

The Second International Conference on Nutrition: Moving from politics to action to end malnutrition in all its forms

A call to Member States to include in their statements to the Second International Conference on Nutrition an outline of specific time-bound and measurable actions they will implement to advance the Rome Declaration commitments.

The NCD Alliance and the World Cancer Research Fund International welcome the coming together of Member States of the World Health Organization and the Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations for the Second International Conference on Nutrition (ICN2) in Rome on 19-21 November 2014. This is a unique opportunity for countries to discuss how to achieve the Rome Declaration's overall goal to “*eradicate hunger and prevent **all forms of malnutrition** worldwide, particularly undernourishment, stunting, wasting, underweight and overweight in children under five years of age; and anaemia in women and children among other micronutrient deficiencies; as well as reverse the rising trends in overweight and obesity and reduce the burden of diet-related noncommunicable diseases in all age groups*”. Ending malnutrition in all its forms is imperative to achieving sustainable development and ensuring health for all. Doing so requires urgent action to ensure food systems provide for all people's health and nutrition needs.

Given the increasingly complex challenge of malnutrition in all its forms, including **staggering rates of overweight and obesity, as well as diet-related non-communicable diseases such as cardiovascular diseases, diabetes, some cancers and neurological and mental disorders**, governments must implement policies, programmes and cooperate internationally to meet the following priority commitments in the *Rome Declaration*:

- ***Enhance sustainable food systems*** by developing ***coherent public policies*** from production to consumption and across relevant sectors to provide year-round access to food that meets people's nutrition needs and promote safe and diversified healthy diets;
- ***Develop policies, programmes and initiatives for ensuring healthy diets*** throughout the life course, ***starting from the early stages of life*** to adulthood, including of people with special nutritional needs, before and during pregnancy, in particular during the first 1,000 days, promoting, protecting and supporting exclusive breastfeeding during the first six months and continued breastfeeding until two years of age and beyond with appropriate complementary feeding, healthy eating by families, and at school during childhood, as well as other specialized feeding;
- ***Empower people and create an enabling environment*** for making informed choices about food products for healthy dietary practices and appropriate infant and young child feeding practices through improved health and nutrition information and education.

We therefore call on Member States to include in their statements to the conference an outline of specific time-bound and measurable actions they will implement to advance these commitments.

The *ICN2 Framework for Action (FFA)* provides extensive guidance on the types of actions needed to support the commitments outlined above. To prevent, manage and treat NCDs and obesity we call on Member States to state how they will implement the following recommendations in the FFA:

- **Review national policies and investments and integrate nutrition objectives into food and agriculture policy**, programme design and implementation, **to enhance nutrition sensitive agriculture**, ensure food security and enable healthy diets (recommendation 8)
- **Strengthen local food production and processing, especially by smallholder and family farmers**, giving special attention to women's empowerment, while recognizing that efficient and effective trade is key to achieving nutrition objectives (recommendation 9)
- **Promote the diversification of crops including underutilized traditional crops, more production of fruits and vegetables**, and appropriate production of animal-source products as needed, applying sustainable food production and natural resource management practices (recommendation 10)
- **Encourage gradual reduction of saturated fat, sugars and salt/sodium and trans-fat** from foods and beverages to prevent excessive intake by consumers and improve nutrient content of foods, as needed (recommendation 14)
- **Explore regulatory and voluntary instruments** – such as marketing, publicity and labelling policies, economic incentives or disincentives in accordance with Codex Alimentarius and World Trade Organization rules – to promote healthy diets (recommendation 15)
- **Establish food or nutrient-based standards** to make healthy diets and safe drinking water accessible in public facilities such as hospitals, childcare facilities, workplaces, universities, schools, food and catering services, government offices and prisons, **and encourage the establishment of facilities for breastfeeding** (recommendation 16)
- **Conduct appropriate social marketing campaigns** and lifestyle change communication programmes to promote physical activity, dietary diversification, consumption of micronutrient-rich foods such as fruits and vegetables, including traditional local foods and taking into consideration cultural aspects, better child and maternal nutrition, appropriate care practices and adequate breastfeeding and complementary feeding, targeted and adapted for different audiences and stakeholders in the food system (recommendation 21)
- **Regulate the marketing of food and non-alcoholic beverages to children** in accordance with WHO recommendations (recommendation 40)
- **Strengthen health systems and promote universal health coverage**, particularly through primary health care, to enable national health systems to address malnutrition in all its forms (recommendation 25)

The NCD Alliance and WCRF International stand ready to support Member States in the implementation of these recommendations – as only by taking swift and concrete action on the ICN2 commitments will we begin to turn the tide on malnutrition in all its forms.