



Nutrition

Specific actions to improve nutrition include investment in development strategies that will contribute to better nutrition in all societies, combined with universal access to a range of tried and tested interventions that directly contribute to reducing undernutrition, especially among pregnant and lactating women, children under the age of two and people affected by illness or distress. Nutritional concerns should be addressed both by direct interventions and also through the integration of nutrition in national strategies, policies and programmes for agriculture, food security, health, food quality and safety, water and sanitation, social protection and safety nets, rural development and overall developmentⁱ. These interventions include scaling up states' own efforts to combat undernutrition and adopt a multisectoral approach. There is a strong economic case for investing in nutrition in order to reduce the costs associated with hidden hunger and stunting.

As stated in the Voluntary Guidelines for the Progressive Realization of the Right to Adequate Food in the Context of National Food Security, States are recommended, among others, toⁱⁱ:

1. If necessary, take measures to maintain, adapt or strengthen dietary diversity and healthy eating habits and food preparation, as well as feeding patterns, including breastfeeding, while ensuring that changes in availability and access to food supply do not negatively affect dietary composition and intake;
2. Take steps, in particular through education, information and labelling regulations, to prevent overconsumption and unbalanced diets that may lead to malnutrition, obesity and degenerative diseases;

3. Involve all relevant stakeholders, in particular communities and local government, in the design, implementation, management, monitoring and evaluation of programmes to increase the production and consumption of healthy and nutritious foods, especially those that are rich in micronutrients;
4. Address the specific food and nutritional needs of people living with HIV/AIDS or suffering from other epidemics;
5. Take appropriate measures to promote and encourage breastfeeding, in line with their cultures, the International Code of Marketing of Breast-milk Substitutesⁱⁱⁱ and subsequent resolutions of the World Health Assembly, in accordance with the WHO/UNICEF recommendations;
6. Disseminate information on the feeding of infants and young children that is consistent and in line with current scientific knowledge and internationally accepted practices and to take steps to counteract misinformation on infant feeding. States should consider with utmost care issues regarding breastfeeding and human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) infection on the basis of the most up-to-date, authoritative scientific advice and referring to the latest WHO/UNICEF guidelines;
7. Take parallel action in the areas of agriculture, social protection, water, health, education and sanitary infrastructure and promote intersectoral collaboration, so that necessary services and goods become available to people to enable them to make full use of the dietary value in the food they eat and thus achieve nutritional well-being;
8. Adopt measures to eradicate any kind of discriminatory practices, especially with respect to gender, in order to achieve adequate levels of nutrition within the household;
9. Recognize that food is a vital part of an individual's culture, and they are encouraged to take into account individuals' practices, customs and traditions on matters related to food;

10. Bearing in mind the cultural values of dietary and eating habits in different cultures, establish methods for promoting food safety, positive nutritional intake including fair distribution of food within communities and households with special emphasis on the needs and rights of both girls and boys, as well as pregnant women and lactating mothers, in all cultures.

ⁱ Based, among others, on the approach developed in the SUN Framework and also UN-UCFA, chapter 2-10-v.

ⁱⁱ VGRtF Guideline 10

ⁱⁱⁱ http://www.who.int/nutrition/publications/code_english.pdf