

A photograph of a woman in a purple shirt and blue headscarf breastfeeding a baby in a light blue shirt. They are sitting in a market stall with a green wall. In the foreground, there are large piles of fresh produce, including green papayas and leafy greens. Other people are visible in the background, including a man in a white shirt and another woman in a white shirt. A sign with 'Gadafi.com' is visible on the green wall.

# A TOOLKIT ON MULTISECTORAL PLANNING FOR NUTRITION

## Introduction

## Foreword

The third phase of the Scaling Up Nutrition (SUN) Movement (2021-2025) and Nutrition for Growth (N4G) Summit in 2021 provides a renewed focus on global nutrition. There are other opportunities this year as well to promote our agenda, such as the Food Systems Summit, the G7 and G20 Meetings and the 26<sup>th</sup> United Nations Climate Change Conference of the Parties (COP 26). Within the global effort to improve nutrition for all, governments' ownership and leadership in adopting national multisectoral nutrition plans and strategies are critical. Planning, financing and scaling up nutrition interventions are today—more than ever—essential to strengthen health systems, food systems and protect hard-won gains in the fight against all forms of malnutrition.

Since the inception of the SUN Movement in 2010, the process of planning and implementing effective interventions through a multisectoral approach has been a priority. One of the key successes of SUN countries has been bringing together different stakeholders around common actions through the multi-stakeholder platform, which can include sectoral representatives from various ministries, representatives of civil society, donors and United Nations agencies, businesses, and the research community. Over the years, multi-stakeholder platforms have contributed to the scale up nutrition-specific and nutrition-sensitive interventions by making a coordinated effort to carry out the multisectoral planning process.

*Building on many successful and inspiring examples from SUN countries, this toolkit helps provide guidance and associated resources to all stakeholders involved in the process of multisectoral nutrition planning. The tools and resources stem from established literature as well as those developed or adapted by Maximising the Quality of Scaling Up Nutrition Plus (MQSUN+) throughout their technical assistance provision during Phase 2.0 of the SUN Movement (2016-2020). Best practice and lessons learned include recommendations for policymakers and all SUN stakeholders on how to successfully prioritise, plan and make evidence-based decisions to fight all forms of malnutrition.*

At the time this publication is released, countries must drive results in the fight against malnutrition during one of the most challenging times in recorded history. The national and international policy responses to contain the COVID-19 pandemic in many countries have limited accessibility and affordability of safe and nutritious foods and disrupted essential health service provisions. In this environment, SUN countries' capacity to develop and implement national multisectoral nutrition plans in a cost-effective way will be vital.

Throughout SUN 3.0 (2021-2025), we will continue to encourage and support a country-led approach that strengthens stakeholders' alignment around government priorities and efforts in this area. I am convinced that this publication will contribute to the understanding of the importance and opportunities for countries to build on our strengths and weaknesses and ensure nutrition is scaled up both at the global and country levels—making the case for why multisectoral nutrition planning is essential for overall health and development.



Gerda Verburg

SUN Movement Coordinator and UN Assistant Secretary-General

# Acknowledgements

This toolkit on *Multisectoral Planning for Nutrition*, including the guidance modules and supplementary tools and resources, was a two-year effort by the MQSUN+ project to capture the learnings of over seven years of providing technical assistance to SUN Movement countries. The toolkit guidance modules were produced by the MQSUN+ project, included Amanda Coile, Sandrine Fimbi, Carrie Hemminger, Silvia Kaufmann, Barb Koloshuk, Monica Kothari and Michelle Martinez, from PATH and Tamsin Walters from NutritionWorks. Special acknowledgements also to Rebecca Brown from NutritionWorks and Chris Coffey, Carrie Hubbell Melgarejo, Diplav Sapkota and Benedicte Walter from PATH as well as our other MQSUN+ consultants who have supported the development of the tools that accompany the guidance modules.

We want to thank our MQSUN+ core team and consultant teams, our consortium partners (NutritionWorks, Development Initiatives, DAI Global Health and Aga Khan University), the SUN countries we have partnered with and the SUN Movement Secretariat—all who have contributed to these key learnings and the successful technical assistance we have provided to scaling up nutrition efforts. We especially want to acknowledge Deborah Di Dio, William Knechtel, Jean Sebastien Kouassi, Philip Dive and the Country Liaison Team—and previously Patrizia Fracassi—at the SUN Movement Secretariat for their years of collaboration and support. We would not have been successful at the national level without the positive relationships with our country partners, including in Afghanistan (Dr Said Shamsul Islam Shams and team), Burundi, Gabon (Dr Hugues and team), Guinea (Dr Malado Kaba, Dr Mamady Daffe and team), Kyrgyz Republic (Sherzod Dadazhanov and team), Madagascar, Pakistan, Somalia (Dr Mohamed Abdi Farah and team), Sudan (Dr Alam Khattak and team), Tajikistan (Malohat Shabanova and team), Togo (Dr Mouaiyatou Bouraima and team) and Yemen (Karima Al-Hada'a and team). We also want to acknowledge the other SUN countries that are highlighted in the toolkit, including Burkina Faso, Chad, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Guatemala, Indonesia, Kenya, Malawi, Nepal, Nigeria, Peru, Tanzania and Uganda.

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*A special thanks to Monica Kothari, Deputy Director, MQSUN+, who initiated and grew the work we did with the SUN countries. It was her vision to develop the toolkit as a succinct way to capture the experience and tools developed by MQSUN(+) over the last 7 years.*

Denise Lionetti  
Project Director, MQSUN+



## Acronyms

ACF	Action Contre la Faim [Action Against Hunger]
AFSeN(-A)	Afghanistan Food Security and Nutrition (Agenda)
CMAM	community-based management of acute malnutrition
CRF	common results framework
CSN	Civil Society Network
CSO	civil society organisation
DFID	UK Department for International Development
DHS	Demographic and Health Surveys
FANTA	Food and Nutrition Technical Assistance
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization
FBO	faith-based organisation
FCDO	Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office
FNSP	Food Security and Nutrition Programme
GOY	Government of Yemen
IDP	internally displaced person
LiST	Lives Saved Tool
M&E	monitoring and evaluation
MEAL	Monitoring, Evaluation, Accountability and Learning
MEL	monitoring, evaluation and learning
MICS	Multiple Indicator Cluster Surveys
MOAFC	Ministry of Agriculture, Food Security and Co-operatives [Tanzania]
MOAI	Ministry of Agriculture and Irrigation [Yemen]
MOE	Ministry of Education
MOF	Ministry of Finance
MOFW	Ministry of Fish Wealth [Yemen]
MOPHP	Ministry of Public Health and Population [Yemen]
MOPIC	Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation [Yemen]
MOSAL	Ministry of Social Affairs and Labour [Yemen]
MOTI	Ministry of Trade and Industry [Yemen]
MOWE	Ministry of Water and Environment [Yemen]
MQSUN+	Maximising the Quality of Scaling Up Nutrition Plus
MSNAP	Multisectoral Nutrition Action Plan [Yemen]
MSNP	multisectoral nutrition plan
MSP	multi-stakeholder platform
NACS	nutrition assessment, counselling and support

NCD	noncommunicable disease
NGO	nongovernmental organisation
NMNAP	National Multisectoral Nutrition Action Plan [Tanzania]
PEA	political economy analysis
PER	Public Expenditure Review
PET	Public Expenditure Tracking Survey
PMO	Prime Minister's Office
PNSAN	National Food and Nutritional Security Policy [Gabon]
PO-RALG	President's Office, Regional Administrative and Local Government
PSNMN	Plan Stratégique National Multisectoriel de Nutrition [Guinea and Togo]
RM	resource mobilisation
SBN	SUN Business Network
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
SDN	SUN Donor Network
SMART	specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and time-bound
SMS	SUN Movement Secretariat
SPRING	Strengthening Partnerships, Results, and Innovations in Nutrition Globally
SUN	Scaling Up Nutrition
SWF	Social Welfare Fund
TA	technical assistance
TFNC	Tanzania Food and Nutrition Centre
TOC	theory of change
TOR	terms of reference
UN	United Nations
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
USAID	US Agency for International Development
WASH	water, sanitation and hygiene
WHA	World Health Assembly
WHO	World Health Organization

## Background

The [Scaling Up Nutrition \(SUN\) Movement](#) is a global movement established in 2010 to end malnutrition in all its forms. The four strategic objectives identified in the [SUN Movement Strategy and Roadmap \(2016-2020\)](#) relevant to the national processes aiming to scale up effective interventions through a multisectoral approach to end malnutrition and attain the global nutrition targets and development goals are as follows:

1	Expand and sustain an enabling political environment.
2	Prioritise and institutionalise effective actions that contribute to good nutrition.
3	Implement effective actions aligned with common results.
4	Effectively use, and significantly increase, financial resources for nutrition.

The SUN Movement works towards the six global nutrition targets established by the [World Health Assembly in 2012](#) for achievement by 2025 (now updated to 2030<sup>1</sup>) and supports the [Sustainable Development Goals \(SDGs\) of the United Nations \(UN\)](#). The aim of ‘Zero Hunger’ is captured in SDG 2; however, at least 12 of the 17 SDGs contain indicators that are highly relevant to nutrition.<sup>2</sup>

By 2020, 62 countries and 4 Indian states have joined the SUN Movement. The Movement in-country is led by the government. Commonly, countries establish a governance structure—coordinated by a steering committee—which includes representatives from each sector and is chaired by a SUN coordinator or Focal Point who acts as a key driving force for the national movement. The SUN Movement is supported at the national level by a **multi-stakeholder platform (MSP)**, which can include sectoral representatives from various ministries, representatives of civil society, donor and UN agencies, businesses and the research community (see Box on page 0-11). The MSP works across sectors to embrace **nutrition-sensitive approaches** to tackle the underlying causes of malnutrition as well as **nutrition-specific interventions** to tackle its direct manifestations—with the awareness that malnutrition results not just from a lack of sufficient and adequately nutritious and safe food but is influenced by a host of intertwined factors linking health, care, education, water, sanitation and hygiene, access to food and resources, women’s empowerment and more. Scaling up these nutrition actions takes a coordinated effort by stakeholders to carry out the multisectoral planning process.



### SUN’s Vision

**By 2030, a world free from malnutrition in all its forms.** Led by governments and supported by organisations and individuals, collective action ensures every child, adolescent mother and family can realise their right to food and nutrition, reach their full potential and shape sustainable and prosperous societies.

<sup>1</sup> WHO, UNICEF. *The Extension of the 2025 Maternal, Infant and Young Child Nutrition Targets to 2030: Discussion Paper*. Geneva, New York: WHO, UNICEF; n.d.: 12. Available at <https://www.who.int/nutrition/global-target-2025/discussion-paper-extension-targets-2030.pdf?ua=1>.

<sup>2</sup> SUN website. Nutrition and the Sustainable Development Goals page. Available at <https://scalingupnutrition.org/nutrition/nutrition-and-the-sustainable-development-goals/>. Accessed 07 October 2020.

# Introduction to the Toolkit

In 2012, the UK Department for International Development (now the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office, or FCDO) initiated a new programme approach to provide flexible technical assistance (TA) for nutrition policy and programming through the Maximising the Quality of Scaling Up Nutrition (MQSUN) project. Through this mechanism, for the first time SUN countries were able to request TA if they did not have the country capacity, technical expertise or existing internal TA mechanism to support their nutrition planning efforts. Since 2012, MQSUN, and now Maximising the Quality of Scaling Up Nutrition Plus (MQSUN+), have provided demand-driven TA to more than 50 SUN countries, as well as broader global support. This ranged from conducting nutrition policy framework reviews and stakeholder analysis through to supporting SUN Focal Points to engage with stakeholders to develop multisectoral nutrition plans (MSNPs) and common results frameworks (CRFs), cost their plans and then start up and roll out activities, as well as engaging in advocacy and establishing monitoring, evaluation and learning (MEL) systems to assess progress.

**The aim of this toolkit is to leverage MQSUN(+)'s experience supporting SUN countries to document and share its approach, key learnings and positive practices for multisectoral nutrition planning—in hopes that it will be informative to and build on [the next phase of the SUN Movement](#).**

## Maximising the Quality of Scaling Up Nutrition Plus

Following on the success of MQSUN (2012-2016), the UK FCDO-funded [MQSUN+](#) (2016-2020) provides [technical assistance](#) to FCDO, SUN countries and the SUN Movement Secretariat (SMS) to catalyse multisectoral [country efforts](#) to scale up nutrition impact, maximise the quality and effectiveness of nutrition-related programmes, increase innovation in nutrition, support evidence generation and knowledge uptake and develop technical capacity. MQSUN+ is a consortium of five expert organisations: PATH (lead), Aga Khan University, DAI Global Health, Development Initiatives and NutritionWorks.

## Purpose of the toolkit

The **purpose of the toolkit** is to provide guidance and associated resources for countries to carry out the process of multisectoral nutrition planning, based on MQSUN(+)'s experience. The process described herein primarily draws from MQSUN+ experience in supporting multisectoral nutrition planning at the **national level**, but many of these steps can be adapted to the subnational level based on the country context. The tools and resources stem from established literature, as well as ones developed or adapted by MQSUN(+) over the course of its TA provision. This toolkit can be used to gain an overview of relevant steps within the country-led process, to find guidance on approaches and/or to identify appropriate and useful resources to support the country-led process. The toolkit aims to provide guidance for each step in the process and highlight respective reference documents, country examples and a package of resources for those involved.

## Audience for the toolkit

The **primary audiences** for this toolkit are:

- > Policy decision makers and programme designers at the country level, government representatives of planning or sectoral institutions and stakeholders engaging in or seeking to lead a process of multisectoral planning and implementation for nutrition.
- > The SMS and SUN networks for providing a resource to better understand or advise on the processes herein.
- > TA providers who may support government processes for scaling up nutrition.



All these actors are vital stakeholders in ensuring nutrition is scaled up both at the global and country levels—making the case for why multisectoral nutrition planning is important for overall health and development.

## Why Multisectoral Planning for Nutrition is Important

The [determinants of nutritional status are multifaceted and multidimensional](#), and as such, addressing malnutrition requires an appropriate well-coordinated, multisectoral response. MSNPs and policies are key to ensuring that various sectors and actors know what actions are expected of them to help achieve their country's nutrition objectives.



PATH/Bui Ngoc Thanh

Multisectoral nutrition planning enables donors, countries and implementers to address the multifactorial causes of national nutrition challenges by linking and integrating programme design, delivery and evaluation across disciplines and sectors.<sup>3</sup> Well-facilitated, high-level multisectoral and multi-stakeholder steering committees can serve as forums for strengthening national collaboration and coordination on multisectoral nutrition programming. In addition to the participation of multisectoral government stakeholders and ministries, it is essential to engage with UN agencies, donors, civil society, academia and private sector partners to strengthen the outcomes, commitment and future implementation and monitoring of an MSNP.

Endorsed at the highest level, an MSNP—sometimes accompanied by a CRF—guides collective implementation and resource allocation and describes how multiple sectors will work together. How this is documented is unique to each country, and many include national targets and actions which have been costed.

However, the process of MSNP/CRF development is just as important as the final document—as this brings each sector to the

table in collaboration to determine priorities and approaches. This process tends to increase commitment and understanding across sectors of the importance of nutrition for reaching national development goals. The planning process also serves to forge links and strengthen bonds amongst sectors within a country. Developing an MSNP/CRF is an important tool for maintaining

<sup>3</sup> Lartey A. Maternal and child nutrition in sub-Saharan Africa: challenges and interventions. *The Proceedings of the Nutrition Society*. 2008;67(1):105–108. <https://doi.org/10.1017/s0029665108006083>.

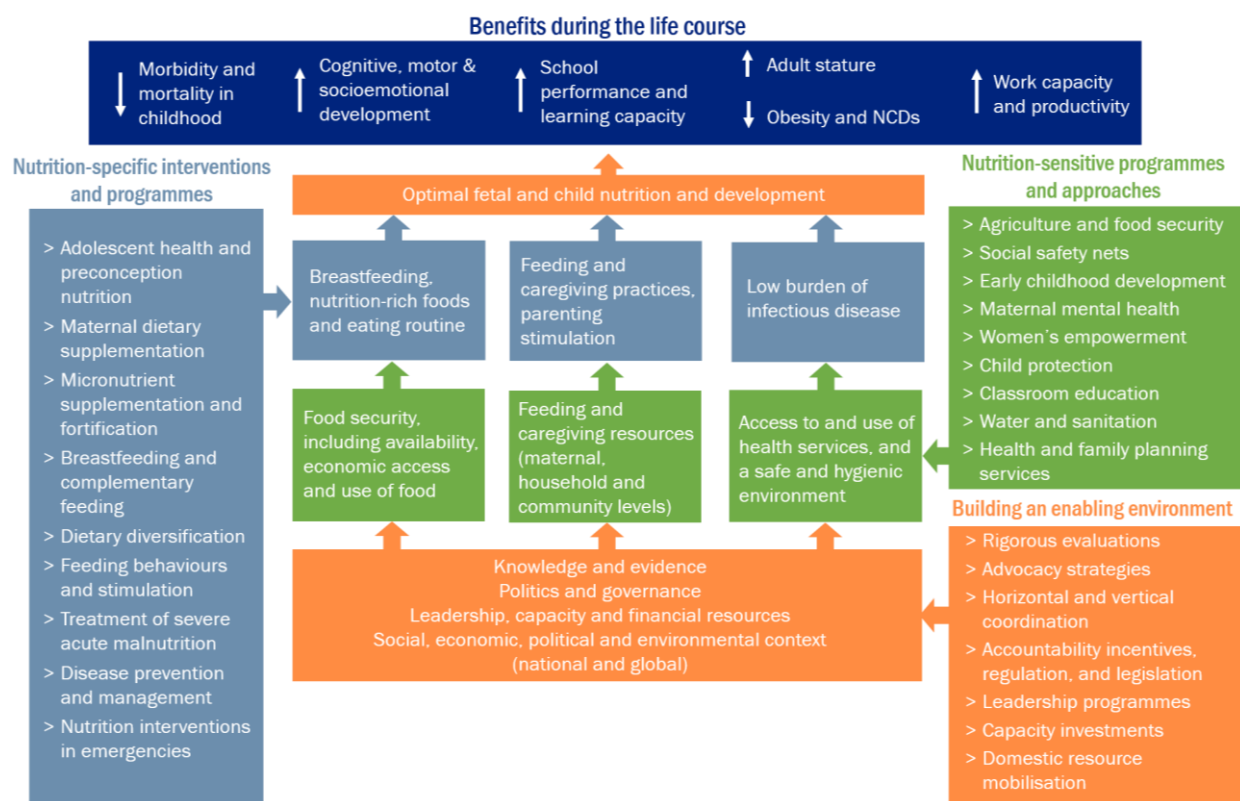


accountability and holding institutions responsible for their commitments. An MSNP/CRF also enables periodic monitoring and evaluation (M&E) of the plan implementation process, facilitating learning and adjustment of plans as necessary to reach agreed targets, and a well-developed plan can be a powerful vehicle for national stakeholders to translate policy into action and results. This toolkit is aimed at supporting this process for developing and launching a strong planning document for multisectoral nutrition.

## Making the case for investment in nutrition

Poor nutrition perpetuates the cycle of poverty and malnutrition through three main routes: direct losses in productivity from poor physical status and losses caused by disease linked with malnutrition; indirect losses from poor cognitive development and losses in schooling; and losses caused by increased healthcare costs. Improving nutrition contributes to productivity, economic development and poverty reduction by improving physical work capacity, cognitive development, school performance and health by reducing disease and mortality. [The economic returns to investing in such programmes are very high](#)—every dollar invested in key nutrition interventions would yield between US\$4 and US\$35 in economic returns.<sup>4</sup> This is further illustrated in the 2013 *Lancet* framework for actions to achieve optimum foetal and child nutrition and development (Figure 1).

Figure 1. Framework for actions to achieve optimum foetal and child nutrition and development.



Source: Black RE, Victora CG, Walker SP, et al. Maternal and child undernutrition and overweight in low-income and middle-income countries. *Lancet*. 2013;382(9890):427–451. [https://doi.org/10.1016/s0140-6736\(13\)60937-x](https://doi.org/10.1016/s0140-6736(13)60937-x).  
Abbreviations: NCD, noncommunicable disease.

<sup>4</sup> Shekar M, Kakietek J, Dayton Eberwein J; Walters D. An Investment Framework for Nutrition: Reaching the Global Targets for Stunting, Anemia, Breastfeeding, and Wasting. Directions in Development—Human Development; Washington, DC: World Bank; 2017. <https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/handle/10986/26069>

Concerted actions addressing *direct causes of malnutrition through a set of nutrition-specific interventions* and underlying causes through *nutrition-sensitive interventions* are necessary to eliminate maternal and child malnutrition. A high-level, strong commitment is essential to provide a political and institutional environment to ensure that resources and capacities are in place to enable actors to provide effective services for nutrition.<sup>5</sup>

### Critical actions for addressing malnutrition

**Nutrition-specific interventions:** These interventions address the immediate causes of undernutrition, including dietary intake and health status. These are primarily focused on women and children but also include supplementation of various nutrients (e.g. iron, folic acid, vitamin A, iodine) to prevent nutrient deficiencies in populations or initiatives to address behaviours—for example, infant feeding practices, including breastfeeding and complementary feeding. Management of acute malnutrition is also a nutrition-specific intervention.

**Nutrition-sensitive interventions:** These address the underlying and systemic drivers of undernutrition by engaging a wide range of sectors (e.g. agriculture, public health, social protection, education, water and sanitation) in action to improve nutrition. These include actions to diversify food production or strengthen people’s livelihoods; systems to increase availability and access to foods to support adequate consumption and meet nutrient requirements; and actions to improve sanitation and hygienic environments. Nutrition-sensitive interventions are most effective in support of improving nutrition when targeted to vulnerable populations (e.g. food- and nutrition-insecure populations), highest risk groups (e.g. women, adolescent girls and children) and their households. For any nutrition-sensitive intervention, in order to achieve and measure impact, it is important to embed nutritional objectives and indicators into the programme framework.

**Enabling environment and governance:** Experience shows that getting higher priority for nutrition or other cross-sectoral objectives requires both high-level political support and partnerships that build buy-in by the sectors concerned; the need for ‘ownership’ applies to ministries as well as to governments as a whole. Capacity development for nutrition across sectors is also important, alongside increasing ‘policy coherence’ through government-wide attention to unintended negative consequences on nutrition of policies in other sectors.

Source: SUN. Scaling Up Nutrition: A Framework for Action. Geneva: SUN Movement Secretariat; 2011. Available at [https://scalingupnutrition.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/05/SUN\\_Framework.pdf](https://scalingupnutrition.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/05/SUN_Framework.pdf).

Given the importance of malnutrition to overall development goals and the multisectoral nature of nutrition, it is pivotal for countries to give sufficient attention and direction to actions that will address malnutrition. This is why it is especially key to incorporate multisectoral planning for nutrition to ensure these actions are appropriately contextualised, planned and designed through stakeholder engagement and to include the appropriate financing, M&E and operational aspects. MQSUN+’s toolkit on multisectoral planning for nutrition provides a framework for taking part in this process.

<sup>5</sup> Ruel MT, Alderman H, Maternal and Child Nutrition Study Group. Nutrition-sensitive interventions and programmes: how can they help to accelerate progress in improving maternal and child nutrition? *Lancet*. 2013;382(9891):536–551. [https://doi.org/10.1016/s0140-6736\(13\)60843-0](https://doi.org/10.1016/s0140-6736(13)60843-0).

## Leveraging SUN Networks and a Multi-stakeholder Platform

Once a country joins the SUN Movement, it gains access to resources, guidance and global platforms for strengthening the enabling environment for nutrition. The composition of the [SUN support structure](#) recognises the multifaceted challenge that is inherent in illuminating the importance of nutrition as a universal agenda. This requires partnerships, which are newly characterised by five SUN networks, in collaboration with the SMS.<sup>1</sup> Their primary objective is to mobilise and align efforts globally and regionally to scale up efforts in-country.

- > The [Civil Society Network](#) encourages the formation of civil society alliances and represents over 3,000 organisations locally, nationally and internationally, spanning multiple sectors and backgrounds.
- > The [SUN Business Network](#) is the only dedicated global platform for business and nutrition that engages and supports business to act, invest and innovate in responsible and sustainable actions and operations to improve nutrition. The group provides a neutral platform to broker partnerships/collaborations between business and all actors on nutrition at the national, regional and global levels.
- > The [SUN Donor Network](#) provides a space where donors at global and country levels can work together and in collaboration with other SUN Movement stakeholders to promote high-level political commitment for nutrition, evidence-based policies and actions, more and better financing, aligned implementation, monitoring of progress and impact and the sharing of lessons learnt.
- > The [UN Network for SUN](#) elevates the nutrition dialogue through its senior leadership and helps to leverage the collective strengths of UN agencies to foster innovations, find efficiencies and enhance complementarity across agencies and with government and SUN networks.
- > The [Academia Network](#) is a new initiative being launched in some SUN countries that aims to elevate the role of academia in driving the evidence base, strengthen national research capacity, prioritise implementation science and research based on needs identified by SUN countries and leverage their voices to advocate for and position nutrition.

In this context, MSPs can be understood as semi-structured processes that allow actors from different economic sectors and government departments to come together for working around a shared set of concerns. It is advantageous to have an MSP established when conducting any of the activities in the multisectoral nutrition planning process.



**SUN's Multi-stakeholder Platform Toolkit** is focused on the design of successful multisectoral and multi-stakeholder platforms. It includes some information and tools which may complement and supplement the information highlighted in different pieces of this toolkit guidance document.

<sup>1</sup>SUN. Scaling Up Nutrition Movement Strategy: SUN 3.0 2021-2025. Geneva; SUN Movement Secretariat; 2020. [https://scalingupnutrition.org/sun-content/uploads/2020/07/SUN\\_Strategy3\\_draft\\_MAIN\\_DOCUMENT\\_ENG.pdf](https://scalingupnutrition.org/sun-content/uploads/2020/07/SUN_Strategy3_draft_MAIN_DOCUMENT_ENG.pdf)



## How to Use the Toolkit

Recognising that all countries have different structures, contexts, capacities and priorities and are at various stages in terms of engaging with multiple actors for a multisectoral approach in scaling up nutrition, this toolkit provides basic information on the various steps in the process of multisectoral planning from which countries can adapt to their own unique circumstances. Planning stages may be different in various countries—for example, some countries first draft a CRF and then a detailed MSNP, while others may do the reverse. The modules in this toolkit are laid out according to MQSUN(+)'s experience, but country approaches may not follow this same process. The tools and resources highlighted in this toolkit are meant to be adapted for various country contexts and can be used at various stages in the planning and implementation process.



The modules in this toolkit are accompanied by a glossary of key terms ([Annex 1](#)) and three country case studies ([Annex 2](#))—in Afghanistan, Guinea and Yemen—to exemplify the multisectoral planning process in a broader context.

## Types of materials in the toolkit

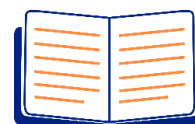
Each module presents an overview of the specific step that it refers to within the multisectoral nutrition planning and implementation process. Within the modules, there are references to various tools and resources that can be used or adapted by countries. These are broken down into three different material types.



**Featured tools** highlight templates, guidance and other key resources that are helpful to the multisectoral planning process—many developed from MQSUN+'s experience.



**Country examples** feature case studies on how different SUN countries have carried out specific activities or provide samples of their multisectoral planning process.



**Additional resources** provide informative publications, reports and other documents for stakeholders who may be unfamiliar with some aspects of multisectoral planning.

Overall, this package of materials provides the reader with clear background, guidance and direction for carrying out the key steps highlighted within these toolkit modules.

## Cross-cutting considerations for multisectoral nutrition planning

This toolkit identifies four cross-cutting considerations that need to be taken into account at each stage of the process and within each module.

### HUMANITARIAN RESPONSE

Although different countries may be more or less affected by emergencies and humanitarian crises, the changing climate and political and economic volatility in the world suggest that all countries should be alert to potentially rapidly changing circumstances and destabilisation of carefully laid plans. Therefore, it is important that risks, resilience measures and contingency plans form an integral part of multisectoral nutrition planning and are considered—even if with a relatively light touch for more stable, less disaster-prone countries—at each step of the process. Considering at each stage of multisectoral planning the overlap between a country's humanitarian response and its development interventions will ensure that the needs and approaches for addressing both short- and long-term malnutrition will be addressed as a country scales up its nutrition-focused actions.



#### MQSUN+'s Linking Humanitarian and Development Actions brief

highlights key actions that can be taken at the country level to bridge the humanitarian-development nexus during multisectoral nutrition planning, primarily when assessing the country context and engaging stakeholders, when developing an MSNP and when operationalising an MSNP.

### ADVOCACY

Nutrition advocacy is a planned, deliberate, systematic and coordinated process, so stakeholders can speak in one harmonised voice to:

- > Ignite social change for movement towards greater political and social commitment to improve the nutrition situation.
- > Promote accountability for nutrition and strengthen nutrition governance.
- > Define and shape specific country contexts.
- > Support a country at any stage of commitment.<sup>i</sup>

Advocacy efforts that aim to increase multisectoral attention to nutrition are often more effective when they identify benefits for non-nutrition sectors rather than just try to persuade other sectors to adopt nutrition goals.<sup>ii</sup> For instance, nutrition advocacy is more likely to obtain the commitment of ministries of finance, labour, education, agriculture, and social services when it also presents gains related to health, human capital, economic productivity, and education. Advocacy is essential during each stage of planning to ensure that all key stakeholders are at the table, that nutrition is pushed high up the national development agenda and that financial commitment and operationalisation of plans follow their development.

<sup>i</sup> Sethuraman K, Kovach T, Oot L, Sommerfelt AE, Ross J. *Manual for Country-Level Nutrition Advocacy Using PROFILES and Nutrition Costing*. Washington, DC: FHI 360/Food and Nutrition Technical Assistance III Project (FANTA); 2018. [https://www.fantaproject.org/sites/default/files/resources/Nutrition-Advocacy-PROFILES-Manual-Apr2018\\_0.pdf](https://www.fantaproject.org/sites/default/files/resources/Nutrition-Advocacy-PROFILES-Manual-Apr2018_0.pdf).

<sup>ii</sup> FANTA. *Multisectoral Nutrition Programming: FANTA Achievements and Lessons Learned*. Washington, DC: FANTA III Project; 2017. <https://www.fantaproject.org/sites/default/files/resources/FANTA-MultiSectoral-Nutrition-Aug2017.pdf>.

## GENDER

Gender inequality is both a cause and effect of malnutrition, hunger and poverty. As many of the determinants of good nutrition are strongly affected by the roles of men women, girls and boys in society, gender is an integral part of any nutrition planning and merits consideration at each step. A strong situational analysis that unpacks the gender inequities that contribute to poor nutrition is a first essential step in planning. Once these are identified, addressing the drivers and impact of gender-based discrimination and promoting diversity inclusion, gender equality and women's and girls' empowerment are essential components of nutrition planning. Actions that recognise and address gender and social inequalities are effective ways of tackling malnutrition, as they also then address many of the direct and underlying causes of malnutrition. At the same time, nutrition investments provide important entry points to addressing underlying drivers of inequality: educational opportunities; household power and income distribution; sexual and reproductive health and rights; and gender-based violence and harmful practices, including child, early and forced marriage. This issue is key for SUN countries, nutrition partners and [technical assistance providers](#) to consider.



### MQSUN+'s [Gender in Multisectoral Nutrition Action Plans brief](#)

highlights the results of gender assessment conducted on MSNPs from a number of SUN countries, as well as recommendations on how to ensure gender consideration in conducting a situational analysis, planning key actions, engaging stakeholders and developing mechanisms for capacity building and M&E as part of an MSNP.

## CAPACITY BUILDING

One of the challenges to multisectoral nutrition programming is that the education and work experience of most programme designers, staff and practitioners usually revolves around a single sector, which tends to promote the continuation of traditional single-sector programmes, with nutrition action often relegated to the health sector only. Therefore, those working in various sectors are likely to require additional capacity building with regard to nutrition concepts, their sectors' relevance and contributions to improved nutrition and the role they can play, followed by the development of planning and implementation skills. [Functional skills](#) are also necessary to drive forward the multisectoral approach, including leadership, management, negotiation, coordination, planning and M&E capacities. Informed and capacitated stakeholders are a prerequisite to making robust progress at each stage of the multisectoral planning and implementation process. Looking at and strengthening capacities at different stages in the planning process will lead to a stronger and more coordinated design and implementation of nutrition action at the country level.



## Modules in the toolkit

The toolkit is organised as a set of six distinct modules, each providing an overview and signposting tools to conduct a part of the process of multisectoral nutrition planning and implementation. Though the modules complement each other, each module is independent of the others and can be picked up on its own. Alternatively, the full set can illustrate the various steps that are complementary in the process of planning and implementation. It is not intended to be used as a linear sequence of modules but rather to provide guidance on each step depending on what is needed by a country at a point in time. The modules herein are as follows:

<b>Module 1: Setting the Stage for Multisectoral Nutrition Planning</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1.1 – Assessing the Country Context               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1.1.1 – Conducting a nutrition situational analysis</li> <li>1.1.2 – Conducting a policy framework mapping and analysis</li> <li>1.1.3 – Conducting a stakeholder mapping and analysis</li> </ul> </li> <li>1.2 – Orienting Stakeholders to Multisectoral Planning for Nutrition</li> </ul>
<b>Module 2: Developing a Multisectoral Nutrition Plan</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2.1 – What is a Multisectoral Nutrition Plan?</li> <li>2.2 – Engaging Stakeholders to Decide on a Way Forward</li> <li>2.3 – Agreeing on Goals, Objectives and Key Actions of the MSNP</li> <li>2.4 – Agreeing on the Governance and Support Structure for Implementing the MSNP</li> <li>2.5 – Finalising and Facilitating Official Endorsement of the MSNP</li> </ul>
<b>Module 3: Developing a Common Results Framework</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>3.1 – What is a Common Results Framework?</li> <li>3.2 – Engaging Stakeholders to Decide on a Way Forward</li> <li>3.3 – Gathering Inputs through Stakeholder Consultations</li> <li>3.4 – Conceptualising Targets, Indicators and other Components of the CRF</li> <li>3.5 – Building Sectoral Consensus through Stakeholder Workshops</li> </ul>
<b>Module 4: Costing and Financing for Nutrition</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>4.1 – Assessing Readiness for Costing</li> <li>4.2 – Estimating Costs for Nutrition Actions</li> <li>4.3 – Conducting a Financial Gap Analysis</li> <li>4.4 – Performing a Nutrition Budget Analysis</li> <li>4.5 – Tracking Nutrition Financial Investments</li> <li>4.6 – Advocating and Communicating for the Nutrition Budget</li> </ul>
<b>Module 5: Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning for Nutrition</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>5.1 – Engaging Stakeholders to Develop an MEL Framework</li> <li>5.2 – Structuring an MEL System for Nutrition</li> <li>5.3 – Developing an Indicator Matrix for Nutrition</li> <li>5.4 – Enhancing Information Management and Structures for Nutrition               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>5.4.1 – Improving coordination and information flow</li> <li>5.4.2 – Strengthening information management</li> </ul> </li> <li>5.5 – Strengthening Learning and Accountability for Nutrition               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>5.5.1 – Using data and evidence to facilitate learning</li> <li>5.5.2 – Fostering accountability through monitoring and evaluation</li> <li>5.5.3 – Disseminating results and knowledge for nutrition</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<b>Module 6: Preparing for Inception and Implementation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>6.1 – Planning for Operationalisation               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>6.1.1 – Establishing or strengthening governance structures</li> <li>6.1.2 – Planning at the subnational level</li> </ul> </li> <li>6.2 – Creating a Capacity-Development Strategy for Nutrition</li> <li>6.3 – Developing an Advocacy Strategy for Nutrition               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>6.3.1 – Conducting advocacy strategy workshops</li> <li>6.3.2 – Developing the advocacy strategy and plan</li> </ul> </li> <li>6.4 – Mobilising Resources for Nutrition</li> </ul>

### About MQSUN+

MQSUN+ provides technical assistance (TA) and knowledge services to the UK's Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO) and the Scaling Up Nutrition (SUN) Movement Secretariat (SMS) in support of pro-poor programmes in nutrition. MQSUN+ services are resourced by a consortium of five non-state organisations leading in the field of nutrition.

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