

Workshop: Jointly Addressing Food and Nutrition Security

The experience of the Millennium Development Goals
Achievement Fund

Madrid, 7th and 8th March, 2013.

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1) INTRODUCTION AND OBJECTIVES OF THE WORKSHOP:

Ending hunger and malnutrition is critical to sustainable development and must remain a priority on the post-2015 agenda. As stressed in the Rio+20 Outcome Document and the “Zero Hunger Challenge” launched by the United Nations Secretary General in June 2012, further and continued efforts are necessary to achieve food and nutrition security for all. In preparation of the UN General Assembly post-2015 discussions to be launched in September 2013, The UN Development Group has convened a global Thematic Consultation on Hunger, Food and Nutrition Security, co-chaired by FAO and WFP and co-supported by the Governments of Spain and Colombia.

Building on the work of the Millennium Development Goals Achievement Fund (MDG-F) on food security and nutrition, the MDG-F Secretariat is organizing a two-day Workshop in March 2013, in Madrid, hosted by the Government of Spain. The objectives of the Workshop are the following:

- 1) To share the lessons learned from the experience of the MDG-F and articulate how they can support the five priorities of the “Zero Hunger Challenge”.¹
- 2) To discuss the experience of the MDG-F with relevant experts from international organizations, the academia and the civil society, as well as partners involved in the management of MDG-F Joint Programmes, with a focus on the following topics: i) Governance; ii) Rural Development and Empowerment; iii) The combination of short-term interventions and long-term strategies;
- 3) To give visibility to and raise awareness of the outcomes of the MDG-F in Spain, by showcasing some of the key achievements of the Joint Programmes supported by the MDG-F.

2) BACKGROUND:

Between 1990-1992 and 2010-2012, the percentage of chronically under-nourished people across the world has gone down significantly from 19 to 12.5 percent.² However, absolute numbers indicate that 868 million people, the very large majority living in sub-Saharan Africa and Southern Asia, are still suffering from under-nutrition. Child under-nutrition remains particularly acute: about 165 million children under five-years-old, or one in four children, were estimated to be suffering from stunting in 2011.³ This is all the more serious that there is growing evidence that adequate nutrition during pregnancy and early childhood is essential to ensure healthy growth and cognitive development. Poor nutrition can have long-lasting negative implications on peoples' lives.

Progress has been unequally distributed across regions: if major improvements have been observed in South-Eastern and Eastern Asia, lifting millions of people out of hunger, the share of undernourished has actually increased in Western Asia⁴. In sub-Saharan Africa only modest progress has been achieved with 26.8 percent of the population still under-nourished, as compared to 32.8 percent in 1990-1992, and improvements appear to have reversed since 2007.

¹ <http://www.un.org/en/zerohunger/challenge.shtml>

² 19 percent of the world population in 1990-1992 represented 1000 million people. Under-nourished people are defined as individuals whose annual average dietary energy intake falls below a minimum threshold. Source: FAO, WFP and IFAD. 2012. The State of Food Insecurity in the World 2012. Economic Growth is necessary but not sufficient to accelerate reduction of hunger and malnutrition. Rome, FAO.

³ Stunting reflects a low height for age. Source: United Nations Children's Fund, World Health Organization, The World Bank. UNICEFWHO-World Bank Joint Child Malnutrition Estimates. (UNICEF, New York; WHO, Geneva; The World Bank, Washington, DC; 2012). http://www.who.int/nutgrowthdb/jme_unicef_who_wb.pdf (p. 8).

⁴ from 6.6 to 10.1 percent

Over the past decades, significant efforts have been made to better understand the causes of food and nutrition insecurity.⁵ Attention has progressively moved away from an initial focus on food availability, towards the recognition that malnutrition and hunger are strongly related to poverty and deprivation, and take roots in a complex set of both biological and socio-economic determinants.⁶ Food and nutrition insecurity reflect people's living conditions, economic resources and social opportunities: access to food, but also to sanitation and clean water, health services and immunization programmes, education, a safe and non-discriminating environment, etc. In line with this approach, food and nutrition security strategies need to integrate the multiple dimensions of social development, economic development, environmental sustainability and peace and stability.⁷

Three years remain to achieve the MDGs, and discussions aimed at advancing the post-2015 international development agenda have started. Ending hunger and malnutrition is critical to sustainable development and must remain a priority on the post-2015 agenda. As stressed in the Rio+20 Outcome Document and the "Zero Hunger Challenge" launched by the United Nations Secretary General in June 2012, further and continued efforts are necessary to achieve food and nutrition security for all. Political commitment and joint efforts to fight malnutrition have gained momentum and have translated into fruitful initiatives such as the "Renewed Efforts Against Child Hunger" (REACH) partnership⁸, or the "Scaling-Up Nutrition" (SUN) movement⁹ launched in 2010.

As one of the most important Funds created to support the achievement of the MDGs around the world, the MDG-F considers this an opportune moment to share the experiences and insights accrued through the implementation of its programmes over the last four years, and to further debate how food and nutrition security can be jointly addressed.

Through its 130 Joint Programmes, the MDG-F has greatly contributed to the fight against hunger and food insecurity. 24 Joint Programmes have been implemented under the "Children, Food Security and Nutrition Thematic Window", bringing together several stakeholders (UN Agencies, Governmental Institutions at the national and local level, Civil Society) to implement

⁵ <http://www.fao.org/docrep/005/y4671e/y4671e06.htm#fn32>

⁶ « Food 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.» Declaration of the World Summit on Food Security, Rome, 16-18 November 2009.

⁷ These dimensions are in line with the three pillars of sustainable human development and the holistic approach to development promoted by the UN System Task Team on the Post 2015 UN Development Agenda in its report "Realizing the Future we Want for All".

http://www.un.org/en/development/desa/policy/untaskteam_undf/untt_report.pdf

⁸ A memorandum of Understanding was eventually signed by FAO, WHO, UNICEF and WFP in December 2011.

⁹ <http://scalingupnutrition.org/>

targeted efforts to address the needs of populations suffering from hunger, and strengthen longer-term food and nutrition security strategies.

In many countries, specific efforts have been made to improve the governance of food and nutrition security strategies. Policy and institutional frameworks have been strengthened. The delivery of key nutrition and health services to populations suffering from hunger, in particular young children and pregnant women, has been scaled-up. Interventions have also contributed to increasing the access to food, through the improvement of agricultural practices and the increase and diversification of food production.

Furthermore, specific experiences have been developed so as to empower vulnerable groups. Some Joint Programmes have worked with communities to allow them to better manage their use of resources and adapt to climate change, which has reinforced their resilience to shocks. A large number of Joint Programmes under various MDG-F Thematic Windows such as the “Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment Window” or the “Development and the Private Sector Window” have also contributed to addressing the multi-dimensional features of food and nutrition insecurity, by supporting women's empowerment, the reduction of inequalities and discrimination, the development of the private sector, the sustainable management of water resources, the links between culture and development, and the impact of conflicts.

Against this backdrop, the MDG-F is organizing a two-day Workshop “Addressing Jointly Food and Nutrition Security” on 7th- 8th March 2013, in Madrid. The following topics will be discussed during the Workshop:

- a) **Food and Nutrition Security Governance: Models of Interventions**
- b) **Rural Development and Empowerment: key drivers of food and nutrition security**
- c) **Combining short-term interventions and long-term strategies**

3) TOPICS ON THE AGENDA:

A. Food and Nutrition Security Governance: Models of Interventions.

- The MDG-F Joint Programmes in the Children, Food Security and Nutrition Thematic Window have elaborated various strategies to achieve their ultimate goal of accelerating progress towards MDG Goal 1. Collectively, the JPs have adopted designs which feature a combination of short-term effective technical food and nutrition security (FNS) interventions delivered at the local level, together with a long-term approach to improving the institutional, legal and policy frameworks to improve food and nutrition security governance.

- FNS governance with respect to the MDG-F experience refers to the institutional capacity of national governments, the UN system, and other stakeholders to provide public goods and services demanded by citizens, especially vulnerable groups, in an accountable, transparent, and equity-focused way. This includes the processes governing policy reform (from agenda-setting, policy design, adoption and implementation), and the structures and institutions through which these processes occur.
- With the increasing recognition that cooperation among stakeholders is critical to achieving results, food and nutrition security governance is critical to improving coordination of national government, UN agencies, donors and other stakeholders; allocating budgetary commitment to FNS; and advancing the design, adoption and implementation of legal frameworks that incorporate nutrition-specific and sensitive approaches into national strategies and plans.¹⁰
- MDG-F Joint programmes have promoted different models of intervention of “good governance” to improve food and nutrition security. Multi-sectorial or integrated interventions have covered a large range of components, aimed notably at i) addressing under-nutrition and maternal and child health, notably through nutrition surveillance and monitoring mechanisms, the provision of healthcare services and the distribution of food supplements; ii) strengthening the legal and policy framework and the institutional capacities of national and local governments to address the causes of food insecurity. But such interventions require specific coordination efforts between several stakeholders to be successful.

Discussion group I:

Participants will be invited to examine several “Models of Intervention” implemented by the Joint Programmes and identify good practices of food and nutrition security governance.

Brief presentations: as inputs for the discussion, the following brief presentations will be made (10 min each):

- **El Salvador: The experience of the JP on Institutional and Policy Framework development.** Lessons learned.
- **Mauritania: Multi-sectorial coordination.** Lessons learned from the Joint Programme Experience.
- **Colombia: Integrated interventions delivered to communities.** Lessons learned.

¹⁰ Pelletier, D.L. 2002. ‘Politics of Nutrition’, in Nutrition: a Foundation for Development, Geneva: UN ACC/SCN.

Questions & Discussion: participants will address the following questions:

- **Institutional and policy framework: what works, and what does not, when building national capacities to manage food and nutrition insecurity?** What institutions and institutional instruments have proved critical for improving the food and nutrition security situation in the countries of intervention? Participants will be invited to review good practices in that area and share lessons-learned.
- **FNS governance and coordination: based on countries' experiences, what have been the main obstacles and successful formulas to implement coordinated multi-sectorial / multi-stakeholder approaches?** What are the key elements of success and the pending challenges for multi-sectorial coordination? For institutional and policy framework development? For community-based interventions? Participants will be invited to review good practices in that area and share lessons-learned.

B. Rural Development and Empowerment: key drivers of food and nutrition security.

- The majority of the poor and food-insecure people live in rural areas, and agriculture is a source of livelihood for most of the extreme poor.¹¹ In order to improve food and nutrition security and eradicate extreme poverty in rural areas, increasing the availability of and access to food is crucial.
- The agricultural sector in developing countries is often characterized by a large share of low productive small-scale farms, often dedicated to auto-consumption, and a high level of informality. The low productivity of the sector translates into low incomes for rural workers and farmers, and a higher vulnerability to shocks such as weather, environmental, or health shocks. The lack of adequate rural infrastructures (transport, power and energy, communications, etc.) and suboptimal business linkages make access to markets more difficult for both producers and consumers. As a result, poor rural households are often faced with distorted and volatile food prices and have to pay a ‘poverty premium’. Supporting small producers to increase their productivity and diversify their production can have a positive impact on their livelihoods and nutritional outcomes.
- Strong demographic growth and increasing demand for food is putting pressure upon scarce natural resources, in particular land and water. Strengthening the capacities of rural communities to manage their land and resources in a more sustainable way and to adapt to the environmental impact of climate change can contribute to reduce their exposure to shocks and improve their resilience.
- As a result of social exclusion, discrimination or long-inherited economic disparities, certain groups are more exposed to poverty, food insecurity and hunger than others. Depending on each country’s context, women, indigenous populations, refugees, etc. have been identified as particularly vulnerable. Such vulnerabilities often reflect an unequal access to productive resources and assets (such as land, water, inputs, credit, and even knowledge) and a lack of

¹¹ References:

IFAD. 2010. *Rural Poverty Report. New realities, new challenges: new opportunities for tomorrow's generation.* Rome, Italy. <http://www.ifad.org/rpr2011/report/e/rpr2011.pdf>.

FAO, WFP and IFAD. 2012. *The State of Food Insecurity in the World 2012. Economic Growth is necessary but not sufficient to accelerate reduction of hunger and malnutrition.* Rome, Italy.

World Bank, 2007. *World Development Report. Agriculture for Development.* Washington D.C., USA.

representation and participation in collective decision-making processes. Improving democratic governance so the voices of the most vulnerable are heard and their rights fully enforced can heavily contribute to fostering food security and equity.

Discussion group II:

Brief presentations: as inputs for the discussion, the following brief presentations will be made (10 min each):

- **IFAD. How can small and medium-size food producers/processors be better supported** so as to improve their livelihoods and foster food and nutrition security?
- **Cuba.** How can the development of the local private sector contribute to **increasing the availability and affordability of food**, and promote food and nutrition security?
- **Brazil.** How can national and local governments **support the right to access to food for vulnerable populations, specifically indigenous people?**
- **Mozambique.** How can local governments support a more **environmental sustainable development of the agricultural sector?**

Questions & Discussion: Participants will be invited to discuss the links between agriculture and access to food, by addressing the following issues:

- **Agriculture and nutrition linkages: how can the development of the agricultural sector at the local level contribute to increasing food availability and access to food?**
Participants will be invited to discuss how the development of the agricultural sector at the local level can help increase food availability and access to food. Examples of MDG-F Joint Programmes activities that have contributed to increasing and diversifying food production within rural communities will be presented.

- **How can local governments support a more environmental sustainable development of the agricultural sector? What interventions have proved to be more efficient?**
What are the main pending challenges? Participants will be invited to discuss how local authorities and institutions can play a key role in encouraging the development of more stable, resilient and sustainable food systems in rural areas and support communities' to strengthen their capacities to adapt to climate change. Examples of MDG-F Joint Programmes activities that have encouraged a better management of natural resources and have supported communities' mitigation of the impact of climate change will be presented.

- **How can local governments support a more equitable development in rural areas specifically in favor of the most vulnerable groups (indigenous people, ethnic minorities, marginalized populations, etc...)?** Participants will be invited to discuss how local authorities and institutions can play a key role in encouraging the development of more socially equitable food systems in rural areas; and empower vulnerable groups (for instance by enforcing land ownership-rights, encouraging dialogue with communities' representatives, etc.). Examples of MDG-F Joint Programmes activities that have contributed to empowering the most vulnerable will be presented.

C. Combining short-term interventions and long-term strategies.

- In a context of limited resources, governments and donors have to make critical decisions when designing nutrition strategies: immediate efforts are critical to address the urgent needs of hungry and under-nourished populations, especially pregnant women and young children in period of food crisis; but long-term strategies focusing on the underlying determinants of under-nutrition are also necessary to sustainably improve the food security status of the most vulnerable and eradicate hunger.

Discussion group III:

Brief presentations: as inputs for the discussion, the following presentation will be made:

- **Insights from the Colombian Agency for International Development Cooperation.** With limited development resources what would be the most efficient balance between short-term and long-term efforts? How to best articulate donors' agenda and national priorities/ national ownership?

Questions & Discussion: From the perspective of the future International Development Agenda, participants will be invited to discuss where development aid efforts should be

focused, in particular with respect to the needs of both short-term interventions and long-term strategies. The following issues will be addressed:

- **With limited development resources, where does development aid have more value-added: in the short-term or long-term efforts for food and nutrition security?**
While discussing this issue, participants will be invited to consider different contexts or food crisis, conflict and post-conflict, etc.
- **How to best articulate donors' agenda and national priorities/ national ownership?**
What are good examples of synergies and alignment between development actors and government's interventions? What have been the key factors for their success?