

Regional Consultation Call on SUN 3.0

40 participants

Countries represented: Bangladesh, Cambodia, Indonesia, Lao PDR, Myanmar, Papua New Guinea, Philippines and Viet Nam

Moderator: Dr. Azucena M. Dayanghirang, Focal Point for the Philippines and Executive Director of the National Nutrition Council, Dept of Health

The call began with an overview of the process and some context. Colleagues were then asked overarching questions about the role of SUN in the next five years, and feedback on the draft strategy overall, before specific topics were discussed:

- **Role of the SUN Movement in the next 5 years**
 - SUN should build on lessons from SUN 2.0, more stakeholders need to be engaged. Excel engagement of multi-stakeholders at sub-national level. Networks need to be functioning better, and parliamentarians need to take the agenda forward.
 - One country shared that they developed a multi-sectoral plan of action on nutrition a year ago with many ministries involved and that it is now going sub-national. Over next 5 years, these plans need to be implemented at sub-national level. Need SUN to support the implementation of this plan as the framework to respond to nutrition issues. Need to be able to rely on sustainable domestic budget and financing.
 - Strategy well-articulated, may identify that changes are needed and improvement is possible. In terms of financing mechanisms, these need to be specific by country (for example, when engaging multiple ministries and dealing with sub-national coordination, one country has a challenge to make alignment with the national plan and the draft strategy) 2. This country already takes a multisectoral approach, but need the support of parliamentarians 3. Not all countries have a specific office yet [to support SUN and coordination of nutrition actors], might need a specific country secretariat and formal office set up in phase 3 for better outcomes. Better alignment of monitoring processes is also needed.
 - Next phase might help to attract talent and investment and to melt together different agencies and networks and draw in those who are not yet involved with SUN. For example, with business, to bring them all together and establish the networks. Light of the SUN needs to reach all levels - people at sub-national level to know what SUN means and to bring them real change. Want to see real and tangible benefits delivered.
- **General feedback on the Draft Strategy**
 - General
 - We have general support for the thrust of SUN 3.0 especially in terms of its focus at country level. Some of our actions are already aligned with the changing directions and we can fit [the strategy to what we are planning] with some minor alignment. The SUN Focal Point is already empowered so can fit the new role. Effective multi-stakeholder platforms exist nationally and we are working on provincial level.
 - The draft strategy is good in telling us *what* to do but has little details on *how* to do it.
 - In general, the draft strategy is comprehensive but also heavy. They liked how the Theory of Change is laid out.
 - The outline of the strategy and the headlines used are confusing
 - Suggested new outline for the strategy:
 1. Review of last phase

2. Current context and challenges
 3. Objectives
 4. Principles
 5. Strategic approach: policy, resource, technical, cooperation...
 6. Implementation: structure, coordination, planning
- Missing elements include more emphasis on sub-national actions, more support in terms of legislation and nutrition, greater role for youth and also explicit addressing the potential conflicts of interest in the private sector in forming the business network.
 - Sub-national
 - Instituting SUN governance at sub-national levels and each should have accountability at different levels.
 - Regionalization
 - Need to look beyond our borders and see what work is bringing added value, our work should complement each other's, in the region and sub-region. COVID-19 calls for such networking. Issue is ASEAN meetings are high-level or from foreign affairs and involved on online meetings - good to know if those from the Ministries of Agriculture, Social Welfare, Health and Education - are technical and nutrition people involved in these meetings?
 - Alignment with other global networks that focus on nutrition, for example high-level panels on nutrition (ASEAN): there is alignment but in the draft strategy we should put maybe one paragraph on working with other platforms.
 - Further to the ASEAN, 6 of the 10 ASEAN member countries are SUN countries (except Singapore, Brunei, Thailand, Malaysia). Nutrition concerns are discussed under the ASEAN Health Cluster 1. There is an ASEAN Strategic Framework and Action Plan on Nutrition for 2019-2030 which identifies joint actions/activities with other ASEAN sectoral bodies (agriculture, education, social protection). At least three times a year, progress of countries is discussed in the ASEAN health bodies at technical, senior official and ministerial level.
 - Financing
 - As proposed in Nepal at the SUN Global Gathering, there should be multi-country resourcing, for identifying and addressing common/shared problems and activities [in neighbouring countries/in a region].
 - More advocacy for funders to assess security for nutrition programs.
 - Middle income countries are least prioritized in calls for proposals.
 - Fundraising for nutrition from outside the country is very important. SUN is not a financing mechanism, but SUN needs to support countries on fundraising. The role of SUN needs to be more clearly mentioned.
 - Quote: Having mentioned in the document that "Fund Raising is an Art" SUN MSP Teams will be grateful to receive more guidance and technical guidance from global level regarding fund raising domestically as well as from external sources
 - Other items
 - Improvement on the conflict of interest (p.25), needs to be more specific in terms of businesses/companies that should/should not be part of SUN. For example, those producing breast milk substitutes (BMS), tobacco, etc. Draft strategy needs more on *how* to do this.
 - There is an emphasis on COVID-19, and while it should address not disrupt existing services, it should focus on the resilience phase for each country. Nutrition interventions need to be sustained and the next steps, on how to build back better.

- Would like to strengthen the organisation of parliamentarians and their work on food security and nutrition and accountability for implementation.
 - There needs to be increased assistance for resources for country networks, including documenting good practices and advocacy for global financial assistance.
 - SUN should not only engage multi-stakeholders but also individuals. SUN needs to be country-driven to lead the multi-sectoral impact, strengthen the MEAL system, on implementation, strengthen sustainable finance for nutrition, identify potential resources, ODA, innovative facilities, and global facilities. Different position with new title and new person? Can the MEAL system be merged with the Joint Assessment? That would be more effective to collect feedback.
- **Country Action Plans (CAPs)**
 - Our national strategy outlines the formation of different task forces with an action plan that is based on the priorities laid out in the national plan. Based on the collective output of task force plans, it sits within the national strategy. With alignment we can fit what we are already doing with the purpose of the CAP; the priority plans will have costings and related expenditure plans.
 - The initial reaction is Why? Why do we have to have a CAP when most countries have National Nutrition Plans? Our plan of action defines roles, targets, and we will formulate another round of feedback that is consistent with this plan. Nutrition needs can be too many and we may be spreading resources too thinly. It also may be explaining the slow progress of malnutrition reduction. CAPs can be one strategy to only focus on a few areas for concerted action where all SUN stakeholders should join forces. We need not formulate a new plan but interventions should come from the existing Plans of Action, by further prioritizing the priorities that have already been identified. Maybe by doing so, we can see some impact by 2025 at sub-national and national levels.
- **Focal Point transition to SUN Country Coordinator**
 - Overall
 - Transition from the SUN Focal Point to the SUN Country Coordinator - does this mean that it will be a new person or new title? This is not clear in the draft strategy.
 - Need to clarify the position of country coordinator.
 - In general support the change but see it as a change of name rather than a change of role and need more support to be provided for this person.
 - Context
 - In change of the actor, we already have the highest policy making body involved.
 - Current FP sits within a council that is chaired by the deputy prime minister - so he is empowered politically and backed by a technical working group. Coordinator.
 - In one context, senior people have too many responsibilities mostly political, hence technical matters will be delayed. The current Nutrition Focal Point should be positioned closer to a high-level decision-making person of body (this was seconded)
 - Name change
 - Appreciate name change
 - Change of the term is more action driven considering the responsibilities in the TOR, Annex 3. We agree to change the name.
 - Found the change is more a change of name than the role or position of the current FP.

- There is a need to consider the person who will take the role of the FP or coordinator before changing the title from SUN Movement Focal Point to SUN Country Coordinator, i.e. If the person will be from the government, donor or Civil Society.
 - Sharing of responsibilities
 - Develop a SUN country organizational structure to assign the roles in Annex 3.
 - The new Country Coordinator TORs and roles are very heavy
 - Found the TORs are quite heavy and a big workload, key might be to provide that ecosystem of support to the country coordinator (current FP) so he can operate in role of SUN Country
 - A support team is a good idea.
 - We can consider sharing of roles with different national agencies.
 - It would be more effective to provide more political and administrative support to the current Nutrition Focal Point rather than move it to a senior position.
 - Afraid that someone in a higher position might not always be able to be involved in the processes timewise. One ministry has the prime role to work on nutrition and if you would rename it there might be a challenge to get him/her in the process every time.
 - Financial responsibilities of a Country Coordinator
 - TOR can support to lobby for an increase in budget for nutrition. If country networks agree to place the coordinator to a higher level, this might be supportive.
 - Financial responsibilities might be difficult - there is a lot of financial independence for ministries.
- Recombitment
 - Having countries recommit might present a good opportunity but the strategy should say where the commitment needs to come from (specifically mentioning who needs to commit, heads of state for example?)
 - We see the need for recommitment, in terms of how, if we have our CAPs it is a clear indication of how we are recommitting, according to the priorities
 - This is very important for the central government. High positions have changed and now there are new PMs/new government/ministers. New leaders should re-commit. Planned to do that at Tokyo summit, good to do so at another big moment.
 - We have elections coming up and the government should recommit to SUN; even if the same government officials return to their chairs SUN should still be recommitted to remind and refresh the central role of nutrition in national development.
 - Totally agree to make re-commitment to the SUN Movement because we have new President with the new strategy, new CAPS, and new ministries involved
 - Recombitment seems a good move to us as well. Even with the stability in senior political roles we have wider understanding and can genuinely seek that recommitment from a senior figure at a major event. It has good implications within the country.
- Measuring Success
 - Success is defined in terms of reduced malnutrition. Key impacts nationally for the SUN Movement are that we want to see the progression on the same indicators currently used [as identified in national nutrition plans] but perhaps with some refinement of the dimensions of performance we currently use.
 - Success is defined in the national strategy for food security and nutrition; we have indicators and targets. As well, there are country-specific measurements to reach the SDGs to track progress and achievement. Also have our demographic and health survey. We have plenty of data for defining and measuring our success.

- There is a department within the government that generates and releases data on nutrition and conducts the national nutrition survey; it is facing operational challenges due to COVID. Success was seen in that the survey already included most of the questions that can measure the success indicators of the SUN Movement, i.e. EBF targets, etc.
- A social sector agency was created under the Office of the Deputy Minister which is multi-sectoral and recently got approved to work at different levels from international to district levels. The National Planning agency is coordinating the different sectors involved and aligning the policy to the programs at all levels. That is our current focus.
- Taking the strategy forward
 - We feel that we can be inspired by SUN 3.0 and fit to the strategy and also to say, the inspiration for us comes from action on the ground. It is really when we are working together as SUN Networks under the SUN FP, that is the satisfying part of working under the SUN Movement - we want this to come through and continue. For example, we felt this in our work with youth - which has been effective and reflects the SUN Principles.
 - We are inspired from what we have read, we would like to own and lead the implementation of CAP in our country and we are hopeful because we have an existing MSP (National Nutrition Council) and Plan of Action and can focus on a smaller plan, a Country Action Plan to focus on 2-3 strategic priorities to reducing all forms of malnutrition. We are in process of expanding our networks. We are excited to implement the plan and contribute to the global SUN Movement.
 - We are hopeful and optimistic that SUN 3.0 will build something better off of the previous phases. In the draft strategy, a few things are clearly identified, however, please make some revisions or changes; help the member states to make better multi-sectoral multi-stakeholder coordination and collaboration.
 - I believe the global SUN movement will continue with the consistency of operations, and bring it into existing platforms for regional coordination, like the ASEAN Community.
 - We are inspired with what is written in the draft strategy. It is very interesting to see the investment needs for nutrition actions at the global level. Exercises for budget analysis are also being carried out at the country level. Having mentioned in the document that “fundraising is an art,” SUN MSP teams will be grateful to receive more guidance and technical guidance from global level regarding fundraising domestically as well as from external sources.