

Combining efforts to end hunger and malnutrition

The SUN Movement

Individual, isolated measures are not enough to eradicate hunger world-wide. Rather, a collective approach is required; an approach that is driven and owned by countries and combines efforts across different sectors and at all levels. This is precisely the approach that the SUN Movement is pursuing.

The Scaling Up Nutrition (SUN) Movement was founded in 2010 and has been joined by stakeholders from government, civil society, the United Nations, business and research. It is based on the principle that all people have the right to food and good nutrition. The initiative sets out from the notion that the role to scale up country-specific nutrition interventions lies primarily with the respective governments and stakeholders, including the adoption of effective laws and policies, and this through strengthened national multi-stakeholder platforms. It combines efforts across different sectors and at all levels, from national to sub-national. The core focus is on empowering women and on infant development, for intervening in the first thousand days of a child's life is found to be of significance to tackling malnutrition and to ensure the child's development to its full potential as a child, adult and citizen.

■ How SUN works

Each country involved has a national SUN Government Focal Point Person who collaborates with relevant ministries, civil society, business, donors, academics and UN agencies.

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The combined efforts of all countries and stakeholders make up the core of the initiative and enable results that no country could achieve on its own. Therefore, SUN is led by a coordinator under the stewardship of its 27-member lead group appointed by the UN Secretary General (see Figure).

Four global networks shift resources and align actions to support the efforts of the respective country network. The **Donor Network** seeks to ensure that nutrition remains a key development priority in international forums and agendas. Donors' investments in nutrition have proven to be of great value, for every dollar invested by a country in nutrition returns 16 dollars. The Network aims to improve co-ordination of funding and provide technical support e.g. in developing national nutrition plans and their implementation, budgeting, costing and monitoring and evaluation. In line with this, most donors have revised their nutrition strategy, developed action plans and introduced special initiatives including Germany's establishment of a special initiative to combat hunger and advance nutrition (One World – No Hunger), the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation Nutrition Strategy and the European Commission's launch of the European Food and Nutrition Action Plan 2015–2020.

The **Business Network** mobilises business efforts in support of the SUN movement by engaging business in backing national nutrition strategies applying a country-led approach. For example, the Nigerien company *Société de Transformation Alimentaire* (STA) intends to treat 400,000 children in Niger as well as the sub-Saha-

ran region with their locally produced therapeutic foods.

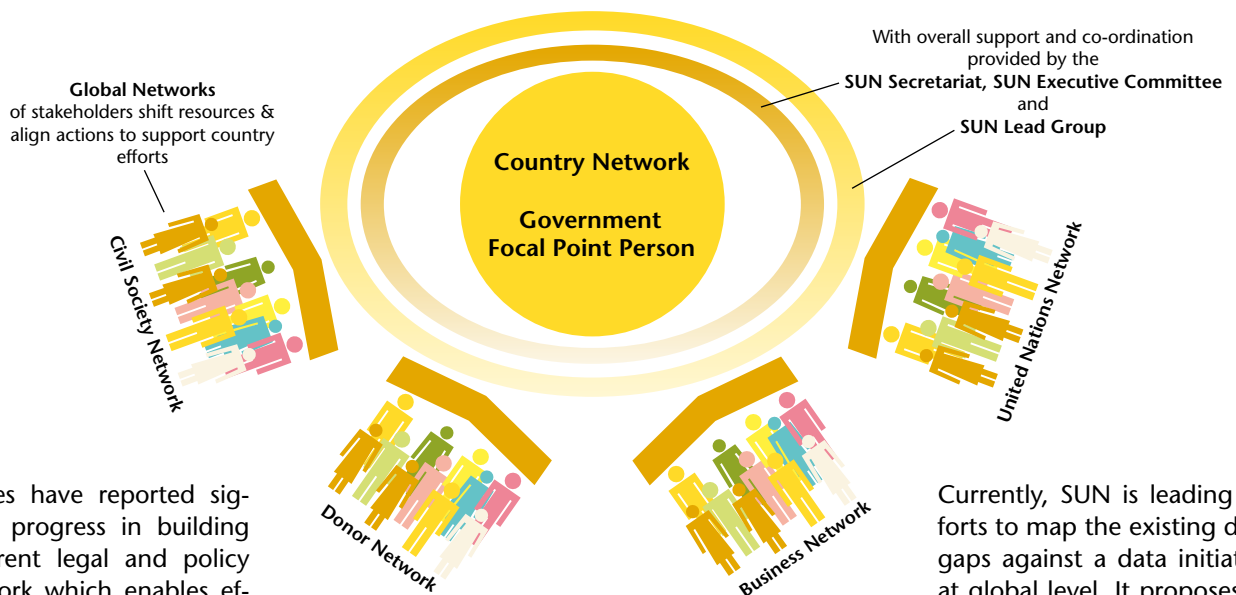
The **UN Network** aims to bring together all relevant UN agencies to help countries accelerate their efforts to improve nutrition through co-ordinated, harmonised and aligned action from the global to the country level. The **Civil Society Network** plays a key role by bringing the voices of those directly affected by malnutrition to the table and ensuring active citizen engagement and community participation in promoting good nutrition.

Donors of the SUN movement annually track and publicly report their financial disbursement on nutrition-specific and nutrition-sensitive programmes, applying a joint methodology to track external development assistance resources aimed at addressing undernutrition. Civil society network members are improving the transparent reporting of their contributions to the movement's efforts.

■ What has been achieved?

Within just a short time, the number of countries within SUN has risen to 56 and is growing, with nutrition sitting at highest level of government. Presidents, prime ministers, first ladies and senior ministers spearheaded high-level nutrition events in 34 SUN countries throughout 2014–15. These engagements provided opportunities to launch national nutrition plans, encourage commitments, increase investments on direct nutrition and nutrition-sensitive interventions, create mass awareness through the media and unite stakeholders. Beyond this,

The SUN approach



countries have reported significant progress in building a coherent legal and policy framework which enables effective governance to scale up nutrition interventions.

A number of SUN countries demonstrate reductions in stunting. For example, Zambia reduced the stunting rate among children from 45 per cent in 2007 to 40 per cent in 2013/14, while Tanzania reported a reduction by 8 per cent in four years and Peru reduced stunting rates by 50 per cent in seven years thanks to public investment and disbursement for health investment in sectors with health goals and the work with government and society.

Civil Society is crucial to advancing multi-stakeholder and multi-sectorial nutrition efforts in countries, and it is increasingly taking part in multi-stakeholder efforts (84 % of established Civil Society Alliances at country level were engaging in multi-stakeholder platforms in 2014). However, this needs to be improved, moving forward through active participation of civil society-organised inclusive and democratic processes, with all stakeholders acknowledging that such

processes are grounded on the SUN Movement Principles of Engagement.

■ Looking forward

Mirroring the ambition of the 2030 Agenda, the strategy of the SUN movement for 2016 to 2020 (see Box) calls for greater emphasis on implementation and accountability. The SUN vision remains a world where all children can realise their right to good nutrition, with a focus on improving nutrition in the first thousand days, from the start of pregnancy to a child's second birthday, and on addressing the nutritional needs of women – especially adolescent girls. While the focus of the movement remains centred on eradicating undernutrition, everyone is encouraged to address the multiple burden of malnutrition. Collectively, the ambition must not leave anyone behind – equity and rights will be at the heart of the SUN efforts, and countries in states of protracted crises must be supported, given their challenging contexts.

Currently, SUN is leading efforts to map the existing data gaps against a data initiative at global level. It proposes to create capacity at national levels to have better-quality disaggregated open data and use this data to empower all concerned to improve co-ordinated practices on the ground.

Nutrition needs to be kept high on the agenda through ongoing advocacy reinforcing global commitments such as the World Health Assembly (WHA) targets, Nutrition for Growth and the International Conference on Nutrition 2, with global entities like the Committee on World Food Security making nutrition central to their efforts and, finally, with key moments to ensure that nutrition remains embedded in our sustainability agenda with the Sustainable Development Goals.

All stakeholders – civil society organisations, the UN, business and donors – will continue supporting the high political commitment of SUN stakeholders through key political events at global and national levels in the coming years. There will be more focus on strengthening capacities, roles and responsibilities at country level, including in particular on increased national budgets. The SUN movement has the potential to reach 82.5 million stunted children in the 56 countries participating – just over 50 per cent of the 162 million children suffering from stunting worldwide.

Main objectives of the renewed SUN strategy for 2016 to 2020

- Expand and sustain an enabling political environment
- Prioritise effective actions that contribute to good nutrition
- Implement actions aligned with national CommonResults Frameworks
- Effectively use, and significantly increase, financial resources for nutrition