



Dated: 26 July 2010

A gathering of leading African and international food and nutrition experts met on the 24th July 2010 prior to the 15th AU Summit in Kampala, Uganda under the theme “Africa must feed itself. No child should go to bed hungry. Reduce child stunting by 50 percent in the next five years and Beyond”.

The meeting underlined the importance of food and nutrition security in human, social, and economic development in Africa. Discussions centered on four programmatic themes, namely, maternal, infant and child nutrition, home grown school feeding, dietary diversity and food fortification and biofortification, that link to the main theme of the AU summit and are viewed as a key mechanism to advance food and nutrition security and agricultural development in Africa.

The participants reinforced the recent national, continental and international commitment to put food and nutrition at the centre stage of social and economic development strategies and investments. Nutrition needs to be visible in all government sectors and be appropriately funded. Key speakers and participants underlined the fact that nutrition is not merely a health issue, it cuts across sectors such as education, agriculture, finance, social affairs (to include youth and gender) and requires multiple players within governments but also public private partnerships.

There have been various declarations on paper and talk about reducing malnutrition levels in Africa but it is time to act if we are to realize the Millenium Development Goals. Participants called for the highest political commitment and action. Accordingly, Member States are called upon to prioritise actions, strengthen actors and facilitate partnerships in order to create the synergies needed for success by undertaking the following:-

- Strengthen their role in leading and supporting the scale up of programmes and projects on mother, infant and child nutrition, dietary diversification, fortification (including biofortification) and home grown school feeding among others that link to “nutritionalisation of agricultural programmes”.
- Commit to ensuring that no mother dies because of her “God given function” or child dies or is damaged from a lack of nutritious food. Maternal, infant and child mortality can be prevented by taking simple measures such as a pinch of iodized salt and consuming a diversified diet.
- Ensure that Africa becomes self sustainable in food production and reduce dependency on food aid. There can be no nutrition without food. This means for instance that the call for governments to commit 10% of their public expenditure to agricultural development as called for by the Maputo declaration (2003), will have positive spinoffs for nutrition in Africa.
- Improve nutrition information systems as a means to enhance monitoring and evaluation of programmes.

- Strengthen nutrition capacity while at the same time realizing that nutrition problems cannot be dealt with by nutritionists alone
- Support the proposal to establish an African food and nutrition day to be commemorated in every country on an annual basis. This will serve as a platform to share experiences and report progress made towards a 50% reduction of stunting and other nutrition disorders in the next five years and beyond, to ensure that Africa is free of malnutrition.

Countries from Africa and other continents, Brazil in particular, were represented at the side event in Kampala. Contributors and Speakers included government representatives from Brazil, Uganda, Kenya, Malawi, Cote'd Ivoire, Mali and AU-NEPAD's Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme, GAIN, WFP, FAO, UNICEF, IRIN, Harvest Plus, GlobalHort, PROTA, and many others actively working across the globe on maternal, infant and child health, nutrition, fortification and biofortification, school feeding, health and agriculture.

