



Schweizerische Eidgenossenschaft
Confédération suisse
Confederazione Svizzera
Confederaziun svizra

Federal Department of Foreign Affairs FDFA
Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation SDC
Regional Cooperation
Division Latin America and the Caribbean

HYSTRA
hybrid strategies consulting

e+i | employment and
income network



NUTRITION, VITALITY AND SOCIAL BUSINESS

18th of March 2015

Best Western HotelBern, Zeughausgasse 9, Bern (Switzerland), +41 31 329 22 22
www.nutritionandsocialbusinesses.org

Summaries of the sessions

Introduction

M. Heeb (SDC) and P. Murphy (Valid Nutrition)

8:30 – 8:55

Marlene Heeb presented SDC's multi-sectorial approach to reduce effects and underlying causes of malnutrition. She started by presenting the importance of the topic and the potential benefits of investing in better nutrition outcomes. In terms of SDC work, Marlene Heeb distinguished between nutrition specific interventions and nutrition sensitive interventions, which are crucial to address the underlying causes. An important message of her presentation was to identify and build on the roles that different stakeholders have in the nutrition challenge, in particular government, civil society and business.

Paul Murphy followed with an introduction on the challenges of improving nourishment at the Base of the Pyramid (BoP) and the role of social entrepreneurs in creating effective market-based approaches. He reminded participants that every day counts and provoked them by stating that there have been lots of initiatives and talks but not enough action. Nutrition is far too complex to come up with one silver-bullet solution and too much idealism has in the past hampered achievements. The private sector is needed to improve nutrition outcomes; at the same time, there has been a lot of mistrust, which we have to overcome. Also, businesses need to work on their marketing because in BoP contexts they will have to use many basics which are not used anymore in developed countries contexts.

Session #1: Measuring outcomes, creating partnerships

Moderator: D. Aylward

L. Kiess (UN World Program), P. Murphy (Valid Nutrition), A. Hehir (DSM)

8:55 – 9:50

Creating public demand for full nourishment requires rapid measurements of personal nourishment outcomes (so people can see how they're doing), and connecting those results to personal development, educational, and productivity outcomes.

The panelists stressed the fact that prevention is key since the essential period for nutrition – the so-called 1000 days – is otherwise often missed. There is no question that the private sector has to come onto board to address the nutrition challenge. But the most difficult aspect is to create the demand and get people to invest in products and behavior that is beneficial for nutrition.

Factors that have so far deterred the private sector to engage are the fear of criticism and the fact that complementary food can often not be marketed due to an interpretation of the breastfeeding code.

When talking about metrics, it is important to keep in mind who these metrics are used for. The data a private sector company needs to build their business model on is different from the data used for showing impact of programs or getting money from donors.

Session #2: Why nutrition alone fails - the importance of holistic approaches

Moderator: O. Kayser

D. Aylward (Ashoka), N. Metro (Kinome, Ashoka Fellow)

9:50 – 10:45

Conducting nutrition programs alone does not work well: other factors such as poor health (e.g. worms, malaria) and sanitation (e.g. diarrhea from bad water) reduce nourishment absorption and often offset any benefits. A silo approach is also more expensive in service delivery, public education, and testing.

Nicolas Metro stressed that nature is at the core of nutrition: Nutritious food comes from environmental processes (soil, oceans, air, solar light). It is therefore essential for us to keep nature alive, especially given our increasingly urban lifestyle. Solutions therefore have to take into account the environment and build on local communities.

David Aylward picked up on this message to provide further aspects of holistic approaches. On the one hand, environmentalists should care about nutrition and several “disruptive innovations” by Ashoka fellows along the “Nutrient Value Chain” provide examples for this. On the other hand, the health community should also care about nutrition. There needs to be a radical change from sick care towards wellness and the vitality concept. The full “vitality package” during the 1000 days period goes far beyond food and includes the awareness of parents, the emotional attention given to babies, etc. A final crucial message given by David concerned the use of IT to find solutions and business models around nutrition.

Session #3: Marketing nutrition for the BoP

Moderator: P. Murphy

L. Klarsfeld (Hystra), M. van Liere (GAIN)

11:00 – 12:00

Marti van Liere presented the lessons learnt by GAIN, working improving availability and accessibility of affordable nutritious infant foods in 17 countries. Marti gave examples of both public delivery and social business models. Based on GAIN experience, in order to create access for all consumers, but especially lower-income households, a mix of traditional and alternative public and private sector delivery channels must be utilized. Another important lesson that was shared is that product innovation based on consumer input is paramount to move nutritious infant food products forward.

Lucie Klarsfeld from Hystra shared lessons learnt in marketing and distributing nutritious foods to BoP consumers, based on case studies of over 20 organizations. These key lessons have already inspired numerous social enterprises to evolve their marketing approach and a leading foundation to modify its nutrition strategy. The examples from the field highlighted a range of practices such as increasing convenience for consumers through home delivery of products, using a so-called “magic price” for products which corresponds to a coin or a bill in the local currency, increasing regularity and loyalty of consumption through subscription schemes and raffles.

Session #4: Two parallel workshops to discuss innovative approaches in nutrition and wellness for the BoP

13:45 – 16:15

Workshop 1: Concrete proposals for successful babies and youth wellness

Moderator: D. Aylward (Ashoka)

Panel: M. Menke (Access Afya), O. Kayser (Hystra), A. Sinha (Nourishing schools initiative, Ashoka India), M. Konaté (Protein Kissée Là)

In this session, two specific proposals developed by Ashoka and other partners out of field experiences of social entrepreneurs all over the world were presented and discussed by the participants. The two proposals were the following:

- **Successful babies:** this plan addresses maternal/child wellbeing holistically, during the 1000 days of pregnancy and infancy, combining full nourishment with health interventions. The proposal integrates and builds on successful narrower approaches.
- **Youth Wellness:** This aims to demonstrate how a program of full nutrition and wellness interventions in school-age children can improve their physical growth, athletic ability and performance in school, while developing long-term behavior change.

Melissa Menke shared her experience with Access Afya in Kenya. After setting up clinics in slum areas, Access Afya wanted to extend the services to more people and other areas. Through their “healthy school programme” they found an attractive service model which includes the three aspects of primary care for school children (screening and deworming), nutrition (new stoves and porridge mixture) and WASH. Parents pay for these services.

Archana Sinha introduced the Nourishing schools initiative in India that is based on the observation that future parents need to get relevant advice on nutrition already before the 1000 days period starts. A toolkit was therefore developed through a participatory process and applied in schools. The toolkit includes a range of methods (games, comic books, etc.) to transfer advice concerning nutrition and also collect data. In order to foster the schools ownership over the toolkit, it is presented as a way to achieve the schools own targets in terms of better academic performance, access public funds allocated according to number of pupils, etc.

Marie Konaté presented her business PKL, a small company in Ivory Coast that produces and sells fortified complementary food. PKL receives technical and financial assistance from GAIN. Even though their products are more affordable than imported products from multinational brands, PKL faces the challenge to reach consumers at the BoP with high quality products at affordable price. Marie Konaté also shared her experience from her own childhood at a school in Mali where programmes similar to those presented from Kenya and India were active. She was convinced that these programmes were very useful and therefore much regretted their disappearance.

The discussion after these presentations focused first of all on the scalability of the models. Most participants thought that in order to reach scale, existing structures, organizations and networks need to be leveraged. Most of the time, this requires an involvement of public structures. Hence, a private initiative can introduce an innovation, but at later stage the government may be brought in (e.g. through a PPDP). However, some participants feared that the corruption that prevails in existing structures is too much of an obstacle and it is therefore better to start from scratch. Another point that was highlighted is the importance to use IT in order to establish sustainable business models that are able to reach scale.

Another aspect of the discussion focused on the marketing challenge. A cheap price is not possible if one wants to uphold the quality of food. It is therefore all the more crucial to get the product right through a customer-centric approach, selling a product that appeals to the consumer. One argument that may also convince is the fact that raw material comes from the local agriculture. In this way, consumer may identify more with the product.