In 2015−17, plants were the main source of protein in Africa (78 percent) and Asia (66 percent), but accounted for 49 percent in Latin America and the Caribbean, 41 percent in Northern America and Europe, and 36 percent in Oceania.

The average dietary supply adequacy has been increasing steadily since the early 2000s in every region, with Northern America and Europe being the highest and Africa being the lowest. In recent years, the average dietary supply adequacy in Africa remained unchanged or decreased because of the declining dietary energy supply in the region (see Figure 50).

Dietary supply adequacy divides a country’s average supply of calories for food consumption by the average dietary energy requirement estimated for its population, to measure the adequacy of food supply in terms of calories. Analysed together with the prevalence of undernourishment, it helps identify the cause of undernourishment as mainly due to insufficient food supply or to particularly bad distribution.

The prevalence of stunting among children under five years (as well as the number of stunted children) decreased worldwide from 32 percent in 2000 to 21 percent in 2019 (see Figure 55). The decrease took place in all developing regions, with the largest drop in Asia, from 38 percent in 2000 to 22 percent in 2019. However, this global progress may have disguised a starker situation in some parts of the world. As seen in Table 45, the prevalence of child stunting is still extremely high in some countries, sometimes reaching more than 50 percent. A majority of the countries with a high prevalence of stunting are in Sub-Saharan Africa.

Obesity among adults of 18 years and above increased rapidly in every region of the world between 2000 and 2016 (see Figure 56). In 2016, 13.1 percent of the adult population in the world was obese, an increase from 8.7 percent in 2000. Oceania and Northern America and Europe had the highest prevalence of adult obesity (both at around 15 percent). The prevalence of overweight and obesity among adults was highest in Oceania and Northern America and Europe, followed by Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean, and Africa.