

## An Introduction to the SUN Movement Civil Society Network



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# Background

**The Scaling Up Nutrition (SUN) Movement is a country led Movement founded on the principle that all people have a right to food and good nutrition. It unites people in a collective effort, vital in the fight against malnutrition because every sector touches nutrition and nutrition touches every sector.**

Today, 54 countries have joined the Movement, guided by 27 members of the SUN Lead Group and drawing on the resources and expertise of four Networks. Each of the Networks; **UN Systems, Donor, Business and Civil Society** support countries to achieve the vision of a world without hunger and malnutrition where every child can reach their full potential. The primary purpose of the **SUN Movement Civil Society Network (SUN CSN)** is to encourage the formation of vibrant civil society alliances in each SUN country.

SUN civil society alliances support country plans for improving nutrition and provide a valuable link to the reality on the ground and communities directly affected by malnutrition.

The SUN CSN is a coalition of alliances from SUN countries which include national and international organizations, working together to build capacity and maximize resources to ensure the greatest impact for countries in scaling up nutrition.

*Sensitizing Market women who become champions for promoting exclusive breastfeeding in Sierra Leone*



© SUN Civil Society Platform in Sierra Leone

**Civil society organizations have a very powerful voice when united: engaging grass-roots and community-driven support for scaling up nutrition locally and globally.**



# SUN Civil Society Network

At the global level, a SUN Civil Society Network (SUN CSN) has been established to support the formation, and effective and efficient operation of strong, credible and influential national Civil Society Alliances (CSAs) in SUN countries for the long-term. It also facilitates communication and coordination across SUN CSAs, and with the broader SUN Movement. The SUN CSN is governed by a steering group comprising national, regional and international representatives from non-governmental organisations.

## A declaration

The Network was inaugurated at a meeting that took place on 11 June 2013, during which civil society representatives re-affirmed their commitment to scaling up nutrition and agreed upon a declaration stating how they would support the aims of the SUN Movement.

The SUN CSN is responsible for ensuring a broad based inclusive approach and encouraging effective processes across the Movement and across stakeholder groups. It also encourages country-adapted alignment of CSOs in support of national plans that are based on realities/needs on the ground.

It contributes to ensuring nutrition remains high in global and national agendas and that grassroots perspectives inspire global advocacy efforts through CSA engagement. It supports CSAs to contribute to and lead in-country advocacy efforts to influence global processes.

## Purpose

To support the formation and effective and efficient operation of strong, credible and influential national CSAs for the long-term.

Strong, credible and influential national CSAs coordinate Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) to:

1. **Actively contribute** to the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of effective national policies and plans for scaling up nutrition (multi-stakeholder, multi-sectoral, multi-level); and
2. **Encourage and facilitate coordination** among all civil society actors, including academia, international, national and local CSOs and ensure alignment of their strategies, programmes and resources with national nutrition priorities.

*Civil Society Actors reaffirm their commitment to addressing malnutrition at the SUN CSN Launch Meeting – June 2013*



© SUN CSN

# How the SUN CSN works

**2013 was a critical year for securing breakthrough progress in tackling chronic malnutrition at the international level through the 1000 days initiative, the Irish European Union presidency, G8 commitments and the Hunger Summit, as well as Post 2015 debates. Within countries, civil society engagement is crucial to ensure robust country plans, which are costed, resourced and delivered. The SUN Movement cuts across all of these processes, stakeholders and objectives.**

By supporting national partnerships and relationships with local CSOs, strengthening advocacy capacity and impact in key countries the network builds an approach centred on progress at the national level, which reinforces and supports global advocacy.

## SUN CSN Objectives

### 1. Build the network and support the formation and sustainable running of strong, credible and influential national CSAs.

Examples include:

- Effectively supporting the development of inclusive, vibrant and sustainable CSAs in SUN countries as legitimate stakeholders by:
  - i. Supporting the formation of national CSAs
  - ii. Encouraging and facilitating improved perception and contributions of national CSAs / Civil Society Organisations (CSO) to multi-stakeholder scaling up nutrition
  - iii. Encouraging CSAs to ensure liaisons between CSA/CSOs and local as well as national expertise in public higher education and research institutions for strengthening capacity building, advocacy and tracking progress of grass root level efforts
  - iv. Increasing support to national CSAs (e.g. through CSN contribution to Communities of Practice of the SUN movement Capacity to Deliver and harnessing CSN members technical, skills-based, financial and human resources)
  - v. Supporting CSAs in ensuring country-adapted and context-specific alignment of CSO strategies, programmes and resources with national nutrition priorities
  - vi. Supporting CSAs in actively contributing to multi-stakeholder, multi-sectoral, multi-level country plans for scaling up nutrition and ensuring these reflect the needs on the ground

- Ensuring national civil society organizations (CSOs) are part of national and international SUN Movement efforts
- Encouraging alignment of international CSOs in support of national plans in response to needs on the ground

### 2. Harmonise advocacy and messages for nutrition to remain a priority on national and global agendas:

- Supporting CSAs contribute to national level advocacy efforts to prioritize nutrition in a sustainable manner (across political parties and beyond political cycles, pre- and post-elections, and working with parliamentarians);
- Improving national CSOs' contribution to global processes through engagement of CSAs in such processes to, in turn, support CSA-led country level advocacy to influence these (e.g. World Health Assembly; international nutrition forums – such as Micronutrient Forum, International Union of Nutrition Scientists, and International Conference on Nutrition 2, and the post-2015 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) negotiations) and;
- Developing position papers and policy briefs for action at global and national levels and disseminating to national CSAs

### 3. Facilitate Capacity Building of national Civil Society Alliances to contribute to effective multi-stakeholder, multi-sectoral, multi-level efforts towards scaling up nutrition

- Supporting and developing the niche strengths of CSOs such as: increasing demand creation; behaviour change communication and social mobilisation; strengthening lessons learned on the 'how to' or implementation science of service delivery to community/household levels, and feeding back into policy level.
- Supporting capacity building of national CSAs, based on identified gaps, that contribute to strengthening the multi-stakeholder, multi-sectoral and multi-level SUN approach and promote empowerment & capacities at all levels of countries to deliver on scaled up sustainable nutrition efforts.
- Leveraging network members strengths to increase technical support to national and local / community CSOs for increasing technically capacity to reach the underserved;
- Developing processes to foster cross-learning and exchange of experiences towards a collective of CSAs functioning as a learning network;
- Signposting funding opportunities and continuing advocating for marginal funding in support of creative solutions for programs and/ or advocacy capacity building.

### SUN CSN structure and governance

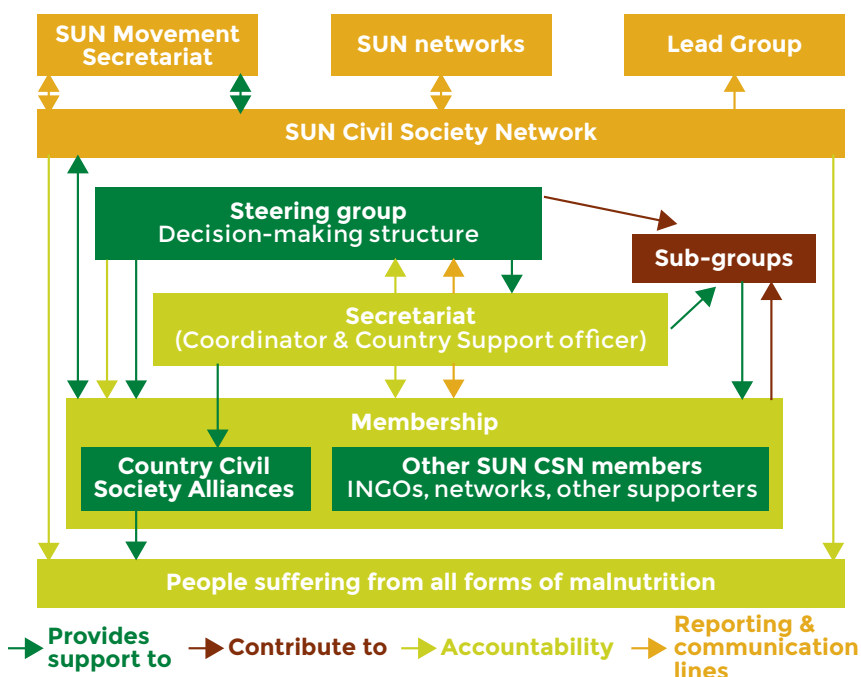
The SUN CSN is guided by an elected steering group, under the leadership of a chair and vice chair. Chair, vice-chair and steering group member roles rotate every 2 years. The network secretariat is currently hosted by Save the Children UK and receives financial support from the SUN Movement Multi-Partner Trust Fund.

The SUN Multi-Partner Trust Fund (SUN MPTF) was established in February 2012 as an additional means of providing immediate financial support for priority actions by SUN Movement stakeholders that could not be financed through other channels. It operates through three financing windows designed to support:

- (1) critical in-country actions in relation to national commitments and priorities for SUN;
- (2) mobilization of in-country and global civil society so as to contribute to realizing these commitments and demonstrating results; and
- (3) adequate finance for strategic efforts that contribute to the more effective working of the SUN Movement as a whole.

The Network fully embraces and is driven by the SUN Movement principles of engagement ensuring the flexibility to effectively scale up nutrition, while maintaining a common purpose and mutual accountability.

#### Governance structure of the SUN CSN



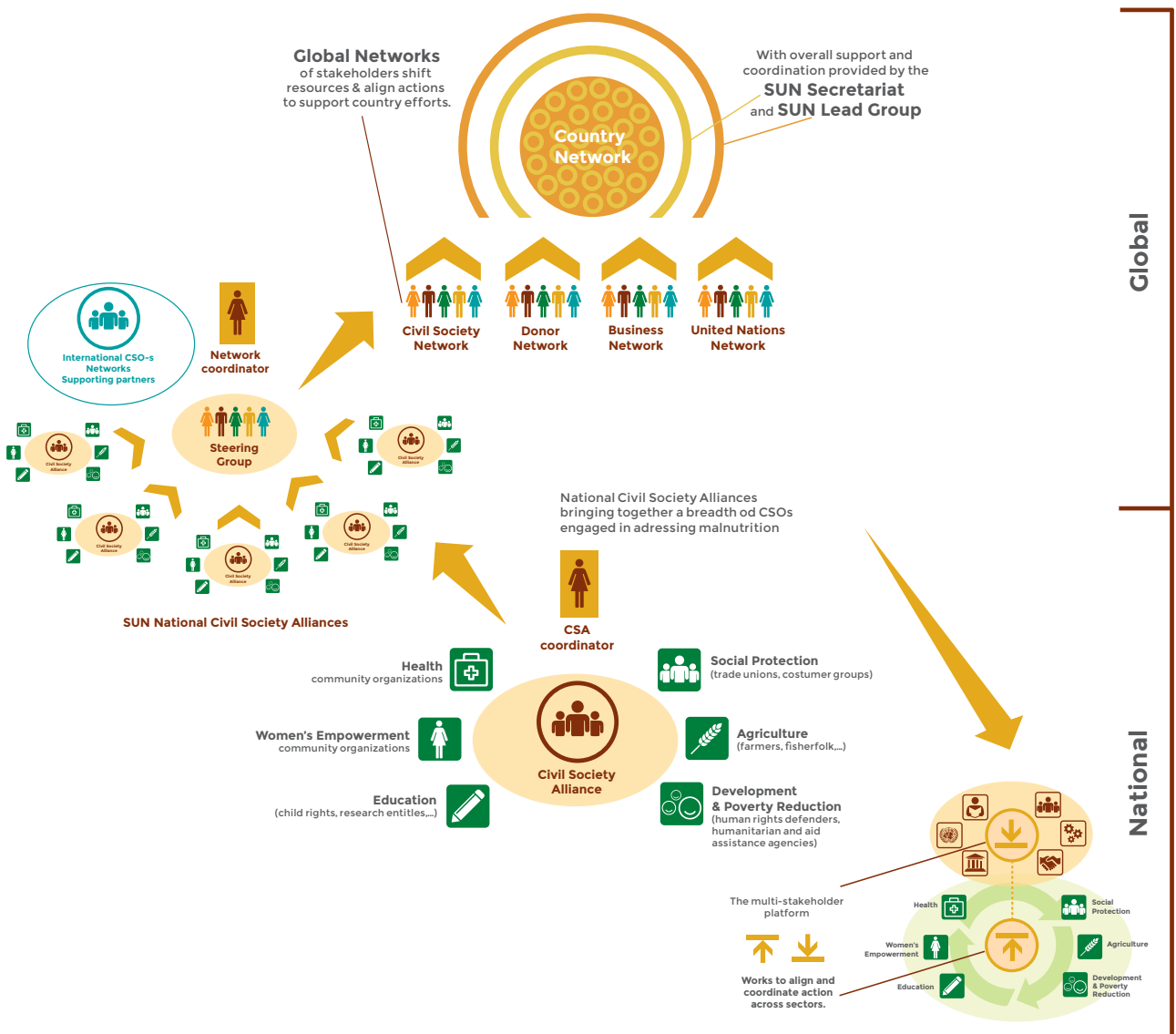
All people within the SUN Movement commit to seven principles:

- Be transparent about impact.
- Be inclusive through open multi-stakeholder partnerships.
- Be rights-based by upholding the rights of all women, men and their children.
- Be willing to negotiate when conflicts arise.
- Be mutually accountable to joint commitments.
- Be cost-effective by focusing on evidenced-based analysis and sustainable impact.
- Be continuously communicative to support learning and sharing.

# Network within the SUN Movement

The SUN CSN is made up of representatives from each of the active SUN national CSAs facilitated by a Steering Group and Network Coordinator. National SUN CSAs represent several hundreds of national, regional and international organisations and networks working in various areas including: small-holder farmers, fisherfolk, human rights defenders, women’s groups, humanitarian and aid assistance agencies, advocacy and research entities, consumer groups, trade unions and many others, actively engaged in scaling up nutrition in their countries.. Organisations within the Network are working together to build capacity and maximise resources to ensure the greatest impact on nutrition. A growing number of over 800 CSOs are actively engaged in scaling up nutrition across SUN countries.

**To contribute to national efforts and support us in our efforts to build civil society capacity to contribute to scaling up nutrition efforts in countries - join the SUN CSN**  
<http://scalingupnutrition.org/resources-archive/network-resources-2#csomember!>





# National Civil Society Alliances

As of September 2014, there are Civil Society Alliances in 30 SUN countries (Bangladesh, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cameroon, DRC, El Salvador, Ethiopia, Ghana, Guatemala, Guinea Conakry, Kenya, Kyrgyz Republic, Lao PDR, Madagascar, Malawi, Mali, Mozambique, Myanmar, Nepal, Niger, Nigeria, Peru, Rwanda, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Sri Lanka, Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia, Zimbabwe) at various stages of CSA establishment and activity with Benin, Côte d’Ivoire, Indonesia actively working towards establishing and obtaining funding for coordinated civil society efforts. Of these 30 alliances, 24 alliances are funded either through the SUN Multi-Partner Trust Fund or through bi-lateral donors (United Kingdom and Irish Governments).

SUN CSA’s build on pre-existing arrangements, existing networks or CSO platforms for coordinating civil society within each country.



## Action

Civil Society is a strong stakeholder in support of national multi-stakeholder efforts towards scaling up nutrition in a sustainable manner, and increasingly recognised as such. It contributes to ensuring these efforts address national priorities defined by the needs of populations suffering from multiple burdens of malnutrition.

Many countries have civil society representatives on the national multi-stakeholder platform for scaling up nutrition. This collaboration embodies the collective action needed to scale up nutrition.

# Civil Society Efforts at Country Level

Civil Society actors are an important stakeholder in support of government efforts, at all levels, through:

- multi-stakeholder landscape mapping;
- advocacy, social mobilization and communications;
- monitoring and evaluation and development of a common results framework;
- national nutrition information systems;
- building sustainability beyond political cycles for prioritization of nutrition through close work with parliamentarians and building cross-party support in advance of national elections;
- working with government to advocate for cross- ministry participation;
- sensitising everyone, including CSOs, and the workforce, to national nutrition efforts and the importance of nutrition-sensitive efforts;
- raising awareness and building ownership by communities for nutrition as an important human rights, social justice and development issue;
- identifying and supporting champions, coordinating efforts for alignment behind national priorities and representing grassroots voices;
- supporting capacity strengthening (e.g. community health workers for nutrition service delivery or linking to other programmes like social protection programmes).

## Commitments and accountability

### Nutrition for Growth

On 8 June 2013 an event to increase global commitment to nutrition was convened by the Governments of the United Kingdom and Brazil together with the Children’s Investment Fund Foundation. The event, known as ‘Nutrition for Growth’ offered an opportunity for governments, businesses, United Nations agencies, CSOs and scientific institutions to commit to do more to tackle undernutrition. The collective ambition was to:

- \*Ensure that at least 500 million pregnant women and children under two are reached with effective nutrition interventions.
- Prevent at least 20 million children under five from being stunted.
- Save at least 1.7m lives by reducing stunting, by increasing breastfeeding, and through the treatment of severe acute malnutrition.

The SUN CSN is facilitating discussions with CSOs that made commitments at ‘Nutrition for Growth’ in June 2013 and ensuring linkage and alignment with SUN efforts where appropriate.

The SUN CSN is also contributing to the development of a common framework and guidance on reporting for the commitments made to nutrition at the ‘Nutrition for Growth’ event. An independent expert group has been identified to collect data and provide advice and guidance to CSOs to promote excellence in tracking and reporting. A first global annual nutrition report will be publicly available in November 2014.

**“ Alone we can do so little. Together we can do so much.”**

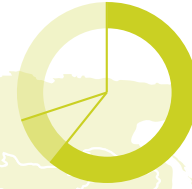
**Helen Keller**

Leadership -  
Type of CSO leading CSAs



- CSAs led by National CSOs or networks (48,5%)
- CSAs led by International NGOs (42,5%)
- CSAs co-led by National CSOs and International NGOs (9%)

Coordinated Civil Society Efforts  
across 47 SUN countries



- SUN countries with established Civil Society Alliances (61%)
- Countries are starting efforts to have multi-CSO discussions (9%)
- Other countries (30%)

Stages of Establishment of the  
29 Civil Society Alliances



- Well established and efforts well underway (28%)
- Fairly recently established and some activities ongoing (19%)
- Recently established and starting up (25%)
- In process of getting established (28%)

Funding status of the  
29 Civil Society Alliances



- CFunded through SUN Multi-Partner Trust Fund (MPTF) (68%)
- Funded through bi-lateral donor support (9,7%)
- Non-funded (22,3%)



**1500:** Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) make up the SUN Civil Society Network

**61%:** of SUN countries have established Civil Society Alliances (CSAs)

**OVER HALF:** of the SUN CSAs are led by National CSOs

**“ We believe as civil society that every woman and child has a fair chance to life and all human being have a right to adequate and nutritious food and freedom from hunger. ”**

**William Chilufya,  
Coordinator of the Zambia CSA**

**May 2014**

The SUN Movement Secretariat is supported by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, Canada, the European Union, France, Germany, Ireland, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom.

**WANT TO FIND OUT MORE?**

Go to [www.scalingupnutrition.org](http://www.scalingupnutrition.org)  
for more information about the SUN Movement.

Follow SUN CSN on Twitter <https://twitter.com/SUNCSN>.  
Read the SUN CSN blog <http://suncivilsocietynet.wix.com/suncsnblog>.