SUN MOVEMENT

Monitoring, Evaluation, Accountability, Learning (MEAL)

MEAL Overview

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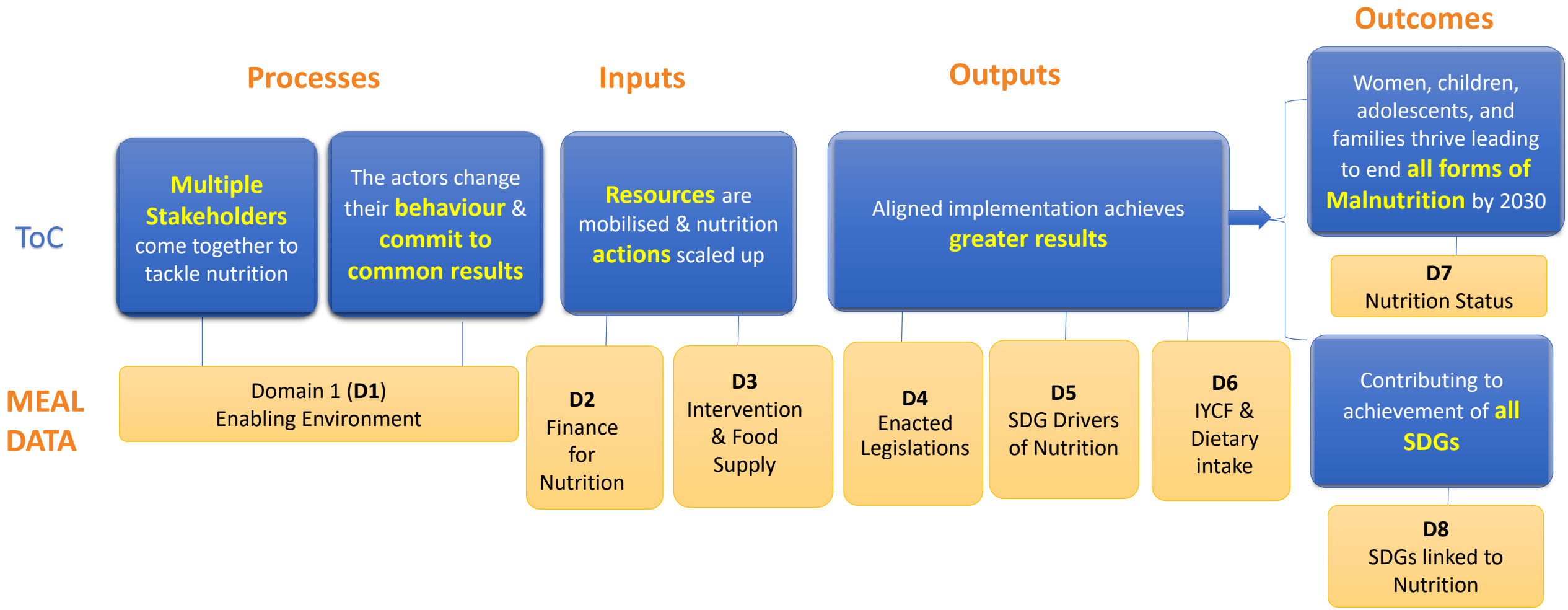
MEAL system objectives

Monitoring, Evaluation, Accountability, Learning

- **Help track and report on progress toward overall SUN Movement objectives**
- **Inform better decision-making on country needs**
  - **Classification of country needs** (geographic, economic & nutritional outcomes)
  - **Track country TA needs and *external* support** – timely response, capturing lessons
- **Inform corrective actions**
- **Reinforce mutual accountability within the Movement**
- **Support Learning** - documentation and sharing of country experiences

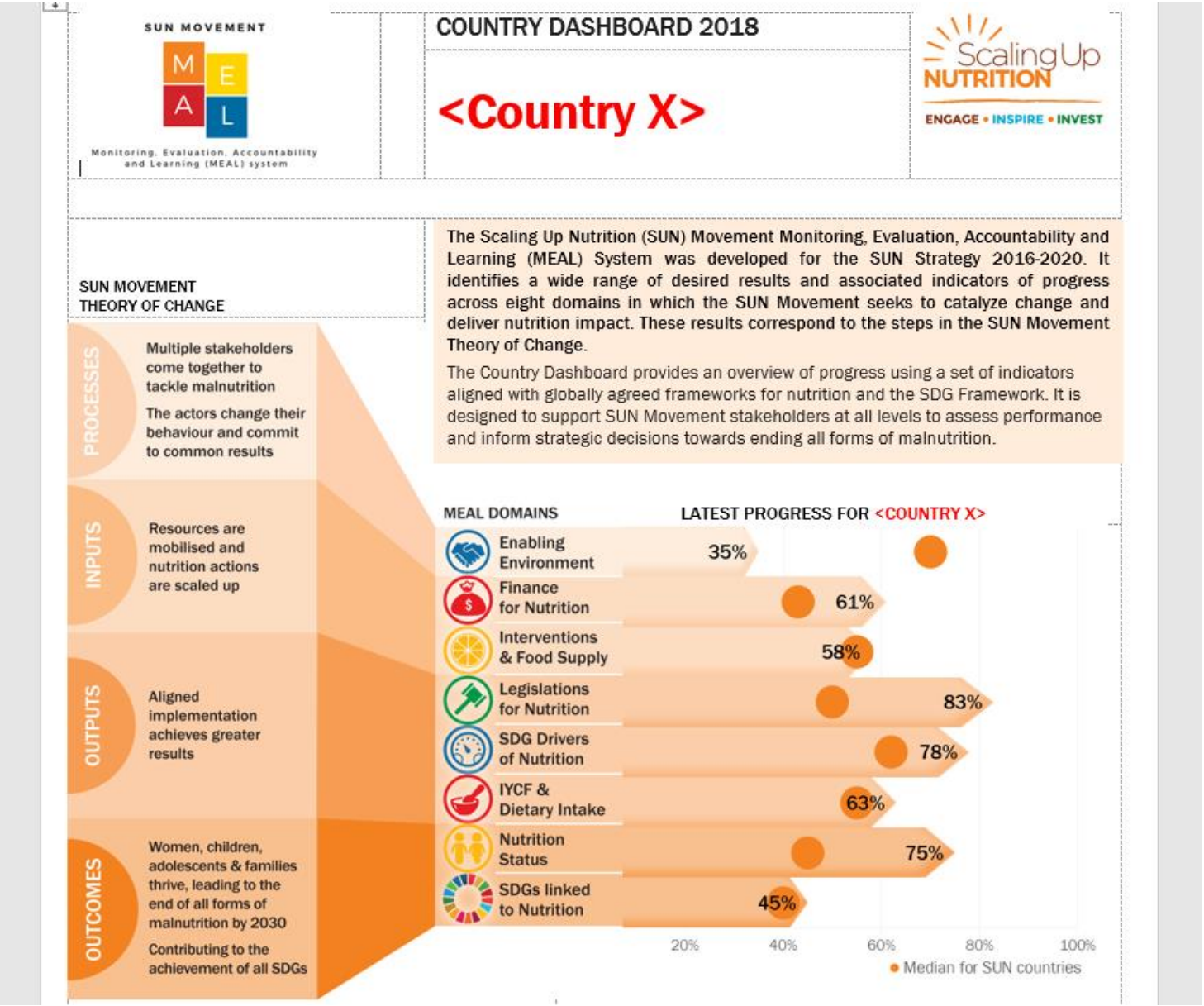
SUN Movement MEAL System components (2019)

SUN Movement led activities	Monitoring	Evaluation	Accountability	Learning
Joint Annual Assessment	X	Informs	X	X
Networks' Annual Assessments	X	Informs	X	X
National Budget Analysis	X		Could inform	X
Stakeholder & Action Mapping	X		Could inform	X
National nutrition action plan reviews	X		Could inform	X
SUN Global Gathering	Informs		Informs	X
In-depth country reviews (Deep Dives)		Informs	Could inform	X
Regional/global workshops				X
Country calls/webinars				X
Learning Routes				X
Tracking needs and Technical Assistance	X		Could inform	X
Mid Term Review		X	Informs	X
Strategic Review		X	X	X
Networks' evaluations (SBN)		X	X	X



Links between the SUN Theory of Change and the MEAL Database

As reflected in the cover of the updated Dashboard



Focus on MEAL Database

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Expected Users

- SUN member countries
- Members of the SUN Movement Global Support System
- Practitioners interested in topics related to the SUN Movement

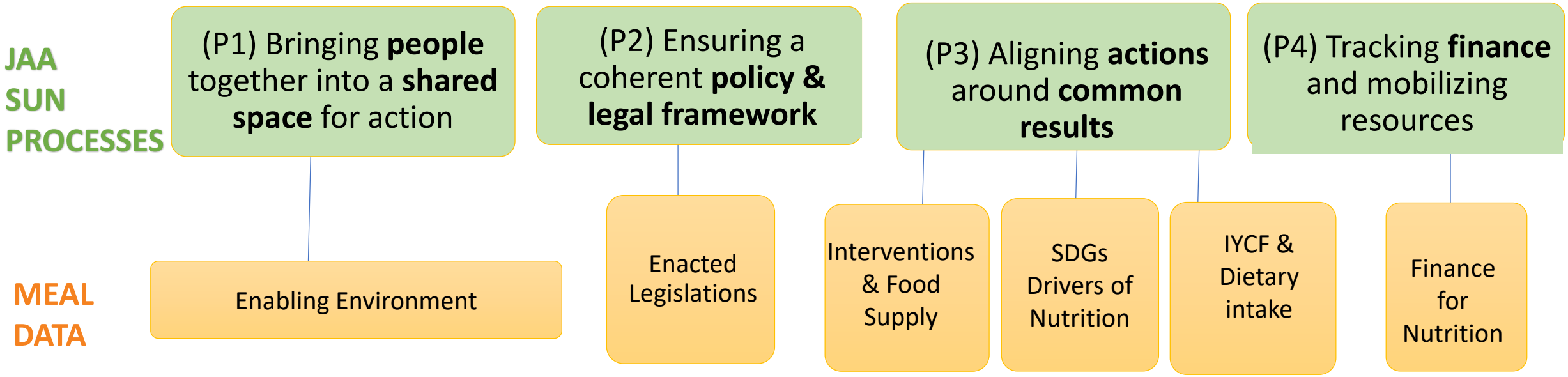
Current MEAL Database Features

- **79 indicators** (67 with at least 75% coverage across all countries)
- Most indicators (**84%**) draw on **secondary data** through collaborations with global data initiatives
- 13 indicators (**16%**) draw on **primary data** collection by SUN stakeholders (Enabling Environment & Finance domains)

Current MEAL Data Uses & Access

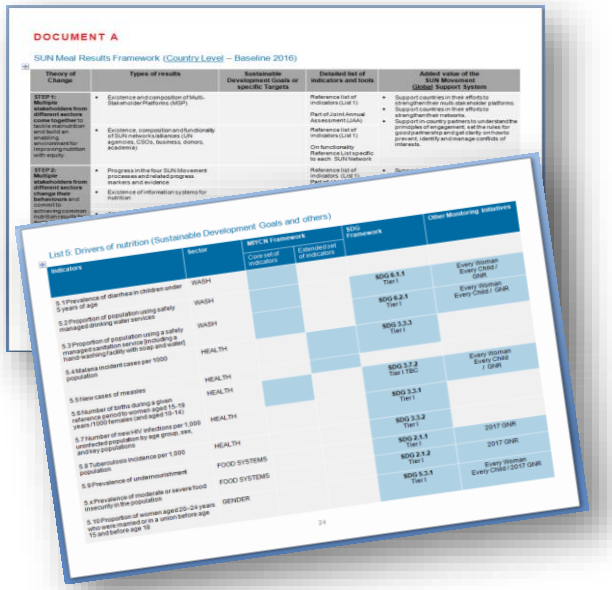
- **Country dashboards** summarize data for individual countries across 8 domains
- **All SUN Countries Dashboard** (Excel file) provides overview of performance across countries
- **Dataset** in Excel file on SUN website
- **MEAL 2016 Baseline Report** & **Focus Area Briefs** provide some initial data visualization of key results

MEAL Database (primary data collection)	Findings included	Indicators in the MEAL Database	Domains in the MEAL Database	Publicly available data sources
National multi-stakeholder Joint Annual Assessments (20 progress markers)	Yes	1.4: SUN Movement processes total score	Enabling Env.	JAA webpage
National Networks' Annual Assessments (5-6 markers per Network)	Yes	1.2: Network Functionality Index	Enabling Env.	SUN Network websites
National Budget Analysis	Yes	2.1: National Budget Spending	Finance	Finance webpage
National Nutrition Action Plans (desk review)	Yes	1.5: WHA targets 1.6: NCD targets	Enabling Env.	Not yet available
Tracking country priorities (trough JAA) and Technical Assistance	Not yet	Not yet defined	Enabling Env. (TBC)	TA webpage
Sub-national Stakeholder & Action Mapping	In progress	3.16: stakeholders presence 3.17: stakeholders actions	Interventions	UNN website
National Information Systems (desk review) (aggregates 26 markers)	Yes	1.7: Information Systems for Nutrition Index	Enabling Env.	Information Systems



Links between the JAA processes and the indicators in the MEAL Database

Overview of MEAL products



Results Framework

List of indicators
Mapping of data

2016 Baseline

Color-coded classification
Detailed Baseline report

Country Dashboards

Annual updates

Thematic Briefs

Gender, multiple forms of malnutrition, humanitarian

Questions?

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MEAL Data Analysis in 2018

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Thematic Briefs

Econometric Analysis

Political Commitment for Nutrition

Acknowledgement: All of this work was supported by Nutrition International under the TAN project, funded with UK aid from the UK government

NUTRITION INTERNATIONAL
Nourish Life

UKaid
from the British people

MEAL Focus Area Briefs

Available for download on the SUN MEAL website:

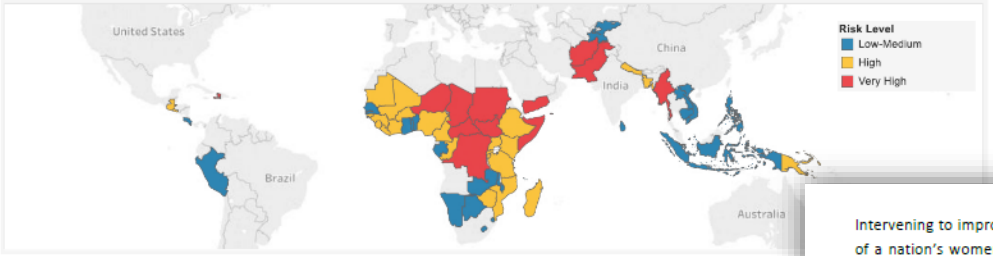
https://scalingupnutrition.org/progress-impact/monitoring-evaluation-accountability-and-learning-meal/

Thematic Briefs - data visualization

SUN COUNTRY HUMANITARIAN CLASSIFICATION

The INFORM Index identifies countries at a high risk of humanitarian crisis that are more likely to require international assistance, based on three dimensions of risk: hazards and exposure, vulnerability, and lack of coping capacity. Based on the INFORM Index classification in mid-2017, 25 SUN countries (42%) were considered as high risk and 12 (20%) were considered as very high risk (Figure 1, Table 1).

Figure 1: Map of SUN countries showing humanitarian risk level



Intervening to improve the nutritional status of adolescent girls is an investment in the future well-being of a nation's women. As shown in Figure 3, overweight and obesity among women is highly correlated with prevalence of overweight and obesity in adolescent girls across all SUN countries.

Figure 3: Relationship of overweight in adolescent girls and adult women by country and region

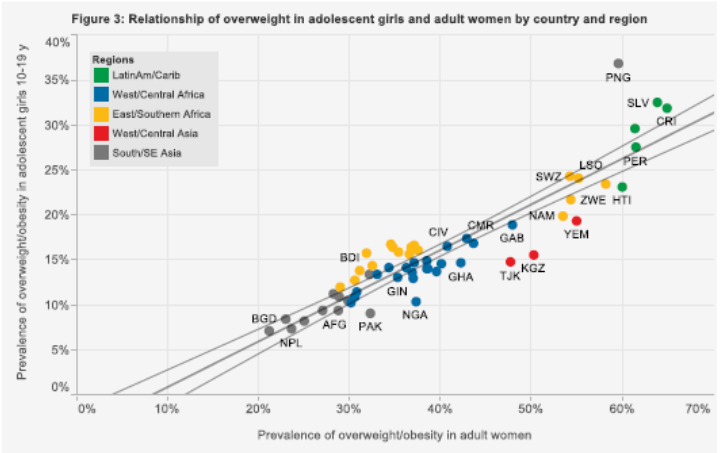
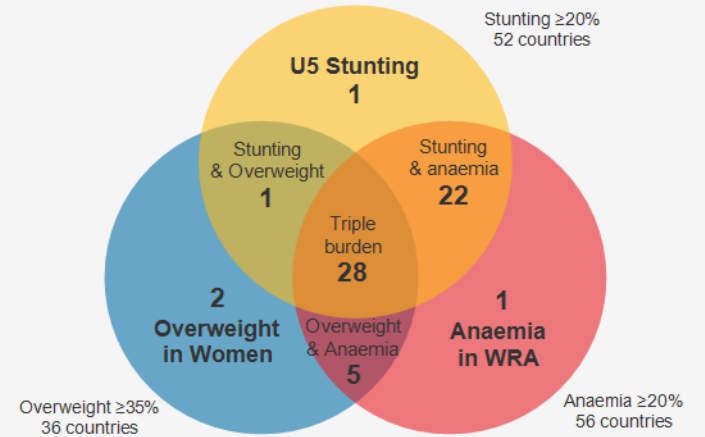
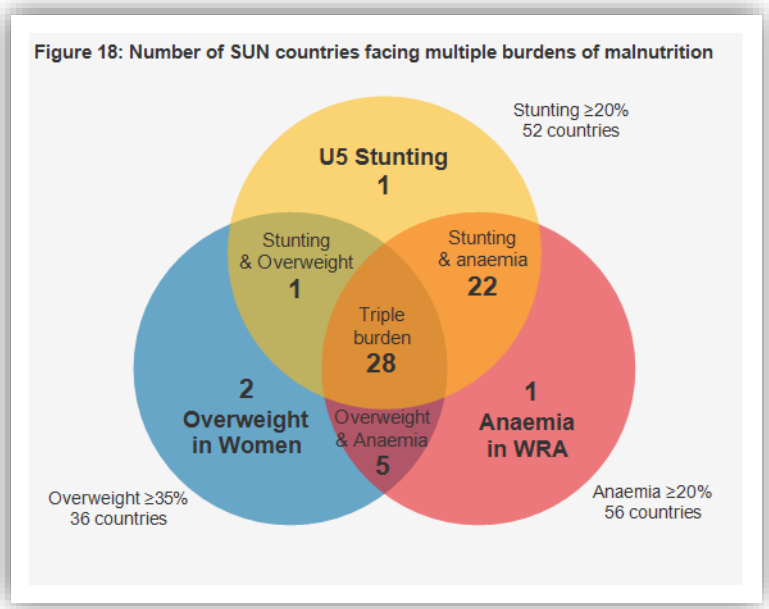


Figure 18: Number of SUN countries facing multiple burdens of malnutrition



Multiple Forms of Malnutrition – Key Findings



- **Nearly half of SUN countries currently experience a triple burden of child undernutrition, women's overnutrition and women's anaemia**.
- **The burden of anaemia among adolescent girls coexists in countries with high prevalence of underweight or overweight/obesity** but there is little overlap between underweight and overweight.
- **Gender-differentiated analysis of malnutrition explains important differences among adolescents and adults**, but not young children.
- **Micronutrient deficiencies contribute greatly to the burden of malnutrition in children, adolescent girls and women**; data gaps keep this form of malnutrition "hidden".

Adolescent Girls & Women – Key Findings

- Overweight and obesity has increased rapidly among adolescent girls in SUN countries.
- **Nutrition and health interventions targeted to women reach less than half of their intended beneficiaries** in low-income SUN countries with the percentage dropping further for women living in very high-humanitarian contexts.
- Girls living in low-income and high humanitarian risk contexts are highly disadvantaged in all SDG indicators of gender equality.
- **Women's anaemia levels are higher in SUN countries with low family planning coverage and lower diet quality**, highlighting the multi-factorial causes of anaemia.

High Humanitarian Risk Contexts – Key Findings

- **The enabling environment for good nutrition is least advanced in countries with a very high humanitarian risk level**.
- One third of very high risk countries have no legislation in place to implement the International Code of Marketing of Breastmilk Substitutes.
- **Child feeding practices are disrupted in the wake of humanitarian conflicts or disasters** as shown by lower rates of exclusive breastfeeding and complementary feeding in very high-risk countries.
- **SDGs that are influenced by good nutrition** – U5 mortality, NCD mortality, early child development and GDP growth – **are progressing least in high and very high-risk countries.**

ECONOMETRIC ANALYSIS

Susan E. Horton, Sakshi Jain, Kendra Siekmans

Econometric Analysis

Background

- SUN Executive Committee requested an econometric analysis of MEAL data in 2018
- Question: can any inferences be made about **contributions of SUN membership and duration to progress across the eight domains** identified in the MEAL Results Framework?

Methods – Sue Horton & Sakshi Jain (health economists)

- focused on **27 indicators** where impact was more likely to be seen
- Ran a series of regression models to explore contribution made by SUN membership and duration
    1. **SUN Countries only** - each model included SUN membership duration (years), per capita GDP, population size, regional status
    2. **SUN vs. non-SUN** – included **15 non-SUN countries** (LIC/LMIC & population >750,000); models included SUN membership (yes/no), per capita GDP, population size, regional status
        - Only 20 non-SUN countries identified, 15 LMIC with GDP data; only 3 LIC non-SUN countries (no GDP data)

Econometric Analysis – Key Findings

Results suggest that SUN Membership matters:

- **Longer membership duration associated with stronger Enabling Environment**
  - Stronger networks, better functioning MSPs, and higher donor funding.
- **Early joiners are more proactive:**
  - Better legislation and higher coverage for nutrition-specific actions (IFA, EBF)
  - However, most of these characteristics already present prior to joining SUN – direction of causality unclear.
  - Need for complementary analysis (e.g. qualitative data, in-depth country reviews).

"Taken together, the results tell a fairly consistent story – that when contextual factors such as per capita income, population size and regional status are taken into account, SUN membership is associated with greater concern for nutrition"

POLITICAL COMMITMENT FOR NUTRITION

Patrizia Fracassi, Kendra Siekmans, Phillip Baker

Political Commitment for Nutrition

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Objective:

To measure level of **political commitment for nutrition** in SUN countries and how this translates into results

Methods:

- Theoretical framework by Phil Baker et al. (2018)
- Mapped MEAL indicators for each type of commitment
- Ranked countries by level of each type of commitment
- Assessed relationship between level of commitment and progress toward global nutrition targets

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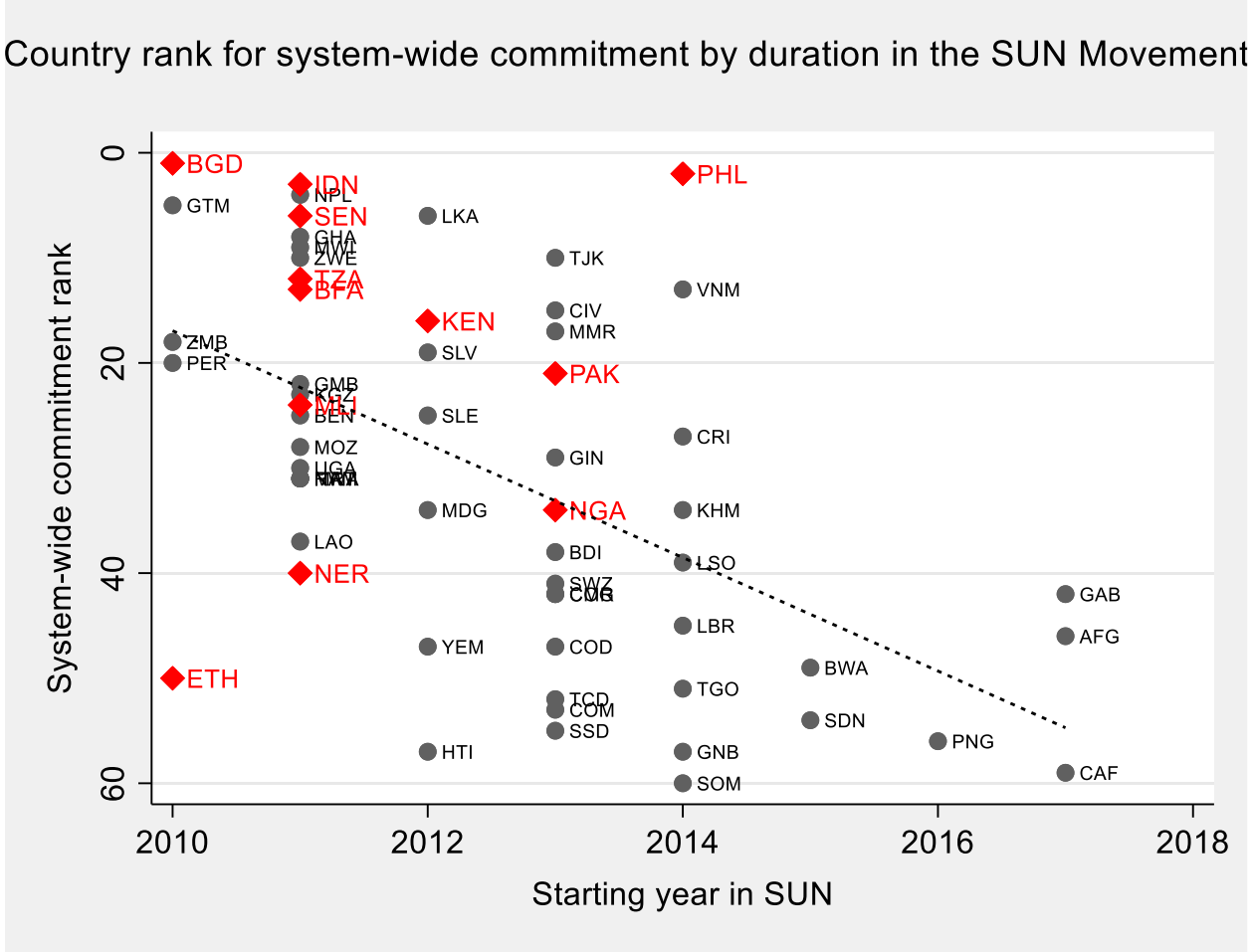
KEY FINDINGS:

- Longer duration in SUN associated with higher **expressed**, **institutional** & **operational** commitment, *but not embedded*
- Level of **institutional** commitment also has an important positive relationship with a country's ability to **operationalize** those commitments – *but only for low-income countries*
- Early SUN joiners more likely to be in the top rankings for **system-wide commitment**



Examples on Political Commitments

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Country	Expressed Commitment Rank	Institutional Commitment Rank	Operational Commitment Rank	Embedded Commitment Rank	System-wide Commitment Rank
Bangladesh	1	1	15	21	1
Philippines	17	4	15	4	2
Indonesia	1	19	7	14	3
Senegal	9	2	15	23	6
Tanzania	9	2	21	37	12
Kenya	36	4	11	22	16
Pakistan	17	13	26	27	21
Nigeria	9	27	26	51	34
Ethiopia	36	23	52	54	50

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POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- Importance of working across **all types of commitment**, especially going beyond expressed and institutional commitments.
- Although institutional commitments do matter, especially in low income countries, they may be just 'tokenistic' if there is **limited implementation capacity**.
- **Countries with balanced political commitment levels**, especially combining nutrition-specific investments with a pro-nutrition development agenda, **may achieve better nutrition impact** compared with those that have an exclusive focus only on one type of commitment.
- Limitations with the interpretation of findings, especially the direction of causality, underline the necessity of **measuring changes in commitments over time and complementing this type of analysis with qualitative information** on the perspectives, roles and capacities of different stakeholders.

Questions?

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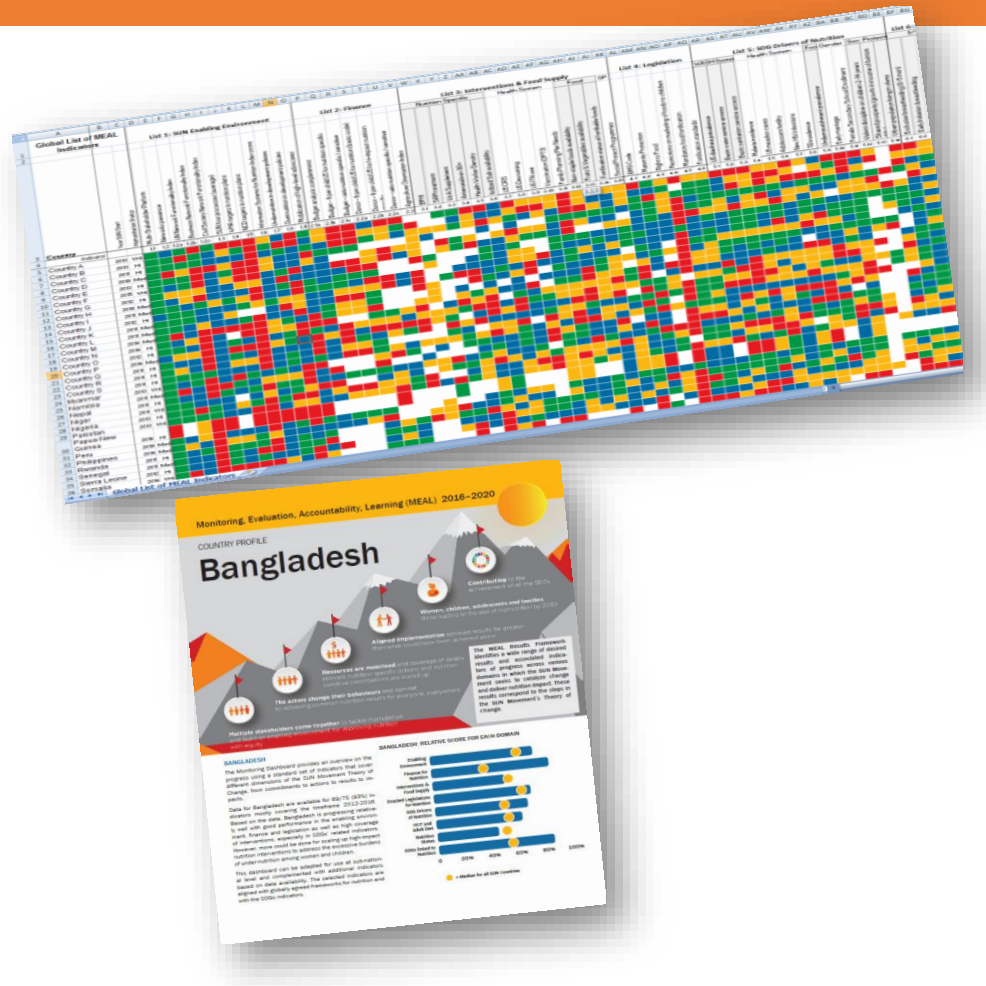
WHAT NEXT?

MEAL PRIORITIES FOR 2019

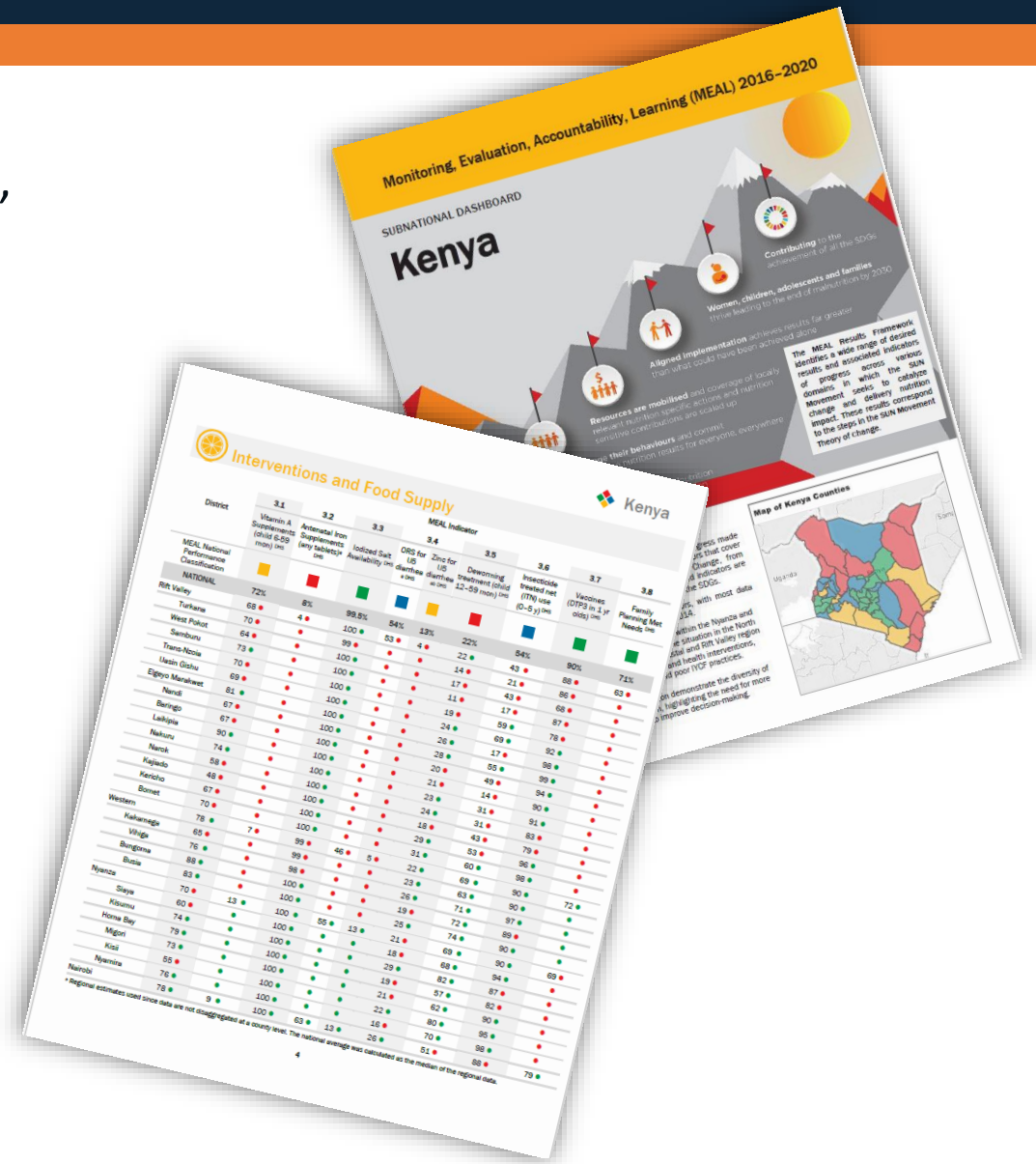
MEAL Database and Country Dashboards

- **Update and redesign of country dashboards** to summarize data for individual countries across 8 domains
- **Update of all SUN Countries Dashboard** (Excel file) provides overview of performance across countries
- **Update of Dataset** in Excel file on SUN website
- **Provide one brief on changes and trends** observed in countries with updated data.
- **Complement the numerical scores with more and better qualitative information** (e.g. through the deep dives and country case studies).
- **Work with communication** on products for wider dissemination



Subnational Dashboard Tool

- MEAL country dashboards provide national perspective; recognized need sub-national level data for coordination, planning and decision-making purposes
- **MEAL Advisory Group 2018 priority: Design & test sub-national MEAL dashboards to better inform country work.**
- ~30 MEAL indicators with sub-national data available
- "**Pro-active and responsive approach**" - prepared standardized sub-national dashboards for interested countries (pro-active) and then provide support for them to complement and update the dashboard (responsive)
- Very useful for country "deep dives" in 2018
- Will be developed upon demand in 2019



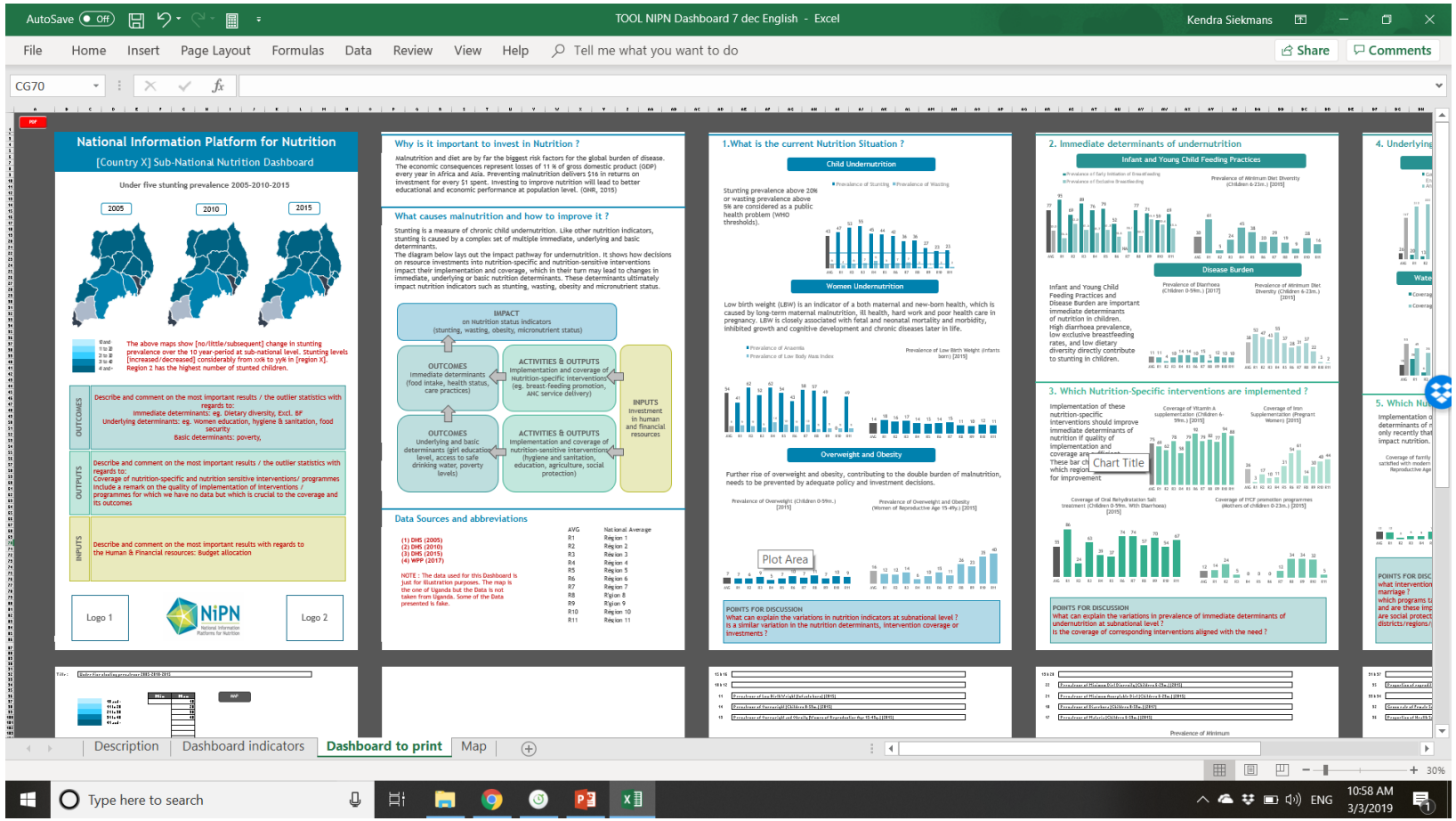
Stakeholder & Action Mapping

- **Stakeholder and action mapping**
  - Led by UN Network
  - Provides valuable info on geographic coverage of both stakeholders and core nutrition actions (both nutrition-specific & nutrition-sensitive)
  - ****A key opportunity to look into multi-stakeholder alignment****
  - Now using a web-based portal that links with DHIS2, enabling ongoing monitoring by country over time (incl Senegal, Mali)
  - 22 SUN countries (incl Burkina Faso, Ethiopia, Mali, Niger, Senegal, Tanzania)

- See UN Network website for country examples
  https://www.unnetworkforsun.org/outcome-1
- Two indicators included in the MEAL Database and Country Dashboard

Subnational Dashboard Tool

NIPN – NI countries:
Bangladesh
Ethiopia
Burkina Faso
Niger



MTR recommendations	PRIORITY ACTIONS
1) **The amount of evidence from JAAs and learning exchanges that are reflected in the MEAL database should be expanded**	• Include the score for the four JAA processes. • Expand use of rich sources of qualitative data that are generated by Joint Annual. Assessments and other learning exercises • Explore better sources of data on progress in implementation as a major gap (e.g. NutriDash).
2) **A more sensitive set of 'behaviour change' indicators should be created/adapted to assess and track actions from national governments, donors, the UN, the private sector and civil society.**	• Identify a sensitive set of 'behaviour change' indicators to assess and track actions by SUN Movement actors building first on existing reporting system. • Consider additional indicators based on relevance and feasibility.

MTR recommendations	PRIORITY ACTIONS
3) **A consensus be developed on the most-appropriate use(s) of the SUN MEAL database (i.e. primarily related to monitoring and reporting or designed to foster greater use of MEAL database content by different end users at different levels)**	• Develop MEAL-related communication material to increase understanding and use • Redesigned the info graphic in the cover page to show the oinks between the ToC, MEAL domains and progresses. • Strengthen collaboration with countries and partners
4) A determination be made regarding the extent to which updating certain MEAL database content should be more 'bottom-up' (i.e. by National Secretariats) than 'top down' (i.e. by the SMS), with suitable checks on quality.	• Develop an online JAA reporting system for better updating and storage of information and documents. • Partnerships with UNICEF, UNN, GAIN, NI, DataDENT, NI and MQSUN+

MTR recommendations	PRIORITY ACTIONS
5) **There be more systematically documented and disseminated information of promising practices related to (a) MEAL and data use and (b) effective multi-stakeholder, multisectoral partnership.**	• Promising practices related to the MEAL system (i.e. JAA, deep dives, budget analyses, TA provision, etc.) and data use better captured in the SUN Annual Report and discussed in one of the SUN GG sessions. • Promising practices on effective multi-stakeholder, multisectoral partnerships drawn from case studies and evaluation reports including the foreseen 2019 Strategic Review.

MEAL Data Use

Are **YOU** a MEAL data user??

- What potential value does the MEAL database have for you in your sphere of influence? What types of questions might this dataset be able to answer?
- What potential value does the MEAL database have for regional or country level partners? How might their use of this resource be increased?
- Would a different type of data interface facilitate greater use of the MEAL database by you, your colleagues or country partners? If yes, what type of data interface do you value for demonstrating/exploring progress of countries?

Questions?

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