Introduction to the first issue of World Nutrition for 2023

Corporate capture of global public space and its resources proceeds apace. Unsatisfied with being a major cause of the double burden of malnutrition, global corporations have succeeded in convincing UN agencies and international NGOs that shipping development assistance dollars to their wealthy home countries is the best way to treat, first severe acute malnutrition and in a second push, moderate acute malnutrition. Now the big guns arrive, at least regarding the potential size of those dollar shipments. Imported products are now going to be the way to go even to prevent malnutrition. Pretty much all young children in low- and middle-income countries apparently need Small Quantity Lipid Nutrition Supplements (SQ-LNS). Make your stock investments quick – they already have UNICEF on board this absurd approach. Gupta et al., on behalf of the International Baby Food Action Network, one of the premier global actors in protecting, supporting and promoting breastfeeding, complementary feeding, and infant health, provide a commentary in the current issue of World Nutrition which I hope will serve to alert the global public health nutrition community before it’s too late. If 10s of millions of children are annually going to need months’ worth of a product made from ingredients shipped from industrialized countries, will any funding be left to do anything else in our field?

We publish two research studies in this issue. Saglam and Evren found that professional water polo players in Turkey had generally poor diets. On match day, anxiety levels were higher and diets worse, but overall, anxiety levels did not correlate with diet quality. Pradhan and Sobti studied infant feeding practices in a Punjab district in India. They found that several practices, including heavy use of prelacteal feeds, was similar whether mothers delivered in a public or private hospital.

Literature reviews include Konlan et al. who identify 8 studies of consumer understanding of food labels in Ghana, comparing consumers’ claim to understand them with 2 studies using objective measures that found the opposite. Srivastava and Jain explore how direct breastfeeding is different from bottle feeding -- whether with breast milk or infant formula -- and how both may affect the development of infant appetite regulation. Ahmadnia et al. review the potential value of diet-based actions to manage depression, and ways in which dietary changes could be made to improve mental and cognitive health. Grey et al., in updating a patient management tool for small and nutritionally at-risk infants under six months of age, review the literature on six types of patient management tools used in the past and explain how they chose the approach best suited for their task.

Commentaries include Kent’s paper on the WIC program in the US, concluding that the US is a major violator of the aims and principles of the International Code of Marketing of Breast-milk Substitutes. Mialon and Naik review 5 public policies used globally to protect and promote healthy diets, discussing how they are and/or could be applied in the USA. Naik and Carriedo reveal how newly released official guidelines for dealing with childhood obesity in the US were created by experts with substantial conflicts of interest. In a book review, Ghazi summarizes the contents of a new open access book, “Reshaping Food systems to improve nutrition and health in the eastern Mediterranean Region.”