



UNITED NATIONS SYSTEM

Standing Committee on Nutrition

Report of the Standing Committee on Nutrition at its Thirty-Fourth Session

*Hosted by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO),
the International Fund for Agriculture Development (IFAD), and the World Food Programme (WFP),
at FAO, Rome, Italy, 26 February – 1 March 2007*

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Summary

- The 34th SCN Session on "Working Together" 26 February - 1 March was attended by more than 400 participants, and the pre-Session meeting on 25 February by 240 participants.
- **Keynote speakers and main guests** at the Symposium included **Ann M. Veneman**, *Executive Director UNICEF and SCN Chair*; **Alexander Muller**, *Assistant Director General, FAO*; **Kevin Cleaver**, *Assistant President, IFAD*; **Sheila Sisulu**, *Deputy Executive Director, WFP*; **Emile Frison**, *Director General, Bioversity International*; and, **Poul Engberg-Pedersen**, *Director-General, NORAD*. All emphasized commitment to working together to progress nutrition within their areas of expertise and capacity acting at basic, underlying and immediate levels to ensure an integrated response to malnutrition. The nutrition agenda must be connected to the broader development agenda. SCN News #34 will feature Symposium papers.
- **Discussions** took place in SCN constituency groups (Bilaterals, UN, NGO/CS), in the thematic Working Groups, in the cross-cutting Task Forces and in plenary. Main issues for discussion were related to **Working Together** and specifically how SCN participants and Task Forces can best contribute to efforts to end child hunger and undernutrition including the **ECHUI** and how SCN should proceed in implementing the **Private Sector Engagement Policy** of 2006.
- On the theme Working Together, it was reiterated that the SCN itself is an outstanding example of **working together in a very cost-effective management of partnerships**, which has gained considerable experience over its three decades of existence.
- Other topics included **Regional Nutrition Strategies** in Africa, Europe and Latin America, the **Lancet** series on maternal and child undernutrition, the **Mainstreaming Nutrition Initiative**, the **SCN history project** and a **poster exhibition** on Working Together in countries (in Africa and Asia) and on specific themes (corresponding to the SCN Working Groups).
- **The Steering Committee Task Forces** presented work plans for the next year, to map out messages, indicators and approaches and move towards a harmonization of efforts at the country level.
- **The SCN Working Groups** met in formal and informal meetings, and had the opportunity to meet with the **SCN Chair** who gave substantial feedback in each of their respective fields. She emphasized the pivotal role of the Working Groups, contributing to information sharing between agencies and across constituency sectors and between global and local levels, as well as the importance of role they play in identifying and filling knowledge and practice gaps. She supported the need for electronic connectivity and systematizing information and lessons learned sharing across the Working Groups.
- The **Bilateral Partner Group** discussed UN agencies working together, SCN private sector engagement, ECHUI and SCN Task Forces. They supported the ENN Operational Guidance on Infant Feeding in Emergencies and the joint Statement by two SCN Working Groups on human rights responsibilities of food industry and marketing to children
- The **NGO/Civil Society Group** discussed ECHUI, SCN private sector engagement and the development of TORs for a new Working Group. The group supported the Operational Guidance and Statement mentioned above, and a SC/UNICEF-UK position on formula
- The **UN Agencies** discussed ECHUI, SCN private sector involvement, key nutrition messages, the Secretariat Annual Report 2006 and Biennium Budget proposal 2008-9, the Task Forces progress, and whether and how SCN could endorse/support.
- The **35th SCN Session in March 2008** will be hosted by the Government of Vietnam with the National Nutrition Institute and international development partners.

- The **2007 World Food Day**, celebrated each year on 16 October, will be on the right to food, SCN members are encouraged to build activities around the theme.
- **Discussions** took place in the SCN constituency groups (Bilaterals, UN, NGO/CS), in the thematic Working Groups, in the cross-cutting Task Forces and in plenary, with these following recommendations agreed:
- **Participants broadly agreed that the SCN should:**
 - 1. Welcome the Ending Child Hunger and Undernutrition Initiative (ECHUI) proposed by UNICEF and WFP, endorse its goals, and recommend that it be a broad based partnership with close links to the SCN.** SCN participants made a series of concrete recommendations and offered various technical or managerial support to further strengthen ECHUI. Areas mentioned include: human rights based programming including CRC and the right to adequate food, enhanced State responsibility, links to existing initiatives, community participation, country ownership, Southern consultation, bottom-up approaches, locally designed solutions, review based on Lancet series, look beyond 2 years of age, focus on stunting and overweight as well as maternal nutrition and intra-uterine growth retardation, focus on household food security including access to water, address underlying and basic causes and their prevention using the well-known classification of "food, health and care", review costing, clarify SCN's role and get regular reports from ECHUI, invite additional partners such as World Bank and FAO.
 - 2. Establish a working group for initiating engagement with the private sector.** There was broad agreement across the three constituencies to establish a tenth Working Group on SCN Private Sector Engagement, with some safeguards and provisos coming from the NGO/CSO constituency and some Working Groups. Detailed ToRs for the Chairs, mandate and work plan - in accordance with the SCN Private Sector Policy - should be developed and agreed to by the constituencies through the Steering Committee. Discussion points included: relation to the Global Compact, inclusion/exclusion criteria for private sector WG participation, consultation with legal sections of the SCN member agencies, focus on all forms of malnutrition not only "window of opportunity", risk of using the word "partnership", re-evaluate the WG in about three years. NGO/CS will suggest name(s) of co-chair(s), concerns to be addresses in ToRs, and activities. Consumers International and similar organizations should be involved. The WG should also address issues such as antenatal care, maternity leave and breastfeeding breaks, and ILO should be involved.
 - 3. Reinforce the importance of the three Steering Committee task forces on: advocacy and communications and partnership building, development of integrated approaches, and assessment monitoring and evaluation, and mandate them to proceed with accelerated work plans.** It was suggested that the Advocacy Communication and Partnership Building Task Force of the SCN should be the forum for harmonizing messages and developing a more convincing narrative; the Development of Integrated Approaches Task Force to provide the best forum for further refining the implementation process and ensuring the ownership by a broad based coalition to carry forward this work at the country level; and, the Assessment, Monitoring and Evaluation Task Force offers the opportunity to share best practices and lessons learned in these areas to inform policy/programme/project formulation and implementation for reducing child hunger and undernutrition. Importantly, the work of the three Cross Cutting Task Forces of the Steering Committee is very relevant to ECHUI and could contribute to further strengthening the initiative.
- No agreement was reached on how the SCN can endorse or give support to statements and other documents, and will be discussed in the Steering Committee before next Session

A. Welcome and opening of the 34th Annual Session of the SCN

1. Alexander Muller, Assistant Director General/Officer-in-Charge, Agriculture and Consumer Protection Department, FAO on behalf of the Rome-based agencies, welcomed participants to the 34th SCN Session at FAO, Rome on Monday 26 February 2007.¹ In his welcoming remarks he emphasized the importance of the meeting for FAO and the Rome based agencies, and confirmed FAO's commitment to nutrition.

2. SCN Chair Ann M Veneman, Executive Director of UNICEF, opened the Session and the Symposium on Working Together to Achieve Freedom from Child Hunger and Undernutrition. In her opening remarks Ms Veneman noted that since her last presence in FAO at the World Food Summit: *five years later* in 2002, some progress has been made to reach the MDGs, but that the gains remain inadequate. She urged the nutrition community to embrace our collective work – with vision, with energy and with urgency - to help save the lives of the more than 10 million children under the age of five years who die every year of largely preventable causes such as disease and malnutrition and to help ensure that over 20 million infants are no longer born underweight every year. Nutrition is a foundation on which human progress is built and key to reaching the Millennium Development Goals. Interventions looking beyond income generation and addressing both undernutrition and overnutrition are necessary. Reversing child undernutrition requires an integrated approach to child nutrition and child health addressing the underlying causes of malnutrition, including healthy mothers during pregnancy, better education, effective disease control, household food security, community-based approaches, immunization, micronutrient supplements and therapeutic foods, parasite and insect control, and good infant and young child feeding practices, particularly exclusive breastfeeding for the first six months, initiation of breastfeeding within one hour after birth, and appropriate complementary feeding. She urged the participants invest in the scaling-up of these programmes and approaches that truly yield results for children. Achieving results requires a united plan of action linking governments, the development community and the private sector. Good and reliable data is needed for accountability and to scale-up the coverage of integrated approaches appropriate to a local setting, for rigorous measurement of effectiveness and for better targeting of investments. The SCN with its partners can contribute to a substantive evidence base. Broad partnerships among UN agencies, governments and the representatives of academia and civil society are helping to develop the Global Framework for Action and the Action Plan for ECHUI. This work is important and requires immediate, innovative and results-driven responses. Ms Veneman ended her speech by reminding the Session participants that one underweight and undernourished child is an individual tragedy, but multiplied by tens of millions, undernutrition becomes a global threat to societies, to economies and to generations to come. The SCN participants share a common commitment to help wipe out hunger and improve nutrition; their success will be counted in lives saved and lives made better.

B. Symposium on Working Together to Achieve Freedom from Child Hunger and Undernutrition

3. The Symposium was well attended with over 400 participants and 230 on pre-Session meetings on Sunday, reflecting the SCN's tripartite constituency: registered participants included Bilateral Partners, NGO/Civil Society members and representatives of 12 UN agencies. Presentations can be found on the SCN website attached to the [Agenda for the 34th SCN Session](#), whereas papers from the Symposium will be published in [SCN News #34](#) (www.unsystem.org/scn)

4. The first session of panel presentations was chaired by the SCN Chair, Ann M Veneman.

- Alexander Muller; Assistant Director General/Officer-in-Charge, Agriculture and Consumer Protection Department at FAO made a presentation on *Sustainable Livelihoods for Food Security and Good Nutrition: the Role of Food and Agriculture Sector*, discussing trends in hunger and undernutrition, the links to poverty, and the need for interventions which include multiple sectors and focus on families. Agriculture growth and hunger reduction are inextricably linked. For example, the only group of countries to reduce hunger during the 1990s was the group in which the agriculture sector grew. He emphasized that FAO is committed to working together – in SCN as well as at country level - with common objectives and targets, complementary approaches and actions, and through developing capacity for joint action. Crucial elements include participation, good programme design and targeting including M&E, focus on the poor and the right to adequate food. FAO can contribute with support

¹ Pre-Session meetings were held on Sunday 25 February by five Working Groups; three SCN Steering Committee Task Forces; the SCN Chair, Vice-Chair, Secretariat and Working Group Chairs and Co-Chairs; and the Steering Committee.

to National Programmes for Food Security, policy advice and technical support through its knowledge network, providing a meeting place for nations, fostering FAO/IFAD/WFP collaboration through country theme groups, seeking opportunities to cooperate with partners, and bringing knowledge to the field.

- Kevin Cleaver, Assistant President, IFAD made a presentation on *Nutrition, Food Security and Agriculture*. He reiterated the links between hunger, malnutrition and poverty, and further discussed the multisectoral causes of malnutrition and the effectiveness of different interventions to progress nutrition throughout the life-cycle including the role of income growth for the poor. The majority of those who suffer from hunger are the very poorest of rural populations and the target group of IFAD's agriculture and rural development programmes. IFAD is committed to One UN, working together in joint programmes and projects to reduce hunger, poverty and child undernutrition. Specifically, IFAD can contribute with introduction of nutrition interventions at the micro level as well as hunger reduction interventions at the project and national level.
 - Sheila Sisulu, Deputy Executive Director, WFP made a presentation on *Actions Needed to Make Freedom from Child Hunger a Reality*. She reiterated that the consequences of child hunger and undernutrition are extreme, causes are multifaceted and costs are immense at about \$20-30 billion per year. WFP's Executive Director Jim Morris has passionately advocated for the fight against child hunger, WFP's commitment will not diminish with his retirement in April. WFP welcomes the SCN meeting theme, 'Working Together to Achieve Freedom from Child Hunger and Undernutrition' because business as usual is no longer sufficient when it is possible to put an end within a generation. This requires urgent and coordinated efforts including alignment of UN efforts to enable consistency. She reported from the WFP Executive Board which took place on the previous week, that the Board had considered ECHUI, welcomed SCN's involvement and foreseen several concrete activities in which collaboration should be sought: collecting evidence of the impact that nutritional interventions currently or potentially have on achievement of the other MDGs, alignment of ECHUI with existing initiatives, assessing the impact of ECHUI's strategy, modeling the impact of ECHUI's essential package, updating the global monitoring report Progress for Children, engaging with The Lancet on publications and research, and a technical launch of ECHUI.
5. The second session of panel presentations was chaired by Emile Frison, Director General of Bioversity International. Emile Frison gave a brief presentation on Bioversity International which is the fourth Rome-based agency dealing with food security with a focus on agricultural biodiversity. Currently, 90% of agriculture investments are in 10 crops only, and there is little focus on nutrition quality. Bioversity International has for the last four years broadened its work and developed a nutrition strategy that includes food based approaches to better using local diversity to improve nutrition and health through enhancing dietary quality thereby bringing agriculture and nutrition together.
- Poul Engberg-Pedersen, Director-General, Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation made a presentation on *Achieving Freedom from Child Hunger and Undernutrition: What the Bilateral Partners Can Contribute*. He reflected on the challenges of reducing hunger and malnutrition within the current environment of a "cohesive UN System" encouraging mainstreaming and broad based approaches like the right to food as reflected in the expression One UN as contrasted to a "targeted services UN" focusing on specific result oriented provision as reflected in the expression Delivering as (One UN). He further discussed development effectiveness of cooperation, in particular global goals and targets (MDGs) versus national ownership (PRS), and national ownership versus reality of undernutrition in families. Bilateral partners can contribute at both global and national levels in various ways, however many face the challenge of being constrained by concentration on three sectors in each country - and nutrition is not one of them.
 - David Sanders University of Western Cape in South Africa made a presentation on *Achieving Freedom from Child Hunger and Undernutrition: What Civil Society Organizations Can Contribute*. He focused on trends in child health and nutrition in the era of Primary Health Care - 1980 to 2004 – with special emphasis on Africa's health situation, the impact of globalization, health sector reform and HIV/AIDS on poverty, health "determinants", health systems and human resources for health, and the role of research, training and advocacy in addressing inequities and capacity weaknesses, with illustrative examples from Southern Africa. Public nutrition community can challenge unfair globalization and ill-considered health sector reforms through research and advocacy, advocate for increased investment in enhancing capacity of and reorientating Southern institutions, develop capacity, improve quality of interventions and develop well-managed comprehensive programmes, involve other sectors and

communities, support with better management systems, focus on health centers and rapidly (re)train community health workers.

- Roger Shrimpton, the Secretary of the SCN made a presentation on *Achieving Freedom from Child Hunger and Undernutrition: What the Private Sector Can Contribute*. He emphasized that the individual and corporate private sector is increasingly important in the modern globalized world, because it has become more powerful and richer than ever before, beyond that of many smaller nation states. He discussed three dimensions of what the private sector can contribute: through producing more nutritious foods; by providing their funding, expertise and networks; or through facilitating more sustainable approaches given the limited capacity of many governments. Employing TBAs in iron supplementation programmes or local vendors in fortification campaigns are examples where local level mobilization of private sector actors has proven successful. Yet, there are risks to Public Private Partnerships and these need to be controlled through codes of conduct which regulate these interactions, such as the UN Global Compact, the International Code of Marketing of Breast-milk Substitute or the SCN Private Sector Engagement Guidelines.
6. The third session of panel presentations was chaired by Rodney Cooke, Director of the Technical Advisory Division of IFAD.
- Marie McGrath, Emergency Nutrition Network, made a presentation on *Achieving Freedom from Child Hunger and Undernutrition: Working Together in Emergencies*. She described the experience of working together on infant and young child feeding in emergencies in the Infant Feeding in Emergencies (IFE) Core Group, an interagency collaboration consisting of UN agencies and NGOs. The group produces materials which influence policy, such as the document entitled "Operational Guidance for Emergency Relief Staff and Programme Managers", and holds interagency meetings among NGO, UN, trainers, academics and regional staff where they have managed to achieve improvements in strategy directions, to develop practical action points, and to assign agency responsibilities and time frames. Success elements include staying power of the individuals and agencies involved, strong commitment to the issue, consistency and institutional memory among members, and powerful combination of political and strategic thinking combined with technical expertise and field contact. Challenges have been lack of funding and possibly authority, perception that breastfeeding is not a priority in early stages of an emergency, and little engagement with donors.
 - Saul Morris, London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine, made a presentation on *Achieving Freedom from Child Hunger and Undernutrition: The Lancet Nutrition Series*. He informed the participants of a forth coming series of articles on nutrition in *The Lancet* that will be published in the latter part of the year. He described the series objectives, which is to provide evidence of importance and determinants of maternal and child undernutrition and effectiveness of nutrition interventions; to place nutrition interventions within a broader context of policies; to assess correspondence between existing priorities and funding; and, to provide recommendations at global, national and sub-national level. Progress so far include a broad engagement of the global nutrition and health communities and interaction with the global food community through a number of events; technical reviews, analyses, and writing the series contents. Furthermore there would be a wide dissemination of and advocacy based on series findings including planned launches and summaries for policy makers. He urged SCN participants to give feedback on a number of issues related to country programmes and the international system including: key actors (now and potential) at country level, the role of nutrition policies and plans, practical steps for governments, partners and the private sector to strengthen undernutrition actions at country level, country-level needs should be met by the international nutrition community, how the UN system can be made more effective at country level, how the SCN can increase its focus on results, what kind of partnership could best bring different groups together, how to move towards a more streamlined organizational set-up, and how to increase the focus on capacity building. A poster had been developed describing the series and soliciting such inputs, and that was on display in the exhibition in the FAO atrium.
7. The fourth session of the symposium featuring the 11th Dr Abraham Horwitz Lecture was chaired by Denise Coitinho, Vice Chair of the SCN. Charlotte Dufour, presently FAO Food Security, Nutrition and Livelihoods Advisor in Afghanistan, and 2007 winner of the Abraham Horwitz Lecture competition, presented a memorable 11th Horwitz Lecture on *Building National Nutrition Coordination from the Field Up: Lessons learnt from the Afghan Reconstruction*. She discussed nutrition coordination in Afghanistan during the transition from emergency to development in different political eras during the past decade. She emphasized that coordination of nutrition policy and programme must respond to the needs and

conditions at the community level, involving both community members as well as local and regional administrative levels to ensure success and sustainability.

8. Summing up the day of the Symposium, the Vice Chair Denise Coitinho thanked all speakers and participants. She mentioned the Horwitz lecture as an incredible interesting example of coordination and working together coming from the field. Nutrition coordination entails solving the questions of how to catalyze political support and how to enhance accountability through good coordination processes or mechanisms, and doing so without coordination fatigue. She emphasized the need to connect the nutrition agenda to other agendas, including the broader development agenda, rather than viewing nutrition as a separate sector. Key elements to achieve this include building leadership and leadership capacity, as well as fostering trust among the different actors in the fields of nutrition and development.

C. Issues for discussion in the business sessions

9. On Tuesday 27 February, SCN Vice Chair Denise Coitinho chaired the plenary session which reviewed the items to be discussed by the SCN constituencies and working groups during the business sessions, and the expected outcomes of these discussions. These outcomes include agreement of all SCN constituencies (UN agencies, Bilateral Partners, and NGO/CSO) on how they can best contribute to efforts to end child hunger and undernutrition, together with their comments on ECHUI, as well as to comment on the draft proposal for SCN to engage with Private Sector. In addition the three SCN Steering Committee Task Forces would also make proposal as to how they could best contribute to efforts to end child hunger and undernutrition, and the Working Groups would give technical recommendations on ECHUI as well as identifying knowledge and practice gaps and how they might be filled. The Vice Chair reminded participants that the SCN is an outstanding example of working together in a very cost-effective management of partnerships, which has gained considerable experience over its 30 years of existence.

10. *ECHUI*. Joseph Scalise, WFP, of the ECHUI Secretariat presented an overview and update of Ending Child Hunger and Undernutrition Initiative. ECHUI is proposed as a global partnership of UN, NGO and private sector actors, which aims to end child hunger within a generation through drawing the world's attention and generating political will and resources. UNICEF and WFP have been the initiating agencies so far in developing the initiative. The SCN has been requested to serve as an advisory board and provide technical advice to ECHUI. Participants were encouraged to download and bring with them the ECHUI Global Framework for Action and Action Plan, both of which were accessible through the SCN website. The next proposed next steps of ECHUI are to harmonize the ECHUI work plan with that of SCN (1st quarter 2007), to integrate the Lancet series findings into ECHUI (2nd quarter), to use the UNICEF Reporting Card on Nutrition to initiate high-level advocacy campaign (3rd quarter), and to participate on the FAO Committee on World Food Security (4th quarter).

11. *SCN Steering Committee Task Forces proposals*. The three Task Forces on Advocacy, Communication and Partnership Building (TF-ACP); Assessment, Monitoring and Evaluation (TF-AME); and Development of Integrated Approaches (TF-DIA) conducted planning meetings on Sunday to agree on proposal of work for the coming year. The crosscutting Task Forces complement the thematic Working Groups in strengthening the capacity of the SCN through bringing the agencies closer together. Being in the initial phase, they all indicated that they would welcome feedback from SCN participants.

- *Task Force on Advocacy, Communication and Partnership building*. Denise Coitinho, WHO representative and Chair of the TF-ACP, reported on some of its products: the creation of a visual identity of SCN on banners and other materials created for the Session and the organization of a poster exhibit in the FAO Atrium based on country experiences of working together and working group themes. The TF-ACP will continue its efforts through consultation with communication experts of the various agencies, and has drafted a strategy for enhancing ACP at the country as well as international level. Planned activities include the joint mapping of current and planned communication activities and establishment of an inventory of nutrition and communication focal points at global, regional and country level; a communication brainstorming meeting to develop a Communication Matrix to facilitate common language, understanding, terminology, vision, target audiences, collective strategies and approaches, including a set of joint messages (from February 2007); agencies to use joint messages alongside with their own messages (July –August 2007); identification of key advocacy opportunities e.g. high profile events, governing body meetings, conferences; presentation of ACP Strategy to the SCN Steering Committee (September 2007); development and implementation of a high level advocacy Social Mobilization/Communication Campaign/Social Pact to end hunger and malnutrition or improving nutrition (the appropriate

focus should be defined during the brainstorming session); and, implementing the nutrition communication activities in at least four selected countries making close linkages with the launching of the Lancet Series on Maternal and Child Undernutrition (March 2008). The TF-ACP will seek close cooperation with the United Nations Communications Group (UNCG) and the UN Cluster Strategic Programme and Communication Support.

- *Task Force on Assessment, Monitoring and Evaluation.* Mark Smulders, FAO representative and Chair of the TF-AME, focused on how the TF-AME will relate to the SCN Action Plan 2006-2010 areas of work: measurement and monitoring, indicators for AME, methods and tools for AME, M&E frameworks and criteria, defining standards and strengthening analysis - all while building on existing initiatives. TF-AME currently includes the Interagency Nutrition Initiative, Nutrition Information in Crisis Situations, monitoring indicators for the Right to Adequate Food, and the M&E framework for the realization of the right to food. To date, a concept note has been prepared and initial feedback is being sought, the purposes of AME are being discussed, and possible actors are being mapped and action areas suggested. The TF-AME envisions contributing to improved information sharing, including through the SCN website and SCN News as possible channels.
- *Task Force on Development of Integrated Approaches.* Edward Frongillo, University of South Carolina, reported that the priorities of the Task Force are to focus on families through bottom-up planning and situation specific response; to work at all levels and at scale through good coordination of a range of partners who contribute within their work areas; to agree on common nutrition goals; and, to work towards them together through a process where partners are motivated to take right decisions and willing to bear the cost of coordination. It is important to recognize that integration does not mean everyone “doing the same thing” or “doing everything” - each partner has particular strengths. This requires commitment, ownership, and capacity. Commitment and ownership is built through engagement of leaders and development community, fostering country focal groups and learning teams, and building regional initiatives. Capacity comprises advocacy, political savviness, comprehensive world view of nutrition, programme planning and design capacity, and ability to trust and be flexible. The TF-DIA plans to develop a set of case studies of past and on-going experiences in selected countries; to provide framework and model approaches for catalyzing and building convergence and commitment in countries and regions; to hold a working session within 6 months to develop typology; and to define actions and capacity needed for integration.

12. *The Draft proposal for initiating SCN Private Sector Engagement.* The SCN Secretary presented the draft proposal, which includes establishing a tenth Working Group with a mandate to initiate SCN engagement with the private sector. The reasons why to engage with the Private Sector had been presented in the Symposium the previous day. The proposal presented to the SCN for discussion was about how the SCN could go about promoting such engagement.

13. *The Secretariat annual report and biennium budget.* The SCN Secretary further presented the annual report of activities undertaken by the Secretariat since the 33rd Session, as well as the biennium budget with its core and programme components. The core budget is financed by UN agencies and covers two fixed-term staff members and administrative expenses of the Secretariat including the Annual Session. It reflects the decision taken under the former Chair Catherine Bertini to standardize UN support to 30,000USD per year from smaller agencies and 100,000USD per year from larger agencies. The programme budget is usually funded by Bilateral Partners and covers the traditional Secretariat activities such as the SCN News, the NICS and the Reports on the World Nutrition Situation. As envisioned in the SCN Action Plan 2006-2010 endorsed by all constituencies at the 33rd Session in Geneva 2006, the programme component should expand in the areas of advocacy, communication and partnerships; assessment, monitoring and evaluation; and, development of integrated approaches, to facilitate harmonization among SCN members and provide guidance at country level. To date there has been no increased funding, hence the work of the three Task Forces in the respective areas has been done on a voluntary basis. The budget proposed for these activities in the Action Plan for the Biennium 2008-9 is essentially the same as that agreed for 2006-7.

14. These issues for discussion are also elaborated in the [Concept Note](#) for the 34th SCN Session.

D. Working Group meetings: summary reports, work plans and key recommendations for action

15. Eight of the working groups met during the 34th Session, with five Working Groups holding pre-Session meetings on the Sunday in addition to the regular meeting during the Session. The one Working Group (on Nutrition Throughout the Life Cycle) which did not hold a regular meeting during the Session, held a brainstorming meeting with core members and chairs of other working groups. In addition, seven of the Working Groups took part in the “Working Together” thematic poster exhibition, displaying various materials in the space provided.

16. The SCN Chair, Vice-Chair and Secretariat met with the Working Group Chairs on Sunday afternoon. The SCN Chair enjoyed the opportunity to discuss the work and purpose of the SCN Working Groups with the Working Group Chairs, and gave substantial feedback and comments in each of their respective fields. She talked about a recent field trip to Ethiopia where she had been able to focus entirely on nutrition and to visit a local enterprise manufacturing therapeutic foods. She emphasized how nutrition needs to be a component integral to development efforts in order to ensure successful outcomes, and how such work must focus on good local knowledge and practice to ensure sustainability and foster ownership. She talked particularly about prioritizing local research needs, community-based interventions to combat malnutrition in emergencies, the importance of good nutrition of children for educational achievements including the negative effects of vending machines in schools, the need to address harmful traditional practices, and nutrition as a crucial component of HIV/Aids prevention and treatment programmes and in health systems. In conclusion, the SCN Chair said how much she appreciated the pivotal role of the Working Groups, contributing to information sharing between agencies and across constituency sectors and between global and local levels, as well as the importance of role they play in identifying and filling knowledge and practice gaps. It is crucial that such information is screened for reliability and reflects good practice. The SCN Chair, who recently had attended the World Economic Forum in Davos 2007, also supported the creation of tenth Working Group on engagement with the private sector emphasizing the considerable potential contribution of the private sector in terms of financial support and expertise.

17. During the course of the meeting, the SCN Secretariat met with individual Working Group Chairs and received their preliminary reports, which included their three priority recommendations with regard to filling knowledge and practice gaps. Four of the eight Working Groups that met (Nutrition of school age children, Nutrition, ethics and human rights, Breastfeeding and complementary feeding, Household food security) gave specific recommendations concerning the ECHUI documentation that will be included in their full reports. Full reports of each Working Group meeting, with work plans for the year to come, will be posted on the [SCN website](#) and summarized in [SCN News #34](#). In the plenary session on the last day the Secretary gave a summary of the preliminary working group reports as follows.

D.1 Working Group on Nutrition in Emergencies

18. The Working Group chaired by Caroline Wilkinson (ACF), Caroline Ablu (USAID), Zita Weise Prinzo (WHO) and Anne Callanan (WFP) (unable to be present), met on Sunday and Tuesday. On Sunday the group reviewed progress of the various initiatives, resulting from the mid-term meeting involving 24 members of the Working Group, held in October in Rome in conjunction with the IASC Nutrition Cluster meeting. The group is reviewing the logistical and procedural implications of using the new WHO growth standard on the treatment of severe malnutrition in emergency settings. Further work is ongoing on benchmarking of nutrition emergencies, trying to decide when a nutritional emergency begins and ends. Based on the results of the Tanzania training on the treatment of severe malnutrition the group agreed that training modules need revising to incorporate the experience gained with community based management. Furthermore the quality of treatment of moderate malnutrition needs to be improved. The interagency Supplementary Feeding Programme review led by SC-UK would contribute to this, as could the ENN/IFE module on complementary feeding. The group also seeks support from the SCN constituencies for the IFE Operational Guidance document for emergency relief staff and programme managers on infant and young child feeding in emergencies. The WG felt that its previous work plan was too ambitious and would seek to redress this in the plan for the next year.

D.2 Working Group on Nutrition and HIV/AIDS

19. The Working Group chaired by Andrew Tomkins (ICH, UK), Bruce Cogill (UNICEF), Randa Saadeh (WHO) and Stuart Gillespie (IFPRI), met on Sunday and Tuesday. Conclusions and recommendations from Sunday discussions were summarized and brought to the Tuesday meeting, including a framework

for priority actions on nutrition and HIV/AIDS, and the development of a policy paper for publication in the Food and Nutrition Bulletin. The three recommendations from the group were that there is a need to assess the impact of nutritional supplements of different types of nutritional recovery, among HIV infected patients receiving ARVs and those not eligible for them. There is also a need to integrate nutrition services more effectively into HIV services and vice-versa. The need to ensure that Ready to Use Therapeutic Food (RUTF) is made more widely available and that commercial promotion is not inhibited by restrictive, patent related practices.

D.3 Working Group on Nutrition, Ethics and Human Rights

20. The Working Group chaired by Margret Vidar (FAO), Flavio Valente (FIAN), Marlis Lindecke (GTZ), Federica Donati (OHCHR) [who was unable to be present] and Marc Cohen (IFPRI) [Working Group Rapporteur], met on Sunday and Tuesday, with much of the Sunday discussions being summarized at the Tuesday open meeting. The WG does not endorse the ECHUI Global Framework as it stands and does not recommend that the SCN become the technical advisory secretariat of ECHUI until the Framework is revised accordingly, since the SCN's own Strategic Framework commits it to integrating human rights in its work. Specifically, the ECHUI needs to incorporate human rights standards and the CRC, increase community participation, lay down the primary responsibility for child nutrition on states, clarify on means and ends with regard to processes and nutrition outcomes, discuss and/or address underlying and basic causes of hunger and malnutrition and how to prevent these, go beyond undernutrition and include stunting and overweight, and focus on nutrition throughout the lifecycle including maternal nutrition and intra-uterine growth retardation. The WG is willing to contribute to revisions to the Framework that would incorporate a rights-based and preventive approach, for presentation at the 35th Session of SCN so the ECHUI Global Framework could be anchored in a system of rights and corresponding obligations established by international law. This would help to promote sustainability, empowering people themselves – especially the more marginalized and vulnerable – and hold accountable those who have a duty to act. The three priority recommendations of the Working Group are:

- to support the joint statement SCN to support *Joint Statement* from 33rd Session by the WGs on Nutrition, Ethics, and Human Rights and Nutrition Throughout the Life Cycle *on the Human Right of Children and Adolescents to Adequate Food and to be Free from Obesity and Related Diseases: The Responsibilities of Food and Beverage Corporations and Related Media and Marketing Industries*. SCN then to forward this statement to the U.N. Secretary General's Special Representative on Business and Human Rights, Professor John G. Ruggie, and to the Special Rapporteur on the Right to Food of the U.N. Human Rights Council, Professor Jean Ziegler, and encourage them to give in-depth consideration to the issues raised in their forthcoming reports.
- SCN to incorporate the principles of the above-referenced Joint Statement into the terms of reference of the proposed new SCN Working Group on Private Sector Engagement.
- The 6th Report on the World Nutrition Situation should focus on measuring progressive realization of the right to adequate food. The report would discuss the question of achieving the Millennium Goals (MDGs), but would emphasize efforts to do so through a rights-based approach, in light of the United Nations' mandate to use such an approach in all of its work, and given the strong human rights emphasis in the Millennium Declaration, of which the MDGs are an integral part. It would seek to assess the processes of realizing the right to food as well as the outcomes.

D.4 Working Group on Breastfeeding and Complementary Feeding

21. The Working Group chaired by David Clark (UNICEF), Isatou Jallow (WFP) and Kay Dewey (University of California, Davis), met on Sunday and Tuesday. The Sunday meeting was well attended with over 60 participants and reviewed the progress made with the 2006 work plan, as well as a proposal on promoting the first hour of breastfeeding. A review of what works in complementary feeding was also presented on the Tuesday. The key recommendations from the group are that SCN:

- should engage ILO participation in its sessions (including making a presentation at 35th Session).
- should encourage building country level partnerships for an integrated approach to improving nutrition for mothers, infants and young children supporting their institutional capacity. One action that could contribute to this is to develop a web-based repository for detailed information on

interventions that have been attempted, including more information than is typically published in scientific journals.

- should advocate for an indicator of early breastfeeding initiation (within one hour) for all agencies to use in assessment and monitoring.
- should seek innovative ways to encourage interaction among Working Groups, including sharing draft WG agendas among chairs and co-chairs.

22. The group work plan will include a proposal for fund raising (for Forum on Infant and Young Child Nutrition), to have UNICEF Executive Board endorse Innocenti Declaration on Infant and Young Child Feeding 2005; and to contact Partnership on Maternal, Newborn and Child Health to obtain support for World Breastfeeding Week 2007, the theme of which is “Breastfeeding: The First Hour - Save 1 million babies”.

D.5 Working Group on Household Food Security

23. The Working Group on Household Food Security, chaired by Florence Egal (FAO) and Shakuntala Thilsted (DANIDA), met on Wednesday with presentations in two parts.

- The first had three presentations, one on FAO’s work on indicators for measuring household access to food and dietary diversity, one on CINE’s project on indigenous peoples and food diversity, and the last one on the draft FSNL (Food Security, Nutrition and Livelihood) Online System for documenting successful household food security interventions.
- The second part was an open discussion of the food security dimensions of ECHUI. Sarah Laughton, WFP/ECHUI, joined the secretariat on the podium. This led to recommendations that ECHUI should: have a stronger focus on household food security than supplements and cash transfers; should give more emphasis to helping find solutions at the country level than proposing predetermined interventions; should link to the World Food Summit and to more partners such as DFID and World Bank.

D.6 Working Group on Nutrition of School Age Children

24. The Working Group, chaired by Francisco Espejo (WFP), Lesley Drake (Partnership for Child Development, UK) and Karin Lapping (Save the Children, US) [who was unable to be present]. At their open session on Thursday, which consisted of a Panel presentation on innovative practices in partnerships for School Health and Nutrition at all levels, they also reviewed their 2006 work plan and presented main issues and strategies for 2007. The three priority issues they recommend to the SCN and that will orient their future activities are as follows:

- Problem: school nutrition programme coverage (children out of school) – Role of WG: Provide guidance to countries and community level on how to address these children
- Focus area: Home Grown School feeding (HGSF) – Role of WG: strengthen a conceptual framework for HGSF planning and implementation, to help decision makers to achieve agricultural development through SF without threatening its educational and nutritional outcomes.
- Offer global support and promote cross collaboration – Role of WG: provide guidance on the monitoring and evaluation tools for the different School Health and nutrition interventions.

D.7 Working Group on Capacity Development in Food and Nutrition

25. The Working Group on Capacity Development in Food and Nutrition, chaired by Patrick Stover (UNU), David Sanders (University of the Western Cape, South Africa) and Emorn Wasantwisut (Mahidol University, Thailand) met in a close meeting of the core members on Sunday to discuss their work plan progress and review proposal for the year to come. The open meeting on the Wednesday presented the results of various regional task forces work (Central Europe and Africa) as well as the new organizational structure of the United Nations University Food and Nutrition Programme (UNU-FNP). The discussion highlighted the problem of the Brain Drain. There are many internal factors that contribute to the attrition of health personnel and the brain drain including HIV/AIDS, declining faculty salaries, inadequate research infrastructure, heavy teaching loads, limited opportunities for advancement, inadequate

governmental support, fiscal constraints on governments to invest in education imposed by PRSPs. Poaching of faculty is the primary external force that contributes to the brain drain and is driven by northern universities, the UN agencies, NGOs and Global Public Private Initiatives, governmental agencies, and the northern health sector. Attempts to dissuade or discourage such activities have not been successful. The brain drain is most acute in African Universities, and capacity development by the UNU and other organizations have had limited impact. New and novel approaches to improve the university environments through university partnerships among northern and southern universities need to be urgently explored.

- The WG on capacity development strongly recommends that the SCN make a statement that acknowledges the impact that the erosion of universities' capacity is having on public health nutrition, including the capacity to implement effective nutrition interventions and other health programmes.
- The WG on capacity development endorses the recommendation of the United Nations University Council that the Food and Nutrition Programme focus its future capacity development activities on universities.
- The WG proposes more effort be expended to achieve a seamless integration of SCN capacity development activities and encourages the Task Force on Integrated Approaches to consult with this working group on issues related to capacity development.

D.8 Working Group on Micronutrients

26. The Working Group on Micronutrients, chaired by Martin Bloem (WFP), Jacques Berger (France), and Gary Gleason (INF) [who was unable to be present], was the last WG meeting on Thursday evening. The four presentations include the results of a systematic review of multiple micronutrient supplementation during pregnancy, as well as a discussion of the latest considerations with regard to iron supplementation in malarious areas, and the update on the 2006 Report on activities related to micronutrient deficiencies, which is already posted on the SCN website. The group proposes to produce two policy papers during the coming year, with one to be on multiple micronutrient supplementation during pregnancy.

D.9 Working Group on Nutrition Throughout the Life Cycle

27. The Working Group on Nutrition Throughout the Life-Cycle, chaired by Ricardo Uauy (IUNS), Chizuru Nishida (WHO) [who was unable to be present], and Ana Beatriz Vasconcellos (Brazil) had an informal closed meeting of its core members to review progress over the last five years and to discuss priorities for the work in the next 3-5 years. Preliminary areas of priority identified include:

- Analyze what the SCN members are doing to support the critical role women play in achieving lifecycle/course optimal nutrition and health for the household/family unit. What can be done in the future, what programs could be developed to enhance and facilitate this role.
- Examining nutrition of the elderly in developing and transitional countries, many countries have a growing segment of older people, who are impoverished and are nutritionally vulnerable. The SCN should start to examine these issues and prepare the International Nutrition System in addressing the problem.
- Define HOW to implement the lifecycle approach in practice, what can be done to integrate the lifecourse perspective into present policies and programs, not for its own sake but to enhance effectiveness of these programs and policies.
- The WG session should also serve to monitor progress and present evaluations of the issues covered in the previous 4 years in order to see the final product of the programs and policies developed from WG discussion. This could take the form of Agency reports at the session or written reports to be circulated to WG members.

E. Other presentations and issues

SCN History Project.

28. *Richard Longhurst (Institute of Development Studies, University of Sussex)* gave a lunchtime presentation on Tuesday 27 February on the SCN History project which has been written to mark the 30th Anniversary of the SCN in April 2007, and builds on a draft written by Professor George Beaton in 1997. The History organizes key events during the 30 years of the SCN's existence into three eras (1977-1985, 1985-1999, and 1999-2007), based on the changes in direction of its structure, and also links the SCN functions to those of the PAG (1955-1977), which preceded it. It discusses what may happen in the next few years (2007-2015). The History reviews the achievements of the SCN over this long time frame, its constraints in operations and reviews what it might have done differently. The History also examines how it has defined an agenda for action, and supported new partnerships. It is now being reviewed and will be available shortly to the wider readership.

Mainstreaming Nutrition Initiative.

29. There is enough evidence linking nutrition and good maternal and child health (MCH) outcomes; however, nutrition has been poorly integrated with MCH activities in most countries. It is important, therefore, to converge the nutrition agenda in selected countries with the MCH agendas towards the achievement of MDGs 1, 4 and 5. The Mainstreaming Nutrition Initiative (MNI) was formed last year with support from the World Bank by ICDDR,B in Bangladesh in collaboration with other partners including Cornell University, the Aga Khan University, and the Partnership for Maternal, Neonatal and Child Health. The key objectives of the Initiative are: development of effective policies for mainstreaming nutrition, assisting countries in implementing programs at scale, and global advocacy for the mainstreaming process.

30. The importance of mainstreaming nutrition is highlighted by the holding of a pre-meeting workshop on integrating nutrition and by a session dedicated for MNI in the 34th meeting of the SCN this year. The MNI session was chaired by *Edvardo Frongillo of University of South Carolina*. It started with an overview of the Initiative by *Tabmeed Ahmed (ICDDR,B)* including achievements of last year as well as projected activities for 2007 in Bangladesh, Viet Nam, Pakistan, Bolivia, Chile, Uganda and Ethiopia. He mentioned about the conceptual framework, the contribution of MNI to the upcoming Lancet Nutrition Series, and the operational reviews of issues relevant for mainstreaming nutrition. *Purnima Menon (Cornell University)* described the framework and the tools for the mainstreaming process. This was followed by presentations of two reviews commissioned by the MNI. *Kathryn Doney of University of California at Davis* presented her analysis of efficacy and effectiveness of complementary feeding interventions. Dr Andrew Hall of the University of Westminster presented the findings of the review on the impact of intestinal parasites on child growth and nutrition. The presentations were followed by a lively discussion on the overall objectives of the Initiative and its role in forging a partnership and advocacy on leveraging funds and resources for future country-level activities.

Parallel sessions on Regional Nutrition Strategies

31. Taking the opportunity of having country experiences presented at the poster exhibition organized by the TF-ACP in the FAO Atrium, parallel meetings were held on Thursday morning on Regional Nutrition Strategies in Africa, Europe and Latin America. These were briefly summarized for the plenary later in the afternoon.

32. Funke Bogunjoko, WHO regional Office in *Africa*, reported that a group of 35 participants briefly considered the content of the two Expert Consultative Meetings on Africa Regional Nutrition Strategy in Ajuba that ensured harmonization with the NEPAD Pan-African Initiative focusing on agriculture, and in Brazzaville organized by WHO Africa. The group also discussed sub-regional and national initiatives in terms of policy and institutional framework, including WAHO activities in fifteen countries in West Africa and the multisectoral policy recently developed in Malawi. The group were delighted to notice that African countries are increasingly being made accountable for promoting the nutritional status of their citizens and that nutrition has gained prominence in the development agenda including increased awareness of the role of nutrition in development. They look forward to the first conference of the Federation of African Nutrition Societies to take place in Morocco in May. The group concluded that the Regional Strategy will serve to inform the review of the development of country strategies, policies and plans. Development

partners were positively encouraged to align their support in a consolidated manner to countries as they review and develop their national policies and implementation plans and to share the plan of action for the strategy which was distributed at the meeting.

33. Francesco Branca, WHO Regional Office for *Europe*, reported that the group had discussed nutrition challenges in the European region and strategies for tackling them. Europe is affected by the double burden of malnutrition with increasing obesity prevalence rates particularly among children. Some parts of the region are still affected by micronutrient deficiencies as indicated by high prevalence figures of stunting and iron deficiency anaemia. The WHO Regional Office for Europe convened the Istanbul Ministerial Conference on Counteracting Obesity in November 2006 and is now developing a second action plan on food and nutrition policy. WHO is also supporting development of national nutrition policies, and is performing monitoring and surveillance capacity building as well as nutrition interventions in schools. UNICEF is elaborating a regional strategy for child nutrition, supporting breastfeeding promotion and the Baby-Friendly Hospital Initiative, strengthening the adoption and implementation of the International Code of Marketing of Breast-milk Substitutes, prevention of micronutrient deficiencies, and child growth monitoring. FAO Regional Office for Europe has aligned its membership to that of the other UN agencies and has engaged in discussing how agriculture and agriculture policy can contribute to healthy diets. On the assessment of food security and sustainable livelihoods and on nutrition education the group considered the need to establish an effective interagency coordination mechanisms to strengthen the collaboration at regional and country level, for example through action plans and policy guidance in common initiatives such as the improvement of complementary feeding and the Nutrition Friendly School Initiative. The group identified Central Asia and particularly Tajikistan as an area for common action including emergency operations. The group also recommended linkages to the process of the three SCN Task Forces and involvement in the new working group on engagement with private sector with invitation to the consumers' organization.

34. Salvador Herencia, UNICEF Innocenti Research Centre, reported that the group had discussed the regional strategies on nutrition in *Latin America*, the need to harmonize these at the county level and how to go about to achieve this. Discussions had focused on the Regional Nutrition Strategy for Latin America presented by PAHO, the Hunger Zero 2025 presented by FAO, the Initiative for Ending Hunger and Malnutrition, as well as the four country experiences of Peru, Bolivia, Guatemala and Brazil. Although Latin America is experiencing accelerated economic growth, disparities in society are growing and poverty increasing with high malnutrition rates among children. Hence while nutrition often becomes a political debate, the group saw the need to focus on families and children and give malnutrition a human face thereby fostering social commitment. There is a need to harmonize hunger and malnutrition initiatives at the country level in national plans of action, the sustainability of the process must be taken into account. The group proposed three actions: to create a permanent space in the SCN Secretariat for attending to regional issues, to organize a checklist for developing an agenda of important issues that need to be resolved, and to urgently organize a regional or sub-regional consultation meeting in order to harmonize plans and activities.

Poster Exhibition of Experiences of Working Together in countries and on specific themes.

35. The Task Force on Advocacy, Communication and Partnerships building organized a poster exhibition in the FAO Atrium and outside the Hall of Flags with the overriding theme of Working Together. Country posters were organized by region and included Malawi, Madagascar, Senegal and Ghana from the African region, and Peru, Bolivia and Brazil from the Latin American region. Seven SCN Working Groups organized thematic poster displays: the Working Groups on Household Food Security (on biodiversity and traditional foods); Breastfeeding and Complementary Feeding; Nutrition in Emergencies; Nutrition, Ethics and Human Rights; Nutrition and HIV/Aids; Nutrition of School Age Children; and, Micronutrients. The Task Force on Assessment, Monitoring and Evaluation had also organized a display, in addition to other posters such as the Lancet Series on Maternal and Child Undernutrition and the European Ministerial Conference on Counteracting Obesity held in Istanbul.

F. Report from the Bilateral Partner Group

36. Arne Oshaug (Norway), bilateral representative in the Steering Committee (SC) chaired the meeting, and was re-elected as chair, and Jeanineke Dahl Kristensen, Denmark, and Ana Beatriz Vasconcellos, Brazil, were elected as co-chairs. Gerd Holmboe-Ottesen (Norway) was rapporteur for the first bilateral partner session, and Jeanineke Dahl Kristensen, Denmark, and Ana Beartz Vasconcellos, Brazil, were rapporteurs for the second and final session. Several in the Bilateral Partner Group (BPs) took part in editing the report.

37. The BPs consisted of 31 participants (from 17 countries). All took active part in the debate and contributed with viewpoints on all elements in the agenda.

38. The BPs welcomed the new SCN Chair, Ms Ann Veneman, and look forward to her leadership, in particular to her efforts to generate resources to enable the secretariat to function. We also look forward to her communication and promotion of nutrition in the Chief Executive Board – CEB, reminding the various UN agencies to work together and promoting the SCN at their home pages on Internet. We are hopeful of a transparent and accountable leadership, and look forward to interact with her in particular during the annual meetings.

Matters related to UN's international development agenda. The SCN symposium - "Working together"

39. It was a general feeling among the BPs that there was too little energy in the first part of the symposium. We think the topic is both important and timely since it addresses a major issue of importance to the UN at present, and it therefore created an expectation in the BPs group. We expected an innovative approach from the UN agencies, for example a common lecture from the three main Rome based agencies where they could exemplify what "Working together" could mean for them, and in particular for food, nutrition and health. That did not materialise and we got three separate lectures demonstrating how they were not able to "work together". We encourage the UN agencies to pursue the challenge of working together and start showing this in a real way.

ECHUI

40. The BPs had several comments to this initiative. This report does not present a consensus but rather viewpoints from a rich discussion, and has more questions than answers. Some countries raised the following comments:

- The BPs welcomed that UN agencies work on a common issue, and has moved their attention from global to national level. It was agreement of the goal of the initiative – hunger and malnutrition among children is unacceptable and everything should be done to get an end to this scandal.
- A number of BPs members stated that today it is impossible to have such an approach without mentioning the progressive realization of the Right to Adequate Food. Now tools are available for policy development for such an approach. Suffice to mention here the *Voluntary Guidelines to Support the Progressive Realization of the Right to Adequate Food in the Context of National Food Security*, which was developed by FAO member countries themselves and finalized in 2004.
- We are doubtful if this initiative will make much difference concerning child hunger, because we don't see that this adds much to the approaches that have been used before in the last 20 years.
- We wonder whether relevant countries have been included in the process of developing the initiative which could have created country ownership. Now it appears to be a top-down approach, with fast solutions to complex and long term problems.
- The proposal has developed in a positive way. However, it is still very specific on certain issues, and very general on others. This may create confusion. More emphasis should be given to how and what the relevant issues are, linking it clearly to local needs.
- ECHUI is only addressing MDG 1, and does not consider the double burden of malnutrition. This is an important weakness because often it is those who are undernourished and suffering from hunger during childhood that become obese and fall victim of chronic diseases during adulthood. Nutrition is linked to all MDGs (at least the 6 first), so ably documented by SCN's 5th World Nutrition Report. The ECHUI document should therefore reflect this.
- We think there is an unbalanced presentation of issues, such as washing hands and breastfeeding and complementary feeding. The last issue - breastfeeding and complementary feeding - merit its

own section and not being placed as a sub-point under another action issue that can be relevant but certainly not representing it fully.

- The BPs appreciate that hygiene and washing of hands have been included, but there seems to be a notion that water is available for everyone, disregarding the reality of privatisation of water sources forcing poor as rich to buy water that earlier was free of charge, and scarcity of water in many places for drinking and agriculture.
- The cost estimate was found to be quite high, without adequate documentation of its foundation and relevance.
- In some countries the main funders of development activities are the World Bank and FAO, but those agencies are not very visible as partners in the ECHUI document. Why are they not? How should those countries, where those agencies are the main providers of development assistance, relate to this initiative?
- During the 1990s many initiatives were taken, and still many countries are working on making policies, strategies and activities aimed at the goals and objectives of those initiatives. Some of them were WFS, WFS:fyI, Millennium Declaration, with related goals. In addition *essential nutrition actions* exist and are used in the field. Should they be continued now with the new initiative, or discontinued? What will come next? It may create more confusion than clarity when such an initiative is launched on top of already established initiatives.
- The document on ECHUI indicates that SCN would have some sort of back-stopping role concerning technical nutrition issues. The first fundamental question relates to the fact that the main UN agencies in this initiative, WFP and UNICEF, have their own nutrition departments, with their own nutrition specialists. Are they not able or envisioned to provide such a back-stopping to this initiative?
- Many felt that it would be wrong of SCN to engage in this initiative; but rather SCN could provide space for professional interaction regularly for example at its annual meetings. SCN could request that representatives of ECHUI regularly report on progress and challenges, providing both insights into successes and problems during implementation.
- It was also felt by some countries that often receive various forms of support through such initiatives, that SCN should use its position to comment on initiatives in order to ensure that they are not going to be just another initiative that would be interfering with ongoing work, without contributing much to solutions, but rather create confusion.

Horwitz lecture

41. The BPs found this year's Horwitz lecture informative and interesting. It provided one glimpse and one example of a complex set of challenges and solutions which would be different depending on the context in each case. It would be useful if SCN could collect several such examples from different parts of the world, publish them for example in SCN News and make them available on SCN's home page.

Strategies of the different UN agencies on food, diet, nutrition and health

42. The BPs recognized that WHO have increased their focus on nutrition by having it as a priority area. We also recognize that WHO have information on its Web-page on this year's annual session. We have not been able to find that in any of the other UN agency home pages. We are eagerly waiting for the result within WFP on their focus on nutrition, with the new leadership within the organization both in nutrition and mainstreaming of women's issues.

43. FAO's nutrition department is without director at the moment. Given the possible negative effect on the department's work we hope that this vacancy would soon be filled with an able and active person and that FAO will continue to participate in the SCN.

Matters related to the SCN

44. The Strategic Framework and Action Plan of SCN were recognized.

45. The BPs recognized the creation of three task forces. Some questioned the rationale for these task forces since much of their mandate should have already been covered by the various UN agencies. One specific concern was to hire more people, rather than having agencies to provide staff of secondments. Hiring of more staff would create higher budget, which at the present moment seems difficult.

46. The BPs welcome the creating of a Working Group related to the engagement of the Private Sector. We would expect that this WG would have its own chairperson with co-chairs, and that the mandate would be further elaborated. This WG would be somewhat different from the other, since it would address both modalities for interacting with SCN, as well as technical issues which would profit from interactions with other WGs.

47. Since the specific challenge of this working group, the BPs suggests that its function, work and interaction with other WG's, and the relevance of the work to SCN should be evaluated in about three years.

48. The BPs considered the working groups are critically important to the SCN. It was agreed that the quality of the sessions of the working groups this year was uneven. The chairing in terms of time of some of the groups could have been considerably better. The WG chairs must have clearer instructions on how to chair and manage the groups. The SCN chair should address this issue in her dialogue with them.

49. It was appreciated that the groups did not overlap, but this must be revisited given the experience of this year's event. There was a very tight schedule not allowing for much interaction with other participants at the meeting, networking, and discussion of potential collaboration.

50. The BPs group is concerned with the diminishing level of institutional capacity, especially in Sub-Saharan Africa. We welcome the UNU initiative focusing on institutional capacity strengthening, and suggest that they prioritise the Sub-Saharan region where the problem is felt strongest. We share the concern of an ever intensified brain-drain which aggravates the situation.

51. We appreciate in particular that several groups worked together. We realized that sessions on Sundays may be important also in the future giving opportunity for several groups to go more into details in their themes than the regular agenda allow, but care should be given to this through careful evaluation of how the participants appreciated this.

52. The guidelines for the WGs should be revised and chairing should be underlined (in particular sticking to the time allotted to each group). It should also include policy and programmatic issues as well as ideas of opportunities for studies or reports on common issues.

53. The BPs support the continuation of Sunday sessions where the WG can have more time and go into details that would be impossible within the time allotted to each group.

AOB

54. The Bilateral Partners meeting at the 34th SCN session supports the Infant and Young Child Feeding in Emergencies: *Operational Guidance for the Emergency Relief Staff and Programme Managers*, developed by the Infant and Young Child Feeding in Emergencies (IFE), version 2.1 (February 2007) as presented and supported by the Nutrition in Emergencies Working Group, with the agreed upon changes to paragraph 5.1.2 regarding iron supplementation in Malaria Endemic Areas.

55. The BPs also support the stated concerns from the WG on Nutrition, Ethics and Human Rights on the responsibilities of food and beverage corporations and related media of marketing unhealthy products to children and adolescents.

56. The BPs looks forward to the 6th World Nutrition Report, and asks the secretariat to provide progress report regularly.

57. Next year the operational SCN has its 30th Anniversary. Such an event should be used to promote the work of SCN, and initiate activities that would highlight the importance of SCN. The Bilateral Partners would therefore suggest the following activity by the SCN secretariat and by its members and supporters:

- 30 seminars or workshops are organized in various parts of the world, with at least 10 by the bilateral partners, 10 by the UN organizations and 10 by the Civil Society partners.
- The questions to address could be the following:
 - What are the 3-5 most important future nutritional challenges?
 - What would each country/civil society or UN agency do about them?
 - What could be the role of SCN in this work?
- Each country/constituency/organizer decides on how to do it, who should be involved, the scope and timeline – but it should be communicated to SCN before next annual meeting. There would be no financial support from SCN.
- Those in charge write a short report of 3-4 pages maximum, and send it to the SCN secretariat. They could then be posted on the home-page of SCN.

- A summary of the challenges, suggested solutions and a possible role of SCN could be presented at the next annual - and 30th Anniversary – meeting of SCN.

G. Report from the Nongovernmental/Civil Society Organizations

58. Elisabeth Sterken, Director INFACT Canada/IBFAN North America, Chair of the CSO Constituency and member of the SCN Steering Committee, chaired the meeting. Co-chairs of the CSO group are Ted Greiner, PATH, Washington, USA, and Mary Materu who could not be present. Elisabeth Sterken was re-elected as chair and Ted Greiner and Mary Materu will continue as co-chairs.

Approximately 65 NGO/CSO members participated in the meetings - from civil society organizations, academia, large and small public interest non-governmental organizations, nutrition and health consultants and the private sector. Members came from over 20 countries – Bolivia, Brazil, Thailand, India, Canada, USA, South Africa, Ghana, Tanzania, Kenya, Nigeria, UK, France, Netherlands, Sweden, Ireland, Spain, Norway, Denmark, Switzerland, and Germany. Approximately one half of the representatives were first time participants.

59. Advisory Committee members: Sixteen members of the group volunteered to be active on the NGO/CSO advisory committee: Tola Atinmo, University of Ibadan, Nigeria; Wenche Barth Eide, IPRFD, Norway; Geoffrey Cannon, Editor Public Health Nutrition, Brazil; Alke Friedrichs, WEMOS, Netherlands; Catherine Geissler, King's College London, UK; Elisabet Helsing, National Board of Health, Norway; Irmgard Jordan, U of Geissen, Germany; George Kent, University of Hawaii, USA; Harriet Kuhnlein, McGill University, Canada; Michael Latham, Cornell University, USA; Irene Lausberg, WEMOS, Netherlands; Emily Levitt, PhD candidate Cornell U, USA; Tom Marchione, World Hunger Education Service, USA; Joseph Mensah-Homiah, PhD candidate Cornell U, USA; Susan Siew, World Alliance for Breastfeeding Action (WABA), Malaysia; Flavio Valente, FIAN International, Germany.

Items on which the group made decisions and outcome of discussions

60. In keeping with the underlying theme of working together and promoting harmonization in setting nutrition policy and in implementation of best practice the NGO/CSO group supported:

- The *Infant Feeding in Emergency Operational Guidance for Emergency Relief Staff and Programme Managers*, developed by the Interagency IFE Core group and presented to and supported, including the revision of 5.1.2, by the WG on Nutrition in Emergencies the revision conforms with the WHO Statement and recommendation on Iron Supplementation of Young Children in regions where malaria transmission is intense and infectious disease highly prevalent.
- The support accepted these guiding principles for establishing best practices for those working in this area.
- The group also supported the Save the Children and UNICEF, UK position that follow-on formula are breastmilk substitutes which fall under the scope of the WHO International Code of Marketing of Breast-milk Substitutes. Members of the group offered technical assistance to work with the Save the Children and UNICEF UK in further developing their background document.
- The group also endorsed the Statement by the WGs on Nutrition throughout the Lifecycle and Nutrition, Ethics and Human Rights entitled: *The human right of children and adolescents to adequate food and to be free from obesity and related diseases: the responsibility of food and beverage corporations and related media and marketing industries*. Several members of the advisory group will work on establishing a mechanism within the NGO/CSO group to further advance the objectives set out by the statement through the structures of the SCN. The statement is available from www.unsystem.org/scn

61. The CSO constituency regretted to not have had time to address the *need for increased participation by southern-based civil society* in the SCN. However, this was supported as an important item for later discussion.

ECHUI

62. *Civil Society constituency statement on ECHUI*: The NGO/CSO constituency shares the goals of ECHUI and welcomes the initiative and invitation to engage with the hosting agencies on its development. We also note and are pleased that some NGOs have already been consulted and largely agree with the types of inputs contributed by these NGOs. The group is prepared to continue providing this type of input, especially participating in discussions over the results of the Lancet series and the final formulation of the essential package. Specific concerns include:

- The need for a more inclusive process involving a wider range of representatives of civil society, social movements (i.e. People's Health Movement), and people living and working in the south. Southern consultation is needed in order to transform it into a bottom-up approach. Country level participation and "ownership" of the initiative should be strengthened to reflect the needs for differences in approaches and programmes needed to implement the initiative at national levels;
- Importantly it was strongly felt in our group that the systemic causes of hunger and malnutrition must be addressed, where applicable, in order for the initiative to have long term impact;
- The need for adequate resources to facilitate the representation from civil society in the governance structure of the initiative;
- To eliminate the use of the word *partnership* in relationship to the engagement with the private sector as this implies equal status with the sponsoring agencies.

63. Additionally within the essential package, some programme areas where the group would focus additional discussion include:

- Representation of hygiene within the priorities presented;
- Micronutrient nutrition—we agree that supplementation can be listed but this should be in addition to food-based solutions;
- Child feeding interventions, especially increasing the focus on the impact of exclusive breastfeeding;
- Household water treatment—the ability to access water could also be considered.

64. Because of the many concerns raised from both a technical perspective and assumptions made regarding the approaches to be used, some recommended that the roll out of ECHUI be delayed for at least one year to allow for adequate deliberation to achieve desired levels of support and effectiveness of the initiative. *Overall the group agreed with the aims of the initiative, but full consensus to support the initiative as currently presented was lacking.*

65. How the NGO/SCO group can contribute

- Through the provision of technical support;
- Through identification and articulating of the right to food and health - the Human Rights Working Group has offered to provide these inputs;
- Through support and assistance in managing the engagement with the private sector especially in the area of recognizing conflict of interest issues and its management;
- Through facilitating and providing southern NGO/CSO participation in the development of the initiative;
- Through providing assistance in holding governments and implementing agencies accountable to MDG commitments.

SCN Engagement with the Private Sector

66. In regard to the establishment of a WG on how the SCN engages with the Private Sector the group:

- Recognizes the need for the SCN to establish the WG in order to put into effect the principles of the policy established on the engagement with the private sector,
- Recognizes that the establishment of this WG is sensitive and controversial. Therefore a process should be put in place to establish TORs for the WG;
- Recognizes the ability for the private sector to do harm and also the potential for it to do good;
- Recommends that the SCN should go through a process to establish the TORs for the WG. That the TORS be circulated to the three constituencies for comment prior to submission to the 35th Session for approval;
- The NGO/CS group will submit the name(s) of co-chair(s) for the proposed WG;
- The NGO/CS group will submit criteria and concerns to be addresses in setting the TORS for the WG.

67. The group also discussed criteria for the development of the TORs as follows:

- That they be in conformity with the Statement and recommendations issued by the SCN WG on NEHR and Nutrition throughout the Lifecycle on the responsibility of the food and beverage industries;
- That the WG should consult existing guidance and recommendations on professional involvement from other sectors, for example the
 - World Medical Association guidance on how doctors handle industry sponsorship. 2004
 - Brennan TA et al. Gifts and Sponsorship, JAMA 2006;295(4):429-433
- The WG should review past experiences with nutrition related PPOs and conduct case studies to understand the practical implications of PPOs;
- Any Guidance should be reviewed annually to take account of the rapidly changing world of commercial sector media and finance;
- The Working Group should consider acting as a repository for case experience on PPOs, in order to formatively review the Guidance. This might involve developing a reporting format, including costs involved;
- Organizations with long-standing experience in working on private sector participation concerns such as Consumers International should be invited to join the WG. CI has long standing experience in mediating between consumer and private sector interests;
- The WG should develop initiatives to engage with private sector on issues which could improve nutrition in the ‘window of opportunity’, such as antenatal care, maternity leave and breastfeeding breaks. As increasing numbers of women are in employment, some of the most significant barriers to optimal infant feeding are because mothers have to return to long working hours when their babies are young.
- The inclusion of the ILO in the work of the WG can facilitate dialogue on integrating maternal/child nutrition needs and women’s employment needs;
- When engaging with commercial sectors directly or indirectly related to nutrition, the following need attention:
 - Avoiding *preferential engagement* with one producer;
 - Minimizing risks of *endorsement by association*;
 - *Reciprocity* – Ensuring that all personnel involved in working on any PPO are not in a position of speaking for the SCN, particularly contact with patients, media or consumers, given human nature’s tendency for reciprocity;
 - *Generic production* – any products emerging from PPOs should be generic without any private sector branding;
 - *Disclosure* – clear guidance on what conflicts of interest and disclosure are involved in working on PPOs.
 - *Accountability*

This goes beyond the principles outlined in the SCN Private Sector Engagement policy which applies only to SCN work and *specifically excludes accepting funding from the food and drinks sectors.*

H. UN Agencies Report

68. The UN agencies met twice during the Session with about 40 participants attending from 12 agencies. Both meetings were chaired by SCN Vice-Chair Denise Coitinho and the Secretariat members were the rapporteurs.

Four main key messages for nutrition

69. The agencies recognized as a top priority the need to agree what the main messages for nutrition are, so that our advocacy efforts can be more successful. After some consideration, realizing that too little time was available to discuss this fully, it was agreed that developing such messages should be the top priority for the Task Force on Communication, Advocacy and Partnership Building, under the guidance of the Steering Committee.

Private Sector Engagement Proposal.

70. The agencies agreed to the proposal that a Working Group should be created to initiate development of SCN private sector engagement. The WG should be constituted of a chair and two co-chairs drawn from each of the SCN constituencies, who should be tasked with developing the Terms of Reference and work plan of the WG. These should be for approval by the Steering Committee and the Chair, in accordance with the ideas outlined in the proposal document and the Private Sector Engagement Policy. The TOR should also include criteria for inviting private sector members to participate as well as exclusion criteria. Furthermore, as work progresses the WG should consult as appropriate with the various legal sections of the various agencies concerned through the SCN Secretariat. It was further felt that the focus of the SCN Private Sector Engagement should not only be aimed at the "mothers and young children during the critical window of opportunity" as indicated in the proposal document, but be broadened to include "all forms of malnutrition", i.e. the double burden.

ECHUI

71. The UN agencies discussed the ECHUI Global Framework and the Action Plan at length and in depth before reaching a series of conclusions and recommendations as to how to further strengthen and support ECHUI.

72. The agencies recognize ECHUI as an incredibly important opportunity to raise the profile of child hunger and undernutrition both within the UN and beyond, and are keen to see how they can be supportive of the Initiative. Furthermore the agencies are fully supportive of the ECHUI Goal, welcome the Initiative in principle, and are ready to join such a call for increased action to reduce hunger and child undernutrition. The agencies also recognize that the initiating agencies (WFP and UNICEF) have been very responsive to suggestions received from various parts of the SCN constituencies so far, and have used these to further strengthen the ECHUI documents.

73. The agencies also had many recommendations as to how ECHUI could be further strengthened. It was felt for example that the advocacy dimensions of the ECHUI documentation could be further strengthened, as it doesn't yet fill the identified need for a "better narrative", in order to be able to sell our problem to others (see paragraph 63 above). The three or four clear messages on how to improve child hunger and undernutrition are not there yet. The messages should be more related to the three or four main goals that need to be reached in order to end child hunger and undernutrition, and less about a package of interventions to be delivered. Furthermore the costing of ECHUI as is proposed in the Global Framework needs to be revised, and there is a need to include not only cost effectiveness of ECHUI interventions, but also the costs of doing nothing.

74. The Global Framework could also be further strengthened with regard to the proposed process of implementation. It was felt that the ECHUI package of interventions should more build on what already exists in countries rather than be vertically imposed. Furthermore while the ECHUI implementation methodology already mentions the right to food, this now needs to be strengthened further by incorporating the components of a rights based approach to programming.

75. With regard to further refinement and strengthening of the ECHUI package of interventions, it was suggested that the package of interventions should be seen as an indicative one not a prescriptive one, i.e. one size does not fit all. The package will require adaptation and refinement by location. This could and should be done as part of the process of building local ownership. The package of interventions should be

periodically updated as more evidence becomes available, as is already indicated in the Global Framework. The upcoming Lancet Series for example will provide an opportunity to review the list of possible interventions and further refine the package. Future refinement of the potential packages should use the well recognized and widely used classification of "food", "health" and "care", since these also help identify and define the different sectoral actors responsible for implementation.

76. The relationship of ECHUI with SCN should be articulated through the Steering Committee, and as appropriate draw on and contribute to the work being developed both through the cross cutting task forces of the Steering Committee as well as through the Working Groups. The work of the three Cross Cutting Task Forces of the Steering Committee is very relevant to ECHUI and could contribute to further strengthening the initiative. The Advocacy Communication and Partnership Building Task Force of the SCN should be the forum for harmonizing messages and developing a more convincing narrative. The Development of Integrated Approaches Task Force provides the best forum for further refining the implementation process and ensuring the ownership of a broad based coalition for carrying forward the process. The Assessment, Monitoring and Evaluation Task Force offers the opportunity to share best practices and lessons learned in these areas to inform policy/programme/project formulation and implementation for reducing child hunger and undernutrition. In addition, the SCN working groups are a resource that could provide recommendations both with regard to the technical inputs to strengthen the evidence base, as well as to include other issues and approaches, for example the Nutrition Ethics and Human Rights. These Task Forces and Working Groups should report on their contributions advances in harmonizing these cross cutting themes and technical content of ECHUI at SCN Annual Sessions.

77. There needs to be more clarity about whether ECHUI will be a UN led initiative and how the relationship with the other UN agencies will be formalized. In the spirit of "ONE UN" working together and speaking with one voice on issues concerning hunger and malnutrition, the scope of the UNHCR led partnership process needs to better define who are "We". How other UN agencies that are keen to join and support the ECHUI partnership can do so, needs to be made clearer.

Steering Committee Cross Cutting Task Forces

78. The UN Agencies agree that the Task Forces on Advocacy, Communication and Partnership Building; Development of Integrated Approaches; Assessment, Monitoring and Evaluation, even if they have been slow to get up and running, are potentially very important and should be given all encouragement and support possible by the SCN. As evidenced by the progress made during the Session, physical meetings are critically important to start the process. The Task Forces should now move to next steps, including holding further meetings as indicated in their work plans, in order to map out messages, indicators and approaches being used by the various actors involved, in order to move towards a harmonization of these cross cutting elements. Membership of Task Forces should go beyond the Steering Committee and include other members of the constituencies who have expressed their interest in participating, such as UNHCR, IFPRI, UNU, WHO regional office for Africa and IASC Nutrition Cluster.

Secretariat Annual Report 2006 and Biennium Budget proposal 2008-9

79. The Annual Report and Budget were not discussed in great detail. The Budget proposal was agreed to in principle, but it was recognized that obtaining the UN contributions to the core funding of the SCN was an ongoing problem. There was a renewed appeal to the UN agencies to make their promised contributions for 2007. It was further agreed that the level of UN contributions for the biennium 2007-9 be further discussed by the Steering Committee at its April meeting and taken up with the Chair as appropriate.

AOB

80. *A process for the SCN to endorse/support statements.* The procedural correctness of the SCN endorsing documents during the Session was questioned by several agencies. Although it was agreed that in the past the SCN had "endorsed" various things, including the new WHO growth standard as can be seen on the SCN website, whether the SCN should be endorsing in this way was agreed to be questionable. The SCN is a policy harmonization forum that seeks to reach consensus on issues and doesn't decide by formal voting as in more formal intergovernmental instances. The SCN makes recommendations through the Chair to the Chief Executives Board. It was agreed that the Secretariat should develop a proposal

clarifying these procedural issues, for discussion in the Steering Committee, and that should be brought for discussion at the 35th SCN Session.

81. *Participants Statement on "Working Together"* The UN Agencies felt that it would be best not to develop a participants' statement this year. Instead a "press release" could be the best way to communicate some of the findings of the meeting.

82. *6th World Nutrition Report*. This was not discussed due to lack of time and was recommended to be discussed in the next Steering Committee meeting.

83. The *UN Habitat* representative indicated his pleasure of participating in the Session and suggested that future SCN initiatives, perhaps the 35th Session and/or its publications, should consider including *urban nutrition* as a theme. This would facilitate the continued engagement of UN Habitat.

I. Plenary Session Discussion

84. The plenary discussions on Thursday 1 March were chaired by Sean Kennedy, IFAD, and Denise Coitinho, SCN Vice Chair. These wide ranging discussions are summarized as follows:

ECHUI

85. SCN broadly welcomes the ECHUI and not only agrees on the goals of ECHUI but also the need for such an initiative to strengthen the response across the world to the problem of child hunger and undernutrition. The SCN Working Groups, Bilateral and NGO/CSO constituencies and the Task Forces have not only made a series of concrete recommendations, but also offered to further strengthen, to contribute to and to collaborate to help take efforts forward for ending child hunger and undernutrition; the NGO/CSO constituency on the condition that the issues that they had raised would be dealt with by the ECHUI Secretariat and the initiating partners. The SCN further noted that many suggestions made by the Working Groups during the past year were integrated and welcomes the inclusive and responsive spirit of ECHUI team.

Implementation of the SCN Private Sector Engagement Policy

86. There was broad agreement across the three constituencies that a new Working Group should be established to initiate the process of engagement with the private sector. There was some concern regarding the sensitivity of such a group from the NGO/CSO constituency and some of the Working Groups. Thus, detailed terms of reference for the chairs and work plan should be developed and agreed to by the constituencies through the Steering Committee before the process is launched. It was suggested that the new working group should look into how SCN engagement with private sector should relate to the Global Compact.

The SCN Steering Committee Task Forces proposals

87. There was general support across the constituencies on the effort to develop the Task Forces. The value added and purpose of the Task Forces is to get existing agencies to work together in more harmonized ways in these cross-cutting areas rather than creating new and costly structures. Working together is however, not without cost. Face-to-face meetings are crucial, especially in the start phase, as demonstrated during the pre-Session meetings of the Task Forces when they accomplished more than they have done throughout the year. The report back from the constituencies was regarded as an encouragement for Task Forces to move forward as they have proposed.

The Secretariat annual report and biennium budget

88. There was no discussion on the annual report and budget, and there was general agreement that this matter could be further discussed by the Steering Committee at its next meeting.

Endorsement of statements and other documents by the SCN

89. There was much debate regarding the issue of whether and how SCN can endorse or support statements and other documents. The previous SCN Chair, Catherine Bertini, maintained that SCN is a consensus-seeking forum without voting mechanisms thus endorsement is not possible, as it would

require the full agreement and commitment of all members. The SCN is a vibrant and dynamic informal forum. Procedures for expressing support must be carefully selected in order to balance bureaucratic mechanisms against resulting weak statements. Historically, SCN has made recommendations through its Chair to the UN Chief Executive Board. The current SCN Chair who is very influential has indicated that she would be willing to make recommendations, hence we need to carefully select these messages.

90. The Steering Committee will therefore, on request of the UN constituency, revisit and clarify on appropriate procedures for expressing support to texts by SCN entities or other groups. Practical suggestions from the floor were numerous. The Bilateral Partners and NGO/CSO constituencies described how they deliberately seek general non-binding agreements at their meetings.

91. The two particular cases which were discussed included the *Operational Guidance on Infant Feeding in Emergencies* by the Emergency Nutrition Network (ENN), and the *Statement on the human right of children and adolescents to adequate food and to be free from obesity and related diseases: the responsibilities of food and beverage corporations and related media and marketing industries* made jointly by the SCN Working groups on Nutrition, Ethics and Human Right/Nutrition Throughout the Life Cycle.

92. The SCN Secretary emphasized that the lack of UN willingness to endorse or support the Operational Guidance is not because of its content – demonstrated by the support from numerous individual Session participants from all constituencies throughout the discussion – but rather sensitivity about the procedures and what these entail. The SCN does not intend to block action but needs to find the appropriate mechanisms through which encouragement can be provided in a dynamic manner. The thematic SCN Working Groups are of course welcome to make Statements on their own initiative.

93. Regarding the two specific requests, the Secretary fully agreed to the respective wishes of the ENN and the two SCN Working Groups to post the *Operational Guidance* to the SCN website and to send, on behalf of the two Working Groups, the *Statement on responsibilities of food and beverage corporations and related media and marketing industries* to the UN Special Representative on Businesses and Human Rights, John G. Ruggie, and the UN Special Rapporteur on the Right to Adequate Food, Jean Ziegler.

Working Groups

94. The SCN Chair supported the need for electronic connectivity and systematizing information and lessons learned sharing across the Working Groups. The SCN Secretariat will assist the Working Groups to move forward the various ideas of intelligently managed websites and online repositories.

95. The Working Group on Household Food Security announced their wish for a third Co-Chair, with affiliation to the NGO/CSO constituency and preferably working with HFS at the field level.

96. The Bilateral constituency requested the Secretariat to revisit Working Group guidelines.

World Food Day

97. The 2007 World Food Day will be on the right to food, SCN members are encouraged to build activities around the theme.

Participation of UN Habitat and ILO

98. UN Habitat had been invited to attend the 34th Session. The UN Habitat representative had expressed to get more actively involved and had requested that urban nutrition should be given more prominence.

99. It was requested that ILO should be invited to attend the 35th Session.

100. The Secretariat will be pleased to facilitate invitations, but also encourage Working Groups create space for diversified focus and involve new partners throughout the year in between Sessions.

Duration of Session

101. It was generally expressed that four days is too short a period and that five days is preferred.

Date and Place for next SCN Session

102. The 35th SCN Session will take place in Vietnam, hosted by the Government of Vietnam in cooperation with the National Nutrition Institute and international development partners. Dr Li Thi Hop from the National Institute of Vietnam welcomed all SCN participants for the next SCN Session in the latter half of March 2008.

J. Closure of the Session

103. The SCN Vice Chair Denise Coitinho closed the 34th Session, noting that it had been a particularly vibrant SCN Session with high participation to all Working Group sessions and lively discussions. The 34th Session had contributed to strengthen group dynamics, trust building and the feeling of sharing the SCN goal of realization of the right to adequate food for all. She expressed her gratitude to the Rome based agencies for hosting the 34th Session, and for making it such a memorable event. She also thanked all those who had helped organize the Session, and especially Florence Egal, Patricia Blake, Joanna Lyons, Jayne Baynes, Dan Thanh Ton That of FAO for all of their support in helping to make this such a successful Annual Session. The SCN Vice Chair then closed the meeting.

**SCN 34TH SESSION
LIST OF PARTICIPANTS**

Chair: Ann M. Veneman, Executive Director, UNICEF, *Secretary:* Roger Shrimpton

Special Guests: Alexander Muller; Assistant Director General, FAO
Kevin Cleaver, Assistant President, IFAD
Sheila Sisulu, Deputy Executive Director, WFP
Emile Frison, Director General, Bioversity International
Poul Engberg-Pedersen, Director-General, Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation
David Sanders University of Western Cape, South Africa
Marie McGrath, Director, Emergency Nutrition Network
Saul Morris, London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine
11th Abraham Horwitz Lecturer: Charlotte Dufour, FAO Afghanistan

UNITED NATIONS AGENCIES

Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations

Alexander Muller; *Assistant Director General/Officer-in-Charge, Agriculture and Consumer Protection Department*
Lavinia Antonaci
Barbara Burlingame
Ute Ruth Charrondiere
Marie Claude Dop
Florence Egal (*Steering Committee and Co-Chair WG on Household Food Security*)
Barbara Ekwall
Peter Glasauer
Maarten Immink
Gina Kennedy
Christina Lopriore
Frank Martinez Nocito
Irela Mazar
Ludovica Mei
Valeria Menza
Frank Mischler
Ellen Anneliese Muehlhoff
Guy Nantel
Guilia Palma
Paola di Prospero
Mauricio Rosales
Rachele Santini
Rebecca Skovbye
Mark Smulders
Amélie Solal-Celigny
James Tefft
Brian Thompson
Margret Vidar (*Chair WG Nutrition, Ethics and Human Rights*)
Andreas Von Brandt
Grainne Moloney
Charlotte Dufour

—*FSAU, Somalia*
—*Afghanistan*

International Atomic Energy Agency

Lena Davidsson (*Steering Committee*)

International Fund for Agricultural Development

Kevin Cleaver, *Assistant President*
Rodney Cooke
Sean Kennedy (*Steering Committee*)

Annex: List of Participants

UNICEF

—CEE/CIS, Geneva

—Ethiopia

—Ghana

—Innocenti Research Centre, Florence

—Indonesia

—Madagascar

—New Delhi

—Peru

Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights

Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

United Nations University

World Food Programme

—Consultant

—Ethiopia

—Ghana

—Tanzania

Ann M. Veneman, *Executive Director*
David Clark (*Chair WG Breastfeeding and Complementary Feeding*)

Bruce Cogill (*Co-Chair WG Nutrition and HIV/AIDS*)

Isabel Maria Crowley

Nita Dalmiya

Ian Darnton-Hill (*Steering Committee*)

Nune Mangasaryan

Flora Sibanda-Mulder

Arnold Timmer

Iqbal Kabir

Gil-Won Cusack

Salvador Herencia

Glyn Hopkins

Allan Sadia Ongong'a

David Parker

Fitsum Assefa

Maria Paola Valenti

Werner Schultink

Guido Cornale

Karim Ghezraoui

Fathia Abdalla

Patrick Stover (*Chair WG Capacity Development in Food and Nutrition*)

Sara Shapiro

Sheila Sisulu, *Deputy Executive Director*

Martin Bloem (*Steering Committee and Chair WG Micronutrients*)

Pushpa Acharya

Francisco Espejo (*Chair WG Nutrition of School-Age Children*)

Salha Hamdani

Edith Heines

Michael Hutak

Annmarie Isler

Isatou Jallow (*Co-Chair WG Breastfeeding and Complementary Feeding*)

Nina Kolbjornsen

Ellen Kramer

Sarah Laughton

Soha Moussa

Anandita Philipose

Margaret Phiri

Leah Richardson

Joseph Scalise

Tina van den Briel

Aulo Gelli

Ellen Girerd-Barclay

Jakob Mikkelsen

Anahit Sadoyan

Estifanos Tekle

World Health Organization

—*Regional Office for Africa*

—*Regional Office for Europe*

Pan American Health Organization

—*Caribbean Food and Nutrition Institute*

UN-HABITAT

INTERGOVERNMENTAL AGENCIES

International Food Policy Research Institute

Bioversity International

New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD)

BILATERAL PARTNERS

Austria

Bangladesh

Bolivia

Brazil

Denmark

France

The Gambia

Germany

Denise Coitinho (*Vice Chair, and Steering Committee*)

Vanessa Candeias

Peggy Henderson

Randa Saadeh (*Co-Chair WG Nutrition and HIV/AIDS*)

Constanza Vallenias

Zita Weise Prinzo (*Co-Chair WG on Nutrition in Emergencies*)

Funke Bogunjoko

Francesco Branca

Trudy Wijnhoven

Manuel Pena

Fitzroy J Henry

Frederico Neto

Marie Ruel

Marc Cohen (*Rapporteur WG Nutrition, Ethics and Human Rights*)

Stuart Gillespie (*Co-Chair WG Nutrition and HIV/AIDS*)

Emile Frison, *Director General*

Pablo Eyzaguirre

Ifeyironwa Francisca Smith

Boitshepo Giyose

Ibrahim Elmadfa

Mohd. Monirul Islam

Dr. Nila Heredia, *Minister of Health of Bolivia*

Ana Maria Aguilar

Dilberth Cordero

Saulo A. Ceolin

Janine Coutinho

Milton Rondo Filho

Mario Mottin

Albaneide Peixinho

Ana Beatriz Vasconcellos (*Co-Chair WG Nutrition Throughout the Life-Cycle*)

Jeanineke Dahl Kristensen (*Steering Committee— Bilateral Partners Alternate*)

Shakuntala Thilsted (*Co-Chair WG Household Food Security*)

Jacques Berger (*Co-Chair WG Micronutrients*)

Modu Cheyassin Phall

Marlis Lindecke (*Co-Chair WG Nutrition, Ethics and Human Rights*)

Julia Sievers

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Ghana	Jacob Armah Cynthia Bosumtwi-Sam Hilda Eghan
Guatemala	Andres Botran
Indonesia	Arum Atmawikarta Dr Minarto
Italy	Massimo Pettoello-Mantovani
Madagascar	Valencia Ranarivelo-Volorina
Malawi	Mary Shawa
Norway	Poul Engberg-Pedersen Anne Liv Evensen Arne Oshaug (<i>Steering Committee—Chair Bilateral Partners</i>) Gerd Holmboe-Ottesen Britt Lande Kaja Lund-Iversen Anne Baerug
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Uganda	Ursula Wangwe
United States of America — <i>United States Agency for International Development</i>	Michael Zeilinger Caroline Abla (<i>Co-Chair WG Nutrition in Emergencies</i>) Aimee Centivany Yonahton Bock Cheryl Jackson Richard Newberg Michelle Snow Judy Canahuati Jay Hirschmann Mark Phelan
— <i>Food for Peace</i> — <i>United States Department of Agriculture</i> — <i>United States Department of State</i>	
Zimbabwe	Julia Tagwireyi
NONGOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS (NGOs) AND INTERGOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS (INGOs)	
Academy for Educational Development	Agnes Guyon
Action Contre la Faim, France	Caroline Wilkinson (<i>Chair WG Nutrition in Emergencies</i>) Cecile Bizouerne Kate Ogden Anne-Sophie Porche
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British Red Cross	Mary Atkinson

CAFOD	Tamsin Walters
CARE USA	Mary Lung'aho
Compact AS	Jan Are Heldal Reidar Retzius
Emergency Nutrition Network	Marie McGrath
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IBFAN/GIFA	Lida Lhotska
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International Association for the Study of Obesity	Kate Baillie Philip James
International Center for Research on Women (ICRW)	Kathleen Kurz
International Council for the Control of Iodine Deficiency Disorders (ICCIDD)	David Haxton
International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies	Mija-Tesse Ververs
International Lactation Consultant Association	Rachelle Lessen
International Nutrition Foundation (INF)	Shibani Ghosh Christine McDonald
International Union of Nutritional Sciences (IUNS)	Ricardo Uauy (<i>Chair WG Nutrition Throughout the Life Course</i>) Osman Galal Tola Atinmo

Annex: List of Participants

Medecins San Frontieres (France)	Andrea Minetti Milton Tectonidis
Micronutrient Initiative — <i>Senegal</i>	Venkatesh Mannar Luc Laviolette Banda Ndiaye
Oxfam	Laura Roach
Plan WARO (Senegal)	Sven Coppens
PATH (Program for Appropriate Technology in Health)	Rae Galloway Ted Greiner (<i>Steering Committee—NGO/CSO Alternate Representative</i>)
Save the Children (UK)	Frances Mason
Save the Children (USA)	Hedwig Deconinck Natalie Roschnik Tobias Stillman
Sight and Life	Klaus Kraemer
Valid International (UK)	Paluku Bahwere Steve Collins Filippo Dibari
Wemos	Alke Friedrichs-Gijrath Irene Lausberg
West African Health Organization (WAHO)	Ismael Thiam
World Alliance for Breastfeeding Action (WABA)	Elisabet Helsing
World Health Policy Forum/University of Foggia	Max Pettoello-Mantovani
World Hunger Education Service	Tom Marchione
World Vision International— <i>Canada</i> — <i>Nairobi</i> — <i>United Kingdom</i>	Colleen Emary Mesfin Tessema Kirsty Nowlan
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<i>Argentina—INSIBIO-CONICET and National University of Tucuman</i>	
<i>Bangladesh—ICDDR,B</i>	Kawsari Abdullah Shamsir Ahmed Tahmeed Ahmed Stacy Grau Mustafa Mahfuz Geraldo Vieira Filho
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<i>Brazil—University of Sao Paulo</i>	

Annex: List of Participants

Jordan—*Al-Balqa Applied University*

Kenya—*University of Nairobi*

Kenya—

Lebanon—*Lebanese Association for Early Childhood Development*

Malawi—*RAB Processors*

Morocco—*CNESTEN*

Morocco—*University Hassan II*

Morocco—*Ibn Tofail University*

Morocco—*Research and Development*

Netherlands—*VLAG Graduate School*

Netherlands—*Wageningen University*

Netherlands—*Wageningen University and Research Centre*

Netherlands—*Wageningen University/European Institute for Food Law*

Netherlands

Nigeria—*University of Ibadan*

Nigeria—*Babcock University*

Nigeria—*National Commission on Food and Nutrition*

Nigeria—*National Planning Commission*

Norway—*International Project on the Right to Food in Development (IPRFD)*

Serbia—*University of Belgrade*

South Africa—*Joint Aid Management (JAM)*

South Africa—*University of the Western Cape*

South Africa—*South African Medical Research Council/Nutritional Intervention Research Unit*

Spain—*University of the Balearic Islands*

Sweden—*UNICEF Consultant*

Tanzania—*Public Health Laboratory (Cornell University)*

Tanzania—*National A I Centre*

Thailand—*Mabidol University*

UK—*Cardiff University*

UK—*Centre for International Child Health*

UK—*Centre for International Health and Development, UCL*

UK—*Imperial College*

UK—*Infant Feeding Consortium*

UK—*Institute of Development Studies*

UK—*London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine*

UK—*NutritionWorks*

UK—*University of Oxford*

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Joyce Kikafunda

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Iman El-Zein

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Mufutau Ademola Amosu

Bamidele Omotola

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Andrew Seal

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Alice Woolnough

Carol Williams

Lawrence Haddad

Paula Lewis

Richard Longhurst

Naoko Horii

Saul Morris

Carmel Dolan

Fiona Watson

Devi Sridhar

UK—*Partnership for Child Development/Imperial College*

UK—*University of Chester*

UK—*University of Southampton*

UK—*University of Teeside (WHO Temporary Adviser)*

UK—*University of Westminster*

UK—*Independent Nutritionist*

UK—*Independent Nutritionist*

UK—*Independent Consultant*

USA—*Boston Consulting Group*

USA—*Centres for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)*

USA—*Cornell University*

USA—*Johns Hopkins University*

USA—*Phelan-Gregory Consulting*

USA—*University of California, Davis*

USA—*University of Cincinnati*

USA—*University of South Carolina*

USA—*Tufts University, Friedman School of Nutrition Science and Policy*

USA, Hawai'i—*University of Hawai'i*

USA—*Independent*

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Vietnam—*National Institute of Nutrition*

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