



# SRI LANKA

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**Action Plan: Prioritize the promotion and the articulation of intergovernmental and multi-sectoral policies to reduce chronic malnutrition, including the development of a legal framework and nutrition policies.**

## Objective of the Action Plan

The Plan seeks to prioritize the promotion and the articulation of intergovernmental and multi-sectoral policies to reduce chronic malnutrition, including the development of a legal framework and nutrition policies. This will be implemented through the multi-sectoral platform meeting on a monthly basis. As a matter of fact, even if this structure has not yet been legalized, meetings between different stakeholders have been taking place. Thus, it is necessary to continue to monitor them and include their proposals in the following meeting of the National Nutrition Committee.

## Plan implementation context

Government of Ghana, as a SUN country since 2011, set up a multi-stakeholder platform, the Sri Lanka experienced improvements in all nutrition indicators up to the late 1990s when nutrition turned out to be a subject of the Ministry of Health. Then, they became stagnated with little or no improvement. It was only in 2010 that the government adopted a National Nutrition Policy put under the responsibility of the Ministry of Health. In 2012, Sri Lanka joined the SUN Movement. In December 2013, the President launched a Multi-sector Action Plan for Nutrition (MsAPN) seeking to obtain specific objectives in terms of nutrition between 2014 and 2016. In this manner, nutrition became a subject of the Office of the President.

Up to now, there is a rather big gap in nutrition among districts at different geographical zones. Micronutrient deficiency is still a problem in spite of apparent high coverage of iron and folic acid supplementation to pregnant women and vitamin A supplementation to children aged 6 to 59 months.

The Action Plan drafted in 2013 includes a series of key interventions developed from a multi-sectoral platform comprising 17 Secretaries, national and international technical experts as well as representatives of the civil society and international development agencies. In this respect, it is carried out at national, provincial and district levels. This platform meets on a monthly basis.

There is a strong commitment of the President and high-level officials of the government as well as organizations of the civil society mobilized through the SUN forum. However, non-sanitary sectors are expected to contribute to a subject long time considered pertaining to the health sector. The private sector has not joined in yet. Agendas of donors and UN agencies need to align with the country's priorities and the mass media and multinational corporations need to be involved in a national effort against malnutrition.

### **Plan Actions, specific objectives and expected outcomes**

**Specific objectives** to achieve:

- Ensure the review of the National Nutrition Policy by the Parliament so that it reflects the multi-sectoral approach, and have it legalized as a new Act.
- Promote this new policy in provinces, districts and divisions.

**Main actions** to be carried out:

1. Disseminate the new Act in different ministries of implementation, as well as the budget approved by the Ministry of finances and the National Department of planning.
2. Implement monitoring results in provinces.

The main expected outcome would be to obtain the review of the National Nutrition Policy by the Parliament and promote it in provinces and to start distributing the budget approved by the Ministry of Finances.