

SUN Movement Pooled Fund – Consultative Group Call

Summary of proceedings and key decisions

31st May, 13th & 19th June 2019

Participants in the calls: Marlene Heeb (SDC, Switzerland), Abigail Perry (DFID, UK), Melissa Hisko (DFATD, Canada), Heike Henn (BMZ, Germany), Louisa Frey (BMZ), Mairead Petersen (IrishAid, Ireland), Heloise Troc (European Commission) Anushree Rao (Civil Society Network - CSN), Melanie Bruns (SUN Donor Network - SDN), Purnima Kashyap (UN Network - UNN), Hajra Hafeezurehman (UNN), Emily Heneghan (SUN Business Network - SBN), Jonathan Tench (SBN), Wahab Moez (UNOPS), Bhushan Shestra (UNOPS), Brenda Killen (SUN Movement Secretariat - SMS), Elena Gaino (SMS), Marek Gajdos (SMS)

Introduction, Objectives and Agenda of the Calls

Brenda Killen, Director of the SUN Movement Secretariat chaired both of the Consultative Group Calls which took place on 13th June and 19th June. The main focus of both Consultative Group calls was on a series of proposals for discussion and decision-making related to the way forward of the Pooled Fund. Some of decisions were endorsed ahead of these two Consultative Group Calls in silence procedure on 31st May 2019.

Endorsed Decisions

Two decisions related to Window II were approved in silence procedure on 31st May 2019 ahead of the Consultative Group Calls:

Decision nr. 1 – Launch Two Calls for Proposals under Window II

Following internal discussion and based on information on the specific context of SUN Countries – in particular the limited capacity to absorb funding, especially at sub-national level - the SUN Movement Secretariat together with UNOPS proposed to split the original financial allocation for Window II into two Calls for Proposals, and to reduce the maximum budget allocated to each. This should result in a maximum of 10 projects under the 1st Call for Proposals / Window II (instead of 20 as initially approved by the Consultative Group), each with a maximum budget of USD 300.000 (instead of USD 400,000 as initially approved) and a total estimated budget of USD 3 million.

The 1st Call for Proposals / Window II will be a “pilot” call. This will allow to:

- Take into account the real absorption capacity of SUN Countries – especially at sub-national level.
- Adopt a more tailored approach of the funding and implementation of the projects to fit SUN Countries’ needs.
- Mitigate the risks involved in launching a Call for Proposals for projects targeting sub-national level under the management of diverse and potentially non-traditional stakeholders – which is a completely new area for the Pooled Fund.

The lessons learned from the preparation and initial phase of the implementation of the 1st Call will be included in the preparation of the 2nd Call for Proposals / Window II. The 2nd Call for Proposals / Window II will be launched after the SUN Movement Global Gathering (planned for the beginning of November 2019). This will allow the inclusion of feedback from discussion with SUN Government Focal Points and other relevant stakeholders during the Global Gathering. The number of projects as well as the maximum budget for each project for the 2nd Call for Proposals / Window II will be defined after the Global Gathering depending on the remaining budget and country needs.

Decision approved: The Window II funding allocation will be split into two Calls for Proposals and the proposed maximum budget of each project will be reduced from USD 400.000 to USD 300.000. In total a maximum of 10 projects will be funded under 1st Call for Proposals.

Decision nr. 2 - Revision to the implementation period of projects under 1st Call for Proposals / Window II

To ensure that all projects funded under the Pooled Fund are aligned to the current lifespan of the Pooled Fund (31 December 2020), the SUN Movement Secretariat together with UNOPS proposed that the maximum duration of the projects funded in the 1st Call for Proposals / Window II is reduced from 18 months (as initially approved by the Consultative Group) to 14 months.

By January 2020 the Consultative Group and the SUN Movement Executive Committee will be asked to consider a no-cost extension of the Pooled Fund after December 2020 to allow the successful completion of any projects which may have needed a longer implementation period.

Decision approved: The maximum duration of the projects funded in the 1st Call for Proposals / Window II will be reduced from 18 to 14 months. The possibility of extension of the projects will be reviewed by the beginning of 2020 at the latest.

The members of the Consultative Group raised several questions related to the decision nr. 1 and nr. 2, that are interlinked. They asked about the potential timing challenge as the second call will only be launched in Nov./Dec. 2019 and project implementation will start probably in Feb./March 2020. This timeline will not leave time enough for 12 months projects. It's important to ensure during the process, and in the light of the high number of projects seeking no-cost extension from Window I, that grantees are able to finalize their projects within this timeline. The members of the Consultative Group were interested whether the option for future potential extension was already communicated to the applicants in the 1st Call for Proposals. It might have an impact on the kind of activities and proposals applicants can submit.

In response to these questions and remarks, the SUN Movement Secretariat together with UNOPS informed that the 1st Call for Proposal was already published without mentioning the possibility of extension. There will be more clarity on the future of the SUN Movement and on the future of the Pooled Fund after the Lead Group meeting in September 2019. Based on the outcomes of this discussion, the SUN Movement Secretariat should be able to come with the possibility of extension of the projects funded in the 1st Call for Proposals / Window II quite soon, before the end of 2019.

As a result of this silence procedure, the 1st Call for Proposals / Window II was launched on 11th June 2019. The text of the Call for Proposals was completed with new language covering fisheries as suggested by Norway which highlighted the importance of this field and the need to encourage applicants to include this focus in their applications.

The rest of the proposals was approved by the Consultative Group during the Consultative Group Calls of 13th and 19th June 2019:

Decision nr. 3 - No-cost extension of projects granted in the 1st Call for Proposals / Window I

In total, 21 projects from 19 different countries¹ were funded in the 1st Call for Proposals of Window I. The total budget of USD 2.4 million was allocated to grants. The implementation of the 12-month projects is expected to be completed by June/July 2019. However, the implementation of several projects was delayed

¹ The Civil Society Alliances from following SUN Countries received Window I – 1st Call for Proposal Pooled Fund Grant: South Sudan, El Salvador, Burundi, Bangladesh, Myanmar, Sri Lanka, Liberia, Namibia, Papua New Guinea, Nigeria, Senegal, Kyrgyzstan, Ghana, Sudan, Chad, Mali, Benin, Cameroon and Somalia.

due to grantees' problems with setting up bank accounts, hiring personnel as well as other internal and external factors such as elections or political changes related to functioning of civil society organizations. The SUN Movement Secretariat together with UNOPS proposed a no-cost extension of an additional 3 months to allow the grantees to achieve successfully the project outcomes and complete their projects.

Decision approved: *Grantees will be invited to consider a no-cost extension of their projects. The main aim of a no-cost extension is to provide enough time for a successful completion of the project and the achievement of the project's outcomes.*

The no-cost extension will be granted for a maximum of an additional 3 months bringing the total implementation period from 12 months to a maximum of 15 months. So far it is anticipated that 17 grantees out of the total of 21 projects will request a no-cost extension.

The members of the Consultative Group raised the question whether a 3 month no-cost extension sufficient for grantees to complete the project activities. According to SUN Movement Secretariat and UNOPS analysis based on the information received from Pooled Fund grantees, a 3 month no-cost extension should be sufficient in most of the grants. In case, it's not sufficient, it can be extended by another 3 months. The maximum extension should not exceed 6 months. This rule is applied also in cases of combination of no-cost extension and top up where both should not exceed together 6 months. This should allow to align the projects from the 1st Call for Proposals with projects from the 2nd Call for Proposals and have solid basis for comparing the results achieved in both Calls for Proposals.

Decision nr. 4 - Top - up of projects granted in the 1st Call for Proposals / Window I

Following the information received from projects' monitoring in the field and after discussion with the Secretariat of the SUN Civil Society Network, a need for top-up funding for projects granted in the 1st Call for Proposals / Window I has been identified and proposed to the Consultative Group.

Decision approved: *The grantees will have a possibility to receive top-up funding to their existing grants. The option to top-up projects will be offered on the basis of demand and merit; it will take into account a good track record of project implementation. The activities covered by the top-up funding should focus primarily on the sustainability of the Civil Society Alliances and durability of the project activities. The maximum amount of top-up funding, together with the initial grant amount, should not exceed a total budget of 200 000 USD per project. The top-up funding will be provided for a maximum of an additional 6 months (the total implementation period of the project will not exceed a maximum of 18 months).*

As the top-up funding will bring the maximum budget and duration of projects in the 1st and 2nd calls for proposals under Window I into line with each other, it should allow for easier comparison of projects and stronger evaluation results.

Members of the Consultative Group stressed the importance of ensuring a good process of evaluation of the projects (top – up part) and were interested in the topics that should be covered by the top up funding as well as how many grantees will apply for this. The SUN Movement Secretariat confirmed that the additional support will be focused on sustainability of the project outcomes and sustainability of the Civil Society Alliances. This should allow to better compare the project activities between 1st and 2nd Call for Proposals. Originally, there was more focus given to the sustainability in the 2nd Call for Proposals in comparison with the 1st Call for Proposals. The SUN Movement Secretariat estimates that all 21 projects may apply for top up grants, some of them will not request no-cost extension and will go directly for top up (Senegal, South Sudan, Ghana and Kyrgyzstan).

Decision nr. 5 - Amendment of the Donor Project Agreement for Window II: Results Framework for Window II

The current logframe for Window I contains high-level outcomes and indicators. It was intended for Civil Society Alliances and not for Multi-stakeholder Platforms with a variety of organizational structures and subnational activities. It encourages political advocacy and budget tracking more than other types of nutrition interventions.

Window II includes more numerous and diverse nutrition interventions. For this reason, the SUN Movement Secretariat together with UNOPS proposed a different approach for Window II, with a more flexible overall framework to allow the grantees to design innovative, catalytic and scalable projects suitable to their country context. This involves the following steps:

- The SUN Movement Secretariat / UNOPS will provide an overall results framework for Window II (a list of common outcomes and guidance on what success looks like for each outcome). This will include 2 to 3 key success / performance indicators under each outcome.
- The grantees will then be invited to develop their own project proposals and logframes suitable to their country contexts in an innovative approach aligned with the overall results framework for Window II.
- Once the grantees are selected, UNOPS will provide M&E assistance to the grantees to improve the quality of their logframes and better align with the overall results framework for Window II.
- After synthesizing the grantees' log-frames, a Window II global log-frame will be finalized.

Decision approved: *UNOPS will amend the Project Agreement with Pooled Fund Donors in order to allow grantees to develop their own logframes within the overall results framework for Window II.*

The members of the Consultative Group stressed the importance of not losing the sight of what Pooled Fund can achieve and have impact on.

Decision nr. 6 - Changing the orientation of the Pooled Fund from Last Resort funding to exclusively Catalytic and Innovative funding

The criterion of "last resort" funding of the Pooled Fund was established in the initial phase of the Multi-Partner Trust Fund (MPTF – the predecessor of the current SUN Movement Pooled Fund). This was a response to the funding situation of SUN countries in the first phase of the SUN Movement – and meant to ensure that the MPTF would not be perceived as replacing any existing mechanism or funding structure at country or regional levels. However, the extent to which the MPTF was a "last resort" source of funding was questioned by the evaluation of the MPTF, which concluded that on some occasions the MPTF was used as a first rather than last resort. In the Pooled Fund SUN Movement Secretariat tried to address the "last resort" requirement by putting in place a clearer procedure to assess the nature of the funding request (a Donor Convener letter certifying the "last resort" nature of the proposal). However, it remained very challenging to confirm if more resources could or could not have been mobilized for a specific project. Therefore, the SUN Movement Secretariat together with UNOPS suggested giving a clear priority to innovative approaches that can have a catalytic impact in SUN Countries and support countries' efforts to scale up nutrition through innovative models.

Decision approved: *For future Calls for Proposals the criterion of the Pooled Fund as "last resort" funding is removed and replaced by funding of "catalytic and innovative approaches".*

Members of the Consultative Group asked clarifications on what "catalytic and innovative" projects mean. The SUN Movement Secretariat explains that catalytic and innovative projects are those which spur other interested parties to take actions or contribute to the continuation of the project after pooled fund resources

expire. These activities should be innovative and spark an interest in working together on nutrition that previously did not exist. The UNN representative asked for a possibility to consider support to REACH facilitators under Pooled Fund.

Decision nr. 7 - Broadening the scope of the Pooled Fund to include support of the establishment and/or operationalization of country level SUN Business Networks

The European Commission is looking at the Pooled Fund as a possible funding mechanism to channel resources in support of the SUN Movement, particularly country's needs.

Following reactions and discussions with other donors to the Pooled Fund, the EC proposal to the Pooled Fund is focused on strengthening participation by national business networks in national multi-stakeholder platforms under Window I. The majority of the budget of EUR 4 million will be dedicated to SUN Business Network in line with Window I and spend before December 2020. The remaining funds could be used at a later stage, pending decision by the Lead Group on the future of the SUN Movement and pending decision by the Consultative Group on the Pool Fund beyond 2020. Support to Secretariats of the Global Networks has been removed from the initial proposal and is not an item for discussion or decision at this stage. Support to Regional Civil Society Coordination Groups has been removed from the proposal for the time being. The EC will be happy to join any discussion with the rest of the Consultative Group on how to further support civil society efforts.

The EC funding would be in support of country level work through a top up to Window I of the Pooled Fund on *“Strengthening participation by in-country non-state stakeholders (civil society, private sector actors, academics, and journalists, among others) and parliamentarians in national multi-stakeholder platforms to implement scale up nutrition plans”*. In particular through this additional support to Window I, the Pooled Fund will support WFP and GAIN country offices as they work with private sector, government and other key stakeholders to establish and/or operate country level SUN Business Networks (SBNs).

This funding will support operation of national SBN platforms in twelve select countries: Bangladesh, Cambodia, Ethiopia, Kenya, Ivory Coast, Laos, Madagascar, Malawi, Nigeria, Pakistan, Senegal, and Tanzania². It will help to increase local capacity to bring the private sector on board around nutrition and expand its awareness of how it can contribute to the national nutrition agenda in a sustainable manner. Emphasis will be placed on leveraging national SBNs to clearly define the roles and responsibilities of business within governments' nutrition strategies and explore collaborative mechanisms that hold all stakeholders accountable. Under this programme, the SUN Business Network will also work with stakeholders to further define and test opportunities for inter-network collaboration and convergence. A specific focus will be placed on identifying and developing points for collaboration between the Business Network and country-level SUN Civil Society Alliances and other stakeholders.

The additional support from the EC will fall under the same governance structure of the Pooled Fund. The EC will become a member of the Consultative Group and a donor to the Pooled Fund. The proposal consists of UNOPS to have an agreement with the EC to top up Window I and then to directly sub-grant WFP/GAIN who will administer the funds in support of national business networks in SUN countries.

Decision approved: *Additional funding to the Pooled Fund will be used to support the establishment and/or operationalization of country level SUN Business Networks under Window I. It is agreed that grants will go to pre-selected countries via sub-granting to WFP/GAIN.*

The Consultative Group members appreciated all the efforts that were invested in the preparation of this proposal. They have mentioned the importance of avoiding parallel funding with projects funded in previous Calls for Proposals.

² The list of the countries can be updated according to evolution of needs and available funding

Decision nr. 8 - Pooled Fund budget revision 2017 - 2020

The available budget of the SUN Movement Pooled Fund for the 2017-2020 period has increased from USD 3 million up to USD 13.5 million. With expected upcoming contributions it will reach USD 15.7 million and including the EC proposal, total estimated budget will be USD 20.2 million. The increase of the initial Pooled Fund budget allows to provide funding to higher number of projects and to cover larger scope of funding activities and grantees. To meet overall objectives, the Pooled Fund needed to revise and adjust the current budget.

The Pooled Fund aims to provide in total funding at least to 60 projects in 4-5 Calls for Proposals and additional top-up funding to 20 projects that are being implemented. The limited capacity of most grantees during the entire project management cycle requires a lot of contractual support, assistance in shaping an adequate budget and project proposal, and capacity building from the Pooled Fund's Secretariat. The Pooled Fund Secretariat Geneva based team provides very strong support to all grantees regarding the implementation of their projects, monitoring, as well as problem solving. This support helps grantees to build stronger capacity in administering their projects. In order to ensure efficient and timely support and administration of funded projects, the Pooled Fund Secretariat proposed higher capacity of human resources and operational support resulting in a revised budget.

Decision approved: *The HR capacity of the SUN Movement Pooled Fund will be strengthened in the following way:*

- *One Grant Management Officer will be hired for UNOPS Geneva Office to ensure more efficient grant management.*
- *Three regional Monitoring & Evaluation Officers will be hired to ensure support, monitoring and oversight management to all 60 projects.*
- *The Consultative Group takes into account the response to difficulties with the current staff contract modality - as endorsed by the SUN Movement Executive Committee. The contracts of the current Pooled Fund team members (3) who joined the Pooled Fund Secretariat before October 1, 2018 will be transferred from the Individual Contractor's Agreement (ICA) modality to UN temporary appointments.*

The revised Pooled Fund budget 2017-2020 is adopted (see annex of this document – Updated version of the Pooled Fund Budget)

The members of the Consultative Group raised their concerns related to the increase of the cost of the management of the Fund. They were interested in comparison with the predecessor of Pooled Fund, the SUN Movement Multi-Partner Trust Fund (MPTF) regarding the cost of administration of the Fund as well as in the role of the M&E regional officers to ensure additional monitoring quality.

The SUN Movement Secretariat together with UNOPS provided an overview and comparison of both funds.

The current Pooled Fund 2017-2020 redistributes approximately 75.2 % of the total budget for grants existing budget and expected to increase to 79% upon reaching USD 15.7 budget. The remaining amount covers administration of the Fund including the costs that were not factored in the MPTF and were covered fully or partially by partners. At the same time, it provides much higher level of monitoring of the projects as a response to the MPTF Evaluation Final Report. The technical support to all the grantees in establishing and operationalizing project level M&E systems, monitoring visits of all projects, regular monitoring calls, monthly monitoring updates as well as regular consultations provide very strong support and contribute to the strengthening of the capacity of in-country stakeholders. The monitoring is based on Pooled Fund logframe in a consistent way. Moreover, the M&E team will also develop/update and operationalize the Pooled Fund log-frame to incorporate new funding windows. The realistically budgeted administration allows a timely

response to disbursement and addressing requests and processing of projects' adjustments. Additionally, there is an increased effort and collaboration between the project team and Civil Society Network. The whole administration is more efficient and allows grantees to implement their projects without any significant delays coming from Fund administration

To meet overall objectives, the Pooled Fund Secretariat needs to award grants to the various organizations having different levels of fund management, implementation and M&E capacities. The experience of working with Window I grantees shows that many grantees do not have appropriate capacities on fund management, results-based planning and M&E. The Pooled Fund Secretariat has spent a lot of time in the grantees' support such as capacities development. In order to ensure the highest level of transparency on the spending of the project budget, and accountabilities on the planned results, the Pooled Fund Secretariat needs to maintain a strong results and resource management system providing technical, M&E and quality assurance support to all the grantees in proactive and timely manner. Moreover, there is huge potentiality and demands on the knowledge management across the Pooled Fund grants, which is not sufficiently explored due to lack of human resources. The expansion of the regional M&E capacity will significantly contribute to strengthen knowledge management across the Pooled Fund grants. The placement of the M&E Team in the regions will also reduce the travel time and budget to conduct field visits and allow providing remote M&E and quality assurance support without hassle of time difference.

Thus, the expanded grants management and regional M&E capacities of the Pooled Fund Secretariat would be instrumental to effectively manage the Pooled Fund Grants ensuring transparency and accountability and improving M&E and knowledge management system.

Decision nr. 9 - Asset treatment in the Pooled Fund grants

By default, the asset treatment in the Pooled Fund grants assumed that non-expendable equipment remains the property of the funding source. Therefore, grantees that purchase equipment must have sent or sold and reimbursed UNOPS for equipment purchased with the grant. The Pooled Fund Secretariat proposed that ownership of equipment remains with the Grant Recipient, in support of their capacity development. Equipment purchase is not a major project activity under Window II and, in the rare instance that there is an equipment purchase, it would be beneficial for the Grant Recipient's sustainability to retain the asset.

Decision approved: *For the future Calls for Proposals under the Pooled Fund, non-expendable equipment purchased from the Pooled Fund grant may remain, after decision by the SUN Movement Secretariat/UNOPS, the property of the grant recipient in order to support their capacity development.*

DFID agreed (and other donors to the Pooled Fund align behind) with this decision under condition that all transfer of assets will be in line with the following points set out below:

- the asset will be put to a good developmental purpose;
- the recipient has adequate resources to maintain and operate the asset, including purchase of any consumables;
- the item will not be sold or disposed of, or diverted for another purpose, within a reasonable time period;
- the recipient has adequate controls in place to ensure that the assets are used as intended;
- any local requirements, regarding duties and taxes, or any other formalities, on transfer will be met;
- IT Equipment is disposed of in line with EU Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment (WEEE) Regulations and all personal data;

At the end of DFID's funding to the Pooled Fund, DFID will require UNOPS to send a formal letter outlining UNOPS request to transfer ownership of the assets and DFID will then send back a formal letter from DFID's Head of Department stating that they agree to the transfer.

Conclusions & Next Actions

- The SUN Movement Secretariat will share conclusions and decisions of the two Consultative Group Calls and silence procedure with the Executive Committee during their Call scheduled for 8th July 2019. The Executive Committee will be asked to endorse the way forward on the broadening of the scope of the Pooled Fund as well as changing of the orientation of the Pooled Fund from Last Resort funding to exclusively Catalytic and Innovative funding.
- The Executive Committee will discuss during their call on 8th July, amongst other topics, the future orientation of the Pooled Fund in a broader context.
- The SUN Movement Secretariat will inform then the members of the Consultative Group about the outcomes of discussion of the Executive Committee.
- The SUN Movement Secretariat will work closely with UNOPS and European Commission to finalize the proposal for funding in support of country level SUN Business Networks.

Annex

SUN Movement Pooled Fund Revised Budget 2017-2020 (version June 2019)					
Category	2017 Budget (3 year) approved	Approved Budget (3 years) as of JUNE 2019	Revised Budget	Variance	Comments
Grants Window I Cycle I	\$2 394 000				21 grants at 114,000
Grants Window I Cycle II	\$3 800 000				19 grants at 200,000
Grants Window II Cycle I	\$3 000 000				10 grants at 300,000 - to be distributed
Grants Window II Cycle II	\$1 736 892				remaining balance based on USD 13,4 million budget
Grants total	\$10 930 892	\$10 176 627		-7%	
Pooled Fund Coordinator	\$432 000	\$468 504		8%	difference
Grant Analyst	\$288 000	\$414 972		44%	difference
M&E Specialist	\$432 000	\$468 504		8%	difference
Grant Management Officer		\$199 500			new position
M&E Officer (Cote d'Ivoire)		\$57 000			new position
M&E Officer (Indonesia)		\$95 000			new position
M&E Officer (Ethiopia)		\$123 500			new position
Personnel total	\$1 152 000	\$1 826 980		59%	The increase is due to Pooled Fund grant numbers and scope changed from USD 6M to approximately USD 15M (250% increase) Grant Management requirement
Communications & Translation	\$62 215	\$92 500		49%	Increase due to increased number of grants, translation requirement of CFP documents, onboarding and reports, includes as well knowledge sharing and case studies
Travel	\$210 000	\$259 000		23%	Increased number of grants and country visits required
Locally Managed Direct Costs	\$195 000	\$195 000		0%	Direct Project Cost (65,000) per year
UNOPS Fee (7%)	\$878 507	\$878 507		0%	
Total	\$13 428 614	\$13 428 614		0%	