

REMARKS BY MR. SAITOTI TOROME, CBS, PRINCIPAL SECRETARY, STATE DEPARTMENT FOR PLANNING, THE NATIONAL TREASURY AND PLANNING DURING THE FOURTH NIPN GLOBAL GATHERING ON 4TH – 6TH OCTOBER 2022

Director General, KNBS;

Executive Director, KIPPRA;

Senior Government Representatives, present;

Scaling Up Nutrition Kenya representative;

Representative, EU Head of Delegation, Kenya;

Representative UNICEF Kenya Office;

Representatives Capacity for Nutrition;
Representatives of National Information Platform for Nutrition
(NIPN) from Kenya, Ethiopia, Guatemala, Lao PDR, and Uganda;
All other Nutrition Partners;
All protocols observed;
Distinguished Guests;

Ladies and Gentlemen;

Good morning,

- It gives me great pleasure to welcome you all to the fourth National Information Platform for Nutrition (NIPN) Global Gathering. The NIPN is a forward-looking initiative that was launched by the European Union in 2015 to support countries in delivering evidence-based programmes and interventions to improve human nutrition in their progress towards the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development Goal (SDG). NIPN was initiated to create country-led and country-owned

nutrition information platforms that enhance the use of existing data to provide evidence to better inform policies and programmes.

Ladies and c Gentlemen,

- This fourth Global Gathering occurs at a time of unprecedented global economic shocks whose impact greatly affects global and local food and nutrition security. In 2015, at the time the world was transitioning from the Millennium Development Goals and defining Sustainable Development Goals, the prevalence of undernourishment was 8.0 %. Unfortunately, as of 2021, this proportion has increased

to 9.3% based on the State of Food Insecurity in the World 2022 Report which goes further to project that by 2030, nearly 670 million people are likely to still be facing hunger. This projection can be translated to 8 per cent of the world's population, which would be the same proportion as in 2015 when the SDG 2030 Agenda was launched.

- These statistics have impact on the nutrition situation of our children and their mothers. Globally 22 percent of children are too short for their age, representing a population that is unlikely to fully achieve

their growth, development and intellectual capacities. In addition, one in three women in our world today is anaemic, representing a population that is susceptible to infection and death.

- To contribute to sustained reduction of malnutrition, there is need for a coordinated service delivery by both third public and non-state actors. This will be achieved through a well-structured collaboration of various institutions with interest in food security and nutrition.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

- The current economic and food security shocks are exacerbated by increased frequency and intensity of extreme climate events around the world which are proving to be disrupters for implementing government plans for instance with regard to agriculture and child education.
- The nutrition situation in Kenya is similarly non-ideal. Based on the 2014 Kenya Demographic and Health survey, 26 per cent of Kenyan children are stunted, 4 percent are too thin for their height and 11 percent are underweight-for-age (KDHS, 2014). This means that out

of 5.99 million children under the age of five years approximately 1.55 million are stunted. With the current drought situation where Kenya is staring at the possibility of a sixth season of failed rain we expect the situation to have worsened. This suddenly comes at a time when we are approaching a global countdown to the 2025 by which several of the countries, we represent had aimed to have significantly reduced malnutrition rates

Ladies and gentlemen,

- This calls for a shift in approach for the sake of averting human crisis. Engagement between governments, international agencies, development partners and local communities needs to be increasingly enhanced. The use of information to inform prompt response needs to be visibly increased and the capacity of government to translate data findings to tangible action needs to be developed.
- This background qualifies the NIPN approach as a timely initiative. With presence in a total of eight countries, NIPN experience in creating country-led and country-owned nutrition information

platforms that has enabled countries to strengthen information analysis and use of data to better inform policies and programmes.

- Particularly in Kenya, the NIPFN platform is not only a welcomed initiative but also a much needed one in supporting various institutions to generate quality data, perform analyses, track progress and use the information for policy development. Ultimately this will contribute to expanding and scaling up effective food and nutrition programmes.

- Having been officially launched in 2021, the project has so far launched a multi-sector web portal, and produced 4 statistical reports as well as a policy brief.

Ladies and gentlemen,

- The nation of Kenya has only scratched the surface with regard to the impact the NIPFN platform could have on the nation. As we work towards realization of the 2030 Sustainable Developmental Goals (SDGs) there is a growing call for effective, accountable, and inclusive institutions. Information platforms such as the NIPFN increase

institutional transparency by easing access to information and ensuring decision-making processes are inclusive and representative for nutrition interventions.

- The Government of Kenya has made a commitment to improve food security and nutrition as enshrined in the 2010 Constitution article 43 (c) which provides the right to adequate amounts of food of acceptable quality, clean and safe water in adequate quantities as well as article 53 (c) which provides every child the right to basic nutrition, shelter and health care. The shared aspiration of the

country in the constitution is further stipulated in Kenya Vision 2030, which is implemented through five-year Medium-Term Plans.

- This project is key in tracking progress in meeting food security and nutrition targets stated in our constitution, Vision 2030 and other development plans.

Ladies and Gentlemen

- I take note that this Global Gathering occurs at a season of transition for NIPN from NIPN 1 to NIPN 2. Similarly, in our nation, this period marks a transition with regard to Medium Term Plans from Medium

Term Plan (MTP) III to MTP IV. This is a crucial time to ensure key nutrition priorities are well anchored in the upcoming 5-year development plans in a manner that will be tracked by all relevant ministries. The inclusion of NIPFN into the fourth MTP would embed it as a government agenda, and would catalyse discussions on the platform's sustainability. With such an initiative we are confident of witnessing a season of actualising our food and nutrition targets.

- As I conclude, ladies and gentlemen, let me take this moment to recognize support that our countries continue to receive from development partners for purposes of strengthening capacity in

areas of food security and nutrition. I acknowledge with thanks the financial support from the European Union together with Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office, Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) and the United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF) in supporting platforms activities. The governments represented here today welcomes such support to ensure that food and nutrition security issues are adequately addressed in our respective countries.

- Allow me in a special way **ladies and Gentlemen**, to welcome you once again to this Gathering as an opportunity for learning, team building and if time allows, I encourage you to take this opportunity to tour our lovely country to see the beautiful, award-winning beaches and enjoy some Kenyan hospitality.

Distinguished Guest, Ladies and Gentlemen,

- It is now my singular honour and pleasure to declare the global gathering officially open.

Asanteni Sana