The UN Network for SUN: Getting traction

Taking stock of membership and UN nutrition support

October 2015
“To continue the good progress in strengthening the inter-agency coordination and furthering the support to SUN countries in scaling up nutrition, our agencies will continue to assist nutrition efforts at country level, while simultaneously enhancing and increasing UN global collaboration and coordination mechanisms. To this end our agencies are committed to supporting REACH as an effective means of building national nutrition governance and technical capacity while encouraging other UN agencies to join the global UN Network for SUN.”

- Joint letter, dated 7 June 2013, signed by:

José Graziano da Silva
Director-General
Food and Agriculture Organization

Margaret Chan
Director-General
World Health Organization

Kanayo Nwanze
President
International Fund for Agricultural Development

Anthony Lake
Executive Director
United Nations Children’s Fund

Ertharin Cousin
Executive Director
World Food Programme
The membership of the UN Network for SUN is evolving as the Network gains traction at the country level.

Core members of the UN Network for SUN at the global & country levels:

1. FAO
2. IFAD
3. UNICEF
4. WFP
5. WHO

Additional members of the UN Network in selected countries:

6. UNFPA
   - Mozambique
   - Myanmar
7. UNAIDS
   - Ghana
8. UNWOMEN
   - Burundi
9. UNHCR
   - Ghana
10. ILO
    - Philippines

And counting...

Source: UN Network for SUN Secretariat
A series of new UN Network for SUN tools help unpack complementarities among member agencies and identify opportunities for efficiencies.

UN agencies support nutrition actions - implementation and governance related actions – at the country level, in a wide array of thematic areas:

- Market Regulation & Insurance
- Social Safety Nets
- Prevention & Mgt. of Soil, Waterborne & Endemic Diseases
- Water & Sanitation
- Management of Acute Malnutrition
- Micronutrient Supplementation
- Maternal, Neonatal & Paediatric Health Care
- Health Behaviors
- Hygiene
- Consumption
- Livestock & Fisheries
- Horticulture/Crops
- Food Processing, Fortification & Storage
- Infant & Young Child Feeding
- Care for Children/Pregnant & Lactating Women

Source: UN Nutrition Inventory
7 critical steps for completing the UN Nutrition Inventory and developing a high-quality UN Nutrition Strategy/Agenda at the country level

1. Secure Consensus to complete UN Network for SUN Deliverables
2. Conduct & Analyze UN Nutrition Inventory
3. Conduct 1 on 1 Interviews & Synthesize Results
4. Prepare & Facilitate Initial Strategic Workshop
5. Prepare & Conduct RC/Reps Debrief
6. Outline Key Elements of the UN Nutrition Strategy / Agenda
7. Finalize UN Nutrition Strategy / Agenda

• Support to UNDAF Drafting / Implementation
• Common Narrative / Messaging
• Joint Programming
The UN Nutrition Inventory takes stock of the nutrition-related actions that the UN is supporting

The process of undertaking the UN Nutrition Inventory

1. Dissemination of & introduction to tool
   - Excel-based inventory tool shared with focal points from 5 agencies
   - Follow-up by REACH team for introduction to tool

2. Completion of inventory tool
   - Where necessary, focal points consulted with other sectors
   - Agency focal points entered data into the inventory tool and submitted completed agency-specific inventory sheets to UN Network / REACH Secretariat

3. Analysis of results
   - Email exchanges between focal points and UN Network / REACH Secretariat for clarification about agency data, as needed
   - UN Network / REACH Secretariat conducted analysis of agency inventory data sheets and aggregates results across agencies

4. Dissemination of results
   - Some draft results shared at UN Network for SUN Asia meeting in Bangkok in June 2015
   - Full inventory findings to be shared with the UN country team in October

Excerpt from the Myanmar UN Nutrition Inventory

DRAFT
The UN Nutrition Inventory compares the stunting burden to existing UN nutrition-related support at the country level.

**Excerpt from the Mozambique UN Nutrition Inventory**

**Are UN efforts concentrated in the ‘right’ geographic areas?**

**DHS 2011**

**Prevalence of stunted <5s**
- > 40%
- 30-39.9%
- 20-29.9%
- < 20%
  - Highest prevalences

**Absolute #s of stunted <5s**
- 0-49,999
- 50,000-99,999
- 100,000-499,999
- >500,000
  - Highest absolute #s

Both convergence and gaps are highlighted: The UN agencies surveyed are primarily concentrated in 5 regions, but none of these agencies are working on nutrition-related actions in Kayah or Tanintharyi.

Key questions:
When more than one agency present

- How complementary are the nutrition actions? Is there combined value added?
- Is there a critical nutrition action missing in each region/state, that the UN is well-placed to deliver?
- Are there opportunities for improved collaboration on joint planning (targeting & geographic focus), implementation, M&E?
- How can the use of delivery mechanisms (e.g. schools, community health volunteers, agricultural extension) be optimized?
- Alignment of advocacy, communications, other?

Source: MICS (2009); The 2014 Myanmar Population and Housing Census (Department of Population, 2015)
Identifying the thematic areas in which multiple UN agencies are engaged at the country level helps minimize duplication of efforts, ensure complementarity and exploit synergies.

Multiple agencies are supporting nutrition-related GOVERNANCE actions in 7 thematic areas.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Theme</th>
<th>FAO</th>
<th>IFAD</th>
<th>UNFPA</th>
<th>UNICEF</th>
<th>WFP</th>
<th>WHO</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Disease Prevention &amp; Management</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>12</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Management of Acute Malnutrition</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maternal, Neonatal &amp; Paediatric Health Care</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Health Behaviours</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>3</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Hygiene</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Infant &amp; young child feeding</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Food processing, fortification &amp; storage</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Excerpt from the Mozambique UN Nutrition Inventory

Achieving increased efficiency is key for a coherent, well-functioning UN Network, particularly in resource-constrained contexts.
Most of the nutrition actions for which the surveyed UN agencies are providing support are aligned to the national nutrition plan.

Some actions are not included in the national nutrition plan, though it is currently being updated.

The Inventory provides a breakdown of UN nutrition action intensity by the respective strategic objectives of the national nutrition plan and magnitude of investment.

Of the agencies surveyed, most UN actions support Strategic Objectives 1.1, 1.2 & 2.5 of the nat’l nutrition plan:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strategic Objective</th>
<th># of actions</th>
<th>Small (&lt;200)</th>
<th>Medium (200-500)</th>
<th>Large (&gt;500)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SO 1.1 Promote consumption of healthy foods &amp; improve nutrient intake</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>25</td>
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<tr>
<td>SO 1.2 Prevent &amp; reduce food, water, vector-borne infectious diseases</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>14</td>
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<tr>
<td>SO 2.3 Increase &amp; diversify domestic food production</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
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<tr>
<td>SO 2.4 Improve access to food</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SO 2.5 Improve mother &amp; child care</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SO 2.6 Improve environmental health &amp; food safety</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SO 3.7 Improve institutional capacity &amp; coordination</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SO 3.8 Improve human capacity</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SO 3.9 Improve quality &amp; quantify of information</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Of the agencies surveyed, most UN actions support Strategic Objectives 1.1, 1.2 & 2.5 of the nat’l nutrition plan.

Number of actions by magnitude of investment:

1SO = Strategic objective
2Reported in thousands of US dollars
The Inventory discerns UN governance actions from implementation actions for each thematic area in the tool.

Most of the actions undertaken by the UN Network on IYCF\(^1\) are governance actions related to optimal BF\(^2\) practices.

**Key findings:**

- Governance actions are being undertaken to support both broad actions.
- Governance actions are conducted primarily in the areas of: (1) policy/planning; (2) human & institutional CD\(^3\)/training.
- UNICEF and WHO are engaged in governance actions, and WFP is engaged in both governance and implementation actions.

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\(^1\) IYCF = Infant & Young Child Feeding / \(^2\) BF = breastfeeding / \(^3\) CD = capacity development
The Inventory includes a distinct section on multi-sectoral nutrition governance support, encompassing both national and sub-national levels.

14 multi-sectoral governance actions at national level

- Situation Analysis, Advocacy & Communications: 3
- Policy Formulation/Review & Planning: 7
- Human & Institutional Capacity Development/Training: 4
- Effectiveness & Accountability: 0

TOTAL = 14 actions

2 multi-sectoral governance actions conducted in 1 province

What is a UN Nutrition Strategy/Agenda?

✓ Sets a vision/aspirations for UN contributions in the future, in alignment with government policy on nutrition

✓ Tells the story on current UN contributions to nutrition concisely, clearly and holistically

✓ Clarifies agency responsibilities and identifies gaps in programmes where the UN is uniquely positioned to contribute

✓ Identifies areas of weakness and opportunities to improve joint programming approaches and alignment between agencies and national nutrition strategies (lessons learned)

✓ Identifies areas requiring additional funds/fundraising

✓ Harmonizes nutrition messages for use in joint advocacy

✓ Contextualizes the recently released UN Global Nutrition Agenda (UNGNA v.1.0) to country realities

✓ The ‘Strategy’ may be a tool that is used for multiple purposes, such as advocacy, feeding into an upcoming UNDAF process or a document that has stand alone value for UN coordination and reflection on performance over several years

NOTE: The process of drafting a strategy also helps to strengthen stakeholder relationships and foster a collaborative dialogue among nutrition players.
The development of the UN Nutrition Inventory tool prompted an analysis of national nutrition plans, which indicated that most SUN countries have a national nutrition plan, though several of them are outdated.

28 out of 55 SUN countries are known to have formulated or updated the national nutrition plan in the last 5 years.

Of the countries with existing plans (49):
- 14 are drafts or are being formulated
- 3 are being reviewed/updated
- 32 have been adopted

One country (Tanzania) uses a national nutrition strategy in lieu of a national nutrition plan.

38% (15 plans) reviewed have prioritized actions.

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1 To the best of the UN Network for SUN Secretariat's knowledge as at 10 September 2015.
3 Some national plans were not available for analysis, as they were still being drafted/formulated.
National nutrition plans are at varying stages of development in the SUN countries with no apparent geographical trends.

Source: UN Network for SUN Secretariat
Most national nutrition plans reviewed mention three or more sectors.

Health and education sectors were most frequently mentioned in the national nutrition plans for 38 SUN countries\(^1\).

All but one plan acknowledged multi-sectorality!\(^2\)

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\(^1\)As previously reported, 49 SUN countries have existing national nutrition plans.

\(^2\)The Food Security and Nutrition Program in the Kyrgyz Republic (2015 – 2017) is centered on the food sector.