

## SUN MOVEMENT POOLED FUND – EVOLUTION & IMPACT

*About* - Founded in 2017, the [SUN Movement Pooled Fund](#) has been established as a last resort, catalytic and innovative funding mechanism providing support to SUN countries and their efforts in scaling up nutrition. Striving towards the strategic objectives of the second SUN Movement Strategy and Roadmap (2016-2020), the Pooled Fund is hosted by [UNOPS](#) and managed by a 7-member team. The Pooled Fund has grown from an initial USD 3 million investment to a multi-phased budget of USD 18.5 million in just 3 years. The Fund now **supports 85 grant projects across 45 SUN countries**. In collaboration with SUN network secretariats, the contracts are allocated to select SUN country projects according to specific eligibility criteria and through transparent and competitive calls within 2 funding windows. Window 1 aims to build, or strengthen, the participation of non-state actors in Multi-stakeholder Platforms (MSPs). Its beneficiaries are national [Civil Society Alliances](#) (CSAs) and national [SUN Business Networks](#) (SBNs). Window 2 aims to accelerate the coordinated delivery of high-impact nutrition activities by members of MSPs, encouraging cooperation across core areas, through sharing and learning, to increase impact. Presented below are the preliminary results which demonstrate that grant-making served as an effective mechanism for supporting flexible, country-driven, national and sub-national results towards the SUN Movement's 2016-2020 objectives. They focus primarily on CSAs since Window 2 and SBN projects are at the mid-point of their implementation.

*Sustaining Advocacy, Building Partnerships* - With support from the Pooled Fund, beneficiaries have established or strengthened partnerships with national and sub-national governments to keep nutrition on the agenda. Cumulatively, over 242 new organizations have joined their national CSAs (77% of those organisations were local nonprofits). This network growth significantly increased the nonprofit sector's **participation in nutrition policymaking**. According to the most recent data, the Pooled Fund has supported CSAs extensive contributions to **187 public nutrition plans** at the national (42) and sub-national (145) level through partnership, advocacy, and/or lobbying. This alignment works both ways. Thanks to grant support, there are now at least **189 CSA action plans, grassroots strategies, sustainability plans**, etc. that clearly show alignment and support to National Nutrition Plans. Finally, Multi-stakeholder Platforms (MSPs) demonstrated that they are more active when a CSA is engaging with them. In just 1.5 years, the number of national MSP meetings in beneficiary countries increased from 26 (baseline) to 124 - in particular cases, the beneficiary was **critical in formalising the MSP secretariat** into a government-led body (PAKISTAN). Finally, the Pooled Fund **demonstrated its flexibility and agility to support countries** to react quickly to adapt, mitigate, and build back better systems in light of the COVID-19 pandemic. Almost all beneficiaries realigned their Pooled Fund activities to either support their governments in developing or aligning national response measures (PHILIPPINES, TANZANIA, KYRGYZSTAN) or to address gaps in national response clusters (GUATEMALA, AFGHANISTAN, NEPAL). In conclusion, the Pooled Fund has supported CSAs and SBNs in aligning with national nutrition priorities while **increasing national coordination** by MSPs in a participatory manner.

*Funding What's Important* - The Pooled Fund supported beneficiaries in mobilising resources to sustain their activities and to finance National Nutrition Plans. A significant intermediary result has been the **successful advocacy** by CSAs in securing national and sub-national **resource allocation for nutrition**. The Pooled Fund has identified 19 budgets analyses that demonstrated significant CSA engagement at national or regional levels that were used to inform effective advocacy. Some beneficiaries have successfully lobbied for national and sub-national domestic budgets to feature a line item specifically for nutrition (CAMEROON). Others were successful in **increasing domestic allocation for nutrition**, even against a difficult political backdrop (SOUTH SUDAN, MALAWI). This would not have been possible without the funding for MSPs and their networks to map local nutrition stakeholders and vulnerable groups and translate their voices into hard, financial commitments. What is not always visible is the role that the Pooled Fund has played in getting CSAs involved in innovative financing mechanisms like the [Global Financing Facility](#) (GFF). In some cases, the CSA beneficiary served as the co-chair to the financial planning committee (MALI, ZAMBIA), while in others, the CSA acted as a conduit between the non-governmental sector's perspective on nutrition gaps and the government-led investment case (SENEGAL, CAMBODIA).

Other countries are looking towards non-traditional sources of funding, such as earmarking taxes on the extractive industry (MOZAMBIQUE), or they are applying public pressure on their national government to make SMART-er commitments at the [Nutrition for Growth](#) Summit (ZIMBABWE). The support that the Pooled Fund has provided has **aligned and harmonized resources while promoting mutual accountability between government and network representatives.**

*Capable, Sustainable, Participatory & Cross-networks Interventions* - The Pooled Fund has catalysed country-driven activities and innovation in its beneficiaries, particularly at the sub-national level. In line with the [SUN Movement Theory of Change](#), beneficiaries focused on bringing diverse stakeholders together for joint implementation and advocacy. This was mainly through strengthening the individual and collective voice of the CSA and working diligently towards **influencing actions on nutrition**. Beneficiaries identified 448 Nutrition Champions across 23 countries, 187 (42%) of which are women, and elevated national nutrition objectives. The Pooled Fund catalysed the transfer of CSA leadership from international non-governmental organisations to national non-governmental organisations thanks to **increased institutional capacity** (CÔTE D'IVOIRE, NAMIBIA). Increased capacity is enabling some beneficiaries provide technical assistance to their public partners in drafting nationwide nutrition-sensitive programs for the government, and training local schools districts, households, and farmers on nutritious community food production (PHILIPPINES, EL SALVADOR). The Pooled Fund further **strengthened inclusivity and diversity** by getting youth networks involved in advocacy campaigns or by actively recruiting women-led non-profits to CSA membership (PERU, BANGLADESH). Equally important is the **cross-network collaboration** that SUN Business Networks has made in sustainable linkages with smallholder farmers to buyers and members within SUN Business Networks (SRI LANKA). Additionally, the SBN and the CSA conducted **joint advocacy initiatives and capability-building** for non-profit and for-profit members alike (KENYA). Beneficiaries have **strengthened network capacity**, local ownership, and inclusivity at levels that other mechanisms may find hard to reach. The SUN Movement Pooled Fund has contributed to **ensuring that nutrition is properly represented and championed at all levels of government**. Through a variety of activities including high-level events, lobbying, budget-analysis exercises, and behaviour-change campaigns the Pooled Fund has played a catalytic role in ensuring that organized cooperation between stakeholders takes place.

More information can be found at the Pooled Fund website, its peer-to-peer learning series, or through [#sunpooledfund](#) for the latest updates from around the world.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> "The Pooled Fund." The Scaling Up Nutrition Movement, SUN Movement Secretariat, published 23 October 2020, <https://scalingupnutrition.org/spf/>.