Parallel Sessions
SUN Movement Global Gathering November 2014

A total of 16 parallel sessions will take place during the Global Gathering. In 14 of these, the detail of the four emerging communities of practice (CoPs) will be discussed. In addition, two parallel sessions will focus on the Independent Comprehensive Evaluation (ICE) of the SUN Movement.

Purpose of the CoP Parallel Sessions
In April 2014, the SUN Movement Lead Group endorsed the formation of communities of practice as a mechanism for ensuring that countries can access technical support more easily and that best practices can be shared. Throughout 2013-2014, in response to requests to bridge capacity gaps through cross-country learning and expert support, the global SUN networks and governments organized regional meetings and exchanges between countries with a focus on nutrition, many outside the orbit of the SUN Movement. These initiatives stimulated the emergence of four communities of practice (CoPs):

**CoP 1: Planning, Costing, Implementing and Financing Multisectoral Actions for Improved Nutrition.** This community of practice focuses on the efforts being made by governments and supporting partners in the SUN Movement to cost national plans for nutrition in order to guide coordinated efforts by stakeholders and to mobilise the required resources to address gaps and sustain results.

**CoP 2: Social Mobilisation, Advocacy and Communication for Scaling up Nutrition.** This community of practice focuses on efforts being made by governments and supporting partners in the SUN Movement to mobilise societies to play their part in working together for improved nutrition, to secure and maintain high-level political commitment and to ensure that evidence and experience of best practices are shared.

**CoP 3: The Reliable Monitoring of Progress, Evaluation of Outcomes and Demonstration of Nutrition Results** This community of practice aims to support the establishment and use of information platforms at national and subnational levels that can help to achieve the following:
   (a) Monitoring progress in reducing malnutrition;
   (b) Determining associations between changes in malnutrition and domestic and external financial investments in nutrition;
   (c) Building plausibility arguments on the (cost-) effectiveness of different interventions, programmes and approaches in reducing malnutrition, especially stunting prevalence; and
   (d) Strengthening mutual accountability of government and development partners

**CoP 4: Functional Capacities for Coordinated and Effective SUN Actions.** This community of practice aims to build the capacity of groups and individuals to function effectively across sectors, among multiple stakeholders and between many levels of government.

The emerging communities of practice are already generating a global repository of knowledge and consensus that are proving invaluable in unlocking bottlenecks. The SUN Movement Global Gathering in 2014 provides an opportunity for participants from countries and networks to further build these communities of practice so that countries can access the resources they need in a reliable and timely fashion.
Purpose of the CoP Parallel Sessions
The overall purpose of the parallel sessions is to identify key messages for each CoP that highlight:

(i) Significant points of ‘learning’ from country experience in relation to the CoP
(ii) Critical priorities for expansion and success of the CoP in the coming year

These key messages will be presented by the moderators of the CoP parallel sessions during the plenary sessions on Monday 17 and Tuesday 18 November. In the final plenary session, the implications of the key messages for national and global public policy priorities for the coming decades will be articulated.

Format of the CoP Parallel Sessions
Each of the 14 CoP sessions will differ in format but have some similarities:

- A moderator will be pre-assigned to moderate the session and summarise key messages;
- Participants from countries and from networks will be invited to contribute particular aspects of their experience;
- Translation into French, Spanish and English will be available in each parallel session room;
- Table discussions (without translation) will be included as part of the session;
- Up to 80 participants will take part in each Parallel Session;
- Participants will be asked to register their first and second choice for each parallel session and will be allocated to a session accordingly.

ICE Parallel Sessions
Two parallel sessions will focus on the Independent Comprehensive Evaluation (ICE) of the SUN Movement. The ICE is assessing the relevance, efficiency, and effectiveness of the Movement. It is too early to measure impact on nutritional status. The ICE will be completed by the end of 2014, and will contribute to the strategic decisions on the future of the Movement.

The SUN Global Gathering offers an opportunity for stakeholders in the Movement to discuss with the evaluators their thoughts on the impact the SUN Movement has had in their countries and offer suggestions for the future direction of the Movement after 2015.
Please note that the numbering of the sessions is based on session number followed by CoP number.

For example Session 1.2 relates to Session 1 on CoP 2 while Session 4.3 relates to Session 4 on CoP 3.

Community of Practice 1: Plan, cost and finance multi-sectoral actions for improved nutrition

Session 1.1: A Common Results Framework (CRF) for nutrition to align multi-sectoral actions

What should participants expect to share and learn from this session?
Agreement around a national Common Results Framework (CRF) helps to shape multi-sector and multi-stakeholder working. The process through which a CRF is developed is a ‘facilitated negotiation’ among key sectors which results in an amalgam of agreed components from their plans. The development of a CRF proceeds more smoothly if it takes place under the authority of the highest level of government, with clear directions to all relevant stakeholders, a realistic timetable and a commitment by all to support the achievement of the agreed results as fully as they can, within their areas of responsibility.

What were the findings of the country progress self-assessment exercise?
(completed by 37 countries in June 2014 to assess progress over the last year)
As part of the self-assessment exercise, countries assessed how they align their own plans and programming for nutrition to reflect national policies and priorities. The focus was on the alignment of results across sectors and relevant stakeholders. Most countries reported on-going efforts in alignment of their programmes around national nutrition-relevant policies. Eighteen countries reported an advanced state of progress (nearly completed or completed) in this area of progress. The scoring is quite consistent with progress markers related to the functioning of multi-stakeholder platforms to facilitate dialogue (SUN process 1) and/or the availability of coherent policy and legislation frameworks to guide the dialogue (SUN process 2). No countries reported being only at a starting point.

Who is expected to participate in this session?
- Participants from countries that are planning to develop or are already developing their CRF
- Participants from countries refining their national plans may also benefit from this session (e.g. if they are looking for ways to make their plans more multi-sectoral or multi-stakeholder)

What areas will be discussed?
- Contextual analysis
- Alignment of nutrition-sensitive actions by sectors and stakeholders: convergence, co-location and integration
- Setting priorities and targets by sectors and stakeholders
- Setting solid foundations for costing

Expected outcome:
- Better understanding on what a CRF is in practice
Session 2.1: Costing actions in the Common Results Framework (CRF) based on explicit principles and assumptions

What should participants expect to share and learn from this session?
Costing needs to be undertaken in an inclusive way so that the principles and assumptions can be examined by all concerned and can be replicable. The most effective approach for budgeting and implementation is to identify annual costs including one-time costs and unit costs of regularly recurring inputs. When estimating costs it is essential to establish (annual) implementation targets along with proposed final target coverage. The latter implicitly brings up the need to include current coverage and spending when estimating costs. None of the national plans analyzed by MQSUN (Maximising the Quality of SUN: a consortium of organisations working on nutrition funded by the UK Government Department For International Development (DFID) consistently contain government costs such as labour costs, recurrent costs of utilities and ongoing investments. The current costing approach leads to an underestimation of the existing contributions to actions for nutrition by different sectors of Government.

What were the findings of the country progress self-assessment exercise?
(completed by 37 countries in June 2014 to assess progress over the last year)
As part of the self-assessment exercise, countries assessed the financial feasibility of their national multi-sectoral plans looking at the extent to which in-country stakeholders are able to provide inputs for costing based on a review of current spending or on an estimation of unit costs for interventions across relevant sectors (nutrition-specific and nutrition-sensitive). Most countries reported being at the beginning of their efforts to assess the financial feasibility of their national plans. There is a considerable difference in the scoring between countries that have joined prior and after September 2012 indicating that early member countries are more advanced. Six countries report an advanced state of progress (nearly completed) in this progress marker. Fourteen countries reported being at the starting point.

Who is expected to participate in this session?
- Participants from countries that are in the process of estimating costs at national level
- Participants from countries refining their costed plans may also benefit from this session (e.g., if they are looking for ways to conduct costing exercises at decentralized level)

What areas will be discussed?
- Inclusion of government costs such as labour costs, recurrent costs and ongoing investments (e.g. potential of using a common markup)
- Cost calculations for governance (stewardship of nutrition). This would include costs incurred across sectors for coordination, convening, capacity development, M&E and operational research.
- Involvement of non-state actors in the planning process with a special emphasis on the private sector
- Costing methodologies and their implications for effectively estimating scale-up costs

Expected outcome:
- Minimum agreement on principles and assumptions that different sectors and stakeholders need to take into consideration when undertaking costing
Session 3.1: Mobilizing resources from government and external budgets to implement nutrition actions

What should participants expect to share and learn from this session?
Participants will learn about the economic rationale for investing in nutrition, and how estimating the costs and benefits of nutrition interventions can help with the following:
   a) The dialogue between implementing Ministries of Health, Agriculture, etc. with the Ministry of Finance and with donors to leverage “more money for nutrition”,
   b) Help countries prioritize interventions that are most cost-effective so as to get “more nutrition for their money”.

What were the findings of the country progress self-assessment exercise? (completed by 37 countries in June 2014 to assess progress over the last year)
As part of the self-assessment exercise, countries assessed the capability by governments and other in-country stakeholders to identify financial gaps and mobilize additional funds through increased alignment and allocation of budgets. The low scoring of this progress marker is consistent with many of the gaps identified in previous progress markers around the lack of a common results framework that can guide joint planning and, especially, sharing of information on implementation and finances. Most countries report starting up in their efforts to scale up and align financial resources. Countries that have joined prior September 2012 appear to be more advanced in this progress marker than those that joined after this date. Four countries reported an advanced state of progress in this progress marker while sixteen countries reported being at the starting point. In addition, countries assessed how governments and in-country stakeholders collectively engage in long-term predictable funding to ensure results and impact. This includes important changes related to short-term humanitarian and long-term development funding, the establishment of flexible but predictable funding mechanisms and the sustainable addressing of funding gaps. Most countries reported on-going efforts to ensure predictability of multi-year funding to sustain impact with no difference across countries that have joined the SUN Movement in different years. Three countries report an advanced state of progress (nearly completed) while twelve countries reported being at the starting point.

Who is expected to participate in this session?
- Participants from countries accelerating implementation of national nutrition plans (national and sub-national level).

What areas will be discussed?
- Cost-benefit estimations to decide on priorities and targets
- Making the case for “more money for nutrition” and “more nutrition for money available”
- Fiscal space for nutrition

Expected outcome:
- Better understanding of how to make the case for leveraging more resources for nutrition from Government and external budgets
Session 4.1: Tracking of government and external resources for nutrition: is there a minimum agreement on what is feasible to move forward?

What should participants expect to share and learn from this session?
The ability to track financial resource flows to nutrition actions is fundamental for improved nutrition accountability to citizens. So far, however, there is very limited practice-based experience and very few countries are able to extensively report on an annual basis. Some countries like Tanzania and Madagascar have attempted to review their spending but have encountered several challenges. This session will focus on the tracking of government and external resources.

What were the findings of the country progress self-assessment exercise?
(completed by 37 countries in June 2014 to assess progress over the last year)
As part of the self-assessment exercise, countries assessed the extent to which governments and other in-country stakeholders are able to track their planned and (if feasible) actual spending for nutrition looking at nutrition-specific and nutrition-sensitive interventions in relevant sectors. While many in-country stakeholders report being able to regularly track their own spending, financial information is not shared within the multi-stakeholder platforms. Hence, governments do not know how much development partners are spending for nutrition and vice-versa. This is mostly due to the current lack of a common framework (language) to identify, categorize and attribute spending for nutrition and track changes over time. Most countries report being at the beginning of their efforts to collectively track and transparently account for spending with no difference across countries that have joined in different years. Five countries report an advanced state of progress (nearly completed or completed) in this progress marker while fifteen countries reported being at the starting point.

Who is expected to participate in this session?
- Participants from countries with an interest in understanding better about options for financial tracking.

What areas will be discussed?
- Pros and cons of tracking budget allocations versus actual expenditures
- Pros and cons of the ‘nutrition budget lines’
- Tracking of government resources using national budgets: setting parameters for the identification, categorization and attribution of nutrition in relevant programmes across sectors
- Tracking of external (official) resources using the aid database
- Possible mapping of private-sector funded projects, where relevant

Expected outcome:
- Minimum agreement on what is feasible to move forward in 2015
Community of Practice 2: Social mobilization, advocacy and communication for improved nutrition

Session 1.2: Developing and implementing effective social mobilization, advocacy and communication strategies

What should participants expect to share and learn from this session?
Countries are taking an increasingly strategic approach to nutrition social mobilization, advocacy and communication (SMAC). Dedicated SMAC strategies for nutrition are being developed in an effort to enhance coordination among relevant sectors and stakeholders. Strategies are helping to identify priorities and harmonise activities. The greatest impact is achieved when advocacy efforts are aligned to support national development plans, with a range of stakeholders being brought together under a common framework and shared messages. While different means and a variety of tactics and tools are used, the focus is on creating a positive and enabling political and policy environment in order to advance the scale up of nutrition interventions, secure resources and obtain results.

What have we learned so far from SUN Countries?
Comprehensive strategies for social mobilisation, advocacy and communication (SMAC) have been established in 11\(^1\) SUN Movement countries: these are often used both by governments and by other actors that support the scaling up of actions for nutrition.

Who is expected to participate in this session?
- Participants from countries planning to develop or refining national SMAC strategies
- Participants who have supported the development of strategies (civil society, UN) and would like to explore ways to align efforts with members of the national and sub-national MSPs
- Countries with expertise or questions on how to effectively monitor the success of the national SMAC strategies

What areas will be discussed?
- Developing multi-stakeholder SMAC strategies aligned with national nutrition objectives
- Aligning different stakeholder groups around an overarching strategy or framework

Expected outcome:
- Better understanding of the process of effective multi-stakeholder SMAC strategy development
- Better understanding of best practices and tools to support this process as well as lessons learned by SUN countries in overcoming challenges in this area

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\(^1\) Out of 42 countries for which data are available.
Session 2.2: Mobilising societies for nutrition awareness, action and accounting

What should participants expect to share and learn from this session?
Stakeholders at the provincial, district and local level are increasingly mobilising communities in order to raise awareness about nutrition, to advocate for a particular action, or to seek accountability. Events such as World Breastfeeding Week, health days and Vitamin A campaigns are being leveraged to highlight the issues around child nutrition and promote messaging around breastfeeding and complementary feeding and general healthy dietary practices. These are particularly significant as they centre on the participation of citizens. Media support and awareness is widely recognised as being vital in order to reach the widest number of people as possible. In addition, parliamentarians possess the power to make laws and regulations, to influence the shape of national development plans, to determine the design and allocations of national budgets, to monitor and oversee the Government’s (i.e. Executive branch) implementation of commitments to children and hold it to account, and to use their platform as community/opinion leaders to draw attention to key development challenges such as nutrition and educate constituents on healthy practices.

What have we learned so far from SUN Countries?
The recent SUN In Practice Brief 3 on Social Mobilisation, Advocacy and Communication shows how countries are raising awareness across communities nationwide; such as Bangladesh where cartoons, folk songs and TV promotions are used, Peru where a radio campaign has been developed, and Pakistan where TV talk shows have been hosted. Cameroon’s efforts to train over 40 journalists and Kenya’s use of national health, breastfeeding and diabetes days (and weeks) are further examples of ways that nutrition can be integrated into existing communication channels. Across the Movement, parliamentarians have been actively advocating for scaling up nutrition (including setting up networks with specific advocacy objectives) in 16 countries (with plans underway in nine more countries).

Who is expected to participate in this session?
- Participants from countries planning or engaged in mass mobilization and behavior change campaigns for improved nutrition
- Participants from countries developing strategies to engage parliamentarians

What areas will be discussed?
- Engaging the media
- Use of scarce resources for expensive mass media campaigns
- Innovative ways of reaching (younger) audiences
- Identifying and working with nutrition champions, including parliamentarians

Expected outcome:
- Learning about the different aspects of and approaches to social mobilization, awareness raising, behaviour change communication and parliamentary engagement. Participants will be exposed to examples of popular campaigns and techniques (including songs and documentaries) and will learn about concrete activities underway involving parliamentarians.
Session 4.2: Developing tools to communicate with one voice about nutrition

What should participants expect to share and learn from this session?
Whether the main purpose is to share information and lessons, influence others, or demonstrate progress, clear and powerful communication techniques are essential to the implementation of SMAC strategies. These include reports and briefing papers that make the case for investing in good nutrition as well as a range of tools from multimedia statistical presentations, to counselling aides, to the development of ‘killer facts’ and trainings. Techniques are being tailored for use with different audiences (politicians, civil servants, business, organizations, traditional and religious leaders, communities and households) at national, district and community levels to help convey the risks of malnutrition and to work out solutions appropriate for different settings.

What have we learned so far from SUN Countries?
Country-specific advocacy tools have been developed within 15 countries to raise senior decision makers’ awareness about nutrition. These include PROFILES, a data-based approach to nutrition policy development and advocacy; the Cost of Hunger in Africa Study led by the African Union and the NEPAD Planning and Coordinating Agency, and the RENEW Project (Reenergizing Nutrition – Expanding Worldwide), which develops and delivers dynamic multimedia presentations to engage global partners and country-level policymakers and leaders in selected countries.

Who is expected to participate in this session?
- Participants wanting to develop clear and concise communication materials on nutrition that can be adapted for audience and purposes
- Participants with an interest in developing ways to share their experience in scaling up nutrition in accessible and dynamic ways

What areas will be discussed?
- Creating a common narrative for nutrition
- Developing clear ways to communicate the issue of nutrition for the purposes of raising awareness, influencing others, demonstrating results
- Sharing and learning through Learning Routes and other mechanisms

Expected outcome:
- Improved understanding of the development, uses, successes and limitations of different tools developed in SUN countries to communicate and share experiences of scaling up nutrition
Community of Practice 3: The reliable monitoring of progress, evaluation of outcomes and demonstration of results

Session 1.3: Strengthening accountability around the agreed Common Results Framework (CRF) for nutrition through stakeholder mapping and monitoring, and through the use of dashboards

What should participants expect to share and learn from this session?
Agreement around a national Common Results Framework (CRF) helps to shape multi-sector and multi-stakeholder working. Many countries report that they are struggling to sustain continuous engagement and coordinated efforts. Mapping of stakeholders and monitoring of actions can help not only to understand who is doing what and where but also to assess what the gaps are in terms of information. Sharing of meaningful and timely information can help stakeholders to maintain a clear direction and commitment to deliver on the agreed results.

Who is expected to participate in this session?
- Participants from countries interested in operationalizing and using their CRF through regular information sharing
- Participants from countries developing their M&E framework may also benefit from this session

What areas will be discussed?
- Stakeholder mapping and monitoring tool
- Agreement around a dashboard: choice of indicators including a better understanding about what it takes to estimate cost-effectiveness of different investments
- Database technologies to organize, store and display a range of indicators

Expected outcome:
- Better understanding of what stakeholder mapping and action monitoring implies in practice
- Better understanding of experience with developing and using dashboards
Session 2.3: Timely and reliable information for nutrition through the use of mobile and database technologies including feedback loops

What should participants expect to share and learn from this session?
Design fundamentals that guide data collection initiatives emphasize the importance of end-user buy-in. This implies that one should develop context appropriate solutions informed by the needs of users based on the identification of data that are useful and feasible to collect. As an example of a recent innovations in data collection, RapidSMS is able to capture, analyze, store and disseminate information in real-time using ordinary mobile phones and a webserver to support service delivery and troubleshooting in the field, and complement paper-based systems. In recent years an increasing number of countries are seeking to strengthen front-line health services by providing mobile services for support across the entire continuum-of-care.

Who is expected to participate in this session?
- Participants from countries interested in mobile technologies or in automated systems of data transmission

What areas will be discussed?
- Prioritization and harmonization of indicators and measurements: link with the dashboards
- The importance of building feedback loops from the outset
- Database technologies to organize, store and display a range of indicators
- Feasibility: what are the pre-conditions?
- Ethical considerations in the use of data (e.g. confidentiality, anonymity and security of data)

Expected outcome:
- Better understanding of experience with developing and using database technologies
Session 3.3: Success and challenges in generating actionable information at community level using the 3A approach (assess, analyze and act)

What should participants expect to share and learn from this session?
Countries report limited national capacities for cross-sectoral analysis but they especially emphasize the need to build sub-national analytical capacity to triangulate and interpret data within the specific context. Capacity building on participatory techniques to triangulate and analyze information at the community level does not require sophisticated and expensive technology. The 3A approach (Assess, Analyze and Act) has been at the core of community-based nutrition programmes for many years. Given the emerging opportunities provided by mobile technologies, it should be possible, however, to ensure that feedback from communities are adequately captured and transmitted so that the emphasis and execution of programs can be timely adjusted.

What were the findings of the country progress self-assessment exercise?
(completed by 37 countries in June 2014 to assess progress over the last year)
As part of the self-assessment exercise, countries assessed the national and local capability to implement planned actions. This requires, on the one hand, a clear understanding of gaps in terms of delivery capacity and, on the other hand, a willingness from in-country and global stakeholders to mobilize their technical expertise to respond to the identified needs in a coordinated and timely way. Most countries report starting up in their efforts to organize the implementation of the CRF in line with a clear plan for sustainable capacity building at all levels. Countries that have joined prior to September 2012 appear to be more advanced in this progress marker than those that have joined more recently. Seven countries report an advanced state of progress (nearly completed) in this progress marker while seventeen countries reported being at the starting point.

Who is expected to participate in this session?
- Participants from countries accelerating implementation at sub-national level

What areas will be discussed?
- Success and challenges in the effective use of the 3A approach
- The use of mobile technologies and other media to facilitate the participation of communities
- Ethical considerations in the use of data (e.g. confidentiality, anonymity and security of data)

Expected outcome:
- Better understanding about participatory techniques to generate actionable information at community level
Session 4.3: National Information Platforms for Nutrition. Is this a feasible approach to respond to countries’ needs?

What should participants expect to share and learn from this session?
As part of their efforts to provide a concerted response to countries’ needs a group of donors, UN Agencies and universities is currently developing an initiative to strengthen national information platforms for nutrition (NIPN). The main client and user of the information will be decision makers from key government sectors, programme implementers, civil society organizations, private sector, bilateral donors and parliamentarians. The process will be managed by a technical team responsible for collating, analysing, interpreting and presenting data collected from multiple sources. User-friendly information will be made available to the public through different media including website, radio, newsletters and through the involvement of local leaders, civil society organizations, schools and other information channels. This initiative, led by the European Commission and DFID is being discussed with a number of countries to assess the feasibility of the approach including the identification of barriers and enablers to the implementation.

Who is expected to participate in this session?
- Participants in all countries with an interest in establishing national information platforms for nutrition

What areas will be discussed?
- Institutional arrangements to effectively establish and run a NIPN
- Immediate gains in improving what is available versus long-term systems strengthening
- Considerations about the feasibility of this approach
- Ethical considerations in the use of data (e.g. confidentiality, anonymity and security of data)

Expected outcome:
- Better understanding about the key features and implications for countries in developing National Information Platforms for Nutrition.
Community of Practice 4: Functional capacities for effective and coordinated scaling up nutrition in action

Session 1.4: Building trust and developing leadership

What should participants expect to share and learn from this session?
This session will focus on trust building, leadership and prevention of conflicts of interest (CoI). Trust between the different individuals and institutions making up a multi-stakeholder platform is necessary for integrated action and achievement of sustainable results. It can be built through strong leadership, transparency, incentive mechanisms, agreement of a common vision and understanding of others’ potentialities, roles & responsibilities, and it is a pre-requisite for prevention and management of conflicts of interest. The session will provide participants with an understanding of the concepts of trust, and leadership particularly with regard to multi-stakeholder platforms. These issues will be assessed in the context of country experiences. Aspects of both preventing and managing conflict of interest will also be examined.

What were the findings from the conflict of interest enhanced learning exercises?
(undertaken in Ghana, Kenya and El Salvador during 2014)
As part of a project to look at conflict of interest within the context of the SUN Movement, three enhanced learning events have been held that provided useful information on issues of trust, leadership and CoI. Countries involved described a need for leadership in the national multi-stakeholder platform and networks that are oriented towards consensus building and wide consultation. Trust was identified as essential in producing more proactive and productive dialogue which required an investment in time. CoI remains a difficult concept for many. Clear policy frameworks for the engagement of all stakeholders, properly disseminated and understood, are required with governments in the lead. CoI cannot be dealt with in isolation from other work and CoI policy/mechanisms should be included as part of the broader framework for scaling up nutrition and integrated in multi-stakeholder platforms’ ways of working and common results frameworks.

Who is expected to participate in this session?
- Participants from countries aiming to create an enabling environment for effective multi-stakeholder action
- Institutions with expertise in building capacity for enhanced leadership and prevention and management of conflicts of interest

What areas will be discussed?
- Prerequisites of trust building across multi-stakeholder platforms
- The role of leadership
- Prevention and management of conflicts of interest

Expected outcome:
- Understanding of key requirements necessary to build trust within multi-stakeholder platforms
- Appreciation of the main issues in preventing and managing conflict of interest
Session 2.4: Improving stakeholder engagement and alignment

What should participants expect to share and learn from this session?
Civil society, business and academia have specific experience and expertise that can bring added value to scaling up nutrition processes. The emphasis will be on learning how different stakeholder groups set up mechanisms, institutional frameworks and incentives that facilitate this engagement, understanding the roles and responsibilities of each of these stakeholders, reflecting on how they can complement the action of the government, improve harmonization and alignment to national nutrition priorities and mechanisms. Participants will gain a strong understanding of the benefits, challenges and strategies for integrated stakeholder engagement for advancing the multi-sectoral nutrition agenda.

What were the findings of the country progress self-assessment exercise?
(completed by 37 countries in June 2014 to assess progress over the last year)
As part of the self-assessment exercise, countries assessed the capacity of the multi-stakeholder platforms to facilitate regular interactions among relevant stakeholders. This implies actively engaging all stakeholders, set significant agendas, reach consensus to influence the decision making process and take mutual ownership and accountability for results. Most countries reported on-going efforts to effectively engage within multi-stakeholder platforms. Twelve countries reported an advanced state of progress and one country reported the highest score for this function. Countries also assessed the extent to which in-country stakeholders are able to align their own plans and programming for nutrition to reflect the national policies and priorities. The focus was on the alignment of results across sectors and relevant stakeholders that significantly contribute towards improved nutrition. Most countries reported efforts were on-going in aligning programmes around national nutrition-relevant policies.

Who is expected to participate in this session?
- Governments and participants from countries aiming to improve engagement of specific groups of stakeholders (in particular the private sector, civil society and academia) in multi-stakeholder platforms and SUN processes
- Civil society organizations, business and representatives of academia interested in engaging in scaling up nutrition processes
- Participants from the Civil Society and Business SUN Networks

What areas will be discussed?
- Incentives and frameworks to engage civil society, private sector, UN, donor and academia in SUN processes and platforms
- Added value of engaging civil society, private sector, UN, donor and academia in SUN multi-stakeholder platforms and processes
- Roles and responsibilities of each SUN Network in multi-stakeholder platforms

Expected outcome:
- Understanding of key elements necessary to facilitate greater engagement of all partners in a multi-stakeholder platform with the overall aim of harmonizing and aligning to national nutrition priorities.
Session 3.4: Strategic capacities for multi-level and multi-sectoral coordination and decentralization of nutrition governance

What should participants expect to share and learn from this session?
SUN countries are increasingly adopting approaches to support coordination between all levels and sectors and decentralizing decision-making and governance mechanisms for scaling up nutrition. The session will allow participants to reflect on steps necessary to develop frameworks and mechanisms that facilitate multi-level and multi-sectoral understanding and coordination, decentralize multi-stakeholder platforms and improve local-national decision-making coherence and alignment.

What were the findings of the country progress self-assessment exercise?
(completed by 37 countries in June 2014 to assess progress over the last year)
As part of the self-assessment exercise, countries assessed the extent to which coordinating mechanisms established by the government and by non-state actors are able to reach out to relevant members to broaden the collective influence on nutrition. Most countries reported on-going efforts to coordinate internally and to broaden membership. Countries looked specifically at the national and local capability to implement planned actions. This requires both a clear understanding of gaps in terms of delivery capacity and a willingness from in-country and global stakeholders to mobilize their technical expertise for a timely response to identified needs in a coordinated way. Most countries reported initiating efforts to organize the implementation of a common results framework (CRF) in line with a clear plan for sustainable capacity building at all levels. Countries also reported that, while information systems are available within sectors in most countries, the sharing of data for managerial decision-making is still limited.

Who is expected to participate in this session?
- Participants from countries interested in decentralizing nutrition governance structures and strengthening their multi-sectoral coordination frameworks
- Participants from countries with experience in promoting multi-sectoral coordination and in decentralizing multi-stakeholder platforms
- Institutions with expertise in reinforcing multi-sectoral coordination and decentralizing multi-stakeholder governance mechanisms

What areas will be discussed?
- Factors that contribute to, and constraints identified, for effective multi-sectoral and multi-level coordination and decentralized nutrition governance
- What actions can help overcome these constraints?

Expected outcome:
- Better understanding of key attributes and characteristics required to work across different levels and sectors when facilitating engagement. Participants will also understand necessary aspects in improving decision making at all levels.