



Global Forum on Food Security and Nutrition

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Maximizing the Impact of the UN Decade of Action on Nutrition

About this online discussion

This document summarizes the online consultation *Maximizing the Impact of the UN Decade of Action on Nutrition* which was held on FAO's Global Forum on Food Security and Nutrition (FSN Forum) from 20 September to 16 October 2016. The consultation was facilitated by Christine Campeau from the United Nations Standing Committee on Nutrition (UNSCN).

The aim of this consultation was to gather input on the question of how the UN Decade of Action on Nutrition (hereafter Decade) could best achieve its goals. The Decade was proclaimed by the UN General Assembly on 1 April 2016 to accelerate global action to achieve the goal of eradicating hunger and malnutrition as embedded in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The General Assembly places the Decade in the follow-up to the Second International Conference on Nutrition (ICN2).

Participants were asked to share their expectations for the Decade, and in particular how it could make a difference in improving nutrition in their own countries. The consultation also included a question on which critical activities need to be included in the Decade's Work Programme, and which specific activities would need to be accelerated in participants' countries. In addition, contributors shared ideas on how to improve the quality of commitments, and on how platforms such as CFS and UNSCN and other movements and sectors could be involved and contribute during the Decade.

Over the four weeks of consultation, participants from 48 countries shared 119 contributions. The topic introduction and the questions proposed, as well as all contributions received, are available on the consultation page:

www.fao.org/fsnforum/activities/discussions/decade_nutrition

Expectations for the UN Decade of Action on Nutrition

Recognizing that future development depends on future generations and their ability to lead healthy lives (Thomas Herlehy, Francis Njuguna, Emile Hounbo, Reynaldo Apaza, Clemens Goldson), participants felt that nutrition must come to the foreground for policy makers (Thomas Herlehy). The importance of adopting an effective approach to addressing all forms of malnutrition was widely agreed; hence, the Decade was warmly welcomed. Participants shared ideas on how the Decade could make a difference in their individual countries, which have been summarized in the last section. Regarding the global level, it was argued that “the goal of ending malnutrition in all its forms by 2030 is as ambitious as it is urgent, but above all [...] achievable” and that the Decade arrives in a timely moment (Scaling Up Nutrition Movement), providing an overarching platform for nutrition interventions (Ateca Kama) and offering a great opportunity to make nutrition a priority on the political agenda (multiple contributors). The strong backing of the UN would stimulate countries to consider executing interventions showing participation in the Decade (Lukiya Birungi).

Participants expected the Decade to mobilize commitment from all sectors affecting nutrition (Ministry of Health of Malaysia, Rosalie Ntula, Chinara Abdramakunova) and to lead to sustained collaboration among the actors involved (WCC-Ecumenical Advocacy Alliance). In particular, the Decade offers an opportunity to fulfil previous nutrition-

related commitments (Action Against Hunger, Save the Children, IFOAM), and can provide guidance to countries on how to fulfil these and promote coherence and coordination across different policy domains (multiple contributors). The Decade's contribution to effective accountability mechanisms would facilitate monitoring and ensure progress (Save the Children).

However, other contributors were more sceptical regarding the potential of the Decade. Change will not be generated from high-level political commitment alone, nor from an imposed set of actions and strategies. Significant difference must involve civil society organizations (CSOs) and social movements positively influencing governments (Claudio Schuftan). In this context, a number of participants referred to past initiatives, which yielded little results (Claudio Schuftan, Wilma Freire Zaldumbide, Mohamed Moloud). Political commitment to tackle malnutrition exists, but actual effective implementation has been lacking. For the Decade to make a significant difference, a high measure of autonomy, dynamic leadership, a multi-disciplinary team of professionals, a strong technical committee and substantial financial resources to 'prime' promising activities in committed countries are needed. In practice, this also implies building on (Scaling Up Nutrition Movement, Andrew MacMillan) and drawing together – rather than competing with – the various initiatives set up in recent years with similar goals (Andrew MacMillan).

Implementing the Decade: approach and activities

Participants shared a wide array of ideas on what the Decade should look like. In general, they stressed the need to consider the constantly evolving nutrition landscape, with emerging issues including modifications in dietary patterns, urbanization and the effects of climate change on food availability. In particular, they stressed that the approach of the Work Programme should be:

- **Holistic and integrated.** All forms of malnutrition should be considered: undernutrition (including stunting, wasting and micronutrient deficiencies), overweight and obesity (Lindy Fenlason, Mariela Contreras, Action Against Hunger, Scaling Up Nutrition Movement). Taking a holistic approach also means addressing the underlying causes of malnutrition

(Action Against Hunger, Francis Njuguna, Thomas Amougou Obama), not just emergency response (Francis Njuguna). This entails involving all relevant public and private stakeholders and strengthening multi-sectoral linkages, as coherent action (Welthungerhilfe, Ministry of Health of Malaysia, Jackson Tumwine, Cochrane Nutrition, Action Against Hunger) and cross-sectoral integration (Action Against Hunger, Bibiana Muasya, WaterAid) are required in the field of food and agriculture, health, water and sanitation, environment, education, gender, social protection, finance, economic development, trade and investment, planning, information and consumer affairs (Action Against Hunger, International Food and Beverage Alliance, Brenda Shenute Namugumya,



Christina Nyaga, Welthungerhilfe, *Scaling Up Nutrition Movement*). The UN should focus on promoting multi-sectoral actions (Brenda Shenute Namugumya) by means of enhancing and consolidating its 'Delivering as One' framework and by supporting local institutions in jointly executing projects (Isaac Bayor). A comprehensive approach should consider the costs and benefits of interventions regarding health, the environment, agriculture and economy (Pat Vanderkooy).

- **Rights-based.** It is our shared public responsibility to protect human rights (WCC-Ecumenical Advocacy Alliance, Pat Vanderkooy, Action Against Hunger). Considering their indivisibility, malnutrition can only be tackled by protecting the rights of all people (WCC-Ecumenical Advocacy Alliance) and recognizing human rights principles (Welthungerhilfe). This also requires identifying the roles and responsibilities of claim holders and duty bearers. Claim holders should be empowered to mobilize themselves and lead in the prioritization of actions (Claudio Schuftan).
- **Inclusive.** 'Leaving no-one behind' (Save the Children, *Scaling Up Nutrition Movement*) and reaching the hardest to reach first (*Scaling Up Nutrition Movement*). The Decade should promote a greater emphasis on equity and highlight the importance of creating an enabling environment that addresses the

needs of vulnerable, marginalized and excluded people (Action Against Hunger). In order to reach all people, in particular to reach food insecure youth, digital platforms could be used. Social media provides the most effective, fastest and cheapest way to engage stakeholders and to gather ideas on how to address nutrition problems (Tricia Callender).

- **People-centred.** Those most affected should be enabled to participate in the design, implementation and monitoring of nutrition interventions (Welthungerhilfe).
- **Context-specific** (International Food and Beverage Alliance). A local approach involving all actors is required (Florence Egal, Barrie Margetts, Emile Hougbo). Common principles should guide the development and implementation of local strategies, but strategies should simultaneously be context-specific, drawing on existing tools and interventions (Florence Egal).
- **Action-oriented.** Rather than an events-based approach, the Decade should be action-oriented (IFOAM). The gap between scientific developments and problem solving is significant: expertise should be turned into action (Wilma Freire Zaldumbide).
- **Evidence-based.** Decision makers should be connected with the academic community. Beyond academia, successful experiences and first-hand knowledge of local realities are needed to understand the success or failure of an intervention (Wilma Freire Zaldumbide, Stella Kimambo). A database of case studies could be created to analyse the appropriateness and scalability of interventions (International Food and Beverage Alliance).

In addition, participants shared suggestions regarding activities to be undertaken in order to facilitate the (successful) implementation of interventions. They stressed the following needs.

- **Improve nutrition-related definitions:**
 - Nutrition should explicitly link people with diets. The specific focus should be on public (health) nutrition and, in addition to the health aspects, the societal and environmental dimensions should be emphasized (Hélène Delisle).
 - A better definition of food system and a typology of food systems should be developed. The original thinking on food systems was the industrial model of food supply and distribution, whereas food is often produced on small farms. A better definition would ensure a better assessment of food systems transformations (Diana Lee-Smith).

- **Invest in research**, for example to:
 - identify mechanisms to assist countries in ensuring coherence of public policies (Cochrane Nutrition);
 - better understand the effectiveness of nutrition interventions based on food systems coupled with behaviour change communication (Hélène Delisle);
 - explore different approaches to assess the feasibility of targeted interventions in different settings, by means of conducting multi-country studies (Renuka Jayatissa);
 - shed light on smallholder subsistence food systems as they transition into market food systems (Diana Lee-Smith);
 - shed light on what variables are key to understanding the impact of agricultural policies on food access and nutrition for different populations (Diana Lee-Smith).
- **Gather relevant data.** For defining effective actions with measurable indicators, initial socio-economic studies are necessary (Emile Hounbo). In addition, data on malnutrition prevalence (Lindy Fenslon) and dietary intake should be gathered (Erick Boy-Gallego).
- **Assess the impact of distinguishing between nutrition-specific and nutrition-sensitive actions.** Nutrition-sensitive actions are likely more effective as they address the causes of malnutrition (Hélène Delisle) and should be a key strategy, involving sectors such as agriculture, financial inclusion, social protection, education and WASH. In particular, they will be crucial for building resilience to malnutrition (contribution from Australia). Yet, nutrition-specific actions will remain more popular for donors; therefore, the Decade should provide clear guidance and resources for designing nutrition-sensitive interventions (IFOAM).
- **Strengthen capacity and workforce in nutrition.** The expertise of people educated in the field of nutrition and public health has been underutilized (Lydia Browne). Strengthening the workforce has to be done in close collaboration with local universities for sustainable institutional strengthening. Specialists should be trained and decentralized to train community health workers in nutrition (Hélène Delisle).

Participants also shared ideas on the different fields in which action should be taken, including:

- **Food security.** Before addressing nutrition, first the problem of food insecurity will have to be addressed. Poor people are ultimately concerned with their daily

meal (Simeon Onya), hence inter alia (economic) empowerment is crucial in this regard (Bibiana Muasya, IFOAM). Poverty is a key impediment to tackling malnutrition (Bibiana Muasya).

- **Food safety.** Food systems must include rigorous food safety management and assessment capabilities to detect problems across the food system (J.B. Cordaro). Furthermore, in particular in developing countries, food adulteration is a significant problem; guidelines should be developed on how to address this problem (Dr. Amanullah). For instance, food prepared by open-market food vendors constitutes an important part of (school) children's diets, yet this food is often poorly prepared due to lacking knowledge on nutrition and hygienic practices (Isaac Bayor).
- **Food loss and waste (Nestlé).** Food loss and waste reduction strategies should be supported to promote sustainable food systems and to enhance food and nutrition security (Stella Kimambo).



- **Agriculture.** In general, agricultural interventions should be better linked with nutrition priorities (Mariela Contreras, Erick-Boy Gallego). During the Decade, the focus should be on the needs of the producers (Mohamed Moloud) and in particular of smallholders (Jennifer Dias). The following aspects should be considered in designing interventions:
 - **productivity** (Maresha Tessema, Mohamed Moloud): smallholders should be incorporated in government programmes and people should be encouraged to produce food for subsistence, which can be done by subsidizing basic inputs (Simeon Onya);
 - **efficiency**, which could be improved by innovative technologies like genetic modification preceded by safety assessments (Alexandr Kaigorodtsev);
 - **crop diversity**, as this will very likely improve nutritional status (Kate Godden);
 - **climate-smart practices** (Lydia Browne) that help to conserve water (Bibiana Muasya);
 - **empowerment**, implying a shift from monoculture-based and high-external-input-dependent industrial production towards sustainable systems that also improve smallholder productivity (IFOAM);
 - **gender and youth**, more focus should be put on female smallholders (Kate Godden); and youth should be stimulated to engage in agriculture (Lydia Browne, Mohamed Moloud, Lal Manavado).
- **Livestock.** The industrialization of the livestock sector has several negative consequences: it reduces employment opportunities (negatively affecting food security) (Martin Zerfas), the products are of lower nutritional value than products from animals raised in organic contexts, and the reliance on high-energy feed means usage of resources that could be used to feed people. Moving away from these intensive farming systems and supporting small-scale farming can tackle malnutrition related to over-consumption of these animal-based products and malnutrition in terms of undernutrition. Open dialogue, agreed language and managing the influence of actors that exacerbate malnutrition are necessary (Compassion in World Farming). Plant-based diets are more easily sustained (Pat Vanderkooy), cheaper, and should be considered in addressing food security (Martin Zerfas).
- **Maternal and child nutrition** (Jessica John, Chinara Abdramakunova). The importance of nutrition during the first 1000 days of life should be emphasized (Ministry of Health, Malaysia), in particular to reduce stunting. Special efforts are needed to boost the nutrition of vulnerable women of reproductive age and to promote maternal, newborn and infant care such as pre-natal health checks and breastfeeding (contribution from Australia).
- **Food fortification** is one the most cost-effective interventions to tackle vitamin and mineral deficiencies (Christina Krause) at scale by improving the staple foods most widely eaten by poor people (Erick Boy-Gallego). However, many iron/folic acid fortification strategies have been unsuccessful (Bruno Kistner), and, in general, food fortification strategies often do not reach the most vulnerable farming households and are unsustainable without passing costs to consumers (Erick Boy-Gallego). Community-based, food-based interventions and strict economic disparity reduction measures addressing poverty would be more appropriate (Claudio Schuftan).
- **Bio-fortification** (Thomas Herlehy) is a complementary strategy to fortification, targeting people who do not have access to fortified foods. It improves the daily supply of essential nutrients for all household members and boosts harvests; biofortification of foods that people already produce and consume in significant quantities is sustainable, culturally accepted and cost-effective (Erick Boy-Gallego). However, monitoring must be systematic to inter alia prevent toxicity, which is expensive (Kate Godden). Furthermore, putting an unwarranted emphasis on (bio)fortification moves the focus away from the social, economic and political determinants of malnutrition – sustainable solutions would not be from the supply side (Claudio Schuftan).
- **Dietary diversity.** Increasing availability and access to a diverse range of foods is crucial, especially in low-income countries (IFOAM). Food production should guarantee dietary diversity (Victor Owino); hence, there should not be an explicit focus on the monocropping of staple crops or the specialization in major cereal or cash crop production at the expense of nutritionally important foodstuffs. Supportive policies for dietary diversity combined with locally developed solutions are needed, including homestead food production and greater integration of locally available nutritious foods into market systems (IFOAM).
- **Nutrition education.** Information on the importance of a balanced diet and dietary guidelines should be disseminated among the public (Thomas Herlehy, Doris Ramirez de Peña), and in particular, vulnerable populations (Clemens Goldson), using diverse media

channels (Thomas Herlehy). Women's education is particularly important as they mainly prepare the food (Obasi Igwe Oscar). Additionally, unhealthy foods should not be made available at schools (Clemens Goldson) and school curricula should include nutrition as a separate subject (Rosalie Ntula, Chinara Abdramakunova, Thomas Herlehy, Clemens Goldson). Lastly, people suffering from nutrition-related diseases should be referred to nutrition specialists that could help them cope with their illness (Doris Ramirez de Peña).

- **Awareness raising and behaviour change.** Public awareness campaigns (Rosalie Ntula, Lawal Luqman) and behaviour change communication should be developed to change unhealthy lifestyles (Ministry of Health, Malaysia, International Food and Beverage Alliance). They should, for example, revive abandoned indigenous eating practices (Victor Owino), and encourage physical exercise in the school curricula (Clemens Goldson). However, one of the participants stressed that focusing on behaviour change campaigns over-and-over puts the responsibility on the individual, while advertising and price structure of ultra-processed foods is the real culprit (Claudio Schuftan).

Improving the quality of commitments

Participants pointed out that "commitments and activities [...] should begin with the moral and legal imperative for the right to food and nutrition" (Save the Children). However, a strong political will is needed to fulfil commitments (Komlan Assignon) and increase investment in the sector – a significant part of the budget should be allocated to food security and nutrition (Georges Bazongo). National nutrition targets should be developed for countries not having these in place yet, considering the national context and harmonizing relevant frameworks (such as the WHA targets, SDGs and ICN2 commitments) while adopting a 'leave no-one behind approach' to ensure progress for all (Save the Children).

All relevant sectors should integrate nutrition objectives into their policies (Ministry of Health, Malaysia, Jackson Tumwine, Stella Kimambo). Ownership of programmes and the ability to hold actors to account are crucial to ensure that activities are being implemented (Ministry of Health, Malaysia, Peterson Kato Kikomeko). Continuous engagement of and coordination among all relevant actors should be ensured in all phases of the project cycle. This also implies that the roles of different stakeholders should be clearly delineated, in particular the roles of non-health sectors (Ministry of Health, Malaysia). Implementing an inclusive and transparent accountability mechanism entails *inter alia*:

- setting up a repository of all nutrition commitments as part of the Decade;
- producing annual reports including clear monitoring of the WHA targets and the ICN2 framework;
- identifying clear links with the High Level Policy Forum for the monitoring of nutrition-related SDGs;
- setting up a participatory mechanism and recognition of the role of CSOs and social movements in accountability (Action Against Hunger);
- setting annual benchmarks to facilitate assessment by CSOs (Claudio Schuftan), which should be given the freedom to fully exercise their role of watchdog (Komlan Assignon);
- collecting and sharing disaggregated nutrition data (Save the Children, Thomas Herlehy, Action Against Hunger) for effective monitoring and evaluation (Rosalie Ntula, Save the Children). In particular governments should supporting regular data collection (Save the Children).



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Engaging relevant fora and movements

First, the UN Decade of Action on Nutrition should not be seen in isolation: currently, also the UN Decade on Biodiversity (2011–2020) is in progress. Both Decades are interrelated because of the many links between biodiversity, nutrition, diets and health. Synergies between these efforts should be established to maximize their impact (Danny Hunter).

In addition, participants stressed that fora like CFS and UNSCN could identify and assemble nutrition champions from different sectors to identify gaps, coordinate actions, strengthen collaborations, monitor impacts and build cross-sectoral coherence (Cochrane Nutrition). Furthermore, these actors can then work together with other relevant forums to build the leadership needed to keep nutrition on the agenda (Stella Kimambo, Cochrane Nutrition), advocate for and provide funding (Obasi Igwe Oscar) and promote better governance. They can also facilitate knowledge sharing (Cochrane Nutrition) and organize consultations (Lindy Fenlason, Rosalie Ntula), meetings and workshops, and train relevant stakeholders (Rosalie Ntula).

One of the participants stressed that only when claim holders demand their rights will move the Decade ahead; international organizations can do little to push member states to commit (Claudio Schuftan). CSOs can engage in social mobilization and awareness raising efforts in collaboration with the media, and ensure effective representation of the 'grassroots', inter alia by helping to design interventions based on community-driven demand (Jackson Tumwine). Participants also argued that the role of the private sector, major donor countries and foundations must be carefully scrutinized and regulated (Compassion in World Farming). Although the majority of the participants stressed the crucial importance of a multi-stakeholder approach for addressing malnutrition, other participants stressed the role of the private sector and the issue of the conflict of interests that underline some interventions (Florence Egal, Claudio Schuftan). Referring to the fact that multi-stakeholder approaches entail increasing interference in public decision-making, it was argued that unless this issue "is addressed face-on with not no more 'go-arounds' [...] multi-stakeholder platforms are to remain in quarantine" (Claudio Schuftan).

Regarding specific organizations to be involved during the Decade, participants shared the following:

- The **UN** in general could facilitate exchanges between experts, who could also formulate recommendations regarding addressing malnutrition. This can in turn inform the design of policy proposals (Wilma Freire Zaldumbide).
- Both **UNSCN and CFS** can:
 - facilitate dialogue (Ministry of Health, Malaysia);
 - strengthen advocacy at the highest level (Ministry of Health, Malaysia, Oumourana Traore);
 - provide and strengthen strategic guidance (Ministry of Health, Malaysia);
 - track efforts (Oumourana Traore, Save the Children);
 - support cross-learning (Save the Children);
 - mobilize technical support (Oumourana Traore);
 - mobilize domestic funding, allocating part of national budgets to food security (Georges Bazongo);
 - engage stakeholders like the private sector for strengthening nutrition action (Georges Bazongo) and mainstreaming nutrition into development policies (Ministry of Health, Malaysia);
 - support institution building by strengthening public-private networks (Christina Krause);
 - create platforms in other countries to build the capacity of future nutrition leaders who would take the agenda further after the Decade (Apio Bernardate Okiria);
 - serve as an information hub and research testing data base (Laura L. Dawson);
 - create a bridge between the agricultural sector and consumers to facilitate nutrition exchanges (Laura L. Dawson).
- **UNSCN** can promote cooperation among UN agencies in support of community, national, regional and international efforts (Jackson Tumwine).
- **CFS** can promote multi-sectoral coordination (Welthungerhilfe, Jackson Tumwine) and has an important role to play in the orientation of action among a range of actors; it can improve policy coherence (Welthungerhilfe) and provide synergies with other initiatives. In addition, it can ensure that

the voice of all stakeholders is heard, exchange information on nutrition with the food security constituency and bringing food security considerations to the attention of the nutrition constituency, and track new issues as they emerge (Jackson Tumwine). Another task will be monitoring progress on the implementation of the Decade (Welthungerhilfe).

- The **Scaling Up Nutrition Movement** will have an important contribution to make. Its new Strategy and Roadmap seeks to accelerate the achievement of results through strengthening of in-country capabilities. The Movement will also work to amplify the progress made during the Decade by sharing experiences, progress and challenges in ways that support coordinated action, strengthen collaboration, and monitor impact within the framework of the ICN2 outcomes, the SDGs and the global nutrition targets (Scaling Up Nutrition Movement).
- **Human rights organizations** can raise national, regional and global awareness on the right to food and nutrition and support efforts promoting these rights. For example, they could strengthen countries' capacities and contribute to monitoring the realization of the right to food and nutrition (Jackson Tumwine).



- **Environmental movements** can play a role in ensuring policy coherence regarding climate change and nutrition interventions, ensuring that climate change adaptation is nutrition-sensitive, and that nutrition considerations are included in climate change mitigation efforts (Jackson Tumwine).

Country-specific suggestions

BANGLADESH

In Bangladesh, the following actions need to be considered during the Decade:

- providing specific guidance on healthy diets and cooking methods;
- developing, disseminating and implementing food-based dietary guidelines in a systematic way to influence supply and demand of healthy foods;
- improving indicators and data for effective food system policies;
- providing support in dealing with climate change and implementing adaption practices;
- protecting, restoring and promoting livelihoods and nutrition of coastal households with specific focus on the needs of women, children and elderly;
- paying specific attention to diets of adolescents (Lalita Bhattacharjee).

BURKINA FASO

In Burkina Faso, a multi-sector approach with specific attention for gender dynamics is needed. Activities to be implemented include the following:

- continuous health screening of children under five;
- promoting family planning;
- implementing WASH projects;
- promoting access to land for women;
- developing inland valleys;
- providing support and training to peasants in agricultural techniques;
- supporting the conservation of foodstuff.

In order to finance these activities, a specific budget for nutrition is crucial and formal engagement with community-based organizations could be strengthened (Oumourana Traore).

CAMEROON

In Cameroon, most UN organizations contribute essentially to emergency responses. Yet, the beneficiaries represent only a small percentage of the population that is vulnerable to hunger. Hence, a switch from emergency to development interventions is needed. The Groupe de Travail sur la Sécurité Alimentaire ([Food Security Working Group](#)) assembles all public and private actors involved in food security but synchronization of interventions is lacking. Assigning operating funds to working groups on food security would make it possible to organize coordinated and targeted interventions in line with local development plans ([Thomas Amougou Obama](#)).

CANADA

In Canada, income insecurity is the biggest barrier to food and nutrition security; addressing this issue requires formulating public policy to improve incomes for households dependent on government assistance. To a lesser extent, lacking physical access to food is a problem, particularly among indigenous people and in northern and remote communities; this can partially be attributed to lacking infrastructure. There must be an assessment of the relative value and feasibility of food produced locally vs food produced in the best 'locale'. Regions with ideal growing conditions must be protected for agricultural use; this requires governments at all levels to commit to land protection ([Pat Vanderkooy](#)).

COLOMBIA

In order to improve child nutrition in Colombia, support is needed from (international) non-profit organizations to take charge of nutrition programmes. Direct communication with senior government officials would be necessary to ensure that food reaches those in need. In addition, nutrition programmes should be monitored by international organizations ([Luty Gomezcaeres Perez](#)).

CÔTE D'IVOIRE

Côte d'Ivoire mainly produces cash crops; in order to improve nutrition, investments in food crops are needed and incentives for their production should be created. Additionally, the following steps should be taken:

- reducing the imports of cereal products, in particular rice;
- regulating the access to arable land;
- reducing external expenditure on mass-consumption products;
- implementing a policy aiming at processing and conserving domestic agricultural products;
- fighting the high cost of living ([Gode Doukoua](#)).

ETHIOPIA

Ethiopia's nutrition programme is coordinated by the Ministry of Health and co-chaired by the Ministry of Agriculture and the Ministry of Education. Three sub-committees are concerned with programme implementation, food fortification and research. Sub-national coordination could be improved. Activities to be accelerated in the country include developing small-scale food-processing technology for reducing post-harvest losses, mandatory food fortification, strengthening the bio-fortification programme, improving coordination among nutrition-sensitive and specific sectors and implementing monitoring and evaluation mechanisms ([Maresha Tessema](#)).

FIJI

Fiji is currently revisiting its food and nutrition policy. The country has made use of international documents for designing the framework for interventions, with the focus being on children under 5 years of age. It was stressed that there is a need to localize global concepts to suit the needs of smaller island nations, and technical support and expertise is needed for implementing nutrition interventions ([Ateca Kama](#)).

GERMANY

Germany mainly focuses on consumer education for behaviour change, yet, without significant success. Within the Decade, the government should set the legal and political framework conditions to promote healthy and sustainable diets, including prevention measures such as taxes on unhealthy foods and mandatory regulations for public procurement. In addition, the National Sustainability Strategy should incorporate indicators to monitor impacts of Germany's policies on national and international food and nutrition security. This requires closer coordination in different sectors and the definition of clear responsibilities (Welthungerhilfe).

INDIA

In India a number of nutrition-specific as well as nutrition-sensitive initiatives have been undertaken, but progress has been slow (Dhanya Praveen). An example of a success story is the fortification of salt with iodine; this approach has to be enhanced to include double fortified salt with iron and iodine, and other foods like wheat and rice (minerals and B- vitamins) and milk (vitamins A and D) (Mahtab S. Bamji).

Recently, the National Food Security Act of 2013 has been approved (Jeevananda Reddy, Kuruppacharil Peter), but effective implementation has been limited. The public distribution system constitutes an example in this regard: for instance, minor millets have been introduced in by the government, but state governments have been failing in terms of production, procurement and supply. In addition, polluted food such as wheat and rice are being supplied. Environmental organizations could play a role in pressuring the government to discourage and control these practices. In general, governments must encourage the supply of locally produced foods under food and nutrient security schemes (Jeevananda Reddy). In order to improve nutrition in India, the councillors operating under the Panchayat system of governance, need to be empowered and made responsible for food and nutrition security (Kuruppacharil Peter).

KAZAKHSTAN

In Kazakhstan, investment projects regarding import substitution and the development of new export-oriented agrarian and industrial sectors should be encouraged. The country should specifically develop:

- networks of dairy farms, poultry farms, greenhouse facilities, vegetable storehouses, feedlots and slaughter places for cattle;
- production of fruit and vegetable using drip irrigation;
- infrastructure for the export of grain;
- organization of meat-processing complexes;
- production of deep conversion of thin wool (Alexandr Kaigorodtsev).

MALAYSIA

In Malaysia, the National Plan of Action for Nutrition of Malaysia 2016–2025 has incorporated a whole-society and whole-government approach to address its double problem of malnutrition. The increasing prevalence of overweight and obesity among school children has been given particular attention. Malaysia has elevated the component of food and nutrition security as one of the objectives of the National Plan of Action, recognizing to promote healthy diets, the food system needs to be reshaped, requiring coherent policies from and collaboration with all stakeholders throughout the supply chain, who should be mobilized by the government (Ministry of Health, Malaysia).

MAURITANIA

Mauritania only has a population of less than three million and possesses significant resources: 500.000 hectares of arable land and one of the richest marine shores in the world. However, 638.000 people still suffer from food insecurity. Self-sufficiency should be achieved by providing technical guidance to farmers. In addition, a 'year of eradication of hunger' could be declared; funding could be obtained through the allocation of a fraction of the resources of every ministry involved (Mohamed Moloud).

MEXICO

Although many (inclusive) food security and nutrition programmes have been implemented in Mexico, the desired results have not been achieved yet. This can be ascribed to the fact that the rural communities have become less engaged in farming, leaving many resources untapped. Promoting sustainable households, where all the family members contribute to food production, is important ([Román Jiménez-Vera](#)).

NIGERIA

In Nigeria, local production should be encouraged, which implies supporting medium and small-scale farmers by, inter alia, improving access to inputs. In particular, the production of food consumed by the vulnerable people in the northeast of the country should be prioritized ([Simeon Onya](#)) and activities regarding climate change adaptation should be included, as climate change-induced migration significantly affects the food security and nutrition of the people left behind ([Ikenna Ejiba](#)). In general, awareness raising efforts regarding the effects of malnutrition need to be strengthened, involving the media, health workers and schools ([Temitope Ajayi](#)).

SENEGAL

Chronic and acute malnutrition is present in most Senegalese regions. A number of aspects, trends and practices should be considered in this regard, including urbanization, a growing population, and lacking adequate (agricultural) training. Regarding natural resources issues, desertification in central regions encourages the migration of livestock towards the South, and the South-eastern regions are facing deforestation due to fraudulent felling of softwood lumber and migration of sheep. Another example of poor natural resources management concerns the irrigation policies, which do not promote the positioning of and protection of water sources on family farms. In general, it will be crucial to train and equip farmers ([Jacques Diouf](#)).

TANZANIA

Tanzania faces a level of stunting of 34 percent, and diet-related NCDs have doubled among adults during the last decade. An integrated comprehensive is needed considering healthy diets, lifestyles and sustainable food systems. This requires:

- developing Integrated Management of Acute Malnutrition (IMAM): its training curriculum and package should be updated, and a community outreach and mobilization package should be developed to facilitate severe and moderate acute malnutrition detection and management. Also, advocacy is needed to ensure adequate funding and prioritization of IMAM in Tanzania;
- developing nutrition education and behaviour change communication;
- advocate and develop guidelines for multiple micronutrient supplements;
- trainings at the community level on food-based approaches to tackle the problem of Vitamin A rich foods;
- reviewing the integrated maternal, infant, young child and nutrition training packages;
- increasing investments in developing value chains and basic social services such as water and sanitation ([Stella Kimambo](#)).

TOGO

In Togo, the Decade should focus on the professionalization of agriculture, water control, mechanization and respecting the commitment regarding the allocation of 10 percent of the national budget to agriculture as agreed on at the Nairobi Summit ([Komlan Assignnon](#)).

UGANDA

Ugandan nutrition policies are well written but their implementation has been minimal ([Lukiya Birungi](#)); hence, policy commitment deserves specific attention. In this regard, an increase in funding is needed and capacity building of people working in the field of nutrition is crucial ([Apio Bernadate Okiria](#), [Jackson Tumwine](#), [Peterson Kato Kikomeko](#)). In particular, the implementation of the Uganda Nutrition Action Plan needs to be supported in the following ways:

- appointing a Multi-sectoral Nutrition Coordinator;
- establishing a mobile implementation team to provide support at sub-national levels;
- effectively engaging high-level decision makers for addressing critical bottlenecks;
- developing a phased work plan;
- conducting an institutional capacity assessment for the implementation of a multi-sector approach at national and sub-national levels;
- developing implementation guidelines to be used at all levels ([Jackson Tumwine](#)).

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

In the USA there is very limited open political discourse regarding addressing malnutrition – this needs to change. The following should be considered during the Decade:

- increasing access to locally grown food with a necessary amount of trade to add nutrient rich foods grown elsewhere. The USA has a lot of unused, privately owned land which could be used by people to farm their own food;
- implementing nutritional education programmes;
- creating adult household databases on nutrition for the design of interventions;
- realizing a mind shift for considering nutrition first, followed only when necessary by mediation, rather than being driven by pharmaceutical interventions ([Lindy Fenlason](#)).

VENEZUELA

Venezuelan agricultural policies have been determined by a strong anti-agricultural bias, and the extremely high dependency on oil of the country has been problematic as falling oil prices have adversely affected food availability. Food shortages are estimated to average 80 percent. The Decade is expected to stimulate agricultural development based on social equity, environmental sustainability and viability, considering strategic planning, research and integration of political and social actors. Activities to be considered concern providing nutrition education, developing laws for consumer protection and improving food quality ([Saul Lopez](#)).

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