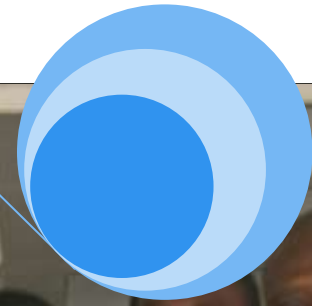
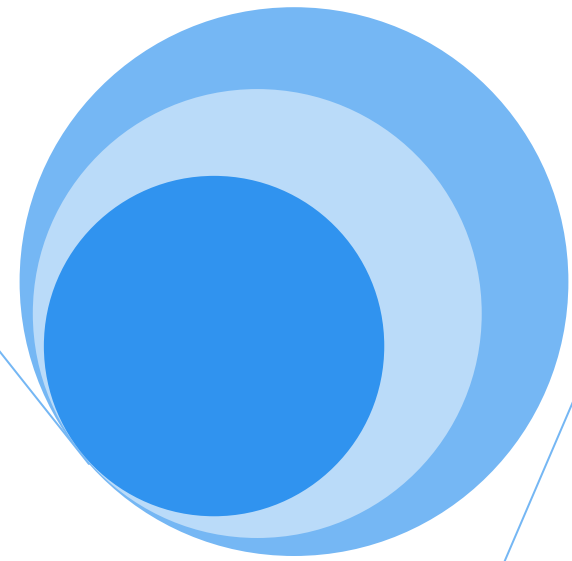


**LAUNCHING OF GHANA COALITION
OF CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANIZATIONS
FOR SCALING UP NUTRITION
(GHACCSSUN) AT BRITISH COUNCIL
AUDITORIUM, ACCRA, 1ST AUGUST,
2013**



Programme

TIME	EVENT	RESPONSIBILITY
8:00am-9:00am	Registration of participants	GHACCSSUN Secretariat
9:00am-9:30am	Seating of Guests	GHACCSSUN Secretariat
9:30am	Arrival of Special guest of Honour	Un Resident Coordinator and UNP Representative in Ghana, Ms. Ruby Sanhu-Rojon
9:30am	Opening Prayer	Amen Amenreynolds Amen
9:40am	Introduction of Chairperson	Ms. Esther Tawiah
9:50am-10:00am	Response of Chairperson	National SUN Focal Person, Dr. Edith Tetteh
10:00am-10:15am	Welcome Address	Nana Ayim Poakwah, Coordinator, GHACCSSUN
10:15am-10:30am	Update on SUN CSOs Platform (GHACCSSUN)	Dr. Frank Mcavor, Vice Chair, GHACCSSUN
	Video Statement by David Nabarro, UN Secretary-General's Advisor on Food Security and Nutrition	GHACCSSUN Secretariat
10:40am-11:40am	Statement by Andrew Adanse-Bonah (12 year old anti-hunger Campaigner and fundraiser) on	GHACCSSUN Secretariat

	<p>behalf of the children of Ghana. Statement by WFP Country Director</p> <p>Statement by USAID Mission Director (Donor Convener for SUN)</p> <p>Statement by National SUN Coordinator, Mrs. Mary Mpereh</p> <p>Statement by Director General, Ghana Health Service.</p> <p>Statement by Hon. Kwabena Appiah Pinkrah, Co-Chair, Ghana Parliamentarians Against Hunger and Malnutrition Caucus.</p> <p>Statement by Hon. Minister of Food and Agric.</p>	
11:40am-12:00pm	Amen Amen Acrobat	Samuel Abbey Mensah
12:00pm-12:10pm	Unveiling GHACCSSUN Logo and Website	Guest of Honour
12:10pm-12:25pm	Poetry recital on nutrition	MC
12:25pm-12:40pm	Keynote Address and Launch of SUN	Guest of Honour, UN Resident Coordinator and UNDP Representative in Ghana
12:40pm-1:00pm	Group picture, interviews, snacks	GHACCSSUN Secretariat

Opening

The launching was declared open at 10:01 am with prayers by Amen Amenreynolds Amen, Founding President of Amen Amen Institute.

Then the chairperson for this august occasion was introduced by Ms. Audrey Baffoe, Country Director of Wellbeing Foundation International in the personality of Dr. Edith Tetteh who is also the National SUN Focal Person.

Chairperson's Opening Address

The chairperson in her acceptance speech thanked God and the organizers (GHACCSSUN Leaders) for such a big launch. She went on to inform participants attempt to scale up nutrition in Ghana started some 78 years ago with various nutrition and nutrition sensitive interventions then in place. Since then various Actors had made several attempt and she herself has been involved in the establishment of a Sewing Centre for teenage mothers at the Ussher Clinic at James Town, Accra through the Zonta Club. She averred that a lot of stakeholders are involved in this exercise today hence the necessary to ensure inclusiveness. She added that Stakeholders should not “**remain in a salad bowl**”, where one would say I am onion, so let me pick only onions or carrot so let me only pick carrots. She also indicated that

Civil Society Organizations have to strategize to let it happen now, that is to support effort in improving nutrition in Ghana and to be abreast with current issues in other countries. She thanked and welcomed all participants for coming.

Welcome Address

The welcome Address was delivered by the Coordinator of GHACCSSUN, Nana Ayim Poakwah as presented below:

Madam Chairperson,
Distinguished Guest of Honour,
Honourable Members of Parliament,
Distinguished Invited Guests,
Colleagues,
Ladies and Gentlemen:

A very good morning to you. Welcome to the launch of Ghana Coalition of Civil Society Organizations for Scaling up Nutrition (GHACCSSUN). On behalf of my colleagues and the entire membership of GHACCSSUN, I wish to take this opportunity to express our appreciation to you all for joining just this morning to launch this Coalition.

Madam Chair, this Coalition has been in existence for one year. As members, we have used this platform during the one year planning period to engage Government and key stakeholders constructively to push a comprehensive nutrition agenda forward and to make it a national priority.

We have collaborated with the relevant institutions of State at various stages to deliberate on nutrition and nutrition sensitive issues ever since Ghana joined the SUN Movement. We have been working with the National Cross Sectoral Planning Group for Scaling up Nutrition that was established two years ago under the auspices of the National Development Planning Commission. We have also been working with the Ghana Health Service, Ministry of Food and Agriculture and the Ghana Parliamentarians Against Hunger and Malnutrition Caucus.

Madam Chair, Ghana is one of the few Sub-Saharan countries that remain on track towards the attainment of the Millennium Development Goal One (Halving Poverty and Hunger by 2015).

As much as this is commendable, members of GHACCSSUN are concerned that child nutrition indicators have not improved substantially over the past decade with a record of 23% of children under five

stunted. The prevalence of micronutrient deficiency diseases and condition such as anaemia is high.

High malnutrition rates are closely linked to food insecurity, household poverty levels, the disease burden of malaria and unsatisfactory infant and young child feeding practices.

But there is life under the SUN. Since Ghana joined the SUN Movement as an Early Riser Country, much progress at the policy level has been made.

Today, Ghana has developed a national nutrition policy which shall be soon endorsed by key stakeholders and Cabinet. We are happy as members of this Coalition that we have contributed to this accomplishment. The Coalition shall continue to mobilize the technical capacity of Civil Society Organizations to complement Government efforts in the development of a costed nutrition plan.

In collaboration with the Ghana Parliamentarians Against Hunger and Malnutrition Caucus, the Coalition shall monitor and facilitate the process leading to the promulgation of appropriate legislative framework for nutrition.

Madam Chair, as we launch this Coalition today, we as members of this Coalition are mindful of the task ahead of us. As this is such a huge one task, we are determined to make our collective commitment to support the national effort to end the scourge of under-nutrition in this country within our lifetime.

We shall continue to share ground breaking new evidence and be committed to policy and institutional changes to make nutrition a national priority. We shall continue to intensify our advocacy and campaign activities across the country to make Government and the people of Ghana see the value in investing in nutrition. Good nutrition is a priority for national prosperity, social justice, stability and development.

Madam Chair, the second series of papers of Maternal and Child Nutrition launched on 6th June, 2013 by Lancet contains new and compelling evidence that sustainable reduction in malnutrition can be achieved by employing specific nutrition interventions with nutrition-sensitive approaches. The Lancet baseline articles of 2008 brought together the world health communities' collective knowledge on these issues and again expand our knowledge of what matters and what are culturally appropriate, cost effective, successful interventions. This should revolve around strong commitment and follow up by key

stakeholders to create the enabling environment that contributes to success.

This includes a “whole society” approach to improving nutrition, based on policies which encourage equity, social justice and empowerment of women. As the momentum for nutrition grows in the next decade, we stakeholders must focus on turning our commitments into actions and results. This Coalition shall continue to create the space for relevant Non-State Actors to contribute to the processes for turning commitments into actions and results in Ghana.

Madam Chair, the SUN Movement in Ghana is thriving in an impressive environment, working as one which indeed underlines the formation of this Coalition and its objectives, pursuing joint efforts that shall lead to better nutrition, communicating successes, encouraging others and demonstrating results. The Ghana Coalition of Civil Society Organizations for Scaling up Nutrition shall work to consolidate this impressive environment. This is indeed the defining moment for nutrition in Ghana and globally. We must seize the opportunity to transform lives in Ghana and provide prosperous future for the children of this country. They must have the right to enjoy nutritious and adequate food. Yes, it is their right and they must enjoy this right fully.

There should be no excuses and no compromise in ensuring that conditions are provided to enhance and sustain this right.

We thank you all for coming to support us.

May God richly bless you all.

A Status Report on the Ghana Civil Society Coalition for Scaling-Up Nutrition in the context of SUN Movement

The Status Report on the Ghana Civil Society Coalition for Scaling-Up Nutrition (GHACCSSUN) and its role in scaling up of national nutrition programs in the context of the SUN Movement was presented by Dr. Frank Mcavor, Vice Chair, GHACCSSUN as stated hereunder:

Objectives of GHACCSSUN in Supporting the Scaling-Up National Nutrition Programmes

- Leading nutrition advocacy and policy dialogue, supporting the design and implementation of national multi-sectoral nutrition strategic plans, promoting multi-stakeholders coordination mechanisms

- building national capacities and monitoring various actors to ensure consistency and accountability in nutrition policies across Ghana

Background

- In context of the SUN movement, GHACSSUN was formed to build on existing policies and programmes, increase stakeholder engagement and amplify the current political commitment in the Ghana.
- GHACSSUN is a national civil society coalition encompassing all relevant and interested CSOs, donors, non-state actors and state actors involved directly/indirectly in the fight against malnutrition.
- GHACSSUN believes peer capacity building will ensure consistency and accountability in nutrition policies in Ghana

The Problem

GHACSSUN to amplify the role of civil society in scaling up nutrition in the following areas:-

- High burden of:
 - 28% stunting
 - 10% LBW
 - 78% Children under 5 anaemia

- Up to 19 million people at risk of undernutrition
- Nutrition has low priority
- Insufficient capacity
- Limited capital investment:-
 - Insignificant government investment
 - Donor-driven

Relevance of GHACSSUN in the SUN Movement

‘The role of civil society is crucial in **advocating** and **sustaining political will** for government **action**, in monitoring and **accountability** of both the public and private sectors, as well as in service delivery’

Process

- Needs assessment of all CSOs involved in nutrition specific and nutrition sensitive actions
- Create a strong link with donor community and other national alliances world- wide and identify and document best practices and disseminate
- Identify and document private sector partners
- Build capacity of the Coalition based on results of needs assessment
- Establish Monitoring and Evaluation mechanism

GHACSSUN Achievements: Multiple actors

- Developing CSO capacity
- Communication for Scaling Up Nutrition
- Civil society participation in key national nutrition programmes
- Engagement of development partners
- Engagement of the business community
- Monitoring & reporting on progress nutrition activities & programmes

- Formation of a national SUN Civil Society Coalition
- Active participation in Cross-sectoral National Planning Group /SUN/MOH/ FORUM since Sept 2012
- Development of appropriate Governance Structures and Guidelines for Coalition
- Official launching of GHACSSUN, August 1, 2013

Process as Outlined By GHACSSUN

- Needs
 - Mapping of CSOs in Ghana
 - Resource mobilization
 - Develop unified advocacy framework
- Actions
 - Organize and bring CSOs together

- Formation of CSO governance structure
- Develop a plan of action for identified needs



Bringing CSOs together in Ghana

Status of GHACSSUN in the Process

- CSO Participation in meeting GHACSSUN in February 2012
- High level meeting on Governance structure of GHACSSUN in Accra, Sept 2012
- Meeting to announce the commencement of Strengthening of GHACSSUN Project May 2013
- Official Launch of GHACSSUN in Aug 2013
- Full implementation of the Multi-Donor Trust Fund sponsored Project on course on.

- Several other meetings to update Members of the Coalition on the stage of SUN implementation in Ghana.

Achievements

- Baseline Study of CSOs involved in nutrition in Ghana
- Commenced in all 10 regions of Ghana
- Mapping of CSOs in Ghana
 - In progress in the three Northern Regions and Greater Accra (4 Regions)
 - Continuing mobilization of CSOs
- Resource mobilization
 - Planned local fund raising commenced
 - Arrangements for a Musical Concert to raise fund completed
 - Event Planner recruited to organize series of fund raising activities
- Unified advocacy framework
 - Consultants commenced work GHACSSUN Advocacy Strategy Plan
 - Working with GHS to develop common advocacy strategy
 - Supporting the reorganizations of Parliamentarians Against Hunger & Malnutrition
 - Backstopping the Mobilization of Parliamentarians to join the Caucus. Number of members has increased from 12 to 28

3-year Plan of action for GHACSSUN

- GHACSSUN Strengthening Project supported by Multi-Donor Trust Fund initiated and programmed to run for 3 years
- Key strategic objectives
- Establish an independent multi-sectoral CSO coalition
- Raise the profile of nutrition as a development issue in Ghana through sustained advocacy program
- Build the capacity of CSOs to be able to sustain Nutrition advocacy towards SUN in Ghana
- Create forum for exchange of best practices among CSOs involved in Nutrition

Key contributions of GHACSSUN to Ghana SUN efforts

- Representation on the national & international SUN forum
- WFP has been nominated and accepted as GHACSSUN UN partner
- Contributed to National Nutrition policy drafting and finalization
- Participation in the Cross-Sectoral Planning Group
 - Selection of a Nutrition Ambassadors

Nutrition Ambassadors



Abrantie Amakye Dede



Joyce Aryee

Key Challenges

- Initial lack of understanding of Role by CSO partners in the national SUN implementation
- Funding from local sources is essential but a huge challenge
- Development of a governance structure that is acceptable for all members
- harmonization of Country players in an efforts to avoid duplication (REACH)

The Way Forward

- Intensive communication targeting family and community practices
- Review of existing materials/development of job aids
- Strengthen Technical Supervision and monitoring
- Validate national nutrition policy and have it ratified
- Develop costed implementation plan for nutrition including SUN (first 1000 days of Child's life)
- Strengthen inter-sectoral collaboration

Some of the key CSOs participating in GHACSSUN



Ghana
Parliamentarians
Against Hunger and
Malnutrition





Video Statement by David Nabarro, UN Secretary General’s Advisor on Food Security and Nutrition

The above video statement from the GHACCSSUN Secretariat was presented as hereunder stated:

“Time is now. Joining efforts for nutrition for all in Ghana and in Africa by Dr. David Nabarro, Coordinator, Scaling-Up Nutrition Movement”.

Good morning everybody. My name is David Nabarro. I work for United Nations Secretary General, Ban Ki-Moon, as his Special Representative for Food Security and Nutrition. Since 2010, I have been serving as the Coordinator of the Movement to Scale-Up Nutrition.

The UN Secretary General is crystal clear when he asks the world leaders to embrace his vision for a world without hunger and

malnutrition. He calls it the “**Zero Hunger Challenge**”. Leaders are responding to the challenge. You are responding to the challenge. On behalf of the UN Secretary General, I wish you all success.

I would like to take you back a few years – to 2008, when the extent and consequences of malnutrition were brought to the world’s attention. Many national leaders have expressed concern that – because of malnutrition during pregnancy and early childhood – too many of their people are disadvantaged and unable to achieve their full potential to earn, to learn and to remain healthy as they grow up. These leaders want all of their people to be able to enjoy good nutrition.

National and international organizations have responded. In 2009, more than 100 of them worked on a Framework for Scaling Up Nutrition. At this time, I was asked by the UN Secretary General to support their efforts.

During 2010, the Framework was released and received warm support from many governments. To make the Framework come to life, a road map for scaling up nutrition was developed. By September of that year, the Movement for Scaling Up Nutrition, or SUN, was launched at the UN General Assembly in New York.

Within the SUN Movement, every organization contributes its unique experience and expertise to a shared vision that is based on the national policy and legal frameworks for nutrition.

In Ghana, you have a strong nutrition policy. You are developing the legal frameworks necessary to make it happen, including the adoption of the code for the marketing of breast milk substitutes. You are updating your plans, budgeting and mobilizing the resources needed to implement nutrition plans in line with the objectives of the National Nutrition Policy coordinated by the National Development Planning Commission.

The SUN Movement offers a way for all countries scaling up nutrition to work together, and for all organizations that support government efforts to align their efforts in a responsive way. It encourages these supporters – who I, sometimes, describe as the nutrition stakeholders – to work in support of their country's efforts in ways that will contribute to national targets for better nutrition.

As I speak, there are 41 countries within the SUN Movement. They are home to more than 80 million stunted children. The leaders of these countries are setting ambitious targets: targets that reflect the global goals for better nutrition agreed by the 190 countries in the World

Health Assembly of 2012. They set up national platforms where all stakeholders can work together.

The national SUN platforms work best when they include the full range of stakeholders whose efforts influence whether or not people are malnourished. Increasingly, parliamentarians, civil society organizations and business enterprises are joining them. The platforms work best when their members work together in support of national policies, transparently and in a spirit of mutual accountability. They put the interests of women at the centre of their strategies and actions. They work hard to identify and avoid the different opinions – even conflicts – that can occur when different groups try to work in synergy.

Each SUN country has appointed a senior government figure as the Movement's focal point. The focal point and the national SUN platform work out an agreed set of expected results and encourage all stakeholders to align action around this Common Results Framework.

Here in Ghana, Dr. Edith Tetteh, the focal point, works with a Cross Sectoral Planning Group (CSPG) to prioritize effective nutrition-sensitive approaches within different sectors. She works tirelessly to ensure coherent and coordinated action at national and at community levels.

For the Focal Points and Platforms to work effectively, it is important that different groups of stakeholders organize themselves so that they can contribute to government efforts. How best to do this in ways that reflect the challenges that households – especially women – face day-by-day as they try to ensure that they and their children are well-nourished. That is why I am so delighted, today, to take part in this launch of the CSO Alliance for Scaling-Up Nutrition in Ghana.

Parliamentarians play a critical role, bringing people's needs and concerns into the debating chambers of government, and seeking explanations on behalf of their constituents. I am delighted to hear that in Ghana, Parliamentarians committed to tackle hunger and malnutrition have organized themselves into a caucus. I look forward to hearing more of their achievements.

Every country and supporter that joins the SUN Movement is committed to making a difference. In the last three years, we have seen that everyone has a role to play. Here in Ghana, the donor agencies are working together, convened by USAID, seeking ways to increase investments in your efforts to improve nutrition. Civil Society is being coordinated through the Civil Society Alliance. You are also involving business enterprises. And the UN system is coordinating its efforts – facilitated by the REACH partnership and the UN Resident Coordinator.

Different groups of national stakeholders are supported through global SUN networks: of country focal points, of civil society organizations, of donor agencies and of businesses.

Sometimes, I am asked “*Will the SUN Movement succeed in reversing the tide of malnutrition*”? My answer is that it will, provided that we live up to our commitments. This kind of mutual ability applies here in Ghana – and throughout the world. As one of the SUN countries, you are contributing to a world where malnutrition is not accepted, and a world where all people experience Nutritional Justice.

I am so grateful to all of you, especially to Dr. Edith Tetteh and her colleagues – for sharing your experiences with other SUN countries and for seeing whether their experiences are relevant for your situation.

I look forward to the day when malnutrition in Ghana is a subject for the history books. You have a vital role, now, in helping to make this happen. That is why today is so significant. Your task is vital and must succeed. I hope that the discussions in such meetings are constructive and contribute urgently to a well-functioning effort for scaling up nutrition in Ghana and beyond.

Statement by Andrew Adanse-Bonah (12year old Anti-Hunger Campaigner and Fund-Raiser) on behalf of the children of Ghana

This young boy averred that Ghana and Africa in general have got vast arable lands lying fallow which needed to be fully utilized hence politicians have to seriously get involved in the process of improving agriculture. He went ahead to state that malnutrition would be a thing of the past if all efforts are geared towards food production and governments making sure that the children get affordable and nutritious food to enable them grow to become profitable citizens thereby contributing their quota towards the economic and social development of the country and Africa in particular. He also intimated that providing food security and scaling-up nutrition will mitigate stunting of children, anaemia, under-five premature death and so on. In the light of the foregoing, he appealed to all stakeholders to come together to make scaling-up nutrition happen now.

Solidarity Message from Honourable Kwabena Appiah Pinkrah, Co-Chairman of the Ghana Parliamentarians Against Hunger and Malnutrition Caucus

The above solidarity message is presented as follows:

Madam Chairperson,
Distinguished Guests of Honour,
Honourable Colleague Members of Parliament,
Distinguished Invited Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen:

I wish to take this opportunity to join the Coordinator of GHACCSSUN to express the appreciation of the Ghana Parliamentarians Against Hunger and Malnutrition Caucus to all of you for attending the launch of this Coalition.

Madam Chair, I represent the Ghana Parliamentarians Against Hunger and Malnutrition Caucus today in expressing our solidarity in the launch of the Ghana Coalition of Civil Society Organizations for Scaling Up Nutrition and to also express the commitment of Members of the Caucus as a whole to Scale Up Nutrition in Ghana.

From where we sit in the Caucus, we have learned to stay abreast of developments surrounding the four main micro-nutrient deficiencies that have caused the death of many children in Ghana which must be addressed immediately. These are iodine, iron, vitamin A and zinc. Only last month, a National Stakeholders' meeting was convened to deliberate on the direction for developing the National Salt Strategy III which addresses the decline in salt iodization in Ghana and puts us on the road to a five-year programme to bring iodization back up to at least 70%. We recognize this as one of the leading nutrition deficiencies in Ghana and we are cognizant of the great intellectual and even physical damage insufficient iodine causes after birth. Salt iodization problem is more of production as distribution problems can be solved in Ghana if production is properly programmed, monitored and made to conform to best practice.

Madam Chair, through legislation and advocacy, we shall work to strengthen the newly drafted national nutrition policy and make its implementation effective. To do this, we shall facilitate the process for the promulgation of an appropriate nutrition legislative framework to back the national nutrition policy.

As we continue to exercise oversight functions of the work of the Executive, we shall lobby the relevant Committees in Parliament that handle nutrition and nutrition sensitive sectors to demand accountability and commitment from the Executive to improve nutrition outcomes in Ghana.

We shall lobby for increased budget allocation for nutrition programmes in general, while serving as the ally of Civil Society platform for the intensification of national advocacy to raise the visibility of nutrition in Ghana, all the while working towards the attainment of a well-nourished and productive Ghanaian Society.

In order to achieve this, we shall contribute to the process for the integration of nutrition and agriculture at the policy level by supporting dialogue and consultation processes on the linkages between nutrition and agriculture at the highest level of governance. A “whole society” approaches to scale up nutrition in Ghana.

Thank you all for being here today.

In her presentation, Ms Vandana Stapleton, USAID/Ghana Family Health Team Leader, representing the Donor platform, made a full presentation in respect of Donor Commitment to SUN implementation in Ghana in the following areas:

Why should we commit to SUN?

More than one third young children suffer from malnutrition with devastating consequences on health, learning, future earning potential, economic development, resilience and security.

The cognitive and physical damage caused by chronic under nutrition, particularly in the 1000 days between pregnancy and age two, is largely irreversible.

Donor commitment to SUN

- Development partners are aligning behind national plans and policies to scale up nutrition to address this challenge.
- To enable development partners to do so, Government must ensure that costed, national nutrition plans and policies are in place.

- National plans must reflect prioritization of food security and nutrition in sectors such health, agriculture, social protection, education, and local development.

Nutrition Donor Landscape in Ghana

She informed the participants that the following are Development Partners supporting the scaling up of nutrition in Ghana:

- a) International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD)
- b) Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO)
- c) World Food Programme (WFP)
- d) Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA)
- e) Department for International Development (DFID)
- f) United States Agency for International Development (USAID)
- g) Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA)
- h) Danish International Development Agency (DANIDA)
- i) The World Bank (WB)
- j) Feed the Future (FF)
- k) German International Cooperation (GIZ)

Support areas include:

- Finalize the Nutrition Policy
- Cost the Nutrition Policy and advocate for budget line item
- Decentralization of nutrition policy to regional and district levels
- Confirm gains in nutrition through Demographic and Health Survey

Speech by the Hon. Minister of Food and Agriculture

Madam Chairperson,
Your Excellencies,
Distinguished Guests,
Ladies and Gentlemen:

First of all, I would like to thank you for inviting Hon. Minister of Food and Agriculture to the launch of Ghana Coalition of Civil Society Organizations for Scaling-Up Nutrition. As a Minister for Food and Agriculture, I welcome every occasion towards enhancing agricultural development especially nutrition. As a key stakeholder in the National SUN Movement to push nutrition forward in our country, I am pleased to join you this morning. Since the nineties, Ghana has been very

active in its quest to end poverty, hunger and malnutrition. The National Constitution guarantees food as a right.

Madam Chairperson, Ladies and Gentlemen, our persistent policies as a nation have yielded positive results that have been recognized by International Agencies. At the recent 38th Biennial Conference of the FAO in Rome on the 16th June, 2013, Ghana was one out of eighteen countries in the world and one out of only two in Africa to win the prestigious Award for notable and outstanding progress in fighting hunger.

While we have achieved substantial improvement in nutrition in Ghana as a nation, there are pockets of severe malnutrition in some rural, peri-urban communities, therefore more needs to be done.

Priorities

It is known that nutritional improvements are closely associated with decrease in poverty. However, according to the Ghana Demographic and Health Survey, the level of malnutrition (stunting of children) increased even when poverty levels decreased quite significantly. Micronutrient malnutrition levels were also quite high. This suggests that increase in incomes may be a necessary condition for decrease in malnutrition but it is not a sufficient condition. In view of this, nutrition

education and advocacy is being pursued by MOFA to ensure that people have adequate knowledge and appreciate the importance of both macronutrient and micronutrient malnutrition.

As part of the Medium Term Agricultural Sector Investment Plan (METASIP), MOFA has emphasized on production that ensures adequate nutrition of farm and non-farm household members. Also food production systems take into consideration foodstuffs with good levels of both macro and micronutrients.

MOFA is promoting as the young guy said, the production and consumption of High Quality Protein Maize, Orangeflesh sweet potato (for vitamin A) as well as moringa and other leafy vegetables. The Root and Tuber Improvement and Marketing Project (RTIMP) and West Africa Agricultural Productivity Programme (WAAPP) have developed high quality staples through breeding of cassava, yam and cocoyam etc. varieties. MOFA has not relented its efforts to increase food production through the fertilizer subsidy, irrigation, and Youth in Agric. Programs.

MOFA is also promoting enrichment of staples during processing, e.g., enrichment of kenkey and gari with soybean.

MOFA is training consumers (especially rural communities) on appropriate food combination of available foods to improve nutrition through food demonstrations and development of recipes. As well as promoting the consumption of micro-nutrient rich foods (e.g., eggs, meat/fish, leafy vegetables, fruits) by children and women of reproductive age especially in rural areas.

The above interventions are being implemented in collaboration with CSIR-FRI, Ministry of Health (Nutrition Unit), Ministry of Education, Ghana Education Service and non-state actors.

Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen, I am delighted to inform you that FAO is partnering with MOFA to look at strategies to strengthen the linkages within the Directorates of Agriculture to promote nutrition.

Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen, we recognize that non-state actors (like the Hunger Alliance of Ghana and other civil societies) play vital role in poverty reductions and improved nutrition through their various programs nationwide; however, there is the

- Non-state actors have legitimate constituencies and accountable representation
- Resources are available

- They have access to platforms for ensuring planning and accountability at all levels and also within the non-state actor group
- Relevant capacity to perform their functions
- Glad to hear GHACCSSUN is building capacity of members

Conclusion

A solid partnership between government and non-state actors is needed for success of nutrition program. I wish to congratulate the Hunger Alliance of Ghana/Coalition of Civil Society Organizations for taking up this initiative. Together we can achieve nutrition.

Thank you.

Keynote Address delivered by Magdalena Owusu Moshi (WFP Deputy Country Director) on behalf of the UN Resident Coordinator

Madam Chairperson and Focal Person for the SUN Movement,
Honourable Members of Parliament and Co-Chairs of the
Parliamentarian Caucus Against Hunger and Malnutrition,

Representatives from the UN System,
Developing Partners,
Representative of USAID,
Officials of the Ministry of Food and Agriculture and the Ghana Health Service,
Members of the SUN Movement,
Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen:

I would like to begin by expressing my sincere pleasure on being invited to give the keynote address and officially launch the Ghana Coalition of Civil Society Organizations for Scaling-Up Nutrition (GHACCSSUN). I would also like to congratulate the Government of Ghana for opting to be an “early riser” SUN nation, one of the first countries to join the SUN Movement. Let me add that I am very happy to see so many government officials and legislators gathered here because your presence is a reflection of the importance you place on nutrition.

Madam Chairperson, we are all aware that good nutrition is an essential ingredient to lay a strong foundation for the future health and prosperity of every nation. Inadequate nutrition which leads to stunting also affects brain development, immunity and general health. The human and economic costs of undernutrition are enormous, affecting mothers, children and the poorest in society. However, in spite of the

severe repercussions of undernutrition which has been identified as one of the world's most serious problems, it is one of the least addressed in most countries.

Thankfully, there has been renewed commitment to address child malnutrition globally with the launch of the second series of Lancet papers on maternal and child nutrition in June this year. The Lancet papers stressed the importance of leadership across all sectors in the push to address child malnutrition. The UN system, development partners, civil society, private sector and key government ministries such as health, agriculture and education, are called upon to collaborate to confront the challenge.

The UN system believes that improving the nutrition of mothers and children is the key to unlocking the problem of hunger and reaping returns on human capital investment. Undernutrition affects people in a challenging and permanent way; low birth weight results in a higher risk of illness both earlier and later in life. But the battle against child undernutrition is winnable; adequate nutrition builds the brains and bodies of the next generation.

Over the years, several programmes within the country have focused on improving nutrition and indeed there has been some progress made,

albeit slowly and unequally across the population. Children under five in Ghana continue to experience sub-optimal growth due to chronic undernutrition and seasonal food shortages. The 2011 Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey found 22.7% of children under 5 to be stunted or too short for their age. Indeed, stunting in the Northern Region reaches as high as 37.4%, which means that nearly one in four children in that region may not achieve their full growth potential. Underweight, wasting, micronutrient deficiencies and anaemia are all major challenges which need to be addressed.

It is essential that efforts to address nutrition be undertaken in a more coordinated manner in order to build synergies which will have greater impact. In Ghana, the UN supports the government's school feeding programme, mothers and children facing moderate and acute malnutrition, and People Living with HIV. Support is also provided to the Ministry of Food and Agriculture to compile and disseminate monthly Food Security and Nutrition Monitoring Bulletins which provide early warning on food security and nutrition challenges in selected districts. Furthermore, support is being provided to a national implementation committee to compute the Cost of Hunger in Ghana in order to inform the whole country how much we lose through undernutrition.

Five UN agencies (FAO, IFAD, UNICEF, WFP and WHO) constitute REACH, a UN inter-agency consortium which operates in 13 countries worldwide including Ghana. As its name indicates, REACH seeks to Renew Efforts Against Child Hunger by supporting national institutions in countries of implementation.

The UN system's commitment to nutrition in Ghana is absolute. Food security and nutrition were chosen as the first thematic area in the United Nations Development Assistance Framework 2012-2016, and there is total commitment to advocacy on the importance of proper nutrition during the first 1,000 days of a child's life.

With regards to today's launch, I must say that as co-chair of the UN's thematic area on food security and nutrition, the selection of the World Food Programme in Ghana as the partnering UN agency for Scaling-Up Nutrition was both appropriate and timely.

Over the next three years, the Coalition will be supported to achieve its objectives which include harmonizing the numerous nutrition interventions implemented by Civil Society Organizations and other professional organizations throughout the country, and supporting the intensification of campaigns, sensitization and other activities especially at community level.

The UN will continue to support the development of a strong national nutrition policy and raise awareness about the importance of maternal and infant nutrition and the 1,000 day window of opportunity, in order to ensure that children in Ghana are well nourished and spared the adverse effects of stunting, wasting and underweight. Together, we can make a difference.

Madam Chairperson, at this juncture, I would like to congratulate the Ghana Coalition of Civil Society Organizations for Scaling-Up Nutrition and declare the Coalition duly launched.

Thank you for your attention.

Other important highlights of the launch

The launch was well covered by Media Houses in Ghana. Over 35 Media Houses made up of television, radio and print media houses covered the launch. There was cultural display, poetry recital on nutrition and acrobatic display by young children to signify that good nutrition results in good health and productive life of every individual and it must start from the infancy. The launch witnessed such a great gathering raised the morale of participants and renewed people's

confidence in the fight against malnutrition in Ghana. It was indeed the beginning of many things to come.