



Food and Agriculture
Organization of the
United Nations



جامعة الإمارات العربية المتحدة
United Arab Emirates University

UAEU College of Food
and Agriculture

INTERNATIONAL EXPERT CONSULTATION

CONCEPT NOTE

STEPPING UP SCHOOL-BASED FOOD AND NUTRITION EDUCATION:

**EXPLORING CHALLENGES, FINDING SOLUTIONS,
BUILDING PARTNERSHIPS**



NOVEMBER
28- 30, 2017



HILI RAYHAAN BY ROTANA
AL AIN
UNITED ARAB EMIRATES



BACKGROUND AND JUSTIFICATION

As follow-up to the commitments made during the Second International Conference on Nutrition (ICN2), and within the framework of the Sustainable Development Goals and the UN Decade of Action on Nutrition, countries around the globe are stepping up their efforts to combat all forms of malnutrition.

Schools represent a key setting to reduce malnutrition in that they are able to affect education, food security and nutrition simultaneously through different access points and opportunities. Holistic school-based food and nutrition programmes and policies have therefore been proposed as of great potential to achieve multi-win outcomes for nutrition and sustainable development.

Such programmes and policies are not only able to make healthy food available and accessible, they can also go further, to raise the capacity of children and adolescents to engage in food practices that support human and environmental health. The need for school-based food and nutrition education (SFNE) to develop and foster these capacities has long been recognized and promoted globally.

FAO has been a leader in SFNE over the last decades, particularly in promoting the integration of food education into national curricula, supporting the development of school gardens as learning platforms, and providing technical assistance for development of learning materials and professional capacity.

However, more evidence is undoubtedly needed on the cost-effectiveness, pathways, scalability and sustainability of existing SFNE models, especially in low and middle-income countries (LMICs). The aims, quality and innovation of much of the traditional SFNE need to be improved to allow for real and lasting changes in food-related practices and outlooks. Key to these efforts are catalyzing educational opportunities within and beyond the classroom, and building stronger linkages with the community, local food systems, school meals and the food environment.

In response to these needs, FAO in collaboration with the United Arab Emirates University and a group of international experts and practitioners, is leading an area of work which aims to lay out the basis for improving the quality, scope and impact of SFNE in LMICs.

Countries have the best understanding of their own needs, priorities and contexts, hence the best way forward lies in strengthening capacities among national stakeholders, and developing guidance on designing, implementing and evaluating effective, quality SFNE.

One of the main milestones of this work is the international expert consultation which will offer a platform for stakeholders to discuss and define priorities, competencies, minimum quality and educational innovations, and provide a framework of cooperation to strengthen food and nutrition education practices, with a special emphasis on low and middle-income countries.

The consultation will bring together renowned experts in nutrition education and behavioural change from academia, governmental and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and the United Nations.

OBJECTIVES OF THE EXPERT CONSULTATION

The objectives of the Global Expert Consultation are to:

- a. share experiences and lessons learnt in integrating SFNE within and beyond school programmes;
- b. develop a shared vision of effective, quality SFNE and its future in low and middle income countries;
- c. develop a framework for collaboration;
- d. define strategies for raising the visibility of and investment in SFNE;

CONSULTATION PROCESS

Planning for the consultation started in late 2016 with an official agreement between FAO and the UAEU. This stage consisted of a series of logistical and technical activities to establish the basis for the consultation, including among others: a global survey on the state of SFNE in LMICs, a review of the literature, the engagement of a group of international experts to support the technical development of the outputs, coordination and liaison, the development of technical outputs for validation (a capacity needs assessment tool and a white paper on key principles and minimum quality criteria of SFNE), identification of participants, and the development of a communication strategy.

The consultation is seen as a starting point, i.e. a means to enrich the discussions and carry the work forward, rather than solely a way to validate the described outputs. FAO recognizes that SFNE can only advance by forming partnerships and by involving global and national organizations, donors, academia and other key actors.

The next steps will be defined in the consultation, through a participatory approach and considering the expectations and scope of the represented entities.



CONSULTATION STRUCTURE AND ROLES

The proposed structure for the consultation consists of

- Keynote panel presentations and discussion
- Participatory sessions and group work
- Sessions to validate and build on a set of outputs (see below)
- Formal and informal sharing of experiences
- Communication and promotion activities

The participants in the consultation will have different roles through the 3 days. They will act as members of the keynote panel, facilitate sessions, provide feedback on the draft outputs, participate in discussions, share experiences and materials, communicate the results of the consultation to their own organizations and /institutions and (where possible) undertake to raise the issues and opportunities in forthcoming conferences and on professional networks. The specific roles will be defined prior to the consultation, communicated and negotiated in due time. Independently of the role, participants are expected to be active throughout the whole consultation.

PARTICIPANTS

Experts from:

- Academic Institutions- UN Agencies- Line Ministries
- NGOs

EXPECTED OUTPUTS


- Agreement on core SFNE terminology
- Input provided to the draft SFNE White Paper
- Input provided to the FAO SFNE capacity needs assessment tool (feasibility, appropriateness, clarity)
- SFNE programmatic and research gaps and opportunities identified and prioritized
- Advocacy and promotional strategies identified for raising visibility and investment
- Partnership opportunities identified (i.e. for research, country implementation) and networking (i.e. forums, database, website)











Cover: © FAO/Saul Palma; © FAO/Riccardo Gangale; © FAO/Saul Palma
Page 3: © FAO/Riccardo Gangale
Page 5: © FAO /FAO El Salvador
Page 6: © FAO /FAO El Salvador
Page 7: © FAO/Riccardo Gangale

UNITED ARAB EMIRATES UNIVERSITY
GSD - PUBLICATION UNIT