

Title: DEVELOPING AND IMPLEMENTING FOOD BASED DIETARY GUIDELINES IN AFRICA: GUIDANCE FROM A REGIONAL TECHNICAL CONSULTATION MEETING

Conference sub-theme: Scaling Up Nutrition OR Nutrition, Food Security and Agricultural linkages

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Background and objectives:

Food Based Dietary Guidelines (FBDGs) are available for over 100 countries and serve as the basis for public health and agricultural policies and nutrition education programmes. However, only six African countries have successfully completed the process. Owing to changing dietary patterns and the double burden of malnutrition, many African countries have indicated their interest to develop FBDGs and require capacities to embark on this process.

Methods: In May 2016, FAO in collaboration with the Nutrition Society of South Africa, held a technical meeting for Africa on the “Preparation of Food Based Dietary Guidelines and Nutrition Education for Promoting Healthy Diets”, with the goal of providing training to governments and exploring issues surrounding the development and use of FBDGs in Sub-Saharan Africa.

Results: Countries, which participated in the meeting were Botswana, Cameroon, Gambia, Ghana, Kenya, Malawi, Namibia, Rwanda, Swaziland, Tanzania, Zambia, and Zimbabwe;

and their representatives from ministries of health, agriculture and other nutrition experts met to discuss challenges and opportunities in promoting healthy diets. They also compared FBDGs models from Latin America and the Caribbean and other countries such as USA, Thailand Sierra Leone and South Africa; while exploring multi-sectorial processes, information sharing and institutional capacity building opportunities in their context, to effectively advocate for the development and implementation of national FBDGs in their respective countries.

Conclusions: There is much still to do to support countries on the preparation of their national FBDGs, and many approaches and recommendations discussed during the technical meeting need to be considered. Overall, the meeting was a crucial platform for participants to obtain practical guidance and examples of good practices on the area of FBDGs. Next steps will require commitment from the country teams to follow-up their action plans after the workshop, with support by technical partners and other relevant stakeholders.

Key words: Food-based dietary guidelines; nutrition education; nutrition transition, Food and Agriculture Organization; Sub-Saharan Africa

Total words: 300 exact words, without considering the title and the keywords