

# Research priorities for nutrition of school-aged children and adolescents in low- and middle-income countries



A lack of data, intervention studies, policies, and targets for nutrition in school-age children (SAC) and adolescents is hampering progress towards tackling malnutrition.

We generated a list of research priorities using the Child Health and Nutrition Research Initiative (CHNRI) method



48

research questions were compiled by experts and from the literature



We asked people to rank the questions based on 4 criteria

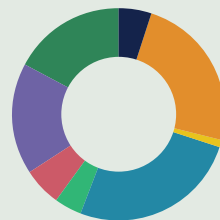
<b>Answerability</b>	This research question is <b>answerable</b>
<b>Effectiveness</b>	This research could result in an intervention that is <b>effective</b>
<b>Deliverability</b>	This research could result in an intervention that is <b>deliverable</b>
<b>Equity</b>	This research could result in an intervention that improves <b>equity</b>

## Results: Top 5 research questions

- 1 How should antenatal and postnatal care interventions be adapted to effectively and cost-effectively support the specific health and **nutritional needs of pregnant adolescents**?
- 2 What strategies are effective for delivering interventions in schools to **improve quality of diets and nutritional outcomes** of SAC and adolescents?
- 3 What strategies are effective at involving SAC and adolescents in defining their own context-specific solutions to nutrition problems, and does their involvement result in **more effective interventions**?
- 4 What are effective, context-specific, behaviour change communication strategies to **improve diets and nutritional status** of SAC and adolescents?
- 5 What improvements can be made to local food systems to **support access to healthy diets in schools**?

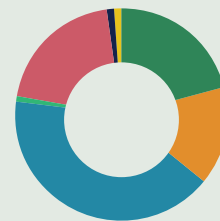
Over 100 people ranked every research question.

Respondents came from across 38 countries.



East Asia and the Pacific **5%**  
 Eastern and Southern Africa **24%**  
 Europe and Central Asia **1%**  
 Global **26%**  
 Latin America and the Caribbean **4%**  
 Middle East and North Africa **6%**  
 South Asia **17%**  
 West and Central Africa **17%**

Academic institution **21%**  
 National government **15%**  
 NGO **41%**  
 Private sector **1%**  
 UN agency **20%**  
 Donor **1%**  
 Other **1%**



## Questions covered



All forms of malnutrition including micronutrient deficiencies, thinness, stunting, overweight/obesity, and suboptimal dietary quality



5 to 19 year olds

## What now?

Going forward, nutrition programs should incorporate implementation research to inform delivery of effective interventions for this age group. Academic research on the development and tailoring of existing nutrition interventions is also needed.

Citation: Lelijveld et al., PLoS ONE  
<https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0280510>