



World Food Programme
Programme Alimentaire Mondial
Programa Mundial de Alimentos
برنامج الأغذية العالمي



CERFAM
CENTRE D'EXCELLENCE REGIONAL
CONTRE LA FAIM ET LA MALNUTRITION

African Union



COMMUNIQUÉ DE PRESSE CONJOINT

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THE GOVERNMENT OF COTE D'IVOIRE, THE AFRICAN UNION, CERFAM AND THE WEST AFRICAN HEALTH ORGANIZATION JOIN FORCES ON FOOD FORTIFICATION

Launch of virtual high-level consultation to reduce micronutrient deficiencies

ABIDJAN – Today, the government of Côte d'Ivoire and the United Nations World Food Programme (WFP), through the Regional Centre of Excellence against Hunger and Malnutrition (CERFAM), in collaboration with the African Union and the West African Health Organization (WAHO) launch a high-level virtual consultation on "Food fortification: which dietary approach to reduce micronutrient deficiencies in Africa?".

The two-day consultation serves to exchange experiences and good practices in food fortification at the global, regional and national level. A focus will be set on supporting the efforts of African countries to eliminate malnutrition in all its forms. It can be followed by registering [here](#).

The consultation is aligned with the African Union's Agenda 2063 and the United Nations Decade of Action for Nutrition (2016 - 2025), with the Tokyo 2020 Nutrition for Growth Summit (N4G) and the Food Systems Summit 2021. "A healthy nutrition strategy and high-level political commitment are needed to facilitate quality nutrition that will allow children to survive, grow, develop, learn, play, participate and work. Food fortification is at the heart of the African Union's Agenda 2063 and sectoral programs, policies and strategies to improve the nutritional status of populations," says HE Ms. Josefa Sacko, African Union Commissioner for Agriculture and Rural Development, Blue Economy and Sustainable Environment.

In sub-Saharan Africa, micronutrient deficiencies or "hidden hunger" constitute a public health problem and a major obstacle to the development of human capital and to the socio-economic development of the continent. An estimated 12.7 million children under the age of five suffer from acute malnutrition or wasting in Africa.

"H.E. Alassane Ouattara, President of the Republic of Côte d'Ivoire has made the fight against malnutrition one of his priorities in the country's Development Plan. The Government is committed to the fight against all forms of malnutrition and makes food fortification a promising strategy," says Mr. Abdourahmane Cissé, the Minister, Secretary General of the

Presidency of the Republic of Côte d'Ivoire, country pioneer in West Africa in food fortification and strategic partner of CERFAM.

“The region is making progress in food fortification. Although we are happy with the developments observed in the different countries, there is still a lot to do. WAHO, in tandem with the Department of Agriculture of the ECOWAS Commission, is committed to supporting Member States and stakeholders to reap the health and nutrition dividends of food fortification,” says Prof. Stanley Okolo, Director General of the West African Health Organization.

“The right nutrition at the right time can help change lives and break the cycle of poverty. Fortification of staple foods, and bio-fortification, are powerful instruments in our toolkit to strengthen food systems, to make nutritious foods available and affordable for all, to improve diets and to tackle micronutrient deficiencies across populations and generations, from unborn children to the elderly,” says Chris Nikoi, WFP Regional Director for Western Africa.

The consultation will be attended by over 400 key players in the health, food security, nutrition and food systems in Africa, including representatives of governments, regional and sub-regional organizations, the African Parliamentarians’ Network, development partners, United Nations agencies, control and regulatory agencies, the private sector, academia, and civil society.

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About the African Union

The African Union (AU) is a continental body consisting of the 55 member states that make up the countries of the African Continent. It was officially launched in 2002 as a successor to the Organisation of African Unity (OAU, 1963-1999). Aspiration 1 of the AU's Agenda 2063 aspires to a prosperous Africa based on inclusive growth and sustainable development. To achieve this ambition, one of Africa's main goals is to ensure that its citizens are healthy and well nourished.

About CERFAM

A regional hub for exchanges, partnership building and South-South Cooperation, the Regional Centre of Excellence against Hunger and Malnutrition (CERFAM) is the result of a partnership between the Government of Côte d'Ivoire and the United Nations World Food Programme (WFP) to support African countries in their national efforts to develop and implement sustainable policies and programmes to achieve Zero Hunger (SDG2) and combat all forms of malnutrition in line with the 2030 Agenda.

About the National Council for Nutrition, Food and Development of Early Childhood of the Republic of Cote d'Ivoire

Following the accession in 2013 of the Republic of Côte d'Ivoire to the “Scaling Up Nutrition” (SUN) Movement for the strengthening of nutrition, the President of the Republic, HE Mr. sets up a multisectoral - multi- actors for the synergy of policies and the convergence of interventions at the community level. The National Council for Nutrition, Food and Early Childhood Development

(CONNAPE) is made up of 5 key bodies: the Decision-making Committee, the Technical Committee, the SUN Focal Point, the Executive Secretariat and the Regional Committees for Nutrition, Food and Early Childhood Development (CORNAPE).

About the West African Health Organization (WAHO)

As a Specialized Institution of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) responsible for health issues, the West African Health Organization was created in 1987. The West African Health Organization (WAHO) is entrusted with a political mandate by the Heads of State and Government to ensure coordination of regional health interventions within the ECOWAS region.

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