

Report on the Briefing Meeting for Bangkok-based FAO Member Countries and Partners, and Media Workshop on Nutrition and ICN2

7 November 2014

FAO Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific

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29 October 2014 | FAO Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific

Summary: The briefing meeting was convened in Bangkok, 29 October 2014, with an aim to build a momentum of awareness about nutrition as a public good and thus the importance of the Second International Conference on Nutrition (ICN2).

A WHO participant from the regional office in Fiji was connected by Skype also made a presentation (Annex 1).

The briefing meeting was attended by participants from member countries Bhutan, Brunei Darussalam, China, DPRK, European Union, Germany, Indonesia, Japan, Pakistan, Philippines, Timor-Leste and USA. The briefing was opened by FAO Assistant Director-General and Regional Representative Hiroyuki Konuma, and heard from three technical specialists on nutrition – 2 FAO Rap and 1 from WHO Pacific Office (by Skype) about the state of nutrition in the region and plans for the ICN2 event and its expected outcome (Rome Declaration and Framework of Action). The outcome of the morning session was a greater understanding of the ICN2 meeting among the regional group members participating and an explanation of the expected outputs. Member countries were encouraged to consider the nutritional situations and needs of their own countries in advance of participation in ICN2. One participant enquired whether the invitations to ICN2 had already been sent and was assured that the invitations had been delivered to them.

The Media Workshop in the afternoon (media only), attracted journalists from Australia, Canada, China, India, Indonesia, United Kingdom and the United States. The journalists represented major news organizations including ABC (Australia), The Hindu (Business Line), The Jakarta Post, Reuters, Voice of America, Xinhua and a freelance contributor to Al Jazeera. The Bangkok event concluded with a number of recommendations by the journalists to raise awareness about the importance of nutrition and the role that policy makers, private sector and general public have in improving nutrition.

Process and Outcome: The morning session gave an overview of the state of malnutrition (undernutrition, over nutrition and micronutrient deficiencies) in the region (and the world) and details of ICN2 process, including information about ICN2 invitation letters and registration details. The brief also introduced the draft Rome Declaration and the Framework of Action, which contained some 60 recommendations.

The briefing meeting was attended by participants from member countries Bhutan, Brunei Darussalam, China, DPRK, European Union, Germany, Indonesia, Japan, Pakistan, Philippines, Timor-Leste and USA. The event was opened by ADG/RR Hiroyuki Konuma and included three substantive presentations – two by FAO specialists (Food Safety and Nutrition and a Policy Officer) and one by a WHO official (Food Safety), via Skype from WHO's Pacific office in Fiji. A brief question and answer session on the country and regional preparation process were followed involving the diplomatic corps, journalists and FAO-WHO

officials. The participants asked about the relevance of the global conference outcomes documents to the regional perspectives and country needs. It was suggested for ICN2 conference to consider a time slot to be included on the issues and challenges in Asia and the Pacific region, given that this region home to almost 60 percent of the world undernourished people. The outcome of the morning session was a greater understanding of the ICN2 meeting among the regional group members participating and an explanation of the expected outputs. Member countries were encouraged to consider the nutritional situations and needs of their own countries in advance of participation in ICN2. One participant enquired whether the invitations to ICN2 had already been sent and was assured that the invitations had been delivered to them.

The afternoon session (an invitation-only media workshop) was an open discussion for journalists, FAO and WHO specialists to consider the morning briefing in detail and explore the public perception of nutrition, how it is reported, experiences on reporting issues of food production, nutrition, obesity, increasing health care costs derived from poor nutrition and non-communicable diseases (e.g. diabetes), and explore ideas on what, together, can be done to help get nutrition back onto the public-policy agenda to encourage increased production and consumption of nutritious foods that are presently being under-produced and under-consumed.

The participating journalists and correspondents came from Australia, China, India, Indonesia, USA and the major wire services – some were already based in Bangkok. They represented major news organizations including ABC (Australia), The Hindu (Business Line), The Jakarta Post, Reuters, Voice of America, Xinhua and a freelance contributor to Al Jazeera. (See Annex 3)

The Bangkok event concluded with a number of recommendations by the journalists to raise awareness about the importance of nutrition and the role that policy makers, private sector and the general public have in improving nutrition. It also resulted in further questions for the organizers of ICN2 as the group believed these could be anticipated by journalists covering the event in Rome.

Media Workshop further questions and recommendations for ICN2 organizers:

Questions for further consideration by ICN2 organizers:

- Is there, or have there been efforts towards regionalizing nutrition indicators and recommendations (e.g. stunting, BMI, caloric intake) keeping in mind variations in genetics and dietary practices between populations (The Hindu reporter said to use a global measurement is probably not very reliable)?
- What are current approaches being undertaken by FAO/WHO towards addressing the influence of big multinational corporations on issues of food and nutrition? And how will FAO/WHO engage/encourage them to do things that might be against their best interests?
- Is there any evidence of the efficacy of food/nutrition legislation interventions (e.g. taxation, marketing restrictions, etc.) in terms of improving population health?
- How do we address conflicts between public health interests and trade obligations? For example, globalization is an often cited factor in promoting changes in the diet. How can a country reconcile recommendations from FAO/WHO while at the same time honouring obligations under the WTO?
- What is the stance of FAO/WHO with regards to GMOs in better nutrition? What is the role of labelling?
- How do we increase awareness of the general public regarding food diversity? Apart from the consumer who else should we be advocating to?
- NOTE: The above questions were forwarded to OCC on 4 November

Suggestions by the media participants to make the ICN2 key messages more newsworthy:

- Reduce technical jargon to make the information more understandable both to journalists and their target readers
- Less process information and more human elements will help people understand
- More targeted approach to messaging, emphasis on clarity and timeliness of material
- Package resources to journalists to make it easier to write a story, include quotes, human interest angles, historical references etc. apart from just providing technical information; stories that have cross border appeal are being sought in particular
- Don't bombard media with process related information
- Bear in mind that there is also pressure for journalists to keep stories brief and to the point (e.g. 300 word limit by AP/Reuters)

- FAO/WHO should pull together a series of case studies that provide a human face to the issues that are expected to be brought up during and immediately after ICN 2
- “Respect” for food and knowing the origins behind the food on your plate is an interesting angle to explore whilst keeping an eye on emerging consumer trends (e.g. farm-to-table restaurants or food concepts)

Media reports following the Briefing and Media Workshop:

<http://www.thejakartapost.com/news/2014/10/31/nations-urged-address-malnutrition.html>

<http://www.thejakartapost.com/news/2014/10/30/ri-s-focus-agriculture-maritime-praised.html>

http://en.chinagate.cn/2014-10/30/content_33911866.htm

http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/china/2014-10/30/c_133752148.htm

<http://spanish.peopledaily.com.cn/n/2014/1030/c31614-8802161.html>

Photos of event:



ADG/RR Hiroyuki Konuma opens briefing



The Briefing



FAO professional staff and the government representative from Timor-Leste

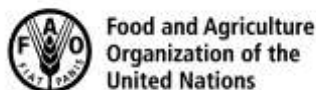


International correspondents and journalists flanked left and right by two FAO Communication and Knowledge Management Officers



Group photo for a FAO RAP Photo Story (Web)

Annex 1: Programme



Nutrition and its Challenges – Briefing on

THE SECOND INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON NUTRITION (ICN2)

29 October 2014

at the FAO Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific
39 Phra Atit Road, Bangkok, Thailand

PROVISIONAL AGENDA

09:00-09:30	Registration
09:30-10:00	Opening Session
	<i>Welcome Remarks by Mr Konuma, FAO Assistant Director-General and Regional Representative for Asia and the Pacific</i>
	<i>ICN2 Video</i>
10:00-10:45	Global and Regional Scenario
	<i>Current Food Security and Nutrition Challenges and the role of agriculture and food systems – by Mr Sumiter Broca, Policy Officer, FAO</i>
	<i>Nutritional impact on health – by Mr Peter Hoejskov, Technical Officer, Food Safety WHO – Western Pacific Region, Fiji</i>
	Q&A
10:45-11:00	Coffee Break
11:00-11:30	Global commitment to address nutritional challenges
	<i>ICN2 Introduction – by Ms Shashi Sareen, Senior Food Safety and Nutrition Officer, FAO</i>
	Q&A
11:30-12:00	Closing Remarks
12:00-13:30	Working Lunch at the FAO River Side Dining Room
13:30-17:30	Media Workshop with Regional Media Representatives (by invitation)

Nutrition and its Challenges – the Second International Conference on Nutrition (ICN2)

ASIA-PACIFIC MEDIA WORKSHOP

(by invitation only)

12:00-13:30	Lunch for media participants at Aquatini Restaurant (Navalai Hotel)
13:30-13:45	Welcome and Introduction – by FAO Assistant Director-General and Regional Representative (TBC)
13:45-15:30	Round Table Open Panel Discussion: <i>Placing nutrition back in the spotlight through traditional and Social Media and the role and use of media planning in nutrition</i> (Including a Skype with WHO colleagues in Manila) (Including a breakout session)
15:30-15:45	Coffee Break
15:45-16:00	Conclusions from breakout session
16:00-16:15	Wrap up and closing remarks
16:15-17:30	Interview opportunities with FAO Regional Officials (optional)

Annex 2: List of member countries and partners who attended the briefing on Second International Conference on Nutrition (ICN2) – 29 October 2014, FAO Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific, Bangkok, Thailand

EMBASSIES
<p>BHUTAN</p> <p>Mr. Sonam Phuntsho (Counselor Political) The Royal Bhutanese Embassy 375/1, Soi Ratchadanivej, Pracha-Uthit Road, Samsen Nok, Huai Khwang, Bangkok 10320</p>
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Annex 3: List of media participants who attended the Media Workshop on Nutrition and ICN2

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