

## SUN Movement Executive Committee (Ex Com) Call

8 February, 15:00-17:00 CET, Zoom

### Summary Note

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#### Participation

**Participants:** Meera Shekar (Chair), Nancy Aburto, Rob Bertram, Azucena Dayanghirang, Connell Foley, Cecilia Gamboa, Lawrence Haddad, Marjeta Jager, Abdoulaye Ka, Asma Lateef, Jo Moir, Gladys Mugambi, Allison Oman, Felix Phiri, Kiran Rupakhetee, Fokko Wientjes, Shawn Baker(Ex-officio), Gerda Verburg (Ex-officio).

**Apologies:** Tumaini Mikindo (Vice-Chair), Moin Karim,

**Observers:** Melanie Bruns (SDN), Theresa Fasig (EU), Helena Guarin (EU), Emily Heneghan (SBN), Wahab Moez (UNOPS), Stineke Oenema (UN Nutrition), Kyoko Okamura (WB), Ritta Shine (SBN), Christopher Twiss (CSN), SUN Movement Secretariat (SMS) Strategic Management Team

#### Agenda

1. Opening and Welcome
2. Country led activities
3. SUN Movement 3.0 Strategy Updates
4. Global Support System Planning
5. Completion Rate on the Self-Assessment, main trends and way forward
6. AOB and close of the meeting

#### Decisions and follow up

- Marjeta Jager, Nancy Aburto and Allison Oman were welcomed to the Ex Com for the interim period (until 31 June 2021).
- It was agreed that Asma Lateef will continue in her role on the Ex Com following her change in position to the SDG 2 Advocacy Hub.
- The Ex Com was pleased with direction of both the SMS Functional Review exercise and the plans of Ops Group, recognising that timelines are very ambitious. The groups will report back on a regular basis.
- Country focal points listed the following key priorities for countries: 1) Leveraging financing (including innovative financing) and resource mobilization for scaling up which is identified as the key constraint; 2) Capacity building and regional exchange between countries and technical assistance based on country demands 3) support harmonization of the implementation of SUN 3.0 through regional efforts, including through the AU and NEPAD 4) support SUN Government Focal Points to receive timely communications regarding global events and opportunities and to help ensure they are copied into any communications to the government so they can rally stakeholders behind SUN; 5) Strengthen coordination between in country networks, particularly the SDN, UN Nutrition and the SBN to leverage resources in support of Focal Points and 6) support to prevent and

manage conflict of interest between networks. The ExCom took note of the 'state of play' in countries and regions and requested for them to be incorporated in the work of the OPS Group and the SMS workplan for 2021.

- The SUN Pooled Fund workplan and budget for 2021 was approved.
- The SMS workplan and budget were discussed and the SMS was advised to share a one-page summary of the priorities from the workplan and associated costs/budgets, emphasizing how the workplan aligns with the new strategy and country priorities as highlighted above by the focal points
- The main highlights from the self-assessment (summary attached) were noted.

## Summary Note

### 1. Opening and Welcome and Ex Com membership updates

The chair opened the meeting and welcomed all participants.

#### *Membership updates*

Marjeta Jager, Deputy Director General for the Directorate-General for International Partnerships (INTPA), (SDN); Nancy Aburto, Director a.i. Nutrition at FAO and Allison Oman, Director a.i. of the Nutrition Division at WFP (UN Nutrition) were welcomed to the ExCom. All will serve for an initial term until June 30<sup>th</sup> 2021. Asma Lateef announced that she will take a new position at the SDG 2 Advocacy hub but will maintain a part-time support role to Bread for the World for the coming six months. On recommendation of the Chair of the ExCom, Chair of the CSN and the SUN Movement Coordinator, the ExCom agreed that Asma Lateef will continue in her position on the ExCom.

### 2. Country led activities

#### *Update from the Latin American Region (by Cecilia Gamboa)*

The Latin American and Caribbean region has been the hit the hardest by the COVID-19 pandemic, so food security and nutrition is taking a central role. The challenges of the region are further fueled by the triple burden of malnutrition, inequalities, and vulnerabilities to climate change. The Latin American countries in the SUN Movement propose a food systems regional approach to the next phase, making best use of the year of commitments (FSS and N4G) and the launch of the new strategy. Costa Rica currently holds the presidency of SICA (Central American Integration System) for six months, offering an opportunity to put food security and nutrition as a priority issue on the region's political agenda. This would include engagement in a regional Food Systems Dialogue and plans on nutrition labelling. The SUN Movement could support, particularly the Lead Group and the SUN Movement Coordinator, to connect ongoing work, to support high level advocacy towards the government and to mobilize actors for country impact. The focus needs to be on regional exchanges; the development of a knowledge management and learning system; support for resource mobilization and innovative financing and a technical assistance system based on country demands building on the JAA; increasing support for advocacy and communication as well as increasing support to prevent and manage conflict of interest with other networks.

#### *Update from the sub-Saharan African region (by Felix Phiri and Gladys Mugambi)*

The region calls upon the SUN Movement Coordinator to support harmonization of the implementation of SUN 3.0 through regional efforts, including through the AU and NEPAD. Multi-stakeholder platforms should receive the new strategy and need to start thinking about food systems in a regional manner. In Malawi, the strategy has been shared with the National Nutrition Committee, a think tank of academics, government technicians and nutrition professionals. They will conduct a gap analysis to find a way to strengthen and implement the new strategy. Launches of SUN 3.0 are planned in countries at the highest level with the commitment of the president in Malawi. The SUN Movement Coordinator could support SUN Government Focal Points to receive timely communications regarding global events and opportunities and to help ensure they are copied into any communications to the government so they can rally stakeholders behind SUN despite competing agendas. The regional focal points plan to follow up biannually in the region on implementation. Coordination between in country networks, particularly the SDN, UN Nutrition and the SBN should be strengthened to leverage resources in support of Focal Points and aligned with a decentralized nutrition response. This can empower leadership at the lowest level and show that the SUN Movement is strong.

*Update from the Francophone African region (by Abdoulaye Ka)*

Main findings of a survey completed by 21 Francophone SUN Countries on the best way to start SUN 3.0 were [presented](#), the challenges faced related to nutrition policies and to identify the capacity building needs were high. In two weeks, there will be a regional webinar to finalize the process, resulting in a regional roadmap to implement SUN 3.0. The regional roadmap will then need to be contextualized for each country's use. The key issues that were identified for action include: advocacy and finance mobilization (main obstacle identified to reach full scale-up of nutrition specific activities for instance), the functioning of the MSP, support for capacity building and the need for regional exchange between countries. Countries are ambitious to increase the level of nutrition coordination anchored at the level of either president or prime ministers' office (while the current level is often Health Ministry level). Discussions are ongoing related to decentralisation (which is not always on track) to ensure impact at the village level. Lastly, the need for sustainable financing for autonomous national structures that would allow national coordinators to retain well trained employees to support implementation of SUN 3.0 was emphasized. In order to increasingly promote peer to peer learning, thematic focal points have been identified in some key sectors (finances, multisectoral coordination) and successful experiences in-country identified, for further exchanges between countries bilaterally upon request and/or at the regional level.

The ExCom took note of the 'state of play' in countries and regions and requested for them to be incorporated in the work of the OPS Group and the SMS workplan for 2021.

### **3. SUN Movement 3.0 Strategy Updates**

Update on behalf of the Task Team by (chair) Fokko Wientjes: The first phase of the functional review has been concluded and the design phase of a new organizational structure for the SUN Movement Secretariat has started. The focus is on clarifying priorities, and ways of working. The timeline for delivery of the Functional Review is aligned with the contract expiry of SMS staff and fundraising cycles.

Update on behalf of the OPS group by (co-chair) Jo Moir: The group now includes country focal points (Afghanistan and Yemen), representatives from national SUN Networks (Zambia, Sri Lanka and Myanmar), UNICEF (on behalf of the office of the Lead Group Chair) and SMS staff (Ellen, Maria, Jeff and Renee). The group has met twice in 2021 and plans to meet bi-weekly going forward. Recommendations will be presented in May 2021 to the Lead group. Depending on the questions posed in the group's ToR, these recommendations are likely to range from best practices to very specific actions. A call will soon be issued for external consultancy support on project and change management through FCDO's Technical Assistance to Strengthen Capabilities (TASC) project. Four working groups will be established on country delivery, MEAL and KM, Governance and Financing. The ExCom is welcome to feed in and provide advice based on their expertise. It was noted that SMS/GSS contribution and ownership in the Ops Group is critical.

Overall: the Ex Com was pleased with direction of both the SMS Functional Review exercise and the plans of Ops Group, recognising that timelines are ambitious. The groups will report back on a regular basis.

#### **4. Global Support System Planning**

The SMS Chief of Staff, Ellen Barclay, presented the workplan and budget for the SMS and SUN Pooled Fund for 2021. The SMS is bound to three priority outcomes, based on existing donor agreements and legal obligations according to the existing multi-year funding framework. The 2021 Workplan is informed by the: the 2019 SUN Global Gathering; 2020 Joint-Annual-Assessments (JAA); the COVID-19 Response and Recovery webinars and the transition to Phase 3 of the Movement. A major focus is on Nutrition for Growth and the Food Systems Summit. For the SUN Pooled Fund small adjustments were made in the final budget to support responses to COVID-19. The Ex Com asked for a one-page summary of the priorities of the workplan putting emphasis on how the workplan is responding to the new strategy and country priorities. The Pooled Fund workplan and budget was approved

Emily Henegan (SBN) presented an update on the GSS workplan on behalf of the networks. They are working on a coordinated mechanism but are waiting for the common accountability framework and common indicators to build on. The networks are taking part in the OPS Group to help advance thinking in these areas.

#### **5. Completion Rate on the Self-Assessment, main trends, and way forward**

The chair presented the conclusions of the self-assessment which were overall positive, albeit some room for improvement by certain members (copy of the summary is attached). **Overall, the ex-com has done well as a whole, despite the challenging times and the pressure of developing the new strategy,** the ex-com has stepped up to the challenge and everyone seems to be proud of the fact that we delivered on the strategy (as we should all be)! Big Kudos to everyone, including the SMS team! At an individual level, most members feel that they have delivered on what was expected and some have even described it as an excellent learning opportunity. And some have pointed out that "heated discussions" and disagreement is good, so long as we reach a productive end. There is strong appreciation for **how the ex-com meetings are organized/run,** despite a very heavy workload in 2020. Some ex-com members are better prepared/engaged than others –perhaps a call-out to all of us to do better in the future. **In general, there seems to be lots of appreciation for the role of the focal points** and the role

they have played in shaping the strategy. **Going forward, there seems to be general agreement that the focus should be on operationalizing** the strategy and not going back on agreements that have already been made and approved in the strategy. Some issues for the ex-com to do better on:

- a) Building stronger partnership and trust among members; show more collaboration and create safe spaces for members to be able to speak out
- b) Ex-com members to receive background info well in advance and have a chance to review before meetings
- c) Help manage workload for individual ex-com members by using consultants and stronger secretariat support

## **6. AOB and close of the meeting**

A brief update was given on the exchanges between the Standing Together for Nutrition (STfN) consortium and the SMS by Lawrence Haddad. It was concluded that there is limited capacity within STfN to engage with SUN Countries in 2021 but conversations will continue to explore how they can support the SUN Movement member countries. It was suggested that the SUN Ops Group explore ways that other academic groups, including e.g. the Exemplars for Global Health and the Society for Implementation Science for Nutrition can be better connected to the SUN Movement.

The chair thanked all participants and closed the meeting.