

Rome, 1st February 2021

Subject: Introduction Chair UN Nutrition

Dear colleagues and partners,

I am delighted to contact you as the Chair of the United Nations' new coordination entity, UN Nutrition, and take this opportunity to wish you all a happy, healthy and rewarding 2021. I am very enthusiastic about working together during this pivotal time, cognizant that nutrition offers a foundation for good health and well-being of people and nations. As you may have heard, I join you from the World Health Organization (WHO), where I am serving as the Assistant Director-General of Universal Health Coverage /Healthier Populations. My term as the UN Nutrition Chair will extend for a period of two years, during which I will work tirelessly to keep nutrition on the political agenda, seizing key moments such as the Food System Summit and the Nutrition for Growth (N4G) Summit. I am also looking forward to continue and strengthen our collaboration with the Scaling Up Nutrition (SUN) Movement.

Today, I am pleased to confirm that the UN Nutrition Secretariat, hosted by the headquarters of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) in Rome, *virtually* opened its doors on 4 January 2021 and is actively working with members to define its path for the coming months and years ahead. As we embark on this new venture, the secretariat is staffing a small team comprised an Executive Secretary, Technical Officers seconded by the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the World Food Programme (WFP), REACH consultants as well as communications and administrative support. Furthermore, REACH will continue as a special project of UN Nutrition under the current arrangements.

This year presents golden windows of opportunity to cast a spotlight on nutrition, such as the N4G Summit and the Food Systems Summit (FSS) in addition to regular global fora, such as the World Health Assembly, the Committee on World Food Security, the UN Environment Assembly (UNEA-5) and the annual UN Climate Change Conference. We can now utilize the UN Nutrition platform to consolidate the strengths of the individual United Nations agencies for the delivery of one robust voice in nutrition, building on past experiences. While the events are months away, an N4G springboard event recently kicked off a year of commitments for nutrition, moving towards the official summit in December, hosted by the Government of Japan, my home country. Since then, a [UN success story from Zimbabwe](#) has been published on the N4G website, providing a perfect example of the collaborative spirit UN Nutrition embodies and advocates for. UN Nutrition will also have a large stake in the FSS, both helping to ensure that nutrition is prominently featured in these proceedings and to converge related efforts in all five action tracks. It will also encourage, stimulate and enrich country dialogues in the lead up to the people's summit, supporting the engagement of SUN Government Focal Points, where applicable.

Beyond dialogue, we will take concrete measures that translate global guidance into impact on the ground. Country support will be a cornerstone of the work undertaken through UN Nutrition, enabled by effective knowledge management that strengthens feedback loops and empowers *peer learning at and across all levels*. Not only will this entail continued engagement in the Scaling Up Nutrition (SUN) Movement, but also outreach to other countries to further mobilize United Nations Resident Coordinators (UNRCs) in the nutrition arena and multi-sectoral actions that address malnutrition in its varying forms. Another key aspect of this work will be supporting UN country teams to embed the multi-sectoral approach in United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Frameworks (UNSDCFs), including

double duty actions in countries contending with undernutrition as well as overweight and obesity. This will help complementary efforts that aim to increase joint programming on nutrition, including projects that have emergency and development components, particularly important within the context of COVID-19 recovery.

I encourage you to visit the emerging [UN Nutrition website](#) for further information, which will be incrementally developed over time and to reach out to the new team to share your perspectives and bright ideas at info@unnutrition.org.

Thank you in advance for your valuable support.

Yours sincerely,



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