

Regional Consultation on Nutrition and HIV/AIDS in French Speaking Countries in Africa Region

Evidence, lessons and recommendations for action

Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso

17-20 November 2008

CONCEPT PAPER

Background

A joint Nutrition and HIV/AIDS regional consultation is being proposed for French speaking countries in Africa, as a direct response to resolution EB117.R2 (WHA59.11) whereby the Member States requested the Director-General of the World Health Organization to strengthen technical guidance to Member States for incorporating HIV/AIDS issues in national nutrition policies and programmes; and to support the development and dissemination of science-based recommendations, guidelines and tools on nutritional care and support for people living with HIV/AIDS.

This consultation follows the good example and successful experience of the Durban consultation held in 2005 on nutrition and HIV/AIDS which had most English speaking countries in Sub-Saharan Africa and a second consultation was held in Bangkok, Thailand from 8-11 October 2007 for 11 countries in the WHO South-East Asia Region and 4 countries from the Western Pacific Region. The main objective of these consultations was to mobilize countries to include nutrition as an integral part of the response to the HIV and AIDS epidemic. The UN Agencies and other partner's involvement have been helpful to ensure this successful integration.

Due to successful integration of nutrition into HIV programme by some countries that participated in the previous two consultations, a number of French speaking countries in Africa have requested a similar effort.

The regional consultation will bring together policy and decision-makers and programme managers, HIV and nutrition researchers and scientists, to be well informed of the latest scientific evidence on issues related to nutrition and HIV/AIDS and to jointly agree on how to translate the science into an action-oriented plan of work.

The participants will come from 20 French speaking countries and will have opportunity to discuss utilization of available scientific evidence, to identify gaps, challenges and opportunities and to develop the work plans for integrating nutrition into HIV/AIDS programmes.

Justification

Sub-Saharan Africa continues to be the region most affected by the AIDS pandemic. More than two out of three (68%) adults and nearly 90% of children infected with HIV live in this region, and more than three in four (76%) AIDS deaths in 2007 occurred here. There were an estimated 22.5 million [20.9 million–24.3 million] people living with HIV in the region in 2007. Almost 61% of adults living with HIV in 2007 were women and an estimated 11.4 million orphans are due to AIDS in this region.

Across West and Central African countries, there is wide variation in observed magnitude of HIV. Of the global total of approximately 33.6 million people living with HIV, nearly 4.5 million, including some 400,000 children aged below 14 years are living in Burkina Faso, Central African Republic, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Guinea and Nigeria alone. In 2006, some 350,000 people died from AIDS and the five countries are also home to nearly 1.9 million orphans due to AIDS. Prevalence rates increase in a general way from the west (Guinea and Burkina Faso) to the east (Nigeria, Republic, Democratic Republic of the Congo and Central African Republic) and range from 1.5 % in Guinea to over 10.7% in Central African Republic. Food shortages and malnutrition have combined with HIV/AIDS to bring some countries in the Region to the brink of crisis. Africa is the region where malnutrition rates are still increasing. Moreover, food is often identified as the most immediate and critical need by people living with HIV/AIDS and others affected by the pandemic. African governments are grappling with a range of programme and policy challenges related to food, nutrition and HIV/AIDS.

Objectives

General

To contribute to the integration of nutrition as a fundamental part of the overall response to HIV/AIDS in Central and Western Africa.

Specific

- Review lessons learnt from the global and regional experience of integrating nutrition as a fundamental part of the response to HIV/AIDS.
- Identify gaps, challenges and opportunities for formulation of evidence-based programmes for integrating nutrition as a central part of the response to HIV/AIDS.
- Formulate and recommend within a regional perspective action plans for national and regional levels ensuring nutrition as a part of the response within the comprehensive package of HIV/AIDS care, support and treatment programmes, including a research agenda.

Expected outcomes

- A Participants' Statement demonstrating a strong commitment from the national participants and relevant partners and institutions to include nutritional support as one of the crucial responses to the epidemic.

- A joint plan of action with UN agencies and other partners to ensure the integration of nutrition as a fundamental part of a comprehensive package of care and support for those infected and affected by the disease.
- Consensus on the best practices in nutrition and food-based interventions in relation to HIV prevention, care and treatment, in Africa.
- A research agenda related to nutrition and HIV/AIDS, in Africa.

Follow up

Regional Office for Africa, WHO inter-country support team - West Africa and Country Offices will support States members to implement the plan of action to ensure the integration of nutrition as fundamental part of a comprehensive package of care and support for those infected and affected by HIV.

Process

- **A Planning Committee** of interested agencies, supporters and selected regional and global scientists to be established (WHO, FAO, WFP, UNICEF, IAEA, and others) and preparatory conference calls planned and convened.
- WHO/AFRO and WHO inter-country support team -West Africa will be the main organizers. WHO will provide the technical assistance needed and raising resources from potential donors. WHO country office in Ouagadougou will assist in the planning and holding of this consultation.
- There will be organized working groups and plenary sessions in which scientific presentations and discussions will be done.
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Dates

This will be a three and a half-day meeting.

Suggested dates are: 18-20 November 2008. The opening reception will be planned the evening of Monday 17th so as not to use much time from the scientific programme.

Venue

Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso has been proposed because of the following reasons:
Easy access by other Francophone countries, cost issues, security, availability of hotels, secretarial support from WHO inter-country support team and country office.

Language of the consultation

French language will be the official language of the consultation. There will be however simultaneous interpretation into English.

Participants**Country participants/3 participants by country**

The country participants will come from three areas:

- 1 from HIV/AIDS
- 1 from National nutrition programmes
- 1 from Leading NGO/PLWHA group at national level

Countries

Algeria, Benin, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cap-Verde, Côte d'Ivoire, Cameroon, Chad, Congo, Central African Republic, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Guinea Guinea-Bissau, Madagascar, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Rwanda, Senegal and Togo.

WHO/HQ

- 2 from NHD
- 1 from HIV

WHO/AFRO

- 1 from FAN
- 1 from CAH
- 1 from HIV

Experts (speakers and facilitators)

- 8 experts

UN Agencies

- 15 participants

NGO

10 participants

Approximate number of participants will be 80-90.

Reference documents**Nutrition and HIV:**

- WHO: Executive Summary of a scientific review: Consultation on Nutrition and HIV/AIDS in Africa: evidence, lessons and recommendations for actions. Durban, South Africa, 2005.
- WHO: Executive Summary of a scientific review: Consultation on Nutrition and HIV/AIDS in South-East Asia: evidence, lessons and recommendations for actions. Bangkok, Thailand, 2007.
- WHO: Nutrition Counselling, Care and Support for HIV-infected Women Guidelines on HIV-related care, treatment and support for HIV-infected women and their children in resource-constrained settings. Geneva, World Health Organization, 2004.
- WHO: Nutrient requirements for people living with HIV/AIDS. Report of a technical consultation. Geneva, World Health Organization, 13-15 May 2003.
- FAO/WHO: Living well with HIV/AIDS - a manual on nutritional care and support for people living with HIV/AIDS. Rome, 2002.
- WHO/UNICEF: Eastern and Southern Africa Regional Meeting on Nutrition and HIV/AIDS. Meeting Report: 2-4 May 2007, Nairobi, Kenya. Kenya, UNICEF ESARO, 2008.
- WHO/UNICEF: Nutritional Care of HIV-Positive Children in Kenya, Malawi and Zambia: A Progress Review. Kenya, UNICEF ESARO, 2008.

HIV and Infant Feeding:

- PAHO/WHO: Guiding principles for complementary feeding of the breastfed child. Washington DC, USA, 2003.
- WHO: Global Strategy for infant and young child feeding. Geneva, World Health Organization, 2003.
- WHO: Infant and young child feeding counselling: an integrated course. Geneva, Switzerland 2006.
- WHO: HIV and infant feeding statement on the prevention of HIV infections in pregnant women, mothers and their infants, Geneva, October 2006.