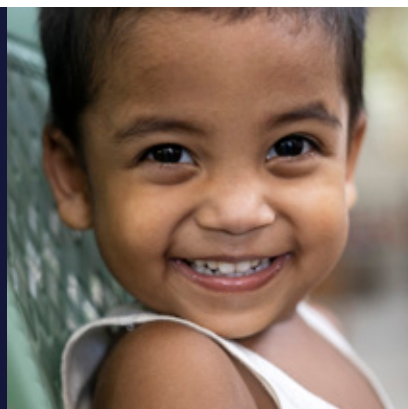


Facilitating a Joint Annual Assessment stakeholder meeting

GUIDANCE FOR COUNTRIES



Scaling Up
NUTRITION

ENGAGE • INSPIRE • INVEST



The SUN Movement Joint Annual Assessment (JAA) consists of two closely related components: the JAA consultation meeting and the JAA meeting report.

This guidance is intended to support actors to optimise the consultation meeting, so that primary objectives are achieved, and stakeholder expectations are met, to the extent possible. Approaches are recommended that can be used to enable inclusive and open discussion, as well as to facilitate completion of the JAA report (see separate guidance).

This guidance recognises the differences that exist among country in terms of

- **what the ‘multi-stakeholder platform’ is, how it is structured, who are the members, what it is called and how it assembles.**
- **how the meeting is organised and managed.**

1. JAA PURPOSE

- enable a participatory and transparent review of country advancement in accelerating progress on national nutrition targets, informed by the country’s most recently available monitoring information.
- document progress that has been achieved collectively over the past year.
- celebrate success, providing an opportunity for SUN (in-country) networks to discuss progress, successes and areas for increasing collaboration.
- jointly identify continuing or new bottlenecks impacting on progress.
- share information with the SUN Movement Global Support System (GSS) on capacity gaps anticipated in addressing the bottlenecks.
- provide the basis for the development of a country compact with the SUN Movement GSS in relation to technical support.
- share experiences and lessons within the country and with the broader SUN Movement.
- serve as a communication tool within the SUN GSS, providing up-to-date information in relation to the Strategic Objectives of the SUN Movement and contributing to learning.



The JAA will also

- enable countries to use the process to build trust and strengthen accountability.
- provide countries with opportunities to contribute to the overall development of the SUN Movement.
- contribute to the overall SUN MEAL (Monitoring, Evaluation, Accountability and Learning) system.¹



2. MEETING OBJECTIVES AND EXPECTED OUTCOME

Key objectives

- Agree on how well the country is progressing towards its nutrition goals and what can be done collectively to accelerate the pace. **Are we on track?** (This could be done by looking at Demographic and Health Surveys/national nutrition survey data, if recent surveys are available; by examining coverage and roll-out of programmes, using stakeholder data; and by assessing whether nutrition activity has been scaled up over the course of the year – what has changed/advanced as compared to last year?)



¹ See: <https://scalingupnutrition.org/progress-impact/monitoring-evaluation-accountability-and-learning-meal/>

- Discuss and reach consensus on bottlenecks and formulation of approaches to address bottlenecks during the year ahead. **What needs to be done to accelerate progress?**

In addition, the meeting provides an opportunity to

- enable nutrition stakeholders to meet and to have challenging discussions in a safe and respectful environment.
- foster new partnerships and strengthen existing partnerships.
- share knowledge and learn from one another.
- showcase success stories.
- advocate and bring issues of concern to the attention of high-level government.
- reaffirm the value of SUN partnerships, strong collaboration, and coordination within the group of stakeholders.
- highlight progress and issues of concern to the general public.
- publicly recognise stakeholders who have made an exceptional contribution over the past year.
- network.



3. PLANNING AND ORGANISING THE JAA CONSULTATION/MEETING

An appointed group will be responsible for planning and managing the meeting. For optimal impact this will include:

- Identifying the chair and organising committee. In most cases this will involve many of the active participants in country nutrition coordination. Including members from each active SUN network can help facilitate participation as well as preparation within and among networks.
- Setting a date and informing all participants at least 3-4 weeks in advance.
- Delegating responsibilities for various elements of the meeting, including managing the agenda, taking minutes and organising follow-up on individual technical presentations, as well as financing and budget management, logistics and administration.
- The meeting is more likely to be successful if all stakeholders have an opportunity to share their ideas on the agenda before the organising committee finalises it.²



The following stakeholders should be represented:

- all critical sectors, aiming for balanced representation of health, food, education, gender, water and sanitation, social protection, etc.
- all active SUN networks in the country (government, civil society, donors, UN, private sector, academia).
- stakeholders with specific expertise on gender and equity.
- subnational governance/coordination bodies.
- specific marginalised groups, considering ethnicity, livelihood groups or geographical areas.
- individuals or groups representative of academia, and people living with disabilities, even if not organised as a network.

² The meeting is more likely to be rich and productive if participants prepare in advance to provide inputs and share relevant information during the meeting. Therefore, in addition to the agenda and meeting invitation, it is often useful to remind stakeholders to consider the joint questions prior to the meeting and to consult with any stakeholder organisations they may be representing so that they are well prepared to contribute.

In addition,

- organisers should aim for gender balance among meeting participants.
- if the agenda will include group work, ensure there are sufficient numbers of delegates from the various networks for all networks to be represented in group discussions.
- special guests should be identified strategically, in relation to advocacy objectives (see below).

Stages of the meeting/structuring the agenda**Principles**

- Aim to develop a strong meeting agenda and SMART action points for follow-up.
- Refer to the JAA report structure to further guide the agenda and use the meeting to complete the report requirements.
- Aim to share highlights and critical advocacy messages during opening and closing.

**Main elements of the meeting**

1. Review progress using available data.
2. All stakeholders reaffirm their commitment to align with country priorities and describe their contribution to last year's priorities.
3. Identify continuing bottlenecks to scaling-up nutrition in country and agree on priorities for next year, aiming to address the bottlenecks.
4. Define capacity gaps and technical support needs.
5. Throughout the meeting, capture valuable lessons learned.

4. JAA MEETING FACILITATION

Strong facilitation skills are critical to ensure a positive, safe and productive environment for open and free discussion, as well as to ensure discussion leads to conclusions with clear action points/outcomes. This is a critical component, if not the central component, of strengthening accountability. In most cases, the SUN Focal Point/Country Coordinator will provide overall leadership and may chair the meeting, but the involvement of a skilled facilitator will certainly add value.

**A strong facilitator will:**

- ensure multiple opportunities for exchange of knowledge, learning and nurturing of innovative thinking.
- manage difficult and challenging discussions when these are appropriate and constructive.
- understand group and power dynamics to ensure that all stakeholders are encouraged to participate.
- facilitate the generation of innovative and new ideas including new partnerships, new approaches and new ways of working together.
- ensure that the available time is used well to achieve the meeting's objectives.

It is recommended that an experienced, respected and, if possible, independent facilitator is identified. This facilitator will ensure strong and equitable participation, optimise opportunities for respectful debate and allow for uncomfortable issues to be raised where appropriate.

5. USING THE MSP MEETING EVENT AS AN ADVOCACY OPPORTUNITY



- Identify the guest/s and the specific message/approach. Guests might include senior government officials, political leaders or other influencers who are positioned to make decisions, influence policy or commit to addressing bottlenecks.
- Prepare well in advance with a clear strategy – what specifically is the group hoping to achieve through the presence of this person?
- Depending on the guest, develop a message (the ‘ask’) with a specific purpose.
- Prepare communication in a language or format that can be easily understood by someone less familiar with the subject. Use graphics where possible. Provide an information package with a summary of critical information and the specific request being made.
- Aim to trigger an action within the control of the guest.
- If press/media are present, aim to have the guest make a supportive statement, expression of interest or commitment.
- Prepare related press statements to amplify the points made and generate additional press coverage, if possible,



OTHER RESOURCES

The Partnership Brokers Association, Brokering Better Partnerships.

Available at: <https://partnershipbrokers.org/w/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/Brokering-Better-Partnerships-Handbook.pdf>

The Partnership Brokers Association is the international professional body for those managing and developing collaboration processes. One of its primary aims is to “challenge and change poor partnering practices so that multi-stakeholder collaboration can become truly transformational”.

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F.Gordijn, N.Eernstman, J.Helder, H.Brouwer (2018), Reflection Methods. *Tools to make learning more meaningful*. Practical Guide for Trainers and Facilitators.

Available at: <http://www.mspguide.org/tool/reflection>

Scaling Up Nutrition Movement, Joint Annual Assessment Reports from previous years.

Available at: <https://scalingupnutrition.org/progress-impact/monitoring-evaluation-accountability-and-learning-meal/joint-assessment-exercise/>

Scaling up Nutrition Movement, Toolkit on the design of multi-stakeholder platforms (MSPs) for nutrition.

Available at: <https://msptoolkit.scalingupnutrition.org>

ANNEX

Accountability can be strengthened through the use of simple planning tools.

SMART commitments and action points

	<i>Specific</i>	<i>Measurable</i>	<i>Attainable</i>	<i>Relevant</i>	<i>Timebound</i>
Commitment or action point					

Action-oriented minutes

<i>Agenda item</i>	<i>Purpose</i>	<i>Format</i>	<i>Conclusions & decisions</i>	<i>Action point</i>	<i>Responsible</i>	<i>Timeline</i>
Some examples are provided below:						
Review country progress	Share information and achieve common understanding	Presentation and short feedback				
Review of progress on last year's priorities	Recognise and document progress as well as challenges	Summative presentations, e.g. by sector or by network				
Defining constraints and bottlenecks	Agree on critical bottlenecks and the means to address them	Small group discussions followed by feedback in plenary				
Define priorities to address constraints	Document plans and commitments for priority actions to address bottlenecks	Plenary discussion; presentation; voting				