

SCALING UP NUTRITION AROUND THE WORLD IN 2017-2018



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West and Central Asia



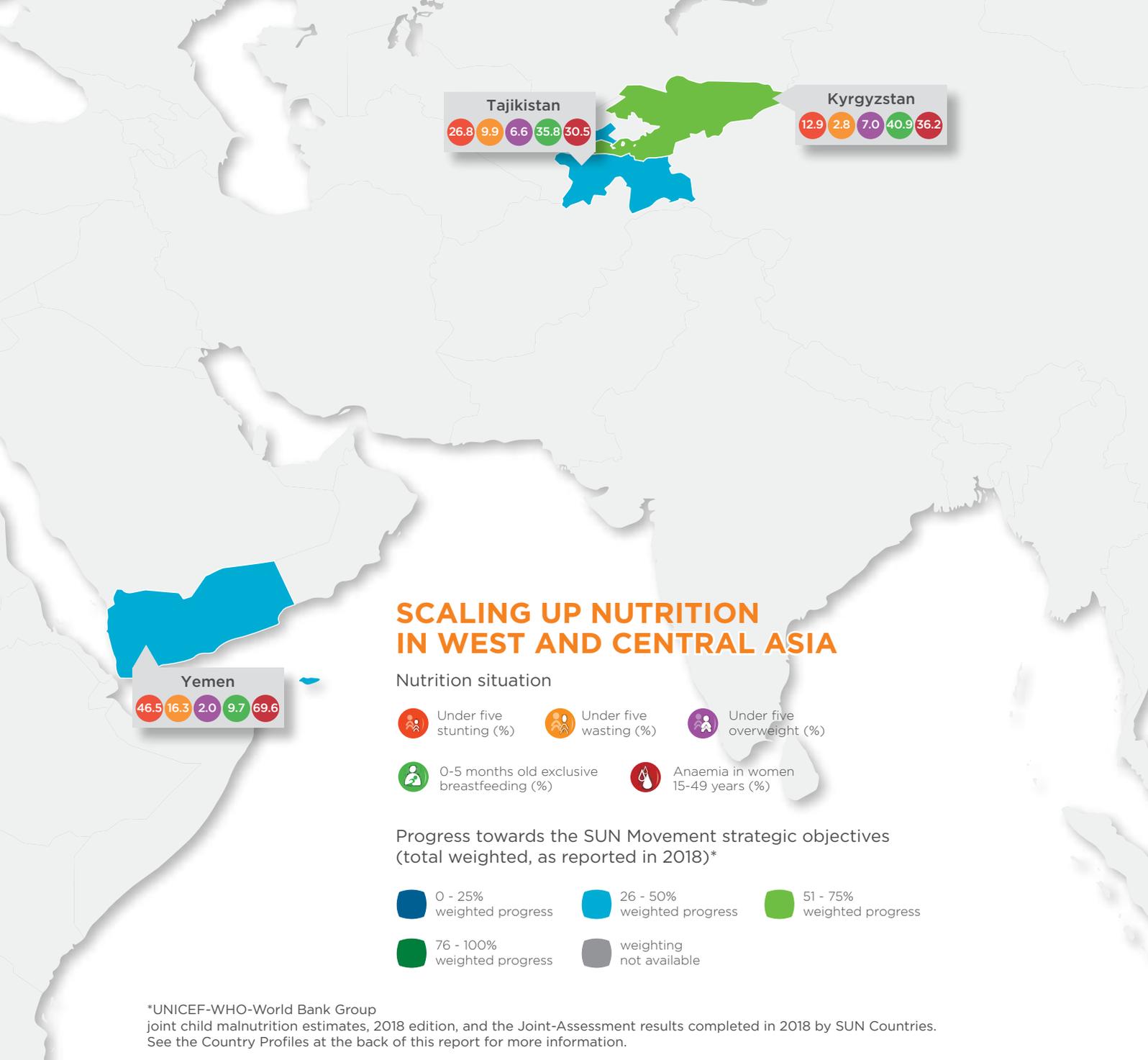
Scaling up nutrition in West and Central Asia

INTRODUCTION

The West and Central Asia region is the smallest region in the SUN Movement and comprises 3 diverse countries - Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan in Central Asia and Yemen in West Asia (which overlaps the Middle East region). All 3 countries joined the SUN Movement between 2011 and 2013.¹

Although these countries are very diverse, they stand united in their commitment to scale up nutrition. All 3 countries have formalised multi-stakeholder platforms (MSPs) for nutrition in place and undertook the 2018 SUN Movement Joint-Assessment. These countries report marked progress towards the SUN Movement strategic objectives - with an increase of 20 percentage points in the median score between 2014-16 and 2017-18.

¹ Unless cited otherwise, data presented in this are from the SUN Monitoring, Evaluation, Accountability and Learning (MEAL) database. These data have been compiled from various sources, as listed in the SUN MEAL Framework Baseline Document, which is available at: <https://scalingupnutrition.org/progress-impact/monitoring-evaluation-accountability-and-learning-meal/>.



Looking ahead, however, challenges in scaling up nutrition in this region remain, including a complicated economic and political climate faced by all 3 countries that could hamper further progress. Yemen, in particular, is in need of urgent and concerted efforts to halt the projected worst famine seen the world over in 100 years, which could render 13 million at risk of starvation.



A SNAPSHOT OF NUTRITION AND DIETS ACROSS THE LIFECYCLE



Malnutrition trends range widely across West and Central Asia. Impressively, Kyrgyzstan is 1 of 6 SUN countries that are on track to achieve the World Health Assembly targets for both stunting and wasting in children (rates today stand at 13 and 3 per cent, respectively).

KYRGYZSTAN IS 1 OF ONLY 6 SUN COUNTRIES ON TRACK TO MEET GLOBAL TARGETS FOR BOTH STUNTING AND WASTING



Kyrgyzstan is, however, struggling to halt the rise in overweight in girls and boys under five, which stands at 7 per cent. Tajikistan faces multiple burdens of malnutrition among children under five – with moderate levels of child undernutrition (17 per cent stunting, 6 per cent wasting), and overweight (at 3 per cent). Whereas overweight is not a concern for children in Yemen, the country faces region faces a high prevalence of acute and chronic child malnutrition. Nearly half of all children under five are stunted (47 per cent) and 16 per cent of girls and boys are wasted.



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The breastfeeding picture in West and Central Asia is also quite varied. Kyrgyzstan is a leader in early breastfeeding initiation rates (at 83 per cent) and about half of infants in Tajikistan and Yemen start breastfeeding within an hour of birth. Exclusive breastfeeding rates among infants between 0-5 months are just under the SUN country average (which today is at 43 per cent) – 36 per cent in Tajikistan and 41 per cent in Kyrgyzstan. Only 1 in 10 infants in Yemen benefit from this life-saving intervention in a context where it is much needed, due to the humanitarian crisis and high prevalence of diarrhoea among young children (38 per cent).²



Anaemia in women and girls is a key concern in these 3 countries, with Tajikistan being the only SUN country in West and Central Asia considered to be making some progress in reducing anaemia levels. Over one third of pregnant (median 40 per cent) and non-pregnant women (median 36 per cent) were anaemic in 2016. In Yemen, 63 per cent of pregnant and 70 per cent of non-pregnant women were anaemic in the same year. Anaemia does not start in adulthood, but already affects adolescent girls between 15 and 19 years in both Kyrgyzstan and Yemen (at similar levels to women overall), and children under five in Tajikistan (42 per cent), Kyrgyzstan (43 per cent) and Yemen (86 per cent). About 16 per cent of children under five in these countries³ also suffer from vitamin A deficiency.

² WHO, (2018). Enabling women to breastfeed through better policies and programmes: Global breastfeeding scorecard 2018. Available at: <http://www.who.int/nutrition/publications/infantfeeding/global-bf-scorecard-2018/en/> [accessed October 2018].

³ Development Initiatives, (2017). Global Nutrition Report 2017: Nourishing the SDGs. Bristol, UK: Development Initiatives. Available at: http://165.227.233.32/wp-content/uploads/2017/11/Report_2017-2.pdf [accessed November 2018].



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As is the case across most SUN countries and regions today, a trend of steadily increasing overweight and obesity among adolescents and adults, alike, has been seen in all 3 countries between 2000 and 2016. Although obesity is rapidly increasing for both sexes, it is currently higher among women (at 19 per cent) than men (at 12 per cent) in the region. Nutrition-related non-communicable diseases (NCDs), such as diabetes and hypertension, are also of significant concern in these countries.



Infant and young child feeding practices in West and Central Asia are just above the average for all SUN countries – with approximately 1 in 5 children between 6 and 23 months receiving a minimum acceptable diet (median 20 per cent, range 15 to 33 per cent) and about one-third of children receive minimum diet diversity (median 35 per cent, range 21 to 38 per cent). These practices directly contribute to undernutrition and micronutrient deficiencies among young children in this region. Large inequities are also evident in this region – only 24 per cent of children from the poorest households receive minimum diet diversity compared to 41 per cent of children from the richest households. Children living in rural areas are also less likely to have minimum diet diversity. Kyrgyzstan is one of only a few SUN countries that has demonstrated significant progress in improving the proportion of children 6-23 months receiving a minimum acceptable diet, which has increased from 16 per cent in 2012 to 33 per cent in 2014.



Whereas, on the one hand, levels of undernourishment are, overall, high in Tajikistan and Yemen (at 33 and 26 per cent, respectively), the level of undernourishment is low in Kyrgyzstan (at 6 per cent). Food insecurity is also high in Yemen (as 60 per cent are considered moderately or severely food insecure), while Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan have some of the lowest severe food insecurity rates across SUN countries (at 4.4 and 7.8 per cent, respectively). Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Yemen are all heavily dependent on food imports, due to limited arable land in the case of the two Central Asian countries, whilst Yemen faces these challenges as a result of the ongoing conflict. In October 2018, the United Nations raised a warning that famine could overwhelm Yemen in the next 3 months, with 13 million people at risk of starvation.⁴

YEMEN COULD BE FACING THE WORST FAMINE IN 100 YEARS, THE UN HAS WARNED

⁴ The Guardian, (2018). Yemen on brink of 'world's worst famine in 100 years' if war continues. Available at: <https://www.theguardian.com/global-development/2018/oct/15/yemen-on-brink-worst-famine-100-years-un> [accessed October 2018].



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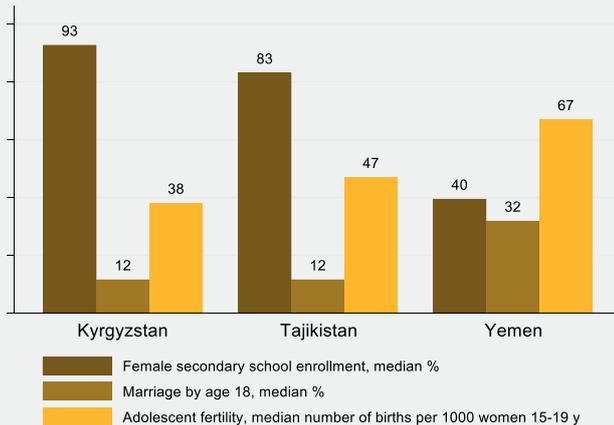


PROGRESS TOWARDS THE SDGs: MAKERS AND MARKERS OF GOOD NUTRITION

The 2 Central Asian countries are progressing towards the attainment of the Sustainable Development Goals, with Yemen being a unique case, given the ongoing conflict.

Nearly 20 per cent of women, men and their families in Yemen live below the poverty line (per 2014 data) compared to less than 5 per cent in Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan (2015 data). Whereas the under-five mortality rate is on the decrease in Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan, as it is globally, Yemen has returned to 2010 levels (55 deaths per 1,000 live births in 2016). Non-communicable disease (NCD) mortality rates are very high in Yemen, high in Kyrgyzstan and moderate in Tajikistan. Similarly, both Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan have seen positive economic growth over the past years, while Yemen has seen a sharp decline in its economy during this period. Living conditions are very poor for a large proportion of the urban population in Yemen, where over 60 per cent live in slums. The status of girls and women in Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan is above average for SUN countries (see figure 1). Over 80 per cent of girls are enrolled in secondary school, only 12 per cent of girls are married before the age of 18 and adolescent fertility is relatively low. In Yemen, the situation is less positive for girls and women, with only 40 per cent of girls enrolled in secondary school and much higher rates of early marriage and adolescent fertility.

Figure 1: Gender-related indicators for SUN countries in West/Central Asia



REACHING THE SUN MOVEMENT STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

In 2018, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Yemen all undertook their Joint-Assessment by bringing together their nutrition communities. Promisingly, these Joint-Assessments show encouraging progress for all 3 countries, with an increase in the median total score from 39 per cent to 59 per cent between 2014-16 and 2017-18.



EXPAND AND SUSTAIN AN ENABLING POLITICAL ENVIRONMENT

All 3 countries in the West and Central Asia region have formalised multi-stakeholder platforms (MSPs) in place, at the national level. Kyrgyzstan is decentralising their MSP into 3 regions, following the formalisation of the national-level MSP in June 2016. In all 3 countries, SUN focal points are placed at high levels within Ministries: in Kyrgyzstan the focal point is the Vice-Prime Minister and Chair of the Food Security and Nutrition Council, in Tajikistan the focal point is the First Deputy Minister of Health and Social Protection and the Yemeni focal point is currently the Vice Minister of the Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation.

The region increasingly works with a more diverse group of stakeholders. For instance, in Tajikistan, the MSP now includes the Chamber of Industry and Trade, the Committee for Religious Affairs, and civil society organisations. In Yemen, the MSP Steering Committee has recently renewed its composition to ensure participation of high-level influential bodies and members from relevant sectors. In terms of SUN Networks, in 2017-2018, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan have set up all four SUN Networks (UN, civil society, business and donor), whilst Yemen is in the process of formally establishing networks for business, civil society and the UN. Kyrgyzstan has created a SUN Academic Network, while Tajikistan and Yemen also collaborate with scientists and academia to grow the evidence base. All 3 countries work with the media to spread the word about the importance of nutrition, which has been a key result in Yemen in 2017-2018. Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan have scaled up their work with parliamentarians, champions and advocates to cement nutrition as a national priority over the past year. In 2017-2018, all 3 countries have made strides and concerted efforts to better coordinate the development of new national nutrition plans and strategies.



PRIORITISING AND INSTITUTIONALISING EFFECTIVE ACTIONS THAT CONTRIBUTE TO GOOD NUTRITION

The West and Central Asia region varies greatly in their ability to ensure a coherent legal and policy framework for nutrition - which is key to ensure the shift from inspiration to lasting human impact.



Whereas the Constitution of Kyrgyzstan implicitly protects the right to adequate food through broader human rights, the Constitutions of Tajikistan and Yemen both have directive principles that (aim to) contribute to the realisation of the right to adequate food. The current situation in Yemen, however, has led to challenges with political decision-making, which affects the development and enforcement of legislation.



In 2017-2018, the SUN Secretariat in Yemen has prepared a project aiming to stock-take nutrition-related laws and legislation in all relevant sectors. Although nutrition is a priority area across all 3 countries, the extent to which it is mentioned in their National Development Plans (NDP) varies, with Tajikistan's National Development Strategy 2030 being a good practice as food security and nutrition are clear components therein.

TAJIKISTAN IS RATED VERY HIGHLY FOR THE INTEGRATION OF UNDERNUTRITION INTO NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT POLICIES



Countries in the region have yet to adopt the ILO's Maternity Protection Convention, 2000 (No.183).⁵ Tajikistan meets the recommended paid maternity leave recommendations – to facilitate a decent work-life balance.⁶ Yemen ratified the ILO Workers with Family Responsibilities Convention, 1981 (No. 156) decades before the ongoing conflict broke out. All 3 countries have put in place legislation to support breastfeeding. Yemen has put in place full legal provisions for the International Code of Marketing of Breast-milk Substitutes. Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan have put in place many provisions in law under this important Code. Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan are SUN Movement leaders with regards to baby-friendly health facilities. In Tajikistan, 70 per cent of health facilities are certified as baby-friendly, which is the case for 38 per cent of health facilities in Kyrgyzstan, much higher than the median of 3 per cent across SUN Movement countries (where data is available).



All 3 countries have mandatory salt fortification legislation in place and the household coverage of iodised salt is at 49 per cent in Yemen, an impressive 99 per cent in Kyrgyzstan and 84 per cent in Tajikistan. Although Tajikistan was among the first countries in Central Asia to adopt a national law on iodisation of table salt (2002, amended in 2007), iodine deficiency disorders (IDD) remain a health challenge especially in the south and in mountainous areas of Tajikistan. Fortification of imported food, such as flour, in Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan is an area for concern as sufficient standards have not been put in place, or, where they have, been followed – leading to a prevalence of micronutrient deficiencies (especially iron, which is a cause of anaemia). In Tajikistan, in 2017-2018, nutrition specialists across sectors have developed a draft law on the fortification of staple foods. SUN Networks in Kyrgyzstan also have been working together, during the reporting period, to ensure the endorsement and enforcement of laws on flour fortification and the prevention of iodine deficiency. Whereas Kyrgyzstan and Yemen have mandatory wheat flour fortification legislation in place, only Yemen has put in place standards on wheat flour fortification. Yemen also has mandatory oil fortification legislation and standards (since 2001).



Tajikistan is the only country in the region reported to have put in place policies to reduce the impact on children of marketing of foods and beverages high in saturated fats, trans-fatty acids, free sugars or salt. Tackling the marketing of unhealthy food and drinks is essential to prevent a further rise in overweight and obese girls and boys in the region.



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⁵ Tajikistan has ratified the ILO Maternity Protection Convention (Revised), 1952 (No. 103).

⁶ Supra note 2.



IMPLEMENTING EFFECTIVE ACTIONS ALIGNED WITH COMMON RESULTS

SUN countries in the West and Central Asia region are scaling up work to align actions around common results. A review of nutrition policies, strategies and guidelines by MQSUN+ during the reporting period has culminated in recommendations for the new National Food Security and Nutrition Programme for 2018-2022 in Kyrgyzstan. All six World Health Assembly targets have been integrated into this new programme, as well as into the Health Development Strategy until 2030, for which MSP members provided input to better harmonise nutrition indicators for better results.

In Tajikistan, the Multi-Sectoral Nutrition Plan's Common Results Framework (CRF) is expected to be finalised by the end of 2018 and endorsed by mid-2019. However, key components of the CRF such as capacity building and training on nutrition are already being implemented. Work is ongoing to integrate CRF targets into sector-specific plans and policies at national and sub-national levels. This Plan will include fully costed nutrition-sensitive and nutrition-specific activities.

In Yemen, the costed Multi-Sectoral Nutrition Plan is being finalised and will be accompanied by a CRF for all sectors including agriculture, health, education, water, the environment, and fishery.

Across the region, holistic assessments and common monitoring systems need strengthening to ensure common nutrition goals are achieved.



EFFECTIVELY USING AND SIGNIFICANTLY INCREASING FINANCIAL RESOURCES FOR NUTRITION

In 2017-2018, both Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan have taken part in the annual SUN Movement budget analysis exercise that looks at nutrition-specific and nutrition-sensitive spending for the second time. Yemen undertook theirs in 2016. The most recent information shows that nutrition-specific spending is low in 2 out of the 3 countries. Based on the latest analysis of donor funding for nutrition in SUN countries (2015), spending per stunted child under-five for nutrition in SUN countries in this region ranges widely - from USD 1.76 per stunted child in Tajikistan to USD 30.60 in Yemen. The total spending per child under-five by donors on high-impact nutrition-specific interventions is also very high in Yemen (at USD 6.65).

In Yemen, recent trends show that civil society organisations attract international donor funding and remain crucial for the implementation of nutrition actions. However, the operational expenses of technical departments in some government sectors are no longer funded, and the ongoing conflict makes it difficult to ensure long-term financial support. Most of Yemen's nutrition projects, indicators and financial details have been uploaded onto 'Map-Yemen', which will become available for users by the end of 2018.

In Kyrgyzstan, the Government allocates a limited amount of funding for nutrition that is tracked. The lack of a system for a comprehensive monitoring of nutrition expenditure - that also takes into account donor financing - renders the tracking of nutrition-sensitive actions very difficult. Kyrgyzstan has the second highest ratio of donor spending across SUN Movement countries (95 per cent) towards nutrition-specific to nutrition-sensitive interventions.⁷ There are no financial mechanisms in place to ensure continuity of humanitarian and development financing.

In 2017-2018, the financial contributions of development partners in Tajikistan were collected and integrated into the SUN financial tracking template, for the first time. This tracking exercise now includes budget expenditures for safe drinking water, vaccination, school feeding, food provision in hospitals, and sanitation and hygiene. Other aspects of funding and resource mobilisation will be addressed upon approval of the CRF.

⁷ Only Guinea-Bissau is higher, at 96 per cent.



THE WAY FORWARD: ACCELERATING PROGRESS

Considering the 3 countries that form the West and Central Asia region of the SUN Movement are so diverse, there is no blue-print nor quick-fix solutions to ensure all women, men, girls and boys get the opportunity to enjoy good nutrition.

Urgent action and financial resources are needed in Yemen to prevent the worst famine seen the world over in 100 years and ensure that actions are taken to curb undernutrition, in particular. Looking ahead, the multi-sectoral nutrition plan will be finalised, and implemented, which is an important step in the right direction. Sectoral frameworks also need strengthening to this end, as does the capacity of institutions and nutrition-related sectors to implement nutrition-sensitive interventions. Formalising networks will also be key to bring more stakeholders onboard. Addressing gender norms and traditions, and ensuring women and girls take part in peacebuilding will be key to ensure better nutrition for Yemen.

In Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan, there are more common areas to be scaled up, such as ensuring fortification standards are in place and enforced - with political ownership and leadership being key to ensure the nutrition agenda remains a top priority. Tajikistan can further embrace the multi-stakeholder approach, including working closely with civil society. The finalisation of the CRF and setting up an effective monitoring and evaluation mechanism will be important for both countries.

share YOUR STORY

ADVANCING NUTRITION IN FRAGILE CONTEXTS: EXPERIENCE FROM YEMEN

Yemen joined the Scaling Up Nutrition (SUN) Movement in 2012 with high-level commitment. Despite progress, the political crisis and outbreak of civil war in 2015 have made it challenging to move Yemen's nutrition agenda forward. MQSUN⁺ (and the predecessor project MQSUN)* has provided support to Yemen since 2013 to analyse the nutrition context and support prioritisation throughout the fluctuating nutrition and political context. Most recently, the SUN Yemen Secretariat (SUN-Yemen) has been collaborating with MQSUN⁺ to update their multi-sectoral nutrition plan.

Given the fragile context, MQSUN⁺'s support has centred on strong remote technical guidance, structure and tools to enable SUN-Yemen to facilitate the in-country action and collaboration throughout the process. SUN-Yemen has highlighted this support as a valuable opportunity for capacity building: Abdulkarim Nasser, Acting Head of SUN Yemen Secretariat, notes that *"MQSUN+ has provided SUN-Yemen with valuable inputs and consultancy. The activities related to updating the Multisector Nutrition Plan have developed SUN-Yemen functional capacities"*.

MQSUN⁺ recognises the commitment and growing empowerment of SUN-Yemen and that this work has been a true collaboration. Beyond the most recent phase of MQSUN⁺ support, Yemen leveraged the MQSUN⁺ outputs and technical guidance to convene stakeholders, gather consensus and collect information and data necessary to move its nutrition agenda forward.

The strong ownership demonstrated by SUN-Yemen has been pivotal to advancing nutrition commitments as a national development priority amidst the protracted crises. SUN-Yemen has highlighted key areas for UN partners and continued MQSUN⁺ collaboration in advance of their initiatives. *"MQSUN+ could provide SUN-Yemen with essential technical support in accomplishing the most urgent activities, such as establishing SUN-Yemen Networks. The SUN-Yemen annual workplan is available and clear; however, there is lack of operational support that could transform SUN-Yemen's work plan into real actions on the ground."*

Countries in conflict are often focused on their humanitarian response. However, through the SUN Movement mechanism and supplementary technical assistance, countries like Yemen can form strong collaboration with in-country partners to drive forward humanitarian and development progress for tackling malnutrition.



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*Maximising the Quality of Scaling Up Nutrition (MQSUN) and now MQSUN⁺ (2016-2020) provides technical assistance to DFID, SUN countries and the SUN Movement Secretariat to catalyse multisectoral country efforts to scale up nutrition impact.



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ACTIVISM BRINGS FORTIFIED FLOUR TO SUUSAMYR, KYRGYZSTAN

Ainagul Muratalieva has never seriously thought about fortification. To her, a simple sense of fullness was equal to good nutrition. She is the head of a local community-based non-governmental organisation. Ainagul and her family live in the remote village of Kozhomgul in Suusamyр valley, located behind the Too-Ashuu mountain pass, 20 km away from the road. Although it may seem that her village is located not far from the road, it is hard to reach the nearest large settlement – there is no regular transport and people have to take taxis, as the road to the nearest large settlement takes 2 hours and it is very expensive to get there.

In 2016, in Kozhomgul village representatives of KACS SUN – a civil society network within the national multi-stakeholder platform (MSP) for nutrition – arranged a workshop for their members on good nutrition – also focusing on the importance of fortified flour.

According to Tursun Mamyрbaeva, a nutrition specialist, *“flour fortification is one of the cheapest and most effective ways to prevent iron, zinc and folic acid deficiencies. It has been proven that flour fortification reduces the risk of iron deficiency and anaemia and decreases the incidence of neural tube defects in children by between 30 and 70 per cent”*.

Ainagul participated in this workshop and found out that there is no fortified flour available in her and neighboring villages, despite the Kyrgyz Law “On the mandatory fortification of baking flour”. After the workshop, village activists took the decision that their families should have the opportunity to buy fortified flour. Ainagul and her friends tried to negotiate with shop sellers in 7 ayil okmotus (municipalities) to only supply fortified flour.

Sellers arranged supply of fortified flour, but at a very high price. Then, the women decided to ask the taxi drivers to deliver fortified flour. However, the taxi drivers charged 100 Kyrgyz Som for delivery of each flour bag. Ainagul almost gave up. Luckily, KACS SUN, offered their help. The MSP unites civil society organisations, academia, public and international organisation and businesses, ensuring a fast exchange of information, access to each other’s resources and the opportunity to share a common language and joint actions.

For a few months, the Civil Society Alliance negotiated with the Millers’ Association regarding the lack of fortified flour. After the inspection of shops in 7 villages, they compared the size of the population and their flour needs. The Chairperson of the Millers’ Association, Rustam Zhunushev, discovered those manufacturers ready to help residents of the 7 villages in Suusamyр ayil okmotu (municipality). Akun, the largest producing flour company, came to the rescue.

Since autumn 2017, Ainagul has collected information about the flour required for shops, she gives this information to Akun, and she acts as the guarantor, to ensure the company gets the profits. In each village, Ainagul has help.

Today, fortified flour is sold in all 7 villages. Whereas, during the first month, the residents purchased 1,5 tons of fortified flour, they now consume 7 tons of fortified flour each month, and prices have dropped significantly.

All this has become possible due to advocacy of the SUN Civil Society Alliance among the residents of 7 villages in Suusamyр ayil okmotu. They have helped residents realise the importance of good health, especially, among mothers and children, through the consumption of flour fortified with iron, zinc and folic acid. Moreover, this has become a reality, and an important result for the MSP, which brings together the Government, civil society and businesses.

LOOKING AT MULTI-SECTORAL NUTRITION IN PRACTICE: A PERSPECTIVE FROM MQSUN+'S LOCAL CONSULTANT IN TAJIKISTAN



Mutriba Latypova and SUN Coordinator Gerda Verburg

The government of Tajikistan joined the Scaling Up Nutrition (SUN) Movement in September 2013. Since 2014, the DFID-funded Maximising the Quality of Scaling Up Nutrition (MQSUN)* and, now, the MQSUN+ project has been providing technical assistance to the country to review existing policy, conduct a nutrition gap analysis, map key stakeholders, and, recently, develop and operationalise their common results framework (CRF).

Since 2017, the MQSUN+ national consultant, Mutriba Latypova, has been supporting the CRF development. *“My role as an MQSUN+ national consultant is to help the country bridge the gap in the nutrition sector, to share global knowledge, and help the country to develop a technically-sound nutrition plan—taking into account global experience, lessons learnt and knowledge.”*

By playing such an integral role in the technical assistance team, Ms. Latypova has noted that her own capacity has been strengthened – in multi-sectoral planning and all its intricacies. *“Professionally, I have grown in understanding more about nutrition programming—nutrition-specific and sensitive interventions—and learnt how to work with consultants and colleagues within the country and outside.”*

This experience has been significant not only for her own professional development, but for the continued role she can now play in supporting country efforts to advance their nutrition agenda. From her support with MQSUN+, she has noted continuing progress in multi-sectoral nutrition collaboration, including the formation of sectoral working groups and a recent national advocacy workshop. She sees the next steps for the country to be finalising their multi-sectoral nutrition plan, reinforcing new and existing nutrition networks and forums, and continuing to advocate for nutrition across key sectors and stakeholders.

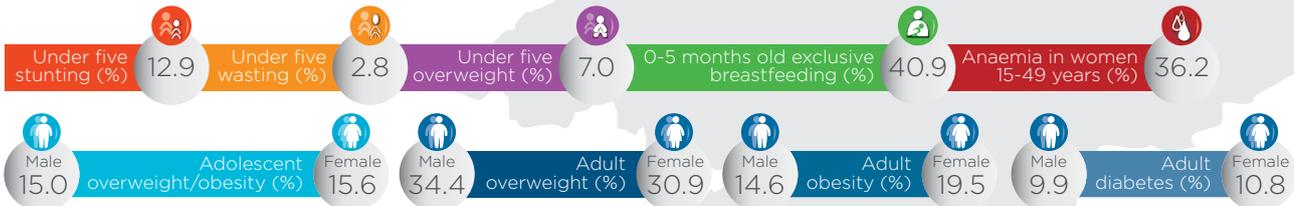


*Maximising the Quality of Scaling Up Nutrition (MQSUN) and now MQSUN+ (2016-2020) provides technical assistance to DFID, SUN countries and the SUN Movement Secretariat to catalyse multisectoral country efforts to scale up nutrition impact.

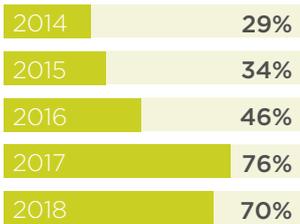


Joined: December 2011
Population: 6.05 million

Kyrgyzstan



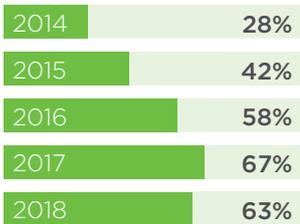
Institutional transformations in 2017-2018



Bringing people together into a shared space for action

The first Vice-Prime Minister and Chair of the Food Security and Nutrition Council has been appointed country coordinator of the SUN Movement. The Deputy Minister of Agriculture, Food Industry and Melioration has been appointed technical coordinator. Terms of reference for the country coordinator, SUN Networks, and

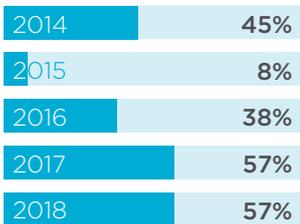
the Multi-Stakeholder Platform (MSP) have been developed. A decentralisation process for the MSP has been initiated with orientation meetings held in three regions. Coordination and communication between the Government and other SUN stakeholders needs further strengthening.



Ensuring a coherent policy and legal framework

A review of nutrition policies, strategies and guidelines conducted by MQSUN+ provided recommendations for the new National Food Security and Nutrition Programme for 2018-2022. There is a need for greater harmonisation across existing programmes. Two large monitoring

exercises were conducted: monitoring the implementation of the laws on prevention of iodine deficiencies and technical regulations on safety of iodized salts; and the law on the fortification of flour. Key findings were presented to members of the SUN Movement for further consideration.



Aligning actions around common results

A multi-sectoral working group was established with representatives of ministries and agencies for the development of the National Food Security and Nutrition Programme for 2018-2022. Six World Health Assembly indicators have been integrated into the new programme, as well as into the Health Development

Strategy up to 2030, for which MSP members provided input in terms of harmonisation of indicators for achieving nutritional results. Despite measures to improve nutrition, holistic assessments of actions to improve nutrition need to be prioritised.



Financing tracking and resource mobilisation

The Government allocates a limited amount of funding for nutrition, which is tracked. However, there is no system for the comprehensive monitoring of nutrition expenditure that takes into account parallel financing from donor organisations. This is particularly difficult in terms

of nutrition-sensitive actions, partly due to a lack of clear criteria for their costing. There are no financial mechanisms available to ensure continuity between humanitarian financing and financing for development.



2018-2019 PRIORITIES

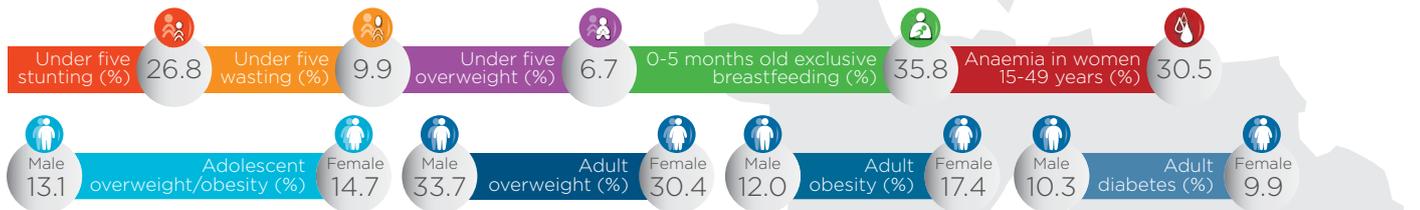
[SCALINGUPNUTRITION.ORG/KYRGYZSTAN](https://scalingupnutrition.org/kyrgyzstan)

- Expansion of the MSP, including at the sub-national level with the development of mechanisms for decentralisation;
- Development of the National Food Security and Nutrition Programme 2018-2022;
- Capacity-building of the MSP in development, analysis, tracking and accountability of nutrition financing.



Joined: September 2013
Population: 8.92 million

Tajikistan



Institutional transformations in 2017-2018



Bringing people together into a shared space for action

The Multi-Sectoral Coordination Council (MSCC), which functions as the SUN Multi-Stakeholder Platform (MSP) has expanded to include the Chamber of Industry and Trade, the Committee for Religious Affairs, and civil society organisations. Through inter-ministerial working groups, the MSCC has supported the

development of a national multi-sectoral nutrition plan. A national SUN Secretariat was also established under the MSCC. The second National Nutrition Forum brought government and development partners together in July 2017, and was followed by the first regional nutrition forum in Khatlon province.



Ensuring a coherent policy and legal framework

Food security and nutrition is a clear priority in the National Development Strategy (NDS) to 2030. In September 2017, the Strategy for Sustainable Development of School Feeding until 2027 was adopted. The MSCC has been engaged in the development and revision of the draft Law on the Fortification of Staple Foods

which, when finalised, will be resubmitted to Parliament for review. There is a need to establish a mechanism for the monitoring and evaluation of implementation of laws at the sub-national level, as well as local food manufacturers' adherence to national standards.



Aligning actions around common results

The Common Results Framework (CRF) is expected to be finalised and endorsed by mid-2019. However, key components of the CRF, such as capacity building and training on nutrition, are already being implemented. Work is ongoing to integrate CRF targets into sector-specific

plans and into policies at national and sub-national levels. Establishing a common monitoring system is a priority, as currently various monitoring mechanisms exist, many of which are similar yet unconnected.



Financing tracking and resource mobilisation

Tajikistan took part in the financial tracking SUN process using the '3 Steps' approach. In 2018, for the first time, the financial contributions of development partners and donors were collected and integrated into a financial tracking template. Thanks to the concerted efforts of the national SUN Secretariat and the

Ministry of Finance, the tracking exercise included budget expenditures for safe drinking water, vaccinations, school feeding, food provision in hospitals, and sanitation and hygiene. Other aspects of funding and resource mobilisation will be addressed upon approval of the CRF.



2018-2019 PRIORITIES

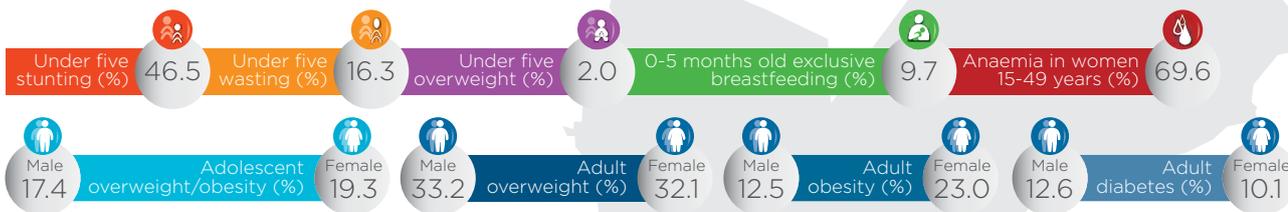
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- Finalisation of the CRF, including an action plan and costing and integration into the sectoral plans;
- Organisation of National Nutrition Forums III and IV;
- Development and implementation of the 'First 1,000 golden days' Strategy;
- Setting up an effective operational monitoring and evaluation mechanism to support the MSP's monitoring of CRF implementation.

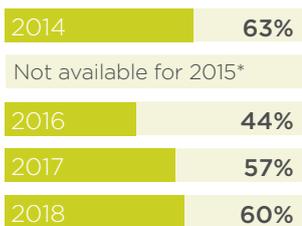


Joined: November 2012
Population: 28.25 million

Yemen



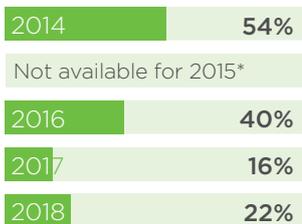
Institutional transformations in 2017-2018



Bringing people together into a shared space for action

Ongoing conflict and political crises continue to pose significant challenges for nutrition coordination, and the deterioration of the humanitarian situation has negatively impacted nutrition indicators in Yemen. This has led SUN to work increasingly with technical-level representatives across various sectors.

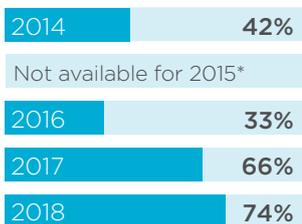
However the Multi-Stakeholder Platform (MSP) Steering Committee has recently renewed its composition to ensure participation of high-level influential bodies and members from relevant sectors. Planning has begun to formally establish SUN networks for businesses, civil society and the UN.



Ensuring a coherent policy and legal framework

The current situation in Yemen has led to fragmentation of the State, with political decision makers having little influence and parliament having no role. Also, the fact that the judiciary lacks power makes it very challenging to enforce and protect

laws and legislation. However, the Ministry of Health is still able to enforce the Law on the Protection of Breastfeeding. The SUN Secretariat has prepared a project to identify nutrition-related laws and legislation in all relevant sectors.



Aligning actions around common results

The Multi-Sector Nutrition Plan (MSNP) is currently being finalised and will be accompanied by a common results framework for all sectors. Sectors such as health, education, water, environment, fish, and agriculture fed into the costed MSNP. A contextual analysis of nutrition status has been prepared in partnership

with MQSUN+ and will serve as a reference for all sectors and entities working in nutrition. Importantly, most nutrition stakeholders also operate within the humanitarian cluster approach in terms of planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation, facilitating coordination.



Financing tracking and resource mobilisation

An annual nutrition budget analysis was conducted and the costed plan of each government sector is reflected in the draft MSNP. Civil society organisations attracted international donor funding, which remains crucial for its implementation. The ongoing conflict makes it difficult to ensure long-term funding: for

example, the operational expenses of technical departments in some government sectors were suspended. Most of Yemen's nutrition projects, indicators and financial details have been uploaded to 'Map-Yemen', which will be available for users by the end of 2018.



2018-2019 PRIORITIES

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- Finalise and put into action the multi-sectoral nutrition plan;
- Strengthen institutional frameworks for nutrition in relevant sectors;
- Strengthen the capacity of government institutions and all nutrition-related sectors to implement nutrition-sensitive interventions;
- Establish SUN networks for businesses, civil society, and the UN;
- Mobilise necessary financial resources.

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All information in this report was collected, reviewed and collated by the SUN Movement Secretariat during June, July and August 2017. The SUN Movement Secretariat is supported by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, Canada, the European Union, France, Germany, Ireland, the Netherlands, the United Kingdom and the United States. Human resource capacity, reporting directly to the SUN Movement Director, has been made available by France and the World Food Programme. The activity plan and budget of the SUN Movement Secretariat supports the implementation of the revised SUN Movement Strategy and the priorities identified by SUN countries in the context of the SUN Movement Roadmap 2016-2020.

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