

2024 Food Governance Conference Abstract Booklet

The abstracts are organised alphabetically by last name.

Regulatory Convergence and Risk Regulation Theory in Nanotechnology Governance for Bangladesh's Food Industry: A Review of EU and US Regulations

Abu Noman Mohammad Atahar Ali¹

1 Associate Professor, Department of Law, North South University

Abstract:

The complex landscape of nanotechnology utilization in the food industry, concerned with potential legal consequences, warrants meticulous examination. Bangladesh, in its pursuit of regulatory alignment, has adopted the regulatory convergence theory, mirroring the practices of other nations in the deployment of nanomaterials within food products. Conversely, developed nations, exemplified by the European Union (EU) and the United States (US), implement a jurisprudentially sound, risk assessment-based approach inspired by the risk regulation theory to govern nanotechnology. The current research examines the legal and regulatory mechanisms underlying nanotechnology use within Bangladesh's food industry, concurrently assessing the frameworks embodied by the EU and the US. The comprehensive analysis exposes profound inadequacies within the regulatory convergence theory, casting doubt on its appropriateness for Bangladesh's nanotechnology application. This paper ascertains, through rigorous legal analysis, that Bangladesh should refrain from further reliance on the flawed regulatory convergence. Instead, this article advocates the adoption of the risk regulation theory, a more effective and legally sound regulatory framework, harmonizing its practices with those of the EU and US counterparts. These legal and regulatory recommendations are rooted in established legal precedents and principles, ensuring the integrity of Bangladesh's nanotechnology governance in the food sector and safeguarding the rights and interests of consumers.

Biography:

Dr. Ali, a food law scholar with a Ph.D. from UOW Australia, currently holds the position of Associate Professor of Law at North South University, Bangladesh. He has authored over a dozen research articles on food law in reputable journals and has presented at prestigious conferences, including Harvard Law School and the Food Governance Conference in 2019 at Sydney University.

Food Safety in Vietnam: A One Health Approach

Tiho Ancev¹, Justin Beardsley, David Guest, Chinh Ho, Kiên Đức Nguyễn, Phước Ngọc Nguyễn, Truong Vinh Nguyễn, Daniel Tan, Thư Đặng Thị Anh, Dat Quoc Vu, and Ruth Zadoks

Abstract:

This paper addresses the critical issue of food safety in Vietnam, recognizing its implications for public health, agricultural credibility, and economic stability. The One Health approach is employed to identify and understand food safety risks, focusing on specific vegetables (green mustard and water spinach) and aquaculture products (Tilapia). The research investigates susceptible practices within these supply chains, their impact on health outcomes, and the associated social costs. Key findings reveal that organic vegetable producers adhere to certification rules, while 10% of non-organic samples show high pesticide residues, posing risks to consumers. Furthermore, about 60% of samples, both from conventional and organic farms, are contaminated with E. coli, indicating potential health hazards. Limited investment in processing and storage forces rapid sales, restricting shelf life. In the Tilapia supply chain, freshness is prioritized, potentially overshadowing concerns about chemical, pesticide, and antibiotic contamination. Consumer surveys indicate that 7% experienced suspected food poisoning in the last three months, with 55% seeking family and friend-based medical attention. The estimated annual cost of foodborne illnesses in Hue City is around USD 10 million. Consumers express a willingness to pay premiums for certified and transparent supply chain information. The study emphasizes the necessity of a comprehensive One Health strategy to address food safety challenges. Integrating plant and animal health considerations is vital to reduce pesticide and antibiotic use, with significant implications for human health and the substantial costs associated with foodborne illnesses. This holistic approach is essential for sustainable improvements in food safety and public well-being.

Biography:

Tiho Ancev is a Professor of Agricultural and Resource Economics, School of Economics, USYD. He is currently the Managing Editor-in-Chief of the Australian Journal of Agricultural and Resource Economics, and a Section Editor for the Encyclopaedia of Energy, Natural Resource, and Environmental Economics

Implementation of the Papua New Guinea National Nutrition Policy's Strategic Action Plan (2018-2022)

Douglas Apeng¹, Elisabeth Schuele

¹ Masters Student, The University of Sydney

Abstract:

Aim: The Papua New Guinea National Nutrition Policy (NNP) 2016-2026 and the Nutrition Strategic Action Plan 2018-2023 (NSAP) was developed to address malnutrition, especially stunting in the country. The intention of the NSAP is to provide a well-coordinated evidence-based approach that optimize resources, aligns actions and detail costs for multi-sectorial action on nutritional interventions. This paper analyses learnings from the implementation National Nutrition Policy's Nutrition Strategic Action Plan (2018-2022). Enablers and barriers to successful implementation of the NSAP are explored and recommendations for implementation provided.

Methodology: Five in-depth semi-structured interviews were conducted with two men and three women involved in the formulation of the 2016-2026 NNP and the NSAP 2018-2022 (NSAP) and have a role in policy implementating.

Results: The qualitative analysis utilized the Forced Field Analysis to investigate driving and restraining forces in the implementation process of the NSAP. Key restraining forces included poor leadership, and lack of advocacy; implementation gap due to the Project Monitoring Unit (PMU) not fully functional, funding constraints and inadequate monitoring and evaluation system; and ineffective collaboration and poor human resource capacity. Driving forces identified such as civil society alliances (CSA) engagement, coordination and capacity building had a positive effect on implementation of nutrition initiatives.

Implications: The findings suggest that implementation of NNP and NSAP needs a whole of government approach. Addressing the restraining forces can lead to the expected outcomes, while driving forces enhance change towards alternatives of successful implementation of the NSAP. The paper concludes with recommendations for policy makers and policy implementers to provide guidance for the next NSAP.

Biography:

An Health Extension Officer and holds a Bachelor in Management and Master of Public Health from the Divine Word University. He is a public health practitioner. Worked as a clinician, coordinated primary health programs in maternal and child health and provided health capacity building with Provincial Health Authorities and local and international health organizations in Papua New Guinea. Currently a student in the Master of Health Policy.

Surviving mission drift: Exploring governance arrangements in food system living labs over time and space.

Harrison Awuh¹

¹ Assistant Professor, Utrecht University

Abstract:

Faced with climate change related challenges, there are growing pressures for adaptation in food production and consumption. Consequently, controlled transformative spaces (living labs) are increasingly being touted as key ingredients for this aspiration for transformation in the food system. However, as food system living labs (FSLLs) increase in scale, governance emerging governance challenges make them vulnerable to mission drift – shifting from their core sustainability values. Therefore, what kind of new governance arrangements can be enacted to ensure that FSLLs remain sustainable over time or as they increase in scale? Based on this research question, this study investigates a FSLL in a neighbourhood in the Dutch city of Almere known as Oosterwold. This FSLL has distinct characteristics and unique future scenarios which can impact wider sustainability goals of urban agriculture by scaling-up while staying true to the norms and values which initially defined its sustainability. This study advances the meso level perspective in governance as a solution to mission drift in FSLL upscaling. The meso level provides an avenue through which collective identities of different actors and institutions (formal and informal) are formed and by which commitments with a social, economic and ecological purpose are generated and negotiated. By doing so, this research contributes to making FSLLs resilient to risks of mission drift over scale and time. Whether a resilience strategy persists over time and scale is in part determined by the extent to which the strategy allows stakeholders in the living lab to (re)negotiate various forms of governance arrangements.

Biography:

I am an assistant professor in climate change, food health and inequalities. I am particularly interested in food system transformation spaces and how they are governed. Some of my most recent research has been on the governance of climate change-related food system living labs in the Global North and South.

Future proofing policy design to safeguard children from harmful digital marketing

Kathryn Backholer¹, Fiona Sing

1 Co-Director, Global Centre for Preventive Health and Nutrition (GLOBE), Institute for Health Transformation, Deakin University

Abstract:

We live in a rapidly changing, digital world where youth exposure to marketing of harmful products, such as unhealthy foods, alcohol, gambling, tobacco and e-cigarettes is unprecedented. Unequivocal evidence demonstrates that routine exposure to these products normalises their use and increases life-time risk of chronic conditions. Protecting children from the impacts of harmful online marketing will require a legislative approach, but the technical and legal requirements of doing so are complex. The aim of this study was to identify the technical and legal mechanisms for adopting, implementing, monitoring and

enforcing a ban on harmful marketing through online platforms. We undertook a desk-top review of policy documents and conducted 15 semi-structured interviews with international policy makers, digital regulators, academics with expertise in digital marketing and industry employed marketing or ad agency representatives. Data collection and analyses were informed by the Public Health Law Framework and key questions related to the technical and legal design of harmful marketing controls. Our findings highlight that regulating online harmful marketing is not as complex as it is made out to be. Key considerations include the need for legal coordination (commodity specific marketing laws to be pursued alongside other internet regulations), broad regulatory scope (all marketing, including influencers and the encouragement of branded user generated content), allowing transactional content but distinguishing it from advertising, multiple points of accountability (advertisers and publisher), sufficient sanctions (to deter breaches of the law quickly). Results can support regulatory design for online marketing laws in Australia and internationally.

Biography:

Kathryn is Co-Director of the Global Centre for Preventive Health and Nutrition (GLOBE), which includes a World Health Organisation (WHO) Collaborating Centre for Obesity Prevention. She holds a National Heart Foundation Future Leader Fellowship and is a Fellow of the Public Health Association of Australia. Kathryn regularly consults to UN organisations and governments on issues related to food marketing controls.

What are the ingredients for effective local government policy-making action to promote environmentally sustainable diets? A case example from the City of Greater Bendigo.

Liza Barbour¹, Julie Woods, Julie Brimblecombe

¹ Senior Lecturer, Monash University

Abstract:

Background – Local governments are well-placed to lead local food system transformation and promote a population-wide shift towards healthy and sustainable diets. This case study explored the facilitating and impeding factors that influenced the policy-making process behind Greater Bendigo's Food System Strategy, an example of evidence-based, integrated food policy.

Methods – Data from semi-structured interviews with individuals involved in the policy-making process were analysed using a seven-stage framework method, guided by the Consolidated Framework for Implementation Research.

Results – Interviews were conducted with City of Greater Bendigo employees (n=15) and key stakeholders working for local organisations (n=6) or at a state or national level (n=3). Data analysis revealed eight facilitating factors and four impeding factors. Facilitating factors included perseverance, community engagement, supportive state policy, effective leadership, a global platform and networks, partnerships, workforce capacity and passion, and the use of scientific evidence. Impeding factors included access to financial resources, prohibitive state and federal policy, COVID-related interruptions to community engagement and competing stakeholder interests.

Conclusions – Based on results from this study, the City of Greater Bendigo’s success is likely built upon (i) a holistic worldview that embraces systems-thinking and credible frameworks, (ii) a sustained commitment and investment internally over time, and (iii) the ability to establish and nurture meaningful partnerships built upon values of reciprocity and respect. Local government authorities aspiring to develop integrated food policy should nurture a workforce culture of taking bold evidence-informed action, invest in mechanisms to enable long-standing partnerships with community stakeholders and be prepared for long-term commitment and investment.

Biography:

Liza is an Advanced Accredited Practising Dietitian and Senior Lecturer at Monash University, where she teaches food sustainability systems and public health nutrition. Liza’s PhD explored the role of local government policy to promote healthy and environmentally sustainable diets.

Aboriginal store owners push for stronger regulation to create healthier stores in remote Aboriginal communities in the Northern Territory

Laura Baddeley¹, Julie Brimblecombe, Khia De Silva, Sarah Funston

1 Nutritionist, Arnhem Land Progress Aboriginal Corporation

Abstract:

Governments can use powerful regulatory levers to create healthy food retail environments to halt the rise in non-communicable disease (NCDs). Strong research evidence, targeted advocacy and amplifying the voices of those most impacted by NCDs to have a say, may influence government policy action. Following the success of the Healthy Stores 2020 study, The Arnhem Land Progress Aboriginal Corporation (ALPA), who operate 25 Aboriginal owned

and governed remote stores, expanded their nutrition policy to include restriction on the merchandising of unhealthy foods and drinks. The full suite of policies could not be adopted in communities where retail competition exists. Opportunity to support the adoption of these policies across all remote stores came with the Northern Territory (NT) Government's intention to amend the NT Food Act 2004 that will regulate remote stores to improve food security. This would mean the health of people in all remote communities could benefit from healthier store merchandising practices. Peak organisations formed a coalition to amplify and strengthen ALPA's call for a level playing field. ALPA brought Aboriginal leaders voices to the forefront of the Coalition's advocacy with letters of support, photos and videos detailing the importance of support customers to make healthier choices. These were presented to the Chief Minister and other key government decision makers. August 2023 the Chief Minister informed the coalition that the asks would be embedded in the NT Food Security Program and the amended Food Act 2004 was gazetted, September 2023, to allow this.

Biography:

Laura is a Nutritionist at the Arnhem Land Progress Aboriginal Corporation (ALPA). She supports the implementation of the ALPA Health and Nutrition Strategy across 25 remote community stores in Northern Territory and North Queensland. ALPA operate non-for-profit grocery stores in remote Australian communities for the last 50 years.

The clash of COVID-19 and noncommunicable diseases: regulating unhealthy commodities as a cornerstone of health systems strengthening

Isabel Barbosa¹, Margherita M. Cinà², Kimberley Benjamin, Oscar A. Cabrera

1 Associate Director, Global Center for Legal Innovation on Food Environments, O'Neill Institute for National and Global Health Law, Georgetown University

2 Associate, Global Center for Legal Innovation on Food Environments, O'Neill Institute for National and Global Health Law, Georgetown University

Abstract:

The clash of COVID-19 and noncommunicable diseases (NCDs), against the backdrop of the underlying determinants of health, created the perfect storm that brought many health systems around the world to a breaking point. The search for sustainable solutions led to various pledges to "build back better." 1 While some of these calls have focused on health

systems strengthening, (e.g., enhancing global health security, expanding universal health coverage), 2 others have emphasised the regulation of NCD risk factors, including unhealthy diets. 3 However, these calls have been largely separate. Taking the clash between COVID-19 and NCDs as a starting point, this paper uses the syndemic lens 4 to argue that the regulation of NCD risk factors is in fact a cornerstone of health system strengthening. It examines the role of prevention beyond clinical settings in building up health systems through the regulation of unhealthy commodities, including unhealthy foods and beverages. As such, interventions such as front-of-package warning labels and restrictions on marketing and advertising, for example, should be understood as necessary and cost-effective interventions toward this goal.

Biography:

1 Isabel Barbosa is a project director with the Health and Human Rights Initiative at the O’Neill Institute and an adjunct professor of law at Georgetown University. She is engaged in scholarship, capacity building, and technical assistance activities related to sexual and reproductive health, as well as noncommunicable diseases, particularly tobacco control and food systems. Prior to joining the O’Neill Institute, Barbosa was a consultant in Colombia at Women’s Link Worldwide, where she collaborated in strategic litigation before high courts in Latin America and within international human rights systems. She has also worked at the Inter-American Commission of Women, the Inter-American Court of Human Rights, and the Office for Health Issues of the Federal Prosecution Service of Brazil, besides participating in government-funded research initiatives in Brazil about constitutional, philosophical, and ethical issues from a comparative perspective. Barbosa holds an LL.B. from the Pontifical Catholic University of Rio de Janeiro and an LL.M. in global health law with a certificate in international human rights law from Georgetown University.

2 Margherita Cinà is an Associate at the Global Center for Legal Innovation on Food Environments, at the O’Neill Institute for National and Global Health Law (Georgetown University). She has a JD/BCL from McGill University and an LLM in Global Health Law and International Institutions from Georgetown University and The Graduate Institute in Geneva. She is also a member of the Ontario bar (Canada).

Indigenous led native grains solutions for health and wealth of Country.

Kim Bell-Anderson¹, Rebecca Cross, Hannah Binge, Dianne Hall, Kerrie Saunders, Katie Moore

¹ Teaching and Research Academic, University of Sydney

Abstract:

For millenia in Australia, traditional practices like cultivating native grains sustained one of the world's oldest living cultures. Gamliaraay, and other First Nations people harvested, threshed and ground native grass seeds into a flour before cooking. However, continued impacts of colonisation through modern farming practices and the subsequent nutrition transition have disrupted knowledge systems, environmental custodianship and health and wellbeing of Indigenous communities. Australian Indigenous people are disproportionately affected by diet-related disease such as type 2 diabetes, which is also among the leading

causes of death in this population. The aim is to heal people and Country by revitalising Gamilaraay grains and guiding a sustainable Indigenous-led industry using a relational, co-design approach. Authentic community engagement and partnership is critical to facilitate an Indigenous-led agenda and program for the regeneration and production of native grains. Trust will be fostered by embedding Indigenous Cultural and Intellectual Property rights and positioning Indigenous communities as the experts and decision-makers. Recent human studies we have completed have shown that substitution of 10% plain wheat flour with native grain flour significantly reduces post meal blood glucose response and glycemic index by 30%. Low glycemic promoting foods are frontline nutrition therapy for prevention and treatment of type 2 diabetes. The nutritional health benefits associated with eating native grains, as well as the cultural benefits of caring for Country and reconnecting with cultural identity, has huge potential to have a direct transformational impact on local communities.

Biography:

Kim is a teaching and research academic in nutritional physiology at the University of Sydney. She endeavours to improve equity, diversity and inclusion, leads the Oceanic Nutrition Leadership Platform Network Group and was recently appointed to the High Level Health Claims Committee, Food Standards Australia New Zealand.

Exploring spatialities in urban Circular Economies of Food Waste

Amelie Bernzen¹, Franziska Czernik

¹ Professor, University of Vechta

Abstract:

The circular economy (CE) concept has become increasingly widespread globally as a new approach to transitioning the economic system to a more sustainable model. An important goal is to close loops in production and consumption to increase the efficiency of resource use and minimise waste and energy. Existing literature has focused on the technical implementation of CE innovations but less on supportive and inhibiting social and institutional conditions, which vary across time and space. In fact, place, space and scale as well as the question on how to translate CE to the individual geographical setting have likewise received relatively little attention. Interesting in this context is also how and why place-based CE initiatives on different spatial levels interact with each other. A compelling

case to study these questions is that of Food Waste, which has been identified as an increasingly urgent global problem, above all due to the associated economic, social and ethical consequences and high environmental costs. Employing quantitative and qualitative content analysis, this review paper therefore aims to analyse how food waste is discussed within the Circular Economy literature, focusing in particular on the significance of spatial embedding and networks of CE initiatives which seek to reduce and revalorise food waste in urban and metropolitan settings, where most of the FWFL occurs.

Biography:

Amelie is professor of Economic Geography at the University of Vechta, Germany. Her research has focused on questions raised within Environmental Economic Geography and Development Studies. Core topics include sustainable food systems, food and nutrition security, rural livelihoods and climate adaptation. She has conducted field work in Europe, Australia, India and Bangladesh.

Franziska studied Economic Geography at the Universities of Marburg (BSc) and Osnabrueck (MA) in Germany, including a research stay in Cambodia. As a PhD student at the University of Vechta, she specializes in innovation processes within the Geographies of Sustainability Transition and the Circular Economy, focusing on food waste in the food service sector in Australia.

Shedding light on gleaning fisheries to inform gender and nutrition-sensitive fisheries policy

Jessica Bogard¹, Gianna Bonis-Profumo, Sinead Boylan, Nicholos Bourne, Ariadna Burgos, Imanuel do Rosario Ximenes, Noviana Faria Simoes, Mario Gomes, Barney Hines, Mario Pereira, Dave Mills

¹ Senior Research Scientist, Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation (CSIRO)

Abstract:

Gleaning - the collection of food from shallow intertidal areas – is a common activity primarily undertaken by women and children which makes a vital contribution to food and nutrition security in Timor Leste, yet its importance is widely overlooked. Lack of data across all aspects of gleaning is a major challenge for developing gender and nutrition-sensitive fisheries policy. We present a data-driven response to this challenge by quantifying the

contribution of women and men's gleaning and fishing activities to diets and nutrient intakes in coastal communities, specifically among women and young children. We surveyed 439 households across four coastal sites in Timor Leste. The survey captured gleaning and fishing activities; quantitative food frequency of 65 aquatic foods; knowledge, attitudes, and practices in relation to consumption of aquatic foods; women's dietary diversity and infant and young child feeding practices. The survey was repeated at two time points to capture high and low fishing seasons. Secondly, we analysed the nutrient composition of 32 commonly consumed aquatic foods (17 fish, 12 shellfish and 3 seaweeds), including proximates, minerals, vitamin A, vitamin B12 and essential fatty acids. Both fishing and gleaning made significant contributions to diets and nutrient intakes of women and children. Consumption of aquatic foods are significantly higher among household's dependant on fish-based livelihoods and those that participate in gleaning. The results of this research, through a national communication strategy, will be used to inform development of gender-equitable fisheries management policy that places nutrition and food security front and centre.

Biography:

Jessica is a Senior Research Scientist with CSIRO Agriculture and Food, based in Brisbane. She is interested in understanding how agriculture and food systems can be leveraged to improve nutrition, particularly throughout the Asia-Pacific region and among women and young children. She has a particular interest in the role of aquatic foods in healthy and sustainable diets. Her recent work is focused on better understanding food environments in low and middle income countries as an entry point to improve dietary quality.

Just transitions in the food system: A case study of dairy in Aotearoa New Zealand

Milena Bojovic¹

1 PhD Candidate, Macquarie University

Abstract:

Achieving a just and sustainable food system in an era of anthropogenic climate change is topic of growing interest and concern among scholars, policy practitioners, food producers and everyday consumers. As a PhD student of human geography with an interest in the intersections of social and environmental sustainability, my research focuses on a case study of intensive dairy production in Aotearoa New Zealand. My research question asks how the sector can transition to support more just and sustainable futures in a way that addresses local and global concerns around fairness, equity, and ecological sustainability. This global lens is required because the nation's dairy sector exports over 95% of its products to over 130 countries. Just transitions as a framework has typically been applied to the energy

sector, however, more recently the concept has been taken up by scholars studying food system change to consider the justice implications for humans, non-humans and environments in agri-food systems. These are important topics given that any major changes in the dominant energy system will have cascading impacts on other sub-systems that rely on fossil fuel energy (such as intensive agriculture). My research in Aotearoa engages with multiple stakeholders across the dairy ecosystem from dairy farmers, ecologists, and economists, to alternative dairy producers, activists, journalists, and academics, to explore the challenges, opportunities and barriers to transitions for the sector. Most importantly, my research considers whether transitions to alternative dairy (plant-based and precision fermentation based) adequately address the issues of traditional dairy production. The findings from my research demonstrate that systematic change in the food system spanning from changes at the farm level, to changes in consumer choice and behaviour, and policy decision-making, are all needed to create openings for just and sustainable transitions for the sector

Biography:

Milena Bojovic is a PhD candidate in the Discipline of Geography and Planning, in the School of Social Sciences at Macquarie University, Sydney. Her research interests are broadly related to environmental and social sustainability issues within food systems, particularly the intersections of climate change, animal agriculture and the development and diffusion of alternative proteins. Her PhD examines just transitions for the dairy sector in Aotearoa New Zealand, and considers the justice implications for humans, non-humans and environments.

A roadmap to food safety policy for Sri Lanka

Anowarul Bokshi¹, Samali C. Perera, Ilmi Hewajulige, Anne Marie Thow, Daniel K.Y. Tan

¹ The University of Sydney

Abstract:

Background: The production and distribution of fresh fruits and vegetables in Sri Lanka have increased to meet the urban and export market demands. However, food safety is a concern for both domestic and exported fruits and vegetables. The aim is to analyse the Food Safety Policy for Sri Lanka, in order to inform food safety policy reform and protect consumer health.

Methods: Existing policies in Sri Lanka regarding fruits and vegetables were collected and analysed systematically using a matrix, to understand the current policy landscape.

Literature on international food safety for fresh produce was reviewed to analyse the gaps in regulations and practices.

Findings: In Sri Lanka, legislative regulation of food safety is under the Food Act No. 26 of 1980 with amendments in 1991 and 2011. Current regulations mostly cover food processing for the handling and packaging of raw materials for finished products and do not adequately address the issues related to fresh produce. The existing Act does not address the whole food value chain and food contaminants such as pesticide residues, food additives, microbes, heavy metals, or physical substances. There is no system in place for assessing food safety for producers, value chain operators, and consumers.

Conclusion: Reform is needed to update the Food Act and to introduce food safety policy with a monitoring system and proper institutional coordination between the Ministry of Agriculture and the Ministry of Health.

Biography:

Dr Anowarul Bokshi has been working at the University of Sydney since 2006 in various Research Roles mostly in Horticulture, Food and nutrition. Dr Bokshi is actively contributing to the CGIAR Team of Sydney University to analyse and recommend the Food Safety Policy of Sri Lanka and few other developing countries.

The regulatory process of front-of-pack nutrition labeling in Brazil

Ana Paula Bortoletto Martins¹, Laís Amaral Mais, Mariana Ribeiro, Vanessa Davies, Mariana Levy, Diogo Coutinho

¹ Professor, Nutrition Department, Faculty of Public Health, Sao Paulo University

Abstract:

The adoption of nutritional labeling in the front of food packages is one of the recommended public policies to provide consumers healthier choices and to contribute for the reduction of non-communicable chronic diseases. This study aims to describe and analyze the Brazilian regulatory process of implementation of the front-of-package nutrition labeling (FOPNL) coordinated by National Health Surveillance Agency (Anvisa). A document review was performed, including data from governmental public documents, reports, scientific articles, websites and social media content and others. A descriptive analysis of the

revision process of the nutrition labeling norms in Brazil (2014-2021) was conducted using the Policy Triangle Framework. The regulation process is analyzed through interdisciplinary research, in order to critically discuss, as an empirical study of "law in action", how regulatory processes are born amidst the political economy that surrounds them. The national political context directly impacted the process and its results. The existence of spaces for social participation and a strong civil society boosted the start of discussions in 2014. However, political crises and a conservative government strengthened the food industry's backlash between 2016 to 2019. The Covid-19 pandemic was used by Anvisa to justify postponing the approval of the regulation and to extend the implementation deadline. Due to the polarization of positions, the regulatory agency positioned itself as a mediator to balance the interests between the private sector and public interest civil society. Anvisa approved in 2020 a magnifying glass model of FOPNL, which is considered less legible and lacks specific evidence of effectiveness.

Biography:

I am a nutritionist with a PhD in public health nutrition. I am currently a professor at the Nutrition Department at the Faculty of Public Health at USP. I am a scientific researcher at NUPENS/USP, at the Law and Public Policies Research Group (GDPP/USP) and at the Josué de Castro Chair of Healthy and Sustainable Food Systems. I am a member of the Coordinating Committee of Colansa (Community of Practice in nutrition and health in Latin America and the Caribbean).

An overview of labelling and claims around environmental sustainability on fish and seafood products in New Zealand supermarkets

Xuân Le Folcalvez, Sheila Skeaff, **Kathryn Bradbury**¹

1 Senior Research Fellow, School of Population Health, University of Auckland

Abstract:

Environmental factors influence New Zealand consumers' purchase of fish and other seafood and consumers prefer to get their information about seafood at the point of purchase. However, environmental claims are not regulated under the Australia New Zealand Food Standards Code. Some seafood products are certified by programmes (e.g. Marine Stewardship Council (MSC)), but other products carry self-declared environmental claims. This study aimed to describe environmental claims on seafood packaged products sold in major New Zealand supermarkets and available in Nutritrack. Nutritrack is an annual survey conducted by trained fieldworkers who take photographs of all packaged food products from

four major supermarkets in New Zealand. Data (including environmental certifications and self-declared environmental claims) were extracted from the archived photographs of all sides of the packaged seafood products in the 2022 Nutritrack database. Self-declared environmental claims were assessed against the International Standardization Organization (ISO) 14021 standard on relevant criteria, including if the self-declared claim mentioned the word “sustainable” (as this term is difficult to substantiate and should be avoided), or was vague and non-specific. There were 369 seafood products included in this study; 88 products (23.8%) displayed a certification and 152 products (41.2%) displayed at least one self-declared claim. Thirty-three distinct self-declared environmental claims were identified, 16 (48.5%) of which breached the ISO 14021 standard because they used the term “sustainable” and 26 (78.8%) of which breached the standard because they were vague. This analysis suggests that stricter regulation is needed for self-declared environmental claims on seafood products available for purchase in New Zealand, to provide consumers transparent, accurate and substantiated information.

Biography:

Kathryn Bradbury has a PhD in Human Nutrition from the University of Otago, and is a Senior Research Fellow in the School of Population Health at the University of Auckland. She currently holds a Senior Fellowship from the Heart Foundation of New Zealand. Broadly, Kathryn is interested in the health, environmental, and ethical impacts of the food system.

Food Policies for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health (FoodPATH): a community-based systems approach to prioritising action on food environments and nutrition

Jennifer Browne¹, Troy Walker², Karen Hill³, Fiona Mitchell, Holly Beswick, Stephanie Thow⁴, Joleen Ryan, Simone Sherriff, Kathryn Backholer, Andrew Brown

1 Senior Research Fellow, Deakin University

2 Research Assistant, Deakin University

3 Research Fellow, Deakin University

4 Senior Project Officer, Victorian Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation

Abstract:

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples have the right to participate in all policy decisions affecting them. This includes policy around food and nutrition. Group model building is a participatory systems science research method which enables community stakeholders to develop a shared understanding of the system-level drivers of complex

problems and co-design actions to address them. In this presentation, we report the findings of the Food Policies for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health (FoodPATH) project which aimed to map Aboriginal stakeholders' perspectives of the key drivers of food choice in order to develop and prioritise actions. Working in partnership with the Victorian Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation (VACCHO), community-based workshops were held with VACCHO and five of its member Aboriginal Community-Controlled Organisations (ACCOs) in urban and regional Victoria during 2022. A team of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander facilitators guided participants (n=53 in total) through a series of workshop activities using group model building methods. Workshop discussions coincided with real-time creation of a visual system map of the interconnected determinants of food choice. Participants used these maps to develop and prioritise a set of actions ideas for improving food environments and nutrition in the community. Participants identified a diverse array of interconnected factors influencing nutrition for Victorian Aboriginal communities. Although findings differed between project sites, the influence of food access and affordability, junk food marketing and food knowledge and skills were evident across all sites. Results informed a community-driven call to action for improving nutrition for Victorian Aboriginal communities.

Biography:

Jennifer Browne is senior research fellow within the Global Centre for Preventive Health and Nutrition at Deakin University. Prior to entering academia, most of her career was spent working in the Aboriginal Community-controlled sector in Victoria where she developed long-term connections with Aboriginal colleagues. Her research is highly collaborative with projects focussed on identifying policy actions that will be both acceptable and effective for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and, most recently, the commercial determinants of Indigenous health.

Troy Walker is a Yorta Yorta man and an experienced researcher and clinician with over 13 years' experience in healthcare with a focus on supporting both physical health and social and emotional wellbeing in Aboriginal communities. He is active in - and passionate about - nutrition research and practice, clinical pain management, Aboriginal lifestyle health, social and emotional wellbeing, and neuromusculoskeletal health. He holds a Masters in Human Nutrition and is a Fellow with the Australasian Society of Lifestyle Medicine.. He is a founding member of the Murnong Health Research Team at Deakin University where his research has focussed on food and nutrition policy for Aboriginal communities and the commercial determinants of Indigenous health.

Karen Hill is a proud Torres Strait Islander woman based in Nipaluna/Hobart. She has over 8 years' experience working and volunteering with the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island communities as well as experience working in Indigenous policy roles in state and federal government. Dr Hill's PhD research has contributed to the sports nutrition and exercise metabolism field and, since joining the Murnong Health Research Mob at Deakin University, her research has focused on nutrition policy and the commercial determinants of health (CDoH) for Indigenous peoples. In 2023, she was an invited panellist at the Australian launch of the Lancet series on the CDoH.

Steph Thow is a Pennemuker/Ngati Porou woman. She grew up in country Victoria and has worked in Aboriginal Health for 15 years. She is passionate about empowering mob and working to improve health outcomes. Steph is a qualified Aboriginal Health Practitioner and has experience working in both the Aboriginal community-controlled and mainstream health service sectors, and has managed projects in Higher Education. Steph is currently a senior project officer in the Healthy Communities team at the Victorian Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation.

Regulatory Safety Approaches from Pills to Plates: Reassessing the Role of Private Actors

Alice Bryk Silveira¹

1 PhD Candidate, Institute of Health Law, University of Neuchâtel

Abstract:

While the pharmaceutical sector thrives under rigorous regulation, the food industry grapples with a more complex regulatory landscape, characterized by a nuanced interplay of softer measures, alongside elements of self-regulation and collaborations between the public and private sectors. This paper delves into the intricate dynamics of food safety, integrating the new food safety concept and emphasizing the need to include diet-related diseases arising from long-term consumption of unhealthy foods. Non-communicable diseases (NCDs), represent a complex global health issue and urge structural changes in our food system, particularly concerning the involvement of the industry. By examining the roles of private industries in public health, especially regarding non-communicable diseases, the

paper seeks to reframe the discourse around unhealthy diets and NCDs. Venturing beyond the customary comparison with the tobacco industry, this paper undertakes a conceptual comparison between the drug safety and food safety approaches. It juxtaposes the strategies of "Big Pharma" and "Big Food" which have been considered in the international framework as "potential partners" for advancing public health. As a case study, the paper scrutinizes the synergy of industries within global health public-private partnerships, highlighting collaborations with the food industry for public health promotion. The aim is to shed light on potential pathways where regulatory measures targeting public health safety concerns can lead to a more robust engagement of private entities, concentrating on mitigating unhealthy dietary habits and their associated health risks.

Biography:

Alice Bryk Silveira is a licensed lawyer from Brazil. She holds a Law Degree from Pontifícia Universidade Católica do Rio Grande do Sul and a Master of Laws in International Human Rights Law from Tel Aviv University. Currently, she is doing her Ph.D. in the Institute of Health Law at the University of Neuchâtel, Switzerland.

A longitudinal quantification of the frequency and magnitude of price promotions for breastmilk substitutes at a major Australian supermarket.

Ana Paula Cardoso Richter¹, Christina Zorbas, Josephine Marshall, Kathryn Backholer

¹ PhD Candidate, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and Deakin University

Abstract:

Background: Marketing of breastmilk substitutes (BMS), including the use of discounts as a promotional device to induce sales, undermines breastfeeding and influences parental choices. In Australia, the marketing BMS, governed by voluntary codes criticized for their narrow scope and effectiveness, lacks comprehensive regulation. The extent of BMS using price discounts both in Australia and globally, remains largely unknown.

Methods: We analyzed PriceTracker data, which records weekly online prices of BMS products sold at a major Australian supermarket, from January to June 2022. We categorized BMS into food (snacks or meals for children ≤ 6 months) and formula (infant formula,

follow-on formula, and toddler milk for children 0-36 months). We descriptively examined the frequency and magnitude of price promotions, providing the means and standard deviations to offer insights into dynamic pricing trends.

Preliminary results: In 2022, 56% of food and 19% of formula products were subject to price promotion. Meals made up the greatest proportion of all price promotions (63%), followed by snacks (54%). The proportion of price promoted infant formula, follow-on formula and toddler milk were similar, ranging between 18-21%. Both food and formula were discounted by an average of 3%.

Implications: These findings highlight the need of a reevaluation of the existing regulatory framework for the marketing of BMS in Australia to ensure alignment with the International Code of Marketing of Breastmilk Substitutes. This would include restrictions on the use of price-promotion for BMS, ultimately promoting optimal infant and young child feeding practices.

Biography:

Ana Paula C. Richter is a doctoral candidate in Health Behavior at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, US, and a visiting student at Deakin University. Her research focuses on the marketing of breastmilk substitutes. Ana Paula holds an MPH from Johns Hopkins University, USA.

Who governs food security in Australia? A multi-level governance and food systems analysis

Rachel Carey¹, Maureen Murphy

¹ Senior Lecturer, University of Melbourne

Abstract:

There is a common narrative that Australia is food secure, because it produces and exports a significant amount of food. However, as global and local shocks and stresses increasingly affect the nation's food supply and food prices, household food insecurity is rising. In this study we investigate the governance of food security in Australia, drawing on document analysis and around 30 semi-structured interviews with government, civil society and industry stakeholders. We adopt a 'food systems' approach to our analysis, investigating the governance of food security through food supply chains from production to consumption. We identify formal and informal governance mechanisms for food security in Australia and the actors involved at multiple levels of governance: national, state and local. Our analysis

focuses on six dimensions of food security: availability, access, stability, utilisation, sustainability and agency (HLPE 2020). We ask who influences food security in Australia and who is accountable, and we examine key governance pathways for the accessibility and availability of food in the food supply. Our study identifies gaps in formal mechanisms for the governance of food supply chains beyond the farmgate and the emergence of new networks to safeguard food access. We emphasise the need for greater government accountability for food security in Australia and clarity about the roles of all levels of government in ensuring resilient food supply chains and equitable food access. We discuss potential models for the governance of food security in Australia that are grounded in a ‘food systems’ approach and the human right to food.

Biography:

Dr Rachel Carey is a Senior Lecturer in Food Systems in the School of Agriculture, Food and Ecosystem Sciences at The University of Melbourne. Rachel leads the Foodprint Melbourne research project, which collaborates with stakeholders using co-design approaches to strengthen the resilience of Victoria's food system to shocks and stresses.

Postgrowth (food) systems: social innovation in Australia

Sabrina Chakori¹, Nicky Grigg

¹ Postdoctoral Researcher, CSIRO, Australia's National Science Agency

Abstract:

There is an increased need to explore new socio-economic pathways able to foster socio-ecological wellbeing. Technological innovation towards more efficient resource use might be necessary, but not sufficient, to tackle the ongoing Capitalocene's polycrisis; new business models and social innovation point to opportunities to address more systemic societal and economic drivers of unsustainability. Degrowth pathways could help transition towards postgrowth societies able to create prosperity in a safe and just space for humanity within planetary boundaries. Degrowth can be defined as a multi-dimensional concept that aims at an equitable restructuring of production and consumption to increase human wellbeing and enhance ecological conditions at local and global levels, in the short and long term. Based on three case studies from Australia, this session reveals how food enterprises

aligned with postgrowth values work towards multiple sustainability goals simultaneously, thereby exemplifying an economic model that seeks to create prosperity within planetary boundaries. For example, the case studies analysed foster regenerative food systems, transparency, care, cultural recognition, and the recreation of the commons. Postgrowth food enterprises prioritise social and ecological performance over financial extractivism, and their goals are embodied in their inclusive democratic governance and institutional structure. By adopting a cross-scale lens, this session also highlights some systemic barriers and catalysers of food systems transformations. For example, contrary to growth-driven economies, wellbeing economies might encourage socially just and ecologically sustainable business models. We will discuss the institutional and governance arrangements that could support equitable sustainability transitions.

Biography:

Dr Sabrina Chakori is a CSIRO Postdoctoral researcher working on a project called Navigating Sustainability Transitions (FSP). Her interests include degrowth pathways (e.g. beyond-GDP systems), circular economy, food systems. Sabrina is a researcher, educator and multi-award social entrepreneur, she founded, for example, the Brisbane Tool Library and the Degrowth Journal.

Evaluation of the First Year of the Wollongong Online Farmers' Market

Karen Charlton¹, Ashleigh Walter, Berbel Franse and Kelly Andrews

¹ Professor, Faculty of Science, Medicine and Health, School of Medical, Indigenous and Health Sciences University of Wollongong

Abstract:

Aim: Alternative food networks are emerging in popularity for their grass roots initiatives to overcome the social and environmental effects of the mass food industry. Virtual farmers' markets are a relatively new social phenomena and academic research on this topic is limited. This exploratory study aimed to assess the feasibility of the Wollongong Online Farmers' Market and to inform the operation of future virtual farmers' markets. **Methods:** A mixed methods retrospective research design was used for this research project. Sales data was summarised using Excel. Repeat customers (n=123) and all producers (n=39) were invited to participate in the research project to share their experience and opinion of participating in the online market. Interviews and focus groups were audio recorded and transcribed. Transcriptions were analysed and themes were developed. **Results:** Over the 10 months of operation, in total 258 customers participated in the market and a general decline

in monthly revenue was observed. Repeat customers participated in either a focus group (n=5) or an individual online interview (n=5); and in-depth online interviews were conducted with producers (n=3). Seven main themes were developed from the interviews and focus groups. Conclusions: The Wollongong Online Farmers' Market created a greater awareness of local producers to the consumers who participated in the market. However, community support for the market did not expand past the cohort of consumers who were already engaged in the local food system. Recommendations were made for adaptation of the market's business model for future virtual farmers' markets.

Biography:

Professor Karen Charlton is an Advanced Accredited Practising Dietitian and registered Public Health Nutritionist from the University of Wollongong. She holds an ARC Future Fellowship to investigate strategies to create a more sustainable, equitable and healthy food system.

Designing food marketing controls that protect against all forms of harmful marketing

Alexandra Chung¹, Judith Myers, Mitchell Bowden, Kathryn Backholer, Helen Skouteris

¹ Postdoctoral Research Fellow, Monash University

Abstract:

Background: Regulating unhealthy food marketing is a public health priority. Research to-date has focused on marketing that targets or is seen by children, yet parents and caregivers are also aggressively targeted. Understanding the nature and impact of parent-targeted marketing can facilitate design and implementation of comprehensive regulatory controls.

Aim: To synthesise findings from two studies that describe the nature and impact of front-of-pack marketing on ready-made infant and toddler foods to inform regulatory design.

Methods: Using automated data scraping we collected front-of-pack images of ready-made infant and toddler foods in Australia's two major supermarkets (Dec 2021). A 36-item coding framework was applied to analyse a sample of 230 products, quantifying all front-of-pack marketing. In-depth interviews with 28 Victorian parents (June 2023) subsequently explored if and how front-of-pack marketing influences parents' perceptions and purchases of ready-made foods.

Results: Individual packages promoted up to 15 unique marketing features. All packages included marketing that targeted parents, including nutrition claims, non-nutrient claims (eg. no preservatives), and child development claims (eg. promotes self-feeding). Parents reported that health and nutrition claims commonly influenced their choices of ready-made foods. Parents expected front-of-pack information to be truthful but were wary of misleading marketing tactics.

Implications for public health policy and advocacy: In Australia, health and nutrition claims are governed by food labelling laws whilst other front-of-pack marketing techniques remain unregulated. Strengthening existing food labelling laws and implementing comprehensive food marketing laws is necessary to adequately protect children's diets from influence by the processed food industry.

Biography:

Alex Chung is a Research Fellow at Monash University. She currently holds a VicHealth Postdoctoral Fellowship where her research is focused building evidence that supports policy reform to reduce the harmful impact of food marketing on children's diets and health.

"We don't want bigger grains": Indigenous governance in a reemerging native grains industry

Rebecca Cross¹, Katie Moore, Dianne Hall, Hannah Binge, Kerrie Saunders, Angela Pattison, Kim Bell-Anderson

¹ The University of Sydney

Abstract:

Regenerative and sustainable transitions in agriculture have fast gained traction over the past decade. However, there are increasing calls to recognise the limitations and tensions inherent in this movement, highlighting the need to decolonise and Indigenise regenerative

agriculture in order to achieve transformational change. This paper presents results on a 5-year interdisciplinary pursuit to support and co-foster an Indigenous-led native grains industry on and with Gamilaraay Country in North-Western NSW. This work aims to embody a highly collaborative, place-based, relational approach to research and as such, both our co-design insights around supporting community governance and enshrining Indigenous food sovereignty, as well as insights into the challenges and opportunities for developing this grass-roots industry, are unpacked. These findings ultimately point to the need for cooperative landscape-scale models for production of native grains designed and driven by local Aboriginal communities, entrepreneurs and enterprises. However, maintaining Indigenous control over both access to and the commercialisation of native grains is a key concern; the majority of Indigenous stakeholders do not want to follow the mainstream agricultural development pathway towards an industrialised, monocultural and economically-driven crop. Instead, a species rich and abundant biocultural ecosystem generated through Indigenous land management practices, both traditional and contemporary, on substantial parcels of Aboriginal-governed land is the shared vision. We argue that developing long-term place-based authentic research partnerships to support and bolster Indigenous agricultural self-determination, and therefore regenerative transformation, is a priority.

Biography:

Dr Rebecca Cross is a rural and environmental geographer in the School of Geosciences at the University of Sydney. Her work focuses on sustainable, regenerative and Indigenous transitions in agriculture and natural resource management by understanding how farming knowledges, eco-innovations, and landholder collaborations enhance diversity within rural landscapes.

Stakeholder perspectives on scaling up potassium-enriched salts to reduce cardiovascular disease in Australia: a qualitative study

Juliette Crowther¹, Annet C. Hoek, Kathy Trieu, Alain Balaguer-Mercado, Inez Denham, Irene Deltetto, Dori Patay, Emalie Rosewarne, James Bullen, Simone Pettigrew, Bruce Neal, Jacqui Webster

¹ Research Assistant, The George Institute for Global Health

Abstract:

Cardiovascular disease, the world's leading cause of death, could be significantly reduced through salt reduction strategies. While current approaches in Australia have had limited

impact, switching to potassium-enriched salt is a highly promising intervention. This qualitative study of stakeholder perspectives investigated the drivers and barriers to scaling up potassium-enriched salt use in Australia as part of a multi-year project. Semi-structured interviews (n=23) with representatives from government, industry, and civil society, were guided by an analytical framework devised from Stone's theory of causal ideas and Moon's typology of power. Data were analysed using thematic analysis. A major theme identified was limited knowledge and awareness of the benefits of potassium-enriched salts across all stakeholder groups. As such, there is limited consumer demand for potassium-enriched products, and limited incentive for industry to invest in supply. Further, government is hesitant to implement policies due to perceived health risks. According to the interviewees, potentially useful drivers and actions would be education, improving flavour and appeal, assisting industry with costs and research and development capabilities, and leveraging current policies and initiatives (such as the Health Star Rating system). There are several perceived barriers that need to be overcome before potassium-enriched salts are taken up by consumers and the food industry, with support of government. The findings suggest that a multi-pronged approach to drive demand and supply is required, which includes addressing misconceptions and disseminating evidence about the benefits and need for switching to potassium-enriched salt.

Biography:

Juliette Crowther is a Research Assistant at the George Institute for Global Health. She works in the Advocacy and Policy Impact team of the Food Policy Division and is working on a project on scaling-up reduced sodium salts in Australia. She lives on the beautiful Mid-North Coast of NSW.

"It won't fix anything": understanding Australians' attitudes towards nutrition-related policies.

Katherine Cullerton¹, Anastassia Demenshko, Michael Waller

¹ Senior Lecturer, School of Public Health, University of Queensland

Abstract:

Australia has witnessed limited nutrition-related regulatory reform during the past decade, despite evidence demonstrating their effectiveness. One reason cited for this lack of action is concern that such measures are not acceptable to the community. To gain a better understanding of public attitudes toward various nutrition policies and to assess whether

these attitudes are consistent across diverse demographics and political affiliations, we conducted a cross-sectional survey with a nationally representative sample (n=1,519). Participants were asked to indicate their level of agreement with five nutrition-related policies and provide reasons for their response. Quantitative data were reported using descriptive statistics and logistic regression analysis, while qualitative data underwent thematic analysis. The policy with the highest agreement level (79.06%) was the removal of soft drink vending machines from high schools, while the policy with the lowest agreement level (50%) involved changing laws to prevent fast-food restaurants from being built near schools. Adding taxes to processed food and beverages received 53% agreement. Notably, there was no significant difference in policy agreement between voters of the Labor and Liberal parties, although Labor voters expressed the highest level of strong disagreement with four of the five policies. Analysis of reasons revealed that opposition to policies related to concerns about access to fast food, the belief that children and adults deserve ‘treats’, doubts about the effectiveness of the policies, and the cost-implications of the policies. These findings provide important insights for advocates and contest commonly held views regarding public support for nutrition policies.

Biography:

Katherine Cullerton is a Senior Lecturer in Global Health and Health Policy at the School of Public Health, University of Queensland. She examines why evidence doesn't translate into policy, increasing the agency of advocates to effectively influence policy and whether it is ever acceptable for population health researchers to engage with the food industry.

Inside a corporate affairs conference: the race for social licence

Katherine Cullerton¹, Dori Patay

¹ Senior Lecturer, School of Public Health, University of Queensland

Abstract:

Background: For many years the tactics employed by commercial actors have been studied by public health researchers. However, there has been criticism recently that scholars siloed approach to studying industry tactics means they may miss broader trends universal to corporate actors across domains. Further, there are challenges to collecting data on corporate practices as it is often difficult to access, incomplete and not representative. In

this study, we covertly attended a Corporate Affairs summit to identify key concerns and practices of the commercial actors presenting.

Method: We adopted a covert observational design involving observation of senior executives (n=35) presenting at a national corporate affairs conference in 2023. The data was inductively and thematically analysed.

Results: Maintaining a social licence to operate was the key concern for corporations. The greatest threat to social licence was from social media activists as they could rapidly turn public opinion against industry actors. Strategies identified to maintain social licence included building relationships with the public and civil society, relying on AI-driven data services to monitor threats, and applying the narrative of value creation and stakeholder capitalism.

Significance: This is the first time researchers have documented industry fears and tactics from inside an industry conference. Our study highlights the power social media activists have in disrupting social licence and that companies regard this a greater priority than engaging with policymakers. This study provides advocates with insights into industry tactics enabling them to challenge corporate narratives that aim to counter regulatory measures.

Biography:

Katherine Cullerton is a Senior Lecturer in Global Health and Health Policy at the School of Public Health, University of Queensland. She examines why evidence doesn't translate into policy, increasing the agency of advocates to effectively influence policy and whether it is ever acceptable for population health researchers to engage with the food industry.

Stakeholder perspectives on implementing a sustained healthy vending initiative in a university setting: a reflexive thematic analysis

Jane Dancey¹, Belinda Reeve, Alexandra Jones, Julie Brimblecombe

¹ PhD Candidate, Monash University

Abstract:

Background: To address the growing burden of non-communicable disease, the World Health Organisation recommends that countries adopt policies to encourage the creation of healthier food retail settings. In Australia, despite the absence of enforceable government

policy in most food retail environments, some organisations are adopting contractual measures to create healthier food retail in settings under their control. This study aimed to explore the perspectives of those involved in the implementation and sustainment (6 years and ongoing) of one such healthy vending initiative in a large Australian university.

Methods: Seven interviews were conducted with individuals involved in the initiative. Our interview guide was based upon the Consolidated Framework for Implementation Research and the regulatory concept of social licence (1-3). Reflexive thematic analysis was used to generate themes and subthemes examining the individual and organisational factors that led to the initiative's sustained implementation (4, 5).

Results: We found that high levels of individual self-efficacy, and enjoyment in participating in innovative projects, combined with interviewees' perception that their organisation had a role in leading social change, contributed to the initiative's sustained implementation. However, implementation was bounded by the financial variability of the initiative and the need to provide consumer choice.

Conclusions: This study analysed individual- and organisational-level factors that likely contributed to the successful implementation and sustainment of a healthy vending initiative. While focussed on healthy vending, it contributes to the broader discussion on how to implement and sustain healthy food retail initiatives in all settings.

Biography:

Jane Dancey is a PhD student and Accredited Practising Dietitian who has worked on healthy food retail projects at Monash University for over 7 years. Jane's research focusses on the use of contracts, as a form of private regulation to create healthy food retail environments.

Ultra-Processed Food Front-Of Pack Labelling: Proposals to Strengthen International Regulatory Framework

Vashti Djoehartono¹, Alexandra Finch

¹ University of Melbourne

Abstract:

This study delves into the growing global health concerns that arise from the rapid expansion of the unhealthy highly processed foods industry, which is widely acknowledged as one of four leading industries that linked to the increase in non-communicable diseases (NCDs) that contribute to one third of global death. The focus of this study lies in the

misleading and ineffectiveness of the current Front-of-Pack Labelling (FOPL) regulations, which are utilized by commercial entities as a means of marketing and directly influence the excessive consumption of UPFs. With a specific focus on consumer rights to health and information, the research suggests a comprehensive reconstruct of the existing FOPL framework within an international regulatory context. This includes an examination of the FOPL initiatives undertaken by the government of Chile. The evaluation reveals the absence of an internationally recognized FOPL standard, which leads to consumer confusion. This confusion is further heightened by the voluntary nature of FOPL implementation, which lacks the necessary urgency among countries and industry stakeholders. To tackle these challenges, recommendations are put forth to redefine the World Health Organization (WHO) FOPL Guideline Principles, establish an internationally recognized FOPL standard through the joint efforts of WHO-FAO Codex Alimentarius, and transition FOPL from a voluntary approach to a mandatory government-regulated approach.

Biography:

Master in International Economic and Global Health Law

Food and Water for Life: A community-led approach to supporting access to healthy food and drinking water in remote Aboriginal communities

Alicia Dunning¹, Trish Tonkin, Devanshi Gala

¹ Research Associate, The George Institute for Global Health

Abstract:

Following a series of threats to food and water security in Walgett, the Aboriginal community has prioritised establishing resilient food and water systems to ensure a sustainable, secure and local supply of affordable and nutritious food and safe drinking water. In 2019, led by local Aboriginal community-controlled organisations the Walgett Aboriginal Medical Service (WAMS) and Dharriwaa Elders Group (DEG), as part of its

long-term 'Yuwaya Ngarra-li' partnership with the University of New South Wales (UNSW) the Walgett Food and Water for Life Program was launched, with a view to building community-led innovative solutions to address food and water security. To better understand experiences of food and water security in Walgett, community surveys were conducted in 2022. Food security was assessed with 9 questions adapted from the Household Food Insecurity Access Scale (HFIAS) and water security with 12 questions adapted from the Household Water Insecurity Experiences (HWISE) scale. Nearly half (46%) of the 251 participants experienced food insecurity and 44% experienced water insecurity; comparable to the prevalence in many low- and middle-income countries and far higher than national-level estimates in Australia. The results also showed a positive relationship between food and water insecurity, reflecting the knowledge of the interconnection between food and water in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures. Presenters from UNSW, DEG & WAMS will discuss the development of the program, community survey findings, current community activities, outcomes to date and what has been learnt about building community-led solutions in remote Aboriginal communities.

Biography:

Alicia is a proud Bundjalung dietitian, who spent the first 8 years of her career working as a clinical dietitian in NSW public hospitals gaining important dietetic, communication and counselling skills. She joined the Food and Water for Life program in mid-2023 as a research associate and is focused on improving food and water security in Aboriginal communities.

Gather + Grow: Building Collective Action for Food Security in Remote Queensland

Renae Earl¹, Simone Nalatu, Kora Uhlmann

1 Health and Wellbeing Queensland

Abstract:

Not everyone has the same opportunity to exercise their Human Right to Food. Systemic challenges mean that some Australians are more likely to experience food insecurity than others, contributing to a higher risk of chronic disease, mental ill-health, and entrenched inequity across generations. In Queensland, remote food systems contend with added challenges of geographic dispersion and extreme climates, amongst others. Food sold in Far North Queensland Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities travels almost

3,500kms to remote stores. This food is often poor quality, up to 30% more expensive, and of lesser variety. Food insecurity, exacerbated by these challenges, worsens health and wellbeing outcomes in this population and undermines efforts to Close the Gap. Health and Wellbeing Queensland (HWQld) is leading a multi-strategic policy response to address place-based and systemic food security barriers in remote Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities (Gather + Grow). Supported by a multi-disciplinary workforce, HWQld is working with government, communities and across sectors to progress four community-identified priorities: • Optimising supply chains to ensure healthy food is available year-round. • Creating supportive settings for sustainable local food production. • Building awareness, capability, and environments that support good nutrition. • Enabling families to utilise healthy food at home with functional health hardware. HWQld has established a tripartite government steering committee that will liaise with dedicated community governance groups. By valuing local, Traditional and cultural knowledge and consulting across sectors, Gather + Grow is supporting shared decision-making and meaningful, relevant action to make access to food fair in Queensland.

Biography:

Renaë Earle is the A/Senior Public Health Nutritionist in Health and Wellbeing Queensland's Equity & Communities team. A dietitian by background, Renaë takes a systems-approach to unpack the intractable barriers to remote food security in Queensland. Community partnering and centering First Nations voices through allyship are integral to her work, and Renaë has travelled across many of Queensland's remote First Nations communities to listen to, and respond to, First Nations priorities. As part of her work to address food security, Renaë is addressing system barriers such as freight and supply chain, housing, economic development and local food production. Other interest areas of Renaë's include adolescent health, and she is currently undertaking a PhD to investigate links between First Nations adolescent empowerment and dietary practices.

Co-designed strategies for sustainable healthy food provision in the Early childhood Education setting.

Audrey Elford¹, Alison Spence, Margaret Rozman, Karen Campbell, and Penelope Love

¹ PhD Candidate, Institute of Physical Activity and Nutrition (IPAN), Deakin University

Abstract:

Background / Purpose: Early childhood Education and Care (ECEC) are prime locations for influencing sustainable healthy diets at scale, due to high attendance, long hours, and the provision of half of daily nutrition needs. In the absence of ECEC-specific guidance for sustainable healthy food provision, this study aimed to co-design appropriate support

guided by the Food and Agriculture Organisations' Sustainable Healthy Diets Guiding Principles.

Methods: The first seven steps of the IDEAS co-design framework (integrate, specify, ground, ideate, prototype, gather, build). Co-design collaborators were ECEC staff and Nutrition Australia. Data collection comprised a survey, with a subgroup participating in weighed food served/wasted audits, interviews and focus groups. Interview themes were coded to the Theoretical Domains Framework and formed the foundation of resource prototypes that were refined in workshops (Nutrition Australia) and focus groups (ECEC).

Results: Surveys (n=129) suggested low food waste awareness (8%). Audits (n=12) found average 27% food waste, and lower plate waste in centres who had previously conducted food waste audits (7%) vs not (17%) (p=0.04). Interview themes (n=17) indicated low awareness of sustainable healthy food, with staff requesting information, and the need for whole-of-centre approaches. Focus groups developed three resources; i) a visual representation of sustainable healthy food provision, ii) guiding practices, iii) a whole-of-centre approach to manage/reduce food waste.

Conclusions: With vast quantities of food provided in ECEC, action is needed to support sustainable healthy food provision and minimise waste. Co-designed resources may offer an opportunity to catalyse awareness and support ECEC centres towards achieving this.

Biography:

PhD student (recently submitted thesis) and casual research fellow at the Institute for Physical Activity and Nutrition (IPAN), Deakin University. Student leader for Deakin University's Sustainable Health Network.

'Australia is one of the most food secure nations in the world': Analysis of stakeholder frames on positioning, drivers and solutions to food insecurity in Australia

Molly Fairweather¹, Zoe de Castro, Sophie O'Connor, Kylie Beale, Sue Kleve, Julia McCartan, Nick Rose

¹ Projects and Research Coordinator Sustain: The Australian Food Network & Research Officer, Monash University

Abstract:

Background: The issue of food insecurity has diverse and often divergent interpretations among stakeholders. This has contributed to fragmented responses within an incoherent

policy landscape to address worsening food insecurity in the face of compounding crises of cost-of-living pressures and inequity, geopolitical unrest and the accelerating climate emergency. This project aims to understand different stakeholder's perspectives regarding the positioning, drivers and proposed solutions to food insecurity, as articulated within submissions to the current federal parliamentary inquiry into food security. In addition, the project explores how the proposed solutions to food insecurity are influenced by divergent stakeholder framings of the problem.

Methods: This project involves thematic analysis of all written submissions (n=185) according to Braun & Clarke's 6-step approach, complemented by stakeholder mapping to understand engagement within the inquiry across both written submissions and invited oral hearings. A codebook was developed to capture the following components from each submission: 1) terminology and framing of food security 2) perceived drivers of food insecurity; 3) proposed policy solutions and recommendations; and 4) degree of alignment with the inquiry's terms of reference. Submissions will be coded in NVivo, with subsequent development and consolidation of themes.

Discussion: Findings will shed light on the diverse and often conflicting solutions proposed by food system stakeholders to address food insecurity. These findings will have applications in advocacy, as an adjunct to the inquiry's report (expected by end of 2023) and in-turn, influencing the government's response (expected by mid-2024).

Biography:

Molly Fairweather is the Projects and Research Coordinator at Sustain, and also works as a Public Health Nutrition Research Officer at Monash University. She has experience across a range of research and policy projects on food systems topics including food security, healthy food retail and urban agriculture.

Systems from silos – transforming governance of sustainable and healthy food

Anna Farmery¹, Rebecca Campbell, Alisi Tuqa, Edward Boydell, Senoveva Mauli, Anne Marie Thow, Dori Patay, Andre Flores, Federico Davila, Anja Bless, Fiona Berry

¹ Senior Research Fellow, Australian National Centre for Ocean Resources and Security (ANCORS), University of Wollongong

Abstract:

Efforts to transform food systems to be healthier, more sustainable and more equitable have been encouraged to embrace a multisectoral approach to foster connections and overcome limitations of more siloed approaches. Through international processes such as the United

Nations Food Systems Summit (UNFSS), national agencies have been tasked with designing and implementing national food system pathways, and coordinating a food systems approach across various government sectors. We identified and the sectors leading these initiatives and examined the implications for practice, with a focus on the agriculture sector, which emerged as the dominant leader of food systems initiatives. We further examined policy and UNFSS activity to determine the ways in which the agriculture sector has committed to deliver on nutrition and other food system outcomes beyond the traditional remit of the production sector. Our results revealed a range of pros and cons resulting from the dominant influence of the agriculture sector in food systems governance, and from the dynamic nature of agricultural ministries. Our results also identified a number of potential structures for successful multisectoral food systems governance. This research highlighted that while adopting a multisectoral approach can help overcome flaws related to siloed governance, there are challenges to successful multisectoral governance of food systems, including accommodating different priorities across sectors, as well as consensus on ownership of food systems activities which may be harder to grasp under a multisectoral approach.

Biography:

Dr Anna Farmery is a Senior Research Fellow at the Australian National Centre for Ocean Resources and Security (ANCORS) at the University of Wollongong. Her research focus is on the intersection between human and planetary health, with a specific focus on aquatic foods. Anna has worked on aspects of sustainable food systems – including production, value chains, consumption and governance - in Australia, Cambodia, Timor-Leste and countries in East Africa and the Pacific.

Multidisciplinary food systems research at The University of Sydney

Penny Farrell¹, Alice Gibson, Jaime Miranda, Dori Patay, David Raubenheimer, Belinda Reeve, Anne Marie Thow, Ruth Zadoks

¹ The University of Sydney

Abstract:

Malnutrition is a leading cause of death worldwide. Food system activities (production or harvest, processing, distribution, and consumption) also contribute to substantial environmental damage including over one-quarter of greenhouse gas emissions (5, 6). There is immense need to make food systems more sustainable. To enhance the sustainability of

food systems, coordinated expertise from multiple disciplines, as well as aligned goals, are needed. This requires multisectoral collaboration in global, national, and local food system governance. However, multisectoral collaboration is difficult because different actors' and sectors' interests, objectives, ideas, and values often conflict, resulting in incoherent approaches to improving food systems, inefficient use of resources, and suboptimal outcomes for health, the planet, and livelihoods. One of the drivers of incoherence is that many professions linked to food, its products, and behaviours, are trained and appraised in siloes. The challenges of incoherence are in many ways mirrored in academia. Projects seeking to optimise food system sustainability require multidisciplinary collaboration – often bringing together nutritionists, lawyers, agriculture specialists, veterinarians, social scientists, epidemiologists, ecologists, political economists, and policy and governance scholars, each of whom have their own languages, ways of working and priorities. Interlinkages across disciplines and shared targets are essential and can take different shapes and forms. In this presentation we explore solutions to these issues by sharing a series of successful case studies of cross-faculty and multidisciplinary collaboration at The University of Sydney, as well as some of the challenges we have experienced in pursuing multidisciplinary collaboration.

Biography:

My research focusses on applying complex systems approaches and theories of public policy making to help understand how to build healthy, sustainable and equitable food systems globally.

Community-led advocacy to achieve food security in remote Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities

Megan Ferguson¹, Emma Stubbs², Caroline Deen, Katherine Cullerton, Ellie Chan, Emma Chappell, Emma Tonkin, Sue Kleve, Melinda Hammond, Simone Nalatu, Kani Thompson, Julie Brimblecombe, Bronwyn Fredericks

1 Senior Lecturer, The University of Queensland

2 Central Australian Aboriginal Congress, The University of Queensland

Abstract:

Introduction: Improving food security is a priority for remote Indigenous communities serviced by Apunipima Cape York Health Council, Queensland, and Central Australian Aboriginal Congress, Northern Territory. The call to action from these organisations resulted in a research project co-designed by Apunipima, Congress, community stakeholders and researchers that aimed to explore community-led solutions to improve food security in remote communities and included a focus on translation.

Methods: A 2-year phase of local qualitative and quantitative data collection was followed by bringing together representatives from 10 remote communities in Central Australia and Cape York to determine collective priorities and solutions, and consider advocacy options, to inform a community-led framework and policy translation plan to improve food security in remote communities.

Results: Community representatives emphasised that there is not one way to improve food security. Solutions were identified across the priority areas of healthy food prices; supply and range of quality foods; road conditions and access to transport; income, employment and training; and health promotion education. Various solution-based messages have been tested with the public to support our advocacy and determine what language would gain the most traction with the public and policymakers when discussing solutions. The project supports the translation of these findings, by capitalising on existing state, territory, and national opportunities, with and in ways determined by community representatives.

Conclusion: Representatives from remote Indigenous communities have developed a community-led framework of solutions to improve food security and have directed the advocacy needed to see these solutions translated into policy.

Biography:

Megan Ferguson is a Senior Lecturer in Public Health Nutrition at the School of Public Health. The research she partners on, is focused on approaches to support local decision-makers design effective policy interventions to improve nutrition and food security outcomes, through incorporating evidence and an understanding of the policy context.

Influencing government policy for stores in remote Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities

Megan Ferguson¹, Nicole Turner², Khia de Silva, Deanne Minniecon, Sarah Connally, Rebekah Clancy, Emma Delahunty, Le Smith, Nikita Muller, Anne Kemp, Jane Martin, Louise Maple-Brown, Emma McMahon, Beau Cubillo, Amanda Hill, Meaghan Christian, Katherine Cullerton, Julie Brimblecombe

¹ Senior Lecturer, The University of Queensland

² Adjunct Professor of Nutrition and Dietetics, University of Canberra

Abstract:

Following the sunseting of the Stronger Futures Northern Territory Act in July 2022, the Northern Territory Government committed to developing legislation within the Food Act 2004 (NT) to ensure food security is supported through stores in remote Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. This provides a critical window of opportunity to strengthen legislation and ensure stores contribute to the prevention and management of chronic disease by improving the healthiness of the store environment.

The Coalition for Healthy Remote Stores comprises representatives from 13 state/territory/national Aboriginal-controlled and non-government retail, health, and academic organisations. Our actions are informed by a conceptual model for influencing government nutrition policy.¹ We have invested in building productive relationships to support advocacy efforts. Informed by demonstrated support from Aboriginal leaders in retail and health, we developed a clear, unified solution. We supported our policy entrepreneurs to be ready to provide solutions to government in a timely manner.

The Coalition's approach has been successful in influencing public policy, with key evidence-informed measures, originating from local, co-designed research, now to be regulations. Additional key measures have been included in guidelines and we will work with government through our trusted relationships to maximise their uptake in stores.

The success of this advocacy, informed by the conceptual model, will be useful to other advocacy efforts especially in food and nutrition policy. We will continue to advocate for improvement of food supply in remote communities as guided by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander leaders and community members our organisations work with.

Biography:

Megan Ferguson is a Senior Lecturer in Public Health Nutrition at the School of Public Health. The research she partners on, is focused on approaches to support local decision-makers design effective policy interventions to improve nutrition and food security outcomes, through incorporating evidence and an understanding of the policy context.

Nicole Turner is a proud Kamilaroi woman. She is one of very few qualified Aboriginal Community Nutritionists in Australia after completing her studies in the Bachelor of Applied Science (Community Nutrition). She is the current IAHA Chairperson and has been on the Board for over eight years showing leadership across the allied health and broader health sector. Nicole has worked in the health sector for over 25 years and in Aboriginal health for over 20 years as an Aboriginal Health Worker and enrolled nurse before becoming a Nutritionist . Nicole is an Adjunct Professor of Nutrition and Dietetics at the University of Canberra and has published several research papers in international journals. Nicole holds a full-time position with the New South Wales (NSW) Rural Doctors Network as the Director of Aboriginal engagement. Nicole's passion is nutrition and living a healthy lifestyle and she believes we need to educate and give knowledge to our people about the importance of maintaining a healthy lifestyle, and prevention of chronic diseases. She enjoys empowering other Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to join the allied health workforce and to encourage young people to finish school and follow their dreams.

Public support for food subsidy and tax scenarios to improve the health and environmental outcomes of food: findings from the COPPER project deliberative forums in the UK, 2023

Hannah Forde¹

1 Postdoctoral Research Fellow, Nuffield Department of Primary Care Health Sciences, University of Oxford

Abstract:

Background: Changing the price of food could make healthier, environmentally sustainable diets more affordable. Implementing policies that increase (taxes) or decrease (subsidies) the price of foods is often controversial, politicised, and protracted. Ensuring policies receive public support is important for effective policymaking. Deliberative methods (e.g. deliberative forums) are particularly useful for understanding public views on contested issues as they involve arriving at decisions through evidence-informed debate of competing viewpoints.

Methods: We held two, two-day long deliberative forums in October 2023 in Glasgow and Bridlington, UK, to understand which food subsidies or taxes the public thought the government should implement. Participants watched five expert evidence videos related to food and health, the environment, economics, policymaking and public support for policies. Participants deliberated to reach a collective ranking of 16 subsidy and tax scenarios and provided reasons for their rankings.

Results: In total, 24 people participated in the deliberative forums (Glasgow, n=13; Bridlington, n=11). In Glasgow, participants most preferred a fruit and vegetable subsidy, a subsidy on low carbon foods, and a tax on high carbon foods; and in Bridlington participants most preferred a tax on foods high in fat, salt and sugar combined with a subsidy on foods

with a healthy nutritional profile. Discussion leading to these rankings included concerns about food equity, sourcing, processing, and personal agency.

Implications: Our study provides evidence to inform fiscal policy decisions about food that is more reliable than other evidence gathered through aggregation methods (e.g., surveys) that may present self-interested views.

Biography:

Dr Hannah Forde is a Postdoctoral Researcher at the Nuffield Department of Primary Care Health Sciences, the University of Oxford. Her research explores ways to use policy and regulation to make the food system healthier, fairer, and more environmentally sustainable.

Countering Industry Interference in Public Health – Law as a Tool for the Management of Conflict of Interest in the Commonwealth Caribbean

Nicole Foster¹

1 Lecturer, Faculty of Law, University of the West Indies Cave Hill Campus

Abstract:

Although there is increasing awareness within the Commonwealth Caribbean of law's potential to support the region's food policy reform efforts generally, there remains significant room for improvement in terms of stakeholders' actual use of the law to influence public health outcomes, including in the food policy space. One area where stakeholders can usefully engage the law for meaningful impact is that conflict of interest, management of which is crucial to ensuring transparency, fairness, and the integrity of decision-making processes. This paper uses CARICOM's ongoing effort to adopt black, octagonal front of pack warning labels as the new regional standard to explore how law can concretely help to manage conflict of interest in public health policy making in the Commonwealth Caribbean. The paper examines the existing legal framework within selected CARICOM states and analyses the extent to which the common law (e.g. administrative law) and legislation (e.g. freedom of information Acts) can be used to increase the transparency and accountability of these processes, thereby limiting the opportunities for, and impact of, conflict of interest on the policy outcomes. The discussion bears in mind the peculiarities of Commonwealth Caribbean states as small island developing states (SIDS) and the recommended concrete actions take account of the financial and human resource constraints that SIDS share. The paper's ultimate objective is to clarify for public health stakeholders and civil society actors in particular the range of options already currently available to them to leverage the law to advance their work on food policy reform.

Biography:

Nicole Foster is Law Lecturer, Faculty of Law, University of the West Indies Cave Hill Campus and founding Head of its Law and Health Research Unit. She is also active in NCD prevention and control advocacy through her work as Policy Advisor with Healthy Caribbean Coalition.

Listening to the voices of lived experience: advocating for food security solutions by going beyond food

Danielle Gallegos¹, Sabine Baker

1 Professor of Nutrition and Dietetics, Queensland University of Technology

Abstract:

Background: Solutions to food insecurity in Australia largely focus on the development of an alternative food system that is led and implemented by the charitable sector. This response ameliorates immediate hunger but fails to address food insecurity more broadly or the underlying social determinants. The Feeding Families in Tough Times project aimed to identify the determinants of food insecurity and co-design a portfolio of potential solutions.

Methods: Forty-three semi-structured interviews were carried out with predominantly mothers experiencing marginal to severe food insecurity in Queensland. Interviews were informed by life narratives. Interviews were analysed using reflexive thematic analysis. A sub-set of interviews was analysed using the Listening Guide to develop data poems that exemplify the power of lived experience to guide solutions for complex issues.

Results: Interviews identified key factors influencing the ability to access food including mental load, capabilities, agency and choice and relationships (with family, service providers and self). Adverse experiences (now and in the past) and precarity were additional key contributors. Participants identified key policy areas that need to be influenced such as those that impact on income (including social welfare payments), housing, domestic and family violence, and childcare.

Conclusions: As researchers and policy-makers we have a duty of care to hear and amplify the voices of those with lived experience. This paper shows that growing a charitable food

relief sector is merely a band-aid, and we need to instead address the social determinants of health.

Biography:

Danielle is Professor of Nutrition and Dietetics at QUT. As a social nutritionist she focuses problems at the nexus between social justice and food and nutrition that require interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary solutions. Her current areas of research focus on household food insecurity and in building food sovereignty.

Mapping the extent of unhealthy food advertising around schools in Tāmaki Makaurau/Auckland to support policy intervention

Karolina Kneller, **Kelly Garton**¹, Daniel Exeter, Victoria Egli

¹ Research Fellow, The University of Auckland

Abstract:

Given the ubiquity and potential harmful effects of unhealthy advertising, this study aimed to assess the extent of children's exposure to unhealthy outdoor food advertising around 381 primary and intermediate schools in Auckland, New Zealand. We developed a simple advertising exposure score using images of advertising collected from Google Street View, and investigated its spatial correlation with indicators of neighbourhood deprivation. Outdoor advertising was present in proximity to 57.3% of the sampled schools (n = 235); of which 82.4% of adverts promoted unhealthy food and/or beverages (n = 2173). Advertising exposure increased statistically significantly with neighbourhood deprivation (p<0.05). The results show a clear need for policy intervention that regulates and limits unhealthy food advertising around schools in New Zealand. The advertising score proved a useful tool to measure and visualise children's potential exposure to unhealthy food advertising, and is easy to understand and interpret. It is also possible to use the same score in different settings, since it does not include any location-specific variables. This score therefore has strong potential to inform policies that regulate advertising in school zones. It serves as a base model that can be refined in future research and to which additional variables could be added.

Biography:

Dr. Kelly Garton is a Research Fellow at the University of Auckland's School of Population Health. Her primary research focus is on the political economy of transitioning to healthier and more sustainable food systems, and regulations to address the commercial determinants of health. Of particular interest is the impact of international trade and investment on public health 'policy space'. Other recent projects have included policy analysis and evidence generation to support regulation to restrict children's exposure to unhealthy food and beverage marketing in New Zealand, and the Smokefree Aotearoa 2025 Action Plan. Dr. Garton also has a Secretariat role coordinating the International Network for Obesity/non-communicable diseases Research, Monitoring, and Action Support (INFORMAS).

The community food environment and its association with health outcomes in high income countries

Alemayehu Gebremariam¹, Katherine Kent, Karen Charlton

¹ PhD Candidate, University of Wollongong

Abstract:

Abstract Introduction: Understanding the link between the community food environment and health outcomes is crucial to inform evidence-based policies and programs. In this review, we summarized and synthesized the existing published evidence on the relationship between the community food environment and health outcomes in high-income countries.

Methods: A systematic literature search was conducted in September 2023 using six electronic databases. Identified studies were systematically organized using the Covidence platform. Two authors independently screened all titles, abstracts and full text articles against eligibility criteria, and extracted data into a pre-designed extraction table. Quality assessment was conducted using The Quality Assessment Tool for Observational Cohort and Cross-Sectional Studies.

Results: Among 43 included articles, most studies (n=29; 67.4%) were conducted in USA and among adult populations (39; 90.7). The most researched health outcome was diabetes (n=27; 62.8%). Fast food outlet density emerged as a frequently used measure of food environment (n=14; 32.6%). Considering inconsistencies in the measure of food environment as a limitation, a high prevalence of diabetes was positively associated with density of fast-food outlets and convenience stores whereas it was inversely associated with supermarket density. Fast food outlet density was also associated with cardiovascular morbidity and mortality.

Conclusion and recommendation: Emerging evidence suggests an association between the healthiness of the community food environment and health outcomes, such as diabetes. A lack of consistency in measuring the food environment remains a significant challenge in the endeavour to inform evidence-based policies and programs to improve community health outcomes.

Biography:

I am PhD student at University of Wollongong with the passion of understanding community food environment and its link with chronic non communicable diseases. I was working as instructor in an Ethiopian University. I have more than 30 publications in scientific journals. I am committed to learn more about research.

Public policy support for small local farms in high income countries to contribute to healthier, more sustainable food systems

Kerri-Anne Gill¹, Jessica Bogard, Katherine Cullerton

1 PhD Candidate, University of Queensland

Abstract:

Global experts and UN agencies have called on national governments to support small local farms as part of a healthy, sustainable and resilient food system. These recommendations apply to countries of all income levels, however most of the focus of researchers and policymakers has been on smallholder agriculture in low- and middle-income countries. This paper will present the findings of a systematic scoping review undertaken in phase one of a PhD project. Four databases were searched with keywords relating to small-scale farms, public policies and high-income countries, yielding 818 initial results. Preliminary analysis has revealed limited evidence that high-income country governments are actively supporting small local farms to contribute to healthy, sustainable food systems. The paper will also outline further research currently underway to directly assess what support Australia's federal, state and local governments are providing to Australian small farmers, and how closely this aligns with the needs expressed by farmers and their representative associations. These findings will highlight opportunities to align public policy more closely with the needs of small local farmers in order to support food system transformation for improved sustainability and food and nutrition security.

Biography:

Kerri Gill is a PhD candidate in the School of Public Health, Faculty of Medicine at the University of Queensland, Australia. Her research interest is in local food production as part of a healthy, sustainable and resilient food system and in particular, the role of small local farms.

Advocacy actions undertaken by Cancer Council Western Australia to restrict outdoor unhealthy food and drink advertising on government property.

Emma Groves¹, Ainslie Sartori

1 Cancer Council WA

Abstract:

Cancer Council WA undertakes advocacy to advance policies in WA to increase healthy eating. This work is in partnership with the Telethon Kids Institute and funded by Healthway. A priority is to build evidence, community support and government commitment to implement a policy to restrict unhealthy food and drink advertising on WA state government property. Such a policy is an evidence-based, effective lever governments can take to support community to eat well, however to date there has been limited commitment by Australian state and territory governments. In WA, the incoming 2021 government committed to instigating a taskforce to investigate a policy, however now stalled at a draft policy. The advocacy strategies undertaken to date include commissioning several policy-informed research projects, delivering two targeted paid public relations campaigns, working in consensus with leading health agencies and building capacity of our partners. As the project has progressed there has also been opportunities to provide advice to WA local governments wishing to consider removing unhealthy food and drink advertising from their property, such as bus shelters. The presentation will describe the advocacy strategies to date with high level results and demonstrate how non-government coalitions can counter industry arguments, develop strong consensus on policy recommendations and increase political pressure to protect children from unhealthy marketing. A summary of a third public relations campaign regarding the release of a recently commissioned cost-benefit analysis to be delivered November 2023 will be presented. This economic evidence we hope is the missing piece to secure government action.

Biography:

Emma is the obesity policy senior coordinator at Cancer Council WA working on an advocacy project to advance policies in WA to support healthy eating. Previous positions in clinical and community dietetics has strengthened Emma's resolve for the need to address the underlying systems and environments that drive inequitable diets.

Perth's junk filled suburbs. How can planning laws and community health align at the local level to promote healthy eating?

Emma Groves¹, Ainslie Sartori

1 Cancer Council WA

Abstract:

Using planning laws to limit unhealthy food outlets and to support access to healthy food options, including near schools, is a key recommendation of the Western Australian Final Report of the Sustainable Health Review 2019. There is much work to be done however with little appetite from WA decision makers, and David and Goliath tales from around Australia highlighting community opposition to proposed outlets being ignored, resulting in new fast-food outlets near schools and homes with little control. Reforming WA planning laws to make community health a consideration in land-use is a priority policy in the advocacy Cancer Council WA undertakes to increase healthy eating. This work is in partnership with the Telethon Kids Institute and funded by Healthway. Commissioning a regulatory review of how current WA planning laws protect health provided recommendations required within the current planning system. It provided the foundation to build consensus amongst public health groups on a clear, united ask. Mapping of unhealthy food outlets in relation to schools and comparison between Perth suburbs builds evidence to initiate community and stakeholder discussions. Regular review for new development applications identifies where new outlets are proposed and what are common themes in community submissions. Commissioning natural experiments to investigate the impact of these new outlets on residents, children and schools will provide additional evidence of their detrimental impact on health with two in progress in 2023. This presentation provides an overview of this commissioned work and will outline future advocacy plans.

Biography:

Emma is the obesity policy senior coordinator at Cancer Council WA working on an advocacy project to advance policies in WA to support healthy eating. Previous positions in clinical and community dietetics has strengthened Emma's resolve for the need to address the underlying systems and environments that drive inequitable diets.

Food security in Aboriginal communities in NSW and First Nations people globally: what is the evidence for impactful policy and practise

Josephine Gwynn¹, Alyse Davis

¹ Senior Lecturer, School of Health Sciences, University of Sydney

Abstract:

The ongoing impacts of colonisation contribute to the systemic social and economic inequities faced by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people today. Everyone has the right to a standard of living which includes adequate food intake however, nationally representative estimates from 2012-2013 report that 22% to 32% of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are food insecure. This presentation will present the results of a rapid review of the literature undertaken by our team of Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal researchers with expertise in nutrition, dietetics, public health, and Aboriginal health research. The team's approach allowed for the situated knowledges of each Aboriginal reviewer to be reflected, and for a decolonised lens to be applied to this review.

This rapid review informs findings on the factors, scale and distribution of food insecurity in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities in NSW and provides evidence and context for any program or policy recommendations arising from it. The review also reports on policies and programmes that have been effective in improving food security for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples nationally and First Nations people internationally. These results will be described.

The review has informed Aboriginal Affairs NSW in their next steps to address food inequity with a statewide Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Food Inequity 2 day Symposium held recently and consideration of strategies in response to issues tabled underway.

Biography:

Josephine a non-Indigenous woman of Irish settler colonial origin. I live on the unceded lands of the Awabakal people, and have had the privilege of working with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities across Australia for over 30 years. Josephine is a Senior Lecturer in the Sydney School of Health Sciences and the Program Director for the Bachelor of Applied Science in Occupational Therapy. She is a member of the University of Sydney's Charles Perkins Centre Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander theme committee, and co-leads the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health and Well being node.

Josephine has a strong record of Aboriginal community led research conducted largely in regional and remote areas. Her focus is primarily on reducing the burden of ill health caused by systemic societal inequities, chronic disease, and food insecurity.

How can remote retail organisations influence system change to address the commercial determinants of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health

Melinda Hammond¹, Georgia Day, La'Shauna Nathaniel

1 Nutrition and Wellbeing Manager, Community Enterprise Queensland

Abstract:

Community Enterprise Queensland (CEQ) is a non-for-profit statutory body responsible for supplying essential goods and services to remote Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities in Far North Queensland. Occupying a unique space between government, industry, and community, CEQ seek to understand the balance between sustainable remote store business and the commercial determinants of health (CDoH). Lead by an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander representative board, a Nutrition and Wellbeing Strategy has been introduced to maximise CEQ's influence on community health outcomes and adjust company practices for the interplay between the social, cultural and commercial determinants of health. The process to develop this strategy has involved; active learning to understand CEQ history and context; situational analysis of the literature and policies of similar organisations; development of strategy in alignment with board direction; co-production of new internal policy to support strategy objectives with key decision-makers; dissemination of strategy and internal policy; planning for monitoring and reporting system that measures strategy impact on sales data and broader evaluation of impact on CDoH. Key enablers of the development process have included governance structures that represent community aspirations, utilisation of strong evidence base and company involvement in research projects with public health organisations. CEQ aim to contribute to the innovative research on the CDoH of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and how they compound with social, cultural and economic factors to positively or negatively influence health outcomes. This may highlight how negative influences may be mediated and influence government to act, thus minimising impact of CDoH.

Biography:

Trained as a dietitian-nutritionist, Melinda has spent the last 30 years working in public health and primary health care in government and non-government health agencies. Melinda is now working as Nutrition & Wellbeing Manager with CEQ, a remote retail organisation, to influence health in very remote communities through addressing commercial determinants of health.

The nutritional implications of plant-based milk consumption

Isobel Harmer¹, Karen Charlton, Joel Craddock

¹ University of Wollongong

Abstract:

Amidst a background of growing environmental concerns around food production, plant-based milk (PBM) offers a potential cow's milk (CM) alternative to address climate impacts. However, the nutritional composition of PBM may not necessarily replicate that of CM. Consequently, PBM consumers could be at risk of nutritional deficiency. This two-part study aimed to investigate the nutritional composition of PBMs and compare the nutritional adequacy of the diets of PBM to non-PBM consumers. Firstly, a supermarket audit of PBMs sold in the Illawarra was undertaken to quantify the nutrient composition of various PBM types and compare this to CM. This information was applied to dietary intake survey data collected from n=97 consumers (dairy consumers n=37, non-dairy consumers n=60) who completed a 24-hour recall using the online Intake-24 programme. Overall, due to low fortification rates, the 129 PBMs identified in the audit had significantly lower levels of protein, sugar, iodine, phosphorus, zinc and vitamins A, B2 and B12 compared to CM, but no significant differences found between fortified PBMs and CM, or protein between soy milk and CM. Compared to dairy consumers, participants who did not consume dairy had significantly lower intakes of iodine and vitamin B12 compared to CM consumers (70.8 v. 128.8ug/day; P=0.000, and 0.9 v.3.0 ug/day; P=0.000, respectively). PBM contains less iodine and vitamin B12 than CM, which may result in inadequate intakes of these nutrients in PBM consumers. This demonstrates the importance of advocating for further PBM fortification, particularly iodine, to better reflect the nutritional profile of CM.

Biography:

I have just completed my Bachelor's of Nutrition and Dietetics at the University of Wollongong and am excited to begin a career in dietetics.

A 'Right to Nutrition' in its Social, Legal, and Political Context: How International Human Rights Translate to Zambian Realities

Jody Harris¹, Sarah Gibbons, O'Brien Kaaba, Tabitha Hrynicky, and Ruth Stirton

¹ Institute of Development Studies, UK

Abstract:

Among approaches to addressing malnutrition, the language of human rights is notably present in international nutrition discourse and national policy and covenants; but the conceptualization, implications and utility of human rights for food system practice are contested. This empirical research explored how the utility of a 'right to nutrition' is perceived by different actors, and how differences in interpretation affect its potential for food system action. In undertaking this qualitative case-study, we applied socio-legal, critical development studies, and political science approaches to compare and contrast written documents and stated viewpoints, across actors in different sectors and levels from global to local, with a focus on Zambia. Human rights are clearly integrated with ideas of nutrition in written documents across levels, but these are largely rhetorical devices providing moral leverage and guiding language, not clearly directing action. Zambia has domesticated relevant international human rights law and has recent case law implicitly underpinning a right to nutrition; using the law brings a strengthening of policy, but also a narrowing of focus in terms of populations covered and issues justiciable. Views on what a right to nutrition means in practice are contested, with a lack of citizen's rights education limiting participation, and a lack of clear norms on who should be doing what scattering accountability. Our research demonstrates that there are three distinct aspects to a rights-based approach— rhetorical, legal and practical— that need to be acknowledged and integrated into food systems action for sustainable and equitable transformation with a human rights lens.

Biography:

Jody Harris is an academic researching the politics and ethics of equitable food and nutrition policy. Her work includes development of theory around equity and human rights in the field of nutrition; and theory-driven analysis of the social and policy dimensions of food systems in a global context.

Challenges for local governments in developing the food insecurity picture. An exploration of the local measurement and use of food security, food cost and availability data to galvanise action.

Emma Hayton¹, Sue Kleve

1 Monash University

Abstract:

With food insecurity in Australia expected to increase with worsening global, societal, economic and environmental challenges, it is imperative that the issue is monitored regularly to inform responses. Local governments (LG) have become progressively involved in addressing food insecurity, yet their understanding is limited by the availability of timely local data and their own capacity to undertake intelligence gathering. Current state and federal data is limited. This research aimed to explore if and how local governments are measuring food insecurity and its determinants, and how data is used to inform strategies to address the issue. Nine Victorian local councils and four community health organisations were interviewed, from five regional and four metropolitan local government areas. Guided semi-structured interviews with relevant staff and analysis of key council plans was conducted. There were inconsistencies in the monitoring of food insecurity across councils and community health. Interviews revealed a number of barriers for LG including inadequate resources, unclear role of council, poor understanding of the issue, as well as a lack of communication both internally, and with external stakeholders. It was apparent that without adequate data to evidence the scale of the issue, LG's are unable to advocate for adequate resourcing. Strong partnerships and internal leaders enabled increased knowledge and action. LG's have the power to make and influence policy that can affect food security. This research identified solutions focused recommendations to support LG to better measure food insecurity, including further advocacy to improve comprehensive and regular monitoring at state and federal levels.

Biography:

Emma Hayton is currently working in public health nutrition research and has experience as a clinical and community Dietitian in both regional Victoria and metropolitan Melbourne. She is an early career Dietitian that has always been passionate about helping others and was awarded Most Outstanding Student by Dietitians Australia on completion of her Masters of Dietetics at Monash University. By working directly with patients and those in the community she developed an understanding that for many, achieving good health can be largely out of their control. Emma is undertaking research in food insecurity and the role of local government in Victoria. She is enthusiastic about learning more about solutions to address food insecurity and create a fairer and healthier food system in Australia.

Big data, big food: Can reforms to the Privacy Act protect children from unhealthy food marketing online?

Katarnya Hickey¹

1 Food for Health Alliance

Abstract:

We all live in a digital world – and Australian children are no different. Just like us, kids go online to learn, to find information, to communicate with their friends and to have fun. Like all of us, when they do they provide advertisers and digital platforms with an endless supply of information that can be used to market things to them, including unhealthy food. This presentation will explore children’s exposure to digital marketing of unhealthy food in Australia and the reasons it is harmful, with a focus on digital marketing practices and the use of children’s information. It will discuss growing recognition of the importance of protecting children from digital marketing of unhealthy food, and of protecting privacy and information online. This presentation will outline recent developments in privacy regulation in Australia and consider how these changes may protect, or fail to protect, children from unhealthy food marketing. This will focus on the Australian Government’s response to the Privacy Act Review and will discuss: The background to and current status of reforms to the Privacy Act 1988. How and why privacy reforms can affect children’s exposure to and the impact of unhealthy food marketing The proposed reforms that may have the most impact on protecting children from unhealthy food marketing online The limits of privacy regulation in protecting children from unhealthy food marketing and the solutions needed to address this

Biography:

Katarnya jointly leads the development of the Food for Health Alliance's policy and advocacy agenda. Her program of work focuses on regulatory solutions to improve the food environment, with a particular focus on protecting children from unhealthy food marketing.

Affordability of healthy diets in Northern Territory remote communities and regional centres

Amanda Hill¹, Meron Lewis, Amanda Lee, Emma McMahon, Megan Ferguson, Bronwyn Fredericks, Christina Pollard, Nicole Turner, Louise Maple-Brown, Khia De Silva, Rebekah Clancy, Meaghan Christian, Anna Murison, Julie Brimblecombe

¹ Research Fellow, Monash University

Abstract:

Food price has a well-recognised influence on food security. In remote Australia, high transportation costs and limited market power can increase food prices. To help mitigate this, remote stores have initiated local policies to reduce healthy food costs for remote residents; e.g. not charging freight on fresh produce and sourcing cheaper generic product lines. As part of the Benchmarking for Healthy Stores project, food price data was collected in 29 remote stores and 5 regional centres in the Northern Territory using the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Healthy Diets Australian Standardised Affordability and Pricing protocol. A modified healthy diet tool targeting cheaper options was also used to more comprehensively capture food prices. Results revealed healthy diets were more expensive in remote stores than regional centres (average \$1403.98 vs \$1178.31/fortnight), however neither were affordable on a welfare-dependent income (average 42% vs 35% income). Remote stores had 4 cheaper healthy options available on average compared with 22 in regional centre supermarkets. Availability of cheaper healthy options reduced remote healthy diet costs by \$101.85/fortnight on average (range: \$2.64-\$228.84), though this was still unaffordable (average \$1302.13/fortnight, 39% welfare-dependent income). Sourcing cheaper healthy product lines in remote stores can be effective in reducing the cost of healthy diets for remote residents. However, ability of remote stores to reduce all healthy food prices is limited; healthy diet affordability is also impacted by low incomes. Broader determinants of food choice need to be addressed to achieve food security for people living in remote communities of Australia.

Biography:Ilise

Amanda is a Public Health Nutrition Research Fellow at Monash University co-ordinating the Benchmarking for Healthy Stores project which aims to facilitate best practice in remote food retail. She is passionate about social justice and working towards achieving equity in health outcomes for all through community-centred public health initiatives.

Infant and young child feeding in Australia and the (self) regulatory vacuum.

Naomi Hull¹, Victoria Marshall-Cerins

1 Australian Breastfeeding Association

Abstract:

In June 2023 the Australian Breastfeeding Association was invited to attend the World Health Organization and UNICEF Congress on the Code of Marketing of Breastmilk Substitutes (The Code) in Geneva, Switzerland. The Congress brought together over one hundred countries to work together to advance understanding of The Code and share implementation strategies and build coalitions to work against the commercial influence on infant feeding choices. Breastfeeding is the foundation of public health protecting infants against infectious and communicable diseases, as well as supporting their cognitive and psychosocial development. For mothers breastfeeding can reduce their risk of breast and ovarian cancers by over 20%. However, new WHO/UNICEF research has uncovered systematic and unethical marketing strategies used by the commercial formula milk industry to influence parents' infant feeding decisions. Australia scored poorly on their implementation of the articles of The Code. With a score of 27/100. This regulatory vacuum in Australia means that the commercial formula milk industry utilises aggressive marketing tactics from the tobacco and gambling playbook, including the distortion of science, capture of health-care providers and parents, altering public opinion, and influencing policy makers. This contributes to the systematic undermining of breastfeeding and therefore public health in Australia. Now is the time to take action in Australia, to recognise international human rights obligations, eliminate inappropriate marketing practices through recommended regulatory action, and utilise existing and novel legal channels to stop new digital promotional techniques.

Biography:

Naomi Hull is an RN, IBCLC (Lactation Consultant), and has a Master of Public Health (Nutrition). Naomi works with the Australian Breastfeeding Association to remove structural barriers to breastfeeding and reduce the commercial impact on infant feeding of unregulated marketing of commercial milk formula products.

The role of civil society in advance dialogue and solutions for strengthened food governance to tackle the commercial determinants of NCDs in Caribbean Small Island Developing States (SIDS)

Maisha Hutton¹

¹ Executive Director, Healthy Caribbean Coalition

Abstract:

Civil society in the Caribbean has played a pivotal role in sensitizing and catalysing multistakeholder dialogue around the direct link between the commercial determinants of health (CDOH), the resulting policy inertia and the urgent need to address governance as a key step in neutralizing commercial influence and fast-tracking NCD policy implementation. Progress towards addressing NCDs has been frustrated by a dangerous interplay between weak public health governance architecture are exploited by powerful commercial forces in order to delay, dilute and derail NCD policy, particular most recently those related to unhealthy foods. This is further complicated by the small community and resource-limitations of SIDS where power imbalances are exaggerated against a backdrop of extreme economic vulnerability exacerbated by impacts of climate change. Since 2017, HCC has advocated for improved NCD/food governance through the introduction of policies to support the prevention and management of conflicts of interest (COI) and greater access to information as vital pathways towards countering commercial influences on food policymaking. Front of package warning labelling (FOPWL) provides a compelling case study illustrating the opacity and lack of accountability in CARICOM decision-making structures, as well as how civil society's multi-faceted advocacy responses could provide an interim blueprint for creating accountability and transparency in the absence of and towards the development of robust COI policies. HCC has also invested in advocacy to build support for improved NCD/food governance at the highest levels, including recently for the inclusion of strong language on governance, CDOH and COI tools in the Bridgetown Declaration on NCDs and Mental Health. In the context of SIDS, the food governance framing is a particularly powerful strategy as it calls for systems and procedures which attempt to rebalance power

asymmetries in favour of policymakers, who do not have the power to oppose industry in their absence. Civil society, through the development of extensive coalitions, has been a major player in driving action in the area of food governance in the Caribbean.

Biography:

Maisha Hutton has been the Executive Director of the Healthy Caribbean Coalition (HCC) since 2012. At the HCC, Maisha is responsible for the daily operations, providing strategic oversight and management across all operational and programming areas. Maisha also serves as a member of World Cancer Research Fund Policy Advisory Group and Chair of the Steering Committee of the Caribbean Public Health Law Forum.

An assessment of rules-in-form and rules-in-use in Nigeria's cassava production system for yield gap and on-farm food loss reduction

Collins Igboji¹

1 Doctoral Researcher, Brandenburg University of Technology

Abstract:

Nigeria, the world's largest cassava producer, faces challenges in maximizing its potential productivity due to below-average yield per hectare and substantial on-farm food losses. These issues are attributed to inadequate agronomic practices adopted by farmers at the farm level despite the extant legal framework governing sustainable crop production in the country. To address this concern, this study employs Ostrom's Institutional Analysis and Development (IAD) Framework as an analytical tool to assess the effectiveness of existing laws, policies and regulations (rules-in-form) relevant to the cassava subsector in reducing yield gap and food losses and also to understand their connections and variations with operational rules (rules-in-use) that shape farm(er) management practices. Using qualitative and quantitative data in a mixed-method approach, the research involves 210 cassava farmers drawn from the three main agroecological zones that make up the cassava growing belt of Nigeria. By investigating the roles of rules-in-form, rules-in-use and power relations in shaping on-farm management practices in Nigeria's cassava sector, this research aims to understand how these factors contribute to yield gap and on-farm food losses and also propose strategies for reduction. The findings will inform policymakers and practitioners about targeted interventions to bolster Nigeria's position in the global cassava market while significantly contributing to food security and economic development.

Biography:

I am a Nigerian doctoral researcher currently based in Germany. My research interest lies in the roles of institutions in promoting sustainable agriculture, with a focus on how

institutional arrangements influence yield gaps and food losses in crop production systems. I hold a master's degree in Environmental and Resource management.

Planning for urban agriculture: Opportunities to improve food security and food justice outcomes in Sydney

Evelyn Ivinson¹

1 Principal Planner, Geography and Planning, Macquarie University

Abstract:

Urban planning solutions lie central to addressing food insecurity and food injustice. The potential for the urban planning discipline to lawfully enable varied forms of food production has been identified in global cities through postgraduate research. By comparison, progress within urban planning to influence urban agriculture in Australia is limited, with examples concentrated amongst proactive local councils. Change, led by urban planners in the United States, Europe and Asia, increasingly focus on the integral role that land use planning plays in improving access to locally produced fresh food and removing the regulatory inhibitors to activities such as urban farms, rooftop gardens and indoor vertical farms. Through international desktop case studies, this research draws insights from planning-based solutions in the United States such as land zoning, land use inventories, food policies and strategies, and incentivised schemes. It shares insights from Sydney-based urban planning professionals and case study operators on planning strategies that focus on integrating urban agriculture within urban environments. Its findings are timely given the recent NSW Parliamentary Inquiry into Food Supply and draws attention to ways that planning governance can enable urban farms, indoor horticulture, rooftop edible gardens and other types of urban agriculture. The research contributes to the current debate on policy support for planning and designing food-oriented built environments in Australian cities and seeks to promote further discussion across NSW State and local government planners on addressing obstacles and challenges to the practice of urban food production.

Biography:

Evelyn Ivinson is an urban and regional planner with experience in strategic planning, development assessment and utilities planning spanning more than two decades. Evelyn is an advocate for tailored approaches through land use governance to address inequities of access to fresh, nutritious food in urban areas. She completed a thesis in 2023 titled 'Planning for urban agriculture: Opportunities to improve food security and food justice outcomes in Sydney' at Macquarie University. Evelyn is currently a PhD candidate at Macquarie University seeking to extend her research to develop a planning framework pilot that promotes urban agriculture in Sydney.

Evelyn is a current member of the Planning Institute of Australia and a volunteer at her local community garden. She also facilitates presentations focused on food production techniques for community members. She is the founder of Local Foodprint, a Sydney-based business educating early childhood and school-aged children to create edible gardens.

Offline-to-online food environment policies – preliminary results from a systematic mapping review of evidence to regulate online food delivery platforms for population health and wellbeing

Sisi Jia¹, Penny Farrell, Gary Sacks, Lana Vanderlee, Alice A. Gibson, Stephanie R. Partridge

¹ PhD Candidate, University of Sydney

Abstract:

Background and aims: Online food delivery (OFD) platforms offer easy access to an abundance of energy dense and nutrient poor foods and may exacerbate existing obesogenic food environments. Despite this, policy and regulation have not kept pace with the developments and demands of the digital food environment. A systematic mapping review was conducted to synthesise the existing evidence that can inform policies to regulate OFD platforms for population health and wellbeing.

Methods: Seven electronic databases including Medline, Embase, CINAHL, Business Source Ultimate, Scopus, Web of Science, Proquest were searched between 22nd September - 13th October 2023. Evidence from studies were mapped to five existing policy areas outlined by the Healthy Food Environment Policy Index (FOOD-EPI) including i) food labelling, ii) food promotion iii) food composition and nutritional quality iv) food retail v) food pricing.

Results: A total of 2013 records were screened, and 29 studies were included. Of 40 study outcomes, eight (20%) were relevant to food composition and nutritional quality, 7/40 (18%) outcomes for food labelling, 6/40 (15%) outcomes for food pricing, 10/40 (25%) outcomes for food promotion and 9/40 (23%) outcomes relevant to food retail.

Conclusion: Preliminary results show the research to-date has been focused on generating evidence on food promotion policies, with fewer studies conducted on food pricing.

Outcomes from the included studies will be synthesised to understand policy options for OFD platforms in the digital food environment and how this may differ to existing policy options in the built food environment.

Biography:

Sisi Jia is an Accredited Practising Dietitian, Research Associate and PhD student in the Faculty of Medicine and Health at the University of Sydney. She is focused on improving nutrition and related lifestyle behaviours in the population and is interested in how the food environment affects diet and health outcomes. Her PhD research looks at how young people are impacted by the digitalisation of the food environment, given the rise in meal delivery applications.

Eating for Planetary Health: The impact of sustainability food labels on consumer behaviour and local food system challenges experienced by food retailers

Bethany Johns¹, Karen Charlton²

1 School of Medical, Indigenous and Health Sciences, The University of Wollongong

2 Professor, School of Medical, Indigenous and Health Sciences, The University of Wollongong

Abstract:

The impact of climate change on disruptions in the food supply chain is evident in Australia, with recent floods and fires affecting availability of foodstuffs. Food labelling or signposting that incorporates information on sustainability may be an effective tool to guide and encourage consumers to make more informed food choices within grocery-store settings. There is limited research regarding the insights and recommendations of food retailers regarding their role in promoting sustainably sourced food products within their establishments. The aim of this study was to identify the perspectives and experiences of food retailers regarding challenges in the existing food system, the potential role of food labelling in driving consumer purchasing choices, and the feasibility of stocking locally sourced produce within the Illawarra region of NSW. A qualitative research approach was utilised, involving semi-structured in-depth interviews with twelve participants, comprised of either supermarkets, speciality produce stores, fishmongers, community grocers, delicatessens, butchers, catering company's or market gardens. Interviews were recorded, transcribed and analysed using thematic analysis techniques. The main themes that emerged were the lack of impact of sustainable labelling due to the financial stressors that reduce capacity for both consumers and retailers to engage within sustainable behaviours. A lack of understanding and government support for sustainability was identified, with small retailers struggling to compete with larger corporations. Complex multifaced challenges require a whole-of-food system approach, supported by policy and governance to encourage food retailers to consider sustainability principles in their procurement, sale and promotion of foods that align with planetary health.

Biography:

Bethany Johns is a Nutrition and Dietetics student from the University of Wollongong. In 2023 I completed my thesis, centred around determining the effectiveness of food labels that incorporate sustainability on consumer purchasing behaviour. She additionally investigated the opinions of retailers regarding the procurement and distribution of sustainable produce within the Illawarra region.

Fiscal measures to fight hunger, promote health, protect the environment, and reduce inequalities

Paula Johns¹, Marilia Sobral Albiero

1 ACT Health Promotion

Abstract:

A case study on advocacy for tax reform in Brazil Considered as the world's breadbasket, millions of Brazilians go hungry or fall ill due to poor diet. A recent study revealed that, in 2019, approximately 57,000 premature deaths in Brazil were attributable to the consumption of ultraprocessed products (UPPs), accounting for 10.5% of all premature deaths in adults . Ethnic minorities, the Black population, and low-income communities are the most negatively affected. Brazil's fiscal and economic policies have been designed to encourage the production of agricultural commodities and industrialized products rather than stimulating the production and consumption of healthy foods such as rice, beans, fruit, and vegetables. Price hikes on foods and beverages exemplify this reality: from 2006 to 2022, food prices increased 1.7 times more than overall inflation, and prices on healthy foods increased nearly three times more than those for UPPs. Brazil is undergoing a tax reform legislative process, providing an opportunity to address some of these problems. A recent public opinion poll has shown that 94% of the Brazilian population supports higher taxes for products harmful to health and to the environment. ACT is leading a collective advocacy effort engaging CSOs from the areas of health, environmental and social justice to support the establishment of selective taxes on harmful products especially sugar-sweetened beverages, tobacco, alcohol, and fossil fuels. ACT's multipronged approach includes commissioning polls and holding events and hearings in Congress, advancing media campaigns, tracking and filing amicus briefs for lawsuits involving tax breaks for UPPs, and editing a book on this topic for the legal community, to name a few.

Biography:

Paula Johns was born and grew up in Brazil. She obtained a Master of Arts Degree in English and International Development Studies in Denmark, at Roskilde University Center. She is the co-founder and director of ACT Health Promotion (former Alliance for the Control of Tobacco Use), a Brazilian coalition of over a thousand members, created in 2003 to support the implementation of the WHO-FCTC in Brazil. Since 2013, ACT has expanded its scope of work to include the agenda of the NCDs. ACT is also one of the leading organizations of the Brazilian Alliance for Healthy and Adequate Food formed in 2016 to support food policy issues. Former chair of the Board of Directors of the FCA – Framework Convention Alliance, former Board Member of the NCD Alliance, currently a Board Member of GAPA - Global Alcohol Policy Alliance. Johns is also an Ashoka Fellow.

The political economy of sugar policy in Indonesia

Ellen Johnson¹, Cut Novianti Rachmi, Suci Trisnasari, Adila Saptari, Hafizah Jusril, Anne Marie Thow

1 PhD Candidate, Menzies Centre for Health Policy and Economics, University of Sydney

Abstract:

The double burden of malnutrition is a prevailing health challenge in Indonesia. Changes in diet in Indonesia, including increased consumption of processed foods – typically high in fat, sugar and salt – is contributing to increased prevalence of overweight and obesity and diet-related NCDs. As such, there is a need for policies in Indonesia to reduce sugar consumption. However, sugar is a major economic sector in Indonesia, and the national government classifies sugar as one of the seven strategic food commodities. The high political priority for sugar as a commodity presents a challenge to health policy makers. The aim of this research is to identify politic-economic factors relating to policy surrounding the production, trade, and distribution of sugar in Indonesia. Understanding politico-economic dynamics that underpin the agenda and priorities of different actors regarding sugar can help inform policy in the future. The documentary data was complemented by 16 in-depth interviews, focusing on framing and beliefs around nutrition, the role and importance of sugar in the Indonesian economy, and the current cross-sectoral engagement with respect to sugar policy. This study found that there were competing priorities relevant to sugar policy between health, agriculture, and economic/trade sectors. Interviewees also noted contentions between priorities and agendas of different government ministries who have policies relevant to sugar. Future strategies and implications centre around opportunities to align government priorities relating to sugar at the national level, to improve policy coherence and support health policy makers across sectors to achieve national nutrition and food security priorities.

Biography:

Ellen Johnson is a Research Assistant and PhD Candidate at the Menzies Centre for Health Policy and Economics, the University of Sydney. Ellen's core research area is food systems and nutrition, with particular expertise in policy analysis, trade, food security, and human rights. She is a nutritionist by training and has postgraduate degrees in Global Health and Social Justice.

Solving the problems with new meat and dairy alternatives: An analysis of problematizations in Australian and US alternative protein regulatory debates

Hope Johnson¹, Christine Parker, and Brodie Evans

¹ Senior Lecturer, Queensland University of Technology Law School

Abstract:

New meat and dairy alternatives, termed alternative proteins, are a new food category derived from insects, plants, fermentation or cell-culturing techniques that closely resemble the nutritional and sensory features of meat or dairy. These products are positioned as the solution to the multitude of issues with meat and dairy production spanning environmental, health and ethical domains. On these grounds, proponents, which include large tech and food manufacturing companies, call on regulators to enable alternative proteins. Others, including public health experts and incumbent animal agriculture industries, regard alternative proteins as unsafe, ultra-processed imitations that further entrench food systems issues from corporate consolidation through to diet-related diseases. This paper presents findings from two discourse analyses of regulatory debates regarding alternative proteins in Australia and the US. The first is a study of problematizations developed through an Australian Senate Inquiry, entitled the Definitions of Meat and Other Animal Products, completed in 2022. The second is an analysis of submissions to the US Department of Agriculture's call for comments on labelling meat products containing cultured animal cells in 2021. While providing insights into the dominant problematisations and solutions that emerged in these debates, this paper focuses on how these debates constructed ultra-processed foods as a problem and what solutions were put forward. This paper concludes with some ideas about how these kinds of regulatory processes could be "opened up" to deal with a broader array of problems and therefore a wider range of solutions.

Biography:

Dr Hope Johnson uses socio-legal methods to investigate how regulatory governance can better address the causes of food systems issues and achieve multiple goals. She is a Senior

Lecturer in the Law School at QUT and an Australian Research Council (ARC) Discovery Early Career Research (DECRA) Fellow (2023)(DE230100135).

Best-practice nutrition labelling to support large-scale food fortification

Alexandra Jones¹, Laura Fisher, Sally McDonald

1 Senior Research Fellow, The George Institute for Global Health

Abstract:

Malnutrition – including nutritional deficiencies – is a leading cause of death and disability globally. Food fortification is a proven and cost-effective intervention for addressing nutritional deficiencies. Nutrition labelling has the potential to help achieve public health goals by improving transparency. We aimed to examine how labelling requirements impacts LSFF programs and make recommendations on how regulations can be reformed to accelerate LSFF. We adapted an existing framework for analysing best-practice in public health law to examine nutrition labelling regulation. We conducted a desk review of regulation across nine study jurisdictions (*Ethiopia, *Kenya, Indonesia, Nigeria, Pakistan, *the Philippines, *South Africa, Thailand and *Vietnam) and two comparators (European Union and United States). Surveys and interviews were also undertaken in five jurisdictions (*) for further insight. Results informed recommendations on best-practice and opportunities for reform. Nutrient declarations are mandatory in about half of study jurisdictions, most permit voluntary nutrition and health claims and some allow specific fortification claims. Fortification logos were identified in four countries. In interviews, we heard that what happens in practice may not be what is written on paper in regulation. Nutrient declarations should be mandatory on all pre-packaged foods, claims voluntary, and standardized claims may increase efficiency of regulatory governance and support consumer understanding. Fortification logo(s) can be used to visually signal fortified foods. Good regulatory governance is critical and should include clear roles and responsibilities for stakeholders and be aligned with other activities within the food system. Local context, resourcing, and a risk-based approach should be considered in strengthening regulations.

Biography:

Dr Alexandra Jones is Senior Research Fellow in Food Policy and Law at The George Institute, where she leads a program of research on regulatory strategies to promote healthier, more sustainable diets. She was a founding member of the Food Governance Node.

Emission reduction opportunities across the food system: priority policies for food consumption, production and waste.

Holley Jones¹

1 Department of Health Tasmania

Abstract:

The food system contributes a third of global emissions and fast action to reduce emissions will be crucial to meeting the Paris Agreement. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) acknowledges the role of the food system in both driving climate change and having major opportunities for mitigation and sequestration. However in Nationally Determined Contributions (NDC) the most important political vehicle to express national commitments to reducing emissions, policy makers overlook the untapped potential of the food supply. This presentation outlines three main areas of opportunity to reduce emissions from the food system through food consumption, production and waste. Localised examples of policy solutions are cited because the policy levers tend to be at national or jurisdictional levels. These solutions include dietary guidelines incorporating sustainability, emissions pricing on commodities, public food procurement, reorienting harmful agricultural subsidies and a comprehensive package of food waste policies. Addressing these simultaneously through a broad package of high impact policies can transform the goals of the system to ensure healthy and sustainable diets for all. The relationship of demand for healthy and sustainable food driving production of a food supply to match it, is a critical aspect of achieving deep mitigation potential required. Progress can be achieved by involving a wide range of food system actors and institutions to negotiate trade-offs, enhance co-benefits and ensure a coherent package of policies with transformative potential.

Biography:

Through learning and experience, Holley has become deeply interested in the whole food system and the processes and politics that shape who eats what. With a keen and growing

interest in the food systems' impact on climate change, Holley is a public health nutritionist striving for a healthier, more fair food system, that everyone can enjoy, without costing the earth.

Exploring the role of governance to enhance food system resilience in disaster-prone regions

Sheriden Keegan¹, Kimberley Reis, Anne Roiko, Cheryl Desha

1 PhD Candidate, Griffith University

Abstract:

In Australia, recent extreme weather events have led to acute food shortages in communities, including metropolitan, regional and rural settings. In the Northern Rivers region of New South Wales, the catastrophic 2022 flood highlighted the compounding food security challenges for a regional community already dealing with Covid-19 and the emerging cost of living crisis. Globally, food system experts are calling for action to strengthen the resilience of food systems, to ensure the continuity of food security for communities in the face of severe weather events and other food supply chain disruptions. This presentation proposes the critical role for governance to support food system resilience in disaster-prone regions. The findings from a case study of the Northern Rivers food system are presented, that included semi-structured interviews with government stakeholders and food system experts and was informed by an analysis of local and regional government policy related to food system resilience. Through exploring the lived experience of food governance stakeholders in a severely disaster-impacted region, a range of options will be discussed that are being used to address food system challenges and where opportunities exist to enhance food system resilience in this region. This includes recommendations for policymakers for enabling governments and governing agencies to respond to food needs during and after disasters. The lessons learned from the Northern Rivers flood experience have significant implications for disaster planning and preparation for food security in the face of future extreme weather events and recurrent supply chain disruptions.

Biography:

Sheriden Keegan (MPH) is a PhD scholar in the School of Engineering and Built Environment at Griffith University, Australia, working with the Local Food Resilience and Contingency project team at Griffith University's Cities Research Institute and Disaster Management Network. Sheriden works collaboratively with governments and communities to enable place-based pathways to resilient and sustainable food systems. Her PhD research is focused on how governance can enable food system resilience at the regional scale.

Positive perceptions of sustainable foods and purchases are associated with higher diet quality in Australian university students

Katherine Kent¹, Yan Hin Siu, Melinda Hutchesson, Clare E Collins, Karen Charlton

¹ Public Health Nutritionist, University of Wollongong

Abstract:

Understanding perceptions and purchasing patterns of sustainable foods and relationships with diet quality in university students can inform on campus solutions to promote sustainable and healthy dietary patterns. The aim was to understand university students' perceptions and engagement with sustainable food practices and the relationship with diet quality. A cross-sectional online survey assessed students' sustainable food perceptions and purchasing behaviours of locally grown, seasonal, organic, fair-trade, and plant-based foods. Diet quality was assessed using the Australian Recommended Food Score (range 0-73 points) in addition to demographic and education characteristics. Student attitudes towards sustainable food options available on campus and future on campus solutions were assessed. Of respondents (n=197; 63% female; 64% domestic enrolled), more than half (58%) reported they thought it important to purchase sustainable foods. Female students were twice as likely to perceive sustainable foods as important (AOR: 2.1; 95%CI 1.1 – 4.0; SE: 0.3, p=0.026). Students who perceived sustainable foods as important were eight times more likely to report purchasing them (OR: 8.1; 95% CI 4.2-15.7; SE: 0.3; p<0.001) and had significantly higher diet quality (B coefficient: 2.9; 95% 0.4- 5.4; SE: 1.3; p=0.024). Students who reported frequently purchasing all types of sustainable foods, except organic foods, had significantly higher diet quality than those who did not. Few students perceived there were sufficient sustainable food choices on campus (19%), emphasizing the need novel on campus solutions. Most students supported the development of an edible campus (80%). These results highlight the importance of promoting sustainable food options and creating a supportive campus food environment, with potential impacts on students' diet quality.

Biography:

Katherine is a public health nutritionist with expertise in measuring household food security and rural nutrition research. Katherine is passionate about investigating the impact of food insecurity on diet and health related outcomes in various priority populations across Australia, including in rural regions, in student and young adult populations and other vulnerable groups.

Katherine has led a body of research that has documented the impact of COVID-19 on the prevalence of food insecurity in Australia and developed recommendations for building a resilient food system, especially in rural regions. Katherine's research has informed state and international policy documents related to food security, and supported program funding for a range of community-based solutions to food insecurity in Australia.

A systematic assessment of the World Health Organization's draft guideline on the use of low-sodium salt substitutes

Katrina Kissock¹, James Bullen, Laura Fisher, Bruce Neal, Kathy Trieu

¹ Research Fellow, The George Institute for Global Health

Abstract:

Background and Aims: The World Health Organization (WHO) has recommended interventions to reduce sodium intake for decades, but global intake remains unchanged because of major implementation challenges. Potassium-enriched salt, where a proportion of sodium chloride is replaced with potassium chloride, has been shown to decrease blood pressure and cardiovascular disease risk, and is a novel opportunity currently under consideration by the WHO for recommendation.

Methods: We reviewed the draft WHO guideline on low-sodium salt substitutes (LSSS) and the supporting systematic review and meta-analysis against existing sodium and potassium guidelines and emerging evidence.

Results: The draft WHO guideline on LSSS provided a 'conditional' recommendation suggesting the 'limited use of LSSS as a replacement for discretionary salt'. This was inconsistent with existing WHO guidelines on sodium and potassium where the WHO made 'strong' recommendations based upon weaker evidence. Flaws in the design and interpretation of the supporting systematic review and meta-analysis were identified including failure to select and report on key efficacy outcomes, underestimation of the quality of evidence, and misinterpretation of the likely balance of benefits and risks. There were important differences in conclusions between the supporting systematic review commissioned by the WHO and other reviews of largely the same data.

Conclusions: The draft WHO guideline on LSSS had significant weaknesses. The LSSS recommendation is misaligned with existing recommendations for sodium and potassium.

The WHO is currently reviewing and updating the draft LSSS guideline in light of the commentary received.

Biography:

Katrina is a Research Fellow at the George Institute for Global Health working on projects around potassium-enriched salt. She recently obtained her PhD in 2022 from the University of Wollongong. Katrina has research interests in cardiovascular disease, dietary intake and public health. She is also an Accredited Practicing Dietitian.

Shaping Healthier Communities: Review of local government public health plans (PHPs) and leveraging evidence-based insights from the West Australian (WA) Food Atlas to inform local food environment policies and actions

Frith Klug¹, Claire Pulker, Alexia Bivoltsis, Justine Howard, Gina Trapp

1 Telethon Kids Institute

Abstract:

With concerns about public health and food access, the intersection of local governance and food environments has gained significance. The role of local governments (LGs) is critical in fostering healthier food environments through public health policies and actions. The aim of this study was to explore what LGs are proposing to improve the food environment within their jurisdiction and how LGs can be better supported to take action to improve food environments. A comprehensive review of all public health plans completed by WA LGs (n=137) was conducted. The number of PHPs present in WA, the extent of objectives and actions aiming to improving the food environment, and the specific areas where actions are being undertaken were obtained. It was identified that addressing the food environment in PHPs is hampered by LGs lacking comprehensive, quantifiable, evidenced-based information regarding food access to underpin decisions. A potential tool to help fill this gap is the WA Food Atlas, designed and developed by the Food and Nutrition Team at the Telethon Kids Institute. The Food Atlas maps, measures and monitors food access using food business data routinely collected by LGs. It offers comprehensive geospatial temporal food access metrics and interactive maps, providing LGs with objective evidence to inform policies. It is currently being trialled in WA among LGs. Evidence-based insights from this trial will be shared. By incorporating food environment objectives in PHPs which are underpinned by data-driven decision-making, LGs can be instrumental in reshaping the future of the food environments to improve health.

Biography:

Frith Klug has extensive expertise in policy development, strategic planning, research, and behavior change with experience spanning government and diverse industries such as healthcare, utilities, and non-profit organizations. Her qualifications include a Bachelor of Commerce, a Graduate Diploma from the Australian Institute of Company Directors and is a Chartered Accountant. Frith is currently undertaking further studies in food and nutrition and is project managing the Food Atlas project at the Telethon Kids Institute.

Using Antitrust Enforcement to Combat Food Apartheid

Kathleen Konopka¹

1 Legal Director, Global Health Advocacy Incubator

Abstract:

Food retailers have consistently profit maximized by acquiring competitors. Reduced competition results in lower quality products and services, suppressed wages for workers, and higher prices for consumers. Acquisitions also result in store closures and Food Apartheid. There are 30% less grocery stores in the United States than 25 years ago, and 40 million Americans, many of color, currently live in low food access areas. In 2022, mega-grocers Albertsons and Kroger announced a merger that, if cleared, would result in nearly 50% of the grocery store market being held by just two companies in the United States. Unsurprisingly, there also has been a marked increase in grocery prices, over 20% from 2018 to 2023. Less stores and higher prices reduce food security for vulnerable populations, and, while price increases impact healthy and unhealthy products, overall higher prices compel lower-income families to buy cheaper, ultra-processed products rather than healthier alternatives to obtain the volume of food needed. Consolidation also negatively impacts farmers and small suppliers. Fewer buyers, each with significant market power, means that farmers and small suppliers are less able to negotiate fair prices for their products and may go out of business. This cedes the production market to large multinationals, who often prioritize selling ultra-processed, ultra-palatable foods that can be cheaply produced, rather than healthier alternatives. Robust enforcement of antitrust laws can halt or reverse grocery market consolidation. Increased competition will incentivize grocers to maintain stores, quality product offerings, and fair prices. Expanding antitrust enforcement to include questions of equity can further minimize Food Apartheid.

Biography:

Ms. Konopka currently serves as the Legal Director for GHAI. She directs the legal work of 8 programs in over 30 countries, including GHAI's Food and Nutrition Program. Previously, Ms. Konopka served as Deputy Attorney General for the District of Columbia, overseeing the entirety of the AG's affirmative civil litigation, including antitrust, consumer protection, and civil rights.

Unmasking corporate political activity: mapping sponsors of industry associations

Jennifer Lacy-Nichols¹, Naomi Carr, Cara Platts , Kathryn Backholer

¹ Research Fellow, University of Melbourne

Abstract:

Background: Harmful industries use a range of strategies to weaken and undermine public health policies that threaten commercial profits. Industry associations play a key role in corporate political activities such as lobbying and can shield their members from reputational damage. But, little known about who associations represent and who their sponsors are.

Design: This project mapped out the associations representing the ultra-processed foods (UPF), alcohol, gambling and tobacco industries in Australia and assessed how transparent associations and their sponsors were about their relationships. We systematically searched for Australian industry associations representing those four sectors and assessed whether they disclosed their sponsors and whether the sponsor publicly disclosed their relationship with the association.

Results: We identified 247 industry associations, with less than half (43.3%) publicly disclosing their sponsors. Of the approximately 2500 unique sponsors that were disclosed, 25% were UPF companies, 9% alcohol, 3% gambling and 0.6% tobacco. Some companies sponsored multiple associations, with Carlton and United Breweries and Coca-Cola sponsoring the most alcohol associations (n = 25), Tabcorp sponsoring the most gambling associations (n = 21), Nestlé sponsoring the most UPF associations (n = 11). Out of 2,766 possible relationships, only 248 (9.0%) were disclosed by sponsors. Companies were often selective, disclosing some but not all sponsorships.

Conclusions: Poor transparency from both associations and their sponsors makes it challenging to monitor the influence of industry associations. This project maps the universe

of currently active associations and sponsors, which establishes a baseline for future monitoring efforts.

Biography:

Dr Jennifer Lacy-Nichols is a Victorian Health Promotion Foundation research fellow based at the Melbourne School of Population and Global Health at the University of Melbourne. Her research seeks to understand the relationships between corporations, politics and health, part of the emerging field of Commercial Determinants of Health. Her current program of work explores the opportunities and challenges for systematically monitoring corporate political activities such as lobbying, political donations and the revolving door, and draws on concepts and methods from political science, business studies and data analytics.

Lobbying in the sunlight: opportunities to improve transparency and protect public health

Jennifer Lacy-Nichols¹, Hedeyeeh Baradar, Eric Crosbie, Katherine Cullerton

¹ Research Fellow, University of Melbourne

Abstract:

Background: Many individuals, advocacy groups, not-for-profits, and businesses engage with governments. To ensure that governments put the interests of the public before commercial interests, we must first be able to measure the extent and nature of commercial political influence. The impetus for this project came from our practical experience of trying to monitor corporate political activities, and the challenges we faced in accessing data. Our aim was to develop a catalogue of what information could (or should) be made public in lobbyist registers.

Methods: We conducted a systematic scoping review of peer-reviewed and grey literature to identify frameworks for measuring lobbying transparency. We used NVivo to code and thematically group the indicators relevant to disclosure practices to develop a Catalogue of Lobbying Disclosure Data.

Results: We identified 15 frameworks published between 1991 and 2022. A distinction could be seen between NGO-led frameworks that focused on reforming regulations and academic frameworks that focused on analysing the content of regulations. Our final Catalogue comprises eight categories and 78 indicators. Two categories (definitions and timeliness) must be assessed by viewing the reporting requirements set out in legislation; the remaining six (openness, identifiers, revolving door, relationships, financials, contact) can be assessed by viewing the government register itself.

Conclusions: There are relatively few frameworks that evaluate lobbying transparency. In the next stage of this project, we will use our catalogue to evaluate government lobbyist

registers and make recommendations to improve lobbying disclosures to make it easier to monitor corporate political activity.

Biography:

Dr Jennifer Lacy-Nichols is a Victorian Health Promotion Foundation research fellow based at the Melbourne School of Population and Global Health at the University of Melbourne. Her research seeks to understand the relationships between corporations, politics and health, part of the emerging field of Commercial Determinants of Health. Her current program of work explores the opportunities and challenges for systematically monitoring corporate political activities such as lobbying, political donations and the revolving door, and draws on concepts and methods from political science, business studies and data analytics.

Identifying gaps and opportunities in researching Australian Higher Education & Campus Foodscapes

Sophie Lamond¹

¹ Research Fellow, University of Melbourne

Abstract:

This paper will begin with a brief introduction into research on campus foodscapes, demonstrating why it is a critical area of enquiry and providing an overview of some of the key ways in which food manifests in higher education settings. This draws on Dr Lamond's previous research on campus foodscapes conducted in US universities, which included desktop research, field work and in-depth interviews with practitioners, as well as extensive mapping of foodscape actors and activities. This paper will provide an overview of the potential of applying these previously-developed research methods to Australian higher-education settings. Currently, the majority of existing research on food in Australian higher education is generated via public health and nutrition researchers assessing the healthiness of food options (see for example, Blake et al., 2021; Coyle et al., 2023; Grech et al., 2016; Roy et al., 2016). A limited number of studies consider health but also incorporate issues such as sustainability, affordability, and food security (for example, Mann et al., 2021; Shi et al., 2021; Grech et al., 2020). This paper puts forward a proposed research agenda for systems-focused, interdisciplinary work to better understand and map Australian campus foodscapes. It will identify gaps in current knowledge and opportunities to link future work and research to international colleagues, programs and communities of practice working in this critical area.

Biography:

Dr Sophie Lamond is a research fellow Melbourne Law School. She has research interests across food systems and food policy, as well as: healthy, equitable and sustainable futures;

community-led change, civil-society activism and systems change from the individual to institutional spheres; education governance and higher education policy; and complexity, wicked problems and systems thinking.

Investigating the nutritional quality of charitable ready meals for people experiencing food insecurity – an Australian case study

Kristy Law¹, Kathy Trieu, Belinda Zheng, Jason Wu

1 PhD Candidate, The George Institute for Global Health

Abstract:

Aim: People experiencing food insecurity have disproportionately higher rates of chronic disease due to poor diet quality. With increasing rates of people experiencing food insecurity, there is increased demand for charitable food relief, however the nutritional quality of the food provided is unknown. This case study aimed to conduct a nutritional analysis of ready meals produced by an Australian food-rescue charity (FareShare) for people experiencing food insecurity. **Methods:** A sample of ready meal recipes were collated by FareShare from January – February 2023, and provided to the primary investigator for data entry into FoodWorks 10 (nutrition analysis software). Microsoft Excel was used to calculate descriptive statistics per ready meal. Nutritional information was compared against criteria for carbohydrate ($\leq 60\text{g}/\text{meal}$), sugar ($\leq 15\text{g}/100\text{g}$), sodium ($\leq 700\text{mg}/\text{meal}$), and dietary fat quality (unsaturated fat:saturated fat ratio $\geq 2:1/\text{meal}$). **Results:** A preliminary analysis of 30 sample meal recipes was conducted. The average serve weight per meal was 410g. All meals analysed met the carbohydrate and sugar criteria with a mean (SD) of 36.8 (16.7) g/meal and 2.3 (0.6) g/100g respectively. However, of the 30 meals analysed, 14 (44%) exceeded the sodium limit and 21 (70%) did not meet the dietary fat quality criteria. **Conclusion:** This case study identified the sodium levels and dietary fat quality of an Australian food-rescue's ready meals could be improved, while the carbohydrate and sugar content met nutritional guidelines. More support and guidance should be provided to food charities to improve the nutritional quality of meals that are provided to those experiencing food insecurity.

Biography:

Kristy Law is a Dietitian and PhD Candidate at The George Institute for Global Health. Kristy's PhD is examining the feasibility and efficacy of Food is Medicine interventions in Australia, including co-leading a randomised clinical trial to test the impact of medically tailored meals on type 2 diabetes outcomes.

Community-led, collaborative work to improve food security on the Anangu Pitjantjatjara Yankunytjatjara (APY) Lands

Ngaanyatjarra Pitjantjatjara Yankunytjatjara (NPY) Womens' Council, Nganampa Health Council, Ingrid Kenny, **Lisa Wells**, Leon Kenny, Imogen Wells, Phoebe O'Meara, Liza Balmer, Suzanne Bryce, Stephan Rainow, Margaret Kavanagh, Rhiannon Hutchinson, Meron Lewis, Lisa-Maree Herron, **Amanda Lee**¹

1 Emeritus Professor, School of Public Health, The University of Queensland

2 Ngaanyatjarra Pitjantjatjara Yankunytjatjara Womens' Council Anangu Research Team.

Abstract:

On the Anangu Pitjantjatjara Yankunytjatjara Lands in Central Australia, Anangu enjoyed plenty of bushfoods and used to be very healthy. But now we have to rely on community stores. We rarely have enough money for shopping. Also, there are many unhealthy foods and drinks in the stores, that cause diabetes, heart problems and kidney disease. For over 40 years Nganampa Health and the Ngaanyatjarra Pitjantjatjara Yankunytjatjara Womens' Council have been working together to get better food in our stores. We set up Mai Wiru Regional Stores group and developed its Nutrition Policy, updated in 2018. In two focus communities from 2018 to 2020, we directed over 150 activities to improve food security and nutrition. For the first time the sales of healthy foods increased- for fruit and vegetables by nearly 50% - and sales of sugary drinks decreased by a third. During COVID, our Anangu Research team kept checking the stores for the availability, price, placement and promotion of healthy and unhealthy foods and drinks, and helped feedback the results to the stores and communities. The prices of healthy foods increased in most (but not all) stores, and sales of unhealthy foods, such as take-away foods, went up again too. We need sustained funding and help to get more affordable, healthy foods in the stores again.

Biography:

Amanda Lee is Emeritus Professor in the School of Public Health at The University of Queensland. She has experience in food security, food and nutrition systems and First Nations' health. Her team's research focuses on co-designed development, implementation, evaluation and translation to inform evidence-based policy and practice to prevent non-communicable disease.

Healthy food prices increased more than the prices of unhealthy options during the COVID-19 pandemic, and concurrent shocks and stressors to the food system

Amanda Lee¹, Lisa-Maree Herron, Mark D. Chatfield, Ru Chyi Tan, Alana Dale, Stephen Nash, Meron Lewis

1 Emeritus Professor, School of Public Health, The University of Queensland

Abstract:

Food prices have escalated due to impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on global food systems, and other regional shocks and stressors including climate change and war. Few studies have applied a health lens to identify the foods most affected. We assessed costs and affordability of habitual diets and recommended (healthy, equitable and more sustainable) diets and their components in Greater Brisbane, Queensland, Australia from 2019-2022 using the Healthy Diets Australian Standardised Affordability and Pricing protocol. Affordability was determined for reference households at three levels of income: median; minimum wage; and welfare dependent. Recommended diet cost increased 17.9%. Prices of healthy foods, such as fruit, vegetables and legumes, healthy fats/oils, grains, and meats/alternatives, increased by 12.8% from 2021-2022. In contrast, the cost of unhealthy foods and drinks in the habitual diet 'only' increased 9.0% from 2019-2022, and 7.0% from 2021-2022. An exception was the cost of unhealthy take-away foods which increased by 14.7% from 2019-2022. Updated data from 2023 will also be presented. With government COVID-related payments, for the first-time recommended diets were affordable for all and food security and diets improved in 2020. However, the special payments were withdrawn in 2021, and recommended diets became 11.5% less affordable. Permanently increasing welfare support and providing an adequate minimum wage, while keeping basic, healthy foods GST-free and increasing GST to 20% on unhealthy foods, would improve food security and diet-related health inequities. Development of a Consumer Price Index specifically for healthy food would help highlight health risks during economic downturns.

Biography:

Amanda Lee is Emeritus Professor in the School of Public Health at The University of Queensland. She has experience in food security, food and nutrition systems and First Nations' health. Her research focuses on co-designed development, implementation, evaluation and translation to inform evidence-based policy and practice to prevent non-communicable disease.

Legal-institutional bottlenecks in the implementation of the Brazilian National School Food Program

Mariana Levy¹, Diogo R. Coutinho, Vitória Oliveira, Marina Lazarotto, Ana Clara Duran, Patrícia Samofal, Igor Perrut

1 University of São Paulo

Abstract:

The option to prioritize adequate and healthy food in public purchases for school meals has been recognized for its potential to mitigate public health risks, considering the link between unhealthy eating and so-called chronic non-communicable diseases (such as diabetes, obesity, and cancer). The objectives and legal-institutional architecture of public procurement can also influence public policies to reduce poverty and hunger, as well as agricultural development, especially family agriculture. The legal and institutional arrangements through which public procurement is operationalized, depending on how they are mobilized, can contribute to the achievement of public policy objectives and government programs. This research aims to understand the challenges and limits of the current architecture of public procurement aimed at implementing the National School Food Program in Brazil, given the potential impacts of this public policy on promoting food and nutritional security for students, as well as on the development of family agriculture. The nationwide empirical research is being carried out by the Law and Public Policy Group and by the Center for Epidemiological Research in Health Nutrition at São Paulo University. During the conference, we intend to present the methodological assumptions, its objectives, main stages and partial results of the empirical research, in particular the semi-structured interviews carried out with public managers and municipal attorneys.

Biography:

Professor at the Faculty of Law of the University of Brasilia (UNB). PhD in Economic, Financial and Tax Law and postdoctoral researcher at the University of São Paulo (USP). Researcher at the Institute for Applied Economic Research (IPEA), at the Institute of Latin American Studies at the Free University of Berlin, at the Center for Studies in Politics and Economics of the Public Sector at the Getúlio Vargas Foundation. Received the Lincoln Institute of Land Policy Case Study Award (2021). My studies are focused on the real estate market regulation, in particular on urban and environmental law and policy, as well as the regulation of the food industry in Brazil.

The impact of welfare increases in 2023 on the affordability of recommended diets by welfare dependent households

Meron Lewis¹, Stephen Nash, Amanda J Lee

1 Research Fellow, School of Public Health, The University of Queensland

Abstract:

It is crucial to ensure healthy diets are affordable for low socioeconomic groups (SEGs) who experience higher rates of diet-related disease than the broader Australian population. Cost and affordability of habitual (unhealthy) and recommended (healthy, equitable, more sustainable) diets were assessed using the low SEG Healthy Diets Australian Standardised Affordability and Pricing protocol for two types of welfare dependent Australian households in 2023. Among results, the impact of welfare payment increases in September on recommended diet affordability were explored. Prices of both common, branded products, and cheaper, generic branded products were collected in Brisbane. Diet affordability was calculated using welfare-based household incomes in April and September 2023. Recommended diets were 3-21% less expensive than habitual diets, depending on the proportion of generic branded to common branded products purchased. In April 2023, recommended diets required between 26-37% of household income for a welfare dependent two adult, two child family, or 24-35% for a welfare dependent one adult, two child family. In September, recommended diets required 24-35% of income for the two-parent family, or 20-30% for the single parent family. Despite increases to welfare payments, affordability of recommended diets remained unattainable or stressful for welfare dependent households with children. This is particularly so in the current context of rising costs of housing, fuel, and utilities, which increase risk of food insecurity and diet-related disease. Continued monitoring of diet cost and affordability is required, together with continued pressure for sufficient welfare support to enable purchase of healthy diets.

Biography:

Dr Meron Lewis is a Research Fellow with the University of Queensland's food pricing research team in the School of Public Health. Her research has included supporting Em. Prof. Amanda Lee with the development and implementation of the Healthy Diets ASAP suite of protocols in the co-creation of transformative food systems for public health and wellbeing, equity and environmental sustainability, including invited work for remote First Nations communities. This research has also been used by the QLD Council of Social Services (QCOSS) in preparation of household budget standards for inclusion in their Living Affordability in Queensland 2022 & 2023 Reports.

Future of digital marketing regulations – Screen capture and AI

Navoda Liyana Pathirana¹, Luai Saif, Asim Bhatti, Florentine Martino, Bridget Kelly, Emma Boyland, Nicholas Carah, Becky Freeman, Mimi Tatlow-Golden, Anna Peeters, and Kathryn Backholer

¹ Postdoctoral Research Fellow, Deakin University

Abstract:

Aggressive promotion of unhealthy commodities, such as unhealthy foods and alcohol, contributes to non-communicable diseases, such as obesity, diabetes, and some cancers. Nevertheless, unhealthy marketing is rarely regulated, especially online. Efforts to monitor exposures to this marketing, for the purpose of holding industry and governments to account, are complicated by behavioural marketing, with individuals having different marketing experiences. We developed SCANNER, a deep learning system to automatically detect and classify unhealthy food and alcohol brands and logos used in advertising. We conducted a pilot study with 24 youth in Australia between the ages of 8 to 25 years using 4 different screen capture technologies to test the effectiveness of SCANNER in quantifying exposure to unhealthy online marketing. Participants recorded 30% of their usual screen time and recordings were analysed with SCANNER. Results from SCANNER were compared with results from manual analysis. Our findings show that SCANNER is effective at detecting and classifying unhealthy marketing within digital screen capture data collected from youth participants, with some variation in performance depending on the screen capture technologies used. SCANNER can accurately detect more than 80 unhealthy food and alcohol brands at 95% accuracy and do so at least 12 times faster than manual methods of analysis. Our findings indicate that SCANNER is an effective tool for monitoring youth exposure to unhealthy food and alcohol marketing through digital media.

Biography:

Navoda is a postdoc research fellow at GLOBE, IHT at Deakin University researching digital marketing and policy regulations. Navoda did her Ph.D. (food system sustainability) at ISA and Charles Perkin Centre of the University of Sydney. Her research interests are in data-driven policy solutions for healthy and sustainable food systems.

Norwegian food system stakeholders' perspectives on participating in a cross-sector research partnership. A qualitative study

Anne Lene Løvhaug¹, Lisa Garnweidner-Holme, Arnfinn Helleve, Laura Terragni

¹ PhD Candidate, Oslo Metropolitan University

Abstract:

Background and aim: Collaborative governance models are increasingly used to address food systems challenges but have been criticized due to potential conflicts of interest (COI), power asymmetries and trust deficiencies. Conditions influencing collaborative governance in a Nordic context are not well known. NewTools, a Norwegian research partnership comprising 28 partners from academia, government, food industry, and civil society, aims to develop scoring systems for healthiness and the environmental and social impact of foods, and to explore applications in these in the Norwegian food system. The aim of this study was to explore NewTools-stakeholders' reflections on participation and the potential of COI.

Methods: We conducted 17 semi-structured interviews with NewTools-partners from all sectors and analyzed these using reflexive thematic analysis and concepts from collaborative governance scholarship.

Results: Overall, stakeholders empathized the value of participating in a collaborative project more than potential challenges, with researchers and civil society exhibiting caution. We identified two main, concurrent reflections related to participation. "Gathering around the table" reflected altruistic ideas around finding common solutions for complex problems through collaboration. "Strategically positioned" related to the value of being informed, potentially influencing the project, and protecting interests. While some civil society stakeholders expressed concerns about power dynamics and partner composition, there was a prevailing belief that collaboration's benefits outweighed COI risks. Good project management was regarded as important to address potential COI.

Conclusion: Despite some concerns, there was an overarching emphasis on the benefits of participating in NewTools and collaborating for addressing complex food system issues.

Biography:

Anne Lene Løvhaug is a public health nutritionist and PhD student in Health Sciences at Oslo Metropolitan University, Norway. Her research interests include food and nutrition governance, in particular cross-sector collaboration in NCD-related policy development.

Benchmarking food environments in Aotearoa/New Zealand for advocacy.

Sally Mackay¹, Hinako Percival, Lisa Te Morenga, Boyd Swinburn

¹ Lecturer, University of Auckland

Abstract:

The Healthy Food Environment Policy Index (Food-Epi) evaluates the degree of implementation of widely recommended food environment policies by national governments. Food-Epi has been conducted in NZ four times (2014, 2017, 2020, 2023) in the year of the national election. There are 47 indicators organised as policies and infrastructure support. In 2023, Food-Epi was conducted by the University of Auckland and Health Coalition Aotearoa (HCA) (a group of public health experts with a collective vision of health and equity in Aotearoa through reduced consumption of tobacco, alcohol, and unhealthy food). Public health experts rated implementation of the indicators against international best practice using an evidence document on government progress. Workshops were conducted with public health experts to prioritise actions to address implementation gaps identified. There has been very little progress in implementation over the 12 years with 'low' or 'very little, if any' implementation of 61% of indicators in 2014, 47% in 2017, 60% in 2020 and 55% in 2023. In 2023, two enabling actions, five policy and five infrastructure actions were agreed by experts. A multi-sectoral National Food Systems and Nutrition Strategy was proposed with mandatory policies particularly focused on protecting children through restricting marketing of unhealthy food and improving school food environments. HCA has disseminated the actions widely amongst politicians, government officials and the Public Health Advisory Committee. The actions guide the HCA food expert panel, shaping key asks in the HCA prevention brief. Food-Epi provides a powerful advocacy tool to provide consistent messages to improve the food environment in NZ.

Biography:

I am a lecturer in population health nutrition at the University of Auckland. My research focuses on monitoring and creating healthier food environments, healthy sustainable diets and dietary assessment. I am co-chair of the food expert panel of Health Coalition Aotearoa, an advocacy group.

Looking at child-directed marketing on social media in South Africa

Mikateko Mafuyeka¹, Petronell Kruger, Lisa Deyce, Tamryn Frank, Safura Abdool Karim, Susan Goldstein

¹ SAMRC/Priceless SA, University of Witwatersrand

Abstract:

Background: There is a growing consensus that marketing unhealthy food and beverages contributes to the prevalence of overweight and obesity. In South Africa, marketing of unhealthy food and beverages on social media has increased, which has contributed to the rising overweight and obesity statistics. However, regulatory reach is often lower or absent for new forms of media. **Objectives:** This research aims to assist in assessing the extent of children's exposure to marketing of unhealthy foods and beverages; to investigate whether there has been an increase in child-directed marketing (CDM) in South Africa and to contribute to this novel field of study.

Methods: We collected social media posts on Facebook and Instagram (n = 1229) for the period of 1 October 2020 to 30 September 2021. Euromonitor data from 2019 was used to select 10 food and beverage companies. Inductive and deductive coding was used.

Results: 58.9% of the food and beverages posts depicted unhealthy products. 14% (n=54) contained children perceived to be under 12 years and 48.4% (n=185) perceived as being above 12 years. Brand posts encouraged direct, 22.7% (n=261) or indirect, 71% (n=815) consumption. The adverts portrayed children in school settings or uniforms and employed child actors, which are both CDM techniques.

Conclusions: Child exposure to marketing should not only be assessed through traditional media but also on social platforms, which have extensive reach. Improved regulation is required for marketing on social media, as well as for brand advertisements to address indirect child-directed marketing. Existing regulations fall short in this regard. *Financial support comes from The University of North Carolina (Grant number 5106249), with additional support from the SAMRC/Wits Centre for Health Economics and Decision Science – PRICELESS SA (Grant number 23108)

Biography:

Mikateko Mafuyeka is a researcher at the SAMRC/Wits Centre for Health Economics and Decision Science (PRICELESS SA). She is an admitted legal practitioner in the High Court of South Africa and has previously held positions as a practicing legal practitioner and Law

lecturer. She has an LLB and LLM from the University of Pretoria. Her work at Priceless SA is policy and health analysis.

Monitoring food industry compliance with regulation to address diet-related disease in South-East Asia

Damian Maganja¹, Alexandra Jones

¹ Research Fellow, The George Institute for Global Health

Abstract:

Governments across South-East Asia have introduced various regulations to address diet-related non-communicable disease. To be effective, the food industry must comply with these regulations. We were engaged by the World Health Organization Regional Office for South-East Asia to develop guidance on monitoring food industry compliance. We firstly reviewed frameworks for monitoring regulation in areas such as food safety and alcohol and tobacco control to develop an initial list of methods that could be applied to monitor diet-related regulations. Strengths/weaknesses and barriers/enablers to implementing these methods were tested through targeted consultations with regional stakeholders. Feedback was used to develop recommended approaches for monitoring diet-related regulations. Acknowledging the diverse circumstances and starting points across the region, and recognising that a risk-based approach is likely to be most useful, we developed a stepped set of recommendations to build effective monitoring systems that can be modified as capacities and priorities change. The basic set builds upon existing food safety systems to monitor compliance with relevant regulations. An expanded system introduces enhancements for identifying and addressing areas of concern, plus methods to allow more systematic monitoring. An optimal system enables a comprehensive overview of compliance for high-risk products and settings, and may support monitoring across the food supply over time. This practical guidance aims to support governments to develop, implement and strengthen monitoring and enforcement of regulations to enhance food industry compliance and improve food environments. Materials have been translated and disseminated through an e-learning course available on the OpenWHO platform.

Biography:

Damian is a Research Fellow in the Food Policy Division at The George Institute for Global Health. He is also co-convenor of the Public Health Association of Australia's Food and Nutrition Special Interest Group. His research and advocacy focusses on policy, regulation and governance in food systems.

The anti-politics of food in South Africa: Transformation, accountability and the nutrition policy subsystem

Busiso Moyo¹, Anne Marie Thow²

1 London School of Tropical and Hygiene Medicine

2 Professor of Public Health Policy and Health, Menzies Centre for Health Policy and Economics, The University of Sydney

Abstract:

Background and aims To examine power and governance arrangements in food and nutrition policy formulation and agenda setting in South Africa and to transform the discourse of the right to access sufficient food and nutrition. Analysis of the policy implementation environment and in-depth interviews were conducted focussing on: existing policy content and priorities across food system sectors; institutional structures for cross-sectoral and external stakeholder engagement; exercise of power in relation to food system policies; and opportunities to strengthen action on nutrition. Description and recommendations Interviews were conducted with 48 key stakeholders involved in the food and nutrition policy sphere: government sectors relevant to food systems (n=21), the private sector (n=4), academia (n=10), NGOs (n=11) and farmers (n=2). The violation of the right to food is a reflection of power relations as much as biological or behavioural factors. There are power dynamics involved in shaping the planning agenda that is inadvertently generating a food system that undermines the right to food. South Africa has strong legal institutions and practices, and social policies that support public provisioning of food, but a non-interventionist approach to the food system. Significance Politics and power are equally important in the direction of policy processes – however, policy is only one lever in a food systems approach and should not be seen as singularly important in eliciting change. There is an opportunity for reframing ‘access to sufficient food’ as food justice in South Africa, and to place increased attention on the social dimensions of existing food policies.

Biography:

Busiso Moyo is an activist and scholar based at the London School of Tropical and Hygiene Medicine. His research interests shine light on three important areas: inequality and right to food struggles in South Africa; the geographies of hunger and politics of malnutrition; and the geopolitics of food and agriculture. The latter examines the global political economy of food, which in turn illuminates the persistence of imperialism and neo-colonialism in contemporary world politics.

Anne Marie Thow is an Associate Professor in Public Policy and Health at the University of Sydney. Her research uses theories of public policy making to explore facilitators and barriers to best practice public health nutrition policy, with a particular focus on food systems and the interface between economic policy and nutrition. Anne Marie currently collaborates on research in Asia, Africa, Europe, Latin America and the Pacific. She is a member of the WHO's Nutrition Policy Guidance Group and WHO EURO's New Economics Expert Group, as well as the United Nations Tax Committee's Subcommittee on health taxes, and she regularly consults with governments and international agencies. Prior to her PhD, Anne Marie worked for the Governments of Australia and Fiji on nutrition policy issues. She trained in nutrition and has a Masters in Public Policy and Economics.

Unwise Partnerships: a semi-automated approach for identifying the endorsement of DrinkWise campaigns by non-industry partners.

Florentine Martino¹, Liam King, Kathryn Backholer

¹ Postdoctoral Research Fellow, Global Centre for Preventive Health and Nutrition (GLOBE), Deakin University

Abstract:

World-wide, harmful industries have created front-groups representing collective business interests, which claim to promote the wellbeing of consumers and 'responsible' consumption of their products. These corporate health promotion (CHP) campaigns have been shown to be ineffective at reducing harmful consumption. Instead, front-groups have been shown to primarily safeguard sales, enhance public relations, and delay effective regulation, rather than improving consumer health. When renowned (health) organisations and prominent individuals endorse these CHP activities (e.g., educational websites, campaigns or tools), it elevates industry's legitimacy in the public health arena. We aimed to examine the extent and nature of partnerships between DrinkWise, an Australian alcohol industry front group, and prominent (non-alcohol industry) organisations and individuals. We developed semi-automated methods to monitor partnerships, which includes crawling the DrinkWise website and social media accounts in full, and scan for key words related to 'campaigns' and 'partners'. Extracted data was manually assessed to map partners against CHP campaigns over time and describe the nature of these engagements. DrinkWise has engaged an increasing number of health-focused organisations and prominent individuals over time, including sports figures, doctors, government officials, NGOs, mental health services, and indigenous health services, in the co-development and endorsement of their CHP campaigns. By associating with credible entities, DrinkWise can enhance its industry's health authority in the public eye, potentially leading to government official access. Our study demonstrates an efficient way to monitor harmful industry campaign partnerships,

which can be used to alert organisations of the ethically sensitive nature of partnering with these front groups.

Biography:

Dr. Florentine Martino is postdoctoral VicHealth Research Fellow at Deakin University within GLOBE. Her research focuses on reducing health inequities caused by harmful industry practices. She currently works on projects to develop automated approaches to monitoring CSR and marketing efforts by the food, alcohol, and gambling industries.

Smarter regulation of Australia's wasted food

Christopher McElwain¹

1 PhD Candidate, Faculty of Law and Justice, University of New South Wales

Abstract:

Australia makes a lot of food, but it also wastes a lot of food. Australia has recently adopted two national 2030 waste targets: halving its levels of food waste; and diverting half of all of its organic waste away from landfill. Current regulatory arrangements aimed at achieving these two targets are failing, and more effective responses are urgently required. My paper sets out four evidence-based steps that will strengthen Australia's ability to achieve, or even exceed, those two targets. In combination, these four steps will help Australia move closer to solving the wicked problem of wasted food and so build a more circular economy.

Biography:

Chris McElwain is a PhD Candidate in the Faculty of Law and Justice at UNSW. He was a lawyer for the New South Wales Environment Protection Authority (EPA), for more than 10 years and helped design NSW's main pollution prevention and waste control laws in the late 1990's. He was subsequently a senior manager in the EPA's waste and resource recovery team for more than 10 years.

Incorporating a gender lens into nutrition and health-related policies in Fiji

Briar McKenzie¹, Gade Waqa, Sarah Mounsey, Claire Johnson, Mark Woodward, Kent Buse, Anne Marie Thow, Rachael McLean and Jacqui Webster

¹ Postdoctoral Research Fellow, The George Institute for Global Health

Abstract:

Gender equality, zero hunger, and health are vital components of Fiji's National Development Plan, aligned with the Sustainable Development Goals. Achieving these objectives plays a pivotal role in mitigating non-communicable diseases (NCDs). However, gender disparities exist within Fiji's NCD burden, prompting a need for more effective integration of gender perspectives in nutrition and health policies. This study included: a policy content analysis of 11 nutrition and health-related policies, application of the WHO Gender Analysis tool to identify opportunities for policy strengthening and interviews with 18 informants to gain insights into the potential for gender considerations in policies. Seven policies (64%) included gender equality as a goal, albeit with a focus on women of reproductive age. One policy was rated as gender responsive. Main themes from interviews with informants focused on; the necessity for a needs-based approach to policy focus, gender-related roles and responsibilities in nutrition and health, the definition of "equitable" in this context, existing gender considerations, and potential barriers to their inclusion. While informants recognized gender-based disparities in NCDs, most did not see a pressing need for stronger gender integration in policies. There is considerable scope for greater inclusion of gender considerations in nutrition and health-related policies in Fiji. This could be done by framing gender considerations in actionable and inclusive terms, advocating for gender-responsive policies within key stakeholder networks, collecting sex-disaggregated data for monitoring policy implementation, and promoting equitable participation in nutrition-related matters at the community and governance levels. These actions would support gender-equitable reduction of NCDs in Fiji

Biography:

Briar is an accredited practicing dietitian and National Heart Foundation of Australia Postdoctoral Fellow at the George Institute. Her work focuses on gender equity in diet and the burden of disease, particularly in the relationship between diet and brain health and in the context of Pacific Island Countries.

Understanding successful and unsuccessful food system policy initiatives through conference abstract analysis

Margaret Miller¹, Ros Sambell, Ella Parnell-Harrison

¹ Associate Professor, School of Medical and Health Sciences, Edith Cowan University

Abstract:

Background In 2020, at the mid-point of the United Nations Decade of Action on Nutrition, the World Public Health Nutrition Association convened an international Congress to review progress in the six Action Areas of the Decade. Submitted abstracts provided an international snapshot of policies, programs and research aligned with the Action Areas and underlying ICN2 recommendations. The aim of analysis for this presentation was to review the abstracts to identify polices and actions shown to have worked or not to improve food governance, food systems or food security in Australia or globally. Methods 426 peer reviewed abstracts, 33 % from Australia, submitted under the nutrition Action Areas of 'strengthened governance and accountability' (72); 'sustainable, resilient food systems for healthy diets' (62); 'safe and supportive environments' (144); 'trade and investment' (10); 'social protection' (81) and 'capacity development' (57) were thematically analysed to determine presenter conclusions on what has worked, not worked and gaps still to be actioned to address food system and food security challenges. Results Key themes associated with 'successful' policies and actions were recognition of power structures for food systems, community engagement, political advocacy. Prominent themes underlying 'unsuccessful' policies included corporate interference and lack of cross-sectoral policy cohesion. Gaps were linked to themes of food sovereignty and human rights. Policy actions in Australian-based abstracts were more prominent for food environments and less for food systems than globally. Conclusion Analysis of policy initiatives undertaken globally to address Action Areas of the Decade of Nutrition Action provides evidence of potential solutions to food governance challenges.

Biography:

Margaret is Associate Professor in School of Medical and Health Sciences at Edith Cowan University. She is active in Food System education and leads a working group of the World Public Health Nutrition Association on Food Systems. She is the current president of WPHNA.

*Regulating Corporate Social Responsibility***Shereika Mills¹**

1 Student, Georgetown University Law Center

Abstract:

Effective regulation of the commercial determinants of health requires examination of all the activities of the unhealthy food industry, including those which may seem unharmed at surface level. In this vein, this presentation will critically examine philanthropic efforts dubbed as corporate social responsibility (CSR) to expose the ways in which corporations use these initiatives as marketing tools, and as a way to establish and legitimize their 'right to participate' in the activities of government. Non-communicable diseases (NCDs) account for over sixty percent of deaths in the Caribbean, with diabetes and hypertension being among the leading causes. In Jamaica, the burden of diabetes is experienced by 1 in 8, while 1 in 3 suffer from hypertension. This is partly due to a nutrition transition in the region, where the majority of food products consumed are imported, and high in sugar, salt and fats. As the Latin American region adopts more healthy food policies, and the Caribbean lags behind, the region becomes a dumping ground for unhealthy food products. In LMIC, CSR initiatives often fill gaps that the government either cannot, or is unwilling, to fill. These initiatives are heavily advertised, and create public dissonance when governments propose regulation of these activities. As a solution to this problem, I will propose regulation of CSR initiatives through conflict of interest policies. I will also propose an ESG tax on unhealthy food companies that will pool funds to be used for social initiatives by the government, instead of accepting direct donations from unhealthy food companies.

Biography:

Shereika Mills is a Jamaican trained attorney, who is pursuing an LL.M. in National and Global Health Law at Georgetown University Law Center. Prior to this, she served as the Policy and Advocacy Coordinator at the Jamaica Youth Advocacy Network, working on research and advocacy around healthy food policies.

Planning for more resilient food systems in Australia: key stakeholder perspectives on legislative, policy and governance approaches

Maureen Murphy¹, Monica Aing, Rachel Carey

¹ Research Fellow, The University of Melbourne

Abstract:

Over the past five years, Australian food systems have experienced multiple overlapping shocks from bushfires, floods and pandemic. International, interstate and intrastate food supply chains have been disrupted, and food prices and food insecurity have increased. The resilience of food systems has been tested, and their ability to withstand and recover from compounding shocks have been compromised. In 2022, the Parliament of Australia's House Standing Committee on Agriculture commenced an inquiry into strengthening food security in Australia. There have been 187 submissions and 24 days of public hearings to date. In this study, we aimed to understand the perspectives of policy actors and institutions engaged in policy discourse on planning for more resilient food systems that safeguard food security. We conducted a thematic content analysis of all inquiry submissions and hearing transcriptions, and triangulated data with key stakeholder interviews with participants from industry, government, and civil society organisations. Our findings showed agreement and growing support among diverse food system stakeholders for legislative and policy approaches that enshrine the right to food, and for integrated cross-portfolio and cross-sectoral governance at national, state and local levels of government. However, perspectives differ on where leadership of food resilience planning should reside, and about inclusion of short food supply chain actors in governance structures. Our study provides insights into the views of food system actors on legislative, policy and governance approaches to planning for more resilient food systems in the context of accelerating and compounding climate shocks and other disaster scenarios.

Biography:

Dr Maureen Murphy is a Research Fellow in the School of Agriculture, Food and Ecosystem Sciences at The University of Melbourne. Maureen is part of the Foodprint Melbourne project, which is investigating the resilience of Victoria's food system to climate and other shocks and stresses.

*The EU's Moving toward a Mandatory FOPL: Legal and Science-based Review***Kuei-Jung Ni¹**

1 Professor of Law and Founding Director of the Center for Transnational Trade Laws at School of Law, National Yang Ming Chiao Tung University (NYCU)

Abstract:

The front-of-pack label (FOPL) on foods has been increasingly regarded as a useful means to tackle the excessive consumption of unhealthy foods. Nations apply differential legal and policy approaches to implement FOPL, either on a voluntary or mandatory basis. Considering the limited effects of the voluntary policy, many countries, such as Chile, Mexico and Peru, etc., have moved toward a mandatory FOPL. The European Union (EU) consisting of 27 members managed to build a common policy on FOPL. After lengthy studies and consultations, the European Commission finally put the mandatory draft on the table. Yet, the agenda has met strong opposition from industry and certain members. The paper aims to disclose the EU's new approach by analyzing its legal and policy implications. It mainly addresses the EU legislative draft which lays the foundation for EU members' intervening in the market by obliging the food industry to use FOPL. To justify the measure, it also sought scientific opinions from the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA). Some doubt arises as to whether such opinions actually endorse the Commission's proposal. It may be interesting to examine what the role of the EFSA plays in the FOPL policy and its adequacy in alleged science-based policy.

Biography:

Kuei-Jung Ni is Professor of Law and Founding Director of the Center for Transnational Trade Laws at School of Law, National Yang Ming Chiao Tung University (NYCU), Taiwan. He studies

food law from international and comparative perspective, especially on the interaction between international rule-making and national implementation.

Evaluation of a voluntary National Healthy Food and Drink Policy and resulting policy improvements: A case study from New Zealand

Cliona Ni Mhurchu¹, Stephanie Shen, Bruce Kidd, Magda Rosin, Elaine Umali, Yannan Jiang, Sarah Gerritsen, Sally Mackay, Lisa Te Morenga

¹ Professor, University of Auckland

Abstract:

Background: We aimed to evaluate the National Healthy Food and Drink Policy, a voluntary policy introduced in New Zealand in 2016 to encourage provision of healthier food and drink options for staff and visitors at hospitals and healthcare facilities.

Study design: A mixed-methods evaluation was undertaken between March 2021 and August 2022, including policy assessments, on-site food and drink audits, surveys of staff and visitors, and interviews with food providers.

Methods: Evaluations were conducted for 20 District Health Boards and two national government agencies. 8485 foods and drinks available for sale were classified according to the Policy criteria. The primary outcome was alignment with the Policy guidance on the availability of green, amber, and red category food and drink items ($\geq 55\%$ green and 0% red).

Results: Nine of the 22 organisations had adopted the National Policy in full. Across all sites, 38.9% of food/drink items were rated red (not permitted), 38.9% were amber, and 22.1% were green. Organisations that adopted the National Policy had healthier foods and drinks on average than those that did not, but the proportion of red items remained high: 32.3% versus 47.5% ($p < 0.0001$).

Conclusions: A voluntary Policy was not effective in ensuring provision of healthier food and drink options in New Zealand healthcare facilities. Findings however highlighted improvements that could be made to the Policy, which has now been made mandatory with an initial focus on removal of all red items by mid-2024. Resources have also been developed to enhance its implementation and impact in the future.

Biography:

Professor Cliona Ni Mhurchu directs a research programme on population nutrition and scalable dietary interventions. She is Director of the HRC-funded DIET research programme, Deputy Director of the Healthier Lives National Science Challenge, and Lead Investigator of a team contracted to develop tools and methods for a New Zealand National Nutrition Survey.

Shedding Light on 'Dark' Advertising: Monitoring Unhealthy Food Advertising on Facebook

Tanita Northcott¹, Christine Parker, Abdul Obeid

¹ PhD Candidate, Deakin University

Abstract:

Public health advocates have long been concerned with the harmful effects of incessant marketing of unhealthy food. As advertising moves more and more online to major digital platforms and social media channels, it is becoming 'darker' and more difficult to monitor in the public interest. This is due to both the ephemeral nature of the advertising, meaning ads appear and disappear without being publicly archived, and the targeting and personalisation of the ads, meaning they can only be observed by those to whom they are targeted. In this paper we describe a solution to observing otherwise unobservable dark advertising through a research project, the Australian Ad Observatory, that uses a novel data donation infrastructure to improve the observability of platform-based advertising. The Ad Observatory enlisted the help of nearly 2000 research participants drawn from the Australian public, who donated approximately 800,000 observations or impressions of more than 300,000 unique ads from their own personal Facebook feeds during 2021 to 2022. These included approximately 7356 impressions of 2136 separate unhealthy food ads by 190 brands, the most common of which were KFC and McDonalds (together accounting for 25% of the ad impressions). We discuss to whom the ads were targeted and major problematic features of how the brands advertised as surfaced by our research. We argue for the value of initiatives like the Ad Observatory for improving the accountability of social media platforms and their advertising models as well as major food brands and food delivery companies.

Biography:

Tanita Northcott is a PhD Candidate at Deakin University and a Research Assistant in the ARC Centre of Excellence for Automated Decision Making and Society.

Can healthy food subsidies in farmers' markets improve the diet quality, food insecurity and psychosocial well-being of adults with low incomes? A randomized controlled trial

Dana Olstad¹, Michelle L. Aktary, Sharlette Dunn, Heather O'Hara, Peter Leblanc, Gavin R. McCormack, Stephanie Caron-Roy, Kylie Ball, Yun Yun Lee, Sara Nejatinamini, Raylene A. Reimer, Bo Pan, Leia M. Minaker, Kim D. Raine, Jenny Godley, Shauna Downs, Candace I. J. Nykiforuk, Tolulope Sajobi

1 Associate Professor of Population Health and Public Health, Department of Community Health Sciences, University of Calgary

Abstract:

Background: Healthy food subsidies allow adults with low incomes to procure nutritious food in a dignified and autonomy-enhancing manner. Offering subsidies in farmers' markets may be particularly beneficial as shopping in farmers' markets promotes fruit and vegetable intake, enhances social connectedness and mental well-being by facilitating community interaction, and supports expansion of local food systems and economies.

Objectives: We examined the impact of the British Columbia Farmers' Market Nutrition Coupon Program (FMNCP) on the diet quality, household food insecurity and psychosocial well-being of adults with low incomes.

Methods: Adults with low incomes were randomized to a no-intervention control or a FMNCP group that received \$21/week for 16 weeks to purchase healthy foods in farmers' markets. At baseline, post-intervention and 16 weeks post-intervention, participants reported dietary intake via two 24-hour dietary recalls to calculate Healthy Eating Index-2015 (HEI-2015) scores, household food insecurity, sense of community and mental well-being. Mixed effects models examined between-group differences.

Results: There were no significant between-group differences in HEI-2015 total scores at either time point. The odds of short-term household food insecurity were 79% and 71% lower among those in the FMNCP group post-intervention and 16 weeks post-intervention, respectively. There was a trend towards better mental well-being and sense of community in the FMNCP group post-intervention, with the former sustained 16 weeks post-intervention.

Conclusions: Healthy food subsidies in farmers' markets may reduce short-term household food insecurity among adults with low incomes, however higher subsidies may be needed to improve diet quality and psychosocial well-being.

Biography:

Dr Dana Olstad is a Registered Dietitian and an Associate Professor of Population and Public Health in the Department of Community Health Sciences at the University of Calgary. Her research program investigates the impact of policy on socioeconomic inequities in diet quality and health.

Food Insecurity in Nigeria: Food Social Governance Approach Through Advocacy Planning

Olusola Olufemi¹

1 Independent Consultant

Abstract:

Food is one of the most fundamental determinants of health. High rates of hunger can have devastating and long-lasting effects across society, including the potentially lifelong effects of stunting, forced withdrawal from education, and dangerous migration. Nigeria is among the top countries' hotspots of highest concern level of food insecurity globally and majority of the population are experiencing a critical hunger situation, with extreme depletion of livelihoods, insufficient food consumption and high acute malnutrition. High inflation, high food inflation rates and the depreciation of the Naira (Nigeria currency) coupled with the rising impact of climate change and national insecurity continue to propel Nigerians into severe and acute food insecurity. This paper discusses food insecurity through the lens of multidimensional poverty, insurgency, climate crisis, national insecurity, and governance in Nigeria. Utilizing secondary data and observation, the paper adopts Paul Davidoff's advocacy planning theory to explain sustainability and food security. Paper suggests promoting transformational inclusive good governance through advocacy planning is pivotal to ameliorating food poverty and achieving food social governance in Nigeria and other countries with poor regulatory practices and bad governance structures. The bedrock of food social governance is engaging communities through advocacy planning and collaboratively to attain food secure futures.

Biography:

Olusola A. Olufemi is an Associate Professor of Urban and Regional Planning. She also has a Certificate in Food Security. Olusola has taught in various universities in Nigeria, South Africa, and Canada. Her research interests are in Homelessness, Food Security, Housing and Environment, Gender, Faith and Development Issues. A member of the Planning Knowledge Exchange of the Ontario Professional Planners Institute, Canada since 2018 and a Lifelong member of the International Society of City and Regional Planners (ISOCARP).

Food system governance in the Pacific Islands region: Strengthening the translation of regional food system policies to national level

Dori Patay¹, Amerita Ravuvu, Viliamu Iese, Penny Farrell, Anna Farmery, Erica Reeve, Dorah Wilson, Seno Mauli, Josephine Maelaua, Ellen Johnson, Anne Marie Thow

¹ Research Fellow, Menzies Centre for Health Policy and Economics, University of Sydney

Abstract:

Recent food system shocks and increasing climate change exposures highlight the urgency of strengthening food systems at different scales, including global, regional, and national, to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals. Pacific Island Country governments are committed to strengthening their food systems to improve social, economic and environmental outcomes. While the Pacific Islands region shows great strengths in regional governance, the translation of regional food system policies to national level remains challenging. This study investigated opportunities to strengthen the translation of regional food system policy guidance to the national level in the Pacific Island region. A qualitative, theory-informed study design was applied. Twenty-one interviews were conducted with key informants in the Pacific islands region between 2021 and 2022. A thematic analysis of institutional conditions was conducted following an analytical framework of multi-level governance. We found that inadequate regional-national translation of food system policy guidance arises from (i) competing demands on limited resources, exacerbated by challenges of financing multisectoral initiatives; (ii) often weak regional-national dialogue; and (iii) perceived tension of economic, social, and environmental priorities in dominant policy paradigms. These barriers may be addressed by establishing a regional food system governance structure and accountability mechanisms as well as a paradigm shift to balance focus between food system priorities. Current drives to implement National Food System Transformation Pathways may provide necessary impetus to realise these opportunities.

Biography:

Dori Patay is a governance scholar who investigates issues at the intersection of health, trade, agriculture, economy and the environment. Dori holds a Research Fellow position at the Global and Intersectoral Policy for Health theme at the Menzies Centre for Health Policy and Economics in the University of Sydney.

Using policy surveillance to support legal nutrition epidemiology: examining obesity policy in California from 1999-2020

Denise Payán¹, Alec M. Chan-Golston

¹ Associate Professor, University of California

Abstract:

Childhood and adult obesity rates are accelerating globally while food insecurity rates soar, particularly among marginalized and low-income populations. Nutrition policies can significantly impact population health by improving environmental conditions and increasing access to health-promoting resources. Limited research exists focused on the surveillance of nutrition laws and policies over time. For decades, California, USA has served as a laboratory for obesity policy—enacting more obesity legislation than other U.S. states and as an early adopter of policies like a 2008 mandatory menu labeling law and 2018 healthy kids’ meal law. We use policy surveillance methods to identify obesity-related bills and resolutions introduced in California’s legislature between 1999–2020. We examined trends in the types of introduced and enacted policies. Between 1999–2020, N=284 bills and resolutions were introduced in California’s legislature to address obesity/overweight—44% were enacted/adopted. In terms of topic, 45% were related to nutrition, 33% to physical activity, and 32% to awareness. Children and schools were the most frequently specified population and setting. Fifty-two percent of awareness policies were enacted or adopted. Awareness policies had 1.7 times the odds of being passed compared to other topics. The presentation will describe our approach to developing a comprehensive policy database where we will share our codebook and the dataset. We will also provide case examples of different typologies of nutrition policies that were successful and discuss policy components and communication strategies to increase policy success, that may be relevant to a global audience.

Biography:

Dr. Denise D. Payán, Ph.D., M.P.P., is an Associate Professor in the Public Health Program at the University of California, Irvine. She leads the Community Health & Innovative Policy (CHIP) Lab and is a health policy researcher whose interests include examining health policymaking and implementation; and evaluating interventions to address obesity and nutrition-related health disparities.

Food security in Sri Lanka: a sustainable circular economy and policy interventions

Samali Perera¹, Takwa Tossaoui, Anne-Marie Thow, Jeevika Weerahewa

¹ PhD Candidate, University of Sydney

Abstract:

Background: The recent collapse of the Sri Lankan economy has had a devastating impact on food security and nutrition, with food prices rising 94% and 32% of Sri Lankan households food insecure. In response, political priority for food production, promoting nutrition, fostering sustainability, and facilitating economic progress has increased. Against this crisis background, a circular economy approach presents a sustainable solution to address multiple food policy challenges. **Methods:** We analysed policies related to food supply and nutrition using a matrix, to identify sustainable strategies for moving towards a circular economy model that seeks to eliminate waste and promote the sustainable utilisation of resources. **Findings:** Existing agriculture and health policies prioritised food and nutrition security, including through multisectoral nutrition engagement and food standards. Within agriculture policies there was also a focus on improving income, employment prospects, and standard of living of agricultural workers. However, food loss and waste received minimal attention, as did the sustainable use of resources. The analysis identified several opportunities to strengthen policy attention to food loss and resource use across the food system, including agriculture, health and industry policies, drawing on a circular economy lens. **Conclusion:** The analysis indicated that integrating a circular economic approach into agriculture and nutrition policies could support Sri Lanka's priority for the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals for 2030.

Biography:

Samali is a research assistant and current PhD candidate at the University of Sydney. She is working on a One-CGIAR project named FRESH (Fruits and vegetables for sustainable healthy diets). Food policy and nutrition, postharvest biology, agronomy, and food security are her areas of research interest.

What are we seeing in social media? An analysis of 'COVID-washing' marketing strategy of unhealthy food in Thailand

Payao Phonsuk¹, Kamolphat Markchang, Hathairat Kosiyaporn, Rujira Adhibai, Orratai Waleewong

¹ PhD Candidate, School of Public Health, Faculty of Medicine and Health, University of Sydney

Abstract:

Digital marketing on social media is a main contributor to unhealthy consumption, one cause of non-communicable diseases. Living in the digital world, Thais spent more time online during the COVID-19 pandemic. Unhealthy food and drink companies take this opportunity to get involved as caring and contributing members of society by using a 'COVID-washing' marketing strategy. This study aimed to identify and analyse the digital marketing strategy of unhealthy food and drink before and during COVID-19 in Thailand. The mixed-method approach was applied to identify the number of posts in twelve food and drink brands and to analyse the content of marketing techniques. Data were collected prior to and during the COVID-19 period between 1 January 2020 and 31 March 2021. There were 8,461 posts from 12 brands via four social media platforms, including Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and Youtube. 56.6% of posts were found on Facebook. Fast food had the highest number of posts (60.5%, 5,118 posts) in all periods, followed by snacks and ice cream (13.7%, 1,157 posts), and brewed sweet drinks (10.2%, 867 posts). 9% of all posts were identified as COVID-19-related themes, including messages like CSR, preventive measures, caring, and delivery service. Our finding confirms that unhealthy food and drink companies have taken advantage of the COVID-19 pandemic to promote their products, by using a COVID-washing technique as one of their marketing strategies. A comprehensive regulation to control unhealthy food and drink marketing is therefore needed in the digital platform as well as raising awareness among people.

Biography:

Payao Phonsuk is a PhD student at the Menzies Centre for Health Policy & Economics, Sydney School of Public Health. Payao is interested in food and nutrition policy research, by focusing on how to build a healthy food environment to prevent obesity and NCDs.

Mapping and survey of community and commercial urban agriculture initiatives across the Illawarra Shoalhaven region of New South Wales to inform policy.

Suzy Pickles¹, Katherine Kent, Anita Stefoska-Needham, Anne McMahon, Karen Charlton

¹ PhD Candidate, University of Wollongong

Abstract:

As the global population continues to expand and urbanise, growing food in and around our cities brings a range of health, sustainability and equity benefits to people and the planet. Despite favourable conditions for growing food and a network of growers in the Illawarra Shoalhaven region of the NSW South Coast, research that maps and understands the nature of urban agriculture initiatives is needed to inform policy. Therefore, this research aimed provide a situational analysis of commercial and community urban agriculture initiatives in Wollongong, Shellharbour, Kiama and Shoalhaven Local Government Areas. Desktop research was used to map the geographical location of 39 small-scale commercial ventures and 25 community gardens, demonstrating the presence of an urban agriculture network with a variety of products including vegetables, fruit, leafy greens, honey, mushrooms, eggs, olives and native foods. A cross-sectional online survey of 15 commercial social enterprises and 10 community gardens identified the sector is underpinned by social, community and environmental values. Local food systems were found to be important to urban agriculture initiatives and a strong preference for local supply chains was revealed, with most produce being distributed direct to consumer or through food relief donations, swap/trade or retail. There is interest among organisations for other local distribution channels such as agritourism, online selling, farmers markets and hospitality, but little interest in more distant and large-scale channels such as interstate and overseas exports. Understanding the perspective of these stakeholders can inform responsive and impactful policy and programs to support local food systems in the Illawarra.

Biography:

Suzy is a backyard grower, designer and researcher. She is currently undertaking an integrated PhD at the University of Wollongong researching healthy, equitable and sustainable local food systems in the Illawarra Shoalhaven region of NSW.

*Attitudes, perceptions, and knowledge on food policies in Colombia: a cross-sectional study***Carolina Piñeros¹**

1 Co-founder, Red PaPaz

Abstract:

High consumption of ultra-processed food has been associated with obesity and other non-communicable diseases. In Colombia, 75% of school children aged 5-12 consume at least one sugar-sweetened drink daily and 24.4% have overweight. To control the obesity epidemic, civil society organizations had urged the Colombian government to implement policies that promote healthy food environments. These policies include front-of-package warning labeling, healthy taxes, advertising restrictions, and school food environment. Red PaPaz conducted a cross-sectional study to assess attitudes, perceptions, and knowledge of individuals aged 18 to 70 regarding these food policies. The study was conducted in the main geographical regions of the country with a non-probabilistic design which included 803 people. Results indicated that low cost (61.4%), easy access (68.6%), and early consumption (74.6%) significantly influence children's frequent consumption of ultra-processed products. Parents reported a lack of availability of fruits, vegetables, or salads (51%) and free drinking water (59%) in their children's schools. Moreover, the study found that participants were supportive of food policies with 88.3% favoring front-of-package warning labels, 64.4% endorsing healthy taxes, and 73.4% supporting a ban on advertising ultra-processed products targeted at children. The study demonstrates strong civil society backing for implementing these policies. As a result of it and civil society advocacy, Colombia has started implementing front-of-package warning labeling and healthy taxes on ultra processed products, which represents a step forward in ensuring the human right to food for children.

Biography:

Carolina Piñeros is one of the founders of Red PaPaz. Since 2004, has been working as the Executive Director of this organization that advocates for the rights of children en Colombia and Latinamerica.

What is the dietary risk of Australian chain food outlets?

Claire Pulker¹, Lucy Meredith Butcher, Alexia Bivoltsis, Catrina McStay, Clare Whitton, Frith Klug, and Gina Trapp

1 Telethon Kids Institute

Abstract:

Background: The Food Outlet Dietary Risk assessment tool (FODR) gives an objective measure of food outlets' potential public health nutrition impact. Application of FODR to food outlets provides valuable information to guide local government public health planning.

Methods: A comprehensive database of registered food businesses was compiled in 2022, using information collected from all local governments present in east metropolitan Perth. Chain food outlets, defined as food retail or food service businesses with three or more outlets that are managed from a central location, were identified. FODR was used to assign scores to each chain food outlet using publicly available information. Risk was categorised as severe, very high, high, medium, or low depending on the total score assigned.

Results: 147 chain food outlets were identified, representing approximately 30 percent of food retail and food service outlets present in east metropolitan Perth. All local governments included in the study had chain food outlets in their catchments, ranging from 14 to 184. For each local government catchment, 56.9% to 75.9% of the chain food outlets present were rated as severe or very high risk to public health nutrition. The overall FODR risk categorisation was: 24.4% severe, 43.5% very high, 26.7% high, 5.1% medium, and 0.2% low.

Conclusion: Chain food outlets are prevalent in east metropolitan Perth, with most rated as severe or very high risk to public health nutrition, using an objective tool. Local government public health plans should prioritise policies limiting the impact of chain food businesses on dietary health.

Biography:

Dr Claire Pulker is a public health nutritionist with 30 years' experience from Australia and the UK. She has worked at the WA Department of Health contributing public health nutrition expertise to food regulatory affairs, and most recently led implementation of the obesity prevention strategy at East Metropolitan Health Service.

Controlling Sugar Consumption in Indonesia: a Comprehensive and Multi Perspectives Analysis

Mohamad Kurniawan, **Fona Qorina**¹, Nico Gamalliel, Ayers Gilbreth, Reyhan Eddy Yunus, Tommy Dharmawan, Dian Kusuma, Ahmad Fuady

1 Evidence-based Health Policy Center Indonesian Medical Education and Research Institute, Faculty of Medicine, Universitas Indonesia

Abstract:

Background: Controlling sugar consumption in Indonesia to prevent the increasing number of non-communicable diseases (NCDs), especially diabetes mellitus, is challenging and involves various interests from medical, social, cultural, and economic perspectives. This qualitative study aimed to explore the potential strategies and recommendations for controlling sugar consumption by incorporating multi-stakeholder perspectives in Indonesia.

Method: We conducted focus group discussions and in-depth interviews with representatives from the Ministry of Health, Ministry of Industry, Ministry of National Development Planning, Ministry of Finance, academicians, health practitioners, industry experts, economists, and an anthropologist, to explore their perspectives. We developed potential policy recommendations to control sugar consumption. All data were transcribed and analyzed thematically following the Steps for Coding and Theorization (SCAT) approach.

Results: The elevated sugar consumption in Indonesia has historically been driven by ingrained dietary practices, the increased availability of sugary products, cultural traditions, lifestyle choice, and the marketing tactics of the food industry. This presents a pressing concern, particularly with the rising prevalence of NCDs, especially diabetes mellitus. All relevant stakeholders have reached consensus on the need to address sugar consumption in Indonesia, especially among children. One of the proposed strategies involves implementing a tax on sugar-sweetened beverages. This proposal has received support from the Ministry

of Health, National Development Planning, academicians, health practitioners, and an anthropologist. Conversely, the Ministry of Finance, economists, and industry experts have express opposition to this taxation, arguing that it may not significantly reduce the prevalence of NCDs and would impose substantial costs on the industry and national economy. Nevertheless, the taxing strategy alone may not be sufficient and should be complemented by additional measures. These measures should encompass enhancing people's health literacy about NCDs and their risk factors, promoting increased water intake, providing incentives for healthy food production, and improving access to nutritious dietary options.

Conclusion: To control sugar consumption in Indonesia, despite the pros and cons, it is essential to raise taxes on sweetened beverages and implement comprehensive regulations that encourage reformulation and stricter control of sugar content, along with enhancing people's health literacy and access to healthy dietary products.

Biography:

Fona is a medical doctor who graduated from Universitas Indonesia. Currently, she works as a research member at the Evidence-based Health Policy Center, Indonesian Medical Education and Research Institute (IMERI), Faculty of Medicine, Universitas Indonesia. Her research interests lie in supporting the translation of medical research into health policy and prevention strategies, particularly focusing on non-communicable diseases.

Healthy, sustainable and equitable food systems: Growing the role of local government?

Belinda Reeve¹

¹ Senior Lecturer, The University of Sydney Law School

Abstract:

Urgent global and national action is required to address the health, sustainability, and equity challenges created by the dominant food system. Globally, however, there is increasing recognition of the important role played by local governments in food systems transformation. In Australia, dedicated local food systems policies remain uncommon, but local governments increasingly engage in programs and initiatives addressing issues such as equitable access to healthy food, diet-related health, food system sustainability, and creating economic opportunities through the food system. However, as creations of state government, Australian councils must overcome significant legislative, political, and practical barriers when growing their contribution to food systems transformation. Based on a critical legal analysis, this presentation will describe key pieces of legislation that create and empower NSW local governments, including local government, environmental and planning, public health, and food law. Drawing on the findings of a multi-year ARC grant project, it will demonstrate how local governments leverage these statutory powers and functions to introduce a wide range of policies and programs on food growing, processing, distribution, sale, consumption, and disposal. It will also describe key legislative barriers to council action and will conclude with a proposal for legislative reform that would strengthen the role of local governments in creating a healthy, sustainable, and equitable food system.

Biography:

Belinda Reeve is a Senior Lecturer at the University of Sydney Law School. Her research focuses on the role of law, regulation, and policy in creating a healthy, sustainable, and equitable food system. She is also the co-founder of the Food Governance Node at the University's Charles Perkins Centre.

Repurposing fiscal and market incentives in food systems to promote nutrition outcomes

Erica Reeve¹, Anne Marie Thow

¹ Postdoctoral Research Fellow, Deakin University

Abstract:

Background: Increasing fruit and vegetable consumption is a key strategy for promoting health and environmental outcomes in food systems. The affordability of obtaining a healthy diet has been decreasing, and the UN is calling for a 'repurposing' of agricultural investments to improve access to an affordable, healthy diet.¹ This provides health advocates with an opportunity to advocate for fiscal and market incentives with potential to create meaningful shifts for nutrition within the system, cognizant of tradeoffs against other development objectives.

Methods: The aim of this paper was to develop an understanding for health advocates ways that fiscal and market incentives could be 'repurposed' to promote healthy diets. We analysed over 300 food systems policies in the Philippines, Sri Lanka and Tanzania to map the complexity of fiscal and market incentives being used by food systems sectors. We document how fiscal and market incentives are applied, and map opportunities to promote healthy diets, with reference to fruit and vegetables.

Findings: We found fiscal and market incentives were implemented through a myriad of policy and legislative approaches pointed towards trade and investment, revenue, consumer protection, health promotion, industry development, environmental protections, and agrarian development. There will be inherent trade-offs associated with reallocating money away from one commodity towards another. A policy response that may seem straightforward will likely be quite complex for countries to operationalise. We demonstrate

for the public health audience what ‘repurposing’ looks like in practice, and make recommendations for navigating political dynamics associated with trade-offs.

Biography:

Dr Erica Reeve is an international expert in Nutrition and Food Security and Post Doctoral Research Fellow at Deakin University in Australia. She has over 18 years of work experience in supporting, delivering and evaluating nutrition and food security programs in the Asia Pacific region, including extensive experience working with and consulting to national governments and international organisations. Her research applies action-oriented research methods to strengthen the effort of policymakers to translate and operationalize generic global food policy recommendations into national policy, and to strengthen food systems governance. She has advanced research skills in action-oriented policy analysis that have enable generic global recommendations to be translated into national policy in over 10 countries.

Policy instruments to promote nutritious and environmentally resilient food systems in Pacific Islands

Erica Reeve¹, Anne Marie Thow, Amerita Ravuvu, Anna Farmery, Senoveva Mauli, Dorah Wilson, Ellen Johnson

¹ Postdoctoral Research Fellow, Deakin University

Abstract:

Background: The promotion of healthy and sustainable diets is a global priority. Food systems involve a number of government actors operating across food production, distribution, trade, processing, marketing and retail. Decades of experience has demonstrated that the implementation of multisectoral policy can be quite challenging. In this study we examine the policy instruments being applied by food systems sectors in the Pacific Islands to promote different food systems outcomes.

Methods: We undertook a documentary analysis of policies governing food systems sectors in the Solomon Islands and Vanuatu. We applied a policy instrumentation approach to examine coherence between policy aims and objectives, and the policy instruments used to respond to these.

Findings: The food system was a cause of economic concern for both countries, particularly in view of the declining performance of agricultural production for export. Economic aims were being addressed using a large range of authoritative tools and incentives to promote industry development, foreign investment and trade opportunities. Climate change and resource degradation were key concerns for the productive sectors, but policy instruments focused largely on knowledge and capacity approaches to improve environmental resilience. Nutrition and food security provided a sense of purpose to food systems sectors, but these outcomes were being minimally operationalized in their policies. Food systems sectors in the

Pacific Islands have clear aims to promote nutritious and environmentally resilient food systems, but policy instruments could more strongly reflect these aims.

Biography:

Dr Erica Reeve is an international expert in Nutrition and Food Systems, and has over 18 years of work experience in designing and evaluating food and health policies in the Asia Pacific region, including extensive experience working with LMIC governments and international organisations.

How policy actors' worldviews and interests can influence their framing of the causes of and the solutions to public health nutrition challenges: an Australian case study of obesity

Patricia Ribeiro de Melo¹, Phillip Baker, Priscila Machado, Elly Howse, Tanita Northcote, and Mark Lawrence

¹ PhD Candidate, Deakin University

Abstract:

Background: the underlying social features of policymaking is an understudied topic in public health nutrition. This study aimed to investigate how policy actors' worldviews and interests influence how they frame the causes of and the solutions to obesity. Methods: the Select Committee into the obesity epidemic in Australia was selected as a case study. First, enquiries submitted by stakeholders were collected from the Parlinfo database. Second, stakeholders were identified and grouped according to their roles and affiliations. Third, a theoretical framework grounded in social constructionism was used to code the submissions ascertaining their frames, underlying worldviews (biomedical, lifestyle and socioecological) and interests. Results: out of 151 submissions, 119 were associated with health-related interests and 32 with commercial interests. Health-related actors mostly framed the problem of obesity in sociological terms and recognised it as a systemic and multifactorial challenge. Commonly proposed solutions included the development of a national food policy and stricter food regulatory approaches. Commercial actors also recognised the multifactorial nature of obesity but used this socioecological frame to divert attention from the harms of unhealthy food products. Proposed solutions were usually informed by biomedical and lifestyle worldviews, and included support for product innovations, industry-led marketing regulation and educational campaigns. Conclusion: most frames adopted by health actors were consistently informed by a socioecological worldview, whereas commercial actors tended to frame the causes of obesity in socioecological terms

while proposing biomedical or lifestyle solutions. There was a tendency for commercial actors to adopt frames that resonated with their underlying interests.

Biography:

Patricia is a PhD candidate at Deakin University and her research project focuses on investigating how competing worldviews, and their associations with the different ways of thinking about public health nutrition problems, can shape evidence use in food and nutrition policy decision-making processes.

Fake or real advocacy? A tool to detect food industry front groups

Sarah Ritchie¹, Jenn Lacy-Nichols, Katherine Cullerton

¹ The University of Queensland

Abstract:

Front groups - organisations which pursue industry interests while concealing their funding and intentions, are used by some corporations and industry associations in the food and agribusiness sector. They aim to influence public opinion and government policy to maximise corporate profits, potentially to the detriment of public health. Identifying whether an organisation operates as a front group can be very challenging. This study aimed to develop and pilot a comprehensive assessment tool to differentiate between genuine health advocacy organisations and front groups. To achieve this, we conducted a systematic search of peer-reviewed studies, grey literature and non-governmental websites to identify definitions and descriptions of front groups. These findings were analysed to identify key criteria which could be used to assess the likelihood of whether an organisation is a front group. These criteria informed the development of an assessment tool, providing users with an indication of an organisation's potential risk of being a front group. The tool incorporates seven categories for evaluating an organisation's likelihood of being a front group, each accompanied by examples of potential evidence for each category. The tool's effectiveness was confirmed through pilot-testing with ten organisations, successfully identifying the level of risk associated with a front group. This project is the first to synthesise existing criteria for assessing potential front groups into a useable resource for decision-makers and advocates. Detecting potential front groups will mitigate the influence of corporations in the food industry and agribusiness with vested interests to influence public debate and obstruct policy change.

Biography:

Sarah is a recent Master of Public Health graduate with an interest in how sociological and political dynamics impact the health of populations.

Why nations need to work together: Wielding the power of regional nutrition actions

Mary Grace Anne Rosales-Sto. Domingo¹

1 McCabe Centre for Law and Cancer

Abstract:

In Asian and African regions, wasting and stunting rates and overweight and obesity prevalence are increasing in tandem. While some high-income countries in the regions are improving population nutrition status, many neighboring countries with underdeveloped policy and regulatory frameworks are vulnerable to exploitation by food and sugar-sweetened beverage industries. The lack of standard guidelines in regulating toxic substances such as trans-fatty acids and regulating marketing of food and beverages to children, is a weakness that is being maximized by the big food and SSB industry to target countries without regulations or the capacity to regulate. Although regional action frameworks such as the Regional Action Framework for Noncommunicable Disease Prevention and Control (WHO-WPRO, 2023) and the Regional Action Framework for Nutrition in South Asia (SAARC, 2014) that promote coordinated regional action are available to member states, such cooperation for nutrition and overall health promotion remains elusive amongst states. The lack of high-level commitment and coordination and varying levels of capacities of members states pose significant challenges to meaningful regional action. This presentation will examine these barriers to regional cooperation for nutrition and the implications thereof. It will also identify opportunities available to activate regional nutrition action through case studies: (a) the ongoing development of a regional standard for regulating TFA in East Africa; and (b) the recently adopted minimum standards for regulating marketing of unhealthy food and non-alcoholic beverages to children in South-East Asia. Finally, the presentation will recommend practical actions to accelerate policy development and advocacy at the regional level.

Biography:

Ma-Anne Rosales-Sto. Domingo is a Manila-based lawyer and the Regional Manager for Asia of the McCabe Centre for Law and Cancer. Her work focuses on NCD prevention and control, with emphasis on healthy diets. She has worked on sodium reduction, healthy food procurement, and harmful marketing to children.

Local food systems governance through peer-to-peer networking and communities of practice

Nick Rose¹, Molly Fairweather

1 Senior Lecturer, William Angliss Institute

Abstract:

Sustain: the Australian Food Network was established in January 2016 and has become one of the country's leading healthy and sustainable food systems organisations. Since its inception, Sustain has focused on engagement with local governments to advocate for and facilitate policy change, based on the understanding that this level of government has a critical role to play in working with and alongside communities to achieve food system change. In March 2021 Sustain launched a Local Government Food Systems Networking Forum as a peer-to-peer community of practice for staff working in local governments that are members of Sustain. This Forum (which builds on an earlier local government community of practice facilitated in 2016-17) currently includes 15 local governments, the majority of which have food system-related strategies or policies, or are in the process of developing them. The Forum meets once every quarter and staff share their food systems-related work and initiatives, listen to updates from Sustain's policy and advocacy work, and hear from an invited speaker on a topic of mutual interest, followed by facilitated discussion. This is a unique food systems forum in Australia and is valued by participating staff for many reasons. This presentation will reflect on the experience of establishing and facilitating this Forum and the benefits it provides to staff. We will also offer observations on future directions for the Forum and the broader implications that this model of community of practice has for collaborative food systems governance and advocacy.

Biography:

Nick is the co-founder and Executive Director of the national sustainable food systems organisation, Sustain, and a Senior Lecturer in the Bachelor of Food Studies at William Angliss Institute. He is the editor of "Fair Food: Stories From a Movement Changing The World (2015)" and the co-editor of "Reclaiming The Urban Commons: The Past, Present and Future of Food Growing in Australian Towns And Cities (2018)." He has coordinated food system strategy processes with over a dozen local governments in the past 18 months.

Benchmarking local government policies for creating healthy, equitable and environmentally sustainable food systems

Oriana Ruffini¹, Chanel Relf, Miranda Blake and Gary Sacks

¹ Research Fellow, Deakin University

Abstract:

Background: Local governments vary in the extent of policy actions to help address unhealthy diets and create environmentally sustainable food systems, with a lack of comprehensive and cohesive action. This study aimed to develop and apply a tool for local governments to benchmark their policies for creating healthy, equitable and environmentally sustainable food systems against global and local best practice.

Methods: The Local Food Environment Policy Index (Local Food-EPI) tool and application process was developed in collaboration with local government policy makers by refining existing accountability tools through an extensive review of the literature and detailed input from an international and local expert advisory panel. In 2022, the tool was piloted in one Victorian local government to test its feasibility, usability, reliability, and the perceived value of the tool from a local government perspective and in 2023, 8 Victorian local governments are currently applying the tool and process. The tool consists of 61 indicator statements in 25 policy areas, across 10 food policy domains (weighted on relative importance). Pilot implementation of the tool identified the assessment process as reliable, feasible and helpful in guiding policy development at the local government level.

Conclusion: The Local Food-EPI tool is a comprehensive method to assist local governments in benchmarking their actions to improve food systems, and prioritising areas for action. Further assessment of local governments using the tool will identify and share knowledge of best practice, monitor policy progress, build capacity and collaborations, and strengthen efforts to increase accountability for change.

Biography:

Oriana Ruffini is a Research Fellow at Deakin University currently working in food policy in the Global Centre for Preventive Health and Nutrition (GLOBE) after previously working in community health evaluations. She is passionate about local food system change and approaches to creating healthy food and eating environments.

Is democracy for sale? Political donations from the food industry in Queensland, Australia

Cherie Russell¹, Nurul Hussain, Kate Sievert, Katherine Cullerton

¹ Research Fellow, Deakin University

Abstract:

Background: Australia's dominant food system encourages the overconsumption of foods detrimental to human and planetary health. Despite this, progress to curtail the availability and abundance of these foods has been limited. Political donations from the food industry may contribute to policy inertia on this issue.

Objectives: We aimed to explore the extent of political donations made by the food industry in Queensland and the potential relationship between donations and the implementation of public health nutrition policies. **Methods:** We collected publicly declared political donations data in Queensland as it has the most transparent donation records. Policy data were sourced from the Australian National and Queensland State Parliaments and consultations from the Australian and New Zealand Ministerial Forum on Food Regulation.

Findings and Conclusions: The Liberal National Party received 68% of all donations, mostly preceding state elections. The Australian Labor Party, despite forming government, received only 17%. Most donations were given by the meat and sugar industries. During this time, few food-related policies were implemented to protect human and planetary health, with a limited relationship between these policies and donations, except for sugar-related donations. Food industry preference for the Liberal National Party, particularly as most donations coincided with election periods, may be due to the party's emphasis on minimal state involvement in economic and social affairs. Our findings add to a growing body of research suggesting that greater transparency, limits, and regulations need to be enacted to

restrain industry funding of political parties to promote more equitable, healthy, and sustainable food systems.

Biography:

Dr Cherie Russell is a Research Fellow at Deakin University, researching food and nutrition policies across the food system. She a Young Scientist for the World Food Forum of the FAO, an executive member of PHAA's Food and Nutrition Special Interest Group, and a co-founder of Healthy Food Systems Australia.

The governance of donor breastmilk in Australia: does it support or disrupt breastfeeding systems?

Libby Salmon¹, Julie Smith

1 Australian National University

Abstract:

Policy and programs to protect and support breastfeeding are underfunded, nationally and globally (Rollins 2016). The use of donor breastmilk may bridge gaps in exclusive breastmilk diets and avoid the harms of commercial milk formulas, but raise concerns about safety, ethics, access, resource priorities and trade in human milk, and its potential to displace breastfeeding. This paper presents empirical research of this complex food governance problem, using Australia as a case study. Document analysis of the laws institutions and policies that govern human milk banks and informal milk sharing arrangements was combined with investigation of the conditions which regulated milk sharing occurred in health and community settings, through key informant interviews of four actor groups: mothers who shared milk, milk banks, health professionals and policy makers. Data was collected from 95 participants over 2016-2019. The study showed that the analysis of what regulates of breastmilk sharing needs to go beyond its legal classification as a food, human tissue or therapeutic good. Across the regulatory 'regime' for human milk, discontinuities in legal frameworks and actor knowledge, objectives, courses of action and feedback signals create regulatory incoherence. This incoherence was distilled to three regulatory themes: contested sources of legitimacy, multiple lines of resistance and conflicting objects of regulation. Targeting these themes offers an approach to refocus regulation from milk as a product to the local governance structures that support all forms of milk sharing, as part of vibrant breastfeeding systems that empower mothers, rather than serve commercial or medicalized interests.

Biography:

Libby Salmon's interests in the governance of infant feeding and food security reflect her background in agricultural systems, and work in government and NGOs, including the World Breastfeeding Trends Initiative and the Australian Breastfeeding Association. Her PhD thesis investigated "Sharing human milk in Australia: challenging regulatory regimes for infant feeding."

Building Advocacy Coalitions: Reframing Breastfeeding Around 'First Food Security' in Australia

Libby Salmon¹, Naomi Hull, Julie Smith, Karleen Gribble, Phillip Baker

¹ Australian National University

Abstract:

Breastfeeding is the critical global 'first-food system' (Smith 2015), but food industry interests use strategies to influence policy and regulation on commercial milk formula (CMF) markets (Baker et al., 2023; Baker et al., 2021). Governments in Australia are seen as 'bad policy actors' in the Asia Pacific region, as perceived national interest lies in protecting and expanding regional CMF markets (Munzer et al., 2022) prioritizing trade over women's and children's rights to breastfeeding and health (Russ et al., 2021; Smith et al., 2014). Civil society plays a critical role in monitoring such policy interference. Infant and young child feeding practices are becoming more critical to the challenges of mitigation, adaptation and resilience to climate change risks (Pope et al., 2021; Smith, 2019; Gribble et al., 2019). This paper presents a case study of a civil society coalition attempting to reverse decades of political neglect (WBTi, 2023) by reframing breastfeeding as 'first food security' (Baker, 2020; Renfrew et al., 2016; Salmon, 2015; WABA, 2004; WBTiAus et al., 2023). Following catastrophic bushfires in 2019-20, floods, the COVID19 pandemic, and disruptions to food supply chains, the Australian Parliament initiated an inquiry into food security. The terms of reference required input on production, consumption and export of food, access to key inputs, impacts to supply chain and of climate change on production. The authors, as part of an internationally networked coalition, made a submission on breastfeeding which was rejected, while submissions from dairy and CMF industries and retailers were accepted. The case study illustrates how political 'windows' and public health advocacy strategies (Townsend 2023) can galvanise political champions to build broader coalitions for breastfeeding, early nutrition and food security for infants and young children.

Biography:

Libby Salmon's interests in the governance of infant feeding and food security reflect her background in agricultural systems, and work in government and NGOs, including the World Breastfeeding Trends Initiative and the Australian Breastfeeding Association. Her PhD thesis investigated "Sharing human milk in Australia: challenging regulatory regimes for infant feeding."

The dominance of snack foods for our youngest Australians and how they compare to international nutritional recommendations.

Maree Scully, Rachael Jinnette, Jane Martin, **Andrea Schmidtke**¹

¹ Public Health Lawyer, Food for Health Alliance

Abstract:

Background: There are concerns that nutrient-poor foods are being marketed as suitable for children under 36 months. The current study aimed to document the prevalence of snack foods for infants and toddlers compared to other foods available for these age groups and assess their nutritional composition against standards proposed by WHO Europe.

Methods: An audit of foods for children under 36 months (n=330) was conducted in September/October 2022, with products identified in-store and online at three major Australian supermarket chains. Eligible products were classified according to WHO Europe's food categories and then assessed against the specific nutrient composition standards applicable to their sub-category.

Results: Thirty percent of all foods on the market for children under 36 months were classified as dry finger foods and snacks (snacks). Only 20% of these products met all proposed nutrient composition standards for this category, with compliance higher for snacks marketed to infants (36%) compared to snacks marketed to toddlers (4%). This is of particular concern given the prevalence of snack foods on the market for toddlers; 55% of foods marketed specifically for toddlers were classified as snacks (compared to 21% of infant foods).

Conclusions: Snack foods dominate the market for toddlers and make up a significant portion of the market for infants. These foods are largely non-compliant with international recommendations for key nutrients. There are no regulations specifically for foods for

toddlers and regulations for infant foods are weak. International recommendations should be followed to improve the nutritional quality of these foods in Australia.

Biography:

Andrea is a public health lawyer and jointly leads the development of the Food for Health Alliance’s policy and advocacy agenda. Her program of work involves translating the evidence base into policy action with a focus on regulatory solutions to improve the food environment, particularly for babies and toddlers.

The effect and impact of new ‘no added sugar’ claim conditions

Andrea Schmidtke¹

1 Public Health Lawyer, Food for Health Alliance

Abstract:

New added sugar claim conditions are expected to be gazetted early 2024 and will change the rules for when ‘no added sugar’ claims can be made on packaged foods. The conditions include a definition of ‘added sugars’ as well as conditions for the use of ‘no added sugar’ claims both on foods containing ‘added sugars’ and in other circumstances. This presentation will explore the proposals leading to these changes and the effect these conditions will have on what sorts of foods can, and can no longer, carry ‘no added sugar’ claims and whether the new rules reflect current evidence and recommendations around what consumers should know about sugars in their foods. It will also explore consumer perspectives of the impact of ‘no added sugar’ claims and whether the claim conditions further perpetuate misinformation for consumers or better support their decisions around sugars in packaged foods. The presentation will discuss the impact of these claim conditions on future food policy initiatives, including whether the definition of ‘added sugars’ incorporated into the claim conditions: 1) captures all ingredients and food components that consumers should limit or avoid in their diets; 2) is fit for the purpose of incorporating added sugars information into the Nutrition Information Panel; and 3) has utility for broad use into the future.

Biography:

Andrea is a public health lawyer and jointly leads the development of the Food for Health Alliance’s policy and advocacy agenda. Her program of work involves translating the evidence base into policy action with a focus on regulatory solutions to improve the food environment, particularly for babies and toddlers.

Money and power: orienting investment towards healthy food systems

Ashley Schram¹, Sharon Friel, Anne-Marie Thow

1 Research Fellow, School of Regulation and Global Governance, Australian National University

Abstract:

The opening of domestic markets to foreign direct investment has shifted greater control over the food system to large transnational agrifood production, manufacturing, and retailing companies, in turn, driving up consumption of ultra-processed food products. Public policies play an important role in attracting and directing investment related to food products and other commercial determinants of health. This project investigated who shapes agrifood-related investment policy in Australia, how, and leverage points for healthy food systems transformation. We conducted 22 semi-structured key informant interviews from government agencies, arms-length bodies, market actors, and civil society organisations. We applied Moon's expanded typology of power in global governance to: (1) investigate the influence of financial actors engaged in governing food systems; and (2) establish, more broadly, who is perceived to be a key actor involved in shaping food systems investment policy and practice, and the types of power and influence they use to shape food systems investment. Our results identified that while influence is perceived to be rooted in economic power, that network and expert power were seen as critical in the investment space – that is, money facilitates entry but connections and knowledge get deals done. Moreover, financial actors demonstrated the capacity to disrupt the traditional balance of power held by transnational food companies, and growing 'ethically-oriented' financial actors, in particular, may present opportunities to introduce health criteria into investment. Further research into the role of finance in food systems can continue to identify new leverage points for population health.

Biography:

Ashley is a Fellow in the School of Regulation and Global Governance at the ANU and Deputy Director of the Australian Research Centre for Health Equity. Her research focuses on how public policies and private business practices stratify society and shape social and health inequities.

Policies to Reduce UPF Consumption: From Food Environments to Food Systems and Corporations

Gyorgy Scrinis¹

¹ School of Agriculture, Food and Ecosystem Sciences, Faculty of Science, The University of Melbourne

Abstract:

High rates of ultra-processed food consumption have been linked to poor diet quality and health outcomes. This has led to proposals to reduce the quantity and proportion of UPFs in peoples' diets, particularly amongst high-UPF consumers. Current policies aiming to address the poor quality of processed foods and poor quality diets have primarily focused on food environment policies focusing on the reformulation or reduction in consumption of high-fat-sugar-salt products. This paper explores the types of policies that can contribute to a reduction in UPF consumption, and the dietary and political rationales for these policies. This includes the strengthening and extension of food environment policies; policies addressing upstream food system practices and structures; and the direct regulation of UPF corporations.

Biography:

Gyorgy Scrinis is associate Professor of Food Politics and Policy in the School of Agriculture, Food and Ecosystem Sciences at the University of Melbourne. He is the author of *Nutritionism: The Science and Politics of Dietary Advice*.

Grazing for dollars: Responsible investors, animal agriculture and transitions to sustainable food systems

Katherine Sievert¹, Rachel Carey, Ella Robinson, Gary Sacks, Christine Parker

¹ Research Fellow, Global Centre for Preventive Health and Nutrition (GLOBE), Deakin University

Abstract:

Investments by the global finance sector contribute to industrial-scale agriculture along with its harmful environmental impacts, making their actions significant in achieving sustainable food systems. Previous research has shown that institutional investors identify animal agriculture as being of particular importance when considering environmental, social and governance (ESG) issues regarding sustainable food systems. This study aimed to 1) investigate how animal agriculture is considered by institutional investors, and whether existing ESG metrics are 'fit-for-purpose' for assessing issues related to sustainable food systems; and 2) how ESG could be best positioned to enable transitions to sustainable food systems. Nineteen semi-structured interviews were conducted with institutional responsible investors in Australia. Our findings reveal that the responsible investment sector lack recognition of the inter-connections between animal agriculture and multiple environmental and social issues. Furthermore, we found that current ESG metrics are limited in scope. Consequentially, there is a focus by investors on 'techno' solutions to the impacts of animal agriculture, such as alternative proteins, addressed through a 'single issue' lens without making connections to other relevant issues, such as health. We propose that holistic approaches to monitoring and assessing the impacts of animal agriculture are needed for the investment sector and suggest integrated 'food systems' metrics that can be used for this purpose. We also recommend that certain areas of animal agriculture, namely large-scale intensive operations, should be excluded by ESG investment, and instead a stronger focus on supporting community-based economies (such as agroecological movements) may be of benefit.

Biography:

Dr Kate Sievert is a Research Fellow with the Global Centre for Preventive Health and Nutrition (GLOBE) at Deakin University. Her research examines power, political economy and corporate interests in food systems. She also works in advocacy for healthy, sustainable and just food systems.

Investigating food coloring in foods and beverages marketed to children in Brazil

Beatriz Silva Nunes¹, Maria Fernanda Pereira Eberle; Mariana F Grilo; Ana Clara F L Duran

1 Masters Student, Universidade Estadual de Campinas (UNICAMP)

Abstract:

Background: Food coloring and dyes presented in foods and beverages in the food supply are associated with hyperactivity behaviors, carcinogenic and/or neurotoxic outcomes. Despite these concerns, they can also be found in products with strategies marketed to children, a vulnerable population.

Objective: To identify foods and beverages with food coloring among the most purchased products marketed to children in the Brazilian food supply between 2018 and 2021.

Methods: We used data from 2,133 products provided by the Mintel – GNPD database, from retailers' private labels and top-selling sales in Brazil, between 2018 and 2021. The products were classified as marketed to children based on the presence of marketing strategies according to the INFORMAS protocol. Food colorings were identified by referencing Codex Alimentarius terms in the ingredient lists. We conducted descriptive analyses of the prevalence of foods and beverages marketed to children with food colorings by food categories and coloring types.

Results: We found that 37.1% of foods and beverages marketed to children contained food colorings. Among certain categories, more than 50% of products, such as soft drinks (67.5%; N=27), candies (66.1%; N=119), instant noodles (65.2%; N=8), ice creams (63.6%; N=24), dairy beverages (54.2%; N=49), and salty snacks (53.8%; N=60), marketed to children included at least one type of food coloring in their composition. The five most prevalent

food colorings found were Brilliant blue-FCF (9,3%; N=198), Sunset yellow-FCF (8,2%; N=175), Caramel I (7,7%; N=165), Caramel IV (6,3%; N=161) and Carmines (6,0%; N=151).

Conclusion: The widespread use of food colorings in foods and beverages marketed to children reinforces the need for marketing regulation to protect children's health and rights.

Biography:

I am a Nutritionist and a Public Health master's student at Unicamp. My master's project focuses on database validation for monitoring and evaluating food labeling public policies. My research interests encompass food labeling, nutritional epidemiology, food environment, public nutrition policies and commercial determinants of health.

A political economy analysis of legislative responses to unhealthy food marketing in three countries

Fiona Sing¹, Kelly Garton, Sally Mackay, Boyd Swinburn

¹ Research Fellow, University of Auckland

Abstract:

Legal responses to restrict children's exposure to unhealthy food marketing are called for by the UN, however, few governments have introduced legislative controls. This research studies the underlying political economy influences that impact the introduction of legal responses. A multiple case study methodology was used to examine the political economy influences on the policy process in three contexts (Chile, Canada and the UK). Data from documentary evidence and 21 semi-structured key informant interviews were analysed using a political economy framework studying the institutions, interests, ideas and the associated power dynamics that shaped the policy process. The prevailing neoliberal ideologies and overarching institutional paradigm, in which all actors were operating, meant any form of government intervention must be justified, evidence-based and no more intrusive on commercial enterprise and public life than necessary. The neoliberal paradigm permeated each of the political economy elements (institutions, ideas and interests). In addition, its influence was observed in all stages of the policy process, from introduction through to adoption of the resulting law, and experienced in both the executive and legislative branches of government. A paradigm shift away from the protection of commercial enterprise and limited government interference would reduce the barriers governments face when introducing legislative responses to unhealthy food marketing. If institutional, actor and discursive power is harnessed in support of the legitimate public health measure, which would involve a strong mandate for the ministry responsible and a dedicated and influential policy entrepreneur, these dynamics may be tempered.

Biography:

Fiona is a Research Fellow at the University of Auckland researching ways to hold the food industry to account through legal levers. Her research has a particular focus on regulating marketing of unhealthy food internationally.

The rise of multi-stakeholderism, the power of ultra-processed food corporations, and the implications for global food governance: a network analysis

Scott Slater¹, Paulo Serodio, Mark Lawrence, Benjamin Wood, Amber Van Den Akker, Phillip Baker

¹ PhD Candidate, Deakin University

Abstract:

In recent decades, powerful food system multi-stakeholder groups - multi-stakeholder institutions (MIs) - have presented themselves as “part of the solution” to address major food system challenges. However, few studies have investigated the governance and leadership of the MIs which have risen to hold dominant global food governance (GFG) positions, nor their links to the current industrial agricultural system, or the UPF industry. We analysed the governance (e.g.: board members, steering committees, advisory and decision-making groups) composition and characteristics of 45 global food system MIs. We found that MIs have ‘assembled’ common interest leadership teams from UPF industries and sectors that drive many of the health and sustainability issues in the global food system. From the 601 leadership positions analysed, when combined, UPF corporations and their associates held almost half (n=263, or 43.8%) of the total MI leadership positions, with Unilever (n=20), Nestlé (n=17), PepsiCo Inc (n=14), and The Coca-Cola Company (n=13) most central to the network. Categorisation by various characteristics showed that the corporate sector (n=431, or 71.7%), high-income countries (HICs) (n=495, or 82.4%), and four countries (United States, Switzerland, United Kingdom, and the Netherlands) in particular (n=350, or 58.2%), are dominant amongst the leadership of the MIs analysed. This study provides empirical evidence that the broad acceptance of ‘multi-stakeholderism’ in GFG has led to the proliferation of powerful global food system MIs led by specific actors with common interests in UPF production and consumption. This represents a trend which hides the UPF industry’s harmful effects, inequalities, and injustices.

Biography:

Scott Slater is a PhD Candidate at Deakin University. Scott's core research areas are global food system governance, with a particular focus on the political economy of ultra-processed food systems, and the political and policy actions to promote healthy and sustainable food systems.

From Human Rights Measure to NCD Best Buy: How Front-of-Pack Labels Can Help Combat Unhealthy Diet

Clare Slattery¹

1 Legal Policy Advisor, McCabe Centre for Law and Cancer

Abstract:

In 2020, the UN Special Rapporteur on the Right to Health described NCDs as 'one of the major challenges of the twenty-first century'. According to WHO, NCDs are the world's 'biggest killers' responsible for around 41 million deaths (or 74% of all deaths) each year. Unhealthy diets alone are responsible for 8 million of these deaths. In response to the NCD burden, the WHO's Global Action Plan for the Prevention and Control of NCDs 2013-2030 includes a menu of policy options and cost-effective interventions (commonly known as 'Best Buys') to combat NCDs and their risk factors which include unhealthy diet, physical inactivity, tobacco, alcohol and air pollution. Front-of-pack labelling as part of comprehensive nutrition labelling policies is a recognised best buy intervention for the prevention of unhealthy diets. Beyond the global NCD agenda, however, front-of-pack warning labels have also been specifically highlighted by the UN Special Rapporteur on the Right to Health as a 'key measure for States to tackle the burden of NCDs' that is in line with the right to health in international human rights law. This presentation will look at examples of how the human rights framework and the global NCD agenda have been utilised by countries to introduce front-of-pack warning labels to combat unhealthy diet and NCDs more broadly.

Biography:

Clare is a Legal Policy Advisor at the McCabe Centre for Law and Cancer. Clare's work focuses on the interplay between public health, human rights, trade and investment law in relation to NCD prevention.

Law, housing and hunger: a public health law analysis of social welfare, housing affordability and food insecurity in Australia

Liesel Spencer¹

1 Associate Professor, Western Sydney University

Abstract:

A significant chunk of the Australian population are denied a stable place to live and a stable supply of food. These interrelated cost-of-living issues disproportionately affect people on low incomes, including adults (and their dependent children) who depend on social welfare for all or most of their household income, and often also depend on social housing. The law and policy settings regulating access to basic human needs of secure housing and a secure supply of food are within the control of Australian legislatures. This paper applies a public health law perspective to evaluate social welfare as a state regulatory response to the population health risks of food and housing insecurity, exacerbated by the current cost-of-living crisis. The paper concludes with specific social welfare law reform recommendations relating to food and housing precarity.

Biography:

Liesel Spencer researches public health law and food systems governance, focussing on regulation of food security. Liesel is interested in diverse methodological approaches, including comparative law, legal geography and empirical methods. Liesel currently teaches Torts Law, Public Health Law and Comparative Law at Western Sydney University School of Law.

Unravelling Challenges and Opportunities in Shaping a Healthier Food Retail Policy in Malaysia

Wai Siew Teh¹, Mohd Jamil Sameeha, Bee Koon Poh, Elaine Q. Borazon, Adila Fahmida Saptari Anne-Marie Thow and Sirinya Phulkerd

¹ Ministry of Health Malaysia

Abstract:

Food retail environments significantly impact dietary outcomes and overall health, offering a crucial avenue to address the double burden of malnutrition. This study aims to identify gaps in food retail policies and uncover opportunities for positive change within the food retail landscape, ultimately supporting increased access to affordable healthy foods in Malaysia. An exploratory mixed-method approach was conducted in two phases. Phase 1 involved mapping food retail related policy documents across 25 ministries in Malaysia, while Phase 2 delved into implementation of existing food retail policies through in-depth interviews using policy space analysis. Thematic analysis was used to analyse both document analysis and interviews. Preliminary findings indicate that development and implementation of policies related to food retail in Malaysia was a complex process and involved multiple stakeholders. Although there is no specific policy on food retail, there are 41 policy documents related to foods, health or nutrition in the country, some of which are relevant to food retail and offer opportunities for improving the food retail environment. The most common barriers perceived by stakeholders are prioritization and conflicts of priorities among stakeholders. Legal and regulatory factors could serve as facilitators and opportunities for advancement through policy development and integration. Preliminary findings also suggest that implementation of food retail and nutrition-related policies should be coupled with increased awareness among stakeholders and nutrition education within the community to stimulate demand for healthier foods.

Biography:

I am a nutritionist with over 18 years at Ministry of Health Malaysia. Leading nutrition surveillance, I'm also a part-time PhD candidate at Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia, researching food retail policy.

Relationship between industry involvement in research and favourable outcomes among peer-reviewed articles investigating meat and public health: A systematic search and review

Navid Teimouri¹, Katherine Sievert, Adam Hannah, Katherine Cullerton

¹ PhD Candidate, The University of Queensland

Abstract:

Scientific evidence is a cornerstone of public health policy and informs the work of health professionals. Consequently, influencing research is a key strategy employed by industry to favourably shape public opinion and policy decisions. While industry-influenced research has been investigated in sectors like pharmaceuticals and sugar, the efforts of the meat industry have remained unscrutinised, despite Meat and Livestock Australia investing millions annually to support research projects. As the impacts of meat production and consumption on public health are increasingly apparent, the industry's attempts to influence scientific research require examination. The study aims to assess whether studies including meat industry aligned authors (via employment or funding) result in favourable conclusions for industry. A systematic search was undertaken to identify studies examining meat consumption and production and its human and environmental health impacts. Three databases were searched with 6,552 initial results found. Screening is currently underway. Data from included papers will be extracted and coded using the following categories: funding source, conflicts of interest, author affiliations, and conclusions. Study conclusion will be classified as negative, positive, or neutral. Data will be analysed using tests of independence and odds ratios to examine the association between industry alignment and conclusion. Results from this analysis will be presented. This study will provide vital insights for advocates and policymakers, enabling them to better understand and counteract the meat industry's practices in shaping science.

Biography:

I am an early PhD researcher at the University of Queensland focusing on food industry (meat industry) influence on scientific research and dissemination, particularly in Germany and Australia. My background is in political sciences and international relations I am in my second year of PhD.

Te Tiriti-led advocacy for healthy food policy in Aotearoa New Zealand

Lisa Te Morenga¹

1 Professor, Research Centre for Hauora and Health, Massey University

Abstract:

Health Coalition Aotearoa (HCA) is a collective of non-governmental health and consumer organisations and academic leaders working together to support effective policies and actions to eliminate harms to all New Zealanders from tobacco, alcohol and unhealthy foods, and to reduce inequities by focusing on the determinants of health. We aspire as an organization to be Te Tiriti-led. Te Tiriti o Waitangi is the Māori language version of the Treaty of Waitangi - the founding document of Aotearoa/New Zealand that sets out how Māori and the British Crown would live together. We acknowledge that repeated breaches of the terms of Te Tiriti by NZ Governments has resulted in longstanding and persistent inequities in health care for Māori in New Zealand. Therefore a central focus of our public health advocacy is for policies that directly address these inequities. I will describe HCA's journey towards Te Tiriti-led advocacy with the development of a Te Tiriti Responsiveness policy that sets out how we as an organization will honour the principles of Te Tiriti, and how we have put the policy into practice in our governance processes and advocacy work.

Biography:

I whakapapa to Ngāti Whātua Ōrākei, Te Uri o Hua, Ngāpuhi and Te Rarawa. I am a public health nutrition and Māori health researcher at Massey University and a Royal Society of NZ Rutherford Discovery Fellow. I co-chair of Health Coalition Aotearoa with Prof Boyd Swinburn and co-chair our Food Policy Expert Group with Dr Sally McKay. My research interests relate to supporting individuals, whanau and communities to achieve good health through healthy affordable food. My research is translational – applying basic nutrition

evidence to enhance human health and wellbeing, and ultimately informing food and nutrition policy.

Corporate Social Responsibility Inclusions in International Investment Agreements: An Opportunity for Sustainable Development and Health

Takwa Tissaoui¹, Teresa Davis, Helen Trevena, Anne Marie Thow

¹ PhD Candidate, The University of Sydney

Abstract:

Objective: Government interest in corporate social responsibility (CSR) and its potential to support sustainable developmental goals, including public health is rising. However, there is a need for accountability to ensure CSR actually contributes to these goals. This has led to the inclusion of new provisions in International Investment Agreements (IIAs) placing expectations on corporate investors around CSR activities, including those relating to public health. This is a new avenue for governments to influence CSR commitments through hard law. This paper presents an analyses and new typology of these inclusions and their implications for public health.

Method: We extracted the text of international investment agreements containing corporate social responsibility inclusions from the Electronic Database of Investment Treaties. We conducted a documentary analysis of the corporate social responsibility inclusions, and informed by the literature we developed a typology categorizing inclusions based on level of detail and reference to international commitments.

Findings: Of the 3816 agreements signed as of October 2023, 126 agreements contain corporate social responsibility inclusions. Using the typology we developed we categorised the level of detail as follows: 9 were minimal, 27 were low, 35 were low-medium, 107 were medium, 11 were medium-high and 7 were high. Health is mentioned in 36 of these inclusions.

Conclusion: This analysis indicates that International Investment Agreements increasingly incorporate a high level of detail on expectations regarding corporate social responsibility by investors. Such provisions offer a potential tool to increase government guidance and accountability of global corporations, including with respect to governments' own public health objectives.

Biography:

Takwa Tissaoui is a research assistant and PhD candidate at the Menzies Centre for Health Policy and Economics. She is a graduate of the Master of Sustainability from the University of Sydney and has a multidisciplinary background in international relations and international business.

A framework of NGO strategies to influence the commercial determinants of health: findings from a narrative review

Belinda Townsend¹, Katherine Cullerton, Rob Ralston, Jeff Collin, Fran Baum, Liz Arnanz, Jane Martin, Rodney Holmes, Sharon Friel

¹ Research Fellow, School of Regulation and Global Governance, Australian National University

Abstract:

Background: Public health scholarship has uncovered a wide range of strategies used by industry actors to promote their products and influence government regulation. Less is known about the strategies used by non-government organisations to attempt to influence commercial practices, including in the domain of ultra-processed foods. This narrative review applies a political science typology to identify a suite of 'inside' and 'outside' strategies used by NGOs to attempt to influence the commercial determinants of health from wide range of industry sectors, including food.

Methods: We conducted a systematic search in Web of Science, ProQuest and Scopus. Articles were eligible for inclusion if they comprised an empirical study, explicitly sought to examine 'NGOs', were in English, and identified at least one NGO strategy aimed at commercial and/or government policy and practice.

Results: One hundred forty-four studies met the inclusion criteria. Eight industry sectors were identified: extractive, tobacco, food, alcohol, pharmaceuticals, weapons, textiles and asbestos, and a small number of general studies. We identified 18 types of NGO strategies, categorised according to the target (i.e. commercial actor or government actor) and type of interaction with the target (i.e. inside or outside). Of these, five NGO 'inside' strategies targeted commercial actors directly: 1) participation in partnerships and multistakeholder initiatives; 2) private meetings and roundtables; 3) engaging with company AGMs and shareholders; 4) collaborations other than partnerships; and 5) litigation. 'Outside' strategies targeting commercial actors through the mobilisation of public opinion included 1) monitoring and reporting; 2) protests at industry sites; 3) boycotts; 4) directly engaging the

public; and 5) creative use of alternative spaces. Four NGO 'inside' strategies directly targeting government actors included: 1) lobbying; 2) drafting legislation, policies and standards; 3) providing technical support and training; and 4) litigation. NGO 'outside' strategies targeting government included 1) protests and public campaigns; 2) monitoring and reporting; 3) forum shifting; and 4) proposing and initiating alternative solutions. We identified three types of NGO impact: substantive, procedural, and normative.

Conclusion: The analysis presents a matrix of NGO strategies used to target commercial and government actors across a range of industry sectors. These can be applied in the areas of food and ultra-processed food, depending on the appropriateness and effective prevention of conflict of interest.

Biography:

Dr Belinda Townsend is Deputy Director of the Australian Research Centre for Health Equity and Fellow in the School of Regulation and Global Governance at the Australian National University. Belinda is an interdisciplinary scholar working at the interface between public health, governance, and political economy and is an emerging leader in the field of public health political science.

The Global Food System as A Determinant of Health

Elna Tulus¹

1 PhD Candidate, School of Public Health, University of Technology Sydney

Abstract:

The global food system centred on international trade has shaped how food is produced for the world's population and subsequently transformed dietary patterns. The consequences can be explained with the rise of particularly diseases relating to the changes affected by the globalisation of food. The health of populations impacted by environmental changes from the conversion of land for agricultural use, are affected in mainly in two ways. Malnutrition caused by the lost of diversity of food because land have been used to grow monocrops for exports and vector-borne diseases caused by the deforestation. The efficiencies in the large-scale food production have enabled the rise of ultra-processed food (UPF) and the consumption of it is growing. Poor diet is linked to non-communicable diseases which is the most common cause of death globally, with one third of the world's population dying from heart diseases. Since 1997, the number of people dying from heart diseases has doubled and people living with diabetes is projected to double by 2050. Availability, accessibility and acceptability of UPF are not the only contributors to the changes in consumption patterns but also in affordability. The cheap ubiquitous instant noodles, an example of UPF is luring for those who are time and resource poor, but more concerning is it has become a solution in food insecure geographies. By questioning the sustainability of the global food system, using the case study on Australian wheat and Indonesian instant noodles, this paper demonstrates the political, economic and geopolitical determinants of health.

Biography:

Elna Tulus is doing her PHD research at the University of Technology Sydney, School of Public Health on the sustainability of the global food system. It focuses on the vulnerabilities manifested across geographies, reflected in public health from the case study on Australian wheat and Indonesian instant noodles.

A little-known setting in the national food retail landscape: an open-access database of remote retail stores.

Emma Van Burgel¹, Luke Greenacre, Megan Ferguson, Amanda Hill, Emma McMahon, Julie Brimblecombe

¹ Research Officer, Monash University

Abstract:

The majority of remote Australian food retail stores service Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and play a crucial role in food security, often being the only point-of-sale for purchased food and drink. These stores operate in a diverse context, covering large geographic areas, and there is difficulty demonstrating their remoteness and the unique logistics required. There is also a lack of data-driven information on the remote food supply in national food supply data, resulting in an inability to design targeted and sustainable policy to drive equitable solutions to remote food insecurity. To demonstrate this sector's diversity and strengthen the foundations for advocacy, we sought to validate, extend and publish a remote food retail dataset and series of interactive, open-access maps. During 2022, we validated and extended a seed list produced by the National Indigenous Australians Agency, including review by 14 experts, and collecting information on remoteness, population, legal entity and management. The final dataset comprised 233 stores, with most classified as very remote (92%). In contrast with urban food retail where major supermarkets dominate, 37% of remote stores were owned by a registered Indigenous Corporation and the majority were independently managed. Most stores (85%) served populations of 1000 or less people. These data and maps can be used across sectors as a vehicle for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples in remote communities and their allies to describe these unique contexts to help design effective policy and strategy to enhance health and equity for remote residents.

Biography:

Emma is an Accredited Practicing Dietitian and a Research Officer at Monash University. Emma has a keen interest in public health nutrition, especially the access, availability and utilisation of food, and enjoys working with diverse populations to support agency and positivity around food and nutrition.

Streamlining food price data to inform policy actions in Australia

Carmen Vargas¹, Kathryn Backholer, Gary Sacks, Laura Alston, Adyya Gupta, Cindy Needham, Rebecca Bennett, Oliver Huse, Jacqueline Monaghan, Christina Zorbas

¹ Research Fellow, Deakin University

Abstract:

Context and aim: Rising food and beverage prices are a significant obstacle to achieving high-quality diets that can prevent diet-related diseases. Food price data can inform the prioritisation of public health policies that enable every Australian to achieve a healthy diet. Yet, governments seldom monitor and act on food prices from a public health perspective. We aimed to understand how real-world policy decision-making in Australia can be informed by streamlined food price monitoring.

Methods: Mixed-methods research, guided by the Knowledge-To-Action (KTA) implementation science framework, comprised (i) interviews with government, academic and practitioner stakeholders and (ii) the development of a proof-of-concept front-end Food Price Dashboard with software designers and IT experts.

Results: Thirteen interviewees provided diverse views on the types of food and beverage price data that can be used to inform food and beverage price monitoring dashboard and policy prioritisation. Nine themes were identified across three areas. Firstly, 'current food price monitoring interests and practices' described the complexity of representing lived experiences of food prices and their affordability through data. Secondly, 'perspectives on Food Price Dashboard features' emphasised the importance of capturing regional differences. Finally, 'food pricing policies' were thought to be hindered by the lack of a government 'home' for this issue. The final Dashboard provides preliminary portal for academic, government, media and public stakeholders to use food price data.

Implications: The first Australian Food Price Dashboard facilitates data-driven public and policy discussions on the public health impacts of food prices. Such tools can hold governments accountable for inaction.

Biography:

Carmen Vargas is a public health nutrition professional with a Bachelor of Dietetics and Nutrition her PhD at Deakin University is currently researching the theory and practice of co-creation with a focus on food retail outlets as part of her funded position with the Centre for Excellence in Food Retail Environments for Health.

The potential of taxing sugary drinks as a solution to overweight and dental disease in Australia: a modelling study

Lennert Veerman¹, Mishel Shahid

¹ Public Health Physician, Griffith University

Abstract:

The World Health Organisation recommends taxation of sugar-sweetened beverages (SSBs) to improve diets and health. Globally, more than 100 jurisdictions have legislated such taxes. To date, Australia has not, despite its high obesity prevalence and dental disease burden. We have previously estimated that a 20% tax on SSBs could save around 175,000 health-adjusted life years (HALYs) in Australia and save hundreds of millions of dollars in health care costs. In our latest work, we added the potential health impact on oral diseases. Using a proportional multistate life table model, we simulated the impact of a 20% SSB tax on health for the 2019 Australian population. The model included 31 non-oral health conditions. We added dental caries, and in a world-first, periodontitis and edentulism. The fermentation of dietary sugar is a necessary part of the cariogenic process. Systemic inflammation and metabolic disorders explain the association between sugar consumption and periodontitis. The progression of these conditions leads to tooth loss and edentulism. We used relative risks from a review of relevant literature. Disease frequency and disability weights were based on the 2019 Global Burden of Disease study. We estimated the number of HALYs accruing over the lifetime. The results confirm the large impact an SSB tax is likely to have on non-oral health outcomes in Australia. The oral health outcomes add substantially to these benefits. By strengthening and extending the evidence base, these findings may make the adoption of an SSB tax in Australia more likely.

Biography:

Dutch-trained public health physician with a passion for healthy physical, economic, social, and natural environments. Trying to make a difference to policy using expertise in epidemiological modelling, burden of disease studies, non-communicable disease control and the cost-effectiveness of prevention.

Changes in children's adherence to sustainable healthy diets over the period Chile's Food Labelling and Advertising Law was implemented: a longitudinal study (2016-2019).

Carolina Venegas Hargous¹, Liliana Orellana, Camila Corvalan, Steven Allender, Colin Bell

¹ PhD Candidate, Globe Centre for Preventive Health and Nutrition, Deakin University

Abstract:

We measured the change in adherence to sustainable healthy diets among a cohort of Chilean children (n=698 children aged 3-6 years at baseline) over the period Chile's Food Labelling and Advertising Law was implemented. Children's dietary data was collected annually from 2016 to 2019 using single multiple-pass 24-hour dietary recalls. Adherence to sustainable healthy diets was quantified using the Planetary Health Diet Index for Children and Adolescents (PHDI-C). This index comprises 16 components that sum to a total score between 0-150 points. Higher scores indicate better adherence to sustainable healthy diets. Linear mixed models were fitted to estimate the change in PHDI-C total and individual component scores from 2016 to 2019. Mean total PHDI-C score decreased from 50.1 points in 2016 to 48.6, 46.3, and 46.1 in 2017, 2018, and 2019, respectively (p-value <0.001), suggesting children's overall adherence to sustainable healthy diets decreased over time. Intake of legumes, fruits, dark green vegetables, red and orange vegetables, and vegetable oils decreased, while consumption of palm oil, red meats, and animal fats increased, resulting in small but significant declines in eight PHDI-C component scores. Whole cereals intake increased, while consumption of dairy products and added sugars decreased, resulting in improvements in three PHDI-C component scores. Aside from a decrease in added sugars intake, the Law did not appear to improve children's overall adherence to sustainable healthy diets. Increasing the environmental sustainability of Chilean children's diets may require additional policies that incentivise consumption of minimally-processed plant-based foods and discourage consumption of animal-based foods.

Biography:

Carolina Venegas Hargous is a PhD candidate in the Global Centre for Preventive Health and Nutrition at Deakin University. Her research focuses on double-duty and triple-duty actions for addressing the global syndemic in childhood by improving children's adherence to sustainable healthy diets.

Tools and outcomes measures for assessing the environmental sustainability of food environments: a scoping review

Carolina Venegas Hargous¹, Audrey Elford, Kate Sievert, Kim Anastasiou, Jessica Kempler, Mark Lawrence, Rebecca Lindberg

¹ PhD Candidate, Globe Centre for Preventive Health and Nutrition, Deakin University

Abstract:

Food environments are the settings where people buy, store and consume food and they could play an important role in a climate-resilient future. However, little is known about the tools and outcome measures currently used to assess the environmental sustainability of food environments across public and private settings. This scoping review aims to fill this gap by summarising the literature in the area and conducting a critical evaluation of the tools identified. A comprehensive search strategy was conducted on October 10, 2022 across six academic databases (Medline complete, Global health, CINAHL, Environment Complete, ERIC, and Embase). The study selection process was carried out in Covidence by five independent reviewers. Pilot screening was conducted in a 10% random sample, whereby titles and abstracts were screened by two reviewers. Once consensus was reached, the remaining titles and abstracts were screened by one reviewer. Full-text review was conducted in duplicate. The search yielded 5,302 studies after duplicates were removed. Two hundred and eight articles were eligible for full-text review, and 111 studies were included for data extraction. Of these, 59 were organised into 'public settings' tools (i.e., hospitals, schools, universities), 28 'private settings' tools (i.e., retail, workplaces and hospitality), and 24 tools for household settings. Findings from this review will shed light on the most commonly used tools for assessing the environmental sustainability of food environments across different settings. This information could help establish rigorous monitoring systems to guide improvements towards achieving more environmentally sustainable food environments.

Biography:

Carolina Venegas Hargous is a PhD candidate in the Global Centre for Preventive Health and Nutrition at Deakin University. Her research focuses on double-duty and triple-duty actions for addressing the global syndemic in childhood by improving children's adherence to sustainable healthy diets.

Organized women and the regulation of breastmilk substitutes: The adoption of Kenya's 2012 Breastmilk Substitutes Act

Maryanne Wamahiu¹, Phillip Baker, Tim Dorlach

¹ PhD Candidate, University of Bayreuth

Abstract:

The WHO recommends exclusive breastfeeding of infants (0-6 months) yet only about 44% are exclusively breastfed globally. Inappropriate marketing of breastmilk substitutes (BMS) is a main cause of low breastfeeding rates which is problematic in the Global South, where socioeconomic conditions often amplify the risks associated with BMS. National adoption of BMS regulation as recommended by WHO's 1981 International Code of Marketing of Breast-milk Substitutes is crucial but remains politically difficult due to strong opposition from transnational BMS producers. We conduct a case study of the adoption of Kenya's 2012 BMS Act, a central legislative achievement in the protection, promotion and support of breastfeeding in Kenya. We explore the political causes behind its adoption through inductive process tracing and by comparing the successful 2012 reform with a failed attempt in the 1980s. Our analysis relies on primary documents and key-informant interviews conducted during multiple rounds of fieldwork in Kenya. We find that adoption of strict BMS regulation failed in the 1980s due to limited high-level political commitment. This contrasted with the 2010s when BMS regulation was successfully adopted mainly due to increased political power of women through the leadership of the Ministry of Public Health and institutions like the Kenya Women Parliamentary Association (KEWOPA), presidential support, and a shift from a civil society-led to a government-led process, which limited industry influence on the adoption of the Act. We demonstrate that politically organized women can play an important role in countervailing the power of BMS producers and achieving effective BMS regulation.

Biography:

PhD candidate in Global Nutrition and Health Policy at the University of Bayreuth, Germany, and Junior Fellow at the Bayreuth International Graduate School of African Studies (BIGSAS). Current research interest in the politics of breastmilk substitutes regulation in Africa with a focus on Kenya in comparative perspective.

The potential health and economic impact and cost effectiveness of food policy interventions for the prevention and control of overweight and obesity in Kenya: a stakeholder engaged modelling study

Mary Wanjau¹, Lennert Veerman, Leopold N. Aminde

¹ Research Fellow, Griffith University

Abstract:

The global increase in overweight and obesity (high body mass index [BMI]) has resulted in a substantial increase of non-communicable diseases (NCDs). In Kenya and other Sub-Saharan Africa countries, people eat progressively less locally produced indigenous foods and more ultra-processed products, which contribute to the rise in obesity. Due to the assumption that hunger and malnutrition are the dominant concerns in this region, there is limited attention for the shifts in diet that lead to obesity. Cultural perceptions such as ‘fat is beautiful, or prosperous’ may also play a role in the high prevalence of overweight and obesity. However, the interest in creating healthy food environments that could encourage consumption of healthy diets is rising. We created a proportional multistate lifetable model that simulates the 2019 Kenya population over their remaining lifetime. We used the model to quantify the avoidable high BMI-related NCD burden in Kenya. Following stakeholder priorities, we then assessed the potential impact and cost effectiveness of four selected food policy interventions for the prevention and control of overweight and obesity in Kenya. Our estimates show that over the first 25 years, approximately 7.4 million new cases of BMI-related diseases could be avoided, which highlights the magnitude of the avoidable high BMI-related NCD burden. All four food policy interventions evaluated yielded health and economic gains. Two specific interventions, a 20% tax on sugar-sweetened beverages and mandatory kilojoule menu labelling were found dominant, i.e., health promoting and cost-saving. These interventions present potential solutions to overweight and obesity in Kenya.

Biography:

I am a Research Fellow within the Public Health & Economics Modelling Group in the School of Medicine and Dentistry, Griffith University, Australia. I have expertise in epidemiological modeling with a focus on assessment of the health and economic impact and, cost effectiveness of population level health strategies and policies.

Has the prevalence or healthiness of products carrying claims changed 10 years post-implementation of Standard 1.2.7?

Lyndal Wellard-Cole¹, Clare Hughes

¹ Senior Nutrition Project Officer, Cancer Council NSW

Abstract:

Background Standard 1.2.7 - Nutrition, Health and Related Claims was introduced in 2013. Foods carrying health claims (HC) must meet Nutrient Profiling Scoring Criteria (NPSC), among other conditions. Public health groups have long advocated for applying NPSC to nutrition content claims (NCC) to prevent claims on unhealthy foods. Research from 2016 found most products carried NCC, an increase from pre-Standard implementation, coinciding with less health claims. Concerningly, 66% of foods with NCC did not meet NPSC. Our study repeats this study, 10 years post-implementation. Methods All cereals, cereal bars and non-alcoholic beverages in The George Institute's FoodSwitch database were included. All available claims on labels were categorised by type (NCC/HC) and nutrient/ingredient. The NPSC was applied to products with claims to determine 'healthiness'. The proportion of products carrying each claim type, and of products with claims that met NPSC were determined. Comparative analysis between 2011 and 2016 results were conducted. Results There were 1983 products in the dataset, including 542 cereals, 333 cereal bars and 1108 non-alcoholic beverages. Of these, 1591 (80%) carried claims, up from 66% in 2011 and 76% in 2016, mostly due to an increase in beverages with claims (55% in 2011, 62% in 2016 and 70% in 2022). At submission, analysis is underway. Final analyses will be presented at the conference. Implications Results will indicate whether NCC continue to be used on unhealthy foods, potentially misleading consumers. This will determine whether advocacy for applying NPSC to all claims remains justified and propose improvements to Standard 1.2.7.

Biography:

I am an Accredited Practising Dietitian and Senior Nutrition Project Officer at Cancer Council NSW, focusing on food and alcohol policy. I conduct research on food and alcohol policy

issues to underpin advocacy, and communicate the links between food, alcohol and cancer with the general public.

Social and economic policies to address household food insecurity – preliminary results of a Cochrane systematic review

Rebecca Lindberg, **Kate Wingrove**¹, Amber Bastian, Rachel West, Martin Caraher, Zandile JR Mchiza, Sinead Furey, Patrick J Owen, Sarah McNaughton

¹ Lecturer, Deakin University

Abstract:

Household food insecurity occurs when there is inadequate access to healthy and affordable food. The purpose of this systematic review is to assess the effects of social and economic policy interventions for reducing the prevalence and/or severity of household food insecurity in high-income countries and the developing nations of Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa (BRICS). This review will include interventions that are described broadly as ‘social and economic policy interventions’, and we group these interventions as follows: i) income and labour policies that aim to provide fair work and employment conditions, helping people to meet the cost of living and taxation and cash policies that address income redistribution; ii) housing policies that aim to reduce homelessness and ensure housing affordability; iii) welfare or safety net policies that aim to provide financial and material support to reduce the effects of unemployment, underemployment, and non-participation in the workforce; and iv) family policies that aim to support parental leave, children’s well-being, and participation of parents in the labour force. A search of ten databases was supplemented with a grey literature search. As this review is currently underway, preliminary results will be presented to characterise the policy options, in terms of policy type, actors involved, settings, duration, target populations, and potential effects on prevalence and/or severity of household food insecurity. In the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic and in a cost-of-living crisis, there is a more urgent need than ever to produce the evidence that can inform actions to address this issue.

Biography:

Kate is an Accredited Practising Dietitian with a PhD in Public Health Nutrition. As a Lecturer at Deakin University, she teaches into the Master of Dietetics and conducts policy-relevant research on healthy and sustainable diets, food systems, and food security.

The Human Right to Food and the Politics of Food Systems in Ethiopia: Policy Regimes and Practices

Yeshewas Ebabu Worku¹

1 Assistant Professor, Addis Ababa University, Addis Center for Ethics and Priority Setting

Abstract:

The Chapter investigates the Human Right to food and the politics of food systems with a particular emphasis on the policy regimes and practices in Ethiopia. Ethiopia is pre-industrial, and pre-capitalist state. The vast majority (more than 80 percent) of its population is dependent on small-scale subsistence agriculture on state-owned land. The post-1991 Ethiopia, in principle, has embraced multi-party democracy and ‘opened up itself to business’ by encouraging the local market to be principally driven by the ‘market forces’ and by [partly] integrating itself into the international free enterprise system. This was particularly evident when the state, in the early 1990s, embraced the Structural Adjustment Program (SAP) sponsored by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and World Bank (WB) and in the early 2010s, the state attracted large scale agribusinesses from the Middle East and India and provided them huge farm-lands and incentives in the form of tax exemption and reduction for those intended to export the majority of their food produce. More recently, the Abiy Ahmed led regime aspires to make Ethiopia a number one exporter of food (Wheat) in East Africa. Therefore, this chapter investigates the politics of food systems in Ethiopia, particularly how the legal and policy regimes, in one way or the other, impacted the right to food of the majority of Ethiopians in Ethiopia. Key words: right to food, policy, politics, entitlement, deprivation and dignity.

Biography:

Yeshewas Ebabu is an Assistant Professor at Addis Ababa University, Addis Center for Ethics and Priority Setting and University of Gondar, College of Social Sciences and Humanities. He received his BA and MA degrees in Philosophy and a Ph.D. in Human Rights Studies from

Addis Ababa University. The title of his Ph.D. dissertation is “The Human Right to Food and the Post-1991 Ethiopian State’s Obligation: A Case Study on Simada Woreda and Gulele Sub-city”. He was a Visiting Research Fellow at the Raoul Wallenberg Institute of Human Rights and Humanitarian Law (WRI), Lund University (2018). His Research interest include, socio-economic rights, right to food, medical ethics and health rights, food system governance, african philosophy, and agriculture and technology.