

Conceptual framework of food systems for children and adolescents

Malnutrition in all its forms - undernutrition, micronutrient deficiencies and overweight/obesity - affects every country globally. Around the world, the diets of children and adolescents are commonly lacking in many nutrients & foods which are conducive to good health, particularly in low- and middle-income countries. Food systems are a major determinant of this, and must be transformed to support healthy, nutritious, and sustainable diets for children and adolescents. Children & adolescents are a group which should be awarded high priority in food systems transformation, given their nutritional requirements for growth and their susceptibility to marketing & advertising techniques. However, recent efforts to transform food systems have not held children & adolescents as a priority. This paper suggests a new conceptual framework, the '*Innocenti Framework*', which investigates the relationship between children specifically and individual components of food systems.

The framework conceptualises the interactions within and between: exogenous & endogenous food systems drivers & determinants, food supply chains, food environments, behaviours of caregivers/children/adolescents, and the primary outcome of diets of children and adolescents. The paper highlights food systems governance challenges, the need for more child-specific recommendations to be included in food systems transformation agendas, and identifies potential areas where policies and programs could be put in place with the eventual goal of producing a food system which supports nutritious, sustainable diets for all children.

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