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Progress Report on the Implementation of the United Nations Decade of Action on Nutrition and Follow-up to the Second International Conference on Nutrition (ICN2)

Executive Summary

As recommended in 2014 by the Second International Conference on Nutrition (ICN2), the UN General Assembly proclaimed in 2016 the UN Decade of Action on Nutrition 2016-2025, which provides a time-bound cohesive framework to implement the ICN2 commitments. FAO and WHO were mandated to co-lead the implementation of the Decade through a dedicated Work Programme. This was drawn up collaboratively in 2017, based on the ICN2 recommendations, and comprises six cross-cutting and connected action areas.

This second biennial progress report provides an update on progress made in implementing the Decade and in following up on ICN2 commitments since 2017, covering key developments in the reporting period. These included advances in a wide variety of nutrition-related activities at global, regional and national levels, ranging from: (i) symposia, seminars, conferences and other meetings and events held worldwide; (ii) country commitments for action on nutrition; (iii) Action Networks led by countries; and (iv) contributions made by UN agencies.

Finally, the report highlights additional efforts required for scaling up commitments and achieving concrete results. It also addresses the mid-term review of the Decade.

Suggested action by the Conference

The Conference is invited to:

- acknowledge the progress made in advancing the implementation of the Decade and in following up on ICN2 commitments, as outlined in the second biennial progress report;
- provide guidance on further actions in the way forward, including in respect of the mid-term review of the Decade.

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I. Background

1. On 1 April 2016, the United Nations (UN) General Assembly adopted resolution 70/259¹ through which it proclaimed 2016-2025 the UN Decade of Action on Nutrition (“Decade”²). The proclamation of the Decade was recommended at the Second International Conference on Nutrition (ICN2), which was co-hosted in November 2014 by FAO and the World Health Organization (WHO) and at which two major outcome documents were adopted: the Rome Declaration on Nutrition,³ laying down ten broad policy commitments, and its companion Framework for Action,⁴ setting out 60 specific recommendations for action.

2. The Decade provides all stakeholders with a unique time-bound opportunity to strengthen joint efforts to implement the ICN2 commitments and recommendations, alongside the nutrition-related Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), including in particular SDG2 to end hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition, and promote sustainable agriculture.

3. In resolution 70/259, the UN General Assembly mandated FAO and WHO to: (i) co-lead the implementation of the Decade, in collaboration with the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF) and the World Food Programme (WFP); (ii) cooperatively develop a work programme for the Decade, using coordination mechanisms such as the UN System Standing Committee on Nutrition (UNSCN) and the Committee on World Food Security (CFS), in consultation with other international and regional organizations and platforms; and (iii) produce biennial reports about the Decade’s implementation.

4. The Decade’s Work Programme was designed in 2017 through an open, inclusive and collaborative process. It embraces six cross-cutting and connected action areas, arranged on the basis of the 60 recommendations of the ICN2 Framework for Action.⁵

5. The Decade’s Work Programme was outlined in various progress reports on the initial implementation of the Decade, submitted to the World Health Assembly in May 2017⁶, to the FAO Conference in July 2017⁷, and to the CFS in October 2017⁸. It was further illustrated in subsequent reports to the UN General Assembly in July 2018⁹, to the FAO Committee on Fisheries in July 2018¹⁰, to the FAO Committee on Agriculture in October 2018¹¹, and to the WHO Executive Board in January 2019¹².

6. Pursuant to resolution 70/259, this second progress report has been compiled by FAO jointly with WHO. It offers insights on the progress made in the implementation of the Decade and follow-up to ICN2 commitments during the period 2017-2018, covering key developments at international and country levels.

¹ A/RES/70/259 - <https://undocs.org/A/RES/70/259>.

² www.un.org/nutrition.

³ www.fao.org/3/a-ml542e.pdf.

⁴ www.fao.org/3/a-mm215e.pdf.

⁵ www.un.org/nutrition/sites/www.un.org.nutrition/files/general/pdf/mv131_rev1_undoa_wp_rev1_en.pdf.

⁶ http://apps.who.int/gb/ebwha/pdf_files/WHA70/A70_30-en.pdf.

⁷ www.fao.org/3/a-mt359e.pdf.

⁸ www.fao.org/3/a-mu302e.pdf.

⁹ <https://undocs.org/A/72/829>.

¹⁰ www.fao.org/3/MX097EN/mx097en.pdf.

¹¹ www.fao.org/fileadmin/user_upload/bodies/COAG_Sessions/COAG_26/COAG26_INF/MX408_INF_6/MX408_COAG_2018_INF_6_en.pdf.

¹² http://apps.who.int/gb/ebwha/pdf_files/EB144/B144_50Rev1-en.pdf.

II. International level key developments

7. A dedicated website on the Decade was made available in 2018 in all 6 UN languages.¹³
8. International developments in 2017-2019 related to the Decade and ICN2 follow-up included:
 - a) FAO, with partner organizations, convened in 2017 five Regional Symposia under the umbrella of the Decade, as a follow up to the International Symposium on Sustainable Food Systems for Healthy Diets and Improved Nutrition, held in Rome in December 2016.¹⁴ These Symposia took stock of the regional dimensions and challenges of sustainable food systems for healthy diets and improved nutrition; shared key features of food systems in the respective regions, and how these influence dietary patterns; identified regional policy processes and experiences for tackling nutrition through a food systems approach; and triggered the development of policy actions in line with the ICN2 Framework for Action and the Decade's Work Programme.
 - b) A Latin America regional meeting on tackling child obesity, "Towards the implementation of the United Nations Decade of Action on Nutrition", was convened by Brazil and hosted by the Pan American Health Organization in March 2017;
 - c) A subregional meeting on tackling obesity in middle-income countries of the WHO Eastern Mediterranean Region was convened on the theme "Towards more commitment for the United Nations Decade of Action on Nutrition", hosted by Jordan in September 2017;
 - d) The WHO Regional Committee for the Western Pacific, in October 2017, endorsed a resolution¹⁵ requesting WHO to develop a regional action framework on protecting children from the harmful impact of food marketing. A consultation with Members on a draft framework took place in March 2019;
 - e) The Montevideo Roadmap 2018-2030 on Noncommunicable Diseases¹⁶ (NCDs), as a sustainable development priority, called on WHO "to fully leverage the UN Decade of Action on Nutrition to reduce diet-related NCDs and contribute to ensuring healthy and sustainable diets for all";
 - f) At the Global Nutrition Summit, held on the margins of the G7 Health Ministers' Summit (Milan, November 2017), USD 3.6 billion was pledged to tackle the global malnutrition crisis, including USD 640 million in new funding. Policy commitments, including on domestic funding, were made by Brazil, Côte d'Ivoire, El Salvador, India, Madagascar, and Niger, among others.¹⁷ The G7 Health Ministers' communiqué recognized the new policy and financial commitments made by the Global Nutrition Summit and advocated for food systems to support healthy and sustainable diets in the context of the Decade;

¹³ www.un.org/nutrition.

¹⁴ For Latin America and the Caribbean: San Salvador, 5-7 September 2017; for Asia and the Pacific: Bangkok, 10-11 November 2017; for Africa: Abidjan, 16-17 November 2017; for Europe and Central Asia: Budapest, 4-5 December 2017; and for the Near East and North Africa: Muscat, 11-12 December 2017 (www.fao.org/about/meetings/sustainable-food-systems-nutrition-symposium/regional-symposia/en).

¹⁵ www.wpro.who.int/about/regional_committee/68/resolutions/wpr_rc68_r3_protecting_children_from_the_harmful_impact_of_food_marketing.pdf.

¹⁶ www.who.int/conferences/global-ncd-conference/Roadmap.pdf; www.who.int/conferences/global-ncd-conference/montevideo-report.pdf.

¹⁷ <https://nutritionforgrowth.org/update-global-nutrition-summit-2017>.

- g) WHO and the Global Alliance for Improved Nutrition hosted an expert consultation (Geneva, June 2018), under the umbrella of the Decade, with the aim to discuss effective strategies to improve adolescent nutritional status and diets at large scale;¹⁸
- h) The UN General Assembly, having discussed the first progress report¹⁹ of the Secretary-General on the implementation of the Decade, adopted resolution 72/306²⁰ in July 2018, recognizing the progress made in advancing the Decade's implementation, while also expressing concern that the world was off track to achieve the global nutrition targets and called upon governments and their partners to intensify their efforts and scale up commitments and investments for nutrition under the Decade's Work Programme;
- i) At the 3rd High level Meeting of the UN General Assembly on the Prevention and Control of NCDs²¹ (New York, September 2018), Heads of State and Government agreed to take responsibility for their countries' efforts to prevent and treat NCDs, including the promotion and implementation of policy, legislative and regulatory measures aiming at minimizing the impact of the main risk factors for NCDs, and the promotion of healthy diets and lifestyles;
- j) The Mar Del Plata Health Declaration,²² adopted by the G20 Meeting of Health Ministers (Argentina, October 2018), focused on antimicrobial resistance, childhood overweight and obesity, the strengthening of health systems and the responsiveness of health systems to disasters, catastrophes and pandemics, which are all areas of the ICN2 Framework for Action. The Declaration²³ of the G20 Meeting of Agriculture Ministers (Argentina, July 2018) emphasized the need for concerted efforts and collaboration among governments, community and the various stakeholders in the food supply chain, among others, for a sustainable, integrated and inclusive future for food systems;
- k) The international conference "Leaving no one behind - making the case for adolescent girls", organized by IFAD and Save the Children Italy (Rome, October 2018),²⁴ aimed at sustaining the on-going momentum of identifying solutions to break the intergenerational cycle of malnutrition, and to contribute to the achievement of the global nutrition goals and objectives of the Decade;
- l) CFS at its 45th session in October 2018 endorsed the Terms of Reference for the preparation of the CFS Voluntary Guidelines on Food Systems and Nutrition, in support to the Decade. The Terms of Reference suggest to follow a comprehensive and systematic approach to food systems aimed at addressing the existing policy fragmentation between food, agriculture and health sectors;
- m) One of the objectives of the Global Parliamentary Summit against Hunger and Malnutrition (Madrid, October 2018), jointly organized by FAO, the Spanish Parliament, the Spanish Agency for International Development Cooperation and the Latin America and the Caribbean Parliamentary Front against Hunger, was to build a network of parliamentary alliances that contribute to the achievement of SDG2 as well as progress

¹⁸ www.who.int/nutrition/events/2018-consultation-adolescents-19to29jun/en/.

¹⁹ <https://undocs.org/A/72/829>.

²⁰ www.un.org/en/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=A/RES/72/306.

²¹ www.who.int/ncds/governance/third-un-meeting/en.

²² www.g20.utoronto.ca/2018/2018-10-04-health.pdf.

²³ www.g20.utoronto.ca/2018/2018-07-28-g20_agriculture_declaration_final.pdf.

²⁴ www.ifad.org/en/web/latest/event/asset/40767280.

towards implementing the ICN2 commitments and the Decade, paying particular attention to the most vulnerable people and territories;²⁵

- n) The 1st High-Level Expert Seminar on Indigenous Food Systems (Rome, November 2018), organized under the umbrella of the Decade, presented fieldwork and research of indigenous peoples' food systems from different parts of the world, looking at informing the global debate on sustainability and climate resilience in the context of the 2030 Agenda and the Decade;²⁶
- o) At its November 2018 session, the Council of the European Union (EU) recognized the importance of the Decade not only for the achievement of SDG2, but also for the realization of the 2030 Agenda in its entirety, and proposed a revision of the 2010 policy framework on food security and the 2013 policy framework on nutrition, honouring its nutrition commitments and implementing a holistic EU approach;²⁷
- p) Decision-makers, practitioners and other stakeholders gathered at a global conference (Bangkok, November 2018), organized by the International Food Policy Research Institute and FAO, to discuss how to speed up progress toward achieving a world free of hunger and malnutrition;²⁸
- q) In its resolution 73/132 "Global Health and Foreign Policy: a healthier world through better nutrition",²⁹ adopted in December 2018, the UN General Assembly reiterated the importance of the Decade and its call for the scaling up of national commitments and increasing investments for nutrition;
- r) FAO, WHO and the African Union organized the First International Conference on Food Safety in Addis Ababa on 12-13 February 2019,³⁰ ahead of the FAO/WHO/WTO International Forum on Food Safety and Trade (Geneva, April 2019), to raise awareness of the importance of food safety and further the commitments made at ICN2.

III. Country level key developments

A. Country commitments for action on nutrition

9. Country commitments for action are key to the Decade's support in leveraging government policy development, investments and actions on the ground. Countries are therefore encouraged to set specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and time-bound (SMART) commitments, which help all stakeholders understand what action is intended and to improve tracking.

10. During the 70th World Health Assembly in May 2017, Brazil and Ecuador were the first two countries to make official SMART commitments as part of the Decade, followed by Italy. The Government of Brazil made a set of 38 commitments, grouping them under the six action areas of the Decade's Work Programme, and outlined the specific policy measures to be undertaken to achieve the goals set. With commitments made under the umbrella of the Decade, the Government of Ecuador reaffirmed its responsibility to fight all forms of malnutrition throughout the life cycle, and to take actions that address the determinants of health and nutrition. Italy started working on the Decade by launching a "National Working Group Tavolo Italy Decade for Nutrition" in July 2017 and launched a

²⁵ www.fao.org/about/meetings/global-parliamentary-summit/en.

²⁶ www.fao.org/indigenous-peoples/ifs-seminar/en.

²⁷ <http://data.consilium.europa.eu/doc/document/ST-14554-2018-INIT/en/pdf>.

²⁸ www.ifpri-faobangkokconference.org.

²⁹ www.un.org/en/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=A/RES/73/132.

³⁰ www.fao.org/about/meetings/future-food-safety/en.

“Decade of Nutrition Platform” in July 2018 on the website of the Ministry of Health to share information on nutrition and healthy diets produced by national research institutes and ministries involved in this working group.³¹

11. A process is ongoing to translate the commitments made by the 60 member countries of the Scaling Up Nutrition Movement into SMART commitments. Furthermore, through their public statements at the 3rd High-level Meeting of the UN General Assembly on the Prevention and Control of NCDs (New York, September 2018), many Heads of State made commitments on promoting healthy diets through different policy responses.

12. An open access database to formally register countries’ SMART commitments was developed in 2017 and is co-facilitated by the joint FAO/WHO Secretariat.³²

B. Country-led Action Networks

13. The Decade encourages and supports countries to strengthen collaboration on nutrition action by establishing Action Networks, which are informal coalitions of countries, with global or regional scope, aimed at accelerating and aligning efforts around specific topics linked to an action area of the Decade’s Work Programme. Led and coordinated by one or several countries, the Action Networks allow countries to exchange knowledge and good practices, illustrate successes and challenges, and provide mutual support to accelerate progress in specific areas, with the final objective of improving food systems, diets and nutrition for all through the establishment of policies and legislation.³³

14. Norway announced, at the Ocean Conference in June 2017, the establishment of a Global Action Network on Sustainable Food from the Oceans and Inland Waters for Food Security and Nutrition, under the umbrella of the Decade and as a direct follow-up to the SDGs. The first meeting of this action network took place in Rome on 5 July 2018, the second meeting was held in Rome on 18 October 2018 and the third meeting in Bergen on 6 March 2019.³⁴

15. Two regional networks were announced at the Global Conference on NCDs in October 2017: the Action Network for the Americas on Healthy Food Environments, led by Chile; and the Action Network for Ending Childhood Obesity in the Pacific, hosted by Fiji.³⁵ Seven countries from the Region of the Americas established the regional action network for healthy food environments to share experiences and build political support for action on regulatory measures in the food system, including civil society participation. The regional action network for ending childhood obesity has been established in the Pacific following a preliminary meeting of a core group of seven Pacific island countries. This network addresses restrictions on the marketing of foods high in fat, sugar and/or salt and non-alcoholic sugar-sweetened beverages to children; a sugar-sweetened beverage tax; and the promotion of participation in physical activity.

16. Brazil has proposed to lead five action networks: (i) to promote food-based dietary guidelines for the prevention of obesity and reduction of NCDs, with Uruguay as co-chair; (ii) to reduce sodium consumption in order to prevent and control cardiovascular diseases, with Costa Rica and Colombia as co-chairs; (iii) on food and nutrition security governance; (iv) on public purchasing of family farming-produced food; and (v) on sustainable school feeding.

³¹ UN Decade of Action on Nutrition: Brazil, Ecuador and Italy make commitments, pp. 28-29 (www.enonline.net/attachments/3087/NEX-11_English_25Jan19_V3.pdf).

³² www.un.org/nutrition/commitments.

³³ www.un.org/nutrition/action-networks.

³⁴ <https://nettsteder.regjeringen.no/foodfromtheocean>.

³⁵ www.who.int/conferences/global-ncd-conference/montevideo-report.pdf.

17. A regional action network for healthy schools in South-East Asia brought together ministries of health and education from Bangladesh, Maldives, Sri Lanka and Thailand, in addition to non-governmental partners from these four countries. At their preliminary meeting in Bangkok in March 2018, they identified priority areas for diet and physical activity in schools.

18. Australia and France are leading a global action network aimed at accelerating and aligning efforts around nutrition labelling on food products, which will enable citizens to obtain comprehensive information about the content and composition of food products and help them make informed choices for better health, as well as encourage food producers to improve the nutritional quality of the food supply. Its inaugural meeting took place on 6-7 February 2019 in Paris.³⁶

IV. Contributions by UN Agencies

19. FAO has prioritized addressing malnutrition in all its forms, including the prevention of overweight and obesity, through the promotion of healthy diets and providing support to countries to transform their food systems and include nutrition objectives in their food and agricultural policies. The development of a corporate approach to nutrition mainstreaming has enabled FAO to enhance the strategic focus of its products and services in the delivery mechanisms towards a more nutrition-sensitive food systems approach through its Strategic Programmes.

20. FAO reported on the outcomes of the five Regional Symposia on Sustainable Food Systems for Healthy Diets, organized by FAO and partner organizations in 2017, to the FAO Regional Conferences in 2018.³⁷

21. In conjunction with the Decade, Members proposed at Regional Conferences and Technical Committees held in 2018 to establish an International Year of Fruits and Vegetables, an International Year of Rye, an International Year of Millets, and an International Day of Awareness of Food Loss and Waste. These proposals were endorsed by the FAO Council in December 2018,³⁸ for further approval by the FAO Conference in June 2019, with a view to having the UN General Assembly consider declaring the recommended international observances.

22. In the frame of the strategic partnership between FAO and the Directorate for International Cooperation and Development of the European Commission, FAO released in 2018 a note³⁹ that offers policy guidance on how to make healthy diets accessible to everyone, while addressing all forms of malnutrition including obesity, as well as diet-related NCDs. In addition, FAO, jointly with IFAD, UNICEF, WFP and WHO, published the *State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World in 2017*⁴⁰ and in 2018⁴¹ and supported *The Global Nutrition Reports* of 2017⁴² and 2018⁴³.

³⁶ www.un.org/nutrition/france-and-australia-announced-establishment-global-action-network-nutrition-labelling.

³⁷ www.fao.org/fileadmin/user_upload/bodies/ARC_30/ARC_30_INF/MV683_INF_11/MV683_ARC_18_INF_11_en.pdf;

www.fao.org/fileadmin/user_upload/bodies/LARC_35/LARC35_INF/MV793_INF_9/MV793_LARC_18_INF_9_en.pdf; www.fao.org/3/mw246en/mw246en.pdf;

www.fao.org/fileadmin/user_upload/bodies/NERC_34/NERC_34_INF/MW126_INF_6/MW126_NERC_18_INF_6_en.pdf; and <http://www.fao.org/3/mw166en/mw166en.pdf>.

³⁸ www.fao.org/fileadmin/user_upload/bodies/CL_160/CL160_Report/MY722_CL_160_REP_en.pdf.

³⁹ www.fao.org/3/CA2797EN/ca2797en.pdf.

⁴⁰ www.fao.org/3/a-I7695e.pdf.

⁴¹ www.fao.org/3/I9553EN/i9553en.pdf.

⁴² https://globalnutritionreport.org/documents/2/Report_2017.pdf.

⁴³ https://globalnutritionreport.org/documents/352/2018_Global_Nutrition_Report.pdf.

23. FAO launched in March 2019⁴⁴ FAO's Framework for the Urban Food Agenda⁴⁵ with the aim to guide FAO's work in supporting decision-makers at global, national, territorial and urban levels to recognize the role of cities and sub-national governments as key strategic sites and actors to address the complex socio-economic and ecological issues that constrain food security and nutrition.
24. In order to support the implementation of the Decade, FAO and WHO jointly developed in 2016-2018 a guide⁴⁶ for countries to translate the policies and actions recommended in the voluntary ICN2 Framework for Action into country-specific commitments and a policy brief⁴⁷ on driving commitment for nutrition within the Decade.
25. Regarding food safety and antimicrobial resistance in the food chain, FAO and WHO have developed and field-tested a food control assessment tool in five countries in 2017-2018 with a view to its official release in April 2019. The membership of the FAO/WHO International Food Safety Authorities Network (INFOSAN) has grown from 440 members in 186 Member States in 2015 to more than 500 members in 188 Member States in 2018. In 2017, the FAO/WHO Codex Alimentarius Commission approved new work for the Ad Hoc Intergovernmental Task Force on Antimicrobial Resistance, which is to complete its work by 2021.
26. During this reporting period, WHO has continued developing normative products to support ICN2 implementation, including evidence-informed guidelines⁴⁸ and implementation manuals on ending the inappropriate promotion of foods for infants and young children⁴⁹, and tracking progress in meeting the global nutrition targets for 2025⁵⁰. In 2018, it also released an interactive e-course on the Decade for WHO staff and launched a global initiative⁵¹ to eliminate trans-fats from the food supply by 2023 whereby to date commitments for action have been made by 24 countries.
27. In June 2018, WHO and Chatham House convened in London a dialogue with representatives of the food and non-alcoholic beverage industries. WHO described a set of expectations on the reduction of salt, free sugars and unsaturated fats in food and beverages and the elimination of industrial trans-fats from foods, which has led to new public commitments on the part of the food and beverage industry.
28. WFP and FAO, together with the Global Child Nutrition Foundation, the Partnership for Child Development, IFAD, the New Partnership for Africa's Development and the WFP Centre of Excellence in Brazil, published in 2018 a resource framework for the design, implementation and scale-up of country-led home-grown school feeding programmes.⁵²
29. WFP continues to maintain its twin-track approach of responding to the immediate food and nutrition needs of people affected by conflict and other emergencies, while at the same time supporting countries in achieving their national SDG targets, in particular target 2.2. In 2017, WFP directly assisted 91.4 million people in 83 countries, 55 of which implemented nutrition-specific programming that reached 16.3 million people. Its nutrition programming is guided by the WFP Nutrition Policy (2017-2021) and by its implementation and costing plan.

⁴⁴ www.fao.org/news/story/en/item/1184269/icode/.

⁴⁵ www.fao.org/3/CA3151EN/ca3151en.pdf.

⁴⁶ www.fao.org/3/ca1505en/CA1505EN.pdf.

⁴⁷ www.fao.org/3/ca1340en/CA1340EN.pdf.

⁴⁸ www.who.int/nutrition/publications/guidelines/en.

⁴⁹ www.who.int/nutrition/publications/infantfeeding/manual-ending-inappropriate-promotion-food/en.

⁵⁰ www.who.int/nutrition/publications/operational-guidance-GNMF-indicators/en.

⁵¹ www.who.int/nutrition/topics/replace-transfat.

⁵² www.fao.org/3/ca0957en/CA0957EN.pdf.

30. IFAD investments target the poor and most vulnerable farming households in rural areas and adopt a people-centred approach with the goal of shaping food systems for healthy diets and optimizing the contribution of agriculture and rural development interventions to nutrition, while ensuring that investments in nutrition-sensitive agriculture are also environmentally sustainable. IFAD is incrementally ensuring that projects approved for the period 2016-2018 are nutrition-sensitive, therefore allowing it to address all forms of malnutrition by improving dietary quality.

31. UNICEF entered its new strategic plan period (2018-2021) with a vision to consolidate and expand the programmatic gains of addressing child malnutrition in all its forms – stunting, wasting, micronutrient deficiencies and overweight around the world. UNICEF intends to meet three annual targets by 2021:

- reach at least 250 million children under five years of age with services to prevent stunting and other forms of malnutrition;
- reach at least 100 million adolescent girls and boys with services to prevent anaemia and other forms of malnutrition;
- reach at least 6 million children with services to treat severe wasting and other forms of severe acute malnutrition in development and humanitarian contexts.

32. UNSCN continued to support follow-up to ICN2 and the Decade by assisting with the development, collection, publishing and promotion of commitments to the Decade from a range of UN agencies, as well as other actors.⁵³ In 2017 and 2018, UNSCN continued to maximize policy coherence and advocacy for nutrition throughout the UN system through eight publications, including “A Spotlight on the Nutrition Decade”⁵⁴. In addition, the UNSCN Secretariat contributed to guidance notes issued by member agencies and issued guidance notes to promote consistent delivery on the ground. UNSCN also facilitated consultations to help develop consensus around new and emerging issues that impact nutrition, worked to highlight how nutrition is a connecting force between the SDGs and a catalyst to their achievement, and supported efforts to raise awareness about the Decade through social media, videos and online discussion forums.

V. Way forward

A. Scaling up SMART commitments

33. While international advances indicate that ICN2 has led to a broad international debate on the multiple burden of malnutrition and the role of food systems in healthy diets, national progress has been uneven. Action networks are expected to be a driver for scaling up commitments and achieving concrete results. The following areas will require intensified action:

- a) *Intersectoral policy.* Countries should update intersectoral policy documents to include all global nutrition targets and translate them into costed operational plans. The accountability of all stakeholders needs to be improved and the commitments made by decision-makers should be followed up;
- b) *Food systems.* The food and agriculture, trade and industry sectors should include nutrition objectives and the promotion of healthy diets. Greater focus is needed on actions to promote the diversification of crops, increase the production of fruits and vegetables, create healthy food environments, including the marketing of foods and beverages to

⁵³ Bioversity, FAO, the Global Panel on Agriculture and Food Systems for Nutrition, HarvestPlus, IFAD, the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, UNICEF, UNSCN, WaterAid, WFP and WHO have concretized their commitments to the Decade (www.unscn.org/en/topics/un-decade-of-action-on-nutrition/action-and-commitments?pages=2).

⁵⁴ www.unscn.org/uploads/web/news/UNSCN-News42-2017.pdf.

children, nutrition labelling, and food procurement in public institutions and price policies;

- c) *Health.* Actions taken to promote healthy diets should reach all stages of the life cycle, especially for women before and during pregnancy and adolescent girls. Services to manage acute malnutrition should be streamlined in universal health coverage strategies and health services to increase coverage beyond the current 20%. The promotion, protection and support of breastfeeding will require mainstreaming the Baby Friendly Hospital Initiative, as well as legislative action on the International Code of Marketing of Breast-milk Substitutes and subsequent resolutions;
- d) *Education.* Schools are excellent environments in which to address the double burden of malnutrition and install good dietary habits, and to reach the growing market of young people with increasing economic power and influence them to avoid the consumption of foods and beverages high in fat, sugar and/or salt. Countries should increase investment in school health and nutrition programmes;
- e) *Social protection.* Increased poverty and inequalities need to be tackled by adequate social protection programmes that include support for healthy diets. Food voucher schemes and food banks are options to be considered.

B. Mid-term review

34. ECOSOC resolution 1989/84⁵⁵ on international decades provides that the implementation of a decade's programme of work should be appraised at the mid-point and at the end of the decade.

35. In keeping with resolution 1989/84, the status of implementation of commitments of the Rome Declaration on Nutrition should be reviewed at the mid-term and at the end of the Decade, in an open and participatory process.

36. In this regard, the Decade's Work Programme foresees the convening of dialogues among stakeholders to evaluate further progress in implementing the Decade at mid-term and at the end of the Decade.

37. During the preparation of the third biennial progress report, the mid-term review of the Decade could be aligned with the convening of the 2020 Nutrition for Growth meeting in Japan.

⁵⁵ https://digitallibrary.un.org/record/75597/files/E_RES_1989_84-EN.pdf.