



United Nations System Standing Committee on Nutrition

Information note about Decade of Action on Nutrition

Introduction

On the 1st of April the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) formally adopted a third resolution on ICN2 and its follow-up. The resolution proclaims the UN Decade of Action on Nutrition 2016-2025. The resolution is welcoming the Rome Declaration on Nutrition as well as the Framework for Action and endorses both documents.

The Decade

The proclamation of the Decade of Action on Nutrition is a commitment of Member States to undertake 10 years of sustained and coherent implementation of policies and programmes, guided by the commitments of the ICN2 Rome Declaration and the recommendations of the ICN2 Framework for Action and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The Decade will increase visibility of nutrition actions at the highest level and raise the profile of nutrition within national strategies and plans. The Decade is of high importance because it offers for the first time a 10 years' timeframe of sustained action, bringing together all actors, across all sectors to join forces and work collectively towards eradicating malnutrition in all its forms. It will ensure coordination, strengthen multi-sectoral collaboration, create synergies and measure progress towards eradicating hunger and prevent malnutrition in all its forms (Rome Declaration commitment 15a).

Lead and coordination

The GA resolution calls upon FAO and WHO to lead the implementation of the Decade. In collaboration with WFP, IFAD and UNICEF, FAO and WHO will develop a work programme based on the ICN2 outcome documents, along with its means of implementation for 2016-2025, using coordination mechanisms such as UNSCN and multi-stakeholder platforms such as CFS.

FAO and WHO will take the opportunity of already planned events and will organize new events to promote the Decade among all actors and to start a consultation process leading to the development of a road map for the Decade, including milestones. The road map will allow for flexibility taking into account the different contexts in countries as well as the several political process at country level. Countries are encouraged to make SMART¹ commitments to end malnutrition in all its forms and drive the sustainable development agenda.

¹ Specific Measurable Realistic and Time bound

UNSCN Coordination role

UNSCN assists the process(es) by assuming the agreed functions in its strategic plan: policy guidance, joint advocacy, harmonizing concepts, exchange of knowledge, communication on global trends and the facilitation of dialogue. More specifically the following UNSCN (additional) actions are foreseen that will support a successful implementation of the Decade:

Joint communication: A dedicated UN website will be made available for the Decade. UNSCN will create a direct link on their home page with this website and will assist with providing information (based on inputs from member agencies and agreed joint messages).

UNSCN policy papers will be developed outlining how the Decade supports the achievement of the SDG's and how the Decade ensures follow-up of the ICN2. Most of the UNSCN policy and position papers foreseen for the coming years will feed the processes of the Decade.

Coordination: UNSCN will dedicate (part of) its monthly conference calls to the organization and structuring of the Decade. FAO and WHO could chair these sessions on a rotating basis. In addition UNSCN will, whenever relevant, reach out to other relevant UN agencies to encourage their involvement in the planning, implementation and tracking implementation of the Decade. According to its roles and functions², UNSCN will reach out to other nutrition actors and platforms

Multi stakeholder platform CFS

It is proposed³ that CFS will offer space to discuss nutrition issues, based on UNSCN discussion briefs to foster a common understanding of nutrition issues. This joint understanding of nutrition issues will facilitate further implementation of nutrition actions and development of consistent and coherent policies across sectors. In addition it is proposed⁴ that CFS will offer space to discuss the draft road map for the Decade, preferably at several stages of the development of the road map.

Some countries may be more advanced in nutrition planning and can share their experiences with others, for example by making use of multi stakeholder platforms such as CFS. Apart from providing platform for sharing experiences, CFS should also provide the platform where joint reports are presented and their implications discussed. This role of CFS is currently debated and the proposed CFS work plan on nutrition will be submitted for adoption during the CFS plenary in October 2016

Process and next steps:

The process leading to the development of a road map will be transparent and open to all interested stakeholders. The development of a road map should be finalized by the end of 2016.

² See UNSCN Strategic Plan 2016-2020

³ The Proposal of the OEWG will be submitted to the CFS plenary in October

⁴ Ibid. 2

Elements of the process are mentioned below, but should be complemented by initiatives at country and regional levels that will also feed the processes at global level. Ideally the road map includes concrete commitments of all stakeholders, framed by government led national nutrition policies. The countries who took the lead in developing the resolution ⁵ could take initiative at their levels to kick start national processes. Of course the process should move beyond these early initiators

- 11th April Informal briefing in FAO HQ to RBA Permanent Representatives, making use of momentum for briefing about UNSCN
- 15th April FAO and WHO DG's to send a joint letter to countries communicating about the Decade
- 20th April UNSCN teleconference about the Decade: to discuss expectations, tasks, roles,
- 29th April Meeting of Nutrition OEWG, WHO/FAO will update Member States about Decade and next steps
UNSCN will brief about coordinated support and action of the UN System in Nutrition
- 5th May: Information session for Member States on the overall follow-up to ICN2 and the Decade by WHO
- July or September Possible Launch of the Decade (High level event in New York)
- Late September Possible first Commitment Conference (jointly with N4G or in New York)
- December 2016 FAO/WHO Technical symposium about on ' the role of Sustainable Food Systems in Promoting Healthy Diets and Improved Nutrition'

In 2020: Possibly a mid-term evaluation , followed by an end evaluation in 2025

During the earlier and initial moments, information sharing about the decade and its significance are important, whereas at later moments the emphasis needs to shift to the identification of a concrete work plan with and for all nutrition actors. (Governments, UN agencies, CSO's, PS, parliamentarians etc.). Stakeholders will be encouraged to make and deliver SMART commitments. The work plan will illustrate the process by which governments and other actors make commitments, implement and track implementation and impacts. The work plan itself will be flexible and open and will provide ample space for countries to develop country plans based on national priorities and needs. FAO and WHO in collaboration with the other UN agencies will support these national processes.

Success of the Decade

In order to harmonize the inputs and involvement of actors and stakeholders, it may be helpful to come to agreement about what a successful decade would look like. The UNSCN members have addressed this issue during their meeting on the 20st of April.

⁵ See resolution for the list of countries