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Creating a climate for nutrition, health and gender equality
Round table around the WHO Climate Change and Health Conference
August 28th 12:40-1:50 pm (Room B)
Low carbon lunch will be provided

Co-organizers

International Union of Nutritional Sciences (IUNS) and Swiss Federal Office for the Environment (FOEN)

Background

The IPCC Fifth Assessment Report indicates that climate change has a negative impact on health, and food and nutrition security of millions of most vulnerable people – particularly women and their children. Climate change further exacerbates the enormous existing burden of undernutrition, undermining current efforts to reduce hunger and promote nutrition. Undernutrition in turn reduces the capacity of vulnerable populations to promote climate-resilient development. Adaptation approaches that include food security and nutrition objectives could have the most direct benefits to health, in particular in developing countries. There are many co-benefits to health and the environment of nutrition-sensitive climate change adaptation and mitigation measures that need to be further explored within the context of the climate agenda and the post-2015 sustainable development framework. Gender dimensions of vulnerability derive from differential access to the social and environmental resources required for adaptation. Therefore, women empowerment, engagement and transformational leadership are critical to address climate change challenges to health, and food and nutrition security in an integrated way.

Scope and purpose

This round table aims to provide to participants an opportunity to discuss:

- Integrated approaches to achieving food security, nutrition, health, gender equality, resilience and sustainability in a changing climate.
- Co-benefits of nutrition-sensitive climate adaptation and mitigation measures.
- Approaches that governments, stakeholders and UN agencies can consider to address nutrition in the run-up to Paris and within the post-2015 agenda framework.

Round table outline

Introduction: Cristina Tirado, chair of the task force on Climate and Nutrition of the International Union of Nutritional Sciences (IUNS); and José Romero, Swiss Federal Office for the Environment (FOEN)

Panelists: Francesco Branca, WHO, Director of Nutrition
Xiangjun Yao, FAO, Director of the FAO Liaison Office
Julien Kyomuhangi, Assistant Commissioner at the MoH in Uganda
José Romero, Chief Scientist Environment International Swiss Federal Office for the Environment
Serge Breyse, MD, Director of Advocacy, Action Against Hunger

Conclusions: Cristina Tirado, chair of the task force on Climate and Nutrition of the International Union of Nutritional Sciences (IUNS); and José Romero, Swiss Federal Office for the Environment (FOEN)

Questions from the audience

Key messages from the round table as compiled by the organizers (Cristina Tirado, IUNS; and José Romero, FOEN)

These key messages reflect the interventions and key messages from the panelists and the discussions with the participants to the round table and do not forcefully represent the views of the organizers of the round table (IUNS and FOEN).

- Climate change has a direct impact on food and nutrition security, undermining current efforts to reduce undernutrition, one of the world's most serious but under-addressed socioeconomic and health problems.
- In order to advance nutrition and health priorities stakeholders may use climate change adaptation and mitigation initiatives, including science-based assessment by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), and policies and actions formulated by the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC).
- A combination of nutrition-sensitive adaptation and mitigation measures, nutrition-smart investments, increased policy coherence, and institutional and cross-sectoral collaboration can address the impacts and threats to food and nutrition security from climate change.
- Empowering women is a cornerstone of fostering adaptation and addressing the impacts of climate change on nutrition and health.
- Mainstreaming issues of food and nutrition security in low- and middle-income countries in national adaptation plans and international cooperation, including through priority support to women and children in communities most at risk for undernutrition.
- Mobilization of sufficient investments in national adaptation plans and international cooperation, including from climate funds, to address food and nutrition security, as well to support mitigation and adaptation measures that bring nutrition co-benefits.
- Strengthen multi-sectoral coordination and political will to include nutrition-relevant actions into climate-resilient sustainable development efforts within the UNFCCC work, the post-2015 framework for Disaster Risk Reduction and the SDGs and post-2015 development agenda.
