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Topic: The impact of food systems on nutrition, diet and health

Title: The double burden of malnutrition: why are the causes and challenges so similar?

Presentation Type: Poster

Background

The double burden of malnutrition has surprisingly similar causes and challenges. This poster will look at two processes in the UK and Kenya.

Methodology

Public Health England facilitated a process of mapping Obesity and Overweight Strategies to the Foresight Reports Obesogenic maps, with the purpose of reviewing whether the causal understanding and strategic response priorities aligned in 17 Local Authority areas of the UK.

West Pokot County, Kenya, conducted an UNICEF Causal analysis of malnutrition. The causal analysis methodology is a structured, participative, holistic study that aims to build evidence based consensus around plausible causes of undernutrition.

Results

The causal analysis of both under and over nutrition seem to have the same underlying determinants even in two vastly different settings. All seem closely related to poor socio-economic status, low levels of maternal education, unemployment, spatial planning factors, regulation of the food industry and psychological / intergenerational determinants.

The strategic priorities for response also seem to have similar challenges, with investment mostly being allocated to the behaviour of individuals and addressing curative response or secondary prevention rather than primary prevention.

Discussion

Strategic financial investment addressing the root causes of malnutrition are needed to significantly address the double burden of malnutrition, to move away from investment in secondary prevention to primary prevention.

Conclusion

Both the UK and Kenya are conducting research to find out how the causes can be addressed. This poster will show causal maps constructed for UK and Kenya, their similarities, responses and research planned.