SECOND INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON NUTRITION (ICN2)

Proceedings of the Roundtables
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FOREWORD

The Second International Conference on Nutrition (ICN2) was jointly organized by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and the World Health Organization (WHO) and was held at FAO Headquarters in Rome, Italy, from 19 to 21 November 2014. The main outcomes were the Rome Declaration on Nutrition, a political commitment document, and the Framework for Action, a flexible policy framework. Taken together, these two documents aim to identify priority actions for addressing malnutrition in all its forms.

Three Roundtables were held during the ICN2, each addressing some of the most pressing subjects on today’s nutrition landscape:

**Roundtable 1 - “Nutrition in the Post-2015 Development Agenda”**, focused on the unprecedented opportunities offered in 2015 and 2016 to make nutrition a global priority, namely finalization of the Sustainable Development Goals and related parameter-setting for development assistance and private sector financial flows.

**Roundtable 2 - “Improving Policy Coherence for Nutrition”**, discussed ways to align and implement pro-nutrition policies across a range of sectors, including agriculture, the food industry, trade, social protection, and education. In so doing, it addressed one of the most important issues in multisectoral programming for nutrition: reconciling health and nutrition goals with economic growth and development objectives.

**Roundtable 3 - “Governance and Accountability for Nutrition”**, tackled the challenge of identifying mechanisms for holding the public and private sectors accountable to addressing the structural determinants and immediate causes of malnutrition. Informally defined as the “glue which holds the commitment to the result”, accountability goes hand-in-hand with good governance. Both require strong and sustained political leadership; institutional and operational capacity; systematic public assessment of progress; and international support based on global recommendations.
The following messages cut across all three Roundtables and underpin many of the recommendations put forward by the Rome Declaration on Nutrition and Framework for Action:

1. **Nutrition outcomes, agricultural practices, and food system trends are profoundly linked.** For many years, nutrition was not associated with agriculture and food systems. Rather it was defined solely as the purview of public health. Today, it is widely recognized that trends in agriculture and food systems – namely heavy investment in cereals and underinvestment in non-staples – have created a situation where the cost of a healthy diet can be very high and the incentives to eat processed foods of minimal nutritional value are strong. These trends have contributed to the double burden of malnutrition which is spreading around the world. Increasing the nutrition sensitivity of agricultural production processes and the food systems they supply is fundamental to reducing this burden.

2. **Public sector action is crucial to establishing pro-nutrition food systems.** Increasing nutrition sensitivity within agriculture requires revising global food security paradigms. Measures of success can no longer be exclusively cereal production-based, but rather must include and indeed prioritize increased access to animal-source foods in poor countries, and to fruits, vegetables and legumes globally. Equally crucial is the promotion of production paradigms which make sustainable water and soil management a top priority.

A preliminary step toward achieving these shifts is acknowledgement of the tension between conventional agricultural development goals, which are profit oriented, and policies related to nutrition and public health, which are welfare based. This, in turn, requires identifying opportunities for policy coherence, and engaging the private sector to find “win-win” where public sector efforts to improve nutrition are not seen as being at odds with market signals. In some cases, such as food fortification, the opportunities are obvious. In other cases, such as regulation of trade in foods, more effort must be made to align economic and health incentives.

There are a variety of options for the public sector’s role in facilitating win-wins; these include consumer-facing policies which increase consumer demand for healthy foods through education campaigns, and food and nutrition guidelines. Tax-based incentives are also an important option and are currently being exercised in a number of countries, often in terms of reducing sugar sweetened beverage consumption. Producer-facing policies are also important, for example government schemes which incentivize the production of healthy foods via research and development, input subsidies, and/or public procurement for school feeding and other social protection programmes. When implemented in tandem, these policies provide a package which, in some countries, have already resulted in a critical shift towards increased production and improvement in the consumption of healthy diets.
3. **Improve data quality and assessment.** Currently, there are enormous nutrition information gaps. First, there is very little information regarding financing and the type of pooled global funding that would be most effective. This information is essential for monitoring commitments and accountability, not least with respect to the Sustainable Development Goals. Second, many countries lack adequate data regarding outcome indicators. Forty-nine percent of governments don’t have enough data to assess whether they are on course for most of the World Health Assembly indicators; and 40 percent of the most recent child growth surveys are over five years old. As long as these and similar shortcomings persist, it will be difficult to leverage the sustained political commitment needed for the paradigm shifts described above, as well as for good governance and accountability.

There is also the question of what to monitor. In addition to nutrition outcomes, better tracking of the types of food available in a given context is increasingly recognized as essential to promotion of pro-nutrition intersectoral policy coherence. This information, essentially the degree to which public and private sector interests are enabling consumers to make healthy food choices, is already being tracked in some countries. Examples include monitoring of food and beverages sold in school vending machines and hospitals, and monitoring whether food labelling is clear, transparent and consistent.

These Proceedings provide accounts of the expert presentations made by each Roundtable speaker and panellist, synopses of plenary discussion, and summaries from each of the Roundtable Chairs. Taken together, the report comprises a compendium of analyses and illustrations of some of the most pressing challenges facing today’s nutrition advocates. As such, we urge readers to consider these Proceedings as an important complement to the official ICN2 outcome documents; they provide background information, country examples, and rationale for many of the Rome Declaration on Nutrition and Framework for Action recommendations.

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Three Roundtables were held during the ICN2 on the following themes: (1) Nutrition in the Post-2015 Development Agenda; (2) Improving Policy Coherence for Nutrition; and (3) Governance and Accountability for Nutrition. These Proceedings compile the expert presentations made by each Roundtable speaker and panellist, synopses of plenary discussions and Chairs’ summaries from each Roundtable.

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ROUNDTABLE 1: NUTRITION IN THE POST-2015 DEVELOPMENT AGENDA

Wednesday, 19 November 2014
ROUND TABLE 1 - PARTICIPANTS

Co-Chairs: His Excellency Charles N. McClain, Deputy-Minister of Agriculture, Liberia
Anne Peniston, Chief, Nutrition Division, Bureau of Global Health, United States Agency for International Development, USA

Moderator: Irene Khan, Director-General, International Development Law Organization, Italy

Main Speaker: Jeffrey Sachs, Director, Earth Institute, Columbia University, USA – What are the current opportunities and challenges for nutrition to become central in the Post-2015 Development Agenda?

Panellists: Sok Silo, Deputy Secretary-General, Council for Agricultural and Rural Development Office of the Council of Ministers, Cambodia – What does the Post-2015 Development Agenda offer with respect to addressing the global food security and nutrition situation?
Eduardo Jaramillo Navarrete, Director-General of Health Promotion within the Undersecretariat of Prevention and Health Promotion of the Secretariat of Health, Mexico – What does the Post-2015 Development Agenda offer with respect to addressing the double burden of malnutrition in all its forms in your country?
Éva Martos, Director-General, National Institute for Food and Nutrition Science, National Public Health and Medical Officer Service, Hungary – What can the Post-2015 Development Agenda offer with respect to addressing the double burden of malnutrition in your country?
Jean-Pierre Halkin, Head of Rural Development, Food Security and Nutrition in DG DEVCO of the European Commission – How can the ICN2 Rome Declaration commitments be linked to the Post-2015 process and other important global processes in very concrete terms?
Sania Nishtar, Director of Heartfile and Co-chair of the Commission on Ending Obesity, Former Minister of Health, Pakistan – How can the Post-2015 Development Agenda ensure addressing non-communicable diseases?
Anne Peniston, Co-Chair  
*Chief, Nutrition Division, Bureau of Global Health*  
*United States Agency for International Development*  
*USA*

Excellencies, distinguished guests and colleagues, ladies and gentlemen, *buonasera* to this beautiful city and welcome to the Second International Conference on Nutrition. I am honoured to co-chair this first Roundtable - "Nutrition in the Post-2015 Development Agenda" - with Liberia’s Deputy Minister for Agriculture, Planning and Development, Charles N. McClain.

Let me begin with a few remarks:

When the MDGs were established, the Global Consensus on Nutrition was a one-dimensional and modest target: reduce by half the number of people suffering from hunger. Over the past 14 years, thanks to a growing body of evidence and experience, we have developed a much better understanding of nutrition’s multiple dimensions. We have also tested effective actions for tackling malnutrition. And we now have a deeper understanding of the links between good nutrition and development.

Nutrition is part of the unfinished business of the Millennium Development Goals. It is a high-impact driver of other development outcomes including economic growth, and equality and empowerment of women and girls. As we learn from the Global Nutrition Report malnutrition is a concern for all countries and good nutrition is important for all the sustainable development goals. We know, for example, that poor nutrition contributes to 45 percent of all under-five deaths. For every dollar invested in nutrition, you will get a 16 dollar rate of return, and we also know that nutrition benefits are realized across generations. Simply put, nutrition deserves to be at the core of the Post-2015 Development Agenda.

The Post-2015 Development Agenda will define common global development priorities for the next 15 years. It will drive not only long-term financing, but also significant investment, policy decisions and institutional reforms for national and international organizations. The preparatory process for the Post-2015 Development Agenda has indeed reflected a desire among stakeholders to look at nutrition more comprehensively. The report of the High-Level Panel recommends targets on stunting, wasting and anaemia, and the report of the Open Working Group on the Sustainable Development Goals reiterates the Sixth World Health Assembly targets. The reports so far are a reasonable starting point for the next and final phase of the post-2015 process. But, as we prepare to enter this final phase, we know that more work needs to be done to consider the full dimensions of malnutrition, to set more ambitious, measurable targets, to accelerate impact for healthier and more productive societies.

Our main speaker and panellists will consider the following overarching questions:

First, we know that undernutrition, obesity and micronutrient deficiencies hold us back from achieving our full potential as individuals and nations. How will we ensure that the Post-2015 Development Agenda adequately addresses malnutrition in all its forms?
And second, what support is needed for nutrition in the Post-2015 Development Agenda? What do stakeholders need for a strong start in sustainably meeting targets, measuring progress with robust and transparent systems for accountability, and most importantly, showing the world whether or not commitments are being met?

I am pleased now to introduce the Moderator for this Roundtable, Ms Irene Khan, Director-General of the International Development Law Organization.

**Moderator:** Thank you very much, Madam Co-chair. I would like to begin with a video-statement from Kofi Annan, Chair of the Kofi Annan Foundation.

**Kofi Annan (via video link)**

*Founder and Chair of the Kofi Annan Foundation  
Seventh Secretary-General of the United Nations*

Dear friends, I send special greetings to everyone gathered in Rome as you address today’s major nutrition challenges. In a world of plenty, one in nine people still go hungry every day. Another two billion may eat, but their meals lack the nutrition necessary for proper health and development. Mothers who don’t eat properly see the health of their unborn babies permanently harmed. Children who suffer nutrition deficiencies have their physical and mental growth limited. As always, this is felt most by the world’s poorest and most vulnerable people. Sadly, this is only half of a very worrying equation. Obesity rates in children and adults are rising rapidly around the world, increasing the risk of heart disease, diabetes and other health problems. Malnutrition also imposes a huge economic burden for countries, costing billions of dollars in lost productivity and avoidable health care costs. To meet these challenges, governments must urgently adopt the right policies and mobilize adequate resources to scale up food and nutrition security, especially in developing countries. Monitoring and evaluation systems need to be strengthened to measure progress towards goals and targets, scale up the successes and guard against unintended consequences. We also have to strengthen cooperation across all sectors and promote nutrition-sensitive approaches in areas such as agriculture, health care and education. It is important, too, that our food is grown, processed and distributed in a more sustainable manner, which must include addressing food losses and waste.

Let me thank all of you for your dedication and commitment to building a food- and nutrition-secure world. I wish you every success for this important conference.
Irene Khan, Moderator  
*Director-General*  
*International Development Law Organization*  
*Italy*

That was a very strong and succinct message from Mr Kofi Annan. This Roundtable seeks to marry a comprehensive approach to addressing malnutrition with the global process to set an international agenda for development post-2015. Despite progress, unacceptably high levels of malnutrition persist in many countries, and the world as a whole will fail to meet the Millennium Development Goal on nutrition. As the Co-chair mentioned, there is growing recognition of this challenge as well as acknowledgement of the need for a more comprehensive approach and that is, of course, the subject of this Roundtable.

As Director-General of the International Development Law Organization, the world’s only international, inter-governmental organization exclusively devoted to the rule of law, I would like to add that, in our own contribution to the post-2015 discussions, we have highlighted the significance of good governance, strong institutions and the rule of law across all development goals and targets, including those which address malnutrition.

The purpose of this Roundtable is to help us to see how the commitments of the Rome Declaration can be effectively integrated into the Post-2015 Development Agenda, how the Post-2015 Agenda will incorporate actions for ending hunger and eradicating malnutrition, how support will be provided to ensure a good start to maintain momentum and to meet the targets, and also to see how the Post-2015 Development Agenda will address Non-Communicable Diseases.

Our main speaker, Professor Jeffrey Sachs, needs no introduction, as one of the key architects of the Millennium Development Goals and now of the Sustainable Development Goals.

Jeffrey Sachs, Main Speaker (via video link)  
*Director, Earth Institute*  
*Columbia University*  
*USA*  
*Special Adviser to the UN Secretary-General on the Millennium Development Goals*

What are the current opportunities and challenges for nutrition to become central in the Post-2015 Development Agenda?

Thank you fellow leaders in nutrition. It’s really a great pleasure to be with you and your deliberations are extremely important and timely. As you know, we are now in the home-stretch of setting the Sustainable Development Goals, but also, more generally, setting the Post-2015 Global Development Agenda.

There will be three major events in 2015 to set this agenda. The first one – the Finance for Sustainable Development Conference – is tentatively scheduled for July 2015. This conference will set basic parameters of international financing for the SDGs, including development assistance flows and private sector flows. Then in September 2015, at the end of the month, there will be the largest gathering of Heads of State in history on development issues: a three-day Summit at
the United Nations that will culminate with the adoption of the new Sustainable Development Goals. And in December, the 21st session of the Conference of the Parties to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change will meet to discuss a legally-binding, universal agreement on climate change.

These three meetings are of utmost importance, we will not have another chance like this in many years – perhaps in our generation – to define an agenda so thoroughly and comprehensively with frameworks for finance, the environment, and the SDGs all being set. It behooves us to get this right.

As you know, the Open Working Group has now finished its work on the SDGs and the report has been sent to the Secretary-General and General Assembly. Seventeen overarching goals were identified. The Secretary-General will issue a Synthesis Report in early December putting the recommendations of the Open Working Group in the context of the broad framework that will come into place in 2015. As such, any last-minute recommendations that this assembled group of world experts can send from Rome to the Secretary-General would be very timely.

Let me read SDG 2 - the SDG closest to our topic today - as recommended by the Open Working Group. It says: “End hunger, achieve food security and adequate nutrition for all and promote sustainable agriculture”.

Remember that the structure of the Final Outcome will be a Goal such as this, and then a series of targets associated with the Goal – perhaps 3 to 5, it could be an even larger number – and then a set of indicators that, presumably, will be monitored every year in every country and recorded in a world-wide manner on an annual basis for global oversight, review, stocktaking and course correction. As with the MDGs, the window for achieving these Goals will be 15 years, with the deadline set at 2030. Oversight will, perhaps, occur on a four-year basis at Head of State level for an updated global summit, and annually at ministerial level to review progress, make assessments, look at the data, share best practices, and do everything possible to move towards implementation and acceleration. It is important to note that all this is subject to intergovernmental negotiation. As the time arrives, the number of Goals, their hierarchy, targets and indicators, the work of the high-level forum which will present the SDG framework to the General Assembly; all will be subject to the annual review and reporting process.

As currently stated, SDG 2 is a very challenging Goal. It looks at agriculture, nutrition and food security in an integrated manner, and your thoughts and comments on that are of great value. The requests of the nutrition community – to reach out to agronomists who have a major responsibility in defining sustainable agriculture and of course to health – are valid, and indeed reflect the multisectoral nature of a number of the SDGs. For nutrition, these are SDG 3: attaining healthy life for all at all ages, and SDG 4: to provide equitable and inclusive quality education and lifelong learning opportunities for all.
Nutrition depends on food, and food depends on ecosystems and on climate. There are huge risks to the food system at present through human-induced changes in climate, land and ecosystems. Therefore the term "sustainable agriculture" is absolutely essential. It has two senses which make it as complicated as any issue we face. On the one hand, agriculture itself is going to be heavily impacted by the ongoing human-induced environmental changes – climate and otherwise. At the same time, agriculture as practiced worldwide is not, itself, environmentally sustainable because agricultural practices are the number one driver of human-induced, earth-system changes. This is the case whether it's methane, nitrous oxide or carbon emissions, whether it's land clearing, destruction of habitat, poisoning of the environment through pollutants associated with pesticides, whether it's nitrogen or phosphorous runoff from fertilizers, whether it's the over-harvesting of fish in ocean fisheries.

We don’t have sustainable agriculture at the present, we have unsustainable agriculture. And we have pervasive malnutrition – over- and undernutrition and micronutrient deficiencies – as Kofi Annan noted. The inter-connectedness of these challenges is absolutely profound. As such I appeal to you, the global nutrition community, to find consensus amongst yourselves so as to provide clarity and guidance in defining these challenges and in setting goals and defining metrics to address them.

Let me make a few additional points. The Goal to end hunger: I don’t believe we have an adequate definition of hunger. Of course, we have a measure of hunger that FAO is principally responsible for, but we know that it's problematic in its measurement and I would say, even in its conceptualization. We don’t have, as far as I know, a clear, crisp consensus – and I know it’s a difficult concept – on what “adequate nutrition for all” means, underscoring not only that this refers to nutrition for all humanity, but also nutrition for all age groups, gender, etc.

The nutrition community plays an absolutely indispensable role in defining what “adequate nutrition for all” means. This includes providing guidelines on exclusive breastfeeding and on complementary feeding of children in the critical period of 6 to 24 months. It also includes providing guidelines on nutrition for pregnant mothers and for adults to avoid non-communicable diseases, obesity, metabolic disorders, and adult-onset diabetes.

In addressing and defining hunger, it is absolutely vital to draw the links between “adequate nutrition for all”, real food needs and sustainable agriculture. Right now this is not happening. There are some rough guidelines that are followed about how much more food needs to be produced by 2050 to meet the needs of a growing world population, but these are usually stated in terms of grain production, which I don’t believe is very adequate; it’s an agronomist's shorthand, not really a nutritionally based assessment of food needs.

If we start not from these guidelines, which essentially multiply the amount of grain to be produced by population estimates, but instead from asking what is an adequate diet for the prospective eight or nine billion people on the planet, we might get very different answers. For example, I think that it is probably right to say that beef consumption in high-income countries ought to be reduced rather than increased, thereby freeing up large quantities of arable land currently...
used for feed grain cultivation for other crops. It’s also certainly true that we do not intend to simply multiply the amount of grain produced but rather aim to increase disproportionately the availability of fruits, legumes, and other high-nutrient foods, whether via aquaculture, poultry production, or increased cultivation of soybean and other crops which can be processed into high-protein products.

But we need guidance from the nutrition community on this. I feel that with better guidelines on producing foods for adequate diets, we’d actually have much better guidelines on which direction global agriculture should evolve, and we’d probably find that the parameters of simply multiplying the amount of grain production, for example, are not right. What we need in agriculture is more transformation, rather than simple multiplication. Of course, that’s also true in view of the fact that so much of the food supply now is lost to post-harvest losses, rotting, ineffective and ineffective storage and transport and pure wastage at the end user level.

We also need downscaled recommendations from the nutrition community. I found during the Millennium Development Goal period, we did not have a clear sense of the kinds of foods that should be produced locally in different farm systems to promote high-nutrient food availability for local populations. I don’t know of good guidelines, country by country, that recommend the combination of food products that also will ensure a good blend of nutrients and nutritional diets for the local population, using local foodstuffs. As you know better than anyone in the world, there are places that are getting sufficient caloric intake but with miserably undiversified diets, eating only bananas or other staples all the time, leading to pervasive malnutrition and micronutrient deficiencies. But informing the farmers and the farm system and the agriculture minister and the agricultural extension workers of what should be grown and eaten locally – that tool still doesn’t really exist.

We also need metrics, good definitions of what it means to end hunger, better definitions of food security, better definitions of adequate nutrition and all that can be downscaled; certainly definitions of what sustainable agriculture means, which is again very complicated, because it goes both to resilience of agriculture as well as to reduce impact of agriculture on the environment: the two-way causation. We also desperately need better data. For example, I tried during the Millennium Development Goal period – 15 years – to get downscaled, good, reliable maps of micronutrient deficiencies. If you look at a particular place – Zambia or Ghana or Uzbekistan or any other country or any city in the United States, and you ask: what are the micronutrient deficiencies? We really don’t have, as far as I know, good, reliable data on vitamin A, on omega-3 fatty acids, on iodine, zinc, iron and other micronutrients to give information to policy-makers, to NGOs, to civil society, to national programmes for nutrition.

Consequently, I would really like to see, in the Sustainable Development Goal period, GIS (Geographic Information System)-referenced mapping of hunger, in a well-defined sense, of food security, and of undernutrition, overnutrition and micronutrient deficiencies. And I would like to have those data on an annual, reliable basis.
You may say, correctly, that the information collection systems for these data do not exist at present. As such, part of the purpose of the coming year is to define what improvements in information systems we need. For example, how can we learn to collect data on micronutrient deficiencies at subnational level systematically? If you can make recommendations on the kinds of national programme implementation and financing needs for that and similar questions, they will hold great relevance for the Summit on Finance for Development. To date, we can put in a new line item for increased funding for nutrition programmes in areas of high stunting or high chronic undernourishment but at the moment we don’t have reliable numbers that tell us what the financing gaps are, what the delivery mechanisms are, and what kind of global pool funding would be most effective.

In conclusion, I hope these thoughts will be helpful and I very much look forward to the Report of this Conference and to the ongoing work of the nutrition community. This is the year to set the agenda.

Moderator: Thank you very much, Professor Sachs, for setting the agenda for our discussion and putting forward some interesting and provocative challenges to the nutrition community to see the linkages between nutrition, agriculture and sustainability, and also to look at issues both globally and locally.

I would now like to invite our distinguished panellists to make their presentations.

Sok Silo, Panellist 1
Deputy Secretary-General
Council for Agricultural and Rural Development of the Office of the Council of Ministers
Cambodia

What does the Post-2015 Development Agenda offer with respect to addressing the global food security and nutrition situation?

It is my pleasure to be here in this important Roundtable discussion on Nutrition in the Post 2015 Development Agenda under the theme “What does the Post-2015 Development Agenda offer with respect to addressing the global food security and nutrition situation?”

Since the first International Conference on Nutrition in 1992, considerable progress has been achieved with regard to food security and nutrition but we are still far from achieving food and nutrition security for all. Moreover new challenges are arising. FAO estimates that a total of 925 million people were undernourished in 2010 compared with 1.02 billion in 2009. WHO estimates that 10 million children die before their fifth birthday every year, and that a third of these deaths are associated with undernutrition. One in three children from developing countries under the age of five - 178 million children - are stunted due to chronic undernutrition and 148 million children are underweight. Micronutrient malnutrition or “hidden hunger” affects around two billion people – over 30 percent of the world’s population – with serious public health consequences.
Food security and nutrition are cross-cutting issues requiring more integrated actions over a large range of development agendas. To improve food security and nutrition, strategies, policies and investments in the fields of agriculture, forestry and fisheries, water resources management, health, water supply and sanitation, education and social protection, are all decisive. To achieve the food security and nutrition goal that “all people have physical, social and economic access to sufficient, safe, and nutritious food, at all times, to meet their dietary needs and food preferences and optimize the utilization of this food for a healthy and productive life”, the Post-2015 Development agenda should be focused on the following targets:

**Target 1**: Increased food availability and food accessibility through increasing diversified agriculture and livestock production, sustainable forestry and fisheries management, post-harvest technology management, agriculture land management and from non-agricultural employment and income opportunities.

**Target 2**: Build the capacity of smallholders, especially women, to increase their productivity through providing adequate inputs, knowledge, information, skills, productive resources and services to increase their productivity and income. Smallholder food producers play a critical role in food systems at all levels. In particular, small farmers represent the vast majority of farmers in the world and are critical actors in the food supply chain. To empower these actors, the Post-2015 Development Agenda needs to help build their capacity and address the constraints they face and provide them with livelihoods and income-generation support during lean seasons.

**Target 3**: Improve the use of food-based approaches to reduce child and maternal malnutrition, especially through interventions during the critical 1,000 days from pregnancy to a child’s second birthday. It is during this window that malnutrition does the most harm and investments yield the highest social and economic returns. The Post-2015 Development Agenda can leverage the potential of the 1,000 day window by scaling up nutrition services and nutrition education. This requires strengthening existing delivery mechanisms and improving the quality of nutrition care and counselling in the health system. It also requires enhancing the availability and appropriate use of nutritious and safe foods at household level by improving household water supply, sanitation and hygiene, expanding food fortification to prevent micronutrient deficiencies, and increasing national and subnational availability of nutritious foods.

**Target 4**: Increase stability of the food supply through scaling up food security-related social protection instruments and public work programmes, conditional cash transfer programmes, school meal feeding programmes and targeted scholarships for poor students. The Post-2015 Development Agenda should also include enhancing resilience of households against the effects of natural disasters, climate change, socio-economic shocks and individual crises by creating capacities for disaster risk management and climate change adaptation at national and subnational level. These issues should be included in sectoral strategies and regional plans.

To achieve these targets, the Post-2015 Development Agenda should include strengthening mechanisms at national and subnational level to improve coordination between relevant sectors and stakeholders, involving relevant government institutions, development partners, private sector
and civil society. In addition, the agenda should concentrate on effective implementation via national action and investment plans; this includes provision of sufficient resources from national budgets and harmonized support from development partners. Data collection and analysis, monitoring and evaluation, information and knowledge management, and capacity development of stakeholders are all also important for this Agenda.

In conclusion, food security is not only an agricultural issue and nutrition is not only a health issue. Food and nutrition insecurity not only undermine human and social rights, they also retard human capital formation by negatively impacting economic productivity and growth. While the cost of treating and dealing with the effects of malnutrition, whether in fiscal, economic or human terms, is high, the cost of prevention is much less, and investments to improve nutrition have been shown to provide high returns.

Moderator: Thank you very much, Your Excellency, for highlighting the targets that you would like to see in the Post-2015 Agenda.

Eduardo Jaramillo Navarrete, Panellist 2
Director-General of Health Promotion
Undersecretariat of Prevention and Health Promotion of the Secretariat of Health
Mexico

What does the Post-2015 Development Agenda offer with respect to addressing the double burden of malnutrition in all its forms in your country?

I’d like to welcome you all: panellists, ladies and gentlemen, delegates and representatives of the countries. I would like to thank the Secretariat for the invitation they have extended to my country to share Mexico’s experience under the theme “What does the Post-2015 Development Agenda offer with respect to addressing the double burden of malnutrition in all its forms in your country?”

As part of the epidemiological transition in my country, we are facing a great challenge. Seventeen percent of Mexico’s adult population and 34 percent of our children are currently overweight or obese. This condition is a risk factor that is directly associated with diabetes, cardiovascular disease and other NCDs. However, food insecurity in Mexico is still rife. It is to address this double burden that the Mexican state, through integrated strategies, is working to develop intersectoral participation.

One year ago, the Mexican President urged adoption of a three-pillared national strategy for overweight, obesity and diabetes. This strategy includes a public health policy based on vigilance, epidemiological strategies, promotion of good health and, very importantly, promoting breastfeeding during the first six months of life. Implementation requires improving access to integrated health services. It’s not enough to make a Universal Declaration on the Right to Health if we do not implement effective action on providing the necessary food and setting up models to address the problems of lack of physical activity and provision of necessary medicines. Medical care should be addressed and there should be clear labelling of medicines and of food, especially those with a high content of salt, sugar and fat, because a consumer should know what he is
eating. As such we are at present discussing in Congress the prospect of taxing processed foods with a high caloric value.

In Mexico, we understand that our children’s health is of utmost importance. Public policies, including, for example, our national fight against hunger, and the fight against overweight, obesity and diabetes, now focus on vulnerable groups: children and women, and wherever there is vulnerability in certain socio-economic groups.

We have also tried to foster co-responsibility among academia and private and public institutions. We have addressed the problems of NCDs in fora where academia, civil society and other institutions are active, and we are working with the public in promoting this important policy because we feel that accountability is extremely important. We are therefore very pleased to be able to address this important forum and share our ideas with you.

Moderator: Thanks to Dr Jaramillo Navarrete for keeping his remarks concise, but for showing us the very clear relationship between good policies, laws, regulations and good health and nutrition.

Éva Martos, Panellist 3
Director-General, National Institute for Food and Nutrition Science
National Public Health and Medical Officer Service
Hungary

What can the Post-2015 Development Agenda offer with respect to addressing the double burden of malnutrition in your country?

It is a privilege to be here and speak on behalf of Hungary under the theme “What does the Post-2015 Development Agenda offer with respect to addressing the double burden of malnutrition in all its forms in your country?” Indeed it is a great honour to speak at this prestigious Conference, where so many countries are assembled to address the multiple challenges associated with malnutrition, and to identify tools to tackle them in the next decades. To achieve this goal, it is essential to heed the UN Secretary-General’s calls for policy coherence at global, regional, national and subnational levels, and for a strengthened global partnership for development.

Let me refer to an official document authored by the Open Working Group on the Sustainable Development Goals – co-chaired by Hungary together with Kenya – emphasizing the importance of the fight against hunger, establishment of food security and better nutrition, and support to sustainable agriculture. This document pays particular attention to reducing wasting and stunting in children under five years of age and to meeting the dietary needs of special target groups, such as adolescent girls, pregnant and lactating women and the elderly by 2025.

Malnutrition is a global burden. As such, a new global partnership engaging national governments, local authorities, international organizations, businesses, civil society and foundations should be formed to address its reduction. At the same time, the key role played by national governments in establishing proper conditions for providing equitable, accessible, and affordable healthy nutrition for their people must be emphasized.
In Hungary, fulfilment of these aims is now a priority on the governmental agenda, considering the unfavourable national public health statistics. These indicate that a significant proportion of the population is overweight or obese, and that daily salt and transfatty acid intakes are well above the WHO’s recommended levels. Intake of sugar and saturated fat is also high.

These risk factors, together with low fruit and vegetable consumption, are, per our national monitoring data, occurring as early as childhood. As a result, diverse national policy actions have been initiated. Fiscal measures such as the public health product tax on foods with high sugar, salt and caffeine content have been introduced, and a recent legislative measure – restriction of transfatty acid content in foods – has been put in place, foreseeing elimination of a compound with proven nutritional risk, in line with the aims of the Rome Declaration and the latest WHO Food and Nutrition Action Plan.

Another example is recent legislation to improve nutritional standards in public catering. This legislation offers healthy meals for all – including vulnerable groups such as children, the elderly and people with special dietary needs – and is considered a national achievement. It also enables local producers to become more involved in mass catering, as with the EU School Fruit Scheme. Schools are a major target of the decree and current participation rates are estimated at 90 percent, demonstrating an effective collaboration between the health, education and agricultural sectors. Based on the results of national surveys, several other highly efficient, health and nutrition-oriented school interventions have also been launched in Hungary. An annual week-long, water consumption promotion campaign in primary schools, called HAPPY-week, is a fine example. This campaign has been running for five years.

This Conference provides an excellent opportunity on the one hand for collective debate and on the other for combined actions by joining the Rome Declaration. The latter contribute to fulfilling the aims of the Post-2015 Development Agenda with special focus on handling the double burden of malnutrition.

Expo Milano 2015, dedicated to “Feeding the Planet, Energy for Life”, will be a great forum to present the outcomes of this Conference to the public. Participation at the Expo is high on the Hungarian government’s agenda, including acknowledging the importance of sustainable development and promoting nutrition. Both are highly publicized in the Hungarian pavilion “Garden of Life”.

**Moderator:** Thank you very much, Dr Martos.
Jean-Pierre Halkin, Panellist 4
Head of Rural Development, Food Security and Nutrition
DG DEVCO, European Commission

How can the ICN2 Rome Declaration commitments be linked to the Post-2015 process and other important global processes in very concrete terms?

First of all, I would like to apologize on behalf of Fernando Frutuoso de Melo, the Director-General for International Development and Cooperation in the European Union, who tried his best to be here but could not make it. He asked me to deputize for him and I do it with pleasure. I will try to be concise in answering the question defining this fourth panel, namely: What does the Rome Declaration bring to the Post-2015 Development debate?

First of all, let’s look at the similarities between the two documents: the Rome Declaration and the current proposal of the Open Working Group. There are many similarities: they both look at all forms of malnutrition – undernutrition, stunting, wasting, micronutrient deficiencies and obesity. They are also global in their perspectives and cover all countries of the planet – both developed and developing countries. They look at not only the immediate consequences of malnutrition but also at the long-term consequences. For example, they examine the trans-generational burden of stunting, and the issue of non-communicable diseases and their link to obesity. The root causes of malnutrition are also deeply examined, notably the challenge for the food system, the challenge of climate change and of sustainable management of natural resources.

In this context, these two documents represent a major step forward in the debate on nutrition, when we remember that just a few years ago the nutrition debate was mostly limited to looking at the immediate consequences of undernutrition in developing countries. Then, the long-term consequences and root causes were out of the debate; today both documents recognize that examining them in greater depth is totally central for any long-term solution.

What the Rome Declaration really brings to the debate is a common platform for both the health and the food security constituencies to engage together in the negotiation. As such, it also remedies a historical weakness in the way in which nutrition has been addressed. For many years, nutrition was not recognized as inextricably linked to agriculture and food systems. Rather it was defined solely as under the purview of public health. Today, with these two documents, we are provided with a very strong common denominator for the two constituencies to join forces in negotiations for nutrition within the Post-2015 framework.

There are those who ask whether the Rome Declaration will be used in other fora. I believe it will be and will take an example from our home ground, the European Union. Two of the founding pillars of the European Union are, firstly, the Common Agricultural Policy and secondly, the Development Policy. They were both established in 1961, at the same time that the Common Market, as it was then known, was established. At its inception, the Common Agricultural Policy already had a goal, which was food security in Europe. We need to remember that food security in Europe was not assessed or established when the Common Agricultural Policy was created. At the time, the synergy between the two policies was measured in what we call now the PCD, Policy Currents for Development. Now with the new system which is being defined by the Rome
Declaration and the Post-2015 Agenda, we have a new challenge. We now have two policies striving towards the same goals. This situation is already shaping discussions within the EU.

Moderator: Thank you very much, Mr Halkin.

Sania Nishtar, Panellist 5
Director of Heartfile and Co-chair of the Commission on Ending Obesity
Former Minister of Health
Pakistan

How can the Post-2015 Development Agenda ensure addressing non-communicable diseases?

Let me begin by thanking the organizers of this Conference for including this topic – How can the Post-2015 Development Agenda ensure addressing non-communicable diseases? – on the agenda. “Non-communicable diseases” is a collective name comprising cardiovascular disease, diabetes, some cancers, and chronic lung conditions. These diseases are linked by biological and lifestyle predictors including diet.

I’d like to make four points about the relevance of NCDs to the Global Development Agenda. Firstly, NCDs are not a problem to be disregarded. NCDs are the leading cause of death worldwide: they caused 38 million deaths in 2012, that’s 68 percent of global mortality. Most of these premature deaths were avoidable. Moreover three-quarters of them occurred in lower- and middle-income countries where more than 250 million people also risk medical impoverishment or foregoing care when afflicted by NCDs. The cumulative economic losses due to non-communicable diseases between 2011 and 2025 are estimated to be around seven trillion US dollars. Tackling NCDs is therefore now recognized as a necessary condition for sustainable development.

Secondly, after years of neglect, NCDs are finally likely to be included on the Global Development Agenda. It is auspicious that world leaders committed to address NCDs in 2011 and that the UN-led Global Process following the political declaration has included NCDs as a target under health in its proposal for the Sustainable Development Goals. It is also favourable that the technical ground-work has already been laid. For example the World Health Organization has now consolidated evidence in support of NCD “best buys”, a set of cost-effective, high-impact interventions. In addition, this year the DG of the WHO established the Commission on Ending Childhood Obesity which I have the privilege of co-chairing, and last year at the World Health Assembly, the Global NCD Action Plan was adopted. Its six objectives and nine targets are aimed at achieving 25 percent relative reductions in premature mortality from NCDs by 2025.

This global process is yet to be mirrored in countries, most of which are off-track in meeting NCD global targets. But before analysing country imperatives, I would like to reiterate as my third point that both over- and undernutrition are relevant to NCDs as risks. Overnutrition takes a toll with obesity being one of the four biological risk factors; however undernutrition, especially in early childhood, is also a risk. For example, poorly nourished mothers deliver infants programmed before birth to develop risk of NCDs later in life. The nutrition transition is also a risk factor and is well underway in settings where poverty and food insecurity coexist with rapid economic, demographic and health transitions. Against this background, there is a clear imperative to ensure
that healthy diets are included as a primary consideration in food security discourse. And healthy diets can contribute to achieving global NCD targets. Policies supporting healthy diets include those promoting accessibility, affordability and acceptance of plant-based diets and breastfeeding, and those that enable reduced intake of salt, sugar, animal fats, transfats and highly processed foods. More broadly, these are policies that support implementation of the WHO Global Strategy on Diet and Physical Activity and the Global Strategy for Infant and Young Child Feeding. Taken together, these types of initiatives could prevent millions of needless deaths from NCDS.

These approaches to tackling NCDs straddle many policy arenas. As such, for my fourth point, I would like to touch upon the complex interdependencies between diet, disease, sustainability and development. On the one hand, diet is a leading risk factor for NCDs, but on the other hand food production is also a major driver for climate change and environmental degradation. Human and planetary health are deeply interlinked, creating not only challenges but also opportunities for a common solution. Economic incentives in the food system can influence both the nutritional quality of food as well as the environmental footprint. For example, synergies can be exploited between fisheries’ sustainability and aquaculture, and the NCD recommendations to increase fish intake; also between recommendations supporting white meat consumption and poultry farming. Professor Sachs’ point about the need to rethink what nutrition really is, is relevant here because both of the examples that he gave with reference to meat- and plant-based diets augur well both for NCDs and environmental sustainability.

The Post-2015 framework is an opportunity to shape policy, with governments having a leading role and responsibility. However it should be recognized here that one government ministry cannot do this job alone, given the complex interdependencies in the public policy space. This is where the challenge lies. We envisage governments to be a single entity but they are, in effect, an archipelago of many agencies and therefore the “total government” approach required for the multisectoral actions critical for nutrition becomes a challenge. Therefore, a number of innovative policy tools for multisectoral collaboration are needed. Beyond that, intersectoral collaboration is also necessary to harness the potential of civil society and the private sector to forge transparent partnerships for policy implementation.

Finally, I would like to say that mainstreaming NCDs to country health systems also requires health system reorientation and broad health system strengthening – Ebola has been a wake-up call for all of us – but our inattention to NCDs is enabling a slow motion disaster many times over. There are complementarities between the public policy agendas promoting universal health coverage and those tackling NCDs. Both should be considered as defining measures to support a country’s human capital formation, a vital input towards the national process of development.
Synopsis of Comments from Member States and Civil Society

The importance of retaining SDG Goal 2 on food security, nutrition and sustainable agriculture was emphasized. In addition, the point was made that Goal 2 and its targets need to be assessed using a clearly defined set of indicators, not least to ensure that progress in nutrition is transparently measured during follow-up. FAO, WFP and IFAD, in cooperation with WHO and UNICEF, were encouraged to revisit earlier proposals for indicators to assist in ensuring this will be the case.

A number of points were made providing critical feedback to the panel. These included a call for better, more explicit recognition of the human rights aspects of reducing malnutrition, as well as a comment on the need to acknowledge that the military and political realities currently facing many African countries pose significant constraints to improving nutrition outcomes.

Social justice was the focus of a comment from Ecuador, which noted the need to improve land distribution policy, access to credit, and gender equity in agriculture.

A comment was made regarding the major health infrastructure challenges facing many governments. The speaker noted that in many countries, there are no systems in place for pre- or post-natal care. Infant mortality is a major problem, and a woman is lucky if she manages to get multiple or even one prenatal consultation. It was noted that, until these fundamental health care system problems have been resolved, the role played by agriculture and other sectors in improving nutrition will be limited.

Charles N. McClain, Co-Chair  
Deputy Minister for Agriculture  
Liberia

There are over 600 people here today, which means that this is a very important and serious issue. I’m from Liberia, one of the countries struck down with Ebola, but I’m also speaking for Sierra Leone and for Guinea. Nutrition has always been a problem in our countries and now, with Ebola, the situation is even worse. What I’m hearing from everybody is a message on integrated approach: we must work together to make sure that nutrition is taken to the highest level. This Roundtable on Nutrition in the Post-2015 Development Agenda has stimulated a very fruitful and valuable debate, and I trust that these conclusions will help to enrich the outcome of the ICN2 and the Post-2015 Development Agenda on nutrition. Let me take this opportunity also to thank the Moderator, Co-Chair, main speaker, panellists and, of course, all of you, to contributing to the success of this Roundtable. This session is therefore now closed.
CHAIRS’ SUMMARY OF ROUNDTABLE 1

The Roundtable “Nutrition in the Post-2015 Development Agenda” underlined the importance of nutrition in the sustainable development goals and discussed practical ways of ensuring that nutrition is adequately reflected across the development agenda. Speakers noted the importance of a comprehensive approach to address malnutrition in all its forms: under-nutrition, over-nutrition and micronutrient deficiencies; and to understand its root causes, immediate and long-term consequences. Non-communicable diseases, including those related to nutrition, result in USD 7 trillion losses annually. The cost of prevention is much lower than the cost to treat malnutrition and its consequences, and investments in nutrition yield high economic returns for countries, and benefit individuals across generations.

The session informed participants of current proposals for anchoring nutrition in the Post-2015 Development Agenda. It is currently included in Goal 2, by the Open Working Group, called: “End hunger, achieve food security and improve nutrition, and promote sustainable agriculture”. The panellists described improving nutrition as “unfinished business” that needs to be at the core of the Post-2015 Development Agenda.

The Roundtable put into sharp focus the linkages between nutrition, food and agriculture systems and climate change, and between nutrition and non-communicable diseases. It highlighted, in particular, the contributions of good nutrition to longer-term economic development. To promote real integration across these sectors we need clearer definitions and measurable indicators. The discussion cautioned, however, not to isolate nutrition to its technical components, as sound strategies need to be linked to basic human rights and considered within the political dimensions of malnutrition.

The Roundtable called upon the UN agencies and others to revisit proposed sustainable development goals and indicators, consider more ambitious targets than previously, and develop more robust systems to measure progress toward achieving nutrition goals at local, national and global levels. Data should include surveillance for micro-nutrient deficiencies, and geographic mapping of malnutrition in order to better target nutrition investments. We should focus on what is achievable, and we should develop strict criteria for prioritizing actions.

Weak systems – health, agriculture, or markets – betray the ability of individuals to obtain the health care and nutritious food they need to grow and flourish. In such systems, political or health emergencies, such as Ebola, are devastating; and where the systems are weak they must be strengthened.
The Roundtable concluded with five key messages:

1. The nutrition community needs to clearly define what is meant by “adequate nutrition” across societies, age groups, genders and health conditions so that nutrient needs and forecasting for food security can be appropriately determined.

2. We must continue focusing on the “1,000 days”, promote breastfeeding, and also include adolescent girls. We must promote good nutrition and physical activity, with immediate-term good health, and long-term protection against obesity and non-communicable diseases.

3. There is need for consensus to prioritize key indicators for measuring progress in nutrition, with clear definitions and robust monitoring systems that effectively inform policies and programs.

4. ICN-2 gives all of us an opportunity to contribute substantially to the Post-2015 Development Agenda for nutrition, and to ensure that malnutrition in all its forms is comprehensively addressed in all the sustainable development goals.

5. This is a unique time for nutrition with unprecedented global attention, and landmark levels of commitment with new data showing what works and what doesn’t. Setting nutrition firmly within the Post-2015 Development Agenda is our opportunity to turn what was once considered an intractable problem into a global success story.
ROUNDTABLE 2: IMPROVING POLICY COHERENCE FOR NUTRITION

Wednesday, 19 November and Thursday, 20 November 2014
Co-Chairs: Dr Tito PIZZARO, Head of the Division of Health Public Policies and Promotion of the Ministry of Health, Chile

His Excellency Igor RADZIEWICZ-WINNICKI, Undersecretary of State, Ministry of Health, Poland

Moderator: Ala ALWAN, Regional Director for the Eastern Mediterranean, World Health Organization

Main Speaker: Corinna HAWKES, Head of Policy and Public Affairs, World Cancer Research Fund – Coherence of public policies for ensuring healthy changes in diets

Panellists: His Excellency Arthur CHIORO, Minister of Health, Brazil – Coherence between economic policy objectives and healthy diets

His Excellency Leo VARADKAR, Minister of Health, Ireland – Coherence between economic policies and healthy changes in diets

Franco SASSI, Senior Health Economist, Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development – Coherence between economic objectives and healthy diets

Kyungwon OH, Director, Korea Centres for Disease Control and Prevention, Division of Health and Nutrition Survey, Republic of Korea – Coherence between economic policy objectives and healthy diets

Vinita BALI, Leader Group Member – SUN and former MD Britannia Industries Ltd., India – Coherence between private sector objectives and healthy diets
PANEL 1 - COHERENCE BETWEEN ECONOMIC POLICIES AND HEALTHY CHANGES IN DIETS

WEDNESDAY, 19 NOVEMBER 2014

Igor Radziewicz-Winnicki, Co-chair
Undersecretary of State
Ministry of Health
Republic of Poland

Excellencies, distinguished guests, dear colleagues, ladies and gentlemen, welcome. Let me begin by expressing my appreciation to all of you for participating in this second Roundtable. This is the first panel: “Improving Policy Coherence for Nutrition”. I expect from this panel a discussion on practical guidelines, so-called “road maps” for politicians, to enable evidence-based nutrition interventions, thereby enhancing the health status of nations.

I would like now to introduce to you the Moderator of this session, Dr Ala Alwan.

Ala Alwan, Moderator
Regional Director for the Eastern Mediterranean
World Health Organization

This panel will focus on improving policy coherence between economic policies and health changes in diet. I think anyone who is engaged in the area of nutrition recognizes the seriousness of this issue and the pressing need to achieve a critical level of coherence and consistency in public policies that aim to achieve health and economic objectives. We all know, at the same time, that this is not always an easy task; it’s a real challenge that deserves the highest level of attention if we are to make a difference in achieving national and global nutrition objectives. In fact, translating the outcomes of this Conference into actionable “road maps” depends on how much progress we make in this area and how much policies in different sectors become coherent, consistent, harmonized and synergistic.

I joined WHO in 1992, just before the first Conference on Nutrition, and I have worked during my career in WHO to support countries to develop national food and nutrition policies and action plans. One of the most difficult challenges faced during these processes has been to reduce inconsistencies between policies across sectors. When this happened, you had an effective, promising action plan; when it didn’t, which was, unfortunately, frequent, the outcome was weak. It goes without saying that nutrition objectives can only be achieved through a multisectoral response and you need to have mutually reinforcing policy actions across government departments and agencies to achieve their agreed health goals and objectives. This requires not only that different government sectors work together but also that other stakeholders, including the private sector and industry, get fully engaged and are held accountable.
A few years ago, WHO conducted a landscape analysis of nutrition policies in 18 countries. This analysis found that policy incoherence was common in many of the countries reviewed. In the Plenary today, the point was repeatedly made that we have not made much progress on this topic since the first International Conference on Nutrition. Indeed today’s slow progress in promoting health and nutrition is in part a manifestation of inconsistencies and inadequate coordination in public policy. For example the current state of affairs regarding the global epidemic of non-communicable diseases – heart disease, diabetes and cancers: these are leading causes of premature death, disability and suffering, whose magnitude and devastating consequences continue to increase worldwide.

Although we have a clear vision to address non-communicable diseases, including global targets endorsed by the World Health Assembly, it is clear that we will not significantly reduce acceleration of this epidemic unless public policies become more consistent and the private sector becomes engaged.

This panel will assess opportunities for and challenges to creating greater coherence between economic objectives and healthy diets. During this panel, we hope to review lessons learnt from countries which have made progress in coherence. We would also like to provide empirical evidence of the economic benefits of policy coherence. Finally, we would like to discuss perspectives and accountability in the private sector.

Our Speaker is Dr Corinna Hawkes, she will be giving examples of policy coherence across the value chain. Corinna, you have the floor.

**Corinna Hawkes, Main Speaker**  
*Head of Policy and Public Affairs  
World Cancer Research Fund*

Coherence of public policies for ensuring healthy changes in diets

Thank you very much for inviting me to give this talk on opportunities for policy coherence for nutrition in the food system. Policy coherence is the systematic promotion of mutually reinforcing policy actions across government departments and agencies, thus creating synergies towards achieving agreed-upon objectives. This point about agreed objectives is an important one. Policy coherence is not for every situation. Rather, it is for situations where different sectors can come to some agreement about what they want to achieve together.

In this panel, we are thinking specifically about advancing coherence from an economic perspective, economic policy and policies for healthy eating. Why?

First, because unhealthy diets are costly for national economies and so a food system that advances healthy diets for all also advances economic objectives.

Second, because by asking questions about how to align economic objectives with nutrition objectives, we start to ask ourselves questions, as I did when I was working as a food security advocate in Brazil. Those questions lead to solutions that are potentially more powerful and innovative than sector-specific ones. We’ll be hearing later from the Brazilian Minister for Health.
about the Brazilian experience; it’s a very good example of how economic objectives for family farmers have been aligned with health objectives on food and nutrition security, resulting in gains on both sides: for example with the school meal programme, which creates a situation of structured demand for foods produced by local Brazilian family farmers.

Third, because of the importance of policy coherence beginning with production all the way through to consumption; from an economic perspective, this means thinking about coherence between supply and demand, which means efficient, well functioning markets. We don’t want a market where food is produced but nobody eats it. Nor do we want a market that produces too much of the food of which we should be eating less. The nutritional problems we currently face are rooted in differing situations of supply and demand. As such, we need to do better at understanding the nature of that supply and demand in order to implement more effective nutrition policies for more efficient markets.

On the left of this slide, we see markets which supply food and products which are rich in vitamin A. For this scenario to achieve its full potential; we need markets to sell vitamin-A rich products such as orange-fleshed sweet potato vines to producer households. Assuming that production is for own consumption, these sales will produce gains in vitamin A intake among members of those producer households. If, on the other hand, we start to look at consumers outside of subsistence farming households, we need to invest in markets between production and consumption and start promoting the benefits of this product to consumers.

In an adult population where demand is already high for, say, sugar-sweetened drinks, taxes are a way of reducing demand. The goal is not to be punitive but to create incentives for market actors to start producing healthy alternatives to sugar sweetened beverages. In the case of children, where demand has not been created to such an extent and where preferences are not so fixed, it’s crucial to stop the types of food marketing processes that create demand for these kinds of unhealthy foods in the first place.

These examples point to the need for food systems which create markets whose supply is coherent with nutrition policies. And as has been alluded to earlier, within the current food system there is high potential for incoherence. Indeed given the vastness and complexity of today’s global food system, some incoherence is to be expected.

For example, the World Health Organization’s Global Action Plan on Non-Communicable Diseases (adopted 2014) aims to create health-promoting food environments by reducing the use of saturated fatty acids and replacing transfats with unsaturated fats. This is a legitimate policy imperative from a health and nutrition perspective. However in terms of supply chain economics – which drive the very food environment which the WHO is attempting to regulate – the World Bank’s policy since 2011 has been to invest heavily in palm oil, which is high in saturated fats. It is important to note that this strategy is also legitimate. It aims to generate income growth and to contribute to food security. These two policy strategies are fundamentally mis-aligned – one encourages reduced use of saturated fats, the other promotes it – however both are justifiable objectives.
Of course, this kind of clash is something we experience in our everyday lives. This slide shows an example from Peru, the public awareness campaign which was created to encourage healthy eating, launched by the Ministry of Health. If you are a child you will experience public awareness messages based on that campaign regularly. However as a child you may then go home and switch on the television, finding that 54 percent of television advertising is for unhealthy foods. When you go to school, you will find that it is surrounded by purveyors of these kinds of unhealthy foods we should be consuming less of. Children and adults experience these mixed messages every day.

Another challenge to policy incoherence concerns a legacy from the past: The Green Revolution investment in food supply, assessed exclusively via improved calorie availability. Today, we know that malnutrition takes many more forms than just insufficient caloric intake. Indeed today, we have a situation characterized by an over-abundance of calories in many countries, where overweight, obesity and diet-related non-communicable diseases are on the rise. There is therefore incoherence between past food and agricultural policies and the current health and nutrition situation. We need to make rapid progress in shifting the agricultural paradigm to ensure catch-up and closer coherence to the paradigm of malnutrition as we understand it today.

How do we identify opportunities for coherence? I’d argue that the global food system is complicated, even our local food systems are complicated, and as such we need to seize what opportunities are available to us. Where are the opportunities in a given food supply chain for creating value for nutrition in addition to value addition from an economic perspective? What are the actors, policies, actions and incentives needed to create that coherence through the chain? What’s important about this approach is that we focus on the totality of the activities. When we think about coherence, we have to put everything inside this kind of framework and look at the totality of actors’ incentives and how the balance of that totality might shift in response to policies and other interventions. I’ll give a couple of brief examples of what I mean by this:

This slide shows a case study from Fiji. The problem in Fiji was inadequate fruit and vegetable intake. What were the policies contributing to that state of affairs? Universal nutrition policy is always to increase domestic intake of fruits and vegetables, however there’s a common assumption that national agricultural development initiatives to promote export of horticultural produce may be a constraint. This is the value of this kind of approach: we can test our assumptions. Often we make assumptions about what is incoherent based on what seems intuitive and obvious, but with this kind of analysis we can actually ask questions about how these initiatives actually affect farmers’ production and marketing decisions. We can then ask how does this influence supply and the volume of production on the marketplace. With this more coherent and total approach, we also go and talk to consumers about the culture of consumption, about the diets and about what they want to consume in terms of fruits and vegetables. With the answers, we can decide how to align these efforts.
Another example comes from India, where there are serious challenges in terms of transfats consumption and cardiovascular disease. Regulation of the use of transfats has been proposed but is proving hard to implement. One study looked at the amount of total fats increases in India and did a careful analysis through the value chain to investigate how policy incentives might be encouraging a proliferation of unhealthy fats in the Indian food supply. For example, it’s often assumed that the high consumption of transfats is linked to an economic policy supporting imports of certain types of oilseeds and vegetable oils. The study’s step-wise analysis concludes that the problems surrounding availability, affordability and acceptability of unhealthy fats in India is linked to a vast range of different incentives in the food system: some on the consumer side, e.g. lack of awareness; some linked to trade as already mentioned; and a lot of related to lack of appropriate investment in the agricultural sector.

These kinds of analyses can help clarify which policy options will advance policy coherence across sectors, with potential economic benefits for the agricultural sector and food systems. And while an expert in non-communicable diseases might not see any immediate links with cardiovascular disease, making these links is precisely the point of policy coherence analyses. We are linking things that do not appear to be linked together, but which are. In so doing, we can discover exciting and innovative solutions that create win-wins, propelling economic development forward while also promoting healthy diets.

In conclusion, it is inevitable that some policy incoherence is present in the food system. However there are tools available that can identify ways to reduce that incoherence. However these tools are best applied when objectives are clearly defined and a problem to be solved has been identified. When these conditions are met, great opportunities for policy coherence present themselves within the food system to advance both nutrition and economic objectives. Thank you.

 Moderator: Thank you Dr Hawkes, there are no questions so it seems your presentation was very clear. Let me now introduce our first panelist: His Excellency Arthur Chioro, Brazil’s Minister of Health. The focus of his input is on the experience in Brazil; how economic policies can be used to help people achieve and maintain a healthy diet.

Arthur Chioro, Panellist 1  
Minister of Health  
Brazil  

Coherence between economic policy objectives and healthy diets  
(Original delivered in Portuguese)

Adequate and healthy food is a basic human right that requires ensuring permanent and regular access in a socially just way. Food must be biologically and socially adequate at the individual level and also be the product of sustainable agricultural practices.

In Brazil, food and nutrition security are a priority on the public agenda. As such, the right to health is also a priority, not least because of its close links with achieving adequate nutrition. Similarly, ensuring health depends on actions across a broad range of areas to fulfil the realization of other human rights.
Over the last decades, in particular in the last 12 years, Brazil has undergone major political, economic, and socio-cultural changes. The expansion and improvement of social policies in the areas of health, education, work, employment and social welfare have contributed to reducing social inequalities, allowing the country to grow in an inclusive manner. There has also been a rapid demographic, epidemiologic and nutritional transition. We are witnessing a sharp decrease in child undernutrition and, at the same time, Brazil is now facing a significant increase in overweight and obesity, and chronic diseases are now the main death causes among adults. Indeed the main diseases affecting Brazilians today are no longer acute or due to privation, rather they are chronic and non-communicable.

Over these last years, we have been promoting the development of integrated public policies, with positive impacts on different social determinants of health and nutrition. A set of national programmes, actions and strategies has considerably reduced the number of food-insecure in the country. Hunger and undernutrition are no longer part of the Brazilian reality. Different indicators show that today the Brazilian population has access to food and that hunger has become an isolated occurrence in the country.

These vastly improved conditions are reflected in the 2014 edition of FAO’s “State of Food Insecurity in the World 2014”. For the first time, this report places Brazil among countries with a very low undernourishment rate, under 5 percent; and with the greater proportional reduction (84.7 percent) of undernourished in Latin America over the last 24 years. We have achieved, in advance, the Millennium Development Goals for reduction of poverty, hunger and child mortality.

Brazil’s achievements in the fight against hunger and poverty are the result of actions in several areas:

First, let us discuss political decision and commitment. The food and nutrition security agenda was prioritized in Brazil in 2003, when former President Lula launched the Zero Hunger campaign together with Dr José Graziano, the present Director-General of FAO. The fight against hunger and poverty remains at the centre of the political agenda, driven forward in 2011 via President Dilma Rousseff’s “Brazil without Extreme Poverty” plan, in which we committed to eradicate extreme poverty in Brazil. Approximately 36 million Brazilians have now been lifted out of extreme poverty, 22 million under the current administration.

Second, Brazil has implemented progressive and effective economic and social policies on a large-scale, with a real increase of 71 percent in the minimum wage and the creation of approximately 21 million formal jobs, as well as institutional and consumer-facing policies in the areas of health, education and social welfare. Our conditional cash transfer programme, known as “Bolsa Família”, has also contributed to decreasing poverty and overcoming hunger in the country. Investment in the programme has tripled over the last ten years. Today, the programme reaches approximately 14.1 million low-income families, on the condition that children remain in school and pay regular visits to local primary healthcare providers.
Third, I should like to mention the institutionalization of food and nutrition security actions. In addition to national political commitment and government strategy, a necessary step for the sustainability of the fight against poverty and hunger was to ensure state policies with these goals in the legal framework. Over the last decade, these have been further strengthened by the National Law on Food and Nutrition Security in 2006, and the institutionalization of a National Plan on Food and Nutrition Security in 2011.

The forth aspect that I wish to highlight is social participation. The Brazilian experience has been marked by strong involvement of civil society in the political process. This, combined with transparency in governance, has been a guiding principle for Brazil’s food security and nutrition interventions in recent years.

Among the policies and programmes implemented, I wish to highlight those aimed at improving access to healthy food.

First, investments in smallholders: Investments in policies supporting family farmers in Brazil now total 6.9 billion dollars and the budget for the rural credit programme doubled between 2003 and 2013. We have also invested in ensuring market access for family farmers through the Family Farming Food Purchase Programme. Federal resources for this programme have increased almost ten-fold since 2003. Subsequent to these investments, family farming in Brazil has increased sharply. Currently, it is responsible for 70 percent of all food consumed internally.

Second, Brazil has one of the largest school feeding programmes in the world. In 2004, the National School Feeding Programme provided free daily meals to 43 million students of primary education and adolescents and adults. In accordance with national law, at least 30 percent of federal resources used in Brazil’s school feeding programme must be allocated to purchasing food from family farms, preferably organic and agroecological production. The Programme also includes food and nutrition education components which are mainstreamed in school curriculums; a cross-cutting approach. All these actions are based on people’s participation, especially through the school feeding councils.

Third, with respect to health and nutrition, it is important to highlight that the Brazilian Constitution, since 1988, recognizes health as a right of all citizens and recognizes the State’s obligation to provide it. Our national health system – the Unified Health System – is free, providing decentralized services with an emphasis on primary healthcare. Ensuring good nutrition is recognized in Brazil as integral to healthcare and as such nutrition interventions are delivered via various channels of the primary care network. To that end, the Brazilian Ministry of Health, via guidelines for the National Food and Nutrition Policy, encourages continuous actions on the promotion of adequate and healthy food consumption, monitoring of food and nutritional status in all stages of life; and nutritional counselling for the prevention and control of nutritional deficiencies, overweight, obesity and associated morbidities.
Lastly, Brazil has been consistently engaged in efforts to build integrated policies and actions across sectors, from design to implementation to evaluation. For example, this year Brazil launched a new edition of the *Food Guide for the Brazilian Population*. This Guide provides easy-to-follow recommendations on diets, based on foods and how to combine them in meals, instead of food groups, portions or nutrients. The goal is to promote consumption of minimally-processed food *in natura*, and to encourage avoidance of ultra-processed food. In so doing, this Guide aims at promoting the health of people, families and communities, indeed the health of Brazilian society as a whole. Its focus on eating and meals aims to support healthy and adequate diets resulting from a food system which is socially and environmentally sustainable.

This is an overview of our work so far and a summary of our experiences. We are ready to share our experiences with other countries, and with FAO and WHO, if requested.

*Moderator:* Let’s now move to the next panellist, His Excellency Leo Varadkar, Minister for Health of Ireland. The focus of his speech will be the Irish experience in building policy coherence between economic objectives and healthy diets. Your Excellency, you have the floor.

**Leo Varadkar, Panellist 2**  
*Minsiter of Health*  
*Ireland*

Coherence between economic policies and healthy changes in diets  

I am delighted to be here to participate in this Roundtable discussion. Achieving coherence between food supply and public health policies to ensure global food and nutrition security is of universal importance to protecting our global population. Policy coherence, as we heard from previous speakers, means working together on policy actions across government departments and agencies which we all know does not happen all the time.

In Ireland, we recently launched a new public health initiative called “*Healthy Ireland – a Framework for Improved Health and Well-being*”. The Framework takes a multi-sectoral approach and aims to improve policy coherence. Its implementation will be via three broad platforms: first, the interdepartmental and cross-sectoral working group to improve collaboration in key areas, comprising senior officials from all major government departments and also key national agencies. Secondly, via integration of health and well-being into our health reform structures and programmes; and thirdly, via engagement with wider society through the Healthy Ireland Council which is designed to create an environment and culture which empowers people to make informed and healthier choices and encourages other stakeholders – particularly the sporting and industry sectors – to make a contribution to good health.

There are many good reasons to advance coherence between economic and nutrition policies and objectives, particularly because unhealthy diets are costly for our national economies and certainly because of the growth in chronic disease, obesity and diabetes. If we’re to be able to afford our health systems in the future, we need to reduce these threats.
The *Healthy Ireland Framework* will be used to help ensure policy coherence in the development of the *Nutrition Action Plan* for Ireland and this Action Plan will, of course, align itself with the recent WHO *Food and Nutrition Action Plan*.

Provision of adequate food and nutrition for the global population requires sustainable intensification of high quality food production, while taking into account the fact that the resources we need to produce food are limited. In Ireland, we are making a contribution by developing our agrifood sector in a sustainable manner, producing high-quality, safe food to assist in meeting global food and nutrition security needs. Our agrifood sector is underpinned by production and regulatory systems which both encourage high-value healthy products and ingredients, and ensure that the food produced is of the highest quality and also meets rigorous food safety standards.

Similarly, at EU level, the Common Agricultural Policy – the CAP – has adopted a number of significant reforms to allow European agriculture to develop in a sustainable manner for the benefit of European society and to facilitate higher standards of food safety in global supply.

In line with these national and EU goals, Ireland’s Department of Agriculture and Food supports food research in the areas of diet and nutrition, product formulation and reformulation. This includes comprehensive surveys on diet patterns of the Irish population, processing technologies to minimize food processing impacts on nutrient content of foods; and ingredient replacement technology to reduce salt and fat content in processed foods and increase incorporation of healthier ingredients. These research projects include collaboration and involvement throughout the agrifood industry to enhance adoption of findings.

We’ve also recently completed development of a strategic research and innovation agenda for agrifood, operative over the next three to five years. This agenda will identify priority areas for research and innovation in agricultural production and the processing of food, including food for health research. It has involved a collaborative, wide-ranging engagement of government departments and agencies in the areas of agrifood and health, including our Food Safety Authority which falls under my remit and also the Health Research Board.

In the field of food for health, priority areas include 1) development of high-quality, safe and sustainable foods and 2) better understanding of the role of food and nutrition in human body function. I also believe that there are vast opportunities for involvement with education so as to influence the dietary habits of young people and children. As such, we have a number of education initiatives aiming to raise awareness of the benefits of a nutritious diet. These include a school milk and fruit scheme where the government provides milk and fruit in some schools, as well as the “Food Dude”, which is a character-based programme which delivers messages about healthy food to children in a playful and friendly manner. This type of investment in the education of young people will provide high returns in savings to our health system in the future – or at least, we hope so.
An agenda which prioritizes policy coherence for nutrition provides the opportunity to identify policies to enhance food supply and demand at the same time supporting the development of more efficient markets and improving nutrition. No single sector on its own can achieve nutrition and food security goals and that's why we need a cross-departmental and cross-sectoral approach. I believe that Ireland’s new *Healthy Ireland Framework* is a good example of how to support a policy coherence agenda.

*Moderator:* Our third panellist – Dr Franco Sassi – will be talking about how it is possible to reshape the food system to improve diets using policy tools which are not detrimental to economic development. Franco, you have the floor.

**Franco Sassi, Panellist 3**  
*Senior Health Economist*  
*Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development*

**Coherence between economic objectives and healthy diets**

I am delighted to have an opportunity to contribute to this debate from the perspective of the OECD. In many ways the OECD has a unique perspective because we have been entrusted with the task of advising and supporting governments in the formulation of policies across all sectors of government intervention, and food policies are policies that require participation from all sectors of government. The OECD has a membership of 34 countries but its actions and analyses extend well beyond the scope of its membership.

Today the challenge of food and nutrition security is characterized by continuing population growth and the effects of the nutrition transition. As such, the food system is being called upon to further increase productivity and food production at a time when large sections of the world population are experiencing the alarming consequences of overnutrition and obesity, when the planet’s resources – especially land and water – are stretched to their limits, when the ecological footprint of agriculture and food production threatens the sustainability of the entire food system, and when demand for crops and for energy production – often sustained by government energy policies – fuels price volatility of basic food commodities, subsequently jeopardizing food security. These unprecedented global challenges call for a commensurate response and strong leadership.

Food policies lie at the intersection of many areas of government action and economic activity. Their design is full of complexity; their implementation is often constrained by powerful forces.

Although it is increasingly recognized that the progress in well-being of societies is not merely a reflection of economic growth, GDP remains a critical benchmark for countries, and especially in the aftermath of a severe economic recession, fostering GDP growth remains a key goal for governments. However, governments have learnt lessons from the recent crisis. The dramatic consequences of some forms of deregulation, especially in the financial sector, have taught us that markets and micro- and macro-economic balances will not always self-correct. Certainly, we cannot expect imbalances and incoherence in food policies to self-correct, either. However, many governments continue to fear that the deregulation and fiscal incentives that may be required to
improve nutrition outcomes could hinder economic growth and the pursuit of economic policy objectives. Work done by the OECD and others has shown that those fears are largely unfounded.

The message I would like to convey in this brief talk is very simple: government policies to improve the quality of nutrition and access to food do not prevent the pursuit of broader economic and social goals. They do not interfere with other government policies nor do they make markets less efficient in creating jobs and delivering economic goals, rather they can offer new opportunities.

At the same time, there is no question that productivity is no longer a goal per se in agriculture and food production. Productivity growth must be qualified along the dimensions of nutrition and resource sustainability, among others, and government policies are needed to achieve this.

The case of palm oil that Dr Hawkes discussed in her presentation provides a graphic illustration of this concept. Policy incoherence in addressing the trade-offs between economic growth, nutrition, environmental and energy production goals has so far prevented the realignment of economic incentives along the food chain, hindering the creation of value for consumers and societies.

Concerns about the coherence between food and broader economic policy objectives are especially associated with policies to address the obesity epidemic which today represents a large part of the health burden of malnutrition. OECD and WHO have jointly undertaken an extensive analysis of possible policy responses to this problem and their expected impacts. We have shown that a policy package including regulatory and fiscal measures as well as health promotion campaigns in schools and via mass media have the potential to deliver significant gains in health and longevity and to cut health expenditures in countries at all levels of income. In China alone, 900 000 years of life would be gained by the population every year and in Europe, 600 000. Twenty million years of life free of cancer and 13 million years of life free of cardiovascular diseases would be added to the health expectancies of countries like Brazil, China, and Canada within 20 years. According to estimates based on OECD and FAO models, these gains would be achieved with negligible impacts on food commodity prices (around - 2 percent of current prices) and international trade.

Given these estimates, we are arguing that countries step up efforts to fight all forms of malnutrition using more stringent policies than currently applied. For example, we recommend widespread national regulatory alignment with WHO dietary guidelines. This will require achieving major reductions in saturated fat consumption – up to one-third in the European Union, Australia and New Zealand, but with significant reductions also in some lower-income countries. The impact of these policies on the food system would be more tangible than in the previous case, with reductions in the demands for certain food commodities like meat and cheese resulting in a consequent price drop of up to 19 percent. That said, vegetable oils would be less affected and there would be compensating increases in the consumption of other food commodities. As Professor Sachs explained in his introductory presentation in the previous session, the call is not to reduce production of certain foods, but rather, to recalibrate the system to accelerate production of others. Overall, such an approach would not affect the sustainability of the food system, indeed it would likely provide incentives for innovation that would also lead to new economic opportunities.
It is important to acknowledge that unintended effects of food policies aimed at improving nutrition may create an unbalanced distribution of economic outcomes across countries and across different sectors within countries. For instance, countries that are net exporters of the most affected commodities will suffer the most and lower-income countries may end up being more affected. These effects, however, will be short-lived. They can be foreseen ahead of policy implementation and they can be mitigated, at least to some degree, through appropriate incentives and redistribution measures.

Let me conclude by saying that this is a time when many governments are concentrating on structural reforms to strengthen their economies. New food policies that change the food system in ways that can improve nutrition and health outcomes should be highlighted as an integral part of those structural reforms. Thank you.

*Moderator:* Thank you very much, Dr Sassi.

**Kyungwon Oh, Panellist 4**
*Director of the Korea Centres for Disease Control and Prevention*
*Division of Health and Nutrition Survey*
*Republic of Korea*

Coherence between economic policy objectives and healthy diets

Economic development has increased food convenience and availability. However it has also created challenges, including new malnutrition problems. Although nutritional regulations such as limits on production and marketing of processed food high in fat, sodium and sugar are in place, these policies are often in conflict with the food industry. In this regard, I would like to provide three examples of Korea’s nutrition policy to highlight the importance of close cooperation with stakeholders in terms of economic effect and successful implementation of nutrition policy.

First of all, let me introduce the nutrition support programme, *NutriPlus*. Malnutrition during pregnancy and the early stages of life can cause low birth weight, obesity, communicable and non-communicable diseases, and reductions in life expectancy. Many of these conditions also increase medical expenses. In other words, the nutritional status of pregnant women, lactating women, infants and young children can affect their health and healthcare costs over a lifetime. In this context, *NutriPlus* provides nutrition support in the form of education and supplementary foods to address anaemia and other types of malnutrition. The programme targets low-income pregnant women, lactating mothers, infants and children. *NutriPlus* has reduced prevalence of anaemia and low birth weight, and has improved energy and nutrient intake.

Second, I would like to describe our guidelines for reducing transfat and sodium intake. As consumption of processed foods in Korea has increased, risks of relatively higher intakes of fat, sodium and sugar are increasing as well. Since 2004, the Korean government has had in place policies to eliminate transfats in processed foods. Since 2010, transfats in 95 percent of processed food have been eliminated. Our government has also been working on reducing sodium intake since 2006. Koreans tend to prefer salty flavours and therefore sodium intake is very high. Lowering sodium intake is one of the top priorities of the Korean government. Against this backdrop, the
government has developed guidelines for food processors to voluntarily manufacture low sodium products. Along similar lines, the restaurant industry has also been voluntarily participating by developing low sodium menus and distributing education materials on nutrition since 2008. Korea needs to calculate the actual cost effectiveness of its sodium reduction campaign, considering that sodium intake reached its peak in 2010 and has been decreasing since then. Concomitant reductions in disease should be included in the equation. In this regard, studies in Korea and abroad show that up to 11 billion dollars could be saved annually if sodium intake could be reduced by two-thirds of present levels. This is 78 times what it costs to implement sodium reduction guidelines and policies.

The last nutrition policy I would like to describe places limits on processed food sales and marketing. The Korean government has banned sales of low-nutrition foods high in calories or caffeine in stores near schools. Television advertisements for such foods and targeting children are also banned from 5pm to 7pm. Initially, we faced substantial opposition in implementing this policy. However, the government and relevant industries successfully reached a compromise after adjusting the television advertising time limits, which were originally proposed for 5pm to 9pm, and which are now, as per the above, from 5pm to 7pm.

Because sufficient calories are not enough to ensure good nutrition, we need well-managed food systems that promote high quality diets. To this end, the Korean government is enacting policies which focus on improving diet and nutrition as well as quality control and food safety. This policy includes introduction of grading or certification systems for agricultural products, improving the food distribution system, and management of school meals by dieticians. These actions will hopefully enhance international competitiveness of Korean agricultural and food products, and improve national diet quality.

The nutrition policies I have introduced have been in place for less than 10 years; more monitoring is necessary prior to estimating their long term cost-effectiveness. Great effort is needed and there are many difficulties inherent to promoting these types of policies. However the lessons learnt are valuable and should be carefully considered before taking the next step. In this regard, it is all the more meaningful for us to promote this exchange between countries on successes and failures in policy coherence. I hope today's meeting will serve as a venue to open up new opportunities for reinforcing cooperation between countries and ministries.

Moderator: Thank you Dr Oh. The fifth and final panellist is Ms Vinita Bali. Her presentation will highlight how the private sector might readjust their policies to improve diet and nutrition, including specific examples from India.
Vinita Bali, Panellist 5  
*Member of Lead Group, SUN Business Network*  
*Former MD Britannia Industries Ltd.*  
*India*

**Coherence between private sector objectives and healthy diets**

Having worked in the food and nutrition sector for a few years, I’d like to start by stating a hypothesis that I’ve developed, and then follow up with three key points for reflection.

My hypothesis is that we know enough to do more than we’re doing and to deliver better outcomes than we’re delivering. Seventy to eighty percent of solutions to malnutrition are known or have been tried in some part of the world. We’ve seen examples from Brazil and Ireland this afternoon where the political leadership for food and nutrition has been taken up by politicians who are not just driving improved policy coherence, but also coherence in action.

These efforts are delivering outcomes that are different from what we see in other countries. As such, the question to my mind is certainly of policy coherence but more importantly, it is of action coherence. As a member of the Lead Group of the SUN initiative of the United Nations, one of the things that stands out very clearly is that those countries that have made significant progress in delivering better nutrition outcomes have done so because there is political leadership that is actually determining and directing not just the policies, but also actions and programmes, in each of those countries.

In line with this hypothesis, my first point is that what we need more than policy coherence is action coherence for which political leadership needs to be assumed. In a multi-sectoral challenge such as nutrition, this is best reflected by bringing together multiple sectors and players to take coherent actions that change outcomes. There are large food companies, global as well as local, around the world that are spending hundreds of billions of dollars on marketing their products, including foods of minimal nutritional value. In many instances, public sector regulation of this marketing has not kept pace with related issues regarding increased magnitude of malnutrition problems. As such there has to be a more productive dialogue between the players who impact food, and the public sector. In addition to regulation, this dialogue must include hygiene and sanitation – which are very important in many countries, including India – as well as simple things like fortification of staple foods.

Until recently, I worked for a large food-based company in India, and one of the things we did as part of our corporate social responsibility plan was work on the fact that India has a very high prevalence of malnutrition, 47 percent of children under the age of five are stunted and iron deficiency anaemia impacts about 70 percent of schoolchildren. Beginning with this challenge, we developed fortified biscuits, cookies and bread for use in the government’s large midday school meal programme. We also did quite large longitudinal studies over a period of time to assess the impact of these fortified products, with results showing haemoglobin levels increasing from 8.5 to 11-11.5 within a period of approximately 90 days. We followed up this programme with an extensive communication and education campaign for the parents of these children. That campaign was rolled out in a large area of New Delhi as well as in three or four villages in
the south. The results were virtually the same across locations. When parents are educated about the importance of a diverse diet, health and nutrition, positive change occurs. For example in the villages, we saw the beginnings of a large number of kitchen gardens. We also had several villagers actually approaching the local municipal authorities and demanding toilets once they began to understand the nutrition and health implications of open defecation.

This second point I’m making is that government has a responsibility to create policies, but subsequent action coherence can only occur if there is also dialogue between the private sector, government, NGOs, civil society and all the other development agencies that have a significant and critical role to play.

The multisectoral approach requires a dialogue between different actors. This is a big Conference with many experts, but I’m not sure how many of the largest food and agricultural companies are represented in a meeting like this, to share their points of view and engage in a productive dialogue, the conclusion of which would be not just policy coherence but also action coherence. Thank you very much.
Synopsis of Comments from the Floor and Panellist Responses

Questions from the floor addressed the challenge of how to collaborate with a private sector which, in many cases, deliberately promotes practices which are, in fact, antithetical to public health objectives. There were also related questions on government collusion as well as a request for examples of public sector best practices.

An additional comment concerned the need to reconcile environmental sustainability goals with calls to improve food systems.

Ms Hawkes, Mr Varadkar, and Mr Oh responded to questions from the floor as follows:

Ms Hawkes:

I would like to divide policy incoherence into two categories: intentional and unintentional. The distinction is important. Sometimes, it’s because we just don’t know what policy incoherence is that we haven’t sought solutions. In these cases there are no actions which are deliberate. In other cases, there are absolutely interests that make policy incoherence deliberate and difficult to reconcile and which require strong government action as a result, for example, the stringent policies that Franco Sassi mentioned.

It’s important to note that many governments around the world are implementing such policies, with subsequent reductions in sugar, fats and salt consumption. We must call on countries to learn from each other in order to better implement more effective policies for positive impact.

Mr Varadkar:

The whole underlying theme in this discussion is the conflict between economic and fiscal policy on the one hand and policies related to nutrition and public health on the other. The key to tipping the balance in our favour is to be much better at convincing our governments, our departments of finance in particular, that the short-term benefits of the former, including increased employment and trade, GDP growth, maybe even increased tax revenues, are likely outweighed in the medium- to long-term by increased health-care costs – already spiralling out of control in western countries – as well as increased welfare costs due to rising disabilities and ill-health from chronic disease.

Having served in diverse sectors of the government, I have come to believe that the health community is actually not very good at curtailling health costs and has a credibility problem with finance departments and the broader government. Costs should decrease for different health problems if they are treated in an appropriate manner, but they actually don’t. We’re good at calculating what a certain health problem should, in theory, cost the economy but when a public health intervention goes through government, no health savings actually arise. We ought to be more realistic in calculating those costs and more astute at putting forward those arguments.
For example, take smoking in Ireland. It now costs 10 Euros to buy a packet of cigarettes in Ireland, plain packaging is being introduced, and smoking in public places is forbidden. These actions represent industry losses and were done based on the assumption that smoking would decrease and that, as a result, Ireland would have lower health care costs for respiratory diseases, thus offsetting some of the economic losses incurred by the regulations. But costs aren’t decreasing.

We have to overcome this challenge. If we’re going to convince the rest of government, we have to show them how our public health interventions will actually save money.

Mr Oh: An example can be made of Korea’s salt regulation policy, which aims to reduce salt-content in our processed foods. When it was enacted, the food industry worried about sales reductions, but neither the taste of the food nor the volume of sales has changed that much.

Mr Alwan ended the audience discussion by apologizing for the time limitations, and thanking both panel and audience for an interesting Roundtable providing clear examples of policy coherence and policy options. Co-Chair Radziewicz-Winnicki closed the panel.
Co-Chairs: Dr Tito PIZZARO, Head of the Division of Health Public Policies and Promotion of the Ministry of Health, Chile

His Excellency Igor RADZIEWICZ-WINNICKI, Undersecretary of State, Ministry of Health, Poland

Moderator: Joachim VON BRAUN, Director, Center for Development Research, University of Bonn

Main Speaker: Marie RUEL, Director, Poverty, Health and Nutrition Division, International Food Policy Research Institute, USA – Shaping Agricultural policies to make them nutrition-enhancing

Panellists: Her Excellency Nemesia ACHACOLLO TOLA, Minister for Rural Development and Land of the Plurinational State of Bolivia – Country case study: Making agriculture policies nutrition-sensitive

The Honourable Akinwumi AYO ADESINA, Minister for Agriculture and Rural Development, Nigeria – Country case study: Making agriculture policies nutrition-sensitive

The Honourable Kevin CONCANNON, Under Secretary of State, United States Department of Agriculture, USA – Country case study: Making agriculture policies nutrition-sensitive

Jeff WAAGE, Coordinator of the Global Panel on Agriculture and Food Systems for Nutrition, and Director, London International Development Centre – Improving coherence within the food systems for nutrition
Good morning and welcome to today’s session on “Policy Coherence for Nutrition-Sensitive Agriculture”. I’d like to introduce our Moderator, Professor Joachim von Braun.

Thank you Co-Chair. Ladies and gentlemen, distinguished guests and colleagues, I’m very pleased to address you this morning and to moderate this panel, which brings some controversial issues to the table.

Let me make a few introductory remarks. Agendas for the food we grow and agendas for the food we eat – that is: agriculture and nutrition – still need to overcome decades of mutual isolation from each other. The International Conference on Nutrition in 1992 was very important for bringing nutrition to the fore but for various reasons it did not generate the type of momentum needed to overcome this disconnect. In contrast, the ICN2 does have the capacity to do this, not least in terms of increasing demand to document empirical evidence of nutrition outcomes generated through investment in agriculture.

The concept of nutrition-sensitive agriculture can be divided into three broad areas of potential impact:

- First, there is income and employment generated in agriculture which, together with improvement in nutrition knowledge and behavior, results in improved nutrition outcomes for farmers and their families, who are often poor and undernourished.
- Second, there is the production of affordable and healthy foods which comprise diets which are both rich in micronutrients and globally accessible.
- Third, there is “no-harm” agriculture: that which manages soils and water sustainably, preventing excessive use of pesticides, herbicides and subsequent nutrient run-offs.

In each of these three outcome areas, nutrition sensitivity can and must be improved.
Another important outcome is sustainable agriculture, which is one of the goals of the emerging Sustainable Development Goals agenda. Sustainable agriculture uses research and innovation to maintain and improve water and soil management, protect biodiversity, and reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Sustainable agriculture also considers the nutrition effects of investment in innovation.

To conclude this introduction, I’d like to note that agriculture is changing fast, becoming part of a wider bio-economy which includes biofuels, biopharmaceuticals, lignocelluloses, the expansion of aquaculture and new health traits. Agriculture is not just crops, livestock and forestry, which this panel needs to take into account.

It’s now my pleasure to introduce our keynote Speaker, Dr Marie Ruel, of the International Food Policy Research Institute. Dr Ruel has been Director of IFPRI’s Poverty, Health and Nutrition Division since 2004. Prior to IFPRI, she was Head of the Nutrition and Health Division of the Institute of Nutrition of Central America and Panama in Guatemala. She has worked for more than 25 years on policies and programmes to alleviate poverty, food insecurity and malnutrition in developing countries.

Marie Ruel, Main Speaker
Director, Poverty, Health and Nutrition Division
International Food Policy Research Institute
USA

Shaping Agricultural policies to make them nutrition-enhancing

The topic on which I’ll speak is shaping agricultural policies to make them nutrition-sensitive. I’d like to add that not only agriculture needs to become nutrition-sensitive and it’s important to remember that – aside from focusing on nutrition, agriculture and health – we should also deliberate on water and sanitation, education, and social protection to make these gender- and nutrition-sensitive as well. Gender and nutrition are at the centre of all these sectors and, as such, it’s necessary for there to be interaction between them, because people need more than food and income, they need potable water, education, health and other services as well.

This conceptual framework of the food system was developed by Per Pinstrup-Andersen. The food system is represented by pre- and post-farm gate inputs, production, processing, marketing, retailing and consumption, all important pathways for the improvement of health and nutrition.

I’d like to focus now on the income-based impact pathway which Dr von Braun introduced. This slide shows the relationship between stunting and GDP per capita; the top line of the shaded area shows the reduction in stunting that is to be expected from an increase in GDP. It’s been calculated that a ten percent increase in GDP leads to a six percent reduction in stunting. This rate of reduction is too slow, it needs to be accelerated. And indeed this slide shows countries where prevalence of undernutrition is higher than it should be, given their GDP. Further complicating the issue is the fact that higher incomes lead to an increase of overweight and obesity. For example, a ten percent increase in income has been shown to increase risk of overweight and obesity in women by seven percent. So simply put, a higher income on its own does not necessarily ensure
improvements in nutrition. As such, we need to make agriculture-based income effects more nutrition-sensitive, namely by ensuring that people invest more income in food and health. Doing this requires meeting vulnerable families’ basic needs in terms of health, education, and social protection services.

Key to these goals is women’s empowerment. Agriculture can have either positive or negative impacts on women’s time, energy expenditure and health. We have to ensure that the potential positive impacts are prioritized in terms of agenda setting and programme implementation.

Which agricultural policies should be prioritized in order to improve nutrition? Although there are many more areas that should be emphasized than I can discuss in this short presentation, I will try to focus on some of the most important. First, we should change our production focus. In the past, this has been on growing sufficient food to feed the planet, measured in terms of having enough calories. There have been positive results as a result of this focus: production, productivity and incomes have increased. However what is missing is improved accessibility of nutrient-rich foods. Humans don’t just need calories; they also need micronutrient-rich foods consumed as part of diverse and balanced diets.

We need a stronger focus on access to animal-source foods (consumed in sufficient but not excessive quantities) as well as fruits, vegetables and legumes. This focus must include production, marketing and consumption. None of these foods are present enough in the diets of the poor in adequate quantities to allow them to meet their micronutrient needs.

Homestead food production initiatives are an example of a type of programme that is working in this area of nutrition-sensitive agriculture. These programmes typically focus on fruit, vegetable and sometimes poultry or livestock production for home consumption. They also often target women. In so doing, homestead food production programmes “activate” the afore-mentioned women’s empowerment pathway from agriculture to nutrition.

Home-grown school-feeding programmes are another example. Under these, local small farmers supply produce to school feeding programmes. As such, farmers are guaranteed a market to sell their produce and schoolchildren eat more fruits and vegetables, with positive implications for micronutrient intake. With this programme paradigm, agriculture, nutrition, education and health are all brought together.

Despite these two promising examples of nutrition-sensitive agriculture programming, more research and development is needed. For example, fresh, nutritious foods spoil easily, as such we need better cold chain technologies to ensure their preservation and to increase incentives for producers, many of whom are currently deterred by the challenge of perishability.

An area where research and development has already shown real results is biofortification of staple crops – this is the breeding of staple crops that are rich in micronutrients such as iron, vitamin A and zinc. This is a situation that benefits everybody, where staple crops yield both calories and micronutrients and, since the biofortified traits are sometimes invisible, there may be little need to change the behavioural patterns of populations. In these cases, the irony is that nobody knows it, but it’s good for you!
Dr Hawkes spoke in her presentation about making select food value chains more nutrition-sensitive. There has been much discussion on this topic, but still great uncertainty surrounds it. Dr Hawkes gave examples of how to bring different actors of the value chain together to educate them on nutrition and to reach common goals. This is not easy, and examples were also given of potential conflicts and differences in incentives. Work also needs to be done on the demand for nutritious food, which is not as high as it should be. For example, livestock owners in Ethiopia sell all their milk at local markets without keeping any for their household, as they don’t know that milk is necessary for children’s growth. In this and similar cases, farmers benefit from a larger income, but to the detriment of their family members’ health.

In considering policies that focus on reducing inequalities: it’s not only the nature of the policy that is important, it’s who the policy reaches. Nutrition-sensitive agricultural policies should target poor smallholders and women in particular. Increasing women’s access, not only to inputs but also to information, markets and social protection services are of high value. These resources are often far more easily accessed by men than by women. Linking to other basic services, such as water and sanitation, health and education, is also imperative. Poor smallholders, and especially women, need all these services at the same time; agriculture can be a platform for facilitating their delivery.

The key message in this presentation is to be nutrition-sensitive, to be purposeful. We need agriculture-based interventions that incorporate nutrition in a meaningful way, that go beyond measuring nutrition as an outcome. We also need to recognize the risks and limitations of agriculture and food systems: agriculture produces food, it generates income and can improve the status of women. But agriculture alone doesn’t help with water and sanitation or formal education for women, so we need to link up with other sectors as well, to make multisectorality a mindset to ensure policy coherence and coordination for nutrition.

We also need to develop and embed the right set of incentives for multisectoral work at all levels.

It’s impressive to see the high level commitments we now have from countries which are moving towards having specific goals and acting in a nutrition-sensitive way, but this needs to be implemented throughout the policy cycle. We need more action on the ground that is nutrition-sensitive, we need to strengthen capacity, and as such, we need to invest. It’s not enough to have an agricultural programme that aims to be nutrition-sensitive. There also need to be sufficient funds to carry it out. Investment must be made in agricultural programmes to make them nutrition-sensitive. We need to document and measure, evaluate and monitor the impact of policies and programmes.

In conclusion, I would like to inform you of an event that will be taking place this afternoon, which is the launch of the Global Nutrition Report. I have two slides from this Report which illustrate the need for greater investment. The first one shows that out of 135 billion dollars in 2012 that
were invested in development aid, only 0.5 billion was invested in nutrition-specific programmes and one billion in nutrition-sensitive interventions. This is not enough. The other sectors that I mentioned – agriculture, education, health and social protection – take up approximately 35 percent of African governments’ budgets. This is an excellent opportunity for us to leverage these sectors to include more nutrition and gender sensitivity. They are quite large budgets and we can help by increasing the skills, the coverage and the reach of our nutrition actions if we lobby these sectors more effectively.

Moderator: Thank you for this very important keynote.

I would like to briefly introduce our panel, who will have seven minutes each to deliver their presentations. Afterwards we will open up the floor for discussion, questions and answers. Our two Co-Chairs are Dr Tito Pizzarro who welcomed you, and His Excellency Igor Radziewicz-Winnicki, the Undersecretary of State from the Ministry of Health in Poland. Also with us on the podium is Her Excellency Nemesia Achacollo Tola, Minister of Rural Development and Land, Bolivia; the Honourable Kevin Concannon, Under-Secretary of State at the United States Department of Agriculture; Professor Jeff Waage, Coordinator of the Global Panel on Agriculture and Food Systems for Nutrition and Director of the London International Development Centre; and the Honourable Akinwumi Ayo Adesina, Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development, Nigeria.

Your Excellency Nemesia Achacollo Tola, you have the floor.

Nemesia Achacollo Tola, Panellist 1
Minister for Rural Development and Land
Plurinational State of Bolivia

Country case study: Making agriculture policies nutrition-sensitive
(Original delivered in Spanish)

I’d like to take this opportunity to greet the Chair and underscore that 2014 was the International Year of Family Farming. I have more time today to speak than I did yesterday, particularly with respect to improving gender equity in family farming and to the resources which we need to invest in smallholders so as to reduce poverty.

Yesterday I briefly outlined the initiatives undertaken by the Bolivian Government. We continue to fight against hunger and undernutrition by empowering our farmers, both men and women, who toil in our rural areas. For example, I would like to mention our land reform efforts. Forty-six percent of women and 53 percent of men own land today in Bolivia – it’s in their name and they hold the deeds. Among these landowners are very small-scale farmers holding between one and 50 hectares.

There are approximately 8 000 women involved in our land redistribution programmes, these are women who are heads of households, mothers who are landowners. This is a situation which didn’t occur before the presidency of Evo Morales. Under the old Constitution, only 9.8 percent of women were landowners, the remaining 90 percent of Bolivian land was owned by men; the private sector in Bolivia controlled 39 million hectares of land and the indigenous farming sector
only 17 million by contrast. Today, there are 40 million hectares owned by our indigenous farmers and five million hectares by the private sector. Of this, 46 percent is owned by women and 53 percent by men. Today, over 50 percent of land is owned by indigenous farmers who have legal rights and official tenure of this land.

In the nine years since Evo Morales has been President of Bolivia, 501 new communities have been established, which manage and own their land. This means that another two million hectares have been incorporated into our land management schemes, and that therefore the fight against hunger and undernutrition – which we would like to reduce to zero – is almost fully achieved. The Ministry for Rural Development and Land is currently working directly with indigenous farmers’ organizations set up in our country and this collaboration allows us to empower these organizations through the transfer of resources.

The Bolivian government has also implemented research transfer programmes targeting poorer peasant families and women’s farmer organizations. We transfer resources to all regions according to vulnerability indexes. We’ve also adopted a very useful programme regarding the rearing of poultry and dairy cows and family fruit and vegetable gardens, targeted particularly at women farmers. These are generally small, local programmes; however they provide a great deal of value to our work in nutrition.

I should also like to take this opportunity to mention the transfer of credits and loans for small- and medium-sized farmers. These services facilitate access to cooperatives and associations which help set up vegetable gardens and small ruminant rearing. One hundred and forty million Bolivians have so far received assistance from these programmes, which encourage farmers to report and classify the work they’re carrying out, and to request resources and credit accordingly. In line with these programmes, we’ve also adopted a new law on financial services which has allowed us to regulate loans provided to the agricultural and livestock sector. A 6.5 percent interest rate is charged by both private and State banks which are in charge of the loans.

Another of the President’s concerns has been the need to strengthen irrigation. As such, programmes are being set up in joint collaboration between the Ministry of Land and Rural Development, the Ministry of Health, and the Ministry of Water and the Environment. These three Ministries have been working together to reduce poverty and improve quality of life of our poorest families since 2007. It has been and is a joint, collaborative effort. We believe that all the countries who are negotiating with us today should commit to obtaining similar goals.

Moderator: Thank you, your Excellency. The Honourable Akinwumi Ayo Adesina, the Minister for Agriculture of Nigeria, has the floor.
Akinwumi Ayo Adesina, Panellist 2

Minister for Agriculture and Rural Development
Nigeria

Country case study: Making agriculture policies nutrition-sensitive

Today I would like to speak from the perspective of Africa.

There is no doubt at all that Africa is on the rise; however, economic growth has not yet translated into improved nutrition. People eat nutritious food but they don’t eat GDP growth. It is estimated that almost 240 million people in Sub-Saharan Africa do not eat sufficiently well to maintain good health and well-being, and that 12 Africans die every minute as a result of hunger and malnutrition. Today, Africa has the highest prevalence of undernourishment in the world, afflicting almost 1 in 4 people. Further, 8 of the 14 countries bearing the heaviest child stunting burden are in Africa.

Given these statistics, there is clearly a detachment between the nature of economic growth, the policy incentives that are driving that growth, and the prevalence of poor and hungry people. To narrow this gap and succeed in lifting millions of people out of poverty, to massively reduce malnutrition and to create a model of shared prosperity, Africa must focus on transforming its rural economy. We must make this rural economy the new wealth economy for Africa, and the way to do that is to transform agriculture.

Historically, agriculture on the continent has been framed in terms of development, as a way of managing poverty. To turn things around, we must begin to look at agriculture as a business, as a sector to create wealth and generate income for people, and also as a platform for investing in better household nutrition, health and education.

In Nigeria today, we treat agriculture as a business. We are developing and deploying an integrated approach to boost our food production, to increase availability, access and affordability of food and improved nutritional outcomes.

Let me say a word about the issue of policy coherence. Nutrition-enhancing policies must be integrated and coherent across the entire value chain; they should include policies and incentives to boost food production, reduce post-harvest losses, expand processing and commercialization, and improve food safety grades and standards. Social transfer policies in particular are needed to reach the poor and the vulnerable, in particular cash transfer and school feeding programmes, seeds and fertilizer subsidies, and similar. And there is no doubt that markets need to be strengthened: markets and trade are crucial for accessing food at a lower cost. We also need to prioritize fiscal incentives that encourage the private sector to develop and produce fortified foods.
I should like to give some examples from Nigeria of policies to increase food production. We’ve started a programme called the *Growth Enhancement Scheme* to provide subsidized seeds and fertilizers to our farmers directly via electronic coupons on their mobile phones or what we call “e-wallets”. Between 2012 and 2014, we reached 14 million farmers via their mobile phones to give them access to seeds and fertilizers, in so doing we cleaned up the corruption of 40 years and restored dignity back to the farmers. As a result, we were able to increase food production at national level by 21 million metric tonnes within three years, which is one million metric tonnes above the target we set for ourselves by 2015.

Let me say that there is an issue with food production because I don’t believe you can address malnutrition unless you produce enough food. The Nigerian experience has been that increased food production reduces inflation, benefitting both urban and rural poor. There is also a gender dimension: the *Growth Enhancement Scheme* now reaches 2.5 million women farmers, all of whom get their seeds and fertilizers via electronic coupons on their mobile phones. These inputs are significantly raising agricultural productivity on their farms, increasing income and improving the nutrition of their households.

We have also taken a lead on policies for biofortification in Africa, which I believe is crucial. Today in Nigeria, half a million farmers have received provitamin A-enriched cassava varieties from our biofortification programme. We estimate that three million Nigerians will consume these enriched cassava varieties by 2015. In fact, in the next four years, we estimate that 80 million Nigerians will have access to nutritious foods coming from provitamin A-enriched varieties.

Another area of nutrition policy development for us is micronutrient powders. We have worked together on this with the Global Alliance for Improving Nutrition, so far reaching 100 000 children under the age of five with micronutrient powders through their mothers. Via mobile phones, we’ve started renewed efforts to reach even more. Our goal is to reach two million women, estimated to impact three million children, in the next few years.

I should also like to say a word about high-energy, nutritious foods. These are big business in Africa; the market is estimated at 700 million dollars annually, 300 000 metric tonnes in total. However, only 10 to 20 percent of this is fortified blended food produced in Africa. What you need to make high-energy foods is sorghum, maize and soybean – we cultivate all three crops in Africa so why is Africa importing these foods from elsewhere? We should give priority to strengthening African processing capacity to produce and supply high-energy nutritious food for relief, public distribution, therapeutic feeding and commercial markets. For example, we now have a private sector company in Nigeria called “Dansa Foods”, which has allocated 50 million dollars for what will be Africa’s largest high-energy food plant. This is such a crucial issue that I personally led an effort which we called *Transformative Partnerships for High Energy Nutritious Foods for Africa* which was launched during the World Economic Forum in Abuja.

I should also mention Nigeria’s School Feeding Programme, which is another component of our work across sectors. This programme has, to date, reached two million children.
In closing, I’d like to say that national partnerships – between Ministries of Agriculture, Health, Education and Women’s Affairs – are crucial to increasing policy synergies and complementarities for reducing malnutrition in Africa. Global partnerships are also crucial. For example we now have the new Alliance for Food Security and Nutrition; the Global Panel for Agriculture and Food Systems for Nutrition; and, of course, Scaling Up Nutrition. These initiatives – each of which offers the opportunity to improve agriculture-nutrition linkages – should be well aligned.

Moderator: Thank you, Minister Adesina. I now request the Honourable Kevin Concannon to take the floor.

**Kevin Concannon, Panellist 3**  
*Under Secretary of State, United States Department of Agriculture*  
*USA*

Country case study: Making agriculture policies nutrition-sensitive

Firstly, I would like to express how appreciative I am to be here with you, partaking in this important discussion on the multiple challenges of malnutrition in the 21st century and how we can collaborate to identify global solutions. The great challenge is to put policies in place that will address the simultaneous dimensions of undernourishment, micronutrient deficiencies, and overnutrition – the so-called “triple burden of malnutrition”.

The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), of which I am a part, is well positioned within the US to produce, implement and oversee a comprehensive approach to food, nutrition and agricultural policy, what some might call a national food policy. With seven mission areas that include food and nutrition, the farm services programmes, food safety, agricultural marketing and regulation, natural resources and the environment, rural development and research, we house in one federal department all of the key elements needed to ensure nutrition-sensitive agricultural policies.

As the principal US hunger and nutrition policy leader, I have often said that we at USDA view hunger and obesity as different sides of the same coin, and that we are striving to ensure that our suite of 15 federal nutrition assistance programmes address both sides of that coin. Each of these programmes plays a critical and unique role in our country’s nutrition safety net. It is this suite of programmes that position us to ensure access to both healthy foods and nutritional guidance for all Americans throughout their lifespan. In the fiscal year 2013, the Federal government spent over 108 billion US dollars to fund and operate the nutrition assistance programmes, representing about 60 percent of the budget of the US Department of Agriculture. These programmes now serve directly one in four Americans over the course of a year. That’s a surprise to many people, even in the United States.

During my limited time today, I’d like to highlight three of our programmes in particular: the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program for Women, Infants and Children (WIC), the National School Lunch and School Breakfast Programs, and the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP). I would also like to briefly discuss the evidence-based foundation of these programmes and our commitment to positively impact the health of our current and future generations.
The WIC programme provides monthly nutrition and health services’ evidence-based supplemental food packages to meet the specific nutrient needs of pregnant women, infants, young children and women who are nursing. Food packages emphasize fruits, vegetables, whole grains, lean proteins and appropriate-fat dairy products. Breastfeeding encouragement and support is also a hallmark of the programme, as are nutrition education efforts and linkages to the rest of the health care system.

Today, over eight million pregnant and post-partum women, infants and very young children receive WIC benefits each month. Over half of the infants born in the US – 51 percent – participate in the programme each year. Participation in WIC leads to better pregnancy outcomes – fewer infant deaths, fewer premature births, and increased birth weights – while also saving money on future healthcare costs. Past research has shown that every dollar spent on WIC prenatal services for low-income women saves between USD1.77 to USD3.13 within the first sixty days of life.

Evidence of the benefits of WIC continues to mount. For example, in 2013, a California study found that state-wide WIC food packages were associated with improvements in measures of early childhood obesity and preschoolers’ consumption of fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and low fat milk. In fact, the Center for Disease Control, the major standard in the US for public health, cited the WIC programme recently for its role in levelling off or reducing overweight and obesity rates in very young children in 18 states across the US.

Each day, the USDA school nutrition programmes provide children with meals at school. The USDA school meals programmes are now offered in about 100 000 public and private schools across the country. Every school day, over 30 million children participate in the National School Lunch Program and about 14 million participate in the School Breakfast Program. Nearly 70 percent of children who have lunch at school in that programme are from lower-income families and 85 percent of children served the Breakfast Program are from lower-income families.

In 2010, Congress passed the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act. This act called for changes to the school meals programme, including the first substantial overhaul of the meal patterns in 15 years, to bring them in line with the most recent Dietary Guidelines for Americans. In 2012-13, USDA began rolling out the resulting series of science-based changes to the school food environment and 92 percent of American schools are now meeting these new standards.

Finally, SNAP is the US federal food stamp programme. SNAP serves an average of 46 million people each month across the US, however coverage expands when the economy is sluggish, and when the economy improves, it contracts. SNAP can make an enormous difference in diet quality and welfare, providing access to nutritious food and funnelling resources into communities, including rural communities, across the country.

**Moderator:** Ladies and gentlemen, I’m sure you’ll agree that one of the great benefits of international conferences is that we learn from each other across countries. We have heard three extremely interesting, highly diverse country experiences. I now call Professor Jeff Waage to give us his thoughts on improving coherence within the food systems for nutrition.
Jeff Waage, Panelist 4  
Coordinator, Global Panel on Agriculture and Food Systems for Nutrition  
Director, London International Development Centre

Improving coherence within the food systems for nutrition

Good morning. Minister Adesina has already introduced the Global Panel on Agriculture and Food Systems for Nutrition. To explain a bit further: The Global Panel is an international group of experts which was established at the Nutrition for Growth event in London in 2013. Working in an individual capacity, but linked to a range of major public institutions, the Panel’s aim is to provide effective guidance to decision-makers, particularly governments, to inform and generate nutrition-enhancing agricultural and food policy and investment in lower- and middle-income countries. Today at one o’clock, Minister Adesina will be chairing a Side Event at which the Global Panel is launching its first brief for policy-makers entitled “How can agriculture and food system policies improve nutrition?”

I have three comments regarding this Panel’s theme:

The first is with respect to the need for coherence across sectors and agendas relevant to linking agriculture and food systems more closely to nutrition. Agriculture, nutrition and health are discrete sectors, also called discrete silos. They have developed separately in our educational and research institutions, in our governments and in our international organizations for decades. Bringing them together to make agriculture work for nutrition and health is an enormous challenge, which requires considerable goodwill, compromise and commitment on the part of professionals.

The same is true for programmes which have been separately addressing undernutrition, often in a rural and low-income country context, and overweight, obesity and non-communicable diseases, often in an urban and high-income country context. Bringing these efforts together is challenging, but we know they are increasingly linked – physiologically, geographically and economically – as problems of poor-quality diets, and as problems of the poor. Our approach must be integrated and coherent. In considering how agricultural and food policies can improve nutrition, the Global Panel has tried to embrace these different but linked, sectors and agendas. The message for policy-makers is that a coherent approach requires facilitating coordination and collaboration between these sectors and agendas.

Secondly, I would like to comment on coherence in programmes and policies across the food system. When we think of agricultural policies to improve nutrition, we usually think of production and its capacity to improve the availability of nutritious foods. But there is in fact a much broader range of policies that can contribute to improving the quality of foods available, accessible and affordable to consumers. The Global Panel suggests that these fall into four domains: policies that affect production of foods; policies that affect markets and trade, including the transport, storage and agribusiness elements that bring often perishable nutritious foods to markets; policies that can improve the purchasing power of consumers, such as food price ceilings and school feeding programmes which can bring nutritious foods to vulnerable groups who cannot easily afford them; and policies that influence the way in which food is processed and the way in which
consumers are informed and educated about food products, such as food fortification and food safety and quality standards.

No one policy on its own will be as effective as a combination of policies across these areas. A consumer-facing policy which promotes consumption of nutritious foods will be more successful if agriculture and trade policies have encouraged production, marketing or import of those foods, thereby enhancing their accessibility and reducing their prices.

As such, my second point regarding coherence is for policy-makers to consider the full range of policies and domains that could be leveraged to improve nutrition, and to integrate these in an effective way. A first step in achieving this goal is to map the potential or demonstrated nutrition impact of various policies across the range of domains I just described. The public and private institutions responsible for these policies can then be brought together to discuss the results.

My final comment is about removing policy incoherence in food systems. While agriculture and food policies have enormous potential to support nutrition, they may also have quite unintended negative nutritional impacts. Trade policies that are critical to the import of affordable foods can also be pathways for the import of unhealthy foods. Several governments have found it challenging to subsidize local nutritious foods and prevent importation of unhealthy foods in the face of trade agreements.

Agricultural policies that support the production of high-energy staple foods are critical to food security and farmers’ incomes and having enough food. At the same time, if not managed carefully, they may lower the price of those foods relative to more expensive nutrient-rich foods like vegetables, fruit and animal-based foods, and they may discourage farmers from producing these nutritious foods. Without reducing the importance of policies for staple food production, governments can create a more level playing field for particularly nutritious foods by directing research and extension investment and input subsidies towards their production.

Coherence across agricultural and health sectors, coherence across different policy domains and their integration, and removing incoherence from existing policies: The Global Panel on Agriculture and Food Systems for Nutrition argues that all three of these areas hold many opportunities for improving coherence between the objectives of agriculture and food policies and our challenge to improve nutrition. Across all three areas, policy-makers will want to consider not only new nutrition-enhancing policies but also to revisit existing agricultural and food policies to see how they might be changed. This is particularly true for countries facing multiple burdens of malnutrition, where it is important to ensure that policies are having positive impacts on reducing undernutrition while simultaneously addressing obesity and associated risks.
Synopsis of Comments from the Floor and Panellist Responses

Member States spoke to their own experiences in addressing the multiple burden of malnutrition, and strengthening nutrition-sensitive agriculture, summarized as follows:

**Indonesia:** We would like to give an example of Indonesia’s experiences in agricultural programmes in terms of improving nutrition at household level. As part of the Government’s commitment to support balanced food consumption, the Government of Indonesia issued a Presidential Regulation in 2009 which has been implemented throughout the nation. The first goal of this regulation is to promote a more diverse, nutritious, safe and balanced daily diet, and to increase levels of food availability as well as economic opportunities in rural areas. Programme activities under this first goal include campaigns to educate people on diet quality. Our second goal is to promote a programme which empowers women to build their own capacity in food security at household level – what we call the Sustainable Food Diversity Programme. This programme has been implemented to optimize creation of homestead gardens. Since there are approximately 38.8 million households in Indonesia, and the total area of homesteads is 10.3 million Ha which is 14 percent of the total area of agricultural land, the role of homestead gardens in providing nutritious food and reducing household expenditure on food should be significant.

**Oman (delivered in Arabic):** Oman has implemented various projects, programmes and policies to ensure food security under a 5-year plan. Areas of focus include date and cereal production, the latter using improved seeds and with special emphasis on supporting smallholders. We are also seeking to improve our fishery and aquaculture capacity in order to tap into the nutrition potential of this sector.

We have also set up the Oman Institute for Agricultural Investment, part of the investment branch of the Government, to try to achieve food self-sufficiency in agricultural products of special importance. Targeted investment has enabled establishment of various projects for local products, including dairy project and meat production. We are also refining our national strategy on food production, which will evaluate needs and requirements as well as improving production.

**Paraguay (delivered in Spanish):** In my country, we are currently implementing legislation to promote breastfeeding. There is also a project to improve nutrition which we hope to implement shortly. In the last ten years, chronic undernutrition has been reduced from 18 to 10.8 percent. We also have a strategy to reduce non-communicable diseases; with reduction of salt consumption the primary concern with respect to nutrition.

Regarding agriculture, we have programmes in place to increase family farming production and to improve public procurement to ensure that it prioritizes family-based agricultural production.

**Sudan (delivered in Arabic):** We have a specific programme designed to ensure food security and food safety, supported by FAO. This is a project which is being implemented in regions in the west of Sudan. Through guaranteed loans for farmers and other means, the programme is promoting production diversity, including legumes and livestock production. Revenues from this activity has given rise to an increase in production of between 340 and 400 percent. With this programme, we have increased farmers’ incomes at the same time as improving the nutritional value of food produced.
Thailand: Since the 1980s, Thailand has experienced rapid reductions in malnutrition under the Poverty Alleviation Plan, implemented at community level in poorer areas. Agricultural policy has put emphasis on food production for the subsystem economy of the general population and also promotes nutritious, low-cost food such as rice, groundnut and sesame. We are promoting complementary feeding for both pregnant and lactating mothers, infants and young children, at the same time setting up dairy farms for the school milk programme; in this way, we have been able to reduce stunting. This policy has involved not only the agricultural sector but also education, local government and health. Our current policy is working its way through the National Food Committee to develop food management strategies to tackle both under- and overnutrition through food security and also food quality and safety. A report on these experiences is available on the UN SCN website².

In addition to country statements, a comment was made regarding the need for guidelines on healthy and sustainable diets which contribute to food and nutrition security and to healthy lifestyles for present and future generations. The need to couch such guidelines within a broader ecosystem approach was emphasized.

A number of questions were directed towards the Panel. These included a request for clarification on how mobile telephones are used to reach out to the most marginalized rural communities and indigenous farmers; and a request for more discussion on ways to mobilize the private sector to fortify their products to increase micronutrient intake.

Two fundamental questions regarding the links between production diversity and diet diversity, and the definition of diet diversity, were asked.

Finally, the issue of how to mobilize global communities such as the UN system and civil society to support both developed and developing countries to research and implement nutrition-sensitive agricultural policies was raised. What would be the mechanisms at both global and national levels?

Mr Concannon, Ms Nemesia Achacollo Tola, Mr Ayo Adesina, and Ms Ruel responded to questions from the floor as follows:

Mr Concannon: To respond to the question on diversity: In the United States, we are promoting farmers’ markets; there are currently about 8 000 nationally and more than 5 000 have been authorized to be able to process electronic benefits in our SNAP programme to promote more diverse, locally grown agricultural produce. In our school-based programmes, which cover the entire US, we are promoting locally grown fruits and vegetables which in themselves tend to be more diverse than the commodities grown on a larger scale in the US, relying on programmes at scale to promote and support diversity.

² http://www.unscn.org/files/Publications/Country_Case_Studies/Thailand_case_study_FINAL.pdf
**Ms Achacollo Tola:** Regarding working across sectors: There are no problems in Bolivia in that area; there were problems when the President took office, but now we have one comprehensive agenda, and we believe that the best way to move forward is through cross-sectoral dialogue and that is currently being conducted under the aegis of our President.

**Mr Adesina:** A word on the use of mobile phones: We started by making a register of all the farmers in the country, including biometrics and contact information. As such we are well-positioned to reach them directly. There are, in fact, more mobile phones than television sets in Nigeria so it makes more sense to reach the population by mobile phones. We are using a new technology called Near Field Communication (NFC). It starts with a card for which the farmers fill in their biometrics, then they can go to the input retailer and collect the subsidized inputs. With this system, you can eliminate the middlemen. There's going to be a primer on this; the World Bank is scaling up NFC technology to several African countries and I'd be very happy to share more information on the subject.

With regard to the private sector, the major issue is incentives, in my view.

**Moderator:** I should like to ask you a question regarding your experiences with cellphones. Is there an opportunity to connect nutrition messages to cellphone services beyond fertilizers, once you have the infrastructure?

**Mr Adesina:** Yes. We have been doing that and several other promotions for some time now, especially for women, which is crucial. In fact, we are working right now to reach roughly two million women farmers with information on nutrition and micronutrient powders.

**Ms Ruel:** I should like to reply to the diversity question, namely the importance of agricultural production diversity for nutrition. We have information on smallholders and at the local level; if the farmers have access to markets, production diversity is less important than if they don’t have good access to markets. In other words, if the markets are functioning well, you can buy diversity, you don’t have to produce it; if, however, the markets do not function well, then it’s important for the small farmers who are usually among the poorest members of the population and most susceptible to malnutrition to have their own production diversity so that their families can benefit.

**Moderator:** I’ll now highlight a few points of this panel. The idea to focus further on strengthening coherence between agriculture and nutrition has been adopted widely in all statements and in all the country experiences we have heard today, both from the podium and the audience. This bodes well for learning from each other regarding the know-how of strengthening that coherence agenda.

In terms of know-how, there has been repeated emphasis placed on strengthening governance in order to manage intersectoral cooperation. The idea of innovation has also been underlined, at programme and project levels in agriculture and nutrition and in joint programmes. I believe we need a new, strong, scientific initiative in both social and natural sciences in order to support the advancement of a coherent agricultural and nutrition strategy, together with strengthening the evidence base.
In this Conference, we have often heard reference to “value chain” improvements: improve the value chain of agriculture and food in order to enhance nutrition. Scientists have gone one step further: they refer to “nets” rather than “chains”. To add value to such webs, the links between interconnected value chains must be optimized. This way of thinking requires new methods and models and especially new administrative procedures: it’s not made up of random task forces and committees. It requires a new method of conceptual thinking which can be translated into action.

Finally, I would like to emphasize that the agenda we have discussed today is of extreme relevance to the Sustainable Development Goal debate. Its matrix is on what we mean by nutritional improvement and nutrition coherence and in that context we need to invest wisely. Coherence comes at a price: it’s an investment, but typically, when it relates to agriculture and nutrition more closely, it’s a very productive investment. Thank you for your attention.

Co-Chair Pizzaro closed the panel by noting that in the last Nutrition Conference in 1992, hunger, poverty and undernutrition were the prevailing issues. In this year’s ICN2, although we’re still dealing with hunger and undernutrition, we are now also tackling the burden of obesity concentrated in the poorest countries of our planet. The key to overcoming these issues continues to be nutrition from unprocessed foods from both the land and the sea.
Co-Chairs: Dr Tito PIZZARO, Head of the Division of Health Public Policies and Promotion of the Ministry of Health, Chile

His Excellency Igor RADZIEWICZ-WINNICKI, Undersecretary of State, Ministry of Health, Poland

Moderator: Barrie MARGETTS, Professor, Public Health Nutrition, University of Southampton, United Kingdom

Main Speaker: Pekka PUSKA, Professor, National Institute for Health and Welfare, Finland – How can we get nutrition in all policies? What will it take?

Panellists: The Honourable Tuitama Leao TALALELEI TUITAMA, Minister of Health, Samoa – Nutrition in trade policy

Lois BROWN, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of International Development and La Francophonie, Canada – Nutrition in agriculture policy

Maria Virginia CASTILLO JARA, Director-General, Food and Nutrition National Center of the National Institute of Health, Ministry of Health, Peru – Nutrition in social policy

Enoch HEMANS COBBINAH, Chief Director of the Ministry of Education, Ghana – Nutrition in education policy

Sarah ABDULLAH ALRAKAYAN, Researcher at the 'University of Rome Tor Vergata', Embassy of the State of Kuwait – Nutrition in health policy
PANEL 3 - NUTRITION IN ALL SECTORS

THURSDAY, 20 NOVEMBER 2014

Igor Radziewicz-Winnicki, Co-chair
Undersecretary of State, Ministry of Health
Republic of Poland

Good morning, ladies and gentlemen. This is the last panel of Roundtable 2; this time we shall be focusing on how to implement in a practical way “Nutrition in All Sectors”. It is my privilege and honour to introduce to you the Moderator of this session, Professor Barrie Margetts from the Department of Public Health Nutrition at the University of Southampton.

Barrie Margetts, Moderator
Professor of Public Health Nutrition
University of Southampton
United Kingdom

Excellencies, distinguished guests, colleagues, ladies and gentlemen. The aim of this third and final panel on policy coherence is to highlight success stories where countries are working together across sectors to address the challenge of malnutrition. During this session we shall hear from different countries about addressing this challenge via trade policies, agricultural policies, social and education policies and finally health policies.

I should now like to introduce you to our main Speaker, Professor Pekka Puska from the National Institute for Health and Welfare in Finland, who will address the questions: how can we get nutrition in all policies, and what will it take?

Pekka Puska, Main Speaker
Professor, National Institute for Health and Welfare
Finland

How can we get nutrition in all policies? What will it take?

Many of you know that nowadays, NCDs are responsible for about two-thirds of deaths worldwide; 80 percent of those deaths are from the developing world, causing not only problems in the public health sector but also for economic and social development. Many of you will be familiar with the picture in this slide from the Health Metric Study. The slide shows the most common risk factors for mortality around the world, including high blood pressure, tobacco use, high blood glucose, also obesity and high cholesterol. If you look carefully at this slide, you will see that how we eat and drink is absolutely crucial to contemporary, global public health.

The parameters for good nutrition are similar around the world, it's a question of both quantity and quality of fats, salt, sugar, fruits and vegetables and energy balance. Based on these parameters, we have many national and international recommendations and strategies, such as the WHO Global Strategy on Diet, Physical Activity and Health. Established about ten years ago, the Global Strategy emphasizes the need for action across sectors. However strategies alone are not enough;
there are very large gaps in implementation for many and diverse reasons. That said, there has been increasing political commitment during the last few years to take positive action. Three years ago, there was a High-Level Political UN Summit on NCDs in New York which passed a Political Declaration for Action.

It's easy to say that we should all work together, but how can this be achieved or promoted in a practical manner? The problem in the area of nutrition, as we have heard so many times here, is that the challenge is extremely complex; a very large number of policy areas are relevant.

Many colleagues have already mentioned “health-in-all policies”. This concept was launched several years ago and is based on the recognition that people's diets and lifestyles are influenced by a multiplicity of drivers originating from a range of sectors.

Last year, WHO had its Eighth Global Health Promotion Conference on this topic, to examine experiences, successes and failures. One of the primary outputs of the conference was the Helsinki Statement, consisting of seven recommendations as follows:

- commit to health and health equity as a political priority; health is important to all of us;
- ensure effective structures, process and resources;
- strengthen the capacity of Ministries of Health to engage with other sectors;
- build institutional capacity and skills;
- adopt transparent audit and accountability mechanisms;
- establish conflict of interest measures; and
- include community and social movements and civil society.

The conference also made a call to WHO and Member States to strengthen their own capacity and work with other international stakeholders on these issues.

The key question here is how to go about achieving these goals. The Helsinki Statement principles are general; they should be adapted to national situations. Given this need, the WHO, based on resolutions at the World Health Assembly last year, is preparing a framework for national action to try to help Member States. Much of this framework concerns nutrition.

I should like to mention some inter-sectoral examples from Finland, as we have been working for many years to improve nutrition and to reduce the obesity problem that we had decades ago. With respect to food and agriculture, the development of a rapeseed plant that grows well in Nordic climates has helped Finland replace dairy fat with a healthier vegetable oil, and a change in milk production subsidies from fat to protein has in fact lowered the fat content in milk. Finnish industry has complied with these shifts. For example a popular national biscuit producer has reduced use of saturated fat by 80 tonnes annually, and one of two leading meat packing companies has reduced salt and saturated fat use in its products by 80 and 150 tonnes respectively.
There has also been increased collaboration with supermarket chains; for instance, Finland’s Heart Symbol is currently used as a “healthy choice” flag on over 100 items for consumption. In line with this marketing, we now have a special tax on soft drinks and sweets; legislation has also been approved to proceed with salt labelling.

What are some lessons learnt from the Finnish experience? Are these intersectoral nutrition victories the result of a proactive, coordinated national agenda, or the result of pressure from the population? My experience is that we should definitely work for coherent policies, but the question is: how far can we coordinate the very complex nutrition system? Policy coherence is, of course, important, but we need action. Major breakthroughs often occur not as coordinated, comprehensive decisions but through priority spearhead issues. As nutrition issues are very complex, millions of lives can be saved with coordinated action on some of these spearheads, like salt.

Many Member States are now examining these issues as a follow-up to the National Health Forum in China on Health in All Policies: Achieving Sustainable Development.

We hear much discussion about the chain “From Farm to Fork”. However in this forum we should approach the argument from the other way, advocating for agriculture and food supply chains which reflect public health requirements as well the needs of sustainable development and climate change. This is what Professor Sachs emphasized in his keynote speech.

As already mentioned, WHO is preparing a framework for national action to help Member States in achieving these goals. This work with regional offices and Member States must be done in collaboration with FAO to ensure that the conversation considers strategies for promoting health across a range of policies. At the same time, it should be remembered that there are great potential benefits for sustainable and cost-effective sector-specific health development.

In conclusion, acting on the “health-in-all policies” concept calls for much rational planning, administration, implementation and research for evidence-based, coherent policies. Additionally, national politics are also critical. The public’s – i.e. voters’ – opinions, stakeholder pressures, and media framing can be immensely powerful in whether these types of policies are enacted and followed through upon.

Moderator: If there are any urgent comments or questions or points for clarification, we have time for one or two quick comments.

A question was asked regarding use of taxation measures for reducing consumption of sugar-sweetened beverages in low income populations, using smoking as a comparator.
Mr Puska: It is a rule of economics that if the price increases, consumption will decrease, but the relationship is complex and depends on circumstances. As regards tobacco, experience from around the world has shown that tobacco consumption has reduced considerably, particularly following reforms in South Africa and other countries. As regards taxation on sugar and soft drinks, there is less experience; in Finland we have just implemented taxation on these products but the impact so far has not been very high.

Moderator: I shall now revert to the panellists, each of whom will speak to a specific policy area of relevance to nutrition. Our first speaker is The Honourable Leao Talalelei Tuitama, who will talk about Samoa’s experience in nutrition in trade policies.

Leao Talalelei Tuitama, Panellist 1
Minister of Health
Samoa

Nutrition in trade policy

I am very much encouraged after listening to His Holiness the Pope this morning, I feel that we’ve all been enlightened and that the spiritual boost will assist us in our endeavour to face the challenge of nutrition.

In September this year, Samoa hosted the Third United Nations Conference on Small Islands Developing States (SIDS) and through the organization of a Sixth Side Event on Non-Communicable Diseases, Health and Development; Samoa took centre stage for an important international reflection on addressing the non-communicable disease crisis within a sustainable development context, focusing on trade and health. As a result of this Sixth Side Event, the Apia Challenge was adopted. The Apia Challenge tasks SIDS and development partners to reduce trade in unhealthy food and beverage products high in sugar, salt and fats. It calls for strengthened regulations on trade, including excise and other taxes, to reduce availability and consumption of unhealthy foods and drinks in SIDS. At the same time the Challenge advocates for installing support mechanisms that make healthy foods more readily available.

In terms of tax policy, excise taxes, import bans, and similar measures can, of course, be limited to products where there is a clear healthy alternative or where the food in question is not part of a recommended daily diet, such as sugar, sweet beverages, “Turkey Tails”, and “Mutton Flaps”.

If countries are able to install both limiting and encouraging measures and are supported by international organizations and development partners for doing so, the result will be increased coherence and mutual strengthening between nutrition and trade policies.

Non-communicable diseases are so prevalent in SIDS that these types of illnesses are considered to be causing national health and development crises. Given the political, economic, health and social impacts, an effective government response must be holistic. This need was formally acknowledged in the Pacific Islands during the Tenth Pacific Health Ministers’ Meeting in 2013,
held in Apia, Samoa. The Apia Communiqué was adopted whereby Pacific Ministries of Health reiterated their political commitment to address the non-communicable disease crisis by adopting goals such as developing targets for recommended levels of fats, sugar and salt in food and beverages, and by promoting multisectoral action. With respect to the latter, particular emphasis has been placed on leveraging trade policies to improve nutrition and health.

Samoa has experimented with applying excises and import bans in order to reduce the availability and subsequent consumption of foods and beverages considered to contribute to non-communicable diseases. To date, Samoa has imposed two taxes on soft drinks: an excise tax on domestic production and an import excise tax enacted in 2007.

Also in 2007, Samoa placed an import ban on turkey tails. The ban was imposed in part due to concerns about the high fat content of this commodity and its possible health consequences, but also because of the perception that importation of this low-quality food constituted a “dumping” on the Samoan market. The prohibition order was prepared, implemented and enforced and the import of turkey tails subsequently ceased in Samoa in 2007. However, as part of Samoa’s accession package to the WTO in 2011, we had to eliminate the ban. This is a classic example of how contradictory objectives between nutrition and trade policies result in incoherence.

It is important to note that there is room within the WTO framework for members to address concerns such as the relationship between poor health outcomes and certain types of food imports. As a solution for the issue of turkey tails in Samoa, an import duty of 300 percent was initially imposed, albeit then subsequently reduced to 100 percent.

Given that these challenges are not unique to Samoa, the time is right for a commitment in the WTO from multiple countries to take more action along these lines and make a real impact on how trade policy can be leveraged to improve nutrition. One important strategy for doing so is scientific research. WTO Members can justify using tariffs and other controls on the import or sales of food products for which there is empirical evidence of an association with poor health outcomes.

For this reason, Samoa is preparing a feasibility study on evidence-based policy options for controlling nutrition-related health problems in a joint partnership with WHO, FAO and other potentially interested development partners such as Australia and New Zealand. The study is planned to be completed by end of 2015.

In conclusion, I’d like to reiterate that nutrition – that is, healthy diets – can only be facilitated by global and national systems when policies across sectors are coherent and when health and nutrition are placed high on the political agenda. Our focus as nutrition leaders and advocates, therefore, should include collaborating in unity to protect and promote the health of our populations through formulating appropriate, health-aware trade policies.

Moderator: Thank you, Mr Tuitama. I should now like to call upon Ms Lois Brown, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for International Development and La Francophonie of Canada.
Lois Brown, Panellist 2
Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of International Development and La Francophonie
Canada

Nutrition in agriculture policy

Thank you everyone for the opportunity to be here with you today. I will be discussing the important role of nutrition in agricultural policy.

Increasing the amount of food available through agricultural growth remains critical to meeting the challenge of global food security. However, we also know that it is equally important to pay careful attention to the quality of food produced. Canada is so pleased to be such a strong supporter of the Scaling Up Nutrition Movement. Indeed we applaud leading Canadian organizations – such as the Micronutrient Initiative – for everything they’ve done to build this globally coordinated platform, as well as the Canadian government for supporting global health and nutrition through high level events such as the Saving Every Woman, Every Child Summit. The goal of this Summit was to build the political will to bring to an end the preventable deaths of mothers and babies.

One way to accomplish these goals is to ensure stronger links between agriculture and nutrition. Agriculture remains the single, largest economic sector and source of livelihood for the rural poor in many developing countries. As such it can play a crucial role in helping us to reach our goals of better nutrition. Looking at agriculture through a nutrition lens means greater focus on four areas: investing in women to ensure they have a greater voice in the crops they grow and the needed inputs they receive; improving the nutritional value of crops and diets through incentives and innovation; making food safer through better storage, preservation and processing; and strengthening financial services to smallholder farmers as well as their participation in value chains.

With respect to the first area, we know that women represent a large portion of smallholder farmers in developing countries. They also play many important roles in ensuring food security for their families as providers, processors and preparers of food. Empowering women to take greater control over resources and decisions is the best investment in the future of their children. That is why Canada includes the empowerment of women in all our agricultural and nutritional projects as a cross-cutting theme.

In terms of the second area I mentioned, we need to increase the nutritional value of foods produced locally. Canada funds research to improve crops that are not only more drought-resistant but that also provide some of the nutrients that are missing in local diets. With increased yields from these types of improved crops, smallholders can build surpluses and reduce risk aversion. In so doing, farmers are empowered to try new crops, diversify their nutritional options and sell more food to local markets. At country level, surpluses increase national food security.

For example, through the Seeds for Survival Programme, USC Canada is providing resilient, locally adapted seeds to increase crop yields and mix. Similarly, the Canadian Food Grains Bank, the Canadian Hunger Foundation, World Vision Canada, and many other Canadian organizations are implementing projects to improve yield and resilience, as well as, in some cases, nutrient content of crops. With respect to the latter, Canada has supported the Pan-Africa Bean Research Alliance
which has developed 199 new bean varieties with higher than average iron and zinc content. These varieties are also drought, disease, and pest resistant.

Regarding the third area, improving the quality and safety of food often requires investing in new equipment. Canada has expertise in the establishment and management of cooperatives to allow smallholder farmers to pool their resources and improve storage and processing capacity. Together with partners like SOCODEVI and Développement International des Jardins, Canada is providing hundreds of thousands of farmers with the organizational structure and equipment to work together to increase the quality and value of their crops.

This work is closely tied to increasing smallholder participation in agricultural value chains. This is the fourth area I mentioned. Without the tools to invest in improving the quality of agricultural products or the ability to feed into larger value chains, smallholder farmers will continue to see deep and steep discounts on their products and continued inefficiencies because of spoilage.

Canada is a leader in developing innovative financing tools to smallholder farmers to help them overcome these challenges. Développement International des Jardins and Mennonite Economic Development Associates are leading experts in providing microcredit and innovative insurance products to smallholder farmers and micro-enterprises. Canada is also supporting the International Fund for Agricultural Development to improve the production of nutritious food through advancing the links between smallholder farmers and the private sector.

To track success in these and similar ventures, Canada is advocating for measurable targets and mutual accountability. This includes ensuring that there are explicit nutrition objectives and indicators embedded in agricultural development activities. Thankfully, there has been much recent progress towards agreeing on such objectives and as we approach the post-2015 negotiations, ensuring a clear goal on nutrition and agriculture with measurable targets will be a Canadian priority.

Moderator: Thank you Ms Brown. Our next speaker is Dr Maria Virginia Castillo Jara of the National Institute of Health, Peru. Dr Jara will talk about nutrition in social policy.

Maria Virginia Castillo Jara, Panellist 3
Director-General, Food and Nutrition National Center of the National Institute of Health
Ministry of Health
Peru

Nutrition in social policy
(Original delivered in Spanish)

Due to high birth rates between 1960 and 1980, the Peruvian population is currently undergoing demographic transition, namely in terms of a large increase in youth. This so-called “demographic bonus” has the potential to increase income and savings at household level. It is hoped that this increase in purchasing power will eventually foster investment and economic growth.
In Peru, average life expectancy is 74.8 years; average years of education are nine; and average per capita income is 11 280 US dollars per annum. As such, Peru is currently ranked as a “medium” country by the Human Development Index (HDI). In practical terms, this means that opportunities to live a long and healthy life, to receive formal education, and to enjoy a dignified standard of living have yet to reach all Peruvians.

We do, however, have a strong economy, fostered mainly by investment in mining, infrastructure and energy. Growth in these sectors has been supported by macro-economic stability and the effective management of public finances. This progress has made it possible to reduce poverty and lay the foundation for social inclusion.

Indeed, between 2001 and 2013, total poverty decreased by 30 percent in rural areas of the country and by 25 percent in urban areas. However, it is important to note that seven million Peruvians are still subsisting below the poverty line, meaning that their expenditure levels are below the cost of a basic consumption basket comprising food and non-food items.

In terms of undernutrition, Peru has also made substantial progress. In 1992, 36.5 percent of children under the age of five suffered chronic undernutrition. This decreased to 23 percent in 2013; in practical terms, a reduction of 13.1 percent. And in 2009, Peru fulfilled its Millennium Development Goal to reduce chronic undernutrition by 18.3 percent.

As regards social policy, in the 1980s Peru experienced an acute economic crisis. Consequently, government introduced price stabilization and other measures to improve real capacity of consumption and household food security. The budget attached to these programmes and policies increased five-fold between 1990 and 1995.

For example, in 1991, the FONCODES (Compensation Fund for Social Development) was instituted. The aim of this Fund was to support projects designed to improve access to water and sanitation for the poorest Peruvian families, in turn generating opportunities for strengthened agricultural infrastructure and economic growth.

In addition, between 1996 and 2000, the Health Ministry bolstered breastfeeding and complementary feeding counselling, using as a delivery platform programmes to improve quality and coverage of basic health care services for women and children. These included vaccination campaigns, childhood disease prevention campaigns, and pre and post-natal services. These programmes were mainly rolled out in peri-urban areas and in the capital.

In the period between 2001 and 2006, Peru increased fiscal austerity. This policy combined with external factors which included an increase in the price of minerals – a major source of revenue for Peru – resulted in impressive economic growth. Increased commitment to social spending followed, including a national conditional cash transfer programme for direct support to the poorest instituted in 2005. Called “JUNTOS”, this programme includes as one of its main goals the reduction of chronic undernutrition, to be achieved through provision of economic incentives to poor families in exchange for maternal and child benefits.
Since 2008, Peru’s Economic and Finance Ministry has relied on a results-based budget model to ensure efficiency of public sector allocations. Five programmes – maternal and neonatal health; access of the population to an identity; lessons learnt from Cycle Three; access to basic social services and market opportunities; and the joint nutritional programme – have been subsequently developed.

As part of its approach to reducing undernutrition, Peru believes that, through programmes carried out by the Ministries of Health, Women, and others, work across three areas is needed: increased access to water and basic sanitation; increased access to healthy food and diets; and increased access to necessary healthcare.

Co-Chair Tito Pizzaro (in Spanish): I should just like to interrupt your presentation for a moment and introduce Queen Letizia of Spain who will join us. Thank you.

Moderator: Thank you for joining us, Your Majesty. I now introduce our colleague from Ghana, Mr Enoch Hemans Cobbinah, Chief Director of the Ministry of Education, to speak to nutrition in education policy.

Enoch Hemans Cobbinah, Panellist 4
Chief Director, Ministry of Education
Ghana

Nutrition in education policy

The Ministry of Education of Ghana is grateful to be invited as part of Ghana’s Delegation to ICN2 to share Ghana’s experience in Nutrition in Education. We have always considered education and nutrition as different sides of the same coin, mutually reinforcing each other to achieve desired objectives.

Ghana has made significant progress in education delivery in the past decade. The Ministry of Education accounts for about 30 percent of National Budget and over 6 percent of GDP. Gross Enrolment Rate (GER) at the Primary Education level increased from 73.45 percent in 2003/04 to 107.3 percent in 2013/14. At the Junior High School level, GER increased from 65.6 percent in 2003/04 to 82 percent in the 2013/14 academic year, while at the tertiary level GER is 13.6 percent, one of the highest in Africa.

The Ghanaian Government has also implemented social intervention programmes in education, including free school uniforms, free exercise books, provision of scholarships for needy students and take-home food rations. These measures aim to increase access and GER as well as to improve completion and transition rates.

Indeed, education policies and strategies in Ghana have always been informed by the fact that nutrition, sanitation and environmental considerations constitute important inputs and necessary conditions for learning and achieving quality education. For example, Ghana’s 1992 Constitution asserts the right of all Ghanaians to nutritious meals, free compulsory universal basic education,
and Secondary Education that is progressively free. Moreover, our successive medium-term development strategies (now referred to as the Ghana Shared Growth and Development Agenda), call for both equitable, accessible and quality education at all levels and for the integration of essential health, nutrition and life skills into the school curriculum.

At the sectoral level Ghana’s current Education Strategic Plan (ESP 2010-2020) provides the guiding framework to meet these calls. This Plan includes measures to promote good nutrition practices in the education system, including inculcation of good health and environmental sanitation values, and prevention and management of HIV/AIDS and other diseases in schools and institutions of higher learning.

Under this Plan, the Ministry of Education, in collaboration with the Ministry of Health, local governments and other non-state actors, has supported the School Health and Education Programme. Originally launched in 1992, this programme has been institutionalized in all main school districts in Ghana and currently includes the following components:

- **School Health Services**: Under this component, health personnel, teachers and other stakeholders provide screening, de-worming and counselling services to schools. This includes 1) provision of vitamin A supplements to children aged four and five in kindergartens across Ghana with support from the Ministry of Health, 2) food and nutrition services, such as promoting the use of iodized salt in schools and training school food vendors in food hygiene and nutrition, and 3) water, sanitation and environment hygiene to provide drinkable water and water harvesting facilities, institutional latrines and toilets, and hand-washing facilities for schools.

- **Skills-Based Health Education**: Implemented via curricular and co-curricular activities, this component aims to ensure that every child who goes through Ghana’s basic education system acquires basic knowledge and skills on nutrition. The topic is integrated into a number of subjects at primary level and taught as an elective in secondary schools. At the lower primary level, nutrition is taught under the topic “Food’. At the Junior High School level, nutrition is integrated in two core subjects, including Integrated Science where topics such as nutrition knowledge, deficiency signs and symptoms in children, balanced diet, importance and functions of nutrients, and the planning of a balanced diet are taught. At the Senior High School level, integration is done extensively through Home Economics.

These initiatives have greatly increased awareness of food and nutrition issues in our schools. For example, since 2011, the sale of sweets and soft drinks on school compounds has been banned in order to ensure that children consume foods of appreciable nutrition value whilst in school. A “School Fruit Day” has also been piloted.

The Ghana School Feeding Programme (GSFP) was initiated in 2005 as another key intervention within education. It has been rolled out substantially under the current administration. The GSFP is comprised of the following objectives: to stimulate primary school enrolment, sustain attendance and retention among pupils especially in deprived communities and improve learning performance; to improve the nutritional status of schoolchildren through the provision of one
hot and nutritious meal per school day per child; and to address short-term hunger and reduce poverty through linking school meals with local food producers, vendors and caterers to boost local food production and local economic activity.

While in 2005 the GSFP benefitted only two percent of total enrolment in public kindergarten and primary schools, by 2013/14 the programme had rolled out to cover 40 percent. A significant rise in primary school GER during the same time period is attributed to this increase.

Despite all these efforts, Ghana's nutrition indicators continue to lag in pre-schoolers and some primary school pupils, namely with respect to iron, iodine and vitamin A. As such, Ghana still faces challenges with educational attainment due to deficiencies in nutrition and related health issues. Underfunding and poor sectoral coordination of activities and policies have not helped, nor has the fact that NGOs, faith-based organizations and committee-based organizations tend to act independently.

Notwithstanding these challenges, Ghana demonstrated its commitment to nutrition by signing on to the Scaling Up Nutrition Movement in 2011. In line with SUN requisites, we have strengthened our multisectoral platform for coordination and developed a multisectoral nutrition policy. The Government continues to focus on human resource development including investing in nutrition, women and children.

Under the new coordinated and integrated framework provided by the National Nutrition Policy (which is consistent with the Framework for Action to be adopted at this Conference) the Ministry of Education will: deepen integration of nutrition into school curricula activities; further promote girls’ education; provide more opportunities to ensuring proper hygiene and sanitation practices in all schools; ensure that school meals follow optimal dietary requirements for targeted age groups; enhance delivery of existing interventions; and increase the number of nutrition indicators used in the national school census.

The Ministry of Education will also take advantage of the timing of its mid-term review of ESP 2010-2020 to fully integrate critical nutrition considerations into the Plan’s second phase. As such it will also make nutrition a priority for increased budgetary allocations.

In conclusion, I would like to reiterate that malnutrition adversely affects educational outcomes in Ghana. The call to effective and coordinated action among all actors is therefore joined.

**Moderator:** Thank you Mr Cobbinah. Our final panellist is Dr Sarah Abdullah Alrakayan, who will speak to nutrition in health policies, in the Kuwaiti context.
Sarah Abdullah Alrakayan, Panellist 5  
Researcher, University of Rome Tor Vergata  
Embassy of the State of Kuwait

Nutrition in health policy

I am honoured to speak today in front of these distinguished guests and Your Majesty. Thank you also to the Directors-General of both FAO and WHO for their guidance and support in both food and health policies, in my country and the Near East region as a whole. I would also like to acknowledge Kuwait’s leader, His Highness the Emir Sheikh Sabah al Ahmad Al Sabah, who’s been awarded the title of Humanitarian Leader by the UN.

Obesity in my country has increased alarmingly in the last decade. So too have its complications, such as diabetes, cardiovascular diseases, osteoarthritis, and cancer. Instead of treating the cause, more and more obese Kuwaitis are turning to liposuction and bariatric surgeries along with all the risks associated with these procedures. Rates of overweight and obesity among adolescents and children are also increasing dramatically. Children who are naturally physically active are getting more and more used to sedentary lifestyles. They are pinned to their chairs by technology and bombarded daily by advertisements and images of fast food. Today in Kuwait, the average three to five year old sees three advertisements per day for fast food. This is the age when we are trying to make them like vegetables. Advertisements like these, which are unfair for both child and parents, require statutory controls and government action.

Given the situation, the Ministry of Health has developed a national plan and assigned tasks to its different divisions. The plan is in line with the WHO global and regional non-communicable disease action plan, which has been adopted by the health secretariat of the Gulf Cooperation Council. I will mention a few of the initiatives that fall under this plan:

In 2010, almost a quarter of Kuwaitis suffered from hypertension. The reason was because Kuwaiti adults consumed between 12-15 grams of salt per day, well above the daily WHO recommendation of a maximum of five grams per adult. Bread is the key source of salt in our diet. One government-owned bakery, the Kuwait Flour Mills and Bakeries Company, produces most of the country’s bread. In 2013 the Ministry of Health established SIRTF (Salt and Fat Intake Reduction Task Force). After joint efforts from SIRTF, WHO experts, food scientists and executives from the bakery, the national salt reduction programme succeeded in achieving a 20 percent reduction of salt on all bread. Kuwait’s next step is to reduce salt levels in cheese. Qatar is currently in the process of reducing salt from a major national bakery by 20 percent, and Bahrain is about to do the same.

In Kuwait we realize the importance of community-based surveys for monitoring dietary intake. As such we have established a nation-wide nutrition surveillance system, the Kuwait Nutrition Surveillance System (KNSS). The system is funded by the Kuwait Ministry of Health and coordinated by the Community Nutrition Supervisory under the Food and Nutrition Administration. The tasks of the KNSS are to monitor health and nutritional status and to supply reliable data. These data are pooled annually by a senior nutritionist and reported to the Ministry of Health, which then uses the information to advocate for policy reforms and to guide public health programmes.
Results of this entire process are forwarded to the WHO’s publicly available Nutrition Landscape Information System. Current KNSS findings are of increased prevalence of obesity, increased intake of energy and macronutrients, and decreased intake of fibre and micronutrients.

One of the public health concerns revealed by Kuwait’s most recent National Nutrition Survey was prevalence of iron deficiency anaemia in women of childbearing age, young children, school-age children and adolescents. This situation prompted the Ministry of Health to administer iron and folic acid supplements to all pregnant women during antenatal visits. A project providing preventive weekly iron and folic acid supplementation to adolescent girls has also been piloted, with promising results.

Currently the Government subsidizes sugar and infant milk formula. However as part of the national efforts to reduce and prevent non-communicable diseases, the Ministry of Health is now considering the termination of the sugar subsidy in order to encourage healthier alternatives. The same goes for infant milk formula, as part of a breastfeeding promotion campaign through training and media. Much of the publicity will focus on the health benefits experienced by children who are exclusively breastfed in the first six months of life.

The Ministry of Health is also working on a labelling initiative developed by WHO. This initiative obliges all food industry companies and fast-food restaurants to label products with number of calories, proportion of saturated fats, and sugar content, in an attempt to increase consumer awareness and motivate healthier food choices. With respect to consumer awareness, the Ministry of Health is also currently considering increasing its budget for health education.

Kuwait recently created a public authority on food and nutrition. This authority is responsibility for monitoring food products for safety and quality in accordance with international standards. Against this background, Kuwait is making efforts to benefit from experiences of the UK, USA, Finland, Saudi Arabia, Egypt and other countries that are advanced in these types of regulation.

I remember when I was a child the social scene was gathering with the family, a relaxing saffron tea, probably with biscuits, and cardamom-enriched Arabian coffee with a couple of delicious and nutritious dates. Unfortunately, those days are over, as the social scene now revolves around food. Every gathering is like a banquet. Now, young adults and even teenagers meet at restaurants on an average of two to three times a week. It’s a new culture that is killing us slowly.

Education is key to countering this trend; including public health campaigns, teaching nutritional literacy in school, and using technology that our children know and like to help lure them back into good eating habits, exercise and healthy living. In other words, make it the hype and make it the trend. And educate parents on healthy eating habits as well, after all we are our children’s first models!

In conclusion, I would like to offer a quote from the Prophet Mohammad (Peace Be Upon Him):

*Nothing is worse than a person who fills his stomach; it should be enough for the son of Adam to have a few bites to satisfy his hunger.*
Synopsis of Comments from the Floor and Panellist Responses

Member States spoke to their own experiences in supporting multisectoral policy coherence, summarized as follows:

Japan: Nutrition should be a policy consideration not only in health and agriculture but also in education, food industry regulation, and other areas. I would like to emphasize the important role played by accurate and reliable data in achieving this goal. Reliable, persuasive information is essential for all policies. For example, Japan has been administering its National Nutrition Survey for 70 years. Information from the surveys was originally used to inform nutrition and agricultural policies in the post-war period. More recently, the survey has been used to identify undernutrition in young and elderly women, and overnutrition among middle-aged men. Multiple health-related programmes have been galvanized by these data, including the Life-Course Diet-Related Education Act.

Ecuador (delivered in Spanish): Ecuador is currently facing a double challenge of undernutrition and obesity. In 2014 we have been experimenting with food labelling, so that people know the contents of the food they’re eating. There has also been an information campaign so that consumers are aware of the salt and sugar content in food. We have set up guidelines so that the population has access to clear, concise information, which means that consumers can make better choices. The results are promising: approximately 20 percent of larger food companies are following these guidelines and people are eating more healthily. We have seen a 10 percent drop in sugar consumption, as well as decreased consumption of soft drinks and other products. We’ve also seen an increase in drinking still water which seems to be country-wide.

Indonesia: As part of its commitment to SUN, Indonesia has developed a new integrated Nutrition Policy which includes health, agriculture and other sectors. Indonesia has also produced a report on community nutrition status, taking a multisectoral approach. And in 2013, Presidential Decree No. 42 put as our main commitment to nutrition the acceleration of recent improvements supported by all sectors as a national movement. This movement constitutes a joint meeting point between the Government and multiple stakeholders in planning, implementing and evaluation in nutrition programmes. As a country with a huge population and diverse geographic conditions, many challenges have arisen in terms of implementation. As such we are currently moving to generate evidence on delivery design. This means focusing not only on what to deliver but how to deliver; namely, how to integrate and hold multiple sectors accountable in a way that fits local conditions and constraints.

Chile (delivered in Spanish): In Chile the poor are obese, they have very low iron and vitamin levels, they eat very little fibre, and they are twice as likely as the rest of the population to contract non-communicable diseases. Moreover, in support of the panellist from Kuwait, Chilean children have completely changed their food habits because of television advertising. If we cannot stop large food companies from advertising their products with labelling that is clearly deceiving, there will be adverse effects on our children’s well-being. Chile is therefore proposing very simple black-and-white labelling and also to prohibit the advertising of certain foods. As a result of these proposed regulations, certain companies have threatened to sue us at the WTO.
This situation should be a global policy priority. European and American ambassadors should not be allowed to take other governments to task for regulating their products in a way which promotes public health.

I’d also like to speak to the definition of non-communicable chronic diseases, within the context of work that Chile has been doing with Dr Pekka Puska. We’ve worked very hard with him. The definition is deceiving because it implies a lack of risk factors. This is of course not the case, and furthermore, there is evidence indicating that these diseases are more harmful than many contagious diseases. If we do not change the definition to capture this information, I think we could be facing the worst pandemic in recent history in our country.

Costa Rica (delivered in Spanish): I’d like to revert to the presentations and references made to public education campaigns with an example from Costa Rica. About a decade ago, 10 percent of our children were born with cleft palates; we now know that a lack of folic acid may be one of the causes of this handicap. The Ministry of Health has started to dispense folic acid pills, but there is no information about where to find them if your community is not covered by the distribution. An alternative and easier treatment is to eat beans and other food items high in folic acid. Unfortunately, the nutrient content of these and other foods is not common knowledge in many countries. As such I’d like to underscore the need to educate populations regarding the nutrient content of food. Doing so can not only improve nutrient intake, it can also reduce abuse of nutrient supplements and other pharmaceutical products. Hippocrates said that “may food be your medicine. The best way to prevent illness is through good nutrition”.

Thailand: Improving policy coherence for nutrition in all sectors is the first step to achieving good nutrition and well-being. The major challenge seems how to set objectives and goals, strategies and actions in nutrition in the least harmful way at both national and community level. Different countries in different contexts are using different mechanisms to meet this challenge. I’d like to share an example of Thailand’s success in the alleviation of undernutrition through rural development committees. These committees are part of a poverty alleviation plan involving agriculture, health and education at national and decentralized administration levels. Based in part on mass mobilization of volunteers at household level, basic services are now very widely available. Nutrition has been used as an indicator in monitoring delivery of these services, resulting in a dramatic drop in undernutrition throughout Thailand.

However follow-up action is now required. Thailand is still facing remnants of undernutrition and at the same time, incidence of NCDs and obesity is rising. In response to this new challenge, we will be using our old multisectoral model, but in a different way. The National Food Committee has developed a national framework involving at least ten ministries, the private sector and professionals. All are tasked to work together to achieve the goals, which will be evidence-based and implemented at community level, including schools and the workplace.

In addition to country statements, a comment was made regarding the need for UN and other agencies to deliver better coordinated, more complementary messages on food and nutrition. This comment was in line with the statement from Chile regarding louder messaging on the nutrient content of common foods, and also referred back to Mr Puska’s keynote presentation.
A question was also directed to Ms Brown, surveillance of the impact of transgenic seeds on soil, health, and the environment. It was noted that use of transgenics is controversial. The speaker noted that the topic of biofortification had also been raised during Panel 2, and asked whether Panel 3 felt that this was a subject to be explicitly included on the post-2015 development agenda.

Dr Puska3 responded as follows:

A number of speeches have referred to salt and sugar as important issues. However I think the policy response is different. For salt, it is quite clear that we need a gradual reduction in all products; if necessary, through setting targets and through monitoring and regulation. For sugar it’s a question of reducing the consumption of sugar in drinks and other specific products.

My other comment regards the situation in Chile where much good, ambitious work is being carried out. The task is huge but the potential is great. Part of the Finnish experience has been an 80 percent reduction in mortality from cardiovascular diseases. The representative from Chile also pointed out the problem inherent to the current definition of “non-communicable disease”. In communicable diseases, there is a risk of contact from microbes; in NCDs, the risk is communicated globally through the media and advertising. I feel that Chile represents the determination of the NCD epidemic. However the risks are global, as are the actions which must be taken to counter that risk. I hope that both FAO and WHO in future deploy even stronger instruments to fight the NCD epidemic.

Moderator: As Mr Tuitama said earlier, this morning the Pope made it very clear about the right of everyone to live in dignity; this inspiring statement should be forefront in our minds when we’re thinking about our work and priorities. I hope this session has highlighted some of the success stories and commitments that we need to move forward collectively. Thank you all, I’ll pass to the Co-Chairs to close this session.

Co-Chair Pizzaro noted that in addition to success stories, the panel had identified gaps in the global knowledge base of effective intersectoral approaches. As such the panel had also highlighted the need to re-consider strategies for improving social welfare. He also noted that although this panel provided a forum in which to hear about extremely diverse country experiences, appropriate levels of state intervention to establish nutrition-friendly environments is a need for all countries, regardless of GDP level or HDI classification status.

Co-Chair Radziewicz-Winnicki closed the session.

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3 Panellists did not comment due to time constraints.
CHAIRS’ SUMMARY OF ROUNDTABLE 2

First of all, let me thank the moderators, main speakers and panellists, as well as all distinguished delegates for participating in the discussions within the Roundtable 2 called “Improving Policy Coherence for Nutrition”. I particularly thank Mr Tito Pizarro, Head of the Division of Health Public Policies and Promotion of the Ministry of Health of Chile, for his invaluable help in chairing this Roundtable.

Let me summarize the objectives of the three panels:

Panel 1 on Coherence between economic policies and healthy changes in diets was to assess the challenges and opportunities of creating greater coherence between and among public policies in order to improve nutrition and achieve healthy diets.

The objective of the next panel on Policy coherence for nutrition-sensitive agriculture was to provide concrete examples on how agricultural projects, programmes and policies can be designed to be more sensitive to nutritional needs.

Finally, the objective of the last panel on Nutrition-in-all sectors was to illustrate the ways in which countries integrate nutrition in various sectors such as agriculture, health, education, trade and social welfare.

The discussions were focused on the current situation, identified, opportunities and provided recommendations. We also considered possible ways to operationalize commitments and turn them into actions.

Many important issues were raised during the discussions around policy coherence for nutrition and achieving healthy diets. Many speakers shared with us their national experiences, both success and failure stories. They raised their concerns about challenges, noted the opportunities and referred to the existing nutrition policies. All voices in the debate were interesting and very accurate.

There is no doubt that policy coherence for nutrition is a challenge. It was clearly indicated by many speakers. Such approach is not free of charge. It is an investment which requires many resources – money, time, strong engagement and a lot of attention. But it is an investment that pays off – once completed, it brings high revenues for generations.

We do not lack knowledge on how to achieve this goal - the paradox is that currently we know enough but we do less than we should. The participants shared with us their national solutions, among others in fiscal policies, education and health programmes, school food schemes, breastfeeding promotion, reformulations or food labelling. This is a knowledge we have to use and let me shortly mention some examples.
We heard about many national experiences in developing and implementing national multisectoral nutrition policies and strategies in coordination with relevant organizations and ministries, civil society and the private sector. These policies focus mainly on family farming or school feeding programmes. Success stories from many countries, like Brazil (with its Zero Hunger Initiative which lifted 36 million Brazilians out of poverty) and Ireland, were particularly welcomed and carefully heard. We were also happy to hear that many countries develop legal frameworks and fiscal policy measures concerning taxes on unhealthy food products, following the experiences of tobacco taxes.

Today, we can also confirm that we have the tools, such as food supply and demand value chain analysis which helps to focus on the totality of evidence, activities, actors, and incentives in the food system and can test the assumption of value for nutrition and value for economics.

Unfortunately, we can also notice that although different tools were implemented, in many countries growing incidence of overweight, obesity and diet-related non-communicable diseases was still observed. That forces us to take as radical steps as possible to reverse the trends.

In establishing new public policies and strengthening the existing ones we need to increase availability and affordability of nutrition rich foods and diverse diets. Reducing inequalities and shaping the consumer demand is equally important. We also need to select value chains more nutrition-sensitive, for instance by enhancing nutrient content, engaging educator actors, stimulating demand.

In establishing policies we should be focused on the most vulnerable groups: infants and women. National school nutrition programmes and supplemental nutrition for children may serve as a good example of these focused actions.

But there cannot be “one fits all” approach. The policies should also reflect specific national settings and cultural environment.

When we speak about vulnerable groups we have to notice that special attention during the session was paid to women. Women’s empowerment, including land ownership, is considered as crucial for improving nutrition outcomes. Since women are often primary caregivers, they can directly, through their own nutritional status, influence nutrition of their children and the whole family.

During our discussion it was underlined that we need to adopt approaches involving all government departments, ensuring that nutrition issues receive an appropriate cross-sectoral response. We clearly see the need to include nutrition in development cooperation initiatives, economic development policies and poverty-reduction strategies. To get high quality food and strengthen capacity building in its production, the close collaboration between health, agriculture and trade sectors is obvious. To raise social awareness and improve health literacy of the society, an active engagement of the education sector is vital. Again, children and their parents are crucial target groups.

But the government alone will not do everything.
During the discussion there was also a common agreement that we need to engage all parties and sectors of society, including civil society and the private sector, to generate effective responses to address malnutrition in all its forms. We should not forget that constructive dialogue with all key actors is a prerequisite for common success. This dialogue, however, should be supplemented with necessary regulations, as public health cannot be the hostage of economic profit. Establishing a national accountability framework for the private sector was one of the ideas we discussed as a possible option.

Finally, we cannot forget about international cooperation. For many countries seeking the support through the technical assistance from the UN system, in particular from WHO and FAO, to reinforce and accelerate national efforts to address policy incoherence is often the first choice while introducing legal changes.

All relevant policies should be based on the recommendations included in global instruments, such as WHO Global Strategy on Healthy Diet, Physical Activity and Health, 2011 UN Outcome Document on NCDs, 2014 UN Outcome Document on NCDs or Helsinki Statement on Health-in-All Policies.

Multilateral cooperation in many different formulas is also very much needed and we heard a lot how much benefit it brings.

We hope that our strong determination presented during the discussions will bring the expected results in the near future across the countries. Let's hope that during the next ICN we will all share the success stories and not the examples of failure policies.

I would like to thank one more time all the participants of the Roundtable. I truly believe the outcomes of the discussion will encourage us for taking the necessary actions to improve nutrition and health of the population. After many decades of disinvestment in nutrition, we have a unique opportunity to make hunger and malnutrition part of history, not of the future. Let's not waste it.
ROUND TABLE 3: GOVERNANCE AND ACCOUNTABILITY FOR NUTRITION

Thursday, 20 November 2014
ROUNDTABLE 3: PANEL 1 - PARTICIPANTS

Co-Chairs: His Excellency Hans BRATTSKAR, Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs, Norway

Louis LAHOUD, Director-General, Ministry of Agriculture, Lebanon

Moderator: Her Excellency Gerda VERBURG, Permanent Representative of the Kingdom of The Netherlands to FAO and Chairperson of the Committee on World Food Security

Main Speaker: Shawn K. BAKER, Director of Nutrition, Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation – Nutrition Governance: What are the elements for effective nutrition governance at global and country levels?

Panellists: Germán GONZÁLEZ, Secretary for Food and Nutritional Security, Guatemala – What are the national experiences with nutrition governance? How does the existence of good governance or its absence impact on nutrition outcomes?

His Excellency Haladou SALHA, AU-NEPAD Senior Technical Advisor to the Rome-based African Ambassadors, AU-NEPAD Senior Liaison Officer to the Rome-based UN Agencies – What are the current mechanisms around nutrition governance and accountability?

Zahra ABHOLLAHI, Director, Community Nutrition Department, Ministry of Health and Medical Education, Islamic Republic of Iran – What are the national experiences with nutrition governance? How does the existence of good governance or its absence impact on nutrition outcomes?
Hans Brattskar, Co-chair
Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs
Norway
Welcome to the third Roundtable of the International Conference on Nutrition. I am Hans Brattskar, Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs of Norway. This first panel will address issues of nutrition governance.

Nutrition governance has to occur at least at three levels: local, national and international. Relevant to all three levels is the Right to Adequate Food and Nutrition. As a well-established human right, this construct provides an important entry point for discussions on nutrition governance.

I should now like to introduce this panel’s Moderator: Her Excellency Gerda Verburg, Permanent Representative of the Kingdom of The Netherlands to FAO, and Chairperson of the Committee on World Food Security.

Gerda Verburg, Moderator
Permanent Representative of the Kingdom of The Netherlands to FAO
Chairperson of the Committee on World Food Security

This Roundtable will be covering accountability and governance for nutrition. Both are imperative to implementation at country and grassroots levels.

I have invited presenters to talk from the heart and have encouraged them not to follow their papers but to speak openly. We must concentrate on how to get things done and make them happen after this important Conference.

Our Main Speaker is Mr Shawn Baker, Director of Nutrition at the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation. Mr Baker will present on elements for effective nutrition governance at global and country levels.

Shawn K. Baker, Main Speaker
Director of Nutrition, Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation

Nutrition Governance: What are the elements for effective nutrition governance at global and country levels?

When Anna [Lartey] and Francesco [Branca] asked that I speak at this Roundtable, I felt both honoured and also a spot of trepidation. For many of us who work in nutrition, governance is far from our comfort zone. It is very easy for us to debate about different requirements for vitamins and minerals or the merits of one set of interventions versus another; the results of the latest efficacy trials. However, when we start speaking of governance we move away from our area of specialization of being good technocrats into the realm of politics. This is awkward but necessary since the challenges of nutrition nowadays are far less about the science of what works and far more about the politics of making what works happen.
Since I’m not a politician, I prepared for this Roundtable by posing a series of questions to myself. I’ll share my internal debate with you:

The first question I had is very basic: why do we need governance for nutrition? Governance is a very serious word and I wanted to question whether we needed something so very serious. I reflected on a presentation that I saw in New Delhi recently that Dr Branca made. He presented data from the WHO Multi-Centre Growth Reference Standards Research and its follow-up Inter-Growth Study. With these studies, we now have conclusive evidence that children from all regions of the world have the potential for physical growth and cognitive development in utero and early childhood – the same from all regions of the world. Reflecting on this, I came to the conclusion that this is concrete evidence of our common humanity and the nutrition necessary to realize this potential is a birthright of every child. Unfortunately, we have seen ample recent evidence that, in fact, we are denying hundreds of millions of children this fundamental birthright. We are undermining their chances to survive and to thrive. We are undermining the future of their families, their communities, their nations and even the whole world. Framing the issue of malnutrition in this way, I passed the first hurdle. I became convinced that this problem – fundamental in its magnitude and gravity – requires a commensurate, politicized solution.

The second question I posed is what are the particular challenges of nutrition governance? Are there aspects of nutrition that make it particularly complicated relative to other high profile health issues – for example, HIV or malaria? When we look at examples where effective governance has resulted in robust action, it is where there has been recognition of a clear and present danger. For HIV, the entire world felt at risk; family members of political leaders were affected; and activists were scaling the walls of parliaments and congress in the USA and Europe. When we look at the example of SARS in the recent past or in today's tragic headlines of Ebola, we can see that the whole world feels at risk. If we reflect on the 2008 food price crisis, politicians feared food riots and political instability: there was a real urgency to act. Unfortunately, despite the immense damage malnutrition causes, it is largely a hidden problem. It is hidden because many symptoms of nutritional deficits are not obvious; it is hidden by its ubiquitous nature which makes it the norm in many countries; it is hidden primarily because those who are the most affected – especially by undernutrition – are those who have the smallest voice. It is even further hidden because, as we have seen in the Global Nutrition Report, it is so poorly measured.

The situation is further complicated by the fact that it is difficult to appreciate who is ultimately responsible. If I were a Head of State, I wonder who I would contact to deal with a nutrition crisis. It’s clear that if there were a disease outbreak, I would call the Minister for Health; for an invasion, I would call the Minister for Defense; if the rankings of international standards for school performance plummeted, I would dismiss the Minister for Education. As we can see from the Global Nutrition Report, almost every country is facing a nutrition crisis, what is less apparent is who is accountable.
In this sense, I believe that nutrition has more parallels with climate change than many other issues where governance has driven action. Similar to climate change, it requires action and accountability that is orchestrated across many sectors. Nutrition also requires long-term commitment, which means that the commitment must be political but not partisan, withstanding multiple administrations and heads of state, and embraced as non-negotiable for all parties.

At this point in my internal dialogue, I was certain that nutrition does, indeed, warrant governance and that the needs are quite special. As such I returned to the basic question of what, indeed, is governance. It is a word bandied around liberally but interpreted freely according to circumstances and when I research a number of definitions, they range from very simple, such as Webster’s: “the way that a city, company, etc., is controlled by the people who run it”, to much more complex.

The most useful one I found on Wikipedia: “...[governance] relates to the processes of interaction and decision-making among the actors involved in a collective problem that leads to the creation, reinforcement or reproduction of social norms and institutions.”

This definition reminded me of a recent announcement made at the Global Gathering of the Scaling Up Nutrition Movement. Made by our colleagues from francophone Africa, the announcement was for the founding of a new United Republic for Nutrition and includes the stipulation that malnutrition will not be permitted.

Now you can understand why the request for me to participate in this Roundtable made me nervous. I imagine that many of us here were trained as nutritionists, agronomists or public health specialists. For those of us that were, many revel in the relative comfort of the world of science; we may stray fearfully into the murkier world of policy-setting but we are uneasy in the realm of politics. However, to truly make a change, we need to embrace the fact that nutrition must be addressed not just at the technical and policy level but also – and perhaps most significantly – at the political level.

My last question – and the one that Anna and Francesco asked me to opine upon – is “what are the characteristics to which we should aspire in nutrition governance?” I believe there are five:

Firstly, good nutrition governance needs to makes the problem both visible and urgent. It needs to change the narrative and reset norms so that malnutrition is no longer acceptable. Doing so requires better measurement so that we can no longer hide behind the excuse of poor data nor the term “chronic”.

Secondly, good nutrition governance has to be inclusive. It needs to empower the diverse sectors and stakeholders involved in nutrition to act. As such it must provide concrete, actionable guidelines so that each actor is aware of what he needs to contribute. Resources, capacity and the evidence-base must be investment priorities for domestic and development-assistance sources.

Thirdly, and on the other hand, good nutrition governance has to hold these diverse sectors and stakeholders accountable. It must set a common definition of success, agree on each actor’s contributions and measure their follow-up actions. We have a good starting point with the World Health Assembly targets for 2025, to which Member States have already committed.
Fourthly, I reiterate the need to be political but not partisan. Good nutrition governance needs to bridge partisan interests so that the momentum for nutrition is maintained for the long term, no matter the transition in governments or organizations.

Fifthly, good nutrition governance needs to be focused on the people it is serving: it should be a means to an end – the end of malnutrition – not an end unto itself. It should not seek to create new bureaucracy but rather to make all of us work better to meet the needs of the people we serve.

I should like to close my comments today with one of my favourite quotes from Nelson Mandela in reference to the Millennium Development Goals: “Will our generation’s legacy be more than a series of broken promises?”

Today we stand at the cusp of defining the Millennium Development Goals. For many of us who have participated recently in the Global Gathering for the Scaling Up Nutrition Movement and the first days of the ICN2, we feel that there has never before been a greater promise to deliver on nutrition. Clearly, anchoring nutrition within the upcoming Sustainable Development Goals is one more step in building on that promise. To do so, we need to ensure that the Goals are aligned to the World Health Assembly targets, that key issues like breastfeeding are included and that our governance ensures the follow-up and accountability to make sure they are achieved.

Whatever the nature of any nutrition governance at any level, we must be clear on the purpose: To ensure that we are not the generation that breaks this promise that has been entrusted to us; the promise that all children, everywhere, realize their potential for physical growth and cognitive development.

*Moderator:* Thank you. Before giving the floor to the audience, could you kindly repeat the quote from Nelson Mandela?

*Mr Baker:* “Will our generation’s legacy be more than a series of broken promises?”

*Moderator:* Let’s keep this in mind.

Questions from the floor were regarding the feasibility of creating a new international organization for nutrition, and ways and means to increase policy-makers’ interest in making nutrition a national development priority.

A comment was also made regarding the definition of “governance”, per the website of the Office of the High Commissioner on Human Rights: “*the true test of good governance is the degree to which it delivers on the promise of human rights: civil, cultural, economic, political and social rights.*” In reference to this definition, the commenter noted the key question of whether governance institutions effectively guarantee the right to health and nutrition, adequate housing, sufficient food, quality of education, fair justice and personal security. She also cited an issue which she noted as – arguably – missing from this definition: conflict of interest policies for the United Nations, including recovery of the ideal of the UN being an arm’s length distance between public interest actors and the private sector.
Mr Baker responded as follows:

I would reflect on the opportunity, financial and transaction costs of creating an entirely new organization. I speak from personal experience of being quite deeply involved with the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria. Obviously, this fund carried out a huge endeavour in scaling up resources. At the same time, that victory has come at an enormous cost of setting up an entirely new infrastructure which is, in fact, presently undergoing a major strategy reform.

Given this experience, I would put forward the notion that forces are already present to carry out what we need to do. For me, the challenge of nutrition governance is to make sure that all these forces are well-aligned, that we are working in harmony with each other and focused on doing our work. Setting up a brand new infrastructure might actually delay progress. Moreover, the afore-mentioned costs would offset impact. As such, I think the bar for the creation of a new international organization would have to be very high. I’m not sure it’s the best way to go about pursuing our goals.

The second question was on how to reach the heart of policy-makers. This is the universal question. Perhaps our first concern should be whether policy-makers actually have hearts! We hope they do. More importantly, they have pocket books. What we probably need to do is to reach both their hearts and their pocket books. However, each individual is motivated differently.

With respect to reaching policy-makers, this is often where we fail on advocacy. We don’t get enough prior information. In contrast, when we do social and behaviour change communication for front-line communities, we often do much background research to see the best solution. Policy-makers require much the same approach. We need to understand our very focused target population, like the Minister for Finance of Cape Verde who spoke this morning before the Pope. We need to understand what will convince our subject in that particular context. Sometimes it’s a humanitarian or emotional argument, in other cases it may be a long-term economic development outcome.

Finally, I would say two things regarding the High Commission for Human Rights’ definition of governance. First, I would underline “promise” and that’s why I quoted Nelson Mandela. If governance mechanisms are not holding us accountable, then we have failed. Second, there are always issues concerning conflicts of interest; everybody involved in an issue has an interest; the question is how do we manage those interests so that we reach a common vision.

Moderator: Thank you. I’m pleased to now introduce Mr Germán González, Secretary for Food and Nutritional Security, Guatemala. Mr González will speak to his country’s experience with nutrition governance, including impact on nutritional outcomes.
Germán González, Panellist 1
Secretary for Food and Nutritional Security
Guatemala

What are the national experiences with nutrition governance? How does the existence of good governance or its absence impact on nutrition outcomes?

(Original delivered in Spanish)

I would like to discuss governance with respect to Guatemala's experience in the creation of a national food security and nutrition system. This system is what underpins actions related to nutrition in my country. Since 1974 in Guatemala, efforts have been under way to have better governance of nutrition: plans were put into place, councils and commissions were established, but none stood the test of time. That is, until 2012 when a major effort was made to build consensus and adopt legislation creating a national food and nutrition security system. This system made it possible to put all the stakeholders together and allowed all Guatemalan citizens to see what was being done in the country; thus increasing accountability. The roles of ministries and institutions were defined, including 14 ministries related to the national food and nutrition security system and working within it. This system welcomes the participation of civil society through a consultation and participation mechanism of the CSOs, the human rights' bodies of the country also participate as does the legislature through the National Commission of Food and Nutrition Security. We also have the private sector on board. All the country’s stakeholders are involved.

As part of this system, which you can read about on the Secretaría de Seguridad Alimentaria y Nutricional (SESAN) website, the President established a major National Pact in 2012: the Zero Hunger Pact or Agreement. This Pact includes all initiatives working towards nutrition security in Guatemala. It details responsibilities for reducing malnutrition and how they are to be shared. Goals are established jointly at the national and decentralized level, with initiatives coordinated between central and local line ministries, and with the latter footing some of the bill, primarily in terms of human and financial resources. Finances are allocated according to a results-based budgeting agreement, including monthly evaluation of results using an information system which is publicly available on the SESAN website.

This National Information System provides a source of constantly updated data on how central and decentralized institutions are progressing in reaching their goals. However, in years past, this monitoring exercise was not providing information regarding nutrition impact on the population. Consequently, since 2012, with the support of our colleagues from IFPRI, we have been implementing an evaluation system to better assess the effect of nutrition interventions under the Zero Hunger Pact.

Based on these evaluations, Guatemala has, over the past year, achieved a 1.6 percent reduction in chronic undernutrition, and a 4.6 percent reduction in anaemia among under-fives. These statistics indicate that the investments that we’re making – a large section of the national budget is, in fact, dedicated to nutrition – are bearing fruit.
Moderator: Thank you, Mr González for giving us the experience of Guatemala. I now give the floor to His Excellency Haladou Salha, African Union-NEPAD Senior Technical Advisor to the Rome-based African Ambassadors and AU-NEPAD Senior Liaison Officer to the Rome-based UN Agencies. Mr Salha will speak on current mechanisms for nutrition governance and accountability.

Haladou Salha, Panellist 2
AU-NEPAD Senior Technical Advisor to the Rome-based African Ambassadors
AU-NEPAD Senior Liaison Officer to the Rome-based UN Agencies

What are the current mechanisms around nutrition governance and accountability?

(Original delivered in French)

Thank you very much. It is both a pleasure and a challenge to speak here. For us politicians, governance means the management of co-responsibility, contracts and relations. It has to do with all the key players, all the stakeholders. As far as Africa is concerned, let us remember that although the continent is made up of 54 States, we need the definition of a common policy. Yesterday, the King of Lesotho spoke to this in a very edifying manner.

The New Partnership for Africa’s Development (NEPAD) aims to play this common policy role. With its clearly defined strategic framework – the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP) – we have a driving force for agricultural development in Africa.

I was speaking a short time ago about the awareness of politicians in Africa – that they had decided to engage, to commit themselves, as from 2003, by dedicating 10 percent of their national budgets to precisely the NEPAD/CAADP approach to enable African countries to ensure agricultural self-sufficiency. Who will be assuming the burden of this commitment? When we consider the stakeholders – in terms of civil society, the private sector, research institutions – we always think that the governments should take leadership upon themselves. However there is also appropriation of the process. Keeping this need in mind, we are hoping to leverage complementarity and synergies between the capacities and capabilities of all stakeholders, including civil society and the private sector; this is of fundamental importance to ownership and accountability.

With respect to nutrition specifically, CAADP is the mechanism which integrates aspects of nutrition, including contractual clauses for stakeholders. The national investment programmes are also under CAADP. These define priorities within countries and regions. Through these national investment programmes the issue of nutrition must be articulated in very consistent fashion, so that subsequently we can speak in terms of explicit nutrition goals for governance and management.

We are presently celebrating the 10th anniversary of CAADP, moreover 2014 was declared the Year of Food and Nutrition Security in Africa by the Heads of State Summit. Additionally, since 2010, in order to permanently anchor this theme into the customs and mindset of the Programme’s technicians, every 30 October has been celebrated as Africa Day for Food and Nutrition Security. These advocacy events have aimed to be cross-cutting across all stakeholders and all strata of society.
With respect to accountability mechanisms, the African Heads of State Summit very often dedicates its efforts to development. This offers a framework which is of fundamental importance for nutrition advocacy. There was also a Heads of State Summit specifically dedicated to the implementation of the CAADP framework, including nutrition. Furthermore, in parallel to all Summits, there are side events for various ministries, including very importantly a Joint Meeting of the Ministries of Planning and Finance. This meeting coordinates decision-makers in the financial attribution process.

An additional tool for accountability is the recent *Cost of Hunger* project, led by NEPAD in collaboration with the AU. This project assesses the impact of malnutrition on socio-economic development, including modeled estimates of impact on GDP and on the academic and physical development of the children who represent our future. Initial findings have been presented to the Ministers of Finance and Planning of the African Union Summit so that they would be made aware of the importance of advancement of nutrition for the development of their respective countries.

As far as consistency and cooperation is concerned, we have in place what we call the *Framework of Progress Review and the Implementation Report*. There is also a biennial peer review process, a mechanism devoted to maintaining accountability in agriculture and nutrition security. And finally, there is an inter-sectoral virtual platform under development, the goal of which will be to provide a continent-wide document repository and opportunity for information exchange.

*Moderator:* Thank you Mr Salha. It’s an honour to now give the floor to Dr Zahra Abdullahi, Director of the Community Nutrition Department, Islamic Republic of Iran. Dr Zahra will speak on Iran’s national experiences with nutrition governance, including impact on nutrition outcomes.

**Zahra Abdollahi, Panellist 3**  
*Director, Community Nutrition Department*  
*Ministry of Health and Medical Education*  
*Islamic Republic of Iran*

What are the national experiences with nutrition governance? How does the existence of good governance or its absence impact on nutrition outcomes?

In the Islamic Republic of Iran, national health policy is predicated on a mandate from the Supreme Leader on national food security and provision of sufficient and healthy food, as well as the constitution, which emphasizes poverty alleviation, nutrition security, and social welfare.

Food and nutrition policy in Iran is managed by the High Council for Health and Food Security. His Excellency the President is the Chairman of the High Council for Health and Food Security and the Minister for Health is its Secretary. Members include Ministers of Agriculture, Industry, Mining and Trade, Social Welfare, and Education and Sport; the National Standards Organization, the Environmental Protection Organization, the media, and the food industry.
The High Council for Health and Food Security is responsible for governance policies that address the strategic direction of the organization, analysing challenges and limitations in food and nutrition programmes, specifying quality control measures, and monitoring and overseeing the implementation of policies.

Under this system, Iran has experienced a 56 percent reduction in stunting among children under 5; a 50 percent reduction in iron deficiency anaemia in children under 2 and in pregnant women; and over a 90 percent reduction in iodine deficiency (as measured by goitre prevalence).

The roadmap for Iran’s National Nutrition and Food Security Policy (through 2025) emphasizes prevention and control of non-communicable diseases as well as micronutrient deficiencies and undernutrition. With respect to these goals, objectives identified by the High Council in the last year include reduction of saturated and transfatty acid content in edible oils; increasing consumption of milk and dairy products; improving the quality of wheat, flour and bread, including a reduction in bread’s salt content; and reducing contaminants and pesticides in agricultural products.

Substantial progress has been made in meeting these objectives:

- There has been a reduction in imported palm oil as well as a revision in standards of palm oil used for food products. A measure has also been approved to stop production of hydrogenated edible oil in 2015, and to reduce transfatty acid content to less than 2 percent.
- Funding for the national school milk programme has been increased. This milk is fortified.
- Technical working groups have been formed to reduce the use of pesticides in agricultural products, and to reduce salt, sugar and fat in food products.
- A multisectoral committee has been set up to organize a healthy food and nutrition awareness campaign.

With respect to implementation, strengthening the links between national and provincial levels is crucial. In this regard, the Council for Health and Food Security at the provincial level has the same structure as at national level; provincial and district level members are responsible for developing and implementing food and nutrition programmes. In addition, the High Council Secretariat (hosted by the Ministry of Health) includes an intersectoral technical working group which is responsible for drafting the Council’s resolutions and forwarding them to the Cabinet to assure proper follow-up to implementation.

It is clear that good governance of nutrition programmes is very important. In Iran, in addition to efforts within governments at various levels of decentralization, political commitment is also reflected in a partnership between the public and private sectors, including capacity building in research, as well as the afore-described policy-making and programme implementation.

In conclusion, I’d like to acknowledge Iran’s multisectoral approach and high political commitment to integrating nutrition objectives into its national development plans. Both have played a critical role in improving national food and nutrition security.
Synopsis of Comments from the Floor

A proposal was made for three key components for good governance: Ownership, leadership, and institutional capacity:

First, if there is shared ownership, different sectors will be incentivized to coalesce. Second, good governance requires good leadership. This Conference is being attended by representatives of countries from all over the world, the question of political interest and involvement is without doubt. There are Ministers for Health and Agriculture here and it is therefore expected that at the highest level of government there is commitment. There are also other sectors of government present, who work in nutrition at various levels. The problem is that, looking at different countries, the nutrition division is often weak, with little institutional or operational capacity for policy formulation, oversight and large-scale programme management. This capacity is the third component of good governance. We need it for policy-making and advocacy, both are imperative for making nutrition a long-term priority that can withstand changes in government.

These components – ownership, leadership, and capacity – are required at the grassroots as well as nationally, so that people working on the ground have the support they need to carry out the essential nutrition actions that we all know work. Unless these three requirements are met, unless we have a nutrition workforce that is adequately trained, properly led and properly motivated, we will not achieve our goals and targets and we shall be back here in 2025, talking about these same problems.

Comments were made regarding conflicts of interest, namely with respect to the inherent tension between public and private sector interests. Representatives from the public sector argued for increased regulation of the WTO, both in terms of speculative behaviour and in terms of relaxing restrictions on country efforts to regulate trade in foods which undermine national health.

In line with these comments, a plea was made to keep the policy-setting arena free from commercial influence, to allow “governance the chance to think about what kind of nutrition policies to put in place”. It was proposed that only after this initial formulation stage, and no sooner, might policy-makers approach the private sector to explore options for coordination. It was argued that the current SUN approach, which encourages governments to make plans with the private sector from the initial planning stages, was thus ill-founded.

The call was also made to rebalance the decision-making powers at the UN fundamentally and rebalance the decision-making processes in the World Trade Organization so that the voices of poor, local smallholder farmers can be heard.

In response to these comments, it was noted that a private sector delegation of 90 people from 24 countries was attending the Conference. A representative from this delegation made two points. First, that “corporate groups” represent large and disparate groups of people, not just business people but also large value chain farmers, small farmers, and small and large businesses. Many people therefore depend on the private sector. And second, regarding involving the private sector in the early stages of problem solving: “Like everyone else, we have certain experiences, tools and products; we are active in the field and we are eager and willing to contribute to solving the problem of malnutrition.”
A final question was asked regarding the issue of making malnutrition “visible”. The speaker directed her comment to Mr Baker, requesting his thoughts on the observation that this challenge is not limited to policy-makers:

*I also think it’s at community level – creating the urgency and the need for communities to understand and appreciate nutrition as a vital area in their own development. I think that, beyond organizations holding governments accountable, communities and societies also have to be able to hold their own leaders accountable and make them realize how urgent the matter is.*

Mr Salha, Ms Abdullahi, Mr Baker and Mr González responded as follows:

*Mr Salha (delivered in French):*

Regarding key components of good governance: what comes to mind is transparency and joint responsibilities. Coherence, consistency, harmonization, and joint management of responsibilities, institutional capacities and the demands of governance are perhaps the key concepts that I’ve gleaned from this discussion.

With respect to conflicts of interest: This issue crops up when we’re trying to define national priorities. In most African countries, you need a constant which must be abided by. In other words, national priorities must be defined by the national strategy. Conflict of interest occurs when governments have not clearly defined their decisions with respect to a national strategy. If there is a multisectoral, multidisciplinary framework which involves concertation and coordination at the national level, it should be easy for government to resolve these conflicts. What is important, of course, is to ensure that the strategy’s values and goals are shared among all stakeholders. For example, the issue of smallholder rights, which are often undermined.

*Ms Abdullahi:*

I should first like to elaborate on what the gentleman said about the weakness of nutrition divisions in various agencies. The problem is that the term “nutrition security” – which is more than food security – is not yet familiar in many country contexts. FAO and WHO should work more on familiarizing and explaining this idea.

Regarding conflicts of interest, I imagine that national priorities are clarified for government when there are reliable data available on the burden of disease and associated costs caused by nutritional problems. When data exist and are trustworthy, policy-makers and the government then have a clearer imperative to budget accordingly. In Iran, there are estimates of the burden of disease caused by NCDs and other food- and nutrition-related problems. As such the government and policy-makers are convinced that something must be done to decrease the excessive costs of health care for different diseases.

*Mr Baker:*

I fully concur that the main problem we have with nutrition is that it is invisible, starting from the household and going up through all layers of society. The problem is compounded by the fact that those who suffer most, particularly in terms of undernutrition, are those who have the least political voice.
I have been reflecting on personal experiences I had in a previous job, when I was visiting small villages where there was backing for mothers’ groups to provide support for optimal breastfeeding. It is such a joy to see an infant who is breastfed with a healthy glow. Mothers and fathers are well-attuned to the health and well-being of their infants and young children. When you start working at the local level and demonstrating what the impacts are – how well those children are thriving – that can dramatically change perceptions, not only in particular households, but in whole villages.

How can we do this at a larger scale, given the labour-intensity of this kind of work? I’d say the answer is two-fold. First, it’s very important to have a good understanding within a given context of what are the norms, investigated specifically through a combination of personal communications, media, and other strategies. Second, once some understanding of norms and priorities is established, how can nutrition be “repackaged” to fit within them. The resulting “product” should not be something that happens by chance but something that needs to be acted on now and with urgency. There is definitely a role for better data in this process, however analysis of how that data fits within the political priority context is equally important for influencing policy-makers.

With respect to the comment on leadership and capacity, I absolutely concur. There have been two decades of disinvestment in nutrition training. I think we need to shore up existing resources into converting people into being nutrition actors while at the same time concentrating on long-term nutrition capacity-building.

Finally in terms of conflict of interest, I should like to reiterate that every actor has his own interests and to me the question is on how to manage those different interests. My five concluding words to this panel are: do not break our promise.

Mr González (delivered in Spanish):

How do you keep corporate interests at bay and how do you keep them out of the decision-making process? I don’t think they should be kept out of the process, I think they should be an integral part of it. All opinions are important, wherever they come from. I shall tell you about something which was carried out in conjunction with the private sector in my country and which is related to this issue of influence and how we can ensure that we can work together to get the best results on this issue.

In 2012, a national programme was established called We’ve All Got Something to Give. It was a campaign in which we targeted mainly, but not only, young people, and also rural communities where there were problems of undernutrition. As part of this programme – which was defined after an initial visit to these rural communities – we came up with a series of proposed solutions to the problems which had been identified. There followed a second field visit by young people: more than 8 000 young people recruited from many different communities in Guatemala participated. After these visits, they used our initial proposed solutions to come up with ideas such as water filters or seeds. They also devised communication strategies to ensure, for example, that exclusive breastfeeding for the first six months was a practice which took root. This widespread, extensive programme meant that there was an increase in awareness about the issue of undernutrition.
Everyone was aware of what they were dealing with: we didn’t merely see an isolated number of politicians or people with specific interests in nutrition, rather there was a peak in national interest. Everyone realized that they could all make a contribution to reducing chronic undernutrition in Guatemala.

In terms of defining governance: food and nutrition security are not campaign or process issues. They are rights of the population that need to be respected. To meet this need, the Government of Guatemala has had to get its house in order, roll up its sleeves, and get to work.

Moderator: Thank you very much. I’m sorry that this panel must come to a conclusion. Let me thank you for your cooperation and offer my own five concluding words: the first is “guts”, we need guts (moral fibre, mettle, courage); the second is “long-term leadership”; the third is “results orientation”; the fourth is “multistakeholder collaboration” and the fifth is: “trust and believe that we can make it happen”.

Co-chair Brattskar closed the panel, thanking Ambassador Verburg for her spirited guidance, the panellists for their active participation, and the audience for their contributions.
Co-Chairs: Her Excellency Gerda VERBURG, Permanent Representative of the Kingdom of The Netherlands to FAO and Chairperson of the Committee on World Food Security

Moderator: Tom ARNOLD, SUN Movement Coordinator ad interim, Dublin, Ireland

Main Speaker: Lawrence HADDAD, Senior Research Fellow, International Food Policy Research Institute, USA – Current accountability mechanisms: Do they work?

Panellists: Her Excellency Cristina Isabel LOPES DA SILVA MONTEIRO DUARTE, Minister of Finance and Planning, Cape Verde – Country accountability mechanism for nutrition

Her Excellency Mary MUBI, Former Permanent Representative of Zimbabwe to FAO – How can we hold governments accountable for nutrition?

Richard GREENE, Senior Deputy Assistant Administrator, Bureau for Food Security, United States Agency for International Development – Accountability for the ICN2 Rome Declaration: Who should be held accountable and how?

Marcela LIBOMBO, Director of Food Security Center – Ministry of Agriculture, Mozambique – Country accountability mechanism for nutrition

Asma LATEEF, Director, Bread for World Institute, USA – What does the current monitoring and accountability framework look like? What accountability mechanisms should be in place?
Gerda Verburg, Co-Chair  
*Permanent Representative of the Kingdom of The Netherlands to FAO  
Chairperson of the Committee on World Food Security*

As Co-Chair for this session, it’s my honour to welcome you to this second panel of the Roundtable on Governance and Accountability for Nutrition. Let me introduce you to our Moderator, Tom Arnold, Coordinator *ad interim* of the SUN Movement.

Tom Arnold, Moderator  
*Coordinator ad interim, SUN Movement  
Ireland*

As we’re short on time, I shall introduce you immediately to our Keynote Speaker, Dr Lawrence Haddad of the International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI). The last session talked at length on the issue of governance, but in this session we shall focus on accountability. I very much look forward to Lawrence’s presentation on current accountability mechanisms.

Lawrence Haddad, Main Speaker  
*Senior Research Fellow, International Food Policy Research Institute  
USA*

**Current accountability mechanisms: Do they work?**

When I was asked to make this presentation – “Current accountability mechanisms: do they work?” – the temptation to have just one slide for this presentation with “I don’t know” was very high! That said, I hope to make an interesting presentation, nevertheless it may not come to any decisive conclusions.

There are many different ways of defining accountability, both inside and outside the nutrition sectors. I’ve tried to simplify the definition as the glue that binds the commitment to the results: it’s very easy to make commitments but far more difficult to generate results.

The approach we are taking in the Global Nutrition Report – for which accountability is a primary focus – is to first identify the commitments. This is not always easy. Most people who make commitments are good at making non-commitments that look like commitments. Therefore the first step is to identify the commitment, then track it, which is also a challenge, assess whether the response to the commitment has actually been delivered or not, then see whether you can leverage the commitment that is supposed to have been made, and finally respond to that accountability assessment.
Before going into more detail on accountability models, I’d like to underscore the notion that accountability for malnutrition is intrinsically difficult. There are two main reasons for this. First, to reiterate Panel 1 of this Roundtable, many manifestations of malnutrition are invisible. Moreover even when extreme malnutrition actually presents, that is becomes clinically visible, the total burden of consequences is not experienced until later in life. This “invisibility” makes accountability difficult. Second, the determinants of good nutrition span multiple sectors, making interventions challenging and reducing the incentive to take responsibility.

With this caveat in mind, I’d like to now focus on current accountability mechanisms. The Millennium Development Goals were an obvious example, as are the World Health Assembly’s Global Monitoring Framework and Targets. Both the Millennium Development and the World Health Assembly goals and targets comprise time-bound, outcome-focused accountability mechanism, the MDGs by 2015, the WHAs by 2025. The Global Hunger Index that IFPRI and two other organizations put together is another example. Calculated using 3 outcome indicators – FAO’s prevalence of undernourishment statistics; child underweight; and child mortality – this index is calculated annually and ranks countries on a 100 point scale to highlight national and regional progress.

Other mechanisms track the actions and monitor the environments which generate the outcomes. INFORMAS, otherwise known as the International Network for Food and Obesity / Non-communicable Diseases Research, Monitoring and Action Support, tracks public and private sector actions to create healthy food environments and reduce obesity and non-communicable diseases. For example, they monitor the types of food and beverages sold in school vending machines; whether hospital food is healthy; and whether food labelling is clear, transparent and consistent. INFORMAS, in other words, tracks the degree to which national public and private sector interests are enabling consumers to make healthy food choices.

Another example of this type of mechanism is the Access to Nutrition Index (ATNI). ATNI scores the world’s largest food and beverage companies not on what they say but what they actually do as regards undernutrition and also overweight and obesity; and sugar, salt and fat content in their food and drinks.

I’d also like to mention the Hunger and Nutrition Commitment Index (HANCI). HANCI is also action-oriented; however its focus is on the political context, namely the policies, spending and laws that create an environment in which we would expect hunger to reduce quickly.

Finally, the “report cards” published by the Countdown to 2015 for Maternal, Newborn and Child Survival are a powerful tool for accountability in MNCH. We have freely and unashamedly copied this model in the Global Nutrition Report.

I’d like to return now to the five steps for strengthening accountability that I outlined earlier. To reiterate, commitments must first be identified, as per the Global Nutrition Report. It turns out that it’s quite difficult to calculate exactly what governments are spending on nutrition. This was
one of the biggest surprises in preparing the Report. Three countries where we were able to
do so are Guatemala, Tanzania and Zambia. For these countries, nutrition budgets were largely
untracked, but not untrackable.

The second step is monitoring commitments. As discussed at length in the Global Nutrition
Report, there are some enormous nutrition data gaps. In a previous session of this Conference,
Richard Greene highlighted some examples: 49 percent of countries don’t have enough data to
assess whether they are on course for four of the World Health Assembly indicators, which is
extraordinary. Forty percent of the most recent child growth surveys are over five years old.

The third step is assessing commitments. A number of countries are on course for the WHA
targets; they have adapted the global targets and applied them at country level. However these
are not countries’ targets; most countries do not have their own targets yet. Sixty-nine percent of
countries for which we have data are on track for one or more of the WHA targets; there is only
one country that is on track for all four.

In the Global Nutrition Report, we also tracked Nutrition for Growth commitments, based on
the 2013 London Summit of the same name. This event convened 21 Heads of State from
high-burden countries, alongside donors, multilateral agencies, businesses and NGOs, all of
whom committed to ambitious targets, including pledging USD4.1 billion for nutrition specific
interventions. Specifically, 168 commitments from governments, donors, civil society, business
and research organizations have been made in association with this Compact. Through the Global
Report, we surveyed each of these commitments. At the time of publication, results indicated that
43 percent were on track; nine percent were off-track; 11 percent were non-responses; and 37
percent were inconclusive.

The fourth step in strengthening accountability is to leverage the assessments. For example, what
have the MDGs done for nutrition? The MDG poverty goal – Goal 1 – includes reductions in
underweight as its first target. Assessment of the MDGs indicate that this indicator’s inclusion was
instrumental in allowing governments, donor agencies, UN agencies and civil society to leverage
MDG assessments to do more for nutrition. A good case study of this experience is Maharashtra,
which, as per the Global Report, did an excellent job of leveraging MDG assessments to increase
their nutrition commitments. Stunting in Maharashtra decreased from 37 to 24 percent in seven
years. This is the second largest state in India, comprising 100 million people – it would be the 12th
largest country in the world if it were a country. The reduction was achieved through improvements
across the board; however public commitment by the state government was critical.

The fifth step is responding to assessments. For example, we conducted a very simple nutrition
accountability exercise for a bilateral partner about eight years ago on how often they and other
branches of government mentioned "nutrition" between 2005 and 2006 in speeches and press
releases. At that time there was no mention whatsoever, by either the Ministries of Health or
Agriculture or senior officials, or in press releases. The bilateral responded remarkably well to that
commitment assessment.
An additional possible step is use of the “Citizen Report Card” (CRC) methodology. These are client feedback surveys that provide a quantitative measure of user perceptions on the quality, efficiency and adequacy of different public services and as such exact public accountability for those services. There is not much experimentation with these in the nutrition community; however, there is a lot in the health community. For example, a CRC-type mechanism was the centrepiece of a randomized control trial experiment (RCT) in the health sector of Uganda. Unlike conventional RCTs, which randomize the actual service received, this experiment delivered the same health intervention to both the treatment and control communities. What was randomized was the way in which the performance of the intervention was reported. In the controls, standard M and E reporting was used; in the treatment group, quality of delivery, reliability of delivery and dignity with which people were treated were reported by the community using CRC-like community-based monitoring. In the treatment group, community members became more involved in local health service provision and strengthened their capacity to hold local providers to account. This was a very well-designed study whose astonishing results were reported in the Quarterly Journal of Economics, namely large increases in the utilization of health services and improved health outcomes and child mortality reduced by 33 percent for the treatment group. This community monitoring approach was a very low-cost intervention, eminently scalable with a big impact.

In the Global Report, we talk about tools for social accountability, citing citizen accountability as a key method for strengthening accountability mechanisms for nutrition. The Uganda study is a strong example of why it’s not only necessary to have accountability at global and national level, but to also have it sub-nationally and perhaps especially at the grassroots. Whether through large NGOs or networks of NGOs or small civil society organizations or individual citizens in communities, there is a range of tools and mechanisms available that have been used in health and other sectors that we could be importing and adapting for nutrition.

I would also like to discuss the role of research, as mentioned by Dr Hawkes in the second Roundtable on policy coherence. Research is extremely important in the accountability response phase because evidence typically supports certain follow-up actions and advises against others where responses don’t seem to be working. One of the best papers in the 2008 Lancet series discussed when to stop taking certain actions. Research is important for pointing out both what will work and what will not work.

That said, since there have been very few serious evaluations of accountability mechanisms in nutrition, at this point I’m not sure whether a strategy of tying accountability to commitments works. The high level of Post-2015 influencing activities suggests it does matter. In my previous job as Director of the Institute for Development Studies, we spent an inordinate amount of time trying to understand how we could influence and understand the Post-2015 process. So many websites and communities of civil society organizations, researchers and NGOs were trying to influence the Post-2015 process. Indeed this is still ongoing and I would argue that, with respect to nutrition, there is still much hard work to be done. To date, there are 17 SD Goals, 169 SDG
Targets – and nutrition is mentioned only once, with reference to wasting and stunting. Four of the WHA indicators – those that have been sanctioned and ratified by more than 180 Ministers for Health – are not even in the SDGs. This is extraordinary.

Let me reiterate that accountability is the glue that binds commitments to results. There are different types of mechanisms for strengthening accountability. Some focus on outcomes or impact indicators and others focus on actions. The latter is my preferred option because of their tangibility and trackability. Indeed I would argue that the cornerstone of accountability in nutrition is its trackability: if you can’t track what a government is spending on nutrition it will be difficult to predict a precise outcome. Governments should be required to inform how their spending patterns are aligned with their proposed nutrition plans and strategies. This is one very important area where accountability needs to be strengthened.

I will conclude as follows: While we cannot say with certainty whether accountability strengthening mechanisms work, we should presume that they do, and invest in finding out which ones work the best.

Moderator: Thank you for the wonderful presentation. I think one of the most striking things about this Conference are the examples that have been given of where actions are really working. Dr Haddad’s example of the reduction in child mortality in Uganda – 33 percent – is outstanding, as was the impact in Maharashtra. We have also heard earlier in the Conference about achievements in, say, Peru and Guatemala, which proves that if there are the right conditions, the political will, the right policies and sufficient resources, significant change can be achieved.

I shall now move on to the panellists. The first is Her Excellency Cristina Isabel Lopes da Silva Monteiro Duarte, Minister for Finance and Planning of Cape Verde. Her Excellency will speak on Cape Verde’s accountability mechanisms for nutrition.

Cristina Isabel Lopes da Silva Monteiro Duarte, Panellist 1
Minister for Finance and Planning
Cape Verde

Current accountability mechanism for nutrition

I should like to make a few comments to contribute to this debate. We are discussing governance and accountability for nutrition. Since accountability – at least for the Minister for Finance – is one of the most important pillars in good governance, we should concentrate on accountability. I should like to take this opportunity to speak about what we have been doing in Cape Verde.

Before attempting accountability in nutrition, governments should adopt accountability as a principle for every sector; making it the core of public administration. This is exactly what we are doing in my country. We are trying to adopt accountability in all governance matters by presenting timely and detailed public accounts to parliament and by using results-based management. Both strategies rely on sustainable, credible information systems.
With respect to the latter, I will be presenting the new Budgeting Programme Approach in December, including a common framework. Our government budget has been structured by programmes, starting from four years ago, when the Government realized its actions are essentially a contract with civil society. As a contract, the government’s programme is to be incorporated into the budgeting process and planning exercise. In Cape Verde, we took the government’s programme and we incorporated it into the planning exercise and we presented, based on the programme, a medium-term fiscal framework. On our country’s Ministry of Finance website, you will see the 2015 budget and the public accounts for 2014, clearly visible. We have uploaded the medium-term fiscal and expenditures frameworks, broken down to the annual budget. By thus structuring the budget and programmes, we are now in a position to start adopting accountability on nutrition.

As such, we are now screening the programmes by using the logical frameworks, introducing two types of indicators: gender and nutrition, and making all the information available online. The idea is to generate total transparency between programme commitments – for example, to decrease malnutrition by ten percent – and subsequent budget allocations.

What usually happens in countries like mine is that the policy planning stage results in a list of what we would like to see accomplished. However, it’s like the left hand and the right hand between planning and actual budget lines, neither knows what the other is doing. At this point, Cape Verde is trying to rectify this shortcoming with a common framework to inform our partners and transparency in budget allocation.

Moderator: Thank you, Minister, for your clarity in presenting Cape Verde’s political commitments and the technical accountability arrangements that you have put in place to deliver on those commitments.

It is now my pleasure to introduce Her Excellency Mary Mubi, former Permanent Representative of Zimbabwe to FAO.

Mary Mubi, Panellist 2
Former Permanent Representative of Zimbabwe to FAO

How can we hold governments accountable for nutrition?

For Zimbabwe, nutrition governance has various levels – we believe that these are mutually supportive, starting at global level. The Millennium Development Goals are global frameworks that have been agreed upon by governments; along with the UN Convention on the Right to Food, the MDGs provide a useful benchmark to stretch the ambitions of countries with respect to nutrition outcomes at country level.

The Post-2015 Development Agenda will also provide internationally acceptable benchmarks for nutrition outcomes. And the reformed Committee on Food Security (CFS) – the most inclusive international governmental platform for stakeholders to work in a coordinated way to ensure food security and nutrition – is critical for pushing the issues of nutrition governance at a global level.
Indeed the CFS Global Strategic Framework for Food Security and Nutrition, and the ICN2 Framework for Action, are also important global governance instruments. After the first International Conference on Nutrition more than twenty years ago, nutrition units in many UN organizations, including FAO and WHO, were virtually dismantled due to a lack of commitment by the two leading agencies to declarations. This should not happen again. Whilst we talk about policy coherence by governments, there must also be policy coherence at global level within the organizations of the UN system and elsewhere.

The regional level is also an important tier of influence. Within the African continent, the African Union has been instrumental in pushing for political commitment to food and nutrition security as priorities, based on continental, regional and national frameworks. For example, the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP) results framework aims to measure the extent to which African Member States are improving food and nutrition security as well as generating wealth and creating employment.

Another example is the Latin American and Caribbean Household Food-Security Scale, which aims at standardizing measurement of food insecurity across the entire region. Widespread use of this instrument is likely to have positive outcomes in terms of improved nutrition in the region and in pushing the country-level actions.

The country level is, of course, the most important in terms of accountability. It is at country level that nutrition governance becomes a key factor in changing nutrition indicators. A number of studies have shown that good nutrition governance at country level must include the following: government commitment; political commitment; and national nutrition policies which are also part of the national development strategy.

I believe the latter is key, as it ensures that nutrition is treated as a development issue and simultaneously holds specific sectors explicitly accountable for nutrition outcomes. It follows that good nutrition governance also requires intersectoral coordination committees built on existing centralized structures. These committees must be vertically integrated from national to decentralized level, so as to generate local ownership, including identification of nutrition challenges. If communities are actively involved in the identification of targets, they will hold their governments accountable. Local ownership also facilitates broader, more inclusive nutrition coalitions, which in turn ensure greater sustainability. For example, the Brazilian model where engaged, informed and empowered communities and stakeholders’ groups hold government accountable for failure to achieve set targets in nutrition.
National nutrition policy must also be backed up with implementation matrices stipulating who is responsible at each level to achieve the necessary impacts. There should be agreement on indicators used to track progress, as well as on timely and systematic monitoring of those indicators. Indeed, maintaining regular service and data collection and analysis is vital to supporting advocacy movements and building political commitment around clear targets. There is also a need to decentralize routine information systems in order to inform early warning surveys. Unfortunately, many monitoring systems are used to inform people at the top levels rather than being used as information for immediate action at the levels where the information is gathered for donor support to and alignment with national priorities. This is best achieved when donor convenors have strong links with the Ministry of Finance, ensuring that no parallel programmes in coordinated funding mechanisms are put in place.

Finally, I should like to give my support to the Minister for Finance from Cape Verde. We are also going through a process where, for the first time, the multistakeholder Zim Asset nutrition programme, is going to be aligned to the budget. For my country, this is a major achievement; similar to my co-panellist, the right hand does not know what the left is doing. In theory, funding must go to the actions which are priorities. Unfortunately in the past, there was little or no budgeting. However now the budget is focused on prioritizing action to guarantee a certain level of accountability.

_Moderator:_ Thank you for your clear and practical statement. I should like to ask Richard Greene, Senior Deputy Assistant Administrator of the Bureau for Food Security at the United States Agency for International Development to speak on accountability for the ICN2 Rome Declaration – who should be held accountable and how?

**Richard Greene, Panellist 3**

*Senior Deputy Assistant Administrator, Bureau for Food Security, United States Agency for International Development*

_Accountability for the ICN2 Rome Declaration: Who should be held accountable and how?_

The ICN2 Declaration and Framework outline goals, actions and policies to improve nutrition and food security. These need to be implemented, but they also should be monitored, tracked and accounted for.

In my view, our first accountability task is to measure progress in outcomes such as optimal breastfeeding and impact, including stunting, wasting and anaemia. We need to regularly monitor these and other high-level indicators through good quality population-based surveys. We should publish these data and convene national leaders in every country to discuss the results. However, only 93 of the 193 UN Member States can now track stunting: this is a large data gap. I don’t know of any international development initiative that has succeeded given a data gap of such magnitude.

At global level, we need independent monitoring of major nutrition outcomes, ideally as part of the Sustainable Development Goal process, as per Dr Haddad.
In addition to tracking the top-level indicators, we need more detailed reporting on process. For instance, through the Global Nutrition Report, with the first edition to be released here at this Conference and discussed by Dr Haddad. This Report provides a comprehensive narrative on global- and country-level progress on all forms of nutrition and its drivers, with nutrition profiles of each of the 193 UN Member States. On an annual basis, the Global Nutrition Report could spur public review of progress and identify gaps and the way forward. We need to institutionalize this type of reporting for nutrition.

Many of the actions outlined in the Framework involve leadership and commitment by national authorities, ideally at Head of State level. Indeed, we know that countries that have achieved the greatest, most sustained reductions in child stunting – such as Peru and Brazil – had national leaders that made fighting malnutrition a national priority, including setting goals, allocating funds and tracking progress. As such, we need indicators and mechanisms to track the level and effectiveness of national commitment. In the end, national civil society including academia and the media must also play a role in holding the public sector accountable to its commitments.

Accountability at national level only works when it translates downstream. A model to replicate is, in my view, immunization in which national targets are translated to districts and tracked at all levels. Staff at almost all health centres in Africa and southern Asia post their vaccination coverage, targets and rates on the door, and district-level staff can also inform of the vaccination rates of their populations. We need this accountability for both child stunting and wasting. Today, as per earlier comments, stunting is truly invisible since it is not commonly tracked in growth-monitoring programmes. Simply put, we need to find ways to set and monitor key nutrition targets at both health centre and sub-district levels. I should like to see every health centre that I visit in the next five years tracking stunting and wasting in the same way they are tracking vaccination coverage.

Accountability also extends to individuals and families who are ultimately responsible for their own well-being. For example, as regards the vaccination model, mothers are reinforced by health workers when they fully immunize their children and they take pride in doing so. This accountability has contributed to very high rates of vaccination coverage, even in challenging environments. We need something similar for nutrition. Parents everywhere need to become responsible and accountable for the nutrition of their children.

Accountability at all levels depends on healthy nutrition behaviours and practices. These should be converted into coverage levels whenever possible. With regard to micronutrient supplementation and breastfeeding, the most important aspect to measure is coverage for the most vulnerable populations. Food fortification coverage should also be especially focused on assuring access for poorer populations.

Women are critical to improving food security and nutrition. Moreover, data show that women’s active involvement in agriculture improves both production and family income. In 2012, USAID’s Feed the Future Initiative, IFPRI and partners launched the Women’s Empowerment in Agriculture Index (WEAI), which tracks women’s resources, leadership and time use in the agricultural sector. I believe we need something similar to track women’s involvement and empowerment in nutrition.
Finally, I’d like to speak to the US Government’s nutrition data collection efforts. USAID has a demographic and health survey data programme which carries out health and nutrition surveys in over 90 countries, and the Centre for Disease Control and Prevention provides technical assistance and survey toolkits to monitor malnutrition programmes worldwide. Under the leadership of the US Department of Agriculture, the US Government shares these data sets publicly whenever possible, reinforcing our commitment to open data. In addition, both of USAID’s flagship programmes – the Ending Preventable Child and Maternal Death Initiative and the Feed the Future Initiative – include improved nutrition as a topline goal. We monitor our performance through a series of measures including population surveys every three to five years as well as annual output data collection. We also have external impact evaluations and programme evaluations. All of these include nutrition indicators.

In conclusion: this is a seminal time for nutrition with great potential for global progress. How much progress is made may depend upon the strength of the accountability systems that are put in place.

Moderator: Thank you. I should now like to give the floor to Marcela Libombo, Director of the Food Security Centre, Ministry of Agriculture, Mozambique, to speak about accountability mechanisms for nutrition in her country.

**Marcela Libombo, Panellist 4**

*Director, Food Security Centre*  
*Ministry of Agriculture*  
*Mozambique*

**Country accountability mechanism for nutrition**

In September 2010, the Mozambique Council of Ministers approved a national multisectoral plan of action for the reduction of chronic undernutrition. This was an important policy step for the Government. At that time, one of the main challenges we faced was to reduce stunting from 43 percent to 20 percent by 2020.

In order to achieve the multisectoral coordination required to realize this goal, the Government drafted a Technical Working Group and Secretariat to manage programme planning, advocacy and nutrition promotion. This body was replicated at sub-national level across all 11 provinces. These working groups meet every two months to share ideas regarding execution of priority interventions and amelioration of gaps in implementation at both national and provincial levels.

In order to strengthen good nutrition governance across sectors, we are also looking to Mozambique’s national political framework to provide the rationale for nutrition-sensitive policies. We have also developed a food and nutrition security strategy under many sectors’ action plans. For instance, we have a Ministry of Education programme on school feeding approved by the Council of Ministers and a programme for food fortification developed jointly with the Ministries of Health and Industry and Trade.
As policymakers and the general population are both relatively uninformed on nutrition issues, a plan has also been launched for communication and advocacy in order to raise awareness regarding healthy eating habits.

With regard to financing and costing for nutrition, a system is being developed, including a stipulation for biannual reports to the Council of Ministers on implementation progress made by these strategic multisectoral nutrition action plans. We are also reporting to donors, to academic organizations and to CAADP in Southern Africa.

I’d like to note that it is quite difficult to get experts from different sectors together to deliberate on policy. As such we have created incentives to strengthen and stimulate multisectoral participation including training facilities, attendance at international meetings and other attractive opportunities for sharing information.

As regards fund-raising and mobilization, we are working together with the Ministry of Planning and Development and the Ministry of Finance – as did my colleague in Cape Verde – and we have mainstreamed nutrition into sectoral economic and social plans to ensure that a budget allocation is provided for years to come oriented towards nutrition activities. We are also mainstreaming nutrition and key policies from government at both national and provincial levels. Of our 11 provinces, five province governors have approved a strategic nutritional plan for that specific province. We have also started fund-raising campaigns and are mobilizing funds for different provinces to stimulate nutrition activities at community level.

Finally, we are working to strengthen both human and institutional capacity across the board. To this end, we have been prioritizing training for human resources and have been working closely with civil society, the latter also in an effort to foster accountability.

In conclusion, Mozambique has made progress in strengthening multisectoral coordination on nutrition. The afore-mentioned Technical Food Security and Nutrition Secretariat, created in 2010, is at the moment, fully functional and receiving information from counterparts at provincial level. Individual and sectoral meetings are taking place with the participation, engagement and trust of different actors and agencies: so far, five platforms have been created mainly for civil society. It’s important to note that the Scaling Up Nutrition movement has played an important role in Mozambique to build these platforms, including those for civil society; there is one on universities, academia and research, and one on donors – as formerly the donors spoke about nutrition in both the agricultural and health sectors but unfortunately were not interrelated. Now they are speaking in the same forum on health, nutrition and food security.

Moderator: Thank you. Our final speaker is Asma Lateef, Director of the Bread for the World Institute. Ms Lateef will speak on two questions: What does the current monitoring and accountability framework look like? And: What accountability mechanisms should be in place?
Asma Lateef, Panellist 5
Director of the Bread for the World Institute
USA

What does the current monitoring and accountability framework look like? What accountability mechanisms should be in place?

Thank you FAO and WHO for inviting me to speak at this important Conference. It’s fitting that we’re talking about accountability after Pope Francis’ speech reminding us that our ultimate accountability is to our fellow citizens who suffer from hunger and malnutrition. Keeping that in mind, I should like to make the following points.

First, I believe we have the building blocks for accountability. However they need strengthening. Dr Haddad’s presentation discussed the many tools we have at our disposal to do this: The World Health Assembly targets, the MDGs and SDGs, the Global Nutrition Report, HANCI, etc. At national level, there is an additional accountability tool becoming available in SUN countries, namely an annual self-assessment of countries’ Common Results Frameworks. These assessments are being carried out by governments, in conjunction with the SUN Multistakeholder Platforms and are an important aspect of the SUN Country Approach and, more broadly, as a tool for strengthening accountability.

Both Dr Haddad and Mr Greene spoke about the challenge of data gaps. Over the next few years, it’s critical that we put efforts into strengthening nutrition data and nutrition information systems from national right down to district levels.

It’s worth repeating why data are so important. Simply put, “what gets measured gets done”. Good data also help ensure that what is being done is working, and, most importantly, data that are publicly available and transparent can empower civil society and provide the tools for them to hold the government accountable.

Indeed, civil society can act as a catalyst for accountability by moving information to action through advocacy. Civil society organizations work in communities; they see first-hand what is working and what is not. When empowered by access to good data, including information on budgets and policies, civil society organizations have the capacity to build nutrition champions in government and parliament. We’ve already seen some excellent examples of this: in Peru, civil society organizations worked together to engage Presidential candidates and obtained commitments to take leadership on nutrition, irrespective of who won the elections. In Zambia, civil society has helped build champions in parliament: there is now a group in parliament called MPs for SUN. The role of building nutrition champions in parliament is crucial, as they provide oversight, the appropriate resources and policy continuity. It’s encouraging to see so many parliamentarians at the ICN2.

Civil society has very limited resources, particularly civil society organizations at the local level. To date, this area remains hamstrung by massive underinvestment. These organizations need all the support they can muster, from logistical support – office space, access to computers and peripherals, access to the internet – to financial support to help build coalitions and build their own
capacity. Looking towards the future and with regard to accountability and the implementation of the Framework for Action, it is important that we see civil society as an ally and invest in it accordingly.

Finally, I should like to comment on the SDGs: Dr Haddad and others have remarked that the MDGs are the “mothers of all accountability”. My hope is that the SDGs become the empowered mothers of all accountability. The relevant challenge for the nutrition sector – especially for nutrition advocates who work in government – is to find out who is responsible for decision-making on the government’s position on the Post-2015 Development Agenda and to lobby them. Please engage the civil society organizations in your country to do the same. We have a wonderful opportunity now to build on the World Health Assembly targets, set a more ambitious agenda and ensure that the multisectoral nature of nutrition is reflected throughout the Sustainable Development Goals.

However, time is short to meet this challenge as well as those that Professor Sachs issued to us as a community. As we attempt to do so, let us be guided by Pope Francis’ plea to keep the plight of the hungry and malnourished always at the forefront of our thoughts and actions.

Moderator: Thank you. I’d like to now ask Tahira Mustafa from the Secretariat of the Global Donor Platform for Rural Development for a brief intervention.

Tahira Mustafa, Discussant

As a network of 38 bilaterals and multilaterals, international institutions and development agencies, the Global Donor Platform for Rural Development platform recognizes the need for multisectoral approaches to address nutrition challenges. The platform welcomes the ICN2 outcome documents and the Framework for Action, especially the recommendations on accountability, encouraging countries to use globally agreed targets and frameworks, and to establish their own national nutrition goals.

Accountability is not just a cross-cutting issue for donors, it is also an important way to improve the impact of nutrition interventions, by measuring progress, mobilizing resources and improving the quality of nutrition aid.

Despite limitations, the tracking exercises and monitoring mechanisms already in place should be viewed as an opportunity to make sure that current commitments are fulfilled. In line with this thinking, a number of members of the SUN Donor Network have taken an important step forward by agreeing to use a common methodology for reporting on nutrition investments, allowing for use of the same language when reporting on Nutrition for Growth commitments. This step – towards a common language in reporting on nutrition investments – should serve as an example to other constituencies, especially those with commitments under Nutrition for Growth. Eventually, if agreement on a common methodology is widespread, it could serve as an anchor for harmonization in priorities, and as such accountability, across a wide spectrum of donor agencies.
In conclusion, I’d like to put a question to the panel regarding the role of non-state actors like the private sector in monitoring ICN2 recommendations. For example, Dr Haddad mentioned INFORMAS which is collecting evidence on private-sector policies and actions on food environments and using the results to strengthen public health efforts. How can the public sector learn from this and similar initiatives?

_Moderator:_ This has been an excellent session. Accountability is clearly central to what we hope to achieve over the next 10-15 years. We have heard some very interesting examples about how, at national level, resources are being allocated according to priorities. A very simple principle is that first, priorities equal resources and second, when resources are committed, there have to be systems in place to account for whether they are effectively allocated. I should like to thank all the speakers and now revert to the Co-Chair.

Co-Chair Verburg thanked the panellists and discussant for their contributions, especially in terms of the difficult task of bringing together both the planning and financing aspects of creating effective policies, and citing the comments of Ms Duarte and Ms Mubi. She noted that while this is a difficult undertaking in practice, it is the prerogative of this Roundtable on accountability to make it work: “Let’s make it happen, let’s make it a reality.”

Co-Chair Verburg closed the Panel by asking that audience and panellists leave the ICN2 with the pledge to fight both undernourishment and overnourishment.
CHAIRS’ SUMMARY OF ROUNDTABLE 3

The Roundtable 3 on Governance and Accountability for Nutrition consisted of two panels: one focusing on governance and the other on accountability.

Panel 1: Nutrition Governance

The panel 1 on governance for nutrition explored key components for effective nutrition governance at national and international levels and shared experiences across countries.

The Roundtable underlined effective nutrition governance as key for follow-up to the commitments embedded in the Rome Declaration on Nutrition. Embedding nutrition in a human rights agenda makes issues of governance and accountability central to effective implementation.

The Roundtable highlighted hurdles to be overcome for strong nutrition governance:

1. the signs of malnutrition are often invisible, and thus remain a hidden problem;
2. in every country in the world, there are people who suffer from malnutrition;
3. those most affected by malnutrition are typically those with the least voice in society, so they are not heard;
4. malnutrition is often poorly measured and reported;
5. nutrition has become everyone’s business and no one’s responsibility, thus it is unclear who is accountable for nutrition in existing governance structures; and
6. the range of country perspectives shared in the presentations.

The discussions all highlighted the importance of making nutrition issues visible and establishing appropriate governance mechanisms across key Ministries and Departments, and that governance mechanisms were not only important at global and national levels but also at local levels.

Discussions also considered whether there is a need to establish a new international organization on nutrition. In addition to the substantial resources required to establish and maintain a new organization, it was recognized that the necessary elements already exist at global, regional, national and local levels. Resources could be better used reinforcing and building up these existing governance mechanisms.

The issue of if, how and when the private sector should be involved in both policy-setting and governance in general was also raised. Different views, opinions and experiences were shared.
There are several key conclusions emerging from the Panel 1. I will mention a few of them here:

1. Make malnutrition visible: many of the effects of nutrition and those worst affected are invariably invisible and lacking in voice. Raising the visibility of nutrition is thus vital. In this regard, improving the quality and frequency of data and information on malnutrition and the impact of programmes, as well as changing the narrative about nutrition issues will be important steps. For example, if we use the terms “chronic malnutrition”, we underplay the urgency of addressing nutrition problems.

2. Be inclusive and empowering: those who need to act must be empowered to do so, including with evidence-based facts.

3. Focus on meeting the needs and human rights of people.

4. Work in a multi-stakeholder setting that makes the sectors and stakeholders accountable on delivering on nutrition targets.

5. Recognize that work on improving nutrition needs to be political but not partisan, so that transitions in governments will not impede efforts to improve nutrition.

6. Request FAO and WHO to develop a definition of nutrition security.

7. Be results-oriented. Governance should not be an end in itself, but a means to end malnutrition.

8. Ownership and leadership are critical elements to nutrition governance: ownership and good leadership at all levels is needed for good governance.

9. Anchoring nutrition targets in the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) is key and inputs are urgently needed.

**Panel 2: Nutrition Accountability**

The panel 2 on **accountability for nutrition** explored the effectiveness of current accountability mechanisms. Experiences and selected country examples were discussed. It was recognized that accountability often is difficult to define – and even more challenging to measure. Why? Many manifestations of poor nutrition are invisible, or become visible only over time. Likewise, nutrition improvements reflect the combined and coordinated efforts of many sectors and many actors, reflecting some of the hindrances to nutrition governance identified in Panel 1.

The panel discussed the importance of accountability mechanisms bringing together different sectors. Moreover, the country examples emphasized the importance of linking accountability to government planning, budgeting, expenditures and results. The critical importance of embedding governance mechanisms – at the global, regional, national and local levels – was underscored.
A model for accountability was presented. This outlines five distinct steps:

1. To identify commitments, including quantifying what governments are spending on nutrition, so that expenditures are in line with nutrition strategies.
2. To monitor and track progress, including filling data gaps and budget commitments.
3. To assess response to commitments.
4. To leverage commitments, applying global targets at national level, if necessary.
5. To respond to assessments, using results for raising awareness and commitments and research for indications of what works and what does not work.

The country perspectives shared in the presentations emphasized that accountability is an essential pillar of good governance. The discussions also stressed this. Accountability must be applied to nutrition and nutrition outcomes, and in order to ensure this transparent public accounting is imperative.

The discussion also highlighted the need to establish indicators to track national commitment and coordinating mechanisms within countries to plan for, advocate for and promote better nutrition.

There were several key conclusions from Panel 2; I will mention some of them.

The first one is that accountability is a critical factor in turning commitments to improve nutrition into results. Progress in nutrition strongly depends upon accountability systems being put in place. The second is that some outcome and action accountability mechanisms do exist, but they need to be strengthened. It is important to invest more in them, in order to find more and better mechanisms. Thirdly, global level agreements provide a useful benchmark for nutrition outcomes at national level. Fourthly, we need to reach agreement on indicators and data gathering. Information systems need to be strengthened with regular and more detailed reporting and publications of results. Fifthly, nutrition is a cross-cutting issue. It requires an integrated, multi-sectorial engagement, and civil society needs to be included. Sixthly, resource allocation should be in line with priorities for nutrition improvement, bringing budgeting, planning and implementing exercises together. The last conclusion is that efforts are needed to embed nutrition more broadly in the SDGs.

The Roundtable gave us important insights regarding good practice and lessons learned, and also provided some concrete recommendations for the way forward for the work on nutrition governance and accountability.
SUMMARY OF THE 10 COMMITMENTS TO ACTION IN THE ROME DECLARATION ON NUTRITION

1. Eradicate hunger and prevent all forms of malnutrition worldwide
2. Increase investments for effective interventions and actions to improve people’s diets and nutrition
3. Enhance sustainable food systems by developing coherent public policies from production to consumption and across relevant sectors
4. Raise the profile of nutrition within relevant national strategies, policies, action plans and programmes and align national resources accordingly
5. Improve nutrition by strengthening human and institutional capacities through relevant research and development, innovation and appropriate technology transfer
6. Strengthen and facilitate contributions and action by all stakeholders and promote collaboration within and across countries
7. Develop policies, programmes and initiatives for ensuring healthy diets throughout the life course
8. Empower people and create an enabling environment for making informed choices about food products for healthy dietary practices and appropriate infant and young child feeding practices through improved health and nutrition information and education
9. Implement the commitments of the Rome Declaration on Nutrition through the Framework for Action
10. Give due consideration to integrating the vision and commitments of the Rome Declaration on Nutrition into the post-2015 development agenda process including a possible related global goal