Finance Capacity Development Platform
FTT design recommendations to the Executive Committee

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Executive Summary

This report presents the Finance Task Team's recommendations on the high-level design features for the proposed Finance Capacity Development Platform. These features include, at a high level:

- <u>Tailored support to countries</u> to develop customized plans for strengthening nutrition financing capacities and outcomes, which are based on a holistic and in-depth assessment of their strengths, needs and opportunities. Support will also include the identification and facilitated provision of targeted tools and support that respond to that assessment.
- Curated support for navigating available <u>nutrition financing-related information and tools</u> (e.g., guidance, frameworks, e-learning modules, case studies and best practices) to address specific country needs and priorities, and enhance the work of technical partners in their support to countries.
- <u>A liaison and convening function</u> that navigates and works with the partnership landscape to address gaps, deficiencies and opportunities identified in the Platform's work, in order to pursue specific outcomes that improve the responsiveness, coherence and robustness of nutrition financing-related support to specific countries, and of the nutrition financing landscape more broadly.

Collectively, the Platform's work will contribute to the overarching goal of improving access to, and effective use of, financing for nutrition. Towards that end, the Platform's activities will lead to a number of intermediate- and higher-level outcomes:
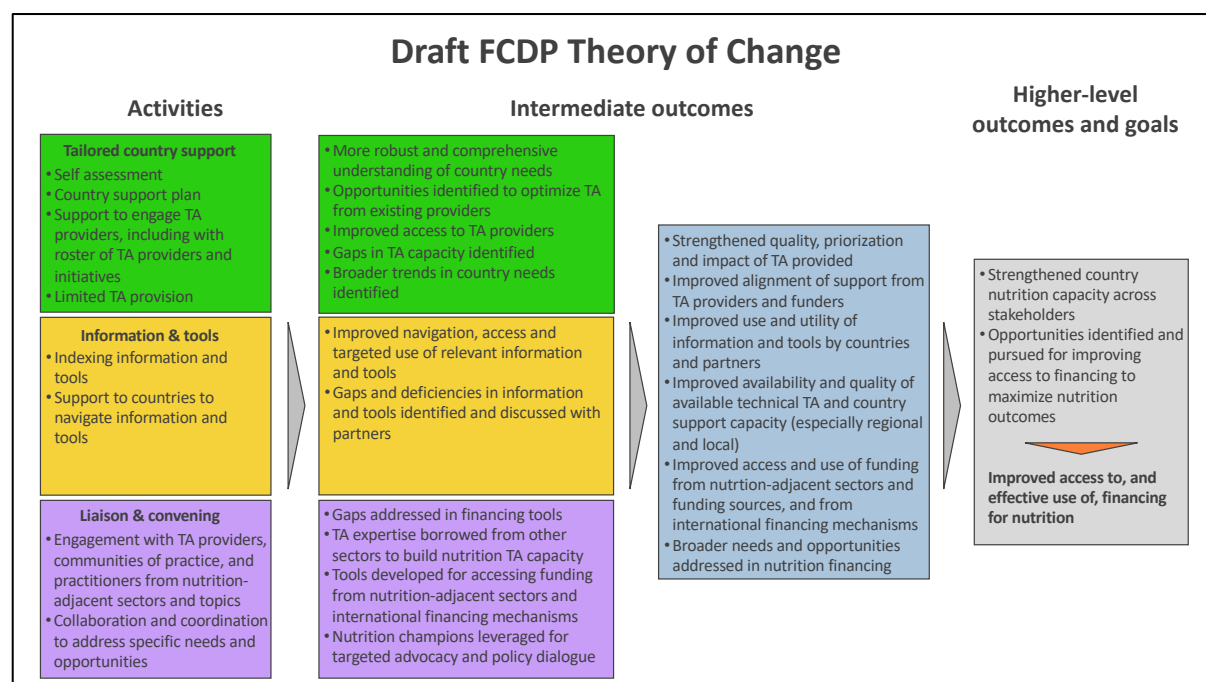
- Countries are more easily able to access the tools and support they need, and in a way that reflects a more comprehensive understanding by them of their nutrition financing-related capacity strengthening needs.
- This leads to strengthened capacity for implementing nutrition financing processes (e.g., tracking, public financial management, resource mobilization), but also a higher-level, multi-year strategy that prioritizes and sequences these processes to maximize a country's nutrition financing outcomes, based on their needs and opportunities.
- The financing tools and support are better understood and utilized – including the nuances of where and when they can be useful, and for what categories of countries and situations. Opportunities to strengthen their use and utility, and address gaps, are identified and addressed – thus strengthening the broader robustness and impact of nutrition financing-related tools and support.
- Specific opportunities are identified and pursued 1) at country level (e.g., to improve alignment and complementarity of partner support, or to access new resources through international financing mechanisms); and 2) at global level (e.g., to develop and pilot new approaches for accessing and ensuring effective use of funding from nutrition-adjacent spaces). This results in concrete gains and outcomes against critical nutrition financing objectives, but also a shift in how the broader nutrition community and landscape can be engaged and harnessed towards more purposeful, outcomes-oriented approaches and initiatives.

Implementation of the work will be guided by a set of proposed operating principles for the Platform, including:

- Being responsive to and serving countries (including their governments, but also other key stakeholders, including civil society), first and foremost.

- As an extension of that principle, it will actively identify and pursue opportunities to enhance the rationalization, effectiveness and impact of partners' support to countries.
- A strategic outcomes-oriented approach.
- A holistic approach to understanding and responding to countries' financing capacity challenges and opportunities, as opposed to focusing on singular processes and outputs.
- A model of support that is responsive to opportunities for both improving nutrition financing outcomes in specific and immediate ways, as well addressing longer-term capacity development needs.

A draft Theory of Change for the Platform is proposed that maps the chain of causal linkages, clarifying what the Platform is intended to achieve, and through which approaches. A Theory of Change helps to reinforce an outcome- and results orientation in the Platform's design; and it should furthermore be used to facilitate the management of the Platform's performance, in terms of both the Platform's implementation, as well as the effectiveness of its design and approaches. The draft Theory of Change is visually depicted below:

Draft FCDP Theory of Change

Activities

Tailored country support
- Self assessment
- Country support plan
- Support to engage TA providers, including with roster of TA providers and initiatives
- Limited TA provision

Information & tools
- Indexing information and tools
- Support to countries to navigate information and tools

Liaison & convening
- Engagement with TA providers, communities of practice, and practitioners from nutrition-adjacent sectors and topics
- Collaboration and coordination to address specific needs and opportunities

Intermediate outcomes

- More robust and comprehensive understanding of country needs
- Opportunities identified to optimize TA from existing providers
- Improved access to TA providers
- Gaps in TA capacity identified
- Broader trends in country needs identified

- Improved navigation, access and targeted use of relevant information and tools
- Gaps and deficiencies in information and tools identified and discussed with partners

- Gaps addressed in financing tools
- TA expertise borrowed from other sectors to build nutrition TA capacity
- Tools developed for accessing funding from nutrition-adjacent sectors and international financing mechanisms
- Nutrition champions leveraged for targeted advocacy and policy dialogue

- Strengthened quality, prioritization and impact of TA provided
- Improved alignment of support from TA providers and funders
- Improved use and utility of information and tools by countries and partners
- Improved availability and quality of available technical TA and country support capacity (especially regional and local)
- Improved access and use of funding from nutrition-adjacent sectors and funding sources, and from international financing mechanisms
- Broader needs and opportunities addressed in nutrition financing

Higher-level outcomes and goals

- Strengthened country nutrition capacity across stakeholders
- Opportunities identified and pursued for improving access to financing to maximize nutrition outcomes

Improved access to, and effective use of, financing for nutrition

The design elements proposed in this report have been developed over a brief but intense design process (following the SUN Lead Group's endorsement of the Concept Note for the Platform in September 2021), which has involved a light Landscape and Needs Assessment, followed by multiple stages of iterative design and consultation – both with the Finance Task Team, as well as with a broader set of country stakeholders, the SUN Executive Committee, SUN Movement networks and members, and other key informants and experts.

The Executive Committee is requested to endorse the high-level design features and key operating principles proposed in this document and provide feedback on the more detailed operationalization considerations. Endorsement is also requested on the continued use of the Executive Committee and the FTT as the primary oversight and governance bodies charged with oversight and governance for the Platform.

I. BACKGROUND AND PROCESS

In September 2021, the SUN Lead Group endorsed the Concept Note for a Finance Capacity Development Platform (FCDP), with the objective of helping to strengthen the capacity of SUN countries to mobilize more domestic and external resources for nutrition across different sectors, and to make better use of their resources, with more accountability – thus accelerating impact on nutrition outcomes in countries.

Since August 2022, an independent consultant (David Kim) has been engaged to support the Finance Task Team (FTT) through the *FCDP Incubation Period*. The work has comprised 3 stages:

1) A landscape and needs assessment
2) Options development for the design of the Platform
3) A final FTT recommendations paper to the Executive Committee

The Landscape and Needs Assessment was completed as a light exercise, which leveraged the work already carried out by the SUN Movement Secretariat (SMS) and other stakeholders in preparing for SUN 3.0, and was supplemented by additional interviews and document reviews. The FTT discussed and provided feedback on the Landscape and Needs Assessment, and the final report was shared with the FTT and the Executive Committee in September 2022. In October and November 2022, the FTT convened twice and reviewed multiple documents to iteratively provide input and direction for the Platform's design and operationalization. The assessment and design processes have also significantly benefited from a high degree of consultation, with over 35 interviews and consultations with over 60 individuals.[1]

This short but intensive process has led to this report, which presents the FTT's recommendations on the high-level design features for the Platform – including key activities and ways of working. It also provides analysis on the gaps and opportunities that the Platform will address, and the ways in which it will build on, complement and interact with the broader landscape. This report is being submitted **for decision** at the SUN Movement Executive Committee's next planned meeting on the 6th of December 2022.

II. KEY MESSAGES FROM THE LANDSCAPE AND NEEDS ASSESSMENT

In the Landscape and Needs Assessment exercise, informants described a wide and diverse range of needs related to nutrition financing. And whilst there is appreciation for the TA provided through the SUN Movement's work to date, it was also proposed that *a different approach is required, departing from the model of discrete TA projects and consultancies that are focused on specific processes*. This echoes the findings from the 2019-2020 Strategic Review of the SUN Movement (April 2020), which found that "…policies, plans and platforms are not translating into implementation to address nutrition challenges. There is a pressing need to shift away from process and towards action and results." The Strategic Review furthermore noted that "much of the support around financing has focused on planning, costing, tracking and coordination…" and that there is "…*a need for an increased focus on how to more effectively access financing for nutrition in SUN countries, both from global sources and domestic resource allocations*."

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[1] Consulted parties include country focal points, civil society organizations, Executive Committee and FTT members, UN agencies, the SUN Movement Coordinator, the SMS and external financing sources (bi-lateral, multilateral, foundation and innovative financing mechanisms).

Country stakeholders described ***difficulties in navigating the different external financing sources' models and timelines for allocations, approvals, disbursements and reporting***. This compromises their ability to 1) engage with and access funding from these sources, and 2) ensure that approved funding from these sources meaningfully contributes to nutrition outcomes.

The nutrition community has long understood that "improved nutrition is the platform for progress in health, education, employment, female empowerment, and poverty and inequality reduction,"[2] and that it is therefore ***imperative to secure financing from the various sources of funding that support "nutrition-adjacent" sectors and development goals***. However, there has been poor progress in doing so.

Humanitarian situations pose many challenges, including difficulties in long-term planning; and parallel structures, -plans and -tracking for humanitarian and development approaches. Informants also noted the ***need for strengthened country capacity for more resilient, shock- and risk-responsive approaches in fragile- and conflict- affected situations (FCAS)***, to enable governments to more flexibly accommodate surges in programmatic- and financing needs. This is not a challenge that is unique to nutrition – there are lessons to be learned from the experiences and approaches that have been applied in other topics, including in social protection. This leads to a broader theme: many of the needs and challenges in nutrition financing may have a context that is specific to nutrition; but the expertise and frameworks needed are frequently *not* exclusive to nutrition. This represents a source of potentially significant ***untapped opportunities for accessing tools, approaches and expertise from outside of nutrition***.

Another important insight from the exercise is that, although there has been an abundance of knowledge and learning generated on nutrition financing, these ***resources are too scattered and insufficiently curated, with little or no support to help country stakeholders understand what is useful, and in which circumstances***. As a consequence, the use and utility of these resources are severely compromised.

The landscape of nutrition financing-related TA provision is in some ways rich and diverse, with a multitude of partners providing support to countries; but there are also important gaps. Informants also described significant ***challenges in the harmonization of different areas of support provided by technical partners and funders***. Countries are often poorly equipped and positioned to coordinate and ensure the coherence of these partners' support.

Finally, much of the TA provision landscape is currently in flux, with new approaches being developed for coordinating TA requests across the SUN Movement Global Support System (GSS) structures; a proposal under development by the SMS to better support Multi Stakeholder Platforms (MSPs); the coordination by the SMS of an effort to clarify the roles and responsibilities of different parts of the GSS in implementing the SUN Finance Framework endorsed by the Lead Group in September 2021; a new Capacity for Nutrition (C4N) global technical facility being launched with funding from the European Union and the German government; and significant resources being invested by UNICEF in nutrition financing

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[2] Global Nutrition Report, 2016

capacity strengthening support to countries, for example. In some ways, this poses a design challenge for optimizing how the Platform interacts with and contributes to a broader landscape that is itself in transition. But it has also presented an opportunity to discuss and share ideas on how the different initiatives can be complementary and mutually reinforcing, which has provided valuable inputs into the Platform's design process.

III.   PROPOSED DESIGN FEATURES OF THE PLATFORM

Underpinning the proposed design of the Platform is the notion that all countries have financing capacity strengthening needs – some starting at a more basic level, whilst others are further along a "continuum" of capacity. Wherever they are on this continuum, countries have room to improve their ability to mobilize financial resources, and to more optimally utilize and manage the resources. This document therefore proposes activities and functions for the platform that would:

- Facilitate access to the tools and technical support for assisting countries in that capacity-strengthening journey – taking a more comprehensive and long-term view than past TA efforts, starting with a more in-depth understanding of countries' financing capacity strengthening needs; and
- Help shape the demand for nutrition financing-related TA, but also the supply and quality of the support, and the effectiveness and coherence of the nutrition financing landscape more broadly.

These approaches seek to shift the focus from process- and information inputs – which have failed to deliver significant, observable gains in nutrition financing outcomes – to how these inputs can be strategically prioritized, sequenced and channeled to directly improve countries' capabilities and outcomes in their efforts to access and more effectively utilize financing for nutrition. Three operational components are envisioned for the Platform's work:
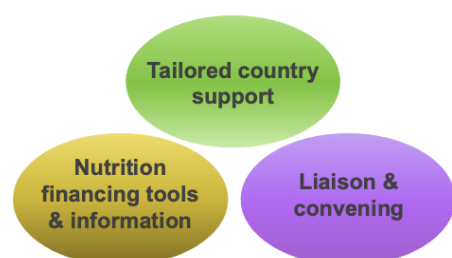
These components – which are discussed in detail below – fulfil distinct functions, each with stand-alone value. However, a key design feature of the Platform are the substantial interactions and synergies between the components, which create significant opportunities for the Platform to play a higher-level role in contributing to the coherence and strategic responsiveness of the broader nutrition financing landscape.

The Platform's proposed activities and ways of working seek to build on and leverage the approaches employed thus far: learning and evolving from what has worked in the past, and where progress and success have been lacking. Another central design principle has been to identify opportunities to play a complementary and enhancing role vis-à-vis the broader landscape, as much as possible – rather than replacing or duplicating efforts. Towards this end, the ***proposed design features focus on bringing more structure, depth, and long-term perspectives to countries as they engage with the broader nutrition financing and TA landscape. At the same time, the Platform's operational model is proposed to be light and agile, so that it can more effectively complement and add value to the work of other initiatives and partners, and make necessary adjustments according to ongoing shifts in the landscape***.

3.1 Tailored country support

The Platform's primary proposed model for assisting countries is through tailored support to countries, to assess their financing capacity strengthening needs, articulate a clear and compelling vision to address them, and access TA from available sources. Access to the Platform's support will be open to all SUN countries, and the platform will take a multi-stakeholder approach to capacity strengthening, i.e., ***not only SUN Country Focal Points and their government colleagues, but also other relevant stakeholders with important roles in achieving nutrition financing outcomes in countries, including civil society.***

3.1.1 Self-assessment: The starting point will be a user-friendly self-assessment, to better understand a country's capacities, needs and opportunities in nutrition financing.[3] The self-assessment will be used as the basis for multi-stakeholder discussions with the country about its situation and needs.

3.1.2 Customized country plan: The outcome of these discussions will be the development by countries of a customized country plan articulating a clear and compelling multi-year vision and roadmap for multi stakeholder financing capacity strengthening for the country to more effectively access and utilize financing for nutrition. As part of that roadmap, the plan will identify:

1) Key gaps and opportunities identified in the self-assessment.
2) Specific inputs required to address them, e.g., TA, peer learning, guidance and tools (leveraging the work carried out in the Nutrition Financing Information and Tools component to identify the most relevant resources for the country's specific needs – *see section 3.2 below*).
3) Concrete entry points and opportunities for support or action, e.g., domestic planning processes, donor allocation- and planning cycles, and funding proposals through international financing mechanisms.
4) Key timelines and milestones for optimizing a country's ability to pursue and leverage these opportunities.
5) Indicators of success, including to demonstrate concrete increases in the quantity and quality of financing.

3.1.3 Facilitation of TA to countries: One of the key questions considered in designing this component has been the extent of the Platform's engagement and responsibility in TA provision. In other words, should the Platform have an explicit mandate for TA provision? What would be the alternatives? A spectrum of options was considered as part of the design process – from no TA provision at all by the platform, to extensive TA provision financed and managed by the platform (*see a more detailed discussion of TA provision in Annex 1*).

It is important to note that there are already multiple channels for TA provision, including for nutrition financing-related needs. ***An important output of the Customized Country Plan will be the identification of ways to optimize the support provided through ongoing channels of assistance*** – including with bilateral, multilateral and other technical partners, with entry points identified in those partners' planning and budgeting cycles. This will result in improved alignment of TA with broader country needs, with a reduction in fragmentation and

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[3] Feedback from consultations has recommended that this and other tools be user-friendly, rather than a highly technical and intimidating diagnostic, which would diminish their use and utility.

duplication in partners' support to countries, and an ability to reallocate efficiencies generated in the process towards other priority TA needs. However, partner support to countries is highly variable vis-à-vis their needs, and there are likely to be important gaps, even with the optimization of existing channels of assistance.

Whilst recognizing the current substantial gaps in nutrition financing TA provision, *the proposed design is to include only a* **limited TA provision role for the Platform** (funding permitting), with a relatively small budget (<$1,000,000 annually) to enable early-stage assistance for highest-need countries, and or to pilot innovative approaches. As discussed in Annex 1, a large-scale TA provision mechanism would require an overwhelming level of initial focus and effort on procurement and control functions, and distract the attention otherwise needed to fulfil the Platform's more strategic opportunities for impact.

This limited TA budget could be utilized for countries with high burden, low capacity, and limited ongoing TA relationships with partners. Because of the confluence of their multiple challenges, such countries are often poorly positioned to access the support needed. They therefore stand to significantly benefit from prioritized assistance from the Platform – beyond the self-assessment and the development of a customized plan – to establish basic building blocks and improve the country's ability to attract further support from other sources. This limited budget could also be used to pilot approaches that have the potential to address important gaps identified in the Platform's broader work and contribute to ongoing learning and development of approaches. Examples of this are covered in the section 3.3.

While actual TA provision by the Platform would be limited to exceptional circumstances, the Platform will support countries in identifying relevant sources and channels of TA, and support countries' engagement with TA funders and initiatives as needed. Towards that end, the Platform will maintain a **Roster of TA providers and initiatives** and their funders, across a wide range of financing topics. The Roster will be searchable across different functional areas (e.g., budget/expenditure tracking, costing), financing type (e.g., domestic, multilateral, innovative), context (e.g., decentralized planning/budgeting, fragile/conflict-affected states) and sectors (e.g., nutrition-specific, agriculture, social protection, etc.), with an emphasis on nationally- and regionally-based expertise. It will furthermore include a wide spectrum of independent consultants and peer learning contacts – for example individuals that are not traditional TA providers, who have experience in specific areas in their own programs/institutions for potential exchange and learning. This Roster will enable countries to more easily identify potential providers that match their needs. The act of consolidating information about available TA provision capacity also creates an opportunity to identify gaps – including, for example, where TA capacity for a particular topic does not exist in a region or country, and where some coordinated and focused efforts might support the cultivation of more local TA capacity. This work will be aligned with and support the broader TA mapping and coordination efforts across the GSS.

3.2 Nutrition Financing information and tools

The Platform will act as a resource and guide to countries in navigating and accessing nutrition financing information and tools. This role will be akin to a reference librarian, which "recommends, interprets, evaluates, and/or uses information resources to help patrons with

specific information needs."[4] This function will involve indexing and reviewing nutrition financing-related content, organized around a structured vision of sustainable financing for nutrition, and advising partners and stakeholders on what might be most relevant to help them address their needs.[5] Such contents would include:

- Guidance, frameworks and tools
- E-learning modules
- Country case studies
- Information on external financing sources
- Examples of successful funding proposals

Much of the Platform's potential impact in this role lies in the interactions between this and its other proposed components:

- In its tailored country support, the Platform will be well positioned to identify the resources that directly respond to countries' needs, and guide them to the relevant tools, case studies and guidelines in a targeted manner.
- Technical partners and other service providers will be able to more easily draw upon (and contribute to) the resources compiled by the Platform in their support to countries.
- The Platform will furthermore play a valuable role in helping these technical partners understand what resources are available, and what utility they offer vis-à-vis specific country needs and situations. This will help foster ongoing learning amongst TA providers and reduce their risk of remaining entrenched in their own tools and approaches.
- The process of compiling and reviewing information and tools on nutrition financing also positions the Platform to identify opportunities to strengthen the use and utility of available resources – e.g., flagging gaps, the need for translation into other languages, inconsistencies in tools and guidance, issues with user friendliness, etc. – to inform further work.

It should be noted that many stakeholders (including the SMS) are already engaged in creating and compiling content that is relevant for nutrition financing capacity development. The Platform's work in this area would therefore leverage and contribute to those ongoing efforts, rather than duplicating them – referencing or sharing links to other information hubs where relevant. Related to this point, the manner in which the Platform carries out its work in collecting, assessing and curating nutrition financing information and tools may be

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[4] American Library Association, https://www.ala.org/educationcareers/libcareers/jobs/reference

[5] Earlier discussions envisioned a comprehensive, annotated resource library of nutrition-financing information and tools as the end-product of this component. There is arguably value in this: consolidating or linking resources in one location would simplify the process for navigating the broad and diverse landscape of nutrition financing-related information and tools, thus contributing to improved country literacy and capacity for nutrition financing. And yet, it has been noted that the work would likely require significant capacity and resources – not only to set up the library, but also to maintain and update it as new resources are developed or identified, add annotations, and to make curation adjustments so that it remains easy to navigate. Furthermore, even with a consolidated and well-curated resource library, country stakeholders are unlikely to have the time or bandwidth to conduct in-depth searches, or to discern the comparative utility of different tools. Therefore, although it is still proposed for the Platform to maintain an open-access repository of information and tools, the above-noted feedback has resulted in a shift in focus: whereas a well-designed library was initially viewed as the end output of this work, it has become clearer that the potentially greater (and more resource-efficient) value-add relates to the various ways in which the Platform can leverage the work of compiling and reviewing these resources towards concrete outcomes and impact for countries and partners.

considerably influenced by the eventual hosting arrangements of the Platform – including the extent to which the activities and operations of the Platform are integrated with those of its eventual host institution. Considerations for identifying the Platform's eventual host are detailed in Annex 2 (*Operationalizing the Platform*).

In operational terms, the bulk of the work related to this component would involve an initial (e.g., 6-9 month) review to take stock and develop an understanding of the availability and utility of nutrition financing-related information and tools. This could be paired with a modest level of effort to create a searchable repository of resources (or links to those resources), although it may not be necessary for the Platform to maintain the repository itself – this could be done in collaboration with the SMS or another party, for example. Beyond this, much of the Platform's focus would be in applying its understanding of the available tools and information – and the gaps therein – to support countries and the other areas of the Platform's work.

3.3 Liaison and convening function

There are numerous opportunities for valuable synergies between the various components described above. For example, the guidance and tools compiled by the Platform will become part of a country's customized support plan. A country case study may eventually lead to the people involved in that experience becoming part of the Roster for providing TA/peer learning to other country stakeholders. Fulfilling the Platform's full potential will depend on working in a way that ***proactively seeks out and exploits the synergies between these functions***.

This relates to a potentially even more powerful value proposition: As previously noted, the Platform will occupy a small but central and influential position that supports countries, and in doing so, also complements and adds value to the work of other initiatives and partners. Part of this value pertains to how the Platform works in collaboration with SUN's Global Support Structures, including the SMS and SUN partners. In particular, the Platform will work closely with the Regional Hubs, amplifying their ability to play their role in finance, and how financing relates to other topics. The Regional Hubs will also be a key partner of the Platform in any support provided to countries, particularly as financing issues are generally closely linked to political economy and the strength of multi-stakeholder platforms (MSPs).

But another important opportunity lies in how the Platform's own activities will generate important insights: about countries' needs and challenges, broader gaps in the landscape, and opportunities to make significant gains to improve nutrition financing outcomes at country- and global levels. The Platform will leverage these insights to play an important ***liaison and convening function between partners, not only to advance country financing capacity strengthening goals; but also to help shape the nutrition financing landscape more broadly by improving the understanding of the barriers countries are facing, and liaising between them and partners on how to address those barriers***.

The potential impact lies in ***leveraging the Movement and the partnership landscape in a more purposeful way towards concrete outcomes, in response to specific needs and opportunities***. The Roll Back Malaria Harmonization Working Group (*profiled in Annex 3*) provides an interesting case study of how the efforts of partners were convened and coordinated towards specific goals, with powerful results. At a high level, illustrative activities of the platform under this liaison and convening function might include:

- Proactively engaging with TA funders and providers to provide feedback on trends, gaps and themes in countries' nutrition financing-related needs, to help shape their support and approaches.
- Convening and collaborating with partners outside of nutrition, to adapt relevant high potential tools and frameworks from other sectors for nutrition outcomes (e.g., social protection shock- and risk-responsive approaches that flexibly accommodate surges in programmatic- and financing needs in humanitarian situations).
- "Borrowing" TA expertise in specific financing topics from other sectors or topics, e.g., health financing, or climate financing, to build TA capacity for supporting nutrition stakeholders and programs in countries.
- Supporting the growth of regional and domestic capacity and expertise, through sharing best practices and latest approaches or peer learning with nutrition financing communities of experts or -practice.
- Convening a working group to review funding criteria and past proposals for "nutrition-adjacent" international financing mechanisms – for example, the Global Agriculture and Food Security Program (GAFSP) or the Green Climate Fund – and developing case studies and frameworks to improve countries' access to funding from these initiatives and topics and maximize the nutrition outcomes from that funding; and piloting these approaches with countries in upcoming funding rounds.

The above examples are illustrative – there are many different directions this liaison and convening function could take, with different levels of ambition, outcomes and resource requirements. Depending on the need and resources available, the Platform could employ: a) a lighter model, in which the Platform simply flags gaps, issues and opportunities to relevant partners; or b) a more engaged model, in which the Platform convenes stakeholders and coordinates specific responses or outcomes. It may not be necessary to decide between these models now, as the opportunities for adding value through this function will emerge more fully once the Platform has established itself and its different operational features. However, it will be important to build this function into the operational ethos and job descriptions of the Platform.

As the Platform becomes more mature in its operating model – having compiled tools, frameworks, and rosters, and having worked with countries to identify and address needs across the broader spectrum of the nutrition financing value chain, and in different contexts – the value of this "birds-eye view" will only increase. Eventually, the Platform could evolve to provide a formidable global public good for nutrition financing, generating insights about the alignment of country financing and TA needs vs. the supply of TA and financing, promising approaches, or worrying trends – all of which could be leveraged by the Platform and the broader community to shape the demand and supply of technical support, and provide thought leadership for improving sustainable financing for nutrition more broadly.

IV.   THEORY OF CHANGE

In this section, a draft Theory of Change is proposed for the Platform. This exercise maps out a chain of causal linkages to clarify what the Platform is intended to achieve, through which approaches, and in response to what barriers and opportunities – thereby helping to reinforce an outcome- and results orientation in the Platform's design. It will also facilitate the Platform's performance management, both in terms of how well the Platform implements its defined activities, but also with regards to the effectiveness of its design and approaches.

Towards this end, as work progresses to operationalize the Platform, a clear performance framework will be developed – tied to the Platform's work planning and prioritization – which builds on this Theory of Change, with clear indicators, milestones and timelines. These tools – including the Theory of Change itself – should be revisited and adjusted as necessary as the Platform is operationalized, and as evidence emerges to show progress and/or challenges in achieving the Platform's objectives. This will help ensure that the Platform is a learning and dynamic initiative – receptive and responsive not just to country needs, but also to identified opportunities to improve its own work. A high-level visual representation of this draft Theory of Change is provided below:

Draft FCDP Theory of Change
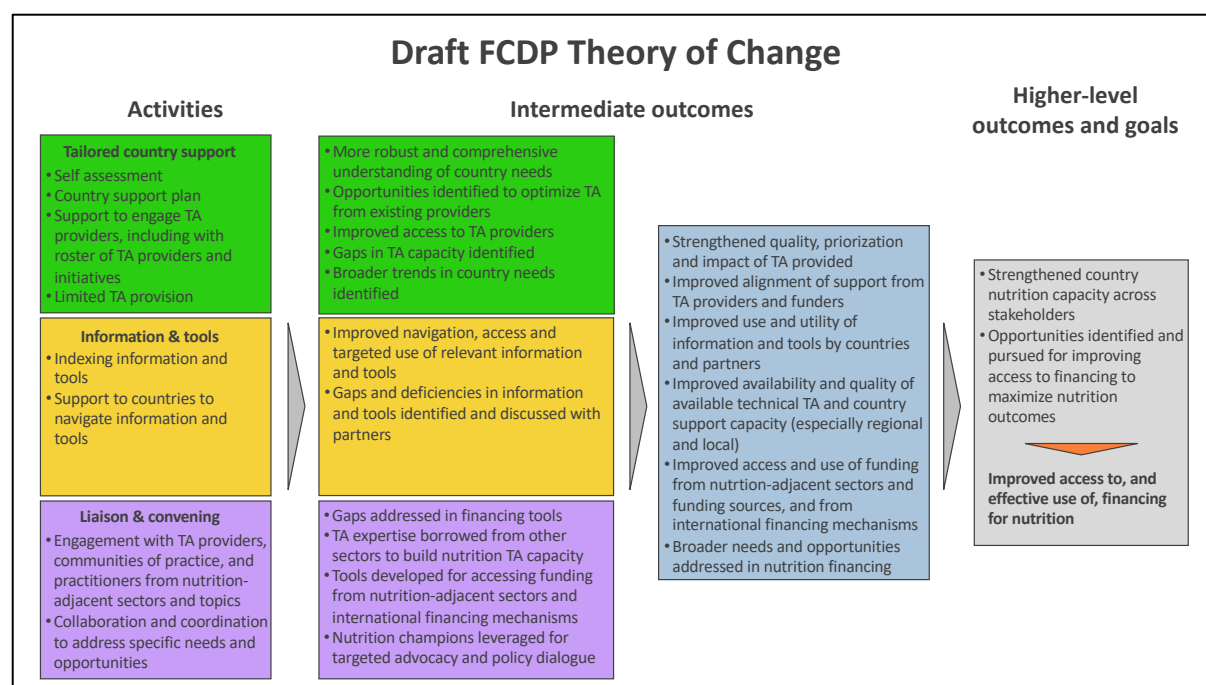
4.1 Goals of the Platform

The overarching goal of the Platform will be to support improved access to, and effective use of, financing for nutrition. It will seek to accomplish this goal through facilitating both the strengthening of countries' nutrition financing capacity, with tailored support according to their specific needs; as well as the identification and pursuit of concrete opportunities for accessing additional funding in ways that maximize nutrition outcomes, putting into practice the capacity being developed.

4.2 Problem statement

The overarching goal of "more money for nutrition, more nutrition for the money" is not new. In various formulations, this has been a top-line objective of the SUN Movement since its first strategy, and of many organizations working in nutrition well before the SUN Movement's inception. A number of challenges have hindered the achievement of this goal, however. These include:

- The spectrum of needs and contexts for nutrition financing-related support (including TA) is vast and diverse. This has made it difficult 1) for any institution or initiative to provide comprehensive support that responds to a country's needs; and 2) for the collective technical and financial support of partners to be harnessed in support of those needs in a coordinated manner, towards concrete outcomes.

- Much of the support to date has been focused on specific outputs or processes. This has led to 1) discrete and fragmented TA projects and consultancies, with limited results, and 2) missed opportunities for providing capacity-building support that is responsive to a more strategic and holistic assessment of a country's needs and opportunities, rather than an immediate process objective.
- There is a wealth of financing-related knowledge and tools, but much of this remains scattered, with insufficient curation, which has limited the use and utility of these resources.
- There are gaps in TA provision capacity, especially at local- and regional levels. Likewise, there are gaps and deficiencies in the available nutrition financing-related information and tools. Perhaps a more fundamental issue however is that 1) there appears to be no comprehensive understanding of these gaps and deficiencies, including where they are most acute, vis-à-vis country needs; and 2) there is an insufficient responsiveness in mobilizing the partnership landscape to address these identified gaps and deficiencies.
- The needs and opportunities for securing financing and achieving nutrition outcomes through other sectors and topics has been a long-recognized priority, and yet there has been limited progress in doing so.
- There is insufficient shared knowledge about international financing mechanisms, including what nutrition-related needs are eligible for funding from these mechanisms, how and when to access the funds, and the factors and approaches that will help make funding requests through these mechanisms successful. There is similarly insufficient knowledge and "know how" when it comes to innovative financing sources, including market- and blended financing.

4.3 Activities and associated outcomes

The design features proposed in this document seek to achieve the Platform's goals in a way that responds to the challenges noted above – learning from the successes and limitations of the work carried out to date. To illustrate this, the Platform's proposed key activities and ways of working are described below, along with the outcomes they are expected to help achieve, in service of its broader goal.

The tailored country support function will contribute to the following outcomes:

- An improved and more comprehensive understanding of countries' nutrition financing capacity needs and opportunities.
- More effectively designed and targeted support from TA providers and funders, with inputs more strategically prioritized, sequenced and channeled to directly improve countries' nutrition financing-related capabilities and outcomes.
- Improved alignment of nutrition financing-related support from technical and funding partners.
- Strengthened capacity in the areas that represent each country's most strategic opportunities for improving access to financing for nutrition from all sources and sectors, and for maximizing the impact of that financing towards nutrition outcomes.
- Ability to identify specific gaps in TA provision capacity, and how they relate to country needs.
- Ability to analyze broader trends in nutrition financing capacity needs.

The "reference librarian" function will help country stakeholders and technical partners navigate the vast body of nutrition financing-related information and tools. This function will contribute to the following outcomes:

- Improve the utility and targeted use of existing resources, in order to support countries' capacity strengthening, and to help them achieve specific objectives and outcomes.
- Foster ongoing learning amongst TA providers and experts, and reduce their risk of remaining entrenched in their own tools and approaches.
- Having reviewed the available nutrition financing-related information and tools, the Platform will be positioned to identify concrete opportunities to strengthen the use and utility of available resources – including through flagging gaps, translation needs, inconsistencies, issues with user friendliness, etc.

The liaison and convening function will further advance the goals of the Platform and contribute to the strengthening and coherence of the nutrition financing landscape more broadly, through:

- Strengthened access to tools, information and expertise "borrowed" from nutrition-adjacent sectors and topics, including for challenging contexts, such as humanitarian and decentralized planning/financing situations.
- Ongoing growth and learning of communities of experts/practice through sharing best practices and new approaches.
- Improved countries' access to, and optimized use of, funds from international financing mechanisms.
- Feedback provided to technical- and funding partners on trends, gaps and themes in countries' nutrition financing-related needs, helping to shape and optimize their support to countries.
- More effective and targeted leveraging of the Executive Committee, SUN Movement Coordinator, the Lead Group and other nutrition champions for advocacy and policy dialogue on key nutrition financing issues.

Finally, the Platform's activities and ways of working are intended to provide valuable support directly to countries and position the Platform to **play a complementary and amplifying role vis-à-vis the work of the GSS, and other partners and initiatives.** For example:

- The Platform's work on curating the use of nutrition financing-related information and tools will improve the uptake and utility of the resources developed and compiled by the GSS and other partners. It will also help ensure that technical service providers are equipped with the most relevant and useful tools in their support to countries.
- The Tailored Country Support work will directly shape countries' demand for nutrition financing-related TA, helping to ensure that responses from technical and funding partners are responsive to a comprehensive assessment of countries' needs and contribute to the long-term vision articulated by countries.
- The Platform's liaison and convening role will contribute to the effectiveness and prioritization of partners' nutrition financing-related support, through flagging broader gaps, challenges and opportunities, and proactively working with partners to address those.
- The Platform will work closely with the Regional Hubs, complementing their relationships and dialogues with country stakeholders with greater depth of financing expertise and

relationships, and enhancing their ability to facilitate financing knowledge and experience sharing within their regions.

The above narrative presents how the Platform's activities and ways of working will directly contribute to a number of outcomes, which are variously articulated largely in shorter- and intermediate terms. As the Platform is operationalized and its workplan and priorities are further developed, it will be important to refine this Theory of Change narrative with more specificity, including defining higher-level outcomes that more closely link with its overarching goals.

4.4 Key operating principles

The platform's work will be guided by the following proposed operating principles:

- Being responsive to and serving countries (including their governments, but also other key stakeholders, including civil society), first and foremost.
- As an extension of that principle, actively identifying and pursuing opportunities to enhance the rationalization, effectiveness and impact of partners' support to countries.
- A strategic outcomes-oriented approach.
- A holistic approach to understanding and responding to countries' financing capacity challenges and opportunities, as opposed to a focus on individual processes and outputs.
- A model of support that is responsive to opportunities for both improving nutrition financing outcomes in specific and immediate ways, as well addressing longer-term capacity development needs.
- A light and agile operational model that enables the Platform to more effectively complement and add value to the work of other initiatives and partners; and to make necessary adjustments according to ongoing shifts in country needs and the landscape, and in response to evidence about the Platform's own effectiveness and impact. This is reflected in the preliminary staffing and budget estimates, with 3-5 full-time staff, and an annual budget of approximately $1-2 million[6] (*see Annex 2 for more details*).

V.   CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The Platform's design process has been fast-paced and intense, and this proposal has been developed through an iterative design, analysis and feedback process. Overall, consultations carried out during this incubation phase have generated across-the-board enthusiasm for the design features recommended in this paper, and the unique approach and the benefits and potential impact they will bring. More specific feedback includes:

- Appreciation for the complementarity with the broader TA and knowledge management space; and a call for continued coordination in the ongoing design and operationalization of new initiatives, to ensure complementarity and minimize duplication.
- Encouragement to ensure that tools (including the self-assessment) are user friendly, to maximize country uptake.
- A strong interest for the Platform to help countries identify concrete pathways for more effectively accessing funding from the complex external financing landscape.
- Recognized value in helping improve the use and utility of nutrition financing-related knowledge and tools through more comprehensive curation and targeted use.

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[6] Depending on whether a discrete budget for TA provision is provided. Details and assumptions are provided in Annex 2 (*Operationalizing the Platform*)

- Significant enthusiasm for the Platform's liaison and convening function, in particular to:
  - Enable countries to better coordinate and improve alignment of nutrition financing-related support from technical and funding partners,
  - Feed into the planning and coordination of SUN networks and members around identified country needs and opportunities, and
  - More effectively leverage nutrition champions for advocacy and policy dialogue to improve the nutrition financing landscape.

In many instances, this document provides some level of detail on what the Platform will or might do, and how. This allows for a more concrete elaboration of what outcomes the Platform's work can help achieve, and with what interaction with the broader landscape. But it will be important not to adhere too rigidly to these details –encouraging the Platform to be a flexible and learning initiative, able to respond to and adjust to country needs, lessons in the effectiveness of its approaches, and changes in the broader landscape.

The FTT requests the Executive Committee's endorsement of the high-level design features proposed in this document, and the key operating principles noted in section 4.4. The FTT also welcomes feedback on the more detailed discussions of the Platform's specific activities and priorities, but notes that these will require more dynamic and ongoing oversight and management during the Platform's operationalization and launch. These details will also significantly depend on and feed into discussions regarding the mobilization of resources for the Platform, and the determination of its eventual hosting arrangements.

The FTT also requests the Executive Committee's endorsement of a proposed oversight and governance framework for the Platform. As described in Annex 2 (*Operationalizing the Platform*), which provides a more in-depth discussion on the Platform's oversight and governance, ***it is proposed that the Executive Committee be formally established as the ultimate governing body for the Platform***, which would ensure that the Platform's work is well aligned and complementary to the SUN Movement's broader activities. This governance setup also supports a harmonized and unified governance model, in line with the SUN 3.0 goal of greater alignment. In order to allow for a more flexible and technically-oriented oversight of the Platform, it is proposed that ***the Executive Committee Finance Task Team play a "first-line" oversight and stewardship role for the Platform*** – continuing the role that it has already been playing during the Incubation Phase – with frequent meetings and focused discussions on the Platform. As needed, the FTT may charge a subgroup to provide more day-to-day oversight and guidance, particularly during what is likely to be a fast-moving and intense launch phase. The FTT will ensure that key developments and decisions are brought to the Executive Committee, including through ad hoc updates or meetings outside of the Executive Committee's standing schedule, as necessary.

Annex 2 proposes a roadmap for operationalizing the Platform. This includes 1) discussion on key decisions required to enable the Platform's operationalization, including its oversight and governance set-up (as noted above), as well as its hosting arrangements, staffing and budget; and 2) a draft plan for setting up those arrangements, as well as other preparatory work required in advance of the Platform's launch. The FTT welcomes the Executive Committee's input on the work described in the Operationalization Annex; but it ***does not request formal endorsement on the operationalization details at this time***, as the Launch phase is likely to be an evolving process requiring dynamic management and adjustments.

Annex 1: Considerations on the Platform's role in TA provision

In recent years, there have been several centralized global mechanisms for TA provision in nutrition. These have included Maximizing the Quality of Scaling Up Nutrition (MQSUN and MQSUN+), Nutrition International's Technical Assistance for Nutrition (NI TAN), and to some extent the SUN Multi Partner Trust Fund (MPTF) – the first two of which were funded by UK Aid as part of its Technical Assistance for Nutrition (TAN) program. These mechanisms have provided demand-driven TA to countries in key areas, including in the costing of multi-sectoral plans, budget analysis and financial tracking. They have also developed tools relevant to nutrition financing, for example through the MQSUN Toolkit on Multisectoral Planning for Nutrition, Costing and Financing. However, funding for these initiatives has come to an end.

One of the key questions considered in designing this component has therefore been the extent of the Platform's engagement and responsibility in TA provision. In other words, would the Platform have an explicit mandate for TA provision? What would be the alternatives? A spectrum of options was considered as part of the design process, from the Platform having no TA provision mandate at all, to an extensive TA provision mandate financed and managed by the platform.

At a minimum, the Platform would support countries in i) developing their Plans, ii) navigating available information and tools on the platform, and iii) identifying relevant TA providers; but not provide any actual technical assistance, beyond a potential periodic check-in to discuss progress and update the Plan as needed. This option would fully rely on other mechanisms for TA provision. In some cases, this may be sufficient, since the Plan would include ways to shape and optimize the support provided through ongoing channels of assistance – for example with bilateral, multilateral and other technical partners, with entry points identified in those partners' planning and budgeting cycles. This would result in improved alignment and a reduction in the fragmentation or duplication of partner support, and an ability to reallocate any efficiencies generated in the process towards other priority TA needs. However, many countries' needs may not be sufficiently served through these existing mechanisms and relationships. Furthermore, as previously noted, the mandates and budgets of some of the major TA mechanisms for nutrition have now come to an end, which is currently widening the gap in the available TA supply vis-à-vis the demand.

A more ambitious scenario would be for the Platform to manage a large-scale TA provision mechanism – perhaps similar to the MQSUN model. This scenario would have significant financial implications, even if the TA provision mandate were limited only to nutrition financing-related topics. Of the 75 TA requests logged by the SMS in 2021, 29 were in the area of nutrition financing – the highest of all the TA request categories. This does not include TA requests made through other channels. Addressing each of these requests could easily require an annual budget of at least several million US Dollars. It would also require significant operational capacity – for example to manage the procurement, contracts and performance of TA providers.

Whilst recognizing the current gaps in nutrition financing TA provision, *the FTT **does not recommend establishing the Platform as a large-scale TA provision mechanism*** at this time. In operational and oversight terms, this would devote a high level of initial focus and effort

on procurement and control functions, which could dominate the attention needed to fulfil the Platform's more strategic opportunities for impact.

Furthermore, as previously noted, the landscape of global TA provision mechanisms is very much in flux. For example, the C4N initiative (expected to be operational in 2023) plans to provide support services for strengthened capacities for nutrition planning and policy response, including in some nutrition financing topics. UNICEF is investing significant resources in nutrition financing capacity strengthening support to countries. The SMS is developing a proposal to enhance support to MSPs, and is furthermore coordinating an effort to articulate and clarify the roles and responsibilities of different parts of the GSS in implementing the SUN Financing Framework adopted by the Lead Group in September 2021. The Platform has a potentially important role to play in helping to ensure that the nutrition financing-related TA requests through these mechanisms are well formulated and prioritized, and that these mechanisms take into account the broader scope of countries' needs, capacities and opportunities.

Noting the limitations in the current TA provision landscape however, and the uncertainty in whether, how, when and to whom support from new TA provision mechanisms will be made available, *the FTT recommends a limited TA provision role for the Platform, with a relatively small budget ($1,000,000 annually) to enable targeted assistance for priority situations, and a strong learning focus*. This budget could be utilized for countries with high burden, low capacity, and limited ongoing TA relationships with partners. Because of the confluence of their multiple challenges, such countries are often poorly positioned to access the support needed. They therefore stand to significantly benefit from prioritized assistance from the Platform – beyond the assessment and the development of a customized Plan – to establish basic building blocks and improve the country's ability to attract further support from other sources. This limited budget could also be used to pilot approaches that have the potential to address important gaps identified in the Platform's broader work and contribute to ongoing learning and development of approaches.

Annex 2: Operationalizing the platform

Once the Platform's high-level design features have been endorsed, the work to operationalize the Platform will start. Before the Platform can begin implementing the key activities and services described in the main body of this report, however, advance work will be required to prepare the Platform for its launch. This annex comprises two sections:

1) A discussion on key decisions required for the Platform's operationalization, including its hosting and governance arrangements; and
2) A draft plan for setting up those arrangements, as well as other preparatory work required in advance of the Platform's launch.

I. KEY OPERATIONAL DECISIONS

This section discusses key operational details that will need to be clarified before the Platform can be launched. These include:

1) Oversight and governance
2) Hosting arrangements
3) Staffing
4) Budget

The focus of this section is primarily on topics 1 and 2, with analysis for exploring and deciding on options. Staffing and budgeting are also covered in this Annex, but at a higher, more illustrative level, as some of the details around these topics will be significantly influenced by decisions on the Platform's hosting arrangements.

1.1 Oversight and governance

As previously noted, the Platform will require a clear and effective oversight mechanism. This will involve fulfilling a number of standard governance functions, including:

- Provide input into the Platform's strategic goals, approach, and direction.
- Review and advise on the performance and effectiveness of the Platform in achieving its intended goals, and revisiting and adjusting these and the Platform's approaches as needed, to maximize its impact and value-add to countries and the broader landscape.
- Approve the Platform's high-level budget and operational priorities.
- Support the Platform's resource mobilization efforts to meet its budgetary needs.
- Ensure that the hosting arrangements fulfil the needs of the Platform and its donors, and that they establish and protect an appropriate model of independent governance and oversight.
- Approve the terms of reference of Platform staff, and in some cases key staffing decisions.
- Approve appropriate measures to manage conflicts of interest, and review potential conflict of interest cases, as needed.
- Approve the criteria for allocating TA budget (if the Platform manages any budget for TA provision).

The Platform's oversight and governance body might also fulfil a broader role in acting as an extension of the Platform – for example in supporting its efforts to identify TA capacity, address gaps, and in its liaison and convening functions, including through helping to leverage

the SUN Movement Coordinator, Lead Group and other key figures, as needed, for important advocacy and policy dialogue.

The oversight and governance needs are likely to be relatively intense through the Platform's launch phase, given the work and decisions required regarding the Platform's hosting arrangements, staffing, budget and operational priorities. Thus, although the SUN Movement Executive Committee is best positioned to provide overall oversight and governance of the Platform, it may not have the required bandwidth, nor be the most suitable vehicle for fulfilling all of the above-noted functions – particularly during the Platform's launch phase. The Platform's governance may furthermore require more specialized expertise and experience than currently resides in the broader profiles of individuals in the Executive Committee.

The FTT is already playing a "first-line" oversight and stewardship role for the Platform's Incubation Phase – with frequent meetings and focused discussions on the Platform – and it could theoretically continue playing this role on behalf of the Executive Committee. As part of these responsibilities, the FTT would continue to provide regular updates to the Executive Committee, and escalate issues of particular strategic or political importance, as necessary. This would feed into ***the Executive Committee's bigger-picture governance role, including to ensure that the work on nutrition financing (including the Platform) is well aligned and complementary to the broader work and approaches of the SUN Movement.*** Such an approach would be aligned with the Board- and Board Subcommittee governance model that many other corporations, partnerships, funds and NGOs follow. In such cases, it is important to clearly demarcate the respective oversight and governance roles between the Board (in this case the Executive Committee) and the Subcommittee (the FTT) – in particular, what decision-making authority the FTT would have (if any), and specific categories of issues that require escalation to the Executive Committee. To the extent that the FTT's oversight and governance of the Platform might benefit from the addition of different perspectives or areas of expertise, the FTT's composition might be revisited and revised accordingly.

The proposed use of the Executive Committee and the FTT as the primary oversight and governance structures for the Platform also supports a harmonized and unified governance model within the SUN Movement, in line with the SUN 3.0 goal of greater alignment of efforts towards the key priorities of the strategy. It also maintains the centrality of countries in overseeing and governing the Platform, given the prominent inclusion and role of country stakeholders in both the Executive Committee and FTT composition. Indeed, some of the most active engagement in the Platform's design process has come from country representatives on the FTT (who are also in some cases Executive Committee members).

The role of donors can sometimes overlap with that of governance bodies. Donors often have their own requirements for the recipients of their funds, and they also have accountability and responsibilities vis-à-vis their own constituencies and governance bodies. The Platform's governance body might theoretically approve a budget, a hosting option, or a set of activities; but the ability for the Platform to implement based on those approvals is also partly dependent on their compliance with donor requirements. However, there are ample examples of multistakeholder governance bodies that successfully navigate these issues, including the SUN Movement's own governance structures.

Alternatively, an entirely new governance structure might be considered, which is fully focused on the Platform. However, *there is little or no apparent value to creating a new governance structure; and doing so would carry significant risk of fragmentation. The recommendation is therefore that governance and oversight of the Platform be the ultimate responsibility of the Executive Committee, with some functions delegated to the FTT*.

1.2 Hosting arrangements

In May 2021, the SUN Movement Operations Group Finance Working Group released a report with recommendations for delivering on the nutrition financing aspects of the SUN Movement's 3.0 strategy, including a recommendation to launch the Finance Capacity Development Platform. The report suggested three options for how the Platform might be set up and resourced, which broadly comprised: 1) setting up the Platform using existing SMS/GSS structures and resources, with surge support from partners and the potential use of the SUN Pooled Fund for TA provision; 2) setting up the Platform using existing structures and resources, but with additional external expertise to "build and kickstart the platform"; or 3) setting up the Platform through a separate entity. Some of the details and assumptions vis-à-vis the Platform's design and approach have evolved significantly since that report – including through this FCDP design process. This Annex therefore treats the Working Group's paper as a useful reference and starting point; but provides a more expansive exploration of different hosting options, and proposes key criteria and considerations to assist in navigating the options.

1.2.1 Hosting criteria

In identifying the optimal hosting arrangement for the Platform, it will be important not only to consider the different services that potential hosts might offer, but also a broader set of criteria that speak to the Platform's operational and governance needs; and the implications of different hosting options vis-à-vis the Platform's interactions with the SUN Movement's structures, stakeholders, and the broader partnership landscape.

In its most basic form, hosting is a function in which one institution or entity provides services to facilitate the operations for another organization or initiative. These services often involve "back office" administrative functions, including human resources (HR) management, financial/budget management, operational infrastructure and equipment (e.g., office space, IT), and contracting and procurement. For some administrative services, the Platform's needs may be relatively light. For example, the Platform may need only minimal or no provision of office space, if the Platform's staff largely or entirely work on a remote basis. However, the Platform will likely require HR or procurement services for contracting and compensating Platform staff,[7] budget/funds management, and the development and management of the Platform's website. If the Platform does manage a (limited) budget for TA provision as currently suggested, TA contracting-related services may be required from the host institution. It is worth noting that one of the most important assets of the Platform will be its staff – and their ability to manage the complex mix of technical, political and strategic aspects of the work in a dynamic, service-oriented and agile manner. The ability to hire, retain and

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[7] The term "staff" is used here as a matter of convenience. Based on design iterations and consultations thus far, there appears to be reasonable basis for concluding that some full-time capacity will be required to carry out the functions and activities of the Platform, which will require HR-type functions related to recruiting, contracting and compensating the individuals that will be involved in these functions and activities. This paper does not however assume the duration or type of contract, including whether the individuals will be contracted as employees or consultants.

administratively support the staff will therefore be critical. Some of the important criteria to ensure an *optimized and supportive administrative hosting environment* include:

<u>Ability to receive donor funds and manage donor requirements:</u> It can be difficult or even impossible for some donors – in particular sovereign (i.e., government) donors – to fund new organizations without an established track record of operations and financial management. Additionally, some potential host institutions may have less capacity or inclination to fulfil the sometimes heavy and often distinct reporting and fiduciary requirements for multiple donors; or they may only be willing to do so at a higher overhead rate, particularly if the overall budget for the Platform is relatively small. On the other hand, some established organizations may already have received funding from key potential donors, thus greatly facilitating the ability to receive further funds from those donors. This criterion will need to be reviewed and refined, as the sources of the Platform's operational funding become clearer.

<u>Administrative/financial stewardship:</u> Robust fiduciary controls will be needed for budget and procurement functions; and recruitment and contracting will require well-defined and fair processes and procedures.

<u>Administrative efficiency and flexibility:</u> At the same time, the Platform's agility will be critical to its success – as noted in the main body of this report – and its operations will therefore need to be light and responsive. This will require administrative processes that are not excessively burdensome and bureaucratic. Especially considering the relatively small expected size of the Platform's operations, it will be critical that the Platform's staff are not entangled in heavy administrative processes, at the expense of focusing on their more substantive responsibilities. Administrative efficiency and flexibility will be necessary both for the longer-term "steady-state" operations of the Platform once it is fully operational, but also in the start-up phase, including for recruitments and setting up the Platform's operations. The SUN Movement is now 2 years into its 5-year 3.0 strategy; and if the Platform is to deliver any notable value during the current strategy cycle, it will require light and effective recruitment and contracting processes, so that its work can commence as soon as possible.

<u>Compensation framework:</u> In many cases, the salary structures, consultant rates and related benefits and other relevant policies that have been established for the host institution's own core business also apply for the staff and contractors of its hosted initiatives. Thus, once a job description has been agreed upon, it is generally evaluated by a pre-defined process to determine the position's level, with an associated pay grade – often with little or no room for negotiation outside of established compensation ranges. For employee contracts (as opposed to consultants), the host institution's broader benefits package also typically applies – including retirement benefits; health/disability insurance; and paid leave for vacation, illness or maternity/paternity, for example. A host institution's compensation framework therefore has direct implications on the ability to attract expertise and talent for the Platform's work. It also has implications on the Platform's budgetary needs. Beyond employee salary ranges, consulting rates and benefit packages, some institutions have international organization status recognized by the national government(s) where they operate. This status affords the institutions and their employees certain privileges and immunities, including tax exemption on employee income. Tax exemptions essentially increase the effective "in-pocket" employee

compensation vis-à-vis the actual budget required for that salary.[8] It should be noted however that some 3rd-party hosting arrangements have more flexibility on compensation packages, and that the HR policies of the host institution in such situations may be less consequential.

Administrative hosting functions and services are critical. However, ***hosting arrangements also involve other important benefits and risks, related to the expertise, business model, reputation, relationships and other characteristics of the host institution.*** Some of these considerations are discussed below.

Expertise and capacity: If the host institution has expertise in some of the technical areas that are important for the Platform's work, the Platform could potentially benefit from that expertise, for example in helping to identify the appropriate tools, frameworks and approaches for supporting countries.

Business model synergies and risks: There are some ways in which synergies in the activities and goals – for example in knowledge management and capacity building – between the Platform and its host institution can be quite valuable, as they present opportunities for the Platform to leverage the systems, processes and functional capacities of its host, to enhance the work and generate operational efficiencies on both sides. These synergies can also represent risks and liabilities, however. For example, if a host institution already has a system for compiling information and tools, the Platform might benefit from these; but it may make it difficult for the Platform to organize its own work differently, if the host institution's knowledge management approach is not well suited to the specialized needs of the Platform. Business model synergies can also create conflicts of interest, as discussed below. This relates to another point, which is also discussed in further detail below: the more the Platform works with, and is integrated in, a set of pre-existing related activities and systems in the host institution, the more difficult it may be for the Platform to establish new approaches. This can bring benefits, but it also can limit innovation and differentiation from existing models.

Conflicts of interest: The Platform's work will likely shape the demand and provision of technical assistance. It will be important to safeguard against the risk of the host institution unduly 1) influencing the Platform's work in shaping TA demand and provision, and/or 2) benefiting from the way in which the Platform shapes TA demand and provision (in financial, political or other terms). There are ways to manage conflicts of interest – for example through creating separate reporting lines, insulating the key activities of the Platform and its host institution from each other (through "Chinese wall" arrangements), or charging an independent governance body with key decisions. However, these measures may not fully or sufficiently address conflicts of interest, or the perception of conflict. Alternatively, the host institution might recuse itself from any potential technical assistance provision that arises from the Platform's work. This too may be suboptimal, as it might prevent the host institution from carrying out important and valuable work to support countries. But there are examples of past initiatives such as MQSUN or NI-TAN where these issues seem to have been managed without major issues.

Independence. As discussed above, the recommendation of this report is to entrust the

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[8] This tax exemption generally also applies to other operational costs of the institution, including for the procurement of goods and services. However, because these expenditures are not expected to be high, the question of taxation on operational costs is unlikely to factor significantly in the Platform's budgetary needs, nor in the host selection criteria.

governance and accountability responsibilities for approving and providing direction on key strategic, budgetary and operational issues of the Platform to the SUN Executive Committee. However, depending on where the Platform will be hosted, it will be required to comply with the relevant rules, regulations and procedures of its host, to enable the host institution to fulfil its fiduciary responsibilities. This effectively will create a separate reporting line to the host institution, and thus a *two layer-system of governance and accountability*, in which the Platform reports to, and is subject to the review of, 1) the host institution on administrative matters – generally those related to budget management, procurement and human resources – and separately to 2) the Executive Committee (and FTT), which sets the strategy; approves the budget, terms of reference, and in some cases key hiring decisions; and is responsible for the high-level performance management of the initiative. In practice, this can sometimes lead to complications, especially where there are inherent oversight and accountability overlaps – for example, on budgetary and HR matters where the host institution will have some oversight and control responsibilities, but where the Executive Committee will exercise overall oversight for budget prioritization and -utilization, and key staffing decisions. These overlaps can contribute to tensions and challenges in the Platform's ability to operate efficiently and independently. These tensions are common, but it will be important to structure and manage the hosting arrangements in a way that 1) enables the host institution to appropriately fulfil its fiduciary responsibilities; but also 2) provides sufficient space and independence for the Platform to optimize its work in service of countries and the broader SUN Movement, and its accountability to the Executive Committee (rather than being beholden to the host institution's interests and management decisions).

Reputation and identity. The host institution's standing and credibility can be a significant asset. If the host institution is a known entity with strong relevant relationships, this may help the Platform gain traction early on in engaging with countries and partners. However, it may also be important for the Platform to have its own identity, which distinguishes its work from other existing institutions, initiatives and approaches.

Value for money. Another important consideration is the cost of the hosting arrangement, and what that money buys in terms of services, expertise and other potential benefits. Comparing value for money between different potential hosting arrangements can be challenging, because different host institutions sometimes use different systems for cost categorization,[9] and they generally offer different types and levels of service. Detailed budget and service proposals will be necessary to evaluate the comparative value for money of different potential hosting options.

Many of the criteria and considerations noted above represent trade-offs. The policies, guidelines and management oversight of a potential host institution should provide confidence in the host's fiduciary functions. They can also compromise the initiative's ability to optimize its operations, recruitment and budget utilization, however. The synergies between the Platform and its host institution can help enhance the work and generate efficiencies, but also compromise its independence and create conflicts of interest. And it can be challenging to maximize the benefits of a host institution's reputation and relationships, whilst maintaining a distinct identity for the hosted initiative.

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[9] E.g., fixed percentage indirect support costs, direct expenditure categories and staff/consultant compensation packages.

In part because of these trade-offs, the above-noted criteria do not lend themselves well to a standard "scoring" system for evaluating hosting options. Even if a potential hosting arrangement promised significant advantages in many areas, certain details in other areas (or even in just one area) could effectively disqualify that option or render it highly unsuitable. In order to appropriately manage these complexities, the following approach is proposed for assessing different hosting options, which treats the criteria and considerations in three categories:

1) **Pre-qualification criteria:** These are the most basic and essential needs: if a hosting option cannot reasonably fulfil them, it arguably should not be considered further. These include:
   - Ability to receive donor funds and manage donor requirements
   - Administrative/financial stewardship

2) **Selection criteria:** These are critical considerations to be evaluated qualitatively, many of which speak to the nature of the relationship between the Platform and its potential host, and what benefits and risks that would entail. These include:
   - Administrative efficiency and flexibility
   - Independence
   - Conflicts of interest[10]
   - Expertise and capacity
   - Business model synergies and risks
   - Reputation and identity
   - Compensation framework

3) **Cost/benefit analysis:** This reviews the benefits and advantages of each hosting option against their costs (value for money) and risks. This analysis should be carried out from a broader perspective, viewing the goals and needs of the Platform, the factors that will be most critical to its success, and those that would put the Platform's goals most at risk.

This tiered approach can help structure the discussions and evaluation of hosting options. It should not be used however as a strict review protocol to be followed dogmatically. As options are explored, some criteria may need to be adjusted, added or removed; and before taking a decision, it should be clarified how these criteria will be utilized – for example, in what scenarios might the assessment of one criterion effectively disqualify a hosting candidate, or how the criteria are weighted.

Some of the flexibility required in reviewing the criteria has to do with the fact that there are many ways in which the hosting role might be fulfilled. ***One critical variable will be the extent to which the Platform operates a) as a distinct initiative hosted by another institution; or whether b) the Platform's activities and services will be fully integrated into the business model and operations of another institution***. This latter scenario would essentially involve supporting (and funding) a set of activities and functions within another institution, which the institution would integrate into its other activities and broader operations. Doing so may have its benefits in operational and strategic synergies, but it would also carry risks. Many of these benefits and risks manifest themselves in a number of the considerations listed above – including in the access to the host institution's expertise and capacity, business model

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[10] In some ways, a high risk of conflict of interest might be considered an automatically-disqualifying factor; and indeed, some conflict-of-interest scenarios may render a hosting option untenable. However, this is often only fully understood after more careful consideration of the conflict of interest scenario, how it might be managed, and the risks and benefits.

synergies and risks; conflicts of interest; independence; and reputation and identity. Of particular note is that full integration can effectively limit external oversight of the strategic direction, resource prioritization and operational approaches, with more decisions and direction-setting sitting with that institution's management team, compared with a scenario in which the Platform is less integrated within its host's business model. It should be noted however that it not always a binary decision of choosing between a hosted or an integrated operational setup. There are degrees of potential integration, and of the associated benefits and risks.

Finally, it should be noted that this section operates under the ***assumption that the Platform would be best served by a hosting arrangement, as opposed to establishing the Platform as a stand-alone entity***. This assumption is based on a number of factors, including the fact that the Platform's operations are proposed to be served by a small number of staff; and there are therefore benefits to leveraging the administrative services of a larger institution, rather than setting up these functions independently. Perhaps of greater consequence is the fact that many donors may not be able to fund an entirely new entity without any established track record of operations and financial management. Another consideration is the fact that the Platform is not intended to be a permanent structure. Given these factors, creating a new stand-alone entity would likely offer limited value, vis-à-vis the associated costs, effort and time required.

1.2.2 Categories of potential hosting arrangements

Below is an illustrative list of the categories of institutions that might be considered for hosting the Platform, with a brief discussion on each. *Note: none of the institutions below have been approached to discuss the possibility of, nor their interest in, hosting the Platform. The institutions have been noted here illustratively in order to frame the discussion of options, and the considerations vis-à-vis different categories of options. The work of approaching and discussing hosting arrangements with potential candidates is noted in the Launch Phase section of this Annex.*

SUN Movement Secretariat (SMS): Nominally, the SMS' functions would make it an obvious candidate for hosting the Platform – particularly those related to facilitating knowledge sharing, liaising, and its central role in engagement with and support to SUN Countries. However, the SMS' expertise in the Platform's substantive areas of work is currently limited; and some of the SMS' activities and ways of working under SUN 3.0 are still being clarified or set up. Another consideration is that the significant overlap in the nominal functions between the SMS and the Platform also presents potential complications in the Platform's operational and oversight models. In some ways the logical approach of an SMS-hosted Platform would be to integrate the Platform's work with that of the SMS. This has potential benefits, but also risks losing some of the more distinct characteristics of the Platform. It could also dilute the ability to provide management and governance oversight in a more focused manner vis-à-vis the Platform's goals and performance. The SMS is itself hosted by UNOPS; and all administrative services, policies and procedures under that hosting arrangement would presumably also apply to the Platform.

UN Agencies: Potential hosts might include members of UN Nutrition (FAO, IFAD, UNICEF, WFP and WHO). Some of these agencies have a history of hosting initiatives and new institutions but have more recently moved away from providing administrative services to

initiatives that are not more fully incorporated into their broader business-, operational- and governance models. Additionally, the fact that these agencies provide technical assistance to countries may pose challenges in managing conflicts of interest, as noted above. Other UN agencies have however progressively moved more into the administrative hosting space – notably UNOPS – which also hosts the SMS – and UNDP. Hosting has also been explicitly identified as a source of potential income growth for UNITAR.[11]

Non-governmental institutions (NGOs): There are many NGOs with nutrition financing-related expertise and relevant relationships with countries. NGOs are also often able to operate in a more flexible and agile manner than UN agencies, and with lower staff costs than UN organizations. However, many of the NGOs with relevant expertise and relationships are also engaged in TA provision, which may pose conflict-of-interest challenges, as noted above.

Academic institutions: A number of initiatives and partnerships have been hosted within universities – leveraging their research and learning models, public-private partnerships for funding and implementation, and their work in contributing to evidence-building and normative standards setting.

Established non-profit platforms in the nutrition space: Some prominent non-profit organizations working in nutrition financing are also worth considering. For example, GAIN is an independent non-profit Swiss foundation with headquarters in Geneva. It holds special international status granted by the Swiss government. It is in some ways therefore a hybrid, with some features in common with UN agencies (including some diplomatic privileges and immunities), but in other ways operating more independently, and with a governance model more similar to that of some NGOs, and of non-intergovernmental international organizations, such as the Global Fund and Gavi. Another example is the Power of Nutrition, which is an independent charitable foundation primarily based in London, overseen by an independent Board of Trustees and supported by a panel of experienced technical experts. Both GAIN and the Power of Nutrition have activities and expertise in important nutrition financing topics.

Other potential hosting options: There are a number of other potential host entities for the Platform, which do not conform to the traditional categories of NGOs, UN agencies, private sector, etc. Some of these are worth considering less for their work or expertise in nutrition financing, and more for their capacities and experience in providing services that could be relevant to a hosting arrangement. A non-exhaustive, illustrative set of examples includes:

- Global Development Incubator[12] is a tax-exempt nonprofit organization with locations in the US, Kenya and Hong Kong, which provides incubation support over a 12–36-month period to help early-stage initiatives design their business strategy and model, develop brand identity, hire and retain talent and construct their financial and operational infrastructure. Part of its approach is to explicitly support the "exiting" of the initiative from the Incubator by helping identify its longer-term administrative and organizational setup.

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[11] https://www.unitar.org/about/news-stories/news/simon-kucher-partners-assess-opportunities-unitar-growth
[12] https://globaldevincubator.org/

- <u>Swiss Philanthropy Foundation</u>[13] was established in 2006 as a non-profit hosting foundation that facilitates initiatives and donations from international sources, and supports the initiatives with financial, human and relational services.
- <u>Crown Agents</u>[14] is a non-for-profit international development company that works to design and implement practical solutions for development challenges. Amongst other areas of expertise, Crown Agents provides fund- and grant management services.
- <u>DAI</u>[15] is an employee-owned for-profit company that works across a wide spectrum of development topics and functions. Amongst other activities, it develops market-based solutions for development challenges; helps clients develop policies and solutions; acts as a financial intermediary in emerging and frontier markets; and offers digital tools and approaches to support decision-making and capacity building.

1.3 Staffing

As noted above, the exact nature of the Platform's staffing needs – and the associated budgetary implications – will to some extent be dependent on its eventual hosting arrangements, as some functions and responsibilities may be more integrated into the host's services, and the various hosting options will each have their own compensation frameworks for staff and consultants. Because of this, this Annex describes the Platform's staffing needs only at a high level, in order to illustrate the kinds of capacity needed, vis-à-vis the Platform's activities and ways of working.

The Platform's work will involve a number of key activities for its staff, including:

- Review, compilation and annotation of tools and information
- Curation and website (although this may eventually be carried out by the Platform's host, or outsourced)
- Development and refinement of a limited set of core tools (including the self-assessment)
- Country support discussions, and assistance in developing tailored country support plans
- Liaison and engagement with SMS, GSS structures, and broader TA initiatives and providers/funders, in both the nutrition and "nutrition-adjacent" spaces
- Exploration and liaison with "nutrition-adjacent" tools, networks and TA providers
- Focused convening towards concrete outcomes
- TA provision management (if the Platform is granted a limited TA budget)
- Reporting and accountability responsibilities to its host and separate governance body

This work is expected to require 3-5 full-time staff. This would likely include a team leader for the platform to manage the Platform's team, workplan, priorities and budget; lead the development of its approaches; act as the principal (but not exclusive) interface with the Platform's partners, donors and governance body; and serve as part of the team delivering on the Platform's substantive work. Other staff members would bring different skill sets, experience, and areas of expertise, to help fulfil the Platform's various functions. Although the Platform would not be required to have deep expertise in any particular area (it will largely draw upon deeper expertise outside of the Platform, when needed), it should nevertheless possess – across its staff – ***a robust fluency and experience across a broad set of financing topics***. Other important features of the Platform's staff profiles should include:

- Programmatic- and/or financing experience in developing countries, ideally in nutrition, health, agriculture or other related fields
- Familiarity with nutrition programming and needs
- Experience with major donors and international financing mechanisms
- Experience/familiarity with technical assistance provision
- Experience with capacity-building initiatives
- Existing relevant relationships in the above areas
- Strong analytical and communication skills
- Ability to work well in partnership, and to generate results from- and with others, even in the absence of any formal authority
- Service-oriented working style
- Strong political navigation skills
- Ability to work in a dynamic environment

Although the Platform does not require very senior staff, its success will heavily depend on having dynamic, high caliber, results-focused professionals – delivering high-quality support, demonstrating value and gaining credibility with a diverse set of stakeholders, and navigating complex political situations and relationships – including with individuals much more senior than the Platform's staff. Staffing the Platform with these requirements may be challenging.

For illustrative purposes, the Platform's staffing might be expected to cost between $400,000 and $800,000 annually.[16] As noted previously, these figures will vary significantly based on its eventual hosting arrangements, including the type of institution (e.g., NGO versus international organization), geography, contract type and other factors.

1.4 Budget

A high-level, provisional annual budget for the Platform is provided below, for illustrative purposes:

- Staffing: $400,000-$800,000
- Travel and meetings:[17] $125,000
- TA provision (to be confirmed): $1,000,000
- Other professional fees (e.g., for tools development, translation, analysis): $200,000
- Hosting overhead:[18] approximately $250,000

Based on this illustrative example, the estimated annual budget for the Platform is $800,000-$1.3 million for "core operational" costs and $1.1 million related to TA provision (assuming budget is available for this function), i.e., a total of *$1.9-$2.4 million if budget is available for TA provision*. **The Platform's total annual budget is therefore estimated to range from $800,000 to $2.4 million.**

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[16] Assumption of 5 staff members (1 Platform team leader, 2 mid-level analysts/country support officers, 1 junior-level analyst/country support officer, and 1 administrative support and coordination officer). Costs including staff compensation, including contributions for pension, insurance, etc. All figures are in US$.

[17] Assumption is that some travel and meetings will be required, including to attend official SUN meetings, and some limited travel to meet with key funders, partners and countries.

[18] Using an illustrative 13% overhead rate. Assumes that key operational costs, including IT equipment and some administrative services, are included in the hosting arrangements.

II.   **DRAFT LAUNCH PLAN**

This section proposes a plan of key actions required to launch the Platform, and the inputs and support required to implement those actions. This plan is illustratively framed on a 6-month timeline. It should be noted however that this is a *very* aggressive timeline. As is frequently the case, the launch stage of the Platform is likely to depart from this plan, with unexpected issues, and numerous dependencies, over which there may be limited control. This plan should therefore be considered a starting point, to be dynamically revisited and adjusted, as needed.

The key actions, inputs and support areas covered in the launch plan include:

1) Establishing key governance and accountability systems
2) Project management and advisory support
3) Finalizing hosting arrangements
4) Resource mobilization
5) Advance operations work

2.1 Establishing key governance and accountability systems

The previous section discusses the need for a clear and effective oversight mechanism for the Platform, along with key governance functions that this mechanism would play. It also proposes that the FTT play a "first-line" oversight and stewardship role for Platform, which would feed into the SUN Movement Executive Committee's broader governance function. This section builds on that proposal, viewing the extensive work required in setting up the Platform's governance and accountability systems during the Launch phase.

The Platform's Launch phase will likely be characterized by the frequent need for decisions, direction and engagement by a governance body, or by a subgroup of a governance body charged with overseeing the day-to-day activities related to the Platform's launch and operationalization. For this reason, it may be unwieldy to rely on the full FTT for this ongoing oversight. Instead, the FTT might consider charging a small subgroup of the FTT (and potentially Executive Committee members) to provide direction and oversight on behalf of the FTT on a more frequent basis during the Launch phase, and referring key decisions and issues to the FTT (which may further escalate to the Executive Committee, as needed). This group (provisionally referred to as the FCDP Launch Oversight Subgroup, or the Oversight Subgroup, for brevity) might consist of 3-5 individuals that are able to dedicate a significant amount of their time (up to 10-20% during some periods) to this important function.

Where relevant, the responsibilities of the Oversight Subgroup are noted in the action areas below, which would also include overseeing the further development and finalization of the Platform's key governance and accountability systems. These would include:

- Finalization of the Platform's Theory of Change and associated performance framework
- Proposed governance and accountability protocol, including the frequency of the Platform's reporting against key indicators and progress areas
- Proposed framework for distinguishing the respective oversight and governance roles between the Executive Committee and the FTT, including what decision-making authority the FTT should have (if any), and the specific categories of issues that require escalation to the Executive Committee

- Assessment of whether any additional areas of expertise or perspective are required on the FTT to effectively fulfill its FCDP "first-line" oversight and stewardship function

2.2 Project management and advisory support

As is described below, there will be a significant volume of detailed work during the Launch phase. At a minimum, *a project manager will likely be required for the 6-month Launch phase*, to manage the many moving pieces, carry out analyses, and prepare for the Platform's operationalization. In addition, *advisory support will be needed on a more discrete basis – particularly to ensure that the eventual hosting arrangements satisfy all relevant strategic, governance, operational and donor needs* (this role is hereafter referred to as the "Legal Advisor," for brevity).

The Project Manager and Legal Advisor would likely support the FCDP Launch Oversight Subgroup in developing the Platform's key governance and accountability systems referenced above. Other responsibilities of these individuals are noted in the action areas below.

2.3 Finalizing the Platform's hosting arrangements

The hosting discussion above represents only the first step in clarifying the Platform's hosting arrangements. Although it proposes selection criteria and notes examples of potential host institutions, further work will be required. This includes:

- A more dedicated review by the Project Manager, including searching more broadly for potential host institution options, and more comprehensive due diligence to better understand how the hosting function might be executed under specific candidates, vis-à-vis the criteria noted above.
- A review by the Legal Advisor/Project Manager of hosting arrangements from other initiatives, to learn from their experiences and best practices.
- Discussions by the Executive Committee (with support from the FTT/Oversight Subgroup), to gauge the interest of institutions in hosting the Platform, and how potential concerns related to conflicts of interest, governance and accountability might be addressed.
- Issuance of a Request for Proposals (RFP), which would provide concrete details of how hosting candidates would propose to carry out the hosting function. These would include details on the administrative services, operational setup, costs and an accountability framework. It might also be an option to proceed to an RFP immediately, rather than carrying out the preceding steps proposed above. However, the experience of other institutions and initiatives suggests that the advance work is necessary for ensuring that the RFP is well articulated, that a sufficient number of relevant candidates submit proposals, and that the proposals address the specific needs and concerns. The RFP would be issued by the Executive Committee, based on FTT recommendations, with support from the Oversight Subgroup, Project Manager and Legal Advisor.
- Evaluation of the RFPs by the Oversight Subgroup (or FTT).
- The final hosting decision/endorsement by the Executive Committee, based on recommendations by the FTT.
- The hosting arrangements will likely also require review and approval by the Platform's eventual individual donors, in order to ensure that the host is able to fulfil the requirements for receiving and managing funds from each of the donors. Discussions will also be required with potential donors to clarify realistic timelines for committing and disbursing funds. It may be the case that some funding may need to be formally

committed *before* an RFP can be launched. There may also be flexibility for donors to make funding commitments conditional on their approval of the host institution. These discussions with donors will likely require engagement from the Oversight Subgroup, the Project Manager, and the Legal Advisor.

- The Legal Advisor's support will be required throughout this process, to ensure that the administrative, operational, financial and accountability details are clear and well suited to the needs and objectives of the Platform, and to appropriately address the risks

2.4 Resource mobilization

Another critical activity during the Launch phase will be the mobilization of financial resources for the Platform. This might involve notional donor commitments to fund the Platform's initial 3-year workplan, with seed funding secured for its first year of operations, for example. Funding would also be required for the Project Manager and Legal Advisor early in the process.

The resource mobilization work would formally be led by the Executive Committee (with support from the FTT/Oversight Subgroup), which would liaise with donors. The Oversight Subgroup would work closely with the Project Manager and Legal Advisor, to ensure that the necessary information is prepared for donor review, and that donor conditions are able to be met. This would also include efforts to ensure that the requirements of the hosting arrangements and the donors are compatible, as noted above. One key detail to be discussed and agreed with donors is the timeline for the commitment and disbursement of their funds, and how this interacts with other key milestones and actions required during the Launch phase, including issuance of the RFP, final approval and agreement on the hosting arrangements, initiation of recruitment processes, etc.

The Oversight Subgroup might also call upon the Executive Committee, Lead Group, or other key parties to liaise with donors, as needed.

2.5 Advance operations work

Beyond the responsibilities noted above, the Project Manager would also be required to develop and finalize a number of key outputs that will be necessary for enabling the Platform's operations, as well as for feeding into discussions and agreements on the hosting arrangements and resource mobilization. These include:

- Developing the Platform's initial 3-year workplan and budget, with a detailed plan and budget for the Platform's first year of operations, including key outputs and priorities for the initial year,
- Drafting Terms of Reference for the Platform's staff

The Project Manager would work with the eventual Platform host to obtain their inputs and requirements – particularly regarding the budget and Terms of Reference, to ensure they fit within the host's administrative and budgetary policies and processes. The Project Manager would also work closely with the Oversight Subgroup to solicit their guidance and input, to prepare these outputs for endorsement by the relevant governance bodies. Once the hosting arrangements have been agreed upon, some or all of the Project Manager's responsibilities may be transferred to the host institution.

Annex 3 - The Roll Back Malaria Harmonization Working Group

Roll Back Malaria (RBM) is a global partnership[19] for coordinated multistakeholder action against malaria. Despite significant efforts since RBM's establishment in 1998, there was limited progress in reducing the malaria burden, and the partnership suffered from a lack of cohesion, alignment and accountability. Although significant funding was available for malaria programs, primarily through the Global Fund, RBM's lack of coordinated support and guidance contributed to malaria having the lowest proposal success rates among the three Global Fund-supported diseases. The Lancet warned in a 2005 editorial that RBM was on a path to "become a calamitous tale of missed opportunities, squandered funds, and wasted political will."[20]

RBM responded with a large-scale change initiative in 2006, which yielded, among other outcomes, new structures to better coordinate global institutions' support to countries. One of these was the **Harmonization Working Group (HWG)**, which was initially formed as an ad hoc group of technical and funding partners, with coordination support from the RBM Secretariat – to help countries develop better Global Fund proposals. HWG country support was based on several factors, prioritizing countries with the highest needs, low external funding support (including through low proposal success rates), and considering the time remaining on their national malaria plans.

Following the Global Fund's 6th Round of funding, in which only 32% of malaria proposals were successful, the HWG provided focused support to a group of 20 countries, with coordinated TA provided or funded by HWG partner institutions. This resulted in a 75% approval rate for the supported countries in the following funding round.[21] These efforts continued and expanded over successive funding rounds, with approval rates reaching an impressive 79% in Round 10 *for all malaria proposals*, compared with an overall Global Fund proposal success rate of 53% across all diseases. Following these successes, the HWG was established into a more formal mechanism for coordinating and harmonizing timely support for planning, reviews, implementation support and the development of tools to assist with planning and proposal preparation.

These efforts led to a surge in funding for stronger programs, with sharp declines in morbidity and mortality rates within a short time, and contributed to a virtuous cycle of improved demand, resource mobilization and impact. In 2008, the Lancet issued a follow-up editorial, praising RBM for having "…raised the profile of malaria, taking the disease from being grossly underfunded and largely neglected to being widely recognized as an exemplary investment opportunity in the development agenda. It has achieved this through stronger leadership, better cooperation between its partners, and responding to country needs by improved coordination around their national strategic implementation plans. During the next decade, RBM has huge challenges. But for the first time, we sense these challenges might be met."[22]

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[19] Roll Back Malaria has since changed its name to the RBM Partnership to End Malaria "to reflect the opportunity the world has to end the disease for good, and our ambition to make it happen." Source: RBM Partnership website.
[20] Reversing the failures of Roll Back Malaria," *The Lancet*, Volume 365, No 9469, April 2005
[21] *PMI Progress Through Partnerships: Saving Lives in Africa*, 2nd Annual Report, March 2008
[22] Rolling back malaria – the next 10 years," *The Lancet*, Volume 372, No. 9645, October 2008