

WHAT'S COOKING: GLOBAL CHILD NUTRITION TO FUEL BRIGHT FUTURES

Announcer 00:00

Please welcome, Ami Firdaus, Senior Associate, Programming, Asia, Milken Institute.

Ami Firdaus 00:10

Hi. I thought it was really cool that I had to walk through a kitchen to get here because we're going to talk a lot about food the next 50 minutes. So with that, good afternoon, everyone, and our warmest welcome to all of you here today with us. Thank you for taking time to join us. Time is so precious. Really appreciate it. Today, we're going to talk about "What's Cooking: Global Child Nutrition to Fuel Bright Futures." This is a public panel that sits on the Milken Institute's health program this year, and this Health pillar that we have within the Institute features a Feeding Change team. This team works to catalyze a more nutritious, sustainable, resilient and equitable food system by activating social and financial capital, engaging policymakers and industry leaders, and also convening key stakeholders across health, philanthropy, and finance. In the midst of all of this, child nutrition is a key lever of change for better food systems. So we hope that placing child nutrition on the Asia Summit program spotlight today is an additional pull on that lever to extend the work on connection and collaboration around better food systems in Asia. This is a region replete with its own share of child nutrition challenges that school meal systems face, and a mosaic of opportunities. We hope that all of you will work alongside the Institute's Feeding Change team to consider and explore the strategic opportunity around enabling healthier school meals in Asia and the world. To end, here's a question for us to think about, to cook, if I may say so, which the panel might unpack over the next 45 minutes or so. What does a healthy school meal look like to you? Do you know? So I'm going to leave that discussion to our esteemed speakers and to Curtis, our amazing moderator, it's over to you, Curtis, I don't think you can hear me. Thank you everyone and enjoy the lunch program.

Announcer 02:20

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Announcer 03:55

Please welcome the panel on “What's Cooking: Global Child Nutrition to Fuel Bright Futures,” moderated by Curtis S. Chin, Chair-Senior Fellows and Senior Advisor, Milken Institute.

Curtis S. Chin 04:19

Good afternoon everyone. Originally we were going to call this program, I don't know What's for Lunch, because really this is all about, in many ways, school lunches. So I was first trying to say, oh, close your eyes. But now I'm going to just say, just think back to your school lunches. For some people, it was a terrible memory. And not just the food. It's like, oh my god, I hated that cafeteria. Others, well, I love those school lunches. And for me, we were laughing because I said, [inaudible] when I went to school, there was always a little calendar, and one day would be like, pizza day, and one day would be like, I don't know, fried chicken day. And it's like, I don't want to eat all those days, I just want the pizza day. And so what we've assembled today is really a dynamic panel, and like with many things at Milken, involving people from all three key sectors. So from government on my left, from Indonesia, but also from the private sector, from civil society or the nonprofit world, and because it's a special food program, a chef. And so what we're going to do is really have, hopefully almost like a lunch conversation on stage, and we do have some things we'll show, but it's really about a conversation about nutrition. It almost follows up on a panel we did last year on investing in children and in ways, it's not just investing in children. It's about investing in our future as we think through what are our young people eating? So just some quick factoids before we get to the conversation, I pulled out—you know I often go to WHO data on health, but, particularly for children, you know UNICEF, I'm a big fan of UNICEF, just came out the Child—the UNICEF Child Nutrition Report of 2025 and we'll talk about what surveys are out there. What's the data that we can really base investment decisions on? But two bits of data I just wanted to pull out for our part of the world, here in Asia, that UNICEF, in this 2025 report, says, in terms of food poverty, the worst is here in Asia. South Asia, 130 million young people in food poverty. And in this part of the world, 59 million East Asian Pacific of young people in food poverty. And so what's been—intriguing is maybe not the right word, but when you think about it, you're the oh, it's just poor nations. That's where the issue is. But it's that's far from the case. And so the word that I see in a lot of the reports from UNICEF and elsewhere is this notion of a double burden. Yes, there's under nutrition. Some countries deal with stunting. You know, people are not getting the right nutrition, but in so many nations, including in my own United States, there's also issues now of being overweight and obesity. So it's got, you got a double burden when we think about children's nutrition and many factors, which we'll get into. But I really want us to focus really on why this is so important, and then later on, we'll talk about partnerships and solutions. So I'm going to begin by asking Heidi to give us the big picture. You know, when we invited you, you were like oh, there's so much to talk about. And actually, you know, Heidi actually has a bunch of great data, which you can reference, and there you can all access online. But why is this such a critical issue? Tell us a little bit about your group and just that big picture, including beyond Asia, when it comes to child nutrition.

Heidi Kessler 07:39

Thank you. A pleasure to be here, and I'm glad that you all look fairly friendly. So looking forward to this conversation. I come from the Global Child Nutrition Foundation, where we lead the global survey of school meal programs. We invite all 194 governments to provide standardized information on their school meal programs so that we have an understanding of what's happening in school meals around the world, and I'm pleased to share some of that information with you today. So first of all, more than 400 million primary and secondary school-aged children receive food at school. That makes this the largest safety protection program in the world. School meal programs can bridge gaps between health, nutrition, education, agriculture, social protection, even gender equity and sustainability. I'd like to describe a little bit about what some school meals look like around the world. Just two weeks ago, I was in Brazil enjoying a school meal of rice and beans and corn that had been procured from smallholder farmers, prioritizing the selection of smallholder farmers that are women. In other parts of the world, Kyrgyzstan, they're providing kefir, fermented milk to provide protein and calcium. They're also serving fortified flour, rice, and oil. They have an online platform for training their chefs, and they have a line item specifically in their national budget to feed children at school, and importantly, they employ nutritionists to make sure that they're getting the nutrition basket right. In Laos, we see tinned fish and poultry on the menu, deep orange and dark green vegetables, fortified rice and oil. Small scale farmers in Laos receive preferential treatments during the bidding process to make sure that they can access a stable market of school meal programs. Another exciting thing in Laos is that they're actively switching their cooking methodology, from using wood and charcoal to using fuel efficient stoves with alternative fuel. In Burundi, the government makes most of what's local. We see zucchini leaves, spinach, cassava leaves on the plates. School meals are not just about food security. They're providing nutrition, the vitamins and minerals that children need, and strengthening the local food systems.

Curtis S. Chin 09:57

You know, I'm going to call up—can I call up, what, slide 10. And so I asked, you know, food is so visual too, and so what are we seeing here? If you can't read, like Finland, Malaysia, Kyrgyz and Honduras. Is that what they're having for lunch? Like, what are we looking at here?

Heidi Kessler 10:15

Absolutely, these are all photos that were submitted by the countries themselves. A wonderful quote I'd like to share from from Finland, a conversation I had last week, the minister said "school feeding is in our history," They have a long, decades, long history of school feeding, "but it's pointed to the future." It's really acknowledgement and recognition that the countries are recognizing school feeding not as charity, but as an investment in the human capital of their future,

Heidi Kessler 10:40

Let me share a little bit about what you might see in Japan. Students might sit down to a steamed bowl of miso soup, some grilled fish, fresh milk and fresh bread, and it's going to be served right in the classroom by the students themselves. Students are actively engaged. They go down to the kitchen, they bring the meal up to the classroom, and they serve their they serve their peers. They have to portion out hot soup. They use real utensils. They know who has allergies. My experience in Japan taught me that the school meal was not just about getting the food on

your tray, sitting down and and talking with your friends and having a break from academics, but it was actually a period where students were learning empathy and compassion through food. Is really a beautiful thing.

Curtis S. Chin 10:40

And can we see slide 11?

Curtis S. Chin 11:32

Yeah, you know, when I think about this region, just imagine the diversity of school lunches out there. One to degree they can afford it, is one question as we'll talk more about, how can we get this done? But one nation that has really made an amazing commitment to children, to nutrition children, is Indonesia. And can we call up slide 14? You know, I know, if you live out here, you all know Indonesia. But for those watching online, Indonesia is a vast country. I know 16,000–17,000 islands, but the new president of Indonesia has made an incredible commitment. Can I ask you, Abdullah, to tell us a little bit about what's going on Indonesia, the survey, or what is the commitment in terms of school lunches and nutrition and all?

Asnawi Abdullah 12:19

Yep. Since 10 years ago, child nutrition has become one of the top government priority. And Ministry of Health also transform health system and put nutrition is one strategy, and we see the result, the prevalence of stunting reduced from 30 percent to 20 percent

Curtis S. Chin 13:00

Stunting? Like they'll meet a certain height?

Asnawi Abdullah 13:02

Yes, stunting drop from 30 percent to 20 percent.

Curtis S. Chin 13:12

Absolutely, yeah.

Asnawi Abdullah 13:12

So in—which means we are able to reduce around 1% every year. So we target by 2045, so the prevalence of stunting is around 5 percent. So the trend indicates we can achieve that, that score. A lot of strategy. We developed 12 Health Program strategy, and most of the strategy achieve the target. Only four program need more focus attention, two programs related with also related with school program, like we said before. Imagine Indonesia has a free meal program, every day we we prepare millions food free program for the student. So then we see that this is program, also impact on long term child health—nutrition.

Curtis S. Chin 14:36

Yeah. How is it actually unfolding? Is it like, I don't know, province by province. I mean, such a wonderful ambition. But how does really one feed—how many kids are we talking about? I don't know, hundreds of millions? You look at the numbers. I mean, how many are at that school level that now the nation is committed to give a meal?

Asnawi Abdullah 14:57

Yeah, so since we have—can you show again the slide with Indonesia?

Curtis S. Chin 15:07

Slide 14 again, yeah.

Asnawi Abdullah 15:08

Recent survey, Indonesia nutrition survey, we see the disparity of stunting issue in one part to another part of Indonesia. In some part of Indonesia, like Bali, the prevalence of stunting is already around 8 percent while in other part of Indonesia, like in Papua, the prevalence is still around 30 percent. So this is a big disparity between one province with another province. That is one issue we need to handle. When we see that—let's see the Bali, for example. In addition, all the health program is achieved the target in that area, also the local government support is quite strong to improve the nutritional status in that area. So then, when we see the health program work with strong commitment from the local government, so the prevalence of stunting is dropped significantly, as we know when we talk about stunting, 30 percent factor related with health program, but 70-75 percent is beyond the health program, so we need more collaboration with local government and other ministry including like sanitation, water supply—clean water supply, so that is also related with stunting. So the issue now for the Ministry of Health, doing quite good program, but we only focus. We only can solve 30 percent of the issue, but the rest, we need more collaboration with other sectors. So that is the challenge for us. And since the government of Indonesia put the stunting as the key issue, invest like you say—before investing in child health is promising for Indonesia to be developed country by 2045. So if we lack of focus on child nutrition at the moment, so we will, we will deteriorate our dream to be a developed country by 2045 which is around 20 years.

Curtis S. Chin 17:57

Yeah, you know, I'm sure everyone is here with you for that. You know, at a Milken Institute, there people from all kinds of sectors. We'll come back to Indonesia. But I think more broadly, one of the questions is, to what degree is partnership with the private sector essential? Like, how does government get it done? Do they outsource it, or they just raise my taxes? I don't know. And so I want to go to Laurent. You know, you are from the private sector. You know, you can tell us a little bit about Sodexo, about where do you fit into this—like, is it like kindergarten through 12th, college, universities? Just if you could share some of your insights into the role of the private sector in addressing issues related to child nutrition and ensuring people get what they should be eating.

Laurent Hochet 18:40

Sure. Thank you, Curtis so let me just introduce who is Sodexo. Sodexo is a family owned company headquartered in France, and we—if we—I don't want to share too many figures with you, but we are basically cooking and serving food to 80 million customers every day around the world. So we have, we are employing for 340,000 people who are cooking and serving food in more than 50 countries around the world. And because we are a family company, with strong conviction, I would say that sustainability and nutrition is at the heart of everything that we are doing. So when we talk about the education segment, we are managing more than 4000 schools around the world, and we are convinced that we have a role to play. So that's why, beyond just serving food, we are looking at the nutrition. We are the largest employer in the world of registered dietitian nutritionists. We employ more than 4000 nutritionists in our company to make sure that the meals are actually healthy. So we when I say that we are cooking, it means that we design the recipes. We cook in our kitchen. We obviously source locally to make sure that we develop the communities where we are—and the countries where we are operating. So what is important for us, when we talk about playing a role in the schools, is actually engaging and educating with the children. And for that, I would say there are three main principles. If you want to reach out to this audience, it might be It must be fun, it must be trendy, and technology based. And that's what we are developing more and more on the schools, is actually to engage with the students through workshops. We do some cooking classes. We also developed, like in India, for instance, recently we had this competition, cooking competition, where actually we select the best little cook, I would say, which involved, actually the design of the recipe. So it's not only cooking, but also we engage them in developing recipes with the healthiest ingredients. And we have this traffic light color system that we also implement in most of our school also to make those children aware of you know, what is the best choice for me? So it doesn't mean that we have everything green, but sometime we explain that when it's red, we need to be aware that it's it should be like once in a while and not like every day. And what we are also doing to allow them to indulge themselves is actually to adapt the recipe. So let's say the pizza is not something that we can remove from the menu. I mean, when you are a child. So what we have developed is a specific dough with a warming flour that we use the, you know, the sauce is full of vegetable that actually allow the kids to have this pizza without feeling guilty, in a way. So that's, that's one way to do it. When we say trendy, actually, we leverage a lot the social media. We engage a lot with chef like Tony, because they are actually the best ambassador, I would say, to reach this population. So could it be in Singapore or in India? Actually, we engage with those chef that are actually coming physically on the school, animating some talk show, some cooking classes. So that's also quite impactful with with this population. And lastly, when I talk about technology, I would say that allowing the kids to order, to preorder actually online. Not only avoid the queuing time on those schools, but also guide them to the healthy choices. That's also a way for us to prevent any allergies. So actually, we set the system such a way that when the

parents are actually ordering online, they don't get access to those meals containing those allergen so we work with the school to preset the system such a way. And obviously we leverage a lot the gamification, because the kids, they love it. When they choose those healthy dishes, actually, they get some rewards. So that's a very positive way to actually engage on the on the nutrition side.

Curtis S. Chin 23:27

Can we call up a slide number one? What are we looking at?

Laurent Hochet 23:34

Actually, that's typically the dishes like—they look like when we serve. We actually—when you look at those recipes, I will say, I mean, I'm not sure this one is part of it, but we have the butter chicken, for instance. This is a big signature dish for or the children, and we managed to adapt to the gravy of the butter chicken again, to have those hidden vegetable and remove as much of the butter and the cashew nuts from the recipe to make it, again, healthier for the children. So again, the challenge that we have is actually we have starting meals every day on schools. Yeah. So the challenge and the risk for us is to become boring. When I say once a day. Sometimes it's even more because we are managing boarding houses. We have chicken—sorry, breakfast, lunch, and dinner actually served by Sodexo. So we must entertain this dynamic and engage as much as we can with those, those children, because we are becoming like the home cook in a way for them, and that's also why, through the different workshop that we are animating, we try also to reach out to the parents, in some countries, to the helpers, also to educate and show that actually we have easy recipes that they can use to make those home cooking also healthy and aligned with what we want to roll out.

Curtis S. Chin 25:06

You know, these lunches look nothing like my school lunch. Clearly, I would ate more of my school lunches if it looked like this, and it will come back, because one of the questions—all that stuff you described from ordering online, wasn't around when I was a kid. But for me, it sounds really expensive. And I think one of the challenges, whether you're in Indonesia or a poor state in the United States, I'm given a budget, you know. How can a company, how can that entity out there that's not the government within my budget, deliver something that is nutritious, but also wonderful looking? So I want you all to think about that. Then you can ask Tony or, and everyone on this panel each other, what do you think? What can you deliver that's not, you know, outside my budget. You know, for Indonesia, so vast. And maybe you'll have localized dishes and all the different, the Balis, the, you know, the different parts of the country. But I wanted to finish this first round of interaction by going to our chef on—but it's so funny when we walked in here from, like, the green room, we walked through the kitchen. And so we're all like commenting, look at look at those mushrooms that but they were probably thinking, who's that chef in our kitchen? And so, you know, Tony, you know, award winning chef in Korea. You've now opened up on the West Coast of the United States, and I remember one of the like the hot shows this year on Netflix, was a Culinary Class Warfare, right? And it's like 100 Korean chefs battling it out to pick the best chef in Korea, and she didn't win, but one of my favorite contestants was the lady that worked in a cafeteria at a school in Korea. And she talked about—her skill is, she's serving, I don't know, 200 kids, so she knows how to make a big pot of kimchi-jjigae

like a stew. So she talked about, you know, her insights were also but she wanted to do in a way where they still thought, oh, this is like a home cooked meal. And so Tony, I wanted to ask you, as you think about what everyone has said, from, it's nutritious, you know, it's a commitment of the government, the role of the private sector, how do we ensure even like the young people, eat what is served? You know, you're a world—or a food program chef advocate. Tell us a little bit about that and what you're seeing from your role as a chef.

Tony Yoo 27:33

Okay, thank you, Curtis, and it's been honored to be a part of this important conversation. Yeah, I work for WFP, yeah. It means using my voice and skill to connect chefs, school, campaign, company and government, yeah. So we design solution together from fortified food like a super cereal to campaign that reduce waste. Slide number four, please. Yeah, the super cereal to support children recovering from malnutrition, yeah.

Curtis S. Chin 28:12

Call up slide number four.

Tony Yoo 28:13

Four, please, yeah. It contains, yeah. It contains the protein vitamin and mineral in a format families accept. We teamed up with the, you know, the [inaudible], yeah, so to raise awareness, because design also means distribution and trust, yeah.

Curtis S. Chin 28:37

Yeah, I hear this theme almost like we're sneaking in the good stuff into school. I don't know that's the right approach, but clearly we have to do something where people will eat what is being served. I know one of the things, Tony, that you've worked on is really it gets all about data, where WFP and others are trying to collect data on—so I don't like counting the stuff that's in the trash can, to get that metric. Well, it's all might be really healthy, but kids are not eating that. So how do they do that? I remember you told me there was like, I don't. It's like, I don't red light or yellow light or green light.

Tony Yoo 29:19

This the number eight.

Curtis S. Chin 29:21

Number eight.

Tony Yoo 29:22

Yes, right. Slide number eight. In Korea school, we use the plate stop light, right, yeah, a playful signal to have kids check the leftover. Yeah. It means the green means they ate everything, and yellow means some leftover, and red means a lot was wasted, yeah, so is low cost and visual, and we try to very simple but effective, plate waste dropped by about 24 percent Yeah, yeah. It means a lot, yeah.

Curtis S. Chin 29:57

And one from a budget side, right? Great, there's less wastage, although it made me think people say, oh, it's a bad thing. When your mom or dad said, finish everything on your plate. Does that encourage over time, like overeating?

Laurent Hochet 30:11

If I may add, I mean, that's something we I mean, most of our school in Asia actually are equipped this, with this waste watch program. Actually, that we have implemented globally, but Asia is obviously part of the priority for us. And actually on the school it totally makes sense, because not only from the back of the house perspective, I mean, our employees are actually measuring every single waste and valorizing in terms of dollar value, what it means at the end of the day make the our people aware of you know how much is a shame to waste this, this, this food. So at every stage of the preparation process, actually, we should be the trimming or the over production, because once you present a dish, actually you cannot reuse it later on, so you need to throw it away. So this is all about forecasting and we usually say the best way to reduce the food waste is to not have any food waste at all. We are not we don't want to talk about recycling or whatever we need to better forecast. And so at the different stage of the process, we measure those waste, including for what we call the post consumer waste, which is actually what the children are bringing back to the to the bin. And actually we have scale, scale actually to weight those wastes, and also make the children aware and give some challenge sometimes. So we play again on the this gamification part. You know, we should reach a target today, actually. So let's together reduce the waste and that's worked quite well in terms of awareness. And that's also another way for us, for us to educate the population on that, and they are usually very receptive. I mean, I've been heading the education segment for Southeast Asia for six years. I can tell you that the best population to engage with for any topic, as long as you are fun, trendy and technology based.

Curtis S. Chin 32:17

Yeah. Can we call up slide number seven. So that Tony also shared with this week, these look like happy kids. Tell me, did you design that meal? What are we looking at in this.

Tony Yoo 32:29

Yeah, is it the right side is my his grandmother's bento.

Curtis S. Chin 32:35

Your grandmother? Yeah, your grandmother's bento?

Tony Yoo 32:37

Growing up in Korea. Is before universal school lunch. I carried the lunchbox from my grandmother made. This was very simple rice and kimchi, some side. Yeah, it looks simple, right, but it's perfectly balanced. So that's love is not a luxury, it's a design principle. So I think it's very important thing now, yeah. And this one is we try to—yeah, food waste of campaign school, so everybody very happy.

Curtis S. Chin 33:14

And slide number nine, what is this? Is this your grandma?

Tony Yoo 33:18

Yeah, it's not my grandma. This child is from Korean movie, okay? It's pretty similar. Yes, my grandma is always, yeah, she loved food, yeah. Gave me a grand daughter with some. Yeah, yeah. So I think it's pretty—

Curtis S. Chin 33:36

So it's really we talked earlier, when we were backstage, about, you know how—again, food is more than nutrition, you know, right? It's love, it's education, it's community. And so everyone on this panel, you know, you've heard each other talk. What are some of your reactions? You know, you see the world. You know, the whole issue, I think, for us, not just in Asia, but around our budget, is a key issue. Indonesia, you know, can you afford to do gamification high tech? I just got to get people food. But the reality, you might get the food, but maybe they won't eat it. You know, what are the lessons that we can take and cost effectively, take from each other? And then Heidi, you know, we know the US. And it's like, Oh, my God, the budget gets cut and cut and cut. What are some of the things you're seeing, let's say from the US that are there lessons there that we can take about what not to do or what to do as you survey the world and tell us a little about you. You've collected like data from all around the world. You do a survey by country, tell us about that.

Heidi Kessler 34:33

Thank you. So prior to 2018 the data on school meals around the world was very fragmented and inconsistent, we didn't know how many children were being fed, what they were being fed, how the food was being procured, or how it was being funded, so the Global Child Nutrition Foundation launched the global survey of school meal programs in 2018 to invite every government of the world to provide us with standardized information. Information on all aspects of their school meal program. So we now have a glimpse and an understanding of what's happening in school meals around the world. Governments have a lot of competing priorities. They have a lot of things that they can invest in. We try to share the message that school meals are one of the greatest investments, that is that a government can make. Schools get school meals, get kids in school. In the US. We might take for granted that the vast majority of students are in school, but around the world, that's not the case. There are more than 255 million school age children who are not in school. Our data has showed a correlation between the coverage of school meal programs and school enrollment. A meal is a very powerful incentive to get a child in school, and we see disproportional benefit to girls. Not only do school meals make it more likely for a family to be willing to send a daughter to school, but it has an even more powerful impact if we give that daughter food to bring home to the family. It can improve her improves her standing in the family, and it can transform her trajectory. We find that if we can keep a girl in school through the ninth grade, she is likely to delay marriage until 18 and first child until 20, and this has profound impacts.

Curtis S. Chin 36:30

Wow. Share with us from Indonesia, as you've heard some of this, as you're thinking about what Indonesia is rolling out. Are there things? Oh, that resonates. We're already doing that in Indonesia, or we recognize the role it can play in development, in the role of women. What are some of your thoughts as you think about what's folding—unfolding in Indonesia? And just some of these perspectives from different sectors, private sector, a chef, someone who surveyed the world?

Asnawi Abdullah 36:59

Yeah, when we look at the free meal program, for example, Indonesia just recently introduced the free meal program, this is really big challenge. And of course, we need a lot of partner with private sector to deliver the free meal program to a million people every day. This is, this is really big deal with Indonesia recently, and when we see the survey before. I also want to emphasize here, when we see the meal, and then we think about what ingredients in our food. The recent survey we conducted, and we found the interesting finding. We see the stunting—in the first year of child already stunting. So then we think about—this must be related with food intake during pregnancy. So one of the issue is related with low—lack of iron folic acid in the consumption. So then we think about like, how to what is strategy to motivate them to take iron folic acid, because the taste is not really, really good. So then impact on law compliant to take iron folic acid tablet, and then the government, think about different strategy. Can we find other products like that was tasty enough for them? Now we try to introduce the—or piloting multiple micronutrient supplement tablets as a potential alternative. Then, when we look at what we have on our meal is related also with stunting as well. So that's, that's why we focus on food we provide for pregnant women, because its impact on on stunting and also free meal program recently, we introduced. We

believe that also have good impact on long term health for the kid and when they grow up. So then the select this—reduce the stunting for their kid in in the long term. So this is the cycle, life cycle approach we introduced recently in Indonesia, in order to not only to reduce stunting prevalence, but also to improve the general child health. So that's, that's, again, when we see the food on the table, and then we see what kind what ingredient, what kind of vitamin. And that is also an issue in Indonesia recently, in some social economic statuses, the stunting is not issue for them, but often nutrition obesity is become more prevalent, mostly in this in the city. So the prevalence of obesity also the another issue for us, in addition to malnutrition, like you say, that double burden nutrition, malnutrition, not only stunting, but overweight and obesity, is what we also say that is also part of the malnutrition.

Curtis S. Chin 41:42

Yeah, absolutely. I mean, that was the double burden. You know, it's like, not getting enough nutrition doesn't mean you're not eating. You might be just eating the wrong things. I was—Heidi and I were earlier we could do a whole different panel on the zero- to five-year old issue, like, even before we get to what we're talking about, school lunches. Should governments, from a health perspective, intervene even earlier and almost—we talked about kids that we have to almost like trick moms to eat those vitamins. You know, how do we get people to eat the things that they should be eating? And one you can't just simply provide it. If it doesn't look good, it doesn't taste good, they just won't eat it. You know, for all of you on this stage, any thoughts on actually, that other challenge of obesity and overeating, and when we think about kids, you know, maybe they're eating too much in school. I just want three of those pizzas. I'm not eating that healthy stuff. So when you think about this issue of school lunches, and you think—I always thought it's always, that's those are the richer countries. But as we noted, you know, it can be in Indonesia. It could be, I know Singapore, where there are issues with school lunches too, and what are kids eating? Laurent?

Laurent Hochet 42:51

I just wanted to maybe bounce on what you say on the affordability part, because this is actually a topic in many countries. And maybe just to share with you some model that we have—we experience around the world, I would say, first, if we have a very pragmatic approach, I would say the longer the contract with the private sector is actually, the easier is the depreciation of the investment on the tool. So if we, if we take the way we operate in certain country, we have those central kitchen we call it a central production unit, but that's actually a way for us to leverage the economy of scale and reduce the cost of the producing a meal, basically. So that's one way, and they are different model, but sometimes the government built the tool and put it as a concession for the private operator for 10 years, 15 years, sometimes to operate and give it back on the same condition. And that's a tool that is actually maintained and renewed and so on. And beside this, we see also a lot of government having a clear requirement on local sourcing. So that's also a way to develop the local network of suppliers, and for companies like us also to support those local vendors based on our own requirements. Should it be traceability in terms of SOPs? Actually we support those business because we need this business locally. Even though we are global operator, we operate locally. Firstly because our customers are local, our recipes should be local, and our staff is actually local people. So having this approach, I would say holistic approach, having an impact on the cost of operating but also developing the local communities is actually a way, in my opinion, to maybe reinforce the local economic tissue, and while providing those healthy meals with strong standard. Because again, you have one

meal—if I take one example that I have in mind, in France, the city of Marseille, where actually Sodexo was created, we have one central production unit producing 50,000 meal every day. 50,000. So for all the school of the city. And actually, this is a concession contract that we have for 10 or 15 years that allow us to invest to make sure that we get the return on investment. And for this contract, for instance, we have strong requirements in terms of freshness of the product and also local sourcing, so we need to rely on these local suppliers.

Curtis S. Chin 45:40

Just to Heidi, do you have thoughts on either affordability or obesity or both?

Heidi Kessler 45:45

So I actually started my career in childhood obesity prevention, and very quickly I found myself in the space of school meals and recognizing that this was an intervention that could address obesity, childhood obesity in the US and beyond, we actually measure the various objectives that countries and governments give their school meal programs. And many countries around the world are using school meal programs to address obesity. That is, of course, we see it higher in higher income countries, and it's less of a focused objective in lower income countries, specifically Sub-Saharan Africa, where underweights and under nutrition is more salient. However, recognizing the potential of school meals to address childhood obesity in these environments before it gets out of control is an important component. School meals have the opportunity to model for children healthy lifestyles and good, delicious eating. So I would sometimes have a school nutrition professional who I very fondly might refer to as a lunch lady, say, "but Heidi, the broccoli and the carrots, they're going straight in the trash. And the broccoli and the carrots, they're not served at home." And so why should we serve it? And I would say to them, if they're not receiving those vegetables at home, it is even more critical that you are providing it to them at school. But then what I would see is, you know, plain steamed broccoli. And I'd say, you know, we got to call in Tony here. We need some flavor. We need some spice. We need to make this food delicious. So nutrition is not nutrition as less unless it's eaten. We don't want healthy trash cans. We want healthy, nourished bellies. So folks like Tony, who help make the food seasoned and delicious and attractive, is definitely the way to go.

Tony Yoo 47:38

My my cooking philosophy is not about adding more, but about removing what is unnecessary. I think it's very important point. I believe the world today needs this art of subtraction, clarity, simplicity and respect for the every ingredient, I think, is the point.

Curtis S. Chin 48:04

Can we pull up? Yeah, we just have a short amount of time. But can we pull up slide number six? And so this is not a school lunch. This is, if you go to fancy, fancy, fancy, restaurant. Yeah, but that is that challenge, you know, how do we get that meal that people think, wow, it's trendy, it's tech driven, it's fancy, and I want to eat it all and all.

You know, as we close, I want to say, can that be done? You know, if you had, I don't know, wave that magic wand, or there's one—a call to action for the people here that you want to them to take away as they think about school lunches, your kids meals, what you need to tell your mayor or your government to do, or what you want to tell your lunch lady to do. You know, what is that last message that you want to leave people? You're experts in this area from all different perspectives and all who will go first, anyone?

Tony Yoo 49:05

Me. These two dishes interpret to traditional recipe in Korea with the seasonal produce. The same logic, scale to school, fewer items per plate, clear colors, one beloved flavor, good design, respect, culture, and knowledge. Better eating, I think.

Curtis S. Chin 49:29

Yeah, I mean, that just goes to the point. And I like Laurent, your point about, you know, we have ministers and trade different perspectives, but almost I liked Laurent when you talked about that interdisciplinary—it's also a way to drive local economies. So people can think, oh, you know, school meals. Oh, that's just Ministry of Education or Ministry of Health. But as a country looks how to develop its own people, its nation, school lunches will drive so many other different things, including, perhaps, local sourcing, local entrepreneurs. Laurent, any closing thought, as you think about all that we've talked about today?

Laurent Hochet 50:07

I would say from the private sector, I would say that we expect the government to set the frame, because that's also a way to prevent the market to pull down and go to the cheapest. While, actually, there are some requirements that we want to achieve all together. And as a global company, we don't want to compromise on the nutrition and the sustainability. And sometimes, to be honest, in certain country, we face some like unfair competition that can actually sold hot dogs everywhere for \$1.50 and actually we don't want to compete with those people. So that's, I would say, the role of the government also to be clear on what are the minimum requirements, and that will be the best way forward for companies like us.

Curtis S. Chin 50:55

Actually, let me jump to—as government. Asnawi, thoughts?

Asnawi Abdullah 51:00

In terms of Ministry of Health perspective, when we see the free meal program, which is a good thing to introduce healthy eating in an early age. So this is what we, the Minister of Health, see as opportunity. Introducing the

healthy habit, and also we, the Ministry of Health, can introduce other healthy program in the school. And recently, we have general health checkup for the school, so then we see that free meal program and combined with other program and in order to create healthy lifestyle from the early age, including the healthy eating since the early age.

Curtis S. Chin 52:00

Absolutely accept those habits. Heidi, bring us to a close. I mean, you surveyed the world. What is your wish, or what do you want people to take away from watching online or here?

Heidi Kessler 52:13

So the world is off track in meeting the Sustainable Development Goals, right? This is felt in individuals. This is felt in families, and this is felt in communities. If we want a cross cutting, multi-sectoral intervention that gets girls in schools, that addresses poverty and hunger, that increases educational outcomes, that can support small holder farmers, that can create jobs and that can address the dual burden of malnutrition, a well designed and well planned school meal program just might be the golden ticket.

Curtis S. Chin 52:50

Wow. And with that, I'm thinking school meals are magical, right? I mean, they're magical for what they can transform in all these other—you know, meeting rooms here, we're talking about development, we're talking about hunger. And in many ways, school meals connects this, you know, to your point, get them when they're young, and it'll transform the really future of not just that individual, but countries as they think about their own growth. Join me all in giving a hand to our panel. [Applause] Thank you all for coming to this. It's our very first on child nutrition as we think through—you know, from a Milken viewpoint, matching up, you know, partnering private sector, you know, association, civil society and government. But you all are part of that community, because, like how I began, I think all of us had a school lunch, whether we loved it or hated it. But how do we get, you know, our kids to love school lunches, and I hope you take away from this that it's not just feeding them, it really is investing in them and all our future. So thank you again for joining us today.

Tony Yoo 54:20

Thank you. Thank you so much.

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