

GUIDANCE NOTE

Actions by Parliamentarians towards ending malnutrition in SUN Movement member countries

Since 2010, [the Scaling Up Nutrition \(SUN\) Movement](#) has inspired a new way of working collaboratively to end malnutrition in all its forms. With governments in the lead, it unites people—from civil society, the United Nations, donors, businesses, researchers as well as parliamentarians—in a collective effort to improve nutrition. Today, 60 countries are members of the SUN Movement. Building on best practice of how parliamentarians have used their core mandates and their roles to improve nutrition, the SUN Movement proposes a number of actions that parliamentarians are encouraged to take to contribute to the fight against malnutrition in their countries.

Please share this document widely with Members of Parliament to encourage their active involvement in the below actions to improve nutrition.

Parliamentarians are encouraged to contribute to the fight against malnutrition by:

1. **Scheduling a parliamentary discussion on the status of nutrition in your country** to place and keep nutrition high on the national political agenda and encourage the active involvement of all relevant stakeholders across sectors in coordinated actions to implement the country's national nutrition plan. This could follow up on the outcomes of the nutrition discussion some countries held last year in Parliament, or be the first of regular annual nutrition discussions in Parliament.
 - a. **Participation:** Relevant actors working on nutrition at the national and decentralised levels, including but not limited to parliamentary committees, government ministries, civil society, United Nations agencies, development partners, academia and private sector.
 - b. **Suggested agenda for session:** The agenda for this consultation might include:
 - Review national nutrition policies and programmes to determine their quality, whether they are fit-for-purpose, funded and implemented, in particular:
 - Assess their alignment with nutrition commitments the government has made, including [the Sustainable Development Goals](#) and commitments made through the SUN Movement.
 - Assess whether key laws and policies to improve nutrition are in place including:
 - *Implementation of the [International Code of Marketing of Breast-milk Substitutes](#);*
 - *Food fortification, especially iodisation;*
 - *Measures to protect girls from early marriage and early pregnancy;*
 - *Measures to safeguard and increase women's control over income and other resources, and women's participation in decision making at all levels;*
 - *Measures to facilitate adequate child care and nutrition including for working parents, such as promoting adequate breastfeeding practices [according to WHO recommendations](#) and maternal, paternal and parental leave.*
 - Review national nutrition data including identifying key causes of malnutrition, progress, challenges and especially vulnerable groups, particularly in relation to [the Global Nutrition Targets](#).
 - Discussion of the national budget allocated for nutrition, including domestic and external spending. Assess whether the national nutrition budget and its implementation is sufficient to implement the national nutrition plan, and identify which improvements can be made.
 - Discuss and identify key actions to further improve nutrition in your country, for example by targeting particularly vulnerable groups with interventions, improving policies, increasing financing, improve coordination and implementation etc.

- Discuss how Parliament can exercise effective oversight and coordination of different actors involved in efforts against malnutrition, including through the actions in points 2 and 3 below.
2. **Encouraging domestic and external investment in existing national nutrition plans.**
Parliamentarians can engage throughout the budget cycle (planning, negotiation and agreement, implementation and review) to keep oversight of the budget allocated and spent on nutrition to ensure it is sufficient to deliver on the national nutrition plan and achieve national and global nutrition targets, and encourage coordinated engagement of all relevant sectors and actors.
Key actions during different parts of the budget cycle could include:
- a. **Planning:** Work with [the SUN Government Focal Point](#) and key nutrition stakeholders from government ministries, United Nations, donors, civil society and academia to:
 - Estimate the amount of money necessary to meet national nutrition goals or review existing information, as many SUN countries have this data available already.
 - Conduct budget tracking to analyze the amount of money allocated to implement nutrition activities across government Ministries.
 - b. **Negotiation and approval:** Use costing and budget tracking information to advocate for adequate budget allocation to nutrition and ensure that the budget approved by Parliament is sufficient to implement the national nutrition plan and reach national nutrition goals.
 - c. **Implementation and review:** Work with the SUN Government Focal Point and key nutrition stakeholders from government ministries, United Nations, donors, civil society and academia to:
 - Track expenditure to identify the amount of allocated money that was actually spent on nutrition.
 - Conduct a nutrition audit to track why nutrition funds did not reach their destination.
3. **Helping to make people’s nutrition, a cross cutting priority for all members of parliament.** Promote nutrition in all your engagements as a Member of Parliament, including:
- a. Engage within your political party to ensure your party’s political manifesto prioritises nutrition, particularly ahead of the next national or local election;
 - b. Maintain active contact with the SUN government focal point and the Multi-Stakeholder Platform for nutrition to exchange information and coordinate actions;
 - c. Highlight nutrition in Parliamentary debates, and in the work of relevant committees;
 - d. Engage your constituency on matters of nutrition, highlighting the local nutrition situation and priorities to improve it, in media and face-to-face constituency meetings;
 - e. Seek guidance, training and support to further strengthen your engagement from national, regional and global networks of parliamentarians focused on food security and nutrition.

Information and contact information for further guidance and support:

The SUN Movement is supporting a global Community of Parliamentarians on nutrition, to connect existing networks for Parliamentarians focused on food security and nutrition, and provide a common space for mutual exchange, learning and capacity building. Please contact the SUN Movement secretariat if you are interested in joining the SUN Community of Parliamentarians or if you have questions regarding the content of this guidance.

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