



## Summary of the Steering Committee Meeting – December 9, 2009

### Nutrition Advocacy

Recommendations on reducing malnutrition for girls and women were shared with a very senior and appropriate audience, including one Minister of State, Member of Parliament, member of the Planning Commission, the Secretary MWCD and other senior Government officials from Ministries responsible for health and nutrition programming, as well as NGO and development partners (including DFID, UNICEF, USAID, the World Bank and the World Food Programme).

*Note that the essential recommendations for improving nutrition of girls and women are a part of the larger “Leadership Agenda for Action” and were developed by a volunteer task force through a consultative process. The members of the task force included Government officials from NIN, NIHFW, NIPPCD and NHSRC, researchers and representatives of NGOs such as IFPRI, CHETNA and MAMTA and development partners such as USAID, the World Bank and UNICEF.*

### Operationalising the Leadership Agenda for Action:

The Chair was appreciative of the fact that two of the three “A”s, the Analysis and Awareness building stages of the nutrition advocacy initiative have been achieved to a large extent by the *Leadership Agenda for Action*, but noted that the third A, i.e. Action, is now required. He asked the Steering Committee members to share their ideas for operationalising the now complete *Leadership Agenda for Action*. (Note that the “*Leadership Agenda for Action*” is a consensus document endorsed by an impressive and diverse number of nutrition experts and leaders, which includes an analysis of overall nutrition security in India and two focused sections, one on children under two years of age and one on girls and women.) The ideas shared include:

- Demonstrating the potential of implementing the essential interventions (from the *Leadership Agenda for Action*) in a synergistic manner, by a partnership of multiple Government departments and development partners, in a few blocks or districts. Geographical priority states and districts could be considered for demonstration of essential interventions
- Dissemination of the *Leadership Agenda for Action* with policy makers at the state level
- Incorporating more focus on nutrition security and nutrition programming into the Right to Food Act
- Advocate to activate dormant initiatives such as the National Nutrition Action Plan (1995) and the Prime Minister’s Council on Nutrition; advocate for the Planning Commission to increase its focus and role in planning, budgeting and coordinating nutrition efforts
- Inform and involve the media more to address malnutrition
- Strengthen and use the potential of women’s self help groups
- A group of parliamentarians called the “Citizen’s Alliance” are requesting a conference on nutrition, led by the Prime Minister

- Encourage the Planning Commission to review the food fortification of staple foods (e.g., wheat and rice)
- Recognise the limitations of ICDS, including that it is not designed or structured to focus on or reach children under two; Expand the role of MWCD in leading and coordinating national nutrition efforts, such as calling inter-Ministerial coordination meetings
- Increase the awareness and understanding about nutrition of Government officials from many Ministries, using as one avenue the on-line IGNOU course on “Leadership Programme on Nutrition Security”
- Promote nutrition education by placing more focus on nutrition in community colleges (could be supported by IGNOU)
- Encourage local food production with a focus on improving nutrition, especially in rural areas
- Increase the focus on nutrition within the existing water and sanitation programmes; Work to reach higher sanitation coverage levels (in order to have health and nutrition impact)
- Identify and promote catalytic interventions such as low cost water purifiers
- Increase awareness of the problem at state and district level, by improving monitoring and correcting problems in the Government’s routine monitoring and reporting systems, especially with ICDS reporting, which appear to underreport malnutrition; focus on standardising a method for growth monitoring such as using the new WHO growth standards; and improve data availability by conducting regular district health and nutrition surveys
- Recognise that there is a “multiplication effect” since nutrition is a very complex area, and thus many interventions must be delivered in an integrated and collaborative fashion in order to have impact; work to coordinate and synergise multiple interventions; create coordination mechanisms from the village to the state and national level, that can coordinate different Missions and Ministry efforts
- Focus on children under two; unify our nutrition messages for clarity and consistency, based on the essential interventions in the *Leadership Agenda for Action* (a UN working group is preparing key messages for all to support)
- Define the essential interventions, needed actions and optimal indicators, by level – what should be done by each actor from community level worker and *panchayat* to district and state level leadership
- Increase the focus and accountability for nutrition within the many existing Government programmes (such as NREGA, NRHM, Rajiv Gandhi Drinking Water Mission and Total Sanitation Campaign)
- Recognise and adjust monitoring to capture both the under and over nutrition aspects of malnutrition and recognise that low birth weight may have an impact on the increasing chronic disease burden in India; Recognise that addressing LBW is very complex and will take integrated efforts and time to change
- Increase the focus on gender, since gender discrimination is a major cause of malnutrition; focus on the *panchayats* to change this; use *gram sabha* meetings to conduct nutrition audits and raise awareness about gender bias and nutrition
- Build a Nutrition Resource Centre within the MWCD
- Advocate for including the recommendations from the *Leadership Agenda for Action* into the midterm assessment of the 11<sup>th</sup> Five Year Plan and into the 12<sup>th</sup> Five Year Plan

## Conclusion and Next Steps

The Chair of the Coalition suggested the following next steps:

- A smaller advisory committee should consider these suggestions and develop an action plan to accelerate progress toward MDG #1 (reducing hunger and poverty), perhaps to be called “Operation 2015”.
- This action plan could consider focusing on scale up of proven successes and innovations, reaching out to the media, and improving and integrating the efforts of the many existing Government missions and programmes.
- Identify and promote catalytic interventions such as low cost water purifiers
- Disseminate the *Leadership Agenda for Action* with policy makers at the state level (through regional workshops)
- Organise a meeting of all UN and bi-lateral agencies to promote recommendations of the *Leadership Agenda for Action*

### **For more information please contact:**

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*Chair*

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**Attachment:**

**Third Meeting of the Coalition Steering Committee  
December 9, 2009 from 3:00 p.m. onwards  
Raunaq Room, First Floor, PHD Chamber Commerce and Industries, New Delhi**

**List of Participants**

<b>S.NO</b>	<b>NAME &amp; TITLE</b>	<b>ORGANIZATION &amp; CONTACT DETAILS</b>	<b>REPRESENTATION</b>
1.	<b>M. S. Swaminathan (Prof)</b> Chairperson- Coalition for Sustainable Nutrition Security in India	Chairman M S Swaminathan Research Foundation Third Cross Street Taramani Institutional Area Chennai - 600113	
2.	<b>Agatha Sangama (Smt)</b> Minister of State for Rural Development	Ministry of Rural Development RoomNo-199, Krishi Bhawan, Ist Floor, New Delhi 110 001	
3.	<b>Supriya Sule (Smt)</b> Member of Parliament-Rajya Sabha	Member of Parliament-Rajya Sabha , Nationalist Congress Party, 6, Janpath Road, New Delhi 110011	
4.	<b>Arun Maira (Sh)</b> Member	Planning Commission Room No-202, Yojna Bhawan, Sansad Marg, New Delhi-1	
5.	<b>Santosh K Mehrotra (Dr)</b> Director, IMR	Plot No 25, Sector A 7, Institutional Area, Narela, New Delhi: 110040	
6.	<b>SD Sikri (Sh)</b> Secretary , MWCD	Ministry of Women & Child Development Room No 61, A wing, 6 <sup>th</sup> Floor, Shastri Bhavan, New Delhi-1	
7.	<b>Nita Chowdhury (Smt)</b> Member, Board of Revenue (Former Principal Secretary) Planning Commission	Kesarbagh, Lucknow- 226001 Opposite- DM Office Board of Revenue, Lucknow, UP	
8.	<b>S Jalaja (Smt)</b> Secretary, Department of AYUSH, MOHFW	Room No-207, IInd floor Red Cross Building , New Delhi-11	<b>Manoj Nesari (Sh)</b> Joint Advisor AND <b>Gazala Zaved (Dr)</b> Asst. Director (Department of AYUSH Ministry of Health and Family Welfare)
9.	<b>VN Rajashekharan Pillai (Prof)</b> Vice Chancellor , IGNOU	IGNOU, Maidan Garhi-110068, New Delhi	
10.	<b>Shreeranjjan (Dr)</b> Joint Secretary	Ministry of Women & Child Development Room No. 605, A wing Shastri Bhawan, New Delhi -110001	

11.	<b>B. Sesikeran (Dr)</b> Director	National Institute of Nutrition (NIN), Jamia Osmania PO. Tarnaka , Hyderabad-500007	
12.	<b>Erin Soto ( Ms)</b> India USAID/Mission Director	USAID, American Embassy Shantipath, Chanakyapuri New Delhi-110021	
13.	<b>Latha Pillai (Prof)</b> Pro VC, IGNOU	Room No-8, block No-8, IGNOU Maidan Garhi-110068	
14.	<b>Rajendra Ahuja ( Sh))</b> Trustee	WFP Trust of India New Delhi	
15.	<b>Karin Hulshof (Ms)</b> Country Representative, UNICEF-India	UNICEF 73, Lodi Estate New Delhi -110003	<b>Victor M. Aguayo (Dr)</b> Chief, Child Nutrition and Development, UNICEF-India
16.	<b>Mihoko Tamamura (Ms)</b> Country Director	World Food Programme, India 2, Poorvi Marg, Vasant Vihar New Delhi-110057	
17.	<b>Rita Sarin ( Ms)</b> Country Director	The Hunger Project India Hunger Project Country Office, Shaheed Bhavan, 18/1, Aruna Asaf Ali Marg Qutub Institutional Area New Delhi-110067	
18.	<b>Prema Ramachandran (Dr)</b> Director	Nutrition Foundation of India C-13, Qutab Institutional Area New Delhi -110016	
19.	<b>Michael Anderson (Mr)</b> Head, DFID India	DFID India B 28, Tara Crescent, Qutub Institutional Area New Delhi - 110016	<b>Arundhati Chowdhary ( Ms)</b> Social Development Adviser DFID India
20.	<b>Venu Srinivasan (Mr)</b> President	CII India Habitat Centre Core 4A, 4 <sup>th</sup> Floor, Lodi Road New Delhi -110003 Ph: 24621874/Fax: 24633168	<b>D Chadha (Sh)</b> CII
21.	<b>Gerard La Forgia (Mr)</b> Lead Health Specialist	The World Bank 70, Lodhi Estate New Delhi -110003	<b>Ashi Kathuria ( Ms)</b> Senior Nutrition Specialist, The World Bank
22.	<b>Rajiv Tandon ( Dr)</b> Chief, MCH, Nutrition and Urban Health Division /Coalition Secretariat Coordinator	Office of Population, Health & Nutrition USAID/India, American Embassy, Shantipath, Chanakyapuri, New Delhi 110021, India	
23.	<b>Anchita Patil (Dr)</b> Senior Advisor (Maternal & Child Health)	USAID, American Embassy Shantipath, Chanakyapuri New Delhi-110021	
24.	<b>Veena Rao (Smt)</b> Presenter/Women's Nutrition Paper Chair	IAS (Retd.) Former Secretary , GOI	