

**REPORT ON FIRST EVER NUTRITION FORUM HELD AT  
TAJ PAMODZI HOTEL IN LUSAKA, ZAMBIA  
ON 23<sup>RD</sup> DECEMBER 2014**

The Civil Society Scaling up Nutrition Alliance (CSO-SUN) held the first ever Nutrition forum on 23<sup>rd</sup> December 2014 at the Taj Pamodzi hotel in Lusaka. The forum, structured as a breakfast event, brought together stakeholders from various sectors working towards Nutrition Development in the Country. It provided an opportunity to review the year by sharing experiences on milestones achieved, challenges faced and what still remains to be done in addressing Malnutrition in Zambia. The Forum was also an opportunity to formally introduce the All Party Parliamentary Caucus on Food and Nutrition (APPCON), a Parliamentary club convened by Members of Parliament to champion Nutrition discourse on the floor. Furthermore, the Nutrition forum recognised and awarded media personnel who have made outstanding contributions to Nutrition Development in the Country over the past year.

The forum was attended by various stakeholders officiated by the first lady Dr. Charlotte Scott who was the guest of honour. Additionally, Chief Mwansakombe from Samfya District in Luapula Province and other Chiefs representatives from Lundazi Province were in attendance. The event also saw the attendance of Members of Parliaments from the APPCON, Government officials and Celebrity Musician Mwila Musonda, popularly known as “Slap D” who is now a Nutrition Champion.

The forum was opened by the CSO-SUN Country Coordinator, Mr. William Chilufya who highlighted the importance of forging strategic partnerships with a wide range of stakeholders in delivering key Nutrition interventions. Mr. Chilufya emphasized that in order to accelerate improvements in nutrition status, there is need to strengthen key mechanisms, actors, and information in ways that will help enhance accountability among everyone involved in efforts to scale up nutrition. Progress towards reducing the levels of Malnutrition is there but at a very slow pace as highlighted by the Deputy Director of the National food and Nutrition Commission (NFNC) Mr. Musonda Mofu. Therefore, there is need to hold to account all actors in the Nutrition sector in delivering Nutrition interventions that will improve the Country’s status of Nutrition.

Speaking on behalf of the APPCON, Hon. Hamududu said Members of Parliament had decided to do to act as a voice for the marginalized groups by forming a caucus within Parliament that would champion debate on Nutrition in the house. He said the formation of the caucus was borne of the need for strong political will needed in addressing the malnutrition crisis. The caucus therefore is intended to directly influence debate in the National Assembly, promote legal backing for Food and Nutrition e.g. through the National Food and Nutrition Commission Act which is currently under review, influence increased budgetary allocation to nutrition and hold the executive to accountable to the Nutrition agenda.

Chief Mwansakombe highlighted the need to accelerate progress for Nutrition at Village level. The traditional leader weighed in on the need to diverse diets in households by consuming locally available nutritious crops and desist from the sole consumption of maize. Furthermore, the Chief called for empowerment of households at village level for sustained reduction in Malnutrition. Meanwhile, Celebrity Musician Mwila “Slap Dee” Musonda gave his encounter with Malnutrition by telling a touching story of two identical twins trapped in the vicious cycle of hunger and Malnutrition. The musician spoke passionately about the need for more high profile Nutrition champions to supplement efforts of stakeholders like Civil Society in raising awareness on Nutrition countrywide.

Finally, the guest of honor Dr. Charlotte Scott gave her personal account of observing malnutrition in the country and was encouraged to see coordinated efforts across multiple stakeholders. She said “I have followed the work of the CSO-SUN Alliance in raising the profile of nutrition in this country, and i must say they are doing a remarkable job. That is why my husband, His Excellency Acting President Dr Guy Scott has been supportive of the work of CSO-SUN Alliance going by the many times he has participated in civil society nutrition related activities”.