmes targeting food security and nutrition outcomes, particularly for those out of school
- ▶ Barriers/enablers to accessing nutrition, health and social protection services for those out of school
- ▶ Optimal community-based platforms for delivering nutrition interventions to children and adolescents beyond schools at scale



# Cross-cutting considerations

## *Funding and cost-effectiveness:*

- ▶ Funding a key barrier to implementation and/or sustainability
- ▶ Need estimations of cost-effectiveness to assess suitability, sustainability and scalability across LMICs

## *Monitoring and evaluation:*

- ▶ Research needed on what indicators/ outcomes measure and optimal timing and platforms for monitoring and evaluation

## *Multi-sector engagement:*

- ▶ Greater focus on effective engagement across sectors - social protection systems, health services, agricultural and commercial sectors



# Next steps: collaboration and coordination

- ▶ Refer to the report for more detailed information on study design, methods and contexts

## *Engage with the Global Adolescent Nutrition Network (GANN)*

- ▶ Network of researchers, programmers, government representatives, donors and UN agencies, coordinated by ENN
- ▶ Platform to identify emerging research, share operational experiences and disseminate information

## *We welcome*

- ▶ Expressions of interest to co-develop concept notes
- ▶ *Updates on* how reports content is being used to shape research plans - within or external to the GANN



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