ACTION AGAINST HUNGER EXPECTATIONS FOR THE UN DECADE OF ACTION ON NUTRITION

Action Against Hunger welcomes the Decade of Action on Nutrition, as an opportunity to amplify previous nutrition-related commitments and to progress movement towards translating these into action by providing clear guidance to States on how to achieve those commitments and by promoting coherence and coordination across different policy domains and with human rights and multiplying spaces for action. We believe that the Decade of Action on Nutrition could provide the embedding mechanism which is currently needed to bring together the many fragmented initiatives that are taking place and to create more coherent and better coordinated global nutrition governance.

We would like the Decade of Action to:

1) ADDRESS ALL FORMS OF MALNUTRITION, PROMOTE A HOLISTIC APPROACH AND PUT GREATER EMPHASIS ON EQUITY

In order to eradicate hunger and malnutrition by 2030, the Decade of Action should be framed around the need to address malnutrition in all its forms, from undernutrition (including stunting, wasting and micronutrient deficiencies) to overweight and obesity. The Decade of Action work program should ensure that undernutrition is viewed as an “everyday emergency” which needs to be addressed in both developed and developing countries as well as in humanitarian emergencies. Specific attention should be dedicated to severe acute malnutrition, which must be seen as a public health issue.

Solving the issue of undernutrition requests a twin-track approach. Although treatment of acute malnutrition is a critical action to save lives, nutrition prevention and resilience strengthening activities are essential to having a lasting, extensive impact through addressing direct and indirect causes. To address all these causes, the Decade of Action should adopt a systemic and multi-sectoral approach, with the promotion of cross-sectoral integration and coordination. Achieving ‘nutrition security’ is broader than ‘food security’ and means ongoing access to the basic elements of good nutrition – a diverse diet, safe environment, clean water and sanitation, adequate healthcare, and the knowledge needed to ensure a healthy, sanitary and active life – and the term recognizes that nutritional status is dependent on a broad range of factors. Addressing such multiple causes requires cross sectoral integration and coordination amongst a range of inter-related sectors and ministries – including food and agriculture, health, water and sanitation, gender, education, finance, social protection, economic development, environment, trade and investment, planning, information and consumer affairs.

Finally, the Decade of Action should promote a greater emphasis on equity and highlight the importance of creating an enabling environment that addresses the profound structural barriers and the needs of vulnerable, marginalized and excluded people.

2) BRING COHERENCE TO THE GLOBAL NUTRITION GOVERNANCE

Within the Decade of Action, we hope the global nutrition governance to be clarified through the consensual adoption of a mapping of nutrition global governance. This document should encompass: a clear identification of the role of each key stakeholder in the nutrition governance, and especially: identification of the role of Decade implementing / technical partners (UNICEF, WFP, IFAD), identification of complementary roles between coordination bodies (CFS & UNSCN) and their role in the DoA, identification of the coordination with “other regional and international platforms”, especially with the SUN Movement, as well as a clear identification of the role of the civil society.

The Decade of Action could also create an enabling environment for greater coherence within the UN system. Currently, global leadership for efforts on malnutrition is split between five UN agencies: UNICEF, WHO, WFP, FAO and IFAD. This fragmentation can lead to policy incoherence and acts as a barrier to an integrated, aligned and coordinated approach. Under the leadership of UNSCN and in accordance with its new Strategic Plan, the Decade of Action should provide the framework to allow UN agencies to agree on integrated strategies for tackling malnutrition in all its forms. The adoption of a joint UN nutrition strategy should be part of the Decade of Action work program.
3) **ENSURE STRONG POLITICAL MOMENTUM IS SUSTAINED AND NUTRITION COMMITMENTS ARE IMPLEMENTED**

To maintain the momentum on nutrition at the international level, WHO and FAO could organize a normative event/moment each year or every 2 years, where every stakeholder/nutrition initiatives get together and prioritize action step. It could be the creation of a political process on nutrition with a dedicated platform for intergovernmental coordination in the context of the General Assembly, with high level meetings on nutrition to be organized during each UNGA, push States to report on their nutrition commitments and provide impulse to the nutrition agenda.

To ensure that global commitments are translated into action at national level, Member States should be urged to:

- **Translate international commitments into national SMART commitments.** National commitments and national targets are essential to prioritize nutrition, guide processes, interventions and resources, and monitor progress in a country’s development agenda. Member States should set ambitious national nutrition targets, informed by WHA global nutrition targets and in line with national priorities and contexts, as well as with international human rights obligations.

- Adopt concrete plans for their implementation, mobilize adequate resources and strictly monitor and evaluate progress made through collection of data.

The Decade of Action work program should also encompass a clear identification of each stakeholder’s (UN agencies and other regional and international platforms) responsibility in providing technical support to governments for the definition of their national commitments and targets, as well as for their implementation and monitoring and evaluation.

4) **IMPROVE ACCOUNTABILITY**

To bring consistency and harmonization in the accountability framework, a robust monitoring and accountability framework should be defined at the global level, integrating the existing nutrition-related commitment frameworks (ICN2 commitments, WHA and NCD targets, SDGs, Nutrition for Growth), with the definition of an inclusive and transparent accountability mechanism at the international level. Activities to improve accountability and to be included in the work program include:

- Setup of a repository of all nutrition commitments as part as the DoA
- Setup of a participatory mechanism and recognition of the role and contribution of CSOs and social movements in accountability
- Identification of clear links / contribution with the HLPF (High level Policy Form) for the monitoring of the SDGs which are related to nutrition: reporting and monitoring on the SDG2 but also monitoring and taking stock of cross-cutting goals / nutrition contributing sectors.
- Annual reports including clear monitoring of WHA targets & ICN2 framework
- Support to countries to improve their accountability and monitor progress made, through the collection of data, the establishment of policies intelligence unit on nutrition, etc.

5) **SUPPORT THE MOBILIZATION OF FUNDING**

Even though financial resources alone won’t be enough to eradicate undernutrition by 2030 and should be accompanied with political leadership, functioning government programs and services, strong accountability, etc., this goal won’t be reached without significantly more funding. Recent evidence has shown that the financial gap in nutrition funding, although quite big, could easily be breached through the mobilization of all kind of resources, from national governments to external donors and innovative financing mechanisms.

The Decade of Action on nutrition needs to showcase the fact that nutrition is one of the best investments a country can do today, with high economic returns. If we want to eradicate hunger and malnutrition by 2030, the Decade of Action on nutrition must also be a Decade of Investment in Nutrition.

The Decade of Action is an opportunity to:

- Call on Member States and external donors to mobilize adequate funding according to a fair-share model (as promoted by the World Bank), for all forms of undernutrition, from the prevention of stunting and wasting to the treatment of severe acute malnutrition. Funding should be adequate in quantity and quality and should be short term – for emergencies -, as well as long term for non-emergency settings.
- Support the organization of a high-level pledging Summit on Nutrition in 2017
- Call on Member States to ensure that all programs in nutrition-contributing sectors (including agriculture, education, health, water and sanitation, and social protection) routinely include nutrition objectives and target groups most affected by undernutrition, including children under five.