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Продовольственная и
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Объединенных Наций

Organización de las
Naciones Unidas para la
Alimentación y la Agricultura

منظمة
الغذية والزراعة
للأمم المتحدة

FAO REGIONAL CONFERENCE FOR ASIA AND THE PACIFIC

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Ministerial Round Table on Zero Hunger

I. Towards Zero Hunger: Collaborations for Impact

1. The Asia-Pacific region, despite impressive economic growth in recent decades, is home to 490 million people still suffering from chronic hunger, accounting for 62 percent of undernourished people in the world. Stunting of children remains a serious challenge, with the prevalence over 40 percent in several countries. Micronutrient deficiencies are still a major problem in many countries. The trend of childhood obesity is increasing, and the region has about 17 million children under five years of age who are overweight. Thus, the Asia-Pacific region currently is affected by a triple burden of undernourishment, micronutrient deficiencies and obesity.

2. However, ending poverty and hunger by 2030 is feasible. Together with the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) and the World Food Programme (WFP), FAO is committed to achieving Zero Hunger in the context of Sustainable Development Goal 2 (SDG 2) to eliminate hunger and all forms of malnutrition by 2030. As almost 80 percent of the extreme poor live in rural areas, it is therefore necessary to transform the rural economy and to empower small-scale and family farmers as critical agents of change in order to achieve Zero Hunger.

3. This will require a new and bolder approach that would place a “Zero Hunger Vision” at the top of the policy agenda and re-orient agriculture and food systems that should be more nutrition-sensitive and more environmentally and socially sustainable. In addition, the root causes of hunger must be addressed by targeting the rural populations, providing access to social protection programmes and strengthening commitment to pro-poor investment.

4. As the challenges of hunger, malnutrition and poverty are intertwined, and the poor and hungry are concentrated in the agriculture and rural sector in most developing countries, increasing investment in agriculture and rural development that increases incomes, employment and nutrition

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outcomes will be an important step forward in eradicating hunger. This includes not only investment in farming, but also promoting investments in small and medium agribusiness enterprises and agricultural research. In addition, people who are extremely vulnerable must be assisted through well-designed social protection programmes. To achieve this, both private and public investments are important. Particular attention will also have to be paid to the impact of climate change on agriculture now and in the future. To do this, the promotion of resilience-enhancing programmes and climate-smart approaches should be emphasized in Zero Hunger efforts.

5. Addressing Zero Hunger requires innovative approaches, integrated actions across sectors and complementary interventions in agriculture (crop, livestock and aquaculture), fisheries and forestry aiming at sustainable food systems. Policies and investments that are nutrition-sensitive, environmentally sustainable, economically viable, gender-sensitive and promote social equity should be in place to break the intergenerational cycle of poverty and malnutrition and find long-lasting solutions for Zero Hunger.

II. Objectives of the Round Table

6. This event will showcase the Regional Zero Hunger processes that demonstrate progress made by selected countries towards realizing SDG 2 and the contribution made by FAO in collaboration with WFP and IFAD. The expected outcome of the Ministerial Round Table will be greater awareness among Members and partners regarding the scope and achievements of the regional Zero Hunger policy processes and initiatives, as well as an overview of the regional approaches taken to address gaps and challenges to maximize impact. In particular, the Round Table aims to further generate political commitment to achieve SDG 2 and transform that commitment to actions that benefit smallholders as well as the population at large.

Facilitator: Ms Kundhavi Kadiresan, FAO Assistant Director-General/Regional Representative for Asia and the Pacific

Agenda and participants

11:00-11:05	Welcome and introduction of participants
11:05-11:15	Keynote speech: Mr José Graziano da Silva, Director-General of FAO
11:15-11:20	Video from FAO Special Goodwill Ambassador for Zero Hunger, Her Royal Highness, Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn of Thailand – call for action on Zero Hunger
11:20-11:40	Ministerial statements: three countries will make a statement on the progress of achieving Zero Hunger with a visual presentation
11:40-11:55	Remarks from Representatives of WFP and IFAD
11:55-12:00	Conclusions/recommendations