



Speaker Summary Note

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

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Nutrition, food security, and health have each moved up the global agenda over the past decade. Agriculture is the bedrock for each, and is in the spotlight today for two reasons. First, concern that food price rises cause instability. Second, anxiety that rising prices are symptoms of a worrying set of structural stresses linked to climate change, environmental degradation, exploding populations and global urbanization. While there is also new awareness that malnutrition is a dynamic cause of underdevelopment (as reflected in approach of the 2010 UN Special Session and major initiatives by the USA, Britain and other donors), the politics of food mean that the long term malnutrition does not capture headlines in the way immediate food prices rises and public demonstration do. We therefore need to be thoughtful about what and how we scale up interventions to ensure we deliver on our main concern: improving health through better nutrition.

Since World War Two, there have been two short spikes of investment in agriculture (immediately post-War, then the Green Revolution) followed by much longer periods of neglect and underinvestment. It is therefore important at a time when agriculture has the headlines, to think more broadly about how to turn the concerns about population growth, increasing prices, and severe environmental pressures into a long and sustained upward curve of investment in agriculture, and people-oriented nutritional and health outcomes. We need to seize the opportunity to turn these concerns into a global campaign which has deep roots and can set in motion changes which will both endure and target at the needs of the poor majority. The challenges are therefore part technical, part financial and part about leadership and mobilisation.

Delivery is at the heart of this challenge. We have known about the causes of malnutrition for a long time, the point is to find practical ways to address it. The idea that governments and donors can pay for and deliver solutions belongs to the past, it is a small, if vital part of the challenge relating to the most severely undernourished, the very poorest and those with chronic illnesses. In general, most people rely on the market to get their food, and governments, companies, producers and donors have to fund ways to make those markets work to tackle undernutrition, starting with food production (agriculture) and moving along the food chain to processing, manufacture, distribution (food security and nutrition) and consumption (health outcomes, public demand and awareness).

GAIN has had some success in doing this in relation to large scale food fortification of some staples and countries, a programme which we aim to scale up from 392m to 1 billion beneficiaries by 2015. This is one example of leveraging agriculture to reform markets in a pro-nutrition way, and there have also been some good successes in improving the nutritional quality of manufactured foods, for example, biscuits in India and yoghurt in Bangladesh.

The new paradigm has at its core understanding that it is the whole food economy environment which is critical: the consumer demand and awareness, the market conditions including regulation, blending concessional and private sector investment together. Therefore, we need to. Within this, what are the priority areas for scale up and improving this enabling environment?

- **Public engagement and leadership:** strategic approaches to delivery: The first key area is not a product line or target market, it relates to creating models which can secure support for the new paradigm. This is about working differently, building public support and choosing areas where we can make a difference. The importance of this cannot be underestimated to avoid the errors of the past, and back sliding into divided efforts, competition and over reliance on a top down, donor driven approach. This means working with the food producers and distributors of all shapes and sizes. It means building a public base of support and understanding.
- **New Models—Targeting:** starting where we have cost-effective solutions that we know work and can scaled up. GAIN believes that home fortification through MNPs can be a key tool in targeting those with the greatest life cycle (1000days) and other needs (chronically ill, emergencies) to complements universal food fortification (which must be brought to full scale).
- **New Models for delivery—moving from subsidization to capacitating:** There is scope with the right public private partnerships to use cross subsidization and hybrid models (WFP/market-based solutions) to reach those in greatest need. Once we recognize that the food economy is critical to nutrition outcomes (most people buy most of their food most of the time) then—as with any business—to access finance and credit becomes a critical factor in the supply and value chain. (e.g., BRAC/Renata, Pre-mix Fund). The right interventions along the chain -the role of blended finance models to create facilitate innovation. Also technical and market support (Britannia)
- **Strengthening Policy—**GAIN’s work with NEPAD to integrate SUN into CAADAP (policy can be a game changer along the value chain); creating and sustaining political will—GAIN’s ability to create policy platforms that bring disparate groups together around a common framework.