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**Integrated and coordinated implementation of and follow-up
to the outcomes of the major United Nations conferences and
summits in the economic, social and related fields**

Implementation of the United Nations Decade of Action on Nutrition (2016–2025)

Report of the Secretary-General

Summary

The present report is submitted pursuant to General Assembly resolution [70/259](#), which proclaimed 2016–2025 the United Nations Decade of Action on Nutrition (“Decade”), mandated the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and the World Health Organization (WHO) to lead the implementation of the Decade, and requested the Secretary-General to inform the General Assembly about the Decade’s implementation based on biennial reports compiled by FAO and WHO.

The report provides an overview of the progress made in implementing the Decade for the period 2018–2019, reflecting key developments at international, regional and country levels. These include advances in the six action areas of the Decade’s Work Programme, as well as further engagement of stakeholders induced by the Decade covering commitments by governments, organizations and non-state actors, multi-stakeholder initiatives and country-led action networks. Finally, the report addresses the way forward, including the mid-term review of the Decade.

The Decade, building on the ICN2 commitments, continues to raise awareness, fuel discussion and stimulate action, bringing countries and stakeholders together to collaborate in novel ways reflecting the new nutrition reality. The importance of nutrition, healthy diets and food systems for human and planetary health is increasingly being recognized, with the evidence of unhealthy diets and malnutrition as key risk factors for disease and death globally being unequivocal. Nations, regions, cities and communities are acting for improved nutrition for all, everywhere at all times, and people increasingly demand transparency on and exert urgency over decisions impacting their diet, health and environment.



Increasingly scientists work collectively across sectors towards offering models to better predict impact of actions or inaction on nutrition, design more holistic and innovative solutions to address malnutrition effectively, and define appropriate metrics to monitor progress and ensure accountability. Each country with its particular context, defines its own roadmap ensuring the rights to food and health are fulfilled for its people. Yet, countries need to work together in solidarity, as a decision in one country can compromise access to healthy diets in another through globalization and interconnectedness.

I. Background

1. On 1 April 2016, the United Nations (UN) General Assembly adopted resolution [70/259](#)¹ through which it proclaimed 2016–2025 the UN Decade of Action on Nutrition (“Decade”). The proclamation of the Decade was recommended at the Second International Conference on Nutrition (ICN2), which was co-hosted in November 2014 by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and the World Health Organization (WHO), and which adopted the Rome Declaration on Nutrition² and its companion Framework for Action³. The Rome Declaration on Nutrition sets out a common vision for global action to eradicate hunger and end all forms of malnutrition, including undernutrition, micronutrient deficiencies, overweight and obesity, and puts forward ten broad policy commitments. The Framework for Action sets forth 60 recommendations to guide the effective implementation of the commitments enshrined in the Rome Declaration on Nutrition.
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), in particular SDG2 to end hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition, and promote sustainable agriculture, and SDG3 to ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages.
3. The Decade aims to accelerate implementation of the ICN2 commitments, achieve the global nutrition and diet-related non-communicable disease (NCD) targets by 2025, and contribute to the realisation of the SDGs by 2030.
4. In resolution [70/259](#), the 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.
5. Designed in 2017, the Decade’s Work Programme embraces six cross-cutting and connected action areas, based on the 60 recommendations of the ICN2 Framework for Action.⁴ Key information on the Decade is available on the UN Decade of Action on Nutrition website.⁵
6. Submitted pursuant to General Assembly resolution [70/259](#) and informed by contributions from Members and various stakeholders, the present report outlines progress made in implementing the Decade over the course of 2018–2019. It covers key developments at international, regional and country levels and sets forth the way forward, including the preparatory process towards the mid-term review of the Decade in 2020.

¹ <https://undocs.org/A/RES/70/259>.

² www.fao.org/3/a-ml542e.pdf.

³ www.fao.org/3/a-mm215e.pdf.

⁴ www.un.org/nutrition/sites/www.un.org.nutrition/files/general/pdf/work_programme_nutrition_decade.pdf.

⁵ www.un.org/nutrition.

II. Advancements in the action areas of the Decade's Work Programme

7. Member States are commended for their foresight in 2016 to proclaim the Decade which has led to increased traction in the different action areas. The Nutrition Decade can significantly contribute to the Decade of Action and Delivery for Sustainable Development, convened under the auspices of the General Assembly (A/RES/74/4⁶). However, more political will, collective action and financial investment is needed. Now, more than ever, in a world with scarce resources available and competing priorities, investing in nutrition is economically smart and morally right.

Sustainable, resilient food systems for healthy diets

8. The Decade's Work Programme urges countries to undertake coherent and innovative actions covering the entire food system – from inputs and production, through processing, storage, transport and retailing to consumption – to ensure access to sustainable healthy diets for all and reduce food and nutrient losses and waste. Moreover, it urges countries to integrate food safety issues into food systems and nutrition policymaking.⁷

9. Under the Decade, the critical role of sustainable food systems, together with the need for policy coherence, working across sectors and with multiple partners in addressing malnutrition in all its forms, is progressively acknowledged in different intergovernmental and scientific fora. A paradigm shift in attention and re-thinking the narrative about nutrition holistically and linking it with food systems, climate and health is happening. The 2019 Lancet Commission Report on Obesity⁸ highlighted food, transport and urban systems as systemic drivers that share tangible actions to address obesity. The concepts of malnutrition and of healthy diets have evolved and the need to shift to more sustainable diets and food systems is increasingly evident.^{9,10} These developments, that pave the way for more effective country level action, are demonstrated by the following.

10. The UN Decade of Family Farming 2019–2028, proclaimed in January 2018 by the General Assembly in resolution 72/239¹¹, aims to promote sustainability of family farming for climate-resilient food systems and to create synergies with the Nutrition Decade through its Global Action Plan.¹²

11. The Declaration¹³ of the G20 Meeting of Agriculture Ministers (Buenos Aires, July 2018) emphasized the need for concerted efforts and collaboration among governments, farmers' communities and other stakeholders in the food supply chain for a sustainable, integrated and inclusive future for food systems.

12. The 2018 Report¹⁴ of the Secretary-General on agriculture development, food security and nutrition highlighted interlinkages across the SDGs to address key challenges and accelerate progress, and outlined important means of implementation to end hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable

⁶ <https://undocs.org/en/A/RES/74/4>.

⁷ www.fao.org/3/a-i7846e.pdf.

⁸ www.worldobesity.org/what-we-do/projects/lancet-commission-on-obesity/lancet-commission-report-on-obesity.

⁹ www.thelancet.com/action/showPdf?pii=S0140-6736%2818%2931788-4.

¹⁰ www.thelancet.com/series/double-burden-malnutrition.

¹¹ <https://undocs.org/A/RES/72/239>.

¹² www.fao.org/3/ca4672en/ca4672en.pdf.

¹³ www.g20.utoronto.ca/2018/2018-07-28-g20_agriculture_declaration_final.pdf.

¹⁴ <https://undocs.org/A/73/293>.

agriculture, while the 2019 Report¹⁵ on the same matter underlined the critical role of a sustainable food systems approach in eradicating poverty, hunger and malnutrition, making food systems more inclusive and work for nutrition, improving sustainability by reducing food losses, ensuring food safety, and strengthening climate resilience.

13. Referring to the Decade as an opportunity to bring together efforts towards eradicating hunger and preventing malnutrition, the General Assembly adopted resolutions dealing with the right to food¹⁶ and focusing on progress and challenges related to agriculture, food security and nutrition in 2018¹⁷ and 2019¹⁸.

14. CFS in October 2018 endorsed terms of reference¹⁹ for the preparation of Voluntary Guidelines on Food Systems and Nutrition, in support of the Decade, aimed at reshaping or promoting food systems to ensure that food for healthy diets is available, affordable, acceptable, safe and of adequate quantity and quality. In 2019 CFS stakeholders discussed in regional consultations the zero draft of these Voluntary Guidelines.²⁰ Subsequently, in October 2019, CFS discussed progress made in implementing ICN2 related policies and actions.²¹

15. 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.²²

16. A narrative around the need for food systems and actionable levers to secure healthy, safe and sustainable diets of children and adolescents was developed by experts and stakeholders at a meeting organized by UNICEF and the Global Alliance for Improved Nutrition (Florence, November 2018).²³

17. The 2nd Global Conference of the Sustainable Food Systems Programme of the 10-Year Framework for Programmes on Sustainable Consumption and Production Patterns (San José, February 2019) encouraged participating organizations to issue voluntary commitments towards the transformation of food systems.²⁴

18. The First International Conference on Food Safety (Addis Ababa, February 2019), which brought together Ministers of Health, Ministers of Agriculture, leading scientific experts, partner agencies as well as representatives of consumers, food producers and the private sector, raised awareness of the importance of food safety in furthering the commitments made at ICN2.²⁵

19. Following its proclamation by the General Assembly in 2018,²⁶ the first World Food Safety Day was celebrated on 7 June 2019 as a unique opportunity to draw attention and inspire action to help prevent, detect and manage foodborne risks, contributing to food security, human health, economic prosperity and sustainable development.

¹⁵ <https://undocs.org/pdf?symbol=en/A/74/237>.

¹⁶ <https://undocs.org/en/A/RES/74/149>.

¹⁷ <https://undocs.org/en/A/RES/73/253>.

¹⁸ <https://undocs.org/en/A/RES/74/242>.

¹⁹ www.fao.org/3/mx516en/mx516en.pdf.

²⁰ www.fao.org/cfs/workingspace/workstreams/nutrition-workstream/reg/en/.

²¹ www.fao.org/3/na753en/na753en.pdf.

²² www.fao.org/indigenous-peoples/ifs-seminar/en.

²³ www.unicef.org/nutrition/food-systems.html.

²⁴ www.oneplanetnetwork.org/2nd-global-conference-sfs-programme-taste-what-took-place.

²⁵ www.who.int/food-safety/international-food-safety-conference.

²⁶ <https://undocs.org/en/A/RES/73/250>.

20. The Future of Food Symposium (Rome, June 2019) included panel discussions on research, knowledge gaps and needs for sustainable food systems and healthy diets, governance of food systems for healthy diets, building consumer confidence in food systems, and what it takes to transform food systems.

21. At an international consultation on sustainable healthy diets convened by FAO and WHO in July 2019, experts reviewed the concept of diets that support reaching goals of health and well-being while also considering the evidence about economic, social, and environmental sustainability. The consultation developed 16 principles for sustainable healthy diets²⁷ to guide action under the Decade and for achieving the SDGs.

22. The *Global Sustainable Development Report 2019* considers food systems and nutrition as an entry point to accelerate progress towards sustainable development, and calls for more equitable access to nutritious foods, reducing food loss and waste and maximizing the nutritional value of produce while minimizing the climate and environmental impacts and increasing the resilience of food systems.²⁸

23. The *State of the World's Children 2019* reiterated that action is needed that reflects the core role of food systems, strengthens the supply of and demand for better food, improves children's food environments, and leverages the role of key supportive systems.²⁹

24. In December 2019, the General Assembly adopted resolution [74/244](#)³⁰ designating 2021 as the International Year of Fruits and Vegetables, and resolution [74/209](#)³¹ dedicating 29 September as the International Day of Awareness of Food Loss and Waste, following requests made by the FAO Conference in 2019.

25. During the 25th Conference of the Parties to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change in December 2019, the Local Governments for Sustainability Cities Biodiversity Center and 13 other organizations called on governments to address food and agriculture as a key driver of land-use change and the climate crisis, by taking measures to reduce the sector's greenhouse gas emissions.³²

26. The UN Secretary-General announced in October 2019 his intention to convene a Food Systems Summit and, in December 2019, he announced the appointment of a Special Envoy to provide leadership, guidance and strategic direction towards the 2021 Food Systems Summit, which aims to maximize the co-benefits of a food systems approach across the entire 2030 Agenda and meet the challenges of climate change.³³

Aligned health systems providing universal coverage of essential nutrition actions

27. As outlined in the Decade's Work Programme, strong health systems are needed to prevent and treat malnutrition in all its forms through the delivery of evidence-informed nutrition interventions and services for all ages in all settings as well as to prevent and treat diseases that can aggravate undernutrition. Health systems also must deal with the long-term health consequences associated with overweight and obesity and the prevention and control of diet-related NCDs.

²⁷ www.fao.org/3/ca6640en/ca6640en.pdf.

²⁸ https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/24797GSDR_report_2019.pdf.

²⁹ www.unicef.org/media/60806/file/SOWC-2019.pdf.

³⁰ <https://undocs.org/en/A/RES/74/244>.

³¹ <https://undocs.org/en/A/RES/74/209>.

³² <http://sdg.iisd.org/news/iclei-brief-urges-reduced-emissions-from-food-and-agriculture>.

³³ www.un.org/sg/en/content/sg/personnel-appointments/2019-12-16/ms-agnes-kalibata-of-rwanda-special-envoy-for-2021-food-systems-summit.

28. Mainstreaming a package of nutrition interventions in the health system is essential to achieve the objectives of Universal Health Coverage (UHC). In resolutions 73/132³⁴ and 74/2³⁵, adopted in 2018 and 2019 respectively, the General Assembly affirmed that countries must determine their own roadmaps to UHC and conduct their own prioritization exercises. In this context, the WHO compendium of recommended nutrition interventions for UHC³⁶ and the joint UN OneHealth Tool³⁷ support countries in this undertaking.

29. In October 2018 the G20 Ministers of Health adopted the Mar Del Plata Health Declaration,³⁸ which focuses 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 addressed in the ICN2 Framework for Action. The G20 also launched the Initiative for Early Childhood Development,³⁹ reiterating that a diversified, balanced and healthy diet at all stages of life has a lifelong positive impact on the child's growth and life.

30. At the Seventh Tokyo International Conference on African Development (Yokohama, August 2019), challenges and needed actions, including for improving health and universal health coverage, were discussed by Heads of State and Government and their development partners to help countries respond to the ICN2 commitments.⁴⁰

31. At the end of 2018, there were over 70 million people forcibly displaced worldwide. It is imperative that populations in humanitarian settings are not left behind, that breastfeeding is protected, quality health care (including mental health) is available and that access to healthy diets is not compromised. In July 2019 the Principals of FAO, WHO, UNHCR, UNICEF, WFP and OCHA committed to accelerate action to end malnutrition in children and develop a joint framework and roadmap for the launch of a UN Global Plan of Action on Wasting by 2020.⁴¹

32. Making specific reference to the Decade, the Declaration⁴² of the G20 Meeting of Health Ministers (Okayama, October 2019) committed to accelerate efforts to enhance nutrition and address all forms of malnutrition.

33. Health Ministers in the WHO African Region (Brazzaville, August 2019)⁴³ adopted the *Strategic Plan to reduce the double burden of malnutrition in the African Region: 2019–2025*, and in the WHO Eastern Mediterranean Region (Tehran, October 2019)⁴⁴ endorsed the strategy on nutrition for the Region 2020–2030.

Social protection and nutrition education

34. Social protection and school health and nutrition programmes have the potential to deliver double-duty actions to effectively address both undernutrition and

³⁴ www.un.org/en/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=A/RES/73/132.

³⁵ <https://undocs.org/en/A/RES/74/2>.

³⁶ <https://apps.who.int/iris/bitstream/handle/10665/326261/9789241515856-eng.pdf>.

³⁷ www.who.int/choice/onehealthtool/en/.

³⁸ www.g20.utoronto.ca/2018/2018-10-04-health.pdf.

³⁹ www.ecdan.org/assets/g20_initiative_for_early_childhood_development.pdf.

⁴⁰ www.mofa.go.jp/files/000521256.pdf.

⁴¹ www.unicef.org/press-releases/joint-statement-principals-fao-who-unhcr-unicef-wfp-and-un-ocha.

⁴² www.g20.utoronto.ca/2019/G20Okayama_HM_EN.pdf.

⁴³ www.afro.who.int/sites/default/files/2019-09/AFR-RC69-7%20Strategic%20Plan%20to%20reduce%20the%20double%20burden%20of%20malnutrition.pdf.

⁴⁴ <http://applications.emro.who.int/docs/RC66-R1-eng.pdf>.

overweight and obesity.⁴⁵ Therefore, a nutrition-sensitive approach needs to be employed in their design and implementation.⁴⁶

35. Most countries in Asia and the Pacific have increased investments in social protection over the past two decades. Yet countries still only spend around 14 percent of total government expenditures on social protection, compared to an average of 42 percent of government expenditure in Europe.⁴⁷ The *Regional Overview of Food Security and Nutrition in Europe and Central Asia 2018*⁴⁸ highlighted policy measures adopted in this region for improving food access, social protection and food assistance. Social protection is one of the areas of work of the FAO project *Developing Capacity for Strengthening Food Security and Nutrition in Selected Countries of the Caucasus and Central Asia* that aims to enhance local diet quality through regular cash transfers and promote broader sustainable agricultural development.⁴⁹ A publication of the International Policy Centre for Inclusive Growth indicated that unconditional cash transfer programmes are the most prominent in the FAO Near East and North-Africa Region, while subsidies for fuel and food are the next most prevalent social protection programmes, followed by unconditional in-kind transfers. The cash transfer schemes that are conditional are mostly tied to children's school enrolment or attendance.⁵⁰

36. Nutrition education helps empower and equip people with the information and skills necessary to adopt healthy eating habits. Most countries have some form of school health and nutrition programme, although some of them seem to have deteriorated in recent years, and schools are still underused as a platform to promote healthy diets.⁵¹

37. With an observed increase of childhood overweight and obesity in every region worldwide,⁵² there is urgent need to renew commitment to improving school health and nutrition programmes. In this context, more than 40 countries in the WHO European Region support the WHO European Childhood Obesity Surveillance Initiative, which measures overweight and obesity in children using standardized height and weight measurements of over 300,000 children every three years.⁵³ This can be a model for other countries and regions for structuring their school based initiatives to address malnutrition.

Trade and investment for improved nutrition

38. The Decade's Work Programme stresses that trade policies and agreements should support nutrition policies and programmes and should not negatively impact the right to adequate food. This action area focuses on achieving global food security and nutrition targets through opportunities identified in trade and investment policies, improving access to a safe and nutritious food supply through appropriate trade agreements and policies.

39. The signing in March 2018 of the African Continental Free Trade Area by 44 African countries is expected to significantly accelerate growth and sustainable

⁴⁵ <https://apps.who.int/iris/bitstream/handle/10665/255414/WHO-NMH-NHD-17.2-eng.pdf>.

⁴⁶ www.fao.org/3/a-i5021e.pdf.

⁴⁷ www.fao.org/3/CA7062EN/CA7062EN.pdf.

⁴⁸ www.fao.org/3/CA2703EN/CA2703EN.pdf.

⁴⁹ www.fao.org/in-action/fsn-caucasus-asia/en/.

⁵⁰ <https://ipcig.org/publication/28434>.

⁵¹ <https://apps.who.int/iris/bitstream/handle/10665/275990/9789241514873-eng.pdf>.

⁵² www.fao.org/3/ca5162en/ca5162en.pdf.

⁵³ www.euro.who.int/__data/assets/pdf_file/0006/372426/WH14_COSI_factsheets_v2.pdf.

development through a doubling of overall intra-African trade by 2022, and a tripling of trade in agricultural goods by 2023, generating substantial economic gains.⁵⁴

40. The Codex Alimentarius Commission agreed in July 2018 to undertake new work to develop guidance on front-of-pack nutrition labelling, which is expected to impact national nutrition policy decisions and international trade.⁵⁵

41. The *Latin America and the Caribbean Regional Overview of Food Security and Nutrition 2018* found that trade will become progressively more relevant as the demand for food grows in regions where supply is insufficient, due to the changes in agricultural production arising from the greater number and severity of weather events and the effects of climate variability.⁵⁶

42. In resolution 73/132, mentioned above, the General Assembly urged “international cooperation to facilitate trade in agricultural products to improve food security and to address problems of both food-importing and food-exporting countries.”

43. The International Forum on Food Safety and Trade (Geneva, April 2019)⁵⁷ explored opportunities and challenges in strengthening food safety systems, particularly through trade, while consumers have access to a great quantity and diversity of food with the substantial expansion of global trade. The Heads of FAO, WHO and the World Trade Organization, in their joint statement, emphasised that “consumers have the right to expect that both locally produced and imported food are safe”,⁵⁸ with better alignment and coordination of efforts to strengthen food safety systems across sectors and borders.

44. The *Europe and Central Asia Regional Overview of Food Security and Nutrition 2019* described changes in the structure of trade and in non-tariff measures for food and agricultural products in this region, showing that the share of agrifood trade in total trade has not changed much, while both agrifood exports and imports have increased significantly, contributing to economic growth and food security and nutrition.⁵⁹

Safe and supportive environments for nutrition at all ages

45. This action area stresses the importance of environmental determinants in nutrition outcomes, including the school, home, hospital and work environments, food production and urban environments, as well as breastfeeding in various environments and regulatory and fiscal tools for a healthy food environment.

46. The concept of food environments, advanced by academia over the past years, has become a central consideration in nutrition policy making to address malnutrition in all its forms in countries. The General Assembly in its resolution 73/132 called for Member States to scale up research particularly on the economic and social determinants of health as related to nutrition and food systems.

⁵⁴ www.fao.org/3/CA2710EN/ca2710en.pdf.

⁵⁵ www.fao.org/fao-who-codexalimentarius/sh-proxy/en/?lnk=1&url=https%253A%252F%252Fworkspace.fao.org%252Fsites%252Fcodex%252FMeetings%252FCX-701-41%252FReport%252FFINAL%252FREPI8_CACe.pdf.

⁵⁶ www.fao.org/3/ca2127en/CA2127EN.pdf.

⁵⁷ www.wto.org/english/tratop_e/sps_e/faowhowtoapril19_e.htm.

⁵⁸ www.who.int/docs/default-source/resources/joint-statement.pdf?sfvrsn=61b890c4_16.

⁵⁹ www.fao.org/3/ca7153en/CA7153EN.pdf.

47. The status report 2018 on national implementation of the International Code of Marketing of Breast-milk Substitutes showed that 136 out of 194 countries had some form of legal measure in place covering all, many or a few provisions of the Code.⁶⁰

48. At the third High-level Meeting of the General Assembly on the Prevention and Control of Non-communicable Diseases (New York, September 2018), Heads of State and Government welcomed the proclamation of the Decade and committed to, *inter alia*:⁶¹

- promote and implement policy, legislative and regulatory measures, including fiscal measures as appropriate, aiming at minimizing the impact of the main risk factors for NCDs, and promote healthy diets and lifestyles;
- invite the private sector to further produce and promote food products consistent with a healthy diet, making further efforts to reformulate them in order to provide healthier and nutritious options, reducing the excessive use of salt, sugars and fats, in particular saturated fats and trans-fats;
- invite the private sector to provide appropriate content information of those nutrients, bearing in mind international guidelines on nutrition labelling;
- invite the private sector to commit to further reduce the exposure of children to and impact on them of the marketing of foods and beverages high in fats, in particular saturated fats and trans-fats, sugars or salt, consistent with national legislation, where applicable.

49. The international conference “Leaving no one behind – making the case for adolescent girls”, organized by IFAD and Save the Children Italy (Rome, October 2018), aimed at supporting solutions to break the intergenerational cycle of malnutrition, contributing to achieve the global nutrition goals and the Decade’s objectives.⁶²

50. Food environments within the urban food agenda in high- and middle-income countries was discussed at the 5th Milan Urban Food Policy Pact Annual Gathering and Mayors Summit (Montpellier, October 2019), highlighting healthy diets as an important strategy to address nutrition challenges in urban contexts.

51. The 2019 Prince Mahidol Awards Conference (Bangkok, February 2019) focused on the political economy of NCDs and a whole-of-society approach.⁶³ Recognizing the Decade, the Bangkok Statement emphasized the need to raise public and political awareness on NCDs, their economic burdens and risk factors, and to protect, promote and support breastfeeding everywhere at all times.

52. The International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), WHO and UNICEF organized, under the umbrella of the Decade, the “International Symposium on Understanding the Double Burden of Malnutrition (DBM) for Effective Interventions” (Vienna, December 2019) to review policies and programme interventions for addressing the DBM and ensuring an enabled environment for good nutrition at each life stage.⁶⁴

⁶⁰ <https://apps.who.int/iris/bitstream/handle/10665/272649/9789241565592-eng.pdf>.

⁶¹ <https://undocs.org/en/A/RES/73/2>.

⁶² www.ifad.org/documents/38714174/40767203/Report+-+Conference+on+leaving+no+one+behind+-+making+the+case+for+adolescent+girls.pdf.

⁶³ https://pmac2019.com/uploads/post/PDF/pdf_post_cac5ff4000111.pdf.

⁶⁴ www.iaea.org/events/understanding-the-double-burden-of-malnutrition-symposium-2018.

Strengthened governance and accountability for nutrition

53. Nutrition demands a whole-of society approach, requiring contributions from and coordination among all stakeholders and sectors. The Decade's Work Programme outlines the responsibility of governments in fostering political dialogue and commitment, providing information for learning and accountability, and promoting inter-country collaboration.

54. Following the first progress report⁶⁵ of the Secretary-General on the implementation of the Decade, the General Assembly recognized in resolution [72/306](#)⁶⁶ in July 2018 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, urging governments and their partners to intensify their efforts and scale up commitments and investments for nutrition under the Decade's Work Programme.

55. In resolution [73/132](#), the General Assembly called upon Member States to address hunger and malnutrition as an issue that affects all nations and reiterated its call for the scaling up of national commitments and increasing investments for nutrition under the Decade's Work Programme.

56. Regarding financial objectives, some low-middle income countries have seen increased government spending on nutrition objectives, and donor spending has exceeded the US\$19.6 billion that was set at the beginning of the Decade.⁶⁷

57. There has been an increase in diverse multi-stakeholder partnerships for nutrition that include the private sector. In the face of concerns over conflicts of interest, power asymmetries, and civil society exclusion, the CFS High Level Panel of Experts for Food Security and Nutrition released recommendations for managing multi-stakeholder partnerships for food security and nutrition in June 2018.⁶⁸

58. The Global Parliamentary Summit against Hunger and Malnutrition (Madrid, October 2018) committed to build a network of parliamentary alliances to support achievement of SDG2 and progress towards implementing the ICN2 commitments and the Decade, paying particular attention to vulnerable people and territories.⁶⁹

59. In November 2018, the Council of the European Union (EU) recognized the importance of the Decade for the achievement of SDG2 and the realization of the 2030 Agenda. It also invited the EU Commission to propose a revision of the 2010 policy framework on food security and the 2013 policy framework on nutrition, honouring its nutrition commitments through a holistic EU approach.⁷⁰

60. As a contribution to the Decade, decision-makers, practitioners and other stakeholders gathered at a global conference organized in Bangkok in November 2018 by the International Food Policy Research Institute and FAO to discuss how to speed up integrated action for progress toward achieving a world free of hunger and malnutrition.⁷¹

61. The *Asia and the Pacific Regional Overview of Food Security and Nutrition 2018*⁷² described new initiatives being introduced to strengthen the capacity of city governments to be involved in food and nutrition, like the FAO's NADHALI initiative

⁶⁵ <https://undocs.org/A/72/829>.

⁶⁶ www.un.org/en/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=A/RES/72/306.

⁶⁷ <https://globalnutritionreport.org/resources/nutrition-growth-commitment-tracking/>.

⁶⁸ www.fao.org/3/CA0156EN/CA0156en.pdf.

⁶⁹ www.fao.org/about/meetings/global-parliamentary-summit/en.

⁷⁰ <http://data.consilium.europa.eu/doc/document/ST-14554-2018-INIT/en/pdf>.

⁷¹ www.ifpri-faobangkokconference.org.

⁷² www.fao.org/3/CA0950EN/ca0950en.pdf.

aimed to develop city-wide food systems plans by establishing multi-stakeholder food system platforms at local level.⁷³

62. As recommended by the ICN2 Framework for Action, the Chief Executives of FAO, IFAD, UNICEF, WFP and WHO harnessed in December 2019 the positive experiences of UNSCN and the UN Network for the Scaling Up Nutrition (SUN) Movement and established terms of reference for a merged entity, to be called UN Nutrition, converging global and country perspectives. This responds to the ambitions set out by the UN Reform and the challenge of achieving the SDGs.

63. Strengthened monitoring mechanisms are needed to track progress in achieving national targets. Nutrition data and information systems serve as a foundation to boost nutrition action. At the global level, the *State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World*⁷⁴ reports in 2018 and 2019, as well as the 2018 *Global Nutrition Report*⁷⁵ used, analyzed and discussed global data on hunger and malnutrition, informing the monitoring of the nutrition-related targets of the SDGs. In 2019, for the first time, low birthweight (LBW) estimates were published by UNICEF and WHO for 147 countries, allowing tracking of progress towards the global target for LBW reduction set at the World Health Assembly in 2012.⁷⁶

III. Further engagement of stakeholders induced by the Decade

Commitments by governments

64. Country commitments for action are key to the Decade's support in leveraging government policy development, investments and actions. 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.

65. While many countries are making progress in setting up new commitments, there is still hesitation to register these commitments in the Decade's database. The commitments submitted by Brazil, Ecuador and Italy have been registered in the open access database that is co-facilitated by the joint FAO/WHO Secretariat of the Decade.⁷⁷

66. In order to support the implementation of the Decade, FAO and WHO published in 2018 a guide⁷⁸ for countries to translate the policies and actions recommended in the ICN2 Framework for Action into country-specific commitments and a policy brief⁷⁹ on driving commitment for nutrition within the Decade.

67. National commitments for action on eliminating trans-fats from the food supply have been made by 103 countries to date.⁸⁰

Contributions by UN organizations

68. FAO continued working on the critical role of agriculture and food systems in reducing malnutrition, strengthening the call for food systems transformation.

⁷³ www.fao.org/in-action/nadhali/en/.

⁷⁴ www.fao.org/publications/sofi/en/.

⁷⁵ <https://globalnutritionreport.org/>.

⁷⁶ www.who.int/nutrition/publications/UNICEF-WHO-lowbirthweight-estimates-2019/en/.

⁷⁷ www.un.org/nutrition/commitments.

⁷⁸ www.fao.org/3/ca1505en/CA1505EN.pdf.

⁷⁹ <https://apps.who.int/iris/bitstream/handle/10665/274375/WHO-NMH-NHD-17.11-eng.pdf>.

⁸⁰ <https://extranet.who.int/nutrition/gina/en/scorecard/TFA>.

Updating FAO's Strategy and Vision for its work in nutrition⁸¹ continued, which is expected to outline FAO's strategic choices and action priorities informed by main challenges in nutrition and its comparative advantages. FAO released in 2019 the *FAO School Food and Nutrition Framework*⁸² to guide its work in supporting governments and institutions to develop, transform or strengthen school-based policies and programmes, and *FAO Framework for the Urban Food Agenda*⁸³ to guide its work in supporting decision-makers to recognize the role of cities and sub-national governments as strategic sites and actors to address the complex socio-economic and ecological issues that constrain food security and nutrition.

69. WHO released in 2018–2019 various normative products to support countries in the implementation of the ICN2 commitments, including essential nutrition actions,⁸⁴ assessing and managing children at primary health care facilities to prevent overweight and obesity, fortification of rice with vitamins and minerals,⁸⁵ effective actions for improving adolescent nutrition,⁸⁶ and the Baby-friendly Hospital Initiative⁸⁷. Moreover, WHO has regularly tracked progress on the achievement of global nutrition targets and on the implementation of nutrition policies through the publication of Joint Malnutrition Estimates⁸⁸ and through the Global database on the Implementation of Nutrition Action⁸⁹ that includes information on nutrition-related policies, actions and mechanisms for monitoring or coordination in 201 countries and territories. WHO has also been supporting the implementation of the Global Nutrition Monitoring Framework in 36 countries worldwide. WHO launched the global initiative REPLACE in 2018, which aims to eliminate trans-fats from the food supply by 2023.⁹⁰

70. IAEA has focused on strengthening collective actions across organizations, countries and communities to move forward the DBM agenda, in particular on the role of stable isotope techniques in understanding biological pathways and in assessing the impact of programmes and initiatives targeting the DBM. Stable isotope techniques are used to accurately assess various forms of malnutrition and provide data to design or improve national health and nutrition programmes. The IAEA's work that fosters the use of stable isotope techniques and building capacity in Member States was reinforced with the launch of the IAEA Doubly Labelled Water Database.⁹¹ Through sharing of data on energy expenditure, the database will help countries to devise better health policies to combat a growing obesity epidemic worldwide.

71. In line with its commitment to improve the nutrition of 12 million people and increase the target of nutrition-sensitive projects to 50 percent by 2021, IFAD developed in 2019 its new Nutrition Action Plan 2019–2025,⁹² with the overall objective to accelerate mainstreaming of nutrition in its investments. Furthermore, IFAD adopted an integrated approach to ensure that climate change, environmental resources, gender, youth and nutrition are adequately mainstreamed throughout its programme of loans and grants.⁹³ In 2018–2019, IFAD organized three regional capacity building workshops on nutrition-sensitive agriculture and rural development

⁸¹ www.fao.org/3/nb124en/nb124en.pdf.

⁸² www.fao.org/3/ca4091en/ca4091en.pdf.

⁸³ www.fao.org/3/CA3151EN/ca3151en.pdf.

⁸⁴ www.who.int/nutrition/publications/essential-nutrition-actions-2019/en/.

⁸⁵ www.who.int/nutrition/publications/guidelines/rice-fortification/en/.

⁸⁶ www.who.int/nutrition/publications/guidelines/effective-actions-improving-adolescent/en/.

⁸⁷ www.who.int/nutrition/publications/infantfeeding/bfhi-implementation/en/.

⁸⁸ www.who.int/nutgrowthdb/estimates/en/.

⁸⁹ <https://extranet.who.int/nutrition/gina/>.

⁹⁰ www.who.int/nutrition/topics/replace-transfat/; www.fao.org/3/CA7062EN/CA7062EN.pdf.

⁹¹ <https://doubly-labelled-water-database.iaea.org/dataOverview>.

⁹² www.ifad.org/en/document-detail/asset/41237860.

⁹³ www.ifad.org/en/web/knowledge/publication/asset/41404848.

to train professionals in Latin America and the Caribbean, East and Southern Africa and West and Central Africa regions. Moreover, IFAD launched a nutrition-sensitive value chain guide⁹⁴ to help partners in designing value chain projects that can improve diets while remaining economically viable and addressing issues of environmental sustainability and empowerment of women.

72. UNICEF entered its new strategic plan period 2018–2021⁹⁵ with a vision to consolidate and expand the programmatic gains of addressing child malnutrition in all its forms around the world, in order to meet by 2021 three annual targets of reaching at least: (i) 250 million children under five years of age with services to prevent stunting and other forms of malnutrition; (ii) 100 million adolescents with services to prevent anaemia and other forms of malnutrition; and (iii) 6 million children with services to treat severe wasting and other forms of acute malnutrition in development and humanitarian contexts. The support provided to countries for improved policies and programmes in 2018 focused on protecting and supporting breastfeeding in children under two years (112 countries) and interventions to improve complementary foods, diet diversity and feeding practices in young children (102 countries). UNICEF supported joint programmes on nutrition and WASH (62 countries), and nutrition-sensitive social protection programmes, including the implementation of conditional cash transfers (39 countries). It also delivered emergency nutrition services to children and women in 59 countries affected by humanitarian crises in 2018.⁹⁶

73. WFP continued delivering optimal nutrition programming on treatment and prevention as emergency response, while integrating nutrition-sensitive approaches across the humanitarian-development nexus. WFP assisted in 2018 over 86 million people across 83 countries through prevention and treatment programmes for malnutrition, including school meals, resilience activities and capacity strengthening. Out of these, nearly 16 million people were reached in 59 countries, most of them in emergency and fragile settings. Stunting prevention efforts focused on promoting healthy diets during the first 1,000 days, whereby 1.2 million beneficiaries were reached through food-based interventions in 22 countries. *WFP Nutrition's Learning Platform*⁹⁷ was launched in 2019 to share WFP's experience, lessons learned and research on nutrition with external stakeholders and the *Fill the Nutrient Gap*⁹⁸ assessments were completed in 19 countries. The Regional Centre of Excellence against Hunger and Malnutrition was opened in Côte d'Ivoire in March 2019, a partnership between WFP and the government to share knowledge and experiences in the fight against hunger and malnutrition.

74. UNSCN continued working towards maximizing UN policy coherence and accountability, advocating on nutrition, building bridges, exploring new and emerging nutrition-related issues in collaboration with its members and through various knowledge products such as the 2018 UNSCN brief on *Non-communicable diseases, diets and nutrition*,⁹⁹ which addresses technical and policy aspects of the NCDs-nutrition nexus. UNSCN NEWS 43¹⁰⁰ explored the drivers of malnutrition, how they intersect and overlap, and how they intensify exclusion and inequalities, while UNSCN NEWS 44¹⁰¹ considered the contexts in which consumers engage with the

⁹⁴ www.ifad.org/en/web/knowledge/publication/asset/40805038.

⁹⁵ www.unicef.org/media/48126/file/UNICEF_Strategic_Plan_2018-2021-ENG.pdf.

⁹⁶ UNICEF's 2018 reporting is based on verified data from UNICEF's internal data reporting systems and its NutriDash.

⁹⁷ <https://cdn.wfp.org/nutrition/nutx/>.

⁹⁸ www.wfp.org/publications/2017-fill-nutrient-gap.

⁹⁹ www.unscn.org/uploads/web/news/document/NCDs-brief-EN-WEB.pdf.

¹⁰⁰ www.unscn.org/uploads/web/news/UNSCN-News43-WEB.pdf.

¹⁰¹ www.unscn.org/uploads/web/news/UNSCN-Nutrition44-WEB-21aug.pdf.

food system making decisions about acquiring, preparing and consuming food, and the impact of the food environment on dietary choices. UNSCN convened an Expert Group Meeting (New York, June 2018)¹⁰² that examined how nutrition can be a connecting force between the SDGs and a catalyst to the achievement of their targets.

75. The UN Interagency Task Force on NCDs, through its thematic working group on nutrition convened by UNSCN, continued to work on all forms of malnutrition. The group participated in three joint missions raising the profile of nutrition within NCD investment cases (Philippines and Thailand in 2018 and Uganda in 2019), which resulted in the development and piloting of a nutrition checklist for future joint missions. The group contributed to the third High-level Meeting of the General Assembly on NCDs by developing an inventory of agencies' work on childhood obesity, and started to prepare for a community of practice on nutrition, human rights and law.

76. The 2019 report of the Special Rapporteur on the right to food to the General Assembly focused on the SDGs¹⁰³ through a human rights-based approach to nutrition policies, emphasizing in particular the inequitable distribution of food and productive resources as a significant barrier to the realization of the right to food and nutrition. The Special Rapporteur also focused on nutrition issues related to children and women in her country mission reports in 2018 (Indonesia and Argentina) and 2019 (Azerbaijan and Zimbabwe).¹⁰⁴ In 2019 the Special Rapporteur contributed to UNICEF's advocacy brief on *Protecting children's right to a healthy food environment*,¹⁰⁵ emphasizing a child rights-based approach to prevent and reduce malnutrition.

Contributions by non-state actors

77. The Civil Society (CS) ICN2 Nutrition Group, a platform of civil society organizations and social movements that have actively engaged in the ICN2 process and continue to advance its follow-up, promoted in 2018–2019 the effective participation and engagement of those most affected by hunger and malnutrition in reshaping nutrition policies. Moreover, it facilitated coordination, collaboration and dissemination of information on the Decade and nutrition-related research, policies and initiatives among its members, and organized preparatory dialogues prior to official meetings. In the context of the Civil Society and Indigenous Peoples' Mechanism (CSM) for relations with the CFS, the Group promoted the alignment of food and nutrition messages and policy proposals towards a collective vision¹⁰⁶ for the CFS Voluntary Guidelines on Food Systems and Nutrition. They stimulated discussions on the need for robust safeguards to protect public policy spaces against potential conflicts of interest in the CFS process on multi-stakeholder partnerships to finance and improve food security and nutrition in the framework of the 2030 Agenda.¹⁰⁷

78. The International Coalition for Advocacy on Nutrition, established following the first Nutrition for Growth (N4G) Summit in London, has focused on mobilizing more and better resources and policies for nutrition while holding N4G commitment makers, especially donor countries, accountable for their pledges. The Coalition

¹⁰² www.unscn.org/en/news-events/past-events?idnews=1828.

¹⁰³ <https://undocs.org/en/A/74/164>.

¹⁰⁴ www.ohchr.org/EN/Issues/Food/Pages/Visits.aspx.

¹⁰⁵ www.unicef.nl/files/Advocacy-brief-healthy-food-enviro-final.pdf.

¹⁰⁶ www.csm4cfs.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/02/CSM-vision-document-FS-N_draft-June-2019-final.pdf.

¹⁰⁷ www.csm4cfs.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/02/CSM-Comments-on-HLPE-MSP-ZD-19-Feb-2018-Final.pdf.

supported a worldwide movement of advocates encouraging governments to step up to the challenge of combating all forms of malnutrition.¹⁰⁸

79. The joint FAO/WHO Secretariat of the Decade convened quarterly teleconferences with the CS ICN2 Nutrition Group and CSM to share information on the Decade and discuss civil society contributions to its implementation, in particular to the country-led action networks. Annual face-to-face meetings were also held in 2018 and 2019.

80. In June 2018, WHO and Chatham House convened a dialogue in London with representatives of the food and non-alcoholic beverage industries for which WHO has defined 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. As a result, in May 2019, the International Food and Beverage Alliance (IFBA) committed to align with the WHO target to eliminate industrially produced trans-fat from the global food supply by 2023.¹⁰⁹

81. In addition, IFBA worked in 2018–2019 in a number of countries in partnerships to improve global health through public-private-partnerships such as in Australia (Healthy Food Partnership to develop food category definitions and draft targets for sodium, saturated fat and sugars), Brazil (Technical Cooperation Agreement on the Development of Local Actions for Promoting Healthy Lifestyles to reduce sugar and salt in food products), India (Eat Right India for product reformulation, provision and promotion of healthier food options, introduction of nutrition information on menus), Spain (Collaboration Plan for the Improvement of Food and Beverages to reduce sugar, saturated fat and salt in food products), and Nigeria and Pakistan (pilot projects to encourage and support the phase out of industrially produced trans-fat by 2023).

82. The Private Sector Mechanism for the relations with the CFS that acts as focal point for private enterprises across the agri-food chain, from farmers to input providers, cooperatives, processors, small and medium enterprises and food companies, organized a consultation to provide the wider private sector network the opportunity to dialogue with the joint FAO/WHO Secretariat of the Decade on their contribution to the Decade, and to discuss potential future priority action (October 2019).

83. In February 2019, the Global Panel on Agriculture and Food Systems for Nutrition pledged its support to the Decade through bringing together policymakers from different sectors in the food system and engaging them in tackling malnutrition. The Panel pledged to deliver tools to encourage and support governments in low- and middle-income countries as they design and implement food and nutrition policies, and to foster changes in food systems to shift dietary trends towards better nutrition and improved health.¹¹⁰

84. In August 2019, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) issued its special report on Climate Change and Land,¹¹¹ emphasizing that the stability of food supply is projected to decrease as the magnitude and frequency of extreme weather events that disrupt food chains increases, with greater atmospheric CO₂ levels lowering the nutritional quality of crops, and resulting in higher food prices and increased risk of food insecurity and malnutrition. In the same report, the IPCC recognized that “consumption of healthy and sustainable diets presents major opportunities for reducing Green House Gas emissions from food systems and

¹⁰⁸ <https://globalnutritionreport.org/resources/about-malnutrition/nutrition-advocacy/>.

¹⁰⁹ www.who.int/news-room/detail/07-05-2019-who-welcomes-industry-action-to-align-with-global-trans-fat-elimination-targets.

¹¹⁰ www.unscn.org/uploads/web/news/Global-Panel-Commitment-to-Decade-of-Action.pdf.

¹¹¹ www.ipcc.ch/site/assets/uploads/2019/08/4.-SPM_Approved_Microsite_FINAL.pdf.

improving health outcomes”, all of which call for enhanced action and commitments under the Decade.

Scaling Up Nutrition Movement

85. The SUN Movement expanded in 2019 by two new members and at present comprises 61 countries and four Indian States. Over 1,200 participants from more than 100 countries came together during the SUN Movement Global Gathering in Nepal (November 2019) to take stock of progress, share innovations and learn. The SUN Movement contributed to achievements in all action areas of the Decade’s Work Programme in 2018–2019.¹¹² It ensured that voices of SUN country stakeholders were considered during the consultation on the CFS Voluntary Guidelines on Food Systems and Nutrition, and included a food systems component in the *2019 SUN Movement Joint-Assessment*¹¹³ and in the training of focal points for SUN. It also facilitated the development of joint messaging around nutrition in UHC, and hosted events during the World Health Assembly (Geneva, May 2019) and the UN High-level Meeting on UHC (New York, September 2019), which raised awareness about the UHC agenda among SUN country stakeholders.

86. The tracking of public financial allocations for nutrition is done by 51 countries and 25 reported their public finances related to nutrition during the last budget cycle year. The Multi-stakeholder platforms engage with parliaments in 45 countries and 15 have dedicated national parliamentary networks for nutrition. Completed by 58 countries, the *2019 SUN Movement Joint-Assessment* is a unique tool which allows all country stakeholders active in scaling up nutrition to come together to celebrate progress, identify challenges and set a course for the future.¹¹⁴

87. The SUN Movement is supported by four networks, including a Civil Society Network (SUN CSN), a Business Network (SBN), a Donor Network, and the UN Network (UNN) for SUN.

88. The SUN CSN works in 53 countries representing over 3,000 organizations locally, nationally and internationally. Their advocacy efforts have resulted in greater investment for nutrition, increased political will and accountability, and more nutrition outputs from national budgets. In 2018–2019 they continued participating in national MSPs, supported implementation of nutrition interventions on the ground, provided technical assistance to reinforce the implementation and monitoring of national nutrition plans and adherence to the International Code of Marketing of Breast-milk Substitutes, and trained people about their right to adequate food.

89. The SBN, co-convened by GAIN and WFP, supported 33 countries to mobilise business for nutrition. The platform has 23 global members (among the 650 businesses ranging from small and medium enterprises to multi-national companies) who collectively reach up to 1.1 million employees worldwide through workforce nutrition programmes. 135 business-to-business matches were established between global and national members. SBN co-hosted the first Nutrition Africa Investor Forum (Nairobi, October 2018) with 220 participants, including representatives from 20 investment institutions, business leaders and policy makers.

90. The SUN Donor Network, bringing together a group of international donors and foundations, continued in 2018 supporting improved accountability for nutrition finance through the development of a policy marker for nutrition to be inserted into

¹¹² https://scalingupnutrition.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/11/SUN-Annual-Report-2019-ENG_web_FINAL.pdf.

¹¹³ https://scalingupnutrition.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/04/SUN-JAAt-a-glance_ENG.pdf.

¹¹⁴ <https://scalingupnutrition.org/progress-impact/monitoring-evaluation-accountability-and-learning-meal/joint-assessment-exercise/>.

the Creditor Reporting System of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development and revision of the Corporate Social Responsibility Code for Basic Nutrition.¹¹⁵

91. UNN for SUN engaged in 2018–2019 with more than 16 UN agencies to operationalize the principles of the UN Reform and Agenda 2030. UNN for SUN supported all SUN members to foster increased coherence in UN programming through development and humanitarian assistance frameworks, focusing on nutrition outcomes, which increased engagement and commitment to nutrition. Furthermore, in 2019 UNN for SUN published *Tales be told*,¹¹⁶ a compilation of country stories illustrating the support received by governments.

Country-led action networks

92. The Decade encourages 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 the Decade's Work Programme. Led and coordinated by one or more countries, the action networks allow countries to exchange knowledge and good practices, successes and challenges, and provide mutual support to accelerate progress with the final objective of improving food systems, diets and nutrition for all through policies and legislation.¹¹⁷

93. To date, the following global action networks have been convened under the Decade:

- (a) Global Action Network on Sustainable Food from the Oceans and Inland Waters for Food Security and Nutrition – lead country: Norway;
- (b) Global Action Network on Nutrition Labelling – lead countries: France, Australia and Chile;
- (c) Global Action Network on Traditional, Healthy and Sustainable Diets – lead country: Italy.

94. In October 2019, plans to form a World Coalition on Healthy School Meals was announced by Germany. A work programme is being developed jointly with Brazil and Sri Lanka.

95. Additionally, several regional networks have been convened for the Americas and the Pacific, namely:

- (a) Regional Action Network on Strategies for Reducing Salt Consumption for the Prevention and Control of Cardiovascular Disease in the Americas – lead countries: Brazil, Costa Rica and Colombia;
- (b) Regional Action Network to Promote Food Guidelines in the Americas – lead countries: Brazil and Uruguay;
- (c) Regional Action Network for the Americas on Food and Nutrition Security Governance – lead country: Brazil;
- (d) Regional Action Network for the Americas on Public Purchasing of Family-produced Food – lead country: Brazil;

¹¹⁵ [www.oecd.org/officialdocuments/publicdisplaydocumentpdf/?cote=DCD/DAC/STAT\(2018\)38/REV1&docLanguage=En](http://www.oecd.org/officialdocuments/publicdisplaydocumentpdf/?cote=DCD/DAC/STAT(2018)38/REV1&docLanguage=En).

¹¹⁶ www.unnetworkforsun.org/sites/default/files/2019-11/UNN%20Tales%20Be%20Told-WEB%20%2815Oct2019%29_.pdf.

¹¹⁷ www.un.org/nutrition/action-networks.

- (e) Regional Action Network for the Americas on Sustainable School Feeding – lead country: Brazil;
- (f) Regional Action Network for the Americas on Healthy Food Environments – lead country: Chile;
- (g) Regional Action Network for Ending Childhood Obesity in the Pacific – lead country: Fiji.

IV. Conclusion and way forward

Scaling up SMART commitments

96. 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 and sustainable diets, the Decade's aim to accelerate implementation of the ICN2 commitments is showing results, albeit uneven in different areas. Action networks are expected to be a driver for scaling up commitments and achieving concrete results. The following areas, though, 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 including formulating and registering SMART commitments under the Decade and 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 and of oils that contribute to healthy diets, create healthy food environments, including by restricting the marketing of foods and beverages to children, promoting nutrition labelling, and ensuring food procurement in public institutions and food price policies to support healthy diets. Work with the environmental, climate change and biodiversity communities should be intensified in advancing research, policymaking, and metrics. A close interaction is recommended between the Nutrition Decade and the Decade of Action and Delivery for Sustainable Development,¹¹⁸ especially with the increased attention to food systems transformation;

(c) *Health.* Actions taken to promote healthy diets should reach all stages of the life cycle, especially for women before and during pregnancy and for adolescent girls. Essential Nutrition Actions should be included in Primary Health Care benefit packages. Services to manage acute malnutrition should be streamlined in universal health coverage strategies and health services to increase coverage beyond the current 20 percent. Promotion, protection and support of breastfeeding also require legislative action based on the International Code of Marketing of Breast-milk Substitutes;

(d) *Education.* Schools are excellent environments to address the double burden of malnutrition and install good dietary habits, 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 food and nutrition education programmes;

(e) *Social protection.* Increased poverty and inequalities need to be tackled by adequate social protection programmes that include support for healthy diets and address malnutrition in all its forms. Food voucher schemes and food banks are options to be considered.

¹¹⁸ www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/decade-of-action/.

Mid-term review

97. ECOSOC resolution 1989/84¹¹⁹ 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.

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

99. In this regard, the Decade's Work Programme foresees the convening of dialogues among stakeholders to evaluate progress in implementing the Decade.

100. The objectives of the Mid-term Review (MTR) of the Decade¹²⁰ are to assess and evaluate the achievements in individual policy areas of the ICN2 Framework for Action, as reflected in the action areas of the Decade's Work Programme, over the period from 2016 to 2020, with a view to: (i) highlighting specific advances, initiatives and partnerships in nutrition during the first half of the Decade; and (ii) identifying the constraints encountered and the actions needed to overcome them during the second half of the Decade. Furthermore, the MTR should identify focus areas for priority action from 2021 to 2025, and plan for the end-term review of the Decade, outlining tentatively its possible format and modalities.

101. In terms of content, the MTR should cover: (i) progress in specific action areas under the Decade in 2016–2020, considering the broader developments regarding nutrition globally, with specific reference to the focus areas of the ICN2 Framework for Action; (ii) collaborations established and engagement of actors in implementing the first half of the Decade; (iii) progress in implementation modalities outlined in the Decades' Work Programme during the review period: commitments for action, action networks, forums and conferences, advocacy and communication; (iv) a synthetic forward-looking storyline based on the review of these different elements.

102. During the preparatory process toward the MTR, a series of consultations and dialogues with various stakeholders at different levels is being convened, including an informal consultation with Permanent Missions in Geneva and Rome to reflect on progress and way forward for the Decade. A face-to-face consultation on civil society engagement in the MTR process was held in October 2019 and will be continued through the quarterly dialogue with CSM and the CS ICN2 Nutrition Group. A face-to-face consultation with the Private Sector on the MTR also took place in October 2019, and ways to ensure its engagement in the MTR process are to be identified by the joint FAO/WHO Secretariat of the Decade. Facilitated by UNSCN, dialogues with UN partner agencies will be convened to seek their inputs to the MTR process. Finally, an online consultation will give all stakeholders at global, regional and country levels the possibility to contribute inputs to the MTR process.

103. The Tokyo N4G Summit in 2020¹²¹ will provide space for taking stock and making new financial and policy commitments at the mid-term of the Decade.

104. In conjunction with the MTR, a global conference/event should be organized to underscore the achievements of the first half of the Decade (2016–2020) and set the stage for the priorities during its second half (2021–2025).

¹¹⁹ <https://undocs.org/en/E/RES/1989/84>.

¹²⁰ www.un.org/nutrition/sites/www.un.org.nutrition/files/general/pdf/conceptnote_mtr_nutrition_decade.pdf.

¹²¹ <https://nutritionforgrowth.org/>.