

Landmark Global Nutrition Study Launched

Good Nutrition: Perspectives for the 21st century



The launch of *Good Nutrition: Perspectives for the 21st century* at CFS 43 in Rome, October 21, 2016. From left to right: Prof. Eileen Kennedy, Prof. Jess Fanzo, Prof. Hilal Elver, Dr Hinrich Thölken, Lauren Landis, John B Cordaro, Dr Klaus Kraemer and Jonathan Steffen.

Jonathan Steffen

Jonathan Steffen Limited, Cambridge, UK

A landmark publication in the field of nutrition science and policy-making, *Good Nutrition: Perspectives for the 21st century* was launched at a side event during the 43rd Session of the United Nations Committee on World Food Security (CFS 43) on October 21, 2016. The venue for the launch was the headquarters of the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) of the United Nations in Rome, Italy.

The objective of this event was to encourage dialogue among CFS stakeholders involved in food security and nutrition at global, regional and national levels. The well-attended session was introduced by Dr Lawrence Haddad (Executive Director GAIN) and facilitated by Prof. Eileen Kennedy (Professor of Nutrition and former Dean of the Friedman School of Nutrition Science and Policy at Tufts University, and Member of the Steering Committee of the High-Level Panel of Experts on Food Security and Nutrition of the CFS). Members of the Editorial Board who oversaw the book's development were joined by Prof. Hilal Elver (UN Special Rapporteur on the Right to Food), Dr Hinrich Thölken (German Ambassador to the Rome-based UN Agencies) and Lauren Landis (Director of the Nutrition Division of the UN World Food Programme) to discuss the objectives, approach and content of the book.

Understanding the complexity of nutrition

Good Nutrition: Perspectives for the 21st century is a work of advocacy whose prime objective is not only to call readers to action,

but also to outline what action needs to be taken to address the global nutritional challenges of our age. As Dr Lawrence Haddad observed in his introduction to the book launch, "We all face challenges, but complexity is never far away." The intrinsic complexity of nutrition was a key theme of the event, for *Good Nutrition* fully acknowledges this fact while at the same time striving to deliver accessible analyses and practical solutions based on robust scientific evidence.

"A brilliantly clear communication vehicle"

Dr Haddad went on to observe that the elimination of hunger by 2030, as foreseen in the UN Sustainable Development Goals, is possible, but only if we accelerate nutrition while simultaneously slowing the spread of obesity. Despite the fact that poor nutrition reduces the health and wealth of nations, Dr Haddad sees malnutrition in all its forms as an "opportunity." Increasing domestic spend on nutrition from its current very low level of 1% of total government budgets and forging new and influential alliances beyond the world of nutrition itself are essential to drive positive change, however. In this context, *Good Nutrition: Perspectives for the 21st century*, is, in the words of Dr Haddad, "A brilliantly clear communication vehicle."

Prof. Manfred Eggensdorfer (Head of DSM Nutrition Science & Advocacy and Professor of Healthy Ageing at the University of

Groningen) next took the floor to introduce the structure and key content of the new publication, which was created specifically to support the post-2015 global development agenda. Placing the book firmly within the context of the UN Committee of Food Security's current drive to strengthen its role in nutrition, Prof. Eggersdorfer explained how *Good Nutrition* is designed to reach the agenda of policy-makers, donors, academics, private-sector organizations and civil society, as well as of organizations dedicated to the nutrition space, with the aim of achieving tangible outcomes and impact.

One world

Pointing out that we all live in one world, even though the nutrition challenges of the developing and the developed worlds may differ greatly, Prof. Eggersdorfer expressed his hope that *Good Nutrition* will provide a key source of reference for CFS stakeholders seeking to learn more about nutrition from global experts, each of whom examines different aspects of the challenge of malnutrition or different components of the solutions within the book's pages. One of the five sections of the new publication is dedicated to sustainable food systems, and a special chapter puts the Sustainable Development Goals into practice, which is of particular relevance to the CFS in light of the upcoming High-Level Panel of Experts (HLPE) Report on Food Systems and Nutrition.

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Like its predecessor volume, *The Road to Good Nutrition: A global perspective* – which was published by Karger in 2013 and which won a 2014 British Medical Association book award for the best publication in the category Public Health – *Good Nutrition: Perspectives for the 21st century* takes a broad-ranging view of its subject. The book's 25 chapters have been developed by no fewer than 50 world-leading experts in their respective fields and overseen by an Editorial Board comprising, alongside Prof. Eggersdorfer himself, Dr Klaus Kraemer (Managing Director of *Sight and Life* Foundation, and Adjunct Associate Professor in the Department of International Health of Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health, Baltimore, MA, USA); John B Cordaro (Global Food Security, Nutrition and Safety Consultant, Mars, Incorporated); Prof. Jessica Fanzo (Bloomberg Distinguished Associate Professor of Global Food and Agriculture Policy and Ethics at the Berman Institute of Bio-

ethics and the Nitze School of Advanced International Studies at the Johns Hopkins University, Baltimore, MA, USA, and Director of the Global Food Ethics and Policy Program); Prof. Mike Gibney (Emeritus Professor of Food and Health at University College Dublin, Institute of Food and Health); Prof. Eileen Kennedy; Prof. Alain B Labrique (Director, Johns Hopkins University Global mHealth Initiative & Associate Professor Department of International Health/ Epidemiology (jt) Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health Baltimore, MA, USA; Department of Community-Public Health, Johns Hopkins School of Nursing (jt); Division of Health Sciences Informatics, Johns Hopkins School of Medicine); and Technical Editor Jonathan Steffen (Jonathan Steffen Limited, Cambridge, UK).

Transforming the nutritional landscape

During the panel discussion, Prof. Hilal Elver expressed her hope that the book would be used as a reference work for academic nutrition courses, pointing out that many of the topics covered are not yet being taught in universities. The richly illustrated book, which contains 79 figures and 19 tables, along with a glossary of key definitions and an introduction by Prof. Elver herself, is structured in five sections. It opens with a consideration of the major forces shaping our global food system, then moves on to discuss the relationship between nutrition, health and economic status. Next it explores the prerequisites for sustainable food systems, before presenting a number of innovative, science-led solutions to the challenge of providing good nutrition for everyone. Finally, *Good Nutrition* concludes with an extended discussion of what needs to be done in order to transform our global nutritional landscape for the better.

The panel discussion triggered a lively Q&A session that covered topics including the increasing importance of a systems approach to nutrition, the need for powerful alliances beyond the nutrition space, the promise of new technologies, the global importance of food safety as well as food security, and the drive to have access to adequate nutrition recognized as a human right.

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***Good Nutrition: Perspectives for the 21st century* (381 pp)** is available from Karger Publishers. The PDF version may be downloaded from www.karger.com/Book/Home/273171.

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Good Nutrition

Perspectives for the 21st Century

Good Nutrition: Perspectives for the 21st Century is a work of advocacy, whose prime objective is to not only call readers to action, but to outline what actions need to be taken and how this should be done, to achieve tangible outcomes and impact. Globally recognized experts present their insights in a clear and accessible way. This book represents a “one-stop information source” and paves the way for future science-led publications dedicated to the pivotal topic of good nutrition.

“This insightful and timely book rightly argues that addressing malnutrition is crucial to achieving sustainable development.”

KOFI ANNAN | CHAIR OF THE KOFI ANNAN FOUNDATION, FORMER SECRETARY-GENERAL OF THE UNITED NATIONS (1997-2006)

*“Nutrition is a complex subject, affected by many intertwining factors. *Good Nutrition: Perspectives for the 21st Century* pulls it all together in one easy-to-follow volume.”*

ANNA LARTEY | PRESIDENT OF THE INTERNATIONAL UNION OF NUTRITIONAL SCIENCES AND DIRECTOR OF NUTRITION AT THE UNITED NATIONS FOOD AND AGRICULTURE ORGANIZATION (FAO)

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