



**GLOBAL
FOOD POLICY
REPORT
2024**

FOOD SYSTEMS
FOR HEALTHY DIETS
AND NUTRITION

The Global Food Policy Report

Food Systems for Healthy Diets and Nutrition

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Nutrition, diets, and health

2.0 Billion

People are affected by micronutrient deficiencies.

148 Million

Children < 5 are stunted.

48 Million

Children < 5 are wasted.

2.2 Billion

People are overweight or obese (40% of all men & women).

1.2 Billion

People have increased blood pressure.

0.5 Billion

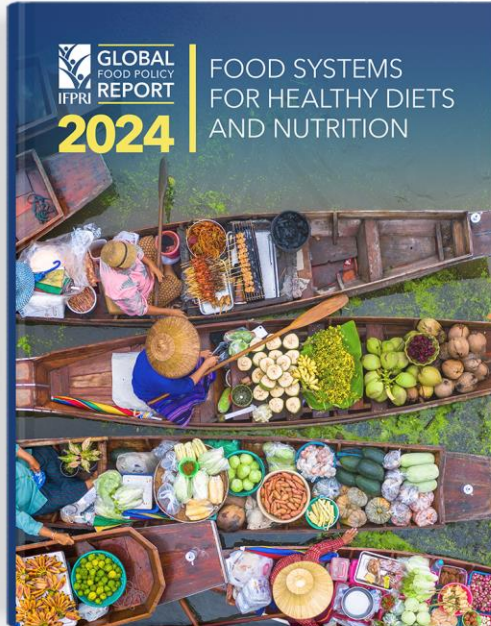
People have diabetes.

Poor quality diets are the **primary contributor to all forms of malnutrition** and the **leading cause** of disease worldwide.

1 in 5 

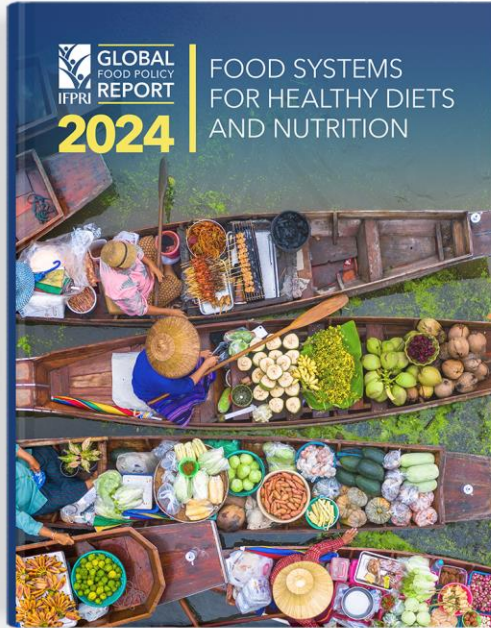
Lives could be saved each year by improving diets

2024 GFPR: A Timely Contribution



- **Global commitment to improving nutrition has risen** in recognition of the potential of healthy diets to improve human *and* planetary well-being.
- The 2024 GFPR examines **approaches to addressing poor diets and nutrition** from the demand and supply sides and through better governance.
 - It **brings together many years of work** from IFPRI and partners on nutrition, providing a basis for moving forward.
 - It delivers **evidence on policies and interventions**, especially those promoting inclusion and equity for vulnerable groups.
- When tailored to specific contexts, these recommendations can promote a **shift toward sustainable healthy diets**.

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+ **Six Regional Chapters**

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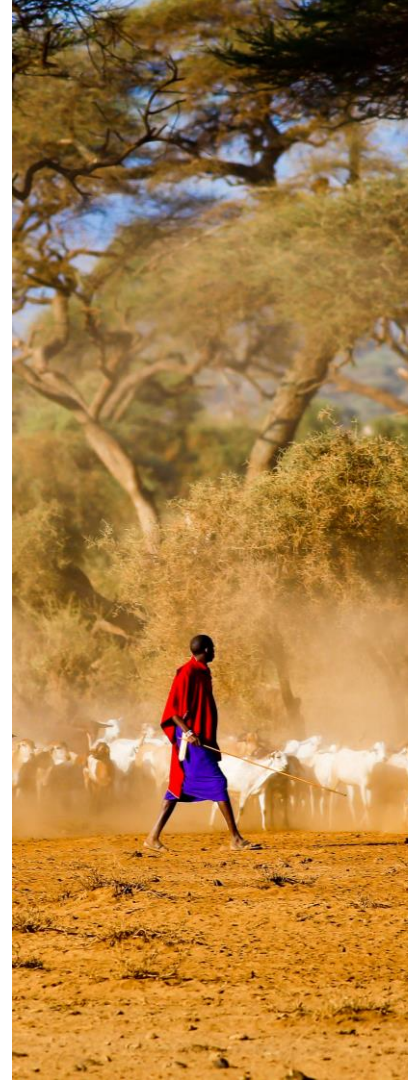
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Sustainable healthy diets

- Increase in the double burden of malnutrition coupled with climate change have brought global attention to the need to transform food systems to support sustainable healthy diets.
- Healthy diets provide the nutrients needed for an active, healthy life.
- Sustainable healthy diets further take into account the environmental impacts of diets.
- Diets in low- and middle-income countries (LMICs), which are often heavily cereal-based, are rapidly evolving to:
 - Include higher consumption of ultra-processed foods.
 - Overconsumption of animal source foods (ASFs) — although many vulnerable populations who could benefit from increased intake of ASFs still have inadequate access.



Challenges to sustainable healthy diets

1 Desirability

Food choices are driven by a complex interplay of a person's cognition, environment, and behavior. Thus, even when diverse, healthy foods are available, accessible, and affordable, people often do not choose healthy diets.

2 Affordability

Low income + high costs of safe and diverse foods (especially fruits, vegetables, and animal-source foods) make healthy diets unaffordable for at least 2 billion people worldwide.

3 Accessibility

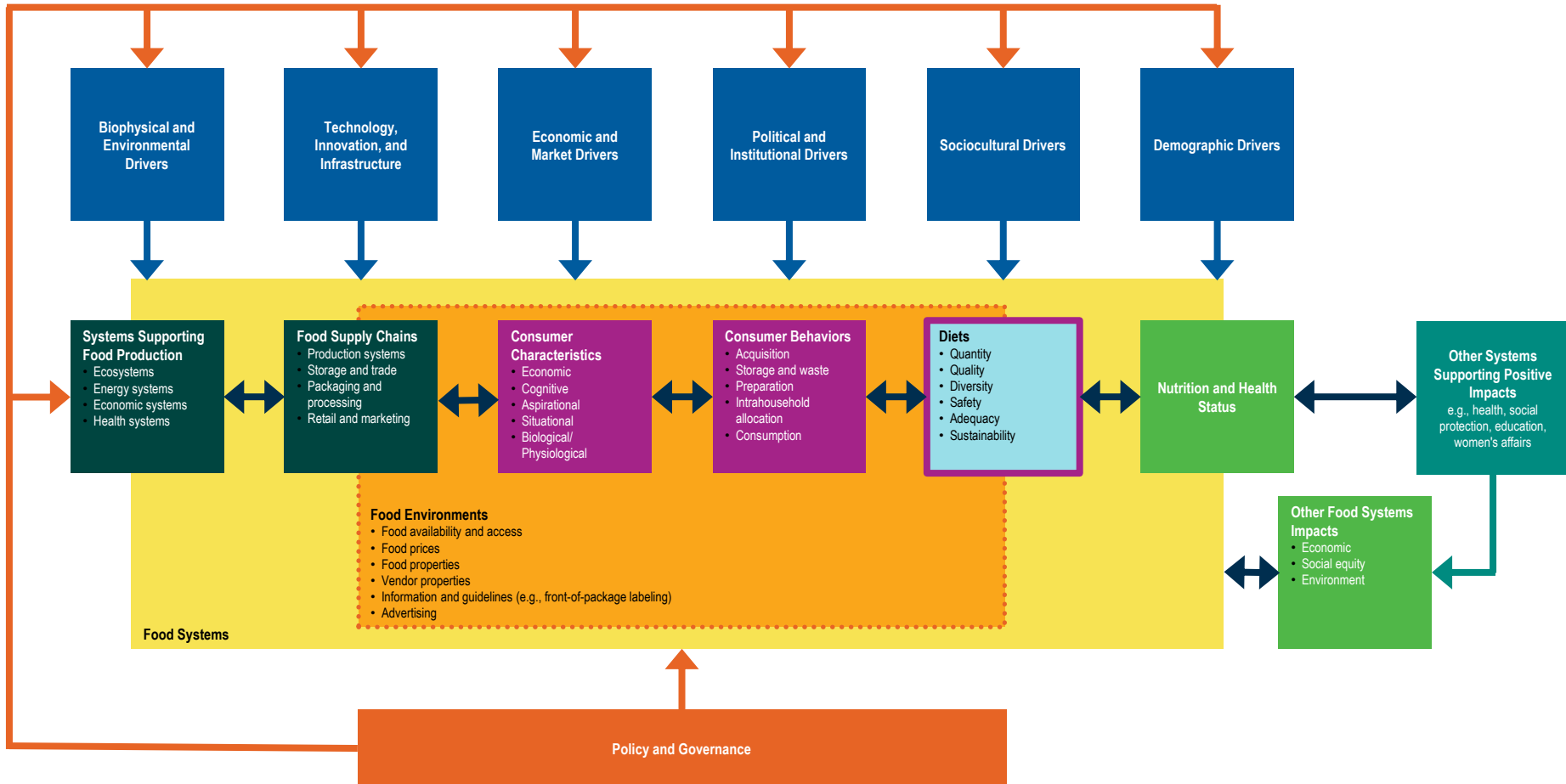
Consumers are often not close enough to safe sources of diverse, healthy, and affordable foods for intake to be convenient or possible on a regular basis.

4 Availability

Insufficient year-round availability of diverse fruits and vegetables means high costs and hard-to-find sources.

Policy and Governance

A consumer-focused food systems framework



Food systems approaches for sustainable healthy diets: **Demand**

- Approaches to increase demand must start with increased **understanding of dietary patterns and their drivers.**
- Strategies for **increasing demand and desirability** can include the use of:
 - Food-based dietary guidelines
 - Social and behavior change communications
 - Multisectoral programs linked to complementary systems such as nutrition-sensitive social protection programs, school-based health and nutrition programs, and inclusion of women's empowerment actions
 - Strategies to address affordability of healthy diets

Food systems approaches for sustainable healthy diets: **Food environments**

- Food environments connect supply and demand and, thus, play a central role in leveraging food systems for sustainable healthy diets.
- Food environments are undergoing rapid and dramatic transformation.
- Urgent actions are needed to support healthy food environments:
 - Increasing access to safe, diverse, healthy, and affordable foods.
 - Addressing the increasing desire for convenience foods.
 - Utilizing regulations and policies to reduce intake of ultra-processed foods.
 - Leveraging retail, marketing, and advertising strategies to support healthy food environments and, in turn, sustainable healthy diets.



Affordability of healthy diets: Opportunities to address this critical challenge

- **Between 2 and 3 billion people cannot afford a healthy diet.**
- Poverty is a primary factor limiting diets, especially in Asia and Africa.
 - Nutrient-dense foods are relatively expensive compared with calorie-dense foods.
 - This is partly because agricultural policies and consumer subsidies **favor staple crops**.
 - Healthy diet costs are higher with poor transport, storage, and logistics infrastructure.
- To shift actual diets toward healthy diets, we need to:
 - Improve national and subnational **monitoring of healthy diet affordability**.
 - Accelerate **equitable economic growth**
 - Scale and strengthen **nutrition-sensitive social protection**.
 - **Repurpose agricultural policies** toward nutritious foods and infrastructure.

Food systems approaches for sustainable healthy diets: **Supply**

- Supply-side innovations can help limit negative environmental impacts of food systems while meeting demand for sustainable healthy diets.
- Approaches to strengthen food supplies by leveraging food crops for better nutrition:
 - Investing in crop diversity, such as through intercropping.
 - Increasing the use of “orphan crops” – locally produced crops that have been neglected in breeding programs and/or underutilized.
 - Fortification and biofortification of staple crops.
- Ensuring the availability, affordability, and safety of sustainably produced animal-source foods (ASFs):
 - In many LMICs, ASF consumption needs to increase, particularly among infants and young children and pregnant women.
 - In other regions, excess ASF consumption needs to be addressed.
 - In all regions, consideration of safety issues and their environmental impacts need to be considered.

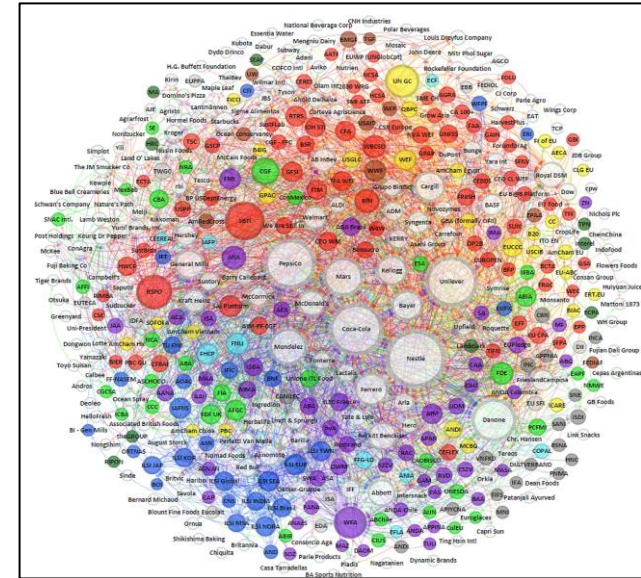
Food systems approaches for sustainable healthy diets: **Enabling environments**

- Enabling environments for food system approaches for sustainable healthy diets and nutrition must include:
 - Capacity to develop policies, implement and enforce laws and regulations, deliver public services, manage trade-offs, and mobilize funds for investment.
 - Management of trade-offs across nutrition goals and other objectives.
 - Ability to positively address corporate influence.
 - Support for citizens' agency to play a transformative role in leveraging food systems for sustainable healthy diets.

Navigating corporate influence is a key ingredient for food systems transformation

- **Corporate influence in food systems recognized as key challenge to better diets and nutrition**
 - “Big Food” shaping the narrative, providing campaign finance, fragmenting opponents, co-opting credible professionals, threatening legal actions (*Mialon et al. 2015; Gómez 2023; Slater et al. 2024*).
- **Corporate influence and state institutions often intersect**
 - Metrics such as the Corporate Financial Influence Index show financial leverage higher in more autocratic systems (*Allen et al. 2022*).
- **Yet, private sector is not homogenous**
 - Ongoing efforts at self-regulation through scorecards.
 - Greater accountability efforts from civil society and international organizations (e.g., Food & Agriculture Corporate Transparency Index, Zero Hunger Pledge).

Complex network of ultra-processed food industries



Source: Slater et al. (2024)

Conclusion

No single intervention, approach, or policy can accomplish the change we need.

To achieve sustainable healthy diets, context-relevant actions must be people-focused, interlinked across the food system *and* supported by good governance to address evolving desirability, affordability, accessibility, and availability constraints.

