The countries driving the SUN Movement

The state of malnutrition in SUN Countries

57 countries and the Indian States of Maharashtra, Jharkhand and Uttar Pradesh are now driving the SUN Movement. They are home to more than 100 million stunted children. Through their commitment, collaboration, investment and implementation of effective actions, millions of children have a chance of a better life. Communities will prosper and the world will be a safer and more sustainable place.
Nutrition situation

- Under five stunting (%)
- Low birthweight (%)
- Under five wasting (%)
- Under five overweight (%)
- 0-5 months old exclusive breastfeeding (%)
- Women Anaemia 15-49 years (%)

Progress towards the SUN Movement strategic objectives (total weighted, as reported in 2016)*

The state of malnutrition in the SUN Movement

Nutrition situation

- Under five stunting (%)
- Low birthweight (%)
- Under five wasting (%)
- Under five overweight (%)
- Women Anaemia 15-49 years (%)

Progress towards the SUN Movement strategic objectives (total weighted, as reported in 2016)*

- 0 - 25% weighted progress
- 26 - 50% weighted progress
- 51 - 75% weighted progress
- 76 - 100% weighted progress
- weighting not available


See the Country Profiles on page 76 for more information.
The countries driving the SUN Movement
Who is leading SUN countries’ collaboration?

The SUN Movement is a powerful example of what working together can mean on a practical level. Led by governments, supported by multiple stakeholders – it has inspired unprecedented political will to improve the nutrition status of everyone, everywhere.

Nutrition change agents in SUN Countries, from different sectors such as agriculture, health, education, water and sanitation, women’s empowerment and others, come together to tackle the multiple forms of malnutrition and build an enabling political atmosphere and environment – fit to ensure good nutrition. They change their individual and institutional behaviours in view to commitment – to achieve common nutrition results. Financing and resources are mobilised and the coverage of locally-relevant nutrition-specific actions and nutrition-sensitive approaches are scaled up. By working together, and aligning their actions, they can achieve results far greater than what can be achieved alone.

37 Heads of State or Government, and 17 Ministers of Health, Agriculture, Planning and Finance have committed their governments to this collective approach. At a working level, 55 SUN Government Focal Points have been nominated who convene diverse change agents from United Nations agencies, civil society, donors, business, academia, the media and parliament – in a collaborative effort to achieve their countries’ nutrition goals. The SUN Government Focal Points hail from sectors such as health, agriculture, planning and economy – and their efforts to unite their national nutrition communities are why the SUN Movement thrives.

As of October 2016, **55 SUN Government Focal Points** have been nominated from a total of **57 SUN Countries** (in addition to the focal points nominated in the Indian States of Uttar Pradesh andMaharashtra).
A SUN Movement tribute to Dr. Nasreen Khan

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We need more trust, more commitment and more champions. Nutrition is not about investment; it is about political will.

In September 2016, Dr. Nasreen Khan, long-time Deputy Programme Manager of the National Nutrition Services and SUN Technical Advisor in the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare of Bangladesh, passed away. Nasreen consulted widely, with passion and energy. Facilitating advocacy workshops, leading Behaviour Change Communication Working Group discussions, leading the charge on the National Nutrition Policy, convening journalist workshops to monitor the Code of Marketing on Breast-milk Substitutes, collaborating on the National Plan of Action for Nutrition – was all in a day’s work for Nasreen. She truly believed that every stakeholder – be it government, civil society, business, parliament, United Nations agencies, donors – all have a significant contribution to make. Nasreen was a powerful voice for nutrition globally and her words and enduring commitment will guide others for many years to come. Her passion was infectious and you could always count on her to rally a room full of people with some colourful words:

We have to put lipstick on nutrition. Make it sexy.

On behalf of the SUN Movement we extend our deepest sympathies to Nasreen’s family, friends and all the people she inspired so much. Nasreen - you are an inspiration and your work and flair for life will long be remembered.

The countries driving the SUN Movement

We need more trust, more commitment and more champions. Nutrition is not about investment; it is about political will.
Sharing and learning in 2015-16

In 2015-16, the SUN Country Network, comprised of SUN Government Focal Points and their Multi-Stakeholder Platforms (MSPs), came together three times, through the meetings of the SUN Country Network. During the discussions, progress, challenges and lessons learnt were exchanged, regarding major themes, which will support their scaling up efforts. They examined the impacts of equity and gender on nutrition status, they deliberated on setting national-level nutrition targets and corresponding commitments to action, and they looked at ways each country in the SUN Movement is building and sustaining political commitment for nutrition action. A series of exceptional exchanges were also facilitated to support Latin American, Southern African and Eastern African countries as they deal with the major threats posed by El Niño and increasing food insecurity.

Coming together virtually

The meetings of the SUN Country Network are a key forum in the SUN Movement for exchanging experiences, coaching and identifying common challenges and ways each country is addressing such challenges in unique ways. They also catalyse opportunities for countries to come together and collaborate.

21st Meeting Date: 14-18 September 2015 | Participants: 230 people
Countries: 46 SUN Countries

Key takeaways:
• Women’s education and behaviour change and communication are key. But it is critical to include men in nutrition education, child feeding sessions and support groups. Support the development of comprehensive behaviour change plans and the integration of a gender lens within the national nutrition plans and strategies.
• It is key to work with the industry and employers to reduce gender wage gaps.
• There are challenges in law enforcement and the implementation of some reforms like women’s access to land and access to education. The involvement of the community at the early stage is crucial for reforms.
• Getting information and disaggregated data from decentralised levels is challenging.
• Sharing more evidence is crucial - in particular on high impact nutrition interventions for adolescent girls.
• Identify tools for better situational analysis and strengthen monitoring and evaluation frameworks with proper indicators and disaggregated data.
• Advocate for strong political commitments and the adoption of pro-women legislation.
• Build capacity at the district and provincial levels.

22nd Meeting Date: 25 -29 Jaunary 2016 | Participants: Over 300 people
Countries: 45 SUN Countries and the Indian State of Maharashtra

Key takeaways:
Lessons for setting achievable national nutrition targets
• Commitments towards implementation need to be Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant and Time-Bound (SMART).
• Analyse historical trends using reliable data over a set time frame.
• The level of the ambition needs to be set at the country level, based on the latest prevalence, the historical trend, the population growth and an analysis of the contextual factors.
• Mobilising political will to own and achieve national targets is key as is involving relevant sectors and actors.

Lessons for securing SMART commitments to ensuring action for results
• Adequate budget allocations are essential to ensure commitments lead to actions.
• Strong coordinating mechanisms and adequate human resources at every level of government help ensure that nutrition targets translate into effective actions.
• Efforts to improve monitoring and evaluation systems is crucial to track implementation and link it to the achievement of targets.

Lessons for connecting the dots between targets, commitments and actions
• The planning phase offers an opportunity to translate targets and commitments into tangible actions and required resources (human, physical and financial).
• Timely and reliable data is essential to inform decisions on implementation and spending.
• Performance-based financing can help to ensure that resources are mobilised on a continuous basis and can help to increase implementation and more effective spending.
23rd Meeting Date: 9-13 May 2016 | Participants: 345 people
Countries: 49 SUN Countries and the Indian State of Maharashtra

Key takeaways:
• The integration of nutrition into national development plans is helpful to sustain political commitment.
• Advocacy efforts must be sustained since arrangements can be changed due to political transition.
• High-level national events involving all key stakeholders help maintain momentum and commitment for nutrition.
• Continuous reporting through the media helps high-level people stay engaged.
• Individual interest, passion and commitment lead to better communication and advocacy.
• Identify key opinion leaders (politicians, artists, and parliamentarians) and make them nutrition champions.
• Work on a common understanding of and framing for nutrition with a set of core sectors (start small and target crucial ones), explain the rationale behind the setting up of a high-level platform, and adopt a participative approach for strategy elaboration and implementation, respecting the power and autonomy of the actors.
• Organise exchange visits or ask for training from countries that demonstrate good practices.

Exceptional Meeting Dates: 28 June and 14 July 2016

Key takeaways:
• Nutritional status is declining in SUN Countries as a result of repeated climatic shocks and this is being exacerbated by the effects of El Niño. The situation is urgent, but can be turned around.
• The impact of El Niño is context-specific, requiring tailored responses globally, regionally, nationally and at the subnational levels.
• Marginalised groups are most at risk and of greatest concern are population groups that are already vulnerable to climatic shocks.
• Institutional memory can be harnessed and care should be taken to not side-line or duplicate existing structures and expertise when dealing with immediate humanitarian needs. Promoting the sharing of experiences across countries is appreciated.
• Strong information management systems ensure that policy makers have timely and reliable data to inform their preparedness and response plans - but capacity must exist to utilise this data.
• Integrated actions amplify impact and effectiveness. Addressing malnutrition requires a holistic approach, with direct nutrition interventions being coupled with nutrition-sensitive approaches.
• Multi-stakeholder collaboration is essential, including between humanitarian and development actors, but is not always happening. The private sector, in particular, is under-utilised.
• Political commitment for ensuring improved nutrition outcomes is essential and this requires efforts by the whole government. Nutrition can be better integrated into planning, coordination and programming structures, and mitigation and resilience can be better integrated into national nutrition plans.
• Additional resources are needed for humanitarian responses, however, investment is also needed in disaster risk reduction and resilience to mitigate the effects of (inevitable) future shocks.
Coming together face-to-face

Two regional workshops to support SUN Countries to mobilise public finance for nutrition, took place in Bangkok, Thailand (22-24 April) and Nairobi, Kenya (23-25 August). SUN Countries explored how the budget analysis exercise can become part of more comprehensive efforts to track financial resources and quality costing exercises at national and subnational levels. They shared efforts to hold responsible parties accountable and to leverage increased investment for nutrition, while using their analysis efforts to make more robust investment cases for nutrition, with target audiences – such as Ministries of Finance.

A working session was held in Nairobi, Kenya (26 August) with delegates from Malawi, Ghana, Zambia, Niger, Benin and Burkina Faso and WHO, on learning ways to mitigate Conflicts of Interest (COI), utilising prevention and management tools and the challenges when considering COI in the development of multi-sectoral plans.

Documenting and disseminating country experiences

The launch of the In Practice Brief: From Science to Action - Academia and Decision-Makers Unite in SUN Countries, at the Agriculture, Nutrition and Health Academy Week in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. Through case studies prepared by academics and scientists in Ghana, Benin, Pakistan, Ethiopia, Costa Rica and Tanzania, it examines how academia is working to equip nutrition decision-makers with the evidence they need to make informed policy choices at the national level.

Takeaways:
- Strengthen capacity for translating evidence into effective decision-making fodder
- Refine research agendas in line with national priorities
- Improve coordination between government planning institutions and research bodies
- Broaden academic engagement and incentivise their participation.

The launch of the In Practice Brief: Empowering Women and Girls to Improve Nutrition: Building a Sisterhood of Success, at the 2016 Women Deliver Conference in Copenhagen, Denmark (16-19 May). Featuring case studies from Senegal, Lao PDR, Sierra Leone, Tajikistan, Malawi and Zimbabwe, with a foreword by Mary Robinson, President of the Mary Robinson Foundation and SUN Movement Lead Group Member.

Takeaways:
- Women must be at the decision-making table with their voices heard
- A community-centred approach is essential
- Education and nutrition knowledge is integral to success
- Men must champion and actively engage in empowering women.
Working together through Communities of Practice

The SUN Communities of Practice are groups of individuals with shared interests that come together in person or virtually to tell stories, share and discuss problems and opportunities, good practices, talk over lessons learnt and innovate to fill gaps.

Definition agreed in June 2015, during a meeting of support providers to the SUN Movement. Derived from Wenger, 1998; Wenger & Snyder 1999

In the SUN Movement, individuals from governments, civil society, business, the academia, UN agencies, donors, along with technical specialists, facilitated by the SUN Movement Secretariat, come together to, collectively, trouble-shoot solutions to nutrition problems. They look to one another to share good practices of efforts that will help plan, implement, advocate, communicate strengthen partnerships and foster an equitable approach to ending malnutrition.

In 2016, the SUN Communities of Practice have brought Asian and African countries together through face-to-face workshops and events to mobilise public finance for nutrition, to advocate at key moments such as Women Deliver 2016 and the World Health Assembly and strengthen synergies with water and sanitation actors. They have convened to provide individual support to SUN Countries virtually, and have facilitated technical assistance country visits. They have also launched online technical discussion forums to foster exchange and peer-to-peer learning, in partnership with the Emergency Nutrition Network through en-Net. Further details of these contributions can be found in the following chapters.

There are currently four SUN Movement Communities of Practice, which are supporting SUN Countries to strengthen their capabilities across essential areas for scaling up nutrition. The work of these Communities of Practice is aligned with the thematic focal areas outlined in the SUN Movement Strategy and Roadmap for 2016-2020.

1. Continuously improving country planning and implementation to end malnutrition

This Community aims to help strengthen country capacity to translate political commitment into results and plan and implement for an end to malnutrition. By establishing a set of common results, agreed by key sectors and stakeholders, supportive partners are bound together to deliver for those who suffer most. Its members are working to help ensure all SUN Countries:

- Have nutrition plans, endorsed at the highest level, with national nutrition targets and costed actions that guide collective implementation and resource allocation
- Regularly and transparently track budget allocations against plans and demonstrate better use of finance data through improved advocacy, planning and impact
- Increase resources for nutrition from both domestic and external sources
- Have systems to analyse and use quality data for decision making, accountability and advocacy
- Implement agreed actions at scale and demonstrate impact.
2. Mobilising, advocating and communicating for impact

A key strength of the SUN Movement’s efforts to date has been its ability to inspire 57 country-level movements that are making nutrition a political priority through social mobilisation, advocacy and communication efforts. This Community seeks to support SUN Countries in their efforts to sustain political commitment through strategic advocacy and communication efforts that will resonate with all sectors of society, support implementation and inspire reflection and continuous improvement. Its members are working to help SUN Countries:

• Increase the salience of nutrition as a top policy, financing and institutional priority at national, regional and global levels
• Increase implementation of social mobilisation, advocacy and behavior change communication actions aligned with national priorities
• More effectively communicate the economic, development and human impacts of malnutrition and the ways to improve it.

3. Strengthening capacity for multi-sectoral and multi-stakeholder collaboration at all levels

This Community comes together to reinforce the capacity of individuals and institutions to collaborate effectively, at national and sub-national levels. This capacity is complemented by forging coalitions and alliances across sectors, who can contribute to nutrition, and make it central to national development. A trusting and principled environment for collaboration is needed, in a context where many partners may have different interests. Its members are working to help SUN Countries:

• Have multi-stakeholder partnerships for coordination at national levels
• Have all key stakeholders, including communities, making measurable contributions to scaling up nutrition
• Have aligned policy, legislation and regulations, in support of nutrition
• Ensure countries adopt an approach to prevent and manage conflicts of interest as they emerge
• Ensure consistent and sufficient investment in capacity strengthening by governments and partners.

4. Promoting equity, equality and non-discrimination for all, with women and girls at the centre

The SUN Movement’s members are committed to tackling the inequity drivers of malnutrition common to all countries and ensuring equality and non-discrimination for everyone. This can be related to gender, social, ethnic, religious, economic, geographic circumstances, and those likely to be exacerbated by protracted crises and climate change. This Community is supporting SUN Country efforts to:

• Ensure the equitable improvement of the nutrition status of all people, ensuring that no one is left behind
• Adopt policies that reduce nutritional inequities, especially among women and girls, and eliminate discriminatory laws and practices
• Strive to involve representatives from vulnerable communities in decision-making processes.
The 2016 SUN Movement Joint-Assessment Exercise

To take stock of progress, reflect on challenges, mobilise support for common nutrition goals and set priorities for the coming year, 45 SUN Countries convened their nutrition communities between April and July 2016.

This process of annual reflection and priority setting, is one of the defining characteristics of the SUN Movement. The data collected reflects the institutional transformations which are supporting nutrition change agents to make measurable contributions and impact, in collaboration. As they reflect on their progress to achieve the SUN Movement’s strategic objectives (see p.18), they hold each other mutually accountable and plan to continuously improve. The process itself is unique – as it allows multiple stakeholders and sectors, to build consensus.

45 SUN Countries held high-profile Joint-Assessment Exercises in 2016 by convening face-to-face reviews with their Multi-Stakeholder Platforms (MSPs).

Snapshot of Joint-Assessment workshops in 2016

Recommended principles for future Joint-Assessment Exercises

1. Reporting of progress in the SUN Movement should be a country-led, collective effort of the SUN Government Focal Points and key in-country stakeholders, with the SUN Movement Secretariat (SMS) and SUN Networks providing technical support.

2. Ensure the Joint-Assessment process is participative, involving relevant stakeholders from government, civil society, science and academia, donors the United Nations, businesses, or other parties.

3. Use the process as a moment to focus on reflection and discussion on issues of governance, strategy, capacity building, and teamwork, topics that are often neglected under the pressure to discuss programmes, or other more immediate topics.

4. While inputs can be collected in a number of ways, a face-to-face meeting is an opportunity to reflect, align efforts and set priorities.