



Editorial**From missed targets to renewed resolve**Stanley I.R. Okoduwa^{1,3} , Ted Greiner^{2,*} ¹Deputy Editor, World Nutrition, World Public Health Nutrition Association²Editor-in-Chief, World Nutrition, World Public Health Nutrition Association³Department of Research Innovation Management, Directorate of Research and Development, Nigerian Institute of Leather and Science Technology, [Federal Ministry of Innovation, Science and Technology], Samaru-Zaria, Nigeria**Keywords:** Global nutrition targets; malnutrition and child feeding practices; early childhood development; food security; social protection; community-based nutrition interventions; rights-based nutrition policy<https://doi.org/10.26596/wn.20251641-2>***Correspondence:** editor@worldnutritionjournal.org, tedgreiner@yahoo.com

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This fourth and final issue of *World Nutrition* for 2025 begins and ends with sad news about the death of our former Deputy Editor, George Kent, PhD. **Ted Greiner's** editorial titled, "*George Kent's legacy*", brings together his and others' personal accounts of the remarkable ways in which George's work and his personal engagement in nutrition issues influenced their work and our entire profession of public health nutrition for the good. **Jody Harris's** commentary, "*Human rights in food and nutrition: George Kent's contributions*," is a timely reflection on a body of work that has also profoundly shaped the ethical foundations of public health nutrition. Kent's insistence that hunger and malnutrition are violations of human rights—not simply technical failures—resonates strongly with the evidence presented throughout this issue.

This issue of *World Nutrition* is published at a time when the gap between global nutrition commitments and lived realities has become increasingly stark. Despite decades of evidence, advocacy, and international target-setting, malnutrition in all its forms remains widespread, deeply inequitable, and highly sensitive to political and economic shocks. The contributions in this issue collectively demonstrate that the problem is no longer a lack of knowledge, but a failure to act decisively on what is already well understood.

The issue opens with an editorial by **Greiner and Jain**, "*The unmet global nutrition targets and the solutions needed*," which situates current nutrition trends within the disappointing trajectory of the WHO Global Nutrition Targets. Of particular concern is the documented increase in stunting since 2020, especially in Africa, reversing earlier gains. As the authors note, the decision by WHO Member States to extend the 2025 targets to 2030 should be seen as a final opportunity—not a postponement—to align nutrition action with the Sustainable Development Goals and to strengthen accountability. Their argument reaffirms a long-standing position of this journal: that effective solutions are known, especially for infants and young children, but are too often undermined by weak political commitment and commercial interests.

Several papers in this issue emphasise how external shocks interact with structural vulnerabilities to worsen

food insecurity and malnutrition. **Dembele**, in "*Self-reported impact of the threat of terrorism and of Covid-19 on household food insecurity in Burkina Faso*," shows that while terrorism and the COVID-19 pandemic have intensified food insecurity, most affected households identify deeper, ongoing causes. Similarly, **Lanou et al.** in "*The prevalence and determinants of unhealthy feeding practices among children 6–23 months of age in Burkina Faso*," document widespread suboptimal complementary feeding practices, revealing that even in households with greater maternal dietary diversity or higher antenatal care engagement, young children may still receive unhealthy diets. Together, these studies highlight that nutrition insecurity is shaped by both structural constraints and household practices.

The fragility of nutrition-relevant social protection is further illustrated by **Manawa et al.** in "*Dietary consequences of the suspension of the National Home-Grown School Feeding Programme on Oyo State school food vendors*." The abrupt rise in severe household food insecurity following programme suspension highlights how nutrition policies function as economic lifelines, not only for beneficiaries but also for those whose livelihoods depend on them. In contrast, **Sulaiman et al.** in "*Effect of a community-based intervention on child nutritional status in Rimi Ward, Kano State, Nigeria*," demonstrate that integrated, community-driven interventions—combining nutrition education, home gardening, and small-scale livestock—can rapidly improve child nutritional outcomes when local capacity and sustained support are prioritised.

Early childhood feeding and care practices are also explored in **Nephalama et al.** "*Meal provisioning at early childhood development (ECD) centres: Perceptions and practices of caregivers and ECD staff in Gauteng Province, South Africa*," which shows that discrepancies between caregivers' and ECD staff feeding practices may confuse children and compromise healthy eating habits. The study highlights the importance of consistent messaging, caregiver engagement, and staff training to ensure that ECD centres reinforce, rather than undermine, optimal feeding practices.

Infant and young child feeding remains a central concern across multiple contributions. Studies from Nigeria—

Olubayo and Samuel's "Exclusive breastfeeding intention and its predictors among pregnant women at Adeoyo Maternity Teaching Hospital, Ibadan," and **Adebayo et al.'s** "A comparative study on knowledge, attitudes, and practices of exclusive breastfeeding of lactating mothers attending a private and public hospital in Ibadan"—again show that high knowledge does not guarantee optimal practice. This persistent gap is echoed in a high-income context by **O'Loughlin and Keith** in "An exploratory analysis of enablers of exclusive breastfeeding in England: Positive deviance in practice," which highlights the decisive roles of maternity protection, health-system support, and regulation of breast-milk substitute marketing. Together, these papers reinforce a core message of *World Nutrition*: breastfeeding outcomes may be shaped as much or more by systems and policies than by individual choice.

Beyond infancy, the issue documents nutrition challenges across the life course. **Ademiluyi et al.** in "Anthropometric indices, nutrition knowledge and perceived dietary behaviours of adolescents attending private and public secondary schools in Odeda, Ogun State, Nigeria," reveal socio-economic gradients that risk entrenching future health inequities. Papers on gestational diabetes (**Ofoezie and Tobin-West**, "Dietary knowledge and management practices of gestational diabetes mellitus..."), chronic kidney disease (**Hmaidouch et al.** "Nutritional evaluation in relation to adequacy of peritoneal dialysis"), gastrointestinal disorders (**Onono et al.** "An analysis of diets among patients with gastrointestinal disorders..."), and obesity-related hypertension (**Gambo et al.** "Association of angiotensin converting enzyme gene polymorphism among overweight hypertensive patients...") collectively illustrate the growing convergence of undernutrition and non-communicable diseases.

Policy relevance is particularly evident in **Zakariah-Akoto et al.'s** "Feasibility-testing of recommendations in Ghana's food-based dietary guidelines," which shows that cultural acceptability and food affordability are as important as technical accuracy in dietary guidance. Similarly, **Okorie**

et al. in "Household dietary diversity and nutritional status of preschool children in Umuahia South LGA, Abia State, Nigeria," reaffirm the persistent links between poverty, low dietary diversity, and child undernutrition.

As *World Nutrition* closes the 2025 publication year, the message from this issue is clear. Nutrition targets are being missed not because solutions are unknown, but because they are insufficiently prioritised, inadequately protected from commercial interests, and weakly enforced through policy. Moving forward, progress will depend less on new targets and more on grass-roots demand from rights holders, political courage, rights-based governance, and sustained investment in proven, community-centred approaches.

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TG conceptualized the editorial. SIRO prepared the original draft. Both TG and SIRO contributed to reviewing and editing the manuscript. TG provided supervision. Both authors approved the final version for publication.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

None

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