



**UN Network**

**ANNUAL  
REPORT**

**2018**







# Contents

Acronyms and abbreviations	3
Key accomplishments: Progress at a glance (2018)	4
Introduction	7
Overview of the UN Network	8
UN Network contributions to global nutrition commitments and frameworks	11
UN Network Annual Reporting Exercise 2017-18	12
<b>UN Network membership &amp; leadership</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>OUTPUT 5.1</b>	
<b>Functionality of the UN Network</b>	<b>16</b>
FUNCTIONALITY INDEX+	18
<b>OUTPUT 5.2</b>	
<b>UN Network support to national priorities, plans and joint UN frameworks</b>	<b>19</b>
UN NETWORK TA FACILITY IN FOCUS: REACH SUPPORT TO GOVERNMENTS	22
<b>OUTPUT 5.3</b>	
<b>UN Joint Programming</b>	<b>24</b>
NUTRITION-SPECIFIC JOINT PROGRAMMES/PROGRAMMING	25
NUTRITION-SENSITIVE JOINT PROGRAMMES/PROGRAMMING	26
NEW AND EMERGING THEMES UNDER JOINT PROGRAMMES/PROGRAMMING	26
<b>OUTPUT 5.4</b>	
<b>UN joint advocacy and communications to attract increased investment in nutrition</b>	<b>27</b>
COMMON NUTRITION NARRATIVES	28
JOINT RESOURCING STRATEGIES	29
<b>Portfolio of UN Network analytical tools</b>	<b>31</b>
Challenges at the country level	37
The way forward	38
<b>ANNEXES</b>	<b>39</b>
ANNEX 1. Current and past UNN-REACH engagement	40
ANNEX 2: Functionality Index + results	41
ANNEX 3: Overview and coverage of UN Network analytics	43
ANNEX 4: UN Network brief on how nutrition is linked to the SDGs	45



# Acronyms and abbreviations

<b>BFHI</b>	Baby-Friendly Hospital Initiative
<b>CAN</b>	Compendium of Actions for Nutrition
<b>CAR</b>	Central African Republic
<b>DRC</b>	Democratic Republic of Congo
<b>FAO</b>	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
<b>GAC</b>	Global Affairs Canada
<b>HCT</b>	Humanitarian Country Team
<b>HQ</b>	Headquarters
<b>IFAD</b>	International Fund for Agricultural Development
<b>IRRM</b>	Integrated Rapid Response Mechanism
<b>IYCF</b>	Infant and young child feeding
<b>MAM</b>	Moderate acute malnutrition
<b>M&amp;E</b>	Monitoring and evaluation
<b>MEAL</b>	Monitoring, Evaluation, Accountability and Learning
<b>MNO</b>	Multi-Sectoral Nutrition Overview
<b>MNP</b>	Micronutrient powders
<b>MSP</b>	Multi-stakeholder platform
<b>NPAN</b>	National Plan of Action for Nutrition
<b>NSFSN</b>	National Strategy for Food Security and Nutrition
<b>PNSAN</b>	<i>Politique Nationale de Sécurité Alimentaire et Nutritionnelle</i>
<b>PPO</b>	Policy and Plan Overview
<b>REACH</b>	Renewed Efforts Against Child Hunger and undernutrition
<b>SAM</b>	Severe acute malnutrition
<b>SBCC</b>	Social behaviour change communication
<b>SDGs</b>	Sustainable Development Goals
<b>SMART</b>	Specific, measurable, attainable, realistic and time-bound
<b>SMS</b>	Scaling Up Nutrition Movement Secretariat
<b>SUN</b>	Scaling Up Nutrition Movement
<b>TA</b>	Technical Assistance
<b>UNAIDS</b>	Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS
<b>UNCT</b>	United Nations Country Team
<b>UNDAF</b>	United Nations Development Assistance Framework
<b>UNDP</b>	United Nations Development Programme
<b>UNFPA</b>	United Nations Population Fund
<b>UNHCR</b>	Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
<b>UNICEF</b>	United Nations Children's Fund
<b>UNN</b>	UN [Nutrition] Network
<b>UNN-PAT</b>	UN Network portfolio of analytical tools
<b>UNOPS</b>	United Nations Office for Project Services
<b>UNRC</b>	United Nations Resident Coordinator
<b>UNSCN</b>	United Nations System Standing Committee on Nutrition
<b>UN WOMEN</b>	United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women
<b>WASH</b>	Water, sanitation and hygiene
<b>WFP</b>	World Food Programme
<b>WHA</b>	World Health Assembly
<b>WHO</b>	World Health Organization

---

# Key accomplishments: Progress at a glance (2018)

## COUNTRY-PRESENCE AND LEADERSHIP

At the country-level, the scope of the UN [Nutrition] Network (herein UN Network) increased from 57 to 60 countries in 2017-18, mirroring the growth of the Scaling Up Nutrition Movement (SUN), as all SUN countries have a UN Network. The three additional countries to join the Network are Afghanistan, the Central African Republic (CAR), and the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC).

The annual reporting exercise provides an opportunity for countries to reflect on the status of the UN Network in-country as well as its achievements. One of the basic requirements of the UN Network is to nominate a UN Network Chair, often a Resident UN Agency Representative, who is tasked with providing senior leadership to the UN Network and mobilizing high-level buy-in from the government. Between the 2016 and 2017-18 reporting cycles, UN Networks with chairs or co-chairs increased from 65 to 71 percent. Another noteworthy finding from the 2017-18 reporting exercise is that United Nations Resident Coordinators (UNRCS) are also serving as chairs, such as in the Republic of Congo and the Comoros. This is timely in view of UN Reform which confers increased authority to them.

## GROWING UN NETWORK MEMBERSHIP

The composition of the UN Network is changing at the country level, recognizing the role that other United Nations agencies play in supporting positive nutrition outcomes. UN Network membership is expanding beyond the five founding United Nations agencies (Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations [FAO]; International Fund for Agricultural Development [IFAD]; United Nations Children's Fund [UNICEF]; World Food Programme [WFP]; and World Health Organization [WHO]). In 2017-18, twelve United Nations agencies were involved in the UN Network,

including the World Bank, United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN WOMEN) and United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS).

## INCLUSION OF NUTRITION CONTENT IN JOINT UNITED NATIONS FRAMEWORKS

The 2017-18 reporting exercise also illuminated improvements made within the context of joint action, as 80 percent of the UN Networks contributed to the development or updating of nutrition content in joint UN frameworks, such as the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF). In Zimbabwe's UNDAF, country results are guided by six national priorities of which Food and Nutrition Security is one of them. The Government of Zimbabwe and the United Nations Country Team (UNCT) formulated a joint implementation matrix and a common budgetary framework that provided a clear link and interface between the UNDAF and individual UN agency programmes.

## UN NETWORK ENGAGEMENT WITH THE GOVERNMENT

42 out of 45 country UN Networks (93 percent), who responded to the annual survey, brokered or provided direct technical support to the government. For example, the UN Network contributed to the strengthening of multi-stakeholder platforms (MSPs) by mobilizing stakeholders and their contributions towards the nutrition agenda in several countries. In countries that have UNN-REACH facilitators, this support was even more intensive, particularly that extended to the SUN Government Focal Point, as documented in monthly REACH monthly reports.

TABLE 1. Key country-level UN Network achievements

### UN NETWORK CONTRIBUTIONS TO PARLIAMENTARIAN ENGAGEMENT

- ✓ The UN Network supported the Joint Project on Complementary Foods to Women's Cooperatives and Advocacy Caravans conducted by the SUN Parliamentarian and Journalist Networks in **Chad**.
- ✓ In **Congo**, UN Network members steered the establishment of a structure and set-up the governing bodies of a Congolese Parliamentary Alliance for Food and Nutrition Security.
- ✓ In **Sierra Leone**, the UN Network supported the advocacy meeting with parliamentarians and political parties to include nutrition support in their manifestos.
- ✓ The UN Network facilitated a high-level round table in **Somalia** with key government personnel in relevant ministries (e.g. Health, Agriculture, Water, Education) and the Office of the Prime Minister.

### UN NETWORK TECHNICAL AND FACILITATION SUPPORT IN DEVELOPMENT AND COSTING OF NATIONAL NUTRITION PLANS/STRATEGIES

- ✓ The UN Network supported the development of **Bangladesh's** National Plan of Action on Nutrition (NPAN2) 2016-2025 and Country Investment Plan 2 (2016-2020), both core national frameworks on food security and nutrition, which are based on national vision documents, national policies and 5-year government plans.
- ✓ In **Cambodia**, the UN Network supported the mid-term and strategic review process of the National Strategy for Food Security and Nutrition (NSFSN, 2014 - 2018) which is identified as an accelerator for future national strategic development planning.
- ✓ In the **Comoros**, United Nations agencies supported the elaboration of the national nutrition policy and mobilization of funds for the recruitment of a nutrition focal point in the government.
- ✓ The UN Network provided joint support in the development and implementation of the **Cote d'Ivoire** National Multi-sectoral Nutrition Plan (PNMN) 2016-2020 and initiated the process of setting-up the Regional Committee in the north of the country.

- ✓ In the **DRC**, the UN Network facilitated a meeting with the Minister of Health and donors to reinvigorate the SUN Movement. A Common Nutrition Narrative was launched and a multi-sectoral mapping of nutrition actions was undertaken by the government with UN Network support.
- ✓ The UN Network supported the formulation and launch of the third National Nutrition Action Plan (PNAN III) at a grand ceremony with the President of the **Republic of Madagascar**.

### UN NETWORK CONTRIBUTIONS TO COUNTRY-LEVEL JOINT PROGRAMMING

- ✓ The organization of nutrition conferences in South Kivu, Kananga and Kwango provinces in the **DRC** led to the development of a joint food and nutrition strategy to help the government cope with Ebola outbreaks.
- ✓ In **Zimbabwe** the UN Network, through UNN-REACH, helped establish a communications and advocacy committee to spearhead the identification of the 'core nutrition actions'.
- ✓ FAO, UNICEF, WHO and UN WOMEN joined forces in a joint programme on nutrition and food security in **Vietnam**, which improved the nutritional status of women and children in disadvantaged locations in two provinces.<sup>1</sup>
- ✓ In **Tanzania**, the United Nations agencies supported the government undertake a Joint Multi-sectoral Nutrition Review (JMNR). UNN-REACH funding enabled regional nutrition officers from eleven regions (Mara, Katavi, Rukwa, Pwani, Tabora, Singida, Dar es Salaam, Tanga, Arusha and Kilimanjaro and Mtwara) to attend the JMNR, where participants reflected on the first year's progress in implementing of the National Multi-sectoral Nutrition Action Plan (2016-2021) and shared knowledge to support learning and nutrition scale-up.

(Continued...)

1. [http://www.sdgfund.org/sites/default/files/viet\\_nam\\_sdg\\_fund\\_final\\_report.pdf](http://www.sdgfund.org/sites/default/files/viet_nam_sdg_fund_final_report.pdf)

(... Continued)

- ✓ In addition, the United Nations agencies in **Tanzania** (e.g. UNICEF) helped support community nutrition services for community health volunteers delivering monthly counselling services to male and female caregivers of young children. This helped to promote early childhood development in over 65% of villages in four priority regions.
- ✓ In **Sudan**, the commencement of the FAO-WFP-WHO joint fortification project included a provision for technical assistance (TA) to the Federal Ministry of Health.
- ✓ Despite the humanitarian crisis in **South Sudan**, the UN Network continued joint implementation of nutrition-specific and sensitive projects in Northern Bahr Ghazal. In addition, UNICEF and WFP produced a joint programme document entitled, *WFP/UNICEF Collaboration Framework, South Sudan, July 2017 to December 2018*. The collaboration ensured a continuum of care for acute malnutrition, which involved a static and Integrated Rapid Response Mechanism (IRRM) to conflict-affected and hard-to-reach locations in the country.
- ✓ **Pakistan's** Multi-sectoral Nutrition Strategy and National Food Fortification Strategy were common narratives that were developed in consensus among all stakeholders, including the UN Network.
- ✓ The 2nd National Nutrition Forum, conducted in July 2017, brought together 100 local and international stakeholders in **Tajikistan**. The forum culminated in a resolution proposing actions to address the major challenges in improving the nutritional status of women and children in the country. This led to the development of a multi-year joint communications strategy, facilitated by the UN Network.
- ✓ WHO conducted an advocacy workshop on the control of marketing foods and beverages high in sugar, salt and fat to children in **Sri Lanka**. The workshop laid the groundwork for continued advocacy to strengthen regulations and promoted innovative approaches, such as the engagement of mothers' and community groups in community-level activities related to maternal and child nutrition.



# Introduction

This report presents the findings from the UN Network's annual reporting exercise carried out in 2018, comparing progress to that of 2016,<sup>2</sup> where applicable. The report largely covers the 2017 reference period along with some achievements made during the first semester of 2018. This was in part due to the SUN Joint Assessments which were being conducted in parallel, covering the period from the April 2017 to August 2018. The response rate to the 2017-18 UN Network reporting questionnaire was 75 percent (45 out of 60 countries).

The report focuses solely on outcome 5 (**Harmonized and coordinated UN nutrition efforts**) of the UN Network results framework and is structured around the following four output areas.

- 1) UN Networks in place and functioning
- 2) UN Network aligned to national priorities, plans and joint UN framework
- 3) UN joint programming in place and implemented
- 4) UN joint advocacy and communications efforts to attract increased investment in nutrition

In addition, the report provides an overview of the UN Network's portfolio of multi-sectoral nutrition tools utilized by the UN Network and government in countries.

The UN Network continued to engage a diverse set of stakeholders around nutrition action at the country level in 2017-18. The UN Network Secretariat worked with its steering committee members (FAO, IFAD,

UNICEF, WFP and WHO) and its global partners, namely the SUN Movement Secretariat (SMS), United Nations System Standing Committee on Nutrition (UNSCN), to provide practical advisory support to country-level UN Networks. For example, the Compendium of Actions for Nutrition (CAN), published in late 2016, was circulated to 60 country UN Networks, as a practical guide on how to incorporate nutrition within nutrition-sensitive actions, thereby helping to demystify the concept of multi-sectoral nutrition. UNSCN guidance on the integration of nutrition into the UNDAF was widely circulated, leveraging the UN Network's field outreach to reinforce joint nutrition action at country level, while encouraging the UNRCs to assume a leadership role in country UN Networks.

Support to national nutritional processes remained the focus area of the country UN Networks, through the provision of financial and technical support to develop national nutrition policies, strategies and plans. Additionally, the UN Network supported multi-stakeholder nutrition analyses, assessments as well as monitoring and evaluation (M&E) systems. The country UN Networks enhanced their direct support to better complement the work of other UN agencies, government and civil society stakeholders.

*The implementation of UN Network and UNN-REACH activities was possible thanks to the generous support of Global Affairs Canada (GAC), Irish Aid, WFP, WHO and UNOPS.*

<sup>2</sup> In 2016, the annual reporting exercise covered all five outcomes in the UN Network results framework, stipulated in the UN Network for SUN Strategy (2016-2020), seeking to establish a baseline for a range of key indicators related to the UN Network.

# Overview of the UN Network

Global commitments such as the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), World Health Assembly (WHA) targets, the United Nations Decade of Action on Nutrition (2016-2025) (herein Nutrition Decade) and SUN Movement have helped increase the focus and accelerate progress on nutrition within these larger goals. Launched in 2010, the SUN Movement has been central to galvanizing a multitude of actors around nutrition and building momentum for these other complementary agendas. The UN Network was formally established in 2013 by the principals of five United Nations agencies with a mandate on nutrition (FAO, IFAD, UNICEF, WFP and WHO). It is one of the four main networks of the SUN Movement and has played an integral role in SUN processes since its inception.

The UN Network is guided by the SUN Movement Road Map and a steering committee, composed of the Directors of Nutrition from the founding agencies. With that said, the UN Network is also making its support available to non-SUN countries in response to country demand. The UN Network Secretariat is hosted by WFP Headquarters (HQ) in Rome, which supports the country UN Networks carry out their ambitious work to reach those most in need.

In 2018, the UN Network undertook a strategic visioning exercise, helping to reflect upon its strengths, challenges and opportunities within the evolving nutrition landscape. The exercise helped articulate a vision and goal to further guide its efforts (Table 2).

**TABLE 2. UN Network Strategic Visioning**

<b>UN NETWORK VISION</b>	All UN agencies, at all levels, recognize that nutrition is central to the Sustainable Development Agenda and collectively act in a coherent manner upon this, in terms of policies, actions, staffing and resources.
<b>UN NETWORK GOAL</b>	To harness the potential of the whole UN System to synergize efforts that help governments address all forms of malnutrition, for all people by 2030.

The strategic objective of the UN Network is to provide an entry point for all United Nations agencies to harmonize and coordinate nutrition efforts in support of national governments. In order to do so effectively, the UN Network works closely with and helps SUN Government Focal Points and nutrition authorities convene various stakeholders from the government to development partners, civil society, the private sector, academics, researchers and the media, among others. Where intensive support is needed and financial resources prevail, REACH<sup>3</sup> (Renewed Efforts Against Child Hunger and undernutrition) is mobilized under the auspices of the UN Network.

UNN-REACH is a country support mechanism for improving nutrition governance, which directly works with nutrition coordination structures and the SUN networks. With nearly ten years of experience in over twenty countries, UNN-REACH has acquired considerable expertise and continually refined its approach to be best adapted to the country contexts and keep pace with the dynamic nutrition environment.

Essentially, the UN Network is a platform for operationalizing integrated action and partnerships for nutrition, both principles which lie at the core of the 2030 Agenda. It works with diverse stakeholders to achieve the following five overarching outcomes.

3. REACH is currently part of the Technical Assistance (TA) services of the larger UN Network. To help reposition REACH under the UN Network, it is increasingly being referred to as UNN-REACH.

**OUTCOME 1**

**Increased awareness of the causes of malnutrition and potential solutions.** The UN Network supports governments and other country stakeholders to increase their understanding of the nutrition situation. In particular, the UN Network draws upon a comprehensive toolkit to illustrate how nutrition is a multi-sectoral issue, helping to sensitize a range of actors on their respective roles in nutrition. The UN Network also increases and sustains advocacy for nutrition, and improves nutrition knowledge management to help actors work more effectively and efficiently, and thus accelerate progress towards shared nutrition goals.

**OUTCOME 2**

**Strengthened and increasingly resourced national policies and programmes.** Through this outcome, the UN Network supports governments: to adopt SMART (specific, measurable, attainable, realistic and time-bound) national nutrition targets; to develop quality multi-sectoral nutrition policies, strategies, plans and programmes; to integrate nutrition into national development plans as well as sectoral policies, strategies, plans and programmes; and to increase investment for scaling up nutrition.

**OUTCOME 3**

**Increased human and institutional capacity to support the scaling up of nutrition actions at all levels.** To this end, the UN Network works closely with SUN Government Focal Points, sectors and other stakeholders to support the development of functional

and technical capacity in all dimensions (enabling environment, organizational and individual) for scaling up nutrition. This, in turn, contributes to strengthening multi-sectoral and multi-stakeholder processes and partnerships at the national and subnational levels.

**OUTCOME 4**

**Increased efficiency and accountability of national efforts.** The UN Network provides support to governments and other relevant stakeholders at national and sub-national levels to effectively monitor plans and programmes and to strengthen national nutrition information systems – including surveillance. With the aim of increasing the effectiveness and efficiency of the United Nations nutrition support, the UN Network contributes to the following intermediary outcome.

**OUTCOME 5**

**Harmonized and coordinated UN nutrition efforts.** It is expected that harmonized United Nations nutrition efforts at the country level result in the better alignment of United Nations actions behind national nutrition priorities and plans. This outcome aims at adopting coherent UN Network nutrition strategies and programming to support national efforts within the context of joint United Nations frameworks and ensuring coherence in all advocacy and communication efforts. Ultimately, the intention is that these efforts attract increased investment in nutrition (including within the United Nations System) to further support the government address malnutrition in all its forms.

**FIGURE 1. UN Network core business areas and services**

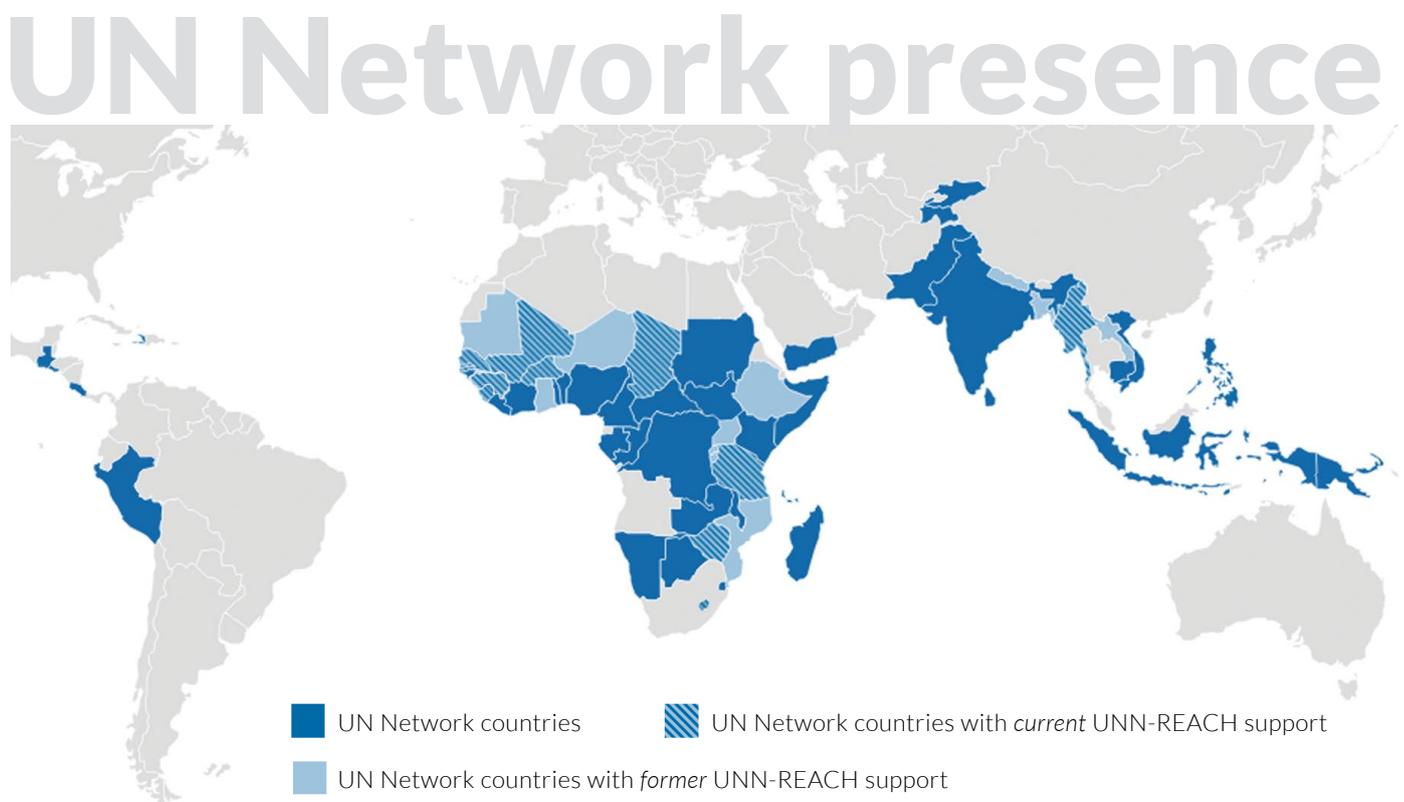
The **UN Network** is centered around four core business areas and their respective services.

- 1) **UN Network Advisory Services** to support enhanced UN Network functionality at the country level, encompassing UN Network membership, leadership and strengthening the national nutrition agenda
- 2) **Multi-sectoral TA Facility** which supports the completion of nutrition capacity gap assessments, mapping, UNN-REACH support, etc.
- 3) **Policy to Action**, bridging the gap between global policy and country implementation
- 4) **Knowledge Management**, including an array of services from webinars to newsletters, study visits and other South-South learning to foster effective knowledge-sharing and brokering

The **country UN Networks** are chaired by high-level UN leadership and bring together the United Nations agencies, contributing towards nutrition outcomes to better coordinate efforts, enhance efficiencies and harness the complementary nature of the United Nations System. As previously noted, the **UN Network**

**does not only work with United Nations agencies.** It also works with and through all relevant nutrition stakeholders (e.g. civil society, the donor community and private sector) supporting governments – including SUN Government Focal Points.

**FIGURE 2. Map of UN Network presence indicating those countries which have benefited from intensive UNN-REACH support**



# UN Network contributions to global nutrition commitments and frameworks

The global goals under the SDGs, Nutrition Decade and WHA have, and are being translated into national goals. With that said, further efforts to break down silos are needed to achieve these interconnected goals, especially at the country level. Some national governments still perceive them to be additional streams of targets and goals, including for reporting. The UN Network is well-positioned to provide guidance and support to governments and the United Nations agencies, highlighting how these targets reinforce one another and mainstreaming nutrition into them. The UNDAF is a pivotal blueprint for UN Network support to governments, helping them reach their targets within the context of these global goals.

At the global level, the UN Network works closely with the UNSCN to transfer global guidance to countries. One example has been the dissemination by the UN Network of the UNSCN-developed guidance on integrating nutrition into the UNDAF. Additional efforts are required to position nutrition as a critical, cross-cutting intervention area and development outcome. To this end, the UN Network Secretariat developed a brief, highlighting the linkages between nutrition and the SDGs (see Annex 4). Figure 3 illustrates the key messages of that brief to help engage the full range of stakeholders needed in order to improve the nutrition and well-being of the people the UN Network serves.<sup>4</sup>

## FIGURE 3. UN Network helps country actors understand how nutrition is interlinked and mutually reinforces the SDGs, paving the way for collective action

Below are some examples that depict the vast and complex nutrition landscape, underscoring the need for integrated and coordinated approaches. The UN Network considers nutrition to be a common thread in the SDGs and provides a platform to bridge diverse workstreams in pursuit of shared goals.



4. Figure 3 is adapted from other SUN literature available at [http://scalingupnutrition.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/Nutrition-at-the-heart-of-the-SDGs\\_001.jpg](http://scalingupnutrition.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/Nutrition-at-the-heart-of-the-SDGs_001.jpg). The UN Network brief illustrating how nutrition is related to the SDGs is available online at [https://www.unnetworkforsun.org/sites/default/files/documents/files/UNN\\_SDGs%20Brief\\_WEB-final%20%286Dec2018%29.pdf](https://www.unnetworkforsun.org/sites/default/files/documents/files/UNN_SDGs%20Brief_WEB-final%20%286Dec2018%29.pdf) and also included in Annex 4.

# UN Network Annual Reporting Exercise 2017-18

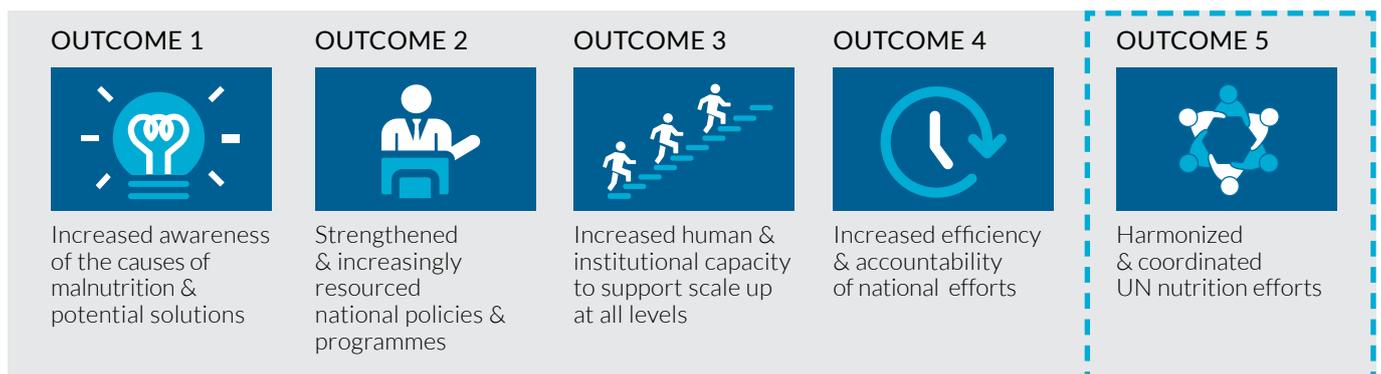
In line with the UN Network Strategy (2016-2020) and recent strategic visioning exercise, the UN Network provides a guiding framework for country-level actions carried out by the United Nations to advance national goals related to all forms of malnutrition. The strategy outlines five outcome areas in the UN Network results framework, which help country-level UN Networks create common strategies for increased impact than would otherwise be achieved through the singular efforts of its members. The UN Network Secretariat measures the performance of country-level action through an annual reporting exercise, which was introduced in 2016.

As previously mentioned, 45 out of 60 country UN Networks (75 percent) took part in the annual reporting exercise, which covered the period from 1 January 2017 through 30 June 2018. In 2016, 47 out

of 57 countries (82 percent) participated. Countries responded to a standardized online questionnaire and provided different levels of detail in their qualitative responses.

This report presents findings exclusively on outcome 5 regarding **harmonized and coordinated UN nutrition efforts**. The decision to focus the report on one outcome area was largely based on feedback from the previous reporting exercise, which encompassed all five outcomes. The country colleagues found it to be an arduous and lengthy reporting process, particularly in view of the multiple reporting demands placed on countries. Since the goal of the UN Network is to harness the potential of the UN System and synergize efforts to help governments address all forms of malnutrition, outcome 5 was considered to be the most relevant option for the 2017-18 reporting cycle.

**FIGURE 4. UN Network Strategic Outcomes (2016-2020)**



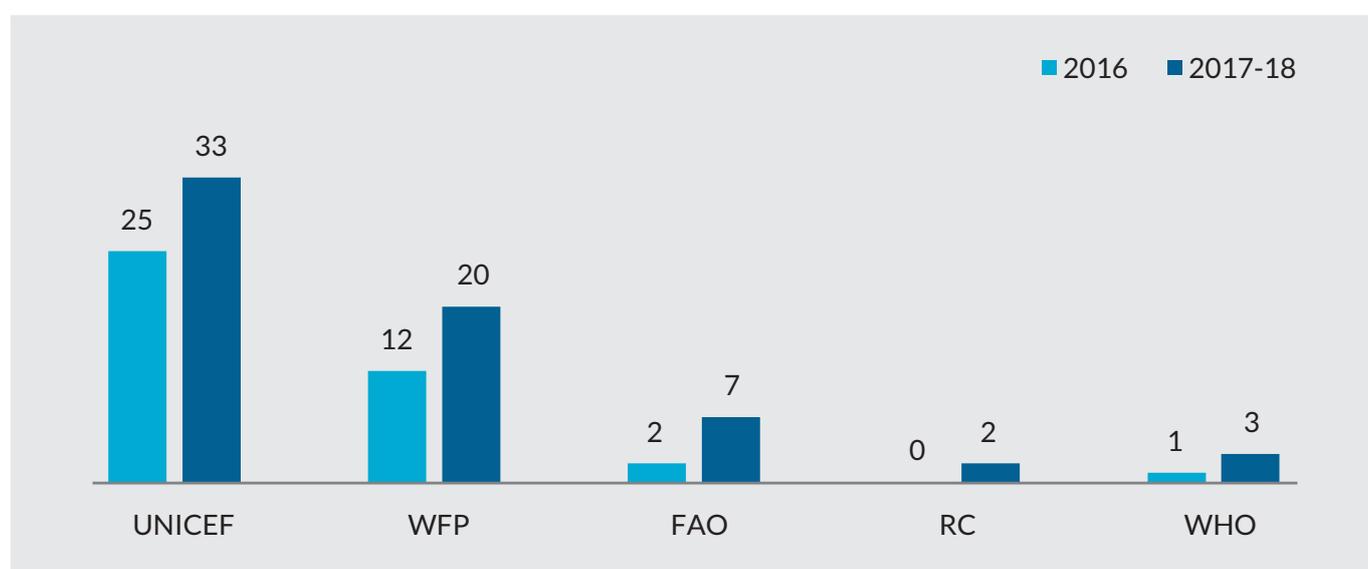
# UN Network membership & leadership



Leadership of the UN Network is critical to the work of the greater United Nations. Having senior representation helps foster national buy-in and steer the different United Nations agencies towards a common goal. The 2017-18 reporting exercise found that majority of country UN Networks have a chairs or co-chairs (71 percent) up from 65 percent in 2016. There has also been an increase in UNRCs fulfilling that

role, as seen in Congo and the Comoros. This attests the growing interest among UNRCs in leading the UN Network at the country level. Figure 5 illustrates the involvement of all United Nations agencies which played a leadership role in the UN Network during the reference period. This indicates a higher-level engagement, sharing of responsibilities and higher commitment to nutrition.

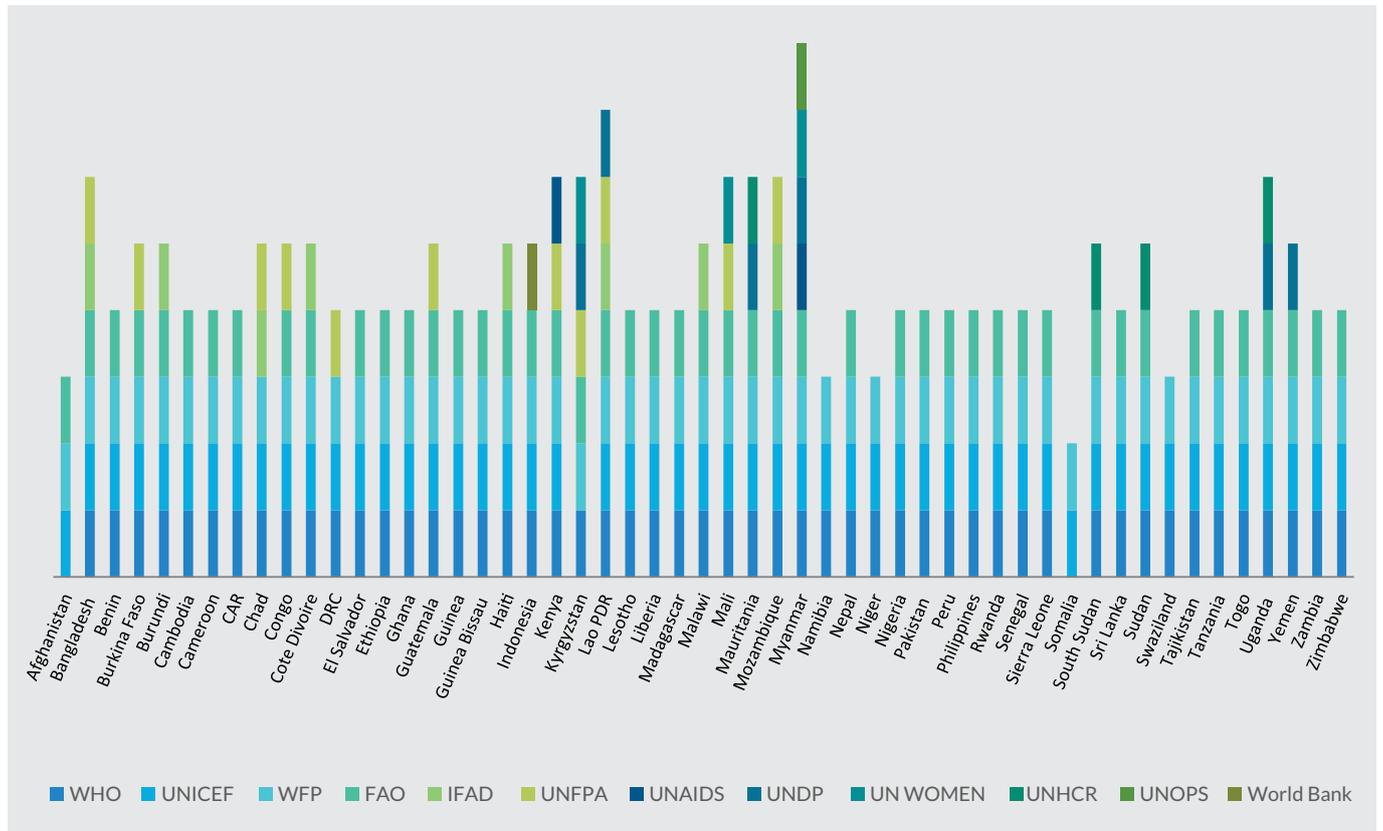
**FIGURE 5. Number of country UN Network chairs/co-chairs, by United Nations agency**



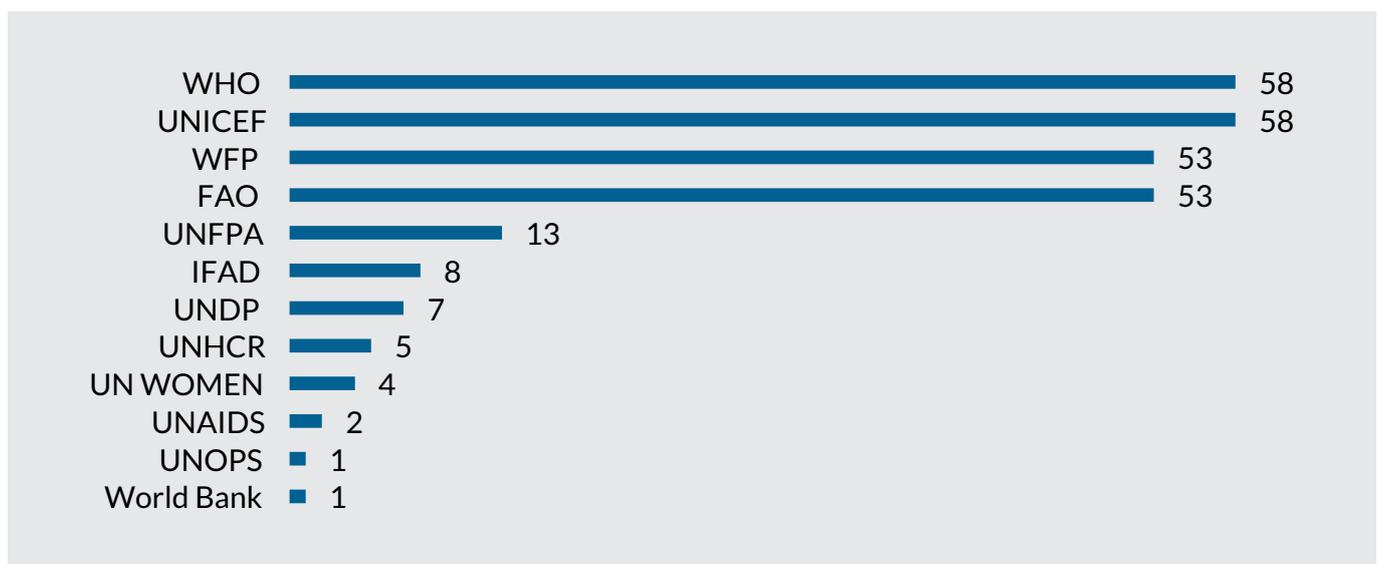
Representation of the United Nations agencies within the UN Network beyond the five founding agencies was also assessed. Nearly half (47 percent) of the countries that participated in the 2017-18 reporting exercise reported that five or more United Nations agencies were involved in the UN Network (Figure 6). Although FAO, UNICEF, WFP and WHO are involved in the majority of country UN Networks, other UN

agencies that contribute to nutrition outcomes are key to UN Network discussions and activities (Figure 7). As many as seven United Nations agencies are engaged in the UN Network in Lao PDR while eight are engaged in Myanmar. Given that nutrition cuts across the SDGs, this new trend is positive and will continue to be encouraged by the UN Network Secretariat in the coming years.

**FIGURE 6. Composition of UN Network, by country (2017-18)**



**FIGURE 7. Representation of United Nations agencies in country UN Networks (2017-18)**



---

# OUTPUT 5.1

## Functionality of the UN Network



Once a UN Network has been established, it is imperative that the Network continues to align efforts in support of national nutrition goals. In this regard, key indicators have been developed to assess the establishment and functionality of the UN Network to ensure alignment with its global strategy. Country responses indicating the establishment and functionality of UN Networks improved for every indicator as compared to the 2016 UN Network Reporting Exercise.

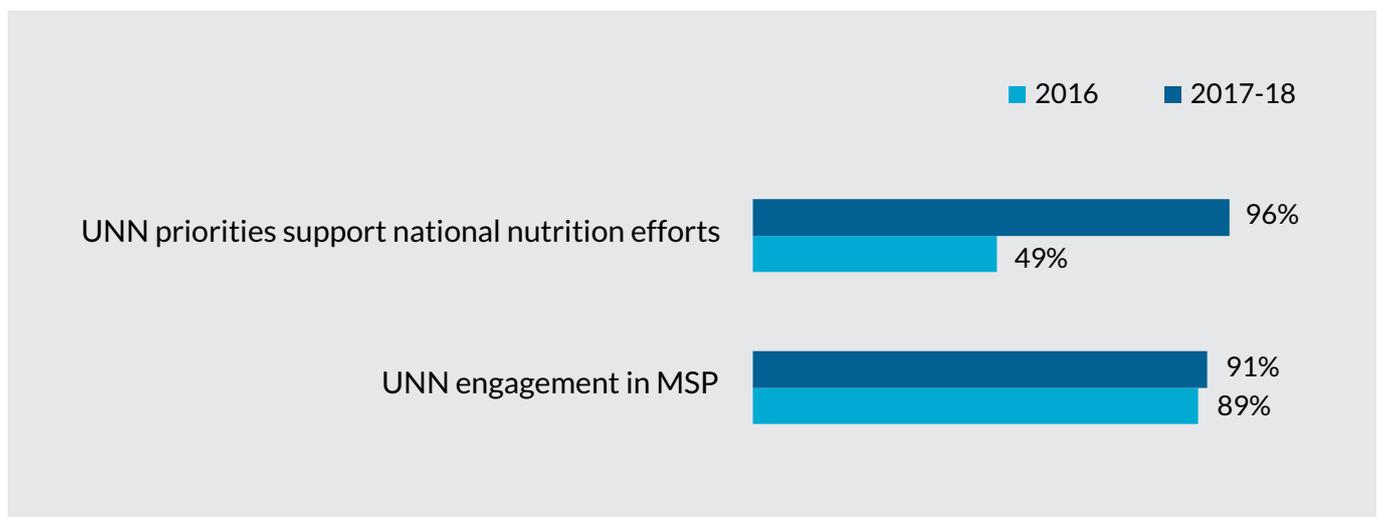
According to the annual survey in 2017-18, 32 out of 45 country UN Networks met quarterly or monthly to convene and coordinate efforts. Countries have indicated a link between the work of the UN Network and its escalation to higher-level forums such as the UNCT and the Humanitarian Country Team (HCT). Furthermore, common UN Network strategies and work plans are increasingly aligned to national priorities and targets.

The level of engagement in MSPs, which were convened by the SUN Government Focal Points involving nutrition-relevant stakeholders, remained high. The MSP is either led or hosted by the country's

SUN Secretariat, government departments under the Ministry of Health, Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning or the President/Vice President or Prime Minister's Office. The UN Network, together with other SUN networks (Business, Civil Society, Donor, etc.), collectively supports the MSP in coordinating and steering nutrition actions in a given country.

During the 2017-18 reporting cycle, the UN Network provided technical and financial support for the development, costing and implementation of national nutrition plans. For example, in Burkina Faso and Lesotho, the UN Network provided neutral facilitation and financial support for the development and costing of the national nutrition plan. High-level advocacy and policy support for these activities was also provided by the UN Network, in addition to maintaining a collective voice on key issues. In Guatemala, the UN Network advocated to keep stunting on the political agenda in spite of the change of government, including the government representatives in the MSP. In Kenya, the UN Network was involved in supporting the establishment of the nutrition MSP within higher levels in government, as outlined in the Food and Nutrition Security Policy Implementation Framework.

**FIGURE 8. UN Network establishment indicators**



## FUNCTIONALITY INDEX+

A Functionality Index was created in 2016 to establish how well the UN Network operated under a common agenda. The index assigns an overall score to each country based on six proxy indicators for all 60 country UN Networks. Data was collected for these six indicators primarily through the annual reporting exercise. Additional indicators (marked in italics) were analyzed to supplement the initial components, giving rise to the Functionality Index+.

Therefore, the Functionality Index+ provides a more comprehensive understanding of the UN Networks at the country level. The additional indicators allow the UN Network to describe in greater detail the level of technical support provided, high-level engagement, implementation of joint programming and joint frameworks and human resource commitments to illustrate a more accurate picture of how the United Nations agencies come together to help shape and mainstream nutrition. The data below are presented for 45 countries and used twelve indicators to assign an overall score.

These include:

1. UN Network Reporting Exercise completed
2. UN Nutrition Inventory in place
3. UN Network Strategy/Agenda in place
4. Chair(s) nominated
5. 3+ UN Network Focal Points appointed
6. UN Network Work Plan Developed/ Priorities in support of national efforts
7. *UN Network's collective agenda tabled at UNCT*
8. *UN Network engaged in MSP*
9. *UN Network worked to develop or update nutrition content of any joint UN frameworks (i.e. UNDAF)*
10. *Technical support provided to SUN Government Focal Point or other government authorities*
11. *UN nutrition joint programmes or programming implemented*
12. *Number of senior UN staff contributing to nutrition (leadership)*

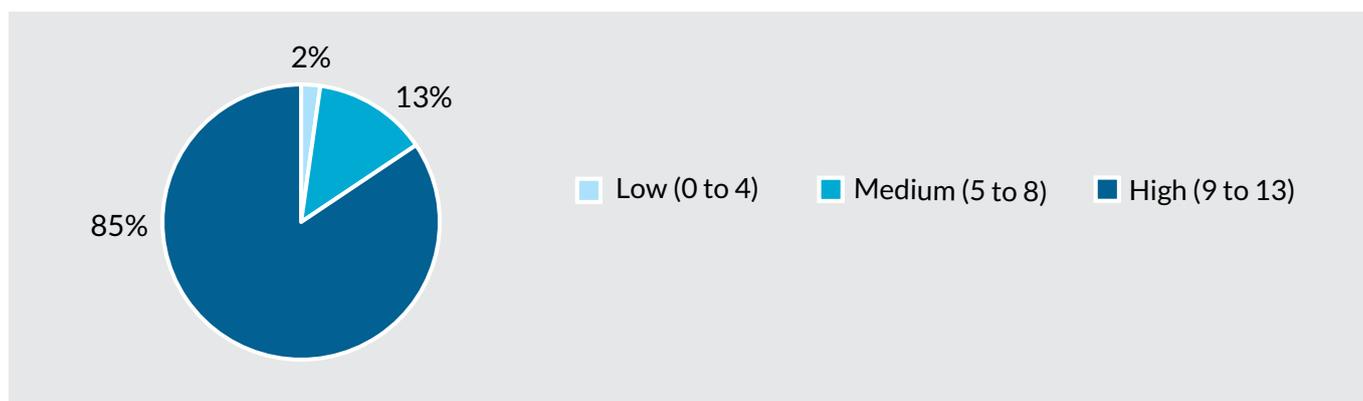
The overall score was then classified into one of three functionality categories, as outlined below.

Functionality Index+ Scoring Range	High (9-13)	Medium (5-8)	Low (0-4)
------------------------------------	-------------	--------------	-----------

Based on this more comprehensive data, the vast majority (over 80 percent) of country UN Networks in 2017-18 were categorized as highly functional (Figure 9). All UN Networks with REACH facilitators were among the highest-scoring countries, underscoring the valuable work

that they carry out at the country level. Another indicator that corresponded with high-performing UN Networks was the engagement of senior leadership contributing to the nutrition agenda. More details are provided in the Output 5.4 section and Annex 2.

**FIGURE 9. UN Network Functionality Index+ (2017-18)**



# OUTPUT 5.2

## UN Network support to national priorities, plans and joint UN frameworks



The UN Network, by design is multi-sectoral, and aims to streamline technical and financial support to governments. According to the 2017-18 reporting exercise, 43 out of the 45 countries reported providing support to the government (including to SUN Focal Points). This support included the allocation of technical and financial resources to national processes, such as the development of national food security and nutrition policies and strategies (e.g. Gambia and the Philippines). In Kyrgyzstan, UN Network support went beyond policy guidance to assist the government in the development of the New Food Security and Nutrition Programme for 2018-2022. In addition, the UN Network helped the implementation of laws on the “Fortification of bakery

flour” and efforts to prevent iodine deficiency. These efforts were based on a nutrition situation analysis, likewise supported by the UN Network, that took into account anemia levels, dietary trends and other nutrition-related indicators.

During the reference period, the UN Network also provided substantial support to the SUN Government Focal Point, especially through its intensive UNN-REACH service in twelve countries.<sup>5</sup> This entailed support for convening and setting-up nutrition-focused stakeholder networks, including the SUN Business, Civil Society, Parliamentarians and Academic Networks.

### **BOX 1. Case study: UN Network technical support to government and SUN Networks in El Salvador (2017-18)**

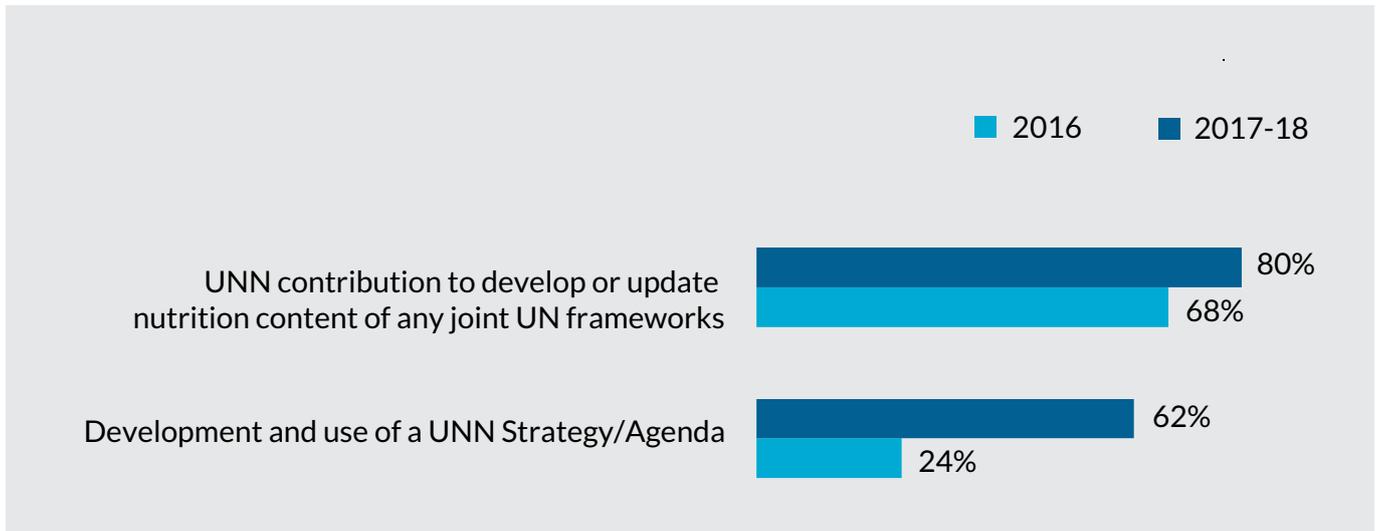
*Technical support was provided to the government for: 1) updates to the Food Security and Nutrition Policy; 2) the design of the Nutritional Educational Strategy Plan; and 3) the creation of the “Breastfeeding Normative for Mothers and Childhood Friendly Hospitals”. The UN Network also supported and coordinated the establishment of the SUN Business Network, jointly with government. Parliamentarians were trained in food security and nutrition to address the issues from a legal study on food security and nutrition.*

The UN Network engaged with government through the common United Nations framework – UNDAF – building on collective actions and the comparative advantage of the respective United Nations agencies. According to the 2017-18 Reporting Exercise, a 12 percent increase was observed for the UN Network’s contribution to develop or update the nutrition content of joint UN frameworks compared to 2016 (Figure 10). For example, nutrition was mainstreamed into the UNDAF in Burkina Faso, which included provisions for children under five, adolescents, women and households to have equitable access to nutrition-specific and sensitive interventions.

A 38 percent increase was reported in the development of country UN Nutrition Strategies/Agendas, compared to 2016. These strategies/agendas are aligned to the global UN Network strategy and guided by the CAN in order to employ a multi-sectoral approach to nutrition. In some cases, the country strategies/agendas have helped better reflect nutrition in the UNDAF (e.g. Burkina Faso) and articulated ways to measure joint progress against their objectives. This has proved to be a pragmatic way to facilitate the work of the UN Network at the country level.

5. REACH countries and donors: Burkina Faso, Haiti, Mali, Myanmar and Senegal – *Global Affairs Canada*. Lesotho, Sierra Leone, Tanzania and Zimbabwe – *Irish Aid*. Chad – *European Union*. Burundi and Guinea – *UNCT*.

**FIGURE 10. UN Network support to strategically reflect nutrition in UN frameworks**



---

## UN NETWORK TA FACILITY IN FOCUS: REACH SUPPORT TO GOVERNMENTS

The UN Network, with the support of UNN-REACH, worked closely with nutrition authorities in twelve countries to catalyse and facilitate multi-sectoral nutrition dialogue and action. UNN-REACH provides governments with support to facilitate and coordinate nutrition governance processes and actions at national and sub-national levels. REACH facilitators work directly with the SUN Government Focal Point and the United Nations agencies (technical nutrition focal points and leadership) to facilitate priority nutrition activities that have been identified and agreed by all stakeholders.

Essentially, the UN Network collaborated with the SUN Government Focal Point to mobilize country actors for inclusive, results-oriented policy formulation and planning processes that harness the contributions of nutrition-specific and sensitive actions in a systematic manner. In **Mali**, REACH facilitators, together with the SUN Civil Society Network, advocated for nutrition to be included as a fundamental right in the country's constitution while it was under review in 2017.

### REVIEW AND ENHANCEMENT OF MULTI-SECTORAL NATIONAL NUTRITION POLICY

REACH facilitators supported government, specifically the SUN Government Focal Points, to broker a consultative process regarding the review and elaboration of national nutrition policies and strategies. In Burkina Faso and Lesotho, UNN-REACH engaged actors from varying nutrition-related sectors (e.g. health, agriculture, education, WASH, social protection) and different SUN networks. In **Burkina Faso**, REACH facilitators supported revisions to the national policy on food and nutrition security (*Politique Nationale de Sécurité Alimentaire et Nutritionnelle* [PNSAN]) and helped engage a wide range of stakeholders.

---

### REVIEW AND ENHANCEMENT OF MULTI-SECTORAL NATIONAL NUTRITION PLANS

During the reporting cycle, UNN-REACH helped to finalize the development and revision of national nutrition action plans in four countries (Burkina Faso, Chad, Myanmar and Senegal) and initiated similar efforts in Lesotho and Sierra Leone.<sup>6</sup> In **Myanmar** for example, the UN Network, including the REACH Facilitator, supported efforts to update the National Plan of Action for Nutrition (NPAN) so that it embodied a multi-sectoral approach. UNN-REACH has helped to establish multi-stakeholder task forces, comprised of representatives from the Government, UN and Civil Society Networks. In addition, findings from the UNN-REACH analytical exercises informed the development of the multi-sectoral nutrition plan. In Senegal, REACH supported the finalization of the costed multi-sectoral strategic plan (2017-2021).

### INTEGRATION OF PRIORITY NUTRITION ACTIONS INTO WORK PLANS OF RELEVANT MINISTRIES

UNN-REACH supported processes to integrate priority nutrition actions into government sectoral plans in four REACH countries (Burkina Faso, Burundi, Chad and Myanmar), reinforcing the efforts of UN partner agencies. In **Burkina Faso**, REACH facilitators continued to engage in technical workshops and ensured that nutrition was well-reflected in the forthcoming National Programme for the Rural Sector II. Additionally, they helped government ministries update their sectoral work plans to ensure that nutrition was mainstreamed throughout.

### INTEGRATION OF PRIORITY NUTRITION ACTIONS INTO RELEVANT SUB-NATIONAL PLANS

UNN-REACH support was sought for decentralized nutrition planning processes that took place in Burkina Faso and Senegal. This prompted the adaptation of UNN-REACH tools to sub-national contexts and the training of local actors on them. For example, this included the enhancement of the Policy and Plan Overview to go beyond national governance frameworks and include data on regional and municipal development plans as well.

---

6. In other REACH countries, this work was conducted in previous years in concert with the government's timeline.

**TABLE 3. UNN-REACH summary of achievements (2017-18)**

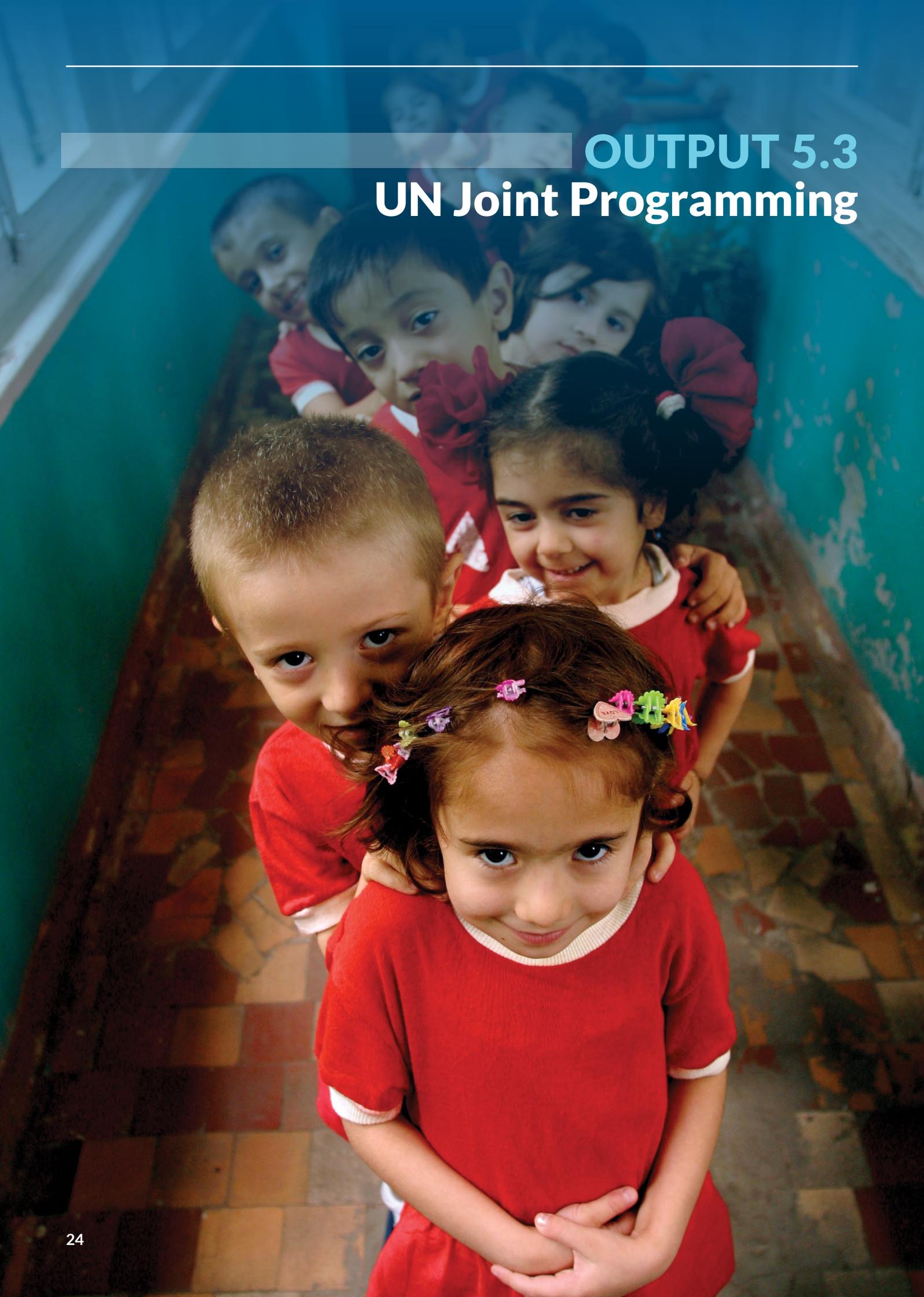
- Strong technical and analytical support in REACH countries (5 Multi-Sectoral Nutrition Overviews, 6 Stakeholder and Action Mappings and 4 Policy and Plan Overviews), with training and quality assurance provided by the UN Network Secretariat
- Nutrition advocacy efforts conducted in Burkina Faso, Chad, Lesotho, Myanmar, Sierra Leone and Zimbabwe
- New multi-sectoral nutrition plan developed (Burkina Faso, Lesotho, Myanmar and Senegal)
- Nutrition capacity gap assessments conducted (Burkina Faso, Chad, Lesotho and Senegal)
- Nutrition information systems enhanced (Mali, Senegal and Zimbabwe)
- UN Nutrition Inventories completed in Burundi, Chad, Guinea and Haiti and initiated in Lesotho, Sierra Leone and Zimbabwe
- UN Network retreat conducted in Burundi, Chad and Haiti, with UNN-REACH's neutral facilitation and analytical support
- UN Nutrition Strategy/Agenda developed in Chad, DRC (Common Nutrition Agenda) and Haiti
- Diversification of donor base and secured new funding for REACH (European Union and Irish Aid)
- Web-based stakeholder mapping tool developed by the UN Network Secretariat and implemented in Senegal and Zimbabwe
- Repositioning of the REACH partnership within the context of the UN Network, including in communication materials
- Launch of basic pages of the new UN Network website, with section dedicated to REACH



---

# OUTPUT 5.3

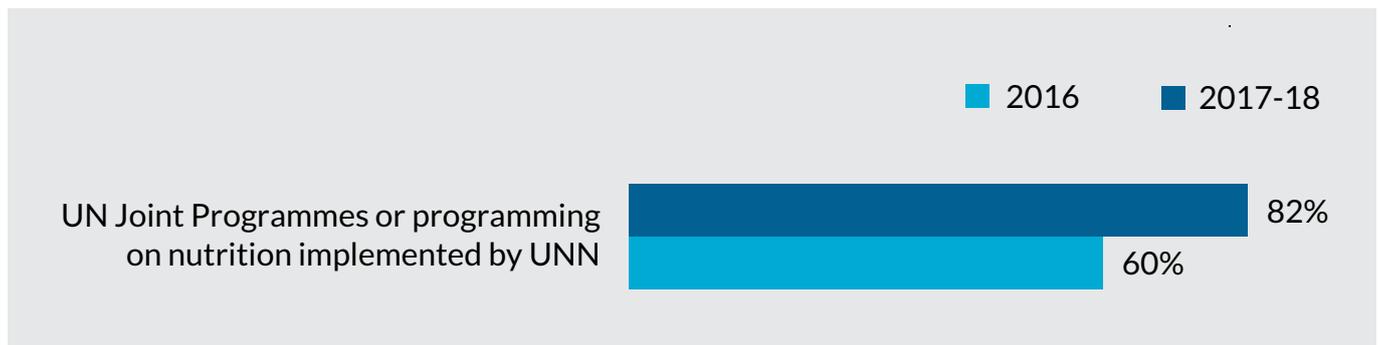
## UN Joint Programming



One of the crucial means to demonstrate effective UN action is joint programming. Joint programming refers to complementary activities undertaken by two or more United Nations agencies, specifically within the same geographical areas and for the same individuals. The United Nations agencies may come together to formulate programming design, implement actions and/or carry out joint assessments/M&E activities.

Joint programming demonstrates cohesion among United Nations agencies. In addition, joint action is key to operationalizing a multi-sectoral approach to nutrition and to ensuring that it is rooted in elements beyond nutrition-specific interventions. Overall, UN joint programming increased from 60 to 82 percent of countries between the 2016 and 2017-18 UN Network reporting cycles (Figure 11).

**FIGURE 11. UN Joint Programmes or programming on nutrition**



**INTER-AGENCY JOINT ACTIONS** pooled United Nations resources to provide collective technical support to national governments. In Sierra Leone, district health workers were trained jointly on the delivery of acute malnutrition support services by UNICEF and WFP. The UN Network also supported

the government in elaborating the Food and Nutrition Security Policy. Similarly, FAO, UNICEF, WFP and WHO undertook joint measures to advocate for controlling sugar content in food and drinks for children during National Nutrition Month in Sri Lanka. Additional country examples are highlighted in Table 1.

## NUTRITION-SPECIFIC JOINT PROGRAMMES/PROGRAMMING

As many as 116 nutrition-specific joint programming components were reported by the 45 countries, which participated in the 2017-18 reporting exercise. The most frequent, nutrition-specific joint components focused on the management of moderate acute malnutrition (MAM) (n=24) and severe acute malnutrition (SAM) (n=23). Infant and young child feeding (IYCF), other social and behaviour change communication (SBCC) activities as well as capacity building to strengthen national nutrition

policy and health delivery systems complemented these core activities. Programming for food fortification at large-scale or household levels was another common area of joint programming in addition to advocacy on addressing overweight and obesity concerns. For example, an integrated programme was implemented in Burundi on the management of acute malnutrition, supplemented by IYCF support.

## NUTRITION-SENSITIVE JOINT PROGRAMMES/PROGRAMMING

Support to governments for technical capacity development was the most frequent type of nutrition-sensitive joint programming reported (n=17) in the 2017-18 reporting cycle. School feeding support was also central in fifteen programmes, where complementary nutrition-specific interventions such as micronutrient powders (MNPs), deworming and Vitamin A supplementation were provided. In Rwanda, joint programming influenced homegrown

school feeding activities: WFP procured food for the schools from smallholders and FAO supported farmers by procuring seeds and providing capital support and market access. Other popular areas of joint interventions included: WASH (11 programmes); unconditional transfers (9 programmes) – especially in emergencies such as in the Sudan and the Rohingya Response in Bangladesh; and resilience support (8 programmes).

## NEW AND EMERGING THEMES UNDER JOINT PROGRAMMES/PROGRAMMING

New themes and focus areas are emerging under joint programmes as the SDG goals address “all forms of malnutrition”. Adolescent girls and gender equality are especially important within nutrition-sensitive

interventions as well as advocacy around overweight and obesity issues. Costa Rica worked on prevention of obesity in girls, boys and adolescents jointly with FAO and WFP through school feeding and nutrition education programming.

### BOX 2. Case Study: Collective United Nations actions in Zimbabwe leads to significant reduction in stunting

*At first glance, Mutasa District in Zimbabwe does not stand out from the rest of the country. The district is agriculture-dependent, with adequate rainfall and fairly well-performing crop-production. Mutasa begins to stand out when nutrition data is compared by district, with stunting levels almost as high as the national average of 26 percent. Girls are disproportionately affected by stunting in Mutasa (36 percent), which is a deviation from the national trend.*

*Although malnutrition trends remain concerning, the situation was worse four years ago. In 2014, the United Nations agencies-initiated convergence efforts through a five-year, multi-sectoral, community-based joint programme between FAO, UNICEF and WFP. Four years into the programme, positive impact has been seen across most nutrition-relevant indicators. Between 2014 and 2018, stunting levels dropped from 43 to 26 percent, minimum dietary diversity increased from 6 to 39 percent (highest in the country) and the proportion of households with access to safe drinking water rose from 60 to 68 percent (National Nutrition Survey, WFP Baseline Study Mutasa, 2014).*

*The joint programme, in line with the SUN principles of multi-sectoral and multi-stakeholder engagement, targeted nutrition-specific and sensitive actions across programming, policy and advocacy domains, building on the comparative advantage of each agency. This encompassed streamlining education, food security, health, SBCC, social protection, WASH, crop and livestock diversification assistance on the ground as well as developing food-based dietary guidelines and carrying out nutrition advocacy. At the national level, the government (including the SUN Focal Point) was supported by the UN Network (including its REACH Facilitator) in coordinating nutrition actions across multiple stakeholders and sectors. In addition, United Nations agencies streamlined nutrition into national policy through direct engagement in policy formulation processes and advocacy work with relevant ministries at all levels.*

*Strong UN coordination has proved critical to the success of the programme and the nutrition gains observed. This has enabled the United Nations agencies to draw upon their respective comparative advantages, while developing a joint information management and monitoring system with common goals and outcomes. In addition, the programme, particularly the stunting-prevention assistance, was implemented through 41 out of 43 existing community-based structures such as government-administered, church-run and private health centres, which were familiar to community members. The joint-programme will document lessons learnt and carry out an endline survey in 2019. These insights will feed into efforts to scale-up the model in other districts with high levels of malnutrition.*

# OUTPUT 5.4

## UN joint advocacy and communications to attract increased investment in nutrition



---

The UN Network strives to have a common voice and align nutrition efforts to reap cost efficiencies and increase complementarities within the United Nations System right down to the communities it serves.

## COMMON NUTRITION NARRATIVES

Common nutrition narratives help diverse actors establish a common nutrition language and articulate common messaging to help place and keep nutrition high on the political agenda of a given country. They also represent an opportunity to define targets and align multi-sectoral, multi-stakeholder efforts to achieve the desired impact. The UN Network has a portfolio of analytical tools that are drawn upon to craft these

common narratives. For example, the Multi-Sectoral Nutrition Overview (MNO) depicts a comprehensive picture of the nutrition situation using visuals to inform better programming and advocacy. The number of country UN Networks that had developed a common narrative nearly doubled to 53 percent during the 2017-18 reporting cycle compared to 2016 (Figure 12). Additional country examples are included in Table 1.

### BOX 3. Case Study: The UN Network in Sierra Leone spearheads political dialogue on nutrition, resulting in concrete action

*The UN Network took great advocacy strides in the lead up to the country's Presidential and Parliamentary elections, held in March 2018. To this end, three tools were deployed by the UN Network in Sierra Leone, starting with the Multi-Sectoral Nutrition Overview (MNO). The MNO reported encouraging trends in the reduction of stunting and wasting levels between 2010 and 2017 (34 to 31 percent and 7 to 5 percent respectively). It also brought attention to the increase in childhood overweight, estimated at 2.3 percent in 2017. Delving deeper, it found that while moderate stunting and wasting had decreased, severe forms had actually increased. Its in-depth analysis across relevant nutrition indicators from breastfeeding rates to food insecurity, adolescent pregnancy and women's empowerment highlighted geographical areas where additional focus was required.*

*The second exercise undertaken – a comprehensive mapping exercise – looked at nutrition-specific and sensitive programming supported by all relevant stakeholders, from government to the United Nations, civil society and donors. The mapping is generating valuable coverage data that is critical to identifying gaps, overlaps and potential areas where efficiencies can be enhanced to maximize impact. These findings were complemented by a Policy and Plan Overview, which assessed nutrition-specific and sensitive policy commitments in light of the current needs and existing programmes. The discrepancy, once clearly identified, was taken a step further through advocacy measures, led by the UN Network in concert with the donor community. Seizing windows of opportunity such as the March elections and national planning processes, Parliamentarians and running candidates were strategically targeted to ensure that nutrition would be placed high on the political agenda of the new Government.*

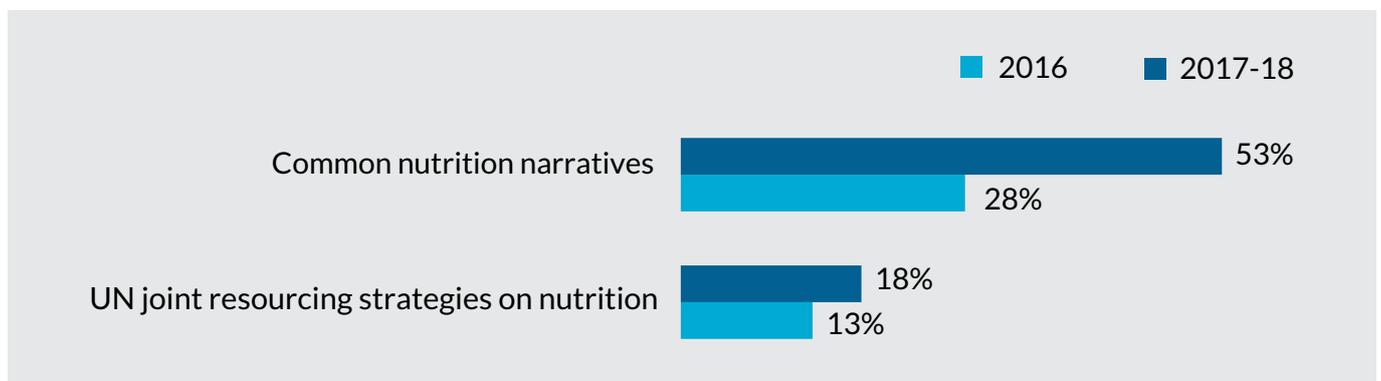
*A critical ingredient of success was the coming together of multiple stakeholders, from donors and UN Network senior leadership, complemented by the hands-on support of the REACH Facilitator, to collectively advocate for political commitments. A breakfast meeting was held with members of parliament to discuss the country's nutrition needs, culminating in a declaration by parliamentarians during a televised dialogue. This domino effect prompted the enactment of a Food and Feed Safety Bill later that day. Just two weeks after, fourteen registered political parties included food and nutrition security as well as teenage pregnancy and WASH in their respective manifestos. These measures kept nutrition on the political agenda irrespective of the elections outcomes. As a result, the new Government of Sierra Leone is actively engaged in nutrition, including high-ranking officials such as the Vice President.*

## JOINT RESOURCING STRATEGIES

The development of a joint resourcing strategy can facilitate the work of the collective UN Network, including the organization of joint events, supporting governments undertake assessments or achieving increased programming convergence. In addition, it can

enable UN Networks to better allocate and optimize human resources within the United Nations. The 2017-18 reporting exercise indicated a small increase in the number of countries with a joint UN resourcing strategy on nutrition with respect to the previous reporting cycle.

**FIGURE 12. UN Network-supported common narratives and joint UN resource strategies on nutrition**

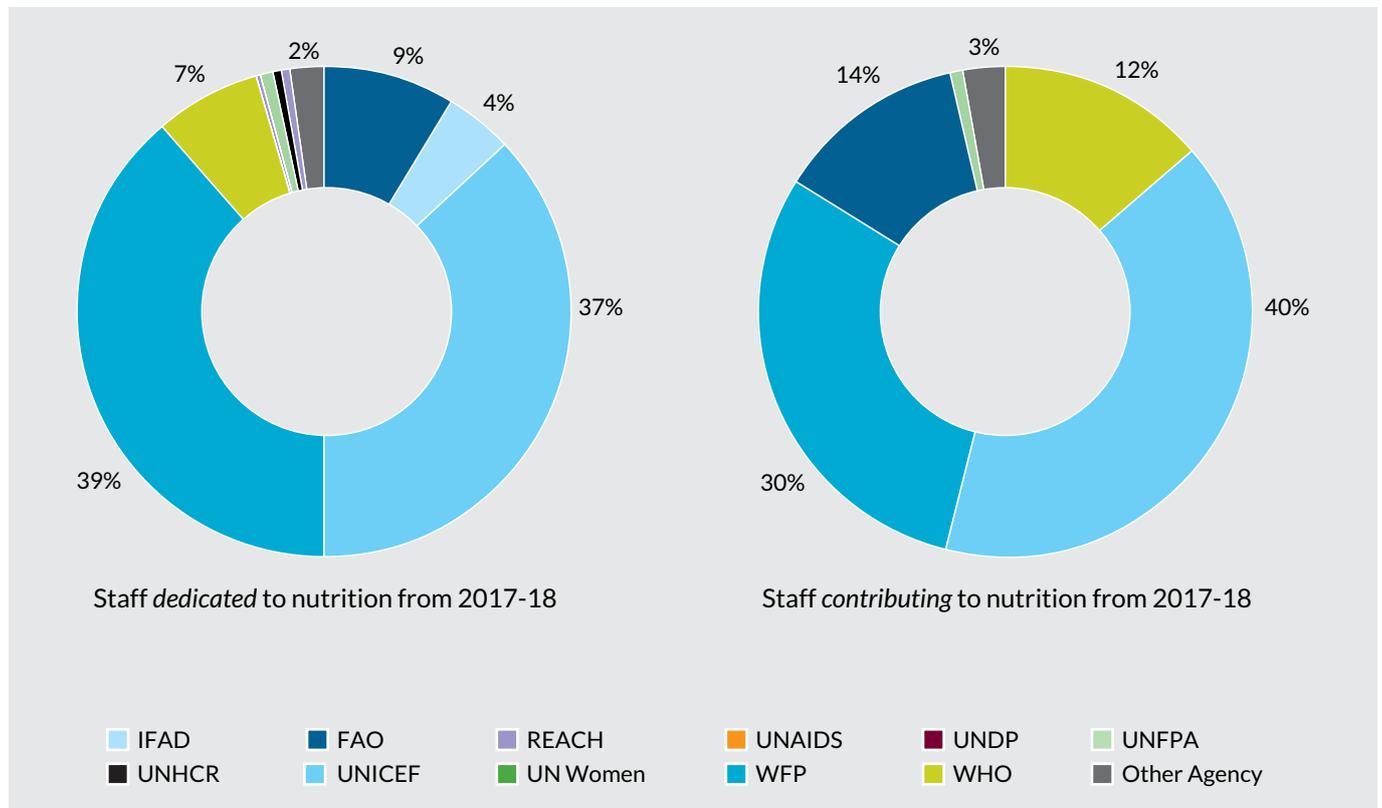


The allocation of full-time staff, by agency, dedicated to nutrition action in a country serves as a proxy for the extent and scale of support in nutrition. With that said, a number of other United Nations staff carry out functions that influence nutrition outcomes, particularly those who work on nutrition-sensitive actions rooted in related sectors (e.g. WASH, education). The proxy also does not take into account the differing natures of the United Nations agencies – normative and operational – which influence the structure of them. Whereas the normative organizations tend to concentrate their staff in global and regional offices, the operational ones tend to have more staff in country offices. Consequently, the staffing statistics presented in this section should be interpreted with caution. The important thing is that all United Nations staff working towards nutrition goals carry out their respective roles effectively.

The annual survey asked countries to indicate the “number of UN staff who were *dedicated* to nutrition” and “number of UN staff who were *contributing* to nutrition” for each United Nations agency, specifying the applicable staff rank. The combined total of these two staffing categories amounted to 1,529 United Nations staff worldwide for the 2017-18 reporting cycle.

Furthermore, the findings of the 2017-18 reporting exercise indicated that there was a total of 784 staff working directly on (in other words dedicated to) nutrition interventions in 45 countries (Figure 13). This includes staff from over twelve United Nations agencies, with WFP dedicating the greatest number of staff to nutrition (303), followed by UNICEF (289), FAO (69), WHO (54) and IFAD (34).

**FIGURE 13. Breakdown of the total United Nations staff engaged to nutrition, by United Nations agency (2017-18)**



Equally important to the collective nutrition agenda is the number of staff contributing to nutrition action in the country, especially senior-leadership. The 2017-18 reporting exercise found that 745 staff were contributing to nutrition actions in 45 countries in addition to the 784 staff who were exclusively working on nutrition (Figure 13). In this case, UNICEF had the most staff contributing to nutrition (301), followed by WFP (223), FAO (102), WHO (92) and UNFPA (7).

Furthermore, senior managers supporting the collective nutrition agenda was reported by 20 percent of the UN Networks, whereas some 68 percent had the support of middle managers. A dedicated United Nations staff or resource person with adequate expertise in nutrition to support the government, the United Nations agencies and the MSP is key to maintaining a functional UN Network at the country level.

# Portfolio of UN Network analytical tools



---

Over the years, the UN Network Secretariat has generated a suite of analytical tools, including those initially developed through UNN-REACH, to frame and catalyse multi-sectoral nutrition action at the country level. The main analytical services of the UN Network include: (1) the **Multi-Sectoral Nutrition Overview**; (2) **Policy and Plan Overview**; (3) **Nutrition Stakeholder and Action Mapping**; (4) **UN Nutrition Inventory**; and (5) **Nutrition Capacity Assessment**.

The tools leverage the technical expertise of the UN Network, including its member United Nations agencies and UNN-REACH. Increasingly, UN Network's portfolio of analytical tools (UNN-PAT) were utilized by government, the country UN Networks and civil society to support decision-making for policy formulation, nutrition planning and programmatic activities. The UN Network analytics are therefore a means to an end.

As part of its multi-sectoral TA facility, the UN Network draws upon these tools to bolster coordination and scale-up of multi-sectoral nutrition actions. How? They foster a common language around nutrition among a diverse set of actors working at the country level and demystify what multi-sectoral nutrition means in concrete terms. In particular, the tools are valuable inputs for the prioritization of nutrition actions as well as the operationalization and monitoring of national nutrition plans. They also allow countries to assess nutrition capacity gaps, to develop data-driven advocacy strategies, to strengthen nutrition information

systems and to support resource mobilization in tandem with key nutrition partners. Together, these efforts help to improve multi-sectoral governance, and ultimately, the nutritional status of vulnerable populations for accelerated sustainable development.

In many ways, the **Multi-Sectoral Nutrition Overview (MNO)** is a critical first step of subsequent action pursued by the UN Network to ensure that its efforts are tailored to the country context. Aspects of the MNO in the form of the MNO Dashboard were prepared in ten countries during the 2017-18 reporting cycle: Burundi; Côte d'Ivoire; DRC; Haiti (updated); Lao PDR (updated); Mali (updated); Myanmar; Senegal (updated); The Gambia; and Zimbabwe. A full MNO was completed in Lesotho and Sierra Leone. The latter is an extensive exercise that unpacks the nutrition situation in the country, using the adapted UNICEF conceptual framework for malnutrition as a guiding structure. It depicts positive trends and areas of concern related to all forms of malnutrition. Furthermore, it uses maps, charts, captions and dashboards to illustrate the multi-dimensional nature of nutrition, highlighting geographic and gender disparities. These outputs, in turn, inform data-driven action and enhance efficiencies, helping to reach the most vulnerable people and to accelerate progress towards nutrition targets. Below is an excerpt from the Lesotho MNO, which summarizes the national nutrition situation, qualifying the severity of the situation.

FIGURE 14. Lesotho MNO dashboard, national level (2017)

	Indicator	Status	Source	Year	Severity	Trend	
Nutritional Impact	Stunting	Prevalence of stunting among children <5 years old	33.2%	DHS	2014	●	➔
	Wasting	GAM prevalence among children <5 years old	2.8%	DHS	2014	●	➔
		SAM prevalence among children <5 years old	0.6%	DHS	2014	●	➔
	VAD	Children <5 years old with vitamin A deficiency	32.7%	DHS	2014	●	n.a.
	Iron deficiency	Children 6-59 months old with anaemia	50.8%	DHS	2016	●	➔
		Women ages 15-49 years old with anaemia	46.5%	DHS	2014	●	➔
IDD	Children 6-11 years old with iodine deficiency (median UI)	214.7µg/L	Urinary Iodine Excretion Survey	2002	●	➔	
Underlying Causes	Food Security	Households with poor or borderline food consumption	63.6%	LVAC	2016	○	n.a.
		Prevalence of undernourishment	11.2%	FAO STAT/IFPRI	2016	●	➔
	Health & Sanitation	Under 5 mortality rate (deaths per 1000 live births)	90.2	UNICEF	2015	●	➔
		Low birthweight	10.4%	DHS	2014	○	➔
		HIV Prevalence	24.6%	DHS	2014	○	➔
		Women 15-49 years old with problems accessing health care	41.8%	DHS	2014	○	➔
		Household access to improved water source	54.0%	DHS	2014	●	n.a.
	Care	Household access to improved sanitation facilities	47.1%	DHS	2014	○	➔
		Timely initiation of breastfeeding	65.0%	DHS	2014	○	➔
		Infants 0-5 months old exclusively breastfed	66.9%	DHS	2014	○	➔
		Children 6-23 months old with adequate complementary feeding	11.3%	DHS	2016	○	➔
	Time to fetch water (households that take ≥30 min)	46.0%	DHS	2014	○	n.a.	
Basic Causes	Education	Females that completed at least primary school	81.2%	DHS	2014	○	n.a.
		Female literacy rate	97.0%	DHS	2014	○	➔
	Population	Total fertility rate per woman	3.3	DHS	2014	○	n.a.
	Gender	Women ages 20-49 years old, with first birth at 15 years	15%	DHS	2014	○	n.a.
		Women's intra-household decision-making power	65.4%	DHS	2014	○	n.a.
	Poverty	Population living under national poverty line	57.1%	HDR	2016	○	➔

The **Policy and Plan Overview (PPO)** helps to visualize the landscape of nutrition-related sectoral and multi-sectoral policies, strategies, plans and legal frameworks that exist in a country. It then highlights the breadth and depth with which nutrition was mainstreamed into those policies, strategies and plans. During the 2017-18 reporting cycle, the PPO tool was used by countries such as Burkina Faso, Mali and Sierra Leone to sensitize actors, including non-traditional nutrition actors, on their roles in nutrition and identify opportunities

for better reflecting nutrition in those governance frameworks. This, in turn, is helping government enhance policy coherence on nutrition to ensure that all relevant sectors and authorities are mobilized to support nutrition gains. In Sierra Leone, the PPO findings were even presented to high-level government officials which was timely in view of the transition to the new government in March 2018. This, along with other efforts mentioned elsewhere in this report, helped elevate nutrition on the political agenda.

**FIGURE 15. Excerpt from the Sierra Leone PPO (2017) flagging three sector-specific strategies or plans which could better reflect nutrition in future versions**

Most strategies were developed several years ago and may benefit from being updated, providing opportunities to better integrate nutrition

		Extent to which nutrition is addressed				
		○ Not at all	◐ Minimal	◑ Partial	● Adequate	● Significant
Document	Next revision	Responsible institution	Nutrition	Remarks		
  National Health Promotion Strategy of Sierra Leone	2021	Ministry of Health and Sanitation		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>9/33 CNAs, 9/24 relevant CNAs.</li> <li><i>Strengths of doc:</i> Malnutrition is recognized as a national concern.</li> <li>Recent detailed multi-sectoral strategy.</li> <li><i>Weakness of doc:</i> Remains high-level. Gaps to fill include are nutrition education, nutrition related disease prevention, IYCF, and supplementation sanitation related CNAs.</li> </ul>		
  National Sustainable Agriculture Development Plan	2030	Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Food Security		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>9/33 CNAs, 9/22 relevant CNAs.</li> <li><i>Strengths of doc:</i> Detailed implementation for agricultural-sector activities.</li> <li><i>Weakness of doc:</i> Malnutrition is not recognized as a national concern. Mentions few agricultural specific CNAs, and omits mention of fortification, or bio fortification, social protection, emergency preparedness and education on food consumption &amp; health practices.</li> </ul>		
  Education Sector Capacity Development Strategy	2016	Ministry of Education, Science and Technology		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Document is weak on gender inclusion.</li> <li>2/33 CNAs, 2/6 relevant CNAs.</li> <li><i>Strengths of doc:</i> Specific to strengthen sector.</li> <li><i>Weakness of doc:</i> Malnutrition is not recognized as a national concern.</li> <li>No relevant information to nutrition, only to gender equality and girls education.</li> <li>Strategy needs revision.</li> </ul>		
  Sierra Leone National Energy Strategic Plan	TBD	Ministry of Energy and Water Resources		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2/33 CNAs, 2/5 relevant CNAs.</li> <li><i>Strengths of doc:</i> Energy strategy detailed across sub-sectors, and women empowerment</li> <li><i>Weakness of doc:</i> Malnutrition is not recognized as a national concern, and there are no nutrition indicators in the document. It does not include any WASH-related activities.</li> <li>Strategy is from 2006 and doesn't mention when the next revision is.</li> </ul>		
  Social Protection Strategy and Implementation Plan	2018	National Commission for Social Action, Social Protection Secretariat		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>13/33 CNAs, 13/31 relevant CNAs.</li> <li><i>Strengths of doc:</i> Malnutrition is recognized as a national concern.</li> <li>Shows the prevalence rates and the absolute numbers of population at risk.</li> <li>A number of nutrition sensitive actions are included in different outcomes areas.</li> <li><i>Weakness of doc:</i> No nutrition related indicators at beneficiary level mentioned.</li> </ul>		

Overall, nutrition could be further integrated into 7 out of 10 strategies when they are updated next

During the 2017-18 reporting cycle, the **Nutrition Stakeholder and Action Mapping** exercise was undertaken by nine countries, namely: Burundi; Côte d'Ivoire; DRC; Gambia; Haiti; Mali; Myanmar; Senegal; and Zimbabwe. The mapping exercise encompasses nutrition-specific and sensitive actions of all relevant stakeholders from government to the United Nations, civil society and donors. Essentially, it illuminates who is doing what, where and how at national and sub-national levels. Not only does this help clarify the linkages across sectors and stakeholders, it identifies opportunities for increased synergies. The selection of mapped actions and target groups enables the country to decide how they want actions to be disaggregated (e.g. by gender, age, urban vs.

rural, etc.). The mapping culminates in the calculation of beneficiary and geographic coverage that is instrumental to nutrition planning processes and programming to ensure that no one is left behind.

To optimize the utility of the mapping exercise, it is best conducted just prior to or in conjunction with the review or development of a new national nutrition plan and/or annual reviews so that key findings and messages can guide future action. The mapping can even be utilized as part of emergency preparedness and contingency and response planning. In addition, the mapping feeds into the SUN Monitoring, Evaluation, Accountability and Learning (MEAL) system, providing action-oriented data that

supplements the survey data also contained in the MEAL. In Senegal, the mapping was extremely well-received and is being used as a baseline for the National Nutrition Plan. It will also be periodically updated to monitor progress. The findings from the Myanmar mapping were

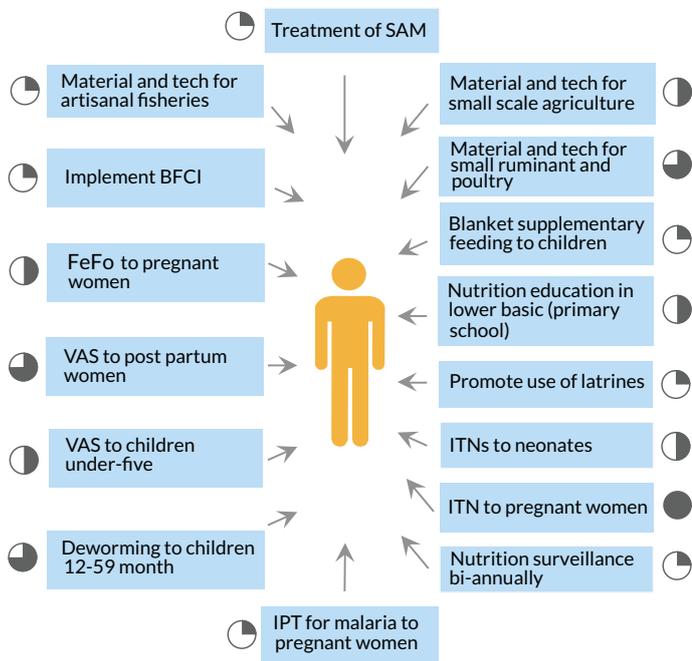
strategically used by key stakeholders while developing the new National Nutrition Plan and thus fed directly into it. An excerpt from the mapping conducted in The Gambia calls attention to the low levels for many nutrition actions that target nutritionally vulnerable women and children.

**FIGURE 16. Excerpt from Nutrition Stakeholder and Action Mapping in The Gambia (2017)**

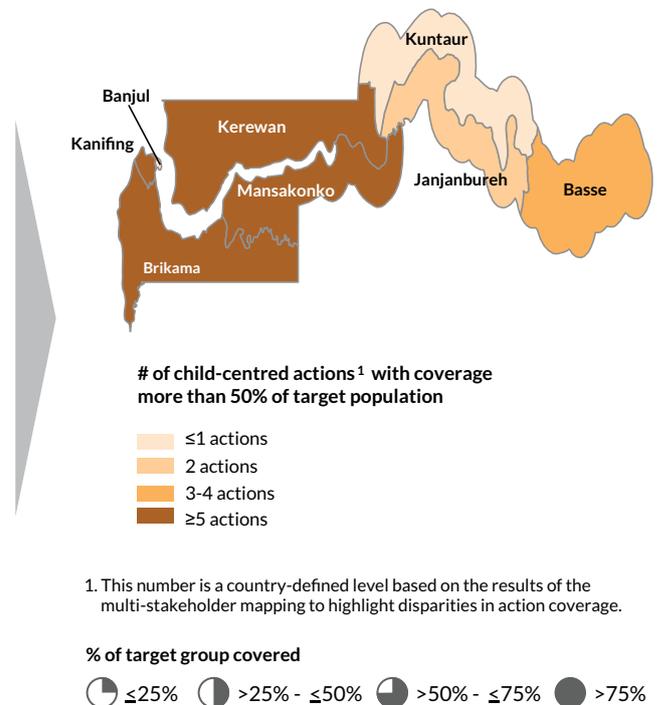
### Are children receiving a full package of nutrition interventions?

Many actions are being implemented in the country, however coverage is low for most actions

On average, a typical child in Gambia only receives ~4 interventions that they may need



On average, children in Banjul & Kuntaur regions are likely to receive fewer actions than other regions



The **UN Nutrition Inventory** tool takes stock of all nutrition actions conducted by the United Nations in one country, providing a common framework and language for describing United Nations activity in nutrition. This allows United Nations actors/agencies in the same country to compare the focus, magnitude and location of United Nations contributions to nutrition. This helps identify gaps and/or duplication of United Nations efforts.

It complements the mapping discussed above in that it covers all actions, using the CAN framework, as

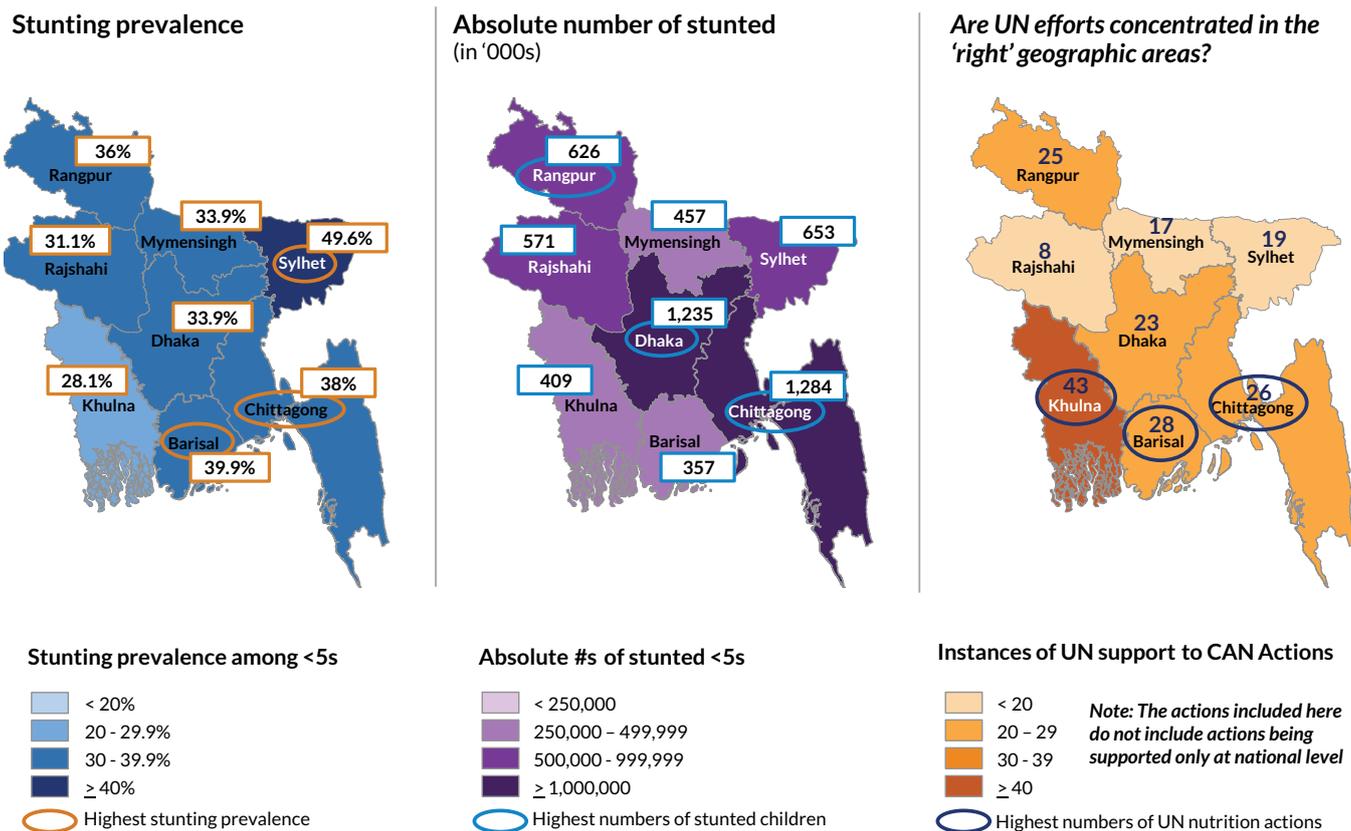
opposed to a subset of core nutrition actions. The UN Nutrition Inventory broadly showcases the geographic concentration of those actions across a given country without generating quantitative coverage data. In addition, the UN Nutrition Inventory explicitly assesses the alignment between United Nations actions and government priorities. It, furthermore, documents existing UN joint programming and estimates the size of investments in nutrition. These findings provide a strong evidence base upon which to develop the UN vision and priorities for nutrition moving forward (i.e. key elements of a country UN Nutrition Strategy and UNDAF).

According to the findings of the 2017-18 reporting exercise, the Inventory was undertaken in ten countries, such as Burundi, Chad, Congo and Guinea. This enabled the UN Network to look at where, which United Nations agency, is doing what, enabling better coordination and enhanced efficiencies. The Inventory has also created a catalytic effect and sparked interest among other United Nations agencies and offices to engage in the UN Network. In Burundi, the preliminary

Inventory findings prompted four other UN agencies – UNDP, UNFPA, UNHCR and UN WOMEN – to participate in the exercise and join the Network, helping to obtain a more complete picture of United Nations nutrition support in the country. In Bangladesh, the Inventory revealed some examples of diverging trends between the concentration of United Nations nutrition activity and the stunting burden, prompting strategic reflection (Figure 17).

**FIGURE 17. Excerpt from the UN Nutrition Inventory in Bangladesh (2017)**

## UN support by agencies surveyed compared to stunting prevalence and number of stunted children



Note: The prevalence for Dhaka is also presented for Mymensingh, which was part of Dhaka at the time of the survey.

Source: Bangladesh Demographic and Health Survey 2014, Bangladesh Census 2011, UN Population Divisions World Population Projections, the 2015 Revision.

The UN Network's **nutrition capacity assessment** tool, developed by the UN Network Secretariat in collaboration with its five founding United Nations agencies, enables countries to identify capacity development needs to help them tackle their respective nutrition challenges. The tool encompasses both functional and technical capacities in nutrition and is adapted to the country context. During the 2017-18 reporting cycle, this capacity assessment tool was used in three countries, namely: Burkina Faso, Chad, Lesotho and Senegal. In Chad, the assessment was focused on nutrition coordination mechanisms, particularly the Permanent Technical Food and Nutrition Committee (*Comité Technique Permanent de Nutrition et d'Alimentation*

or CTPNA) and the food and nutrition committees in five regions – Guéra; Logone Occidental; Ouaddaï; Tandjilé; and Wadi Fari. It examined four strategic areas regarding their capacity to plan, manage and coordinate nutrition actions across diverse stakeholders and sectors. The REACH Facilitator played an integral role in the exercise as part of ongoing UNN-REACH efforts to strengthen nutrition governance. The assessment culminated in nine recommendations and the development of a 5-year nutrition capacity development plan. Country actors are working to operationalize that plan to translate governance milestones into positive nutrition outcomes. This includes efforts to formalize the *modus operandi* of CTPNA and define a strategic vision for the CRNAs.

## Challenges at the country level

The global discourse on multi-sectoral nutrition recognizes broad challenges, such as lack of political will, financing and delivery capacity. The reality on the ground is far more varied, pervasive and dynamic.

At country level, 43 out of 45 countries that responded (96 percent) provided feedback on the three most significant challenges faced by the UN Network. The most frequent reported challenges included:

### ENHANCING AWARENESS

- Sectors unaware of their contributions to nutrition
- Lack of coherence and support to employ a multi-sectoral nutrition approach
- Lack of awareness about nutrition inhibits the functionality of MSPs

### LACK OF ALIGNMENT

- Actions taken by diverse stakeholders are not aligned
- Lack of coordination between the government at national and decentralized levels
- Limited technical and institutional capacity

### FUNDING GAPS

- Unfavorable climate for nutrition-sensitive funding
- Competing priorities from a common pool of resources
- Staffing limitations for multi-sectoral nutrition coordination

---

# The way forward

- Advocating for higher leadership for country UN Networks, broadening UN Network membership and enhancing the UN Network functionality to bring increased cohesiveness to the national nutrition agenda
- Strengthening mutual accountability for nutrition by tracking the UN Network's collective efforts to support national nutrition priorities regarding all forms of malnutrition
- Leveraging investments, innovation and surge United Nations expertise to accelerate the scale-up of nutrition actions and nutrition governance processes
- Continue to support countries through UN Network analytics (e.g. MNO, PPO, Nutrition Stakeholder and Action mapping, UN Nutrition Inventory, Nutrition Capacity Assessment) to: (1) rally and establish a common language on nutrition among diverse stakeholders and sectors; and (2) to support decision-making for policy formulation, nutrition planning and programmatic activities as part of greater efforts to enhance coordination and scale-up of multi-sectoral nutrition actions.
- Strengthen country-level engagement in the areas of the humanitarian-development nexus, gender and multiple burdens of malnutrition. Better incorporate these aspects in the UN Network tools
- Continue to strengthen the UN Network's knowledge management practices, highlighting salient and timely success stories through a series of case studies, webinars, briefs, newsletters, podcasts and events
- Engage with countries on commitments to the Nutrition Decade



# Annexes



## ANNEX 1. Current and past UNN-REACH engagement

UNN-REACH COUNTRY STATUS			
COUNTRIES <sup>7</sup>	CURRENT	FORMER	ENGAGEMENT PERIOD
Bangladesh		✓	2010 – 2016
Burkina Faso	✓		2014 – 2018
Burundi	✓		2013 – 2017
Chad	✓		2013 – 2019
Ethiopia		✓	2012 – 2015
Ghana		✓	2012 – 2016
Guinea	✓		2015 – 2017
Haiti	✓		2015 – 2018
Lao PDR		✓	2008 – 2011
Lesotho	✓		2016 – 2019
Mali	✓		2012 – 2018
Mauritania		✓	2008 – 2011
Mozambique		✓	2012 – 2016
Myanmar	✓		2015 – 2018
Nepal		✓	2012 – 2016
Niger		✓	2012 – 2016
Rwanda		✓	2012 – 2016
Senegal	✓		2015 – 2018
Sierra Leone	✓		2010 – 2019
Tanzania	✓		2012 – 2018
Uganda		✓	2012 – 2015
Zimbabwe	✓		2016 – 2019

Diverse funding sources were used to fund UNN-REACH activities at the country level. For instance, Global Affairs Canada has funded twelve UNN-REACH country engagements: Bangladesh; Burkina Faso; Ghana; Haiti; Mali; Mozambique; Myanmar; Nepal; Rwanda; Senegal; Tanzania (Phase 1); and Uganda. Irish Aid has provided funding to support UNN-REACH activities in four countries (Lesotho, Sierra Leone

[Phase 2], Tanzania [Phase 2] and Zimbabwe), while the European Union has funded UNN-REACH in Chad (Phase 2) and Niger. In other cases (Burundi, Chad [Phase 1] and Guinea), the UNCT has provided financial support to UNN-REACH. The Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation provided funding for Phase 1 of the UNN-REACH engagement in Sierra Leone.

7. In addition to the countries included in this table, Liberia initiated UNN-REACH activity in November 2018 thanks to generous funding from Irish Aid. It is not listed in this table as the official launch fell outside of the reference period of this report.

## ANNEX 2. Functionality Index + results

FUNCTIONALITY INDEX + (n = 45 countries)													
Country	Overall Score	Chair(s) Nominated	Focal Points from 3+ United Nations agencies	Work Plan Developed/Priorities in support of national efforts	UN Nutrition Inventory	Reporting Exercise Completed	UN Network Strategy/ Agenda	UN Network's collective agenda tabled at the UNCT	UN Network's engagement in MSP	UN Network contribution to develop or update nutrition content of any joint UN frameworks	UN Network technical support (direct or otherwise) to SUN Focal Point or government	UN nutrition joint programmes or programming implemented by the UN Network	Number of senior UN staff contributing to nutrition (leadership) NOB/D1+=2; NOC/P3+=1; Others/NA=0
Bangladesh	9	1	1	1	0	1	0	0	1	1	1	1	1
Botswana	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Burkina Faso	12	1	1	1	0	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	2
Burundi	10	1	1	1	1	1	0	0	1	1	1	1	1
Cambodia	11	1	1	1	0	1	0	1	1	1	1	1	2
Chad	11	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	0
Comoros	11	1	1	1	0	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Congo	10	1	1	1	0	1	1	0	1	1	1	1	1
Costa Rica	6	1	1	1	0	1	0	1	1	0	0	0	0
Cote d'Ivoire	11	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	0	1
DRC	10	1	1	1	1	1	1	0	1	1	1	1	0
El Salvador	9	1	1	1	0	1	1	1	1	0	1	0	1
Gabon	10	1	1	1	1	1	0	1	1	1	1	1	0
Gambia	9	0	0	1	1	1	0	1	1	1	1	1	1
Ghana	7	1	1	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	1	1
Guatemala	11	1	1	1	0	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Guinea	9	1	1	1	0	1	0	0	1	1	1	1	1
Kenya	13	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	2
Kyrgyzstan	8	1	0	1	0	1	1	0	1	1	1	1	0
Lao	11	1	1	1	0	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Lesotho	11	1	1	1	0	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Liberia	10	1	0	1	0	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1

Indicates countries where UNN-REACH was active during the reference period

(Continued...)

(... continued)

FUNCTIONALITY INDEX + (n = 45 countries)													
Country	Overall Score	Chair(s) Nominated	Focal Points from 3+ United Nations agencies	Work Plan Developed/ Priorities in support of national efforts	UN Nutrition Inventory	Reporting Exercise Completed	UN Network Strategy/ Agenda	UN Network's collective agenda tabled at the UNCT	UN Network's engagement in MSP	UN Network contribution to develop or update nutrition content of any joint UN frameworks	UN Network technical support (direct or otherwise) to SUN Focal Point or government	UN nutrition joint programmes or programming implemented by the UN Network	Number of senior UN staff contributing to nutrition (leadership) NOB/D1+=2; NOC/P3+=1; Others/NA=0
Madagascar	9	1	1	1	0	1	1	1	0	1	1	1	0
Malawi	12	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Mali	7	1	1	1	0	1	0	0	1	0	1	0	1
Mauritania	12	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Mozambique	12	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Myanmar	13	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	2
Namibia	10	1	1	1	0	1	0	1	1	1	1	1	1
Pakistan	12	1	1	1	0	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	2
Philippines	11	1	1	1	1	1	1	0	1	1	1	1	1
PNG	10	1	0	1	1	1	1	1	1	0	1	0	2
Rwanda	9	1	1	1	1	1	1	0	1	1	1	0	0
Senegal	12	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Sierra Leone	11	1	1	1	1	1	0	1	1	1	1	1	1
Somalia	11	1	0	1	0	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	2
South Sudan	9	1	1	1	0	1	0	0	1	1	1	1	1
Sri Lanka	8	1	1	0	0	1	0	0	1	1	1	1	1
Sudan	9	1	1	1	0	1	0	0	1	1	1	1	1
Swaziland	9	1	1	1	0	1	0	1	0	1	1	1	1
Tajikistan	10	1	1	1	0	1	0	1	1	1	1	1	1
Tanzania	11	1	1	1	0	1	1	1	1	1	1	0	2
Vietnam	7	0	1	1	0	1	0	0	1	0	1	1	1
Zambia	9	1	0	1	0	1	1	1	1	0	1	1	1
Zimbabwe	11	1	1	1	0	1	1	1	1	0	1	1	2

Indicates countries where UNN-REACH was active during the reference period

## ANNEX 3. Overview and coverage of UN Network analytics

Further to the information reported in the *Portfolio of UN Network analytical tools* section of this report, the

following tables highlight where and how these tools have been used over time.

MULTI-SECTORAL NUTRITION OVERVIEW (MNO) 24 SUN COUNTRIES	
SUN COUNTRIES	PERIOD CONDUCTED
Bangladesh	2010, 2014
Burkina Faso	2014, 2016
Burundi	2014-15, 2017-18
Chad	2013
Cote d'Ivoire	2017 ( <i>Dashboard only</i> )
DRC	2017 ( <i>Dashboard only</i> )
Ethiopia	2013
Haiti	2016-17
Ghana	2013, 2016
Lao DPR	2009, 2015-16
Lesotho	2017
Mali	2013, 2017
Mauritania	2009
Mozambique	2013
Myanmar	2017
Nepal	2013
Niger	2013, 2016
Rwanda	2015
Senegal	2015, 2017
Sierra Leone	2011, 2017-18
Tanzania	2013, 2015-16
The Gambia	2017 ( <i>Dashboard only</i> )
Uganda	2013
Zimbabwe	2017 ( <i>Dashboard only</i> )

POLICY AND PLAN OVERVIEW (PPO) 14 SUN COUNTRIES	
SUN COUNTRIES	PERIOD CONDUCTED
Bangladesh	2014
Burkina Faso	2015-17
Ghana	2014
Lao PDR	2009
Mali	2016-17
Mauritania	2009
Mozambique	2015
Myanmar	2015-16 ( <i>partially completed</i> )
Nepal	2014
Niger	2015
Senegal	2015
Sierra Leone	2017-18
Tanzania	2016
Uganda	2013 ( <i>partially completed</i> )

### HOW WERE THE MNO FINDINGS USED?

*In Sierra Leone, the MNO findings were used by the UN Network and donors to fuel an advocacy campaign, which included a televised dialogue with parliamentarians resulting in the enactment of a Food and Feed Safety Bill and fourteen registered political parties committing to include food and nutrition security within their manifestos.*

### HOW WERE THE PPO FINDINGS USED?

*In Burkina Faso, findings from the PPO served as inputs for the review of the multi-sectoral strategic plan on nutrition. This prompted government ministries to update their national sectoral policies and plans, and catalysed a series of discussions with locally elected representatives to better articulate nutrition in regional municipal development plans.*

## NUTRITION STAKEHOLDER AND ACTION MAPPING 22 SUN COUNTRIES PLUS EGYPT (2017)

SUN COUNTRIES	PERIOD CONDUCTED
Bangladesh	2010-2011
Burkina Faso	2015
Burundi	2018
Côte d'Ivoire	2017
DRC	2017-18
Ethiopia	2013
Ghana	2013, 2014, 2016
Haiti	2017-18
Lao PDR	2009, 2015-2016
Mali	2016-2017, 2018
Mauritania	2009
Mozambique	2013-2014
Myanmar	2016-2017
Nepal	2014-2015
Niger	2014-2015, 2018
Rwanda	2015
Senegal	2015, 2018
Sierra Leone	2011-2012, 2018
Tanzania	2013, 2014, 2016
The Gambia	2017
Uganda	2014-2015
Zimbabwe	2017-18

### HOW WERE THE FINDINGS USED?

Mali is using the UN Network Nutrition Stakeholder and Action Mapping tool as part of the district-level nutrition information system to measure progress across multiple sectors. In Senegal, the tool was used as a baseline for the national nutrition plan and to monitor its implementation.

## UN NUTRITION INVENTORY 18 SUN COUNTRIES

SUN COUNTRIES	PERIOD CONDUCTED
Bangladesh	2017
Burkina Faso	2016
Chad	2016-17
DRC	2016-17
Ethiopia	2013
Ghana	2015
Guinea	2017
Haiti	2017
Lesotho	2017-18
Mali	2017
Mozambique	2015
Myanmar	2015-16
Rwanda	2016
Senegal	2016
Sierra Leone	2017-18
Tanzania	2016
The Philippines	2016
Zimbabwe	2018

### HOW WERE THE FINDINGS USED?

In Mozambique, the UN Nutrition Inventory was used to frame discussions for a UN Network retreat on strategic planning as well as the development of a UN Agenda for the Reduction of Chronic Undernutrition in Mozambique. It also led the United Nations agencies in the UN Network to identify fortification as a focus area to implement the UN Nutrition Agenda. In addition, it informed the drafting and implementation of the next UNDAF, helping to better reflect nutrition in UN programming.

## NUTRITION CAPACITY ASSESSMENT – 7 SUN COUNTRIES

SUN COUNTRIES	PERIOD CONDUCTED
Burkina Faso	2018
Chad	2018
Ghana	2014
Lesotho	2017-18
Nepal	2015
Niger	2015
Senegal	2016

### HOW WERE THE FINDINGS USED?

In Lesotho, the UN Network conducted a multi-sectoral nutrition governance capacity assessment, through UNN-REACH, thanks to generous funding from Irish Aid. The assessment was commissioned by Government of Lesotho and specifically examined the capacity of the Lesotho Food and Nutrition Coordinating Office (FNCO), Ministries of Health, Agriculture, Education and Training, along with other stakeholders (including civil society and the media) engaged in multi-sectoral and multi-stakeholder nutrition processes. The assessment supported the development and costing of the National Food and Nutrition Strategy Development Plan (2018 – 2022). It also identified opportunities for mainstreaming nutrition into governmental policies and frameworks, as well as ways to strengthen comprehensive nutrition information systems and the role of the FNCO.

## ANNEX 4. UN Network brief on how nutrition is linked to the SDGs

RALLYING FOR NUTRITION THROUGH THE 2030 AGENDA CONFERS A UNIQUE OPPORTUNITY TO LEVERAGE NUTRITION AS AN ENABLER TO ACHIEVE THE SDGS.



### UN [Nutrition] Network helps actors find their place on the nutrition map

THE **UN NETWORK** IS ACTIVE IN 60 COUNTRIES, WHERE IT IS PROMPTING TRANSFORMATIONAL CHANGE TO ADDRESS ALL FORMS OF MALNUTRITION

Addressing malnutrition requires a holistic and interconnected view of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) that goes beyond Goal 2. The necessary transformation set out by the SDGs requires engagement with multiple stakeholders – as different sectors (e.g. health, education, agriculture, employment, water, sanitation and hygiene, gender equality and women’s empowerment) must align, harmonize and coordinate to achieve the SDGs.

The **UN [Nutrition] Network** (herein UN Network) serves as a platform for operationalizing integrated action and partnerships for nutrition.

The **UN Network** plays an integral role in the Scaling Up Nutrition (SUN) Movement in all 60 countries and promotes progress towards the United Nations Decade of Action on Nutrition 2016–2025 by supporting country-driven action. It brings additional value to the

UN System by leveraging its relationships with a diverse array of stakeholders from government – including Parliamentarians – to civil society, and business, donor and research communities.

In this context, the UN Network is uniquely positioned to facilitate a multi-sectoral, multi-stakeholder approach to nutrition, helping actors break away from fragmented approaches to malnutrition and disrupting the *status quo*. Action will be most effective when taken collectively to scale-up both nutrition-specific and nutrition-sensitive interventions from national to community levels.

Nutrition is virtually related to all of the SDGs. With that said, the following pages outline how **nutrition is directly embedded into 12 of the 17 SDGs**, thereby illustrating how it is both a maker and marker of sustainable development.

## UNPACKING THE LINKS BETWEEN NUTRITION AND THE SDGS





- Good nutrition increases productivity of individuals and societies, contributing to economic growth (Alderman *et al.* 2013; World Bank 2006).
- Conversely, undernutrition can reduce individual lifetime earnings by as much as 10% or more (Alderman *et al.* 2013; World Bank 2006). For instance, child stunting is associated with reduced hourly adult wages (Hoddinott *et al.* 2013) quantified as up to 20% less (World Bank 2006).
- According to the Cost of Hunger studies, child undernutrition can reduce a nation's GDP by 1.9 to 16.5% (AU Commission, UN ECA and WFP, 2013).
- Obesity can result in lost productivity and increased health care costs, estimated at nearly 8% of GNP in China (Popkin *et al.* 2006) compounding already challenging situations.
- Poverty reduction also helps governments generate resources which can be invested in social programmes that address all forms of malnutrition in the greater context of development gains.

**ACTION EXAMPLES:** Public Works Programmes; price subsidies; microcredit; unemployment insurance; and unconditional cash transfers – all undertaken with a nutrition lens.



- After a prolonged decline, world hunger is on the rise again. The number of chronically undernourished people in the world has increased in 2017 to 821 million (FAO, 2018).
- Today, nearly 1 in 3 persons globally suffers from at least one form of malnutrition – undernutrition, micronutrient deficiencies, overweight or obesity – and a large part of the world's population is affected by diet-related non-communicable diseases (NCDs) (WHO, 2017; The Lancet, 2016).
- Diet is the number 1 risk factor in the global burden of disease (Murray *et al.* 2015). Healthy diets are as fundamental to address stunting and micronutrient deficiencies as they are to prevent overweight and obesity (and diet-related NCDs). And, healthy food systems are the basis for healthy, sustainable diets.
- Achieving a world without malnutrition by 2030 will require multi-stakeholder and multi-sectoral action, including a food systems approach, particularly within the context of the triple burden of malnutrition.

**ACTION EXAMPLES:** Food processing (including fortification); food labelling; cash transfers; food vouchers; Right to Food; public-private partnerships; food safety legislation; maternity protection; and International Code of Marketing of Breastmilk Substitutes.



- Good nutrition contributes to good health and well-being.
- On the other hand, there is a vicious cycle between illness and disease, and malnutrition (World Bank, 2013), with malnutrition presenting health risks and sick individuals having heightened nutritional needs to help them combat infection.
- Each year, undernutrition contributes to over 3 million deaths among children under 5 years old, which equates to approximately 45% of preventable child mortality (Black *et al.* 2013; Maternal and Child Nutrition Study Group, 2013).
- Some vitamin and mineral deficiencies are associated with increased occurrences of infectious diseases, such as diarrhoea, pneumonia and other acute respiratory infections (WHO and UNICEF, 2013; Black *et al.* 2008).
- Furthermore, severe infectious disease in early childhood can lead to acute wasting and even cause irreversible stunted growth” (Black *et al.* 2013).
- Chronic nutritional deficits early in life, starting with pregnancy, can not only lead to stunting and irreversible cognitive impairments, but they also augment the risk of obesity and NCDs later in life (Adair *et al.* 2013; Black *et al.*)
- A healthy diet can help to prevent diabetes, heart disease, stroke and some forms of cancer, further illustrating the links between nutrition and NCDs (WHO, 2015).

**ACTION EXAMPLES:** Maternal/infant/child nutrition and health counselling; Baby-Friendly Hospital Initiative (BFHI); iron/folic acid supplementation; oral rehydration treatment with zinc; management of severe acute malnutrition; deworming; nutrition counselling for people living with HIV/AIDS and TB; counselling on healthy diets to prevent overweight, obesity and NCDs; and universal health care.



- A child's ability to learn and a child's nutritional status are linked.
- Good nutrition can increase one's IQ (Black *et al.* 2013). Iodine deficiency alone is associated with up to a 15-point IQ reduction at the population level (WHO, 2013).
- The *Cost of Hunger* studies have shown that stunted children have lower education outcomes than their non-stunted counterparts and that 7-16% of repetitions in school worldwide are attributed to stunting (AU Commission, UN ECA and WFP, 2013).
- In contrast, access to education can support improved care practices such as exclusive breastfeeding, dietary patterns, and ultimately, nutrition outcomes (Ruel and Alderman, 2013).

**ACTION EXAMPLES:** School meals; deworming; nutrition and health education; and WASH interventions in schools, increasing attendance at schools, technical and vocational education.

## 5 GENDER EQUALITY



- Gender equality and women's empowerment are inextricably linked to nutrition. Gender equality can drive as much as 25% of child nutrition gains.
- It is important to take measures that help girls start school in a timely fashion and keep them in school. This not only helps them increase their earning potential in adulthood, but it also prevents early marriage and adolescent pregnancy (The World Bank, 2009), which can be detrimental to the nutrition of an adolescent girl and her baby.
- Income-generating activities are often targeted to women, recognising that they tend to spend a larger portion of additional income and other resources on household nutrition, health and education, which can support nutrition gains (World Bank, 2007; Mucha, 2012; UNSCN, 2010).

**ACTION EXAMPLES:** Prevention of adolescent pregnancy; Family Planning; take-home school rations targeting adolescent girls; microcredit targeting women; and land tenure reform.

## 6 CLEAN WATER AND SANITATION



- Access to safe drinking water and to adequate sanitation are essential to safeguarding nutrient absorption, and thus contribute to improved nutritional outcomes (WHO, UNICEF and USAID, 2015).
- Limited or lack of access to safe water increases the risk of waterborne disease, which impedes nutrient absorption and may thereby compromise one's nutrition.
- A growing body of evidence indicates links between poor sanitation practices (open defecation) and malnutrition (stunting) (Compendium of Actions for Nutrition, 2016; Global Nutrition Report, 2014; Spears, 2013; Woodruff *et al.* 2014).
- In some settings, collecting water can be time-intensive with the burden disproportionately falling on women (Graham, Hirai, and Kim, 2016). This can detract from time that caregivers may dedicate to proven nutrition actions, such as exclusive breastfeeding for the first 6 months of life and continued breastfeeding thereafter up to age 2.
- Decisions around water use should be driven with a goal to achieve sustainable, equitable, and nutritious food systems.

**ACTION EXAMPLES:** Infrastructure systems for water and sanitation; handwashing education/promotion; household water treatment; food hygiene promotion; and provision of water during special circumstances.

## 8 DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH



- While the links between economic growth and nutrition are well-documented, the literature shows that economic growth alone will not resolve malnutrition (Heltberg, 2009; Haddad *et al.* 2002). In many countries, high child undernutrition levels (e.g. stunting and wasting) are observed even among households in the highest wealth quintile.
- In terms of decent work, actors may consider the cost of a minimum nutritious diet in addition to traditional macroeconomic considerations (inflation, labour supply and demand) when defining or adjusting national minimum wage.
- Exposure to chemicals on the job or duties that require heavy lifting may not be suitable for pregnant and lactating women and may even compromise their health and nutritional status. They may also jeopardize the nutrition and health of the foetus and their infants.

**ACTION EXAMPLES:** Minimum wage; ILO Occupational Safety and Health Convention No. 155 (1981); microfinance/credit; entrepreneurship; and eradicating forced labour and slavery, human trafficking and child labour.

## 12 RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION



- Good food environments confer quality diets, which contribute to good nutrition. This can, in turn, increase the demand for sustainable food production.
- Nutrition and sustainable diets are core elements of both sustainable consumption and production, underscoring the importance of employing a food systems approach.
- The transformation of food systems, policies and practices, should guarantee sustainable and nutritious diets. Efforts to reduce post-harvest food losses and consumer food waste can also help promote increased food security and food safety, and further support nutrition gains.

**ACTION EXAMPLES:** Food systems management, including reducing losses at all levels; promotion of small-scale farmer rights, organic agriculture; locally produced foods for consumption; regulations on the availability of ultra-processed foods; and support indigenous knowledge of local foods, including underutilised varieties.

## 13 CLIMATE ACTION



- The future availability of nutritious foods is being threatened by climate change and environmental degradation.
- Climate change impacts diets and food systems, as climatic conditions can affect livelihoods and the types of foods crops harvested for human consumption.
- Did you know that diets affect climate change (UNSCN 2017)? Approximately 19-29% of the human-induced greenhouse gas emissions are derived from food production and consumption, with animal source foods being the main contributing factor (Steinfeld *et al.* 2006; Vermeulen *et al.* 2012; Tubiello *et al.* 2014; CBD 2015).
- Similarly, 70% of fresh-water use is attributed to food production and consumption (UNSCN 2017), stressing water resources in some locations.
- Like malnutrition, climate change tends to affect the most vulnerable regions and populations, exacerbating already difficult circumstances. (HLPE, 2010).

**ACTION EXAMPLES:** Climate change mitigation and adaptation (including promotion of underutilized crops; promotion of sustainable food consumption patterns; improved water management); and impact reduction and early warning.

## 15 LIFE ON LAND



- Alarming gaps in access to natural resources (e.g. land and forests, water and sanitation and energy) among small-scale food producers and other vulnerable groups undermine food security and nutrition. “Enhanced access to natural resources will contribute to food security, improved nutrition, stability and resilience” (SMS, HLPF Brief, 2018).
- Good nutrition can foster environmental sustainability, in that healthy diets often exert less pressure on ecosystems from food production to processing to marketing.
- Protecting biodiversity is not only crucial for environmental sustainability, but also for good nutrition, recognising that the nutrient content of foods can vary vastly among different species.

**ACTION EXAMPLES:** Protection of biodiversity; food composition data for locally available plant foods, adapting land tenure/rights in accordance with *Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance Tenure* to support healthy diets; sustainably manage forests; and combat desertification.

## 16 PEACE, JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS



- The 2017 report on the *State of Food Insecurity and Nutrition in the World* has shined a light on the nexus between conflict, food security and nutrition. It illustrates how “conflict affects food security and nutrition, but also how improved food security and more-resilient rural livelihoods can prevent conflict and contribute to lasting peace”.
- Experience shows that high levels of undernutrition are often found in conflict-affected areas (Howell *et al.* 2018; Carroll *et al.* 2017.).
- Conflict can disrupt or impede recommended infant and young child feeding practices, such as exclusive breastfeeding during the first six months of life, which are integral to good nutrition in infancy, early childhood and in later stages of life.
- Improved nutrition governance, including action supported by the UN Network, can reinforce greater efforts to increase accountability and inclusive stakeholder dialogue across sectors.

**ACTION EXAMPLES:** Food assistance; livelihoods support; nutrition support in emergencies; and strengthening institutions to address inequalities, injustice and violence.

## 17 PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS



- Due to the multi-dimensional nature of nutrition, a multi-stakeholder, multi-sectoral approach is required to address malnutrition in all its forms.
- Combatting malnutrition can only be ended through effective partnerships and coordinated action across all SDGs.
- In many ways, nutrition community is exemplifying how partnerships can be leveraged for shared development goals. Multi-stakeholder engagement lies at the core of the SUN Movement to which the UN Network actively involved. At the country level, UN Network support is pivotal to maintaining momentum on multi-stakeholder, multi-sectoral nutrition processes that foster the achievement of shared nutrition results.

**ACTION EXAMPLES:** Collective actions building on comparative advantages; establishment and strengthening of multi-stakeholder nutrition coordination platforms; and promoting a systems approach (e.g. food, health).

### **Photo credits**

Cover page: IFAD/Akash

Page 6: WFP/Diego Fernandez Gabaldon

Page 13: UNICEF/Njiokiktjien

Page 16: UNICEF/Estey

Page 19: UNICEF/Nesbitt

Page 21: WFP/Tania Moreno

Page 23: FAO/R. Grisolia

Page 24: UNICEF/Pirozzi

Page 27: UNICEF/Tremeau

Page 31: UNICEF/Tadesse

Page 38: UNICEF/Tremeau

Page 39: WFP/Polly Egerton

Page 45: FAO/Farooq Naeem

Back cover: WFP/Diego Fernandez Gabaldon



# ANNUAL REPORT

# 2018

The time is now. The **UN Network** is calling upon UN agencies to engage in nutrition at country level as part of efforts to bolster integrated action, leveraging nutrition as an enabler to achieve the SDGs.

With contributions to the UN Network Secretariat from



Global Affairs  
Canada

Affaires mondiales  
Canada



Irish Aid



World Food  
Programme



World Health  
Organization



UNOPS



**UN Network**

To learn more about how the **UN Network** is supporting country-level action visit <https://www.unnetworkforsun.org/> or write to [unnetworkforsun@wfp.org](mailto:unnetworkforsun@wfp.org)

**UN Network Secretariat:** Via Cesare Giulio Viola, 68/70 - 00148 Rome, Italy