

Recommendations on the Rome Accord: ICN2 Zero Draft Political Outcome Document for 19 November 2014

The World Cancer Research Fund International and the NCD Alliance strongly support the aim of the Rome Accord and its focus on reshaping food systems to address malnutrition in all its forms, including obesity and nutrition-related non-communicable diseases (NCDs). However, the Zero Draft and its commitments lack ambition and require a stronger focus on solutions. We, therefore, propose the following alternate commitments for the Rome Accord.

Recognizing that a framework for collective commitment, action and results is needed to reshape the global food system to improve people's nutrition:

1. We declare our commitment to identifying and implementing effective food systems solutions to poor quality diets and malnutrition in all its forms. This should include finding solutions to underweight, stunting, micronutrient deficiencies, overweight/obesity and diet-related non-communicable diseases, including heart disease, diabetes and some cancers. We consider all of these conditions to be part of malnutrition in all its forms.
2. We commit to establishing cross-government and multi-sectoral governance structures with the mandate of identifying and encouraging effective food systems solutions to malnutrition. Governments should play a lead role.
3. We commit to improving the opportunities for our populations, especially vulnerable populations, to access safe and nutritious foods. We will identify and remove constraints to an available and affordable supply of nutritious foods so that all populations can access a diverse and healthy diet. Constraints can occur throughout the food system, and may include soil, water and land management, agricultural research, agricultural production, transportation, distribution networks, procurement logistics, transmission of price information and retailing. Focusing on increasing access to nutritious food has co-benefits for climate, resilience, and gender.
4. We commit to leveraging local food systems and engaging local populations to support the adoption of sustainable and nutritious diets, including by establishing markets for smallholder and family farmers, developing urban food systems to meet the needs of the local population, leveraging traditional/indigenous crops, and supporting women engaged in local and smallholder food production systems.
5. We commit to reviewing the coherence between national and international policies that influence food systems and the food supply and programmes and policies designed to achieve nutritional outcomes, including those associated with food safety. This will include reviewing bilateral, regional and international trade and investment agreements, investments in agricultural research, and incentives we provide to food processors and retailers. We will address policy incoherence to ensure investments and incentives that provide an enabling environment for the effective implementation of nutrition policies and programmes.

6. We commit to accelerating the implementation of population-wide interventions that enable and empower individuals, women and families to make healthy, nutritious food choices, which will create demand for healthy food systems. These should include the measures contained in the WHO Comprehensive implementation plan on maternal, infant and young child nutrition and the WHO Global Action Plan for the Prevention and Control of NCDs 2013-2020, including the implementation of the WHO Set of Recommendations on the Marketing of Food and Non-Alcoholic Beverages to Children.
7. We commit to advancing the data revolution in nutrition. Data systems and metrics are needed to monitor progress and drive commitment and accountability for achieving nutrition outcomes, and the relationship between food systems and nutrition. We commit to focusing on creating and improving systems and tools for gathering better and more frequent data, particularly on undernutrition rates, micronutrients, diet quality (including metrics relevant to obesity and non-communicable diseases) and local availability and affordability of diverse nutritious foods. Achieving this may require improved data sharing and use between the private and public sectors. Data should also be disaggregated by gender, age, ethnicity, geography and other key targets essential for reaching the most vulnerable and marginalised.
8. We commit to engaging all actors in our efforts to identify and implement effective food system solutions to malnutrition in all its form including civil society. We recognize that engagement with the private sector should be conducted within a clear and transparent framework for engagement which is supported by appropriate rules, regulations and safeguarding against conflicts of interest.
9. We call for food and nutrition security to be included as a standalone goal, with relevant targets and indicators, and mainstreamed in the post-2015 development agenda. Food and nutrition security represent the cornerstone for progress on other development fronts such as employment, education, the environment and health and in achieving a quality future for humankind. The sustainable development goals should strongly complement poverty eradication efforts when it comes to food and nutrition security, and include universal targets on eliminating malnutrition in all its forms.
10. We call for official development assistance, including climate mitigation and adaptation finance, philanthropic transfers and other foreign assistance, to support capacity building in identifying and implementing effective food systems solutions to improve malnutrition in all its forms.

World Cancer Research Fund International is an umbrella organisation that leads a network of cancer charities and has a global reach. The network funds scientific research and updates and interprets the evidence on the relationship of food, nutrition, body weight, physical activity and alcohol to cancer risk. WCRF International advocates the wider implementation of effective policies to prevent cancer and other non-communicable diseases.

The NCD Alliance is a unique civil society network of over 2,000 organizations in more than 170 countries focused on raising the profile of non-communicable diseases (NCDs) on the global development agenda. Founded in 2009, the NCD Alliance unites five international NGO federations and a network of global and national NGOs, scientific and professional associations, academic and research institutions, private sector entities, and dedicated individuals.