

Wednesday , 14 October 8:30– 9:30

Iran Room

Investments for a healthy food system implementation of the ICN2 framework for action

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ORGANIZERS

UN Standing Committee on Nutrition (UNSCN)

Abstract: ICN2 highlighted the role of food systems – the way food is produced, processed, distributed, marketed and prepared for human consumption – as crucial in the fight against malnutrition in all its forms. In the ICN2 Rome Declaration Commitment 15b Member States committed to ‘increase investments for effective interventions and actions to improve people’s diets and nutrition and in Recommendation 17 encouraged ‘governments, and international organizations to identify opportunities to achieve global food and nutrition targets, through investment policies’. This event will provide a unique opportunity where specific options for targeted investments along the agriculture and food value chain to improve health and nutrition will be highlighted. Concrete country examples will illustrate where investments have provided nutrition-sensitive outcomes for more diverse and healthy diets. This includes producer needs (needed inputs, income and security) and consumer needs (diverse, high quality, convenient, and affordable diets). Policy tools will be illustrated that can be instrumental in achieving healthy diets within the different types of food systems. Moreover, the question on how to assess the nutritional impact of investments will be discussed. Finally, participants are invited to discuss and share their own experiences with regard to how investments contribute to healthy food systems.

KEYWORDS: Food system , ICN2 follow up , Responsible investment , Policy tool , Healthy diet

Languages: EN,FR, SP, PO

Refreshments

Summary: This symposium presented current work and country experience on investments along the agriculture and food value chain that can provide nutrition-sensitive outcomes for more diverse and healthy diets.

The main themes addressed:

The ICN2 follow up, and in particular the Framework for Action recommendations on investments with a healthy food system objective in different types of food systems;

Examples of how countries with a different type of food system prioritize and implement selected recommendations from the ICN2 Framework for Action to combat malnutrition in its different forms according to the country specific context. Representatives from Brazil (food system type 3, transitioning) and Germany (food system type 2, mixed) shared specific examples that work in their countries.

Summary points:

Countries facing a high burden of overweight and obesity like Germany may opt for measures addressed to food manufacturers and focus on well-informed consumers. These include, in the case of Germany, product reformulation to reduce salt, sugars, and oils in manufactured foods, as well as dietary standards for school meals and behavior change communication and incentives to improve diet.

In countries that face a double burden of malnutrition actions to halt and reverse the rise in overweight and obesity must be undertaken along with continuous efforts to combat undernutrition. Brazil for example uses a twin track approach which includes social protection measures addressing undernutrition along with measures addressing overweight/obesity which include among others an increased production of fruits and vegetables and locally-sourced foods for schools as the means to achieve higher consumption of healthy food.

The event was a valuable contribution to the discussion on CFS’ role in advancing nutrition. It stimulated participants to reflect on ways for the CFS stakeholders and Member States to ensure that nutrition is adequately approached in the newly planned CFS workstream in line with CFS mandate and comparative advantage, and thus contributes to accelerated progress in eliminating malnutrition in all its forms.

Key messages that came out of the discussions:

The ICN2 Framework for Action provides a menu of voluntary policy options and strategies to address all forms of malnutrition, including overweight and obesity.

Every food system has the capacity to produce healthy food and can contribute to nutrition and health outcomes of people.

Investments to support healthier food systems are at hand for countries that wish to implement the ICN2 Framework for Action. They range from large-scale infrastructure improvements, to small-scale technical and marketing support, regulatory and voluntary measures, all the way to consumer education and incentives.

Significant gaps remain and need to be closed in the knowledge available to countries and investors about how to select among the investment choices, and which to prioritize for given food system and nutrition context.

It is hoped that development banks and other financial institutions will work with the food security and nutrition community to provide contextualized financial information about the promising interventions, so that informed choices among investment alternatives can be made by countries with any type of food system.

The detailed report is available on the UNSCN website.