



The Government of Nepal, the Government of the United States, the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), and the World Food Programme (WFP) are pleased to invite you to a

Special Event of the Fourth United Nations Conference on Least Developed Countries on

Equitable Human Development: Investing in Nutrition in LDCs

Tuesday 10 May 2011, 8:00-9:45AM, Çamlica Hall, Istanbul Conference Center, Istanbul, Turkey

Objective of the event:

The special event will highlight the critical importance of adequate nutrition in accelerating economic, social, and human development in LDCs. Undernutrition during pregnancy and the first 2 years of life causes irreversible damage to the mental and physical development of children. Improving nutrition during this period in life is feasible through simple interventions. There is ample evidence that the benefits far outweigh the costs, especially among the most deprived. The panel will underline the urgency to invest more in nutrition and will provide examples of how multi-sectoral programmes can improve nutrition outcomes and human capital. The event aims to show how best to translate the growing momentum on nutrition into measurable and equitable results for children.

Background:

Compared to the richest children in the developing world, the poorest have twice the risk of dying before age 5. They are also twice as likely to suffer from chronic undernourishment, and will therefore see their growth stunted and cognitive capacities diminished. The cycle of stunting is passed on to future generations. Compared to other children the same age stunted children have 1 to 4 times the risk of dying from infectious disease, are more likely to perform less well in school (equal to two to three fewer years of education) and to earn less in adult life - by 22 per cent on average. These factors further exacerbate deprivation and inequity. Stunting affects about one in three children, or some 195 million children under five, in the developing world.

LDCs are especially affected. Of the 24 countries accounting for more than 80 per cent of the global burden of stunting, 13 are LDCs. Their plight has been worsened by the high global food prices and the economic crisis, which pushed millions more people into poverty and hunger. As a result, in 2010, 29 countries had "alarming" or "extremely alarming" levels of hunger, according to the IFPRI's global hunger index, and 27 of these countries were LDCs. The remaining 11 LDCs showed a "serious" incidence of hunger. LDCs pay a high price for not adequately addressing undernutrition and growth stunting, including increased health and education costs, lost economic productivity, and the suffering of millions of children.

Eminent speakers:

Sir Richard Jolly will be the moderator for the event.

- H.E. Mr. Jhala Nath Khanal, Prime Minister of Nepal
- H.E. Mr. Donald Steinberg, Deputy Administrator, United States Agency for International Development
- H.E. Mr. Ba Housseini Hamadi, Minister of Health, Mauritania (TBC)
- High level representative of the Government of Mali (TBC)
- Dr. Mihret Hiluf, Director, Agrarian Health Promotion and Disease Prevention, MOH, Ethiopia
- Mr. Anthony Lake, Executive Director of UNICEF
- Mr. Amir Abdulla, Deputy Executive Director of WFP
- Save the Children (TBC)

Light breakfast will be served. For further information and to RSVP, please contact jgreene@unicef.org