



Joint Press Release

High Level Delegation of Cooperating Partners Visit Zambia to Monitor Nutrition Progress

A large delegation of senior donor officials is visiting Zambia from 1st to 4th December 2013 to look at the current state of nutrition in the country and Government's progress to scale up nutrition interventions. The officials are members of the Scaling Up Nutrition (SUN), a movement which is providing support to strengthen nutrition efforts in countries with a huge burden of under-nutrition.

“Zambia has one of the highest rates of childhood under-nutrition in the world. Nearly half of Zambian children are stunted, having suffered chronic malnutrition during the vital first 1000 days from conception to age two,” said Nick Dyer, UK Aid Director General. “We are delighted to be working with the Zambian Government in its efforts to reduce these very high levels of under-nutrition and ensure that all children have an opportunity to lead healthy and productive lives in line with its Vision 2030.”

Zambia became a SUN focal country at the end of 2010, and was commended for the strong commitments made to tackle under-nutrition by His Excellency Vice President Guy Scott at the high-level Nutrition for Growth Event held in the United Kingdom in June 2013. The commitments include launching the National Food and Nutrition Strategy and the First 1000 Most Critical Days Programme whose focus is reducing stunting or chronic malnutrition.

The United Nations Resident Coordinator A.I, Dr. Hamid El-Bashir, stated that “the purpose of the visit is for the senior officials to see how the SUN global efforts are being translated at national and community level as well as to understand key challenges to expand the coverage of evidence-based nutrition interventions”.

The visiting delegation will attend a series of high level meetings with senior Government officials to discuss opportunities and challenges that Zambia faces to significantly reduce its current high levels of under-nutrition. They will also meet with the SUN Civil Society Alliance and representatives of the private sector to discuss their potential role in improving nutrition levels and preventing stunting in young children. The delegation will undertake field visits to a variety of nutrition programmes in Chipata, Mumbwa and Chongwe.

The European Union, USAID, UN Agencies, Irish Aid, SIDA and the UK Government's Department For International Development (DFID) are all committed to aligning efforts to support implementation of nutrition interventions under the National First 1000 Most Critical Days Programme.

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Notes to Editors

1. The First 1000 Most Critical Days Programme focuses on 1) The scale up of direct and indirect nutrition interventions starting in 14 high-burden districts; 2) Capacity building for more effective institutions and coordination and management of the 1000 Days Programme; 3) Communications and Advocacy on the critical importance of adequate nutrition during the first 1000 days of life (pregnancy and up to two years of age) and 4) Monitoring and Evaluation to ensure systematic documentation of what works for reducing stunting in Zambia.
2. The SUN movement was launched in 2010 and endorsed by more than 100 organisations, with consensus on what is needed to scale up nutrition actions, focusing on the crucial 1,000 day window of opportunity. More information is available at:
http://www.unscn.org/en/scaling_up_nutrition_sun/sun_purpose.php
3. SUN delegation will meet the following Government officials: Cabinet Secretary Dr Roland Msiska and the Permanent Secretaries of the five line Ministries responsible for nutrition i.e. Ministry of Health; Ministry of Community Development, Mother and Child Health; Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock; Ministry of Education, Science, Vocational Training and Early Education; Ministry of Local Government as well as with the National Food and Nutrition Commission.