

2016 BASELINE ASSESSMENT OF KEY INDICATORS

Dashboard Guidance Note

Interpreting and Using the MEAL Indicator
Colour-coded Results

SUN Movement stakeholders seek to demonstrate how their work and resources are converted into results that deliver nutrition impacts for children and women. The Monitoring, Evaluation, Accountability and Learning (MEAL) system provides the backbone to measure the Theory of Change of the SUN Movement (Figure 1) and is well suited to the systemic nature of changes that SUN countries seek to catalyze.

With input from the MEAL Advisory Groupⁱ, the SUN Movement Secretariat has developed a Results Framework that includes key indicators grouped under each step in the Theory of Change.

Figure 1 – The Theory of Change to achieve impact at country level



Using the MEAL Dashboard Tool

The Dashboard tool provides a summary of country results at baseline (2016) using a colour-coded method of classification. This dashboard is designed to support SUN Movement stakeholders at national, regional and global levels to assess progress using a standard set of indicators that cover eight domains of the Theory of Change (Box 1). Interested countries can adapt the dashboard for use at sub-national level based on data availability.

The following potential uses are envisioned:

Progress of all SUN countries	To assess progress of SUN countries for a specific indicator or across a range of indicators or areas of interest.
Individual country progress	To understand where each SUN country has made most progress and where it is lagging behind specific indicator/s or an area of interest.
Patterns linked to performance	To identify patterns across SUN countries looking at the high performers, those in the middle and those that are slower-paced by understanding where they are performing relatively well or not
Patterns linked to Theory of Change	To identify performance patterns by looking at specific groups of indicators that correspond to the SUN Movement Theory of Change.

Methods

Choice of indicators and data sources

MEAL indicators align with globally agreed monitoring frameworks and initiativesⁱⁱ and reflect a desire to use data that are already available and have been reviewed for quality (e.g. UNICEF Global Databases, WHO Global Health Observatory, World Bank databases).

The MEAL system also includes indicators specific to the SUN Movement based on primary data collected by the SUN Movement Secretariat (e.g. SUN Movement Joint Annual Assessments) and the SUN Movement Global Networks.

Data analysis

The data analysis process looked at the coverage for each indicator across SUN countries and the range in reference years. Summary statistics were calculated for all countries as well as by region, year of joining the SUN Movement, humanitarian risk level, and country income classification (based on World Bank data)ⁱⁱⁱ.

Box 1: Eight domains of the Theory of Change



Individual SUN countries

Each country has its own **Country Dashboard** which provides a summary for each indicator of the actual data, colour-coded score, reference year of the data and comparison with the median for all SUN countries.

Interpreting the results

Each Country Dashboard has an aggregated graph (Figure 3) that presents the scoring across the key domains in the MEAL Results Framework for all those indicators with available data. This allows the user to immediately identify the domain where a country is doing relatively well or not. The graph also provides the scoring median for all SUN countries.

Limitations

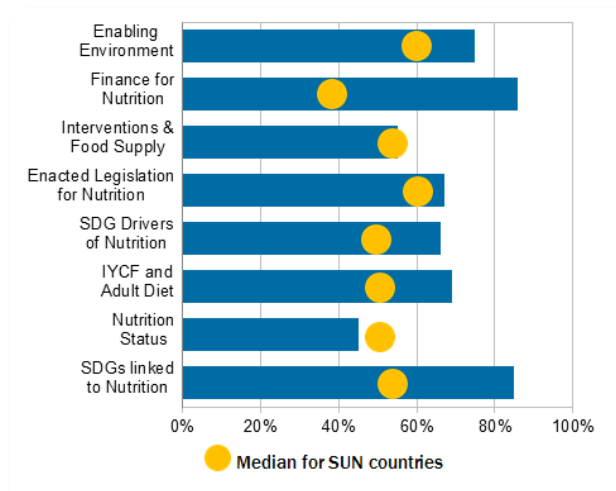
Although the selection of MEAL indicators was guided by the requirement of a publicly available source of data that had been reviewed for quality, not all data sources have been immediately available or regularly updated and not all indicators have broad coverage across all SUN countries^{iv}.

Next steps

While the results are expected to provide insight into current SUN country progress, the intention is to engage country teams and partners in the use of the rich MEAL baseline dataset to further analyze the assumptions and hypotheses of the SUN Movement Theory of Change. This further exploration will first focus on testing assumptions of direct pathways of actions, results and impact. It will also seek to identify contexts where a ‘deep dive’ assessment would be helpful to better understand key relationships and anomalies.

The SUN Movement Secretariat will work with research institutes and consortia (e.g. Transform Nutrition and Global Nutrition Report team) to develop shared protocols for deep-dive case studies. One example of this is the current work with the Institute of Development Studies (IDS) and the country team in Indonesia, with country-level data collection planned for the end of 2017.

Figure 3 – Snapshot of a Sample Dashboard Graph



FOR DETAILED INFORMATION:

More details available on the SUN Movement website at <http://scalingupnutrition.org/progress-impact/monitoring-evaluation-accountability-learning-meal/>:

- SUN Movement MEAL Results Framework and Lists of Indicators with data sources and coverage.
- SUN Movement 2016 MEAL Baseline
 - > Comprehensive Report
 - > Individual Country Dashboards
 - > All SUN Countries Dashboard (colour coded excel file) and Database (excel)

Notes

- i. A group of representatives from donors, UN agencies, civil society, academia and private sectors.
- ii. These include the Maternal, Infant and Young Child Nutrition Monitoring Framework (MIYCF), Global Monitoring Framework and Targets for the Prevention and Control of Non-Communicable Diseases (NCD), Global SDG Indicators, Global Nutrition Report, UNICEF NutriDash, Every Woman Every Child, Fortification Data Exchange and others.
- iii. List of SUN countries and their characteristics is summarized in Appendix D of the MEAL Baseline Report.
- iv. A complete list of limitations with the identified indicators is included in Appendix E of the MEAL Baseline Report

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