



Speaker Summary Note

Session: **Prioritizing and Scaling Up Interventions for the Most Optimal Agricultural, Nutrition, and Health Outcomes**

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Ireland's very strong commitment in overseas aid programme (and indeed in whole foreign policy) to the global effort to prioritise the elimination of hunger. Some 20% of Ireland's total ODA now going towards food security, to hunger alleviation programmes, including agriculture and nutrition.

Particular priority has of late been a focus on encouraging the Scaling up Nutrition (SUN) initiative.

Launch in September 2010, together with the United States and in presence of UN and several governments and partners. Commitment to a programme of 1,000 days of action in support of Scaling-Up-Nutrition or SUN. This to emphasise the absolute necessity to address malnutrition among mothers and children up to the age of 2 years.

Follow up meeting 10 February with SUIN Partners – discussion

1. Leadership—Vital importance of ensuring that the SUM Movement for Scaling up Nutrition be **led** by the **participating countries**—that the **priorities and plans** be country-specific and managed by governments and leaders in participating countries.
2. The high **and growing** level of political commitment in many participating countries—often led by Head of State or of Government—which have resulted in Nutrition being placed more centrally in Government and which therefore is beginning to enable the kind of **interdepartmental coordination** which is so essential in the process. Now a very strong recognition of the importance of having a fully multi-sectoral approach to Nutrition.
3. Very importantly also Nutrition being reflected now much more strongly in **National Development Plans and in Poverty Reduction Strategies**, with an emphasis on ensuring that **all** development programmes have a strong nutrition focus.
4. But as well as being multi-sectoral—an increasing emphasis on the engagement of multi stakeholders. The importance of involving a very broad range of actors in the Nutrition effort.
5. **Cultural impediments** to extending/expanding nutrition programmes. Economic growth does not guarantee improvements in nutritional status. The task is to bring about behavioural changes which involve tackling existing impediments, e.g. a low level of education among women.
6. The role of the **private sector** noted—though still not as vibrant, or as adequately explored as it needs to be.

Public Sector and Civil Society should be encouraged to create the ethical framework in which the private sector can operate (similar to the code of marketing breast milk substitutes) – to push

ethical engagement (efficacious products, appropriate pricing and delivery and extensive distribution).

Also the potential to engage what we might call the more non-traditional elements such as **smallholder farmer organisations, trade unions, the media, consumer associations, professional bodies, and of course very importantly the whole civil society sector.**

7. The need for improved **coordination** both within governments and among all partners, to build **stronger capacity** at all levels, for help in **advocacy, and in developing Monitoring and Evaluation** frameworks.
8. Agreement at the meeting—which very welcome—was that participating countries will begin to develop **Reference Groups** who will bring forward the whole process in their respective countries.
9. Discussion on the need for **additional resources** and where such resources might come from.
Some comments
 - **Is** already a strong commitment and support from several donor partner governments; also from multilateral agencies who are already engaged, and can be much more so, to help in the process.
 - Necessity for participating governments to continue to and indeed strengthen their own commitments to the process including in the allocation of resources.
 - The belief that as plans are developed, as structures within countries are put in place and strengthened, that resources will come available. Reaffirm Ireland's commitment to and support for the process
 - With the overwhelming evidence, now widely recognised that investment in nutrition is the single most cost effective development investment, strongly encourage participating countries to have confidence to proceed with urgency to follow the paths which they are already embarked on
 - And appeal to all donors and development partners to continue to back up the commitments to prioritise nutrition in their ODA and to give the support that this whole effort so obviously and urgently warrants.