



THE MOORE INSTITUTE FOR
NUTRITION & WELLNESS

INTERNATIONAL SUMMIT ON THE NUTRITION OF ADOLESCENT GIRLS AND YOUNG WOMEN PRELIMINARY CALLS FOR ACTION

SUMMARY

In May 2015, delegates from 17 countries gathered together in Portland, Oregon, U.S.A. for the International Summit on the Nutrition of Adolescent Girls and Young Women, supported by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. The Summit brought together nutrition scientists and field practitioners to consider some of the greatest challenges facing the nutrition of girls and young women, and the dire health consequences and profound lost opportunities that result for entire communities, countries and the global population as a result. Delegates represented leading scientific institutions, international aid agencies and government organizations.

During the Summit, the 67 participating delegates developed a unified set of preliminary calls to action. These preliminary calls to action will culminate in a Summit Consensus Statement that will synthesize the important findings, knowledge gaps and critical action steps needed to improve the health of adolescent girls and young women.

More than 25 years of research has demonstrated the critical role of nutrition in improving the health of mothers and their offspring. It is now clear that poor nutrition among adolescent girls will not only harm their own health but will affect their offspring, should they become pregnant, and perpetuate poor health within the population for the next generation. As Dr. Margaret Chan, Director-General of the World Health Organization described, “We can reduce maternal anaemia, low birth weight and child stunting and bring down the risk of noncommunicable diseases within a generation. **We can achieve this by giving nutrition the attention it deserves**” (Address given at the meeting on nutrition, session: “*Why we must act now: consequences of early under-nutrition*,” on the occasion of the UN High-level meeting, 20 September, 2011). This goal cannot be achieved unless the health of adolescents and young women is improved overall, prior to conception, and during and after pregnancy. This document recommends bold action because the need is urgent.

“ We can reduce maternal anaemia, low birth weight and child stunting and bring down the risk of noncommunicable diseases within a generation.

We can achieve this by giving nutrition the attention it deserves.”

-- Dr. Margaret Chan, WHO

PARTICIPATING ORGANIZATIONS

Aga Khan University, Pakistan, Central Asia and East Africa

Amhara Development Association, Ethiopia

Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, Washington, USA

BRAC, USA

Cambodia Ministry of Health

Case Western Reserve University and MetroHealth Medical Center, Ohio, USA

Center for Alaska Native Health Research, Alaska, USA

Centre for Global Child Health, Hospital for Sick Children, Toronto

Emory University, Georgia, USA

Essence Empowerment Initiative, Nigeria

Global Health, Disease Control Priorities Network, USA

International Food Policy Research Institute, Health and Nutrition Division (IFPRI), India

Johns Hopkins University, Bloomberg School of Public Health, Human Nutrition Program, Maryland, USA

King Edward Memorial Hospital, Pune, India

London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine, UK

Mahidol University, Institute of Nutrition, Thailand

March of Dimes, New York, USA

MRC Human Nutrition Research, UK

Mercy Corps, Niger

Mercy Corps, USA

New York Academy of Sciences, Sackler Institute for Nutrition Science, NY, USA

Nike Foundation, Oregon, USA

Oregon Health & Science University (OHSU), USA

OHSU Global Health (Southeast Asia), USA

OHSU Knight Cardiovascular Institute Center for Developmental Health, USA

OHSU Moore Institute for Nutrition & Wellness, USA

Oregon National Primate Research Center, OHSU, USA

Program for Appropriate Technology in Health (PATH), USAID, Washington, D.C., USA

Population Council, Guatemala

Save the Children, Cambodia

Save the Children, UK

Save the Children, Washington, D.C., USA

Uganda Ministry of Health

United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), Zambia

United Kingdom Department for International Development, UK

University of Alaska Fairbanks, Institute of Arctic Biology, Alaska, USA

University of California, Davis, California, USA

University of Colorado at Denver, Colorado, USA

University of Colorado Health Science University, USA

University of Southampton, UK

University of the West Indies, Jamaica

University of Toronto, Nutritional Sciences, Canada

University Research Co., LLC, Cambodia

U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), Bureau for Global Health, Washington, D.C., USA

World Alliance for Breastfeeding Action, Bangladesh



PRELIMINARY CALLS FOR ACTION

1

Design new, vigorous efforts to educate all girls of school age and to keep them in school through their teen years.

2

Abolish child and adolescent marriages.

3

Prevent pregnancies in early adolescence (ages 10 to 15) because of deleterious outcomes for girls, their offspring and future generations. Delay pregnancy in late adolescence (ages 16 to 19) as long as possible.

4

Define and develop a global consensus on the concept of adolescent age (10-19 years) and include as a focus in indicators of adolescent health and nutrition. More robust data collection is urgently needed. The identification of non-invasive, inexpensive biomarkers for nutrition and comprehensive components of health to evaluate interventions and improved indicators are crucial to effective data gathering.

5

Ensure adolescent girls have access to a variety of nutritious foods that contain micronutrients, healthy fats, proteins and complex carbohydrates.

6

Incorporate adolescent voices and enlist their participation in each step of the action plan for adolescent health and nutrition. We need to engage adolescent girls (and boys) to better understand the drivers of their behavior and strategies that will resonate with them.

7

Develop and evaluate effective nutrition interventions and potential delivery strategies, and share best practices rapidly across delivery platforms.

APPENDIX: PARTICIPATING DELEGATES

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