



The contribution of the private sector and civil society to improve nutrition

Collection of contributions received

Discussion No. 92 from 5 to 26 September 2013

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Introduction to the topic

As part of the preparations leading up to the Second International Conference on Nutrition (ICN2), a Preparatory Technical Meeting is to be held at FAO Headquarters from 13 to 15 November 2013. More information is available at: www.fao.org/ICN2.

To feed into and inform this meeting, a series of online discussions are being held on selected thematic areas. This online discussion “**The contribution of the private sector and civil society to improve nutrition**” invites you to share evidence and exchange views on how the private sector and civil society can contribute to improving diets and raising levels of nutrition, particularly of the poorest and most nutritionally vulnerable, as well as ways to improve monitoring and evaluation.

For many of us, the ICN2 may be the only opportunity in our lifetime to focus world attention on nutrition and thereby reach agreement on what needs to be done to improve nutrition. If ‘better access to better food and nutrition for more people’ is an objective we can all agree upon, how can we achieve it and what is required individually and collectively from each sector?

It is clear the world must produce enough food in quantity and in quality in terms of variety, diversity, safety and nutrient content to feed a population of over 9 billion by 2050. How is this to be done sustainably and meet the zero hunger target? In the last FSN Forum discussions, it was agreed that to counter malnutrition we need nutrition-enhancing agriculture and food systems (<http://www.fao.org/fsnforum/forum/discussions/nutrition-enhancing-agriculture>) that provide diverse and healthy diets. The role of social safety nets (<http://www.fao.org/fsnforum/forum/discussions/social-protection-and-nutrition>) in protecting nutrition is also recognized as are direct measures targeted at reducing stunting and addressing acute malnutrition.

If we consider food and nutrition insecurity essentially as a problem of poverty, the strategy to counter this insecurity needs to be founded on inclusive broad based development and sustainable economic growth. Indeed the World Bank reminds us that investing in nutrition makes sense from an economic point of view as every dollar invested generates a return of up to \$US30 and FAO's report on [The State of Food and Agriculture 2013](#) estimates an annual cost of malnutrition of \$US500 per person! Thus it is clear that economic development is fundamentally important in the combat against hunger and poverty.

Farmers, farmers' associations and farmers' cooperatives are key to feeding the world. Smallholder farmers as entrepreneurs that invest and innovate, are the basis for agricultural development that can effectively tackle poverty, hunger and malnutrition. The private sector therefore has a key role to play in developing sustainable agriculture and delivering nutrition for all people. As governments cannot feed people on a sustainable basis, they need to deal with structural conditions which constrain development while at the same time promote policies which will enable the private sector to continue to innovate and invest in the food and agriculture sector. This includes supporting local business development.

Similarly, a thorough involvement of civil society organizations (including NGOs, social movements and community-based organizations), especially those representing the sectors of the population that are most vulnerable to hunger and malnutrition (among others: small food producers and landless farmers, agricultural workers, fishers and fish workers, pastoralists and herders, forest dwellers, ethnic minorities and indigenous peoples, women and youth), is key to ensure coordination, ownership, effectiveness and accountability of initiatives aimed at improving nutrition. A proactive effort to stimulate the participation of civil society representatives so as to have a balanced representation in terms of constituencies, type of organization, geographic distribution, gender and age is of crucial importance.

All sectors must work together for this common goal. Private companies, civil society, knowledge institutions and government (the golden quadrant) need to agree upon finding effective and efficient policies, sustainable practices and food solutions to reach the underserved consumer. At the same time agro-food solutions are required that provide foods which are nutritious, healthy and respond to consumer demand.

Three key actions are needed to result in 'better access of better food and nutrition for more people': 1. connect agriculture, food and nutrition at all levels; 2. invest in new ideas and delivery models; and 3. align agendas (including a One UN agenda on nutrition) and work together on the Zero Hunger Challenge . Make zero hunger a cross-sector objective and ensure the post-2015 MDG agenda includes nutrition security as an explicit part of food security and vice versa.

We invite you to focus your comments on this note as well as on the core [background and expert papers and materials for the ICN2](#) made available for this discussion and on the following four sets of questions:

- **Policy issues:** What role can the private sector and civil society play in designing and implementing policies that make agriculture and food systems more nutrition-enhancing? What are the knowledge gaps?
- **Programme issues:** What have been the success stories and lessons learned by the private sector and civil society in implementing nutrition-enhancing agriculture and food systems programmes at country level? How can the impact of such programmes on food consumption and nutrition be monitored?
- **Governance:**What are the changes needed to make sure that the private sector and civil society are involved in building effective and sustainable governance mechanisms related to agriculture, food systems and nutrition?
- **Partnerships:** What contribution can the private sector and civil society make for working across sectors and building strong linkages between food and agriculture, social protection, employment, health, education and other key sectors? How can the 'golden quadrant' be managed to create and scale up sustainable partnerships? What are examples of projects working jointly with the private sector, civil society, governments under a UN-wide initiative (like SUN, ZHC, etc...)?

The outcome of this online discussion will be used to enrich the discussions at the preparatory technical meeting on 13-15 November 2013 and thereby feed into and inform the main high level ICN2 event in 2014.

We thank you in advance for your time and for sharing your knowledge and experiences with us.

We look forward to your contributions.

The facilitators:

Robynne Anderson

Etienne du Vachat

Contributions received

1. Kuruppacharil V.Peter World Noni Research Foundation, India

Private sector and civil societies play a significant role to improve nutrition of the community.

In fact in many countries, they play a bigger role in education, demonstration, training and dissemination of traditional knowledge. Availability of food, access to food by enhanced purchasing power and absorption of nutrients by a receptive and healthy body are three pillars of nutritional security.

Without the active involvement of civil society and private sector, the whole exercise will be ineffective.

The private sector has a social obligation which is further embellished by tax benefits. Rockefeller Foundation funded the much lauded wheat programme in Mexico and India. Ford Foundation, Microsoft, Jamshatjee Tata Foundation etc are a few philanthropic organizations supporting health and nutrition education.

A detailed discussion will be useful to planners, politicians and educationalists.

Dr K V Peter

2. Raghavendra Guru Srinivasan Independent, India

Problem

Excess Nutrition or Overeating leads to obesity and deterioration in human capital.

Possible solution

The basic fact is that intense practitioners of yoga consume food only once a day while moderate practitioners of yoga consume food twice a day. With the normal consumption being around three times on a given day, the economic benefit or the reduction in food consumption due to yoga practice is two meals per person per day for intense practitioner and the same would be one meal per person per day for moderate practitioner. In addition, the economic benefit includes increase in well-being & consciousness, and decrease in cost of non-communicable diseases.

Thus yoga can be a mitigating factor for overeating that leads to obesity. Yoga is different from other physical activity as one has to reduce food consumption to progress in practice. I have proposed that Yoga be recognised as Clean development mechanism for food energy.

Policy Issues

I have explained the policy issues in the attached document they include Simplification of food taxes globally and embedding physical activity in education.

Programme Success - example America

Percentage of Yoga practitioners in America has shot up to 8.7% of the total population by 2012.

The savings in food consumption could be well over 1% of national food consumption together with phenomenal development in human capital. This percentage of 8.7% in USA was achieved due to decades of hard work of yoga teachers while people in India have started undergoing bariatric surgery.

Governance

Recognition of Yoga as clean development mechanism is primary and we need to create corresponding governance frameworks similar to that of the frameworks we have for fossil fuels.

Partnerships

Partnerships are required at international and national level to embed best practice in education. The Partnerships to be built could be similar to that of Michelle Obama's promotion of physical activity in developing countries. Such partnerships are non-existent in India which has the dual problem of malnutrition and obesity.

Carbon Incentive for Physical Activity

<http://www.fao.org/fsnforum/es/sites/default/files/resources/cifpa-%20PRI%20Submission.pdf>

3. Mr. Senkosi Kenneth, Forum for Sustainable Agriculture in Africa, Uganda

Many thanks for the topic. Addressing nutrition issues from a private sector perspective is a challenge as its profit margin oriented. As you know well balanced foods attract premium prices thus, fewer sales and that makes them 'unpalatable' to investors. However, the private sector in partnership with CSOs can make a positive change. The public will have a quicker buy-in for the adoption of menus involving nutritious foods if this cause is CSO led. Therefore, the private sector needs to finance the CSOs to this effect.

In essence, the model is research, production and finance to be handled by the private sector with promotion led by the civil society for greater public buy-in.

Regards,

Kenneth Senkosi

4. Claudio Schuftan PHM, Viet Nam

Dear GFFSN,

Let me be one of the first to contribute to this forum. Allow me to do so by, as a devil's advocate, zeroing in on what I do have strong different views than what is expressed in the background invitational write-up.

You say: We subscribe to the view outlined in the topic note that all sectors must work together for this common goal and look forward to your feedback on the issues raised. I would like to let readers know that as PHM, IFAN, IBFAN-GIFA and ICCO we wrote a letter to the moderators a week ago requesting that the consultation be split into two since we are of the opinion that the private sector has different motivations than civil society and should contribute to the consultation questions separately. (Readers may ask moderators to publish that letter). Yes, work on this topic all sectors must, but only sometimes together and sometimes in sharp opposition (e.g., big food).

You say: The role of social safety nets in protecting nutrition is also recognized as are direct measures targeted at reducing stunting and addressing acute malnutrition. On June 13, in this same forum I posted: "Let us now, once and for all, stop talking about safety nets! This is what leads to mere tinkering within the system. The ongoing casino capitalism with its global restructuring, creates the problems, and food and nutrition professionals are supposed to pick up the pieces? Just so that poor and marginalized people do not revolt? Who is cheating whom here? We need to stop victimizing poor people and then throwing them bread-crumbs. What about changing the system that makes safety nets for poor people necessary to begin with? So, is the role of social networks universally recognized?"

You say: ...our work needs to be founded on inclusive broad based development and sustainable economic growth. Do you mean sustainable redistributive economic growth?

You say: the World Bank reminds us that investing in nutrition makes sense from an economic point of view as every dollar invested generates a return of up to \$US30. How often do we need to repeat, especially in this forum, that investing in nutrition makes sense, because it is a human right, NOT because it makes sense from an economic point of view!

You say: Smallholder farmers as private sector entrepreneurs...No problem here. But when you call the private sector to contribute to this debate with civil society it will be big private sector that will take the opportunity. Small farmers can incorporate as social movements and be on the civil society side of the debate.

You say: promote policies which will enable the private sector to continue to innovate and invest in the food and agriculture sector. What do we think with be the ratio bigbusiness:small entrepreneurs investing in food and agriculture? Look at land-grabbing, at junk food, at vertical integration of the agroindustry (Monsanto, Syngenta et al). The end balance will tilt towards malnutrition producing investments, don't you think?

You say: All sectors must work together for this common goal. Nobody is as smart as all of us. Do I have to remind readers that big business consistently tries to outsmart us? Think about it: we mostly react, not proact...

You say: public-private partnerships (PPP) that combine the individual strengths of respective sectors can collectively help build food and nutrition security through socially responsible, market-led investments and growth. This, I probably found the most biased in the background write-up. Just look and the work IBFAN, PHM, FIAN and others (not forgetting Judith Richter) have done to decisively debunk this myth. Many of us have been vocally critical of the SUN initiative precisely because of this.

You say: Private companies, civil society, knowledge institutions and government (the golden quadrant). Can I respectfully ask where this quite deceiving appellation comes from?

You say: to reach the underserved consumer. Going back to what I say above, who reaches them most? Are we not losing a battle here? And finally,

You say: ensure the post-2015 MDG agenda includes nutrition security as an explicit part of food security. Readers should also know that many of us are now switching to much more accurate term 'nutrition sovereignty' which we are trying hard to introduce in post 2015 deliberations.

Claudio Schuftan, Ho Chi Ming City
cschuftan@phmovement.org

5. Maria Antip, International Fertilizer Industry Association (IFA), France

Dear all,

In order to improve access to suitable and sufficient nutrition worldwide, the private sector and civil society must work alongside governments and research institutes. All four can and should bring contributions to food and nutrition security.

To promote nutrition-sensitive agriculture, the International Fertilizer Industry Association (IFA) recently published a scientific review and a series of infographics on the role of agronomic biofortification to address malnutrition.

Key messages about how macro and micro nutrient fertilization can enhance food systems by increasing:

- Quality: adding fertilizers and micronutrients to soil can increase the content, composition and bioavailability of vitamins and nutrients.
- Quantity: Deficiencies in nutrients reduce crop yields of 40-60%.
- Diversity: Adding macro and micro nutrients through fertilization can positively impact crop texture, flavor and shelf life.
- Safety: Fertilizers diminish human health risks; for example Selenium reduces incidence of heart disease.

Another aspect of improving nutrition lies with empowering smallholders worldwide to become commercial farmers. Investment constitutes a powerful instrument towards good nutrition. Investment-driven measures can target specific groups, such as smallholders and women, and facilitate their access to agricultural finance, training, capacity building, knowledge transfer and innovative practices. PPPs play an important role in advancing nutrition securities and policy should create an enabling environment for businesses.

The Farming First coalition and the fertilizer industry support the Zero Hunger Challenge, which advocates access to food all year round, eliminating stunted growth in children through improving the nutrient quality of food, sustainability across all food systems, increase in smallholder productivity and income and zero food waste or loss.

We believe that solutions will differ by region and by landscape to address the diversity of nutritional deficiencies, as well as the different benchmarks for balanced diets.

Further info and resources can be found by accessing the links below:

FA infographics: <http://www.fertilizer.org/ifa/HomePage/SUSTAINABILITY/Nutrition>

Fertilizing Crops to Improve Human Health: A Scientific Review:

http://www.fertilizer.org/ifacontent/download/90302/1324791/version/1/file/2012_ipni_ifa_fc_hh_final.pdf

Zero Hunger Challenge: <http://www.un.org/en/zerohunger/challenge.shtml>

6. S. Emmanuel Bleggi, Bread for the World Institute, USA

I never understood why, when making the point that investment in early childhood nutrition (as the Bank does above) yields high returns, the data from the Copenhagen Consensus Challenge Paper by Hodinott, Rosegrant & Torero, is not used. They clearly state on p.37 and in Table 3.19 that the return can be as high as \$138 for every dollar. If one wishes to make an economic argument, why not make the strongest possible argument? We need governments, from the top to the district and village level, to see that nutrition investments are smart economically, socially and politically. Reference: <http://ow.ly/oJyr6>

7. Chris Manyamba, Institute for Food, Nutrition and Well Being, University of Pretoria, South Africa

Food security and nutrition is a complex cross-cutting issue, there is a need for joint efforts of government and development partners in achieving ultimate goals set in these policies and strategies. In South Africa there are efforts in scaling up nutrition through school feeding programmes and food gardens by National government Departments (Health, Education, and Social Development), private sector like Nestle and civil society. There is need for effective coordination across the sectors to define multi-sectorial and integrated approaches to improve nutrition among school children. This can be done by strengthening linkages between nutrition and agricultural, education, social protection, water and sanitation and addressing issues of food fortification and food safety.

8. Eileen Omosa Centre for Basic Research & Networking Africa and University of Alberta, Canada

The contribution of the private section and civil society to improve nutrition.

Based on my experience and knowledge from working with rural communities, there is a great and urgent need for collaboration among civil society, private sector and policy makers for success in improved nutrition:

Civil society being very much in touch with individuals and communities has the important task of sharing traditional and formal knowledge on food production and consumption of nutritious foods with rural households. The reason being that over time and with improvements in information and communication technologies, rural communities have access to all sorts of information including adverts on 'good foods'. As a result, we have witnessed cases where mothers and other food providers harvest and sell nutritious traditional foods to purchase processed foods or snacks marketed as 'good food'. I always refer to the case where mothers sell chicken, eggs and bananas to return home with bread and soda for their children. We need civil society and the private sector to collaborate in the marketing of nutritious foods.

The private sector has a social responsibility to maintain balance between business profits with achieving a health and wealth community: In cases where a large corporation has made a discovery and markets their 'good food' aggressively, they have a responsibility to boldly communicate the nutritional content and any side effect of the new food to consumers. That way, families will make their decisions and choices from an informed position. This is where civil society and government come with policies to regulate private sector.

The private sector can still make profits by identifying profitable markets for indigenous/local foods that are of high nutritional value and encouraging local farmers to produce for consumption and extra for the market. Advise and encourage local producers to add value to their products, especially in packaging and marketing to meet the market needs: that way private sector is able to sell while households are able to produce nutritious foods for consumption and for the market - kill two birds with one stone.

Civil society and the private sector need to encourage Networks of food producers so that each community grows what they are best at in line with climatic conditions. Farmers willing do this based on the knowledge that another farmer will produce the other crop that they will need. That way, the private sector will facilitate the marketing of the produce from different communities to meet the business and nutritional needs of all.

Civil society and policy makers to work with the private sector in the introduction of improved seed, etc to food producers. That way there will be enough monitoring in terms of affordability and nutritional value of new foods. In my opinion there is very little value and profit in introducing an improved seed to my grandparents when the seed requires a lot of inputs in terms of measuring the right amounts of seed to fertiliser, to water to sunshine to storage temperature; when they have spent decades perfecting. The reason being that if they miss one stage, the whole crop is compromised; the easiest way to discourage adoption as once a crop of one adapter fails, rest assured that those within their network will listen to the word of mouth from the earlier adaptor.

9. Archana Sinha, Ashoka Innovators for the Public, India

Policy issues: As civil society organisations are more connected to communities than policymakers are, they can help design policies that are appropriate for the societal and cultural context. For instance, while conducting a baseline study in Karnataka we found that govt. programmes to distribute free iron tablets to pregnant women are often ineffective. This is because the women are taken by surprise when the side effects such as stomach irritation kick in and so they either stop taking the tablets or reduce their frequency of intake. They also have other beliefs about these tablets that stop them from taking them. Policies need to account for this, such as by procuring tablets that minimise side effects or educating women about the tablets. CSOs can help [understand the why's behind the problem](#) and this can help design better policies.

Programme issues: It's important that monitoring was mentioned here, because it's crucial in creating success stories. Without measuring outcomes, we don't know what we are doing wrong (or right). At [Ashoka](#), we use an Android survey app that enables rural women to collect data. There are other such initiatives such as the University of Washington's Open Data Kit as well. In India, the latest national nutrition data is 7 years old. The govt. can work with civil society to create a real time data flow on nutrition.

10. Monica A. Hernandez H. Université Catholique de Louvain, France

I have finished writing my master thesis work entitled: Alternative strategies for vegetation implementation and integration within the urban context: the case of Bogotá. I will be presenting my work at the 5th AESOP Conference on Sustainable Food Planning. This conference would be held in Montpellier, France.

The strategies included on my work are based on all the highlighted questions in this discussion. Partnerships between the public and the private sector are necessary, not only for economic purposes but to enhance eco systemic services in the city and develop joint programs where both sectors are responsible for the inhabitants wellbeing in the city. In the other hand, government policies must be modified in order to drive the private sector towards responsive practices to community needs.

Attached to this message, I sent the abstract where the relation between Sustainable development, Architecture, Social interaction, Vegetation, and Urban networks are related to food system for a city like Bogotá.

<http://www.fao.org/fsnforum/sites/default/files/resources/Astrategies4Vegetation-V03.pdf>

11. Mohamed Salih Mohamed Yassin, University of Padova, Italy

The private sector and civil society are numbed in the various phases of policy design and implementation process. In order to enhance its engagement and participation, it should increase its advocacy and lobby the policy-maker and play the role of policy changers. In other words, it

should pass from a passive player to a more proactive and participating actors. It can use many pressure tools such as media campaigning, organizing purchasing groups and communities, boycott harmful agricultural practices and promote certain sustainable agricultural more nutritive food system. Nutrition-sensitivity and sensibility through the promotion of sound diet principles in the various societal layers, schools, universities, trade union...etc. It can sensitize communities on certain theme relevant themes normally ignore by the mainstream and conventional policy drivers. It should overcome the stereotypes widely diffused by certain elites that only them can lead, by gaining confidence and operate on evidence based approaches. Of course, nutrition-enhancing requires a multi-stakeholders platform to be appropriated accommodated in policies addressed collectively.

Around the world, there are many success stories, but that are not sufficiently highlighted by the mass media to be adapted and/or adopted, the same failure stories should be narrated to allow opportunities of avoidance by potential victims. There are a jam of programmes which render its examination and selection a huge and exhausting task. Specialized agencies, should assist in that not by spoon feeding, but by summarizing it and put it in suitable format to be useful to wide spectrum of users.

The governance as relational system should be subjected to regular check-ups to examine its effectiveness and efficiency. That should be done, preferable in participated democratic transparent and accountable patterns. The Agricultural and Food Chain can be checked vertically and horizontally in holistic lens make use of panels of experts and knowledge and experience holders.

Innovative multi-format partnerships, such as private public partnership (PPP), can involve the CSOs to strengthen agricultural and food and nutritional sustainable and resilient systems. Putting the humankind as core stakeholder, not only physically, but going by that.

This is merely theoretical reflection prior to go through the background materials provided due to time constraints.

YASSIN Mohamed S. M.
University of Udine
Deprt. of Civil Engineering & Architecture
Research Doctorate Candidate in Economics, Ecology, Landscape and Territory

12. UGAgri Group7, University of Guyana, Guyana

UGAgri Group7 is a small group of students of the University of Guyana who are compiling a comprehensive report on food security and nutrition, particularly the effects of malnutrition on economies and the factors which contribute to food insecurity and the ensuing consequences. While the group has not targeted any one geographic region, developing countries-particularly Latin America and the Caribbean- are natural areas of focus.

All posts made are via a collaborative effort by the members of the team.

Regarding the discussion, we feel that:

Civil society and the private sector both have the potential to, and play big roles in issues relating to food security and nutrition in society. Civil society- usually an abstract for a number of NGOs tackling social and health issues- is often the leader in calls to the wider population to address issues that need addressing, and this must first be acknowledged and respected. So, empowering civil society to engage in policymaking and to encourage leading partnerships with other key role players will improve the creation of more effective food security and agricultural policies. In

Guyana, nutrition concerns are rightfully aimed at children and current actions include school feeding programmes. Issues of sanitation and access to potable water in schools are still major concerns and need to be addressed for economic, health and social reasons if any dent is to be made in remedying low levels of nutrition in the most vulnerable segment of the population.

The private sector in recent times across the region and globally has made concerted efforts to work with other actors in states to raise levels of nutrition, typically by making cheaper, nutritious goods available to large sectors of the population where they were previously unavailable and by opening lines of credit for small scale farmers. More can be done to help establish markets in rural areas where markets for necessary inputs for small farmers are missing or incomplete, so as to facilitate the creation of community markets that control their own production and so, food security. It must be recognised that businesses tend to engage civil society on these matters only when they stand to gain viz. their objective to maximize profit. Nevertheless, much can be done by the private sector- and through a joint effort by the private sector and civil society, and even more is encouraged.

A partnership between the elements of civil society and the private sector- where it is possible- should strive to create channels for agricultural policymaking and dialogue between all stakeholders in general, and small farm owners in particular. Simultaneously, they need to collaborate to facilitate, enable and drive agricultural research on nutrition and to push for meaningful policies and decisions to be derived from this body of research and information.

13. UG2014 Group 8 University of Guyana, Guyana

“The food you eat can be either the safest and most powerful form of medicine or the slowest form of poison.” – Ann Wigmore

Nutrition is therefore very important for the well-being of the citizens of any nation. Both the Private Sector and Civil Society are a big portion of most economies and therefore can play a major role in influencing the nutritional standards of a country. In this comment we intend to tackle the ‘Policy Issues’ portion of this discussion, specifically the first question, in relation to our local economy (Guyana, South America) where possible.

· What role can the private sector and civil society play in designing and implementing policies that make agriculture and food systems more nutrition-enhancing?

Currently in Guyana, we are on track with the MDG Goal 1 – Eradicate Extreme Poverty and hunger. According to the United Nations Development Website, “Guyana has made good progress towards eradicating extreme poverty and hunger. The country has met the target of halving the proportion of people who suffer from hunger, and has improved its performance in reducing poverty and increasing employment.”[1] Using this as an indicator on the nutritional well-being of the citizens of our country we appear to be doing well overall. Guyana being an agriculture based economy is fortunate to have access to many resources that would allow proper nutritional well-being. Combining our rich agricultural resources along with advances in agricultural technology we are able to produce more organic goods that have far higher nutritional content relative to other countries.

The private sector’s interest should be providing the goods and services that meet the demands of society. For an agricultural company, it will be essential for them to provide products and services for farmers to improve their yields as well as food quality. Private sector companies increase their profits, by helping farmers increase their income and also reduce food shortages.

The private sector’s role in designing and implementing policies is analyzing the society’s needs. Hiring professional Analysts to survey society’s preferences gives the private sector’s policy makers

meaningful contributions to design policies. Funding research and development for nutritious products preferred by society.

Civil society work closely with the public (persons who will be benefiting from the policy) and can therefore influence the public to adapt to policy objectives. Civil society needs specific skills such as independent monitoring and promoting accountability to make contributions to the policy design. By gathering first hand information from the general public, they can provide vital information as to what is needed under a series of policy advocacy workshops. Civil society should increase the awareness of the importance of nutritional foods to the public via meetings, campaigns among others, as it empowers local communities to benefit from the outcomes of policies.

Source:

United Nations Development Programme. Goal 1: Eradicate Extreme Poverty and Hunger. 2012. http://www.undp.org.gy/web/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=... (accessed September 12, 2013).

[1] (United Nations Development Programme 2012)

14. UG Agricultural Economics Focus 2014, University of Guyana, Guyana

At the turn of the 20th Century most developing nations successfully began to provide food for an exponentially increasing population through the industrialization of agriculture. Rapid increase in staples, such as rice and maize, and dairy products to upkeep with the never ending demands of the world's population were possible through research and technological advances. Such products, through globalization, have begun to flood the markets of developing countries, such as Guyana.

Being an agriculture based economy, with a land size of 83,000 square miles and a stable population of 750,000 people, the country shows great potential and capacity in producing all the food its people demand. Rightly enough, through a National Strategy to improve nutrition, the country has managed to eradicate extreme hunger and poverty- the first MDG goal before the targeted year, implying an improvement in nutrition.

But to what extent? About 40% of Guyana's adult population is overweight, where; nutrition and obesity-related diseases - diabetes, hypertension, and heart disease - are among the ten leading causes of death.[1] The quality of food consumed by a country's people is an issue that must be addressed by any government.

The Private sector and Civil Society Organizations definitely have an important role to play in this area of concern. The government on its own cannot improve the level of nutrition in an economy. The civil society organizations are more capable of mobilizing and educating the public on "smart eating". CSOs are also capable of lobbying for the needs of the consumers at large, petitioning for policies, and implementation of policies that will better the nutrition of the people. For example, a relatively large portion of food consumed in Guyana is from imports, which consist of tinned foods, processed foods and preserved foods- all of which have negative long term impacts on health. CSO's are of the capacity to curb such actions, representing the public health, by petitioning for policies to limit such imports. CSOs are also more capable in educating the Public through workshops and awareness sessions on issues relating to health and nutrition. In Guyana, the government can enable a framework to manage and monitor CSOs as done in Nepal to conduct such activities.

Similarly, private sectors can contribute in a greater way to the nutritional enhancements of Guyana, but with the aid of policies implemented by the Government. Being richly endowed with land and fertile soils, it possible that Guyana can produce most of what it eats. Incentives should be provided for farmers to plant more and then for the private sector to process our very own

produce. For example, the demand for meat birds in Guyana is high. However when there is a shortage on the local market, private sectors would import chicken which is laden with steroids, (which is negatively correlated with health). Also eggs of such nature are also imported. The private sector of Guyana is more than capable of farming poultry meat and reaping eggs to meet the demand of the nation in a healthier way. The same can be said for other products, such as rice and sugar. The private sector should be motivated to engage and secondary levels of production using raw materials provided by our very own country. This would lead to Guyana capabilities in not only eradicating extreme hunger and poverty but to ensure proper nutrition.

It cannot be overemphasized how important policies implemented by the Government are towards enabling the Private Sector and CSO's in improving nutrition.

15. UG2014 Group 8, University of Guyana, Guyana

“Often we are too slow to recognize how much and in what ways we can assist each other through sharing such expertise and knowledge.” – Owen Arthur

Knowledge is powerful tool. When yielded correctly it can have many positive effects for society. However when not shared properly or miscommunicated it can have adverse effects on society or society may lose out from a potentially advantageous situation. In this comment we intend to follow up on the policy issues part of this discussion, we started earlier, in particular the second question.

· *What are the knowledge gaps?*

Based on the project glossary for a Canadian Water Project, “knowledge gap is defined as a lack of referenced materials or expertise to assess certain characteristics that can be adequately described without data.”^[1] According to Investopedia the private sector is, “the part of the economy that is not state controlled, and is run by individuals and companies for profit.”^[2] Based on an article by BBC World Service, “a civil society is a public space between the state, the market and the ordinary household, in which people can debate and tackle action.”^[3] In other words, civil society encompasses all non-governmental organisations that are not for profit such as religious organisations, charities, etc.

The private sector may have more materials and better skills to help draft policies or to put issues forward in a more logical manner to policy makers. Civil society however is more in tune to the issues the average citizen is faced with. The private sector may deem the civil society as less important in policy designs but through its influences to the public, it has transformed itself to an important and equal partner in the directing of social and economic development.

In terms of nutrition and food security, civil society may notice the rise or malnutrition among citizens in a particular area but may not be able to approach policy makers with a plan to correct this. The private sector may not notice the said situation but if alerted by civil society they may be able to figure out the cause of the said situation and approach policy makers with a relevant plan. Hand in hand civil society and the private sector can pool their resources (knowledge) to improve the nutritional situation of any given economy.

Sources:

(1) Investopedia. *Private Sector Definition* / Investopedia. 2013.

<http://www.investopedia.com/terms/p/private-sector.asp> (accessed September 16, 2013).

Ausable Bayfield Maitland Valley Source Protection Region. *Drinking Source Water Protection - Glossary*. 2013. <http://www.sourcewaterinfo.on.ca/content/spProject/glossary.php> (accessed September 16, 2013).

British Broadcasting Corporation. *What is Civil Society* / BBC World Service. July 5, 2001. http://www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/people/highlights/010705_civil.shtml (accessed September 16, 2013).

[1] (Ausable Bayfield Maitland Valley Source Protection Region 2013)

[2] ((I) Investopedia 2013)

[3] (British Broadcasting Corporation 2001)

16. Group 4 University of Guyana, Guyana

The contribution of the private sector and civil society to improve nutrition.

Group four (4) consists of a small number of students of the University of Guyana and form part of the graduating class of 2014 from the Economics Department. The aim of this group is to contribute to discussions such as this in an effort to help develop policies that better the lives of the poor and society as whole such as tackling the problem of food insecurity and malnutrition worldwide.

Our first attempt in this post will be to effectively contribute to the discussion on the roles that the private sector and civil society can play in improving nutrition in the diets of the poor and less fortunate.

All posts hereon are a compilation of the views of each member in the group.

The FAO reported under its nutritional country profile, Guyana – “A significant proportion of children under five years of age suffer from malnutrition (survey data indicate that 14% were underweight for age; 11% had low height for age and 11% had a low weight for height. About 40% of adults are overweight, with the prevalence of obesity increasing with age. Significantly more women are obese compared to men.”

As evident in the above statements the problem in Guyana is not one of hunger but rather the consumption of less nutritional foods at an early age. Most malnutrition cases occur in the rural areas where there is an abundance of foods that contain a large amount of carbohydrates and starches and do not have much of a nutritional content. The reason for the consumption of such low nutritional diets can be premise on the lack of knowledge of the rural poor on the types of foods and combination of food that are required to promote a healthy diet. The other factor that restricts them from consuming a healthy diet also can be pinpointed to the fact that some lack the income to fund such diets while some are guilty of having the income to fund such diets but tend to mismanage it due to their cultural diets and habits: alcohol consumption and tobacco usage are just some.

Some may argue that the primary cause of the poor being malnourished can be linked to their low incomes. We beg to differ. Although this is one of the major causes, it is not the primary cause. Abhijit V. Banerjee and Esther Duflo best explained it in their book “*Poor Economics; A Radical Rethinking of the Way to Fight Global Poverty*” when they said “...*Equally remarkable, even the money that people spend on food is not spent to maximize the intake of calories or micronutrients. When very poor people get a chance to spend a little bit more on food, they don't put everything into getting more calories. Instead, they buy better-tasting, more expensive calories.*”^[1]

It makes economic sense if you would think about it. When consuming one basic type of food for probably years you tend to suffer from a case of prolonged diminishing marginal utility, but without the income to change your diet you have no choice but to continue consuming these basic, not so nutritional foods if you want to survive. However, with the increase in income; given ones taste and preferences, the poor would tend to deviate from the regular years long diet and move toward a tastier, utility maximizing diet now that they feel somewhat ‘richer’. However, these tastier foods are more expensive and subtract a large fraction of their income but might not increase their caloric or nutritional intake as found in the “*flight to quality*” in Abhijit V. Banerjee’s and Esther Duflo’s book, “*Poor Economics; A Radical Rethinking of the Way to Fight Global Poverty*”.

Therefore, the role that the private sector and civil society can play in fostering the improvement of nutrition for the poor is to fund and be a part of workshops that aim at educating the poor on the cons of being malnourished, their required nutritional intake and the types of food that will contribute to their increased nutritional intake. Once educated on the benefits of eating the right types and amount of food *only then* will the increases in income of the poor (nominal or real) by the private sector and civil society be effective in increasing the nutrition for the poor and malnourished as iterated by many.

[1] Poor Economics; A Radical Rethinking of the Way to Fight Global Poverty

17. Robynne Anderson facilitator of the discussion , Canada

Can partnerships work?

In the first week of the discussion, we have seen both faith and scepticism about the role of private sector and civil society. Occasionally, there has been a falling into old habits that the discussion is a “for” and “against” model.

Overarchingly, it seems there is an understanding of the need for both, as exemplified by Kuruppacharil V.Peter, World Noni Research Foundation, India: “Without the active involvement of civil society and private sector, the whole exercise will be ineffective.”

Coalitions like Farming First, cited in Maria Antip’s submission contain a broad range of stakeholders from smallholder farmers to scientists, business to NGOs and has done a lot to promote the importance of women in agriculture, climate change adaptation, and the links between nutrition and food security. Other contributors have been able to cite in-country programs for school feeding and farmer supply.

Working together on policy making breeds a more integrated approach to challenges and better outcomes, as described by UGAgrri Group7, University of Guyana, Guyana: “A partnership between the elements of civil society and the private sector- where it is possible- should strive to create channels for agricultural policymaking and dialogue between all stakeholders in general, and small farm owners in particular. Simultaneously, they need to collaborate to facilitate, enable and drive agricultural research on nutrition and to push for meaningful policies and decisions to be derived from this body of research and information.”

Seeing the continuity between the actors in the debate – from civil society to private sector and respecting their roles is an essential and inevitable consequence of the discussion on nutrition. It is similar to the process that has seen greater linkages between agriculture, nutrition and health, as led by FAO in the 2010 International Symposium on Food and Nutrition Security: Food-Based Approaches for Improving Diets and Raising Levels of Nutrition and by IFPRI in their ground breaking 2011 conference Leveraging Agriculture for Improving Nutrition and Health.

Ultimately, it seems that this leads to actual programming that is more complete. Chris Manyamba, Institute for Food, Nutrition and Well Being, University of Pretoria, South Africa explains the progress in his country: “There is need for effective coordination across the sectors to define multi-sectorial and integrated approaches to improve nutrition among school children. This is being done by strengthening linkages between nutrition and agricultural, education, social protection, water and sanitation and addressing issues of food fortification and food safety.” That seems well worth replicating, so how can we do it? How can better partnerships be built? Is it hard to overcome entrenchment in civil society and private sector relationships? What kind of enabling environment encourages all actors to work together?

We need more of your insightful views.

Robynne

18. Etienne du Vachat facilitator of the discussion, France

First of all, I would like to thank all the contributors to this discussion for their very valuable inputs and reflections. Let me also remind those who have not contributed yet that this discussion will be on-going until Thursday next week and that your contributions are still expected and very much welcome!

What strikes me particularly is how much the contributions received so far are illustrating a great diversity of points of view and opinions, which is a real strength of this forum. In particular, the discussion and the examples raised have clearly underlined the greatest diversity and heterogeneity of actors that one can find inside each of the two groups “civil society” and “private sector”.

The main differences between civil society and private sector have been rightly reminded: they have different goals, methods, principles, constituency, audience, public or targets, etc. That said, many contributions have shared positive examples of good collaboration between civil society and private sector, where joint projects are able to maximize the added-value and contribution of each side, in order to raise levels of nutrition.

Others have made it clear that in many cases, the role of civil society organisations and private sector actors are very different and sometimes opposed. As Claudio Schuftan puts it: on nutrition, all actors must work “but only sometimes together and sometimes in sharp opposition”. In particular, the role of civil society organisations to work with or to lobby governments “to come with policies to regulate private sector” based on the experience and inputs of communities “in order to drive the private sector towards responsive practices to community needs” has been underlined by both Eileen Omosa and Monica A. Hernandez. The role of civil society actors to closely monitor (and denounce, if need be) the practices of private sector (such as in the case of aggressive food marketing that threatens nutritious diets) as well as government policies (example of iron supplementation to pregnant women in India) has also been illustrated.

Overall, this variety of actors and the huge diversity of the contexts remind us that, in the fight against malnutrition, there are many different models of collaboration and partnerships within and between civil society and private sector, with both positive and negative aspects. In particular, there is no one-size-fits-all or “silver bullet” form of “public-private partnerships” but each experience needs to be assessed by all the concerned stakeholders: in this, transparency and accountability to citizens and communities, in particular the poor and most marginalized people, is key, especially from a civil society perspective.

The framework of this discussion (with both civil society organisations and private sector actors invited to participate in the same discussion) might have orientated the contributions to focus more on examples of interaction or joint work involving both civil society and private sector. But of course, contributions on the respective roles and works of one or the other are also very much welcome.

Looking forward to reading more in the next few days,

Etienne

19. Michael Gaweseb, Namibia Consumer Trust, Namibia

Dear Sir/Madam

Kindly see two newsletters 1/ 2 in which we have written about our work with regard to food/nutrition security from a civil society perspective. Please feel free to contact us if there is any question.

Regards

Michael

20. Mr. Subhash Mehta Devarao Shivaram Trust, India

Policy issues:

We need to look at the rural producer orgs/ company (PC) staffed by professionals (general practitioners [GPs] and MBAs in agriculture) playing the role of the private sector and assisted by civil society for designing and implementing bottom up policies that ensures nutrition through agriculture, following the local integrated low cost agriculture systems and creating human and institutional capacity and filling the knowledge gaps among the women, men and youth, docs attached covering Policy, Programmes, Governance and Partnerships.

· Programme issues:

Document the successful models, contracting these farmers for wide replication in the area assisted by the PC (private sector) and civil society in following integrated nutrition-enhancing community assisted agriculture and food systems programmes at country level and the PC responsible for monitoring the impact on food consumption and reduction of hunger, malnutrition, poverty and effect of climate change whilst improving livelihoods and net incomes.

· Governance:

NARES, CGIAR, PCs (private sector), CSO/ NGOs, will all need to work as a team and as equal partners, focused on AR4D for meeting the needs of the rural producer communities, from seed to harvest, finance, value addition, infrastructure, marketing/ logistics, etc.,if we are to ensure building effective and sustainable governance mechanisms related food systems and nutrition through agriculture.

· Partnerships:

Governments, NARES and the CGIAR are mostly urban based and thus it is the contribution of the local successful farmers, PC (private sector) and civil society, mostly working across sectors and

building strong linkages with rural producer communities, covering nutritious food and agriculture, social protection, employment, health, education and other key sectors, model available at:

Bija Vol. 58 http://www.fao.org/fsnforum/sites/default/files/resources/bija58_27-5-2011%5B1%5D_0.pdf

21. Abdou Yahouza, Projet de sécurité Alimentaire au Niger ARZIKI /CLUSA, Niger

[original contribution in French]

Bonjour Mr Etienne

Je suis avec intérêt le forum actuellement en ligne dont vous assurez la modération.

Veillez trouver en attaché le rapport CILSS sur la tracasserie routière.

(http://www.fao.org/fsnforum/sites/default/files/resources/Premier_Rapport_CILSS_Tracasseries_Routieres_JtAt2013%20%282%29.pdf)

Cela m'amène à dire, que le gros travail que doit mener les privés c'est d'abord le plaidoyer pour supprimer ces taxes illicites afin faciliter l'investissement dans divers domaine (approvisionnement, investissement agricole, commercialisation...). Les taxes licites et illicites rendent chères les produits aux consommateurs, et du coût augmentent la pauvreté et la malnutrition. Pendant ce temps les douaniers, policiers et gendarmes accumulent beaucoup de richesses puisées de ces pratiques au su et vu des autorités politiques. Il faut un sursaut national et international des privés, gouvernement et société civile pour combattre ces pratiques et afin de rehausser les économies et la nutrition.

Mes salutations

Abdou Yahouza

Projet de sécurité Alimentaire au Niger ARZIKI /CLUSA

Niamey Niger

[contribution in English]

Hello Mr. Etienne

I am following with interest the on-line forum for which you are the moderator.

Please find attached the CILSS [Comité permanent inter-états de lutte contre la sécheresse dans le Sahel, Permanent Interstates Committee for Draught Control in the Sahel] report regarding harassment on the roads.

http://www.fao.org/fsnforum/sites/default/files/resources/Premier_Rapport_CILSS_Tracasseries_Routieres_JtAt2013%20%282%29.pdf

This brings me to say, that the main task for the private sector is firstly to argue for the elimination of illicit taxes with the object of encouraging investment in several areas (supply, agricultural investment, marketing ...). These licit and illicit taxes make the products expensive for the consumers, and the costs increase poverty and malnutrition. Meanwhile, the customs officers, police and gendarmes accumulate much wealth as a result of these practices in full view and knowledge of the political authorities. A national and international shake up from the private

sector, the government and civil society is necessary to fight these practices in order to re-emphasize cost reductions and nutrition.

Yours

Abdou Yahouza

Projet de sécurité Alimentaire au Niger ARZIKI /CLUSA [Food security project in Niger]

Niamey, Niger

22. Hart Jansson, Malnutrition Matters, Canada

I would like to make the following contribution to the current discussion. It is an example of how civil society, using social business as a vehicle, can make useful and sustainable contributions to improve nutrition in the rural areas where it is needed most.

"Civil Society Contribution to Improve Nutrition – An Example

- submitted by Malnutrition Matters (www.malnutrition.org) Sept 2013

Malnutrition Matters (MM) is a Canadian-registered non-profit, founded in the year 2000. MM is committed to alleviating malnutrition by creating sustainable micro-enterprises in rural areas, which are centered on local processing to provide affordable food with increased protein and micronutrients. MM has helped establish over 240 sites worldwide to produce soymilk from local soybeans. The large majority of these sites use equipment that does not require electricity or running water, and which can provide supplemental protein-rich nutrition for 1,000 people or more per day, at the cost **of about 4 cents a cup**. Each one-cup serving (or 250 ml) contains **7 g of whole protein**, which is less than half of the cost of dairy milk. The MM sites serve over **150,000** beneficiaries daily. Locally made soymilk is the most cost-effective way to provide micro-nutrient fortified whole protein to rural populations, where often over 50% of the children are malnourished, with protein and micro-nutrient deficiencies often the most acute. Capital cost for the equipment is less than \$5,000 per site and sites typically become self-sufficient in less than one year.

The majority of these sites have been developed with other civil society partners, some of which are listed below. MM itself is a sustainable social business, with less than 20% of revenue from sponsorships.

MM has also recently established over solar food drying 20 sites. These sites use solar-only food driers to dry up to 30kg of food (such as tomato, mango, peppers, guava, papaya, fish) per day, per unit. This increases food security by enabling part of the harvest to be preserved in simple plastic bags for up to one year, rather than having surplus harvest rot. The SolarFlex dryer capital cost is \$1,400 per unit.

MM's partners include :

- African Development Bank (Ghana)
- Africare
- Alpro NV (Belgium)
- Humana People to People (Malawi, Mozambique)
- OIC International / USAID (Liberia)
- TSBF/CIAT (Kenya, Burundi, Rwanda)
- World Bank Development Marketplace

- World Concern / ZOA / EU (Myanmar)

Please visit www.malnutrition.org to see YouTube videos of various sites in action.

thanks,

Hart

Hart Jansson

www.malnutrition.org

23. Agri econs5, University of Guyana, Guyana

“According to Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs Theory, with respect to psychological (basic) and safety needs of a human being, once individuals have basic nutrition, shelter and safety, they attempt to accomplish more.” --- [Abraham Maslow](#)

According to the World Health Organization, *“Nutrition is the intake of food, considered in relation to the body’s dietary needs. Good nutrition – an adequate, well balanced diet combined with regular physical activity – is a cornerstone of good health.”*

With reference to the preamble and definition above, one can conclude that basic nutrition (on the aggregate level) will more likely develop a very productive labour force, thus the country’s development. However, due to the rise of the fast food industry in Guyana it is evident that people are more concerned with the convenience of getting food faster rather than the most important point, which is, proper nutrition. Most individuals in society presently rely on processed or packaged “less nutritious” foods because of its low time consuming characteristics to prepare. It is therefore of importance to note that the lack of a healthy labour force is likely to cause a decline in productivity and a loss of efficiency.

The world today is faced with its own unique challenges. As highlighted before in the forum, poverty eradication and a growing population approximated to exceed 9 billion by the year 2050, creates a sense of urgency on the matter of food security and nutrition.

As stated by Thomas Malthus, *“That the increase of population is necessarily limited by the means of subsistence, that population does invariably increase when the means of subsistence increase, and, that the superior power of population is repressed, and the actual population kept equal to the means of subsistence, by misery and vice.”* However, Malthus ignored one key element which has seen the exponential increase in population today. Technology has allowed mankind to produce more at faster rates to feed our growing population.

From an economic perspective, nutrition is integral to individuals and the population as a whole since it has a positive correlation with population growth. When inspecting the Solow Growth Model (Macroeconomics 6th Edition, N. Gregory Mankiw), it can be clearly noted that growth in the capital stock, growth in the labour force, and advances in technology can significantly boost the productive capacity of a nation. In essence, in magnifying the point of population growth which is synonymous to growth in the labour force the focal point of the private sector along with civil societies should definitely be pointed in the direction of proper nutrition because through proper nutrition, only then a massive labour force can be developed thus economic growth and development. This can be substantiated from the following statement

“the improvement of average nutritional status in the poorest countries will generate a positive social effect way beyond its economic effect”-(does nutrition enhance economic growth? The economic cost of hunger by Xiaojun Wang and Kiyoshi Taniguchi)[1]

(It makes no sense that the population is growing and individuals lack proper nutrition since poor nutrition can lead to reduced immunity, increased susceptibility to disease, impaired physical and mental development, and reduced productivity. Basically this population will be a liability to the labour force.)

Solutions to the problem of nutrition and food security are numerous. However, we shall concentrate on civil society and the private sector. We shall examine the roles they play in the solution to the problems associated with nutrition and food security.

“Civil societies also known as non-governmental organizations (NGOs) — are critical actors in the advancement of universal values around human rights, the environment, labour standards and anti-corruption. As global market integration has advanced, their role has gained particular importance in aligning economic activities with social and environmental priorities”[2]-

The role of civil society in solving the solution encompasses sensitizing the public on nutrition to lobbying governments to engage in policy making which can promote the production of highly nutritious food. To illustrate, civil society can persuade governments to subsidise technology used on farms. As a result, farmers can benefit from the use of these technologies and increase production. Hydroponics is a viable alternative agricultural technique as it is cheaper and delivers nutrients directly to the plant root. This encourages efficiency and is a simple process for farmers to learn and adapt. However, like most developing countries farmers in Guyana are an aged population, risk averse and may be reluctant to engage and learn a new technique. By creating an attractive policy the farmers can benefit significantly through hydroponics and thus promote social mobility among small farmers. The need to lobby for nutrition specialists through health centres, television programmes and school programmes can all aid in educating the population on the importance of a balanced diet. When an individual works hard to attain their money they should be able to spend their money on proper nutrition as opposed to “fast food” which is likely to lower productivity and cause illnesses such as diabetes thereby reducing the individual’s welfare and in the long run resulting in a premature death.

On the other hand, the private sector which is more profit oriented can seek to exploit the opportunity to invest in developing large agricultural lands for food production. As in the developed world farm lands are concentrated mainly among large scale producers since an incentive exists for farmers to invest more into the accumulation of stock and land.

Collaboration of the private sector and civil society will likely promote growth of small farmers through access to credit, grants and advice. This is likely to translate to greater production as farmers are now better able to access the resources they need to expand their enterprise.

The documentary *Life and Debt* by Stephanie Black highlighted the flaws in economic policy which was supposed to encourage economic growth and reduce poverty. However, the policies failed as the IMF imposed certain restrictions and the domestic economy was not allowed to flourish. Thus, protective barriers and subsidies can arguably be utilized by developing countries to cultivate an efficient agriculture industry. As in most cases developing countries are at a disadvantage or face unfair competition by the developed countries because they have heavily subsidized agricultural industries and they are exceedingly larger, hence more efficient and control a greater part of the world market. Therefore our objective will be to explore possible strategies which the private sector and the civil society can be involved in, most importantly how both of these bodies can collaborate to make hydroponic farming and thus the agricultural sector in Guyana one of pre-eminence.

[1] <http://www.fao.org/docrep/006/y4850e/y4850e04.htm>

[2] - http://www.unglobalcompact.org/participantsandstakeholders/civil_society.html

24. Concern 3, University of Guyana, Guyana

Concern: concern embodies the sentiments of an assembly of students of the University of Guyana committed to sharing ideas on how we can improve food security across time horizons for our peoples. The dynamism of this topic (Food Security) will see us drawing lessons from many sources and fields of taught. Emphasis of our contributions will focus on developing countries as the core of our ideas. Food Security is an important subject!

“Concern” contributions will reflect the views of each student as far as possible.

Unleashing current and future constrain through partnerships and enhanced nutrition today

The well-being of developing countries and their peoples are hinged on several components of which ‘partnership and nutrition’ are significant. Partnership, however, especially among Government, Private Sector, and Civil Society is no easy feat. The goals of these bodies often collide resulting in many destabilizing outcomes injurious to citizenry. Nevertheless, “...recognition and respect of differences in ideologies, values, interests and practices among partners...[1]” (all else equal) can provide the bridge needed to set the motion of progress forward.

An example of partnership among the agents stated above can be seen in “Kenya Private Sector Alliance (KEPSA)[2]” which “partners with civil society to advocate for sound policies. Another reference can drawn from the wide spread support garnered to address the issue to HIV/AIDS. Today, changes in attitudes, behaviour, and institution have had major impact on the fight of this life taking disease.

What is the point? Where the right issues are identified coupled with partnerships and the common will to achieve a set goal, that objective becomes a reality. The issue of nutrition is one of grave importance to a nation. Poor nutrition has a certain kind of a “circular cumulative trap”. Its impact on over-all health and well-being is deep. Poor health contributes to high mortality rate, high health cost, to the firm, low productivity, absenteeism, among others.

Developing countries need the right types and design of policies which will provide space for these three agents to operate. The private sector needs to know its property is protected and the existence of an independent judiciary, civil society is concern about security to execute their agenda. The role of government is to use it policy making leverage to create institutions which will allow for the innovative capacity of both the private sector and civil society to move process. Practical lessons can be learnt from China[3] and Brazil[4] which provides modern approach to agriculture.

For there to be genuine change in the nutritional value derived from our farm products it is critical that all three agents herein recognize their role. Policy formation should be coordinated among the agents to design the needed institutions to influence all sectors inclusive of technological development component.

[1] Government, Private Sector and Civil Society for Sustainable Development: Toward a Collaborative Synergy in Latin America

[2] How can the private sector effectively partner with civil society to promote good governance in Kenya? (Raphael Obonyo 2013)

[3] China's Agricultural Policies and Rural Development

25. Marco Montanaro Barilla Center For Food & Nutrition , Italy

Contribution submitted by the Barilla Center for Food & Nutrition (www.barillacfn.com) – September 2013

Note : *The Barilla Center for Food & Nutrition (BCFN) is an international think tank established in 2009 with the objective to analyze the major issues related to food and nutrition around the world. Economic, scientific, social, and environmental factors are analyzed in relation to their impacts on food, through a multidisciplinary approach. For more information www.barillacfn.com*

Structure policies and social-health interventions to effectively promote the spreading of healthy eating behavior, also looking to the international best practices in this area

In our view, the way in which available scientific knowledge in the field of nutrition and health can be translated into concrete action, toward broad, comprehensive planning that can have a real impact on people's behavior, should be re-thought. The public institutions most involved in these issues are not the only ones called on to participate in the definition and implementation of such projects, but other parties, including private companies and doctors, will also need to play a proactive role (according to their specific areas of expertise). A brief summary of these guidelines for improving all of the measures for the actual spread of healthier eating habits and lifestyles is below:

- It is essential that the dietary and lifestyle recommendations provided be practical and workable: in fact, they must be understandable and adoptable by families and individuals for the concrete circumstances of their lives
- Intervention plans formulated for nutrition and health should be defined in structural terms that aim to influence behavior in a sustainable manner over time: from this point of view, the time horizon cannot be limited to the short term, despite the need for practical improvements to be found within a reasonable length of time.
- In general, it is desirable that interventions on diet and health have a national (at least) breadth, with necessary local variations, which may differ in the form of their execution, but do not differ in substance from the guidelines and principles defined at the national (or international) level;
- For children and adolescents, it is necessary that the issues related to diet and lifestyle be addressed with an approach that combines information and experience ("active education")
- It is necessary to involve the medical profession in the process of spreading healthy eating habits. The family doctor and the pediatrician, in particular, could be a great "conveyor belt" of more correct dietary habits.
- It is necessary to ask the agro-food industry to think about implementing strategies and operational plans consistent with the guidelines identified for proper nutrition. This can help encourage them to conduct scientific, nutritional and technological research and to work constructively on several important topics that concern them (for example, the progressive improvement of the nutritional profiles, the definition of food with specific features, the improvement of the nutritional density of the products, etc.).

Agronomic “knowledge” is not very widespread.

With the development of science, farming is increasingly characterized by the articulation and breadth of knowledge gained regarding the characteristics of the natural environment and the physiology of plant species. All this is combined with the practical experience accumulated over centuries of activity. In other words, there is a wealth of knowledge available of extraordinary value that is only partially used today. In certain surroundings, this seems to be due to the lack of effective processes for transferring knowledge.

Biodiversity as an instrument for correct risk management.

A pragmatic approach, without prejudice, to the choice of agricultural models allows – at the level of policymaking – the maximization of the overall resilience of agricultural systems. Proper management of biodiversity and the coexistence of different models, all equally optimized concerning sustainability boosts the possibilities of response to adverse events and the search for specific objectives of the system, when these are alternative (e.g., maximum quality vs. large volumes).

Sustainable diets and healthy lifestyles.

Healthy lifestyles and food choices have an increasing impact on the environment, besides people's health.

In the food sector, we witness a gradual shift in the consumption patterns which are not consistent with the protection of the environment and people's well-being. An example of such shift is represented by the increase in the consumption of animal proteins in the emerging countries - with subsequent increase of agricultural raw materials destined to animal feeding - and nutritional imbalances in daily diets.

We believe the food consumption patterns based on sustainable diets may have a beneficial effect on agricultural productions and the environment.

26. UG Agricultural Economics Focus 2014, University of Guyana, Guyana

Note: This is a follow-up post based on previous ideas expressed by this group. This post focuses on what the Private Sector can do to contribute to food security.

The private sector has a special role to play in food security, especially in rural areas. Through a process of vertical coordination in the rural agriculture sector, large agro processing firms can enhance the efficiency of farm operations, drive income growth in these regions and, therefore, augment the food security of rural dwellers. The literature suggests very strongly that increased income is positively correlated to improved food and nutritional security,

Contract farming, a tenet of what experts call the “industrialization of agriculture”, is regarded as a production arrangement with the potential to yield tremendous benefits for farmers.

Under a contractual arrangement, the contractor (agro processing firm, in this case) and farmer share the risk of agricultural production, and work together to mitigate these risks. For instance, contracted farmers are assured of a definite buyer for their produce and, maybe a fixed price, whereas an independent farmer are confronted by market vagaries such as low market access, as well as fluctuating prices.

Additionally, contractors can help farmers enhance their production techniques by providing them with extension services and technology which, if they (farmers) were independent, they might not

be able to afford. Usually, because of lack of knowledge and concomitant risk averseness, farmers are hesitant to adopt new production techniques. Under contractual stipulations, however, and with 'goading' from the contractor, farmers are more likely to adopt modern agricultural techniques.

Through vertical coordination, agro processing firms help to correct the common issue of there not being credit markets that serve rural farmers. Whether as a result of uncertain land tenure, information asymmetry and monitoring costs, banks usually set high collateral requirements and interest rates which the independent farmer cannot afford. Because contractors set a standard for the output they contract independent farmers to produce, they have a more "hands-on" approach when dealing with farmers and to this end, contractors often supply inputs to farmers on credit.

However, vertical coordination does not automatically translate to improved incomes and greater food security for farmers. Large corporations (contractors) have been accused of underpaying farmers for their produce, as well as engaging in agriculture techniques which, while commercially favourable, are environmentally devastating. There has been, though, increased activism by NGOs, farmers rights groups, governments and international organizations, has strengthened the bargaining position of farmers and led to them receiving better terms under contracts.

27. Anura Widana, New Zealand

The farmers' organisation (FOs) as a civil society has a definite role in promoting food security and nutrition both within farming and non-farming sectors. Unlike many other forms of civil society groups, the members of FOs themselves undertake farming which put them in the context to carry out farming practices both for food security and nutrition. The involvement of FOs in the farming sector is most appropriate and cost-effective in the present context of agriculture given the low-level of resources available for the public sector for the same role.

28. Future of Agricultural Economics ECN 4103 Group 2 University Of Guyana, Guyana

Reference to Guyana:

Government is a main channel of communication in many countries, especially in developing countries. However, there are always lags and misinformation when implementing measures on a National scale. Given this, one realizes that with the urgency of improving nutrition and combating hunger there needs to be a more personal and closer channel to reach the people and this is where the Civil Society and Private Sector comes in. The Civil Society is a main advocate and implementer of necessary policies and strategies for the improvement nutrition. The Scaling Up Nutrition Movement (SUN) gives a very insightful list of the roles the Civil Society must fulfill as the watch dog and advocate of improving nutrition, they include: Know what has to be done; Do what has to be done; Be part of inclusive partnerships for planning and policy making; Advocate for the most marginalized and disadvantaged and finally Be accountable.[1] The Private sector has one major role and that is to be the investment drive to make these strategies practical.

The need for a nutrition sensitive and healthy population is a drive for overall development in a country. In Guyana, a lot of people are able to go about their daily lives and be comfortable because these struggles are unknown to them. The Stabroek and Bourda Markets in the capital city are full of produce, the supermarkets and shops are successful; on the exterior everything looks fine. So what Guyana needs are persuasive methods to force the private sector to see beyond the exterior and look at important issues and realize that they can play a major role and steer Guyana to become a humanitarian conscious country with a keen eye on future prosperity.

In this post we would like to address the issue of Partnerships between the Private Sector and Civil Society in order to improve nutrition. This issue brings to mind the Chinese proverbial saying, "Give a man a fish and you feed him for a day, teach a man to fish and you feed him for a lifetime." We are not saying that the Private Sector and Civil Society need to fully donate food to the needy people; we are saying that there are other ways of outreach that should be utilised before this method. Our first suggestion is for the Private sector and Civil Society to engage in worthy Agriculture based investments such as finding out ways in which they can get access to unused fertile lands and lease or sell them at reasonable prices so that the average man can get access to them without hassle and this can encourage farming. In short, we are saying that the Private Sector and Civil Society can team up and petition for land allocation activities which will contribute positively to the economy, meaning that the more produce in the economy can encourage the use of fresh, healthier meals by the populace. Another partnership which can be helpful is for the Private Sector to fund the Civil Society to operate coop societies in the different villages so as to encourage bulk purchasing of fruits and vegetables so that farmers' produce will not go to waste if they are not sold out in the market and villagers can enjoy healthy selections at a reasonable price.

The Civil Society should organise awareness campaigns in order to educate households and businesses alike in the form of "House to House" visits on issues such as how junk and processed food cause malnutrition. Given that we are on the topic of awareness, the media is a very important player in spreading the word. The private sector can play an important role here to educate people through health conscious television advertisements, radio announcements and newspaper articles.

Our final suggestion is for the private sector to give out vouchers to the civil society. The Civil Society will now filter out the best candidates (single parents, poor low income families, those who are chronically ill, etc) to receive the vouchers.

Partnership between the Private Sector and Civil Society is vital in the struggle to improve nutrition. Their interdependence as a team is a very important factor which can make a big difference all over the world to fight many issues as addressed in this post.

Sources: [1] <http://scalingupnutrition.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/09/archived/SUN-Civil-Society-Meeting-Report-final-25July-2011.pdf>

29. UG2014 Group 8 University of Guyana, Guyana

"Innovations that are guided by smallholder farmers, adapted to local circumstances, and sustainable for the economy and environment will be necessary to ensure food security in the future."– Bill Gates

It is our smaller farmers who also need to be empowered if we are to help solve the global issue of nutrition and food security. Under the right guidance and given the right opportunities they can prosper and in turn so too can a country's economy. In this comment we intend to answer the first question under programs.

- What have been the success stories and lessons learned by the private sector and civil society in implementing nutrition-enhancing agriculture and food systems programmes at country level?

In Guyana there are not many well-known success stories about such programs. However, one such story is the Linden Economic Advancement Program (LEAP). The initiative was started in 2002 and ended 2009. At the time it was a Government and Civil Society Program. The approach basically is to fund a maximum of 100% of labour and 80% of operation costs. Farmers will fund 100% of equipment and a minimum of 20 % of the costs of operation or LEAP will fund a maximum of 100%of labour, 20% of equipment rental and 70% of operation costs. Farmers will fund a minimum of 80% of equipment rental and 30% costs of operation.

The idea behind the program is that assistance with land clearing would have an immediate effect on the expansion of cultivation. Moreover, LEAP is intended to be a means for the achievement of economic diversification of Region 10 through increased investment, and emergence of a viable entrepreneurial sector. This in return would impact the nutrition-enhancing agriculture and food systems within the Region 10 area. The will result in the farmers benefitting tremendously from this initiative since farmers could earn an income and the area would become relatively more 'Food Secure'.

Today members of the LEAP committee have recognised the importance of the said program and have continued to fund the initiative from their own pockets. It is now a private and civil society partnership. The members have indicated the tremendous growth and potential that resulted from fostering the initiative to present day. Farmers from the region 10 area have even started tapping into overseas markets to expand their product line.

Due to the overwhelming success a new initiative was formed and referred to as the Region 10 Agriculture and Forest Producers Association. The organization is a community-based organization registered under the Friendly Societies Act. Its acts as an institution to create employment and reduce poverty by financially empowering the residents of Region 10 and provides an opportunity to diversify from the traditional bauxite industry for which this community is known. The organisation's motto is, "thank you for choosing our product, you are helping to eradicate poverty in our region".

The lesson learnt here is that, through closer knitted program such as LEAP, the agriculture sector in general could be fostered. The amount of farmers benefitting from these initiatives is overwhelming and still being recorded. When the private sector is involved, such programs will be even more efficient after all, they will peruse some kind of profit maximisation and intern have some kind of efficiency. Food security woes are no longer a problem and levels of nutrition rise since the area now had both better access to food and is more economically stable.

We would like to suggest a simple recommendation. If the Ministry of Agriculture has an impact assessment done, they would see the amount of positive externalities being derived from such programs. Policies should then be created to have such programs being implemented though the ministry and the commercial banks. Therefore empowering small farmers further and welcoming potential farmers on board. Not only should grants be given out but more practical and onsite training should be provided for farmers. These initiatives would foster an already dying sector in our economy. It would empower small farmers who in turn, as we have seen with the success of the LEAP programme, can help eradicate food security and nutrition issues. With the Guyana Marketing Agency on board, the farmers would then find overseas markets to sell their products and even go into agricultural by products such as jams, pepper sauces, seasonings etc. This can help with the worldwide food security and nutrition problems by increasing the availability of food.

Sources:

LEAP. Linden Economic Advancement Program. 2003-2009. <http://www.leapguyana.org/> (accessed September 22, 2013).

Stabroek News. Linden farmers on sweet pepper drive. May 14, 2009. <http://www.stabroeknews.com/2009/archives/05/14/linden-farmers-on-sweet> -... (accessed September 22, 2013).

30. Prabir Dutta, Dg Foundation, India

Dear Sir,

IDF has discussed elaborately different types of Malnutrition viz over-nutrition, under-nutrition, micronutrient deficiency etc. Soil for agriculture may remain ideal by organic agriculture system. Under-nutrition caused by poverty has to be checked by foods of animal origin mainly. Micronutrient deficiency can be controlled also by the foods of animal origin. Example of Bangladesh vis to ideal cultivation may be considered.

Best regards.

Yours sincerely,
(Dr)Prabir Dutta
Dg Community,
India

31. Claudio Schuftan, PHM, Viet Nam

I have to say that, so far, I have been surprised that big industry has been silent in this consultation. I'd say most contributions have dealt with 'small private sector' potential or proven inputs.

But, not trying to be repetitive, I want all of us to be conscious of the big picture of how the private sector can and often is bad news and works at counter-purpose to what all of us aspire.

Let's take the example of PPPs:

PPPs are seen by the Establishment as a way to bring new financial resources to address global challenges --nutrition included. However, in reality, they have further reinforced selective vertical programs by focusing on non-sustainable, technocratic solutions to single issues (e.g. fortification with micronutrients or supplementation). They are simply not addressing the social determination of malnutrition or many of the burning needs of national health and nutrition systems to deliver such services, especially preventive.

To me, it is clear: PPPs need to be seriously questioned since they have proven to be unable to promote horizontally-integrated, social interventions with an explicit commitment to strengthen local systems and, most of all, to respond to locally felt needs seldom allowed to be expressed. They have been unable (unwilling?) to build new alliances with people's civil society organizations and social movements that are struggling for more participatory decision-making in all health and nutrition matters.

Existing global PPPs must thus be audited, in order to expose the basic flaws and rules that such PPPs ongoingly apply plus their flagrant conflicts of interest on the many occasions where they are influencing public decision making. They are not to be allowed to build upon existing public systems and not to embed the actions they fund in national structures --always with the ulterior motives of profit or gains in market share and also of 'white-washing' their bad conscience and reputation.

There is more to criticize, but I stop here for now.

PS: How do colleagues think this is different (if at all) from how global philanthropies work? Why do some call this philanthrocapitalism?

Cludio Schuftan, People's Health Movement, Ho Chi Minh City

32. Subhash Mehta, Devarao Shivaram Trust, India

You will be pleased to read the CGIAR Chairman's forward, written for UNCTAD's Trade and Environment Review 2013 - "Wake Up Before Its Too Late ", endorsing the paradigm shift required in agriculture.

Some highlights:

Better understanding of the multi – functionality of agriculture being of pivotal importance for the significant role it can play in development of rural poor producer communities' access to safe, sufficient, nutritious food and mitigating/ adapting to climate change

- Around one billion people chronically suffer from starvation and another billion are malnourished (70% of these two billion are themselves small producers/ agriculture labour) as they do not have the money to access sufficient nutritious food for their own needs
- Priority in conventional systems remains on productivity and economies of scale, with the focus being on 'Industrial Agriculture'
- Paradigm shift and Fundamental transformation towards sustainable low cost agriculture systems needs to be recognized to ensure the 'Right of everyone to safe, sufficient nutritious food is a reality before the MDG's deadline of 2015 (June 20, 12, Rio +20 declaration).

Links are given below to the press release of Sept 18, 2013, and the report:

<http://unctad.org/en/pages/PressRelease.aspx?OriginalVersionID=154>
, <http://unctad.org/en/pages/PublicationWebflyer.aspx?publicationid=666>

It is very encouraging that the report focuses on the current crisis in global agriculture and calls upon Governments to change and follow a smallholder producer friendly enabling AR4D path, primarily to put them to work on farm, producing most/ all the nutritious food needs for themselves and markets in the vicinity and tackle the multiple challenges of rural poverty, hunger, malnutrition, suicides, environmental degradation and the effects of climate change. This requires a rapid and significant shift from conventional monoculture-based and high-external-input-dependent 'economies of scale' industrial production towards mosaics of sustainable, regenerative 'economies of scope', integrated low cost agriculture systems of each area that considerably improves livelihoods, production, net income and purchasing power of smallholder producer communities.

This report adds to the growing weight of opinion that conventional industrial agriculture will not deliver future nutritious food security and that efforts to promote low cost ecological farming practices, as adapted by successful farmers of each area, season after season, need to be widely and rapidly scaled-out for producer communities to access the required nutritious food and at little or no cost, thus making agriculture sustainable for nutritious food security and in the long term and substantially contributing to the economic development of developing countries.

I am attaching the 'White paper' (contributed by CSOs for GCARD, Montpellier, March 2010), as it had then initiated the [Paradigm shift](#) in AR4D- Old to New, matrix also attached, focus being on following integrated agriculture of the area, financing of producer orgs/ companies (Private Sector) set up by the rural smallholder producer communities but staffed by professionals (general practitioners [GPs] and MBAs in agriculture), to take over all responsibilities and manage risks, leaving members mostly to on farm activities.

Hopefully, the CGIAR and national agricultural research and education systems (NARES) with the intervention of all stakeholders, ensure that the mandates are re written to include the proposed paradigm shift in the report, also being reflected in their research agenda and gets translated into policy recommendations by Governments, international bodies and multilateral UN agencies.

Warm regards
Subhash

33. UG2014 Group 8, University of Guyana, Guyana

“Adopting and promoting sustainable production practices require concerted effort, something which in practice is too often missing or insufficient. Making this shift at the scale required demands forward-looking leadership in the public and private sectors alike.” – Helen Clark, UNDP Administrator

Setting plans in place to ensure food is grown isn't always enough to ensure this food will go to the targeted areas. Adequate monitoring of programs is necessary to ensure efficiency. In Following up on our last comment that answered the first question under programs, we are now discussing the second question in this comment.

- How can the impact of such programs on food consumption and nutrition be monitored?

In Guyana, the government has a track record of transforming the agricultural sector into a local and international supplier in a wide range of processed, canned and bottled agricultural foods. They have also achieved the goal of “halving” the population hunger rate. Despite being a major net exporter of food, Guyana still stands on sinkable grounds on providing and maintaining food for its country. The creation of food and nutrition programs is seen as one of the most tedious tasks but monitoring can be tremendously stressful at the other end. However, Guyana has taken the greatest toll of implementing the “Guyana Food and National Security Strategy 2011 -2020”. The strategy is aimed at improving the health and well-being of all persons living in Guyana through enhanced food and nutrition security. In developing and implementing policies and programs to achieve this overall goal its measures and actions will impact the entire population, but the primary concern will be with those sections of the population that live in poverty and are considered particularly vulnerable to food and nutrition insecurity. This monitoring program was undertaken by the government of Guyana along with the ministry of agriculture and other governmental bodies. There has been no recent monitoring program developed by the private sector or civil society but they both have been in support of the government's monitoring program.

With this strategy active, a Regional and Community Food and Nutrition Security Forums (CFNSF) and a National Technical Coordinating Unit (NTCU) will be constituted by stakeholders from government, private sector, civil society and the donor community at each of the ten administrative regions of Guyana. The major role of the Community Coordinators (CC) will be to prioritize projects related to food security and facilitate food security project coordination, identification, implementation, management and evaluation.

The private sector and civil society will in turn applaud, support and be better off with this initiative in supporting the needs of the nation's wealth. With these bodies in action we now have major monitoring techniques in place which will grow a better Guyana for all.

Source: Ministry of Agriculture: Government of Guyana. Food and Nutrition Security Strategy for Guyana. July 2011.

<http://www.cwa.caricom.org/press/publications/Food%20and%20Nutrition%20Security%20Strategy%202011.pdf> (accessed September 24, 2013).

34. Veronique Droulez, International Meat Secretariat, Australia

This is an important topic and there are a number of ways in which the private sector can contribute to improved nutrition in partnership with other relevant stakeholders. We provide examples from the red meat industry, representing beef, veal, sheep and pork meat.

1. Contributing evidence to inform policies - the private sector can contribute the following evidence in consultation with relevant stakeholders using standardised methodologies to ensure desired outcomes are achieved.

Nutrient composition - dietary guidelines and recommendations are informed by the various food groups ability to deliver on nutrient quality and quantity:

There have been significant changes in production, retail and consumer trimming practices, resulting in leaner meat products and hence lower levels of fat and saturated fat content. The private sector can contribute by updating data to reflect current production systems and consumption practices; represented 'as consumed' and by different agro-ecological zones.

Terms such as 'red meat', 'meat' and 'processed meat' which treat commodities as homogenous categories can introduce error since they do not reflect foods available for purchase. The private sector can contribute more meaningful descriptors which represent the retail supply and will help to encourage intake of a diversity of foods within this category.

For some nutrients, such as protein, iron and zinc, correction factors are required which take into consideration bioavailability and the private sector can support research required to improve food compositional data for these nutrients.

Environmental impact:

Since GHG is not an appropriate proxy for sustainable diets, multi-criteria have been recommended for environmental impacts relevant to food security such as water, arable land and biodiversity. Use of these resources to produce nutrient-rich foods can help to inform policy. The private sector will continue to provide data on the environmental impact of their products.

We note the need for consequential analyses since environmental impacts will change in response to changes in supply and the private sector can provide the necessary data for these models. The Global Agenda of Action for Sustainable Livestock -a multi-stakeholder platform in which FAO, governments, private sector, and civil society work together to develop sustainability criteria – can contribute to this discussion.

2. Supporting nutrition-enhancing programmes

There is evidence from developed countries that improvements in production practices that achieve higher resource use efficiency and decrease degradation of landscapes without compromising their nutritional integrity will not only reduce the environmental impact but also improve nutrition. Actions based on resource use efficiency can usually be practically implemented within the food supply chain and the private sector can share this knowledge with producers in developing countries.

The private sector plays an important role in nutrition education, particularly where food knowledge and skills are required to consume their products, such as meat. There are many examples of partnerships between the private sector, civil society and governments combining their collective expertise, resources and distribution networks in developing programmes and

communications for promoting improved nutrition. These need to be evaluated to identify the most effective approaches.

It is becoming increasingly evident that diet and lifestyle are interrelated and that the 'one size fits all' approach is not effective. The private sector can contribute consumer insights to guide development of dietary recommendations tailored to the consumption patterns, cultural practices and available food supply of different population groups.

3. Participating in effective partnerships

Collaboration across sectors is challenging and to be effective, we recommend the following:

Nutrition and sustainable diets are broad terms which mean different things to different sectors and to avoid miscommunications, a clear definition and criteria are required which encapsulates the need to feed a growing population and supply a diverse range of foods which meet nutrient requirements and prevent development of chronic diseases.

Two-way dialogue based on mutually beneficial (win-win) partnerships with clarity around roles and responsibilities.

35. Claudio Schuftan, PHM, Viet Nam

Dear Moderator,

This consultation on the role of civil society and the private sector was originally conceived to give room for our inputs to the ICN2 preparatory process with the aim of influencing it, not only positively, but also effectively.

Last week, I submitted a posting related to the worrisome role PPPs are exerting on public decision-making. I made a call to action.

But this issue, and many others that worry me, do not seem to be on the agenda of ICN2. Can we expect this consultation will forcefully enough demand that these issues become part of the official discussions in November 2014?

Let me give consultation participants just a sample of the (additional) types of issues I see we are missing and, in my view, cannot simply be excluded in ICN2 in depth discussions:

Issue 1: Post 2015 food and nutrition human rights compliant policies, i.e., policy coherence with the human rights principles and framework as unequivocally recently demanded by the Secretary general . (I cannot understand why the UNHCHR is not a cosponsor of ICN2!).

Issue 2: Governance issues in the nutrition community. As many colleagues will know, after decades, civil society participation in the UN SCN has been excluded and the SCN has primarily become a vehicle for the SUN initiative coordination. (Mind you, SUN has an important corporate and TNC involvement). Actually, the whole issue of private sector participation in global nutrition governance has to be re-discussed critically.

Issue 3: We cannot continue working in nutrition without dealing with what unfair free trade agreements (FTAs) are doing to nutrition, or without dealing with the financial crisis in rich and poor countries.

A much more proactive critique and action is needed in these areas.

These are just three of the issues dear to civil society that come to my mind now. But, of course, there are other. I am sure other colleagues participating in this consultation can add other (Issue 4:..., Issue 5:..., Issue 6:.....). Will ICN2 have these in the agenda of the official ministerial meeting? The question I ask is: Can our consultation make a fervent call to this effect? The first challenge is to put these issues in the agenda. I think the preparatory meeting next November in Rome is crucial and civil society has a pivotal role to play there.

Claudio Schuftan, Ho Chi Minh City

36. Lida Lhotska, IBFAN-GIFA, Switzerland

Dear Moderator,

I would like to support Claudio Schuftan's observations and suggestions for additional issues that need to be raised and addressed. I would also like to emphasize one point in relation to the Issue 2 he highlights: Unless/until also principles for safeguarding policy-making against conflicts of interests created by too close or inappropriate engagements with commercial/economic actors are fully implemented in a form of adequate conflict of interest policies, that deal with individual AND institutional conflicts of interests, and that help address their underlying causes, the chance that the Secretary general's demand for the post 2015 food and nutrition policies to be compliant with human rights principles will be very slim or non-existent.

With best regards,

Lida Lhotska
IBFAN Liaison office
IBFAN-GIFA
Switzerland

37. Ms. Kelicia Daniels, University of Guyana, Guyana

Dear Moderator,

In response to the policy issues, the private sector's involvement in promoting nutrition- enhancing food systems are not to be understated. The private sector essentially picks up the slack where government food systems fall short; we must now target policies to aid the private sector to fulfil its purpose in food security.

Improper nutrition is mainly associated with impoverished nations due to the unavailability of food with adequate nourishment resulting from income constraints. **The private sector should then, design policies aimed at sustainable food supply to balance present and future demand in order to prevent unwarranted price increases in food supplies due to excessive demand.** In doing this, food supplies will be within reach for low income and impoverished households at affordable prices.

The private sector should also design policies to target production. It is through the use of more technology, production rates can keep up or even exceed the rate of population growth. In achieving this, production numbers must not only be sufficient (so that there is potentially enough food for everyone in the world to be fed), but also proper food distribution, ensuring global food security for everyone.

38. UG2014 Group 8, University of Guyana, Guyana

“We all do better when we work together. Our differences do matter, but our common humanity matters more.” – Bill Clinton.

Working together is key for any plan to be successful. Divided though the private sector, civil society and government can carry out their roles and responsibilities well, when working together for a common goal – for instance, food security and better nutrition – each party can bring to the table their best skills and together nutrition levels can rise. In this comment we intend to answer the question under governance.

- What are the changes needed to make sure that the private sector and civil society are involved in building effective and sustainable governance mechanisms related to agriculture, food systems and nutrition?

The world is continuously expanding and so is the demand for nutritious foods. The future is uncertain as it relates to Global Warming, which is an unpredictable factor in food production. It is important for all leaders of government, business, civil society to work together to achieve sustainable growth in the agriculture production.

Private sector needs to constantly collaborate with civil society and other stakeholders to invest in research for innovative means of using fewer resources to gain more food. Consistently interact with their focus groups via monthly meetings, workshops etc. With advancements in technology we can produce more food of higher quality using fewer resources therefore maximising scarce resources.

As we noted in a previous comment, civil society has closer relationships with the average citizen while the private sector has better skills and materials available to draft policies. If these two groups and corporate and bridge the knowledge gap they can provide useful information to policy makers that will enhance governance mechanisms related to agriculture, food systems and nutrition. In other words, as the policy makers will be better equipped as they can add to their skill set the knowledge of both the private and civil society to create policies that not only reach out to the average citizen but also looks at the country’s economic state.

39. Helen Medina, US Council for International Business, United States of America

As we expressed in our comments in the previous submission to the FAO online consultation, USCIB would like to underscore that advancing health and nutrition requires a multi-stakeholder approach that reflects the complexities of the issues. There is no quick or simple solution to addressing challenges such as obesity, under-nutrition and disease. While we believe that the private sector has a role in producing healthy and nutritious food, it is equally important to address issues that impact the community’s ability to thrive such as poverty, hunger, gender inequality, water access and sustainable agriculture. It is within this context that we share with you in our comments some examples of programs and approaches that reflect this complex reality.

[Final USCIB comments private sector contribution re nutrition 0925.pdf](#)

40. Future of Agricultural Economics ECN 4103 Group 2 University Of Guyana, Guyana

The Civil Society and Private Sector are key players in the fight to improve nutrition. Given the previous post by this group on how important the partnership between these two entities are in the battle for a better nourished population we would now like to give a different perspective. The focus will now be on the issue of Health Care and its role in a Developing country like Guyana and its link to the Civil Society and Private Sector.

Health care is social insurance for the ill and injured. In some aspects of the world it is stated that wealth brings better nutrition, which basically says that if a country's economy is blooming there will be more resources and finances available to invest in improvements in its health sector. This means that better medical care and healthier measures will in turn improve nutrition. The following are some areas that can be addressed that in essence have a chain effect that leads up to an improvement in the overall nutrition of the Population.

Less Loss Time in Productivity can result in more output. Given this, the Private Sector can try to implement better health system in place for employees such as medical insurance and allowances which can reduce the amount of time needed for days off or for trips to the hospital for whatever medical reason.

The Civil Society and Private Sector can bring awareness to the importance of nutrients supplements (such as cod liver oil tablets, vitamin b and c tablets, etc) and make these available to the needy and malnourished proportion of the population free of cost or at a reduced cost. In essence, healthy bodies contribute to healthier minds. Improvements in nutrition benefit the entire country. This availability of supplements will increase the quality and quantity of human capital which is an important determinant of economic growth.

A noticeable trend in developing countries is its unplanned spike in population growth, especially to the uneducated, poor persons whose income cannot cater for a growing family. The Private Sector and Civil Society can invest in sexual and reproductive education and preventative measures which can lead to better family planning and therefore a reduction on the size of a family. A smaller, more manageable family size will make the fewer members more nourished than if the food supply of the home had to be spread out. At a societal level, similar investments may lead to demographic changes conducive to economic development. In particular, they may lead to a period in which countries have a high ratio of workers to dependents leading to increased national savings. In effect this means that a smaller, more manageable and healthy population can most likely result in a rise in GDP per capita if population growth is supervised.

Finally, less financing for remedies and the placement of more importance on preventative measures for certain types of illnesses or providing services for treating illnesses at the early stages will help greatly with the cost that would be incurred if these measures were not in place. Such initiatives can reduce health care burdens on both the Civil Society and Private Sector; this tends to free some of the capital available to be invested in other sectors.

41. Group 4, University of Guyana, Guyana

The role of the private sector and civil society is paramount in a nation's quest to improved nutrition. If this responsibility is to be left on the shoulder of the government alone, it is reasonable to assume that, given the many other functions of government, this purpose would be left unattained to a large degree. This is not to point out any particular weaknesses to any particular government. However, especially in the consideration of a developing country where allocation of resources is supremely significant in that country's advancement, it would be unreasonable to assume that any governing body would be able to take the matter of the nation's nutritional well-being wholly into its own hands.

In response to the post of the previous group, Future of Agricultural Economics ECN 4103 Group 2, who stated that the private sector could take up the role of implementing better health systems for employees (such as medical insurances or allowances), we pose our question thusly: Is implementing better health systems a route to the improvement of nutrition of a nation, or is it merely a means by which POOR nutrition can be treated more readily or effectively?

That question is not to understate the importance of improved health systems, but merely to point out that given those improvements, it would not speak directly to a nation's intake of more nutritional foods, but rather to a system that is better prepared to deal with ailments that may arise from poor nutrition.

Take, for example, the United States of America. The powerhouse nation. The everpresent economic giant. The health systems of this great nation are, undoubtedly, far superior to that of smaller, less developed countries such as our motherland, Guyana. Whereas, perhaps, our greatest area of nutritional insufficiency stems from resources not being able to reach many of the poor peoples of our land, and thus leading to many people, children especially, being under-nourished and underweight, the problem facing America is converse to ours in that their greatest nutritional letdown is the rate of obesity that plagues their people.

Better health systems, yes. Better nutritional standards? Perhaps not.

It is by this arugment that we can then pose a further question: is less time Really lost by implementing better health systems? Or does it create an opportunity whereby workers can benefit from health allowances and have no real incentive to alter an unhealthy lifestyle?

42. Concern 3, University of Guyana, Guyana

Effective Governance Contribution to Nutrition Enhancement in Developing Countries

“Good governance of the nutrition sector entails making adequate policy decisions in a timely manner, committing the necessary financial and organisational resources to their effective implementation, that is ensuring that benefits reach the majority of the population, preferably the most vulnerable. Good governance also entails a sustained political commitment to ensure that nutrition programmes and policies are able to withstand threats and constraints from changes in national leadership and political and socioeconomic upheavals.” [1]

Effective governance is essential in developing countries in order to provide strong leadership and to efficiently coordinate policies and programmes to eliminate food and nutrition insecurity. Therefore the following changes need to be embraced in order to accomplish goals for nutrition enhancement in developing countries.

Governance need to encourage the participation of actors from the state, market and civil society in the decision making process. Their collaboration is vital in order to design and implement nutrition policies that cater for the ‘most vulnerable groups, including women, food insecure households and small scale farmers’. All individuals should have equal access to resources and opportunities to enhance their welfare.

Impartial legal frameworks need to be enforced in developing countries in order to ensure that the right of every individual is protected. "An independent judiciary and an impartial and incorruptible police force will also be required for efficiency."

Fundamental information related to nutrition budget expenditure should be transparent and accessible by the private sector as well as the civil society.

Lastly, “all organizations should also be accountable to individuals who would be affected by their decision. Not only governmental institutions but also the private sector and civil society organizations must be accountable to the public and to their institutional stakeholders. Who is accountable to whom, varies depending on whether decisions or actions taken are internal or external to an organization or institution.” [2]

Sources:

[[1]] Solon, F.S. (2007) 'Good Governance for Nutrition in the Philippines: Elements, Experiences, and Lessons Learned', *Food and Nutrition Bulletin* 27.4: 343–52

[[2]] United Nations. (2013). *What is Good Governance?* Thailand: United Nations Economic & Social Commission for Asia & the Pacific.

Retrieved from: <http://www.unescap.org/pdd/prs/ProjectActivities/Ongoing/gg/governance.asp>

UNDP (1997) *Governance for Sustainable Human Development*. United Nations Development Programme

43. UG2014 Group 8, University of Guyana, Guyana

“Coming together is a beginning; keeping together is progress; working together is success.” – Henry Ford

Merely coming together is the first step; however parties need to ensure they make the commitment to keep working together in order to achieve the common goal. In this comment we intend to answer the first question under partnerships.

* What contribution can the private sector and civil society make for working across sectors and building strong linkages between food and agriculture, social protection, employment, health, education and other key sectors?

With the other sections of commentary clearly highlighting the need for greater collaboration amongst the private sector, civil society and policy makers, it's of concern and mutual interest for the discussions that proceed to highlight several key areas how these parties can find common grounds in partnering to foster some kind of growth in our economy. Recently the Director-General of the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) Jose Graziano da Silva echoed the same sentiments at a high level meeting in Africa.¹

Firstly, applying this to our country Guyana, the role of the local private sector body (The Private Sector Commission or PSC) should be taken into consideration. The PSC is the umbrella body that deals extensively in creating investment and sharing information to the firms that are members. Thus if organizations such as the FAO hold meetings with the commission to outline to their roles and the initiatives of the FAO in eradicating issues such as food security and improving nutrition they would have better knowledge and guidance in ways in which they can help in meeting these goals. Being more inclined to the pivotal role they play, the Private sector will be able to help create policies such that they themselves along with the civil society could be better off and achieve some kind of Pareto Efficiency.

Civil Society being NGOs, religious bodies and other substantial non-profit and non-governmental groups in society, can also benefit from meetings with the FAO that would inform them of the goals in mind. As Civil Society is usually closer to the average citizen they can better determine the root of the problem so an efficient solution can be found.

In terms of working across sectors to achieve better nutrition both private and civil society can help in building strong links across these sectors by setting targets for each sector that would complement the other sector and would all be geared towards the same goal. For instance, the private and civil society can work with policy makers to ensure that systems are put in place that would allow for both the quantity and quality of food production to be increased. Once this has been done it also important to educate citizens of the essentials of a balanced diet so they can choose their foods wisely and reduce risks of life threatening diseases. The healthcare section can help in informing citizens of wise nutritional choices. Though Guyana had halved our poverty level, there are still those who cannot afford to eat a balanced diet. Civil society can continue their

numerous feeding programs and the private sector can create more employment where possible to help with this situation. This will help Guyana successfully reach its Goal 1 target of the MDG.

Source:

United Nations. UN News Centre. July 1, 2013.

<http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=45313&Cr=hunger&Cr1=food+se...> (accessed September 25, 2013).

44. International Life Science Institute (ILSI) , United States of America

The International Life Sciences Institute (ILSI) is pleased to respond to this online forum. As a nonprofit, research foundation, ILSI has a 35 year history of contributing to improving nutrition around the world. Through our 16 branches and Research Foundation, we have an impressive history of building science related to improving nutritional status through micronutrient fortification, developing science-based dietary guidance designed to reduce noncommunicable diseases, and sharing nutrition knowledge through publications, e.g., Nutrition Reviews, Present Knowledge in Nutrition and the ILSI Europe monograph series. These monographs translate science for non-specialists and are used extensively to inform audiences worldwide about food and nutrition.

Policy issues: ILSI advocates for the use of science in developing nutrition policies. We commissioned a paper discussing this topic for the ICN 2. The manuscript, entitled “Building Effective Nutrition Policy Demands a Strong Scientific Base,” is downloadable from the ICN 2 website and gives examples of research activities carried out by civil society organizations that provide the science base upon which sound policy is built. We encourage those interested in the outcome of the ICN 2 to read the manuscript.

Programme Issues: One of the major challenges facing nutrition programs is showing efficacy. Collecting data that accurately reflect what people eat is expensive and difficult. Without such data, showing that a specific nutrition intervention works is difficult, if not impossible. ILSI has been working with FAO, WHO and ASEAN to develop a harmonized approach to measuring dietary exposure. This work is focused on harmonizing the lexicon for food categories and individual foods – a basic tool in determining what people are eating. Harmonization of the names allows intake data collected in different countries to be evaluated and compare more accurately. FAO and WHO have been pleased with the outcome of this work, funded in large measure by ILSI.

PASSCLAIM delivers criteria to assess the scientific support for claims on food products and is another example of the private sector working with civil society to improve nutrition. It addressed concerns about misleading and unsubstantiated claims and, when implemented with European Commission regulation 1924 2006, consumers benefited from a harmonized approach to the validity and scientific support for claims on foods leading to improved nutrition.

Partnerships: Given the financial realities of today, public-private partnerships are a key mechanism for creating new science and understanding in which all involved combine human and financial resources. ILSI is built on a public-private partnership principle and the organization believes this principle is fundamental to developing useful science resulting in improved nutrition and health. Public-private partnerships require nurturing and understanding the issues that must be addressed in order to create strong public-private partnerships. ILSI North America recently submitted a manuscript describing 12 principles for enduring and effective public-private partnerships for publication.

45. Ms. Veronique Droulez International Meat Secretariat, Australia

This is an important topic and there are a number of ways in which the private sector can contribute to improved nutrition in partnership with other relevant stakeholders. We provide examples from the red meat industry, representing beef, veal, sheep and pork meat.

Contributing evidence to inform policies

The private sector can contribute the following evidence in consultation with relevant stakeholders using standardised methodologies to ensure desired outcomes are achieved.

Nutrient composition - dietary guidelines and recommendations are informed by the various food groups ability to deliver on nutrient quality and quantity:

There have been significant changes in production, retail and consumer trimming practices, resulting in leaner meat products and hence lower levels of fat and saturated fat content. The private sector can contribute by updating data to reflect current production systems and consumption practices; represented 'as consumed' and by different agro-ecological zones.

Terms such as 'red meat', 'meat' and 'processed meat' which treat commodities as homogenous categories can introduce error since they do not reflect foods available for purchase. The private sector can contribute more meaningful descriptors which represent the retail supply and will help to encourage intake of a diversity of foods within this category.

For some nutrients, such as protein, iron and zinc, correction factors are required which take into consideration bioavailability and the private sector can support research required to improve food compositional data for these nutrients.

Environmental impact:

Since GHG is not an appropriate proxy for sustainable diets, multi-criteria have been recommended for environmental impacts relevant to food security such as water, arable land and biodiversity. Use of these resources to produce nutrient-rich foods can help to inform policy. The private sector will continue to provide data on the environmental impact of their products.

We note the need for consequential analyses since environmental impacts will change in response to changes in supply and the private sector can provide the necessary data for these models. The Global Agenda of Action for Sustainable Livestock -a multi-stakeholder platform in which FAO, governments, private sector, and civil society work together to develop sustainability criteria – can contribute to this discussion

2..Supporting nutrition-enhancing programmes

There is evidence from developed countries that improvements in production practices that achieve higher resource use efficiency and decrease degradation of landscapes without compromising their nutritional integrity will not only reduce the environmental impact but also improve nutrition. Actions based on resource use efficiency can usually be practically implemented within the food supply chain and the private sector can share this knowledge with producers in developing countries.

The private sector plays an important role in nutrition education, particularly where food knowledge and skills are required to consume their products, such as meat. There are many examples of partnerships between the private sector, civil society and governments combining their collective expertise, resources and distribution networks in developing programmes and

communications for promoting improved nutrition. These need to be evaluated to identify the most effective approaches.

It is becoming increasingly evident that diet and lifestyle are interrelated and that the 'one size fits all' approach is not effective. The private sector can contribute consumer insights to guide development of dietary recommendations tailored to the consumption patterns, cultural practices and available food supply of different population groups.

3. Participating in effective partnerships

Collaboration across sectors is challenging and to be effective, we recommend the following:

Nutrition and sustainable diets are broad terms which mean different things to different sectors and to avoid miscommunications, a clear definition and criteria are required which encapsulates the need to feed a growing population and supply a diverse range of foods which meet nutrient requirements and prevent development of chronic diseases.

Two-way dialogue based on mutually beneficial (win-win) partnerships with clarity around roles and responsibilities.

46. Agri econs5 University of Guyana, Guyana

Hydroponics in Guyana ensuring food security through environmentally friendly agricultural techniques

“One people One nation One destiny”

In their drive to create vibrant housing schemes the Government of Guyana has chosen to use arable agricultural lands along the Low Coastal Plain. As result, the farming of produce has an increased opportunity cost. Thus, for farming to remain a successful venture and a crucial one necessary for population growth and sustenance the use of various agricultural techniques can be ventured / explored.

One agricultural technique is hydroponics which remains a viable alternative as the coastal plains are being “developed” with real estate. In the low coastal plain various agricultural techniques must be pursued to ensure soil conservation of the remaining arable lands. Hydroponics is the answer because it does not require the use of arable land. On the other hand, it requires a saline mineral solution to support the growth of crops instead of soil (“soiless cultivation”). Thus, it is a good substitute with the demand for housing increasing on the low coastal plain. It is evident that farms can gravitate towards a less developed area which the hydroponic technique can thrive and produce fresh produce year round.

Hydroponics should be considered because there exists many factors which adversely affect the production of crop and food production in open field areas:

- Increasing ultraviolet radiation.
- Decreasing fresh water supplies and water quality.
- Increasing top soil erosion and soil degradation.
- Increasing resistance of insect pests and plant diseases to traditional chemical controls.
- A convergence of natural cycles leading to extreme weather conditions.[1]

The need to conserve arable land on the Coast is of utter importance since most crops that are exported must leave via Georgetown therefore it would be more cost effective for farmers to have

their farms near the coast to reduce transportation cost. With hydroponics cash crops that were once grown using arable land can now be grown using air and a mineral water solution on any kind of flat surface. Because of this, useful agricultural lands are now available for crops such as rice which cannot be grown using “soilless cultivation”.

Moreover hydroponics has an additional environmental benefit- it reduces the chances of water pollution. The sources of water pollution are usually associated with farming activities originating mainly from fertilizers, pesticides and herbicides with the run-off from these chemicals. As a result water ways surrounding farmlands are contaminated. When hydroponics is used instead this “run-off” is avoided because all the necessary minerals and nutrients needed to support plant growth is administered directly to the plant root. The use of hydroponics in the cultivation of crops eliminates the chances of E-coli contamination since this issue is usually associated with improperly composted manures and irrigation water flowing through nearby cattle farms and hydroponics requires no irrigation and manure given that this method utilizes soilless cultivation.

Although hydroponics may use additional minerals in cultivating crops, a smaller dosage is required because these minerals are applied directly to the root. As a result farmers have cost savings and fewer chemicals are applied producing natural crops. Through this method chemicals such as herbicides are rendered as being superfluous therefore these toxic chemicals are not released into the environment. In addition the use of pesticides is reduced since less pests attack the crops because most pests are found in the soil. If farmers wish to completely eliminate the use of pesticides when using soilless cultivation they may use integrated pest management technique, a method that promotes the use of a balance of beneficial insects that are natural predators to destructive garden pests.[2]

The conservation of the limited amount of fresh water available on Earth is of vital importance because without any fresh water agricultural activities cannot take place and as a result no food will be produced. On the other hand, hydroponics utilizes approximately 10-15% of the water a farmer normally uses for an open field situation to produce a similar amount of crops. The reason for such a high reduction in water usage is due to the recycling of water which is delivered to the roots as opposed to the excess water used in irrigation with the traditional methods.[3]

In Guyana hydroponics is likely to play a pivotal role in ensuring food security since it allows for the production of cash crops in a cost effective manner. Consequently, guaranteeing affordable access to food for persons living in Guyana. Furthermore, farmers benefit because the yield of their crops are likely to increase significantly when compared to traditional methods .

[1] <http://www.commercial-hydroponics.com/hydro.html>

[2] <http://progressivegardening.com/hydroponicfoodsafety.html>

[3] <http://progressivegardening.com/hydroponicenvironmentalbenefits.html>

47. Rahul Goswami, Centre for Communication and Development Studies, India

Dear FSN Global Forum members, FAO forum administrators and facilitators, thank you for providing the opportunity to comment on the subject, 'The contribution of the private sector and civil society to improve nutrition', which will constitute part of the preparations leading up to the Second International Conference on Nutrition (ICN2).

As has been pointed out elsewhere amongst the contributions, a separation of 'private sector' and 'civil society' would likely have led to contributions that provided a greater degree of insight into the distinct roles of each of these groups, for they are (and should remain) quite different from one another.

I will extract some of the assumptions and statements in the guiding paragraphs which I think need close examination, and comment on these.

1) The topic text said: "It is clear the world must produce enough food in quantity and in quality in terms of variety, diversity, safety and nutrient content to feed a population of over 9 billion by 2050. How is this to be done sustainably and meet the zero hunger target?"

I will advise and urge forum administrators, facilitators and members alike to avoid using the "9 billion by 2050" (or variations thereof) metric. Not the FAO nor any global development agency, not any single country nor any group of countries, let alone any of us, reckon with food provisioning at this scale. All those on this forum I am sure work in local or sub-regional administrations, and if any FSN forum member has to plan for the population of a province of, let's say 2.5 million people (or a city with a similarly-sized number of residents) it would I think be out of the ordinary. Hence there is not, and never will be, a "we" who will feed this number. As long as we are able to help it, many of them will feed themselves, locally, nutritiously, affordably and with all the cultural variety and diversity you mention. Food companies can and do have overextending ambitions when it comes to numbers, but this I will take up below.

2) The topic text said: "In the last FSN Forum discussions, it was agreed that [to counter malnutrition we need nutrition-enhancing agriculture and food systems](#) that provide diverse and healthy diets. The [role of social safety nets in protecting nutrition](#) is also recognized as are direct measures targeted at reducing stunting and addressing acute malnutrition."

As to the first assertion, I doubt we can say there was agreement (I did not agree with the thesis provided as the topic text). There is a need for FAO and fora such as this to steer well clear of conflating at every opportunity the terms 'agriculture' and 'nutrition' into a single compound description, for continuing to do so is likely to turn the perception of agriculture as most of us commonly know and recognise it into a subordinate sort of activity, inadequate to feed people satisfactorily. So let us not foster the popularisation of a new term that can be spun by public relations firms (with the food multinationals as their clients) as a technological code for better food.

As to the second, concerning social safety nets, the recognition to which you refer may be found in a limited sense in the international circuits that have by now been provided to evangelise this method. Most instances of 'social safety nets' are cash or benefit transfers to populations comprising either rural or urban poor, and who have systematically been disempowered and disenfranchised from making and exercising their choices of what to grow and what to eat. As the experience with the cash transfer for food programme in the USA has shown, supplying money to poorly fed households results in ever greater quantities of junk food being purchased, with all the attendant health risks.

3) The topic text said: "If we consider food and nutrition insecurity essentially as a problem of poverty, the strategy to counter this insecurity needs to be founded on inclusive broad based development and sustainable economic growth. Indeed the World Bank reminds us that investing in nutrition makes sense from an economic point of view as every dollar invested generates a return of up to \$US30 ..."

On the other hand, we may (and I do) consider food and nutrition insecurity as a problem of the sort of ill-conceived macro-economics fostered by the World Bank (and the International Monetary Fund, the Asian Development Bank, the Inter-American Development Bank, the African Development Bank). In July 2013 the World Bank's report, 'Securing Africa's Land for Shared Prosperity', advised a ten-step program to ["boost governance"](#), ["step up comprehensive policy reforms"](#) and ["accelerate shared and sustained growth for poverty reduction"](#) in sub-Saharan Africa. The report outlined a programme aimed at "scaling-up land administration" in sub-Saharan Africa. Concealed behind these assertions was the World Bank's familiar paradigm of enhancing

efficiency by "transferring land from less to more productive users at low cost" - and those more productive users are the private sector.

I think there is a very good reason why [La Vía Campesina International, the global network of rural organisations](#), has begun a new worldwide action plan based on small-scale farming and agro-ecology, food sovereignty, and self-determination of communities - none of which has any connection with the return-on-investment example given by the World Bank. There is also a good reason why La Vía Campesina is reaffirming its stance against transnational corporations, industrial agriculture and agri-business (i.e., the private sector).

4) The topic text said: "Farmers, farmers' associations and farmers' cooperatives are key to feeding the world." You have my complete agreement with that statement. In its 2012 report 'Our Land, Our Lives', Oxfam [deals with the type of smallholder farming households and communities that you must refer to](#). Debunking the myth of Africa's "unused land", the Oxfam report showing that most areas targeted by land deals were previously used for small-scale farming, grazing and common resources exploitation by local communities.

5) The topic text said: "As governments cannot feed people on a sustainable basis, they need to deal with structural conditions which constrain development while at the same time promote policies which will enable the private sector to continue to innovate and invest in the food and agriculture sector."

Governments are sovereign entities and exist, for better or worse, as the result of a contract between themselves and their citizens. I must advise that it is not for this forum to generalise that "governments cannot feed people on a sustainable basis" or that governments "need to deal with structural conditions which constrain development ..." We are not here to adjudicate between the many manifestations of governance and applaud those of them which are devoted to the promotion of private sector activity in the cultivation of primary crops and the provision of food to the population from those crops.

Let us recall that in 2007 an important report - perhaps the most important one thus far - emerged from the multilateral system, and this was the International Assessment of Agricultural Knowledge, Science and Technology for Development (IAASTD), with contributions from experts from over 100 countries (and endorsed by nearly 60 countries). The IAASTD report concluded that "business as usual is not an option" and argued with a collective authority that was not seen before for a shift toward agro-ecological approaches, to make this shift urgently as it is necessary for food security and climate resilience.

Remember also that in the IAASTD were a number of references to the role of the government in ensuring that this shift is made keeping in mind the need for equality, social justice and people-centric development. What the authors of the IAASTD urged for was transformative changes needed in our food, agriculture and trade systems in order to increase diversity on farms, reduce our use of fertiliser and other inputs, support smallholder farmers and create strong local food systems.

Now re-examine the topic text of "feed people on a sustainable basis", "deal with structural conditions which constrain development" and "promote policies which will enable the private sector to continue to innovate and invest in the food and agriculture sector".

Six years after the IAASTD, the Trade and Environment Report 2013 of the United Nations Commission on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) recommends a rapid and significant shift away from "conventional, monoculture-based... industrial production" of food that depends heavily on external inputs such as fertiliser, agro-chemicals, and concentrate feed. [Titled 'Wake Up Before it is Too Late', the UNCTAD report has said the goal should be](#) "mosaics of sustainable regenerative production systems that also considerably improve the productivity of small-scale farmers and

foster rural development", and [includes in-depth sections on the shift toward more sustainable, resilient agriculture](#); livestock production and climate change; the importance of public sector research and extension; the role of land use; and the role of reforming global trade rules. Unfortunately, heedless of the mass of evidence marshalled in the IAASTD business as usual has largely continued. Will the new UNCTAD report be similarly ignored by the private sector (intent on pursuing the prescribed return-on-investment from 'nutrition-enhancing agriculture') and pliant governments? Or might it instead lead to a much-needed policy transformation? We shall have to wait and see.

6) The topic text said: "A thorough involvement of civil society organisations ... is key to ensure coordination, ownership, effectiveness and accountability of initiatives aimed at improving nutrition."

A cursory reading of the behaviour and approach on the ground of many transnational corporations (TNCs) and other business enterprises reads like a roster of the devastation of livelihoods, of territories and of the environment of the communities in which they pursue business and profit. For the most part, the private sector hastens the commodification of essential services and of nature itself. In so doing, they can and do violate or are complicit in violations of human rights and labour rights, they erode the basis of food sovereignty, pollute water sources and lands, and plunder natural resources.

That is why the 'Vienna + 20 CSO Conference', held in June 2013, to address current challenges for human rights, [called on countries to urgently develop and institute binding systems of international regulation and norms for TNCs](#). States have the obligation to ensure, by establishing strong legal systems of accountability for violations of rights and effective remedy and justice for all affected people, including along the food supply chain.

The reading is shocking, dismal and everything else in between: eleven peasants and six policemen killed. 13 peasants prosecuted, and more than 50 incriminated in the course of one of the most violent land conflicts in Paraguay's recent history; fisherwomen, men and children who have been deprived of their access to Lake Victoria in Uganda threatened with being shot by private security guards if they cross the borders established by investors who claim to have 'bought' the lake; female workers of big food retailers who are put under surveillance, sexually harassed at their workplace and underpaid in the USA; pastoralists who are trying to survive the consequences of the destruction of their habitat due to mining activities in Mongolia. These dreadful examples are but a few of the testimonies of human rights' violations and abuses that demonstrate the increasing trend towards criminalising social movements defending food sovereignty all over the world.

However even this sparse and scattered information has been enough for UN monitoring bodies and defenders - such as the Special Rapporteur on Human Rights - to state that the second most vulnerable group of human rights' defenders are those [working on land, natural resources and environmental issues, and these you will find are central to food cultivation](#). The International Labour Organization has also reported that the incidence of bonded and slave labour is particularly high in certain workplaces in the food chain - such as big plantations, industrial slaughterhouses and trawlers. Remediating these violations is what I am reading in your statement of the "thorough involvement of civil society organisations" and "accountability".

Thank you and regards, Rahul Goswami

48. Etienne du Vachat, facilitator of the discussion, France

The exchanges have been going on for three weeks and I have to say it has **really been a lively discussion** and it has already tackled an impressive number of topics, with a quite a variety of points of views. I would very much urge you to share more of your insights and ideas on the forum,

given the importance of the issues at stake. In particular, there are a number of issues that have not been tackled so much yet and I would very much like to see more of your reflections about these:

- First of all, I feel **our discussion has very much focused on agriculture production as growing crops** but that not enough attention been on other agricultural activities, such as livestock production, fisheries and forests, for instance, three sectors whose contributions to good nutrition are huge. Please do not hesitate to share more stories and examples from this broader agriculture perspective!

- Similarly, **there is not one but different forms of malnutrition**. They all need to be fought although they don't always necessarily require the same interventions and policy tools. Some solutions are common but there are also (prevention and treatment) solutions that are specific to wasting, stunting, different micronutrient deficiencies, overweight, obesity, etc., and also specific to countries or local contexts depending on the causes of malnutrition. I hope you can also contribute to the discussion from this point of view...

- Many contributions have explicitly or indirectly mentioned the importance of raising citizens and consumers' awareness about healthy diets and good nutrition and related behaviors. Would that also be possible to **share more good stories and examples** about (successful) behavior change strategies? We know that such strategies are highly context-specific but it is always inspiring to hear what has been working from different parts of the world and different contexts...

- We know **women have a key role to play** to raise levels of nutrition... We also know that the workload of women and gender imbalances in decision-making power (such as on household income allocation) strongly affect nutrition. It would be very interesting to read more about how civil society organisations and private sector actors are responding to this crucial issue.

- In terms of private sector actors, some contributions have distinguished **agricultural companies** (involved in agricultural production and working with farmers or agricultural workers) and **food companies** (producing food products further down the value chain and more in relation with consumers). However, there are **numerous actors in between** that also deserve our attention to make agriculture systems more nutrition-sensitive, from the traders to the manufacturers and processors up to the retailers, etc. Some companies are also vertically integrated along the whole food chain - does this position give them more opportunities to enhance (or to neglect) the nutrition potential of their products at different steps? Also, many private sector companies from other sectors are involved in activities that clearly have an impact on nutrition, such as companies providing water and sanitation facilities, pharmaceutical companies, etc.

- **The issue of environmental sustainability** has been largely tackled, from the sustainability of production (with agroecology practices, for instance) to that of the whole food systems, up to the sustainability of diets. Some countries have recently moved forward to establish sustainable dietary guidelines. I was wondering whether CSOs and/or private sector companies which have been involved in or have analyzed such processes would be in a position to share their views: how was it developed? what were the different positions? is it targeting both food producers and consumers? how far does it regulate the action of the (ultra-)processed food industries? how will it be implemented and monitored?

- **The price of food** has been focusing the attention of national decision makers for centuries. The recent increases and higher volatility of food prices have also lead to many initiatives at national and global levels. Nutritious, healthy foods and diets tend to be more expensive for family budget. The most vulnerable, who are more affected by under-nutrition, are also spending a higher proportion of their income on food. Thus rising food prices represent a clear threat to the access to quality, nutritious diets for the family members that need it most. However, the link between the level of food prices and the prevalence under-nutrition is not easy to establish. Are there recent

worth sharing experiences from civil society or private sector on witnessing, assessing and/or combating this?

- This forum has also the goal to provide inputs for the ICN2 conference. Two recent contributions have suggested important issues (such as rights-based approach to nutrition, trade, governance and regulation of conflict of interests in the nutrition sector) that would have to be discussed at the 2014 conference, as well as during the preparatory 2013 technical meeting. You can find the draft agenda of the preparatory ICN2 meeting here ([http://www.fao.org/fileadmin/user_upload/agn/pdf/ProvProg PTMN template 2 .pdf](http://www.fao.org/fileadmin/user_upload/agn/pdf/ProvProg_PTMN_template_2.pdf)). There are already spaces to discuss topics such as partnerships and governance (at country level), influence of agro-food policies, the issue of policy coherence, etc. Please do share more of your views on this agenda!

- Finally, I would like to read more contributions on the question (underlined in the introductory text) of **monitoring the impacts of agricultural programmes** on food consumption and nutrition. Are there experiences from CSO or PS companies you would like to share? Clearly, we need to build strong evidence of the effectiveness and cost efficiency of our actions and not base our decisions on ideological assumptions or theory only. Although, this is clear that different forms of evidence are needed and can complement each other, as recently underlined by P. Pinstrip-Andersen on his comment of the Lancet article on nutrition-sensitive interventions (http://www.thelancet.com/journals/lancet/article/PIIS0140-6736%2813%2961053-3/fulltext?_eventId=login) as well as on L. Haddad's blog ("the absence of evidence is not the evidence of absence" <http://www.developmenthorizons.com/2013/07/ids-transforming-nutrition-summer.html>)

Hoping to read exciting new contributions in the next days of this discussion!

Etienne

49. Laurence Rycken, International Dairy Federation, Belgium

The International Dairy Federation (IDF) appreciates the opportunity to contribute to this online discussion on "The contribution of the private sector and civil society to improve nutrition". Founded in 1903, IDF is the leading source of scientific and technical expertise for all stakeholders of the dairy chain. IDF is committed to furthering current knowledge and science on a wide range of issues by triggering state of the art projects across the dairy chain.

One of the questions posed is to comment on the core background and expert papers and materials for the ICN2. Although mostly excellent, we have some concerns about one of the conclusions/statements in 'Leveraging agriculture and food systems for healthier diets and non-communicable disease prevention: the need for policy coherence' by Hawkes C and colleagues. On page 22 it states that in relation to dairy products (along with highly processed foods and meats) 'Increasing consumption of these foods has been associated with Non-Communicable Diseases.'

We believe this is not fully representative of the available scientific evidence for dairy foods and NCDs. For example the 2013 Australian Dietary Guidelines acknowledge the evidence for the health benefits of consumption of milk, yogurt and cheese has strengthened since the 2003 edition of the dietary guidelines[1] and states that:

"Consumption of milk, yogurt and cheese can protect us against heart disease and stroke, can reduce our risk of high blood pressure and some cancers, may reduce our risk of type 2 diabetes and may contribute to stronger bones"

In relation to the question ‘What role can the private sector and civil society play in designing and implementing policies that make agriculture and food systems more nutrition-enhancing?’ we would like to say that international dairy organisations such as IDF and national dairy food organisations can play a role in the development of nutrition policy, such as dietary guidelines. Their staff has the specialist expertise required to assist policy makers in using the latest scientific literature on dairy foods and health. Also, many national dairy organisations fund research to fill gaps in knowledge relating to the impact of dairy consumption on health.

[1] National Health and Medical Research Council (2013) Australian Dietary Guidelines Summary, Pg 23. Canberra: National Health and Medical Research Council.

50. UGAgri Group7, University of Guyana, Guyana

Just reading though the contributions on this discussion boggles our minds in the range of ideas and opinions that have arisen from commentators across the world. And, we are grateful for the dimensions they have added to our thinking since the group’s last post two weeks ago.

The facilitators mentioned, “If we consider food and nutrition insecurity essentially as a problem of poverty, the strategy to counter this insecurity needs to be founded on inclusive broad- based development and sustainable economic growth.” Taken at a first glance, it is relatively easy to reconcile this with the teachings of free-enterprise economics in which the implicit story is that a “rising tide lifts all boats.” Then, the contribution of the private sector to nutrition seems intuitive and the idea that we need to host a global dialogue to state the obvious seems a bit perplexing. It is especially at odds with the facilitators’ comment that “Farmers, farmers’ associations and farmers’ cooperatives are key to feeding the world,” because these associations are quite different from the mainstream abstract of the “private sector” and so, had seemed to be part of a different discussion.

That discussion is one on rural development, the use of common resources and food sovereignty. What this means to us is that development must be facilitated in rural communities where the most vulnerable to malnutrition and nutrition-related diseases are concentrated. This specifically means infrastructural support- including regular access to potable water and a stable supply of energy- and policies-- like registering land and securing property rights for farmers--that protect these vulnerable communities from land-grabbing among other opportunistic consequences of corruption and wider political instability in the agri. sector. Oxfam’s 2012 report, ‘Our Land, Our Lives’, mirrors this concept of smallholder farmers being the centre of agricultural development that will then allow them to control their own livelihoods and nutrition.

UGAgri Group 7

51. Anna Antwi, GD Resource Center and Food Security Advisor for Canada-Program Support Unit, Ghana

Both the private sector and civil society including their organisations can contribute positively to nutrition outcomes. However we should guard against companies trying to hide behind the poor to take advantage of their situation to exploit the under-nourished. Again, both the private sector and civil society organisations can work effectively as individual entities, as collaborators and also partners with the government to enhance nutrition.

Policy: National policies should support public-private partnership in a way that production of nutritional foods would be much cheaper and easily accessible to all. The private sector majority of who are farmers in developing countries may contribute in various ways. Companies (through their corporate social responsibility) should easily identify with nutrition problems and provide support if the government sees it as a priority. The companies may support and encourage farmers (through

access to inputs, providing extension services/ technology dissemination, providing capacity building, introducing them to new varieties etc) to boost production, link them to market source. Some companies may also encourage farmers (with support of civil society) to form and strengthen their groups to be linked to an aggregator or market outlet. The private sector can also act as a nucleus farmer or contract farmer. Some private sector operators can support and link farmers up with financial institutions for easy access to the market. These activities (or programs) should have clear policy guidelines that will encourage the private sector to operate. The bottom line is a win-win for all stakeholders. The policy should create a free and conducive environment for private sector and civil society to work. Civil society is best in advocacy and drawing policy makers attention to policy and implementation gaps. Since they operate at various levels and in networks, they can also link up to bring best practices, make their voices heard.

Programme: Farmers and farmer groups as private sector may produce to respond to specific needs – for example in high Vitamin A deficient areas, farmers could be supported to produce crops such as orange flesh sweet potato (OFSP) and civil society may educate the populace in Vitamin A deficiencies, causes, prevention and remedies or solutions using food based approaches. The private sector and civil society may support and educate the population on post harvest loss, handling, food processing, preservation, storage, utilization and marketing. Women and girls could also receive education from both private sector and civil society on various issues relating to production, health care, hygiene, food safety and handling. Private sector could establish industries or cottage industries dealing with value addition along the chain, processing etc.

Land owners could go into terms with women and other producers to produce to satisfy some needs. Other private operators could also support with infrastructural development (warehousing, roads, bridges) to ease movement of people and food from producing areas to marketing centres and where they are needed most. Private sector may also support with business ideas and development. Printers may help with development of Information, Education and Communication (IEC) materials that may educate farmers and processors, and the general public in nutrition.

Civil society organizations (NGOs, CBOs, Trade Unions, individuals, women groups, farmers, FBOs and farmer groups) can play advocacy roles and campaign as networks. Production of food alone will not tackle nutrition issues, education and linkage with other sectors is vital for nutrition security. They could raise funds to support worthy course, and help to raise nutrition awareness.

Providing women with income generating activities helps to improve nutrition, and this could be done with support of private sector and linked to financial outlet. Women are good entrepreneurs if they receive training and have source of funding to expand their businesses. The incomes from their business go into supporting household food and nutrition security. Purchasing their items also help to increase their incomes for household nutrition.

Both the private sector and civil society can create incomes for the poor, do education and engage the government.

Governance: The state can create the enabling environment for both the CSOs and private sector to thrive, and work successfully to eliminate the canker of under-nutrition in our world. Civil society may raise accountability and transparent issues and hold government accountable. The civil society can also support with capacity building on human rights issues – dealing with both the right holders and duty bearers especially within the lower levels at the district levels. Civil society can support the districts in their development plans and help to advocate for budgetary support for farmers and the private sector to improve nutrition

Partnership: the private sector and civil society organisations as partners and collaborators can work effectively and efficiently to tackle food based approaches to under-nutrition. WFP's food for work or food for asset and school feeding programs in food insecure communities (involving the local authority, traditional leaders who may release land for community work, farmers

involvement in food production and communities link with the district assemble etc, supplementary feeding centres for children and People living with HIV) are all examples of synergies in food partnerships. Civil society and private sector may work together in carting of food, and also supporting and working UN based institution like WFP, UNICEF, WHO and FAO to bring holistic approach to nutrition as these work with whole range of people and organisations to tackle nutrition.

52. Solomon Mkumbwa Columbia Global Centres Africa, Kenya

Good nutrition is the balance of nutrients intake against body demands, where the imbalance leads to either 'undernutrition' or 'overnutrition' - both of which are public health concerns.

Private sector as the 'engine of economic growth' is key creating jobs that can afford the poor a living wage, specifically, food purchasing power, a necessary but not sufficient condition for good nutrition. In addition, the private sector engaged in food value chain renders direct services in food production, distribution, and retail - making food conveniently available to consumers - another important necessary but not sufficient condition for good nutrition.

While we recognize their (private sector actors) important contributions to nutrition, we should be cognizant that their primary objective is profit maximization. As such, the private sector will be inclined towards supplying food commodities being demanded on the market, regardless of food diversity concerns from nutrition standpoint. It is, therefore, important that consumers know the food nutrients, quality and safety standards they need and that their demand for the 'safe, nutritious and diversified foods' is reflected in the market supply. In this regard, a consumers' rights protection civil society organization (CSO) is key in educating its members, and advocating for adherence to the food quality and safety standards as set by the appropriate national authorities.

Again, in pursuit of cutting down business costs, so that they can remain in business or indeed mere hunger for more profits, private sector actors may pay their workers below the living wage rates. With low wages, the poor families cannot afford a nutritious diet, even if they have adequate knowledge of good nutrition. This calls for workers' rights protection civil society organization such as the trade unions to come into play.

Both consumers' and workers' rights protection CSOs can employ various strategies to achieve their goals – including lobbying for legislation of minimum wage, enactment of food labeling and standards checks. They may also directly facilitate dialogues between workers and employers to respond to short terms food market price inflationary activities. They may negotiate with government, to remove or reduce taxes on certain nutritious foods to promote their consumption. They may facilitate tripartite dialogues between the government, private sector and CSOs in finding lasting solutions to challenges facing their members (that is, workers or consumers).

On the other hand, CSOs in the form of international NGOs are best suited and play an important life-saving role in supporting consumption failure among victims of disasters, where local relief response capabilities are overwhelmed or inadequate. The INGOs may also offer capacity development support to local CSOs, without necessarily replacing their role. Local CSOs should be supported to develop and grow as they have appropriate legitimacy in addressing the structural causes of poor nutrition, through promotion of nutrition rights of their members. INGOs on the other hand should play a more indirect capacity development of local CSOs role, as they (INGOs) will not be there for all the time, that is, most INGO projects are donor funded short term in nature.

53. Vincenzo Lo Scalzo, AgoràAmbrosiana, Italy

Dear Etienne du Vachat, facilitator of the discussion - FSN Moderator

I am happy for the participation of Barilla's Forum as evidence of the successful series of publications and scientific Forums on specific themes of the wide area of people nutrition issues that are target for improvement by scientific progress and through diffusion of open debates with stakeholders and key rulers of healthy policies of behaviour.

In this respect, I like to mention another example of smart plan of information covered by another private corporation, i.e. Bayer CropScience, Italy, that financed the edition of a series of treaties on the most common crops (Collana Coltura & cultura), invited work with farmers "to help them meet the good agricultural practices set out by the UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO)", "To support the fight against malnutrition and improve food quality" and "joined the HarvestPlus program which is supported by the World Bank and the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation and others".

I invite the management of Bayer in Milano to continue the action on the field to share and lead "the FAO calls on farmers and food processors to use all available knowledge to produce food sustainably both economically, environmentally and socially."

A relevant rural company (Racemes) has commented on its' web-site-page the mission of Bayer CS with the following text:

QUOTE (in Italian):

Bayer CropScience ha reso possibile la realizzazione della collana "Coltura & Cultura" per far conoscere i valori della produzione agroalimentare italiana, della sua storia e degli stretti legami con il territorio e per contribuire a colmare la faglia che esiste tra il mondo dei consumatori che non conoscono quello che mangiano e la necessità dei produttori di far conoscere quello che producono. Per la prima volta sono riunite tutte le conoscenze sulle colture italiane: dalla botanica al paesaggio, dalle varie forme di utilizzazione artigianale e industriale fino al mercato nazionale e mondiale. E ancora la storia e le forme di espressione artistica e culturale, senza dimenticare l'alimentazione, con valori nutrizionali e ricette della migliore tradizione italiana Racemus condivide questa ammirevole scelta aziendale e promuove, unitamente alle altre aziende del territorio, tutte le iniziative volte alla formazione del consumatore.

UNQUOTE

At <http://www.colturaecultura.it/partner.asp> the scope of Coltura & cultura is edited in Italian in similar words, signed by the present General Manager of the Italian company, Mrs Karina Von Detten - Bayer CropScience <<http://www.bayercropscience.it/>>. She states:

"³Coltura & Cultura² vanta ad oggi la collaborazione di oltre 600 autori, grandi nomi della ricerca, della comunicazione, della filiera, con l'¹obiettivo comune di fornire gli strumenti necessari per apprezzare l'¹agricoltura vera e sostenibile e di contribuire a far conoscere i valori di qualità e sicurezza quali elementi distintivi e caratterizzanti la produzione agroalimentare italiana.

From direct press conference and confirmed in <http://bayerus.online-pressroom.com/index.cfm/events/150-years-of-bayer/>

among the most recent initiative in this area of rural and social knowledge progress, the hit is an internationally planned 150° Anniversary Tour, around the planet.

QUOTE

To mark the 150th anniversary of Bayer, an interactive exhibition showing how the company has improved the quality of life for millions of people around the world will appear at 30 locations in Europe, the Americas, Asia, Africa and Australia. The exhibition will focus on the topics of health

care, agriculture and high-performance materials. Click here to learn more about the Anniversary Tour.

<http://www.news.bayer.de/baynews/baynews.nsf/id/World-tour-to-mark-150-Years-of-Bayer?Open&parent=Press-Releases-150-Years&cm=005010>

The Anniversary Tour will appear in Research Triangle Park, North Carolina, from June 11 - 13.

UNQUOTE

A gallery provides images and scope for each stop and exhibition of the issues with a smart stimulus to a personal interactive Q&A personal dialogue visitor-spot exhibited. " Families discover the varied interactive exhibits of the Anniversary Tour in Lyon, France."

" The younger generation has fun with the interactive exhibition."

" Students tour the Science For A Better Life exhibition in Toronto, Canada, and take part in a quiz."

At that occasion, special awards were granted to Italian students to compete in the spread cultural and formation culture on food.

QUOTE

I giovani di tutto il mondo invitati in Canada per aiutare a risolvere il problema di come nutrire un pianeta affamato

E¹ possibile presentare la propria candidatura fino al 15 febbraio 2013

4-H Canada invita i giovani di tutto il mondo a "sedersi al tavolo delle discussioni" dal 19 al 25 agosto 2013 per il ³Youth Ag-Summit² che si svolgerà a Calgary, Alberta, Canada, per condividere idee e sviluppare un piano d'azione per risolvere il problema di come nutrire un pianeta sempre più affamato.

Da oggi fino al 15 febbraio, giovani di età compresa tra i 18 e i 25 anni, provenienti da oltre 20 paesi hanno la possibilità di presentare uno scritto di massimo 2.000 parole o un video di massimo 7 minuti con a tema le sfide per nutrire un pianeta affamato. 120 sarà il numero dei candidati selezionati. Questi avranno la possibilità di partecipare, interamente spesati (volo e soggiorno) al summit un evento della durata di una settimana dove verranno condivise idee ed esplorate opportunità insieme ad altri giovani, business leader e scienziati relativamente a questa sfida globale legata all¹ agricoltura. Un¹idea rivoluzionaria potrebbe fare la storia.

Bayer CropScience è lo sponsor del Youth Ag-Summit ed è impegnata ad ispirare i giovani di tutto il mondo affinché possano, con il loro contributo, fare la differenza aiutando a portare l'agricoltura in primo piano. I Paesi attualmente coinvolti sono Australia, Canada, Cile, Cina, Costa Rica, Finlandia, Francia, Germania, India, Indonesia, Italia, Giappone, Messico, Sud Africa, Spagna, Taiwan, Regno Unito e Stati Uniti.

Nel novembre 2011 le Nazioni Unite hanno dichiarato che la popolazione mondiale ha superato 7 miliardi di persone. Ciò significa che in meno di 40 anni ci saranno 2 miliardi di bocche in più che necessiteranno cibo salutare e nutriente. Per trovare una soluzione al problema è importante capire quali sono le sfide da affrontare e le opportunità da cogliere. E¹ chiaro che nessuna persona, società o nazione detiene le risposte ma attraverso la discussione e le varie opportunità di collaborazione, come il ³Youth Ag-Summit², vi è la possibilità di trovare concrete soluzioni in agricoltura.

Per maggiori dettagli in merito alla modalità di partecipazione è possibile visitare il sito www.youthagsummit <<http://www.youthagsummit>> .com

UNQUOTE

QUOTE From www.youthagsummit

WHEN

4-H Canada and Bayer CropScience are partnering to hold the global 4-H Youth Ag-Summit in Calgary, Alberta on August 19-25, 2013. The Summit will assemble young adults (ages 18-25) from 24 countries worldwide to ³come to the table,² share their ideas and develop a plan of action on how to feed a hungry planet.

WHO

Throughout the week-long event, 120 young agricultural delegates, 25 global mentors, and numerous volunteers will share ideas and explore opportunities with global peers, business leaders, elected officials, and scientists about this global agricultural challenge. One revolutionary idea could make history. As representatives of the next global generation to finding a solution, delegates must understand the challenges and opportunities facing their communities.

WHY

In November 2011, the United Nations declared that the planet¹'s population surpassed 7 billion people. By 2050, experts predict an additional 2 billion people will need healthy food and nutrition. No one person, company or nation holds the answer but, through discussion and collaboration, and innovation, these young adults know ground-breaking agricultural solutions can be found, acted upon and achieved.

Hosting the inaugural global 4-H Youth Ag-Summit is a real honour for Canada. We look forward to hosting these young leaders from around the world in Calgary and enabling a meaningful dialogue aimed at addressing issues, opportunities and tangible next steps. We also look forward to the engagement and involvement of Canadian federal and provincial government officials and businesspeople in welcoming this dynamic group of future leaders to Canada.

AGENDA

Youth participating in the Youth Ag-Summit will participate in a full schedule of presentations, debates, discussions, group work, tours and networking, and social opportunities. Starting with a Calgary Stampede Breakfast, Day 1 is for Goal-setting and Orientation capped by a VIP reception. The Day 2 (Wednesday) theme is Innovation, followed by Sustainability on Thursday and Leadership on Friday, as well as Action Planning, final reporting and feedback sessions. Saturday is set aside for a day trip and Celebration. Delegates leave on Sunday.

UNQUOTE

Another major contribution to the diffusion of knowledge on Food and security issues is provided since many years by NESTLE, on the home page with the motto "Good Food, Good Life".

QUOTE

The Nestlé Supplier Code is an integral part of all purchase orders, supply contracts and is being integrated into all other commercial agreements.

The Nestlé Supplier Code is implemented in each market and business and is applicable to all suppliers.

Read more about how we implement the code worldwide through our Traceability and Responsible Sourcing Audit Programme.

<http://www.nestle.com/csv/responsible-sourcing>

...our supplier base, that includes approximately 165 000 direct suppliers and 680 000 individual farmers, who deliver materials to Nestlé's buying stations, in our sourcing overview

<http://www.nestle.com/csv/responsible-sourcing> .

Nestlé Supplier Code available in 22 languages

... Quality assurance and product safety is one of Nestlé's 10 Corporate Business Principles (pdf, 1 Mb) http://www.nestle.com/asset-library/documents/library/documents/corporate_governance/corporate-business-principles-en.pdf , which form the foundation of all we do.

... Nestlé Quality Policy - Our actions to ensure quality and food safety are guided by the company¹s Quality Policy (pdf, 85 Kb) <http://www.nestle.com/asset-library/documents/library/documents/suppliers/quality_policy_nestle.pdf> which describes our commitment to:

- Build trust by offering products and services that match consumer expectation and preference
- Comply with all internal and external food safety, regulatory and quality requirements
- Gain a zero-defect, no-waste attitude by everyone in our company
- Make quality a group-wide objective

UNQUOTE

The commitment is kept under severe compliance with quality standards to create value for consumers. "Our internal Quality Management System is audited and verified by independent certification bodies to prove conformity to internal standards, ISO norms, laws and regulatory requirements."

A significant attention is paid to the essential role of WATER.

Part of the solution as support of knowledge to all stakeholders is provided with unloadable reports and statements, through

- Press releases <<http://www.nestle.com/media/pressreleases>>
- News & features <<http://www.nestle.com/media/newsandfeatures>>
- Events <<http://www.nestle.com/media/mediaeventscalendar>>
- Facts & figures <<http://www.nestle.com/media/facts-figures>>
- Images & videos <<http://www.nestle.com/media/images-video>>
- Statements <<http://www.nestle.com/media/statements>>
- Presentations <<http://www.nestle.com/media/presentations>>
- Media contacts <<http://www.nestle.com/media/media-contacts>>

Selected topics are:

- Environmental sustainability
- Innovation and science
- Nutrition, health and wellness
- Insight blog

Among them "Nutrition basics" is a good example of scientific divulgation:

- Giving kids the best start <<http://www.nestle.com/nhw/kids-best-start>>
- Improving our products <<http://www.nestle.com/nhw/improving-products>>
- Understanding food labels <<http://www.nestle.com/nhw/understanding-food-labels>>
- Nutrition basics <<http://www.nestle.com/nhw/nutrition-basics>>
- Fact sheets <<http://www.nestle.com/nhw/nutrition-basics/fact-sheets>>
- Glossary <<http://www.nestle.com/nhw/nutrition-basics/glossary>>
- Health and wellness tips <<http://www.nestle.com/nhw/health-wellness-tips>>
- Personalised nutrition <<http://www.nestle.com/nhw/personalised-nutrition>>
- Nutrition basics

Healthy eating is all about balance eating the right amount to match how active you are, and enjoying a variety of foods, so you get all the nutrients you need.

To function properly, the human body requires over 50 nutrients. No one single food or drink can provide us with all these nutrients at once, which is why eating a variety of foods in the right amounts each day is important to good health.

Use the portion plate to help you choose the right foods While our critics complain that the food industry is responsible for rising levels of non-communicable disease related to obesity in both developed and emerging markets, I firmly believe we can be part of the solution.

It's true that our portfolio includes foods such as ice cream and chocolate, but whether Nestlé is in business or not, people will continue to eat these products.

Our responsibility is to provide consumers with the best products we can in these areas; to use our scientific expertise to offer the healthiest choices possible.

In Latin America, as in many other regions of the world where we operate, we can play a valuable leadership role in support of concerted action; from studying how food can help keep people healthy, to finding solutions to managing diet-related diseases.

We have the capacity, and more importantly, the determination to do so.

I feel sincerely convinced of the value of contribution that also the international corporation, while being well lured by a social as well a profit target, are able to provide a significant contribution to the plan endorsed by ONU/FAO to nutrition of the entire planet.

It would take towards a final success of implementation country by country, spot by spot, a popular determination to spread the culture, practice and pleasure to enjoy good food, health and pleasure, the understanding of personal nutrition value and access " with a variety of foods in the right amounts each day" as an important achievement to good health.

Agora Ambrosiana AA Draft - English edition - is a plan for the promotion of themes of debate relevant to the wide issue "FOOD and SECURITY" shared in all territories. The contribution of 2012 to FSN is now edited to the attention of Eurasian/FAO inline consultation whose conclusion are on preparation by FAO/Eurasian

Dr Vincenzo Lo Scalzo, AgoraAmbrosiana - Milano Italy

http://www.fao.org/fsnforum/sites/default/files/resources/6_4-H%20Canada.pdf

54. Future of Agricultural Economics ECN 4103 Group 2, University Of Guyana, Guyana

This post strives to highlight the policy issue aspect of the Private Sector and Civil Society's contribution and ability to improve nutrition.

"The quest for food security can be the common thread that links the different challenges we face and helps build a sustainable future."

– José Graziano da Silva, United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) Director-General

Uncertainty in food security and the quality of nutrition dilemma are nationwide concerns that affect everyone. For example, developing countries are forced to deal with issues such as malnutrition and starvation, while industrialized countries attempt to curb obesity and elevating cholesterol levels. Thus, there seems to be an inverse relationship between the nutritional concerns in both nations; which is probably as a result of the gap between their respective agricultural sectors.

Therefore, the Private Sector and Civil Society should strive to establish measures and strategies which may narrow this gap, improve nutrition and guarantee food security on an international level; by sharing ideas, technology and available resources.

Such beneficial policies would require developing nations to acquire improved technology and skills from the industrialized agricultural sector.

55. Future of Agricultural Economics ECN 4103 Group 2, University Of Guyana, Guyana

“The strength of the team is each individual member. The strength of each member is the team.”
– [Phil Jackson](#)

Developing countries are usually richly endowed with natural resources such as; arable land and favorable environment for agriculture - even though they are mostly populated by malnourished persons. Although Guyana’s labour force is heavily concentrated in the agricultural sector; the struggle to attain food security (as highlighted in our previous post) is due to the gap between the technological capabilities within agricultural sectors in developing and industrialized nations. The Private Sector and Civil Society are major stakeholders in the quest to improve nutrition; especially when both entities collaborate with the government.

It is therefore our intention to highlight three major strategic frameworks that were implemented in Guyana collectively by the Private Sector, Civil Society and the Government.

Firstly, the “**Grow More Food Campaign**” was launched in 2009 in response to rising fuel prices which resulted in global increases in prevailing food prices. This approach consisted of five plans which were necessary in order to maintain Guyana’s presence in the international market, while improving status and competence of local farmers:

- -Implementation of US\$21.9M Agricultural Export Diversification Project (ADP).
- -Implementation of US\$6M Rural Enterprise and Agricultural Development Project. (READ).
- -Increased investment in Drainage and Irrigation.
- -Enhanced extension service (Agricultural Training Institutes)
- -Increased Availability of seeds and planting materials.

The second framework; “**Food and Nutrition Security in Guyana (2010-2020)**” which was linked to the first, was concocted to address four key dimensions of food security: availability, stability, access, and utilization. This collaboration is considered to be a commendable one among the Government, Private Sector and Civil Society. The main objectives are:

- -Help ensure immediate access to food in emergency context
- -Rebuild and enhance resilience to withstand shocks
- -Support longer term development initiatives for hunger and poverty reduction
- -Take stock of national, regional and global initiatives directed at improving food security coordination, with a view to encourage convergence and avoid duplication among such initiatives
- -Improving sharing of information on food security and nutrition policies
- -Inform the National Assembly about the success and challenges to reduce hunger and malnutrition in Guyana
- -Ensure that agricultural trade fosters food security
- -Promote rural development
- -Enhance women’s access to resources
- -Ensure children and other vulnerable groups have access to food
- -Ensure sustainable income of small producers

The third framework; “**Jagdeo Initiative**” is more extensive than those previously mentioned, since the policies are on a regional rather than local level. This model is a fast track attempt to address pressing issues such as; the volatility of price levels and food production due to climate change, poverty, nutrition issues (Disaster Risk Management) and even marketing of the agricultural sector (Agribusiness) in the entire Caribbean region.

The goals of the Jagdeo Initiative include: increased private and public investment in Agriculture, increased Agriculture production and hence, employment in the sector, increased intra and extra regional agricultural trade, improved food security and nutrition. However, constraints include occurrences of praedial larceny, inefficient land and water systems, lack of technology and skills in agriculture and lack of investment, among others.

In conclusion, these three frameworks have been successful in Guyana by establishing significant coordination and partnerships among the Government, Private Sector and Civil Society, by enhancing the importance of the agricultural Sector. Production levels and employment have increased, in addition to improved technology and food accessibility.

As a result, Guyana has slashed the proportion of its population suffering from hunger; in accordance with the first MDG to eradicate extreme poverty and hunger. Nutrition levels have also improved; malnutrition among children in 1997 was 11.8%, while in 2008 data showed that 6% of children under 5 experienced mild to moderate malnutrition and less than 1% suffered from severe malnutrition.

In addition, Guyana is proceeding to accomplish the second MDG (as a matter of fact, all), which is to achieve universal primary education. Enrollment in primary schools in 2000 was above 95% and the survival rate of children entering grade 1 and reaching grade 6 from 2006-2009 has consistently been 90%.

Sources:

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56. UG2014 Group 8, University of Guyana, Guyana

“If everyone is moving forward together, then success takes care of itself.” —Henry Ford

As we have stressed in earlier comments, each sector of society has its own strengths and weaknesses. Each sector is unique in its skills and communication tactics. Each sector is important and has a part to play in ending hunger and improving nutrition. Once these sectors work together with this common goal in mind success will follow, *ceteris paribus*. In this comment we will further discuss this by answering the second question under partnerships.

* How can the ‘golden quadrant’ be managed to create and scale up sustainable partnerships?

When the "golden quadrant" is in scope of achievement, the private companies, civil society, knowledge groups and government tend to pool their resources to develop and work towards a common goal for society. Their motive is to work as a body to develop efficient and effective strategies and policies to serve the needs of the parts of society that is under met with basic needs of food and security. In Guyana, with the golden quadrant active the advancing and expanding the scale of programs will enable the quadrant body to target sectors of the production and manufacturing sectors of the economy such as agro-processing and new aqua-farming companies which plays a major part in food production and security. With the pooling of resources and up-to-date cooperation with international institutions and bodies the Guyanese food production economy will adhere to international standards and policies of food production and security requirements. These measures will work to ensure the amounts of food reserve within the economy are also met.

The injection of grants and unilateral transfers from international organizations and membership countries along with local funding agencies such as the Institute for Private development (IPED), GO- Invest etc. contributes to the expansion in scale of production allowing the sectors to become modernized with technologically advanced harvesting and processing equipment. The health of society also plays an important role therefore the food produced and distributed must be nutritious and satisfies the needs of the consumers from all walks of life but especially the ones in need. The country is already the state and scope of achieving all its progressive goals and will continue to work and cooperate furiously in achieving and maintaining its current and future goals.

Sources:

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57. C.Palanivelayutham Chokkalingam, India

Now a days the availability of nutritional food is scanty and not easily available at the doorsteps of domestic consumers. In order to bridge the gap between production and availability of food the private sector participation is unavoidable one.

many products are there for eg. Mushroom consumption is now a days increasing day by day. The private sector participation in production and marketing is to be encouraged. Mushroom cultivation and processing has been carried out by many small industries and corporate companies. The technology adopted to value add this product well known by private companies. Economic development of one nation is not restricted with food production itself but making available nutritious food to all people without any loss in quantity and quality. For this Public and private partnership mode is essential.

58. Claudio Schuftan, PHM, Viet Nam

Dear Moderator,

You through to us a challenge to comment on the prices of food, i.e., their volatility and how diets are becoming more expensive for poor people with higher %s of income being spent on food. You hinted that the link: food prices to undernutrition is yet to be established. I beg to disagree and here is why. I apologize, because the evidence cannot be presented in just 2-3 paragraphs.

As our contributors know, current conventional economic theory says that there is an 'invisible hand' of self-correcting cycles of supply and demand. This notion may have had some utility when it was invented by Adam Smith over 200 years ago. Now it is more like believing in Father Christmas. All indicators point to the fact that food prices are unlikely to fall any time soon and may indeed rise much higher.

Rising food prices are inconvenient and even troublesome for people with plenty of disposable income. They are often a disaster for impoverished populations and communities.

The impact of 'free market ideology' is great on food production and distribution, and thus on the cost of food, as well as on food insecurity, on equity and on nutrition. The impact of the latter on poverty and on the misery of children is undeniable.

Public health nutrition professionals can effectively do their jobs only when they understand and act upon the underlying and basic social, economic and political determinants of nutrition at population and community levels. Otherwise they cannot do much more than apply band-aids to deep wounds.

The crisis we face is not only of rising prices, it is also of fluctuating prices. Price instability, whether of money itself or of food, in itself destabilises societies. This, especially for city dwellers with little disposable income who do not produce food, but buy it, and have been hard hit. Often, they now literally do not have the money for basic foods.

Food prices are rising and fluctuating wildly for a number of reasons. Supply and demand issues cannot explain the speed and severity of the phenomenon observed. Neither current prices nor the commodities futures markets (designed to bet on what food may be worth not now but later) reflect or relate to real supply and demand.

Protectionism: robbing the poor to pay the rich: We are supposed to be living in a world of free trade. The reality is different though. One of the causes of rising food prices is protectionism. Governments remain stubbornly committed to subsidise agribusiness in Europe and the US so they can and do export food at prices that have been 'cheapened' --and this distorts markets. National food production in the South cannot compete, and the livelihoods of small and family farmers are undermined or even destroyed.

Speculation: manipulating the markets: Food is treated as just another commodity so that its value is manipulated by speculators, including futures traders. Many investors continue to believe that commodity markets are in the midst of a super-cycle --a long-term trend that will continue to drive prices higher for years to come. In theory, this should be a good thing --not for consumers, but for big producers and speculators who sell before bull markets become bear markets and prices drop. But high levels of speculative investment are always problematic. There is no guarantee that small farmers will benefit from productivity increases and high prices.

High levels of speculation in food are creating price volatility that is driving hundreds of millions of people into poverty and the threat of starvation. What is needed here, is limits on speculation, and stricter regulation of market manipulation.

Taken all together, the current food prices crisis has highlighted the fragility of the world's food system, and its vulnerability to shock. Consumers are now spending a larger share of their income on food. In some countries a large proportion of the more impoverished population groups simply do not have the necessary additional money. Within countries, impoverished urban communities are the most affected by high food prices, because they rely on food purchases for their food supplies.

There are specific nutritional consequences of the food price crisis; they are:

- Reduced food energy intake. This results in low birth weight and the risk of serious wasting, which has long-term health, child development and welfare consequences.
- Reduced intake of micronutrients. This increases risk of micronutrient deficiency diseases such as xerophthalmia and iron deficiency anaemia.
- Reduction in breastfeeding. This is a consequence of mothers needing to work, and also of inadequate nutrition of the mother during pregnancy and after the birth of her children.

The cost of doing nothing to alleviate the impact of food price rises, and of working towards new systems of governance that will equitably stabilise food prices, would be very heavy indeed. To summarise, it will include increased low birth weight rates, decreased breastfeeding rates, increased malnutrition rates, increased under 5 mortality, and a heavy toll on child development. Populations on the margins of poverty will suffer more, and those already in poverty will be pushed

towards destitution. What remains unknowable is just how great the damage will be. Children will suffer the most.

Rises and fluctuations in the price of food are here to stay. This is a corollary of an ideology that treats food as a commodity whose value is determined by money markets that continue to drive the world's economy with minimal regulation. The negative impact of the unpredictable high prices of food on society, most of all in the South, are now quite evident. The most vulnerable populations and communities are, as usual, the most affected. These are mothers and their children who live in impoverished regions and countries.

Long-term the answers must be structural. The prevailing systems of political and economic governance that determine, among many other things, the price of food, are not working in the public interest. Will ICN2 deal with these issues?

Claudio Schuftan, Ho Chi Minh City

59. Simona Seravesi, ECDPM, Netherlands

Dear all,

This is a contribution from the ECDPM on the following set of questions: "Partnerships: How can we work across sectors and build strong linkages between food and agriculture, social protection, employment, health, education and other key sectors? How can we create sustainable partnerships? how can we build effective governance for nutrition?"

The multi-- sectoral nature of promoting nutrition security requires different interventions that address under--nutrition directly, through measures to improve and increase access and availability of a nutritious food supply; indirectly, through production and education measures to raise awareness of the importance of nutrition; and through an enabling environment that brings institutional support as well as better rural infrastructures, property rights to ensure land tenure; equal land distribution access to education; and gender balance in participation in markets. Neither public nor private actors can address these single---handedly.

As a consequence, a key aspect is the recognition of the need for multi--stakeholder partnerships. Despite the growing interest in multi---stakeholder partnerships, there are still many questions to be addressed such as what are the main characteristics, drivers and constraints of these partnerships including governments, business and Civil Society Organizations (CSOs).

To explore these issues, the ECDPM has recently published a paper "The enriching business of nutrition. Market--based partnerships and regional approaches to nutrition: what role for CAADP?" (available at: <http://www.ecdpm.org/dp149>) which examines the challenges posed by market--based partnerships model in promoting nutrition and the potential benefits of a regional approach to nutrition and implications for policy---makers and donors.

The private sector plays an important role in scaling up nutrition and many large multinationals from the food, health and agricultural sectors (e.g. DSM, BASF, UNILEVER, GSK, Cargill, etc.) are increasingly engaging in nutrition--related research, investments, and production, through a range of different types of partnerships and business. There is also an increasing awareness of the commercial interest of operating at the Base of the Pyramid (BoP)¹ as it can offer opportunities to link private sector interests with development objectives, including around nutrition.

The ECDPM paper highlights that implications and scalability of business models are still being discovered, with questions emerging already about the ideal form of partnership, roles of

partners and the impact of the broader enabling environment. Given the various risks involved in market-based approaches, it may be difficult to draw concrete lessons from pilot projects, where lack of commercial sustainability may be due to the business environment, the business model or the specifics of working with nutritional foods.

Private sector partners must therefore work with the public sector and Civil Society Organizations to try and draw out relevant lessons for policy. But, the role of the private sector implies discussions about the degree to which market-driven models can be used to meet goals for reducing under-nutrition in developing countries.

Even with the growing recognition of the potential role of the private sector, partnerships and lessons from these for donors remain in their infancy. The Global Alliance for Improved Nutrition (GAIN) and AIM appear to offer a good platform for taking the agenda forward. As the GAIN and AIM models are also seen by the private sector as a way to enter into new markets and experiment, these may offer the best focal points for lessons that can be learnt from existing partnerships.

A useful dialogue within the donor community is needed on the nature of public-private partnerships. In addition if donors are to engage more with the private sector on nutrition, an important role might be in building trust and credibility around multi-stakeholder partnerships by supporting research and baseline studies to assess the impact of the engagement of the private sector.

Donor support might also help in linking different market-based approaches to nutrition. Multi-stakeholder partnerships are generally targeted at a particular niche or market opportunity, while the discussion above highlights the need for broad, multi-sectoral approaches. There may therefore be a role for coordinating and ensuring not only that the broad supporting environment is in place, but also coordinating different multi-stakeholder projects to mutually support one-another.

From a government perspective, the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme, CAADP and its prominent role in guiding policy on food security and nutrition in Africa, can offer a framework to maximise the development benefits from these multi-stakeholders partnership models.

Even regional approaches are widely recognised as being beneficial in principle, but have yet to be translated into concrete actions. Addressed in the context of CAADP and with nutrition as a focus, this may again be a way to promote multiple objectives around the goal of improving nutrition. This might include analysis and case studies on the impacts of cross-border trade and their impacts on the nutritional status of populations around development corridors, for example.

A better understanding of the lessons from existing projects addressing nutrition and dialogue among stakeholders on how partnerships can be more effective may help to bring further clarity and to better focus on what works and what does not. Regular multi-stakeholder dialogues to share lessons among the full range of partners will be important to build trust, and understand how best to support such partnerships. These need to take place at the national, regional and international level, something that ECDPM is willing to support.

Thank you! Kind regards, Simona Seravesi

1 The BoP approach is about how international companies can adapt or introduce new business models that combine small margins with large markets of low-income consumers.

60. Robynne Anderson, facilitator of the discussion, Canada

Dear FSN participants,

It is great to see such a range of organisations participating in our online discussion. From reading the contributions over the past few days, we can see that there is a huge diversity of actors engaged in this important topic and ICN is going to be important in defining our roles in providing nutrition.

I was particularly excited to read about the specific projects that are happening on the ground. Not least, we heard from Guyana, where those in the agro-processing and aqua-farming sectors are pooling resources and working with international organisations to look at solutions such as modernizing harvesting and processing equipment in order to improve food production.

Many pointed to the 'multi-sectoral nature' of promoting nutrition security. ECDPM in the Netherlands noted market-based initiatives in the food, health and agricultural sectors are increasing nutrition-related research, investments, and production.

I thought it was interesting that the forum asked us to reflect upon 'sustainable partnerships' and how to create linkages across sectors. It is true that working together will be absolutely key here. In the electronic world of the FSN online forum, the question set out a 'private-sector' – 'civil-society' dichotomy, but we all know that real life doesn't work like that. Just look at the wide range of academics, farm organisations, private companies and others involved since the discussion began on-line and it's easy to see that this division seems somewhat artificial and not necessarily helpful. What we really want is real solutions that will make a difference on the ground.

As the forum wraps up, it would be great to hear about specific projects and partnerships that are driving outcomes on nutrition. It has been a pleasure to hear from you all and it will be a pleasure to work with you on food security and nutrition in future.

61. UG2014 Group 8, University of Guyana, Guyana

"If we are together nothing is impossible. If we are divided all will fail". – [Winston Churchill](#)

As we have been stressing in our previous comments, working alone on any goal can be very exhausting especially when the focus is on large areas. For example, as we have been stressing in our previous comments, in order to achieve the MDG's the private sector, civil society and governments all play a very important role by working together. Currently, Guyana's private sector, civil society and Government are working together under various United Nation (UN) development projects. In this comment we intend to address the last question under partnerships.

· *What are examples of projects working jointly with the private sector, civil society, governments under an UN-wide initiative (like SUN, ZHC, etc...)?*

Development is very important in any economy especially in Guyana since this is a developing country. The United Nation (UN) is an organization that is willing to work across countries to promote numerous projects and programmes that contribute to the development, social progress and human rights, etc. Some examples of projects that are UN initiatives, and which the private sector, civil society and governments have come together and have worked on them and are still working on are:

· *Caribbean Renewable Energy Development Programme* – the objective of this programme is to allow the use of renewable energy in Guyana and all the other Caribbean countries. This programme will contribute to a decrease in gas emission thus creating for us an environment where the air is clean. Some of the renewable energy projects that are in process in Guyana are: a solar electricity project, the 100MW hydro-project (Amaila Falls) and an 11.4MW wind farm.

- *MDG Support Plan* – supporting and monitoring the projects and programmes that will enable Guyana to complete its MDG report within the given time frame. With the encouragement of growth and an increase in the amount of available jobs the level of poverty has already been reduced. Thus proving that Guyana is on track for the first MDG. They supported the programmes that targeted malaria and HIV infected and there has been a positive outcome since the level of malaria and HIV infected person have declined and also allot more treatments are available.
- *Developing Capacities in Aid Effectiveness* - this programme helps to properly manage, monitor and implement the aid received effectively. It was also a major actor in the achievement of the first MDG for Guyana. That is the reduction of poverty. Due to the fact of the proper management, the quality of work produced is excellent.
- *Developing Institutional Capacity for Budget Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation* –This project started on the 15th June, 2009 and ended on 31st December, 2010. The ministry of Finance of Guyana was the one that had full control over the project and the focus was to make sure monitoring was conducted on a regular base so as to ensure work was going as planned and that required results were obtain. This project was a follow up on the MDG's support project so as to increase the effectiveness. Another project that is on-going under this programme is one that focuses on climate change, the reduction of gas emissions.

Working together with all sectors of society improves partnership on a local level. Integration among local and global communities on projects strengthens relations that increases development; thus achieving Goal 8 of the MDGs. With the correct guidance if the golden quadrant works together worldwide nutrition can be improved and global food shortage greatly reduced, ceteris paribus.

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62. University of Guyana, Agriculture Economics Research Group 1 University of Guyana, Guyana

To Moderator and All Others:

We would have mentioned in an earlier post that the role of the private sector and civil society is not to be understated where the improvement of nutrition is concerned. It would have been mentioned in the description of atop this discussion that **“if ‘better access to better food and nutrition for more people’ is an objective we can all agree upon, how can we achieve it and what is required individually and collectively from each sector?”**

It is without a doubt that any business entity is established with the principal goal of making profit. In the country that we reside, Guyana, (and probably what we're about to allure to occurs globally) most entrepreneurs and their top line managers give very little concern as to the nutritional intake of their workers and, given its seemingly weak correlation with improvements in profit, very little and probably none care.

In a country such as ours, given certain cultural impetus, we would firstly have to convey a convincing reason as to why the private sector should get on board with a programme of such nature as the benevolence of entrepreneurs in Lesser Developed Countries is limited to their own humanity (with the exception of a few socially conscious.) Guyana specifically, is a country where many of the major players in the private sector have little education and their achievements in the private sector have only occurred given the acquisition of capital or land by someone in their lineage. Given their lack of formal training, they may not be able to see the benefits of such an initiative. **Therefore, it is important in the planning and other initial stages of implementing such a programme in these weaker economies, to give the private sector firstly a reason to get on board with the programme, as it would prove to be far too dangerous to work on the pre-emption that was made.**

It is suggested that an education/information programme be conducted as an immediate precedent to the implementation of any programme that requires the private sector to come on board. In this case, it would be of immense assistance if the specific profit oriented benefits would be included in such a programme. The entrepreneurs could be educated on how improvements in nutrition can actually help not only to improve the workers' productivity and their profit but how utilizing the 'conscious capitalism' model could result in them garnering greater social capital and how the perpetually important intangible asset of Goodwill can be exponentially improved. The end game of such a precursor programme is to truly have the private sector on board throughout the project and even after, as they would have, in addition to initiating their philanthropic conscience, realized the improvements for them as businessmen.

We will be addressing the questions that would have been asked in succeeding posts i.e. 'how we can achieve it' & what is required as contribution from each sector.

63. Kuruppacharil V.Peter, World Noni Research Foundation, India

In fact NGOs and Private organizations play major role in education, awareness creation, model kitchen/nutrition garden development and demonstration.

It was the traditional wisdom of ancient inhabitants in warm humid tropics to grow plants and crops of family choice and make family self sufficient in food and nutrition. A kitchen garden has fruits, vegetables, spices and herbs, tuber crops and ornamentals to decorate family deity. No outside labour was used, only family labour is used. Kitchen wastes are converted to manures and methane cooking gas. Irrigation water comes from adjacent well and ponds. The ancestors have prior knowledge on light/shade requirement of crops. Every available space is utilized including bio fences using chekkurmanis, basella, Ceylon spinach. Amaranth rich in iron and fibre was grown throughout the year. Fruits like guava, bilimbi, tamarind, gooseberry, litchi, rambutan etc were grown based on temperature requirement of fruit trees. Spices like black pepper, ginger, turmeric, clove, nutmeg etc were also grown. Tubers like potato, Chinese potato, cassava, sweet potato and yams were also cultivated. With change in time technologies like hydroponics, aero ponics and aqua ponics to meet nutrition requirement of family have come up. I have a series HORTICULTURAL SCIENCES published by New India Publishing Agency New Delhi(www.bookfactoryindia.com).I compliment FAO for initiating such a discussion.

Dr K V Peter

64. Claudio Schuftan, PHM, Viet Nam

Dear moderators

I do take strong exception to Robynne's statement that: "...the question set out a 'private-sector' – 'civil-society' dichotomy, but we all know that real life doesn't work like that. Just look at the wide range of academics, farm organisations, private companies and others involved since the discussion began on-line and it's easy to see that this division seems somewhat artificial and not necessarily helpful".

Indeed, real life does work like that. The dichotomy is there, and it is marked. The fact that in our consultation we have had inputs from the sectors Robynne mentions is certainly no proof that the division is somewhat artificial and not necessarily helpful. This is a dangerous blanket statement. Does anybody have a doubt about the negative effects Big, Food, Big Beverage and the baby food industry are having on nutrition the world over? ...and this is just one example. What about corporate land grabbing? Multinational, family owned and corporate international oligopolistic grain traders? Speculators in futures markets? ayayay!

Claudio Schuftan
Ho Chi Minh City
cschuftan@phmovement.org

65. FIAN International

Dear moderator,

I have been following the debates in the Forum and I would like, in the name of FIAN International, the human rights organization for the Right to Adequate Food, to support the positions expressed by the representative of PHM, Claudio Schuftan.

In addition to what he wrote, I would like to convey FIAN's concern on the lack of participatory, transparent and coherent governance of international nutrition initiatives since the UN Standing Committee on Nutrition excluded civil society representation participation, and was recently reduced to the facilitator of the UN platform of SUN.

Unfortunately, the CFS itself, despite some efforts, has been unable to effectively take into account all the dimensions of nutrition into its Food Security and Nutrition mandate, especially due to the non-participation of WHO and UNICEF (and other nutrition related UN agencies) in it, and due to the fact that the governmental participants in the CFS normally come from the Agricultural Ministries and not from the broad food and nutrition area.

WE are also concerned that the CFS has not been invited to take a proactive role in the preparation of the International Conference on Nutrition 2, to take place in 2014. How can the ICN 2 discuss issues relevant to promoting nutrition and overcoming the most relevant nutritional problems in the world today (malnutrition, micronutrient deficiencies, the double burden, NCDs, the role of food publicity for children, regulation of TNCS involved in the food system, etc.) without an adequate participation of the CFS members? And especially who will be in charge of guaranteeing the implementation of the recommendations of the ICN 2, with a dismantled SCN and a non-involved CFS?

We hope the ICN2 preparatory meeting in November 2013, will open a space for these discussions. To discuss national initiatives is very important but to discuss how to guarantee policy space to the most affected countries, through human rights compliant public regulation of the interference of powerful actors (among them the G8 and TNCs) is even more important.

Flavio Luiz Schieck Valente MD.MPH.

66. Aliya Bakry, Consultant, Morocco

Dear all

The title of this discussion calls out for a clarification of terminology. The “private sector” embraces a large continuum of companies, from the very small enterprise to the large multinational. It is clear that at the two extremes of this continuum, these two types of companies don’t play the same role, don’t affect the market in the same way and in what concerns us here don’t relate to nutrition and health in the same manner. Hence, I think it is obviously misleading to put all these companies in the same basket and to call on the civil society to “collaborate” with them indistinguishably is pure decoy.

I would like to refer to the excellent paper published in February 2013 in the prestigious journal *The Lancet*: Moodie et al. 2013. Profits and pandemics: prevention of harmful effects of tobacco, alcohol, and ultra-processed food and drink industries. *The Lancet NCD Action Group*. *The Lancet*, vol 381, Issue 9867, pages 670-679, 23 February 2013.

I invite the participants of this discussion to read this excellent article and I cite here its key messages:

“• Transnational corporations are major drivers of non-communicable disease epidemics and profit from increased consumption of tobacco, alcohol, and ultra-processed food and drink (so-called unhealthy commodities)

• Alcohol and ultra-processed food and drink industries use similar strategies to the tobacco industry to undermine effective public health policies and programmes

• Unhealthy commodity industries should have no role in the formation of national or international policy for non-communicable disease policy

• Despite the common reliance on industry self-regulation and public-private partnerships to improve public health, there is no evidence to support their effectiveness or safety

• In view of the present and predicted scale of non-communicable disease epidemics, the only evidence-based mechanisms that can prevent harm caused by unhealthy commodity industries are public regulation and market intervention.”

As clear from the conclusions of *The Lancet NCD Action Group*, some constituents of what’s quite loosely called “the private sector”, namely in the field of nutrition and health, the producers and distributors of ultra-processed foods, should be rigorously controlled by the States; in this control, the civil society can play a role. The illusion of “public-private partnership” need in the same way to be demystified.

67. Alessandro Cagli, Belgium

By 2050, the global human population is expected to exceed nine billion. Currently, 12.5% of the global population, or one in eight people, are undernourished – the vast majority of whom live in developing countries, where the prevalence of undernourishment is estimated at 14.9%. With the global demand for food, feed and fibre set to nearly double, there is an urgency about how to feed the world. Producing 70% more food for an additional 2.3 billion people by 2050 while combating poverty and hunger; using scarce natural resources more efficiently and adapting to climate change are the main challenges facing world agriculture.

Responding to these challenges will take investments in innovation, research and development, in affordable technologies and in smallholder farmers, who are essential to stable, productive and equitable agricultural development. In many regions fewer people will be living in rural areas and even fewer will be farmers. Making farms more productive and more resilient through sustainable intensification systems - increasing crop yields with improved nutrition levels and resistance to disease and climate change, while using less water, pesticides and fertilizers and lowering greenhouse gas emissions is critical.

Such enormous tasks cannot be faced without a true partnership involving governments, academic and scientific communities, non-governmental organizations, communities, farmers as well as the food industry itself. Policies and practices aimed at advancing the goals of sustainable agriculture, improving the livelihoods of smallholder farmers, securing the stability of rural communities and helping ensure the future of the world's food supply certainly cannot be implemented without a proper involvement also of the food industry.

As the World Health Organization *Global Strategy on Physical Activity and Health* suggests, reducing the risk factors for chronic disease on a global basis will demand collaboration among many different groups. The success of the *Global Strategy* can only be based on a comprehensive approach with active participation by all involved, including government, the food and beverage industry, civil society and other public- and private-sector stakeholders.

The UN Declaration of 16 September 2011 on the prevention and control of non-communicable diseases (http://www.un.org/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=A/66/L.1):

- recognizes “the need for the efforts and engagement of all sectors of society to generate effective responses for the prevention and control of non-communicable diseases”;
- acknowledges “the contribution and important role played by all relevant stakeholders, including, where and as appropriate, the private sector and industry, in support of national efforts for non-communicable disease prevention and control”;
- commits to “advance the implementation of multi-sectoral, cost-effective, population-wide interventions in order to reduce the impact of the common non-communicable disease risk factors”;
- commits to “develop, strengthen and implement multi-sectoral public policies and action plans to promote health education and health literacy, including through evidence-based education and information strategies and programmes in and out of schools, and through public awareness campaigns”.

To sum up:

1) the Food Industry is an essential partner to help reach the goal of an improved nutrition worldwide and, therefore, it should be properly involved in a whole-of-society effort towards reaching such a goal. Of course, proper “rules of engagement” could usefully be defined for such an involvement.

2) The best way to improve nutrition is not through regulations and restrictions, but rather through nutrition education and literacy, especially through evidence-based education and information strategies and programmes (in and out of schools) and targeted public awareness campaigns.

3) Multi-sectoral, cost-effective, population-wide interventions should be the preferred tool to be used. As an example, please refer to the EPODE experience: <http://www.epode-european-network.com/> and <http://www.epode-international-network.com/>

68. Samuel Hauenstein-Swan, ACF, United Kingdom

Dear Moderator and friends

I like to draw attention to, why investment from the private sector will only go some of the way to ending undernutrition. It covers two broad arguments. Firstly, when considering how the private sector could contribute to improved nutrition outcomes, it dispels two common misconceptions: the first is that all that is needed is a production-based model with a minor tweak towards nutritionally enhanced harvests. The second is that all countries and regions in the midst of the global nutrition crisis are equally attractive for private sector contributions. The reality is that by eliminating food availability through increased yields we will only take a minor step towards eradicating undernutrition (Smith and Haddad; 2000). Secondly it emphasizes that new investments have so far been very biased towards agriculture and have not been mirrored by investments in other sectors such as nutrition, health, education or rural infrastructure. The G8's 'New Alliance', which has food security and nutrition as its headline goals, is regarded as the flagship programme to catalyze investments from the private sector. Examining the six country frameworks that so far have been published, it appears that few private sector investments are planned for nutritious crops and foods. More than half of the 111 planned private investment projects focus on non-food crops and only four mention specific, nutrient-dense food products to be sold locally (Robinson and Humphrey, IDS Blog 2013).

The first misconception is that increased production of nutritionally rich crops will be a major step in combatting the global nutrition crisis. While evidence exists suggesting that improved agricultural can lead to improved food security and nutrition outcomes, evidence also exists proving that this will not happen automatically and that regulated, multi-sector interventions are needed to ensure that the increased food resources are distributed evenly at household level and that food of the right quality is accessible by all. To maximise availability at the household level, production models need to be adjusted with three key policy measures in mind:

(i) Empower women farmers, both to allow them more control over income and household spending — which usually leads to more being spent on the feeding and care of young children, and to correct for unequal access to labour and inputs which results in women's plots often achieving lower yields than men's;

(ii) Promote home gardens and small-scale livestock rearing in order to increase the diversity of production and consumption and

(iii) Complement agricultural programmes with programmes to improve education, health services, water and hygiene (Hunger Alliance and ODI, 2013). To ensure the effectiveness of new investments, such a complex strategy must be guided by increased dialogue between civil society and policy makers. However by delegating the fight against undernutrition to private sector

preferences, which are heavily anchored in the agricultural sector, future efforts are unlikely to reach those in most need or address the underlying factors driving undernutrition.

The second misconception is that private sector interest in development is equal to the interest shown in public private partnerships (PPP). The encouraging theme of the World Economic Forum in 2010 (Realizing a New Vision for Agriculture and Nutrition: A Roadmap for Private Sector Stakeholders) did result in some support towards the resolution of problems related to water quality, hygiene, disease prevention, livelihoods and commodity supply chains. However it is probably reasonable to state that private sector food companies have yet to become pro-active towards the needs of the very poor and malnourished who may be perceived to be outside their future customer base. The above analysis of the New Alliance confirms this trend.

The groundbreaking work which led to the development of Ready To Use Therapeutic Foods (RUTF) to treat Severe Acute Malnutrition (SAM) through the CMAM approach has given frontline medical professionals a product which can be used under clinical or community supervision in controlled dosages to save the lives of many. Considering the caseload of 19 million children in need of these products globally, this is surely an interesting investment proposition. However there are apparently some major blockages to engaging business actors to invest in it.

To attract new actors to contribute to efforts to improve nutrition, it is of paramount importance to narrow the current funding gap and the unpredictability of the current market place. Funding for RUTF is more forthcoming in response to emergencies: 60% of current investments involving the treatment of SAM with RUTFs are in short-term, emergency settings, rather than in protracted crises. Increasing the funding for nutrition in chronic crises where there are on-going baseline needs would be more conducive to private sector investments (ACF's Aid for Nutrition Series 2012-13) and would potentially attract new actors.

Not only does funding need to be increased and delivered more consistently, but the supply chain also needs to be reformed. One of the key challenges is that the sustainable provision of RUTF by external actors is only possible if UNICEF plays a pivotal role. Governments, donors and civil society organisations should explore and trial innovative financing to provide long-term, sustainable and predictable funding for the full package of direct nutrition interventions which is aligned with complementary initiatives in health, food security and agriculture. The vacuum of private sector interest in undernutrition can only hope to be closed when a credible costing to improve nutrition by an external actor is integrated with national nutrition plans.

Equally, donors within the SUN Movement are taking very different approaches to tackling undernutrition. While the EC is the primary funder of the Secretariat, DFID's support appears to focus on advocacy and the stimulation of partner government involvement rather than the supply of digestible nutrients. In contrast, USAID's approach through the Feed the Future initiative is to improve food security by boosting harvests, nurturing agricultural development and expanding business opportunities. In some respects this is a return to development through market economics and livelihood improvement rather than a direct move to addressing malnutrition on the ground or through its health and social drivers. Despite the positive messages printed in their policies, such inconsistency between major donors is sending mixed messages to potential private investors.

An additional barrier to private sector investment in nutrition is the limited potential for additional stocks of RUTF. It is unlikely that a new PPP for RUTF would be successful as the current producers of the product are operating well below their available capacity. An alternative would be to direct the capacity of the private sector to the manufacture of Ready To Use Supplementary Products (RUSF) which could be used address Moderate Acute Malnutrition (MAM). MAM is much more widespread and there is a much greater potential to develop new, innovative types of RUSF. Therefore the private sector could play a very positive role here by working with the public sector to ensure the institutional supply of products to address MAM and by potentially providing the consumer with the product free of charge.

The development of products and services for the treatment and prevention of MAM probably offers the greatest potential for the private sector in nutrition programmes. Private sector investments would reduce the need for treatment and free up the resources of governments to target the underlying causes of undernutrition within the health, food security and education sectors. This will also require a rethink of how civil society operates and the role of NGO's play in addressing MAM.

Finally we should consider whether there is a preference for local or multinational companies to invest, bearing in mind that multinational companies are likely to contribute the most financially. While global or regional private partnership initiatives would contribute significant value to the distribution of products around the world, they would also undermine the desired objective of integrating the manufacture of RUTF within national governments where it is needed. Also there must be a transparent agreement between the private sector, civil society and government at national level which defines the extent to which external engagement is in the interest of all parties. This is especially the case when foreign exchange is needed for the purchase of milk powders, micronutrients and packaging.

The lack of funding, stability and strategy to tackle acute malnutrition and to produce RUTF therefore requires initiatives to be started at government level and progressed by engaging in discussions with affected civil society. These challenges are unlikely to be fixed by the private sector.

If the private sector is to play a new and positive role in addressing undernutrition, governments and civil society must be clear on where and how to encourage the development of future markets. Discussions must outline where the gaps in funding are and how new investment could free resources in other areas where private sector investments have not been forthcoming. Furthermore, given that there is unequal progress in different sectors and regions, donors must be able demonstrate that there is a real need to tackle undernutrition beyond emergencies. This would create long-term markets which interested companies could enter. In 2008, the first Lancet series concluded that the approach to tackling nutrition crises was fractured. Since then much energy has been expended to improve coordination and increase the evidence-base. If future efforts to address hunger are dictated by disjointed and biased private investment, we are in danger of losing much of this progress.

69. Ewan Robinson, Institute of Development Studies, United Kingdom

We need to re-shape food markets for the benefit and health of the poor

We need to decide what kind of food and nutrition systems we want to build, and then talk about how to use policy and programmes to build them. A number of other contributors have asked about real world examples and cases. This post refers to several, from IDS's work on markets and nutritious food.

First, we should recognize that food and diet are not the sole determinants of nutrition. And markets aren't the only way people access food. Hundreds of millions of smallhold farming households grow much of their food. This household production is, in some cases, an important source of nutritious diets; it's also where the majority of 'nutrition-sensitive agriculture' programmes have focused.

But we can't ignore markets. The majority of the world is already buying their food, and this will increase in the short or medium term. Yet, at present, most markets are failing colossally to provide access to healthy foods for poor populations (in both North and South), and we see the growing 'double burden' of over/undernutrition.

I want to highlight 3 challenges facing efforts to promote the role of the private sector in nutritious foods:

Food markets are usually not efficient

The starting point is that the vast majority of markets for food don't function well; they are riddled with market failures. There's lots of debate about the effects of financial speculation on global food markets. But in most countries, even domestic markets have huge problems. Especially common is the so-called 'credence problem'. This happens when consumers can't distinguish between a nutritious form of food, and a nutrient-poor alternative. The result is that food producers (whether large or small) have no incentive to make healthier foods. (A good example is [infant weaning foods](#) in many countries.)

The implication is that, so long as people are buying food, we need various forms of regulation and other mechanisms to address these problems.

Formal businesses – when they sell nutritious food – don't sell it to the poor

We don't have the numbers to generalize, but based on a number of case studies, it appears that most of the businesses explicitly making nutritious food products are selling them to middle- and upper-income consumers. This is true both of medium-size domestic companies and multinationals. There are examples where ventures have set out to sell products to 'bottom of the pyramid' populations, but we've seen in a number of cases that they have had to shift strategy and focus on the wealthy, in order to recover costs (this was [case for Grameen Danone Foods in Bangladesh](#)). Again, this calls for attention to the policy environment and the structure of incentives.

The exceptions are products sold to public agencies, such as WFP, which distribute them to vulnerable populations. The best-known example is Plumpy'Nut, a Ready-to-Use Therapeutic Food. But when you take the same (or very similar) products and try to sell them in consumer markets, things are radically different, and it's unclear whether [consumers will be willing to pay for them](#), and whether companies will be able to fend off competition from non-nutritious competitors. (For an excellent review of this issue, see Lybbert 2011, [UNSCN News 39](#))

Informal markets are crucial providers for the poor

In an earlier contribution, [Aliya Bakry](#) (and others) point out that the huge range of actors contained within the 'private sector'. Much of the discussion about how to encourage businesses to produce nutritious foods focus is on multinational corporations, or large domestic companies. But the potential of these actors has only been proven in a few areas (most notably, in national-level fortification of staple foods like flour). Yet, most of the world's poor already rely on informal food markets. (OECD data indicate that [informal markets are growing in all regions](#).) These markets produce, transport and provide foods at low cost, and they are especially dominant for nutrient dense and fresh foods. Informal markets also face important problems (including the problem of credence goods described above). They involve large numbers of individuals and small businesses, and are difficult for policy to coordinate.

Are there models we can learn from about what might improve food markets for the poor? There are interesting cases to look at. For example, [in Ghana, UNICEF and the government helped spark a large number of informal businesses selling weaning foods](#) aimed at infants. This market expanded rapidly and organically, but it also lacks transparency for consumers to know what they are paying for. In Mozambique, donor-funded projects tried to [build local markets for orange-fleshed sweet potato](#), aiming to convince consumers it was worth paying slightly more for the more nutritious orange variety, and to convince traders to buy and promote them.

We need serious debates about what kind of food system can deliver nutritious foods to the people who currently don't have access. For this foreseeable future, this means we need to address problems with markets. We need more positive cases of ways to do this. What businesses will do depends on the structures and incentives embedded in markets. Improving food markets for the poor needs to be a central issue for policy in this debate.

70. Concern 3, University of Guyana, Guyana

The 2006 World Food Summit (WFS) defined the concept of food security as when “all people at all times, have physical, social and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food which meets their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life.”

This definition included nutrition relative to the previous concept. Nutrition in developing countries is not valued as highly as it should be. In the developed world, nutrition is vital to the development of human capital. In recent years, diabetes, high blood pressure; stroke, heart diseases, and cancer have been on the rise. They have replaced malnutrition and transmittable diseases as major public health problems. This goes in accordance with the paper, “The Agriculture, Food and Health Challenge” that was released in 2009 by Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA).

In recent times, developed countries have introduced several measures to help eradicate the harm to public health as a result of poor nutrition. In Guyana, for example, stakeholders inclusive of small farmers are advocating for a reversal of the current trend of consumption. Shifts from processed foods, beverages, and other such food products lose much of their valuable nutritional capacity rendering them less wholesome to foods produced organically.

Fresh food and fruits are abundant in Guyana. However, a major challenge to small farmers is getting that food to the people who want it. In a sense, this is a typical case of market failure. The inability of sellers and buyers to meet or food to reach to those who desire it most is not occurring. This results in a natural case where the food which actually reaches the market is sold at higher prices resulting in lesser consumption. This tragedy has harmed both farmers and consumers. Opportunity is here created for all stakeholders' government, civil society, and the private sector to work together and bridge the gap.

It has been estimated that on average Guyanese do not consume 2 serving of fruits per day. Such estimates reflect less than half of what is required. The majority opt for aerated beverages over water, or fruit juices. One should note that manufactured fruit juices are not as healthy as they may appear; the sugar level and the amount of preservatives added often neutralize the vitamins that were there to begin with. Yet Guyanese prefer those products over the local juices available.

With these choices that consumers tend to make, it is not surprising that outcome is ill health. Many of the consumers of these processed foods are children, teens and young adults, when one takes a good look at what happening, it is deplorable. In another 10 years when these children turn into adults, the rate we are currently seeing they are likely to have a number of health related issues. This is not a future we would like to have.

Some of the measures that can be taken to help prevent these inevitable outcomes are; reshaping the way the population sees agriculture and its products. This refers to educating the public of the blatant blunders in their judgment as it comes to food consumption. The media plays a central role in this aspect. Advertisements and programs can be broadcast to expose the nation to the better ways of living and should also reveal the detrimental effects that not reforming can have on them all. This would enable the population to greatly change their skewed perspective of what agriculture is and the benefits of fresh agriculture produce. Many are under the impression that

consuming local products is a sign of being inferior to the high class of society. This false impression should be washed away from the minds of the people through sensitizing programs.

Government can have a program which is aimed at strictly sensitizing the public of their nutrition and what they can do about it, to improve it. Schools and women should be major targets because children are easier to mold than adults, women are the ones who often do the cooking and therefore if they are educated in better nutritional practices it will better the entire family. Families are what make up communities. The spill off effect of such a simple feat would lead to such major improvements in nutrition. Agriculture plays a major role in better nutrition; after all the products which are consumed all stem from the agriculture sector. Educate the population about better nutrition and the agriculture sector is bound to flourish.

71. Robynne Anderson, facilitator of the discussion, Canada

Nutrition is a fundamental human need and working together to achieve it is such a meaningful activity. During the course of the on-line discussion, it was heartening to see many examples of the way people can pull together to further food security and nutrition. Overarchingly, the conversation has pointed to the need for a diverse range of actors to be engaged: farmers organisations, NGOs, academics, private sector, and individuals too.

We have seen evidence of the strengths each sector brings to delivering nutritional programs. These include specific activities taken by non-governmental actors in their respective businesses or organisations, which in turn can lead to collaborations that become more than the sum of their parts. From a private sector perspective, it may mean not only improving the nutritive content of an existing product but also being part of partnerships that deliver integrated solutions on household nutritional security. The private sector is at its best in leveraging market-based solutions to address some of the most intractable problems in addressing poverty and sustainability. We heard great examples of the role universities can play in analyzing needs, also of farmers organisations in managing resources sustainably, and civil society groups on-the-ground. Each group bringing their own skills to bear on the problems of nutrition is a potent solution.

So, many thanks to all of you for your insights and the passion you bring to feeding the world's people better. Onward to more engagement and more action.

72. Etienne du Vachat, facilitator of the discussion, France

Dear all,

It is very impressive to see the interest aroused by this discussion until the final hours... I would first like to thank all participants for the number and quality of contributions. I think it shows to what extent, coming from very different countries and backgrounds, we are all strongly involved in the fight against malnutrition, against all forms of malnutrition, and therefore against the deep inequalities that continue to impede many children, women and men from ensuring "a fulfilling and dignified life free of fear".

I would like to address four points:

- First of all, **the interests (and challenges) of this discussion** were related to the great variety of the issues that it aims to cover. As underlined in many different posts, both "civil

society” and “private sector” are two general concepts within which the diversity of actors, visions, approaches, sizes and scales is huge... thus making conceptualization challenging. Similarly, malnutrition is complex, multifaceted and multisectoral by nature and there are very numerous potential levels of action to improve nutrition through our food systems. All this has offered us a lively, rich discussion, with many points of view sometimes converging, sometimes complementary and sometimes downright opposed. We need to acknowledge this diversity, which is a great strength, as a basis for building consensus.

- Many concrete experiences and examples of programmes, partnerships and initiatives have been shared and I think this was one of the main added-value of this discussion. Most of the concrete experiences that have been mentioned are relatively local or sub-national initiatives that would often deserve to be scaled-up and shared at a higher level, providing that there is evidence of their successes. In this regard, transparency and public accountability of such initiatives are essential. This is particularly the case for the Public-Private forms of partnership that have raised concerns throughout the discussion. From a civil society perspective, **accountability is more than just a word**. Collectively, we need to reflect about what kinds of accountability will create an “enabling environment” with both regulations and incentives for the private sector to behave better. That is: accountability from who (parent companies, subsidiaries, retailers, etc.)? To whom (to employees, to public authorities, to local communities including the most nutritionally vulnerable, etc.)? And on what (how to make companies more accountable on their impacts on the right to food and nutrition? or on their contribution to its determinants, such as access to land, water, sanitation and hygiene, healthcare services, decent work, quality education and above all affordable, diverse, nutritious foods – including adequate, transparent information on the latter)?
- As a contribution, when it comes to **assessing the extent to which different agricultural programmes and policies are actually contributing to improving nutrition**, I would suggest to refer to the Global Strategic Framework (GSF), developed by the CFS (Committee on World Food Security, whose 40th session is opening today). It provides very clear guidelines on the monitoring of initiatives that relates to food and nutrition security, including in its paragraph 93 on the “five principles that should apply to monitoring and accountability systems” (www.fao.org/docrep/meeting/026/ME498E.pdf). Additionally, the “Key recommendations for Improving Nutrition through Agriculture” developed by FAO following a literature review (http://unscn.org/files/Agriculture-Nutrition-CoP/Agriculture-Nutrition_Key_recommendations.pdf) also provide useful criteria, specifically related to nutrition and agriculture, applying to both the field intervention and the policy framework levels, such as: explicitly integrating nutrition objectives, focusing on vulnerable populations, incorporating nutrition promotion and education, etc. It is

important to underline that there is no single easy solution (or 'magic bullet', such as nutrition value adding for instance). In fact, each criterion taken alone might not be able to achieve strong results. But taken together, they are the roadmap to success because they are interrelated and mutually reinforcing.

- Finally, the outcomes of this discussion would have to be taken on board by the organizing committee of the **upcoming ICN2 Preparatory Technical Meeting 13-15 November 2013 and the 19-21 November 2014 conference**, in order to inform the agenda and set-up of both meetings. Many interesting experiences would be worth sharing, many different views would need to be reflected (and debated) and several topics raised in this discussion would need to be addressed in the agendas of the two meetings. Improving the links between the ICN2 and the work of the CFS which is the most inclusive policy forum for food security and nutrition issues that mostly focuses on agriculture, has also been recommended. In terms of process, an option to consider would be for the ICN2 to have a Civil Society Mechanism (CSM), similar to that of the CFS, which would allow formal participation of civil society organisations to the conference. More information on the process through which the recommendations made in this forum will feed into the preparation of ICN2 will certainly be shared in the coming weeks.

Thank you again for having brought your own points of views and experiences to the discussion. I look forward to continuing this lively dialogue on the way to the ICN2 and after.

Warm regards,

Etienne