

UNITED NATIONS DECADE OF **ACTION ON NUTRITION**



2016-2025



STRENGTHENING COLLABORATION AMONG COUNTRIES

Malnutrition affects people worldwide in multiple ways, including undernutrition, overweight, obesity and deficiencies in micronutrients that are vital for growth and health. If the challenge of malnutrition is not addressed successfully, it will be impossible to achieve many of the [Sustainable Development Goals \(SDGs\)](#).

Collaboration among countries is essential if countries are to end all forms of malnutrition by 2030, in line with the SDGs and the recommendations of the [Second International Conference on Nutrition \(ICN2\)](#).

One way that this can be achieved is through Action Networks, a mechanism for strengthening collaboration among countries encouraged and supported by the [United Nations \(UN\) Decade of Action on Nutrition 2016–2025](#), also referred to as the Nutrition Decade.

Action Networks are informal coalitions of countries focusing on a specific nutrition-related action area to foster policy dialogue and facilitate and enhance local action. Led and coordinated by one country or several volunteering countries, these Action Networks allow countries to exchange good practices, illustrate successes and challenges and provide mutual support to accelerate progress in specific areas, with the final objective of improving food systems, diets and nutrition for all through the establishment of policies and legislation. In doing so, Action Networks help countries implement their commitments and the Nutrition Decade's Work Programme.

The UN General Assembly mandated the Food and Agriculture Organization of the UN (FAO) and the World Health Organization (WHO) to co-lead the implementation of the Nutrition Decade.

EXAMPLE OF THE NORWAY-LED GLOBAL ACTION NETWORK

Sustainable Food from the Oceans and Inland Waters for Food Security and Nutrition

Established by Norway under the umbrella of the United Nations Decade of Action on Nutrition 2016–2025 and as a follow-up to the Sustainable Development Goals, this Action Network will highlight the critical role food from the oceans and inland waters can play in ensuring food security and nutrition. It will also raise political interest, share knowledge and good practices, illustrate successes and challenges and work to increase the production and consumption of sustainable, safe and nutritious aquatic food. The network will include cross-sectoral expertise from governments and governmental institutions working with fisheries and aquaculture, nutrition and health.

For more information, see:

<https://nettsteder.regjeringen.no/foodfromtheocean/>

HOW DO ACTION NETWORKS FUNCTION?

Governance

Action Networks can be regional or global. They are led by a governmental institution within the lead country or countries. Leadership of Action Networks may be rotated among participating countries to equally share workload and costs.

Membership

Countries can be members of one or more Action Networks at the same time.

There is no limit to the number of countries that can join an Action Network. Lead countries must, however, coordinate network activities in a consistent, orderly and inclusive manner.

Action Networks' members represent ministries or other national public institutions covering nutrition-related areas of work. Membership should be open to more than one ministry or public institution from each participating country, to encourage the multisectoral engagement necessary to integrated and sustainable action.

Action Networks' lead countries are responsible for deciding how a network will engage with civil society organizations, academic institutions and the private sector, with due consideration to conflicts of interests that may arise between the network's activities and objectives of such organizations.

Operations

Action Networks can operate for as long as deemed necessary by members to fulfil their objectives.

Ideally, members should agree on and develop common work plans to facilitate the implementation of their activities.

In becoming members, countries commit to participating actively in Action Network activities, including suggesting points of action and supporting implementation.

Action Networks must decide on their working language(s) and have their own internal means of communication among members (e.g. an internal mailing list) to facilitate information exchange. They are also expected to convene meetings as necessary.

Action Networks' lead countries must submit short annual progress reports on network activities to the Nutrition Decade's joint FAO/WHO Secretariat. Such reports should contain meeting outcomes and agreed action points.

When needed, operational tools and technical assistance may be provided by international organizations such as FAO, WHO, the International Fund for Agricultural Development, the World Food Programme and the United Nations Children's Fund, as well as the United Nations System Standing Committee on Nutrition and the Committee on World Food Security (CFS) Secretariat.

Funding

Coordination and management costs of Action Networks are borne by their lead countries. As per [UN General Assembly resolution 70/259](#), the Nutrition Decade leverages existing initiatives and mechanisms.

Action Networks' members are responsible for bearing the costs of their own participation in Action Network meetings or for finding alternative funding sources.

ACTION NETWORKS' MEETINGS

Action Networks' meetings are opportunities for countries' representatives to exchange experiences on the development and implementation of policies and legislation for nutrition and food systems for healthy diets, and to benefit from views and experiences of representatives from the private sector, civil society organizations and academia.

Action Network members decide on the frequency of meetings. Network meetings can be held in person or virtually, taking full advantage of web-based conferencing technologies to facilitate attendance and diminish costs. Lead country members decide where and how network meetings are hosted; they set agendas and invite participants.

Action Network meetings are by invitation only and are not public events.

HOW TO ESTABLISH ACTION NETWORKS?

One or more countries can propose an Action Network. To start the process, the proposers communicate the Action Network's title, objectives, scope and initial programme of work to the Nutrition Decade Secretariat. The proposers also identify and invite other interested countries to join the Action Network and regularly inform the Nutrition Decade Secretariat on the Action Network's progress.

SUPPORT BY THE NUTRITION DECADE SECRETARIAT

The Nutrition Decade Secretariat acts as a facilitator in support of the Action Networks created under the Nutrition Decade. In this role, the Secretariat will:

- host a knowledge repository for the Action Networks' activities on the Nutrition Decade website (www.un.org/nutrition);
- assist lead countries in announcing network meetings and sharing news on activities;
- arrange for reporting achievements by Action Networks in progress reports to the World Health Assembly, the FAO Governing Bodies, CFS and the UN General Assembly; and
- provide visibility to governments and institutions actively supporting the Nutrition Decade's Action Networks.

For more information on the modalities of Nutrition Decade's Action Networks, see: www.un.org/nutrition/action-networks

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Produced by:

UNITED NATIONS DECADE OF
ACTION ON NUTRITION
2016-2025

UN Decade of Action on Nutrition Secretariat



Food and Agriculture
Organization of the
United Nations



World Health
Organization