

Introduction to the re-launched journal, World Nutrition

World Nutrition is the quarterly journal of the [World Public Health Nutrition Association](#) (WPHNA) but its articles reflect the opinions of its authors, not of the association. It aims to provide content of value to nutritionists, dieticians, health workers, agricultural specialists, social scientists, students, policy makers, and others interested in public health nutrition or community nutrition. It is global in scope, presenting content of general interest as well as content specific to low-income or high-income settings. Its content includes editorials, literature reviews, commentaries, book reviews, and letters to the Editor.

The journal has not been published since early 2016. This renewed WN is and will remain different from what it was in several ways. This new software platform will provide authors and those of us involved in editorial and review work a more smoothly functioning working environment. Authors will, from now on, submit papers directly to the submissions link on the journal home page rather than sending them by email to the Editor. That does not mean we expect to become excruciatingly formal or distant from our authors. You are still welcome to write us. My email address is below.

Similarities and differences

WN, like the World Public Health Nutrition Association (WPHNA) to which it is linked, is committed to change. We are horrified to see that poverty, its main driver—inequality, and the many resulting nutritional problems remain at unacceptably high levels. Unlike other scientific journals, we encourage authors to include reference to these and other social/economic determinants of poor nutrition of all kinds. We are looking for positive examples of what needs to be preserved, protected and developed to make this a better world.

WPHNA and WN are different than most others in the nutrition field. We take conflict of interest (CoI) seriously and will avoid it. Attendance fees pay for our conferences. Membership fees pay for other costs, including those associated with the re-launching and running WN. Our information for authors and reviewers now includes detailed information about the journal's CoI policies.

WN also allows its authors to step outside the bounds of rigid scientific language—too often a way of masking authors' opinions through the use of the passive verb tense and other objective-sounding formulations. Authors are urged to express their opinions about nutrition problems, the factors causing them, and the solutions being attempted. Politics, economics, and social factors are often more important than biology in understanding and addressing nutrition disorders and deficiencies, and yet get inadequate attention in most nutrition journals.

Thus commentaries, editorials, and letters to the editor will continue to dominate WN's pages. Many of the commentaries are heavily referenced. That is in the tradition of the first major commentary published in this journal, "The Great Vitamin A Fiasco" by the late Michael Latham. However, traditional scientific literature reviews on issues of concern to the public health nutrition community are also now welcomed in the journal, as well as book reviews.

The Latham commentary can now still be found [here](#). The entire archive of past issues of WN is being migrated to the current website where the most recent issue can already be found. The URL is now www.worldnutritionjournal.org The journal was formerly nested within the WHPNA website and that will be taken down when all the past issues have been fully migrated to the new website that will be exclusively for WN.

Usually editorials, letters to the editor and opinion-based commentary will not be peer-reviewed, as is the tradition for those types of submissions in other journals. More scientifically-oriented and referenced commentary and literature reviews will be peer reviewed. While opinions belong to their authors, facts and science do not.

WN is in the process of becoming a member of Crossref, which means we will be able to attach DOIs (Document Object Identifiers) to all substantive papers, in both past and future issues. This will allow WN's papers to have a permanent location on the internet, be found more easily, and be more widely indexed and searchable. We will notify past authors once a DOI has been assigned to their manuscripts.

This issue

We start this issue with a set of papers based on a session at the WPHNA international conference in Cape Town, South Africa in September 2016. The session's title was "Magic bullets (Single technical interventions) versus community-based nutrition programmes." These papers have been updated, and peer reviewed for publication in WN. In addition to treating technical issues, they unflinchingly point a finger of blame at the development assistance donors, their corporate lobbyists, and the World Bank. The scant resources available for dealing with undernutrition and micronutrient deficiencies are not devoted to increasing the production and consumption of healthy foods or to increasing the ability of the poor to afford food. Instead, the global agencies support programs that rely on purchases from wealthy countries.

The topic is introduced by Mason and Margetts. They review some of the major magic bullets that consume the majority of resources, both financial and technical, available for nutrition. The next papers describe the right ways of doing things. Doherty et al take up broad questions on community health workers, what their impact is and characteristics of health systems that use them. Then Shanta and Shrimpton explore critical design elements of community-based nutrition programs and research needs. Then Fisker and I view with a critical eye one of the most highly visible and controversial magic bullets--high dose vitamin A supplementation.

Three papers on related topics come next. First, Shrimpton et al explore the capacity building issues relevant to the human resources needed to implement nutrition programs. Then two papers add Indian perspectives to the magic bullets debate, first on the risks of high doses of vitamin A (Kapil, et al) and second on the big push for imported ready to use therapeutic foods for so-called community management of malnutrition (Prasad).

Sadly, donor agencies largely view economic analyses of nutrition programming from their own point of view. Shifting attention to the communities that need help, community-based approaches bring positive economic as well as health benefits and the potential for sustainability. Backyard gardens are just one of many examples.

Global agribusiness is putting us all at risk, especially the low-income countries it is increasingly penetrating. It is driving small farmers out of business and replacing ecological food production with the industrial model. Sustainable agricultural approaches are gaining increasing attention as a possible antidote. For example, Action Against Hunger has published a [short summary](#) of the issues. This issue of World Nutrition presents a detailed explanation of sustainable agriculture, with examples and illustrative photos from Malawi, authored by the Nordin and Nordin. Linnecar then addresses the endocrine disrupting chemicals our industrialized food supply brings to our tables, and the ongoing battle to reduce them.

How money is spent to solve nutrition problems is more important than ever now. After decades of neglect, nutrition problems in developing countries are finally getting attention. In line with this, WHO has produced its first ever nutrition strategy (<http://www.who.int/nutrition/publications/nutrition-strategy-2016to2025/en/>). In this issue, WN presents reviews of this strategy document by former staff from both WHO/PAHO (Freire) and FAO (Egal).

But the UN is in the throes of a right-wing death threat under the guise of neoliberalism. Many are not familiar with the way the neoliberal agenda has been quietly getting implemented for decades now by parties of both the right and even the center-left—the latter fooled into viewing it as something technical rather than a political tool of the wealthy to ensure that even more wealth and power come their way. Another commentary by Schuftan and I addresses how this threatens WHO's effectiveness.

Next come two commentaries that relate to conflict of interest issues. Aksnes et al. express the concern we all have that most nutrition organizations seem impervious to the Col involved in accepting funding from companies that make ultra-processed and other foods that are part of the problem. They also worry that the current US administration is taking Col to a whole new level, threatening to normalize it even further. George Kent, our Deputy Editor, provides a detailed article exploring the Col involved in the world's largest infant formula giveaway program, part of the US government's Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC). It is preceded by a commentary by me on his article.

The final contributions are a review by Peter Greaves, former Chief of Nutrition, UNICEF Headquarters, of a new book (Why the Politics of Breastfeeding Matter by Gabrielle Palmer) and George Kent's closing request for reader discussion of Good Question.

Gradual progress is truly being made in solving problems of malnutrition linked to too little food consumption (as well as other underlying and basic causes). But health problems linked to excessive calorie consumption, inadequate exercise (and perhaps other issues such as hormonal disturbances) are rapidly increasing in rich and poor countries alike. Indeed, in all but the lowest income countries, obesity now often affects the poor more than the rich. The most recent high-quality estimate has it that 600 million people are obese, and that this is directly attributable to 4 million deaths a year (The GBD 2015 Obesity Collaborators 2017). We urge readers with expertise in overweight, obesity, and non-communicable diseases to contribute their commentaries and reviews to WN.

Join us in making WN excel as a journal representing the views of the public health nutrition community

Everyone working on the journal, including me, does so as a volunteer. If you are interested in contributing, let us know. Associate editors and a copy editor are needed.

We are also always in need of more volunteers for the heroic, critical, but unsung task of reviewing papers submitted to the journal. Write me at tedhgreiner@gmail.com and let me know which topics you feel most comfortable reviewing—word them as broadly or narrowly as you like. I find that peer reviewing gives me a chance to keep up with the latest findings, but also to have some small influence on what gets published and the way in which critical issues are dealt with.

Some personal comments

For decades, I have warned students, including those from low-income countries, who were interested in careers in my field—nutrition in low-income countries—that jobs are scarce. I would no longer give them that warning. Particularly for those willing to work in humanitarian or emergency settings, jobs now abound. The world has finally woken up and to some extent begun putting its money where its mouth is. (An apt nutrition metaphor!)

As a young man, I thought hard about what was the main cause of human suffering that could be changed, and decided it was what we eat. In the decades since then, I've learned that the major factors affecting what people eat are not just personal, and thus that approaches to changing behavior are only part of the solution. The human rights approach WN endorses requires that claim holders organize and demand from duty bearers, largely but not only governments, that they search and come up with the active implementation of more sustainable solutions at public health, as well as other levels.

We who work with public health nutrition are guardians of human well-being. Yet if we are to be effective, let us learn from the life of Michael Latham. When he rose in righteous outrage against the injustices and indignities he witnessed against the poor and the defenseless, he moved us all. But outrage becomes righteous only when born, like his was, of love for and service to humanity.

--Ted Greiner, Editor-in-Chief, World Nutrition, tedhgreiner@gmail.com

Brown, V., M. Moodie, L. Cobiac, A. M. Mantilla Herrera and R. Carter (2017). "Obesity-related health impacts of fuel excise taxation- an evidence review and cost-effectiveness study." BMC Public Health **17**(1): 359.

The GBD 2015 Obesity Collaborators (2017). "Health Effects of Overweight and Obesity in 195 Countries over 25 Years." N Engl J Med: 1-15.