Impacts of hunger and malnutrition on population health: Africa

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Many of the global population are still hungry

Source: FAO, 2019
Slow progress on undernutrition but faster movement towards overweight and obesity

151 million children too short for their age (stunted)

51 million children weigh too little for their height (wasted)

38 million children overweight

2 billion adults are overweight and obese.

124 of 141 countries analyzed having more than one form of malnutrition

Many suffer from hidden hunger or micronutrient deficiencies

GNR, 2018
Africa imports more Maize (A) and Rice (B) than it exports

(B) (Abera et al., 2019; Covic et al., 2019; Karimov et al., 2019) Based on FAOstat data
C. Africa Wheat trade balance, million metric tons

Abera et al., 2019; Covic et al., 2019; Karimov et al., 2019) Based on FAOstat data
Current Intakes vs Planetary Health Diet

Limited intake: Red meat, Starchy vegetables
Optional foods: Eggs, Poultry, Dairy foods

Emphasized foods: Fish, Vegetables, Fruit, Legumes, Whole grains, Nuts

Source: EAT Lancet Commission, 2019
Current Intakes vs Planetary Health Diet

Source: EAT Lancet Commission, 2019
Undernutrition is very costly to countries

African Union Commission et al. (2014).
Agriculture production intensification: Crops

Inadequate policy, regulatory instruments & surveillance, to manage & mitigate
Agriculture production intensification: Livestock

Inadequate policy, regulatory instruments & surveillance, to manage & mitigate
Covid-19 has arrived

Africa 22 April 2020 (25 808 +ve cases)

South Africa 22 April 2020 (3 635 +cases)

COVID-19

Challenges of washing hands without portable water
There are significant challenges on social distancing and food provision

Source: Bekele, 2020
Key messages on the Impact of hunger on food security

• Malnutrition in all its forms is a significant risk to population health
• Malnutrition is a significant economic burden to countries
• The multiple challenges to current and future food security call for rethinking the direction we should take for sustainable development
• COVID-19 will make the situation significantly worse
• Is there anything we can do different?