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Workshop Report | Strengthening Effective Engagement to Scale Up Nutrition in Action

Workshop 10-12 June 2015, Nairobi - Kenya

Brief Introduction.....	2
Introduction Session	3
Session 1: Coordination Arrangements	4
Session 2: Building Trust and Leadership.....	5
Session 3: Transparent Accountability Mechanisms	5
Session 4: Knowledge Sharing.....	6
Session 5: Addressing Functional Capacity Challenges.....	6
Session 6: Panel Discussion on Effective Modalities of Support for Various Kinds of Challenges.....	7
Key Conclusions	8
Annex 1: List of Participants.....	9

Brief Introduction

From 10th to 12th June 2015, the SUN Movement Secretariat partnered with UNICEF and the SUN Business Network for a three day Scaling Up Nutrition event in Nairobi, Kenya. The first day was a workshop led by the SUN Business Network on **‘Understanding the Role of Business in Nutrition’**, following this, a two-day workshop was led by the SUN Movement Secretariat and focused on **“Strengthening Effective Engagement to Scale Up Nutrition in Action”**.

Participants came from the governments of SUN countries, Botswana, Burundi, Ethiopia, Kenya, Lesotho, Madagascar, Malawi, Mozambique, Namibia, Rwanda, Somalia, South Sudan, Swaziland, Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia and Zimbabwe in the East and Southern Africa Region with further representation from non-SUN countries Eritrea and Angola. Participants also included representatives from UN Agencies, the private sector and civil society.

Understanding the Role of Business in Nutrition

During the first day and a half discussions focused on how the private sector can contribute to improving nutrition and the mechanisms through which governments can better engage private sector to support the achievement of national government-led nutrition goals.

In her opening, Florence Lasbennes, Head of the SUN Movement Secretariat, recognized the importance to engage all stakeholders to reduce malnutrition. She acknowledged the existence of controversies regarding the engagement of private sector and stressed that this is calling for more dialogue, deeper mutual understanding and careful monitoring of impact of all actions. For the Sun Business Network summary report click [here](#).

Strengthening Effective Engagement to Scale Up Nutrition in Action

The SUN Movement is a community of knowledge, expertise and skills that can be harnessed to support the capacity of individuals to work effectively together to scale up nutrition. The ability of countries to harness and support this culture of effective partnering as a way of working is the essence of functional capacities within the Movement. Defining more precisely the functional capacities needed for multi-stakeholder and multi-sector partnerships to deliver results, understanding capacity needs and defining strategies to strengthen these capacities is key for a sustained momentum of implementation of actions to reduce undernutrition. Subsequently, the ability to mobilise an appropriate resource response is important in developing these capacities for the SUN Movement.

The second day and a half of the workshop explored these issues further through thought provoking presentations on the concept of functional capacities more broadly, examined functional capacity issues through country-led presentations and held interactive breakout sessions to enable wider participant discussions. All presentations from the Functional Capacity Workshop are available on the SUN Movement website. Click [here](#).

The following report goes further into detail about the findings from the **“Strengthening Effective Engagement to Scale Up Nutrition in Action”** workshop.

Introduction Session

Facilitator: Bjorn Ljungquist, Consultant

The Functional Capacity workshop began with an opening from Joan Matji, Regional Adviser for Nutrition, UNICEF ESARO and Florence Lasbennes, Chief of Staff SUN Movement Secretariat, which set the scene both regarding where we are now from a nutrition perspective and how working effectively together can impact scaling up nutrition successfully. Joan mentioned that eighteen of the twenty one ESAR UNICEF countries are members of the SUN Movement. Within this region seven countries are showing a decline in stunting and issues such as high level political will allowing governments to lead the multisectoral platform, systems and capacity to make a difference and accountability mechanism were all important in creating this decline. However there are still 27.5 million stunted children in the region and greater leadership, advocacy and accountability was required. Florence posed the question, how to strengthen our way of working? It is key for the SUN Movement to deepen our understanding of the specific attitudes and behaviours which are needed to bring various sectors and stakeholders together and deliver together on a common goal. Our workshop also need to explore ways in which the SUN Movement can support countries to strengthen functional capacities to scale up nutrition.

Breda Gavin-Smith from the SUN Movement Secretariat introduced the concept of functional capacities stating that reaching the end can be done quickly alone, while reaching successfully requires that we go together. Functional capacities encompass a way of working effectively together that is hugely important to scale up nutrition results. Capacity Development encompasses both technical capacity and functional capacity. **Technical capacities** are associated with particular areas of professional expertise; in nutrition, these may include infant and young child feeding and disease prevention etc. **Functional capacities** are the essential skills that allow for planning, implementing and monitoring and evaluating multi-sector and multi-stakeholder plans for scaling up nutrition in action. These capacities enable Governments to plan, lead, manage and sustain action across different sectors, among multiple stakeholders and between many levels of government. The functional capacities have to be looked at along three dimensions: individuals, organizations and the enabling environment. Breda introduced the four functional capacity issues that would be further discussed throughout the workshop which included: coordination arrangements, building trust and leadership, transparent accountability mechanism and knowledge sharing. The workshop will support the SUN Movement to understand what is working well within these functional capacity issues and where further support is required.

Three presentations followed further detailing the concept of functional (or strategic) capacities, highlighting findings from on-going research and existing gap assessment tools.

- The politics of reducing malnutrition: building commitment and accelerating impact – Stuart¹Gillespie, IFPRI
- Building multisectoral nutrition systems: challenges, strategies, capacities, tools and lessons from the African Nutrition Security Partnership (ANSP) – David Pelletier, Cornell University
- Assessing functional capacity: areas of consideration – Joyce Njoro, REACH

Key Messages from the Introduction Session:

1. There are several approaches to examining functional capacities. However they can be viewed in summary as the capacities required to plan, implement and monitor and evaluate actions for a systemic approach to nutrition across different sectors, among multiple stakeholders and between many levels of government. It is a way of working more effectively together to scale up nutrition.
2. It is important to consider functional capacities in the context of three dimensions: individuals, organizations and the enabling environment.
3. Progress in cross-sectoral coordination and cooperation between different stakeholders at different levels are never linear but can be accelerated by deliberate action to reinforce the functional capacities to scale up nutrition.
4. We are learning, sharing experience and harnessing lessons as we go. It is a main feature of the SUN Movement, that applies very well to functional capacities to scale up nutrition. It should be developed at all levels.

Session 1: Coordination Arrangements

Facilitators: David Pelletier, Cornell University & Raobelina Holy Malala, Madagascar SUN Government Focal Point

David Pelletier introduced the functional capacity issue detailing the format that countries were requested to follow in developing the presentation for the workshop. . Issues to discuss included; achievements, how it was achieved, challenges and risks.

Ferew Lemma, SUN Government Focal Point Ethiopia and **Gladys Mugambi**, SUN Government Focal Point Kenya, presented from their countries perspective. Ethiopia achievements were regarding its sector focal point which was achieved due to having a high level champion and evidence generation. However resources and information systems still remain a challenge. Kenya presented its Food Security and Nutrition Policy, Nutrition Plan of Action, the Constitution which recognizes the right of nutrition for the child and its Monitoring and Evaluation Framework as its achievements in this functional capacity issue. Challenges such as resources and information systems were identified as well as limited local evidence for nutrition sensitive interventions.

Following each functional capacity issue presentations countries worked together to further explore the issue. Countries were requested to consider the following questions:

- *What challenges and risks exist for your country in relation to this functional capacity?*
- *Of these, which are the highest priority to tackle in the next year or two?*

Key messages about Coordination arrangements:

- There is no ideal institutional position/location for convening the national multi-stakeholder platform (MSP) for nutrition. . While it can be powerful to have a high level institution (President or Prime Minister's office) convening the MSP as it instills confidence in the process and the national commitment it can raise challenges to sustain it when there is a change of Government. Other country experience shows that a lower institutional level for convening the MSP can achieve results if it convenes the right people and demonstrates good willingness for negotiation and communication.

- Overall what matters for functioning MSPs is to be influencing all possible sectors and stakeholders, to be leading from where you are and to bring the right people at the table in a smart mix of technical people and decision makers.
- Resources and support for coordination at subnational and community level is a recurring consistent challenge.

Session 2: Building Trust and Leadership

Facilitators: Stuart Gillespie, IFPRI & Dr. Déo-Guide Rurema, Burundi SUN focal point

Freddie Mubanga, SUN Focal Point and **Kondwani Mpeniwawa** representing the SUN Focal Point in Malawi presented from their countries perspective. Zambia mentioned strong networks collaborating with each other and strong engagement of non-traditional partners such as the private sector allowing people to lead from where they are as greatest achievements in this functional capacity issue. A particular challenge remains the delayed institutionalization of coordinating structures at national and subnational levels. Malawi discussed improved coordination at subnational level and improved accountability with M&E plans in place achieved through groups working together and showing leadership as their achievements. Technical and financial partners engaging and negotiating using different fora and structures remains a challenge.

Following each functional capacity issue presentations countries worked together to further explore the issue and followed the same questions as per each functional capacity issue session.

Key messages about building trust and leadership:

- Often misunderstandings arise between government and various stakeholders particularly private actors. Need further dialogue to develop common language and better understanding and appreciation of respective roles and responsibilities.
- Competing priorities and agendas and competition for resources often create mistrust between stakeholders. Need to be addressed by being transparent and through frequent dialogue and negotiation.

Session 3: Transparent Accountability Mechanisms

Facilitator: Joyce Njoro, REACH

Maureen Macumu Bakunzi, SUN Focal Point Uganda presented her country perspective. Key achievements included having stunting as a target for all sectors as well as joint planning with different sectors. Challenges regarding further evidence on what works and what does not work to scale up nutrition was a key issue for Uganda.

Following each functional capacity issue presentations countries worked together to further explore the issue followed the same questions as for all functional capacity issue sessions.

Key messages about Transparent Accountability Mechanisms:

- Common results framework can be an important tool for accountability and improving transparency. Having common plans is important to diffuse tensions on transparency.
- There still remains a lack of transparency among partners in allocation of resources and poor accountability for taking actions underpinned by lack of information.

- Joint annual planning should be improved with regular review meetings with all in-country SUN Networks and with systematic sharing of stakeholder M&E Plans.
- Financial tracking needs to be strengthened. Serious challenges in how costs are addressed and earmarked codes for tracking should be examined.

Session 4: Knowledge Sharing

Facilitator: Allison Oman, WFP

The facilitator introduced the session on knowledge stressing that knowledge must be community-based. Fundamentally, it is the people in the community that we need to involve as they hold the knowledge. We all need to share knowledge creating synergy, networking, and collective intelligence. **George Kembo** from Zimbabwe and **Sarah Mshiu** from Tanzania presented their country perspectives. George discussed Zimbabwe's community based participatory approach to sharing information and generating knowledge. Lack of technology at the decentralized level remains an issue. Sarah shared Tanzania's wide fora of knowledge information sharing platforms including planning and budget meetings and joint nutrition reviews. Nutrition information management however remains weak.

Following each functional capacity issue presentations countries worked together to further explore the issue.

Key messages on Knowledge Sharing:

- There is much innovation that facilitates knowledge sharing and community level engagement, e.g. citizen engagement, linkages with community structures, and use of media in communicating messages.
- Still the challenge for many countries is in reaching the majority

Session 5: Addressing Functional Capacity Challenges

Facilitator: David Pelletier, Cornell University

The facilitator introduced the aim of the session which was to identify the functional capacity issue that provided the greatest challenges within each country and to consider the concrete next steps and necessary modalities of support necessary to move it forward.

Key Outcomes from this session included:

- Countries identified the key priority challenge in the context of their country setting.
- Modalities necessary to reinforce the functional capacities include training and experience sharing workshops, "twinning" and knowledge sharing platforms with countries, articulating clearer roles and responsibilities, revising MSPs structures, inviting additional partners to the MSPs, examining existing information platforms that currently exists and finalizing the common results framework.

Session 6: Panel Discussion on Effective Modalities of Support for Various Kinds of Challenges

Facilitator: Bjorn Ljungquist, consultant

The final session had the aim of bringing together identified needs and challenges relating to functional capacities, as identified over the previous day and a half, while considering various modalities of support to address these.

Charlotte Dufour, FAO Nutrition Policy and Programme Officer presented a concrete example based on the CAADP nutrition capacity development initiative highlighting how the functional capacities can be strengthened in the way we work. This presentation was followed by a panel discussion. Panel members included; Charlotte Dufour, **Nigel Nicholson**, Nutrition Advisory Service to the European Commission, **Symphorosa Oundo**, Research Consultant at the International Institute of Social Studies of Erasmus University Rotterdam, **William Chilufya**, Civil Society Zambia and **Geraldine Murphy**, GAIN.

Key Messages from the session included:

- Success factors in working with multiple stakeholders and sectors include Government led coordination mechanisms with buy-in by line ministries and commitment of individuals, champions of a systemic multi-sector approach to nutrition,
- The SUN Focal points can be considered an 'interlocutor' for the multi-stakeholder platforms, i.e. implicated (rather than neutral) facilitator co-producing and having a co-responsibility for how the collective action works and bears fruit. It is important to consider what individual skills are required to fulfil the role: leadership, management skills, ability to initiate and implement change, ability to gain and engender trust, capacity to understand and talk the specific language of various sectors and stakeholders. This first list of skills and attributes should be further defined.
- Building agendas behind a common goal and cause requires trust. This promotes better cohesion, accountability and leadership.
- Governments need to define the policy and regulation framework in which business engage to participate in the implementation of nutrition plans. It is important that governments can rely on advisers who can help balancing the requests from business in the interest of public good.
- It is important to be clear on the challenge that is impacting the MSPs opportunity to scaling up of nutrition and to design a strategy to address the challenge (i.e. create ownership, develop trust and solidarity).

The session and final close of the day was conducted by the SUN Government Focal Point from Swaziland, **Danisile Vilakati**. She thanked the organizers and the SUN Movement Secretariat for a great 3 days of learning and was grateful to have the opportunity for this kind of meeting. It was she believed a rare opportunity engaging with the SUN Business Network. While the business network may be thin on the ground but private actors are able to mobilize, network, bring us together. She encouraged the SUN Movement Secretariat to keep doing what they are doing, meetings like this supporting wider engagement, giving countries the necessary follow-up, feedback and monitoring in their actions to scale up nutrition. Florence Lasbennes closed the meeting by concluding that the SUN Movement Secretariat will continue harnessing lessons, and bringing people together especially to strengthen functional capacities to scale up nutrition.

Key Conclusions

Some key messages emerged both from the discussions over the day and a half workshop on functional capacities as well as from participant's evaluation responses. While not exhaustive and open to interpretation here are some surmised points:

- Consensus from participants that there is no blueprint or indeed one size fits all approach to effectively engaging in multi-stakeholder platforms but it remains key to the success of scaling up nutrition and thus improving the lives of women and children.
- Functional capacities can be viewed in terms of a way of working better and more effectively together. Issues such as coordination arrangements, trust and leadership, transparent accountability mechanisms and knowledge sharing are issues that can both support or obstruct engagement in multi-stakeholder platforms.
- General acknowledgement that having regular opportunities to discuss these issues is important for the Movement and that we learn by doing and we learn from one another. This is of particular importance for functional capacities.
- The common results framework was identified clearly as a tool to improve coordination, build trust and develop leadership, support transparency and knowledge sharing.
- Participants from countries identified the successes and challenges within the functional capacity areas. They identified and prioritized one functional capacity issue that they would like to focus on in the coming 6 months.
- Various modalities of support are available to strengthen these functional capacities issues and often more than one modality response is required.
- The SUN Movement needs to continue to understand the challenges raised and what modalities are available within Functional Capacities and where the modality gaps are in meeting these challenges.

Annex 1: List of Participants

Country/Affiliation	Name (Last, First)	POSITION and ORGANIZATION
Angola	Dr. Tati, Maria Futi	Director of Nutrition, UNICEF Angola
Botswana	Ms Kenanao Motlhoiwa	Health & Nutrition Specialist
Botswana	Gaotobogwe, Radikwata	Member of BOCCIM
Botswana	Modise, Kehumile Juliet	Principal Health Officer, MoH
Botswana	Motlamedi Makoko Shatera	Director: Agricultural Research, Statistics and Policy Development, Ministry of Agriculture
Botswana	Thothe, Oesi	Principal Economist Ministry of Finance and Development Planning
Burundi	M. Déo-Guide, Rurema	SUN Focal Point
Burundi	M. Damien, Nakobedetse	Directeur du Bureau Burundais de Normalisation
Burundi	M. Mugabarabona Sylvestre	président du réseau de la Société Civile
Ethiopia	Timmer, Arnold	Chief of Nutrition, UNICEF Ethiopia
Kenya	Kiige, Laura	UNICEF Kenya
Lesotho	Leohlara, Moipone	SUN Focal Point-FNCO, Prime Ministers Office
Lesotho	Elias, Tiisetso	Economist, Ministry of Development Planning
Lesotho	Mathule, Lineo	SUN Focal Point-FNCO, Prime Ministers Office
Madagascar	(Mme) Holy, Raobelina	Coordonnateur national de l'Office National de Nutrition, Point focal SUN
Madagascar	(Mme) Voahangy Arijaona ,Raoniarinjaka	Directeur Général Technique du Ministère de l'Agriculture
Madagascar	(M.) RAVELOSON Stéphane	Directeur Général de la Société SOCOBIS
Malawi	Kondwani Mpeniuwawa	SUN FP Malawi
Malawi	Banda, Theresa	
Malawi	Tembo, Maureen Maguza	
Malawi	Janet Guta	Deputy Director for Nutrition in MoH
Mozambique	Khan, Sonia	Nutrition Specialist, UNICEF Mozambique
Mozambique	Almeida. Jorge	Planning technician and Facilitator of Multisectoral Technical working Group of PAMRDC Technical Secretariat for Food Security and Nutrition - SETSAN
Mozambique	Mungoi, Eduarda (Dr.)	Advisor to Minister of Industry and Trade, Fortification
Mozambique	Carina Imael	Head Civil Society Platform for SUN
Mozambique	Amaro, Marla	Head of Nutrition, Ministry of Health
Namibia	Hiwilepo-Breuer, Evelyn	Synergos, and secretariat to Namibia Alliance for Improved Nutrition – NAFIN
Namibia	Nyunt, Myo Zin	Chief of Health, UNICEF NAMIBIA
Rwanda	Ngabo, Fidele	Director, Maternal, Infant and Young Child Nutrition MoH (*Invitation to be sent to the Minister of Health Dr. Agnes Binagwaho and copy Dr. Fidele)
Somalia	Majeed, Sayed	Chief of Nutrition, UNICEF Somalia
Somalia	Wilfred Bengwi	Nutrition Programme Officer, WFP Nairobi
Somalia	Zivai, Murira	Nutrition Manager, UNICEF Somalia
Somaliland	Qambi, Abdulkadir	SUN Focal Point
Swaziland	Vilakati, Danisile	Ministry of Health, SUN FP
Swaziland	Cocchia, Julia	WFP
Swaziland	Hlope, Andreas	Chief Commercial Officer Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Trade
Tanzania	Kaganda, Joyceline	Ag. Managing Director, TFNC
Tanzania	Mshiu, Sara	Economist, PMO
Tanzania	Mikindo, Tumaini	Executive Director, PANITA

Uganda	Maureen Bakunzi	SUN FP Uganda
Uganda	Brenda Namugumya	SUN CSA
Zambia	Chilufya, William	Country coordinator, Zambia Civil Society Scaling Up Nutrition
Zambia	Freddie Mubanga	Head Public Health & Community Nutrition /1st 1000 MCDP/SUN National Coordinator, National Food and Nutrition Commission
Zambia	Siwiti, Raphael	Nutrition Analyst, SUN Business Network
Zambia	Heneghan, Emily	Nutrition Advisor, WFP
Zimbabwe	Chigumira, Ancikaria (Ms.)	Deputy Director in the Ministry of Health
Zimbabwe	Mache, Bernard	Director in the Ministry of Agriculture
Zimbabwe	Mweembe, Chris	National Coordinator, Zimbabwe Civil Society Organisations Scaling Up Nutrition Alliance (ZCSOSUNA)
Zimbabwe	Kembo, George	Director Food and Nutrition Council
African Union Commission	Osei, Kwame Akoto	Nutrition Specialist, AUC
FAO Rome	Dufour, Charlotte	Nutrition Policy and Programme Officer, Nutrition Division
WFP	Wilfred Bengwi	
WFP Nairobi	Oman, Allison	WFP Regional Nutrition Advisor, Nairobi
IGAD	Oiye, Shadrack	Senior Project Officer (Health and Nutrition), IGAD- SRH/RHCS & NUTRITION
ECSA HC	Mwaisaka, Rosemary	Manager, Food Security and Nutrition East Central and Southern Africa Health Community (ECSA HC)
SBN	Juneja, Pia	Junior Associate, SUN Business Network
SBN	Van Liere, Marti	Director, Maternal, Infant and Young Child Nutrition
SBN	Tench, Jonathan	Manager, SUN Business Network
SBN	Spiegel, Kristina	Senior Associate, SUN Business Network
SBN	Musonda, Monica	CEO, Java Foods
SBN	Garrett, Greg	Director – Food Fortification, GAIN
SBN	Badham, Jane	Managing Director, JB Consultancy
SBN	Chapuis, ERWAN	International Development Director, NUTRISET
SBN	Girma, Minilik	Hilina Enriched Foods, Ethiopia
SBN	Abdalkarim, Eman	Operations Manager, Samil Industrial Sudan
SBN	Bashir Salih, Ahmed	Supply and Logistic Manager, Samil Ind. Sudan
SBN	Mathiesen, Roger	Regional Adviser, Alive and Thrive
SBN	Sablah, Mawuli	FAO
SBN	Wangari, Diana	BASF
SBN	Hutchinson, Nick	UNGA Kenya
SBN	Mathenge, James	World Vision Tanzania
SBN	Dibari, Filippo	SBN Mozambique
SBN	Musinguzi, Enock	SBN Tanzania
SBN	Murphy, Geraldine	Director, Business Partnerships, GAIN
SBN	Attah, Angela	SUN Business Network, Nigeria
SBN	Ruth Kinoti	MD Shallem Investments (Kenya)
SBN	Alba Tiley	DSM
SBN	Lee-Robertson, Heidi	DSM
SBN	Kelly Arburi	CIFF
SBN	Lauren Shields	BSR HER Project
SBN	Ngumi, Willie Gichora	GSMA Mobile Tech
SMS	Smith, Breda	Public Health Nutritionist, SUN
SMS	Lasbennes, Florence	Chief of Staff, SUN Secretariat
SMS	Akoto-Danso, Kwame	Policy Support Officer
CSA	Moutari, Attou M.)	Niger CSA Responsible plaidoyer
REACH	Joyce NGEGBA	Tanzania-National REACH Facilitator
REACH	Jean-Claude Nkurunziza	Burundi-National REACH Facilitator

REACH	Paula MACHUNGO	Mozambique-National REACH Facilitator
CSA	Ismael, Carina	CSP SUN Coordinator ANSA
Independent Consultant	Bjorn Ljungqvist	Independent Research Consultant
IFPRI	Covic, Namukolo	Research Coordinator, IFPRI
IFPRI	Stuart Gillespie	Senior Research Staff, IFPRI
Cornell Uni	Pelletier, David Louis	Professor, Cornell University
WFP Burundi	M. Loum, Sergine	Nutrition Programme Officer, WFP Burundi
WFP Mozambique	Mariquele, Berguete	Programme Officer, WFP
EC NAS	Nicholson, Nigel	European Commission Nutrition Advisory Service
UNICEF ESARO	Shabnam Peckek	Partnerships Manager in the Public Private Partnerships Unit, UNICEF ESARO
WFP Rome	Britta Schumacher	Nutrition Program Policy Officer, WFP Rome
Independent Consultant	Oundo, Symphorosa	Researcher
Independent Consultant	Nyaki, Joan	Consultant, BSR
North West-Uni	Prof. Johann C. Jerling	Faculty of Health Sciences
		School of Physiology, Nutrition and Consumer Sciences
		North-West University