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I. Introduction

1. The Chairman of the Subcommittee on Nutrition (SCN), Dr. Richard Jolly, welcomed participants to the twenty-seventh session of SCN, hosted jointly by UNICEF and the World Bank. He also welcomed Dr. Namanga Ngongi, SCN Chair Designate and Deputy Executive Director of the World Food Programme (WFP). A warm welcome was extended to representatives of bilateral agencies, non-governmental organizations and other supporting groups. Dr. Jolly thanked the members of the Interim Programme Steering Committee for their efficient agenda which had given major emphasis to the important role of the SCN working groups.

2. Dr. Ngongi emphasized the importance of the tripartite participation in the SCN — United Nations agencies, the bilaterals and the non-governmental organizations. He welcomed the agencies that were attending the session for the first time and encouraged all to pool resources to reach common goals. The SCN, he said, worked within a common framework in order to make a significant contribution to ending malnutrition.

3. Dr. Jolly noted that two major documents, the *Fourth Report on the World Nutrition Situation* and the draft ACC/SCN strategic plan, were to be reviewed and discussed during the week and a revised strategic plan presented for adoption at the business meeting. He encouraged participants to use the week to discuss the challenges those documents presented for administrators within their own agencies and to work together to identify practical actions to address the issues. Dr. Jolly recalled some of the successes encouraged by SCN in the past. Examples included the recognition in 1985 of the need for a global programme to combat iodine deficiency; the commitment in 1986 by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) to consider the protection of nutrition in programmes of economic adjustment; the proposal in 1989 to hold an International Conference on Nutrition; and the documentation in 1993 of the enormous impact of vitamin-A-deficiency on young child mortality.

II. Matters for the attention of CCPOQ and ACC

Fourth Report on the World Nutrition Situation

4. The *Fourth Report on the World Nutrition Situation*, produced by ACC/SCN in collaboration with the International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI), had been published. It can also be downloaded from the SCN's web site. The *Fourth Report* states that, "Investing in maternal and childhood nutrition will have both short- and long-term benefits of huge economic and social significance, including reduced health care costs throughout the life cycle, increased educability and intellectual capacity, and increased adult productivity. No economic analysis can fully capture the benefits of such sustained mental, physical, and social development." Despite the progress that has been made over the years in reducing some forms of malnutrition in some regions, much more needs to be done. The *Fourth Report* emphasizes that some 30 million infants are born each year in developing countries with intrauterine growth retardation due to poor nutrition during foetal life. Population-wide interventions to avert this situation are urgently needed in many countries. The problem of low birth weight is especially common in south-central Asia where about 21 per cent of newborns are affected. These infants will face a high risk of disease and early death in addition to poor cognitive and neurological development. Furthermore, current research shows that foetal undernutrition is linked to chronic diseases such as hypertension, diabetes and cardiovascular disease in adulthood.

5. Trends in the *Fourth Report* show that the highest levels of stunting are estimated for eastern Africa, where on average 48 per cent of pre-school children are affected in 2000, up from 47 per cent 10 years ago. This trend is further amplified by the high population growth rates in the region; hence, the number of stunted children continues to increase each year. Stunting is also widespread in south-central Asia, which accounts for about half of the global problem. The trend in that region is towards improvement, but the pace of progress is too slow to meet global goals by the target date of 2015. About 44 per cent of the children in south-central Asia are underweight, making it the worst-affected region in the world for that

indicator. Countries of Eastern Africa are experiencing a rise in underweight children; in sub-Saharan Africa, 8.2 million more children are underweight now than in 1990. The World Summit for Children (1990) set a global goal of halving severe and moderate undernutrition among children under five years of age by 2000. Only South America has achieved that goal. Progress has been steady and significant in south-central Asia, but the rate of progress is all too slow.

6. The *Report* also presents nutrition data for other age groups. Height surveys conducted in Latin America show that stunting is common in school-age children in that region. In 4 of 11 countries surveyed, more than one third of children in school are stunted. In Peru and Guatemala prevalences are 48 per cent and 51 per cent respectively. These rates are similar to those found in other countries in other regions. The *Report* emphasizes that there is a lack of reliable data on the nutritional status of school-age children. Information on the nutritional status of adolescents is also scarce. Among adults, both underweight and overweight are present in many countries in the developing world. While underweight is especially common among women in south-central Asia, both underweight and overweight are seen in African women. Very little work has been carried out on the nutritional status of older people in developing countries.

7. The *Report* describes progress made in reducing micronutrient deficiencies such as iodine and vitamin-A deficiencies. Iron nutrition needs much greater attention. Iron deficiency and its anaemias affect more than 3.5 billion people in the developing world, well over two persons out of every three. The *Report* provides positive information on breastfeeding trends and reaffirms the crucial contribution of good nutrition to human development. It challenges United Nations agencies to put into operation the principles of human rights when designing programmes. Finally, it reports on the 1998 estimates of 12 million refugees, primarily from Africa and Asia, and the 20 million persons who were internally displaced, and raises important questions regarding nutrition in the face of the increasing globalization of trade, information and financial resources and, especially, regarding the rapid spread of HIV/AIDS.

III. Work in progress: summary of discussions and conclusions

A. ACC/SCN strategic plan

8. At its twenty-sixth session SCN had decided to establish an Interim Steering Committee for one year. The main purpose of the Committee was to propose the content and format of the ACC/SCN session and symposium in 2000 and to guide a restructuring process that would further strengthen the activities of ACC/SCN. The Committee held its first meeting on 18 May 1999, with the following membership: FAO, UNDP, UNICEF, WHO, the World Bank, a representative of the bilateral donor community, a representative of the NGO community and a representative of civil society. The SCN Technical Secretary served as rapporteur. The Committee elected the representative of the World Bank as chair and the representative of UNICEF as vice-chair. The Committee held a total of 15 meetings, all except one by conference telephone call.

9. A draft ACC/SCN strategic plan had been prepared by the Committee. It consists of the following parts:

- I. Vision and mandate;
- II. Rationale for preparing the strategy;
- III. Strategic actions;
- IV. Implications for the structure and functions of SCN;
- V. Funding;
- VI. Monitoring the implementation of the plan.

10. Although important advances have been made in improving nutrition in many parts of the world, progress has been uneven and insufficient. Unless action for nutrition is accelerated now, unacceptable levels of malnutrition and human deprivation will persist for most of this century. SCN, in bringing together three clusters of participants — United Nations agencies, bilateral representatives and members of civil society — is taking leadership in strengthening and coordinating efforts to end malnutrition.

11. The mandate of ACC/SCN is to raise awareness of nutrition problems and mobilize commitment to

solve them, at global, regional and national levels; to refine the direction, increase the scale and strengthen the coherence and impact of actions against malnutrition worldwide; and to promote cooperation among United Nations agencies and partner organizations in support of national efforts to end malnutrition in this generation. SCN is a global forum, not an operational agency; it can influence regional and local action in many ways, principally through agency representatives. One important aspect of the SCN's task is to monitor progress at the local and regional levels, and for that purpose a monitoring and evaluation system is needed, with annual SCN reports indicating progress against agreed milestones. The draft strategic plan specifies in part III a number of actions to be taken in carrying out the three main aspects of the mandate.

12. The draft strategic plan contains proposals with respect to the structure and functioning of SCN. It stipulates that SCN sessions will include parallel meetings for each of the three clusters of participants. A public symposium, working group meetings and a business meeting will be open to all participants. In addition, SCN strives to bring professionals from the developing world to its meetings. The working groups are at the heart of SCN: they enable participants to take an active role in the work programmes, harmonize actions, share information and review tasks in substantive areas.

13. The functions of the Chairperson are redefined, as well as those of the Steering Committee, the secretariat and the group of distinguished nutrition advocates.

14. As regards funding, in place of the voluntary nature of both core and programme funding, it would be desirable to establish a system of assessed contributions from United Nations agencies to cover the core budget.

15. Several aspects of the draft strategic plan have been implemented already, and an assessment of effectiveness is proposed for 2003.

16. The Chair of the Steering Committee made clear that the aim of the Committee had been to establish in the plan a framework for action which in some respects was ambitious in scope. An opportunity was open to develop and revise actions aimed at reducing malnutrition. SCN commented on the draft plan, offering both substantive changes and editorial

improvements. The approved version is attached (see annex I).

B. Report of the Technical Secretary

17. The Technical Secretary noted that since it was not a budget year, the secretariat had been asked by the Steering Committee to report on work in progress and related matters. The secretariat report was divided into three parts: publications and products, funds and fund-raising, and staff and logistics.

Publications

18. The publications programme is the main item in the biennial work plan. SCN publications are peer reviewed. Although material is contributed from the United Nations and other sources, the secretariat retains editorial control over content. The *Fourth Report on the World Nutrition Situation*, just released, had been a major undertaking. Funds had been raised from eight donors.

19. An outline of the fifth report will be presented to SCN at its twenty-eighth session, with publication planned for early 2002. Circulation of *SCN News* is growing; it now has a print run of 10,000. A recent readership survey indicates that 68 per cent of readers work in developing countries. While *SCN News* often presents new research findings, it has a programme focus rather than a research focus.

20. Refugee Nutrition Information System (RNIS) bulletins are issued quarterly and sent to about 1,200 nutrition professionals. Electronic updates are issued, as needed. The bulletins document the nutrition, health and survival of refugees.

21. Nutrition policy papers often cover topics discussed at SCN symposia or report on emerging issues. The next issue in the series will deal with the prevention of low birth weight.

22. The final *Report of the Commission on the Nutrition Challenges of the Twenty-first Century* is now available. A press event was held in March in London to bring attention to the main findings of the Commission.

23. Maintaining the SCN web site is an ongoing activity. All SCN publications are posted to the web site in full, as are reports of working groups and other reports and notices.

Fund-raising

24. Fund-raising consumes a considerable amount of the secretariat's time, because both core and programme budgets depend on voluntary contributions. Generally the core budget is funded by United Nations agencies, while most of the programme budget is funded by bilateral agencies. Late payment of contributions by United Nations agencies obliges the secretariat to borrow from programme funds, often impeding the implementation of the work programme. The Steering Committee recommended an assessed form of core budget funding to redress the situation. Of the total programme budget of \$1,077,000 for 2000-2001, donor commitments totalling \$527,500 have been confirmed, leaving \$549,500 to raise.

Staff and logistics

25. Fully staffed, the secretariat consists of four Professional staff and one support staff. Secretariat staff are on the WHO payroll. The present office accommodation provided by WHO in the Ecumenical Centre is adequate. However, the distance to the WHO main buildings is somewhat inconvenient, and maintaining day-to-day contact with WHO personnel is difficult.

C. A new initiative in health policy

26. The Subcommittee was informed of the recent creation of the World Health Policy Forum, designed as a global membership network aiming to create a context in which policy action plans addressing important international public health issues can be developed and made to work. In its first 10 years the Forum will focus on food and health policy. The Forum's Board believes that public health policy needs concerted, international, multidisciplinary and multisectoral strategic planning. The Chair noted that this agenda item was included for information only and that the Forum was in no way endorsed by SCN agencies.

D. Symposium on nutrition stocktaking and the challenges for the twenty-first century

27. Dr. Jolly opened the symposium by stressing three important points raised in the *Fourth Report*:

nutrition is fundamental; nutrition failures are egregious; but rapid progress is possible. Accelerated and broader actions grounded in the realities of each country are required in order to improve the situation. The Technical Secretary thanked the contributors, reviewers and donors of the *Report* and presented the main findings.

28. Mr. F. H. Abed, Executive Director of the Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee (BRAC), gave a succinct background summary of the serious nutritional situation in south-central Asia, highlighting that in Bangladesh iodine deficiency still affected more than two thirds of the population. However, there had been successes including a vitamin-A supplementation campaign that had reduced night blindness to one fifth its level 15 years earlier. Mr. Abed noted that the debilitating results of malnutrition were all avoidable. BRAC had 90,250 village organizations with 3.5 million members participating in a wide variety of programmes in which nutrition was a cross-cutting issue. For example, there were programmes in collaboration with WFP in a targeted vulnerable group programme; with UNICEF in a community-based nutrition pilot; with the World Bank, UNICEF and the Government of Bangladesh in an integrated nutrition project. Mr. Abed concluded by congratulating the United Nations in recognizing that nutrition and health were human rights. He emphasized the need for an integrated approach to deal effectively with widespread malnutrition and to ensure that the poor gained the advantage of good nutrition for learning, working and prospering.

29. Dr. Kul Gautam, Deputy Executive Director of UNICEF, remarked that significant successes had been achieved where it had been possible clearly to articulate and communicate goals to decision makers. He discussed the importance of demonstrating convincingly how national goals were achievable within the political or official lifetime of leaders and how goals could be pursued without emptying the state coffers. He also discussed political, tactical and moral benefits and indicated what kinds of international support and recognition could be brought to bear on the achievement of goals. In all cases, using the public media had been vital. Dr. Gautam urged SCN to produce a new set of goals, targets and strategies around which political leaders, corporate leaders, civil society organizations and the media could be mobilized. The goals could be incorporated into a

presentation to be made at the special session of the United Nations General Assembly in 2001, on progress made since the World Summit for Children in 1990. Dr. Gautam also suggested that SCN should consider making child growth-monitoring and promotion a new political imperative, given evidence from the *Fourth Report* and the *Report of the Commission on the Nutrition Challenges of the Twenty-first Century* that child malnutrition rates had declined more rapidly where monitoring was undertaken at the community level. He asked whether it would be possible to point to child growth as the gold standard for measuring the success of development efforts.

30. The Vice-President of the World Bank, Dr. Eduardo Doryan, challenged SCN to consider an essential minimum package to revitalize efforts to reduce malnutrition: firstly, make child growth a key indicator of the overall development effort, and use weight-for-age to measure how poverty reduction is progressing towards the 2015 goal; secondly, tackle the challenge of low birth weight, in particular through innovative actions for adolescent girls; thirdly, renew efforts to combat micronutrient deficiencies, particularly through fortification programmes.

31. Dr. Per Pinstrup-Andersen, Director-General of the International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI), presented a synopsis of the most outstanding points in the *Fourth Report*, including the use of the life cycle perspective. He noted that investments in education and improving the status of women together were estimated to be responsible for over 50 per cent of the reduction in child malnutrition. The appalling lack of consistent and credible data throughout the life cycle was highlighted, as were the outstanding problems of iron deficiency anaemia and the relationship of child mortality and nutritional status to civil conflict. The links between development and malnutrition were also explored. A synopsis of some of the trends identified in the *Report*, such as the globalization of trade, information and communication technologies, expanded capital markets, HIV/AIDS and urbanization was provided. Dr. Pinstrup-Andersen concluded by highlighting some of the issues that the *Fourth Report* did not cover — mechanisms to scale-up and down, the nutrition community's capacity to act, the role of agriculture in improving human nutrition, and the potential of new technologies to improve nutrition.

32. Following the presentations, various issues were raised: HIV/AIDS and its effect on nutrition,

discrimination against women as a cause of malnutrition, the practical difficulties of implementing a human rights approach to nutrition in West Africa, the challenge of advocating nutrition to ministers of finance and other decision makers, the linkage between rising inequalities within and between countries and malnutrition, the new epidemic of obesity, the need to pursue poverty reduction aggressively and to increase investment in education and health. It was noted that the major contributing factors to malnutrition over the past 20 years might be different from those in the next 20 years. Thus, to bring malnutrition rates down in the next 20 years might require a shift in focus to a different set of factors. The role of SCN in raising awareness of nutrition issues was discussed. Several participants suggested that SCN should stress the importance of nutrition in poverty reduction strategies.

33. The Fourth Dr. Abraham Horwitz Lecture was given by Ms. Deepa Bhat, a graduate student attending the School of Nutrition and Policy at Tufts University. Her topic was "What makes the difference? Applying the positive deviance approach to improve pregnancy outcomes". In introducing the lecturer, Dr. Jolly noted that Ms. Bhat had been selected from among 10 candidates who submitted proposals for consideration by the SCN secretariat. Session participants were honoured that Dr. Horwitz was able to attend the lecture.

E. Reports of working groups

Life-cycle consequences of foetal and infant malnutrition¹

34. The Working Group (Chair, UNU; Rapporteur, UNICEF) summarized the growing evidence that, from conception onwards, nutritional factors affected health. Folate and iodine deficiencies in early pregnancy and iron deficiency in infancy were well documented examples. Several important events over the past year had helped to clarify how to go about designing large-scale programmes. A meeting on the prevention of low birth weight, held in June 1999, concluded that prevention of low birth weight required an integrated package of interventions, including better nutrition, control of infectious disease, and reduced physical workload. The UNICEF Care Initiative could serve as a basis for developing such an integrated programme. A technical consultation on low birth weight had been held in March 2000 in the United States to develop a

broad coalition of researchers, organizations and donors working together to move the low birth weight agenda forward. The consultation had recognized that low birth weight needed to be addressed through interventions focusing on female adolescents and pre-pregnant women. An attempt to replicate and expand the Barker studies² in the United States was under way. The working group noted that there were contradictions in the Barker findings and that certain mechanisms were poorly understood. Finally, the working group heard from UNICEF on an 11-country low-birth-weight pilot programme.

35. The working group will report back in 2001 on the following issues:

(a) Achievements of a secretariat to be established at the Institute for Child Health in London. The secretariat will collect, summarize and disseminate new knowledge concerning low-birth-weight prevention;

(b) Achievements of a task force of the International Dietary Energy Consultancy Group (IDECGT) to review critically the Barker hypothesis and make recommendations for studies to test it;

(c) Guidelines to assist in the monitoring and evaluation of low-birth-weight prevention programmes;

(d) Guidelines for programmes to evaluate the efficacy and effectiveness of a multiple micronutrient supplement for use during pregnancy;

(e) Programmatic experience on promoting nutritional improvement and weight gain during pregnancy, and the role of communications.

Micronutrients

36. The working group (Chair, Helen Keller Worldwide; Rapporteurs, WHO, UNICEF and Micronutrient Initiative) brought together a large body of work in three main areas (until now treated separately at SCN annual sessions): vitamin A and iodine deficiencies, and iron deficiency anaemia. A consolidated report of activities with regard to vitamin A covered the current status of programming, the work of partners, and future actions and perspectives. The difficulty in arriving at a reliable estimate of vitamin-A deficiency was discussed. Estimates ranging from 100 million to 250 million affected pre-school children are currently published. A report on iron deficiency touched upon research and programming activities,

including evidence on the permanent cognitive impairment of young children who suffer from anaemia, new multinutrient supplements for young children and increased international support for wheat-flour fortification with iron. Some of the constraints noted were the need for better data on iron status; assessment methods and research on the causal relationship between iron deficiency and health outcomes; and the importance of integrating interventions, including iron supplementation, food fortification and education for dietary change, and of linking those interventions to other public health and nutrition activities, including those addressing reproductive health and nutrition, malaria control and integrated management of childhood illness. A consolidated report of the agencies' work in the area of eliminating iodine deficiency disorder (IDD) through salt iodization, including the Salt 2000 Conference, was presented. Remaining challenges to IDD elimination included low coverage rates in parts of Eastern Europe and sub-Saharan Africa and the process of sustaining universal salt iodization while phasing out external assistance to salt producers.

37. The working group agreed to report back in 2001 on five issues:

(a) Progress in substantially increasing advocacy for new and expanded programmes to prevent and control iron deficiency anaemia, including gathering of evidence on programmatic experience and on the work of large-scale effectiveness trials. For vitamin A there is a need to agree on prevalence estimates of vitamin-A deficiency. UNU has offered to act as the secretariat for iron and vitamin A;

(b) Recommendations on improving public health approaches to iron deficiency, including dosage, supplement and enrichment mix formulation, and methods for preventing iron deficiency in children less than two years of age;

(c) Strong consensus on methods to establish the effectiveness and impact of food-based approaches;

(d) Situation analysis and possible recommendations on HIV/AIDS in relation to micronutrient deficiency;

(e) Setting micronutrient goals for the coming decade and the success of incorporating those goals into those being developed for the 2001 special session

of the United Nations General Assembly for follow-up to the World Summit for Children.

Breastfeeding and complementary feeding

38. The working group (Chair, UNICEF; Rapporteur, WHO) heard a summary of the objectives of the Technical Consultation on Infant and Young Child Feeding, convened recently in Geneva, outlined the rationale for the development of a new strategy and explained the general organization of the Consultation. Nine programmatic themes were discussed in depth at the Consultation, including the impact of globalization on infant feeding and increasing rates of exclusive breastfeeding. Discussion focused on the need to ensure that the new strategy was rights-based, and the need for WHO to further review evidence concerning the optimal duration of exclusive breastfeeding. WHO reported that it was currently undertaking a systematic review of all published scientific literature on the issue, including infant growth patterns worldwide, nutritional adequacy of breastmilk, and morbidity and mortality patterns. The results would be available in early 2001. IBFAN reported on the background and development of a training module on infant feeding for humanitarian aid workers. It is a collaborative project of WHO, UNICEF, LINKAGES and the International Baby Food Action Network (IBFAN). IBFAN noted that there were many inconsistencies and gaps in the knowledge of humanitarian aid workers on infant feeding and consequent inappropriate practices, resulting in poor health outcomes in the most vulnerable age group. Concerning mother-to-child transmission of HIV/AIDS, participants noted that breastfeeding protection, promotion and support had weakened as a result of concern over the transmission of HIV through breastfeeding. Current messages on infant feeding were perceived as conflicting. UNICEF stressed that it was difficult to monitor the growth and health of non-breastfed children in HIV-prevalent countries.

39. The working group agreed to report back in 2001 on the following issues:

(a) The resolution of technical questions regarding the recommended duration of exclusive breastfeeding;

(b) In conjunction with the working group on nutrition and emergencies, the dissemination of pre-service and in-service training on infant feeding issues to all humanitarian aid workers using two modules, one

on key issues and recommendations, and another on basic technical knowledge;

(c) The consistency of messages delivered through national programmes regarding the prevention of mother-to-child transmission of HIV;

(d) The effectiveness of programmes to support good breastfeeding techniques and exclusive breastfeeding (to prevent mastitis and subclinical mastitis) to reduce mother-to-child transmission of HIV;

(e) The re-launch and promotion of the three WHO/UNICEF/UNAIDS documents on HIV and infant feeding, given the widespread misunderstanding of their recommendations;

(f) For those agencies and non-governmental organizations involved in the reporting process to the Committee on the Rights of the Child, ensuring that country reports address progress on the state of implementation of the WHO/UNICEF Code for the Ethical Marketing of Breastmilk Substitutes and related activities to the Committee;

(g) The strengthening of Code implementation, especially in countries with high HIV prevalence;

(h) The incorporation of infant feeding issues into the discussions of other SCN working groups;

(i) Progress on development of a global strategy on infant and young child feeding.

Nutrition in emergencies

40. The working group (Chair, UNICEF and WHO; Rapporteurs, independent consultant) considered three main topics: problems associated with identifying and treating malnourished adults in Burundi and Congo-Brazzaville; recent research on infant feeding in emergencies; and issues associated with infant malnutrition. A presentation on adult malnutrition considered the difficulty of determining the admission criteria for entry into feeding programmes for adults, the problems of dealing with chronic diseases in the feeding centres, and some of the behavioural and social differences that needed to be taken into account in the design of programmes for severe adult malnutrition. A discussion of research on infant feeding in emergencies highlighted the lack of coordination, quality and monitoring of infant feeding interventions in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia during the

Kosovo crisis. There was a need for harmonization and clarification of the responsibilities of United Nations agencies and others in that area, which would involve a review and clarification of the memorandums of understanding between United Nations agencies. A presentation on infant malnutrition included a discussion of the problems of assessment of infant malnutrition for population surveys as well as for clinical care. Breastfeeding in the context of HIV/AIDS and emergencies was also reviewed.

41. The working group agreed to report back on the following issues next year:

(a) Achievements in support of, and advocacy for, interventions addressing adult malnutrition. This will include an update on recent research findings presented at the inter-agency meeting which need to be widely disseminated;

(b) In concert with the working group on breastfeeding and complementary feeding, guidelines for the training of humanitarian staff on infant feeding issues in emergencies;

(c) WHO should make its nutrition manuals available on its web site for global, low-cost dissemination;

(d) RNIS's expansion of its coverage for one year to include the nutritional situation of selected population groups of more than 100,000 people displaced by natural emergencies;

(e) Achievements of a secretariat for this working group, to be located at the Emergency Nutrition Network (ENN).

Nutrition, ethics and human rights

42. Should the working group on nutrition, ethics and human rights continue to exist? The working group (Chair, UNICEF; Rapporteur, WANHR) has been successful in placing human rights on the agenda of SCN. This is not to say that this new "child" can live and thrive on its own from now on. It will for some time remain fragile and in need of nourishment and care. Apart from UNICEF with its demonstrated commitment to applying human rights principles in programming, most agencies are (at best) just beginning to develop the internal processes needed to come to grips with what a rights-based approach would mean to their work. Mainstreaming human rights into nutrition must be the aim of SCN and should

eventually be reflected in the work of all its working groups. Non-governmental organizations working with a rights-based approach need the SCN working group as a focal point in the United Nations which can support and assist them in giving visibility and legitimacy to their rights-based work with food and nutrition issues at the country level.

43. It was decided to continue the working group for a further two years to ensure that human rights principles will be interpreted and put into operation. The potential is high, given the growing United Nations and civil society commitment to human rights in general and with the interest expressed by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) in pursuing collaboration with SCN which began at last year's symposium. Various memorandums of understanding developed by OHCHR and single agencies provide scope for direct collaboration on food and nutrition rights. The past year has provided a set of new working tools with which such collaboration can now more effectively be put into place, including the General Comment No. 12 on the right to adequate food, adopted by the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights. The coming two-year period will be one of particular challenges in consolidating the response by OHCHR to the mandate given to it by the World Food Summit. The process ought to come to a close with the follow-up event to be held five years after the Summit, in November 2001. The SCN community must take advantage of that process and be an active partner in it by contributing its professional expertise and commitment to ending hunger and malnutrition.

44. The working group agreed to report back on the following issues in 2001:

(a) Preparation of a manual on the interpretation and use of General Comment No. 12 on the right to adequate food;

(b) Development of benchmarks and indicators for food and nutrition rights programming and monitoring;

(c) Recommendations made at the twenty-sixth session, some partly fulfilled, some partly needing a longer period of response and, in some cases, further dynamic interaction with stakeholders to be fully implemented.

Household food security

45. The working group (Chair, World Bank; Rapporteur, IFPRI) noted that:

(a) An enormous amount of work was currently ongoing in the household food security area;

(b) Research reports were becoming more operational in nature — for example, work on women's status and its effect on child nutrition;

(c) The steady shift of poverty and malnutrition to urban areas was a growing concern;

(d) There was a profusion of databases on food and nutrition security and a need to harmonize indicators across databases;

(e) There was a large number of publications available and downloadable from various web sites;

(f) Partnerships were growing and playing an important role in the household food security area. FAO presented information on the state of food insecurity in the world, showing progress in some areas and declines in others, mostly in sub-Saharan Africa. A presentation by the World Bank showed that even unprecedented income growth would get us only half way to the target of halving undernutrition rates by 2020. The critical role of direct nutrition programmes was highlighted. Implications for targeted poverty programmes, the impact of redistribution of income, and the extent to which findings could be generalized, particularly at the household and community levels, were discussed. The Food Insecurity and Vulnerability Information Mapping System (FIVIMS) project was presented, and three proposals were put to the group: that the FIVIMS inter-agency working group play a major role in supporting the SCN's efforts in disseminating information on food insecurity; that FIVIMS work closely through United Nations reform processes such as the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s; and that FIVIMS form the basis of a new SCN working group on information systems.

46. A discussion followed on how FIVIMS could help countries to strengthen their information systems. A question was posed as to the feasibility of improving FAO's method for estimating the numbers of food-insecure people. Several examples of new programming initiatives in urban areas were provided, including those from CARE, FAO, the German Agency

for Development Cooperation (GTZ) and the Asian Development Bank (ADB). WHO presented its multicountry study, currently under way in six countries, aimed at examining factors that relate to household food and nutrition security in vulnerable population groups. The next segment focused on ways in which agriculture and other food-based approaches could enhance their impact on malnutrition. Plant breeding approaches to increasing the micronutrient density of staple grains were discussed.

47. The working group agreed to report in 2001 on progress implementing a work plan to be finalized in the next month, based on topics selected from suggestions at the session. Potential topics included:

(a) A review of programme activity in food-based approaches to improving nutrition (including food aid supported interventions) and an assessment of their effectiveness;

(b) A review of new knowledge on the impacts of HIV/AIDS on household food security; and

(c) A review of new knowledge on the role of the public sector in generating biotechnology for the poor consumer and producer.

Nutrition of school-aged children

48. The working group (Chair, World Bank; Rapporteur, World Bank) heard three presentations, on the latest research and findings on nutritional status of the school-aged child and programme impacts; results of a survey of partners and donors in school-based nutrition interventions; and efforts at the World Bank to harmonize policies on school health and nutrition. A number of documents had been distributed which included recent data relevant to school feeding programmes. They indicated that targeting school feeding to all grades might be inefficient from a student-retention point of view. Another article, on the cost-benefits of school feeding vs. improved learning materials showed that school feeding had no effect on dropouts but had a weak impact on test scores and was high in cost. There were several calls from participants for "universal" school feeding programmes, but others expressed concern about their cost and effectiveness. Still others argued that cash incentives to increase school attendance could be more cost effective and needed rigorous evaluation. The International Center for Research on Women presented some of the results of multiple programmes they had implemented for

adolescents, including nutrition, HIV/AIDS, reproductive health and adolescent livelihoods.

49. The working group agreed to report back at the twenty-ninth session (2002) on an inventory of school feeding programmes, with special effort being made to collect impact evaluations and with explicit attention to community-based programmes. It would include an effort to harmonize school feeding policies among agencies. The World Bank, WFP and FAO would work together on this task.

F. Business meeting

50. The following decisions were taken:

(a) Strategic plan. The strategic plan was adopted by acclamation;

(b) Working groups. There will be two new working groups: one on nutrition and HIV/AIDS, and one on capacity-building in nutrition. Further, the representative from FIVIMS will work with the Steering Committee over the next year to determine how best to link organically the FIVIMS project with the processes and working groups of SCN. Nominations for chairs of the two new working groups are invited in writing to the secretariat. They should be received within the next two weeks. Anonymous nominations are not accepted. Nominations are also invited for the working group on breastfeeding and complementary feeding, the working group on the nutrition of school-age children and the working group on household food security. Recommendations arising from working group discussions at the twenty-eighth session should include deliverables, time frames and institutions responsible for follow-up;

(c) Issues for Steering Committee attention. The Steering Committee will further consider three issues that arose during discussion of the Strategic Plan: the issue of participation of Governments and non-governmental organizations from developing countries in SCN; the issue of participation of the private sector whose objectives are sometimes in conflict with those of public nutritionists; and the role of external reviewers and the need to monitor the performance of SCN;

(d) Core contributions. Possible new contributions to the core budget, identified during the twenty-seventh session, need to be confirmed as soon

as possible after representatives consult with their agencies. The secretariat will follow up on this with individual agencies;

(e) Letter to the United Nations Secretary-General. Drs. Jolly and Ngongi, as outgoing and incoming SCN chairs, should write a joint letter to the United Nations Secretary-General about the rich experience of ACC/SCN in drawing together United Nations agencies, bilaterals and non-governmental organizations in a partnership structure. The letter could also serve to bring the *Fourth Report* to the attention of the Secretary-General;

(f) Letter to the Executive Director of UNICEF. Drs. Jolly and Ngongi should write a letter to the Executive Director of UNICEF proposing a set of new nutrition goals for the September 2001 meeting on follow-up to the World Summit for Children. The goals should be developed by the SCN working groups;

(g) Membership of the Steering Committee. Dr. Ngongi proposed that the United Nations agencies on the Steering Committee would be FAO, UNDP, UNICEF, WHO and the World Bank. In addition, UNAIDS would represent the "smaller" United Nations agencies. Non-governmental organization and bilateral nominations are still required. The World Bank will continue as Vice Chair.

G. Date and place of the next session

51. The twenty-eighth session will take place 2-6 April 2001 in Nairobi, hosted by the World Food Programme. An alternative date is 24-28 March, depending on the availability of meeting facilities at the United Nations Centre. The Technical Secretary will confirm as soon as possible.

H. Closure of the twenty-seventh session

52. Dr. Jolly thanked the participants for their commitment to SCN and reflected on the success of the meeting, particularly the historic adoption of the strategic plan, the excellent symposium and the release of the *Fourth Report*. He wished SCN, and nutrition, every success for the future and handed over the mantle to the incoming chair with pleasure. Dr. Jolly will continue as co-chair until the end of June, when he retires from UNDP. Dr. Ngongi expressed his appreciation of the meeting and the positive

participation of all three clusters of the tripartite structure. He concluded by thanking Dr. Jolly for his dedication to SCN and his high commitment to nutrition action.

IV. Parallel working sessions

A. United Nations agencies

53. Strategic plan. The draft strategic plan was discussed extensively. The Chair of the Steering Committee urged participants to focus their comments and suggestions on the principal issues of the document, and on issues of implementation rather than wording. Written comments were reviewed and changes discussed, agreed and noted. The Technical Secretary was asked to incorporate the changes into the text, together with others arising in the plenary session, and to circulate the final version to all SCN participants by the end of April. The United Nations agencies agreed on the following changes in the main body of the plan: refer to the global targets (not goals) as set during the 1990s; include reference to low birth weight; include a graphic element on progress against IDD; include all regions in the graphs (not just selected regions); include more information on HIV/AIDS; add a paragraph on food safety; redraft the section on the three strategic actions to reflect their interdependence; include a section on developing guidelines for dealing with the private sector. It was noted that developing these guidelines would not be a simple task, since most of the United Nations agencies themselves were only beginning work in this area.

54. With regards to funding, the Technical Secretary stated that ACC/SCN was the only voluntarily funded subcommittee of ACC. A shift to an assessment procedure would be beneficial for the secretariat since it would eliminate the need to track and trace invoices and to allot additional time for fund-raising activities. The Chair requested that the Technical Secretary and the secretariat's adviser on budget and finance discuss this situation with all United Nations SCN participants in relation to the 1999 shortfall, to determine how the secretariat's budget could be brought into balance.

55. Regional advisers. Several regional advisers reported on their nutrition activities. There was much evidence of agency collaboration on projects and significant work being done in the area of

micronutrients, in particular. There is need to focus on interventions that break the intergenerational cycle of poverty, especially maternal and child health interventions and early child development programmes.

56. Working groups. The need to emphasize capacity-building in all SCN work was discussed. Agencies will not be effective if they work in isolation from each other. Furthermore, there is a gap between "high-level" training at the country level and training at the community level. It was proposed that a working group on capacity-building be established. The human devastation from HIV/AIDS, particularly in Africa, needs to be addressed. It was proposed that a working group on nutrition and HIV/AIDS be established. It was emphasized that working groups are the core of SCN. However, their achievements cannot be judged in the short term. The working group on vitamin-A deficiency took about 10 years to accomplish its objectives and is now incorporated into the working group on micronutrients. A limiting factor for working groups is that they have no funding base. It was suggested that the working group on life-cycle consequences of foetal and infant malnutrition should cover issues pertaining to women's nutrition.

57. *Clarion call*. At the twenty-sixth session it was decided to create a two-to-three page advocacy document for policy makers with little nutrition knowledge or awareness. This *Clarion Call* would highlight current nutrition challenges as set out in the *Fourth Report* and the *Report of the Commission on the Nutrition Challenges of the Twenty-first Century*. A prototype of the *Clarion Call*, which consists of six laminated cards along with an explanation of the text, was circulated. The Technical Secretary requested that comments and suggestions be forwarded to the secretariat in Geneva by 1 June 2000.

58. Membership in the Steering Committee was discussed, and the need to reduce the number from nine to seven participants was noted. There was general agreement that one place be reserved for the "smaller" agencies.

59. The following proposals were also discussed, for consideration by the SCN plenary:

(a) In 2002, 10 years after the International Conference on Nutrition, a global event or a series of regional events should be held to revive interest in nutrition, develop global momentum and increase the flow of resources into nutrition. One gap which needs

to be addressed is the problem of lack of agency coordination in support of implementing national plans of action for nutrition. Such national plans of action are disregarded by some agencies. Another gap is the need for better coordination mechanisms between humanitarian relief and development agencies;

(b) The theme of integrated community-based approaches was highlighted as an area of common interest, requiring inter-agency collaborative action. The possibility of linking it with a sustainable livelihoods approach and of developing a pilot country for United Nations coordination in community-based approaches to nutrition was suggested. India was identified as a good possibility; also Viet Nam;

(c) To provide a mechanism for information exchange among agencies, the secretariat was asked to issue a quarterly, one-page e-mail brief covering about 10 points of major interest or new initiatives. The brief could cover projects or programmes, research, publications and events such as training and conferences;

(d) WHO and UNICEF were designated the lead agencies to promote collaboration with others on issues relating to anaemia, including iron deficiency anaemia and anaemias due to other causes.

60. A United Nations-only parallel segment would be organized as part of future SCN annual sessions. It should take place on the first day of the annual session. To ensure balanced representation, it was proposed that within the United Nations agency cluster, each agency would be formally represented by one or two individuals, with other staff members, including regional staff, whose participation in the meetings is encouraged, attending as observers. The issue needs to be further discussed and resolved before the next session. Topics to be covered in the future would include information-sharing, priorities for collaboration in programme and policy initiatives, and review of any procedural and budgetary issues.

B. Bilateral agencies

61. The cluster of the bilateral representatives convened as scheduled during the week and had a working dinner. The following discussions were held, and decisions and recommendations of the bilateral cluster taken:

(a) Elly Leemhuis-de Regt (Netherlands) was elected as chair, with Frances Davidson (USAID) and Barbara Macdonald (CIDA) elected as rapporteurs;

(b) The definition of what constitutes a “bilateral” was discussed. The group recommended that those individuals mandated to represent their countries at SCN and who have the responsibility to report back be declared bilaterals. It was agreed that representatives from any country (donor or recipient) that met this definition be invited to participate in the bilateral cluster. Increasing developing country participation in all clusters should be deemed a priority by SCN. Thus, it is recommended that this issue be taken up by the Steering Committee early in this year’s agenda. The bilateral cluster recognizes that it has an important responsibility in this regard and will participate fully in the thinking. It was further recommended that the SCN secretariat invite recipient Governments to the next annual meeting through their normal communication channels (e.g., *SCN News*, web site);

(c) Elly Leemhuis-de Regt reported on the SCN interim steering committee process that took place over the past year;

(d) The draft strategic plan was discussed by the group and unanimously praised. The open collaboration stressed in the plan is welcomed by the bilaterals and signals a positive change. The group was pleased to see that the tripartite nature of SCN was not only maintained but embraced. The bilaterals expressed their gratitude to the steering committee for their hard work. Putting the plan into operation will require careful thought, and bilaterals will continue to support and encourage this process. Specific comments were offered on the draft plan, and provided to the Technical Secretary;

(e) The bilateral cluster highlights the importance of coordinating the FIVIMS and SCN secretariats. It is recommended that SCN receive a regular FIVIMS report in the working group on food security, and it is suggested that as a member of the FIVIMS inter-agency working group, the secretariat attend FIVIMS annual meetings;

(f) Infant feeding issues were discussed. In light of existing scientific evidence, the bilateral cluster urges resolution of the 4-6-month complementary feeding issue with respect not only to growth but also health and development of the infant.

Preferably, this should take place prior to the end of May. The process of technical resolution should be transparent and scientifically sound and should not detract in any way from energies to promote exclusive breastfeeding;

(g) The bilateral cluster is preparing an advocacy document which is comprised of briefs relating nutrition to most major developmental sectors. The goal is to complete the draft by September, with the final document printed by the end of the year;

(h) Coordination and representation of the bilateral cluster was discussed. Elly Leemhuis-de Regt was elected a Steering Committee member for the coming year but accepted the nomination with the condition that another member be identified for that role for 2001-2002. Ted Greiner (Sweden) will act as alternate. Arne Oshaug (Norway) will help over the year and organize bilateral communications and preparations for and during the twenty-eighth session.

C. IGOs/NGOs/civil society

62. At the twenty-sixth session the Interim Programme Steering Committee was set up to look at a new vision, new relationships and new partnerships. Participation of one representative from the NGO community and one from the bilaterals was invited. Somewhat arbitrarily, but ultimately successfully, this representation was rotated between Helen Keller Worldwide, International Union of Nutrition Sciences and WABA. Most participants (of the 40 or so present) preferred the term "civil society". There was a discussion on who might be excluded, with agreement that the question may need to be resolved in the future, if it becomes a problem.

63. Comments on the role of non-governmental organizations/civil society in relation to SCN were wide-ranging. The important role of civil society organizations with regard to United Nations agencies needs continuing clarification and recognition. One consideration is the greater access that civil society organizations often have to hard-to-reach populations and grass-roots organizations. There is sometimes an opportunity lost in the perceived imbalance between the large and important input from the NGO/civil society nutrition community at the field level and their relative lack of power and influence at the policy table.

64. An inventory of the interests of NGOs and civil society, their work on nutrition and why they are participating in SCN should be developed. It might be facilitated by the grouping of the NGOs according to their major functions, for example:

- (a) Emergency and relief organizations;
- (b) Foundations;
- (c) Intergovernmental organizations;
- (d) International NGOs;
- (e) National organizations;
- (f) Regional organizations;
- (g) Universities and research institutions.

65. However, it is sometimes difficult to separate those that do policy-level advocacy from those who do mainly service delivery from those who do research; some do a combination of all three. The diversity in the NGO/civil society nutrition community is what makes it so rich. Some NGOs are representatives of larger networks of other NGOs. It was noted that there is a genuine desire to establish partnerships with the United Nations agencies and effective participation in SCN. One constituency that does not have a place in the current structure are representatives of national Governments (Ministries of Health, for example) from countries that are not donor countries. Given that one of the tasks of the group is to address how SCN might get greater representation of people from the less industrialized world, it is suggested the Steering Committee address this issue.

66. The NGO/civil society cluster discussed three broad questions, pertinent to their participation in SCN:

- (a) What can the NGO/civil society cluster contribute to SCN?
- (b) What does the NGO/civil society expect from SCN?
- (c) How should the NGO/civil society cluster be represented on the SCN Steering Committee?

67. A number of detailed recommendations was made. They are available in a separate report, but are summarized in the statement below:

Recognizing that SCN is ahead of the curve in terms of openness and following the stated wish

of the larger United Nations system to be more involved with civil society as true and effective partners, the groups recommended:

(a) That in terms of overall representation at SCN, national Governments should be represented;

(b) That civil society should continue to be represented on the Steering Committee;

(c) That their representation should be equal to that of other partners at some point in the evolution of the new SCN;

(d) That, in the meantime, a representative group of 10 people should be selected or appointed as a core representative group. From this group, three would be selected, including at least one of the existing representatives, to be responsible for keeping each other and the group of 10 fully informed, to ensure continuity of representation. The three would revolve in the positions that civil society finally receives on the Steering Committee.

Notes

¹ Renamed working group on the prevention of foetal and infant malnutrition.

² A series of studies showing strong associations between low birth weight and stunting at 1 year of age and chronic disease in adult life, giving rise to the concept of foetal origins of adult disease.

Annex I

List of participants

Chairman: Richard **Jolly**
Chair Designate: A. Namanga **Ngongi**
Technical Secretary: Sonya **Rabeneck**

Symposium presenters

Fazle Hasan Abed, Founding Chair of BRAC, Bangladesh
Eduardo Doryan, Vice President, World Bank
Kul Gautam, Deputy Executive Director, UNICEF

Abraham Horwitz Lecture

Deepa Bhat, Tufts University

United Nations, its entities and programmes

United Nations Children's Fund	Kul Gautam Roger Shrimpton Helen Armstrong Krishna Belbase David Clark Archana Dwivedi Steve Esrey Joyce Greene Yvonne Grellety Lida Lhotská Werner Schultink Gabrielle Palmer
Eastern and Pacific region office, Bangkok Eastern and Southern Africa region office, Nairobi	Karen Codling Urban Jonsson Olivia Yambi Arjan de Wagt Flora Sibanda-Mulder
West and Central Africa region office, Abidjan Regional office for South Asia, Kathmandu Eritrea South Africa Nepal Yangon, Myanmar	Ellen Girerd-Barclay Festo Kavishe Gloria Kodzwa P. O. Blomquist Pirkko L. Heinonen
United Nations Development Programme	Peter Matlon Geoff Prewitt
United Nations Environment Programme	Lesly Puyol
United Nations Population Fund	France Donnay

Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees	Rita Bhatia Zhara Mirghani
Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights	Elsa Stamatopoulou
United Nations University	Cutberto Garza Fre Pepping Nevin Scrimshaw Ricardo Uauy (Steering Committee member) Fernando Viteri Pattanee Winichagoon
World Food Programme	A. Namanga Ngongi Pieter Dijkhuizen
Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS	Badara Samb
Specialized agencies	
Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations	William Clay Kraisid Tontisirin David Wilcock
International Atomic Energy Agency	Venkatesh Iyengar
International Fund for Agricultural Development	Eve Crowley Sean Kennedy
United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization	Francis J. Method
World Health Organization	Graeme Clugston Bruno de Benoist Randa Saadeh Felicity Savage-King Harry-Sam Selikowitz
PanAmerican Health Organization	Susan Chan Chessa Lutter Nathalie Valdes
Regional Office for South-East Asia	Sultana Khanum
World Bank	Eduardo Doryan Milla McLachlan Harold Alderman Lynn Brown Donald Bundy

Bangladesh, Dhaka Office

Rolf Carriere
Sadia Afroze Chowdhury
Merced Doroteo
Rae Galloway
Judith McGuire
Jean-Charles Le Vallée
Leda Nemer
Claudia Rokx
Rashmi Sharma
Shirin Jahangeer
Iqbal A. F. M. Kabir

Regional development banks

Asian Development Bank

Joseph Hunt

InterAmerican Development Bank

Isabel Nieves

**Secretariat of the Subcommittee
on Nutrition**

Sonya Rabeneck
Arabella Duffield
Arie Groenendijk
Jane Hedley
Judith Pojda

Bilateral agencies

Australia

Geoff Marks

Canada

Barbara MacDonald

Denmark

Shakuntala Thilsted

Germany

Rainer Gross

Israel

Dorit Nitzan Kaluski

Netherlands

Elly Leemhuis-de Regt
Marti J. van Liere

Norway

Gerd Holmboe-Ottesen
Arne Oshaug

Sweden

Eva-Charlotte Ekstrom
Ted Greiner

United States of America

Frances Davidson
Thomas Marchione
Rene Berger
Neal Brandes

Eunong Chung
 Bruce Cogill
 Holly Fluty Dempsey
 Ciro Franco
 Ruth E Frischer
 Stacy Gilbert
 Miriam Labbok
 Lowell Lynch
 Paula Reed Lynch
 Kristen Marsh
 Peter Morris
 Richard Newberg
 Karen Nurick
 Helene Rosenberg
 Emily Wainwright
 Jim Wright
 Timothy Quick

**Non-governmental
 organizations and
 intergovernmental organizations**

Academy for Educational Development

Victor M. Aguayo
 Sandra Huffman
 Micheline Nturu
 Peggy Parlato
 Ellen Piwoz
 Suzanne Prysor-Jones
 Barbara Reed

Action Against Hunger/Action contre la faim

Chris Daniell
 Anne-Sophie Fournier
 Carlos Navarro-Colorado

Aga Khan Foundation

Pat Scheid

Bread for the World

Richard Hoehn

CARE

Tim Frankenberger
 Virginia Vaughn

Catholic Relief Services

Antoinette Brown
 Mary Lung'aho

Concern Worldwide

Mary Corbett

Emergency Nutrition Network

Fiona O'Reilly

Global Forum on Sustainable Food and Nutritional Security	Flavio Valente
Helen Keller Worldwide	Susan E. Burger Ian Darnton-Hill Erin Dusch June Pierre-Louis
International Baby Food Action Network	Rebecca Norton
International Center for Research on Women	Kathleen Kurz Cheryl Morden
International Council for the Control of Iodine Deficiency Disorders	Francois Delange John T. Dunn
International Dietary Energy Consultancy Group	Beat Schurch
International Food Policy Research Institute	Per Pinstrup-Andersen Akhter Ahmed Suresh Babu Howarth Bouis Marc J. Cohen Rafael Flores Stuart Gillespie Lawrence Haddad Carol Levin Bonnie McClafferty Marie Ruel Lisa Smith
International Life Sciences Institute	Alex Malaspina
International Nutrition Foundation	Gary Gleason
International Union of Nutritional Sciences	Barbara Underwood
IVACG	Laurie Aomari
LINKAGES Project	Victoria Quinn Cindy Arciaga Lauer Lora Iannotti
Micronutrient Initiative	Faris Ahmed Venkatesh Mannar
Oxfam International	Anny Peters
Save the Children, UK	Anna Taylor

Save the Children, USA	David Marsh
Wellstart International	Audrey Naylor Wenche Barth Eide
World Alliance for Nutrition and Human Rights	George Kent
World Vision	Anne Henderson
Canada	Jamo Huddle Naomi Klass
Guatemala	Maria Julia Medina
Senegal	Banda Ndiaye
United States	Camille Morse

Other participants

Irene Abdou, Food Aid Programme Specialist, Mendez England and Associates

Robert Black, Johns Hopkins School of Public Health

Chelsea C. Blume, UNICEF Intern, Columbia University

Annalies Borrel, independent consultant

Geoffrey Cannon, World Health Policy Forum, New York

Jindra Cekan, American Red Cross International Services

Jennifer Coates, School of Nutrition Science and Policy, Tufts University

Modibo Mamadou Diarra, Nutritionist, Ministry of Health, Mali

Serigne Diene, BASICS Regional Office for West and Central Africa, Senegal

William Dietz, Division of Nutrition and Physical Activity, Centres for Disease Control, Atlanta

Lesley Drake, Partnership for Child Development, Oxford, United Kingdom

Goulda Downer, Metroplex Health and Nutrition Services

Leslie Elder, The MotherCare Project, John Snow Inc.

Margie Ferris-Morris, Nutrition and Food Security Consultant

Lisa Firth, Population Services International, Washington, D.C.

Edward Frongillo, Division of Nutrition Sciences, Cornell University

George Fuchs, International Centre for Diarrhoeal Disease Research, Centre for Health and Population Research, Bangladesh

Smita Ghosh, School of Nutrition Science and Policy, Tufts University

Gary Gleason, International Nutrition Foundation

Michael Golden, University of Aberdeen, Scotland

Boitshepo Giyose, Commonwealth Regional Health Community Secretariat for East, Central and Southern Africa, United Republic of Tanzania

Steve Hansch, Congressional Hunger Center, Washington, D.C.

Christopher Howson, March of Dimes
Carrie R. Hubbell, School of Nutrition Science and Policy, Tufts University
Robert Johnston, Macro International/Demographic and Health Service
Eileen Kennedy, United States Department of Agriculture, United States of America
Gerald T. Keusch, Fogarty Foundation
Marjorie Koblinsky, The MotherCare Project
Jane Kusin, Health Care and Disease Control, Royal Tropical Institute, Amsterdam
Pauline Kuzwayo, Nutrition Society of South Africa/Medical University of South Africa
Wilbald Lorri, Tanzania Food and Nutrition Centre, Dar-es-Salaam
Celia Maier, Partnership for Child Development, Oxford, United Kingdom
Manjunatha Maiya
John Mason, Department of International Health and Development, Tulane University
Marie McGrath, Centre for International Child Health, Institute of Child Health, London
Altrena Mukuria, Macro International/Demographic and Health Service
Robert K. N. Mwadime, Regional Center for Quality of Health Care, Makerere University, Uganda
Nancy A. Myers, Department of Sociology, Kent State University, Ohio
Indira Narayanan, BASICS Global Child Survival Program, Washington, D.C.
Ruth Oniang'o, Jomo Kenyatta University, Nairobi
Ibrahim Parvanta, Maternal and Child Nutrition Branch, Division of Nutrition and Physical Activity, Centers for Disease Control, Atlanta
David Pelletier, Division of Nutritional Sciences, Cornell University
Anne Ralte, FANTA Food and Nutrition Technical Assistance Project
Beatrice Rogers, School of Nutrition Science and Policy, Tufts University
Isatou Jallow Semega-Janneh, National Nutrition Coordinator, Department of State for Health and Social Welfare, Banjul, Gambia (former Dr. Horwitz Lecturer)
Trisha L. Schmirler, Food Aid Management (FAM)
Andrew Seal, Centre for International Child Health, Institute of Child Health, London
Kishore Shah, World Faiths Development Dialogue
Fred R. Shank, Institute of Food Technologists
Sharon Slater, Population Services International, Washington, D.C.
Jane Strachan, Lutheran World Relief

Andrew Tomkins, Centre for International Child Health, Institute of Child Health,
London

Paolo Toniolo, President, World Health Policy Forum, New York

Lisa Troy, School of Nutrition Science and Policy, Tufts University

Ron Waldman, Program on Forced Migration and Health, Mailman School of Public
Health of Columbia University

Narada Warnasuriya, University of Sri Jayawardenepura, Sri Lanka

Casey Wisecarver, Macro International/Demographic and Health Service

Brad Woodruff, International Emergency and Refugee Health Branch, Centers for
Disease Control, Atlanta

Patricia Young, United States National Committee for World Food Day, Washington,
D.C.

Annex II

ACC/SCN strategic plan

25 April 2000

1. Over the past two decades, important advances have been made in improving nutrition in many parts of the world. But progress has been uneven and insufficient. Some 790 million people are food insecure. About 184 million pre-school children remain stunted in 2000. Unless action for nutrition is accelerated now, unconscionable and unnecessary levels of malnutrition and human deprivation will persist for most of this century. So concluded the ACC Subcommittee on Nutrition (SCN) at its twenty-sixth session in 1999. Current trends, unless changed, will condemn countries to an escalating health burden and limit their broader development prospects. A higher level of commitment and effort is therefore required.

2. SCN, bringing together United Nations agencies, bilateral government representatives and members of civil society, is eager to take leadership in strengthening and coordinating efforts to support countries in their actions to end malnutrition. This strategic plan sets out the major actions involved.

I. Vision and mandate

3. Our long-run vision is of a world in which malnutrition is no longer a human development constraint. This is possible, but to achieve it will require decisive action at country level, supported by a coherent and coordinated international strategy, founded on human rights and providing a framework for action throughout the United Nations and international development finance system, implemented in close partnership with non-governmental organizations, bilaterals and Governments. Nutrition needs to be made a key development priority, recognized as vital to the achievement of other social and economic goals. Good nutrition under normal conditions contributes to the prevention and mitigation of death and malnutrition in emergency situations. Good nutrition facilitates the prompt return to conditions favouring development following disasters.

Key global targets set during the 1990s

1. Reduce the number of food insecure people to half the 1996 level by 2015
2. Reduce severe and moderate malnutrition among under-fives by half of the 1990 levels by 2000
3. Eliminate famine deaths by 2000
4. Eliminate vitamin-A deficiency and iodine deficiency disorders by 2000
5. Reduce the rate of low birth weight to less than 10 per cent by 2000
6. Reduce iron deficiency anaemia in women by one third of the 1990 levels by 2000
7. Empower all women to breastfeed exclusively for the first 4-6 months of life and to continue breastfeeding with complementary food up to and beyond two years, by 2000
8. Reduce extreme poverty in developing countries by at least one half by 2015.

Note: These global targets were set at the World Summit for Children, the International Conference on Nutrition, the World Food Summit and the World Summit for Social Development. The target on breastfeeding incorporates language as set out in the Innocenti Declaration. Some of these targets are being updated, and new ones developed, by ACC/SCN working groups.

4. The mandate of ACC/SCN is to raise awareness of nutrition problems and mobilize commitment to solve them — at global, regional and national levels; to refine the direction, increase the scale and strengthen the coherence and impact of actions against malnutrition worldwide; and to promote cooperation among United Nations agencies and partner organizations in support of national efforts to end malnutrition in this generation.

II. Rationale for preparing the strategy

5. Despite decades of international action and considerable progress in some areas and regions, malnutrition remains a pervasive problem with devastating economic, social and health consequences. Malnutrition is both a cause and consequence of income poverty and is exacerbated by the growing inequality between the rich and the poor and by natural and man-made disasters. Considerable evidence has shown that this relative inequity has serious and measurable impacts on mortality, both from malnutrition and non-communicable diseases. More alarming still is that malnutrition's negative effects are not limited to currently affected generations. Mounting scientific evidence indicates that malnutrition has adverse intergenerational effects that significantly increase its economic and other social costs. Investing in nutrition makes economic sense because it reduces health-

care costs, improves productivity and economic growth and promotes education, intellectual capacity and social development for present and future generations.

6. Steps have been taken during the past decade to combat malnutrition in all its forms. Coordinated multisectoral international and national actions were proposed in the 1992 International Conference on Nutrition and the 1996 World Food Summit. For the most part, the response to malnutrition has been piecemeal and confined within narrow discipline and sectoral boundaries. All too often only the immediate food shortage or diseases are addressed, leaving deeper-seated causes unattended. Although there are notable successes (e.g., against iodine deficiency disorders in most regions and in reducing underweight and stunting in many countries in Asia and Latin America), the international response has often been insufficient, uncoordinated, and limited in impact.

7. The malnutrition challenge is all the more pressing when considered in the light of emerging global issues. While improved food production and increased incomes have made food more readily available and accessible to more people, millions of poor people in many countries are still unable to secure their right to food in a sustainable and dignified manner. Millions more, when displaced by natural disasters and wars, are particularly vulnerable. Undernutrition, micronutrient deficiencies and diet-related chronic diseases still coexist, even with improvements in food security seen in many countries. The HIV/AIDS pandemic is also undermining gains in nutrition, as manifested by deterioration in nutritional status in highly affected regions such as sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia. Consumers worldwide have a right to good-quality safe foods. Accordingly, addressing food safety issues at community, national and international levels has gained increasing importance.

8. Reducing malnutrition is a key component of any plan for the elimination of poverty. Several human rights conventions obligate States and their partners, including international organizations, to take action — separately and together — to achieve the progressive realization of the right to adequate food. A human rights approach to development means the achievement of goals through sustainable and empowering processes. Many social, economic and cultural rights can only be realized progressively. It is therefore important to define the realization by time-bound targets. These targets should be set at country level, then aggregated at regional and global levels. Malnutrition reduction is recognized as one of the key indicators for monitoring progress in poverty reduction. All this provides an unprecedented opportunity to give greater prominence to the entire nutrition effort, as Governments and world development leaders unite around a comprehensive approach to poverty and development.

9. The realization of most human rights requires responsibility, legitimacy, participation, and resources. Resources include human, economic and organizational resources. The first two are usually recognized, but organizational resources are not. Organizational resources include both formal and informal institutional arrangements. These play a crucial role in closing the gap between what is known and what is actually done. Efforts should be made to come up with appropriate institutional arrangements at various levels, from the community level to national, regional and global levels, so that malnutrition reduction can be achieved within the target time frame. Social mobilization and capacity-building, especially at the

community level, are an essential and integral part of institutional arrangements which will lead to sustainability in prevention and control of malnutrition.

10. To grasp this opportunity and support countries in fulfilling their obligations regarding the right to good nutrition, the nutrition community must set itself a strategic agenda, and mobilize strongly for its implementation. SCN exists for this purpose. It was conceived to serve as a point of convergence for the United Nations system in the area of nutrition, ensuring that the system-wide response is indeed greater than the sum of the individual efforts. SCN is not in itself another agency. It is a forum in which the agencies come together to harmonize policies and programmes and coordinate activities and act together to achieve global nutritional aims. Its structures and functions exist to support the overall effort, to do what no single agency, acting alone, can do.

11. In 1999, the United Nations agencies agreed that it was necessary to review the structure and function of SCN and to clarify the responsibilities of participating agencies as well as those of the secretariat and appropriate advisory mechanisms. SCN also decided to develop a strategic plan. All this has now been done. Changes to the processes of SCN, particularly the annual meetings and working groups, are thus proposed to facilitate the implementation of the strategic plan and to mobilize the effort required to meet the challenges and new opportunities for nutrition. The strategic actions proposed in part III below will form the basis for operational plans for SCN for the next 10 years.

III. Strategic actions

12. In accord with the stated mandate, three main areas for action can be identified. These are:

(a) Promote harmonized approaches among the United Nations agencies, and between the United Nations agencies and governmental and non-governmental partners, for greater overall impact on malnutrition;

(b) Review the United Nations system response to malnutrition overall, monitor resource allocation and collate information on trends and achievements reported to specific United Nations bodies;

(c) Advocate and mobilize to raise awareness of nutrition issues at global, regional and country levels and mobilize accelerated action against malnutrition.

These three functions are all vital and of equal importance and can be seen as a triangle, one dependent on the other.

13. These areas of strategic action relate to global, regional and national levels. However, it is recognized that SCN is primarily a global forum. It can affect regional action by improved involvement of regional agency representatives in SCN activities, exchange of information through its regular publications, and through contributions from regional entities in SCN's global work. SCN will develop ways to interact constructively with regional nutrition forums. SCN itself does not have a country-level presence. Nevertheless a particularly important focus is to facilitate United Nations agency collaboration in support of country action, particularly in the context of the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) and Comprehensive Development Framework (CDF) processes. To measure progress, identify problems and maintain accountability in SCN activities, a streamlined monitoring and evaluation system will be implemented. It will be based on a biennial work programme, prepared on the basis of the strategic plan to reflect specific outputs and outcomes, with measurable indicators and time frame. The annual report of the SCN will indicate progress against these agreed milestones.

Promotion of harmonized policies and programmes

14. SCN will promote convergence between the policies and programmes of United Nations agencies and between agencies and other development partners through four key actions:

(a) SCN will work through the agencies to ensure that nutrition receives consistent and coherent attention in the UNDAF process, by ensuring that training programmes (e.g., for managers at the United Nations Training College in Turin) have a strong nutrition component, proposing nutrition indicators for the common country assessments (CCAs), and providing guidelines for theme groups on nutrition. SCN will monitor pilot initiatives to integrate nutrition into the UNDAF process in selected countries and prepare case studies, sectoral briefs and guidelines based on these experiences for wide dissemination;

(b) Linking theory and practice. Through its symposia and working groups, SCN will strengthen the bridge between the science and the practice of nutrition by providing a forum for systematic review of the policy and programmatic implications of new nutrition research findings. Through reflection on programmatic experience, new areas for research will also be identified;

(c) Sharing information about good practice. Drawing upon regional and country-level experience, SCN will disseminate information on good field practice and programmatic innovations through annual sessions, workshops, the Internet and publications. This process will build consensus on programmatic approaches among key players in nutrition worldwide;

(d) Signalling the need for norms and standards. SCN will identify, for the attention of technical agencies or other bodies, critical areas where norms and standards are missing or out-of-date and holding programmes back. This includes (especially) identifying knowledge gaps and significant areas in dispute or controversy, identifying areas requiring operational research, and facilitating this work.

Review of the United Nations system response to malnutrition

15. Since its inception, SCN has been tasked with the responsibility to oversee the United Nations response to the malnutrition problem. It must answer the question Is the United Nations system meeting the malnutrition challenge with sufficient resources, allocated effectively and efficiently? Over time, specialized agencies and other United Nations bodies have been given responsibility to monitor progress towards the achievement of specific targets, such as those agreed at the 1990 World Summit for Children, the 1992 International Conference on Nutrition and the 1996 World Food Summit. SCN will complement these initiatives in the following four ways:

(a) Keeping score. SCN will develop a tool for reporting on the magnitude of the nutrition challenge and countries' responses to it, in the style of the Progress of Nations which ranks countries according to performance;

(b) Keeping a watching brief on resources devoted to nutrition. SCN will maintain a database on country and regional-level capacity in nutrition in the United Nations system, and report on trends in such capacity at regular intervals. It will collate and disseminate information on the actions of various United Nations bodies and partner organizations with regard to innovation, experimentation, scaling up, quality control, and monitoring and evaluation of nutrition-relevant actions;

(c) Making information count. SCN will facilitate global and country-level decision-making to achieve nutritional goals, by supporting the development and use of global and national databases and information-sharing through, for example, the Food Insecurity and Vulnerability Information Management Systems (FIVIMS) initiative, part of the follow-up to the World Food Summit. This will include the introduction of indicators of performance of countries in reducing food insecurity and malnutrition;

(d) Reporting on progress. SCN will serve as a clearing house for reports on actions against malnutrition and progress achieved, disseminate standard definitions of indicators, catalogue the response of United Nations governing bodies to reported trends, and monitor follow-up action.

Advocacy and mobilization

16. The multifaceted nature of the nutrition problem means that it requires attention from a wide range of agencies but is seldom the primary concern or chief focus of the agendas of those agencies. Furthermore, there are no simple, direct or quick solutions to the malnutrition problem. People working together over a period of time are needed in order to achieve sustainable results. Ongoing advocacy, to keep nutrition in the eye of decision makers at all levels, is therefore an essential activity for a body charged with coordination of the United Nations system response to nutrition. SCN will intensify its advocacy activities in three ways:

(a) Recognizing nutrition as a human right and elevating nutrition as a development imperative. SCN will implement a systematic campaign to position nutrition as a key development problem and human rights challenge, and advocate for increased attention to nutrition in United Nations assemblies and other international and regional forums. It will make strategic use of information

generated through its review of the United Nations system response to malnutrition so as to deliver key nutrition messages to global, regional and national leaders;

(b) Reframing the issues. The advocacy strategy will include working with partners on global initiatives focusing on emerging nutrition issues. Such campaigns will serve to reframe and reposition nutrition issues, build new partnerships, and inject renewed vitality into the fight against malnutrition and poverty. An example of an appropriate first theme might be the intergenerational transmission of poverty through growth failure;

(c) Disseminating success stories. SCN will capture and disseminate successful examples of nutrition-directed efforts that have significantly reduced malnutrition, especially where they can be scaled-up by national governmental agencies and promoted by United Nations agencies and others.

IV. Implications for the structure and function of SCN

SCN's tripartite nature

17. From its inception in the 1970s SCN has pioneered the bringing together of three clusters of participants: the United Nations agencies, other international and regional development finance institutions, and intergovernmental bodies; the bilateral donor Governments; and civil society, including international non-governmental organizations, academic institutions and other civil society representatives. SCN annual sessions will include parallel meetings for each of the three clusters, public symposium, working group and business meetings will be open to all participants. SCN will make special efforts to ensure a reasonable balance of participants from the developing world at its meetings. The work of SCN is based on the principle of consensus-building and inclusiveness, and this will continue.

18. The non-governmental organizations can provide a broad spectrum of scientific, technical and service expertise to link SCN to civil society. This includes, for example, links to academics and technical groups, international non-governmental organizations, and emergency and disaster relief service groups. The non-governmental organizations provide a conduit not only for extending SCN to civil society but also to provide feedback as a credible voice of the people the agencies' programmes are meant to serve. They may provide independent review at several levels, such as technical and scientific soundness of publications, projects and programmes, and an on-site analysis of needs, opportunities and constraints to agency programme effectiveness and their implementation with a human rights context.

19. SCN acknowledges the commercial private sector as an important actor engaged in nutrition-related activities. It will seek to engage this sector so as to maximize positive nutrition impacts. SCN will develop guidelines for such participation in its meetings, above all being open and clear about potential conflicts of interest.

Working groups

20. The working groups are at the heart of SCN. Through working groups, participants take an active role in the work programme of SCN to achieve the harmonizing, information-sharing, advocacy and review tasks in the substantive areas deemed of greatest importance by the collective SCN body. The working groups will host workshops as an integral part of the annual sessions of SCN. Generic terms of reference for working groups further explain their mandates and responsibilities (see appendix I).

The Chair

21. The SCN Chair provides outstanding leadership in the field of nutrition. The Chair advocates and mobilizes actors and actions aimed at accelerating the reduction of malnutrition and the achievement of global goals. Specifically the Chair maintains regular high-level interaction with ACC, the Economic and Social Council, and other United Nations bodies, bilaterals and the NGO community, and engages all bodies that have a role in the reduction of malnutrition worldwide. The Chair guides SCN in developing a strategic approach to bringing substantive nutrition matters to the attention of ACC. (Appendix II provides terms of reference.)

Steering Committee

22. A Steering Committee of not more than nine members (composed of at least five United Nations agencies, and at least one each from the bilateral and NGO clusters), under the leadership of the SCN Chair, will guide and monitor the implementation of the strategic plan. The Steering Committee will monitor the implementation of recommendations arising from working groups. Steering Committee members will be appointed by the Chair for a two-to-three year period, after broad consultation with SCN. Membership is rotational. One of the United Nations agencies on the Steering Committee should represent the “smaller” agencies. (Appendix III provides terms of reference.)

Distinguished nutrition advocates

23. The nutrition field is very broad, involving many sectors, and is influenced by socio-economic processes over a wide front. SCN participants collectively do not possess all the knowledge needed to address all issues. There is also a need for an independent voice in SCN to inform and guide its work, to bring to the SCN’s attention emerging issues and to assist the Chair in the implementation of the SCN’s advocacy efforts. To meet these needs, SCN will benefit from the involvement of up to four distinguished experts in relevant fields. These advocates will have achieved global excellence in nutrition and development research and practice and have outstanding records in development leadership. They will be appointed by the SCN Chair for a two-to-three year period, after broad consultation with SCN. (Appendix IV provides terms of reference.)

Secretariat

24. The secretariat carries out the tasks assigned to it by SCN, supports the Chair in executing his or her executive functions, facilitates the work of the Steering Committee, and acts dynamically to strengthen networking and follow-up. A key task is the organization and follow-up of the annual sessions and working group activities and preparation of reports for ACC. The secretariat is also responsible for managing a peer review process in support of SCN publications to ensure their high quality. (Appendix V provides terms of reference.)

V. Funding

25. The core and programme budgets will continue to be presented separately and approved as a package by SCN which SCN will report once per biennium to the Consultative Committee on Administrative Questions (CCAQ) on core budget matters.

26. In line with normal practice in all other ACC subsidiary bodies, and in an effort to increase, stabilize and improve the certainty of the SCN's core funding, SCN will seek to replace its current voluntary funding with a more formal assessment procedure. Agency assessments would be established, on a consensus basis, following broad consultations, in accordance with the principle that individual agency contributions should be roughly proportional to the current scale of resources allocated to nutrition programming.

27. SCN will also broaden the scope for organizations to contribute to the core budget. Intergovernmentally financed organizations such as regional development banks, intergovernmental organizations and similar international bodies active in nutrition will be invited to contribute. Non-contributing United Nations participants will be encouraged to resume or initiate core contributions. The Steering Committee will support the Chair in this endeavour, will canvas potential SCN participants, brief them on the benefits of participation and stress the need to contribute to the SCN core budget.

28. To alleviate problems due to late payment of core contributions, the host agency will be required to pre-finance the core operations of the SCN secretariat, in keeping with standard practice among ACC subsidiary bodies. This will also reduce borrowing against programme funds, which interferes with efficient implementation of the work programme. The cost of housing the SCN secretariat will be accounted for as a "contribution in kind" from the host agency.

VI. Monitoring the implementation of the plan

29. An external review of SCN will be held in 2003, three years after the adoption of this strategic plan. This external review will assess the continued relevance of the SCN's mandate (as set out on para. 4 above) and the SCN's effectiveness in fulfilling this mandate. The review will examine how effectively SCN has achieved targeted changes, whether the changes have contributed to achieving the three key strategic actions, and any problems encountered with implementation. The review will also assess the effectiveness of the SCN's Steering Committee, working groups,

task forces, the secretariat and its resources (personnel, facilities and budget), and other mechanisms it uses to meet its mandate.

30. Distinguished individuals with credentials and experience in nutritional science, operations, and advocacy will be appointed by the SCN Chair, after broad consultation with SCN. These individuals should not be staff of United Nations agencies. They will be appointed only for the term of the review, approximately six months, and will report to the SCN Chair. The review will be planned and overseen by the Steering Committee. Terms of reference for the review will be prepared by the Steering Committee, and presented to SCN for approval at its thirtieth session in 2003. Subsequent external reviews will take place at three-to-five year intervals.

Appendix I

Terms of reference: working groups

Working groups are the driving force of SCN. Through working groups, operating continuously, participating agencies take an active role in the work programme of SCN, to achieve the harmonizing, information-sharing, advocacy and review tasks in the substantive areas deemed of greatest importance by the collective SCN body.

Purposes

The purposes of SCN working groups are, inter alia:

- (a) To share information on the latest scientific advances, programmes and innovations in the specific substantive nutritional area of the working group;
- (b) Through information-sharing and networking, to assist in harmonization and alignment of agency actions, and reinforce key agency actions in areas of mutual concern;
- (c) To identify critical issues for further attention by SCN participating bodies. This includes identifying gaps in current policies, strategies, guidelines, norms and standards, and programmes, identifying relevant actors and suitable ways to address the gaps and to take the substantive agenda forward. Work may be carried out through dedicated task forces (see below) or other suitable mechanisms;
- (d) To provide advice to the secretariat and the SCN Chair, and perform tasks as necessary on technical issues related to the substantive nutritional area of the working group.

Structure, composition and operating procedures

Each working group is to have a chair, appointed by the SCN Chair, for a two-year period. The working group chair will generally be from a United Nations agency. The SCN Chair may appoint a working group chair from among the civil society cluster or the bilateral cluster of participants in SCN.

Responsibilities of working group chairs include:

- (a) To engage the working group in preparation of a concise one-to-two year work plan for review by the SCN annual session;
- (b) To take leadership on the frequency, format and venue of working group workshops or other events;
- (c) To take leadership in organizing a workshop on the substantive theme of the working group during the annual sessions and submit an agenda to the secretariat by 1 February, in advance of the annual SCN session. The workshop should include a review of the latest scientific and programmatic advances in the field, a consolidated report of agency actions on the topic, with particular focus on regional and country actions, emerging issues for consideration and resolution, and a discussion of the work plan for the forthcoming year;
- (d) When additional mid-year workshops are planned, to work with the Technical Secretary to find a host, raise funds if needed, and organize the workshop.

Each working group is to appoint one or more rapporteur(s), who, with the working group chair, serves as anchor for the group throughout the year and is responsible for sharing information about the working group activities with participants and other interested parties. The rapporteur assists the chair with the preparation of agendas for workshops and other working group activities, prepares meeting reports and tracks follow-up actions. The rapporteur liaises with the Technical Secretary to finalize and disseminate reports. The function of rapporteur can be assigned on a year-by-year basis at the annual meeting, and can be carried out by participants from any cluster in the SCN.

Each working group will have a core of members representing at least three United Nations agencies, as well as bilateral and non-governmental organization participants. Membership will be voluntary and open to all interested persons, but membership will consist of active participation in the functioning of the group during the course of the year. Each working group must facilitate the participation of persons in leadership positions in nutrition programmes in developing countries in working group activities.

Working groups will present their work programme for approval to SCN at its business meeting. The working group may recommend that SCN appoint dedicated task forces to carry out specific tasks on behalf of SCN. Such task forces will have specified terms of reference, prepared by the working group rapporteur, which will specify concrete deliverables and a limited life span. Task forces will report to SCN through the relevant working groups and will be disbanded on completion of their task.

Themes and lifespan

The SCN Chair, in consultation with the Steering Committee, will keep under review the themes of the working groups and make recommendations to the SCN business meeting regarding themes requiring new working groups. SCN participants can at any time submit proposals for working group themes to the SCN Chair for consideration. This will help to ensure that priority issues and relevant substantive areas are addressed. The continued existence of a working group is not automatic but will be confirmed by the Chair, on the basis of the performance of the working group, after the annual session. Similarly, the SCN Chair will review the slate of working group chairs and make necessary adjustments, after consultation with the Steering Committee.

Appendix II

Terms of reference: Chair

The job of the Chair is to provide outstanding leadership in the field of nutrition through effective advocacy and formulation of global nutrition strategies.

Specific duties

The specific duties of the Chair are:

- (a) To fulfil a dynamic leadership role through regular high-level interaction with ACC and other United Nations bodies, bilaterals and the NGO community and engage all bodies that have a role in the reduction of malnutrition worldwide;
- (b) To guide and assist in the preparation of the agenda for the annual session;
- (c) To chair the annual session;
- (d) To attend other SCN-related meetings during the year.

The Chair also oversees the work of the SCN secretariat and maintains close communication with the Technical Secretary. He or she takes the initiative in raising funds for the ongoing work programme of the secretariat.

Resources

The resources available to the Chair are:

- (a) SCN secretariat;
- (b) Working groups on a number of key themes — currently nine;
- (c) Steering Committee, consisting of representation from United Nations agencies, bilaterals and NGOs;
- (d) Core and programme budgets of about \$900,000 each per biennium;
- (e) Distinguished nutrition advocates, serving as the independent voice for SCN.

The resources expected from the Chair or his/her organization are:

- (a) About 20 days per year, including annual sessions;
- (b) Funding for travel on behalf of SCN to attend meetings of ACC, CCPOQ, CCAQ, technical conferences, annual sessions of SCN itself, individual meetings with SCN members, and meetings with the SCN secretariat in Geneva;
- (c) Office accommodation, communications and secretarial assistance for the Chair.

Appendix III

Terms of reference: Steering Committee

ACC/SCN at its twenty-sixth session made far-reaching proposals to revitalize inter-agency collaboration in support of an intensified global, regional and local fight against malnutrition. An interim programme steering committee was appointed for one year to advise SCN on revisions to its structure and processes.

The Steering Committee will generally hold monthly conference calls with set agenda. The minutes will be prepared by the Technical Secretary and will record what action needs to be taken by whom in between conference calls. Conference calls will be initiated by the secretariat in Geneva.

The SCN Chair will appoint Steering Committee members for a two-to-three year period, after broad consultation with SCN. The Committee will have not more than nine members, at least five from United Nations agencies, at least one non-governmental organization and at least one bilateral representative. The SCN Chair and Technical Secretary serve in an *ex officio* capacity. Steering Committee members will take advantage of informal contacts at other meetings to carry out their work and to gather suggestions and ideas for the deliberations of the Steering Committee. Steering Committee members will communicate regularly to the wider SCN body on the work of the Committee, its actions and draft proposals. The Committee will report to the ACC/SCN Chair. United Nations agency participation in the Steering Committee must be reflected in an appropriate level of core funding to SCN.

The functions of the Steering Committee are the following:

- (a) To guide the implementation of the strategic plan;
- (b) To monitor follow-up of recommendations made by the working groups and their task forces;
- (c) To identify strategic venues for the SCN Chair to give key note speeches on nutrition;
- (d) To assist in the identification of new issues to be addressed by SCN.

Appendix IV

Terms of reference: distinguished nutrition advocates

ACC/SCN recognizes an ever-increasing need for effective advocacy. The multiple sectors in which nutrition plays a vital role and the broad implications of the benefits of sound nutrition and of the adverse impacts of malnutrition in developing and industrialized countries underscore the need for effective advocacy for the elimination of nutrition as a public health problem in this generation.

Main tasks

The main tasks of the advocates are:

- (a) To assist the SCN Chair in raising awareness of nutrition problems and mobilizing commitment to solve them;
- (b) To act as spokespersons for SCN in support of the malnourished throughout the world and those at risk of either chronic or acute malnutrition and to propose new ideas for SCN to consider in order to strengthen its work in accelerating the reduction in malnutrition at the international, regional and national levels;
- (c) To act as SCN spokespersons for nutrition in natural and man-made emergencies;
- (d) To extend the SCN's already large advocacy network of nutrition professionals to seek to influence key decision makers and leaders at senior levels in government and the private sector.

Appointment

The SCN Chair will solicit nominations of distinguished scholars, stateswomen and statesmen from all agencies and other SCN participants. Nominations should document the nominees' accomplishments of relevance to the field of nutrition, experience and effectiveness in advocacy, broad-based networking skills, public recognition, and regional ties. Nominations will be reviewed by the SCN Chair and the Steering Committee. The Committee will solicit input from all agencies in a manner that is respectful of the confidentiality of the nomination process.

After broad consultation of SCN participants, a slate of up to four advocates will be forwarded to the Secretary-General of the United Nations (or the Chair of ACC) who will be asked to make the appointment on behalf of SCN. Appointments will be made for periods of two-to-three years and renewable only once.

Appendix V

Terms of reference: secretariat

The main tasks of the ACC/SCN secretariat are the following:

(a) To play a pivotal role in the implementation of the ACC/SCN strategic plan; foster dialogue and understanding among the United Nations agencies and others to initiate and sustain planned activities; track progress achieved against agreed milestones; make recommendations to the Steering Committee on flexible adaptation of the strategic plan to emerging issues within the ACC/SCN; report also on problems encountered and propose means to solve them;

(b) To raise awareness of the causes, costs and consequences of malnutrition through dissemination of information, the principle avenues being the ACC/SCN publications and web site; serve as a point of contact for information on nutrition policies, programmes and events of the United Nations agencies;

(c) To act dynamically to strengthen networking to ensure effective follow-up action to SCN decisions and recommendations, as well as those of other United Nations forums at which specific functions are assigned to SCN. This involves keeping SCN participants in touch with one another and informed; helping to identify gaps, complementarities and possible overlap in programmes. The Technical Secretary maintains regular contact with counterparts in secretariats of other relevant ACC subsidiary bodies;

(d) Every two-to-three years, to publish a report on the world nutrition situation to document malnutrition prevalences and trends worldwide and to present information on global issues affecting nutrition. These reports offer analysis and interpretation of nutrition problems throughout the life cycle. Tables and figures are often provided by the United Nations agencies and others. The writing of the report, editing, formatting and design is done by the SCN secretariat;

(e) To implement a programme of work, as approved by ACC/SCN, together with a biennial budget. Currently the main element in the programme is three ongoing series of publications: *SCN News*, reports of the Refugee Nutrition Information System and Nutrition Policy Papers, and the SCN web site. Based on the translation of the strategic plan into annual work plans, the focus of this work will evolve;

(f) To organize and service annual meetings of ACC/SCN, as well as working groups and task forces convened under the auspices of ACC/SCN; develop symposia topics and organize and service symposia and special meetings to raise awareness of emerging nutrition issues. This work is aimed at harmonizing nutrition policies across the United Nations and involves preparing technical and other documentation for discussion, participating in the work of the meetings and drafting reports. Serve as secretariat to the ACC/SCN Steering Committee, organize their meetings, prepare minutes and ensure timely follow-up to agreed activities;

(g) To raise funds, approximately \$900,000 per biennium, to cover costs of the programme of work, from bilateral donors, private foundations and United Nations agencies, liaise with the secretariat's host agency to effectively administer these funds and to report back to donors on products and disbursements;

(h) To manage a peer review process to ensure the high quality of the ACC/SCN technical publications. This process seeks to involve expertise from United Nations agencies, bilaterals, non-governmental organizations and academia.
