



Food and Agriculture
Organization of the
United Nations



World Health
Organization

STRENGTHENING NUTRITION ACTION

A resource guide
for countries based on the
policy recommendations
of the Second
International Conference
on Nutrition (ICN2)



UNITED NATIONS DECADE OF
ACTION ON NUTRITION



2016-2025

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of the Second International Conference on Nutrition (ICN2)

Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
World Health Organization
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FOREWORD

Eradicating hunger and ending all forms of malnutrition in the world remain major pervasive development challenges of our time.

Today, one in three people in the world suffer from at least one form of malnutrition. Not one country is free from malnutrition, be it hunger, undernutrition, micronutrient deficiency, overweight or obesity. Globally, dietary patterns have shifted from a diet rich in legumes, fruits and vegetables, and unrefined cereal foods to a diet with a high intake of refined carbohydrates, added sugars and fats, and excessive consumption of animal-source foods, especially meat in some regions.

Unhealthy diets and maternal and child malnutrition are among the current top risk factors for the global burden of disease and account for about one quarter of global deaths. Increasing numbers of people of all ages are affected by diet-related noncommunicable diseases (NCDs), including diabetes, hypertension, cardiovascular diseases and some cancers. Less than half of people in the world have full coverage with essential health services and treatment of people suffering from NCDs places a heavy burden on health systems. Low- and middle-income countries are assuming an increasing share of the economic burden of NCDs, as their populations grow and their food systems change.

Globally, significant quantities of food intended for human consumption are lost or wasted each year. This not only has implications in terms of economic losses for farmers and other stakeholders within the food value chain, but it also leads to higher prices for consumers and represents a major squandering of resources, including energy, labour, land and capital used in producing food. Reducing food losses in particular would contribute greatly to increasing the supply of available food in developing countries, thereby contributing to improving food security.

Climate change and other environmental factors impact food security and people's nutritional status and dietary choices, primarily through their effects on food production, food access, water safety, sanitation, time for necessary caregiving and income opportunities. The poor and vulnerable, especially women and children, are most affected by the consequences of the changing climate. Conversely, current food systems and dietary choices themselves contribute to climate change because of the greenhouse gas emissions they produce, some systems more than others.

The Second International Conference on Nutrition (ICN2), convened in 2014 and attended by 164 Member States of FAO and WHO, has been instrumental in raising global awareness about the need to transform food systems for better diets and a healthier planet. The adopted ICN2 outcome documents, the Rome Declaration on Nutrition and the Framework for Action (FfA), provide a global roadmap for addressing malnutrition in all its forms through multiple sectors, including food, agriculture, health, social protection, trade, education and the environment. We need food systems that are sustainable, resilient and efficient in providing year-round access to foods that cover people's nutrient needs in an equitable manner, and with due attention to environmental and health impacts.

In 2015, world leaders committed to achieve a set of goals and targets – the Sustainable Development Goals – and set out a vision for a more sustainable future for all, economically, socially and environmentally. At the centre of this 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development is the elimination of all forms of malnutrition. To get there, we need a transformative change and a prioritization and acceleration of action-oriented efforts.

The United Nations (UN) Decade of Action on Nutrition (Nutrition Decade), proclaimed by the UN General Assembly in April 2016, has given us a window of high-level political attention to nutrition in order for us to scale up our collective efforts so that all people at all times and at all stages of life have access to affordable, diversified, safe and healthy diets. It calls upon national governments and other relevant stakeholders to actively support the implementation of the ICN2 commitments over 10 years, from 2016 to 2025. The Nutrition Decade provides an umbrella for all actors to work together to address malnutrition in all its forms.

This resource guide will support countries to make the policy changes that are required. The vision put forward by ICN2 is the consumption of diverse, nutritious and safe food for all through sustainable production, trade and distribution systems that enable healthy diets. This document also aims to support countries and other stakeholders in translating the ICN2 voluntary policy recommendations into concrete and SMART (**s**pecific, **m**easurable, **a**chievable, **r**elevant and **t**ime-bound) country-specific commitments for action.

The resource guide is structured around 24 themes that “unpack” the ICN2 Ffa. Countries are invited to pick and choose those themes that are most relevant and applicable to their context.

The Nutrition Decade can be the movement of movements to provide all people with food that will contribute to healthy diets and optimal nutrition so that indeed by 2030 we have ended all forms of malnutrition and achieved food security and improved nutrition!

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