

**Statement by the Head of Nepalese Delegation Mr. Lila Ram Paudel in 38th Session
of the FAO Conference
Rome, Italy (15-22 June, 2013)**

**Mr. Chairperson
Your Excellencies,
FAO Director General
Distinguished Delegates
Ladies and Gentleman**

It is my great pleasure to deliver a short statement on behalf of the Nepalese delegation in this august gathering. I take this opportunity to congratulate you Mr. Chair on your election and also extend my sincere thanks to FAO Director General for the excellent preparation of this 38th session of FAO conference.

The theme of the 38th session of FAO conference is **Review of the State of Food and Agriculture be: Sustainable Food Systems for Food Security and Nutrition** is more emphasizing on the need of well-designed food systems for better nutrition. The situation of malnutrition is alarming and became the global problems and this is more serious in Africa and South Asia regions where the poverty is very high.

Mr. Chairperson,

FAO's most recent estimates indicate that 12.5 percent of the world's population are undernourished in terms of energy intake, about 26 percent of the world's children are stunted, 2 billion people suffer from one or more micronutrient deficiencies and 1.4 billion people are overweight, of whom 500 million are obese. The situation is more pervasive in most developing countries and is burdened by multiple types of malnutrition, which may coexist within the same country, household or individual.

The chronic problems of all forms of malnutrition impose unacceptably high economic and social costs on society. The state and even an individual have to spend a large portion of their income in health care, food items and to fulfill their daily dietary requirements. Therefore, there is an urgent need to reduce these costs by introducing agriculture based nutrition interventions and establishing sustainable food systems and that must begin with the integration of food and agriculture.

Mr. Chairperson,

The issues of malnutrition are complex and multidimensional. The major causes of malnutrition and its consequences are inadequate availability of and access to safe, diverse, nutritious food; lack of access to clean water, sanitation and health care; and inappropriate child feeding and adult dietary choices. The root causes of malnutrition are even more complex and encompass the broader economic, social, political, cultural and physical environment. Addressing this multi sectoral problems require integrated and collaborative actions and complementary interventions in agriculture and the food system.

Mr. Chairperson,

Nepal is also one of the high risks country from malnutrition like stunting, underweight, under nutrition and micronutrient deficiencies perspectives. The rural children and women particularly lactating women and children below five years of age are more affected by stunting, underweight and micronutrient deficiencies whereas obesity and overweight is the problems of urban areas. About 41 percent of the households are consuming the foods less than calorie requirements.

In this juncture, the Government of Nepal has started several initiatives and developed policy frameworks to address the problems of malnutrition, micronutrient deficiencies, dietary improvement programmes with focused interventions. In this context, we have good partnership and joint programmes with FAO Nepal in formulating Food and Nutrition Security Plan, Multi-sectoral Nutrition Plan of Action and some country specific nutritional improvements. Similarly, some of the global initiatives like Global Agriculture and Food Security Programmes, Feed the Future, Global Health Initiatives are currently ongoing initiatives in order to reduce the problems of malnutrition and improved the food insecurity situation of the country.

Mr. Chairperson,

Addressing malnutrition requires integrated approach and actions in all level: global, regional and national level and investment on agriculture and food systems need to be increased substantially. We need some focused country specific interventions like agriculture based nutrition intervention, gender sensitive nutrition programs and policies to address specific issues of affected population.

Nepal believes that this is possible with multi-sectoral co-operation and need to have strong partnership between public and private sectors and Rome based UN Agencies particularly FAO in order to address the emerging challenges in nutrition, food systems public health and education. The role of UN agencies, international community and development partners is very much crucial to find out the sustainable approach to overcome with these challenges and deriving a common lasting solutions.

Before concluding my remarks, Mr. Chair, I would like to extend our sincere thanks to FAO for its support in agriculture and rural development in Nepal. I wish successful conclusion of this 38th Session of FAO conference and this conference would be milestone to derive the common and pragmatic solutions to address the issues of malnutrition and its consequences in general.

Thank You

Mr. Lila Ram Paudel

Head of the Nepalese Delegation

Nepal