— SYNOPSIS —

ACCELERATING THE END OF HUNGER AND MALNUTRITION

— A GLOBAL EVENT —

28–30 NOVEMBER 2018 | BANGKOK, THAILAND
www.IFPRI-FAOBangkokConference.org

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"It is meaningless for us to achieve all other SDGs if we are undernourished. Despite the progress over the last two or three decades, there is an urgent need to pick up the pace to end hunger and malnutrition by 2030."

SHENGGEN FAN

Director General,
International Food Policy Research Institute

"I am very optimistic that we can end hunger in the next 10 years, because all the ingredients for ending hunger are there."

M. S. SWAMINATHAN

Founder Chairman and Chief Mentor,
M.S. Swaminathan Research Foundation

The world faces a fast-approaching due date: 2030 is the year by which 193 countries have committed themselves to ending hunger and malnutrition as part of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). This commitment is supported by the UN Decade of Action on Nutrition (2016–2025), designed to promote the achievement of SDG2—a necessary condition for most other SDGs—and the Compact2025 initiative, which was established to use data, research-based evidence, best practices, and South-South learning to accelerate progress in ending hunger and malnutrition. These efforts, however, represent only the first step along the path toward achieving a world free of hunger and malnutrition. Success depends on following up commitments with concerted actions that produce measurable and sustainable results. So far, the evidence shows that the world is moving far too slowly along this path. Despite the political will expressed in the SDGs, hunger persists, and malnutrition is climbing.

These realities—and the conviction that the world could move faster—were the impetus and the backdrop for an international three-day conference—organized by the International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI) and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)—in Bangkok in November 2018. At the conference, more than 600 distinguished decisionmakers, practitioners, and other stakeholders—from across governments, NGOs, civil society, research organizations, and the private sector—gathered to discuss how to speed up progress. In a wide-ranging set of keynote addresses, panel discussions, and side events, they shared evidence and lessons learned from around the world on transforming food systems to reduce hunger and malnutrition. They explored opportunities for scaling up successful actions and innovations that can disrupt business-as-usual to build momentum and accelerate progress.

THE CHALLENGE

— ACCELERATING THE SPEED OF ACTION —

The statistics are sobering. After years of decline, the number of undernourished people worldwide has risen in the past three years, from 784 million in 2015 to 821 million in 2017. Malnutrition can take multiple forms—undernutrition, micronutrient deficiency, and overweight/obesity—and more than one form may exist at the country, community, household, or even individual level. Child stunting—an indicator of chronic undernutrition—is falling on a global scale but increasing in some regions. Overweight and obesity are rising among women, men, and adolescents in nearly every country. Indeed, most countries face overlapping burdens of stunting and overweight. Overall, less than half of adults worldwide have a healthy body weight. At the same time, micronutrient deficiencies—that is, lack of essential vitamins and minerals—also appear serious based on the meager evidence available, but it is difficult to know how serious, owing to a paucity of data.

What is behind these discouraging figures? Among the causes are extreme poverty, increasing conflict and displacement, extreme weather events and climate change, and the

ubiquity of poor diets. Most people's diets are inadequate whether they live in rural or urban areas and whether they are rich or poor. No group at any income level is eating enough vegetables, whole grains, or legumes, and all groups are consuming too many sugar-sweetened beverages. Moreover, as we look at the task before us, we face a perfect storm of global threats and challenges, including continued weather extremes, ongoing conflict, and exploding rates of diet-related noncommunicable diseases.

To meet the goal of ending hunger and reducing malnutrition by 2030, the world will need to make much faster progress. It will need to identify accelerators of food system change—that is, technological innovations, policy changes, or institutional reforms, or combinations of these, that lead to transformative change at a large scale in the sustainable reduction of hunger and malnutrition. The conference in Bangkok was designed as a venue to focus on such accelerators, sharing knowledge, and providing opportunities for dialogue and collaboration.

A portrait of Inonge Wina, Vice President of Zambia, speaking into a microphone. She is wearing glasses, a pearl necklace, and a patterned garment. The image is overlaid with a semi-transparent purple filter.

“We are racing against time. We only have a maximum of 11 years to end hunger in the world by 2030.”

INONGE WINA
Vice President, Zambia

TACKLING PERSISTENT HUNGER AND UNDERNUTRITION

— ADDRESSING THE ROOT CAUSES —

“If we’re going to tackle the problem of hunger seriously, we must focus. And the programs that we craft will have to be focused on the poorest of the poor.”

NEWAI GEBRE-AB

former Chief Economic Advisor
to the Prime Minister, Ethiopia

Globally, hunger is growing worse, not better. The current number of undernourished people—821 million—represents a backtracking to the level of 2010. Although the number of stunted children has declined to about 151 million, it is still too high. The scale of the task is daunting: meeting SDG2 by 2030 will require lifting 185,000 people out of hunger every day for the next 4,000 days.

Accelerating the end of hunger and malnutrition must be an inclusive process. Undernutrition is clearly linked to poverty as well as to economic, political, and social exclusion, with the most vulnerable groups being the rural and urban poor, women, minorities, and low-caste groups. The extreme poor—who number 736 million, about 10 percent of the world population—continue to be left behind in terms of hunger, malnutrition, and economic and human development. The income gaps between wealthy and poor countries, communities, and households have harmful effects at all levels. Evidence shows that children from poor households are more likely to be stunted than children from wealthier households, which are often able to capture public services—even those designed to be “universal.”

NUMBER OF UNDERNOURISHED PEOPLE, 2000–2030 (MILLIONS)

Source: Adapted from Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, FAOSTAT, 2018, <http://www.fao.org/faostat/en/#home>.

Focusing on the poor can be expensive and difficult. Eighty percent of the extreme poor live in rural areas, and many of these live in savannahs, mountainous areas, or other remote or unproductive areas. Reducing extreme poverty, and the hunger and undernutrition that often accompany it, will require political leadership; pro-poor economic growth and stimulation of income-generating activities; investments in rural infrastructure, education, and health services; social protection combined with economic inclusion; the use of tax policy and public spending to reduce income inequality; and climate-sensitive policies and programs.

It is essential to note that much of the recent growth in hunger and undernutrition stems from conflicts and natural disasters such as extreme weather events. Many times people are affected by both kinds of events at once. In 2017, more than 30 million people were newly displaced owing to conflicts or natural disasters. In some conflicts, combatants use

hunger as a weapon of war, and in other cases, forced and voluntary migration leave people vulnerable to hunger and undernutrition. Evidence shows that even short displacements in conditions of, say, food insecurity and poor sanitation and hygiene can worsen child nutrition, with irreversible effects on the children affected. In such cases, humanitarian assistance is crucial but not sufficient. Humanitarian aid must be linked to longer-term development aid for refugees and displaced people—and for host communities, which often bear a heavy burden. Policies also need to make it easier for refugees and displaced people to pursue their livelihoods. These migrants would benefit from, for example, agricultural support services and the opening up of local labor markets. In addition, accumulating evidence points to the effectiveness of cash transfers in certain emergency situations. Ultimately, however, it is important to establish peace and stability and return people to their homes as quickly as possible.

NUMBER OF STUNTED CHILDREN UNDER 5, 1990–2030 (MILLIONS)

Source: Adapted from UNICEF/WHO/World Bank, Joint Child Malnutrition Estimates: Levels and Trends, 2018, <https://www.who.int/nutgrowthdb/estimates/en/>.

OVERWEIGHT AND OBESITY

REVERSING THE RISE

In 1980, 857 million people were overweight or obese. In 2018, that number was 2.1 billion. Unhealthy diets and increasing non-communicable diseases, such as diabetes and hypertension, have become the largest cause of disease and death in the 21st century. Today's food environments do not enable healthy diet choices, and healthy diets are thus not the default. Consumption of processed foods with excessive salt, fat, sugar, and calories is rising rapidly, particularly in middle-income countries. Unhealthy foods are increasingly marketed to children. These factors mean that it is important to create food environments and food systems that support healthy diets.

In individuals, overweight and obesity are often linked to childhood undernutrition, and they also exist alongside undernutrition in many communities and households. As a consequence, double-duty actions that address multiple forms of malnutrition are crucial. Such actions include high-quality antenatal care, breastfeeding, adequate complementary feeding of young children, and nutrition education. Also important is support for women's healthy diets, which are sometimes neglected in the context of efforts to improve child nutrition.

Action against overweight and obesity must take place at multiple levels. Global movements and collaboration can help develop comprehensive policies. By drawing lessons from other health movements such as the fight against tobacco and alcohol use, national and local actors can set standards and carry out policies to influence food systems and environments. Examples include regulating the prices of certain foods, requiring adequate nutrition labeling, limiting the marketing of unhealthy foods to children, and investing in healthy food environments in public institutions such as schools and social protection programs. Public investment along these lines, aligned to the nutrition needs of the population, can stimulate private money to follow.

Because obesity is difficult to control and treat, efforts by all stakeholders should focus on prevention, including behavior change communication designed to improve people's dietary choices. More research is needed on consumers' behavior and how to promote positive shifts, but lessons can be learned from the food industry, which has shaped consumer behavior in unhealthy ways, and from positive experiences with changing behavior in the areas of sanitation, family planning, and HIV/AIDS. Nutrition

GLOBAL PREVALENCE OF ADULT OBESITY IN %, 2000–2016

Source: Development Initiatives, 2018 *Global Nutrition Report: Shining a Light to Spur Action on Nutrition* (Bristol, UK, 2018).

Note: Data show BMI ≥ 30 among adults aged 18 years and over.

education for children and adults—and for policymakers and institutional partners—is key. When pressing for behavior change, it is important to consider potential constraints, such as women’s time pressures, lack of well-functioning markets, and limitations in the food sector’s ability to respond quickly to changing demand. More broadly, it is clear that changes in food environments and food systems will help. Governments should work to make it costlier and less convenient to overconsume food. In Chile, for example, foods high in fat, salt, sugar, or calories must carry black warning labels and cannot be marketed to children.

The shift toward fast food and highly processed diets with more fat, salt, and sugar is happening fastest in urban areas, where populations are growing. In cities, the most accessible, affordable, and convenient diets are often the unhealthiest. In the midst of this rapid change, policymakers and urban planners are lagging behind. Urban food environments must be reoriented toward healthier diets by making healthy foods available, accessible, affordable, and desirable and shifting demand toward healthier foods and diets. Changing the food environment will require looking at how food reaches cities—in particular, logistics, refrigeration, processing, and packaging.

“If we do not do this transformation, this will be the first time in human history when the next generation will have a shorter life span than their parents.”

ANNA LARTEY

Director of Nutrition and Food Systems Division, FAO
(paraphrasing Lawrence O. Gostin)

Why is it so hard to improve people’s diets?

“Diets everywhere are a common cause of malnutrition in all its forms, and they are therefore a common solution to malnutrition in all its forms.”

CORINNA HAWKES

Director, Centre for Food Policy, City University of London

Poor-quality diets—that is, diets filled with high levels of salt, fat, and sugar, staple foods low in nutrients, and lacking in nutrient-dense foods—clearly play a role in all forms of malnutrition. Yet despite longstanding calls for people to eat more fruits and vegetables, whole grains, and legumes, it has proven difficult to redirect food systems to support healthy diets.

Part of the problem is that fruits and vegetables cost too much. The Green Revolution boosted production of rice and wheat dramatically in the 1960s and 1970s, pushing down prices. But production of pulses, fruits, and vegetables did not see the same growth. In the absence of large supply increases, the prices of nonstaple foods have steadily risen over the past 40 years. As a consequence, the world suffers from a nutrient gap. Although the world’s farmers produce adequate supplies of cereals, they still do not grow enough fruits, vegetables, and pulses.

In addition to educating consumers about nutrition, it is crucial to lower the prices of nutrient-dense foods. One way is to increase public funding for agricultural research on key vegetables. Agricultural researchers should work to maximize the nutrients produced per unit of land, and the food-processing industry should be designed to add nutritional value rather than subtract it.

In addition, despite some areas of consensus, discussions about the elements of a healthy diet are ongoing. Whereas some argue for reducing consumption of animal-source foods to improve environmental sustainability, nutritionists point out that these meat, fish, and dairy products can be dense in highly bioavailable nutrients and that in many cases extremely poor people would greatly benefit from increasing the amount of animal-source foods in their diets.

PERCENTAGE CHANGES IN CEREAL AND PULSE PRODUCTION AND POPULATION, 1965–1999

Source: Howarth Bouis, “Scaling Up Agricultural Innovations to Address Hunger and Malnutrition,” presentation, Bangkok, November 29, 2018, <https://www.slideshare.net/ifpri/scaling-up-agricultural-innovations-to-address-hunger-and-malnutrition>.

LEARNING FROM COUNTRY EXPERIENCES

— ENHANCING POLITICAL WILL —

In many ways, policies, programs, and institutions at the country level are at the heart of efforts to accelerate the end of hunger and malnutrition, and they often depend on good governance. Successes in a number of countries have shown that rapid progress is possible, and in Bangkok policymakers, practitioners, and researchers from those countries described the lessons learned. Bangladesh, for example, has made enormous strides in improving its people's nutrition by boosting rice production, investing in infrastructure and education, improving dietary diversity, strengthening social safety nets, empowering women and girls, and supporting the continual generation of knowledge. Ethiopia has focused on overcoming extreme poverty, supporting agricultural development, productive safety nets, and promoting breastfeeding and other nutritional initiatives. Rwanda, which has pledged to eradicate hunger and achieve middle-income status by 2035, has adopted nutrition-sensitive agricultural strategies to increase the production of micronutrient-rich foods as well as deploying thousands of community health workers and adopting programs to distribute livestock to poor families, provide milk to schoolchildren, and promote kitchen gardens.

Laos has undertaken a multisectoral effort by convening an interministerial group that is working to eradicate malnutrition. To combat obesity, Chile has curbed aggressive marketing of food high in salt, fat, sugar, or calories to children. Peru made striking progress in reducing child undernutrition by combining high-level political commitment with evidence-based solutions addressing the multidimensional nature of nutrition, such as programs in the areas of education, health, sanitation and hygiene, housing, and agriculture, as well as conditional cash transfers. Thailand tackled the problem of malnutrition at the local level, by training a large nationwide cohort of community health volunteers and devoting efforts and resources to cutting malnutrition village by village.

These examples show not only the range of solutions that can be effectively deployed, but also the progress that is possible when countries' actions reflect commitment at the highest levels. Country-level action that is country-owned, context specific, and well coordinated across sectors can produce rapid reductions in hunger and malnutrition.

“We need political leaders to invest in the future of the nation, and that needs to be at the level of the president, vice president, or prime minister.”

GERDA VERBURG

UN Assistant Secretary-General and Coordinator,
Scaling Up Nutrition (SUN) Movement

GENDER

PROMOTING EQUALITY

As food producers, food consumers, and often household caregivers and decision-makers, women need to be at the center of nutrition actions. Evidence has consistently shown that promoting gender equality can unlock a virtuous cycle that results in better nutrition outcomes for children and households.

Efforts to promote gender equality can be designed to reach women (like delivery of agricultural extension services), benefit women (like efforts to ensure that a nutritious crop actually improves women's income or nutrition), or empower women (like efforts to increase women's power to make decisions about what crops to grow). The choice among these goals will determine what indicators will be used to measure progress. To maximize benefits for women, it is important that policies and programs take into account women's needs and constraints. In addition, it is also useful to find ways to address gender norms, build women's capacity, and increase women's participation in decisionmaking—not only within households, but also at the highest levels of government.

Gender, however, is not just about women, but rather about the social relationship between men and women and the rules and norms that govern what men and women do. Bangladesh, for example, has carried out programs that train husbands and wives together and led community conversations designed to sensitize men to gender issues. Such efforts can address the broader context in which women's and men's activities take place to maximize the benefits for food security and nutrition.

“Agriculture, nutrition, and gender—these are all interconnected issues. . . . If you have a healthy mother, you will have a healthy child and a healthy nation.”

SHIRIN SHARMIN CHAUDHURY
Speaker, Parliament, Bangladesh

TECHNOLOGY

UNLEASHING INNOVATION

New technologies are being developed and deployed around the world. Fast-changing digital, bio-based, and mechanical technologies are poised to have major impacts on people's food security and nutrition, and they are gaining increasing attention from venture capitalists.

Conference participants described a host of innovations. Drones, controlled-environment farming such as hydroponics and aquaponics, vegetable protein, nanotechnology, and big data are in increasing use and starting to make a difference for farmers and consumers. Blockchain technology can help improve the traceability of crops and other farm products, adding value and reducing waste. Genomics can help resurrect neglected nutritious crops in various ecosystems, and gene editing could help

scientists develop crops that can grow in seawater. In Zambia, e-vouchers have allowed farmers to select from a range of inputs, an innovation that has helped promote the cultivation of crops besides maize, increased private sector participation in input markets, and encouraged young people to become agrodealers. China has adopted new models for financing and managing genetic screening and testing projects for early detection of anemia and parasitic diseases.

But most technologies in use in the global North have not yet reached people in the global South. These disruptive technologies need to spread worldwide, and while they can drive poverty reduction and economic development, they need enabling policies and investments from national and local governments.

"There's no monopoly of good ideas."

ELENI GABRE-MADHIN

Founder and CEO,
BlueMoon Incubator

ENGAGING THE PRIVATE SECTOR

Most of the food system falls within the private sector—ranging from large multinational corporations to millions of smallholder farmers. Engagement with the private sector is thus vital, but it is also useful to remember that private actors are highly influenced by government action. Public policy can do a great deal to facilitate appropriate action by private companies and provide incentives for the private sector to participate in developing healthy food systems. Both the public sector and the private sector face constraints and conflicts, but those must be turned into opportunities, and trust and transparency need to be built. It is also important that governments support an environment in which sustainable business models can be carried forward.

Large multinationals, small and medium-sized enterprises, and private equity are all investing in nutrition. Private food companies are using big data to understand consumer preferences at the top and bottom of the pyramid. They are exploring financial mechanisms and creating institutions to channel investments designed to address market gaps, build the knowledge base, drive co-innovation, provide infrastructure, and cultivate disruptive technologies.

At the other end of the scale, smallholder farmers face their own challenges, including water scarcity, poor soils, low yields, climate change, and lack of connection to markets. Helping these farmers become more productive and food secure is also a form of private sector engagement.

“Get businesses properly involved in educating consumers for good nutrition. Recognize the power of business, engage with them, but on the terms of the nutrition community.”

DAVID NABARRO

Curator, Food System Dialogues, UK

“Local governments are where your top-down policy meets the road. In other words, our global efforts are only as good as how local governments can implement this transformation.”

SAMINA RAJA

Principal Investigator of
the Food Systems Planning
and Healthy Communities Lab,
University of Buffalo

GOVERNANCE

STRENGTHENING LEADERSHIP AND IMPLEMENTATION

Good governance, from the global to the local level, has a key role to play in improving people’s access to healthy foods and creating enabling environments for reducing hunger and malnutrition. Effective governance depends, however, on a clear understanding of the agendas and interests of different actors and stakeholders in food systems.

At the global level, governance actions might be taken to reach social goals like fairness, equity, and humanitarian action or to correct market failures like concentration of market power, poor governance of global common pool resources, and lack of global public goods. The mechanisms of global governance can include global organizations, global goals, binding agreements, voluntary agreements and guidelines, private commitments, and standards and labels related to food and nutrition. Several ideas were suggested to address the challenges of global governance, including an independent forum on food, nutrition, and agriculture with effective

coordination, and a science-based assessment mechanism for food, nutrition, and agriculture.

At the national level, governments play an important role in setting the policy agenda and coordinating government agencies and the private sector so that they all work toward the same goals. In the Philippines, for example, the president mandated the National Nutrition Council to play this coordination role, and similarly, India has developed a coordinated national policy framework to increase the country’s pulse production.

Local authorities form a vital bridge between the national government and a country’s citizens, and local governments can help facilitate people’s access to healthy foods through a number of channels, including agricultural production, food trade in informal markets, and regulation of food safety. In addition, while national governments are often rightly thought of as important sources of funding, local governments may also have resources that can support healthier food systems.

GENERATING SOUND AND USEFUL DATA

IMPROVING THE EVIDENCE BASE

To accelerate the end of hunger and malnutrition, it is vital to track progress, manage data, and evaluate impact. There is wide agreement, however, that the current data are inadequate to the task. We need more, more timely, and better-quality data to show what is working and what is not working.

Efforts to measure hunger and malnutrition face constraints related to logistics, resources, capacity, and statistical challenges. Food security is complex and involves food availability, access, utilization, and stability, but these elements can be difficult to measure. In addition, there are questions about exactly whose food security and nutrition should be measured and at what scale. Should we be measuring food security in terms of quantity, quality, or security of access? Diet quality, for example, does not appear in the SDGs, but there is rising demand for simple indicators of diet quality.

To improve data management, international agencies and national governments should invest in collecting, analyzing, and disseminating information; harmonizing and coordinating their data collection; collecting data at the subnational level; and making datasets publicly available. Data must be shared across sectors and partners.

Several new tools have been created to measure food security and nutrition. FAO's Food Insecurity Experience Scale (FIES) relies on a set of eight simple questions about households' perceptions and experiences of food insecurity in the preceding 12 months (see box). Because this tool is simple and fast to administer, it can be included in virtually any survey at any scale, and a number of countries already use it. The Minimum Dietary Diversity for Women of Reproductive Age (MDD-W) indicator looks at the proportion of women who consumed at least 5 out of 10 food groups in the preceding 24 hours. While no one indicator can offer a complete picture of diet quality, the MDD-W can be incorporated into large-scale surveys, used to show diet quality over time, and employed to help target and evaluate nutrition programs.

In the end, of course, data alone are not enough. Data must be used to guide effective action and drive sound policy choices.

Eight questions for measuring food insecurity through people's experiences: FAO's FIES

During the past 12 months, was there a time when, because of a lack of money or other resources:

1. you (or others in the household) were worried you would run out of food?
2. you (or others in the household) were unable to eat healthy and nutritious food?
3. you (or others in the household) ate only a few kinds of foods?
4. you (or others in the household) had to skip a meal?
5. you (or others in the household) ate less than you thought you should?
6. your household ran out of food?
7. you (or others in the household) were hungry but did not eat?
8. you (or others in the household) went without eating for a whole day?

Source: Carlo Cafiero, "Beyond Hunger: Monitoring Food Insecurity in the SDG Era," presentation, Bangkok, November 30, 2018, <https://www.slideshare.net/Ifpri/beyond-hunger-monitoring-food-insecurity-in-the-sdg-era>.

"Let's . . . start looking at the data with a very critical eye and invest in the technical capacity that is needed to become competent measurement professionals in the area of food insecurity."

CARLO CAFIERO

Senior Statistician and Economist, FAO

NUTRITION

— MOBILIZING THE RETURNS ON INVESTMENT —

Many studies have shown that investing in nutrition makes economic sense and is cost-effective. First, poor nutrition has been shown to have a high cost. Numerous studies find that undernutrition causes GNP losses ranging from 2 to 17 percent. There are a variety of ways to calculate the benefit-cost ratio of investments in nutrition for current and future populations. All scenarios, however, find that benefits substantially exceed costs—even when the methods fail to include certain benefits, such as reduced anemia, reduced health costs, reduced chronic health problems, and reduced mortality. Overall, the evidence points to substantial underinvestment in nutrition.

The World Bank developed an investment framework for nutrition calling for \$7 billion of investment each year—a large sum, but one that pales in comparison to the nearly \$600 billion spent annually on agricultural subsidies. Where then should the additional resources for nutrition come from? Donors alone are not likely to provide these funds. Domestic public resources will

be important, and nutrition should be included in national development funds. Revenue from tobacco and sugar taxes may be one source of domestic funding. One important avenue may involve using public investment to leverage private investment, which is likely to be the primary source of funds in the future. In effect, the public sector would provide seed money in food system sectors that the private sector could then follow. Other options include the Power of Nutrition, a charity that aims to unlock private and public funding for nutrition, and the Global Financing Facility. There are also links between nutrition and investments in health, agriculture, infrastructure, and other sectors, so these investments should be considered holistically.

How nutrition is framed may also influence the level of investment. Whereas many people consider nutrition a health issue or an agricultural issue, Jim Kim, president of the World Bank, has framed it as a human capital issue—an approach that increases the chances of gaining financing.

“Nutrition is not something you give to the poor because they missed out on development, but it’s actually something that makes development happen.”

HAROLD ALDERMAN

Senior Research Fellow, Poverty, Health,
and Nutrition Division, IFPRI

ACCELERATION

LET'S WALK THE TALK

The urgency of the task we face cannot be overstated. Pockets of progress on reducing hunger and undernutrition in some areas are accompanied by backtracking in other areas, in many cases owing to rising conflict and natural disasters. At the same time, a global epidemic of overweight, obesity, and chronic disease brings entirely new challenges. Meeting the goal of Zero Hunger by 2030 and cutting malnutrition in all of its forms will not be easy. Initiatives such as the Decade of Action on Nutrition and Compact2025, which can help spread knowledge and evidence on what works to those in the best position to use such information, will help overcome the challenges. As the Bangkok conference demonstrated, high-level leaders around the globe in the areas of policy, practice, and research are committed to these objectives, and there is no shortage of ideas, knowledge, and energy for moving forward. All agreed that it is time to identify innovative solutions and scale up proven successes to build momentum and accelerate progress so that we can look forward to a world free of hunger and malnutrition.

"We have the tools and the knowledge to take action."

KOSTAS STAMOULIS

Assistant Director-General, Economic
and Social Development Department,
FAO

"We must use nutrition as an opportunity to transform agriculture, an opportunity to promote economic growth, an opportunity to improve human capital."

SHENGGEN FAN

Director General,
International Food Policy Research Institute

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