



CURATED RESOURCES FROM ENN'S ARCHIVES

Emerging themes for SUN countries

BUILDING AN ENABLING ENVIRONMENT FOR SCALE-UP

The 'enabling environment' for scale-up refers to all political and policy processes that shape and maintain momentum for the effective implementation of actions that reduce undernutrition¹. Such factors can include: advocacy strategies, coordination, accountability, incentives, regulation, legislation, leadership programmes, capacity investments, rigorous evaluations and domestic resource mobilisation¹. The importance of such factors is now widely recognised. Country actors are motivated

to both share and to learn from national and sub-national experiences in creating conducive environments for nutrition. At the same time, stakeholders are aware of the specific context of each setting and the resulting need to adapt efforts to create an enabling environment accordingly.

Since 2015, a total of 42 articles from ENN publications have covered themes that contribute to building an enabling environment.

Emerging themes



JOINING THE SUN MOVEMENT CATALYSES ACTION FOR NUTRITION

A number of countries have seen a significant increase in momentum and funding for nutrition in recent years. The act of joining the Scaling Up Nutrition (SUN) Movement has prompted countries to formulate multi-sector nutrition policies and nutrition action plans, either building on or adapting existing legislation, or creating new plans from scratch (Indonesia, Malawi, Somalia)²⁻⁴. In Nigeria, the act of signing up to the SUN Movement in 2011 gave impetus to reshaping nutrition policy to reflect emerging issues such as the importance of the first 1,000 days and the rise of diet-related non-communicable diseases (NCDs)⁵.

However, joining the SUN Movement is a first step: commitment to nutrition also needs to be built at the system/institutional level and underpinned by budgetary/financial allocations. High-level government ownership was key to success in creating enabling environments to improve maternal nutrition in two SUN countries, Nepal and Bhutan^{6,7}.



PRIORITISE ADVOCACY

Nutrition is just one of the areas competing for a Government's attention – and budget. Advocacy and social mobilisation are increasingly seen as an integral part of the national strategy to put nutrition on the agenda in a wide range of SUN Movement

Advocacy efforts have transformed media coverage of nutrition in Haiti, Kenya and Zambia with the creation of networks of journalists interested in nutrition

countries (Haiti, Myanmar, Pakistan, Philippines, Kenya, Senegal, Tanzania, Zambia)⁸⁻¹³. Countries have employed a variety of approaches and techniques, from organising high-level nutrition events and engaging parliamentarians, to developing country-specific advocacy tools and establishing SUN civil society alliances (CSAs). Workshops have been used to 'sensitise' political leaders, government actors, and journalists (Burkina Faso, Chad, Haiti, Kenya, Zambia)^{8, 10, 13, 14}. Multi-sector advocacy and integration of nutrition objectives into other relevant sectors were cross-cutting themes in workshops to build advocacy capacity of CSAs and parliamentary networks in West Africa^{15, 16}. Advocacy efforts have transformed media coverage of nutrition in Haiti, Kenya and Zambia with the creation of networks of journalists interested in nutrition^{8, 10, 13}. Sensitising national social protection and agriculture policies and developing an all-party parliamentary group on food and nutrition has resulted in an increase in spend on nutrition-sensitive programming in Zambia (although it still remains low)¹³.



USE EVIDENCE (AND FINANCIAL ARGUMENTS) TO GET PEOPLE ON BOARD

One mechanism to generate government buy-in within different ministries is through providing robust evidence and data on malnutrition to encourage multi-sectoral engagement. Technical and operational support to countries from partners such as the UN-REACH (Renewed Efforts Against Child Hunger) project has provided analysis of the nutrition situation to raise awareness among various actors (Burkina Faso, Burundi, Myanmar)^{8, 17, 18}. Tanzania's CSA has provided parliamentarians with evidence-based information and technical tools, such as nutrition data in simple language¹². Indonesia's stunting 'bootcamps', known as Rembuk Stunting, aim to accelerate stunting reduction by providing health-related data to sub-national government leaders in target districts with high prevalence of stunting and wasting in children under five¹⁹.

Financial arguments have also proved persuasive with high-level leaders in a number of countries (Ethiopia, Gabon, Kenya)²⁰⁻²². Gabon's Minister of Agriculture

CASE STUDY

became a nutrition champion when he linked the impact of improving nutrition on the country's gross domestic product with a 1:16 return on every dollar invested in nutrition²¹. Parliamentarians are often well placed to put the case for increasing budgetary spend on nutrition, framed as an investment in a country's human capital (Chad, Burkina Faso)¹⁴.



DEVELOP LEADERSHIP AT ALL LEVELS FOR CHAMPIONING NUTRITION

Strong leadership for nutrition is essential for gaining support to successfully promote action on nutrition globally, regionally, and within countries. There is a need for both high-level political buy-in and champions. High level political and popular nutrition champions, including First Ladies, Prime Ministers, celebrities, athletes and religious and traditional leaders, have been identified in a number of SUN countries (Ethiopia, Gabon, Indonesia, Kenya, Uganda)^{2, 20-23}. A less traditional level of leadership is that of influencers. These can be donors, mid-level bureaucrats, or civil society actors, who can create networks of nutrition champions and supporters. Vibrant alliances of civil society organisations, with the reach to mobilise communities, have been set up in many SUN countries (Pakistan, Kenya, Tanzania, Zambia)^{12, 13, 24, 25}. There are a number of initiatives to build leadership capacity at a working and grassroots level, including: the UN-REACH partnership in 12 SUN countries; the African Nutrition Leadership Programme; Action Against Hunger's (ACF) support for nutrition champions in West Africa; and the SUN global CSA's Youth Leaders initiative.

Vibrant alliances of civil society organisations, with the reach to mobilise communities, have been set up in many SUN countries

Committing to nutrition: Advocacy strategies during Senegal's elections

National elections present an important opportunity to raise the profile of nutrition on the political agenda. ENN interviewed Abdou Diouf, Executive Secretary of the SUN Movement Civil Society platform in Senegal, about the network's advocacy with presidential candidates during the country's election in early 2019.

The SUN CSA developed a 'call to action' that included an assessment of the country's nutrition situation and a strategy to address this, for the presidential candidates. Due to time pressures (the election campaign period is only three weeks in Senegal), the CSA organised a press conference and focused on online media, posting the call to action on the candidates' social media pages and feeds. The main lessons learned from the advocacy are to start early for any successful activity and that it requires a high level of preparatory technical work.

The network now plans to conduct similar activities to address prospective candidates at local elections, working through platform members that have reach to the community.

www.ennonline.net/nex/12/committingtonutrition



SEEK NEW ALLIES

Countries are increasingly looking further and wider to form alliances with new influencers (Haiti, Myanmar, Philippines)^{8, 9}. A programme to build leadership capacity via parliamentarian networks in ten West and Central African countries with support from SUN CSAs has borne fruit^{15, 16}. Parliamentarians in Burkina Faso and Chad have shown leadership within their countries in supporting legislation to promote nutrition, contributing to the development of national food and nutrition plans and increasing government spend on nutrition¹⁴. In an initiative to harness the power of young people, the Youth Leaders for Nutrition Programme has trained 13 young activists from around the world on subjects such as fundraising and communications²⁶. The youth leaders have participated

Youth leaders conduct a Girl Power nutrition session with Girl Guides in Madagascar



in high-level discussions and offer a youth perspective on issues such as adolescent nutrition, using social media to share progress in their respective country campaigns and to lobby for support.



CONSIDER DIFFERENT MODELS FOR COORDINATION

Strengthening the enabling environment at the national level may be achieved via the creation or reform of institutions such as coordinating structures, seen in Senegal and Mali^{27,28}. Senegal's CLM (Cellule de Lutte Contre la Malnutrition) is a specific unit set up to combat malnutrition and attached to the Prime Minister's office²⁷. The structure and position of the CLM has been an important factor in high level coordination and mobilising resources through the national budget.

In an initiative to harness the power of young people, the Youth Leaders for Nutrition Programme has trained 13 young activists

Models for inter-sectoral collaboration range from sectors working together on projects (Ethiopia), to coordination while maintaining sectoral remits (Kenya), to full integration and merger (Indonesia)^{2,20,29}. Efforts to strengthen agriculture-nutrition linkages are evident in the realignment of nutrition units in Kenya's Ministries of Health (MoH) and Agriculture (MoA)²⁹. Through the food and nutrition linkages technical working group, the two ministries have jointly developed strategies such as the National Healthy Diets and Physical Activities Guidelines, and Kenya Food Composition Tables. Sub-national coordination mechanisms are not functioning well in Chad, despite the progress made in nutrition coordination at the national level³⁰. To address this, focal points have been recruited to coordinate and facilitate implementation of the National Food and Nutrition Policy in five regions of the country with high prevalence of undernutrition.



CONTEXTUALISE POLICIES TO THE NATIONAL AND SUB-NATIONAL CONTEXT

Both horizontal and vertical coordination are needed since nutrition requires action from a range of sectors and stakeholders at different levels. ENN's work on sub-national, multi-sector coordination in three districts in three 'high-achieving' SUN countries (Kenya,

Nepal and Senegal) concluded that national guidance was not easily transferred to meet the needs of sub-national institutional architecture and coordination processes³¹. Coordination guidance is geared towards national level; sub-national coordination is challenging and has evolved in a way that is “loose”, “unstructured” and “opportunistic”. However, the development of new structures such as Technical Support Units for all multi-sector nutrition programme (MSNP) districts to coordinate seven implementing ministries were described as a ‘game changer’ in Nepal³².



PRIORITISE NUTRITION ACTIVITIES/POLICIES BASED ON COUNTRIES' CONTEXTS

Each country will focus its efforts on different nutrition programmes and activities, depending on the specific context and priorities around which stakeholders need to come together. Actors in Fragile and Conflict Affected States (FCAS) are increasingly working on joint programming to strengthen links between humanitarian and development planning (Ethiopia, North-Eastern Niger)^{33, 34}. Ecuador has created an enabling environment in order to reduce child obesity through a series of regulations, taxes on sugary and non-sugary drinks, traffic-light labelling of all processed foods and an increase in physical activity lessons in the national education system³⁵.



HARNESS THE CAPACITY OF LOCAL ACTORS

Recognising that governments can't achieve nutrition improvements by themselves, there is a need to engage with and develop capacities of local actors. For example,

UN actors have engaged and supported local NGOs, developing their capacities to effectively roll out nutrition interventions

CASE STUDY

Exploring multi-sector programming at district level in Senegal, Nepal and Kenya

A series of three country case studies and accompanying synthesis by ENN describe multi-sector programme implementation at sub-national level in Ethiopia, Kenya and Nepal. In each country, two districts were explored in depth, and within each, a specific multi-sector programme examined.

They identify five types of programme or adaptations that can render an intervention increasingly sensitive to nutrition:

- Multiple sectors converge on nutritionally vulnerable households or demographic groups to offer programmes services; e.g. targeting of services to first 1,000 days households.
- Multiple sectors converge at the level of village or commune believed to be vulnerable to undernutrition; e.g. agriculture and health workers use the same list of target beneficiaries to deliver complementary agriculture and nutrition inputs within the same village commune.
- Nutrition messaging is incorporated into the work and activities of other sectors; e.g. education curricula changes to include nutrition components, nutrition behaviour-change communication (BCC) within a social protection programme.
- Nutrition-sensitive sectors change or add inputs into programmes; e.g. replacing poultry with milk-producing animals, introducing seeds for fortified crops, changes in hardware.
- Nutrition-specific platforms utilised to introduce nutrition-sensitive messaging from other sectors; e.g. food and personal hygiene, need for dietary diversity, etc.

The studies find that devolution is changing the nutrition landscape, with implications for programmes, policies and funding arrangements. There is a lack of robust data on household's receipt of comprehensive sector support. None of the programmes examined collected data on the additional cost of implementing multi-sector nutrition sector programming and have not yet developed robust monitoring systems able to demonstrate their nutrition impact. There are diverse understandings of what 'nutrition sensitivity' means among the many stakeholders consulted.

www.enonline.net/fex/57/msprogramminsenegalnepalkenya

Participants at a
Parliamentarian Seminar
on investing in nutrition,
in Burkina Faso



in many countries, UN actors have engaged and supported local NGOs, developing their capacities to effectively roll out nutrition interventions. Local actors in Somalia and Yemen provided a rich resource of local knowledge with access to affected populations and are able to reflect on key needs of local populations^{36,37}.



ENSURE SUFFICIENT FINANCING

Nutrition financing and budget tracking are crucial to both advocacy for increasing nutrition funding and holding governments accountable for current spending commitments. Some countries, such as Bangladesh, Nigeria and Senegal, have developed costed national nutrition plans³⁸⁻⁴⁰. Next steps are to mobilise domestic resources to ensure financing. Successful efforts to increase government budget for nutrition involved a long process of advocacy in Senegal, and pressure from parliamentarians in Burkina Faso and Chad^{14,27}. However, research in Nepal and Uganda on multi-sector nutrition planning found that increased funding allocation for nutrition did not necessarily translate into higher nutrition spend, although lack of clear accounting mechanisms for nutrition-related allocations and spending, limited analysis⁴¹.

Budget tracking presents challenges. A review of seven West African countries (Benin, Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, Gambia, Ghana, Mauritania and Togo) found significant discrepancies in methods for categorising and weighting budget-line items⁴². Further actions are needed to strengthen methodologies for tracking domestic budgets for nutrition. Government ownership and leadership are critical to successful budget analysis, including developing in-country capacity for this process and ensuring annual nutrition budget tracking⁴².

Successful efforts to increase government budget for nutrition involved a long process of advocacy in Senegal

REFERENCE LIST

- ¹ Stuart Gillespie, Lawrence Haddad et al (2013) The politics of reducing malnutrition: building commitment and accelerating progress. *Lancet*. 2013 www.thelancet.com/retrieve/pii/S0140673613608429
- ² Nina Sardjunani and Endang L. Achadi (2016). SUN Movement experiences in Indonesia. *Nutrition Exchange* 6, May 2016. p34. www.ennonline.net/nex/6/sunmovementindonesia
- ³ Felix Pensulo Phiri (2016). Experiences of multi-sector programming in Malawi. *Field Exchange* 52, June 2016. p97. www.ennonline.net/fex/52/multisectorprogrammingmalawi
- ⁴ Dr Mohamed Abdi Farah, Mohamed Abdi Hasan and Job Gichuki (2019). Developing a Common Results Framework for nutrition in Somalia. *Nutrition Exchange* 11, January 2019. p20. www.ennonline.net/nex/11/commonresultsframeworksomalia
- ⁵ Ambarka Youssoufane (2017). Shaping national food and nutrition policy in Nigeria. *Nutrition Exchange* 8, July 2017. p28. www.ennonline.net/shapingnationalfoodandnutritionpolicyinnigeria
- ⁶ Laigden Dzed, Vandana Joshi, Loday Zangpo, Tashi Tshomo and Chandralal Mongar (2019). Creating an enabling environment for delivering maternal nutrition interventions in Bhutan. *Nutrition Exchange Asia* 1, June 2019. p12. www.ennonline.net/nex/southasia/maternalnutritionbhutan
- ⁷ Dr Ram Padarath Bichha, Kedar Raj Parajul, Pradiumna Dahal, Naveen Paudyal and Stanley Chitekwe (2019). Nepal's success story: What helped to improve maternal anaemia?. *Nutrition Exchange Asia* 1, June 2019. p14. www.ennonline.net/nex/southasia/nepalssuccessstory
- ⁸ Sansan Myint, Agnes Solano, Holly D Sedutto, Nicolas Bidault (2018). Applying the Compendium of Actions for Nutrition: Experiences from Haiti and Myanmar. *Nutrition Exchange* 9, January 2018. p25. www.ennonline.net/nex/compendiumactionshaitimyanmar
- ⁹ Charulatha Banerjee (2017). A new SUN civil society network: Advice from nutrition champions on set-up. *Nutrition Exchange* 7, January 2017. p19. www.ennonline.net/nex/7/suncivilsocietynetwork
- ¹⁰ Titus Mung'ou and Jacob Korir (2016). Nutrition advocacy in Kenya's newly devolved government system. *Nutrition Exchange* 6, May 2016. p35. www.ennonline.net/nex/6/nutritionadvocacykenya
- ¹¹ Ambarka Youssoufane and Abdou Diouf (2019). Committing to nutrition: Advocacy strategies during Senegal's elections. *Nutrition Exchange* 12, July 2019. p16. www.ennonline.net/nex/12/committingtonutrition
- ¹² Tumaini Mikindo (2017). Committing to nutrition: Raising nutrition up the political agenda in Tanzania. *Nutrition Exchange* 7, January 2017. p9. www.ennonline.net/nex/7/tanzania
- ¹³ Eneya Phiri (2016). Role of communication and advocacy in scaling up nutrition: lessons and plans from the Zambian experience. *Field Exchange* 51, January 2016. p9. www.ennonline.net/fex/51/advocacysunzambia
- ¹⁴ Ambarka Youssoufane (2019). Building parliamentary networks for nutrition in West Africa. *Nutrition Exchange* 11, January 2019. p12. www.ennonline.net/nex/11/parliamentariannetworkswestafrica
- ¹⁵ Judith Kabore and Laure Serra (2017). Advocating for nutrition in West Africa: The role of SUN civil society alliances. *Nutrition Exchange* 8, July 2017. p24. www.ennonline.net/nex/8/suncivilsocietyalliancewestafrica
- ¹⁶ Judith Kabore and Laure Serra (2017). Advocating for nutrition in West Africa: The role of SUN Civil Society Alliances. *Field Exchange* 55, July 2017. p60. www.ennonline.net/fex/55/nutwestafricasuncivilsocietyalliances
- ¹⁷ Doudou Halidou Maimouna, Ousmane Ouedraogo, Bertine Ouaro, Chloé Denavit, Tania Goossens-Allen, Nicolas Bidault (2017). REACHing for the SUN: UN support for scaling up nutrition in Burkina Faso. *Nutrition Exchange* 7, January 2017. p17. www.ennonline.net/nex/7/burkinafaso
- ¹⁸ Ernest Niyokindi, Dr Célestin Sibomana, Francis Muhire, Dr Lwin Mar Hlaing, Dr Sansan Myint and the UN Network Secretariat (2018). Mapping multi-sector actions in Burundi and Myanmar: Towards more effective coordination. *Nutrition Exchange* 10, July 2018. p9. www.ennonline.net/nex/10/mappinmsburundiandmyanmar
- ¹⁹ Akim Dharmawan, Pungkas Bahjuri Ali, Dr Entos Zainal, Ardhianti, Evi Nurhidayati and Nur Akbar Baha (2019). Stunting prevention in Indonesia: Raising awareness at the sub-national level. *Nutrition Exchange* 11, January 2019. p8. www.ennonline.net/nex/11/stuntingpreventionindonesia
- ²⁰ SUN KM Team. Synthesis: Multi-sector programmes at the sub-national level: Insights from Ethiopia, Niger and Bangladesh. Case study, July 2019. <https://www.ennonline.net/mspsynthesis2019>
- ²¹ Yves Fernand Manfoumbi (2018). Championing nutrition in Gabon. *Nutrition Exchange* 10, July 2018. p18. www.ennonline.net/nut/10/championingnutritioningabon
- ²² Gladys Mugambi, Marjorie Volege, Grace Gichohi (2017). Co-ordinating sectors: Kenya's Food and Nutrition Security Bill. *Nutrition Exchange* 7, January 2017. p11. www.ennonline.net/nex/7/kenya
- ²³ Prioritising and funding the Uganda Nutrition Action Plan. *Field Exchange* 54, February 2017. p51. www.ennonline.net/fex/54/ugandanutritionactionplan
- ²⁴ ENN's SUN Knowledge Management team (2019). Setting up SUN Networks in Fragile and Conflict Affected States. *Nutrition Exchange* 11, January 2019. p15. www.ennonline.net/settingupsunnetworksinfragileandconflictaffectedstates
- ²⁵ Titus Mung'ou (2016). Transforming media coverage of nutrition in Kenya. *Field Exchange* 52, June 2016. p86. www.ennonline.net/fex/52/mediacoverageofnutritionkenya
- ²⁶ Hanitra Rarison and Jane Napais Lankisa (2019). Harnessing the power of youth leaders: Speaking out on adolescent nutrition and child marriage. *Nutrition Exchange* 12, July 2019. p8. www.ennonline.net/nex/12/youthleaders
- ²⁷ Ambarka Youssoufane (2017). Increasing funding for nutrition: The role of advocacy and communication in Senegal. *Nutrition Exchange* 7, January 2017. p13. www.ennonline.net/nex/7/senegal
- ²⁸ Ambarka Youssoufane and Dr Djibril Bagayoko (2019). Coordinating nutrition in Mali: Interview with the SUN focal point. *Nutrition Exchange* 11, January 2019. p24. www.ennonline.net/nex/11/maliinterviewsun
- ²⁹ Lillian Karanja (2019) Working together for nutrition: Changes in Kenya's health and agriculture ministries. *Nutrition Exchange* 11, January 2019. p10. www.ennonline.net/nex/11/workingtogetherfornutkenya
- ³⁰ Mohamed Cheik Levraak and Dimanche San San (2018). Decentralising nutrition management and coordination in Chad. *Nutrition Exchange* 9, January 2018. p14. www.ennonline.net/nex/9/nutmanagementandcoordchad
- ³¹ Tui Swinnen, Jeremy Shoham and Carmel Dolan, with input from Charulatha Banerjee, Lillian Karanja-Odhiambo and Ambarka Youssoufane (2018). Exploring multi-sector programming at district level in Senegal, Nepal and Kenya. *Field Exchange* 57, March 2018. p21. www.ennonline.net/fex/57/msprogramminsenegalnepalkenya
- ³² Charulatha Banerjee, Tui Swinnen, Jeremy Shoham and Carmel Dolan (2018) Multi-sector programming at the sub-national level: A case study in Kapilvastu and Jumla districts in Nepal. www.ennonline.net/mspcasestudynepal
- ³³ Amal Tucker Brown, Orla Mary O'Neill and Ki Yeon Yoon (2017). Cluster coordination in a government-led emergency response in Ethiopia. *Field Exchange* 56, December 2017. p20. www.ennonline.net/fex/56/clustercoordinationethiopia

-
- ³⁴ Kirathi Reuel Mungai and Adeola Goriola Makanjuola (2017). Post-Rome integrated action: Experiences from North-eastern Nigeria. Field Exchange 56, December 2017. p50.
www.enonline.net/fex/56/postromeactionnortheastnigeria
-
- ³⁵ Angélica Ochoa, Gabriela Rivas-Mariño and Roosmarijn Verstraeten (2017). Tackling overweight and obesity in Ecuador: Policies and strategies for prevention. Nutrition Exchange 8, July 2017. p12.
www.enonline.net/nex/8/tacklingoverweightandobesityinecuador
-
- ³⁶ Mary Wamuyu and Aden Mohamed (2018). Developing a community-based nutrition surveillance system in Somalia. Nutrition Exchange 10, July 2018. p26.
www.enonline.net/nex/10/communitynutsomalia
-
- ³⁷ Majid Hamed Alhaj, Dr Rasha Ali Al-ardhi and Dr Karanveer Singh (2019). Strengthening sub-national capacity in Yemen to provide life-saving treatment. Nutrition Exchange 11, January 2019. p22.
www.enonline.net/nex/11/sunnationalcapacityyemen
-
- ³⁸ Dr Md. M. Islam Bulbul and Dr Iftekhar Rashid (2018). Developing the second National Plan of Action for Nutrition in Bangladesh. Nutrition Exchange 10, July 2018. p14.
www.enonline.net/nex/10/nationalplannutritionbangladesh
-
- ³⁹ Ambarka Youssoufane (2017). Shaping national food and nutrition policy in Nigeria. Nutrition Exchange 8, July 2017. p28.
www.enonline.net/shapingnationalfoodandnutritionpolicyinnigeria
-
- ⁴⁰ Dr Mohamed Abdi Farah, Mohamed Abdi Hasan and Job Gichuki (2019). Developing a Common Results Framework for nutrition in Somalia. Nutrition Exchange 11, January 2019. p20.
www.enonline.net/nex/11/commonresultsframeworksomalia
-
- ⁴¹ Amanda Pomeroy-Stevens, Heather Viland and Sascha Lamstein (2017). Recommendations for multi-sector nutrition planning: Cross-context lessons from Nepal and Uganda. Field Exchange 54, February 2017. p90.
www.enonline.net/fex/54/multisectornutritionplanningnepalanduganda
-
- ⁴² Adam Aho, Judith Kabore, Seydou Ndiaye and Dr Noel Zagre (2019). Nutrition budget analysis at national level: A contribution to a revised approach from West Africa. Nutrition Exchange 12, July 2019. p11.
www.enonline.net/nex/12/budgetanalysis