

Cambridge University

Food Security Event, 8th April

Distinguished colleagues, ladies and gentleman. First I would like to thank Dr Vira and Dr Nally for inviting me to speak at the last of this series of Cambridge University events focussed on Food Security. Although issues like food and nutrition security are now more and more in the public eye there is still much work to be done on the ground. Besides understanding what is scientifically and technically possible, we must also consider the role that different parties including the private sector can play to bring about a healthier, more sustainable and more secure nutritional future. Food security cannot be a ground for disputes : it is too serious an issue for this. It is or must become a place for partnership, as it is too broad and complex an issue for one of us to solve alone.

When you live in a city like London - or Cambridge! , you are surrounded by cafes, restaurants and eateries and it is often very easy to forget how prevalent issues like poor food security and under nutrition are throughout the world. You can too easily forget that about 1 billion people go to bed hungry every night, that there are 2 billion undernourished people in the world and, by 2050, we will have 9 billion mouths to feed. But the problem does not stop here : we also have over 1.0 billion people who are obese and this number – and its consequences be it heart disease od diabetes epidemics are as far reaching as those of under nutrition. The problem is huge, and is now visible at the same time in the same place, be it in Asia, in Africa, or in parts of Europe and the US where under nutrition and obesity exist side by side.

Before we consider how to change the future, though, we should not forget the lessons of the past. What is clear from history is that the levels of food and nutrition security reflect and affect individuals' living conditions, economic resources and social opportunities. For every

\$1 spent on combating hunger and malnutrition by a developing countries unlocks at least 30\$ of national wealth that can be used to provide better overall health, better school attendance and ultimately additional economic growth. These are problems that a magic wand will not solve. This is something all us must work on together and we – institutions, NGO, companies - have a shared interest in doing so. At Unilever, we have a long history of working with Government and civil society. Indeed the roots of our business were founded on doing just that.

During the Second World War, due to a shortage of animal fats, we were asked by the UK government to produce a margarine that provided essential fats and was fortified with vitamins. It is still going strong today! The margarine and the spirit of co-operation it embodied are still important elements of our business.

This spirit of partnership has since grown into other areas such as sustainability. We all need to show leadership – individually and collectively to forge new

forms of transformational partnership. It makes sound economic and moral sense for us to work together – both within industry, with governments, with NGOs and with civil society. Traditional governance mechanisms – such as UN, G20 or G8, are needed but have their limitations. We need to create new partnerships. Movements such as Scaling Up Nutrition (SUN) are great examples of this new approach.

We are now deeply involved in partnerships to:

- improve health and wellbeing
- improve environments and
- improve livelihoods.

and do all of this together, as addressing one issue in isolation often does not solve the broader problem.

Improving health and well-being

As a company we have, as, of course, have others, provided healthy food, actively reduced salt and sugar in our products, encouraged and developed clear and transparent nutrition policies, but - as importantly - encouraged people to cook and therefore eat more

diverse and balanced meals . As an example, we were one of the first businesses to start a salt reduction programme in the UK. This was a difficult issue where no business wanted to be the first to lead, but we took the initiative. We have since been at the centre of discussions with other manufacturers, retailers, chefs and, of course, government to see how we can take this agenda forward.

This co-regulatory approach has done much to reduce salt intake and has now served as a model for many other countries round the world.

We are now continuing on this journey by encouraging families to cook healthy and tasty meals and developing tools with the International Union of Nutrition Scientists to understand what best motivates people to do so and stick – for the long term – to better healthier eating habits. Changing habits for the better, and making it easy and sensible for people to comply to is the challenge ahead of us

Improving Livelihoods

The food business is not, of course, just about the large multi-national companies. We only provide about 6 percent of the world food supply. Much comes from small holder farmers, many of whom are women, who can provide food for themselves and also for their neighbours. But the striking fact is that three quarters of Africa's malnourished children live on small farms. By helping these small local food producers, we can help reduce the problems of malnutrition at source, and do more in doing so, progressively raising the standards of hygiene, education and ultimately livelihood

An example of a programme which works directly with similar communities in India is Shakti, programme we started and run with NGOs, banks and governments.

This is helping women like Rojamma, who lives in Andhra Pradesh. When her husband left her, she was only earning a few rupees working in her mother's field and was struggling to feed her two daughters.

With our help, she joined Shakti and became a micro-entrepreneur. Now she is selling soap, shampoo, water and tea in and around her local village.

This is good for Rojamma, because she is running her own business and providing for her family. It is also good for the three million households affected by the scheme because not only do they have improved access to affordable local commodities but also spin off projects such as IT training, health education and the provision of education scholarships. And it's good for Unilever because it enables us to reach hundreds of thousands of villages and millions of households in rural India. So tackling tackling the Foods challenge is not only about tackling the foods challenge. It is about addressing a whole eco-system of interrelated issues, and offer solutions that are not a one off solution, but a systemic improvement.

One of the key systemic improvement required, when it comes to Foods security is Foods waste.

Obviously the Foods that is wasted in the rich countries and would be enough to put an end to malnutrition. You may have heard of the initiative we launched in this country and in the US, to help people re-learn how to accommodate left over. It's a great way of avoiding waste, saving money but also diversify what you are

eating. I will happily provide tips and recipes at the end of this session.

But more seriously, this is only part of the issue. There is also the Foods that is wasted in fields, alongside roads or in warehouses, as logistic to move it from where it is produced to where it is needed is simply not adequate.

I will always remember, from my time living in Africa, the tons of rice provided by Band Aid and Bob Geldorf rotting in some warehouse just one hundred miles away from Ethiopia, where kids were dying very minute.

Why did this happen? How can it be possible ? What can be done to make sure this does not happen next time? This has made Foods security something very personal to me, for the rest of my life. And it made me believe that companies had a definite role to play, as a force for good, next to NGOs and governments Unilever has recently been trying to reduce food waste in the field, supporting small holder farmers and the eco system around them; looking at how food is stored

before it is processed, how it is distributed and what happens in the home or in the restaurant's kitchen.

All this waste is avoidable. We are trying to find ways to avoid this waste at each step of the process.

These are just some of the things we are doing but many of them show that to meet the challenges requires new ways of thinking and new approaches. Approaches that require real partnerships between all key stakeholders : regulators , NGOs, companies.

Approaches where sustainable and equitable growth underpins and helps great business performance, approaches where companies are part of the solution rather than part of the problem. This why we, as a company, have put sustainability at the heart of our business model – with the Unilever Sustainable Living Plan and its 50 metricated and time bound commitments

Unilever's history was that of a social enterprise, where you could do well by doing good. Our future is as a social enterprise.

And these things – society and enterprise – are not in conflict. Instead, they are inextricably interconnected.

Strong society needs a strong enterprise base. Strong enterprise needs a strong society.

I am really proud of what Unilever does, working with NGOs and others. We are helping to transform some of the most impoverished parts of the world. We are helping to reduce food and nutrition insecurity and at the same time are helping to bring dignity, opportunity and a brighter future.

Thank you