

XIXth
**GLOBAL CHILD
NUTRITION FORUM**
• MONTREAL 2017 •



XIX^e
**FORUM MONDIAL SUR
LA NUTRITION INFANTILE**
• MONTRÉAL 2017 •

2017 FORUM REPORT



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Forum Communiqué:

Organizer, Nadia Goodman - Consultant, WFP Centre of Excellence against Hunger

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Dear 2017 Global Child Nutrition Forum Attendees and Supporters,

On behalf of the Global Child Nutrition Foundation (GCNF) and the UN World Food Programme (WFP) Centre of Excellence against Hunger, thank you for joining us at the 19th Annual Global Child Nutrition Forum from September 17 to September 21 in Montréal, Canada. We were honored to hold the first Forum in Canada, and we are grateful to our organizing partner the Breakfast Club of Canada for hosting the global school meal network at one of our largest Forums yet. We are also grateful for the enthusiasm and generous support provided by the Government of Canada, the Government of Montréal, LIUNA!, the Province of Québec, and The Sprott Foundation.

The Forum is a learning exchange and technical assistance conference held annually to support countries in the development and implementation of sustainable school feeding programs. Since 1997, the annual Forum has united leaders from countries around the world for five days of intensive training, technical assistance and planning, all directed toward establishing country-operated, sustainable school feeding programs. By sharing their insights, experiences, and challenges, and informal worldwide alliance of leaders dedicated to advancing school feeding has evolved.

Our 2017 Forum theme - “Bridge to Sustainable Development through School Meal Programs: Engaging Local, National, Regional, and Global Communities” was selected to represent the many ways implementers can use school meal programs to connect and better serve communities of all sizes in their countries. Through Forum discussions and presentations, we learned how participants are implementing school meal programs to bridge to hard-to-reach communities. We learned a number of countries are creating and implementing innovative programs to expand their reach to communities that have previously been left out of the school meal system.

Each year at the Forum, a group of representatives gather together over several days to create the Global Child Nutrition Forum Communiqué, an annual guide created to enable participants and their partners to advocate on behalf of home-grown school meal programs and related matters, while also measuring progress across Forums. Through the Forum Communiqué, participants are able to collaboratively agree upon a set of recognized priorities and recommendations to take back to their home countries. We hope that the Communiqué will serve as an effective tool for progress in school meal programs around the world, enabling participants to continue their work ensuring more children have the nutritious food needed to learn and thrive in school. Please see pages 25 to 26 to view this year’s Communiqué and learn how you can continue the important conversations started in Montréal.

ABOUT GCNF:

Global Child Nutrition Foundation (GCNF) connects a global network of practitioners, governments, nonprofits, and companies working together to develop and support locally-sourced school meal programs around the world.

ABOUT WFP CoE

World Food Programme Centre of Excellence is a knowledge hub based in Brazil that promotes south-south cooperation in capacity development in the areas of school feeding, nutrition, and food security. It brings together southern nations who want to learn and develop their own programs.



Gene White,
President of the Board
of Directors, Global
Child Nutrition Foundation



Daniel Balaban,
Director, WFP Centre of
Excellence against Hunger

Opening Ceremony

The 19th Global Child Nutrition Forum was held in Montréal, Canada from September 17th until September 21st 2017. The purpose of the Global Child Nutrition Foundation (GCNF) is to provide all children with the opportunity to succeed and achieve their full potential through the provision of adequate nutrition.

Gene White, President of the Global Child Nutrition Foundation opened the Forum with warm words of welcoming and appreciation to the co-organizers: World Food Programme Centre of Excellence against Hunger and the Breakfast Club of Canada, which were paramount in the realization of this Forum. White highlighted that the Forum's purpose is to create networks and make friends to celebrate the successes of school feeding programs (SFP) around the world.



Daniel Balaban, Director and Representative of the World Food Programme (WFP) Centre of Excellence against Hunger, spoke about the unique opportunity that the Forum provides in terms of sharing different experiences through dialogue and cooperation among different participants that could lead to tangible commitments that could directly contribute to seven different Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Balaban asked to pay particular attention to going beyond the provision of food but also to meet the nutritional needs of our children, thus enabling them to be more productive adults in the future; food programs must connect with local food production partners and governments to strengthen food systems.

Denis Coderre, Mayor of Montréal, expressed his enthusiasm in seeing Montréal in the next years as a city where all schools would provide breakfast to their students and where all work

together towards a better living conditions for children.

Sébastien Proulx, Minister of Families, Education and Recreation, Québec Province, congratulated the Breakfast Club of Canada for their hard work in providing the most essential meal of the day to kids in many different schools around Canada.

Jean-Claude Poissant, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada, congratulated all the efforts from the different partners involved in the Forum and highlighted that the priorities are to help poor sectors of society to become middle class Canadians through a poverty reduction strategy so that everyone has the chance to succeed and achieve their full capabilities. He claimed: "Celui qui a de la santé a de l'espoir, et qui a de l'espoir à tout - He who has health, has hope. And he who has hope, has everything".

Mrs Aissata Issoufou, First Lady of the Republic of Niger, congratulated the significant progress in the education sector of all countries and also noticed that there is still a lot to be done in terms of gender disparity, especially in rural areas. Boys and girls must have the right to attend school and access a hot meal which is imperative in the fight against nutritional deficiencies in children.

H.E. Paul Sintentela Dlamini, Deputy Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Swaziland, expressed his sincere appreciation to the organizers of the forum and remarked that inequality among households, infectious diseases, and climate change, among other factors, has increased food insecurity and led to absenteeism of children. However, through school meal programs, the school retention rate has significantly increased. Apart from being academically inclined, schools care for and support children with HIV and malnutrition. They ensure that children are provided with nutritious meals on a daily basis in order to improve their mental growth and academic performance. The cost of this program is increasingly unsustainable, and the government of Swaziland mentioned that it will be happy to learn best practices from other countries on how they have managed to solve school feeding programs associated problems.



Dr. Sabrina Former, former beneficiary of the Breakfast Club Programme, shared her personal story portraying the economic difficulties that her family faced when she was younger, and how the Breakfast Club program helped her in becoming the successful professional that she is now.

Finally, **Daniel Germain, Founding President of the Breakfast Club of Canada**, expressed his gratitude towards **Arlene Mitchell, Executive Director of the Global Child Nutrition Foundation** for providing him with the inspiration to make a change in children's lives. Germain extended special thanks to his team who has put in extraordinary sacrifice to feed children all around Canada. He also promised that the efforts to feed children everyday will persist. He also thanked the World Food Programme for their confidence and trust in the organization of the 19th Global Child Nutrition Forum.

Keynote by Dr. Jeffrey Sachs

In a live video from the UN General Assembly in New York, Dr. Jeffrey Sachs stressed how important the role of all the participants of the Global Child Nutrition Forum is in terms of fulfilling the mission of the Sustainable Development agenda. Jeffrey Sachs, who is currently leading a network of universities around the world to tackle the Sustainable Development Goals, expressed his sincere wish to have the Forum as a partner in achieving this endeavour. He is currently launching Canada's Chapter of the United Nations Sustainable Development Solutions Network at the University of Waterloo. In the near future, it will also include many other universities around Canada. He believes that this could be an opportunity to mobilize the government on behalf of the shared mission of the Forum. Sachs highlighted the need of not only a formal process and budget to maintain school feeding programs, but also a tremendous amount of community engagement and formal structure.

Question: Governments are increasingly taking charge of their programs, but there are still financing issues. Do you have any advice in terms of sustainable and effective ways of founding these programs?

"It is everyone's aspiration that countries finance their own wellbeing, and as countries rise in income levels, they "graduate" out of poverty. However, for low-income countries, the budgets are currently insufficient and will probably remain so by 2020 unless there is very rapid economic growth. We need a significant amount of global funding for education, and organizations would need to do that in order to raise donor financing. I would go to multiple companies in the sector, asking them to put significant resources to move this along. We need a massive campaign to ask governments to put a fight against tax havens, and get more involvement from private companies.

We are in a political fight for decency and I believe we are going to win that fight."



Scenes from the Opening Ceremony Reception



Thank you to GCNF's Donors and Forum Partners:

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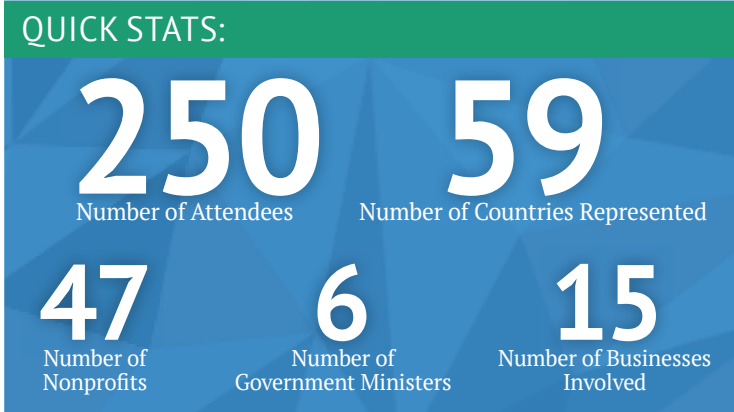
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Susan Neely

Forum Overview:

The 19th Annual Global Child Nutrition Forum was organized by the Global Child Nutrition Foundation in partnership with the World Food Programme Centre of Excellence against Hunger, and the Breakfast Club of Canada, with support from partners, experts from governments and non-government organizations, UN agencies, civil society, academics, researchers, private sector, media, and other organizations.

The Global Child Nutrition Forum brought together 250 participants (60% women) from 59 countries, including one First Lady, one Deputy Prime Minister, five Ministers, and two Vice-Ministers, members of parliaments and representatives from the African Union. The Forum gathered government representatives, practitioners and community members from national, provincial and municipal levels, including sectors such as education, agriculture, health, social protection, planning and finance. The theme of the Forum was Bridge to Sustainable Development through School Meal Programs: Engaging Local, National, Regional, and Global Communities.



Beyond improving child nutrition and thus physical and cognitive development, school meals can be a strategic means to foster other important social and economic impacts. School meals effectively draw hungry children to school and improve class attendance and overall educational achievement. When connected to smallholder farmers, school meal programs can expand new, potentially sustainable markets while strengthening the agricultural food systems that allow students to consume locally-sourced, familiar, diverse, and—most importantly—nutritious, food.

MAP OF ATTENDANCE BY GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS



Plenary Session 1:

BRIDGING TO COMMUNITIES OF INTEREST MODERATOR: BARBARA NOSEWORTHY



Speaker 1: Victoire Sidémého Dzidudu Dogbe Tomegah, Ministre du Développement à la Base (Togo)

Key message: School feeding programs are not the business of one department but the entire community.

Ms. Victoire highlighted that school feeding programs should be the center of policy and state budget allocations. It is essential to involve grassroots communities in the management process with an integrative approach which include Multisectoral Institutional Framework with clearly defined duties and responsibilities. Ms. Victoire stressed that in Togo, the institutional framework is completed by NGOs, which ensures that all resources go to beneficiaries. The primary outcome of school meal programs is building a relationship with "ownership and capacity strengthened to reduce undernutrition and increase access to education at regional, national and community level." Also, progress towards gender equality is seen in girls' enrolment in the school programs which address the most urgent needs for water, sanitation, and health infrastructure available in the country.



Speaker 2: Carlo Scaramella, Deputy Regional Director, Regional Bureau for North Africa, Middle East, Central Asia, and Eastern Europe, United Nations World Food Programme

Key message: MENA region is witnessing the largest refugee crisis and children are affected due to the displacements and refugee flow.

Mr. Scaramella reported that 45% of World Food Programme's work is in the Middle East. In 2011, four million children were beneficiaries of school meal initiatives. Interestingly, 700,000 children in Syria are being provided locally grown food produced by women.

Mr. Scaramella emphasized that when a conflict area is considered, the most crucial factor to ensure is retention in schools, especially for girls, followed by further social inclusion. Mr. Scaramella highlighted that school meal programs empower marginalized children and provide a presence of state through social protection. Therefore, implementation of school meal programs is essential

WFP interventions: Regional Initiative Programme provides a platform for partners which coordinates support and helps increase impact.



Speaker 3: Jocelyn Brown, Deputy Administrator, Office of Capacity Building and Development, U.S. Department of Agriculture

Key message: School meal programs are not just about food and nutrition; early marriage, early pregnancy and gender issues can also be addressed through school meal programs.

Ms. Brown stated that school lunch programs in the United States have 70 years of experience, but breakfast is still often lacking. More than half of the children who receive the assistance are from low-income families. The assistance programmes do not adequately achieve food security since they don't reach the most marginalized of children. Moreover, legislation is essential for providing technical and financial assistance, as this will help reduce food insecurity.

Ms. Brown stressed the need for countries to take control of school meal programs by developing sustainable and graduation plans to feed the children in the poorest and marginalized communities. A holistic approach is needed to achieve valid results. Further, involvement of different stakeholders is crucial in order to get different approaches about dealing with marginal and indigenous communities.

Speaker 4: Dr. Miriam Altman, Trustee and Former Chairperson of the Tiger Brands Foundation, Republic of South Africa.

Key message: South Africa is a middle-income country with significant issues of poverty and malnutrition.

Ms. Altman mentioned that the organization is not public, but is rather an endowment to state programs. The issues of poverty and food security are addressed through state programs. Currently, 12 million children are beneficiaries of this program. The food security program is applied in the most impoverished communities, and serves to feed about 9 million children during the school period. Ms. Altman highlighted that many children have been going to bed hungry which is why breakfast is a crucial meal to ensure their success in school. Tiger Brands is providing hot breakfasts, an industrial kitchen, trained staff, as well as mobile monitoring for students. Up to now, around 64,000 children in 91 schools have been reached through this initiative.



Speaker 5: H.E. Dr. Martial De-Paul Ikounga, Former Commissioner for Human Resources, Science and Technology of the African Union

Key message: Agriculture will feed; nourishment can foster development.

Dr. Martial De-Paul Ikounga highlighted that school feeding is an investment and it should become law in every country for the future generations. Dr. Martial addressed the components required for the success of the school feeding program, emphasizing that common understanding of those at the African Union level is recommended. It is crucial to address the nutrition aspects first, followed by education, because no education can succeed if a learner's nutritional requirements are not met. The visit to Brazil was an opportunity to experience the impacts of home-grown school feeding, a practice that can be beneficial to local farmers. The topic of school feeding programmes should be addressed at the highest level of the state; leaders should be aware of such programs as they may result in a stronger impact. The African Union has been celebrating the African Day of School Feeding every year since 2016. Dr. Martial De-Paul Ikounga would like to know what the achievements of the school meal program have been, and has requested a study serving this purpose. He also emphasized that the Sustainable Development Goals' 17th goal is about partnership rather than about begging or dependency. Also, he mentioned that investing in the youth through professional and technical training could be beneficial to the programme. Finally, he stressed that education, youth employment, and governance are key to the school feeding program's success.



MARKET PLACE:

The Forum Market Place provided participating businesses and organizations an opportunity to showcase how their activities, services, and products contribute to the fight against child hunger, improve child access to primary education, and increase the promotions of small-scale farmer agricultural production. The following organizations shared their work in the Forum Market Place:





Workshop: Media

Facilitated by:

- **Sinne Mutsaers - Communications Creative Director, Foodies Children Show**
- **Jarreth Merz - Producer/Director, Foodies Children Show**
- **Sylvie Harrison - Radio Craft Development Team Lead, Farm Radio International**
- **Ian Pringle - Director of Programs, Farm Radio International**
- **Boitshepo "Bibi" Giyose - Senior Nutrition Officer for Policy and Programmes in the Nutrition and Food Systems, Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations**
- **Ana Islas - Nutrition Officer in the Nutrition and Food Systems Division, Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations**

The overall goal of the workshop was to demonstrate how media can be incorporated in school meal programs as a behavior intervention, as well as to address its barriers. School meal programs are the most educational interventions for healthy eating that are currently in place. However, they can be strengthened through comprehensive interventions and media, as the latter is a very strong tool.

Each workshop started with an act during which people from the communication sector attempted to persuade the Minister of Agriculture to attend a comprehensive campaign by convincing him of the important role that the media could play in the comprehensive program.

Sylvie Harrison, introduced the Communication for Development (C4D) tool. This distinct field of study is also known under other names such as "health communication" or "social and behavior change communication". She stressed that: "Dialogues which require critical thinking are capable of generating a critical thinking community that has to have those dialogues. Without dialogues, there is no communication and there will be no education; and by education we mean change".

Key for C4D trends

- Hybrid model: results driven & participatory communication
- Multichannel: builds something that makes sense along with the community perception
- Information and Communications Technology (ICT): for scale

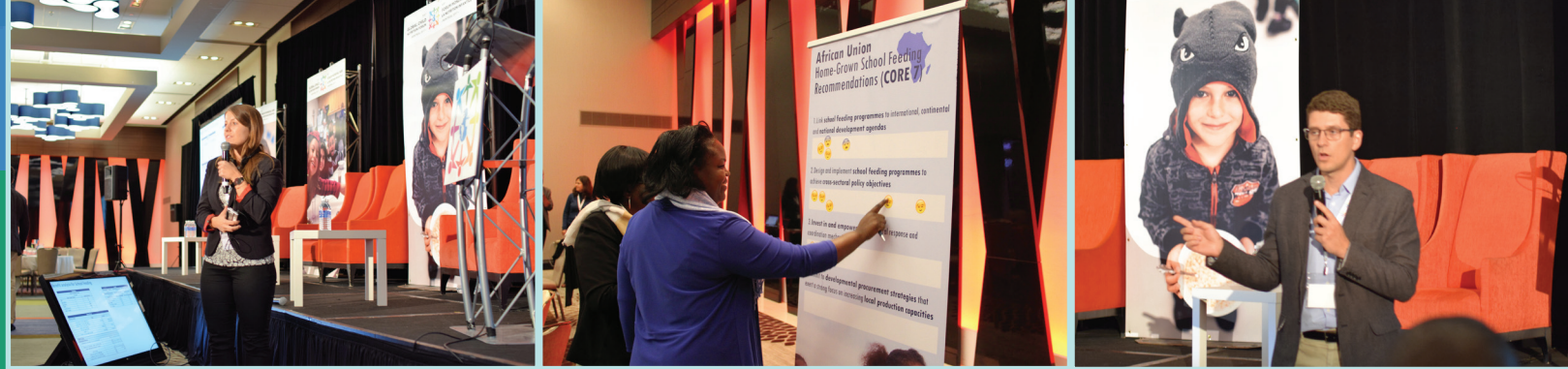
Nutritional education: Eating behavior is influenced by many factors: social, ecological, cultural food system, policy, and media. Moreover, individual food preferences are influenced by many previous experiences. Family, other community members, and schools also play an important role in influencing food preferences and eating behaviors.

The "Foodies" TV series was shown to the audience. These series described the story of a Ghanaian family. Jarreth Merz introduced the session as he mentioned that it is essential to inspire people rather than to educate them. He stated that if we use media as a wheel, we can create a vehicle and customize it according the need of the program. The "Foodies" series will show how we can incorporate a message in a vehicle which has the highest standard of the education.

During the group session, every person was asked to share their traditional knowledge and any cultural taboos related to food. People all around the world shared some interesting information about how a culture can restrict or enhance the consumption of certain foods. The main message retained was that traditional and indigenous knowledge can play an important role in changing behaviour: there is lot to be harnessed from traditional and indigenous systems. Taboos can be both negative and positive, however, every culture has a voice which can be used to raise awareness and promote healthy eating habits. One example from Rwanda was truly fascinating. People from Rwanda love music, and in their culture music is a form of spreading happiness and celebration. After having developed the high ironized bean which is a bio-fortified crop, a music campaign promoting better nutrition through high ironized beans took place. This campaign served to motivate people to incorporate ironized beans into their diets. The role of music is as important in Africa, as it could also serve as a popular and non-threatening way to convey health-promoting messages.

The group was then asked how they could implement media tools in their current projects. Although delegates were interested in using media tools, they were concerned about the funding that would be required.

Jarreth Merz explained that media could be used as a tool for other issues including food wastage, women empowerment and building partnership. Funding should not impede the use of media as a communication tool, but rather should be seen as an investment that would increase awareness to projects, making them more impactful.



Workshop: Private Sector Engagement

Facilitated by: Will McMahan, GCNF Program & Operations Officer

The main objective of the workshop was to develop a skillset to have conversations about private partnerships. Participants were asked to answer the following questions:

1. What is the definition of the private sector?
2. What is already happening in your school meal program with the private sector?
3. Are there legislations or policies for public-private partnerships in your country?
4. Is the private sector engaged in social support in other sectors (mining, forestry, fishing, manufacturing, etc.)?

Even with participants coming from different backgrounds, public or private, many of the groups concluded that private sector engagement can be beneficial for all parties. The challenge lies in making the private sector recognize their social responsibility as well as investment and business opportunities.

During the workshop, participants also highlighted that it can be difficult to determine how to effectively deal with corporations. For example, in the case of school feeding programs, there should be specific guidelines involving the nutrition of food programs offered by companies to young children, such as adherence to nutritional requirements and quality of ingredients. Furthermore, it is still not clear whether legislation helps the formation of public-private partnerships or makes the private sector more hesitant to collaborate. Each party needs to understand from the beginning each other's needs and expectations from the partnership. It may also be beneficial for countries to share strategy documents and experiences with private sector partners.

Workshop: Cost Benefit Analysis in the Policy Cycle

Facilitated by:

- **Nard Huijbregts - Lead Social Policy Advisor, Economic Policy Research Institute**
- **Vinícius Limongi - Project Admin Assistant, World Food Programme's Centre of Excellence against Hunger**
- **João Paulo Cavalcante - Technical Expert - Social Policies, World Food Programme's Centre of Excellence against Hunger**
- **Katharina Bollig - Social Policy Advisor, Economic Policy Research Institute**

The aim of this workshop was to introduce a tool developed by WFP to simulate cost-benefit of school feeding programs. The purpose of this tool is to advocate policy-makers regarding benefits of sustainable home-grown school feeding.

At the beginning of the workshop, participants were asked to name three benefits of school feeding programs. The Public Policy Cycle was presented to show the pathway to sectoral (education, health & nutrition, and agriculture) impact. The unit of analysis is the household, and the tool looks at direct beneficiary households, households engaged in agriculture, and other households in the economy. During the workshop, the presenters highlighted various available tools used to assess the benefits of school feeding programs and explained why this new tool should be used instead. The cost-benefit analysis tool intends to advocate that school feeding is not so much about cost as an investment for human capital development. This tool uses household expenditure data in each country to simulate cost-benefit. One of the strengths of this tool is capturing economic and agricultural changes across the years. The tool is also relatively quick to apply because it relies on publicly available data. This means that the information presented by the tool can be quickly shown to governments, as compared to other methods which use field data collection. Moreover, the tool can be used for monitoring and evaluation of new data prospectively collected on the program and country.

At the end of the workshop, participants were divided into groups of ten and conducted a group exercise to better understand how to apply the Public Policy Cycle using the data on various indicators from four different fictional countries. Please see Appendix III for more information about this workshop exercise.

Plenary Session 2:

NUTRITION MESSAGES FOR COMMUNITIES OF INTEREST MODERATOR: BOITSHEPO (BIBI) GIYOSE



Speaker 1: Dr. Elizabeth Kristjansson, Professor of Psychology, Faculty of Social Sciences, University of Ottawa

Dr. Kristjansson and colleagues conducted a systematic review of school meal programs in 2017 which included 25 studies; 15 from low middle-income countries and ten from high-income countries. Mainly randomized control trials or controlled cohorts were selected with children between 5 to 19 years of age.

Studies were focused on both their physical and psychosocial health outcomes. The results of the physical health review show that effectiveness of school meals has had an impact on weight, but no effect has been observed on height. The dropout rate was reduced from 22% to 12%, and attendance was increased in lower-income countries. Findings suggest that math gains were higher for experimental groups from randomized control trials.

For future research, Dr. Kristjansson suggested the following recommendations to observe the effectiveness of school meal programs: Target most undernourished children or areas with high proportions of malnutrition; Studies should focus on a child's psychosocial development by measuring cognitive and learning outcomes; Need for high-quality research which can compare different modalities and effects on subgroups of children, as well as combination of school feeding with other interventions; Comparisons of school-cooked meals with prepackaged meals, as well as different timings for breakfast and lunch should be considered.



Speaker 2: Dr. Aulo Gelli, Research Fellow, International Food Policy Research Institute

Dr. Aulo Gelli presented the Nutrition Embedded Evaluation Programme Impact Evaluation (NEEP-IE) study which is the cluster of randomized control trials conducted to evaluate the impact of childcare center-based integrated nutritional and agricultural interventions on the diets, nutrition, and development of young children in Malawi. Dr. Aulo emphasized that investing in early childhood development is the real human capital investment.

The NEEDP-IE study involves the intervention activities which improve nutritious food production, training and behavioral-change communication to adjust food intake, care, and hygiene practices. Cluster randomized control trials, implemented in 60 rural communities, were randomly assigned to one of the two treatment arms.

The first one was the control group, which included 30 communities with Community-Based Child-care Centers (CBCCs) which were supported by Save the Children's Early Child Development program with no nutrition or agricultural support. The second one being the intervention group, which included 30 communities with CBCCs which were supported by Save the Children's ECD programme with additional nutritional and agricultural support. Primary outcomes at child level included dietary intake (measured through 24-h recall), while secondary outcomes included child development (Malawi Development Assessment Tool (MDAT)) and nutritional status (anthropometric measurements). At a household level, primary issues included smallholder farmer production output and crop-mix (recall of last production season). Intermediate outcomes along with theorized agricultural and nutritional pathways were measured. During this trial, a mixed-methods approach was used and child-, household-, CBCC- and market-level surveys and assessments were carried out, as well as in-depth interviews and focus group discussions with project stakeholders.



Speaker 3: Dr. Hugo Melgar-Quiñonez, Professor and Director of the Institute for Global Food Security, McGill University

Dr. Melgar-Quiñonez highlighted that inadequate household food security is the underlying cause of children's health and nutritional status. Food insecurity is a very complex phenomenon which has various consequences, including obesity and the double burden of malnutrition. National data from the USA showed that the likelihood of being overweight among African-American children is higher in a food insecure household than in one that is food secure. The prevalence of overweight children increased with increasing levels of food insecurity in Mexico City. The Food Insecurity Experience

Scale is a new indicator which measures food insecurity by asking individuals about their personal perception of food insecurity. This tool can help monitor progress towards achieving the Sustainable Development Goals. Dr. Melgar-Quiñonez recommends that school feeding incorporate the most current and sound indicators for evaluation and to evaluate the impact of the programme promptly. In order to be useful in the fight against undernutrition and food insecurity, the difference in the dietary shortfalls of food insecure children must be considered.

Speaker 4: Dr. K. Srinath Reddy, President, Public Health Foundation of India, and member of the Global Panel on Agriculture and Nutrition (GloPan)

Malnutrition is a widespread issue as 800 million people in the world are hungry, 2 billion are micronutrient deficient and 1.9 billion are overweight, with children and adolescents being the most vulnerable. As such, there is a pressing need for an active response to the current nutrition transition delineated by the increasing rates of overweight and obesity worldwide.

Malnutrition is pervasive, and can't be solved through income growth alone. Dr. Reddy highlighted that in order to improve nutrition for all, it is essential to make changes in the food system, as well as gain knowledge in all domains of nutrition. The Global Panel's objective is to yield strong evidence and understanding of how the collaboration of agriculture with food systems could improve nutrition outcomes. Dr. Reddy reported that we are currently facing problems in terms of the way we should be approaching agriculture and food systems to make them sustainable.

Dr. Reddy provided the following recommendations to consider when constructing school meal programs: School meals should be consistent with national dietary guidelines and formulated with emphasis on nutritious ingredients and food groups; Policies that facilitate local and regional procurement and diversification of foods for schools should be implemented; Consumption of healthier school meals and encouraging children's lifelong healthy eating habits should be promoted; Integrated actions that link school meals with nutrition education, community engagement, school gardening, training and technical support to help schools achieve a healthier environment overall should be applied.



Speaker 5: Dr. Harold Alderman, Senior Research Fellow, International Food Policy Research Institute

School meal programs play a significant role in food security and nutritional status among children in schools. Dr. Alderman explained that improvements in education and nutrition, as well as the availability of new social protection instruments, have shifted the potential roles of school meal programs into new areas and challenges, including smallholder farm integration and market development. Dr. Alderman emphasized the necessity to evaluate programs carefully. For instance, a review found that school meal interventions had an overall impact on learning. However, these results were accurate when the enrolment rate was low and the food insecurity level was high, indicating that programs should be focused on food insecure areas. Still, only 12% of children attending school in low-income countries have been receiving school meals. Dr. Alderman raised the issue of the double burden of malnutrition as a global threat, and emphasized that it is crucial to design programs with this important issue in mind, as well as focusing on diet diversity rather than energy density.

Recommendations provided by Dr. Alderman were as follows: Schools can become a platform for micronutrient fortification of meals and for periodic supplementation to kids, as well as help with educating about micronutrient deficiencies; Schools can provide an environment for regular health screening for malnutrition, as well as referrals; Schools can become a platform for behavioral changes by providing education to both the children, and their parents.



TECHNICAL CONSULTATION BOOTHS (TCBS)

The general objective of TCBS was to provide an opportunity for attending country officials and others to make a direct connection with funding organizations and technical assistance partners in order to explore potential collaboration.

At the beginning, all organizations' representatives provided a 2-minute presentation about their programs and what their organization offered. All participants received a one-page handout listing about each organization that presented, which included the languages spoken at each TCB. Participating organizations include:

American Peanut Council; the Breakfast Club of Canada; Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO); Food and Nutrition Service; Global Child Nutrition Foundation; Hampton Creek; Joint Aid Management (JAM); McGill University Institute for Global Food Security; Planet Aid; United States Department of Agriculture (USDA); UN World Food Programme (WFP); and World Food Programme Centre of Excellence against Hunger

Ministers Roundtable

MODERATOR: DR. MARTIAL DE-PAUL IKOUNGA

In this session, the former Commissioner of Human Resources of the African Union and an ally to WFP's home-grown school feeding programme (HGSF), Dr. Martial De-Paul Ikounga moderated the discussion on challenges and lessons learned in countries' implementation of HGSF.

In Egypt, HGSF programmes aim to have 100% coverage of national schools, including preschools. The Deputy Minister of Education explained that they used to cover all education cycles, including sport and disability schools, but after the economic shock, coverage was reduced. Their programmes also include links with social protection and social justice through a 3rd year conditional cash transfer programme for school attendance and health checkups. Improvements need to be made in their monitoring system, especially for the institutional level. There also needs to be more community participation, more private sector engagement and partnership, as well as better promotion for water sanitation, hand washing and hygiene in remote areas. Decentralization is also key to support programme monitoring and institutional capacity building. As a result, school feeding can boost local economy.



The Minister of Togo highlighted school feeding programs as being an important element for social inclusion and poverty relief. It also serves as an entry point to improve human capital, including better school performance and success of young girls. Greater returns can be made when the programs are integrated with other social protection programs. Moreover, communities in Togo have understood that SFPs are mutually beneficial. However, further investments and partnerships need to finance programs in order for them to reach as many children as possible and help in poverty reduction.

On the one hand, the legislation in Lesotho encourages all children to go to school; on the other hand, school feeding programs ensure that children attend school. As mentioned by the country's Minister, they seek support with implementing their policy fully. Furthermore, although they recognize that school feeding programs create a platform for smallholder farmers, more effective participation is needed from the community, as well as from different government departments, NGOs, and women representatives.

The Minister of The Gambia was proud to announce that after being part of WFP's programme for over 40 years, they have launched a pilot for local procurement. The country is also working towards a fully home-grown, government-led SFP by 2021. The challenges, however, remain; their supply for home-grown production is inadequate due to climatic conditions and weak partnerships. Nonetheless, there is a strong political will.

The Minister of Burundi announced that starting October 2017, milk would be distributed throughout the country on top of their school garden SFP. WFP Brazil will also support them in the placement of a legislation. This will, as a result, help address the impacts of climate change and the risk of deforestation. Further, the Minister emphasized that youth are their richest resource.

There is a need to invest in youth and foster them early in life.



Although Bangladesh is a small country, 170 million populate it. Of the 65,000 governmental primary schools, 3.2 million students are being fed through the country's school feeding programs with the support of WFP. The challenge they need to consider is that hunger is not the only issue; the nutritional value of the meal needs to be evaluated and optimized for children's educational success.

The Minister of Nevis explained that their SFP is being supported through the partnership between private and governmental organizations -creating a coalition of stakeholders- for the provision of funds, food and infrastructure, as well as coordination of the programme. The challenges that they face are the monitoring and evaluation of food commodities throughout the supply chain, training of cooks, provision and assurance of nutritional diversity, data collection on effectiveness, monitoring of stocks, efficiency, and a lack of a national policy. In the latter case, the Ministry of Education is currently developing a policy which will be covering health and nutrition.



Resources and Topical Highlights

MODERATOR: ABDOU DIENG

During this session moderated by the Director of the United Nations World Food Programme's West Africa Bureau, Abdou Dieng, panelists were invited to speak about the different research findings on school feeding programmes and the way forward to improve these types of research.

As stated by UN Standing Committee on Nutrition's Stineke Onema, the current nutrition transition from under- to overnutrition screams for a need to look at malnutrition in all its forms. With the UN Decade of Action as a platform for systemic change, all actors need to come together to build sustainable resilient food systems for healthy diets, align health systems to deliver universal coverage of essential nutrition actions, provide social protection and nutrition education, focus trade and investments for improved nutrition, form safe and supportive environments for nutrition at all ages, and strengthen governance and accountability for nutrition. In fact, schools are efficient and effective entry points for nutrition that move beyond project approaches and expand to change the system. This will not only benefit the nutrition of children and communities but also help in the achievement of human rights to education and health, holding governments accountable for achieving these rights. In the end, governments need to lead to achieve systemic-level change.

The National School Milk Program of China presented by Liu Lin, Deputy Secretary General of the China Dairy Association (DAC), is the first school meal program in China involving seven government ministries. The program has successfully ensured the safety throughout the whole supply chain and delivery of milk in over 60,000 primary and high schools between the years 2000 and 2016, reaching a total of over 20 million children in 31 provinces. Even after 17 years of success in the program and 13 years of government management, Liu believes the school coverage is not enough and thus continuously works harder for improvement.

In 2016, Nard Huijbregts, Lead Social Policy Advisor, Economic Policy Research Institute (EPRI) was asked by the African Union to conduct a study on sustainable school feeding. After 13 country missions, 20 in-depth country case studies, a continental survey, and interviews with both governmental and non-governmental stakeholders, he and his team at the Economic Policy Research Institute developed a conceptual framework or model for African school feeding. In this model, the key feature is the high involvement of communities. School feeding programs have been proven to improve cognitive performance in children, as well as school attendance and enrolment. They are also beneficial for health and nutrition, on top of agriculture and local economic development and are noted for providing returns to the communities. Factors driving these impacts are meal frequency and regularity, design and implementation of the program, establishment of infrastructures for the school feeding programs, and the involvement of ministries. To advance the research, health and nutrition indicators need to be monitored rather than education indicators alone. There is also a greater need to integrate school feeding programs into larger national development agendas/strategies.

Francesca de Ceglie, Regional Program Policy Officer of WFP Regional Bureau for Latin America and the Caribbean, presented a study conducted by WFP. The study focused on Latin America and the Caribbean where school feeding programs have been largely successful and found that, despite the large coverage in over 16 countries, there are still large income inequalities and high prevalence of malnutrition, including overweight and obesity. As such, many models of school feeding programmes need to be redesigned to include diversified menus and promote healthy eating habits along with school meals.

There were recommendations on the use of evidence-based methods. This data can be used as a resource for timely information that is important for the prevention of issues such as malnutrition and food insecurity. Data collection is necessary in school feeding programmes even if the data is scarce. Many inexpensive tools and networks, exist to collect impactful data. As noted by panelist Derek Ruths, Director, McGill Centre for Social and Cultural Data Science, "data can be powerful and have a large impact on the programme you can run".

RECOMMENDATIONS:

Recommendations by EPRI's Nard Huijbregts:

- Link school feeding programmes to international, continental and national development agendas
- Design and implement school feeding programmes to achieve cross-sectoral policy objectives
- Invest in and empower multi-sectoral response and coordination mechanisms
- Commit to development of procurement strategies that exert a strong focus on increasing local production
- Innovate financing strategies by diversifying financing sources and/or implementing co-financing mechanism
- Devote resources and processes to M&E systems and automate feedback process to improve policy outcomes
- Deepen and learn from South-South and Pan-African cooperation to optimize policy impacts

Recommendations by UNSCN's Stineke Onema:

- Multi-sector, multi-actor involvement
- Target children from communities at risk
- All forms of malnutrition should be looked at
- Be part of school curriculum
- Led by Government
- Based on national dietary guidelines, norms and standards to ensure quality of meals
- Locally procured where possible, in order to support SME and have an impact on local economy
- Be part of a comprehensive national social protection plan
- Capacity development of all actors
- An enabling school environment
- Promote healthy diets and nutrition
- Improve dietary diversity, including use of traditional foods
- Supportive nutrition and health services
- Inclusion of SFPs in national budget and a careful transition period from donor to government
- Long term planning and support by diverse range of partners

About the Breakfast Club of Canada

A BRIEF OVERVIEW OF BREAKFAST CLUB OF CANADA

As the only country in the G7 that does not offer a national food program in schools, Canada relies on programs like the Breakfast Club of Canada to ensure all Canadian children have the nutrition they need to learn and thrive in school.

In Canada, 1 in 5 children is at risk of starting the school day on an empty stomach due to a lack of access to nutritious food. In First Nation communities, this ratio is actually 1 in 2 and among immigrants and newcomers, the risk is 2.5 times higher than the general population. In total, nearly 1 million Canadian children are at risk of getting nothing to eat before they go to school in the morning. By the time they are 15 years old, a quarter of Canadian youth say they go to school without breakfast.

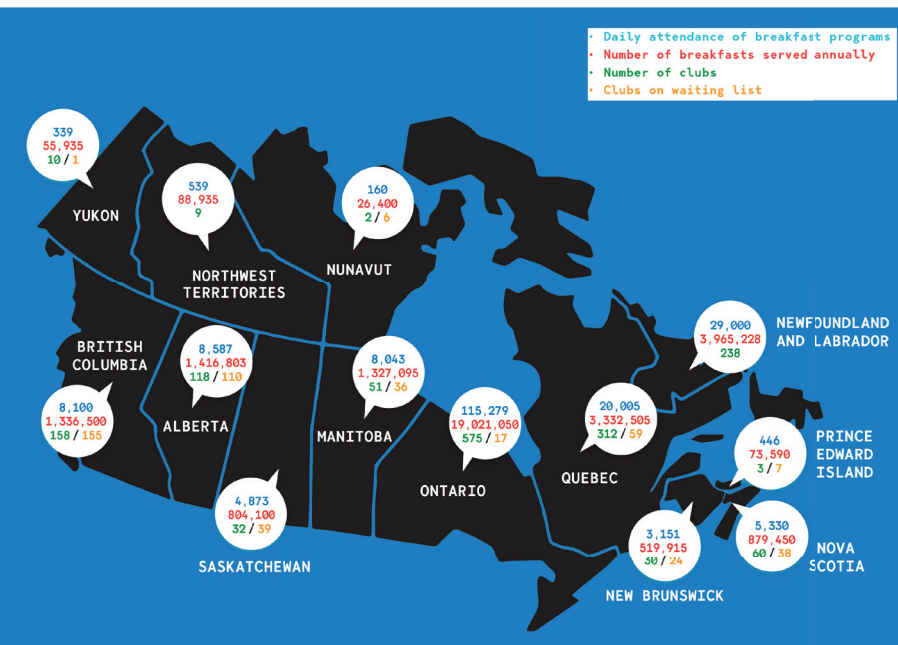
To address these needs, the Breakfast Club of Canada has developed a strategy to promote the development of Canadian children to their full potential. The Club joins forces with partners, communities, and local agencies to provide healthy opportunities and nutritious breakfasts for all children and youth in schools across Canada. In addition to encouraging the opening of breakfast clubs in schools and community settings, the Club acts as a true agent of change at the heart of society. It builds on the importance of healthy eating for children and youth and the training of youth and volunteers, encouraging community mobilization.

For 22 years, the Breakfast Club of Canada has been nourishing children's potential by making sure as many of them as possible have access to a healthy morning meal before school, in an environment that allows their self-esteem to grow and flourish. But the Club is much more than a breakfast program - taking a broader approach that promotes the core values of engagement, enrichment and empowerment, the Club teams up with communities and local partners to develop solutions adapted to their specific needs. Operating from coast to coast, the Breakfast Club of Canada helps feed more than 203,852 students everyday in 1,598 schools.

HIGHLIGHTS OF PROGRAM*:

- 1,598 Breakfast Clubs
- 203,852 Daily Attendance
- Nearly 33 million breakfasts served per year
- 492 Breakfast Clubs on waiting list
- More than 17,500 volunteers prepare and serve breakfast

* as of July 15, 2017



The Breakfast Club of Canada believes schools play a vital role in creating healthy environments that promote and support healthy eating habits for all students. Most children and youth spend a majority of their time at school, and therefore the foods consumed at school contribute significantly to the overall quality of their diet. Eating a balanced breakfast every morning is one of the simplest things that can be done to ensure students' bodies and brains are receiving the vital nutrients they need. Well-nourished children and youth are better prepared to learn, be active, and maintain their overall health and wellness. Schools can positively impact students' long-term physical and mental health by teaching and modeling healthy eating habits and behaviors as well as engaging students in food and nutrition education.

In schools across Canada, Breakfast Clubs help ensure that all students have an equal chance to learn, dream, and grow to reach their full potential. Through the program, Breakfast Clubs provide universal access to a healthy breakfast in a friendly and supportive environment every morning, with the goal of reaching all students in elementary, middle, and high schools. Breakfast

Clubs offer a variety of nutritious, culturally-appropriate foods, with fruits and vegetables served at every meal.

While the programs are designed to provide a nutritious meal, they also provide a fun and safe place for children and youth to socialize when sharing a meal, engage student volunteers to encourage the development of life skills, leadership, and confidence, and contribute to the development of a healthy school community.

The Breakfast Club of Canada Panel

MODERATOR: JEAN-LUC MONGRAIN

For the first time in its history, the Global Child Nutrition Forum was held on Canadian soil, made possible thanks to the Breakfast Club of Canada serving as the host organization. The Club invited a few of their partners to share highlights about their innovative programs, including partners from the private-sector, government, and non-governmental organizations.

The program was moderated by **Canadian journalist, television host and news anchor, Jean-Luc Mongrain**. Mongrain is currently the news anchor of his own show called *Mongrain* on LCN. Mongrain welcomed Forum participants and introduced panelists to the program.

Breakfast Club of Canada's Founding President, Daniel Germain, opened the program by describing the Club's activities and priorities to feed Canada's children. By collaborating with the private sector companies (such as Danone, Staples, and Coca-Cola), they ensure funding is available for the program to run. Part of the Club's success lies in the consideration that, even in a single country like Canada, different regions have different needs, experience different challenges, and thus require different programme designs. As Germain states, the program is "teachable"; they travelled different regions to learn and adapt their program accordingly.

Isabelle Rayle-Doiron, VP of Danone, has had a long-term partnership with the Breakfast Club. The company has a strong value of community engagement, hence their slogan "One planet, one wealth". Their contributions include yogurt products, as well as monetary funds (including pay deductions from employees), and employee volunteers who help serve school meals and run fundraisers. Mrs. Rayle-Doiron believes that enterprises can become more engaged and help in the promotion and assurance of child health and nutrition.



Rudel Caron, Regional Vice President of Staples in Eastern Canada, explained that his and the company's engagement in the community start from company values, including those towards the environment and education. They have given 12 years of commitment (3 million CAD), as well as actively participated with schools in meetings and campaigns to go over the needs and visions of the schools.

Tommy Kulczyk, commissioner for Children, was approached by the mayor of Montreal to put together the Commission for Children of the city. His mandate is to identify vulnerable schools and partners to ensure children's access to nutrition and health, as well as sports, cultural and extracurricular activities. With their values in line, Kulczyk respects what the Club does consistently. Their collaboration was built with the city acting not only as a leader, but also as a lever that supports the Club rather than changes it.

The First Nations population is among the poorest in Canada. Thankfully, half of the community is being served by the Breakfast Club of Canada. **Ghislain Picard, chief of the Assembly of the First Nations of Quebec and Labrador**, has partnered with the Club to ensure that First Nations' youth have access to a healthy breakfast while promoting their self-esteem and self-confidence.

Catherine Parsonage, Executive Director and CEO of the Toronto Foundation for Student Success, the largest school board in Canada, stated that in a wealthy country such as Canada, hundreds of thousands of children are coming to school hungry. Parsonage stated that the parents of 48% of children in Toronto come from other countries outside of Canada. Many are coming to schools with a deficit, although poverty is relative and as such can be perceived differently in different regions. The success of the partnership with the Breakfast Club lies in three key elements: integrity and trust, responsiveness to needs, and a common goal of feeding children. Parsonage also highlighted that partnerships should include the community, since food as a concept is inclusive. Although some parents may not speak a common language with the Club, they still understand the culture of sharing food. It would be recommended to bring together the best partners, including the private sector, as part of the advisory board. Yet, expectations should not be to bring everyone together without resistance or challenges.



School Visits

SCHOOL VISIT: DAWSON COLLEGE

The primary goal of this visit was to introduce the “Three Sisters garden” project, which is a student-run gardening project at Dawson College. The term “Three Sisters Garden” originated from the First Nation’s strategies to grow the three “sisters” of the Mohawk Creation Story together as companion plants. According to First Nation beliefs, corn, beans, and squash are valuable gifts and should be grown together in order to nourish each other. This symbol has brought Dawson’s students together, especially First Nation students, in working on the project. Students are involved in all different aspects, including planting and harvesting. The crops serve to feed Dawson’s students for free, as well as a donation to women shelters and other schools. The garden is part of the Peace Study Program in Dawson which aims to gather all students together to provide them with a learning environment and empower them.



At the beginning of the visit, **Anna-Liisa Aunio, Professor of Sociology**, provided an overview of the current nutritional status of indigenous people and their children. She indicated that, in indigenous communities, multiple factors have hindered those communities from accessing nutritious and sufficient food. Those factors include inadequate road access especially in the winter, high food prices, and lack of enough government subsidy to buy food. In addition, most of their children are suffering from dental problems and cavities due to the high intake of sugary foods and lack of access to frequent dental care. Then, she highlighted that one of their main objectives was to bring the “Three Sisters garden” project to Dawson as a way to transfer indigenous knowledge and value First Nation perspectives in regard to nature. They hope this symbolic garden will bridge the indigenous and

non-indigenous students together and act as a starting point of justice for First Nation people.

One of the members of the Mohawk community introduced the “Three Sisters garden” project in a practical way. According to her, indigenous gardeners have been inter-planting corn, bean, and squash for centuries. The corn provides a sturdy natural pole for the bean vines to climb onto. As for the beans, they nourish the soil by providing nitrogen which improves soil fertility. The soil is kept shaded and moist by spreading the large leaves of squash vines, thus creating a living mulch. However, the college had faced some difficulties during the year, such as irregular weather during the summer, which resulted in a low amount of harvested crop. Also, due to the rainy weather which caused the copper to leak from roofs, some fields got contaminated by copper

Overall, this visit served multiple purposes, one being a spiritual reminder of the importance and value of the First Nation’s knowledge. It also highlighted the beauty that came with bridging indigenous students with non-indigenous students in order to bring justice and peace for both communities.

SCHOOL VISIT: ECOLE CHAMPLAIN

Self-Esteem and Youth Engagement: A group of Forum participants visited Ecole Champlain in Montréal to learn about the Breakfast Club’s approach in regards to nourishing children’s potential. For over 23 years, the Club has promoted a variety of activities such as the youth volunteering program, leadership camps and Rise and Shine breakfast initiatives. The visit began with a preview of the Rise and Shine breakfast initiative. Participants were warmly welcomed to join students for a nutritious breakfast consisting of scrambled eggs, fruit, and yogurt. Volunteers led Forum participants through a typical Breakfast Club morning routine - lively singing and dancing as volunteers welcomed students to the cafeteria, where they received their breakfast and joined together at tables.



Volunteers then led students and participants through a self-esteem building activity, “Dream in a Bottle”. Participants were instructed to look within themselves and “write a dream that you never dare to write about.” After writing their dreams, participants rolled the piece of paper and placed it in a glass bottle so that through the glass, they can see their dreams with clarity and believe in them – and then do everything they can to achieve them.

Club volunteers then shared an overview and highlights from Leadership Camps. Created in 2000, the Leadership Camps have united over 5000 children from all across Canada who stood out due to their community involvement and positive attitude. During the six-day camp, a team of passionate and experienced counselors provides a nourishing atmosphere for the participants, where the focus is on the individual strengths of each person. This is a great opportunity to create a generation of socially engaged young people, a place where positive and responsible behaviours are encouraged, and where young people are inspired to believe in their extraordinary potential.

Country Displays

Country teams wishing to present information regarding their countries' programs were asked to prepare a brief introduction and to focus on what is innovative about the program and what the key challenges are. Each presenting country was assigned a table, and participants could choose the country tables they were interested in. Both the presenting and visiting teams were asked to use one another as consulting partners; to learn from what is special and innovative; and to offer problem-solving options regarding the challenges.

The specific questions the presenting countries were asked to prepare are below, followed by highlights from a few presenting countries.

QUESTIONS:

1. Does your country have a school meal program?
2. How many school children does it cover? How many school children in the country?
3. What kind of meal is served?
4. 3 current challenges in your program
5. 3 innovations in your program

DEMOCRATIC SOCIALIST REPUBLIC OF SRI LANKA



Name of the school meal program: School Nutrition Programme

Number of children fed via the country program (2016/2017 school year): 1,153,832

Challenges:

- The government would like to provide school meals to all school children, nationwide, Grades 1 – 9. Currently the government budget allocation (\$38 million vs \$112 million/annually) is only sufficient to cover 56% of primary (1-5) and 8 % of Grades 6-11).
- Importance of good nutrition needs to be enhanced and expanded for children, parents and teachers in particular. Obesity and unhealthy food habits are a growing issue.
- Lack of dedicated school nutrition programme staff at zonal level to coordinate and oversee the programme (including school cooks)

Innovations:

- In 2017, introduction of a 'national school park' which comprises school garden programs including organic methods (introduced to all schools nationwide), promotion of traditional cooking measures and nutrition education - all for children and families
- Healthy School Canteen program (in 2010 high sugar/high oil banned from sale in school cafeteria) to also address non-communicable diseases while promoting increased physical /sports activities
- School health promotion program—certification introduced with gold/silver/bronze accreditation based on criteria in national circulation

MALAWI



Name of the school meal program: National School Meals Program

Number of children fed via the country program (2016/2017 school year): 2,100,000

Challenges:

- Insufficient resources to reach all the learners
- Lack of adequate personnel to adequately implement, coordinate, and improve the monitoring and evaluation system of the program
- Climate change issues such as floods and draught, affecting growing of different crops

Innovations:

- Malawi has developed the Nutrition Key Messages manual which is helping in promoting Nutrition education and linking with water, sanitation (WASH), and hygiene and school garden initiatives. Teachers are using this document as a supplementary material for teaching nutrition
- Malawi has reviewed its teacher training colleges curriculum to include more information on Nutrition education so that when teachers graduate, they should have adequate knowledge on nutrition, including school meals. Malawi has also developed supplemental material on school gardens, which teachers are expected to use as they are linking school feeding, school gardens and nutrition education.
- School feeding is well integrated with school health interventions such as deworming, bilhazia treatment and prevention, promotion of oral health, WASH and vaccinations as well as promotion of physical health assessments in collaboration with Ministry of Health and Agriculture.

REPUBLIC OF ARMENIA



Name of the school meal program: "Sustainable School Feeding" Programme

Number of children fed via the country program (2016/2017 school year): Through National School Feeding Programme - 22,000 in 2016. Through the UN WFP project - 60,000 in 2016.

Challenges:

- Will the government have sufficient budget to fully take over school feeding from 6 remaining provinces by 2023?
- Should targeting remain universal or targeted?
- There is no National School Feeding Policy yet though there is a great national willingness to entirely nationalize the school feeding programme.

Innovations:

- The national program is entirely decentralized with cash-based transfers whereas the WFP's program is in kind, with some recent pilots on cash transfers.



Regional Meetings

NORTH AMERICA

For the North American regional meeting, Dr. Mary McKenna, Elisa Eliva, and Dr. Yibo Wood explained the models for SFPs in Canada, including Indigenous communities, and USA, respectively. In Canada, the model can be complex and involves different organizations and agencies. Programmes also tend to be school-based rather than implemented by the national or provincial governments. Most programmes aim for access to health, food and education, support and socialization, and economic and community development. The goal for future programmes would be to achieve universal and targeted coverage across Canada, including vulnerable schools, for all students. However, there is a lack of a monitoring system and engagement from the federal government. Food needs to be made an educational mandate rather than a simple service: healthy eating should be a normal and supported expectation of schools. Furthermore, funders need to relinquish some of the control and allow communities to engage. There is a local interest for local food production, re-introduction of traditional foods, and engagement of youth.

In the United States, SFPs aim to safeguard the health and well-being of school children, support US agriculture, offer balance, nutritious meals for all students, and support low-income families through the partnership between USDA, the States, and school districts. Over 30 million children (over 100,000 schools) participate on an average day in the national school lunch program. The key aspects are an emphasis on nutrition, including nutrition standards established to reduce childhood obesity, agricultural links that link schools with communities, and an expansion beyond lunch. In order to feed these children, we need to be innovative.

In order to build on the strength of school food programs and extend their impact on food sovereignty, children need to be able to access these programs at local/regional/national levels, and we need to aim for self-sustenance through local production while planning for a prompt response during time of crisis.

ASIA

In South Asia, 28% of children are affected by stunting. The meeting began with a discussion on the first Southeast Asia School Feeding meeting, which took place in Cambodia in July 2017. The participants who attended this meeting were asked to reflect on their experiences and learnings at the Southeast Asia School Feeding meeting. During the three-day meeting, the participants were able to share their expertise on the school meal programs from their respective countries. The participants also visited schools where WFP Cambodia provided a large number of meals to students. The participants went on field visits where they met with farmers and suppliers who were part of the school feeding program in Cambodia. The organizers of the Southeast Asia School Feeding meeting asked those who attended it to provide feedback because they are looking to host a second meeting.

The main objective of the Asian regional meeting was to discuss and provide updates on what had happened since the previous meeting last year. The participants held discussions on how to create an Asian regional network and how to gain knowledge on the experiences of other regional networks, such as the African regional network. The participants also discussed the need to create a knowledge platform website where countries can share information on their school meal programs and have access to evidence-based studies and interventions involving these programs in Asia.

At the end of the meeting, the participants agreed on the following points: (1) increased South-South cooperation involving the school meal programs; (2) development of an accessible resource page for countries to share information; (3) increased partnerships with other countries, such as China, Japan, and South Korea, and (4) more evidence-based studies on the impact of school meal programs on various outcomes.

AFRICA

Dr. Martial de-Paul Ikounga led the African regional meeting. He pointed out that home-grown school meal programmes are the most extensively used social protective nexus that produces common experiences and involves communities. He highly insisted that all countries in the region should work on their communication so that a common platform could be generated and this platform could be representative of a continental platform. There is a request for well-designed studies to observe the impact and relevance of school feeding programmes from the African Union Member States. On March 1st, the African Union celebrated the African Day of School Feeding to promote home-grown school feeding. Dr. Ikounga highlighted that every country has the responsibility to celebrate this day and each country is held accountable



for funding as there will be no budget provided by the African union and WFP. The African Union is encouraging every country to celebrate school feeding day in order to share the common experience and bonding within the communities.

Last year, Burkina Faso did an incredible job at celebrating African Day of School Feeding as highlighted by Dr. Ikounga who stated during his speech “celebration of African day of school feeding can be done in a simple way. It’s all about spreading awareness”. Every country should plan how they can best spread the message in their communities about widely-used social safety nets.

Dr. Ikounga addressed networking issues in some countries which are related to the communication, and stressed that countries should quickly start working on bridging these gaps. World Food Programme and African Union will work together to improve coordination around school meal programmes, and work with communities to reinforce their commitment to promoting home-grown school feeding programmes as a key strategy to achieve nutrition, food security and economic development of children and local communities.

Closing Ceremony

The closing ceremony started by the talk of **Stanlake Samkange, Director of Policy and Program Division, United Nations World Food Program**, who emphasized the importance of the forum’s leadership role which is achieved through school meal programs. He pointed out the WFP 2030 agenda by raising the following important question: “How does WFP support countries towards achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)”?

Importantly, he stated that the improved school meal programs should be linked to 8 SDGs targets in order to reach their goals, in particular SDG 1 (no poverty), SDG 3 (good health and well-being), SDG 4 (quality education) and SDG 5 (gender equality). It was indicated that the new challenge for WFP is focusing on linking our world to SDGs and performing them in the schools. To develop the new framework, it is crucial to look at other regional frameworks and connect them with SDGs as well as national indicators. In addition, it was pointed out that the new universal language has become based around SDGs and serves as a shared language with a common focus for all countries; however, it should be customized to each country’s context, needs and their own particular circumstances.

Catherine Bertini, Current Distinguished Fellow at the Chicago Council on Global Affairs and Fellow at The Rockefeller Foundation, started her speech by continued emphasis on “Committing to feeding children around the world”. As the former Executive Director of the United Nations World Food Programme, Bertini highlighted that training and leadership issues in the headquarters are a big challenge in performing school meal programs in order to build powerful and durable SMP. It was also stated that investing in the new generation serves as a commitment to future generations as eight SDGs are supported by SMP. In addition, she indicated that government partnership is critically important, and if governments are not already partners, they should be brought into the partnership, such as in Canada. Importantly, government ownership and a multi-sectoral approach are very important to make the SMP as a life-saving assistance. Then, she ended her speech by quoting Malala Yousafzai: ‘If your government is committed itself to SMP, let’s get it there.’ She stated that “You should believe that the world is changing school by school and child by child, so be proud of your work always! You can change the world.”

Daniel Germain, Founding President of Breakfast Club of Canada, highlighted the crucial role of the government in making a better life for children, and mentioned that child feeding programme should be a mission for all countries. He also emphasized the importance of achieving all SDGs for SMP success and recommended that the countries brought their experiences at national level, as well as reflect the national budget. He ended his speech by reminding the valuable role of Malala Yousafzai and said that she not only made her dream possible, but also that one a hundred million girls. His message for the forum was the following: “We all have the responsibility to write history and I want to write it with you.”

Daniel Balaban, Director of the WFP Centre of Excellence against Hunger in Brazil, spoke about how the Forum has provided opportunities for increased South-South cooperation. “This Forum has become one of the most important encounter for us, to share experiences, debate and deepen our cooperation to promote child nutrition worldwide” Balaban said. “It’s a wonderful exercise of south south dialogue and cooperation.”

The last speaker in this ceremony was **Gene White, President of the Global Child Nutrition Foundation**. She encouraged the participants to use the forum’s communique as a tool in their country, and described this tool as being a wonderful piece of equipment serving to improve SMP. Also, she asked the participants to share the story behind this tool and its benefits with their governments in terms of the things that need to be done and those that can be done. She closed her speech by stating that no one is alone, and that working as a community to achieve a goal is important! “It’s the commitment of all of us!”

Appendix I: Participants

Listed by country; countries in alphabetical order:

Samuel Quinda Maleze - Provincial Director in Benguela Province, Ministry of Education, Angola

Agustin Depetris - programme Officer, United Nations World Food Programme, Argentina

Gevorg Muradyan - Adviser to the Prime Minister, Republic of Armenia Government Staff, Armenia

Marta Sandoyan - Assistant to the Minister, Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Armenia, Armenia

Ram Chandra Das - Project Director, School Feeding Program in Poverty Prone Areas (Joint Secretary), Directorate of Primary Education, Ministry of Primary and Mass Education, Bangladesh

Dr. A F M Manzur Kadir - Additional Secretary, Bangladesh Ministry of Primary and Mass Education, Bangladesh

Rezaul Karim - Head, Programme Planning and Implementation, World Food Programme, Bangladesh

Mostafizur Rahman - Minister, Ministry of Primary and Mass Education, Bangladesh

Piet Vochten - Head of Office, Bhutan, World Food Programme, Belgium

Gnon-Ganni Armelle Korogone - Programme & Policy Officer, World Food Programme, Benin

Berkègui Julienne Zime Yerima - Director of School Feeding, Ministry of Maternal and Primary Education, Benin

Jamyang Choeden - Chief Programme Officer, Ministry of Education, Bhutan

Karma Tshering - Director General, Ministry of Education, Bhutan, Bhutan

Boitshupo "BiBi" Giyose - Senior Nutrition Officer - Policy and Programmes, Food and Agriculture Organization of the UN (FAO), Botswana

Christiani Amaral Buani - Programme Officer, Centre of Excellence against Hunger - World Food Programme, Brazil

Daniel Balaban - Director and Representative, Centre of Excellence - World Food Programme, Brazil

Cristiane Cardoso de Paula - Researcher, Brazil Santa Maria Federal University, Brazil

Sharon de Freitas - Programme Assistant, World Food Programme Centre of Excellence Against Hunger, Brazil

Vinicius Limongi - Programme Assistant, World Food Programme Centre Of Excellence Against Hunger, Brazil

Daniel Madsen Melo - Programme Assistant, World Food Programme Centre of Excellence Against Hunger, Brazil

João Paulo Milani Cavalcante - Programme Assistant, World Food Programme Centre of Excellence Against Hunger, Brazil

Isadora de Afrodite Richwin Ferreira - Communications and Reports Officer, Centre of Excellence - World Food Programme, Brazil

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Appendix II: Communiqué

Each year at the Forum, a group of representatives gather together over several days to create the Global Child Nutrition Forum Communiqué, an annual guide created to enable participants and their partners to advocate on behalf of home-grown school meal programs and related matters, while also measuring progress across Forums. Through the Forum Communiqué, participants are able to collaboratively agree upon a set of recognized priorities and recommendations to take back to their home countries.

The XIX Global Child Nutrition Forum

Bridge to Sustainable Development through School Meal Programs:

Engaging Local, National, Regional, and Global Communities

Communiqué

The nineteenth Forum was organized by the Global Child Nutrition Foundation in partnership with the WFP Centre of Excellence against Hunger, and the Breakfast Club of Canada, with support from partners, experts from governments and non-government organizations, UN agencies, civil society, academics, researchers, private sector, media and other organizations.

The Global Child Nutrition Forum (GCNF) brought together 250 participants (60 per cent women) from 59 countries, including 1 First Lady, 1 Deputy Prime Minister, 5 Ministers and 2 Vice-Ministers, members of parliaments and representatives from the African Union. The Forum gathered government representatives, practitioners and community members from national, provincial and municipal levels, including sectors such as education, agriculture, health, social protection, planning and finance.

The present Communiqué recalls the theme of the XVIII Forum, which was “Building powerful and durable national school meal programs”.

The Forum acknowledges that school meal programs contributes to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG), especially SDG 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 8, 10 and 17, and emphasizes the need for such programs to be linked to international, continental and national development agendas, including the Decade of Action on Nutrition.

The Forum acknowledges the need for multi-sectoral approaches and efforts by government and non-government organizations, development partners, UN agencies, civil society, academics, researchers, private sector, media and other organizations.

The Forum praises the African Union for launching the Implementation Cluster on School Feeding under its Continental Education Strategy for Africa (CESA) and acknowledges the importance of global and regional networks such as the Pan-African Network for School Feeding and Nutrition; the MENA Regional Initiative on School Meals and Social Protection; the Latin America and Caribbean, South Asian, and South-East Asian School Feeding networks; and the global Scaling Up Nutrition network. The Forum further underlines the importance and invaluable evidence brought by studies such as the African Union Study on Sustainable School Feeding in Africa based on local production (Home-Grown School Feeding, or HGSF), the WFP study on Nutrition-sensitive School Meal Programs in Latin America and other relevant studies.

The nineteenth Global Child Nutrition Forum recognizes that:

1. Governments should consider food as a basic human right;
2. Governments are called upon to play a key role to ensure this right;
3. Strong political will, leadership and ownership from governments are required to assure food and nutrition security to all children, adolescents and youth and for integrated and sustainable school meal programs;
4. School meal programs should be integrated in the national development agendas as well as in national legal frameworks, policies and programs such as education, food and nutrition security, social protection, health, nutrition and agriculture;
5. School meal programs promote gender equity and equality;
6. School meal programs and child, adolescent and youth nutrition should be incorporated into and become a priority in national budgets;
7. Innovative financing strategies are needed to support school meal programs;
8. Adequate and transparent institutional capacity and accountability are required among governments and implementing partners at all levels for effective delivery of school meal programs;
9. Integrated and sustainable school meal programs, especially home-grown school meals, are a sound investment in human capital. They are an effective way of providing food and nutrition to children, adolescents and youth, with multiple benefits in education, health, poverty reduction, community and socioeconomic development;

Appendix II: Communiqué (cont.)

10. A strong multi-sectoral approach, coordination and good governance are needed to ensure accountability, efficiency and effectiveness in the implementation of school meal programs;
11. Public-Private Partnerships have great potential and responsibility to strengthen the school meal programs;
12. Early Childhood Development through Pre-Primary schools should be included in the design of school meal programs;
13. School meal programs should incorporate food and nutrition education;
14. School meal programs are more effective when they are evidence-based and able to continuously translate knowledge into implementation;
15. Effective knowledge-sharing platforms through local, regional and global cross-learning exchange programs and media are of utmost importance to strengthen school meal programs;
16. South-South cooperation is an effective means to strengthen school meal programs;
17. It is important to give special attention to school meal programs in conflict and post conflict contexts.

The Forum recommends that:

1. Governments develop or improve existing legal frameworks for social and human capital investment and social responsibility from the private sector for school meal programs;
2. Participants be champions and advocate for the implementation of school meal programs;
3. Governments integrate school meal programs into national policies, strategies and plans;
4. Gender considerations should be mainstreamed in the design and implementation of school meal programs;
5. National budgets provide sufficient resources to school meal programs;
6. School meal program actors and partners identify entry points of interest to develop a nutrition-sensitive approach to effectively address the nutrition needs of the target population;
7. School meal programs adopt climate-smart and environmentally-friendly practices and strategies for long-term sustainability;
8. Robust monitoring and evaluation (M&E) systems that provide regular feedback loops be developed and implemented;
9. Stakeholders develop communication and media strategies as part of the implementation of school meal programs;
10. Communication and coordination among partners take place through existing national, regional and global networks;
11. Special attention be paid to school meal programs in countries in conflict and post conflict;
12. The participating countries translate the recommendations of this communiqué into action plans, as appropriate and relevant in their respective country contexts, and report on their progress in next year's Forum.



Appendix III: Cost-Benefit Analysis Workshop Exercise

GROUP EXERCISE: COUNTRY PROFILES

COST-BENEFIT ANALYSIS IN THE POLICY CYCLE

Exercise instructions

The participants are divided into eight groups of ten participants. Each group is provided with a country profile of a fictional country, which is based on authentic key characteristics of a real country. As there are four country profiles, two groups will have the same profile each.

The profile paints a high-level picture of the country's demographic and economic state, its achievements in various sectors (Table 1) and facts on the current school feeding programme(s) operating in the country (Table 2).

Based on the information in the profiles, the groups will explore how the cost-benefit analysis model for school feeding, as presented previously, could best be utilised in the policy cycle.

In doing so, the group will focus on the key challenges currently faced by their country and its government's priorities (as derived from the information provided in the profile) and develop a home-grown school feeding programme.

And even though the group will not carry out an actual cost-benefit analysis for their country, knowing the potential of the model and the results it can provide, the groups will discuss how to best use the results of a cost-benefit analysis model to convince policy-makers that school feeding can address persistent challenges, while meeting government priorities, in the country.

The group work can be summarised in the following key questions:

1. Which are the policy priorities and key challenges of your country right now and how does school feeding relate to these?
2. Which stage of the policy cycle might your country currently be in with regards to its school feeding programme?
3. How may a cost-benefit analysis for school feeding be useful at this stage? Why?
4. How could the results from a cost-benefit analysis of school feeding best be utilised to pitch the programme to the country's policy-makers and advocate for its continuation/expansion?

Following work within the groups (approximately 30-40 minutes), which was facilitated by the session conductors, each group presented their pitch to the conductors. The groups had about 5 minutes time each to verbally present their pitch.



2017 Forum Gallery





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