

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Childhood obesity in the rural world

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Dear Editor

The recent publication on childhood obesity on a rural island in Greece is very interesting¹. Athanasopoulos et al noted a high prevalence of this problem, which was mentioned as an important global public health consideration¹.

The problem of childhood obesity is relatively recent. However, it is not highly prevalent in all areas of the world, and may appear to be limited to the context of developed countries. A focus on the opposite problem, undernutrition, shows this to be prevalent in developing countries. A previous report in your journal from a rural area at the Cambodian–Thai border, gave the prevalence of undernutrition as approximately 63%².

However, the problem of childhood obesity may still be present in developing countries, especially among the children of economically advantaged families^{2,3}. Thus, the factors that affect the nutritional status of rural children can

be complex and should be assessed specifically according to individual settings and situations³.

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