



IDENTIFYING, ENGAGING AND SUSTAINING CHAMPIONS FOR NUTRITION

A toolkit from the Transform Nutrition Consortium and the Scaling Up Nutrition (SUN) Movement



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- » Nutrition champions are individuals who use their platforms and influence to position nutrition as a key political priority at global, regional, national and local level. They contribute to raise awareness and change negative attitudes and behaviors related to nutrition, and help foster collaboration.
- » Experience from more than 30 SUN countries show that nutrition champions can play a key role to build and sustain political commitment for nutrition and make nutrition matter for everyone, everywhere.
- » The SUN Movement support champions at three levels:

- **High Level Political and Popular Champions** – First Ladies, Prime Ministers, celebrities, athletes, religious and traditional leaders etc.
- **Working Level** – Ministers, Members of Parliaments, Heads of Organisations, CEOs etc.
- **Grassroots** – Health, Agriculture and Nutrition extension workers, teachers, religious, traditional and community leaders etc.

1. IDENTIFY POTENTIAL CHAMPIONS relevant for the context and specific purpose

- a. **Conduct stakeholder mapping** – brainstorm potential champions and divide them into three groups:
 - **“Decision makers”** – People with formal power/influence over nutrition policy and implementation (e.g. Heads of State, Ministers, MPs etc.).
 - **“Influencers”** – People with informal power/influence at a national, regional or global scale (e.g. First Ladies, celebrities, religious leaders, technical experts etc.).
 - **“Clients”** – People with potential influence at local level (e.g. Health, Agriculture and Nutrition extension workers, teachers, religious, traditional and community leaders etc.).

b. **Analyse the potential champions** to understand their motivation, current engagement, level of influence and their platforms or opportunities to influence change relative to nutrition.

c. **Identify if they are already supportive** or if they first need to be convinced/motivated to support and promote nutrition (if so consider the best way to convince them).

d. **Select your champions** based on their influence and convening power, their motivation and interest in nutrition and their personal integrity and credibility.

2. DEVELOP A CHAMPION ENGAGEMENT PLAN to ensure strategic, long-term engagement, which is to be regularly evaluated and updated

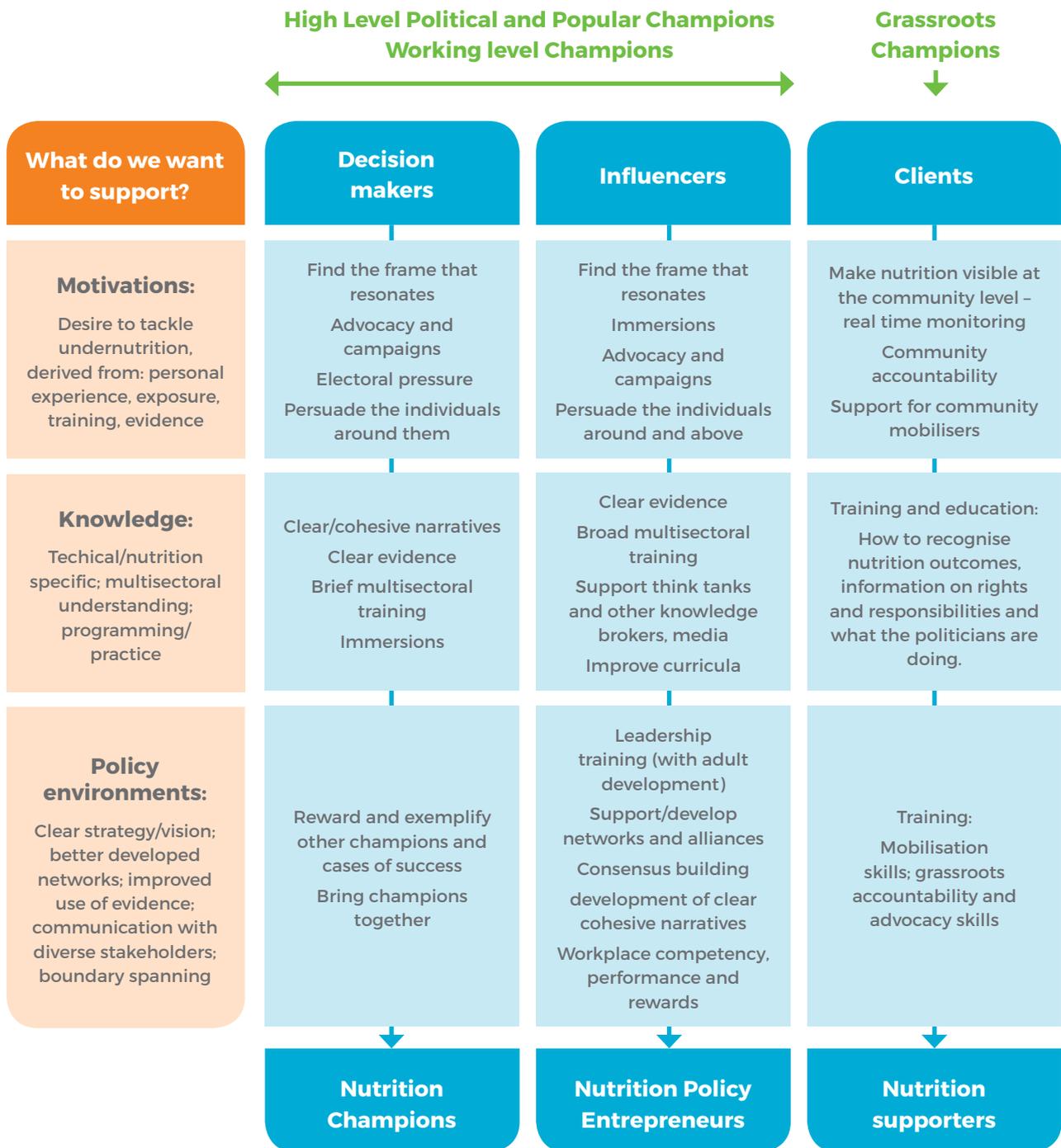
a. **Consider different roles and levels of responsibilities** for champions to engage at either high level, working level or grassroots level.

b. **Tailor the engagement** to match their seniority, as well as the motivation, current engagement, influence and platforms of each champion.

c. **Ensure that the plan specifies how to engage, support and sustain nutrition champions over time:**

- **Engage:** Get champions on board by motivating them, connecting to what resonates with them.
- **Support:** Assess the champions' knowledge and capacity gaps and provide tailored capacity building on the technical aspects of nutrition as well as on leadership and advocacy skills.
- **Sustain:** Develop strategies for long-term engagement, ensure champions feel appreciated and rewarded and that they are connected to other champions, including through networks and communities of practice to keep them motivated and equipped with new knowledge and skills.

Theory of change for supporting nutrition leadership



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INTRODUCTION AND TYPES OF NUTRITION CHAMPIONS

1



INTRODUCTION

It is increasingly being recognised that champions play a vital role in influencing nutrition policy and practice, from securing political will to changing attitudes at the community level.¹ However, there are some key gaps in our knowledge on how to identify, engage, support and sustain a champions' commitment to addressing nutrition challenges. Therefore, many organisations who are seeking to work with and support champions lack good practice guidance to inform their approach.

This publication builds on existing literature, with practical experiences, from the Transform Nutrition Consortium, the Scaling Up Nutrition (SUN) Movement and personal experiences shared by nutrition champions in response to an online call for contributions.²

Types of nutrition champions

“Leadership is about vision, about people buying in, about empowerment and, most of all, about producing useful change. Leadership is not about attributes, it’s about [behaviour]. And in an ever-faster-moving world, leadership is increasingly needed from more and more people, no matter where they are in a hierarchy. The notion that a few extraordinary people at the top can provide all the leadership needed today is ridiculous, and it’s a recipe for failure.”³

The space nutrition champions occupy is both diverse and fluid: they operate at all levels of policy and practice with individuals, often assuming different roles at key moments in time.⁴ On the one hand, constructing ‘champion types’ can appear to oversimplify this complex environment and fail to acknowledge the nuances that exist within and between

individuals working to champion nutrition. On the other hand, categories facilitate analysis and provide a framework around which lessons and recommendations can be drawn. Therefore, although much of the literature is discussed in terms of types of champions, lessons must be contextualised within each policy and practice environment to ensure appropriate strategies are adopted to support champions appropriately, at that moment in time.

Heaver,⁵ for example, identifies three levels of people to target for leadership support: decision-makers, influencers and clients. *Decision-makers* hold formal power to shape nutrition policy directly, and include politicians and senior civil servants (heads of relevant line ministries and heads of implementing departments). *Influencers* have no formal power in the policy process, however they are able to influence decision-makers, such as close relatives to a head of state, respected nutrition specialists, development partners, donor representatives and media actors. And lastly, *clients*, who are rarely able to influence policies and programmes designed for them and would benefit from an increased voice and more active participation in the policy and practice process.

Dao⁶ identifies three types of healthcare champion: executive champions (holding leadership positions within an organisation), managerial champions (responsible for clinical departments) and frontline clinicians. Heaver,⁷ similarly, expanding on the target categories above makes a distinction between active nutrition *champions at a policy level*, those *policy entrepreneurs who network and strategise to sustain political commitment*, and broader *supporters who may also exist at the*

¹ Nisbett, N., Wach, E., Haddad, L. et al., 2016. Championing Nutrition: Effective Leadership for Action. In: Gillespie, S., Hodge, J., Yosef, S. and Pandya-Lorch, R. eds., 2016. Nourishing millions: Stories of change in nutrition. Intl Food Policy Res Inst.

² Online discussion forum was established on the EnNet discussion forum at: <http://www.en-net.org/question/2700.aspx>

³ Kotter, John., 2013. Management Is (Still) Not Leadership. [Blog] Harvard Business Review. Available at: <https://hbr.org/2013/01/management-is-still-not-leadership>

⁴ Nisbett, N., Wach, E., Haddad, L. and El Arifeen, S., 2015. What drives and constrains effective leadership in tackling child undernutrition? Findings from Bangladesh, Ethiopia, India and Kenya. Food Policy, 53, pp. 33-45.

⁵ Heaver, R., 2005. Strengthening country commitment to human development: lessons from nutrition. World Bank Publications.

⁶ Dao, B., Otolorin, E., Gomez, P.P., Carr, C. and Sanghvi, H., 2015. Preparing the next generation of maternal and newborn health leaders: The maternal and newborn health champions initiatives. International Journal of Gynecology & Obstetrics, 130(S2)

⁷ *ibid.*

Box 1: Examples of nutrition champions



Dr. Neelofur Malik

Working level champions

Dr. Neelofur Malik, a private medical practitioner in Pakistan, provides advice on nutrition and healthy eating, handwashing and hygiene awareness campaigns as well as the training of local teachers to educate students on the importance of good nutrition, hygiene and sanitation.⁹

Esther Kimani, a practicing doula and lactation consultant in Kenya, offers home visits to pregnant women and breastfeeding support, and complementary feeding sessions for new mothers which are helpful in ensuring women feel confident in their capacities to feed their infants and young children in the right way.¹⁰



Esther Kimani

While some individuals are working within their personal capacities or professions, others are contributing to broader governmental efforts to champion nutrition.

Nutritionists such as Sandra Salomy Phiri in Malawi are offering their time to provide nutrition education and support as part of larger government programmes. They support 'front-line' health workers with necessary knowledge on essential nutrition actions, indicators and diagnosis, in an effort to ensure that nutrition gets the attention it deserves.¹¹

Political and Societal Champions



HE. António Mascarenhas Monteiro

The nomination of regional political champions for nutrition has shown to be a strong strategy to raise high-level awareness. The former President of Cape Verde, HE. **António Mascarenhas Monteiro**, has been a champion for the West Africa region between 2011 and 2014 and the former First Lady of South Africa and Mozambique, Ms. **Graça Machel**, has been actively advocating for women's rights and nutrition over the last years. The King of Lesotho, **King Letsie III**, has also been nominated as the African Union's Nutrition Champion and 26 SUN Countries have officially appointed high-level nutrition champions.

Increasingly, celebrity chefs such as **Jamie Oliver** are campaigning, at the global level, to improve the quality of the food we can afford, have access to, and are influenced to purchase.

frontline. *Champions* are high-level politicians, civil servants and those who can directly influence policy. *Entrepreneurs and supporters* are mid-level civil servants, NGO members, or academics, and while *entrepreneurs* directly support *champions*, *supporters* are not directly engaged in strategizing, coalition building, or other activities which *entrepreneurs* may be.⁸

The key similarity found in these definitions is a separation between different political levels and recognition that champions work at high-levels, mid-levels and on the ground.

How are champions identified and how can potential champions be identified?

Lessons from innovation literature outlined by Coaks and Smith¹³ show champions and potential champions can be identified by their position within their social networks. Therefore, champions are firmly rooted within social structures and act as anchors within policy and practice processes to promote change. Like Coaks and Smith, Dao's view of champions also recognises respect of peers and support from superiors as key characteristics of a successful nutrition champion.

⁸ *ibid*

⁹ Malik, N. 2016 October 27. Call for your experiences on engaging nutrition champions for a new publication. [Online forum comment]. Message posed to <http://www.en-net.org/question/2700.aspx>

¹⁰ Kimani, E. 2016 November 2. Call for your experiences on engaging nutrition champions for a new publication. [Online forum comment]. Message posed to <http://www.en-net.org/question/2700.aspx>

¹¹ Phiri, S. S. 2016 October 27. Call for your experiences on engaging nutrition champions for a new publication. [Online forum comment]. Message posed to <http://www.en-net.org/question/2700.aspx>

¹² Additional information on the Net-Map methodology and PIPA is available from <https://netmap.wordpress.com/> and <http://pipamethodology.pbworks.com/>

¹³ Coakes, E. and Smith, P., 2007. Developing communities of innovation by identifying innovation champions. *The Learning Organization*, 14(1), pp.74-85.

Box 2: Stakeholder mapping tools

There are a number of useful tools and approaches to help in identifying stakeholders and understanding the role they play within their network. Stakeholder mapping exercises assess and document:

- » the strength of existing relationships with and between stakeholders;
- » the influence they hold and where they hold it;
- » the extent to which their objectives already align with your agenda; and
- » how the stakeholders are connected to your networks.

There are a variety of useful tools to structure stakeholder analysis, two approaches commonly used are the Net-Map methodology, developed by IFPRI and the network mapping component of Participatory Impact Pathways Analysis (PIPA).¹²

Nisbett et al.¹⁴ also highlight the importance of trusted interlocutors in translating and communicating research to decision-makers within a local context. There is a need to both understand the local context in order to translate information for its audience and be within the local networks in order to develop reputation for trusted information. Nisbett also found that different leadership qualities were required depending on the shape and maturity of the network, and suggest that, in fragmented environments, champions who can not only operate within the social network, but who can shape it are required.

This networked and context specific definition can be used to identify existing champions and potential champions and because champions operate at all levels of policy and practice, situational analysis tools and stakeholder mapping exercises (see Box 2) can be a good starting point for identifying both champions, potential champions and areas where championship is required.

For example, a First Lady may not currently champion nutrition. However, they are trusted interlocutors with a critical position to influence change and could therefore be targeted as a potential champion of nutrition. Lessons from the SUN Movement show that the emergence of First Ladies as ideal nutrition champions has been taken up by an increasing number of countries such as Malawi, Ethiopia, Guinea Bissau and Kenya. Or at the working level, mid-wives' position within communities, trust of the community members, and local knowledge can be used to champion changes in nutrition practice at the local level. In addition, as Chinwe JoyEzeife, Deputy Director of Maternal, Newborn and Child Nutrition at the National Primary Health Care Development Agency in Nigeria explains, community leaders are often best placed to understand the needs, preferences and motivations of their community members in order to mobilise demand, facilitate access and improve utilisation of nutrition services.¹⁵

¹⁴ Nisbett, N., Wach, E., Haddad, L. and El Arifeen, S., 2015.

¹⁵ Ezeife, C. J. 2016 November 7. Call for your experiences on engaging nutrition champions for a new publication. [Online forum comment]. Message posed to <http://www.en-net.org/question/2700.aspx>

Box 3: A snapshot of SUN Country experience in nominating champions

27 SUN Countries have nominated one, or several, high-level political or social champions for nutrition – from First Ladies, Presidents, Prime Ministers and parliamentarians to sports stars and celebrities. These individuals are high-profile advocates who work with the Networks to win hearts and minds.



Graça Machel

The nomination of champions has proven to be a key tactic for effective advocacy. Chad has nominated political and sectoral champions across relevant ministries and Mozambique has elected five high-profile public figures comprised of First Ladies (current and former), famed musicians, government ministers and religious leaders. In the example of Mozambique, the nutrition community collectively recognised that in order to put the nutritional needs of women and children on the agenda, they needed strong voices from all walks of life. The identification of these high-profile champions was one of the elements of the National Nutrition Advocacy Strategy formulated in 2014. From First Ladies (current and former) to musicians, Ministers of Government and religious leaders, the nutrition community attracted names such as Isaura Nyuse (First Lady of Mozambique), Graça Machel (President of the Foundation for Community Development and widow of the former South African President Nelson Mandela and former Mozambican President Samora Machel), Mingas (a singer), José Pacheco (Minister of Agriculture and Food Security), Nazira Abdula (Minister of Health), Sheik Aminudin Mohamed (a religious leader) and Dom Dinis Salomão Sengulane (a religious leader).



To kick off their efforts, a brief [video](#) was released, where many of the champions speak about malnutrition. In addition, Mingas composed a song about malnutrition that debuted during a gala, where the advocacy campaign was formally launched. The Renewed Efforts Against Child Hunger Initiative (REACH), the Technical Secretariat for Food Security and Nutrition (SETSAN) and the Civil Society Network for Scaling Up Nutrition all play important supporting roles for the champions.

Why did they take this on?

"I am close to the community and want to make a difference", Mingas (singer)

"In my position, I can make a difference every day, and I must. Before I go to bed, I ask myself, what did I do to champion nutrition today? Who did I talk to about good nutrition?", José Pacheco (Minister of Agriculture and Food Security)

Box 4: Identifying and targeting political champions in Pakistan¹⁶

Recognising the important roles that parliamentarians can play in the implementation of multi-sectoral nutrition strategies, the enactment and enforcement of nutrition-relevant legislation (i.e. the protection and promotion of breastfeeding laws, mandatory food fortification laws) and in increasing budgetary allocations for nutrition-specific and nutrition-sensitive interventions, the SUN Civil Society Alliance (CSA) in Pakistan focused their efforts on engaging parliamentarians as key nutrition champions.



Dr. Irshad Danish

Dr. Irshad Danish, the founding coordinator of the CSA and the SUN Academia and Research Network in Pakistan (SUNAR, Pak) explained that the CSA began its work by reaching out to parliamentarians who had a history of working on different social and development issues. They were encouraged to see not only a great deal of interest from female parliamentarians at the national and provincial levels, but also that both ruling and opposition ministers of parliament (MPs) were ready to work together to address malnutrition challenges, despite their political differences.

The CSA did their homework – they studied each party’s manifesto and then made sure to highlight how their political ambitions were easily related to and complemented by the country’s development goals, particularly those related to health and nutrition. The CSA then organised sensitisation sessions for MPs across the country. During their engagement with parliamentarians, they provided key statistics and updates on the legal situation and policy environment. This led to parliamentarians using official procedure and protocols of national and provincial assemblies to call attention to and instigate dialogue on nutrition. Meetings with members of relevant parliamentary Standing Committees also helped to promote accountability through parliamentary platforms. The CSA is also developing policy briefs and provincial scorecards to aid MPs to champion nutrition during policy and planning activities.

¹⁶ Danish, I. 2016 October 31. Call for your experiences on engaging nutrition champions for a new publication. [Online forum comment]. Message posed to <http://www.en-net.org/question/2700.aspx>

**NUTRITION CHAMPIONS:
ENGAGED, SUPPORTED
AND SUSTAINED**



NUTRITION CHAMPIONS: ENGAGED, SUPPORTED AND SUSTAINED

Engaged

Understanding the motivations of champions and potential champions is a prerequisite to effectively develop engagement strategies tailored to the individuals or groups. Heaver¹⁷ makes the distinction between two types of motivation: intrinsic and extrinsic. Extrinsic motivation includes external accountability factors or pressure to achieve results, whereas intrinsic motivations appeal to someone's internal rights-based belief system.

Heaver¹⁸ suggests little systematic work has been done to foster support for nutrition interventions using individuals' intrinsic motivation to address rights-based issues of malnutrition. However, Nisbett et al. found that many champions are motivated by a wide range of factors, including many intrinsic motivations. This includes, for example, a desire to work in paediatrics within disadvantaged communities, exposure to malnutrition on a field visit which had prompted them to focus their efforts on addressing nutritional challenges, and personal experiences within their families or communities. This supports the view, therefore, that engagement strategies should seek to use intrinsic motivations as well as extrinsic motivations when engaging with champions, and potential champions.

Supported

Support to champions has largely been provided in two main forms: capacity-building programmes and networks or communities of practice. Capacity support for leaders within the nutrition community have focused on both technical aspects of nutrition to provide leaders with the necessary 'nuts and bolts' to advocate for change and softer leadership

skills training required to effectively champion nutrition. Network-building initiatives focus on peer support and mutual learning, and are often, but not always, linked to capacity-building programmes' alumni networks.

Capacity-building

Leadership capacity-building was highlighted in the World Public Health Nutrition Association's competency framework as one of the key competencies required to achieve improvements in health and nutrition, in developed and developing country settings¹⁹ and initiatives such as the SUN Movement, the African Nutrition Leadership Programme, and the European Nutrition Leadership Platform have invested in building capacity for leadership among national governments, civil society, and the private sector.

However, leadership is a fluid and complex subject area, and, therefore, Davari, Rashidi and Baartmans²⁰ recommend a context-specific approach for designing leadership capacity-building programmes with extensive research to first identify the skills gaps within the target group. For the first Iranian Food and Nutrition Leadership Programme (IFNLP), for example, a mixed-method study was conducted on leadership skills within a group of Iranian food science and technology professionals. As a result, the IFNLP was designed to address the identified skills gaps: team-building, communication, creativity, decision-making, holistic thinking and practicing, and trust-building.

Following this approach, the present initiatives of IFNLP, Middle-east Nutrition Leadership Programme (MENLP), and other leadership programmes are based on extensive local and external consultancies to ensure each

¹⁷ Heaver, R., 2005.

¹⁸ *ibid*

¹⁹ Hughes, R., Shrimpton, R., Recine, E. and Margetts, B., 2011. A competency framework for global public health nutrition workforce development: a background paper. World Public Health Nutrition Association.

²⁰ Davari, A., Rashidi, A. and Baartmans, J.A., 2015. Nutrition Leadership Development: Capacity-Building Initiatives in Iran and the Middle-East Region Since 2009. *Frontiers in public health*, 3.

Box 5: Nutrition champions on their motivating factors



Nahas Angula

"I am a nutrition champion. I started this activity in 2007 when I was the Prime Minister of the Republic of Namibia. My interest in nutrition was triggered when Namibia reviewed its progress or lack thereof towards the Millennium Development Goals. The review revealed that Namibia was facing a major challenge in reducing maternal deaths and infant mortality. As a Prime Minister I was shocked by these findings."

Former Prime Minister of Namibia and SUN Movement Lead Group Member, Right Honourable Nahas Angula



Dr. Akinwumi Adesina

"The greatest contributor to economic growth is not physical infrastructure, but brainpower: what I refer to as "grey matter infrastructure". Stunted children today leads to stunted economies tomorrow. Let us, together, end the scourge of malnutrition. It is well within our reach to do so, and the evidence is overwhelming that we must act – and act now."

Dr. Akinwumi Adesina, President of the African Development Bank



Gladys Mugambi

"I love what I do. And what I was trained to do is improve lives through good nutrition. And I am very excited to be part of a team that is spearheading nutrition in my country. Moreover, I would like to see my contribution to changing lives of people in the country. Just before I became the SUN Focal Point in Kenya, I was leading the food fortification initiative in Kenya which was an uphill battle because we were dealing with private sector for the first time. We expected it was going to be very difficult but I realised that when you bring people together, you are able to do big things. That was a great achievement for me because we met our targets."

Gladys Mugambi, Head of Kenya's Nutrition and Dietetics Unit in the Ministry of Health and SUN Government Focal Point

"In January 2013, due to my expertise and experience working with policy-makers, I was contacted by development partners to help with influencing political parties to include nutrition in their manifestos. Initially, I was reluctant to perform the task as I was not aware about the magnitude and impact of malnutrition. However, when I studied nutrition reports and realised the effects of malnutrition on child development and the economic consequences, I decided to play my role in safeguarding the country's future development and prosperity.

As the founding Coordinator of the SUN Civil Society Alliance Pakistan, I took the lead in our #InvestmentinNutrition campaign to generate demand for budgetary allocations for nutrition. As a result, a number of news reports, editorials, and articles on nutrition were published in national and regional newspapers. We also worked with 100 parliamentarians from national and provincial assemblies to sensitise them on the value of investing in nutrition. As a result, the issue of malnutrition was discussed at different political/parliamentary forums and members of Parliament have come forward from different political parties and made commitments to bring more investment for nutrition."

Dr. Irshad Danish, Coordinator, SUN Civil Society Alliance Pakistan and nutrition rights activist



Juliana M. Lunguzi

"I am a nutrition champion. I work to increase the visibility of nutrition across a range of policy discussions and to help connect sectors where collaboration is critical. I'm committed to working with and understanding the challenges and priorities of the communities, in particular the young people I represent. This gives me the hands-on experience I need to share when advocating for nutrition in Malawi. I focus on sharing clear and simple messages, and draw inspiration from other success stories found in other areas including the fight against HIV/AIDS and improvements in sexual and reproductive health."

Juliana M. Lunguzi, registered nurse and midwife, Member of Parliament, and Chair of the Parliamentary Committee on Health in Malawi.

leadership programme is tailored to the needs of the target group. Because of the diversity that exists within and between champions, this context-specific approach is required to ensure appropriate support packages are developed to meet the needs of the existing and potential champions, alike.

Although the skills gap may vary within local contexts, much work has been conducted to define the skills required for effective leadership and the functions champions need to perform. Therefore, literature can provide a benchmark to which the skills gap can be measured.

The following skills have been identified from existing literature,²¹ and, building on the assertion that champions who can not only operate within their networks but who can shape it as well are required, the identified skills can be separated into the skills required to operate as a champion within an environment and the skills needed to transform networks:

Skills required to effectively operate within networks

- » Advocacy
- » Knowledge dissemination and communication
- » Relationship-building
- » Consensus-building
- » Risk-taking
- » Diplomacy
- » Ability to overcome opposition

- » Ability to navigate boundaries between social, political and professional groups
- » Ability to understand (and navigate) policy and practice environments

Skills required to shape one's network

- » Ability to inspire and motivate
- » Ability to unleash the potential of others
- » Ability to focus their own and other members' energy on achieving collective results

In addition, Jerling²² outlines the African Nutrition Leadership Programme's (ANLP) broad recommendations for components of successful leadership capacity development programmes, which could be applied in a multitude of contexts and skill gaps, as outlined in Box 6.

Box 6: ANLP recommendations for components/goals of leadership capacity-development programmes

- » Create an awareness of one's own leadership orientation and ability, and how it influences team and personal effectiveness;
- » Teach that all change initiatives start at an individual level;
- » Create an environment in which individuals can experience their strengths and growth areas and receive feedback on their behaviour and their growth;
- » Create an environment that allows for growth from awareness to attitude to behaviour;
- » Promote an internal locus of control;
- » Develop a personalised action plan for growth beyond the capacity-development programme;
- » Create an awareness that leadership is a behaviour and not a position;
- » Create an awareness of the importance of developing others and cooperating with others, rather than to compete;
- » Create a sense that leaders are accountable to themselves for their own growth;
- » Establish the practice of reflection as a basis for continued self-discovery and growth;
- » Teach how leadership capabilities affect team performance and work performance; and
- » Share experiences of working in diverse teams (cultural, technical, gender, etc.).

²¹ Dao, B., Otolorin, E., Gomez, P.P., Carr, C. and Sanghvi, H., 2015.; Brito, A., Cabrera, A., Gomes, F.S., Crispim, S.P., Jáuregui, A., Kanter, R., Chamorro, R., Schlüssel, M.M., Chávez, R., Ríos-Castillo, I. and Kroker, M.F., 2014. VI Latin American Workshop on Leadership in Nutrition, Cuba 2012: the first harvest. Nutrition (Burbank, Los Angeles County, Calif.), 30(3), p.369; Jerling, J., Reflections on Nutrition Leadership Capacity Development; Davari, A., Rashidi, A. and Baartmans, J.A., 2015.; Nisbett, N., Wach, E., Haddad, L. and El Arifeen, S., 2015.

²² Jerling, J., 2015.

Box 7: Building the capacity of the Kenyan media as actors of change²³



Gladys Mugambi

The former coordinator of the SUN Civil Society Alliance in Kenya, Titus Mung'ou, shared the case study of their work to organise national and county-level media training, targeting journalists specialising in health and nutrition reporting. The aims were to sensitise journalists on nutrition programmes in Kenya and their role in SUN, to build journalists' capacity to report nutrition stories, and to strengthen the relationship between media practitioners and nutrition experts.

The catalytic role of the media in six Kenyan counties targeted by the SUN CSA resulted in more allocation of resources to nutrition. Sustained media advocacy and press articles on the need for more funds for nutrition was undertaken during the budgeting process, thereby influencing key decision-makers to act. Due to limited funds for media advocacy, sensitisation of journalists in the remaining 41 counties of the country remains a tall order, but is necessary to build capacity to push on key nutrition issues. Using local media benefits and influences both the public and the decision-makers who rely on the stations for their daily news.

Sustained

Networks & Communities of Practice

Howell²⁴ identified the following six requirements for champions to prosper:

- » To work within an innovative environment;
- » To work with other innovators;
- » To be challenged and to learn;
- » To be (socially) connected within and without the organisation;
- » To be recognised for their work; and to work for management that supports their activities.

Therefore, in addition to a view that champions should be seen within their own networks and organisations, there are also benefits to increasing their networks and connectivity outside of their immediate context.

Communities of practice have also been found to be an effective avenue for engaging champions and for allowing champions to leverage their collective action to influence health policies, providing stimulus for continuous learning, to be challenged and supported. For example, Dao²⁵ found the most successful cohorts to take part in the Jhpiego-led initiatives to develop maternal and newborn health leaders were those teams who

Box 8: Networks in action in Sierra Leone²⁶

The Sierra Leone Alliance Against Hunger and Malnutrition is an alliance of over 150 non-governmental networks, including women, youth and farmer-based and school based organisations. The alliance is also playing an active role in the country's SUN Civil Society Platform and other national nutrition and food security working groups.

Edward Jusu, the national coordinator of the alliance highlighted how the platform was created in response to persistent reports that identified malnutrition as one of the major causes for high maternal and infant mortality in Sierra Leone. To enhance governmental commitment to nutrition, the alliance is currently leading the efforts to highlight nutrition and food security issues in the current constitutional review process. The alliance is also using several platforms to bring Sierra Leone's voice to the global efforts to improve nutrition and food security for our malnourished children and women around the world. The alliance is currently hosting, the Ecosystem Based Adaptation for Food Security Assembly—a pan-African institution which allows them the opportunity to promote an emphasis on nutrition in climate change discussions.

²³ Mung'ou, T. 2016 November 7. Call for your experiences on engaging nutrition champions for a new publication. [Online forum comment]. Message posed to <http://www.en-net.org/question/2700.aspx>

²⁴ Howell, J.M., 2005. The right stuff: Identifying and developing effective champions of innovation. *The Academy of Management Executive*, 19(2), pp.108-119.

²⁵ Dao, B., Otolorin, E., Gomez, P.P., Carr, C. and Sanghvi, H., 2015.

²⁶ Jesu, E. 2016 1 November 1, 21. Call for your experiences on engaging nutrition champions for a new publication. [Online forum comment]. Message posed to <http://www.en-net.org/question/2700.aspx>

were able to leverage their identity as a group to influence national health policies, promote regional mentoring programmes and influence teaching agendas in hospitals. They note the collective engagement appeared to “build

even greater momentum for broad changes in national health systems”. This also relates to the extent to which champions are able to connect, coordinate and inspire others to work towards a common goal.

A FRAMEWORK FOR SUPPORTING CHAMPIONS



A FRAMEWORK FOR SUPPORTING CHAMPIONS

Given the complexity and the extent to which a context-specific approach should be taken when identifying, engaging, and supporting champions of nutrition, little work has been conducted to develop a framework for practitioners. However, the African Nutrition Leadership Programme (ANLP) has put forward an approach for champions themselves, to think through the context-specific questions that need to be answered before effective strategies can be developed to lead change,²⁷ as outlined in Box 9, and Nisbett et al. have put forward a theory of change for supporting nutrition leadership, as shown in Figure 1.

Nisbett et al.'s theory of change highlights practical action points for supporting and maintaining the capacity of nutrition leadership. Based on qualitative evidence collected to determine the enabling and constraining factors for effective nutrition leadership, it outlines the processes required to support decision-makers, influencers and clients to become nutrition champions, policy entrepreneurs and supporters.

Many of the findings which have been discussed above on how to engage and support champions are echoed in this theory of change. For example, immersions, advocacy campaigns and electoral pressure play on both intrinsic and extrinsic motivations to address problems of undernutrition; capacity-building through the use of evidence, leadership training, and knowledge provision supports champions with the 'nuts and bolts' they need to advocate for change and the softer leadership skills to navigate networks; and lastly, networking activities and connecting champions with each other so they can build their collective voice and build alliances.

Indeed, the role of nutrition champions in advocating for nutrition, formulating policies, and coordinating and implementing action in nutrition have increasingly been recognised in many countries such as Peru, Brazil, Thailand, and the Indian states of Maharashtra and Tamil Nadu.

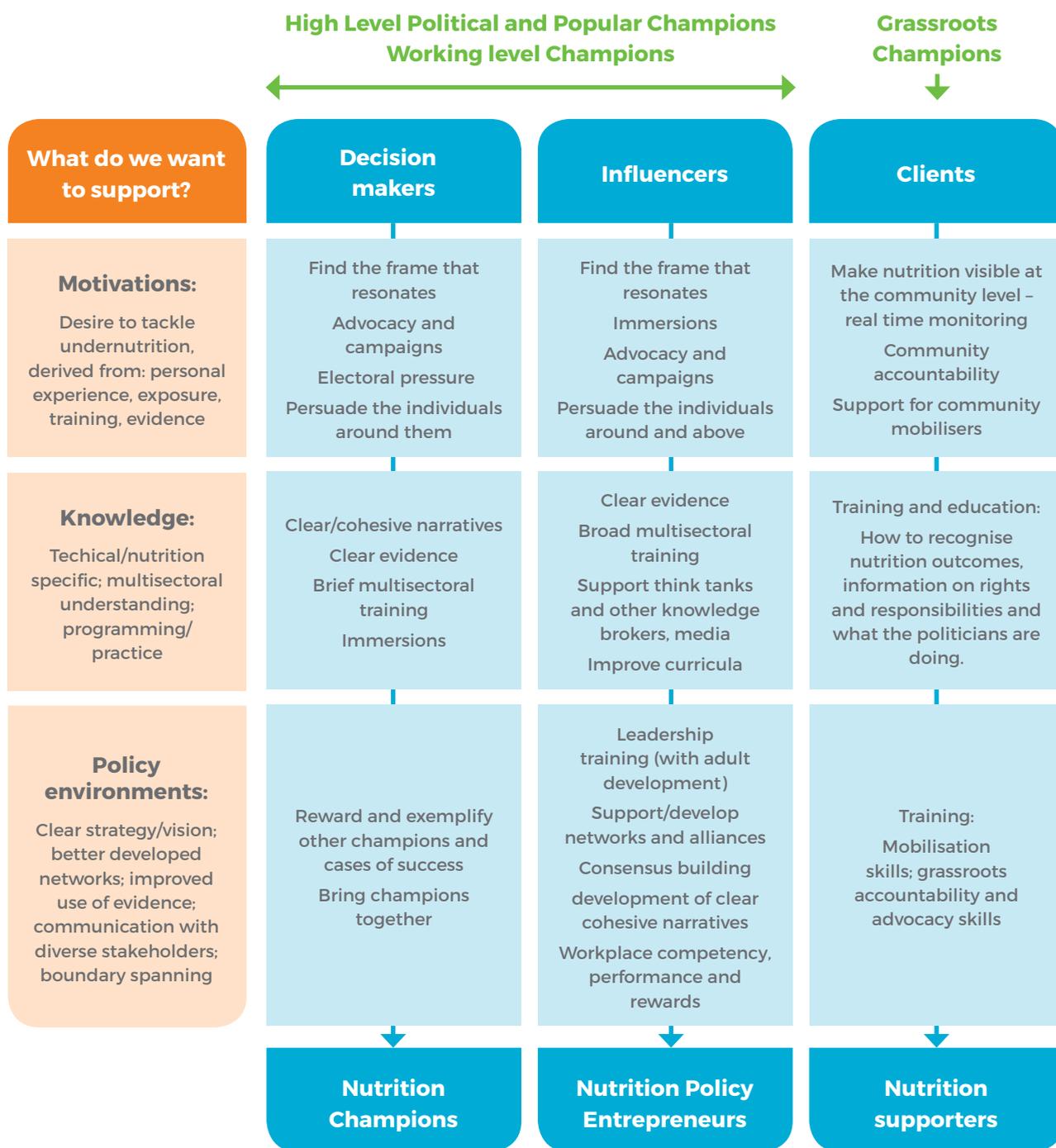
At a working level, nutrition champions are proving that building on what is already in place and improving institutional structures, undertaking proactive and strategic advocacy

Box 9: The ANLP model of leading change

- » Determine the reasons for a change and the outcomes it should deliver;
- » Perform a stakeholder analysis and develop a plan to align stakeholder commitment with the desired change process (motivations);
- » Ensure the availability of a wide range of leadership skills and seek to improve leadership skills within stakeholders who may influence the change process (capacity building);
- » Diagnose current effectiveness issues (strengths, weaknesses, threats, opportunities, problems, conflicts and dilemmas) that need to be addressed;
- » Grow knowledge and skills to identify the sources and nature of resistance to the change process and the ability to effectively manage resistance to change; and
- » Develop and perform checks and evaluations to detect obstacles and measure progress, along with the eventual achievements, in order to redirect and/or adapt change interventions.

27 Jerling, J., 2015.

Figure 1: theory of change for supporting nutrition leadership



and outreach and building effective nutrition leadership at all levels, is making a difference. SUN Countries stress the importance of informal contacts and networks, to reach high-level leaders. In Burkina Faso, one member of Parliament made direct contact with the President to advocate for the creation of a specific budget line for nutrition

which subsequently led to the creation of a parliamentary network for nutrition.

While such examples of charismatic leadership are something that a few may be born into, most types of leadership can be built up and supported. This has been nurtured through initiatives such as the Transform Nutrition Consortium who have nominated 10 champions



Ambarka Hassane
Youssoufane

Insights: Ambarka Hassane Youssoufane is the Emergency Nutrition Network (ENN) knowledge management specialist in West and Central Africa. He is based in Dakar, Senegal. He has years of experience, with roles in governmental and civil society authorities in Niger.

Nutrition champions play a dominant role in scaling up nutrition in SUN countries. This was one of the points arising from the twenty-third round of SUN country teleconferences. This round, which brought together all SUN Countries in groups of four to five countries from 9 to 13 May 2016, addressed the topics Strengthening and supporting the political commitment for measures promoting nutrition.

These nutrition champions are well known political, sporting and cultural figures, or others recognised for their leadership and willingness to support Scaling Up Nutrition in their country, or indeed beyond its borders. These nutrition champions are torch bearers for nutrition, whose voices and reputations play a dominant role in addressing nutrition at the highest political level.

In Benin, the Secretary-General of the Presidency, a nutrition champion, played a front-line role in advocating for nutrition financing by participating in the budget session of the Ministry of Finance. The action of the Secretary-General gave nutrition a voice in Benin and granted it all the attention it deserved.

Nutrition champions are often parliamentarians whose actions support the creation of laws and the vote for the state budget.

In Burkina Faso, nutrition stakeholders received the support of the President of the National Assembly in scaling up nutrition actions in this country. This was possible through the arrival of a nutrition professional at the Parliamentary Assembly as a serving member of parliament. "It has been thanks to the efforts of this parliamentarian, who is with us today, that we have been able to establish the connection with the President of the National Assembly to advocate for nutrition," said SUN Focal Point Ms. Bertine Ouaro during a telephone interview. This new proximity to the parliament and its President has made it possible to set up a parliamentary network for nutrition, that will be the entry-point for nutrition advocacy in the new Parliamentary Assembly. In particular, this network could support advocacy in favour of a budget line for nutrition and/or the creation of various laws relating to nutrition, or even raise the institutional support for nutrition to a higher administrative level.

In certain countries such as Chad or Mozambique, there are a number of nutrition champions who are involved in different ways. In Mozambique, nutrition champions notably include: the Graça Machel Foundation, civil society leaders, religious leaders, former Ministers of Agriculture and Health, etc. All these figures are fully involved in advocating for nutrition through their multiple public interventions. In Chad, there are political champions, notably former or serving Ministers and sectoral champions active in their respective areas: agriculture, livestock husbandry education, information, etc.

In Kenya, and in other countries, the First Lady has distinguished herself as a nutrition Champion. Moreover, in this capacity, on 14 June 2016, HE Ms. Margaret Kenyatta presided over the official launch of the Global Nutrition Report in Nairobi, where she launched an appeal for more investment and legislation to improve nutrition and overcome breastfeeding obstacles.



Ms. Margaret
Kenyatta

"The Global Nutrition Report recommends that we all renew our commitments to nutrition with one common fundamental goal: a world in which everyone, regardless of race, ethnicity, sex or social class, can access the resources that they need in order to live happily and in good health. The most basic of these resources is food. Fortunately, empowering communities to feed themselves is also one of the first steps towards a stronger, richer and more democratic world. We all want such a world and we must act." Her Excellency, Ms. Margaret Kenyatta.

that are leading from where they are. Leaders that inspire broad-based momentum have been key, but making nutrition resonate through storytelling is driving home nutrition messages. "This real-life evidence clicks into

their brains faster and helps bring life to the statistics you are showing them," said Christine Muyama, Graça Machel Trust, Uganda, and Transform Nutrition Champion.

CONCLUSION



CONCLUSION

Nutrition leadership is proving invaluable for sustaining political commitment to nutrition amongst many of the countries discussed in this publication.

As has been showcased, Nutrition Champions are helping to keep nutrition high on political agendas but also simulating demand from their communities on why nutrition is vital for children to reach their full potential.

SUN Countries are recruiting and engaging nutrition champions at three distinct levels in response to their requirements.

- » **High Level Political and Popular Champions** – First Ladies, Prime Ministers, Celebrities, Athletes and religious and traditional Leaders
- » **Working Level** – Ministers, Members of Parliaments, Heads of Organisations and Institutions, CEOs and
- » **Grassroots** – Health and Agriculture Extension Workers, Nutrition Field Officers, local religious and village, teachers and heads of community based organisations

This document hopes to demonstrate that leadership in nutrition can be fostered and built overtime and it has made the difference in many SUN Countries. Through the SUN Country experiences and learnings from the Transform Nutrition Consortium, it has demonstrated that individuals are advancing the nutrition agenda, and it takes a united nutrition community to support their efforts. In the annexes that follow are various Terms of References for nominating nutrition champions at high levels, but also for engaging working level champions across sectors. As can be seen from the Kenyan Nutrition Champion Guide in Annex 2, recognition of the efforts of nutrition champions is essential and considering incentives to sustain people's efforts is essential.

The SUN Movement Secretariat and the Transform Nutrition Consortium hope this synthesis helps to share what is working in different countries to sustain the engagement of nutrition champions, and that the associated online resources are valuable for nutrition advocacy efforts in many countries.

High Level Political and Popular Champions

First Ladies, Prime Ministers, Celebrities, Athletes and religious and traditional Leaders

Working Level

Members of Parliaments, Heads of Organisations and Institutions, CEOs and

Grassroots

Health and Agriculture Extension Workers, Nutrition Field Officers, local religious and village, teachers and heads of community based organisations

ANNEXES



ANNEX 1

Terms of reference models

West Africa example

Nutrition advocate

August 2011 – August 2013

The Nutrition Advocate is an opportunity to engage at the highest level of government to achieve change in the fight against malnutrition in West Africa. The causes of this malnutrition in the region are understood, as are the principal actions required to reduce it. A number of technical and policy documents, including the ECOWAS Nutrition Resolutions of 2006 and 2009, clearly outline the way forward, emphasizing the proven and cost-effective solutions that now require greater commitment and funding by national governments to be implemented effectively and at scale.

The Regional Directors of international organisations involved in nutrition in West Africa have jointly committed to support an Advocate for nutrition in West Africa, whose prime function will be to advocate for action and increased investment by Countries. This will be a central role that is aimed at placing nutrition at the centre of the region's development agenda.

The Advocate will bring executive experience and influence with governments. The person will articulate the moral and economic case for investing in nutrition, and in proposing concrete policy changes. Her/his own rich experience of government will bring a dimension of diplomacy as well as attention to budgetary and policy issues. It is assumed that the individual will also be able to help raise public awareness and leverage broad support for change.

Type of activities and engagements

Depending on the issue, we have envisaged a series of different ways in which s/he might intervene:

- » Visit to a Head of State of neighbouring countries – where a specific country issue needs to be un-blocked;
- » Address to national parliaments – where a piece of legislation needs to be approved, or at the time of budgetary decisions;
- » Addresses at regional and global events – such as the African Union or the ECOWAS Heads of State; summit to make the case for region-wide issues, and bring attention to specific problems in Nutrition in West Africa, such as increased government expenditures on nutrition;
- » Letters to governments – on a broad range of nutrition-related issues;
- » A phone call or letter directly sent to a Head of State or Minister – when a specific issue needs to be un-blocked;
- » Participate in media debates or interviews on nutrition in the region or globally.

Duration of engagement and definition of activities

This role has an initial duration of 2 years, with the possibility of extending the engagement until 2015, at the time of the MDG deadlines, if both parties agree.

The agenda of engagements will be defined and prioritised by the Advocate in collaboration with the leadership of the regional nutrition organisations. Issues and events should always satisfy certain criteria:

- » the activity should be focused on specific needs or issues;
- » the probability of change or impact should be high;
- » a specific clear message should be developed around the activity: the country should exhibit a high prevalence of malnutrition;
- » the activity should be in-line with the overall objectives defined for the Nutrition Advocate project.

For the first 24 months, support will be made available for up to 6-7 major activities or engagements, including the different types of engagements outlined below, for which we hope the Advocate will be available.

Evaluation, feedback and reporting

Although there will not be a formal evaluation process of the Advocate, the partner representative accompanying the Advocate will prepare a report after each country visit or other activity, outlining the actions undertaken and persons met during the activity, and relating these to the stated objectives of the specific activity. These reports should include a few key impact indicators or expected outcomes that can be tracked in the future. These reports will constitute the basis for an annual review of the project as a whole, to be carried out by the Nutrition Working Group, with the results being delivered to the Regional Directors of the participating organisations.

High-level work plan

While the Advocate will have a broad role in advocating for increasing the commitment of National Governments to action on Nutrition, and while the agenda of the Advocate will be dynamic, adapting both to current events, and windows of opportunities for country level engagements, several long-term issues have been identified that will constitute the Advocate's initial specific objectives at the regional and country level, which are summarized below but detailed in the document "Nutrition Advocate for West Africa, Discussion points for agreeing on the details of engagement".

Examples of these regional issues are:

- » Increasing priority of nutrition in development strategies;
- » Reducing dependency on external funding sources for nutrition interventions;
- » Increasing commitment to averting, recognising and handling crises.

Support to be provided to the Advocate

Secretariat

The direct counterpart to the Advocate will be the leadership of the Regional Nutrition Organisations, currently represented by the UNICEF Regional Director. They will be responsible, together with the Advocate, for defining the advocacy strategy and the agenda of engagements. Detailed technical support will be provided by the technical staff of the Organizations, such as preparing country missions, drafting speeches, producing marketing materials, and coordinating logistics. The Advocate will be in direct contact with a Secretariat, currently to be assured by the UNICEF Regional Office for West and Central Africa. Eventually, if the need arises, a full-time support staff member can be arranged for the Secretariat.

Financial and logistical support

Funding cover travel, accommodation and other expenses will be provided.

Technical support

- » Initial briefing
- » Discussions of regional nutrition situation, and introduction to concepts and data
- » Facilitated working session on advocacy for nutrition in West Africa
- » Information kit
- » Malnutrition overview and situation in West Africa
- » Nutrition sound-bytes
- » Nutrition policy at country and regional levels
- » On-going technical support
- » Briefing notes before travelling
- » Permanent technical back-up team and focal-point

NUTRITION CHAMPION

Selection Criteria

Introduction

In Kenya, one in every three children under five years is suffering from chronic malnutrition, while one in 10 children suffers from acute malnutrition. This situation has remained constantly high for over two decades.

Kenya made a commitment to accelerate reduction of malnutrition by signing into the SUN Movement last year as the 30th Country after consolidating efforts in establishing necessary structures for its implementation. Government has provided leadership while creating an enabling environment to involve all stakeholders.

In many SUN Countries Nutrition Champions are the primary advocates.

Champions have been identified in 15 countries (Benin, Cameroon, Chad, Guatemala, Indonesia, Kyrgyz Republic, Malawi, Namibia, Nepal, Niger, Nigeria, Peru, Sri Lanka, Tanzania and The Gambia) and efforts are underway to identify champions in 10 additional countries.

There is growing recognition that strong leadership for nutrition is an essential element for garnering the support and understanding required to achieve impact. Champions give nutrition a human face: the identification of nutrition champions was mentioned by many countries as a useful support for SMAC.

In Kenya, the Ministry of Health in collaboration with various actors has spearheaded various policy frameworks, developed structures and allocated resources to scale up nutrition.

The enactment of the Kenya Constitution 2010 and creation of a devolved government system also impacted on the health sector. From the national to the county level, a number of projects have been initiated to scale up nutrition.

In recognition of the importance of leadership in the fight against undernutrition, the Ministry

of Health and partners would like to identify Nutrition Champions at the national and county level. The champions will influence and help improve nutrition, thereby making a significant influence.

A Nutrition Champion

A Nutrition Champion is someone whose work makes a difference in transforming thinking and action on nutrition. They champion the fight against undernutrition and are committed to raising the profile of undernutrition and influencing change at local, national, regional and international levels.

A Nutrition Champion should be committed to transform people's lives, thinking and actions towards improving the nutrition situation.

The champions may be 'unsung heroes' in various sectors, such as politics and sports, but should always be ready to sacrifice time and resources to bring a significant difference in life.

Types of Nutrition Champions

Nutrition champions can be categorised as follows:

- » Politicians and parliamentarians who take a particular interest in nutrition and look for opportunities to support the scaling up efforts.
- » High profile personalities such as sporting figures revered particularly by young people;
- » Nominated individuals recognised through public channels for playing an outstanding role in promoting nutrition.

Selection Criteria

- » A talented and accomplished individual in health, social sciences, entertainment, sports or public life.
- » A person of integrity who has a strong desire to mobilise the public interest to support scaling up nutrition, is committed to reach out to target audiences and decision-makers;

- » A person with good knowledge of Kenya's health sector, development, global trends in nutrition and MDG goals.

A Nutrition Champion should be:

- » A Kenyan national
- » A person who has provided community leadership on health issues and collaborates with others to build support for improvement of nutrition.
- » A person who has used creative and innovative strategies to promote infant and young child nutrition, to address diverse challenges within the community, county and nation.
- » A spokesperson, an advocate and educator.
- » A person with potential to generate long-term support from nutrition, mobilise resources and seek new solutions to problems.
- » A role model, can be emulated and his/her ideas replicated in the sector.

When selecting a Nutrition Champion, the following are the desired qualifications:

- » A person who can influence the government, local authorities, organisation and individuals to take nutrition as a priority in their development agenda;
- » A person who can help improve or scale up nutrition programmes and interventions, within and outside the locality;
- » A person who can promote nutritional considerations across sectors, such as agriculture, education, water and sanitation, social protection, etc.
- » A person who can influence or advocate for formulation and implementation of policies as well as strategies to improve nutrition;
- » A person who can mobilise communities to play an active role in policy development and actions to scale up nutrition;
- » A person who can build consensus and coalitions at county and national level, bring people together for a common goal, and capable of driving the nutrition agenda for change.

Role of Nutrition Champion

- » To engage in public advocacy, fundraising and mobilisation of resources to scale up nutrition.

Expectations

- » Respect impartiality and independence of the position.
- » Refrain behaviour or conduct that adversely affects nutrition activities.
- » Refrain activities incompatible goals and purposes of a Nutrition Champion.
- » Exercise good judgment and discretion at all times in matters relating to the performance of his/her duties as a Nutrition Champion;

Governance and Administrative Issues

- » Nutrition Champion is based or located at
- » Nutrition Champion reports to
- » Generally, Nutrition Champions offer their services on voluntary basis. The organisations engaging them shall cater for services such as transport, accommodation ...

EXAMPLE CHAMPION WELCOME LETTER

Mrs. Hadja Djene Kaba Condé

First Lady of the Republic of Guinea Conakry, Republic of Guinea

Geneva, 29 June 2016

Your Excellency, Mrs. Hadja Djene Kaba Condé, First Lady of the Republic of Guinea

On behalf of the SUN Movement, it is my pleasure to congratulate you on your appointment as Ambassador of the SUN Movement for the Republic of Guinea. Mr. Mamady Daffe, Director of the Nutrition Department at the Ministry of Health, and SUN Focal Point, announced the appointment to us. The Republic of Guinea has been a member of the Movement since 28 May 2013 and we are delighted to be able to work with you in your important new role.

With your leadership, inspiration and passion to improve the lives of children, adolescents and women, especially following the Ebola epidemic, I have no doubt that you will help to give nutrition the political and public importance it deserves in your country.

Ambassadors for nutrition are a key part of the effort to create and maintain political commitment to nutrition. In more than 30 SUN countries, high-level Ambassadors work hard to highlight the importance of nutrition.

These Ambassadors for nutrition participate in high-level events and share messages about the importance of good nutrition via the media. Alongside political decision-makers they pledge to guarantee that the far-reaching causes of malnutrition are addressed by laws and through cooperation between government sectors. They encourage cooperation between various stakeholders such as civil society, United Nations agencies, the private sector and donors, by putting in place actions to guarantee adequate nutrition for all. Ambassadors for nutrition demonstrate just how crucial good nutrition is for the health and well-being of children, so that they can succeed at school, have access to jobs and develop their potential. This will enable communities and society to prosper.

As an Ambassador for nutrition, you will be part of the international community of Ambassadors who galvanise political attention to improve nutrition. As a high-level Ambassador your appeals in the Republic of Guinea will not only benefit your country but also inspire the 56 other member countries of the SUN Movement.

My colleagues in the SUN Movement Secretariat as well as the nutrition community in the Republic of Guinea are ready to support you in your actions. They will be available in particular to share your efforts and messages within the Movement and to inform you of opportunities to support your commitment in the future.

I am delighted to have the chance to work with such a respected and experienced leader as yourself.

Yours sincerely,

Tom Arnold

Interim Coordinator, Scaling Up Nutrition (SUN) Movement

EXAMPLE FROM CHAD OF NOMINATING MULTIPLE MULTI-SECTORAL CHAMPIONS

List of Nutrition Champions

The Permanent Technical Committee for Food and Nutrition – the cross-sector platform supported by the SUN Movement and the REACH initiative – hereby awards the title of Nutrition Champion to the following people in recognition of their commitment to the cause of food and nutrition.

The list of Nutrition Champions is as follows:

At the departmental level

1. Mrs Khadidja Abdelkhader, of the *Ministry of Agriculture*, for her commitment to integrating food and nutrition.
2. Mr Sana Sevéia, of the *Ministry of Livestock Farming*, for his support and dedication to working within a cross-sector framework.
3. Dr Brahim Hamid, of the *Ministry of Public Health*, for his unwavering support for nutrition interventions.
4. Dr Abdessalam Tidjani, of the *Ministry of Research*, for his tireless work in this field and in the area of food safety in particular.

Office of the Prime Minister

5. Dr Yankalbé P. Matchock, advisor to the *Office of the Prime Minister*, for his ongoing

commitment to advocacy and support at the highest level of government.

National Assembly

6. Dr Lawane Gilbert, member of the National Assembly and of the parliamentary nutrition network.

UN Network

7. Mr Mohamed Cheik Levrak, of *REACH*, for his role in liaising between UN and government agencies to drive progress on food and nutrition, and for his discretion, directness and first-rate service.
8. Mr Bruno Maes, of *UNICEF*, for his resolute commitment to nutrition and his readiness to support worthwhile initiatives.

Forum organizers (exceptional awards)

9. Dr Ngariera Rimadjita, of the Ministry of Public Health.
10. Dr Mahamat Annour Wadak, Secretary-General of the Ministry of Public Health.

Nutrition Sponsor, Champion of Champions

11. Mrs Mariam Mahamat Nour, of the *Ministry of Planning*, for everything she has done – and continues to do – for nutrition in Chad, and beyond in Mali, Togo and Mauritania.

ANNEX 2

Engagement Plan examples

NUTRITION CHAMPIONS: A guide to strengthening Advocacy to Scale up Nutrition Investment in Kenya



The purpose of this guide is to share ways in which you can identify, select, and manage nutrition champions. The goal of this guide is to empower key leaders, facilitators and managers within the nutrition sector with the information needed to identify nutrition advocates

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1. Introduction

In Kenya, one in every four children under five years is suffering from chronic malnutrition, while one in 10 children suffer from acute malnutrition. This situation has remained constantly high for over two decades. Kenya made a commitment to accelerate the reduction of malnutrition by signing up to the SUN movement in 2012 after consolidating efforts in establishing necessary structures for its implementation. The SUN Movement is a unique Movement founded on the principle that all people have a right to food and good nutrition. It unites people from governments, civil society, the United Nations, donors, businesses and academia/researchers in a collective effort to improve nutrition. The Government provides leadership while creating an enabling environment to involve all stakeholders.

The Ministry of Health, in collaboration with various actors, has spearheaded various policy frameworks, developed structures and allocated resources to scale up nutrition. The enactment of the Kenya Constitution 2010 and creation of a devolved government system also impacted on the health sector. From the national to the county level, a number of projects have been initiated to scale up nutrition. Over the last 10 years, some progress has been made in tackling malnutrition across the country and recently, Kenya was declared as the only country that is on track to achieving the World Health Assembly nutrition targets by 2025. There is growing recognition that strong leadership for nutrition is an essential element for garnering the support and understanding required to achieve impact. Champions give nutrition a human face: they are a useful support mechanism to advocate and communicate nutrition priorities.

2. Rationale

Nutrition Champions are key promoters in ensuring that nutrition remains a priority agenda at the country and county/sub-national level. Champions have been identified in many countries and in Kenya, in particular, few nutrition champions have been identified based on their personal experience and commitment to nutrition. In recognition of the importance of leadership in the fight against undernutrition, the nutrition sector would like to identify more Nutrition Champions at the national and county level. The champions will influence and help improve nutrition, thereby making a significant influence.

3. Definition of a Nutrition champion

A champion is anyone – a public official, a community leader, a concerned citizen- who works hard and well to start and/or support an initiative or intervention, to bring a program or idea to reality, or to otherwise improve the quality of life. The champion may be ‘unsung heroes’ in various sectors, such as politics and sports, but should always be ready to sacrifice time and resources to bring a significant difference in life.

A Nutrition champion is someone whose work makes a difference in transforming thinking and action on nutrition. They champion the fight against undernutrition and are committed to raising the profile of nutrition and influencing change at local, national, regional and international levels.

4. Types of Nutrition champions

Nutrition champions can be categorized as follows:

- » Politicians and parliamentarians who take a particular interest in nutrition and look for opportunities to support the scaling up efforts at either national or subnational level.
- » High profile personalities such as music or sport figures revered particularly by young people;
- » Nominated individuals recognized through public channels for playing an outstanding role in promoting nutrition at either national or grass roots level i.e. human rights activities, community leaders, active individuals at national or subnational level, etc.

5. Selection Criteria

- » A talented and accomplished individual in health, social sciences, entertainment, sports or public life.
- » A person of integrity who has a strong desire to mobilize the public interest to support scaling up nutrition, is committed to reach out to target audiences and decision-makers;
- » A person with good knowledge of (or motivated to learn about) Kenya's health sector, development, global trends in nutrition and MDG goals.

A nutrition Champion should have at least three of the below qualities

- » A person with convening power – the ability to mobilize relevant people to discuss issues and act upon them.
- » Who attracts media attention to raise the visibility and profile of nutrition issues.
- » A person who has used creative and/or innovative strategies to promote nutrition, to address diverse challenges within the community, county and nation.
- » A spokesperson, an advocate and educator.
- » A person with potential to generate long-term support for nutrition, including mobilizing resources and seek new solutions to problems.
- » A role model, can be emulated and his/her ideas replicated in the sector.
- » A person who can influence the government, local authorities, organization and individuals to take nutrition as a priority in their development agenda.
- » A person who can help improve or scale up nutrition programmes and interventions, within and outside the locality.
- » A person who can promote nutritional considerations across sectors, such as agriculture, education, water and sanitation, social protection, etc.
- » A person who can influence or advocate for formulation and implementation of policies as well as strategies to improve nutrition.
- » A person who has provided community leadership on health issues and collaborates with others to build support for improvement of nutrition.
- » A person whose views and actions are well respected and influential and has strong communication skills, etc.
- » A person who can mobilize communities to play an active role in policy development and actions to scale up nutrition.
- » A person who can build consensus and coalitions at county and national level, bring people together for a common goal, and capable of driving the nutrition agenda for change.

6. Role of Nutrition Champion

The main role of the nutrition advocate is to support in improving the profile of nutrition at both country and international level. Additionally, the nutrition champions will be required to advocate adoption of good nutrition practices at population level. The specific roles will be defined based on experiences and technical skills.

National champions

- » Participate in nutrition in the national and international meetings as deemed necessary by the nutrition sector
- » Ask nutrition related questions and advocate for nutrition in parliamentary hearings
- » Being a point of contact for peers who have questions about nutrition
- » Sharing knowledge on the importance of nutrition
- » Ensuring that nutrition is a priority in their area setting
- » Influencing the government, local authorities or an organization to take nutrition on board as a development priority
- » Promoting nutritional considerations within other sectors e.g. agriculture, social protection, water and sanitation
- » Engage in public advocacy, fundraising and mobilization of resources to scale up nutrition

Subnational/grass roots advocate

- » Support planning for and budgeting for nutrition
- » Lobby for representation in nutrition budgeting process
- » Participate in the implementation of nutrition activities at the county level
- » Building coalitions within the national or local nutrition community around a clear and consistent agenda for change
- » Mobilizing communities and/or supporting women and men to play an active role in influencing and participating in the policies, programs and actions required to scale up nutrition

Media spokesperson

- » Advocate for media/nutrition sensitive reporting
- » Assist in the advocacy for mass education on nutrition
- » Participation in nutrition related activities
- » Write opinion editions for the nutrition sector
- » Working closely with those with nutrition expertise

7. Expected outcomes

The expected outcomes can be grouped into six distinct categories that represent the essential changes in lives, community conditions, institutions, and systems that result from advocacy

1. **Shifts in social norms:** knowledge, attitudes, values, and behaviors that comprise the normative structure of culture and society.
2. **Strengthened organizational capacity:** Increased funding for nutrition interventions from government and external sources and enhanced capacity (skill set, staffing, leadership, organizational structure and systems) for strategic planning and implementation of nutrition actions
3. **Strengthened coordination.** Alliances may vary in levels of coordination, collaboration, and mission alignment and can include nontraditional alliances.
4. **Strengthened base of support:** nutrition elevated at highest level in the government at both national and county; Increased Grassroots, leadership, and institutional support for nutrition and Continued engagement and political will for nutrition. The breadth, depth, and influence of support among the general public, interest groups, and opinion leaders for nutrition will be key
5. **Improved policies:** Integration of nutrition into development strategies across all sectors. Inclusion of nutrition in policy proposals, adoption, funding, and implementation.
6. **Changes in impact:** long-term changes in nutrition situation or nutrition indicators

8. Qualities of good nutrition champions

He/she should

- » Be people-centered.
- » Know that they can't change the world or solve every problem, but are champions for change
- » Be clear about their role and whose rights and interests they represent.
- » Be persistent and assertive.
- » Be inquisitive-ask questions to gather information.
- » Be resourceful with a good understanding of their community, programs, services, policies or legislation.
- » Be imaginative, innovative and creative
- » Be respectful and willing to listen and learn and try to understand various perspectives, opinions and positions.
- » Be sensitive to diversity.
- » Avoid any false, misleading or unfair statements or claims – they always try to be factual, transparent and objective.
- » Give realistic advice and inform others about the consequences and risks associated with their actions, and the agreed-upon decision.
- » Be sensitive to a person's right to confidentiality and the legal limitations of this right.

Adapted from: The Advokit

9. Expectations from the nutrition champion

- » Respect impartiality and independence of the position.
- » Refrain from behavior or conduct that adversely affects nutrition activities.
- » Refrain from activities incompatible with goals and purposes of a Nutrition Champion.
- » Exercise good judgment and discretion at all times in matters relating to the performance of his/her duties as a Nutrition Champion.
- » Be willing and motivated to share knowledge on nutrition.

10. Empowering the nutrition champions

This is important as some of the nutrition champions could have limited knowledge on nutrition. Here are some of the key tips to empower nutrition champions

- » Developing nutrition messages for nutrition champions.
- » Bilateral engagement with the champion for periodic updates
- » Developing of information pack for the champions
- » Formal trainings on advocacy and exchange visits

11. Managing the nutrition champions

- » Nutrition Champion will be based or located at either national, county or community level
- » Nutrition Champion will work with nutrition sector stakeholders at national and county level
- » Generally, Nutrition Champions will offer their services on voluntary basis. The organizations engaging them shall cater for services such as transport, accommodation based on funding availability
- » Each nutrition champion or advocate will be issued with a terms of reference detailing the specific deliverables
- » Monitoring of achievement of the specific deliverables will be done by the nutrition sector with support from the advocacy, communication and social mobilization steering committee
- » Evaluation of the impact of advocacy will be measured through achievement of the expected outcomes.

12. Honoring the nutrition champions

There are various ways in which the nutrition champion can be honored. This includes

- » Public recognition of the nutrition champion
- » Engaging the champion in strategic meetings and gathering
- » Building their capacity to promote nutrition through the media.
- » Presentation of awards on special occasions as the situation deems fit
- » Issue a press release, detailing the person's contribution
- » Voice a public thank-you, at an organizational event, a community meeting or presentation, in a radio interview, etc.
- » Publicize nutrition champions on relevant website, Facebook, Twitter, etc.

13. When to honor community champions

Although it's fine to honor a community champion at any time, the gesture will be more noticeable if it seems relevant to an event or announcement or accomplishment, or if it's expected. Given that, there are different types of situations when recognition of champions is particularly fitting such as:

- » The achievement of a goal in which the champion has been deeply involved.
- » Achievement of a particular benchmark
- » A clear change in attitude on the part of officials or the public
- » The successful completion of a project or initiative
- » The beginning or end of a fundraising campaign
- » During nutrition related national campaigns or at a public ceremony marking the beginning of something new, or the achievement of a goal

14. Benefits for a nutrition champion

By supporting nutrition, there are various benefits that the nutrition champion at both national and county level could gain from the nutrition sector. Some of these benefits are highlighted below.

- » Enhanced visibility and image of the champion
- » Media attention
- » Satisfaction due to contribution to a good cause
- » recognition by peers
- » Incentives /rewards (for local leaders this may be participation in national/regional events, for others it may be interaction with high level international actors, award ceremony, etc.).



