Independent Evaluation of the Multi Partner
Trust Fund of the Scaling Up Nutrition Movement

Final Report

Chris Leather
Nick Norvell

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The Evaluation Team comprised of Chris Leather & Nick Norvell. The Evaluation Team was supported by research assistants: Thais Gomes Nogueira Espíndola and Patricia Luyza de Malafaia Giordano. The Independent Evaluation was commissioned by the Management Committee of the SUN Movement’s Multi Partner Trust Fund (MPTF) and was overseen by its evaluation Steering Group (SG). Funding for the Evaluation is provided through Window III of the MPTF. The evaluation manager was Diana Alvarez from the SUN Movement Secretariat (SMS).

**Disclosure of Information**

The contracts between the evaluators and UNOPs for the evaluation state:

> The Individual Contractor shall disclose to UNOPS any business or professional employment or activity in which he/she may have been involved prior to, or may be involved in during or after the Agreement. These activities must not be incompatible with the performance of services called for in this Agreement nor represent a real or perceived conflict of interest.

In this regard, Chris Leather, the Evaluation Team Leader, informed the SUN Movement Secretariat of his involvement in the following pieces of work:

**June 2014 – January 2015**: Member of the Evaluation Team for the Independent Comprehensive Evaluation (ICE) of the SUN Movement, (Mokoro 2015)

**April – December 2015**: Conducted an independent study of civil society alignment with scaling up nutrition efforts commissioned by the global Civil Society Network Steering Group (Leather 2015)

**July 2015 – August 2016**: Contracted by DFID (20% of time) to provide technical support to the Brazilian government and other partners in the preparations for the Nutrition for Growth events associated with the Olympic Games in Rio de Janeiro.

**Statement by Chris Leather:**

> “During these activities, as in all professional activities, I maintain strict independence and seek to act in the interests of people at risk of malnutrition and food insecurity. I believe that these activities have been complementary and contributed to the analysis of the SUN Movement MPTF and options for the future”.

This report should be cited as:


The Evaluation Team would like to thank all those who have assisted its work so far. These include the MPTF Evaluation Steering Group and the SUN Movement Secretariat in particular Florence Lasbennes, Diana Alvarez and Elena Gaino. The Evaluation Team has sole responsibility for any errors that remain.
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Executive Summary

This report presents the final findings, conclusions and recommendations of the independent evaluation of the Scaling Up Nutrition (SUN) Movement Multi Partner Trust Fund (MPTF). The objectives of the evaluation were: to assess the performance of the MPTF in contributing to the four Strategic Objectives of the SUN Movement and to assess the need for, and propose options for, any future catalytic, last resort fund at global level.

The performance of the SUN Movement MPTF

The projects funded through the MPTF have made major contributions towards the Strategic Objectives of the SUN Movement. National Civil Society Alliances (CSAs) and the global SUN Civil Society Network (CSN) have helped to raise awareness of the importance of addressing malnutrition and increase political commitments to scale up actions. Some have also contributed to multi-sectoral policies and plans and are increasingly promoting implementation at sub-national levels. However, many CSAs have struggled to implement activities according to work plans. Delays have been caused, *inter alia*, by slow disbursements from Participating UN Organisations (PUNOs) to CSO Implementing Partners (due to slow processes within PUNOs as well within IPs/CSAs) and the challenges associated with establishing a functional CSA. CSAs are contributing to sustained commitments and actions to address malnutrition across political cycles (e.g. by promoting nutrition champions amongst parliamentarians and advocating for commitments to be enshrined in national constitutions and legislation). Despite this, CSAs themselves find it difficult to attract the adequate and long-term resources that they need to sustain their activities and impact. Donors at country level should now have increased confidence that CSAs are able to have an impact on public awareness, political commitment, effective policies and monitoring. This should lead to increased funding being made available at country level.

The global CSN has been highly successful in stimulating the establishment and strengthening of national CSAs and facilitating the sharing of learning. The global CSN also ensures that there is a strong civil society voice within and outside of the SUN Movement at global level. Without the CSN, and in particular the dedicated work of the CSN Secretariat, the achievements of CSAs would have been much more limited. The Evaluation Team believes that there is a need to revise the model of the global CSN. The current model, whereby the Secretariat takes on responsibility for a large proportion of activities is not sustainable.

The other three projects funded through the MPTF were also relevant to the Movements’ Strategic Objectives and have had significant impacts. The Learning Routes were a highly appreciated tool for the sharing of experiences between countries. The Budget Tracking workshops were a critical component of the Community of Practise (COP) 1 process aimed at enabling countries to track multi-sectoral budget allocations.
and expenditures. Many SUN stakeholders found the M&E baseline work valuable, especially for tracking progress over time at country level.

There have been catalytic funding needs that have gone unmet. CSAs have been established which have not had the opportunity to access funds from the MPTF. Momentum in the establishment of CSAs has been lost. There was sufficient evidence of the usefulness of civil society engagement at country and global levels, particularly following the completion of the ICE, as well as funding gaps provided by the CSN, for the Management Committee to mobilise additional resources to support new CSAs at least during 2015 until the completion of the MPTF evaluation. Opportunities may also have been missed to enhance national capabilities through small, catalytic grants.

**Factors determining performance**

NGO Implementing Partners have played a valuable role given that none of the MPTF funded CSAs were legal entities at the start of the funding. However, a small number have overstepped their role as fund administrators and sought undue influence over CSA Secretariat staff and the use of funds, thereby encroaching on the role of CSA executive bodies. PUNOs have to take a large proportion of the blame for the slow disbursement of funds to end-users and processing of no-cost extensions, whilst recognising that they did not have the systems in place to begin with to play the role efficiently and the administration fee received was inadequate. The technical support provided by PUNOs and REACH staff has been valuable, although both CSOs and UN agency staff recognise this is part of the role of UN agencies anyway. The role and work of the MPTF Office, the SUN Movement MPTF Management Committee and the technical support provided by the SUN Movement Secretariat have been excellent. Donors often place emphasis on SUN stakeholders accessing funds at country level but it is not clear to what extent the global Donor Network is facilitating the increased availability of funds at this level.

**Future needs and options**

CSAs and the global CSN will need to continue to access at least 45% of their total funding needs over the next five years from donors at the global level both for start up and running costs. Most informants believe that any future fund should not only be catalytic but also help existing CSAs to consolidate their development and provide more time to achieve financial sustainability. It is also widely believed that last resort funds are needed to catalyse national SUN Business Networks, particularly to support the participation of local, small and medium enterprises in policy making, and to strengthen the national capabilities identified in the SUN Movement Strategy.

It may be desirable to channel funds for global Civil Society and Business Networks directly to them rather than through a pooled fund. However, funding for national level needs (national civil society alliances and business networks, national government
If donors are going to continue to pool funds through the UN MPTF, significant reforms are needed, including channelling funds directly to recipients, ensuring that the technical secretariat has adequate resources to play its role, and reporting requirements for recipients are appropriate for the size of grants. There is potential for such changes to be made. If there were only to be one PUNO, UNOPS has the interest and capacity to play the role. However, it would be advisable for the MC to also consider alternative options for the efficient disbursement of funds. The analysis of the options for the administration of a pooled fund, suggest to the Evaluation Team that UNOPS and the New Venture Fund (NVF) would be strong candidates for performing the role of Administrative Agent.

Main recommendations for the design of the SUN Movement pooled fund

- There should be three main funding windows: I. Strengthening national government capabilities; II. Supporting national Civil Society Alliances and the global Civil Society Network; III. Catalysing national Business Networks
- The Fund should primarily be catalytic. However, support could be provided to support SUN stakeholders to consolidate and maintain achievements in exceptional circumstances, i.e. there is no alternative source of funding.
- Funds should be channelled directly from the Administrative Agent to Implementing Partners, whenever possible.
- The decision making body should remain within the SUN Movement architecture, with strong linkages to the Executive Committee and its composition should be broadened to include representatives from the full range of SUN stakeholders, in line with the governing bodies of other global funds.
- The Management Committee should consider the following options for Administrative Agent: The MPTF Office; UNOPS and the New Venture Fund.
- The SMS could continue to be the technical secretariat and receive additional funds to enable it to perform the role to the full. However, further consideration should be given to the option of UNOPS or the NVF provided technical secretariat services (with SMS oversight) if either were to be playing the Administrative Agent role.
- Technical assistance to funded stakeholders should be provided through regular SUN processes and structures, i.e. national multi-stakeholder platforms; mutual support between national networks; support from global SUN Networks and Communities of Practice etc.
- Members of SUN multi-stakeholder platforms should have the opportunity to comment on proposals and reports, whilst respecting the autonomy of the funded partner.
PART I: INTRODUCTION

1 Purpose and audience of the report

This report presents the final findings, conclusions and recommendations of the independent evaluation of the Scaling Up Nutrition (SUN) Movement Multi Partner Trust Fund (MPTF). See Annex 1 for the Terms of Reference (ToR) of the evaluation. The audience of this evaluation are all SUN Movement stakeholders at global and national levels given that it has significant implications for funding the implementation of the SUN Movement Strategy 2016-2020.

2 Background

Descriptions of the SUN Movement, the SUN Movement MPTF and the evaluation approach are presented in Annexes 2, 3 and 4 respectively. Given the request of the evaluation Steering Group to keep the main body of this report as short as possible, only brief summaries of the SUN Movement MPTF and the evaluation approach are presented here.

3 The SUN Movement Multi Partner Trust Fund (MPTF)

The Evaluation ToR provides an introduction to the SUN Movement MPTF:

In March 2012 the SUN Movement Multi-Partner Trust Fund (MPTF) was established by Participating UN Organizations (PUNOs) and contributing partners. It was formulated in response to a perceived gap in funding for country-level platforms, particularly those pertaining to the civil society alliances.

As noted on the SUN website:

Resources for Scaling Up Nutrition in SUN countries are usually mobilized at country level from national budgets or through agreements with development partners. Funds for some in-country activities – particularly catalytic actions by national authorities and participation of in-country civil society groups within national SUN platforms – have not proved easy to mobilize in-country.

The Evaluation ToR explains the purpose of the SUN Movement MPTF as

a catalytic tool to stimulate actions by members of the SUN Movement for scaling up nutrition, especially to catalyse support for SUN governments' plans to enhance and expand nutrition-specific and nutrition-sensitive interventions. The SUN Movement MPTF has not been designed to be a vertical nutrition fund for large scale investments in food and nutrition security, nor to replace existing funding pathways at country level (both from national budget and from bilateral and multilateral resources). The SUN Movement MPTF has been meant to be used as a small fund of last resort (when other funding is not available) for stakeholders to access small grants through which their engagement in the SUN Movement at country level can be initiated and/or enhanced. As a last resort funding mechanisms any potential recipient is supposed to explore all other funding opportunities before being able to access the SUN Movement MPTF funds.

A chronology of key events in the history of the SUN Movement MPTF is presented in Annex 5.

The MPTF supports three primary areas of work, with three corresponding funding windows:
Window I: Support for initial SUN actions at country level to galvanize their commitments to the principles of the Movement;

Window II: Support for mobilizing of Civil Society to contribute to the goals of the SUN Movement; and

Window III: Support for global SUN strategic efforts.

Annex 2 of the 2013 MPTF Annual Report (SUN MPTF 2013) presents the MPTF Log Frame and Window II Theory of Change. The key areas of change identified in the Window II Theory of Change are:

1. Coordinated Civil Society Alliances (CSAs) in SUN countries;
2. CSAs advocate effectively;
3. CSAs participate in national platforms for scaling up nutrition;
4. CSAs contribute to better accountability in SUN countries; and
5. The collective of CSAs are a functioning learning network (i.e. the global SUN Civil Society Network).

Annex 3 of this current report provides a comprehensive description of the SUN Movement MPTF covering the issues below:

- Origins and evolution of the SUN Movement MPTF
- Purpose of the SUN Movement MPTF
- Governance arrangements
- Fund allocation process
- History of fund allocations
- Disbursement timeframes
- Current status of MPTF funds (income, allocations, balance)
- Use of funds
- Accountability mechanisms

A summary of key, updated financial information is presented in Table 1 below. A list of all the funded projects is presented in the table at the end of Annex 3.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Total source of funds</th>
<th>10,121,384</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>DFID</td>
<td>5,860,091</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Irish Aid</td>
<td>429,485</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Swiss Agency for Development &amp; Cooperation</td>
<td>3,798,083</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interest &amp; investment income</td>
<td>33,726</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Total use of funds</th>
<th>9,968,811</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Projects</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Window I:</td>
<td>Learning Routes 642,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Window II:</td>
<td>24 Civil Society Alliances 7,606,115</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Window III:</td>
<td>CSN Secretariat (3 allocations) 1,036,055</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>SUN Movement M&amp;E baseline report 60,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>SUN Movement MPTF evaluation 203,424</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sub-total projects</td>
<td>9,867,594</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administration</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Refunds from PUNOs</td>
<td>-99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MPTF admin fee</td>
<td>100,877</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bank fees</td>
<td>439</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sub-total admin</td>
<td>101,217</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Balance remaining in MPTF</td>
<td>152,574</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As of 16th February 2016, values in USD. Source: UNDP MPTF Office Gateway

Window I (USD 962,000) has been utilised to support a pilot project (USD 642,000) led by PROCASUR to improve sharing and learning initiatives between national SUN multi-stakeholder platforms and for a project (USD 320,000) in support to the SUN Movement Community of Practice on Planning, Costing, Implementing and Financing Multi-sectoral Actions for Improved Nutrition.

Window II (USD 7,606,115) is providing financial support to civil society actors in 24 countries across Africa, Asia and Latin America. Support has also been granted to the SUN Civil Society Network Secretariat through Window II (USD 1,036,055) 10.24% of the total SUN Movement MPTF funding has been allocated under this window for civil society support, either on network or country specific projects. Donors fund the Civil Society Alliances in five countries bilaterally.

Window III (USD 60,000) has been used to support the development of the SUN Movement Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) framework. It is also being used to fund this evaluation of the SUN Movement MPTF.

In November 2014 the Management Committee approved the extension of the SUN Movement MPTF until 31 December 2016. The Management Committee (MC) approved a total of 20 no cost extensions that extend the majority of the projects into 2016.

4 The evaluation

The Management Committee of the SUN Movement MPTF commissioned an evaluation to provide both an assessment of the current SUN Movement MPTF as well as a set of forward-looking recommendations. These recommendations will inform the MC decisions in designing the forthcoming (if any) funding mechanism for the SUN Movement and to strengthen the role this mechanism could have in contributing to the new strategy of the SUN Movement (2016-2020).

In summary the objectives of the evaluation are:
To assess the performance of the MPTF in contributing to the four Strategic Objectives of the SUN Movement.\(^1\)

To assess the need for, and propose options for, any future catalytic, last resort fund at global level.

The questions presented in Annex 6 provided a comprehensive basis to guide the evaluation. They were used to guide literature reviews, interviews and group discussions during the course of the evaluation.

In order to answer these questions, the team members undertook the following activities:

**Project reviews:** Desk based evaluation of the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability of all 28 funded projects and determinants of success.

**In depth case studies:** (including country visits) of 5 out of the 24 Civil Society Alliances (CSAs) funded by the MPTF: El Salvador, Guatemala, Laos, Malawi and Zimbabwe.\(^2\)

**Governance and administrative analysis:** including the role and work of the MC, the SUN Movement Secretariat (SMS), the MPTF Office, Participating United Nations Organization (PUNOs) and other global level structures (e.g. SUN Networks)

**Future needs analysis:** assessing the need and options for any future catalytic, last resort fund.

See Annex 7 for a Bibliography of the literature reviewed and Annex 8 for a list of all the people from whom we received information either in person, via skype, telephone or by email. This evaluation also drew upon a small number of interviews undertaken by the Team Leader in mid-2015 during a research study for the global SUN Civil Society Network on civil society alignment with SUN efforts at country level. These interviews are also referenced in Annex 7.

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\(^1\) Strategic Objective 1: Creating an enabling political environment, with strong in-country leadership, and a shared space where stakeholders align their activities and take joint responsibility for scaling up nutrition; Strategic Objective 2: Establishing best practices for scaling up proven interventions, including the adoption of effective laws and policies; Strategic Objective 3: Aligning actions around high quality and well-costed country plans, with an agreed results framework and mutual accountability; and Strategic Objective 4: Increasing resources towards coherent aligned approaches.

\(^2\) The selection criteria included: geographical distribution, at least 1 country with a fragile political environment, timing of funding decision, a range of Participating UN Organizations, at least 1 country with REACH presence, a range of Implementing Partners, at least one project with a grant of >US$400k.
PART II: EVALUATION FINDINGS

Part II presents the findings of the evaluation in relation to the following issues:

- The performance of the MPTF funded projects by Window (relevance, effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability)
- Factors determining performance;
- Overall design, governance and administrative arrangements;
- Future funding needs and options.

5 The performance of funded projects

In the following sub-section we present findings on the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability of the funded projects.

5.1 Window I: Learning Routes & Budget Tracking

5.1.1 Learning Routes: Strengthening the Capacity of SUN Countries to Scale Up Nutrition through Learning Routes

This pilot project (US$642,000) was approved by the SUN Movement MPTF Management Committee in November 2013 and was originally planned to take place from February 2014 to February 2015. In January 2015, a no cost extension was agreed up until the end of April 2015 as a consequence of delays due to political changes in the Peruvian host institution. The implementing partner was PROCASUR Corporation and the PUNO was UNOPS.

Two Learning Routes were held. The first was held in Senegal in May 2014 under the coordination of the Fight Against Malnutrition Unit – Cellule de Lutte Contre la Malnutrition (CLM). The second was in Peru in September 2014, hosted by the Ministry of Development and Social Inclusion (MIDIS). The objectives of the Learning Routes were to: improve knowledge of SUN members about successful initiatives in nutrition; better access to hands-on methods and practical tools to scale-up nutrition; strengthen partnerships and networking; and systematic, continued cross-fertilization among countries (PROCASUR 2015d).

There was a very high level of interest and positive feedback from participants in the Learning Routes, indicating that they were very relevant to their needs. Participants in the Senegal Learning Route particularly appreciated the opportunity to strengthen the linkages within and between country delegations through field visits, case analysis and the thematic group discussions (PROCASUR 2014c).

The one-week learning experience (in Senegal) exceeded the expectations of the Peru Country Team...the high level in which all stakeholders coordinate their actions shone through. This was illustrated in the development of multi-sectoral processes and the design of policy instruments that reflect the same language and commitment between the
Speaking of the Peru event, Dr. Joyceline Kaganda, Acting Managing Director of the Tanzania Food and Nutrition Centre said:

I am going to take back to my country some of the learned strategies they (stakeholders in Peru) have been using to-date... All in all this has been one of the greatest experiences in my life and for my country. (Source: SUN Movement website)

One significant outcome of the Peru Learning Route was that PRISMA, a participating NGO, started an advocacy campaign to persuade decision makers and candidates to include nutrition in their political agenda during the regional and district elections which followed the Learning Route. As result, 86% of candidates committed to include nutrition as a priority in their political programme (PROCASUR, 2014c).3

Another impact of the Peru event is reported in the 2014 SUN Movement MPTF Annual Report (SUN MPTF 2015a):

Following the participation of the Lao PDR national delegation, including CSA representative, in the Peru learning route, the CSA reported that the experience resulted in the Laos National Nutrition Centre prioritizing civil society and having confidence that civil society are good partners to address nutrition - and plan to include CSA at the table and in future discussions more often. This has since continued to strengthen.

PROCASUR’s own surveys revealed that:

participants evaluated very positively the Learning Route Programme. The improved knowledge on relevant thematic areas, the sharing of good practices and innovations with potential for adaptation and scaling-up in participating countries are amongst the main benefits highlighted by SUN representatives (PROCASUR 2015c).

There is some evidence that attention was placed on cost control which helped ensure value for money. For example, the Learning Route in Senegal was cheaper than anticipated due to the good work of CLM the local partner. The underspend was used to increase the number of participants in the Peru Learning Route.

The intended next steps are outlined in the SUN Movement Annual Report (SMS 2015). They are to: encourage the implementation of the Action Plans; agree on how to incorporate lessons learnt from the Learning Routes into future knowledge exchanges; discuss cost-effective approaches to reach more countries with Learning Routes. Some countries were delayed in implementing their Action Plans due to external factors, in particular Sierra Leone and Guinea Conakry due to the Ebola outbreak (PROCASUR, 2014c).

3 It was not possible for the evaluators to follow up and assess the extent to which this actually happened.
The success of the pilot programme has led the SUN Civil Society Network to organise Learning Routes for members of national Civil Society Alliances. The SUN CSN Secretariat secured USD 1,020,921 from Children's Investment Fund Foundation (CIFF) to implement the learning route methodology to enhance country support and experience exchange in 2015-2017. This project is run in conjunction with PROCASUR and funds an additional CSN Secretariat staff member. The project aims to build stronger links between CSAs and other stakeholders and focuses on experience exchange with the hope that outcomes will be stronger civil society coalitions which are more effective at increasing attention and resources towards nutrition.

In terms of the wider SUN Movement, the Learning Route pilots have informed the development and activities of Communities of Practice, for example, the COP for developing functional capacities for coordinated and effective SUN actions (SMS 2014).

**Box 1   SUN Movement Communities of Practice**

During 2014, COPs were established by the SMS, as means of organising requests for support from SUN countries thematically, and linking them with expertise from other SUN countries and across the SUN networks. Four COPs have been established, as follows:

- **COP1:** Planning, costing, implementing and financing multisectoral actions for improved nutrition.
- **COP2:** Social mobilisation, advocacy and communication for scaling up nutrition.
- **COP3:** The reliable monitoring of progress, evaluation of outcomes and demonstration of nutrition results.
- **COP4:** Functional capacities for coordinated and effective SUN actions.

**5.1.2  Budget tracking: Addressing gaps in multi-sectoral costing and financial tracking for nutrition**

A grant of US$320,000 was provided to UNICEF in January 2015 for a 6-month period from March – August 2015. UNICEF HQ was the PUNO and UNICEF Regional Offices the Implementing Partner. A no cost budget extension was signed on July 29, 2015 because of the need to reschedule an Asia workshop to the Spring of 2016, due to the UNICEF South East Asia office involvement in the Nepal earthquake response.

The MPTF funds covered the costs of five workshops which took place in April 2015 as part of the on-going work of COP 1 to support countries to track budget allocations for nutrition across sectors. The overall process was co-funded with resources held by the SMS. The workshops aimed to accelerate a process that started in November 2013 during a regional workshop in Nairobi on costing and financial tracking.

Prior to the MPTF funded workshops, the SMS issued a “call for expressions of interest” inviting countries to participate in the process to improve and report on budget allocations, using the “3-step approach” originally developed by the SUN Donor
Network. Thirty countries responded to the Call for Interest and carried out Step 1. Sixteen countries carried out the data gathering exercise by themselves, the Institute of Development Studies (IDS) supported ten, Results 4 Development (R4D) supported two and two had the support of the USAID-funded SPRING project.

In total, government representatives from 32 countries (including 2 observing countries) participated. In addition, multiple stakeholder groups including the United Nations, Civil Society, Private sector and Donor organizations participated.

This project was developed as a contribution to COP 1 which itself was a response to requests from SUN countries for support on the costing, financing and tracking of plans for improved nutrition. Consequently, it was regarded as responsive and relevant to the needs and demands of SUN stakeholders. It is very much aligned with and supportive of the Strategic Objectives of the SUN Movement, especially SOs 3 and 4. The relevance to the needs of SUN countries is reflected in the feedback provided by participants, which was reviewed by the Evaluation Team. All participants indicated that their primary learning objectives had been met. There was also significant demand for support to enable participants in the workshops to take the work forward in their countries.

From a review of the literature, the feedback from participants and information provided by key informants, the major achievements of the workshops are identified in Box 2.

**Box 2  Achievements of the MPTF funded budget tracking work**

- enabled 30 countries to advance in their tracking of budget allocations and publically communicate preliminary data from 30 countries on their multi-sectoral budget allocations for nutrition, presented in Global Nutrition Report (GNR 2015) (see Chapter 5, pp60 & 61 and Appendices A3.1 & 3.20)
- learn lessons from the application of the 3 step approach in order to develop it further as a technical tool (e.g. build on existing national systems and capacities)
- built consensus between countries about the importance of budget analysis and the approach to take
- highlighted the importance of involving parliamentarians, the media and civil society in promoting tracking of budget allocations and expenditures
- further highlighted the inadequacy of public allocations and spending on nutrition specific and sensitive actions and more cost-effective spending of existing funds
- demonstrated how the tracking of budget allocations is one key component of wider efforts to improve planning and track financial resources

The workshops achieved their objectives, and at a cost to the donor of USD 320,000, provided good value for money. The publication of the preliminary data in the GNR 2015 is certainly a "strong step toward transparency and accountability" as claimed by the SMS (SMS 2015).
There is a strong chance that the workshops will have sustainable impacts given the level of motivation they helped generate amongst participants to utilise what they had learnt. The fact that the workshops were part of a broader, on-going process within the SUN Movement to enhance the tracking of budget allocations and expenditure on nutrition in relation to needs also increases the likelihood of sustained results.

A key priority in 2016 will be to further support the advancement of the analysis with the group of SUN countries that participated in the 2015 exercise. Further regional workshops will support countries that have already undertaken the work to advance further and enable other countries to begin. This will involve moving into tracking of actual expenditures and tracking off-budget resources, such as civil society and private sector contributions (Source: SMS email). This work will be taken forward as part of the policy and budget cycle management (work stream 1.2) in the Roadmap 2016-2020.

The workshops and the overall process have been successful in bringing together different stakeholders providing technical support to governments on budget analysis, planning and monitoring. The overall COP 1 process is doing likewise, linking, for example, Civil Society Network activities in Zambia and Malawi, SPRING experience in Uganda and Nepal, WHO work on the National Health Accounts. Linkages with REACH's mapping approach will be explored. During our enquiries, the SMS was praised for having done an excellent job leveraging resources from all fronts, whilst recognizing that the process was and remains very much a team effort led by the Secretariat.

The MPTF funds did not catalyse the process of improved budget analysis but did significantly help to accelerate progress. It is unclear whether the MPTF funds were last resort. Perhaps an alternative source of funding could have been found but this would likely have delayed progress. This does give rise to the question of how this type of process should be financed in the future within the 2016-2020 Strategy and Roadmap. This issue will be reviewed further in the section below on future funding needs and options.

5.2 Window II: National Civil Society Alliances and the global Civil Society Network

5.2.1 National Civil Society Alliances

Relevance

The valuable role CSOs can play in advocating for the scaling up of effective nutrition policies and actions, supporting their implementation and monitoring progress is widely recognised by SUN Movement stakeholders. The reviews in Annex 9 provide numerous examples of CSA objectives and activities being highly relevant to the SUN Movement's Strategic Objectives. Key informants acknowledged that CSOs can contribute to these objectives most effectively if they have a mechanism through which they can align with each other and work together in complementary ways.
The country case study in Lao found that MPTF funds enabled CSOs to be better aligned and consistent with each other, and thereby provide a more unified voice to Government and donors.

The SUN Movement MPTF was established primarily as a response to a request from Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) for funding (Mokoro 2014). This explains why a high percentage of the total funds were allocated to support civil society engagement in SUN efforts. The Evaluation Team heard only one criticism of the use of MPTF funds (see section 7.4 below).

During the evaluation some informants questioned the relevance of establishing CSAs in two countries, Guatemala and Bangladesh, where, it was perceived that civil society platforms already existed. The Evaluation Team sought to clarify these situations.

Our enquiries revealed that a civil society platform did already exist in Guatemala. In 2005, INCOPAS (Instancia de Consulta y Participación Social) was established by the government as a means of enabling civil society participation in policy making on food security and nutrition. Government representatives, during our field visit, expressed concerns that the CSA for SUN duplicates the role of INCOPAS and this led to tensions between CSOs. However, members of the CSA for SUN argued that there was a need for a stronger independent civil society voice to monitor the implementation of government policies and advocate for improvements. A key concern of the CSA for SUN is to encourage the government to increase focus on chronic malnutrition given that it has mainly focussed on acute malnutrition to date. The MPTF CSA has been working to develop closer, complementary relationships with INCOPAS and the latter participated in the Learning Route event held in Peru in 2014. The creation of an alliance funded by the SUN Movement MPTF created tensions in the civil society nutrition landscape. These tensions could have been avoided by better research by those who initiated the CSA. The situation is improving but the tensions resulted in slow progress and a need to build relationships across the civil society actors in country (Source: MPTF evaluation case study).
In Bangladesh, there was no existing national civil society alliance working specifically on nutrition before the country joined the SUN Movement. However, a split between CSOs did occur during the process of establishing a national alliance. The NGO that was initially leading the establishment of the alliance was considered by other CSOs to be positioning itself to host the Secretariat and access funding, rather than playing a facilitation role. When decisions were made about which organisation would host the secretariat of the alliance, the NGO that had been leading the process was not selected. In the opinion of informants, this resulted in the NGO disengaging from the process, becoming very critical of the SUN Movement as a whole and attempting to set up an alternative civil society alliance. It appears that this alliance is not now very operational and the CSA for SUN is now widely recognised as the primary mechanism for civil society participation in the country. However, the situation has probably led to a reduction in political diversity within the CSA for SUN. (Source: interviews undertaken by the Evaluation Team Leader for the CSO alignment study, Leather 2015).

Effectiveness

The Evaluation Team reviewed the effectiveness of CSAs against the following objectives which were common to most CSA funding proposals and the intended outcomes defined in the SUN Movement MPTF Log Frame and Window II Theory of Change (SUN MPTF 2014a):

- Establishing functioning CSAs
- Raising awareness of nutrition and promoting political commitment
- Influencing policies, plans and investments
- Scaling up CSO programmes aligned with national policies and plans
- Promoting monitoring and accountability
- Sharing learning and building capacity amongst CSOs

✓ Establishing functioning CSAs

There are now over 2,100 CSOs participating in the 34 CSAs (SUN CSN 2015), 24 of which were co-funded by the MPTF. Most CSA projects involved establishing the CSA from scratch. The development of functioning CSAs was itself a stated objective of many MPTF funded projects. This has been well achieved in most cases. This means that CSOs are to some extent reducing duplication and working together in more complementary ways both in their operational activities as well as their advocacy work.

In Kenya, the MPTF funds not only helped to establish the CSA but also helped ensure that the CSA became the recognized and authoritative entity for mobilization and coordination of CSOs around nutrition issues (Kenya, 2014).

The Evaluation Team's case study in Zimbabwe revealed a well-functioning CSA. The governance arrangements are clearly defined, well understood and agreed by members. There are clear divisions of responsibility between structures. The Steering Group provides strategic oversight, the Chair provides strong leadership, the Secretariat plays
a strong mobilisation, facilitation and coordination role and Progressio (the SUN Movement MPTF Implementing Partner) performs the Treasurer function. There is regular consultation with members who have a strong sense of ownership and influence.

“We have just registered the CSA – until now we had to learn to work together. There were some disagreements on the internal structure and organisation of the CSA (which delayed progress)”.

(Senegal CSA Chairperson)

However, examples have been identified of CSAs which are experiencing internal challenges to their effective functioning. This often relates to a lack of common understanding regarding the governance and administrative arrangements of the CSA, including the division of roles and responsibilities between the IP, executive body, secretariat and membership.

The case study in Malawi provided a contrasting scenario to Zimbabwe. It should be emphasised that the Civil Society Organisations’ Nutrition Alliance (CSONA) is implementing some excellent work (e.g. with media and parliamentarians) as is illustrated elsewhere in this report. However, most Malawian stakeholders, within and outside of civil society, regard CSONA as a project of the Implementing Partner, Concern Worldwide, rather than a member led Alliance. A Steering Committee has not been established. Staff members of Concern have mostly been responsible for decisions on how funds were used and the Secretariat staff have been responsible for the implementation of most activities. As a consequence members of the CSA feel they do not have much influence and are hesitant to engage fully. The evaluator concluded that this approach is limiting the credibility, effectiveness and sustainability of the CSA. Current senior staff in Concern Worldwide and the Secretariat coordinator acknowledged this and there appears to be a strong commitment to make the governance of the CSA more inclusive and member led. The reason given for the existing situation was that the CSA was not an independent legal entity and therefore Concern was ultimately responsible for the Alliance. Whilst this is true from a legal standpoint, experience from Zimbabwe and other countries demonstrate that CSAs can be collectively governed if there are commonly agreed principles, ways of working and divisions of responsibility.

Similar problems were reported in Kenya during a separate research study on civil society alignment recently conducted by the SUN Movement MPTF Evaluation Team Leader (Leather 2015) and were reiterated during the current evaluation.

Towards the end of the evaluation process, the Team heard reports from members of another CSA that there was a lack of awareness amongst the membership about the existence and use of MPTF and other funds. A number of members felt there was a resistance on the part of the CSA Steering Group and Secretariat to place more decision making in the hands of the membership and called for an independent audit of the use
of MPTF funds. The Evaluation Team will submit a separate review on this case to the Management Committee.

Whilst the Evaluation Team believes that there is a significant number of MPTF and non-MPTF funded CSAs experiencing problems, the majority do appear to have established effective governance arrangements and ways of working where members are appropriately involved in decision making and the implementation of activities.

✓ Raising awareness of nutrition and promoting political commitment

CSAs which have become functional have commonly had an initial focus on raising awareness of the public and decision makers regarding the importance of better addressing malnutrition. Evidence suggests that significant progress has been made in this respect and CSOs have made a major contribution to raising nutrition up the political agenda.

Many CSAs have sought to raise awareness and promote accountability through the media. One example of an effective media event was the press briefing organised by CSONA in Malawi in May 2014. The media coverage highlighted how CSONA was calling on candidates in the national elections to commit themselves to end malnutrition in the country. One outcome of CSONA’s work was that the Principal Secretary for the national Department of Nutrition, HIV and AIDS, made a commitment to work closely with the Ministry of Gender to revive the deployment of home craft workers to assist people in the rural areas to deliver nutrition messages and best practices (Source: MPTF evaluation case study).

Box 3 CSONA Malawi: An example of CSA engagement with the media

CSONA organised a press briefing on the eve of The World Press Freedom Day 2014 which centered on the theme: Reaching New Goals: Free Media Fortifies the Post 2015 Development Agenda. The aim of the press briefing was to explore how different media can raise visibility of issues to do with nutrition. Following the press briefing, CSONA was featured in 8 articles and programs which included 3 print Medias, 2 electronic Media and 5 national radio programs. One of the articles on CSONA: http://www.nyasatimes.com/2014/05/02/end-malnutrition-in-malawi-candidates-asked-to-sign-nutrition-pact/.

✓ Influencing policies, plans and investments

Stated objectives of CSAs such as influencing national policies and plans, mobilising increased investments and contributing to scaled up nutrition programmes have been
harder to achieve in the time available, especially for newly established CSAs. Yet, significant progress appears to have been made in some countries. CSA members reported again and again how their influence and motivation has increased by channelling their advocacy through the CSA.

At least 26 CSAs are engaging in national multi-stakeholder platforms and at least 20 have common advocacy plans4 (SUN CSN 2015). Some CSAs do report impacts on public policies and resource commitments. Findings from the Evaluation Team’s desk reviews and country visits revealed how such claims are supported by other SUN stakeholders in country. Examples of these results include:

In Mozambique, the SUN Civil Society Platform is considered by the SUN government focal point to have been influential in the development of the government position on the role of nutrition in the post-2015 development agenda (Source: research study interview).


Madagascar SUN CSA’s advocacy efforts granted them a private audience with the Prime Minister and a commitment to hold a workshop with all ministers and donors to start discussing increased investment in nutrition. This commitment was reaffirmed by the Minister of Agriculture of Madagascar during the closing plenary of the 2014 SUN Movement Global Gathering (SUN 2015: 79).

The CSA in Kenya is recognized by other stakeholders (from government and UN agencies) as having successfully advocated for a stronger nutrition component in the national health policy. The policy was revised based on their input (Kenya 2015b).

In Kyrgyzstan, “one of the major achievements of the CSO Alliance for Nutrition & Food Security is the advocacy for a new amended Law of the Kyrgyz Republic “On Bakery Flour Fortification” the result of which, in 2015 the majority of the votes of the Kyrgyz Parliament were given for the Law. The Alliance has been continuing promotion of flour fortification in the country at different levels and amongst population.” E. U. Choduev, Deputy Minister of Agriculture and Melioration, Coordinator of Scaling Up Nutrition Movement in the Kyrgyz Republic.

“The SUN CSA in Myanmar has been a platform to leverage critical resources for nutrition, such as through its membership links to multi-donors funded projects under 3MDG and LIFT. CSA has helped promote visibility and standards for nutrition programming and has built good relations with Government. Opportunities with a new Government should be taken, to strengthen local level engagement with communities and national organizations,

In response to CSA for SUN Bangladesh work, government representatives made the following statements:

“Hunger free Bangladesh. This is our Commitment.” Honourable Minister Meher Afroze Chumki, MP, Ministry of Women & Child Affairs during Global Day of Action 2014

“I will raise the issue of malnutrition and profile of nutrition in the Prime Minister’s Office, and ensure that Bangladesh speaks loudly on nutrition” Director of Health, Prime Minister’s Office, Government of Bangladesh

4 Not all are MPTF funded.
and for CSA to support a clear civil society agenda and advocacy asks for nutrition”. Hedy Ip, Nutrition Specialist, UNICEF Myanmar

The Uganda Civil Society Coalition on Scaling Up Nutrition has worked closely with other partners, including the National NGO Forum, Volunteer Efforts for Development Concern and the Food Rights Alliance, to advocate for a national food and nutrition policy and increased financing for proven strategies to improve nutrition. They combined research, advocacy and media activities to provide a voice for people directly affected by malnutrition.

**Box 4 Influence on policy of the Uganda CSA’s awareness raising and advocacy work with partners**

Various engagements with policy makers and other government decision makers raised political awareness and interest in the policy issue, particularly concerning the Food and Nutrition Bill that has effectively been stalled since 2009. During a high level dialogue organised by project partners on 10 October 2013, members of parliament committed to exploring links between agricultural sector development and food and nutrition, prioritising support for research on indigenous nutritious foods, and supporting a multi-stakeholder approach in addressing nutritional challenges. The Prime Minister’s Office held a Nutrition Development Partners Meeting on 21 November 2013, and a National Nutrition Forum was held on 3 December 2013 followed by a stakeholders meeting with the Prime Minister in which he announced government will be monitoring progress on nutrition indicators. Complementing this, the Minister of Gender, Labour and Social Development also organised a marathon on nutrition, and authored an op-ed published in New Vision on 26 November 2013 in which she emphasised the importance of the pending Food and Nutrition Bill.

CSOs within the SUN Movement have been strong advocates for the decentralisation of national policies, capacities and resources, recognising that this is a pre-requisite for scaled up actions and major reductions in malnutrition. At least 24 CSAs\(^5\) are working at the sub-national level to support decentralized, multi-stakeholder structures and processes (SUN CSN 2015). Many CSAs have a strong emphasis on ensuring that national nutrition policies and programmes promote gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls in ways which ensure nutrition for all.

For example, in Lao PDR the Scaling Up Nutrition Civil Society Alliance, with support from Plan International and the Swiss Development Cooperation (SDC), undertook a study to document examples of successful approaches to improved nutrition implemented in the country that address gender equality or gender mainstreaming (Baldwin 2015). The report aimed to support all organizations working on nutrition to better address gender equality in their work. It was

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\(^5\) Not all MPTF funded
intended that the paper informed the national Food and Nutrition Security Action Plan (FNSAP, November 2012).

It is worth emphasising the risks that many civil society organisations, particularly social movements and peoples’ organisations, take in highlighting the underlying causes of malnutrition and advocating for effective policies and regulations. During the field visit to El Salvador, the team heard how the commitment of one CSA member, CAC (Ambiental de Cabañas en Defensa del Agua y la Cultura) in El Salvador, had seen three of its youth volunteers shot dead during their campaign in 2013 against foreign owned mining companies’ contamination of drinking water in the area of Cabana. This was their own activity, not one funded by the MPTF, but illustrates that advocacy sometimes confronts deeply vested interests and places members of CSOs at serious risk.

✓ Facilitating the scale up CSO programmes aligned with national policies and plans

Supporting CSA members to scale up their programmes is not an explicit objective of many CSAs. Understandably, the primary activities relate to advocacy and accountability. However, it is surprising that there is little mention of the role of CSAs in relation to the programmes of members, given that scaling up aligned nutrition actions by all stakeholders is the primary intended outcome of the SUN Movement.

Clearly, CSAs are not intended to implement programmes themselves. However, there is on-going debate about the role of CSAs in accessing and administering funds for programmes of member CSOs. Some CSOs believe that CSAs should apply for and administer programme funds for members – in effect becoming a consortium. Others believe that CSAs should merely play a coordination and facilitation role, supporting members to map needs, develop joint proposals and to access funds which they themselves administer as individual CSOs or through their own consortia.

In Guatemala, the CSA coordinates innovative radio spots produced by youth in Spanish and 4 other Mayan languages (Kaqchiquel, Keqchi, Kiche, and Mam) to communicate educational nutrition messages, the importance of breastfeeding in the first 6 months, hygiene around food preparation. These were delivered in the communities around Coban, 5 hours north of Guatemala City through the local Funmayan (Fundacion Maya Norte). 45 radio stations in Guatemala gave free radio airtime to deliver these messages. (Source: Guatemala case study)

However, our case studies did reveal examples of CSAs leveraging additional funding for CSOs and supporting them to coordinate their programmes effectively. For example, in Malawi CSOs are supporting the implementation of the Government led Support for Nutrition Improvement Component (SNIC) Project, which aims to reduce stunting through improved ante natal care, breast feeding and infant feeding practices. The five-
year project is receiving USD 22 million from the World Bank and Canadian Development Agency.

Promoting monitoring and accountability

The extent to which CSOs participate in national government / multi-stakeholder monitoring systems or implement their own systems is a debated issue, and of course is highly dependent on the context. We observed both scenarios as well as situations where CSOs are supporting national systems whilst also retaining their own independent analyses and reports.

In Guatemala, MPTF funds support the CSA for SUN to establish a Monitoring and Social Audit Commission of CSOs, which aims to monitor and evaluate government policies, actions and public investment. This is criticised by government officials, as they believe it duplicates what the government is already doing through the SIMON system. However, the CSA believes it is vital to maintain an independent capacity in a situation of high levels of corruption.

A major focus for many CSAs has been on tracking government budget allocations and expenditure on nutrition across different sectors. This is of course coherent with SO4 of the SUN Movement and the work of COP1 described above and members of CSAs have benefitted from their engagement in the MPTF funded workshops on budget analysis.

There is often a close linkage between the work of CSAs on raising awareness of parliamentarians and their work on budget monitoring. At least 10 MPTF funded CSAs are seeking to raise the awareness and engagement of parliamentarians on nutrition with the intention that MPs will encourage governments to increase investments and hold them to account against their national and international commitments. This is well illustrated by CSONA in Malawi (see Box below).

Box 5  Supporting parliamentarians to monitor nutrition budgets and hold governments to account

In collaboration with Save the Children International Malawi, Civil Society Organization Nutrition Alliance (CSONA) held an engagement meeting with Members of Parliament (MPs) during the 2015 National Budget Sitting. The aim of the meeting was establish an interface and build relationships with MPs for future engagement as well as present the preliminary results from CSO Budget analysis exercise and highlight the progress this far as it relates to Malawi’s Nutrition for Growth Commitments (N4G). One major outcome was the agreement that the Parliamentary Committee on Nutrition, health and AIDS would develop a roadmap with benchmarks by which the Committee would monitor nutrition budget allocations at national and district levels.

Sharing learning and building capacity amongst CSOs

The value of CSAs in providing a space for CSOs to learn from each other is very evident from our field visits, interviews and literature reviews. Facilitating the sharing learning
between CSAs is a key function of the global CSN. Its work in this respect is reviewed below. However, the MPTF Log Frame and Window II Theory of Change imply that CSAs will, of their own initiative, seek to share their experiences with other networks and countries within the Movement. The Evaluation Team found numerous examples of CSOs sharing their situation analyses, programme approaches and advocacy positions with fellow members of alliances.

**Efficiency**

A high proportion of CSAs have struggled to implement activities according to work plans for reasons which are explored in Section 6. Delays in implementation are reflected in the underspends of CSAs. Eighteen of the SUN Movement MPTF funded CSAs and the global CSN requested no-cost extensions which were approved by the Management Committee.

Numerous stakeholders, particularly SUN Movement MPTF donors, raised the efficiency of channelling funds to the projects as a major concern. The ICE noted significant delays in the transfer of funds to Implementing Partners (see Annex 3). In Guatemala, the initial agreement between UNOPS and the Implementing Partner took 5 months to be signed and then there was an average delay of 5 months to disburse funds to the Implementing Partner.

In Sri Lanka, there was a six month delay in initiating the project implementation due to delays the signing of the legal agreement between the PUNO and the IP, establishment of the Secretariat and registration of the SUN Peoples’ Forum (Sri Lanka, 2014c).

There were also delays in the processing of requests for budget revisions and no cost extensions. The Evaluation Team saw examples of no-cost extension requests, which took more than 6 months between the request being made by the Implementing Partner and the request being submitted to the Management Committee for approval. Decisions were made very close to the original end date of projects. This resulted in uncertainty for many CSAs, a loss of momentum and there were reports of loss of staff with short-term contracts and lack of clarity of renewal.

For these reasons, the value of transferring funds through UN agencies has been questioned both in terms of the time for transfers to occur and the 7% administration fee charged.

It was only possible for the Evaluation Team to assess the cost-efficiency of CSA activities in the case study countries that we visited and even then, it was not possible to undertake an in-depth analysis. In both Malawi and Zimbabwe, the Implementing Partners (Concern Worldwide and Progressio respectively) had rigorous procurement and accounting systems in place to minimise costs and verify expenditures.
**Sustainability**

The sustainability of CSAs depends not only on their ability to access funds but also the extent to which members are engaged and willing to take responsibility for the implementation of activities.

The ability of CSAs to acquire financial resources sustainably is reviewed below in the section on future funding needs and options. However, it is worth noting here that longer-term fundraising was not an explicit objective within the initial funding proposals and strategies of CSAs. In general, the issue of fundraising appears to only have come to the fore as MPTF project periods have drawn to an end. Where fundraising efforts have occurred they tend to have been piecemeal and ad-hoc rather than comprehensive and strategic. The recent study on civil society alignment found that in many countries

...there is not a regular exchange of information between CSAs and donor conveners. There are often contacts with individual CSOs but not representatives of CSAs. Responsibility for this is shared between donor and civil society representatives (Leather 2015).

The findings above on CSA governance arrangements suggest that some CSAs are highly dependent on the commitment and actions of one or a small number of individuals or organisations. On the other hand, the majority of CSAs have generated strong ownership by members with consequent inputs of in-kind resources, technical support, sharing of responsibilities and sometimes, financial contributions.

In terms of project results, many CSAs appear to be producing lasting results, by contributing to increased awareness of nutrition, improved multi-stakeholder processes, better multi-sector policies and programmes and, to some extent, increased investments.

CSAs in many countries work with parliamentarians helping to prioritize nutrition regardless of the party in power (e.g. Ghana, Zimbabwe) and obtain signed commitments for nutrition improvements from presidential candidates, ensuring that nutrition remains a priority (e.g. Malawi, Peru). (SUN CSN 2015)

Some CSAs have recognised the risk of declining political commitment due to changes in government and are implementing activities to promote sustained commitment and action over political cycles, e.g. promoting cross-party nutrition champions amongst parliamentarians, raising awareness amongst journalists and advocating for commitments to be enshrined in national legislation. To ensure sustainability in Peru, the MPTF funds have supported activities that are strengthening existing consultation mechanisms between local governments and citizens (Peru, n.d.).

5.2.2 **The Global Civil Society Network (CSN)**

“Gaining Parliament’s backing is key to developing and implementing government’s nutrition strategy”

(Juliana Lugunzi, Parliamentarian from Malawi, at the SUN Movement Global Gathering 2015)
In total the global CSN received USD 1,036,054 from the MPTF. The PUNO is UNOPS and the Implementing Partner is Save the Children, which hosts the CSN Secretariat. In addition to the MPTF support, CSN has also accessed DFID support to enable the development of professional package of SUN CSN documents and over US$1 million from the Children’s Investment Fund Foundation (CIFF) as part of a larger Save the Children grant to implement the learning route methodology in support of country support and experience exchange. In addition, the SUN Civil Society Network benefits from a number of in-kind support from its members.

The objectives of the global CSN have evolved over time but can be synthesized as follows:

- Promoting establishment or strengthening of CSAs
- Promoting the effectiveness of CSAs through technical support
- Facilitating and capturing learning
- Facilitating participation in regional and global processes
- Supporting the internal functioning of the CSN

In our evaluation we not only assessed the work of the CSN Secretariat but the work of the global CSN as a whole. Members of the global CSN, led by the Steering Group, are collectively responsible for the implementation of the CSN’s work plan. The Secretariat should play a coordination and facilitation role. MPTF funds were allocated to support the overall function of the Network. Clearly, given that a large proportion of the funds were spent on and by the Secretariat, their work has been a major focus of attention.

The relevance of the global CSN is amply illustrated by the overwhelmingly positive feedback provided by members of CSAs during our interviews and case studies, as well as during previous studies and evaluations (Mokoro 2015, Leather 2015). CSAs expressed the need for technical support, coordination and guidance and that is what the MPTF grant helps to give them. The SUN CSA in Kenya, for example, provides positive feedback on the technical support received (Kenya, 2015). It has contributed to the growth in the number of CSAs and the strengthening their capabilities.

Individual members of the global CSN have been instrumental in the establishment of new CSAs at country level. The global network now has over 2,100 CSOs participating through the 34 CSAs.

In relation to the SUN Movement MPTF, the CSN Secretariat has played a key role both in supporting the development and review of CSA funding proposals, reporting to the MC and providing technical support to MPTF funded CSAs, as part of its wider efforts. The specific roles and responsibilities of the CSN Secretariat in relation to the MPTF are laid out in the Supplementary Guidance Note approved by the MC in November 2014. The SMS and MPTF MC members appreciate the work of the CSN Secretariat in relation to the MPTF and acknowledged that the overall workload of the CSN sometimes affected the level of support that the CSN Secretariat was able to provide. By its own admission,
the CSN Secretariat found the MPTF application review process was too much to manage, on top of all its other responsibilities.

The technical support provided by members of the Network and the CSN Secretariat is found to be very useful by national CSAs, particularly because it is grounded in the learning from national level experiences. There is a strong iterative approach between the lesson learning and technical assistance activities of the CSN. Examples of the guidance and resources produced by the CSN are provided in the Box below.

Box 6   Examples of guidance and resources produced by the CSN

| SUN CSN cross learning tool on the CSN blog covering the following issues: | Decentralisation; Influencing Policy change; Independent registration and sustainability; Financing and sustainability. |
| Ensuring CSAs have equitable access to opportunities | http://media.wix.com/ugd/a1d6d9_90a870d1f93c470ddeb4a27d014fbbd9.pdf |
| A SUN CSN Process For Claims And Log When Internal Tensions Arise In SUN CSAs | http://media.wix.com/ugd/a1d6d9_adb2352f1bd44d7cb11aed4802d70da7.pdf |
| Civil society successes in scaling up nutrition | http://media.wix.com/ugd/a1d6d9_e3db0fd63f204c2d99d41ea228a2735f.pdf |
| Civil Society Network process for submitting request for support from the SUN CSN | http://suncivilsocietynet.wix.com/suncsnblog#!supporting-csas/cbq5 |

Highly useful tools such as the Request Tracker help to ensure that the work of the CSN Secretariat is demand-driven and meets needs. The CSN Impact Tracker also provides a dashboard of the interactions with Government and the policy change targeted. As we note under Sustainability, the CSN is also tracking the funding needs and fundraising efforts of SUN CSAs in each SUN member country where possible. The work on developing “SUN 2.0”, helping coordinate Global Gatherings, and developing future Strategy and Road Maps also indicate that funds devoted to the CSN are funds well spent but hugely under resourced for the work required.

The evaluation confirmed findings of previous studies (Leather 2015), that CSAs are not always aware of the guidance and support that is available from the CSN. Some informants believe that guidance should be more prescriptive whilst still recognising that tools and approaches need to be appropriate for the context, whilst others feel it is up to the country actors to organise themselves based on guidance.
There were also calls for the global CSN, in the form of the Steering Group, to be more interventionist in situations where CSAs are not functioning in line with guidance based on experience and agreed at global level. This point was particularly made in relation to the governance of CSAs in which host organisations are overstepping their roles and members feel unable to take ownership of the alliance.

The CSN achievements are too dependent, however, on the work of just a couple of committed staff. The model of CSN support to CSAs is effective but such a small team will find it difficult to provide the level of sustained support needed with the level of in-house resources and small pool of additional funds for bringing in ad-hoc technical expertise.

The Secretariat capacity may have been fit for purpose for the original 11 CSAs but the growth of the Movement means that there are now 39 CSAs in need of support with over 45 countries with civil society activities. One approach that is being developed by the Secretariat is to decentralise capacity to regional hubs.

Some CSAs feel that the CSN is too demanding of CSAs whose focus has to be at national level. They felt that there was too much pressure to feed into global discussions and processes. Another concern is that communications are too long and not always easy to understand. The Evaluation Team heard a number of requests for fewer, shorter and simpler communications. The SUN CSN is developing a strategy for improved communication in response to such feedback. The strategy will be implemented in two phases – what can be done with current resources (very limited) and what can be done with additional resources).

There was also concern expressed for the workload of CSN Secretariat staff. Whilst many people believe that an increase in Secretariat capacity is justified, they also believe that there is a need to further prioritise activities. For example, someone other than the Coordinator should undertake extensive financial analysis.

The undoubted overload of Secretariat staff is partly a consequence of members the CSN not freeing up enough of organizational time to lead on the implementation of different work streams in the CSN work plan. For example, the Terms of Reference of the CSN state Steering Group members should spend 15 days per year i.e. 5% of their time on CSN issues. It is pertinent to ask if this really enough. If there is real organizational commitment to alignment within civil society, should there not be an expectation of a higher proportion of organization time and resources to support the collective effort?

5.3 Window III: Monitoring and Evaluation Baseline

During the third meeting in December 2012, the SUN Movement MPTF MC authorized activation of MPTF Window 3 “Support for Global SUN Strategic Efforts” to provide US$60,000 to develop the SUN Movement Monitoring and Evaluation Framework and conduct a baseline study and other preparatory work for the 2015 SUN Movement Evaluation. UNOPS was identified as the PUNO and a consultancy firm, MDF Training
and Consultancy, was contracted as the implementing partner, working together with the SMS.

In the first quarter of 2013, all SUN networks were involved in the design of the system and data was collected for baseline and progress information. September 2012 was used as cut-off date for the baseline to ensure all MPTF work would easily fit in, including all major indicators by MPTF logframe.

**Box 7  Outputs of the MPTF Window III M&E Baseline project**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The Monitoring and Evaluation Framework (SMS 2013)</th>
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<tr>
<th>The SUN Movement Baseline Report</th>
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The SUN Movement M&E Framework, and the baseline study, were rigorously reviewed as part of the ICE. Therefore, the Evaluation Team did not conduct an evaluation of this project within this current evaluation.

**Box 8  ICE summary conclusion and recommendations on the SUN Movement M&E systems**

SUN’s M&E framework is insufficiently rigorous and too subjective; it is therefore not reliable as a guide to individual country progress over time, nor for comparing progress across different countries. It places too much emphasis on global indicators at the expense of country-specific indicators that could be more useful in ensuring country-level accountability.

The GNR should lead on monitoring progress in SUN countries (as a regular part of its global monitoring), particularly at the outcome and impact level. Monitoring and evaluation of output-level results is likely to need to stay within the SUN system, but the system must be made more robust. Specifically, SUN M&E should be built around country-specific and attuned objectives, rather than standardised global M&E frameworks, but with some global early phase monitoring to ensure that the structures to enable country M&E frameworks and systems are making progress.

... The SUN Movement should contract consultancy support to revise the M&E Framework in time for the beginning of the new strategy reference period (mid-2015), to include consultation with GNR.

*Source: Mokoro (2015)*

The synthesis of SUN Movement stakeholders responses to the ICE give the impression that there is not full agreement with the conclusions of the ICE.

there is no consensus on the efficacy of the Movement's monitoring and evaluation framework. Most appreciated the self-reporting of process and output indicators by country multi-stakeholder platforms; some thought it should be redesigned and made simpler; others argued for more time for the current M&E system to be practiced consistently (SMS 2015?)
This issue was also addressed by the ICE Quality Assurance Advisers in their statement on the ICE and the responses of SUN Movement stakeholders:

We have also noted the skepticism of some stakeholders with respect to SUN ICE conclusions and recommendations on monitoring and evaluation, and the apparent lack of consensus on how to proceed in this area. There clearly exist tensions and a need to strike a balance between national-level monitoring of nutrition indicators, project-level M&E requirements of donors and other development partners, and a desire to track global progress while facilitating comparisons among countries. Given how slowly nutrition indicators change over time, we find the evaluation’s emphasis on monitoring output-level results and country-level policy and institutional outcomes to be appropriate. (Compton et al 2015).

The only additional observation of the SUN Movement MPTF Evaluation Team to this analysis is that the MPTF seems to have been used as a gap filler in the funding of this project, as with the two projects funded through Window I.

6  Factors determining performance

6.1  The implementing partners

NGOs have been playing a critical role as implementing partners (IPs) given that none of the CSAs were established as independent legal entities at the start of the funding periods.

Most IPs appear to be administering funds on behalf of CSAs in an accountable manner without seeking undue influence over CSA staff or how funds are used. However, the Evaluation Team observed that some IPs have struggled to make payments and provide reports on time. Some overstep their role as an administrator and overly influence the work of Secretariat staff and the use of funds. This issue is illustrated in Section 5.2.1 (CSA effectiveness) above. There are also instances where there have been tensions between INGOs that are IPs and national CSOs, often where the IP has been overstepping its administrative function.

Some of the delays in the transfer of funds and commencement of projects can be attributed to IPs being slow to finalise proposals and sign agreements with PUNOs. On occasions, the work of the IPs in this respect was delayed by the need for CSA executive bodies to reach agreement on the project design, governance and implementation arrangements.

The role played by PROCASUR in the Learning Routes project was strongly endorsed by participants, as was the support and guidance provided by the SMS. The Senegalese counterpart, CLM, showed strong commitment and capacity for organising the Learning Route in Senegal (PROCASUR 2014b). This helped to minimise costs. In Peru there was a very good working relationship between PROCASUR, the SMS and the Peruvian Ministry.
responsible for hosting the event. This allowed efficient implementation despite institutional changes taking place in the Ministry.

The work of UNICEF in the budget analysis project, together with partners such as Oxford Policy Management (OPM) and the Institute of Development Studies (IDS), were highly appreciated by the SMS and participants. The work of MDF Training and Consulting was similarly praised in the M&E baseline project.

6.2 **CSA executive bodies, secretariats and members**

Critical to the success of CSAs are their executive bodies and secretariats, in playing leadership and facilitation roles for their member organisations. In general, executive bodies appear to be performing their roles well, setting strategic priorities for the CSA, overseeing the work of the secretariat and the use of funds. However, as raised above in the review of the functioning of CSAs, there is sometimes a lack of clarity regarding divisions of responsibility between executives, secretariats, host organisations (implementing partners) and members. Other concerns that arose include: the dominance of INGOs, inactivity of some executive members and inadequate consultations with members, especially on issues under discussion in national multi-stakeholder platforms.

One observation from meeting with CSAs and their members has been how impressive and committed the members of the CSAs are. There is an obvious logic in harnessing this energy together, to facilitate the members to know each other better and use the new knowledge and linkages towards nutrition. The members are clearly stronger together, motivated and have stronger belief in their ability to influence governments. In Kenya, the formation of different taskforces within the CSA proved to be critical in ensuring delivery of its mandate and optimal use of an array of expertise among members (Kenya, 2014).

There is widespread acknowledgment amongst CSOs in the SUN Movement that the participation and leadership of grassroots organizations in CSAs is inadequate. This is often due to the limited number of local CSOs working on nutrition specific interventions. Participation is stronger in the realms of food security and public health. In some circumstances, the limited participation of grassroots organizations is because they are critical of processes that they consider to be too open to corporate interests (Mokoro 2015).

CSOs consisting of people most at risk of malnutrition often have the greatest credibility and legitimacy to speak on nutrition issues but also tend to have limited opportunities and capacities to influence decision makers. Tensions often arise when NGOs speak on behalf of **“One of the biggest risks to the SUN Movement is the relationship between INGOs and southern CSOs.”**

(Source: Informant in CSO alignment study, Leather 2015).
grassroots people and organizations and dominate participation in multi-stakeholder platforms or in CSAs. Consequently, some CSAs such as Nepal and Zambia have policies limiting the participation of INGOs in governing bodies but encourage their active participation, particularly in providing technical support to national organizations.

The absence of strong, credible local and national voices risks limiting the impact that CSOs have on policy making and monitoring at national level, as governments are often less inclined to listen to INGOs. Consequently, many CSAs are actively trying to enhance the capacities and participation of grassroots organisations through the type of sub-national activities described above.

There are different opinions within and between CSAs on the value of registering the CSA as a legal entity. Some CSAs, e.g. Zambia, Sri Lanka, Uganda, Malawi and Kenya have established or are establishing themselves as legal entities. Reasons given for this include: a desire to ensure that decisions are fully made by the governing body of the CSA; to make the administration of funds more efficient; a need to increase the legitimacy of the civil society voice; a need to fundraise and be a direct recipient of funds.

Other CSAs such as Lao PDR, El Salvador, Nepal, Mozambique, Ethiopia and Peru have chosen to maintain a 'loose network' where funds are administered and the Secretariat is hosted by a member organisation. In some CSAs this decision was motivated by a concern that there would be too much competition for membership of the governing body and increased bureaucracy impeding a focus on the implementation of activities. A fear that the CSA will compete for scarce funds with members is also cited by some CSOs.

Where a CSA is registered, it becomes a long-term legal and financial responsibility, and time commitment of someone to ensure that filing requirements are met, accounts are submitted and fees paid regardless of funding available. It is understandable why a CSA would seek to minimize the future obligation of carrying out these tasks without any corresponding financial security.

6.3 Non-project stakeholders at country level

For CSAs to achieve their objectives, government representatives and other stakeholders need to be willing to engage with CSOs. An achievement of some MPTF funded CSAs has been to establish good working

In El Salvador, the Alianza highlighted the costs of registering, and the possible conflict over “who the employee works for”. CALMA employees were clearly very supportive of the Alianza Nutres, but had their wider tasks to carry out as part of CALMA. Indeed, the Alianza had not recruited extra staff but used CALMA staff. In Laos, given the sensitivities of registering local organisations, it was not decided to register a CSA, nor does there appear to be a plan to do so. The legal status does not appear to be a “crucial undertaking” – rather the CSA is able to harness and coordinate the energy of the members just as well as an informal alliance.
relations with government nutrition focal points, Ministers and other government officials and recognition of the legitimacy of CSAs as the means by which CSOs coordinate and organise themselves to participate in policy development, implementation and monitoring.

However, attitudes towards CSOs vary between countries. The progress of some CSAs has been significantly hindered by the unsupportive approaches of government representatives and sometimes UN staff. However, in most countries government and UN officials have been highly supportive of CSO engagement. In Myanmar, for example, the CSA reports that the government has been very encouraging and has publically recognized the SUN CSA's progress compared to other networks (Myanmar, 2014c).

**Box 9  The case of El Salvador: relationships between government, civil society and the private sector in ensuring healthy diets**

In El Salvador the relationships with Government appear to be excellent. It was CONASAN, the National Council for Food Security and Nutrition, which first had information of the availability of MPTF funds and advised CSOs to apply. The Government focal point is particularly motivated and in harmony with the CSO network. Still despite having a positive partner in Government, this has not resulted in the passing of pro-nutrition legislation which has waited on the statute books since 2013, blocked in Parliament due to “business interests” amongst Members of Parliament. It would appear that in trying to digest too much change in one proposed food security law in 2013, it has failed to pass the law at all.

CONASAN is both an Executive Government Agency for Food Sovereignty and Nutrition and part of the CSA. This overlap is seen as very helpful for collaboration but is contrary to the approach of most CSAs who want to ensure they have their own autonomous space to share information, lessons and positions.

There are other civil society alliances, notably the Mesa de Soberania Alimentaria (Food Sovereignty Group) which has its own focus on protecting small producers’ economic interests with which the CONSAN and Alliance Nutres also collaborate.

Local Government officials that we spoke to admire the work the CSOs were doing whilst being stymied by central Government in terms of legislation. There are however opportunities to work on Municipal “ordinances”, local laws which can be a force for nutrition, if central government legislation is not passed. The private sector appears to be part of the challenge in making legislative progress.

The Minister herself expressed her support for the collaboration with the CSA, and that they needed to continue to apply the counter-pressure to business agencies such as ANEP (Agencia Nacional de Empresas Privadas) and others.

Source: SUN Movement MPTF Evaluation case study in El Salvador

In Guatemala, pro-nutrition legislation and a similar structure exists including an INCOPAS Agency in Government, where all stakeholders are invited to participate. However, the SUN CSA does not feel that INCOPAS is effective enough on its own without advocacy from outside. The CSAs in Guatemala and El Salvador receive technical support and evidence based analysis from organisations such as ICEFI (Instituto Centroamericano de Estudios Fiscales). They are excellent collaboration
partners and complement the work in the field carried out by CSOs, for example on nutrition education, WASH, agricultural crops for nutrition.

6.4 PUNOs (country and global levels)

Initially the MC believed that the MPTF would be strengthened with the participation of more UN organizations: “the Chair of the Management Committee will encourage more UN Organizations to join the SUN Movement MPTF within the next three weeks” (1st MC meeting minutes, SMS July 2012). However, during the evaluation, the role of PUNOs has been the most questioned component of the SUN Movement MPTF architecture.

The responsibilities of PUNOs are described in the MoUs signed with UNDP, the overall Terms of Reference of the SUN Movement MPTF, the Management Committee Terms of Reference and Rules of Procedure and the Supplementary Guidance Note. They can be summarised under two main headings:-

- Receive and transfer funds to Implementing Partners (provide guidance on proposals, sign funding agreements, process timely disbursements and project revisions)
- Ensure full programmatic and financial accountability (verify narrative and financial reports by IPs, ensure timely submission to MC, investigate misused funds and implementation challenges)

The Evaluation Team assessed the activities and performance of the PUNOs in relation to these planned roles. By their own admission, PUNOs did not perform these functions to the standard that they and others would have liked. The work was described by one PUNO representative as “a very painful process”. As described elsewhere in this report, in many instances, the processing of disbursements and budget revisions was very slow and the extent and quality of programme and financial monitoring was limited.

Many informants placed significant responsibility for delays in fund transfers and the processing of requests for budget revisions and no cost extensions with PUNOs. One interviewee closely involved in the overall administration described the delays in transfers and budget revisions of up to 6 months as “outrageous” and having “created a huge reputational issue for the Fund”.

The reasons given by PUNOs for slow processes were:

- They did not have the necessary internal procedures already in place to facilitate rapid disbursement of funds. Establishing systems and procedures between head offices and country offices took time and resources following the establishment of the SUN Movement MPTF.
- The 7% administration fee was inadequate to cover costs. In any case, the teams that were undertaking the

In El Salvador, the PUNO made the processing of budget lines far more complicated than it needed to be. The CSA needed to apply for 27 cheques. The El Salvador example may have been exceptional - annualised budgets, paid in advance and liquidated against activity deliverables and receipts at the end of each year were the norm. (Source: SUN Movement MPTF evaluation case study)
work were not the recipients of the money.

- Hence, without additional resources, staff were side-tracked from other activities. PUNOs devoted significant amounts of their own resources.

It was also highlighted that the Management Committee did not establish timeframes for the transfer of funds and other administrative tasks. This is widely seen as a major weakness in the SUN Movement MPTF procedures.

In addition to being a conduit for funds, the primary function of the PUNOs is one of financial and programme quality assurance, including verifying the reports of CSAs/IPs. PUNO staff explained that there were limits to the extent to which they could oversee project implementation and the use of funds without encroaching on the autonomy of CSAs. On the other hand, donors do not consider that verifying reports constitutes interference in the affairs of CSAs. We did not see any cases where PUNO feedback on IP/CSA reports has been documented.

Informants recognised the constraints and circumstances experienced by PUNOs. However it was argued that PUNOs accepted the responsibilities and they could and should have done more to ensure that they were performed fully and efficiently. The Supplementary Guidelines were developed by the Management Committee to provide greater clarity on the role of PUNOs but some expressed the view that their responsibilities were already sufficiently clear in the MoU with UNDP and the SUN Movement MPTF Terms of Reference. Despite encouragement and pressure from the Management Committee, the standard roles of PUNOs in UN MPTFs were not followed by the UN agencies in many cases.

Even though it is not an explicit role of PUNOs in any of the governing documents of the Fund, the national staff of some PUNOs (e.g. UNICEF, Kyrgyzstan; WFP, Zimbabwe) were praised for providing strong technical support to CSOs in the establishment of CSAs and the implementation of activities. It was argued that this should not necessarily be considered an added value of MPTF funds passing through the UN organisation. One would expect UN organisations to provide such support anyway as part of their mandate. Indeed, in Lao PDR, for example, the PUNO is UNOPS, but it is UNICEF which has provided extensive technical support to the CSA. In Guatemala, the PUNO had recommendations on the types of indicators to be chosen but did not feel that its suggestions were being implemented.

### 6.5 REACH

REACH is present in 10 out of the 24 countries in which the MPTF has supported CSAs (see Inception Report, Leather & Norvell 2015, Annex H). In Bangladesh, there was tension between the REACH national facilitator and WFP, the UN organisation which hosts REACH at global and country levels. Some WFP Country Offices expected REACH facilitators to be the person responsible for the oversight of the MPTF grants and projects. In fact, REACH did not have a signatory role for grant management and did not
consider this to be part of their role. They were happy to provide technical support to CSAs but not to be responsible for grant administration given that they were hosted by WFP and not part of WFP’s country programme. This confusion appears to have contributed to delays in the transfer of funds in some cases, although WFP’s delivery rate is second behind UNOPS. Technical support provided to CSAs by REACH facilitators has generally been appreciated by recipients, whilst recognising that this role is independent of any responsibility in relation to the MPTF.

6.6 MPTF Office

The evaluation team has heard nothing but praise for the work of the MPTF Office in its role as the Administrative Agent for the SUN Movement MPTF. It established the SUN Movement MPTF quickly in order to receive the funds which needed to be urgently disbursed by donors, it has undertaken its work for a small administrative fee (1%), contributed constructively to strategic discussions in the MC and ensured that funds were disbursed rapidly to PUNOs and financially reported. The Administrative Agent functions have been performed consistently with the timelines defined for UN Trust Funds – all the transfers were done with 3-5 business days from MC decision as is evidenced by the dated and audited transactions of its functions. The MPTF Office provides real time data on the SUN Movement MPTF on its Gateway website6. However, some reports were found to be missing for some of the funded projects.

6.7 SUN Movement Secretariat

During the course of the ICE:

the SMS was praised for playing an efficient and effective role in supporting the establishment of the MPTF, including helping to develop allocation criteria, issuing calls for proposals, reviewing them, making recommendations to the MC, facilitating MC meetings and drafting annual and other reports. … One MC interviewee said that the excellent Secretariat support enabled the MC to “spend more time discussing desired strategic impacts of the Fund” (Mokoro, 2015, Annex K, ¶43).

The findings of the current SUN Movement MPTF evaluation support this conclusion. The SMS did not charge an administration fee for its technical support to the MC. However, good work of the SMS came with an opportunity cost. At peak times during the MPTF process (e.g. reviews of applications, reporting), SMS staff were side-tracked from other essential business and sometimes became over stretched, having to work over time to fulfil their responsibilities. However, SMS staff feel that they have never been able to play to the full their role in checking the compliance of reports with requirements. The Evaluation Team was left with a strong impression that if the SMS were to continue to play such a role in the future, it could not and should not do so without additional capacity.

6 http://mptf.undp.org/factsheet/fund/SUN00
6.8 The Management Committee

The Management Committee is considered to have made efficient funding allocation decisions under the strong leadership of the SUN Movement Coordinator. The main question arising from interviews by the Evaluation Team was why more efforts were not made to mobilise additional funds to provide funds to a wider range of stakeholders as was originally envisaged in the design of the Fund. Whilst appreciating the important contribution that the Fund has made to the mobilisation of civil society, some informants believe that there has been a missed opportunity to provide the SUN Movement with a strategic instrument to help catalyse and enhance multi-stakeholder policies and plans.

6.9 The SUN Donor Network

Following funding from DFID in 2011 to enable CSOs to develop 11 proposals, the SUN Donor Network (DN) provided feedback on the draft proposals in April 2012. The DN was a useful means for discussion on funding for CSAs not funded through the MPTF. Beyond this initial support, the DN does not appear to have played a major role in relation to the MPTF. The primary message from most donors is that attempts to access funds should be made, in the first instance, at country levels. However, the extent to which individual donors or the SUN DN, have clear plans for increasing the availability of small grant funding for SUN stakeholders at this level, is not clear. It is also unclear to what extent donor networks at country level are informing the global DN about small scale funding needs to catalyse and support SUN processes. The CSA in Tanzania PANITA mentioned that a local funding approach is too ambitious – funds are allocated earlier at global level, while many CSAs have little experience in liaising with donors. (Tanzania itself however successfully accessed funding mainly through IrishAid and did not need MPTF funding.)

Country level donor networks and conveners are considered to have a key role in mobilizing resources and promoting the alignment of stakeholders. However, in many SUN countries, there is still no donor convener. In others, there is not a regular exchange of information between CSAs and donor conveners. There are often contacts with individual CSOs but not representatives of CSAs. Responsibility for this is shared between donor and civil society representatives.

6.10 The SUN Lead Group

The MPTF 2012 Terms of Reference state that the SUN Movement Lead Group will “set the strategic direction and capitalization of the MPTF”(p7). The Minutes of the 1st MC meeting report that the MC should have additional linkages with the Lead Group: It was agreed that the SUN Movement Lead Group Chair or his representative would be invited to participate in the MC meetings.

However, there appears to have been little discussion of the MPTF by the Lead Group and little awareness of what it has done amongst its members. Some informants have
expressed concern that the work of the MPTF has been detached from broader strategic discussions within the SUN Movement. Others felt that this has not been an issue given the close involvement of the SUN Movement Coordinator and members of the SMS.

7 Overall design, governance and administrative arrangements

7.1 The choice of the UN MPTF Office as the administrative agent

There is little doubt amongst interviewees that the decision to channel donor funds through the MPTF Office was the right one at the time. Donors had pledged money before a mechanism was identified. Swiss and UK funds needed to be received quickly before the end of their financial years; otherwise their funds would be lost. The former SUN Coordinator had good connections with the MPTF Office which moved quickly to establish the SUN Movement MPTF.

7.2 Design and Guiding documents of the SUN Movement MPTF

The intended objectives, ways of working and divisions of responsibility of the MPTF are laid out in the documents listed in the Box below.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Box 10</th>
<th>The guiding documents of the SUN Movement MPTF</th>
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<tr>
<td>February 2012</td>
<td>SUN Movement MPTF Terms of Reference</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Standard Administrative Arrangement between Donor and MPTF Office</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Memorandum of Understanding between Participating UN Organizations and the United Nations Development Programme</td>
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<tr>
<td>August 2012:</td>
<td>SUN Movement MPTF Management Committee Terms of Reference and Rules of Procedure (revised May 2013)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Window II Theory of Change</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>SUN Movement MPTF Logframe 2012-2015</td>
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<tr>
<td>November 2014</td>
<td>Supplementary Guidance Note</td>
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Some stakeholders expressed the opinion that the MPTF’s ToR, Management Committee TOR and Rules of Procedure should have provided greater clarity on the roles and responsibilities of each actor involved, particularly in relation to fund transfer timelines and processes, monitoring and reporting.

The Supplementary Guidelines were developed to provide greater clarity on the roles and responsibilities of PUNOs, as well as the global CSN. Stakeholders appreciated the flexibility of the MC and the MPTF procedures to adapt to needs (e.g. 15% flexibility across budget lines – which was not originally in the procedures but was agreed by the MC in December 2014). However, some informants feel that there was a need for
greater clarity on timeframes for fund transfers, budget revisions and other processes as well as better guidance on reporting requirements. It was suggested that the Fund has lacked Standard Operating Procedures setting clear benchmarks for the performance of PUNOs and other stakeholders.

### 7.3 Resource mobilisation and availability

The first MC meeting minutes reveal that there was intention to raise additional funds, including from private donors and foundations. The minutes of the 5th meeting of the MC, held on 27th November 2013 state:

> By the 6th meeting of the SUN Movement MPTF MC in early 2014, funds in all windows will be exhausted. The Chair and MPTF Office will accelerate efforts on resource mobilization, keeping the SUN Movement MPTF MC continuously engaged. The work done by the global Civil Society Network should help feed into such a strategy (SMS 2014)

During the 6th meeting state:

> The Chair suggested that a discussion of further replenishment of the SUN Movement MPTF takes place in early 2015 once the outcomes of the (Independent Comprehensive) Evaluation of the SUN Movement are clear…. The Management Committee agreed to make a careful effort to consider the future focus and replenishment of the SUN Movement MPTF within the broader context of evaluation of SUN Movement. (SMS 2014).

However, according to the MC meeting minutes there was no further discussion regarding resource mobilisation. It appears that informally MC members decided to wait for the outcomes of the MPTF evaluation and the development of the 2016-2020 SUN Movement strategy and road map.

### 7.4 Funding windows and allocations

Almost 90% of the disbursed funds were allocated through Window II to support civil society participation in SUN processes. Window I areas of change, outcomes and outputs as described in the MPTF Logframe suggest that the primary intended recipient of this window is national governments. The outputs suggest activities such as the mapping of current needs and capacities, the establishment of multi-stakeholder platforms, developing costed plans and strengthening national implementation and monitoring capacities. However, only 10% of disbursed funds were allocated to such activities (Learning Routes and Budget Tracking). The MPTF ToR states that activities that could be supported through Window III include resource mobilisation and transfer strategies, communications, validation of progress indicators and an independent evaluation of the Movement. Less than 1% of disbursed funds were allocated through Window III. The SUN ICE was financed separately by the Gates Foundation.

As noted earlier, there is general satisfaction with the way the funds have been allocated. However, FAO did express the view that, taking into account the transaction costs of administering a large number of small grants, funds might have been / could be “better used for capacity development, perhaps through a train the trainers’ approach
that reached government as well as non-state actors engaged in providing a variety of services related to nutrition policy and programming.”

Whilst the majority of SUN stakeholders, might not agree that this would have been a better use of funds, many suggested that there could be a more strategic, demand driven approach to identifying needs across the range of SUN stakeholders at national level. There might have been more discussion within SUN multi-stakeholder platforms regarding the priority needs for small grant funding to support the achievement of SUN Strategic Objectives.

### 7.5 Calls for proposals

At the SUN Global Gathering in Milan in October 2015 and then again in El Salvador it was evident from evaluation interviews that some governments and CSOs were not aware of the availability of MPTF grants. Informants felt that the time period available for grant applications in response to the October 2013 call for proposals was very short, less than one month. They argued that allowing for more time available to consult among members and to plan a proposal carefully would have improved the quality of proposals.

### 7.6 Process for selecting projects to be funded

The SMS and CSN secretariats found the application review process very time consuming and found it difficult to allocate the required capacities given all the other demands on their time. Some interviewees expressed the view that funding conditions could have been used to promote improved project quality, e.g. clear plans for documenting impact and achievements; evidence of longer term fundraising and sustainability strategy being developed and implemented; requiring cross-learning exchanges, including attendance annual SUN GG each year and attendance to one to two regional events per year; evidence of relationship building with key stakeholders.

### 7.7 Fund transfer mechanism

During the 7th meeting of the MC on 7th July 2014, the Chair noted that:

> ...at the initial set up of the SUN Movement MPTF, it is likely that the Management Committee underestimated the complexities of putting in place the systems required for quick and smooth transfers that comply with the internal rules and procedures of each PUNO. It was originally hoped this could happen within 2 weeks but in fact takes closer to 6 months. (ref )

The MPTF Office reported to the Evaluation Team that the lengthy process of fund transfers from UN Agencies to NGOs is not a characteristic of UN Agencies working in SUN Movement MPTF only. The UN Common Humanitarian Funds (CHFs) have faced similar challenges – it used to take up to 50 days to transfer funding to NGOs in humanitarian contexts. The CHF Advisory Group recommended that PUNOs should set benchmarks, e.g. 4 weeks between funding allocation decision and receipt of funds by
implementing partners. The CHFs are working on a new fund transfer timeline of 10 working days between Managing Agent (not Admin Agent) of the Fund (UNDP) and NGOs.

7.8 Information flow and communications

Interviewees from both the CSN and PUNOs agreed that communication between them has not been as good as it should have been. CSAs, through IPs, have a contractual obligation to report on progress to PUNOs and in turn the PUNOs report to the MPTF Office and MC. The CSN also has a role to play in following the progress of CSAs, identifying supports needs and providing technical support. However, PUNOs have not routinely copied the CSN Secretariat into communications. This has made it difficult for the CSN to play its role as well as it might. There were no clear parameters established regarding communication between the CSN and PUNOs. As mentioned above, PUNO feedback on IP reports has also been largely undocumented. The level of absorption of the budget is also difficult to establish from the reports. Gateway data on expenditure appears in reality to represent the funding transferred from MPTF to the PUNO, and not expenditure by the CSA which might well be less.

7.9 Monitoring and reporting

The MC regularly reviewed grant disbursements and challenges in fund disbursements. Progress in implementation was reviewed in Annual Progress Reports (MPTF MC 2012, 2013 and 2014) based on reviews of individual project progress reports.

The reporting requirements (i.e. quarterly reports) were considered onerous by many recipients and other stakeholders given the size of the grants. The MPTF proposal and reporting templates do not encourage very explicit analysis of the achievements, learning and challenges of each project against the shared theory of change for the SUN Movement MPTF Window II. Therefore, in the view of some informants, shared learning is compromised. Some CSO stakeholders expressed the view that the types of outputs and activities in the Window II section of the MPTF logframe are too restrictive and there is a need to focus more on social change outcomes. The Outcome Mapping approach used in the overall Movement M&E framework is seen as a useful approach for monitoring the progress of CSAs.

From the observations of the evaluation team, the quality and usefulness of quarterly and annual reports is limited by: the lack of clarity regarding the overall planned versus actual activities and costs of the CSAs and the contribution MPTF funds are making to this bigger picture; lack of practical examples of achievements; inadequate analysis of constraints faced, particularly internal ones within civil society; lack of forward looking presentation of activities, costs and resource gaps. In short, project reports appear to have limited value for learning purposes. This is despite the material on the SUN website and the MPTF Office Gateway presenting information well. If this information were combined with more granulated data from IP / PUNO reports on activities against
the Log Frame with cross references to actual outputs, then all stakeholders would have a much better understanding of the issues facing the CSAs in each country.

8 Future funding needs and options.

In this section we present our findings in relation to the following questions:

- What elements in the SUN Movement Strategy 2016-2020 might need support from a catalytic, last resort fund? What are the opportunities and constraints facing these elements in accessing funds from other sources? (8.1)
- What are the options for meeting these funding needs from global level? (8.2)
- What are the options for pooled funding mechanisms? (8.3)

8.1 Future funding needs, opportunities and challenges

As requested in the evaluation ToR, the Evaluation Team identified “the areas requiring financial support to contribute to the objectives of the SUN Movement (2016-2020)” and considered "future needs for a catalytic last resort fund to support national multi-stakeholder platforms during the next phase of the SUN Movement”. Our review of the strategy highlighted the broad funding needs listed in the Box below. Having identified these needs we then consulted with key informants to solicit their views on which activities might be best financed from the global level from a global pooled fund.

**Box 11  Broad funding needs in the SUN Movement**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>National level</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- Nutrition specific and sensitive programmes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- National networks (donor, UN, civil society and business)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Strengthening national capabilities (including strengthening multi-sectoral and multi-stakeholder coordination platforms; developing costed plans, common results and monitoring frameworks; building decentralized implementation capacity; advocacy and mobilization etc)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Global level</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- SUN Movement Secretariat (including costs associated with Lead Group, Executive Committee, Global Gathering etc.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Global SUN Networks (country, donor, UN, civil society and business)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Communities of Practice supporting countries strengthen their capabilities</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Funding for programme implementation and running costs of national government structures clearly fall outside the scope of a pooled fund as donors have made it clear that “there is little appetite in major donor agencies for any new Global Fund” (Results UK 2014:11). The funding needs of the UN Network for SUN and the SUN Donor Network at global and national levels were also not reviewed because it is widely considered that they should be self-financed. The SMS believes that there would not be
any added value in its funding being channelled through a multi-partner trust fund. “The current system of donors providing funds through a UN agency is working well (Source: Head of SMS).

Therefore, the Team focused our analysis on the following types of activities and costs in the SUN Movement as potential recipients from a global pooled fund:

- National CSAs and the global CSN
- National SUN Business Networks (SBN) and the global SBN
- Strengthening national capabilities

Resource requirements of the SUN Networks and the SMS are being estimated as part of the Roadmap development process. The first version, available by March 2016, will provide detailed provisions for 2016-2017 and broad intentions for 2018-2020. It will be revised in early 2017. This evaluation therefore can help inform the on-going Roadmap process.

8.1.1 Civil Society Alliances and the global Civil Society Network

In consultation with CSAs and the global CSN Secretariat, the Evaluation Team estimated the funding needs of CSAs and the CSN for 2016 – 2020, the proportion of funds which CSN members hope can be accessed at country and regional levels and the estimate of the funds that will need to be accessed from global level (see Table 3). The table does not include an estimate of civil society needs for nutrition specific and sensitive programmes that need to be considered separately.

| Table 2 | Total funding requirements for CSAs, 2016-2020 |
|------------------|-------------------------------|-----------------|------------------|-------------------|
|                  | established CSAs | new CSAs by 2016 | new CSAs by 2018 | Total funding needs 2016 - 2020 |
| # CSAs           | 34               | 10              | 12              |                                |
| Core costs / year| 75,000           | 50,000          | 50,000          |                                |
| Activity costs/ year | 150,000        | 100,000         | 100,000         |                                |
| Total budget / year | 225,000         | 150,000         | 150,000         |                                |
| # years          | 5                | 4.5             | 3               |                                |
| **Total 2016-2020** | **38,250,000**  | **6,750,000**   | **5,400,000**   | **50,400,000**           |

Ave % of funds from MPTF no cost extension (18 CSAs, 2016 only) 5%

7 Core costs are higher for established CSAs than new CSAs because facilitation and coordination (Secretariat) costs tend to grow with increased workload particularly associated with larger membership and decentralisation to sub-national levels.
The global CSN reported that funds are needed from global level not only to catalyse new CSAs but also to support the running costs of established CSAs. CSAs are making a strong commitment to access on average 40% of their resource requirements at regional and country levels and through contributions of members. However, it is estimated that there will be a need for approximately US$ 6 million per year to be made available from global level.

The global CSN estimates a funding requirement for the CSN Secretariat (not including activities) of approximately US$ 1.3 million per year. This includes 6 full time staff (coordinator, country support, learning routes, communications, monitoring, learning and evaluation and administration). It does not include proposed regional level coordinators for which funding may not pass through the global CSN. Other significant costs include: interpretation and translation, website development, secretariat travel, technical support consultancies and funds to support CSA representatives to participate in the SUN Global Gathering and other global meetings. Save the Children as host NGO for the Secretariat have a target Indirect Cost Recovery Rate of 15%.

In considering funding needs the global CSN, the Evaluation Team identified the following key questions: to what extent should activities be carried out by CSN members rather than secretariat staff and to what extent should funding for activities be accessed directly by members as opposed to passing through the CSN? If the emphasis is on activities primarily being undertaken by members aligned with a common strategy and funds being accessed directly by them then it is possible that the funding needs of the global CSN are lower. However, this would not represent a major saving to donors. Even if some CSN members increase their in-kind and financial commitments the activities outlined in the CSN strategy and budget would still require donor funding.

The Evaluation Team undertook an analysis of other sources of funding for MPTF and non-MPTF funded CSAs in order to assess the likelihood of CSAs being able to access funds at regional and country levels (see Annex 10). Potential funding sources for CSAs include:

- Member contributions and grants
- Bilateral funding from government donors and philanthropic institutions (including integrating CSA core costs into programme funding applications)
- Budget support
- National pooled funds
- Consultancies

There is a prevalent opinion that some International NGOs with significant amounts of unrestricted funding could be making larger financial contributions to support at least some of the core costs of CSAs and the global CSN. This would probably involve the re-allocation of existing resources, requiring senior management decision-making, but this would represent stronger organisational commitment and alignment to scaling up nutrition. There is also a strong recognition amongst better-resourced INGOs that they need to be making increased financial contributions to the running costs of CSAs and the global CSN.

Our investigations reveal that CSAs are making concerted efforts, with the support of the CSN, to access funds from various sources as illustrated by the establishment of a CSN Strategy and Sustainability Task Force (SSTF). However, most donor representatives spoken to admit that it is unlikely that many CSAs will be able to raise all the funds they require over the next five years at country or regional levels.

8.1.2 National SUN Business Networks and the global SUN Business Network

In early 2015, the SUN Business Network (SBN) drafted a proposal for funding with the objective of fostering support to SUN countries to address gaps in country plans on the role of business. The SBN decided not to move forward with the proposal, partly because of the onerous requirements on recipients.

At a national level, the priority funding need is for a national coordinator with a small activity budget (average total per country = US$ 150,000 per year). The development of a national fundraising strategy is part of the Terms of Reference of the coordinators.

Current funding for the SBN global secretariat ends in December 2016. The Secretariat intends to hold conversations with the SUN Donor Network and with individual donors regarding further funding. The global SBN coordinator foresees a need to increase the size of the global secretariat, as the number of countries with SBNs grows. For every ten countries there would be a need for a focal point at global or regional level to provide support.

The SBN global secretariat believes that it should be possible to find bilateral funding for SBNs in a few priority countries. No estimates were provided to the Evaluation Team of the average proportion of required funds that the SBN aims to mobilize from members at global and national levels. There was a strong view amongst interviewees, including donors, that the global SBN and national SBNs should be self-financing. However, others argued that it is difficult, at least initially, to persuade SBN members (or potential members) to contribute to the cost of SBNs because they do not fully see the added value. The global SBN Secretariat believes that funding will be
needed from global level to support national SBNs as well as the global SBN over the next five years.

The role of businesses in relation to nutrition and their participation in national multi-stakeholder platforms and SUN processes is an issue of major controversy. One issue that seems to have widespread support is that there is a need to place considerable emphasis on engaging local, small and medium scale businesses in national policy-making and implementation, as well as regional and international discussions.

It was proposed that catalytic funds should be made available to a small number of national business networks, with the purpose of supporting national/local, small and medium enterprises to participate in national multi-stakeholder platforms. The establishment of a small number of effective SBNs, with strong participation and leadership by local businesses, could then be used as examples for the mobilization of longer-term funds from within the business networks and bilateral donors, if required.

8.1.3 Strengthening national level capabilities

The SUN Movement Strategy 2016-2020 highlights four areas where there is a need to enhance national capabilities in order for the Strategic Objectives to be achieved (Box 12).

**Box 12  Areas where there is a need to strengthen national capabilities**

| 1) Policy development, planning, implementation and monitoring: the Policy-Management Cycle;  |
| 2) Advocacy and mobilization that encourages decision-makers to make commitments for improved nutrition, to act on them and to ensure they are realized;  |
| 3) Coordination of relevant action across sectors, among stakeholders and between levels of government; and  |
| 4) Ensuring that the Movement offers maximum value to those who engage within it.  |

*Source: SUN Movement Strategy 2016-2020 (p19)*

The Evaluation Team discussed options for mobilising resources to address these needs with national government representatives, donors and other key stakeholders. During the discussions, informants particularly emphasised the need to enhance the functioning of national multi-stakeholder platforms. In many countries they are considered not to be functioning as well as intended, often due to the limited capacities of national coordinating teams or secretariats. This is sometimes a function of authority (i.e. where responsibility for government multi-sectoral coordination lies) but also a matter of organisational capacity and resource availability.
There was wide agreement that the primary responsibility for addressing strengthening national capabilities and covering associated costs rests with national governments. Some of the costs could be channelled through the SUN global networks in terms of technical assistance from global level. This requires global networks to identify the contributions they are going to make to the SUN Movement strategy, develop budgets and mobilise resources accordingly. Other sources of technical support include Technical Assistance for Nutrition (TAN) supported by DFID\(^8\) and SPRING financed by USAID\(^9\). However, informants suggested that there might be a need to make some catalytic, last resort funding available from a global pooled fund.

### 8.2 Alternative options for meeting funding needs from global level

There is a strong demand for last resort funding from global level to support some elements within the SUN Movement strategy. However, this does not necessarily mean that a global pooled fund is the best way of channelling these funds. Before assessing the advantages and disadvantages of a pooled fund we explored options for donors to provide funding directly to, and through, existing SUN structures.

#### 8.2.1 Direct financing of global civil society and business networks by donors

Donors could provide funds directly to the host organisation of global civil society and business networks (recognising that neither are currently legal entities), as is the preferred option of the SMS. It may be possible for the Networks to sign Letters of Intent with donors for multi-year funding.

**Advantages:** likely to reduce administration costs below 8% compared with current MPTF, (i.e. 1% by MPTF Office and 7% by PUNOs).

**Disadvantages:** if there is more than one donor, steering groups and secretariats may have to spend a lot of time mobilising resources and reporting, taking time away from their core business of technical support to national networks and engaging in SUN global processes.

#### 8.2.2 Financing of SUN national CSAs and Business Networks through their global networks

In this option, decisions on the allocation of funds to national networks would be made by the Steering Committees of the global networks. There is a precedent for this in the Global Partnership for Education in which the Global Campaign for Education (an autonomous civil society network) administers the Civil Society Education Fund (CSEF) – see Box 13.

\(^8\) formerly known as MQSUN. See https://devtracker.dfid.gov.uk/projects/GB-1-204954

\(^9\) [https://www.spring-nutrition.org/about-us](https://www.spring-nutrition.org/about-us)
Box 13  An example of a global pooled fund to support national civil society alliances managed by a global civil society network

The Civil Society Education Fund (CSEF) is funded by the Global Partnership for Education to support civil society engagement in education sector policy, planning, budgeting and monitoring. Managed by the Global Campaign for Education, in close collaboration with regional NGO partners, the CSEF supports national civil society education coalitions focused on education in developing countries. The CSEF program aims to build stronger and more effective civil society engagement in education sector processes, and through this ensure improved progress towards education goals. The CSEF gives grants to national civil society coalitions to support their advocacy activities, build their capacity to strengthen planning, implementation and impact, and promote cross-country learning and networking. The CSEF program is currently funded by a $29 million allocation from the GPE Fund for 2016-2018, which will support 62 national coalitions or networks around the world. For the period 2013-2014, the CSEF received $14.5 million, supervised by UNESCO.

Source: GPE website: [http://www.globalpartnership.org/civil-society-education-fund](http://www.globalpartnership.org/civil-society-education-fund)

Advantages: Decisions on the allocation of funds would be made by CSOs and businesses themselves for their respective networks, minimising risks of political interference. Global networks should have the best knowledge of national level funding needs and be well positioned to ensure equitable allocation of funds.

Disadvantages: Whereas the GCE is an established legal entity, the SUN CSN and BN are not. It is unlikely, that one INGO or company would be willing to administer a fund for national networks, with a value of over US$6 million per year in the case of CSAs. There could be tensions between the steering group and national networks. The national steering groups and secretariats would need to spend significant time on the management and administration of funds, taking time away from core business.

8.2.3 Catalytic funding to strengthen national government capabilities

The primary recipient of funds for this purpose would be national governments, especially the national nutrition focal points. As noted, only catalytic funds would be provided as it is assumed that governments, perhaps supported by in-country finance, would take on longer-term responsibility.

A similar approach could be adopted for channelling funds as with the civil society and businesses networks, i.e. donors provide funds through a UN agency with allocations being decided by the SUN Movement Executive Committee or a sub-committee established for the purpose. The advantages and disadvantages are similar to financing national networks through global Networks.

8.2.4 A global pooled fund
Informants perceived a pooled fund to have the following advantages and disadvantages in comparison with other funding mechanisms:

Advantages:

- Increased coordination and alignment between donors. Donors are able to pool risks.
- Economies of scale and reduced administration costs (compared with funds being channelled through different routes, each with their own administration capacities)
- Minimises the time which recipients have to spend on mobilising funds, signing agreements with, and reporting to, multiple donors.
- Ideally funds are unearmarked. However, there is still potential for donors to earmark funds if necessary or for allocations to be attributed to specific donors.
- Harmonised reporting requirement to different donors

Disadvantages:

- Increased layer of bureaucracy and hence, administration costs.
- Loss of visibility of impacts of specific donors.
- Fears that funding would be inadequate
- Management Committee is more distant from funded activities than global networks and therefore less well positioned to assess funding needs.

8.3 Options for pooled funding mechanisms

According to most informants, a continuation of the current MPTF without reforms is not an option. If the SUN Movement were to continue working through the MPTF Office, there would need to be significant reforms. At least one potential donor told the Evaluation Team that they would consider putting money into a SUN Movement pooled fund but not with the current arrangements.

Therefore, the Evaluation Team assessed the advantages and disadvantages of the following options for the hosting of a SUN Movement pooled fund:

- Current MPTF with reforms
- Hosted by another UN agency
- Hosted by an entity outside the UN system

8.3.1 Current MPTF with reforms

In this option, the MPTF Office would continue to play the role of Administrative Agent, receiving funds from donors, ensuring their disbursement and accounting for their use, in line with decisions made by the Management Committee. The SUN Movement Secretariat would continue to play the role of technical secretariat for the Fund.
There would be significant reforms to address the weaknesses in the current system and ensure the more efficient and effective use of funds. Reform options that were proposed during the evaluation are presented in Box 14.

**Box 14  Options for reforming the current SUN Movement MPTF**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Improve resource mobilisation:</th>
<th>The Management Committee is proactive in encouraging additional donors and ensuring adequate capitalisation of fund. Donors provide un-earmarked funds.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Broaden participation in the Management Committee:</td>
<td>This could help to ensure that the full range of SUN stakeholders are involved in setting priorities, have the opportunity to apply for funds and can play a role in mutual accountability.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Develop Standard Operating Procedures:</td>
<td>The Management Committee sets timeframes for finalising funding agreements, transferring funds, processing revisions etc. An online, publically accessible mechanism could be established where the timelines for every process are logged to promote peer pressure and transparency.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Only one UN agency performs the PUNO roles:</td>
<td>i.e. channelling funds and monitoring implementation. There is little enthusiasm amongst PUNOs for continuing to play this role, particularly being a conduit for funds. It is seen as a distraction from core business, with the administration fee not covering the costs of the work.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MPTF Office signs agreements directly with implementing partners:</td>
<td>The MPTF Office currently administers MPTFs that provide funds directly to governments and some non-UN institutions, e.g the Central African Forest Initiative. The MPTF Office is exploring possibilities of providing grants directly to CSOs, including carrying out legal work to identify safeguards. Conclusions are expected in June 2016. However, there are concerns about high levels of the misuse of funds that have been encountered in other MPTFs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The SUN Movement Secretariat has additional resources:</td>
<td>The resources would be adequate to ensure that the SMS has the capacity to perform the MPTF technical secretariat role without transaction costs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improve monitoring and reporting requirements:</td>
<td>There is a need for fewer and shorter reports with more concise reporting of progress against planned objectives, activities and budgets. Use of MPTF funds needs to be reported in context of wider activities and budgets.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Promote improved project design:</td>
<td>Provide guidelines for applicants on SMART project objectives and plans; assess the governance arrangements of projects to ensure that they promote broad participation; make future funding conditional on longer term fundraising being a specific objective with associated strategy.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Many of these reforms are applicable whoever is performing the role of Administrative Agent and could apply to the options below. The key question is whether there is a need for funds to pass through a UN agency or whether it would be feasible and desirable for the MPTF Office to provide them directly to Implementing Partners.
Interest in playing the PUNO role may depend upon the size and scope of the fund, e.g. the fund allocates more than US$ 10 million per year to a wider range of SUN Movement stakeholders in a high proportion of SUN countries in order to achieve SUN Movement Strategic Objectives. There may be more interest if a larger amount of funds pass through one organisation and are used more strategically.

However, even though the Evaluation Team suggested that the size and scope of the Fund might be broadened, there was still little interest. UNICEF recognised that they would have a responsibility to continue if it was the only or best option. Only UNOPS expressed strong interest in continuing to perform the PUNO role stating that they would have the capacity to do so in all SUN countries where funds were being provided. Some felt that the PUNO role might be best played by a UN agency that does not have a stake in nutrition policy and programming, identifying UNOPS as a possible option.

It is interesting to note that in the MPTF Office’s newest Trust Fund (Colombia Post Conflict Transition Fund), there will be one PUNO that will only charge 3% for performing the role.

**MPTF Office pass funds directly to implementing partners**

There was a strong preference amongst many informants, including from PUNOs, for this option. However the key question is how full programmatic and financial accountability would be ensured.

The MPTF Office believes that many government donors will not want accountability to rest with local CSOs or CSAs. Private foundations might be more flexible on this issue and accept a higher level of risk in relation to the small size of grants.

One option could be that funds continue to be administered by INGOs even if CSAs are registered as legal entities. However, careful attention would need to be paid to the CSA governance arrangements as highlighted elsewhere in this report.

**8.3.2 Hosted by another UN agency**

In this option, fund allocation decisions and oversight would still be undertaken by a Management Committee consisting of SUN stakeholders, but a different UN agency would play the role of Administrative Agent, disbursing funds directly to implementing partners. The SUN Movement Secretariat would continue to provide technical secretariat services. The SUN Movement Fund might be integrated into an existing, relevant fund hosted by a UN agency.

The Evaluation Team discussed this option with representatives from WHO, FAO, UNICEF, WFP, IFAD and UNOPS. Only UNOPS expressed interest. The other organisations all believed that hosting a new fund would be a potential distraction from
their primary purpose of supporting national governments to develop policies, scale up programmes or the direct provision of assistance. Some considered that it might be difficult to gain the agreement of their governing bodies given concerns of some Member States about the SUN Movement in relation to the involvement of the private sector and the limited membership.

FAO informed that there has been limited appetite amongst donors for providing resources for the Action for Nutrition Trust Fund\(^\text{10}\) that FAO announced during the Second International Conference for Nutrition (ICN2) in November 2014. FAO have not considered it to be cost effective to activate the governance mechanisms of the AFN in the absence of substantive pledges.

UNICEF advised that the newly established UNITLIFE\(^\text{11}\) financing mechanism aims to support multi-million dollar nutrition programmes in SUN countries in Africa using funds raised through a micro-levy on extractive industries. It would be unlikely that there would be interest in administering a large number of small grants. However, a SUN Movement small grant fund which aims to strengthen the capabilities of SUN stakeholders and UNITLIFE could be complementary, e.g. by strengthening the capacities of CSOs to implement programmes funded through UNITLIFE.

In expressing interest in hosting any future SUN Movement fund, UNOPS highlighted their track record in hosting pooled funds following the needs of donors and other partners. It was suggested that huge operational efficiencies could be achieved by the hosting, fund management, oversight and operational support being provided by the same organization. A detailed outline of UNOPS’s hosting, fund management/oversight and operational support services is presented in Annex 11.

8.3.3 Hosted by an entity outside the UN system

In this scenario, the Administrative Agent role would be performed by an independent entity that would transfer grants directly to Implementing Partners. Ultimately, fund allocation decisions and oversight would be the responsibility of the Board of the entity but would be based upon the advice of a steering group of SUN stakeholders.

The Power of Nutrition\(^\text{12}\) was identified in the evaluation ToR as a possible means of channelling small grants. However, discussions with Power of Nutrition representatives suggested that there would not be interest given the small size of grants and the cost of administration. As with UNITLIFE, the Power of Nutrition is focussing on providing large scale financing to a small number of countries, whereas the SUN Movement MPTF


\(^{11}\) http://www.unicef.org/media/media_85667.html

\(^{12}\) http://www.powerofnutrition.org
is providing small grants to a large number of countries. This also appears to apply to
the Global Financing Facility Trust Fund\(^\text{13}\) in support of Every Woman, Every Child.

During the evaluation, the New Venture Fund was identified as an entity specialising in
the administration of donor funds. For example, The NVF is hosting the Gates
Foundation funded Nutrition Advocacy Fund, which is providing grant support (ranging
from US$75,000 to US$200,000) to nutrition-focused civil society organizations in high-
burden countries to develop and implement advocacy plans to secure financial and/or
policy commitments at the second Nutrition for Growth Summit in August 2016.

Discussions with NVF representatives indicated that there would be strong interest and
capacity in being the Administrative Agent for a SUN Movement pooled fund. Given this
interest the Evaluation Team explored in more depth how this option might work in
practice – see Annex 12. As with other options signing agreements directly with
Implementing Partners there would be a need to ensure appropriate levels of
programme and financial accountability.

**PART III: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

**9 Conclusions**

**9.1 The performance of the SUN Movement MPTF**

The projects funded through the MPTF have made major contributions towards the
Strategic Objectives of the SUN Movement. The allocation of 90% of the funds to civil
society was appropriate given the valuable role CSOs can play in advocating for an
enabling political environment; sharing evidence-based best practices from community
level; scaling up their own aligned programmes and calling for and tracking increased
resources.

MPTF funded CSAs and the global SUN Civil Society Network (CSN) have helped to raise
awareness of the importance of addressing malnutrition and increase political
commitments to scale up actions. Some have also contributed to multi-
sectoral policies and plans and are increasingly promoting implementation at sub-national levels.

However, many CSAs have struggled to implement activities according to work plans.
This is reflected in large underspends of MPTF funds and requests for no cost
extensions. Delays have been caused, *inter alia*, by slow disbursements from
Participating UN Organisations (PUNOs) to CSO Implementing Partners (due to slow
processes within PUNOs as well within IPs /CSAs) and the challenges associated with
establishing a functional CSA. The relevance and effectiveness of some CSAs was limited
by inadequate dialogue and consultation with governments and other stakeholders

\(^{13}\) [http://globalfinancingfacility.org](http://globalfinancingfacility.org)
regarding priorities. In some cases, CSA activities appear to be driven more by global campaigning priorities of INGOs than an analysis of the local context.

CSAs are contributing to sustained commitments and actions to address malnutrition across political cycles by raising awareness amongst citizens and journalists, promoting nutrition champions amongst parliamentarians and advocating for commitments to be enshrined in national constitutions and legislation. Despite this, CSAs themselves find it difficult to attract the adequate and long-term resources that they need to sustain their activities and impact.

The global Civil Society Network has been highly successful in stimulating the establishment and strengthening of national CSAs, including through facilitating the sharing of learning between CSAs. The global CSN also ensures that there is a strong civil society voice engaging in processes within and outside of the SUN Movement at global level. Without the CSN, and in particular the dedicated work of the CSN Secretariat, the achievements of CSAs would have been fewer. The support provided by the CSN Secretariat is highly valued. For such a small team, their results have been highly impressive. Many informants believe that it requires increased capacity to continue to play its role effectively, although workload could be reduced through more prioritisation and CSN members taking on more responsibilities. The Evaluation Team believes that there is a need to revise the model of the global CSN. The current model, whereby the Secretariat takes on responsibility for a large proportion of activities is not sustainable. Recommendations for a revised model are included in Annex 13 together with other recommendations for enhancing the performance of CSAs and the global CSN.

During the ICE one donor informant stated:

> work needs to be done in building up confidence in the alliances amongst donors at country level. Hopefully the MPTF will have helped do that and will therefore have been an important step on the journey, but not a long-term financing solution for civil society action at country level.

In our view, donors at national and country level should now have confidence that CSAs are able to have an impact on public awareness, political commitment, effective policies and monitoring. This should lead to increased funding being made available at country level.

The other three projects funded through the MPTF were also relevant to the Movements’ Strategic Objectives and have had significant impacts. The Learning Routes were a highly appreciated tool for the sharing of experiences between countries. Lessons learnt from the pilot project are being taken forward through SUN Networks and Communities of Practice. The Budget Tracking workshops were a critical component of the COP 1 process aimed at enabling countries to track multi-sectoral budget allocations and expenditures, and ultimately to enhance planning, increase investments and ensure transparency and accountability. Many SUN stakeholders found
the M&E baseline work valuable, especially for tracking progress over time at country level.

A question that still needs to be considered is whether there were other activities at country, regional and global levels that could have benefited from small, catalytic grants but went unfunded. The SUN Movement MPTF Terms of Reference (MPTF 2012a) are clear that other stakeholders, in addition to civil society, are eligible to receive funds to support activities within the parameters of the SUN Movement’s Strategy and Road Map. However, allocations to other stakeholders were limited to the 3 ‘non-civil society projects’.

It could be argued that there have been funding needs that have gone unmet. Certainly, new CSAs have been established which have not had the opportunity to access funds from the MPTF. The Management Committee made decisions not to re-capitalise the MPTF, first until after the completion of the ICE and then until after the completion of this current evaluation. In the meantime, momentum in the establishment of CSAs has been lost, with possible delayed multiplier effects in terms of strengthening of national multi-stakeholder processes, reviews and developments of policies etc. The Evaluation Team feels that there was sufficient evidence of the usefulness of civil society engagement at country and global levels, particularly following the completion of the ICE, as well as funding gaps provided by the CSN, for the Management Committee to try and mobilise additional resources to support new CSAs at least until the completion of the MPTF evaluation.

In terms of other needs for small, catalytic grants, it is true that there were few enquiries and proposals being submitted to the MC. However, if one concludes that there is a need for such grants to be provided to facilitate the implementation of activities within the new SUN Movement strategy over the next five years, then it is difficult to imagine those needs did not exist previously and opportunities were missed to enhance national capabilities and accelerate efforts to scale up nutrition. As FAO argued, there was and continues to be a need to increase investments in national and sub-national government and other stakeholder capabilities to deliver scaled up services and programmes aligned with national nutrition plans and frameworks. Small grants from the SUN Movement MPTF might have helped catalyse such activities although the funds for such capacity development programmes would have to be sourced elsewhere. The Management Committee might have done more to consult with multi-stakeholder platforms regarding capacity development needs and mobilise additional resources to help catalyse such programmes.

### 9.2 Factors determining performance

NGO Implementing Partners have played a valuable role given that none of the MPTF funded CSAs were legal entities at the start of the funding. Many have provided valuable technical support to CSAs and local CSOs. However, a small number have overstepped their role as fund administrators and sought undue influence over CSA Secretariat staff.
and the use of funds, thereby encroaching on the role of CSA executive bodies. Clarity on the division of responsibilities between IPs, CSA Secretariats, executive bodies and members is critical to CSA success going forward. Supportive attitudes towards civil society participation amongst government and UN officials are prevalent in most countries.

PUNOs have to take a large proportion of the blame for the slow disbursement of funds to end-users and processing of no-cost extensions, whilst recognising that they did not have the systems in place to begin with to play the role efficiently and the administration fee received was inadequate. The technical support provided by PUNOs and REACH staff has been valuable, although both CSOs and UN agency staff recognise this is part of the role of UN agencies anyway. The main intended added value of the PUNOs was to ensure programme and financial accountability. However, there is significant variation between countries in the extent to which they were able to perform this role effectively.

The role and work of the MPTF Office, the SUN Movement MPTF Management Committee and the technical support provided by the SUN Movement Secretariat have been excellent. The financial support provided by DFID to enable CSOs to develop their original funding proposal was welcomed. The contribution of the SUN Donor Network (DN) to the MPTF has been questioned. Donors often place emphasis on SUN stakeholders accessing funds at country level but it is not clear to what extent the global DN is facilitating the increased availability of funds at this level.

9.3 Has the SUN Movement MPTF been catalytic?

In relation to the SUN Movement MPTF’s own objectives, as well as the SUN Movement’s Strategic Objectives, the MPTF has been effective in helping to catalyse and enhance engagement in national nutrition processes, not only of CSOs, but also other stakeholders. This has been primarily achieved through the actions of CSOs at country level supported by the MPTF and other sources funds. Interviews conducted with government, UN and donor representatives suggested that the financing of CSAs can have significant multiplier effects both within civil society and beyond. The SUN Movement MPTF can be considered to have “catalysed the catalysts.” Many of the achievements of the SUN Movement reported in the ICE would not have happened without civil society involvement.

The ICE of the SUN Movement found that:

... Civil Society Alliances would not have grown without funding through the MPTF. In-country funding for CSAs from NGOs, national governments and donors is not available or is inadequate in most SUN countries (Mokoro, 2015 Annex K, p37).

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See the SUN MPTF Terms of Reference (MPTF 2012a) and the MPTF Logframe (MPTF 2012, revised in 2014)
This finding is supported by the current evaluation. By implication, this also means that some of the increases in political commitment and strengthening of national policies identified during the ICE would also not have taken place without MPTF funding of CSAs.

9.4 Has the SUN Movement MPTF provided last resort funding?

The extent to which the MPTF has been a last resort source of funds is questionable. In at least one of our case study countries, we saw little evidence of other funds having been sought. In this instance, the MPTF was used as a first rather than last resort. Our enquiries suggest that it might have been possible for more resources to have been mobilised at country or regional levels. However, informants highlighted that one added value of funds being made available through the MPTF is that it enabled CSA members and staff to focus on implementation rather than resource mobilisation. Secondly, it enabled CSAs to cover most of their core costs, whilst contributions from members (mostly INGOs) supported activities.

9.5 Summary of strengths and weaknesses of the SUN Movement MPTF

The table below summarises the conclusions of the Evaluation Team regarding the strengths and weaknesses of the current SUN Movement MPTF. This provides a basis for assessing how different options for a future fund might build upon the strengths of the current SUN Movement MPTF and address its weaknesses.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Strengths</th>
<th>Weaknesses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fund management and allocation</td>
<td>Management Committee ensured funded projects were relevant to the SUN</td>
<td>Lack of performance standards, e.g. timeframes for disbursement of funds</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>decisions</td>
<td>Movement Strategy and made timely funding decisions</td>
<td>between signing of PUNO/IP agreements and disbursement of funds.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>The timeframes for applications were very short for the 2nd round of funding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resource mobilisation</td>
<td>Donors to the SUN Movement MPTF showed strong commitment to the overall</td>
<td>Tendency to provide earmarked funds</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>SUN Movement Strategy</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Lack of other donors engaging limited coverage and impacts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>MC might have done more to mobilise additional resources</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fund administration –</td>
<td>MPTF Office played role of Administrative Agent efficiently and effectively</td>
<td>There were no observed weaknesses of the role played by the MPTF Office</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administrative</td>
<td>at low cost</td>
<td>in the administration of funds. However,</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In consultation with the MPTF Office, the Evaluation Team considered whether the weaknesses of the SUN Movement MPTF are unique or also experienced by other similar MPTFs.

The SUN Movement MPTF is relatively small in size and scope compared to most other funds hosted by the MPTF Office. Other funds tend to have a more strategic approach providing much larger grants to a wider range of stakeholders. In comparison, the SUN Movement MPTF has filled a niche in the form of support to civil society as well as provided ad-hoc support to the other 3 funded projects.

MPTF Office procedures have been developed for Funds that have provided multi-million dollar grants to support the implementation of programmes, where UN agencies
have been the managing entity and often directly implementing activities. In contrast, the SUN Movement MPTF provides small grants mostly to support the establishment of independent civil society coordination mechanisms, where UN agencies have been careful not to be, or even appear to be, in a management role.

The relatively small size of the SUN grants has meant that it has been difficult to cover the costs of administrative and oversight functions and indeed to perform these roles to the required standards. PUNOs have experienced this constraint but also the lack of additional resources for the SMS has hindered its ability to play its technical support role to the full. Other MPTFs provide technical secretariats with up to 3% of total funds.

As mentioned above, other MPTFs such as CHFs have experienced delays in the transfer of funds to Implementing Partners by PUNOs. However, this has been addressed in many funds by introducing Standard Operating Procedures, including clearly defined timeframes and other benchmarks, with consequent improvements in efficiency and quality.

### 9.6 Future needs and options

It is clear that not all small funding needs can be self-financed by stakeholders or met at country and regional levels. CSAs and the global CSN will need to continue to access funds from donors at the global level both for start up and running costs. The Evaluation Team considers that any future fund should not only be catalytic but also help existing CSAs to consolidate their development and provide more time to achieve financial sustainability. CSAs and the global CSN are considered to be one of, if not the, top priorities in the SUN Movement for small grants funding. Last resort funds are needed to catalyse national SUN Business Networks, particularly to support the participation of local, small and medium enterprises in policy making, and to strengthen the national capabilities identified in the SUN Movement Strategy.

It may be desirable to channel funds for global Civil Society and Business Networks directly to them rather than through a pooled fund. However, funding for national level needs (national civil society alliances and business networks, national government capabilities) would be best channelled through a global pooled fund to ensure coordination, equity and efficiency.

We propose the following criteria for informing the selection of an appropriate host for the fund:

- **Decision making body:** is composed of representatives from the range of SUN stakeholders; has strong linkages with the governing bodies of the SUN Movement; ensures coherence with other global funding streams and processes.

- **Secretariat:** has the capacity to support the Management Committee; review applications, follow up on disbursements, requests for revisions etc. without taking time and resources away from other business.
• Willingness to disburse a large number of relatively small grants (e.g. US$200k – 1 million).

• The design should ensure quick decision making, disbursement of funds, processing of requests for budget revisions, no-cost extensions etc.

• Indirect Cost Recovery rates are kept to a minimum.

• There are strong programme and financial monitoring systems whilst respecting the autonomy and self-organisation of recipients and ensuring that reporting requirements do not hinder timely and effective implementation.

If donors are going to continue to pool funds through the UN MPTF, significant reforms are needed, including channelling funds directly to recipients, ensuring that the technical secretariat has adequate resources to play its role, and minimising reporting requirements for recipients. There is potential for such changes to be made. If there were only to be one PUNO, UNOPS has the interest and capacity to play the role. However, it would be advisable for the MC to also consider other options for the efficient disbursement of funds. The analysis of the options for the administration of a pooled fund, suggest to the Evaluation Team that UNOPS and the New Venture Fund (NVF) would be strong candidates for performing the role of Administrative Agent.

10 Recommendations\textsuperscript{15}

The Evaluation Team makes the following recommendations for the design of a future SUN Movement pooled fund. In Annex 14 we make more detailed recommendations which could provide the basis for the Terms of Reference and Rules of Procedure of a new SUN Movement Fund.

10.1 Purpose and scope

• The SUN Movement Fund should support the strengthening of national capabilities to scale up nutrition, including through enhanced participation of stakeholders, by providing small, last resort and primarily catalytic funding.

• As with the existing SUN Movement MPTF, it should not be a vertical nutrition fund for large scale investments in food and nutrition security, nor replace existing funding pathways at country or global levels.

• The SUN Movement Fund should be coherent with the SUN Movement Strategy and Roadmap 2016-2020 and integrated with broader SUN Movement governance

\textsuperscript{15} Although it was not a requirement in the Terms of Reference for this evaluation, the Team has identified a number of recommendations that could help to enhance the performance of Civil Society Alliances and the global Civil Society Network. These are presented in Annex 13.
structures and processes at national and global levels, whilst respecting the autonomy and self-organisation of SUN stakeholders.

- The Fund should primarily be catalytic. However, support could be provided to support SUN stakeholders to consolidate and maintain achievements in exceptional circumstances, i.e. there are inadequate alternative source of funding. All applicants should provide a strategy for financial sustainability, together with their funding application.

- The end date of funded projects should be no later than end December 2020. There should be an independent evaluation of the Fund in early 2020, preferably in the context of an independent comprehensive evaluation of the SUN Movement as a whole. The evaluation should determine whether there is a need for a continuation of the Fund after 2020. On-going monitoring should review progress in implementing the changes resulting from the current evaluation, identify ways of improving the functioning of the Fund, and providing an early indication of sustainability and future funding needs.

10.2 Funding windows and priorities

- There should be three main funding windows: I. Strengthening national government capabilities; II. Supporting national Civil Society Alliances and the global Civil Society Network; III. Catalysing national Business Networks.

- The annual funding requirements and allocations for each window should be determined through consultations with the relevant stakeholders.

10.3 Theory of change

- A SUN Movement pooled fund theory of change should be developed coherent with the overall Theory of Change of the SUN Movement developed during the ICE (Mokoro 2015).

- The SUN Movement pooled fund Theory of Change should illustrate how the funded activities in each of the windows will achieve their objectives and contribute to the overall strategic objective of the Fund and the Movement as a whole.

- A key aspect of the Fund theory of change is that the enhanced participation of civil society actors and businesses will lead to improved policies, plans, capabilities and aligned and scaled up actions by all stakeholders, thereby resulting in the improved nutritional status of all citizens.

10.4 Governance arrangements

- Linkages between the Management Committee and the SUN Movement Executive Committee should be facilitated by the SUN Movement Coordinator to ensure coherence between the Fund and the SUN Movement Strategy.
The composition of the Management Committee should be broadened to include representatives appointed by all SUN Networks, in line with common practice in the management of other global pooled funds.

The Management Committee should discuss the pros and cons for the following three options for the performance of Administrative Agent role:

Option 1a: The MPTF Office, with UNOPS as the only PUNO.

Option 1b: The MPTF Office signing agreements directly with Implementing Partners.

Option 2: UNOPs, signing agreements directly with Implementing Partners.

Option 3: The New Venture Fund, signing agreements directly with Implementing Partners.

Whoever is the Administrative Agent, the SMS is well placed to continue to provide technical secretariat services as long as additional funds are received to enable it to perform the role to the full. The SMS should be able to draw on the support of the secretariats of the global SUN Networks as necessary in reviewing proposals, compiling reports and capturing lessons learnt from projects. The SUN global network secretariats should factor this role into their own budgets and funding applications.

The Evaluation Team considered the option of UNOPS or the NVF undertaking technical secretariat tasks if either of these organisations were the Administrative Agent. Both of them consider that they have the interest and capacity to play such a role. However, the MPTF Office argued that it is vitally important to keep the Administrative Agent and technical secretariat roles separate. In other funds where they have been combined in the same entity there have been perceptions of conflicts of interest which have had a major impact on fund effectiveness. In the opinion of the Evaluation team, this option warrants further consideration particularly given that both UNOPS and the NVF do not have a strong stake in the SUN Movement and the Administrative Agent and technical secretariat functions would be answerable to the multi-stakeholder Management Committee of the Fund.

10.5 Programmatic and financial quality and monitoring

Technical assistance to funded activities and stakeholders should be provided through regular SUN processes and structures, i.e. national multi-stakeholder platforms; mutual support between national networks; support from global SUN Networks and Communities of Practice etc.

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16 Indicative costs for the provision of Administrative Agent and Technical Secretariat services are provided by UNOPS on the first page of Annex 11 and by the NVF on the last page of Annex 12.
• Implementing Partners should provide biannual and end of project narrative and financial reports. Reports on funded activities and expenditures should be placed in the context of the full programme of the stakeholders, in order to illustrate the specific contributions being made by the Fund.

• There should be a budget line for each project for annual independent verification of programme activities and financial expenditures.

• Funded activities should be reviewed within routine SUN monitoring and evaluation processes, i.e. in narrative reports the Implementing Partner would need to provide feedback and contact details of other members of national multi-stakeholder platforms and networks.

• Any verification and monitoring of the use and impacts of funds should be documented and made available to the Management Committee, Secretariat and Administrative Agent.

• Annual or semi-annual activity budgets and payment requests might be planned to avoid an excessive reporting for low-level budget items. Advance payment would be liquidated against invoices and activity reports period by period.

• SUN government focal points and members of SUN multi-stakeholder platforms should have the opportunity to comment on proposals and reports, whilst respecting the autonomy of the funded partner. In particular, stakeholders should comment on the potential and actual contribution the funded activities will make / are making to scaling up nutrition.

• The Administrative Agent should facilitate audits of a sample of funded projects from each window each year. The administrative agent should also maintain contact with grantees through regular reporting and conversations to track and manage the grant spending and ensure that the activities are in compliance with the grant agreement.