Global Health Histories seminar series
Food Security – fair shares for all

The UN perspective on food and nutrition security

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"Food and nutrition security are the foundations of a decent life, a sound education and the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals"

Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon
• **Food and nutrition security** exists when all people, at all times, have physical, social and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food to meet their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life. (1996 World Food Summit's Declaration and State of Food Insecurity in the World 2001)
The Food Challenge

FAO Food Price Index

Nominal

Real*

* The real price index is the nominal price index deflated by the World Bank Manufactures Unit Value Index (MUV)
Trends in world hunger

Note: Figures for 2009 and 2010 are estimated by FAO with input from the United States Department of Agriculture, Economic Research Service. Full details of the methodology are provided in the technical background notes (available at www.fao.org/publication/sofi/en/).
The designations employed and the presentation of material in the map(s) do not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever on the part of FAO concerning the legal or constitutional status of any country, territory or sea area, or concerning the delimitation of frontiers.
Under fives and pregnant/lactating women are the most vulnerable and affected

- 10 million children die each year: 1 out of 3 due to undernutrition
- 195 million under fives are stunted: 1 out of 6 children failed to grow to his/her full potential
- 1 out of 2 children under five has some form of micronutrient deficiency
- MDG1 hunger target way off track
- Undernutrition is associated with chronic diseases later in life

Concerted and cross sectoral efforts can save 1 million lives per year and ensure better lives and futures for children and their families
Globalization and urbanization lead to important changes in food systems and agri-health-nutrition interactions

- Increased market orientation of the global agrifood system, unleashing new dynamics throughout the food supply chain, affecting production, quantity, quality, price, and desirability

- Higher exposure to aggressive marketing practices and desire for foods associated with high social status

- Close to 40 percent of populations in developing countries live in urban areas (60 percent by 2025): they are less likely to produce their own food, are highly dependent on cash income and food processing and distribution systems, less physically active.
Leading to the other side to the problem ….

- WHO further projects that by 2015, approximately 2.3 billion adults (age 15+) will be overweight and more than 700 million will be obese.

- 50 million children under the age of 5 years will be overweight globally in 2015. 42 million in developing countries.

Source: WHO BMI databank
Comprehensive Framework for Action of the HLTF

different parts of the UN system to work together with governments and other stakeholders
The Updated Comprehensive Framework for Action (2011)

- Priorities: sustainable agriculture, better ecosystem management, gender equity, **improved nutrition**, and the human rights of those least able to enjoy the right to food.
- Two parallel tracks: (i) meeting immediate needs through emergency assistance and improved safety net schemes; and (ii) building long term resilience by addressing structural problems of dysfunctional food systems.
- **Promotes a comprehensive approach** that also helps countries to adapt and build resilience to the effects of climate change.
Policy framework to address all dimensions of food and nutrition security

- Investments into agriculture
  - Short-term boosts
  - Longer term support for sustainable agriculture
- Enhancement of resilience of rural communities
- Improvement of smallholder productivity
- Adjustment of trade and tax policies
- Improvement of international food markets

- Interventions on prices, stocks and movements
- Investments into climate change adaptation and mitigation
- Management of macro-economic implications
- Development of international bio-fuel consensuses

- Promotion and expansion of effective social protection
- Employment Generation
- Enhanced and more accessible emergency food assistance
- Effective nutrition interventions and safety nets

- Promotion of behavioral changes like breastfeeding, complementary feeding and better hygiene practices
- Promotion of dietary diversity
- Enhancement of micronutrient intake
- Community Nutrition Initiatives

In addition, institutions and capacities need to be strengthened at all levels.
Key solutions to achieve nutrition security
the SUN movement

Nutrition specific actions: e.g. treatment of SAM, breastfeeding and CF, micronutrient supp, nut education etc.

Nutrition sensitive development investments – food security, agriculture, social protection, education etc.

Such solutions have a high potential to also prevent nutrition related chronic diseases later in life.
SUN: global movement to assist countries to access the support they need

"...Coordination of stakeholders to encourage synergy of purpose and complementarity of action"
First 12 months: 20 countries have engaged


Several others indicated their interest to be part
Current Transitory Arrangements

• Country Partners Reference Group (iCPRG)
• Multistakeholder Transition Team
• 6 Task Forces: capacity building, communications, civil society, development partners, private sector, monitoring and reporting
• UN Reference Group (SCN, REACH, FAO, WHO, UNICEF, WFP)
• Secretarial support (joint team of staff from HLTF+UNSCN)

• Stewardship Study will propose options for more permanent arrangements
Gathering Momentum

– Agriculture investment trend is increasing

– Governments now give increasing priority to hunger reduction and nutritional improvements as development outcomes

– Growing appetite for transformative private-public partnerships for food and nutrition security

– Cost-effective and proven interventions in nutrition that can make a real difference are available, and gradually being scaled-up fostered by a global SUN movement

What next?
There is crucial Agri-Health-Nutrition Policy Dialogue that needs strengthening

• Agriculture, health and nutrition three way linkages: agriculture can pose threats to health through increased incidence of various diseases and unbalanced food supply. Some of the developing world’s major health problems (i.e. AIDS, malaria, malnutrition) can have disastrous effects on agriculture (loss of labor, knowledge, and assets).

• Coordinating can yield significant welfare benefits for the poor.
• Agricultural policies – must balance their contribution for the greater availability of staple foods, micronutrient rich foods, income generation, and women empowerment.

• Health and nutrition policies – must ensure adequate maternal and child care for women in agriculture, adequate feeding and hygiene practices in agricultural households, as well as access to and use of health services by the rural households.
Women

- At the core of all these linkages are women: the guardians of food security for the family and principal care-givers of family members, especially children.
- Women generate life and health: their nutrition status has a direct impact on the nutritional status of their children.
- Women produce foods contribute to the rural economy as farmers, labourers and entrepreneurs (43% of the agricultural labour force in developing countries, 50% percent in Eastern Asia and sub-Saharan Africa).
- Women have less access than men to agricultural assets, inputs and services and to rural employment. The yield gap averages on 20-30 percent.
Women – closing the gender gap

• Improving women’s social status and closing the yield gap in agriculture would:
  • raise output and reduce the number of undernourished people in the world by as much as 100-150 million.
  • put more resources in the hands of women and strengthen their voice within the household,
  • Increase hh spending on food, health, clothing and education for children. The benefits would span generations.
Some thematic areas for the “how to” Policy Dialogue

• Make agriculture policies health and nutrition sensitive in a changing climate
• Carry out health and nutrition impact assessments in early stages of agricultural policies planning and programming
• Establish nexus of food / energy / water / land / environment / health at policy as well as service delivery levels
• Make the rural workforce healthier and increase investments in diversified food crops, specially of small holders
• Increase access to health care services, markets and income
• Increase access to health, nutrition, trade, market information
• Manage new food demands - for animal feed / biofuels?
• Assure emergency food reserves including nutritious foods
• Empower women as a linking element
WHO and FAO - leading the way

• How can the full range of government from different sectors, specially health and agriculture, be engaged in this dialogue? CFS, WHA, FAO Conference, UNFCCC, regional bodies?

• Who should be engaged in the dialogue besides Government? Partnerships, coalitions

• Where – WHO and FAO must take the lead now and come together with the other members of the UN family, under the stewardship of the UNSCN Executive Committee, to fill this crucial knowledge and policy gap.
Thank you

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