



# Improving Nutrition through Agriculture and Food Systems

## A conducive international environment for nutrition

Text-only version

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## Learning objectives

By the end of this lesson you will:

- describe what the main international commitments to nutrition are; and
- identify possible ways to build on existing initiatives and commitments.

## Introduction

In the past few years, nutrition has risen on the policy agenda with an increased number of national and international initiatives. Far more attention has been paid to the multiple burdens of malnutrition.

Through this lesson, you will become aware of the key initiatives, high-level events, commitments, movements and partnerships on nutrition and food security, at global, regional and country level, which have marked the last years. At the end, you might come up with some ideas on how to prioritize your activities within this international environment.

## Initiatives and commitments for addressing malnutrition

### *Year 2008*

#### **High Level Task Force on Global Food and Nutrition Security (HLTF)**

Following the dramatic rise of global food prices in early 2008, the **High Level Task Force** has been created, under the leadership of the UN Secretary-General. It aims at supporting effective action in countries, advocating for funds for both urgent action and long-term investments, inspiring a broad engagement by multiple stakeholders and improving accountability of the international system.

#### **REACH partnership**

The **REACH partnership** was jointly established by the FAO, UNICEF, WFP, WHO and IFAD to support multi-sectoral approaches for nutrition at country level. Since 2015, REACH has become a service of the UN network for the Scaling Up Nutrition Movement, designed to help countries in multi-sectoral coordination and planning for nutrition.

#### **L'Aquila Summit**

Twenty-six nations and fourteen international organizations launched the "**L'Aquila Food Security Initiative**" (AFSI). The declaration was reinforced through the L'Aquila Joint Statement on Global Food

Security and a commitment to invest \$22 billion for agriculture over three years in countries facing dramatic food insecurity through a comprehensive and coordinated approach to implement national food security strategies.

### **Year 2009**

#### **World Summit on Food Security\***

The decision to convene the **Summit** was taken by the FAO Council. The Summit unanimously adopted a declaration committing all the nations of the world to eradicate hunger at the earliest possible date.

\* (Member states make official commitments)

#### **Reform of the Committee on World Food Security (CFS)**

The **Committee on World Food Security** (CFS) was set up in 1974 as an intergovernmental body that reviews and follows up on food security and nutrition policies. The CFS was reformed in 2009 to become the foremost inclusive international and intergovernmental platform for all stakeholders to work together to ensure food security and nutrition for all. Since 2009, non-state actors participate through the Civil Society Mechanism and Private Sector Mechanism. The CFS develops and endorses policy recommendations and guidance on a wide range of food security and nutrition topics. The Committee reports to the UN General Assembly through the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) and to the FAO Conference.

### **Year 2010**

#### **The Scaling Up Nutrition (SUN) Movement**

The **SUN movement** is a global country-led movement that has brought together a wide coalition of stakeholders in nutrition, to advocate for greater action. These stakeholders are organized in global and national level networks, including the civil society, donors, UN agencies and business network. The SUN movement primarily focuses on scaling-up interventions that target the "**window of opportunity**" (**1.000 days**, i.e. from conception to 24 months of age), including efficacious nutrition-specific interventions (e.g. breastfeeding promotion, micronutrient supplementation) and investments in nutrition-sensitive interventions in various sectors including agriculture.

Aiming for a more coherent nutrition agenda globally and at country level. **United Nations, Civil society, Business, Donor, 56 Countries, GLOBAL, SUN Networks.**

## **Year 2012**

### **Zero Hunger Challenge**

Launched by the UN Secretary-General, the **Zero Hunger Challenge** is a global call to action for a range of organizations, social movements and people to promote effective strategies, more investments and increased development cooperation, in line with existing national and international agreements.

## **Year 2013**

### **Global Panel on Agriculture and Food Systems**

The **Global Panel** on Agriculture and Food Systems for Nutrition is an independent group of influential experts from the public and the private sector, which aims to generate and stimulate a stronger evidence base on agriculture, food systems and nutrition, and to provide effective guidance to decision-makers on nutrition-sensitive agriculture and food policy, programmes and investments.

### **Nutrition for Growth**

The **Nutrition for Growth** is an initiative launched in 2013 - in connection with the 2013 G8 Summit - by DFID, BMGF, CIF and other international partners, to galvanise global commitment to tackle undernutrition worldwide. During the first high-level international event in London, the "Global Nutrition for Growth Compact" has been endorsed by about 90 stakeholders. Two other international events are planned for 2016 and 2017.

### **World Health Assembly (WHA) Global Nutrition and NCDs Targets\***

The **World Health Assembly** has endorsed a set of six ambitious global **Nutrition Targets** by 2025 based on their public health relevance: child stunting, anaemia in women of reproductive age, low birth weight, childhood overweight, child wasting and exclusive breastfeeding. It serves as both a rallying cry to improve nutrition, as well as a universal tool for tracking progress. It has also endorsed **9 global NCDs** targets and indicators for 2025 aiming at combatting global mortality from the 4 main NCDs - cardiovascular disease, cancer, chronic lung disease and diabetes.

\* (Member states make official commitments)

## **Year 2014**

### **Second International Conference on Nutrition (ICN2)\***

Twenty-two years after the first conference on Nutrition (November 1992), FAO and WHO have jointly organized the **Second International Conference on Nutrition (ICN2)**. During the ICN2, over 170 member

states signed the **Rome Declaration on Nutrition** and its **Framework for Action**, thereby committing to making nutrition a central objective of their development processes. The **role of food systems** features as a central focus of the Rome Declaration on Nutrition, and political commitment and efforts to make agriculture policies and programmes "nutrition-sensitive" are growing. ICN2 follow-up provides a unique opportunity for operationalizing international commitments for Nutrition.

\* (Member states make official commitments)

### **The Global Nutrition Report**

The **Global Nutrition Report** is a report on the world's nutrition situation - global, regional, and country levels - and efforts to improve it. It assesses countries' progress in meeting global nutrition targets established by the World Health Assembly. It documents how well countries, donors, NGOs, businesses, and others are meeting the commitments they made at the Nutrition for Growth summit in 2013. The Report helps to guide action, build accountability and spark increased commitment for further progress towards reducing malnutrition much faster. This report will be updated and published annually.

## **Year 2015**

### **Nutrition in the Committee on the World Food Security (CFS)**

During the **CFS 42**, held at the FAO in October 2015, CFS has established a workstream on nutrition which focuses on identifying long-term actions to contribute, link and follow-up ICN2 commitments: the Rome Declaration on Nutrition and the Framework for Action endorsed by member states and the SDGs.

### **Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)\***

**Sustainable Development Goals (endorsed in September 2015)** are one of the main outcomes of the **Rio+20 Summit**. They are a follow-up to the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and UN member states are expected to frame their development agendas and policies over the next 15 years in line with these 17 goals. While the term "nutrition" appears as a free-standing element of the SDG No.2, nutrition issues are interwoven within all 17 goals. The SDGs offer a unique opportunity to **move forward the agenda on nutrition-sensitive food systems**.

\* (Member states make official commitments)

### **UN Global Nutrition Agenda**

The **United Nations system Standing Committee on Nutrition** (created in 1977) is the food and nutrition policy harmonization forum of the United Nations. This committee launched in June 2015 the **UN Global**

**Nutrition Agenda** which provides a broad framework describing how the UN agencies support the achievement of global and national nutrition goals.

### **Expo Milan 2015**

The **Expo Milan** "Feeding the Planet, Energy for Life" took place over 6 months, from May to October 2015, with the objective to express new visions on how to ensure nutritious food for all in a sustainable way. It has provided the opportunity for Milan to present the **Milan Urban Food Policy Pact**. Signed in October by 100 cities, this pact aims at creating coherence between municipal food-related policies and programmes, and relevant subnational, national, regional and international policies and processes, and to develop food systems based on the principles of sustainability and social justice.

## **Year 2016**

### **UN Standing Committee on Nutrition**

The **UN Standing Committee on Nutrition** (SCN) was established in 1977 under the auspices of the Economic and Social Council of the UN (ECOSOC) with the mandate of harmonizing the policies and actions of UN agencies in the field of nutrition. In January 2016, the SCN Secretariat has moved from WHO to FAO in Rome and the structure and strategy of the SCN is updated to reflect changes in the institutional environment and nutritional challenges to be addressed.

### **Decade of Action on nutrition**

The UN General Assembly proclaimed a **Decade of Action on nutrition**, the 1st April 2016. This resolution places nutrition at the heart of sustainable development and recognizes improving food security and nutrition are essential to achieving the entire 2030 Agenda. It also invites international partners, civil society, private sector and academia to actively support governments to ensure full implementation of the steps outlined in the Rome Declaration and Framework for Action.

## **Initiatives at the regional level**

### **The Hunger Free Latin America and the Caribbean Initiative (HFLACI)**

This regional initiative was launched in 2005, as a joint commitment by countries and organizations to eradicate hunger within one generation. It supports regional, subregional and national commitments to the eradication of hunger and the right to food at the highest political level, including programme of the Community of Latin America and Caribbean States (CELAC). In particular, this initiative supports

countries in achieving their Food and Nutrition Security goals through better design and implementation of multisectoral public policies and programmes and the strengthening of related institutions.

The regional initiative is prioritizing its actions in eight countries, all with the highest prevalence of food insecurity: Bolivia, El Salvador, Grenada, Guatemala, Haiti, Honduras, Paraguay and the Dominican Republic.

### **Parliamentarians against hunger in Latin America & Caribbean (FPHALyC)**

FPHALyC was created in 2009 as part of the Hunger-Free Latin America and Caribbean Initiative. It is a parliamentary debate platform established as a response to the need for legislative engagement.

Parliamentarians in the region are committed to promote legislative and regulatory frameworks to promote healthy, sustainable, safe and culturally appropriate diets, based on food biodiversity, respect towards the environment, and promotion of local foods produced through short food chains for building healthy and sustainable food systems in the context of the post-2015 development agenda.

### **Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP) - The Nutrition Capacity Development initiative**

The Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP) - adopted by the African Union in 2003 as an integral part of the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) - is Africa's policy framework for agricultural transformation, wealth creation, food security and nutrition, and economic growth. In 2011, NEPAD and the African Union Commission (AUC) have spear-headed efforts to support countries by launching a **Nutrition Capacity Development initiative** under the CAADP process. The objective is to strengthen capacities of countries in integrating nutrition from design to implementation, and ensuring that enhanced-nutrition interventions are timely planned, budgeted and implemented as part of their National Agriculture and Food Security Investment Plans. During the Government Summit held in June 2014 in Malabo, countries have reaffirmed their commitments to ending hunger and child stunting by 2025 (Declaration on Nutrition Security for Inclusive Economic Growth and Sustainable Development in Africa).

### **Africa Regional Nutrition Strategy (ARNS)**

The Africa Regional Nutrition Strategy (ARNS) 2015-2025 outlines the specific role of the African Union (AU) and the African Union Commission (AUC) in the elimination of hunger and malnutrition. It endeavors to identify means to build upon and to replicate good policies, programs and practices, while

adapting to context-specific conditions. A large number of African countries have already updated their National Nutrition Policies, Strategies and Action Plans and put in place new institutional arrangements to support an acceleration or "scaling-up" of nutrition actions.

### **The Asia-Pacific Zero Hunger Challenge**

As a result of the Zero Hunger Challenge, a "Regional Guiding Framework for Achieving Zero Hunger in Asia and the Pacific" has been launched in April 2013, and calls for concrete action at the country level. Given the complexity and ambition of the call, many countries require support, and FAO has committed to providing assistance through this regional initiative. To date, Timor-Leste, Myanmar, Nepal, Vietnam, Cambodia and Laos are the countries that have officially committed to the eradication of hunger and malnutrition. Other countries such as Philippines, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, India, and Indonesia are currently considering taking the same, or similar, approach by committing themselves to the Zero Hunger Challenge.

## **Building on existing initiatives and commitments**

Marta and Erik are getting in touch with some of existing committees to support their work.

Marta has participated in the CFS as a representative of her NGO in the Civil Society Mechanism.

  
**Marta**

“The CFS week has been really stimulating. Together with other Civil Society Organisations, we put forward a statement advocating for greater consideration for nutrition in CFS policy advices to countries. I also attended several side events which were a great opportunity to learn about countries’ experiences with nutrition-sensitive programming, and to discuss with CSOs representatives about what works and why.”

  
**Erik**

“Our agriculture investment plan has always focused on boosting agricultural production, trade and Gross Domestic Product. However, since our country has engaged in the **CAADP process** and has endorsed the Framework for Action at the **ICN2**, I have been involved in **revising our National Agriculture investment plan** in order to better align it with the newly-adopted national commitments towards nutrition. I also started participating in the multi-sectoral National Nutrition Working Group in order to improve coordination with other ministries and other stakeholders, such as the civil society and the private sector.”

**How did Marta and Erik benefit from getting in touch with those initiatives?**

Erik took the opportunity to engage in a multi-sectoral and multi-stakeholder dialogue on nutrition and ensure that nutrition is integrated in national agriculture strategies, while Marta built on them to share knowledge, experiences and lessons on nutrition-sensitive programmes and advocate for inclusion of nutrition in policy guidance on agriculture and food systems

Marta had the chance to learn from countries' experiences and to strengthen her capacity to advocate for nutrition. Erik has been motivated to work together with other stakeholders and to integrate nutrition in the main national agriculture strategy.

**Knowledge and evidence** of what works and why, as well as **capacities and resources to implement**, are key factors for building and sustaining a political momentum for nutrition action and for converting it into results at local level.

Several platforms exist at different levels (global, regional and even country level) which allows learning and sharing knowledge, information and skills related to food security and nutrition. They aim to disseminate information to a variety of stakeholders, promote advocacy, peer-learning and sharing of experiences across countries, foster coordination, collaboration and planning, guide policy decision making, and strengthen country and regional level capacities. Some of these platforms and initiatives (e.g. FSIN, Ag2Nut, SUN) facilitate the exchange of expertise and knowledge through a global and country network of practitioners.

*Example: Online platforms*

**Ag2Nut** - <https://knowledge-gateway.org/ag2nut>

**FSN network** - <http://www.fsnnetwork.org/forum>

**SecureNutrition** - <http://www.securenutrition.org/>

**FSIN Landscape** - <http://www.fsincop.net>

**Plataforma de seguridad alimentaria y nutricional** - <http://plataformacelac.org/>

**COMPACT 2025** - <http://www.ifpri.org/program/compact2025>

**SUN Communities of Practice** - <http://scalingupnutrition.org/about/how-is-the-movement-supported/strengthening-capacity-to-deliver>

It is important that policy makers understand that malnutrition cannot be tackled unless **all actors work together**. The various ministries (health, agriculture, education, industry and trade... ), parliamentarians, the civil society, the private sector, academic institutions, development partners and donors, all have a role to play, and coordination is necessary for playing it in an effective way, at international as well as regional, country and even community level.

Here are some examples of key coordination mechanisms and players: However, many more actors contribute to the growing interest on nutrition ranging from small citizen groups, farmers organizations to international organizations.

- ▶ **Governments** are in the driving seat in the fight against malnutrition. At country level, the Ministry of Health (through the nutrition department) is in charge of programmes designed primarily to address immediate determinants of malnutrition such as treatment of acute malnutrition, care-giving practices, micronutrient supplementation, and for reducing the burden of infectious diseases. However, other ministers including Agriculture, Education, Social affairs, Women affairs, rural development, trade, among others, are also important for addressing underlying causes of malnutrition through nutrition-sensitive approaches.
- ▶ **The UN Standing Committee on Nutrition (SCN)** was established in 1977 under the auspices of the Economic and Social Council of the UN (ECOSOC) with the mandate of harmonizing the policies and actions of UN agencies in the field of nutrition. **The UN Network for SUN** bring together all relevant UN agencies to help countries accelerate their efforts to improve nutrition through coordinated, harmonised and aligned action. Since 2015, the UN REACH partnership has become a service of the UN network for SUN to help countries in multi-sectoral coordination and planning for nutrition.
- ▶ The **Consortium of International Agriculture Research (CGIAR)**: is a worldwide partnership addressing agricultural research for development. It is carried out by 15 research centres that generate and disseminate knowledge, technologies and policies for agricultural development through the CGIAR Research Programs. In particular, the CGIAR Research Program on Agriculture for Nutrition and Health (A4NH) outputs are designed to support agricultural researchers, value chain actors, program implementers and policy makers in reshaping actions to contribute to nutrition. The **Leverhulme Centre for Integrative Research on Agriculture and Health (LCIRAH)**: is a new, intersectoral and interdisciplinary platform for integrating research in agriculture and health, with a focus on international development goals.

- ▶ **SUN Donor Network:** brings together development partners, including bilateral donors, foundations and development banks. The network is working to ensure that nutrition remains a key development priority in international forums, that more resources are committed for nutrition and that donor approaches to nutrition are better harmonised. It also has a strong focus on financial tracking, not only for accountability purposes but also to measure progress in mobilising resources and improving the quality of nutrition aid.
- ▶ **Parliamentarians** play a critical role in securing necessary laws, policies, financing and equitable implementation of nutrition actions. Understanding how to engage parliamentarians, build their capacity and leverage their potential as nutrition champions can make the difference for better nutrition.
- ▶ **Civil society - SUN Civil Society Network:** is made up of international and national organisations. All are engaged through national civil society alliances (CSA) and are mainly working in numerous advocacy and coordination initiatives. As of March 2016 they have been established in 34 SUN countries.

**Civil Society Mechanism (CSM) of the CFS:** is the largest international mechanism of civil society organisations (CSOs). The CSM is reaching out to hundreds of CSOs in all continents, sharing information with them on global policy debates and processes, promoting civil society consultations and dialogue, supporting national and regional advocacy and facilitating the participation of a diverse range of CSOs at the global level, in the context of the CFS.

- ▶ **Private sector: SUN Business Network:** was established to mobilise and intensify business efforts in support of the SUN Movement. Companies which are part of the network have endorsed commitments on scaling up nutrition specific and nutrition sensitive actions.

**Private sector Mechanism of the CFS:** is an open platform for providing a permanent seat for for-profit enterprises and their associations, from farmers, to input providers, to cooperatives, processors, small-medium enterprises, and food companies. All companies involved in the food and agriculture sector can engage in the mechanism.

**Global Alliance for improved Nutrition (GAIN) Business Alliance:** is a partnership platform for networking and knowledge sharing aimed at identifying new business models to address malnutrition at the base of the pyramid. The BA has more than twenty members, all leaders in the food processing sector. It is convened by the GAIN and the UN World Food Programme (WFP).

There are several ways you can take advantage of these existing initiatives and commitments to nutrition. You can build on them to:

- ↳ give a **high profile to nutrition** and food related issues
- ↳ invest in **human resource capacities** to effectively deliver on nutrition
- ↳ ensure long term **financial investment** from government and donors on nutrition
- ↳ ensure effective **governance** and multi-sectoral coordination for nutrition
- ↳ identify **interventions** based on evidence of improved nutritional status

After benefitting from this growing international commitment for nutrition, countries increasingly integrate nutrition in their agricultural policies, programmes and investment plans, including by updating existing policies or adopting new ones.

### *Examples of country initiatives and commitments*

#### ➔ **Brazil**

The case study of Brazil represents a success story where the Government is the leader.

The **Ministry of Social Development and Fight Against Hunger (MDS)** was established in 2004.

The Ministry has overall responsibility for planning and implementing a programmatic response to poverty and hunger in the country. In addition, **CONSEA**, the **National Council on Food and Nutrition Security**, is responsible for overseeing the implementation of national food security agreements and promoting the consolidation of nutrition and food security strategies.

Many programmes have been developed and coordinated by the MDS, including **Bolsa Familia**<sup>1</sup>, the **Food Acquisition Programme**<sup>2</sup>, the **Programa Nacional de Alimentação Escolar**<sup>3</sup>.

The poverty rate (urban and rural) and the prevalence of undernutrition dropped since these policies and actions have been put in place. Unfortunately, the country is nowadays facing a growing nutrition transition problem of rapidly increasing **overweight and obesity**. Relating to this new issue, the government is also launching a **new multisectoral programme** with involvement of the Ministries

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<sup>1</sup> **Bolsa Familia** – Conditional cash transfer programme reaching roughly 35% of the population

<sup>2</sup> **Food Acquisition programme** assists primarily smallholders and family farmers by improving their own consumption. The programme will include efforts to eliminate food being sold privately on school premises. Will work to reduce sugar consumption and will seek to limit particular forms of food advertising.

<sup>3</sup> The Ministry of Education with the National Fund of Education (FNDE) are responsible for the **Programa Nacional de Alimentação Escolar** (National School Food Programme) which reach approximately 50 million students a day.

of Health and of Planning, of departments concerned with sports and cities, and of CONSEA. The programme will include efforts to eliminate food being sold privately on school premises, will work to reduce sugar consumption and formula, and will seek to limit particular forms of food advertising.

### ➔ **Zimbabwe**

Building on the **Nutrition Capacity Development initiative** under the CAADP process, Zimbabwe has revisited its **Zimbabwe Agriculture investment Plan (ZAIP)** to better address nutrition problems.

The Office of the President and Cabinet plays a coordinating role and oversees the implementation process of the plan. In 2013, the Government approved the Food and Nutrition Security Policy (FNSP), which is promoting food and nutrition security in the context of economic growth and development through seven core commitments each led by a specific sector ministry.

The **Food and Nutrition Council (FNC)**, main coordination platform for food and nutrition security, is leading the implementation of two: Commitment 6, "establishing and effective national integrated food and nutrition security information system" and Commitment 7, "enhancing and strengthening capacity for food and nutrition security".

The council engages multiple stakeholders and is currently in the process of developing a comprehensive **Food and Nutrition Security Information System** that analyses data from various sectors on food and nutrition security and provides timely information for planning and programming.

Source: [www.fao.org/nutrition/policies-programmes/capacity-development/caadp/southern-africa/en/](http://www.fao.org/nutrition/policies-programmes/capacity-development/caadp/southern-africa/en/)

### ➔ **Ethiopia**

The Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia joined the SUN Movement in September 2010.

Moreover, the Government of Ethiopia, in collaboration with development partners, has shown its commitment to reducing stunting at a faster rate, and has signed the commitment for food and nutrition security at the G8 meeting in 2012. As a result, its National Nutrition Program (NNP) has been revised and endorsed by many stakeholders in 2013 for the following main reasons:

- To address the nutrition problem (as the prevalence of malnutrition is still relatively high in the country).

- To strengthen initiatives that were not addressed in the previous NNP 2008 and to include initiatives that have emerged. Namely accelerated Stunting Reduction Initiative, National food Fortification programme and Multisectoral linkages among key NNP implementing sectors.

The revised National Nutrition Plan provides the framework for 5 strategic objectives and interventions across relevant sectors including **health, agriculture, education, water, labour and social affairs**, and **women, children and youth affairs**. It is a costed plan that details interventions in key sectors and includes a logframe of activities, a Common Result Framework, a disaster risk management and a government coordination component. The **Monitoring and Evaluation** framework includes **key indicators from relevant sectors** and yearly **targets** for progress. Ethiopia is also advancing on the development of a capacity building framework and of sectoral scorecards. Efforts are underway to ensure that programs in these key sectors are **nutrition-sensitive**. Nutrition-sensitive agriculture is a pillar of the **CAADP Implementation Plan** and the **Food Security Program** derived from the **National Agriculture Plan**, which includes social protection and focuses on **1,000 days**.

Source: <http://scalingupnutrition.org/sun-countries/ethiopia>

### ➡ Lao PDR

Lao PDR achieved the MDG Hunger target, but it has struggled to reduce malnutrition, with stunting rates still over 40%. Since the country joined the SUN Movement in April 2011, the government issued a formal decree in 2013 to establish a **multisectoral National Nutrition Committee (NNC)** chaired by one of the Deputy Prime Ministers. The Secretariat to the NNC was established with focal points appointed from the various Government ministries, including Health, Agriculture, Education, and Planning. The NNC has developed a normative and operational framework to define the multisectoral approach, which also helps development partners to support the Government more effectively on nutrition.

The government of Lao PDR has specific nutrition objectives in its 8th National Socio-Economic Development Plan; the country adopted a National Nutrition Policy (2008) and has developed a National Nutrition Strategy (2016-2025) and Plan of Action (2016-2020) that cover a core set of 22 nutrition-specific and nutrition-sensitive interventions.

Recognizing the need for a multisectoral response to malnutrition in the country, the NNC decided in 2013 that interventions in agriculture, education, WASH, and health should be implemented in a "convergent" approach. Convergence involves the coordination between the various sectoral activities so that they are brought together and implemented in the same geographic areas, at the same time, and benefit the same populations. These new concepts have been fully reflected in the National Nutrition Strategy and Plan of Action by the Government, with advice from the development partners, to accelerate progress towards achieving the country's targets relating to malnutrition.

The strategy adopted, based on international experience in multisectoral nutrition responses, is "multisectoral prioritization and convergence" meaning the implementation of a set of 22 high impact priority interventions in all villages in selected districts which are targeted on the basis of poverty, food insecurity and malnutrition. These interventions from the agriculture, education, health and WASH sectors - selected from a much larger set of initially considered nutrition-specific and nutrition-sensitive activities - are being implemented in parallel by the sectors, with planning and review carried out jointly.

Source: <http://scalingupnutrition.org/sun-countries/lao-pdr>

## Conclusion

We have seen how countries have taken steps forward in their commitments to nutrition through a growing number of initiatives over the last 10 years.

**Building on and sustaining this momentum to effectively convert it into impact is our priority. This can happen only if each of us takes action in our respective fields.**



*Jaden, the  
course guide*

"I hope that you now feel more confident to explore how you can contribute to these national, regional and global efforts to fight a scourge we know can be prevented today."

## Summary

There is a real international and regional commitment to eradicating malnutrition, in all its forms, shown by a growing number of initiatives and actions.

All of these commitments, endorsed at international or regional level, are good opportunities for countries to advocate themselves, at their level, for better nutrition.

Building on this conducive environment is an opportunity to:

- give a high profile to nutrition and hunger related issues and turn international and regional commitments into actions at country level;
- advocate for effective governance for multisectoral nutrition strategies involving all concerned parties;
- invest in organisational development and human resource capacities to effectively deliver on nutrition;
- choose interventions based on evidence of improved nutritional status;
- ensure financial commitment and long term investments from government and donors on nutrition.

Several countries have already make the steps to update their National Nutrition Plan or Programmes and put the right policies in place. The Decade of Nutrition is just starting.

## What's next?



**Eric, Marta  
and Jaden**

“So, Erik and Marta, ready to address nutrition through your work?”  
“Yes, It is really compelling and I would like to move on. We are conducting a situation assessment next month for starting a new project, and I wonder whether I could use it to understand the nutrition situation.”

“What we learnt is really fascinating. I'd be interested to further deepen my knowledge on how to incorporate nutrition in our National Food Security Policy...”

## Coming soon

If you are interested to know more, stay tuned to the [FAO e-learning](http://www.fao.org/elearning/#/elc/en/courses/NUTR) website because there are more e-learning courses to come! <http://www.fao.org/elearning/#/elc/en/courses/NUTR>

Course: **Nutrition situation analysis**

What are the main nutrition problems in the area I work in and who is most affected? What are the major causes of malnutrition? Are there data on the nutrition situation, and how to get them? What are the policies, programmes and legal framework in place? What are the institutional arrangements for nutrition? What is in place to improve the nutrition situation of families and individuals affected by malnutrition?

Course: **Design, monitoring and evaluation**

What are the main food and agriculture-related interventions that can be implemented to address nutrition problems in the area I work in? What are the impact pathways between the proposed activities and nutrition outcomes? Which indicators should I use to monitor and evaluate the policy or programme I seek to implement?