

Foreword



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Working Together for Improved Nutrition

Approximately a third of the world's children face lifelong economic and social disadvantage because of poor nutrition during pregnancy and in the first two years of life. A significant proportion of these children are disadvantaged because of unbalanced diets that lead to obesity and its associated health challenges. Malnutrition is a phenomenon with many aspects, not all of them immediately apparent.

Analysis of efforts to tackle malnutrition conducted by The Lancet originally in 2008 and again in 2013 indicates that a range of specific interventions exist that can help people enjoy good nutritional status. Experience shows that they are most effective if national development strategies are sensitive to the underlying determinants of people's nutritional status.

“A person who has food has many problems. A person who has no food has only one problem.”

Chinese saying

Nutrition-sensitive solutions

Since 2008 many governments, civil society organizations, research groups and intergovernmental agencies (including those within the United Nations system) have sought ways to scale up effective actions for better nutrition. The collective experience to date suggests that such efforts are successful if all the different groups that seek to enable improvements in people's nutrition work *together* in support of sound national policies, the implementation of effective interventions, and sector programs that are sensitive to the determinants of malnutrition.

The evidence also indicates that as efforts are made to scale up success, all the groups that seek to support the implementation of national policies should work in synergy. As they do so, they should, at all times, take account of the day-to-day challenges faced by communities at risk of malnutrition, aligning their efforts to promote social justice and nutritional equity, and monitoring their collective impact. Their overarching aim should be to enable all women and children – and their families – to realize their right to food and good nutrition.

A bold new way of collective and harmonized thinking

The *Scaling Up Nutrition* or 'SUN' Movement was launched in September 2010 in response to the release earlier that year, by more than 100 national and international organizations, of the *Framework for Scaling Up Nutrition*.

The Movement is designed to bring together diverse stakeholders – central and local governments, civil society organizations, research groups and intergovernmental agencies and business enterprises – so that they can jointly work on improvements in nutrition on a scale that reflects the urgency and seriousness of the issue.

The SUN Movement embodies a bold new way of collective and harmonized thinking, action and communication for improved nutrition. It is specifically a movement, and not a new program, institution or fund. Through the Movement, national governments – both individually and jointly – are leading the worldwide effort to yield lasting nutritional benefits for individuals and societies within their respective countries. When joining the SUN Movement, they each commit to enabling people to access proven and innovative solutions for better nutrition, and to work in ways that increase the effectiveness of their investments so as to yield sustainable and equitable results.

The imperative to act

The Road to Good Nutrition is an expression of this new way of thinking. It brings together the experience and insights of globally recognized experts in the field of nutrition to create an in-depth introduction to the subject for the non-expert. This book is detailed, accurate and as up to date as possible, given the speed at which nutrition research on the one hand and nutrition policy on the other are evolving. The world of nutrition is moving fast, and it needs to, for the challenges we face are huge, and the imperative to act, overwhelming.

My hope is that *The Road to Good Nutrition* will help us all to accelerate our progress along the path to a world where everyone receives the food and the nutrition to which they have a self-evident right.

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