



DAY 1 - Wednesday February 6th

Opening ceremony (facilitated by the UN Decade of Action on Nutrition Secretariat)

Message from Prof. Jérôme Salomon, Director General for Health, France.

It is my privilege to welcome you today in Paris, for the inaugural meeting of the Global Action Network on Nutrition labelling. Jointly with Australia and the Nutrition Decade Secretariat, we would like to thank you all for having responded to this call for global actions under the umbrella of the United Nation Decade of Action on Nutrition 2016-2025.

Nutrition is a main determinant of health, and therefore, better nutrition is of utmost importance if we want to progress towards achieving the Sustainable Development Goals and prevent NCDs.

All our countries have nutrition policies. And we know the challenges to achieve their objectives. There is a consensus on the main strategies needed to improve the global situation. Among them is the Nutritional labelling on foods.

The goal of the Network will be to support countries to accelerate efforts around nutrition labelling and shed light on the scientific evidence behind various models.

Labelling schemes are very timely and represent an opportunity for governments to act efficiently to improve Health and reduce disparities. The development of easily understandable

labelling is essential when it comes to empowering consumers in making healthier food choices, at the time of their purchase.

We are firmly convinced that, with an improved evidence base on the effectiveness of food labelling models, and the way to implement them, it should become easier for countries to define their national policies and regulations, including a single coherent nutritional information model.

I am equally delighted that this first meeting is taking place in Paris.

France has embedded nutrition in its renewed national health strategy. This strategy puts a strong emphasis on a population based approach to health promotion and prevention, across the lifespan, reaching out to people in their life environment.

Since November 2017, following a long collaborative process with all stakeholders, France has chosen the Nutri Score as the national reference model for front of pack labelling. Its implementation is an important part of the nutrition strategy. To date, more than 100 food manufacturers and retailers have committed to use the Nutri- Score labels on their products.

Collected evidence have shown that the adoption of nutrition labelling, not only enabled citizens to make informed choices for better health, but also encouraged food producers to improve the nutritional quality of the food supply.

Because food products cross borders, we believe that a global approach in nutrition labelling is essential to spur the good practices of food producers and retailers worldwide, and help stop the obesity epidemics and NCD's worldwide. I would like to reaffirm France's commitment to work and support WHO in this endeavor.

Today we will all have the opportunity to exchange on our respective national strategies for implementing nutrition labelling policies. We will hear about policies/regulations, mechanism of implementing compliance and enforcement, elements for success and challenges faced.

Tomorrow we will work together to draw the network actions and activities, timelines and milestones. The network represents an opportunity to act globally to help reduce the burden of malnutrition worldwide, that we, collectively, should not miss.

Thank you again for your presence.

And now I leave the floor to Australia

Message from Dr. Lisa Studdert, Deputy Secretary, Department of Health, Australian Government

On behalf of the Australian Government and the Secretary of the Federal Health Department, and as co-chair of this new World Health Organization group, I welcome all of you to the first meeting of the Action Network on Nutrition Labelling.

Australia is really pleased to be involved in this important initiative and it is wonderful to know of the keen interest of so many other partners there in the room today.

The evidence is clear. When consumers have access to nutritious foods and better information about the food and drinks available to them they are more likely to make healthy choices.

All around the world, people are eating too much sugar, salt and fat and not getting enough fibre and essential nutrients. Increasing numbers of Australian adults are affected - our latest results show two thirds of our adult population are now overweight or obese.¹

As you are all aware, poor diet is a known risk factor for many non-communicable diseases (or NCDs), such as coronary heart disease, stroke, high blood pressure, some forms of cancer and type 2 diabetes². There is also increasing evidence of links between poor nutrition and mental health disorders, notably depression³.

These chronic conditions now constitute a huge part of the burden of disease experienced by Australians and I'm sure in many other countries around the world.

Governments can play a role in empowering consumers to make food choices that will prevent or reduce these avoidable and chronic conditions.

How can we do that? Consumers need accessible, easily understood information about the health value of the food items on supermarket shelves. The evidence shows that with this information consumers can and actively will select products that will lead to better health outcomes for them and their families.

The Australian food regulation system aims to not only promote a safe food supply but to also work towards reducing the burden of NCDs.

We believe that nutrition labelling on packaged foods to support public health is an appropriate area of interest for government.

We are proud of our efforts to improve useful information to Australian consumers. We continue to work with the public health organisations in our country, academics, the food industry and consumers to enhance our labelling systems.

Our experience is that nutrition labelling does work.

In fact it may indeed have a compounding effect—not only influencing consumers to make healthier choices, but also encouraging the food industry to improve the nutritional value of their food products.

In Australia, like many other countries, packaged food products must carry a Nutrition Information Panel and ingredients list.

The Nutrition Information Panel includes details on the key nutrient content of a food, allowing consumers to select products in line with their dietary needs and to compare the nutrient

¹ National Health Survey: First Results, 2017-18,
<http://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf/Lookup/by%20Subject/4364.0.55.001~2017-18~Main%20Features~Key%20Findings~1>

² <https://www.aihw.gov.au/reports/biomedical-risk-factors/risk-factors-to-health/contents/nutrition>

³ See for example <https://www.mentalhealth.org.uk/a-to-z/d/diet-and-mental-health>

content of different products. The ingredients list allows consumers to see the specific ingredients in foods, including highlighting any allergens.

While this information is important, in the Australian experience we know that many people just don't have the time or knowledge to interpret this information on the spot, while doing their shopping.

Simple front-of-pack nutrition labelling is effective in helping consumers to identify products which are better for their health overall. Many different schemes are now being considered and implemented around the world and no doubt you will discuss those, including in many of the countries there today.

In 2014 Australia introduced a voluntary, interpretive labelling scheme known as the Health Star Rating system. With the introduction of the system we are seeing some positive results in terms of consumer use and understanding and industry reformulation.

Australia is committed to addressing NCDs and we recognise that improving the quality of our diets will go some way to reducing this burden. Nutrition labelling is an important component of this work.

We will continue to support international efforts in this area, for example through the WHO and the FAO. We are glad to collaborate and share our knowledge and to provide support for other countries' efforts to protect and promote public health.

The Australian representatives at this meeting will be sharing our experiences in developing and implementing our various, complementary nutrition labelling systems. Likewise, they will be keen to hear from you about your countries' experiences and progress in this area.

I encourage all countries to consider how nutrition labelling would add to their public health efforts. I hope that this forum assists with the development of meaningful preventive health strategies and provides opportunities for collaboration and support when combating NCDs.

I wish you well with your work there, and thank you.

UN Decade of Action on Nutrition Secretariat by Dr. Francesco Branca, Director, Department of Nutrition for Health and Development, WHO, Geneva

[UN Decade of Action on Nutrition \(PDF\)](#)

Introduction to the theme

Global overview - labelling into a nutrition national policy by Chizuru Nishida, Coordinator of the Nutrition Policy and Scientific Advice Unit, WHO, Geneva

[Global overview: Labelling into national nutrition policy \(PDF\)](#)

Discussions on Nutrition Labelling: Exchange of country experiences in implementing nutrition labelling:

1st round table: Implementing nutrition labelling policies (including information on types of policies/regulations, nutrients included, mechanism of implementing compliance and enforcement, elements for success and challenges faced

[1st round table \(PDF\)](#)

2nd round table: Implementing FOPL (including information the process of determining specific FOPL systems, impact assessment if available, elements for success and challenges faced

[2nd round table \(PDF\)](#)

DAY 2

Working group sessions

First topic: *identification of bottlenecks and solutions to the implementation of nutrition labeling in countries*

[Bottlenecks group 1 \(PDF\)](#)

[Bottlenecks group 2 \(PDF\)](#)

Second topic: *available evidence to support Front-of-the-Pack Labelling; analyze existing tools and resources.*

[Second topic \(PDF\)](#)

Wrap-up of each morning session outcomes by each rapporteur

Topic 1

[Global summary \(PDF\)](#)

Topic 2

[FOPL process \(PDF\)](#)

Next steps / Operational aspects of the Action Network

[Global action network on Nutrition Labelling \(PDF\)](#)

[Summary of the two days comments on implementing nutrition labelling policies and FOPL \(PDF\)](#)