



Forty-fourth Session of the Committee on World Food Security (CFS)

Launch of the HLPE Report *Nutrition and food systems*

10 October 2017

Patrick Caron
HLPE Chairperson

Opening statement

Dear Excellency Ambassador Gornass,
Excellencies,
Distinguished delegates,
Dear FAO, WFP and IFAD representatives,
Ladies and gentlemen,

Thank you, Excellency, for giving me the floor and for the opportunity to launch this expected 12th (HLPE) report on “Nutrition and food systems” during a plenary session.

Worldwide, one person in three is malnourished and one in two could be malnourished by 2030 if nothing is done.

Despite the progress made over the last decades, more than 800 million people are still hungry, as we saw yesterday. Hunger remains a huge challenge, particularly this year with four countries facing famines and a degradation of the situation at the global level, as announced by the three Rome-Based Agencies yesterday.

In the meantime, micronutrient deficiencies affect more than 2 billion people. Overweight and obesity are rapidly increasing, including in developing countries. According to WHO, obesity has more than doubled since 1980.

Malnutrition in all its forms – undernutrition, micronutrient deficiencies, overweight and obesity – now affects all, all countries, whether low-, middle- or high-income and has become the number one problem in public health.

Therefore, economic growth alone will not be enough to end hunger and malnutrition. Nutrition has to be set as an explicit objective in coherent and cross-sectoral nutrition strategies, policies and programmes.

Those different forms co-exist within the same country or community, and sometimes within the same household or individual and can even paradoxically be linked: they thus must be fought altogether.

In this context, this report analyses how food systems influence people's dietary patterns and nutritional status. It calls for radical transformations of the same magnitude of the *green revolution* of agriculture, but for different reasons and with different patterns, and presents effective policies and programmes that have the potential to shape sustainable food systems, contributing to the progressive realization of the right to adequate food.

This report highlights the central role of food environments in facilitating healthier and more sustainable food choices. Based on its findings and with the view to progress towards the effective realization of the right to food, I would like to highlight two priorities: (i) improve the physical and economic access to healthy and sustainable diets, (ii) improve consumers' information and education in order to enable them to make healthier food choices.

Actions against malnutrition cannot wait. The short-term costs of the actions outlined in this report may seem high, but the cost of inaction is likely to be much higher, carrying with it a terrible legacy affecting future generations.

On behalf of the Steering Committee, I would like to acknowledge the engagement of all the experts who worked for the elaboration of this report, and especially the Project Team leader, Dr Jessica Fanzo, and all the Project Team members, some of whom are in the room today.

Many thanks to the external peer reviewers and to all those who contributed to the electronic consultations both on the scope and on the first draft of the report. I would also like to thank the HLPE Secretariat for its precious support to our work.

And finally, I would like to warmly thank all the resource partners who support the work of the HLPE in a totally independent way since its creation.

The HLPE stands ready to provide further support for the forthcoming policy convergence process on Nutrition and food systems. I hope that the findings and recommendations of this report will facilitate CFS work and ambitious achievements, and also inspire, on the ground, many stakeholders in building food systems that facilitate healthier and more sustainable food choices.

Merci.