



Speaker Summary Note

Session: Governance and Inclusion Levers

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Title: Governance and Inclusion Levers to Improve Nutrition Outcomes

SLIDE 1:

Those who govern have a role in improving nutrition outcome by: developing food and nutrition policies, and setting standards; establishing (quality and functional) compliance and coordination mechanisms and; providing resources for interventions in food and nutrition social/"public goods". Three conditions should hold if governments are to perform on these roles: (a) improving nutrition outcomes must be seen as urgent, (b) there must be political commitment to make a difference, and (c) enough resources to undertake the necessary programs must be provided.

SLIDE 2-4

We are facing challenges in moving nutrition agenda in eight countries where I work. It is obvious the governors in these countries need compelling in order to act on nutrition. Some of the innovative levers include:

1. *Advocacy* → The important role of (a) senior nutrition political champions; (b) exposure of senior leaders to real cases of malnutrition, and; (c) field visits to neighbouring "positive deviate" countries
2. *Pressure* → By (a) a well informed media (showing cases of malnutrition and presenting real stories of effects of malnutrition at community level), and (b) result oriented development partners putting pressure on governments.
3. *Monitoring government accountability* → (a) have Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with measurable governance outcomes and milestones (I will share some indicators), and (b) have forums for joint review.

Sad though, development partners continue to "degrade" local capacity in nutrition by supporting efforts that are parallel to government systems.

SLIDE 5

NGOs and the private sectors find it very difficult to influence national policy making process at national levels: they are superficially involved in planning. However, they may have more influence at district level and especially if they are contributing to the district budget and/or in human resource capacity strengthening. They should concentrate on inclusion in district level planning by playing a major role of

collecting and presenting quality data/information, sharing promising practices of plausible solutions to nutrition problems and Inclusion of communities in nutrition is difficult. Communities have many real and perceived needs, e.g. food, health, education, infrastructure, markets, and livelihood. The demand for nutrition is minimal. How do we involve them? Levers include:

- Making nutrition problems and solutions visible→Branding nutrition (slogans, logos, songs, visuals) to raise self-awareness and demand for nutrition and inclusion
- Informed media to educate and mobilize communities
- School children
- Local Government Assessment Indicators (in decentralized systems) that include nutrition

SLIDE 6

Sustainable improvement of nutrition outcomes calls for a critical mass of passionate leaders in nutrition at all levels.