



Tropentag, September 15-17, 2021, hybrid conference

“Towards shifting paradigms in agriculture
for a healthy and sustainable future”

Understanding Local Needs and Barriers for an Integrated Nutrition Intervention Towards Sustainable Diets, Burkina Faso

LOUISE BÜTTNER¹, FANTA ZERBO², MOUBASSIRA KAGONÉ², ALI SIÉ², INA DANQUAH¹, ISABEL
MANK¹

¹*Heidelberg University, Heidelberg Institute of Global Health (HIGH), Germany*

²*Institut National de Santé Publique (INSP), Centre de Recherche en Santé de Nouna (CRSN), Burkina Faso*

Abstract

Undernutrition among children <5 years continues to be a challenge in West Africa. Specifically, seasonal food insecurity and climate change-related impacts on food production accelerate the prevalence of child undernutrition. A combination of nutrition-related interventions such as home gardens combined with nutrition counseling may reduce child undernutrition and increase the resilience of rural population to a changing climate. Home gardens are defined here as small-scale horticultural production sites at the household-level. The present study aimed to understand needs and barriers to implement such a nutrition-related intervention in rural Burkina Faso.

In preparation of an integrated intervention project, a qualitative study was carried out in Burkina Faso in 2020. A semi-structured guide led the interviews, which were recorded, transcribed and translated. Directed content analysis was applied. 32 in-depth interviews were carried out with mothers (24 to 54 years old) of children <5 years living in rural Burkina Faso, and 11 in-depth interviews were conducted online with experts from Burkina Faso. 20 out of the 32 mothers did never practice any gardening and eight mothers reported to have never received nutritional advice. Among the 11 stakeholders, most had either experience with gardening or with nutrition counseling projects, but rarely combined.

A reoccurring communicated challenge to the implementation of gardens was a lack of water. As gardens were often only cultivated during the rainy season (May-Oct), the mothers expressed interest to learn more about irrigation and planting vegetables during the dry season (Nov-Apr). The women also explained that the men tend to decided what the family eats, wherefore a holistic family approach should be considered in order to increase acceptance and behavioural change towards a sustainable and nutritious meal for children. The mothers acknowledged the importance of nutritional advice to improve the feeding practices of their children and the overall health of their family. In conclusion, the mothers of children <5 years showed great interest in participating in the intervention project. These results support the design of an integrated intervention to improve the nutritional status of children and increase the resilience of small-scale agricultural households to climate change.

Keywords: Child undernutrition, home gardens, nutrition counseling, qualitative research, West Africa

Contact Address: Isabel Mank, Heidelberg University, Heidelberg Institute of Global Health (HIGH), Im Neuenheimer Feld 324, 69120 Heidelberg, Germany, e-mail: isabel.mank@uni-heidelberg.de