Drivers of Innovation in Pediatric Nutrition
Drivers of Innovation in Pediatric Nutrition

Editors
Berthold Koletzko, Munich, Germany
Sibylle Koletzko, Munich, Germany
Frank Ruemmele, Paris, France
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Preface

The 66th Nestlé Nutrition Institute Workshop was dedicated to an important but rather abstract topic analyzing potential drivers of innovation in pediatric nutrition. This topic clearly goes beyond the usual scope of academic pediatricians. The themes of other recent Nestlé Nutrition Institute Workshops such as nutritional challenges in emerging societies, personalized nutrition in pediatrics, or nutrition from before pregnancy to the age of 2 years relate closely to pediatric research, clinical practice, and public health. In contrast, this workshop aimed to address and to identify forces that potentially drive innovation in pediatric nutrition, a vision which surpasses research, clinical and academic thinking. While preparing this workshop, we came to appreciate that even if research comes up with the best innovative concepts, the likelihood of translational application of this knowledge will very much depend on a variety of other factors. Often, challenging preclinical and clinical studies must be performed to evaluate potential effects, effect sizes, suitability and safety. The commercial introduction of new or modified dietetic products for infants and children into markets depends on the regulatory standards and environments which differ considerably in various geographical regions and countries. In addition, policy and politics on child health and nutrition may be of considerable importance. The forces of marketing have become very influential, and these forces may not always agree with science and research. Economic considerations, intellectual property protection, adequate availability of safe and suitable raw materials, the state of food technology, as well as feasibility of production and distribution of a conceived new product are determinants of whether and how a product can be brought to the market. Expectations and response of both consumers and health care professionals, and many other factors also are of very high importance. As one might imagine, it was not easy for us to put a balanced program together on the variety and complexity of questions that are of relevance here, but it has been a truly enjoyable and informative experience. Given that this topic has more technological and commercial implications than other topics that are usually addressed by the Nestlé Nutrition Institute Workshops, we involved a slightly
higher proportion of expert speakers who are in one way or another related to the company, which we trust readers will understand.

It was a great pleasure and privilege to organize and co-chair this workshop. We wish to thank Dr. Petra Klassen-Wigger, Prof. Ferdinand Haschke and their colleagues at the Nestlé Nutrition Institute in Switzerland for the dedicated work and support, as well as Lois Lin, Dr. Lawrence Li and their colleagues at Nestlé Nutrition China who realized the symposium in China with cordial affection, meticulous attention to detail, and enormous enthusiasm. We also thank the speakers and discussants at the workshop who contributed to the intellectual content of this book.

Berthold Koletzko
Sibylle Koletzko
Frank Ruemmele
Foreword

‘Drivers of Innovation in Pediatric Nutrition’ was the topic of a unique workshop held in Sanya, China, on 1–5 November 2009. Innovation is defined in the dictionary as: ‘the introduction of something new’ or ‘a new idea, method, or device: novelty’. When applying ‘innovation’ to pediatric nutrition, a large variety of different expertise needs to be taken into consideration in order to successfully develop new products from the idea to the shelf. These include: innovative ideas in research and development that are technically feasible, accepted by health care professionals and regulatory authorities and, last but not least, by the consumer.

In this context, the topics discussed in this workshop ranged from the history of infant feeding practices, novel insights into human lactation as a driver of infant formula development, to new approaches through modern analytical tools such as molecular biological assays, and finally the regulatory settings and consumer behavior. Altogether, the workshop was a rich source of information to paint the future of innovation in pediatric nutrition.

We would like to warmly thank the three chairpersons, Prof. Bert Koletzko and Prof. Sibylle Koletzko from Germany and Prof. Frank Ruemmele from France, who are very well-known experts in the area of pediatric nutrition and drivers of innovation themselves, for assembling the outstanding scientific program.

Our special thanks go to Mr. Lawrence Li and Ms. Lois Lin and their team for the superb logistical support of the workshop and the warm hospitality.

Prof. Ferdinand Haschke, MD, PhD  
Chairman  
Nestlé Nutrition Institute  
Vevey, Switzerland

Dr. Petra Klassen, PhD  
Scientific Advisor  
Nestlé Nutrition Institute  
Vevey, Switzerland
Contributors

Chairpersons & Speakers

Prof. Dennis M. Bier
USDA/ARS Children’s Nutrition Research Center
Baylor College of Medicine
1100 Bates Street
Houston, TX 77090
USA
E-Mail dbier@bcm.tmc.edu

Prof. Peter A. Cooper
Department of Paediatrics & Child Health
University of the Witwatersrand & Charlotte Maxeke Johannesburg Academic Hospital
Private Bag X 39
Johannesburg, 2000
South Africa
E-Mail peter.cooper@wits.ac.za

Dr. Mario G. Ferruzzi
Purdue University
Food Science Building
745 Agriculture Mall Drive
West Lafayette, IN 47907-2009
USA
E-Mail mferruzz@purdue.edu

Prof. Frank Greer
Department of Pediatrics
University of Wisconsin/Meriter Hospital
202 S. Park Street
Madison, WI 53715
USA
E-Mail frgreer@pediatrics.wisc.edu

Prof. Ferdinand Haschke
Nestlé Nutrition Institute
Avenue Reller 22
CH–1800 Vevey
Switzerland
E-Mail Ferdinand.haschke@nestle.com

Ass. Prof. Anneli Ivarsson
Epidemiology & Global Health
Department of Public Health and Clinical Medicine
Umea University
SE–90185 Umea
Sweden
E-Mail anneli.ivarsson@epiph.umu.se

Dr. Jürgen John
Institute of Health Economics and Health Care Management
Helmholtz Zentrum München
German Research Center for Environmental Health (GmbH)
Ingolstädter Landstrasse 1
DE–85764 Neuherberg
Germany
E-Mail john@helmholtz-muenchen.de

Prof. Berthold Koletzko
Dr. von Hauner Children’s Hospital
Ludwig Maximilians University
Lindwurmstrasse 4
DE–80337 München
Germany
E-Mail office.koletzko@med.uni-muenchen.de
Contributors

Prof. Sibylle Koletzko  
Dr. von Hauner Children’s Hospital  
Ludwig Maximilians University  
Lindwurmsstrasse 4  
DE–80337 München  
Germany  
E-Mail Sibylle.Koletzko@med.uni-muenchen.de

Prof. Bo Lonnerdal  
Department of Nutrition  
University of California  
One Shield Avenue  
Davis, CA 95616  
USA  
E-Mail bllonnerdal@ucdavis.edu

Prof. Maria Makrides  
Women’s & Children’s Health Research Institute  
University of Adelaide  
North Adelaide, SA 5006  
Australia  
E-Mail maria.makrides@cywhs.sa.gov.au

Prof. Ambroise Martin  
Lyon-Est Medical School  
University Claude Bernard  
Lyon 1  
8 avenue Rockefeller  
F–69373 Lyon Cedex 08  
France  
E-Mail ambroise.martin@sante.univ-lyon1.fr

Prof. Monique Raats  
Co-Director: Food, Consumer Behaviour and Health Research Centre  
Department of Psychology  
Faculty of Arts and Human Sciences  
University of Surrey  
Guildford Surrey GU2 7XH  
UK  
E-Mail m.raats@surrey.ac.uk

Prof. Frank Ruemmele  
INSERM U989  
Pediatric Gastroenterology  
Hepatology and Nutrition  
Hôpital Necker-Enfants Malades  
149 Rue de Sèvres  
FR–75743 Paris Cedex 15  
France  
E-Mail frank.ruemmele@nck.aphp.fr

Prof. Noel Solomons  
Center for Studies of Sensory Impairment  
Aging and Metabolism (CeSSIAM)  
Avenida 17, 16-89 (interior)  
Zona 11 (Anillo Periférico)  
Guatemala, 01011  
Guatemala  
E-Mail cessiam@guate.net.gt

Dr. Jörg Spieldenner  
Health Economics-Epidemiology  
Nestlé Nutrition Institute  
Avenue Reller 22  
CH–1800 Vevey  
Switzerland  
E-Mail joerg.spieldenner@nestle.com

Dr. Weiping Wang  
Fudan University  
220 Handan Road  
Shanghai, 200433  
China  
E-Mail wpwang@shmu.edu.cn

Dr. Wei Cai  
Shanghai Pediatric Research Institute  
800 Dongchuan Road  
Shanghai, 200240  
China  
E-Mail caiw204@yahoo.com.cn

Dr. Meng Mao  
West China 2nd University Hospital  
No. 20 Section 3, Renmin Nan Road  
Chengdu, Sichuan, 610041  
China  
E-Mail dffmmao@126.com

Moderators

Dr. Weiping Wang

Dr. Wei Cai

Dr. Meng Mao

XII
Invited Attendees

Robert Gibson/Australia
Mohammad Serajul Akbar/Bangladesh
Manzoor Hussain/Bangladesh
MD Nurul Islam/Bangladesh
Mohammad Sirajul Islam/Bangladesh
Ilse Hoffman/Belgium
Tongxin Chen/China
Runmin Jin/China
Guanghui Li/China
Guicun Li/China
Haiqi Li/China
Qiuping Li/China
Xiaonan Li/China
Yongbai Li/China
Kun Liang/China
Guanghui Liu/China
Kezhan Liu/China
Qingya Tang/China
Shaotao Tang/China
Baoxi Wang/China
Ying Xiong/China
Fan Yang/China
Jie Yang/China
Mingji Yi/China
Fei Yin/China
Lei Yu/China

Jiakang Yu/China
Rong Zhang/China
Getu Zhao Ri/China
So King Woon Alan/Hong Kong
Michael Lentze/Germany
Santosh Kumar Mittal/India
Priyankar Pal/India
Arvind Shenoi/India
Sunit Singh/India
Rhishikesh Thakre/India
Mario de Curtis/Italy
Fredrick Were/Kenya
Arturo Ludan/Philippines
Hania Szajewska/Poland
Elena Kornienko/Russia
Sultan Alenezi/Saudi Arabia
Ali Dhansay/South Africa
Linono Sebotsa/South Africa
Olle Hernell/Sweden
Hung-Chieh Chou/Taiwan
Yao-Hsu Yang/Taiwan
Sirinuch Chomtho/Thailand
Peniri Kosuwon/Thailand
Ruangsrit Tantibhaedhyangkul/Thailand
D’Ann Finley/USA

Nestlé Participants

Catherine Chen/China
Nicole Chen/China
Christine Chu/China
Li Guan/China
Xiaolan Huang/China
Lawrence Li/China
Spring Li/China
Lois Lin/China

Ann Yuan/China
Sanjeev Ganguly/India
Maria Lourdes Pamintuan/Philippines
Grace Uy/Philippines
Marco Turini/Singapore
Stefan Bodenstab/Switzerland
Petra Klassen Wigger/Switzerland
Nelly Jeanne Marmy Conus/Switzerland