

CIVIL SOCIETY DECLARATION ON THE FIGHT AGAINST UNDERNUTRITION IN WEST AFRICA, CHAD AND MADAGASCAR

Dakar, Senegal, May 4 2016

We, civil society organizations, working to strengthen nutrition in 10 West African countries (Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, Guinea, Liberia, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone), as well as in Chad and Madagascar, gathered in Dakar from May 3 to 5 2016:

Confirm our commitment to support the fight against malnutrition in our sub-region;

Welcome the efforts of West African States to overcome malnutrition and lessen its impact on communities;

Appreciate the commitments made by West African States at the World Health Assembly, to nutrition summit for growth in London, at the International Conference on Nutrition in Rome, the various ECOWAS forums;

Appreciate their adherence to the Scaling Up Nutrition movement, their commitment to work towards achieving the Sustainable Development Goals, to implement commitments made in Maputo (allocate 10% of the national budget to agriculture), in Abuja (allocate 15% of the national budget to health) and in Malabo (reduce chronic malnutrition and 10% in weight to 5% by 2025);

Note that despite these commitments, the situation in West and Central Africa remains extremely worrying, since 5.9 million children under five years may suffer from acute malnutrition this year, including 1.9 million in its severe form, without any proper action.

We, as civil society actors, are determined to play our role and participate in reducing the prevalence of acute and chronic malnutrition and to promote the right to food.

We, Civil Society Organizations in West Africa, Chad and Madagascar, commit to:

1. Support and contribute to the formulation and implementation of a national policy for nutrition and food through multi-stakeholder dialogue spaces by 2018;
2. Ensure monitoring of the budget allocated to nutrition with effective involvement of community and parliamentarians at national and sub-national levels by 2018;
3. Encourage governments to take SMART commitments to nutrition by 2020 and contribute to the mobilization of resources, including through innovative financing;
4. Support, by 2020, the adoption of at least 4 functional legal frameworks conducive to nutrition (on the implementation of the International Code of Marketing of Breastmilk Substitutes, the rights to food, health and WASH) with the cooperation and active involvement of parliamentarians in institutional dialogue.
5. Support the development of a multisectoral response at the decentralized level in 100% of communes where CSOs are active, by 2020.
6. Establish in each country a citizen monitoring committee for the respect of the State's commitments for nutrition by 2018.
7. Develop by 2017 a regional network for civil society to strengthen nutrition in West Africa, in order to facilitate coordination and experience sharing with a rotating responsibility by member countries.
8. Develop by 2017 an advocacy campaign in the 11 countries of the sub-region for the effective implementation of country commitments to reducing undernutrition.

We, civil society in West Africa, Chad and Madagascar, ask African States to act urgently. Act for life. Act to reverse the trend. Act to write a new page in the history of West African children to pass on to future generations. A vibrant history, full of health and good nutrition.

Also, we recommend to the governments of West African countries, of Chad and Madagascar the following:

1. Advocate for the organization by regional bodies (particularly ECOWAS or CILSS) of a high level financial pledging conference for nutrition, by the end of 2017.
2. By 2020, ensure adequate funding for nutrition by creating specific budget lines for nutrition in the various ministries (health, agriculture, education, water and sanitation and social protection);
3. By 2020, ensure adequate funding for nutrition by allocating at least 3% of the national budget to nutrition;
4. By 2018, to adopt resource mobilization plans for the implementation of policies, the regular holding of balance exercises for nutrition, with review of the main nutrition issues in each country;
5. By the end of 2018, ensure the development of a national accountability mechanism for nutrition policy frameworks, appointing a focal point for the monitoring of commitments and sharing with communities; by the end of 2017, adopt accountability structures at sub-national level in at least 50% of regions.

Made in Dakar, May 4 2016

Workshop participants:

- *RESONUT, SUN Civil society Alliance in Burkina Faso*
- *ROSCINUT, Civil Society Network for Nutrition, in Chad*
- *Convention de la Société civile Ivoirienne (CSCI), Côte d'Ivoire*
- *SUN Civil society Alliance in Côte d'Ivoire (ASCSUN-CI)*
- *RSC-SUN, Réseau Société Civile SUN (SUN Civil society network) Guinea*
- *Acord, Liberia*
- *HINA, SUN Civil society Alliance in Madagascar*
- *SUN Civil society Alliance in Mali*
- *Association Mauritanienne d'Aide aux Malades Indigents (AMAMI), Mauritania*
- *Collectif TUN (Tous Unis) pour la Nutrition (SUN Civil society Alliance – All United for nutrition), Niger*
- *CS-SUNN, SUN Civil society Alliance in Nigeria*
- *SUN Civil society Alliance in Senegal*
- *SUNI CSP (Scaling Up Nutrition and Immunisation Civil society Platfom), Sierra Leone*

In partnership with:

