

Tuesday, 13 October 18:00– 19:30

Iran Room

Creating food environments for healthy diets second international conference on nutrition (ICN2)**Follow-up****ORGANIZERS**

Italy

FAO

Department of Nutrition for Health and Development

WHO (World Health Organization)

Abstract: Nutrition related non-communicable diseases have put immense burdens on national economies. Underlying the current nutrition situation is the problem of unhealthy diets, which are a problem for undernutrition including micronutrient deficiencies, obesity and nutrition-related non-communicable diseases. The joint FAO/WHO Second International Conference on Nutrition (ICN2, 19-21 November 2014) highlighted concerns about food systems not supporting healthy diets. ICN2 recognized the importance of a food system approach – from production to processing, storage, transportation, marketing, retailing and consumption – as key to promoting healthy diets and improving nutrition, as isolated interventions have limited impact. Furthermore, the Framework for Action, one of the outcome documents of ICN2, made several recommendations to governments to enable the food environment to deliver healthy diets.

It is therefore incumbent on governments to create, strengthen and support food environments in the form of policies, programmes and standards that will foster healthier diets. The objective of the side event is to share country approaches on policies and programmes that have been successfully used to create healthy food environments, including through national dietary guidelines, the production of diversified food, food safety and consumer information.

KEYWORDS: ICN2 Follow-up , Family farmers , Healthy diets , Dietary Diversity

Languages: EN, FR, SP

Refreshments

Summary: Mr Sundaram (FAO) made the *Welcome remarks* and emphasized that the need for sustainable food systems to promote healthy diets came up strongly during the ICN2 (the Framework for Action gives nine recommendations on food systems for healthy diets.) He highlighted that Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) # 2 mentions nutrition and several other SDGs also involve nutrition. Placing nutrition with food security and sustainable agriculture in SDG 2 clearly underscores the role of agriculture and food systems for nutrition.

Ms Lartey (FAO) in her *Introduction* gave an overview on *What do we mean by healthy food environments?* Food environments are foods that are available in the space around people as they move through their daily lives. Food environments differ everywhere and are changing due to food availability, access, affordability and preference.

The following presentations focused on different approaches, used by different countries, in designing policies and programmes to create healthy food environments, including through the production of diversified food, national dietary guidelines, food safety and adequate labelling.

Ms Rossi (Italy) focused on *How to create a healthy food environment through the production of diversified foods, as in the Mediterranean diet*. The Mediterranean diet is not only limited to the Mediterranean region. The Mediterranean diet, originally a diet of the poor, is now the diet of the rich. The Italian diet is changing and leaning towards more fats consumption, animal proteins and sugar. Promoting a healthy diet can also be helpful for the environment as a sustainable (Mediterranean) diet is linked to availability/convenience, environment, acceptance and adequacy. She concluded that the whole dietary pattern is protective of health and environment than a single food or ingredient.

Ms Bandeira (Uruguay) and **Ms Muehlhoff** (FAO) made presentations on *How to create a healthy food environment through national dietary guidelines*. **Ms Bandeira** presented the food-based dietary guidelines (FBDG) for Uruguay which were published in 2005 and are now being updated with the assistance of FAO. These guides are now incorporated into nutrition education materials in hospitals, schools, and transmitted to different neighborhoods. The country is facing nutrition transition problems of overweight and obesity and there is the need to adopt updated food guides that take into account this situation. **Ms Muehlhoff** gave an overview of the development of FBDGs and food guides. In a recent exercise, FAO has identified 76 countries worldwide with official national FBDGs. She also presented best practices from different countries.

Ms Obura (Kenya) made a presentation on *How to create a healthy food environment through food safety*. She stressed that a safe food environment requires a concerted effort from a wide range of players. She also mentioned that the Kenyan constitution supports the right of every person “to adequate food of acceptable quality”. Kenya has created a National Food Safety Coordination Committee, a multi-

sectoral committee, for coordinating all food safety activities in the country. The national government and county governments have separate functions in enforcing food safety regulations.

Mr Mishima (Japan) made a presentation on *How to create a healthy food environment through adequate labelling*. He shared statistics to show that Japan is a country where people have the highest longevity. The system of nutrition labelling in Japan was renewed in 2015. While the Consumer Affairs Agency is in charge of the system, the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (MAFF) are responsible for supervision of enterprises. Food companies are now required to provide information on five major nutrients on food labels. However, they are obliged to offer information only concerning packaged food. He showed the Japanese food guide and emphasized that it illustrates “what” and “how much volume” of food should be taken per day in meals. Some takeaways and restaurants are now using these food guides to provide information to consumers.

Mr Branca (WHO) provided the *Concluding Remarks*. He stressed that a food environment is at the center for achieving the SDG #2 and 3 by 2030. He summarized the different presentations, highlighting the key points. He reminded the audience about the ten commitments of the Rome Declaration on Nutrition and of the sixty recommendations of the Frameworks for Action that now need to be translated into firm national actions.