



Dear Reader,

Almost half of the world's population are malnourished in one way or another. In spite of enormous efforts undertaken by the international community, the human right to food is, in the face of 800 million starving people, still the most frequently violated human right. At the same time almost two billion people are overweight. And, however paradoxical this may sound, we encounter both in half of all states: overweight and undernutrition.

What is particularly serious is malnutrition in all its forms afflicting children, as children who are not adequately nourished during childhood will have to live with the consequences their entire lives. We are increasingly faced with obesity, diabetes, eating disorders and cardiac diseases at an early age. If children lack key nutrients, their growth and brain development will be severely stunted.

Generally speaking, each euro, dollar or peso invested in nutrition pays off many times for it, as it is an investment in the future of mankind, in the future of our societies and in the future of our states. However, global political efforts are only gradually beginning to focus on the importance of an adequate nutrition. The Second International Conference on Nutrition (ICN2) held in November 2014 marked a major milestone in



this regard. In the final documents, all United Nations Member States committed to pursuing a cross-sectoral approach in order to counter malnutrition in all its forms (undernutrition, micronutrient deficiencies and overweight and obesity). The ICN2 therefore provided strong impetus and helped explicitly enshrine nutrition in the sustainable development goals (SDGs) last year. We must take advantage of this momentum in order to fight malnutrition worldwide using a holistic approach.

My ministry, the Federal Ministry of Food and Agriculture, is supporting the global implementation of the ICN2 outcomes, in particular via the Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations (FAO) and by funding research activities. This flyer highlights some aspects of our involvement in the field of nutrition at international level. I hope you find it a stimulating read.

Yours

Christian Schmidt, Member of the German Bundestag
Federal Minister of Food and Agriculture

Projects for balanced nutrition across the globe – The Bilateral Trust Fund with the FAO¹

Since 2002 the Federal Ministry of Food and Agriculture supports projects of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) via its Bilateral Trust Fund. One priority of the fund is to build the basis for a balanced nutrition. The current involvement in this field comprises **nine projects** and over **14 million Euros** in support. The focus lies on the following issues:

➤ Mainstreaming nutrition into programmes and policies

- ➔ Building on the projects in **Afghanistan** that were launched in 2002, an integrative approach was developed to incorporate nutritional aspects into already existing agricultural projects. The government in Afghanistan used this approach to cooperate with all relevant ministries in developing a comprehensive nutritional agenda (AFSANA) in collaboration with all relevant ministries. The agenda helped strengthen necessary institutions, launch nutrition education programmes and support agricultural workers, in particular women.
- ➔ Inspired by this success story, and using support from the BMEL, this approach was transferred to **Sub-Saharan Africa**. Nutrition was integrated into agricultural programmes and policies in Sub-Saharan Africa and into the investment plans of the „Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme“ (CAADP). Other projects are concentrating on building capacities at regional and country level in order to implement the CAADP nutrition roadmaps with a focus on agriculture, cross-sectoral planning for nutrition, integrating of food consumption indicators into information systems and the incorporation of nutrition into agriculture extension services.
- ➔ Another project in **Sierra Leone** supports the government and its partners in implementing measures under the Smallholder Commercialisation Programme (SCP) and the district development plans that support the right to adequate food and improve the nutrition of the population. The project promotes expedient interventions, such as nutrition education, crop diversification, school gardens, processing of crops and investments in labour-saving tech-



- ➔ nologies, in the implementation of the SCP and support the inclusion of the right to adequate food in the constitution.
- ➔ Another project is being carried out in the Mopti region of **Mali**; this project aims to use food-security interventions to improve the resilience and nutrition of vulnerable sections of the population. The project improves the capacities of vulnerable households via knowledge, skills and income to enable these households to withstand threats and risks, and helps develop nutrition-sensitive agriculture to promote sustainable consumption of diversified foods.

➤ Nutrition education

- ➔ Two projects were conducted to create nutritional guidance and educational programmes in order to help people make their diets more balanced and hence better and thus reduce malnourishment. One project introduced a „Basic Certificate“ in Nutrition Education and Communication (NEAC) which provided a foundation for adopting Best Practices from NEAC training and for meeting local demand. The target group comprised multipliers such as students, educators, midwives and agricultural experts. The project was then expanded to include francophone, sub-Saharan Africa. Course materials -**ENACT**- on nutrition education were drawn up in cooperation with partner institutions and included in the educational programme. This allowed universities and educational institutions to learn methods for developing curricula and course materials, which then results in curricula tailored to local needs.

→ The IMCF project on „Improving the dietary intake and nutritional status of infants and young children through improved food security and complementary feeding“ combined nutrition education and improved food security. Mothers in **Cambodia and Malawi** were given guidance in using locally available foods wisely to feed their infants and young children nutritiously. The project was flanked scientifically and produced a better effect when **food security interventions were combined with nutrition education**. The results were summarised in the Programme Lessons “*Integrating Agriculture and Nutrition – Education for Improved Young Child Nutrition*”.

➤ **Support for women in agricultural projects and urbanisation**

→ Other projects aim to achieve improved food security and balanced nutrition at household level through empowering women and develop support strategies for the planning of urban food systems.

➤ **Effect**

The projects supported by the BMEL raised awareness and political resolve for nutrition-sensitive food systems and were fed into the development of internationally recognised recommendations.²

Research for balanced, needs-orientated nutrition worldwide

With its research initiative on “**Nutrition – Diversified Agriculture for Balanced Nutrition in Sub-Saharan Africa**”, the BMEL would like to be instrumental in closing gaps in knowledge in the field of nutrition-sensitive food systems – food production geared to the nutritional needs of the population – and in implementing the ICN2’s “Framework for Action”. Overall, the BMEL is supporting eight projects under this initiative with funds totalling over 8 million Euros. The three-year projects

are being carried out between 2014 and 2018. In addition to this, it is planned to establish long-term partnerships and a competence network in this area in order to make a sustainable contribution to food security and nutrition.

The approved research projects examine the role of diversified agriculture in combating malnourishment and unhealthy diets and identify appropriate approaches that can be taken.

They address research questions related to integrated farming systems, address the importance of fruit and vegetables (in particular traditional local crops and neglected crop species) in a trans disciplinary manner, examine the benefits of integrated fish and horticultural production and address the challenges and benefits of urban farming. The objective of the projects is to contribute to improving the nutritional status of the local population. In addition to this it is planned to raise the awareness of national stakeholders involved primarily in the field of agricultural production (including research institutions, policy makers and consultancy and educational service providers) for the subject of nutrition. The regional focus is on **eastern and southern Africa**.³

A further announcement on needs-orientated and application-orientated support for international research cooperation will focus on investigating and developing innovative approaches to the processing of local foods in Sub-Saharan Africa and south-eastern Asia that will contribute to improving nutrition and reducing food losses in quality and quantity.

Remaining in dialogue with all actors

To reach viable solutions on global nutrition issues, the BMEL regularly exchanges thoughts, views and experiences with German representatives from other ministries, civil society, business and scientific communities, in particular via its multi-stakeholder platforms on nutrition and global food security.

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Federal Ministry
of Food
and Agriculture

Understanding global food security and nutrition

In Focus: Balanced nutrition across the globe



2 Key recommendations for improving nutrition through agriculture and food systems <http://www.fao.org/3/a-i4922e.pdf>

3 www.bmel.de/research-fsn