Maximising the Quality of Scaling Up Nutrition Plus (MQSUN$^+$)

Technical Support for Scaling Up Nutrition

Following on the success of MQSUN, MQSUN$^+$ (2016-2020) provides technical assistance to: 1) SUN countries and the SUN Movement Secretariat (SMS) to catalyse multisectoral country efforts and build local capacity to scale up nutrition impact, and 2) DFID to maximise the quality and effectiveness of nutrition-related programmes to support achievement of global targets to reduce malnutrition. MQSUN$^+$ is a consortium of five expert nutrition organisations, PATH (lead), Aga Khan University, Development Initiatives, DAI Global Health and NutritionWorks.

This brochure outlines the support services currently offered to SUN countries. Support services to DFID are outlined in a separate brochure, available upon request. SUN countries can submit a request for MQSUN$^+$ technical assistance through the SUN Movement Secretariat.

Nutrition governance and policy and legal framework analyses

Political framework analysis
MQSUN$^+$ analyses country policies, strategies, plans and implementation tools (e.g., programmes and instruments) for engagement in nutrition-related issues at the political level and in mobilising funding. The purpose of this review is to assess the inclusion of nutrition across different sectoral policies and strategies and inform alignment, prioritisation and strategic communication toward addressing nutrition goals.

Governance in fragile contexts
MQSUN$^+$ examines the factors that promote or inhibit political commitment to address undernutrition in fragile states and identifies the policies and practices of humanitarian actors that promote or inhibit long-term investment in nutrition through national systems. We also support the advancement and development of a framework for understanding how nutrition governance could be enhanced in a context of state fragility or humanitarian crisis.

Development/revision of national nutrition policies
Based on analysis conducted, MQSUN$^+$ supports countries to revise nutrition related policies.

Development of common results framework

MQSUN$^+$ supports SUN countries in the process of developing a common results framework (CRF). A CRF enables multiple stakeholders—including different government ministries and external stakeholders—to work toward common goals and results for the improvement of nutrition and to agree on allocation of responsibilities for implementation and achievement of results among different sectors. The process of developing a CRF may include the following activities, depending on country needs:

Contextual analysis
MQSUN$^+$ conducts contextual analyses to assess the current nutrition situation in country and the causal and contributing factors associated with the development of malnutrition. This process may encompass an assessment of the political environment for nutrition. The analysis can be used to assist in prioritising investments and activities across sectors, as well as to help promote and build a common understanding of nutrition in the country.

Food and nutrition security situation analysis

MQSUN+ provides an in-depth picture of the nutrition and food security situation across sectors. We analyse institutional frameworks to better understand the extent of inter-sectoral coordination to ensure improved governance and support to capacity development for nutrition. We also conduct readiness assessments of ministries for integrating nutrition into other sectors including water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH), agriculture, social protection and more.

Multi-stakeholder mapping and engagement

MQSUN+ supports the identification and analyses of stakeholders' interests and influence to allow a greater understanding of the nutrition context and to inform advocacy needs. Multisector workshops bring together relevant stakeholders to raise nutrition awareness and share concerns and priorities to inform the CRF.

Support with setting priorities and targets

MQSUN+ supports the prioritisation and setting of targets and measurable indicators (including country-specific milestones and deliverables) in order to ensure nutritional outcomes are achieved with maximum efficacy.

CRF operationalisation and development of multisectoral nutrition action plan

MQSUN+ supports the development of a multisectoral plan of action for nutrition which builds on the components of the CRF to elaborate detailed actions and strategies on governance, integrating CRF targets into sectoral plans and policies, identifying or developing finance sources and tracking mechanisms, documenting capacity needs and strategies and implementation planning across sectors for the integration of nutrition.

Financial tracking, cost estimation and resource mobilisation

Financial tracking

MQSUN+ assesses existing financial tracking tools and systems and/or provides tools or recommendations for financial tracking mechanisms aligned with national nutrition planning.

Costing readiness assessment

Before full costing can be conducted, a multisectoral operational plan for nutrition must have sufficient detail on intervention activities, targets and coverage. MQSUN+ conducts costing readiness assessments to analyse a CRF or multisectoral plan for the required level of detail needed for costing and makes recommendations to ensure readiness. This review also provides useful information on country data gaps.

Costing at national and district level

MQSUN+ supports the cost estimation of interventions featured in an operational plan or multisectoral nutrition action plan. Cost estimations for scaling up nutrition are necessary for budget planning and also useful to stimulate resource mobilisation from both domestic and external sources.

Budget analysis and tracking of nutrition funding

MQSUN+ conducts budget analyses and estimations of global targets to support countries in tracking trends in their budget allocations and nutrition spending. Resource-tracking is an important way to promote transparency and can be used for advocacy purposes.

Resource mobilisation

In this process, MQSUN+ may map existing resources for nutrition; assist in the identification of potential funding mechanisms; and/or develop an investment case for nutrition to advocate mobilisation of funding.

Monitoring and evaluation

M&E frameworks and plans

MQSUN+ provides support for the development or review of monitoring and evaluation frameworks and plans for new or existing national policies and plans. This process may include developing workshop presentations and facilitating stakeholder discussions for consensus on the framework and/or plan.

Nutrition surveillance

MQSUN+ reviews national nutrition surveillance systems and identifies areas for improvement for institutionalising these systems. We also support integration of nutrition indicators in other sector programmes.

Operational research and programme design

MQSUN+ supports gap analyses at the sub-national level to explore the strengths and weaknesses of programmes to inform programme improvement and scale-up. This assessment may include a desk review of available documents and/or stakeholder interviews.

Operational research

MQSUN⁺ conducts operational research to identify priorities for complementary interventions alongside nutrition programmes, such as cash-transfer interventions.

Programme design

MQSUN⁺ provides recommendations on the technical design and delivery model of nutrition programmes.

Cross-cutting services

Knowledge management and lessons learnt

MQSUN⁺ documents lessons learnt to inform decision making and prioritisation within and between country contexts and to strengthen the global knowledge base on the experiences of addressing undernutrition.

Document preparation and dissemination support

MQSUN⁺ provides ad hoc support and produces summary documents in preparation for workshops, forums or other events.
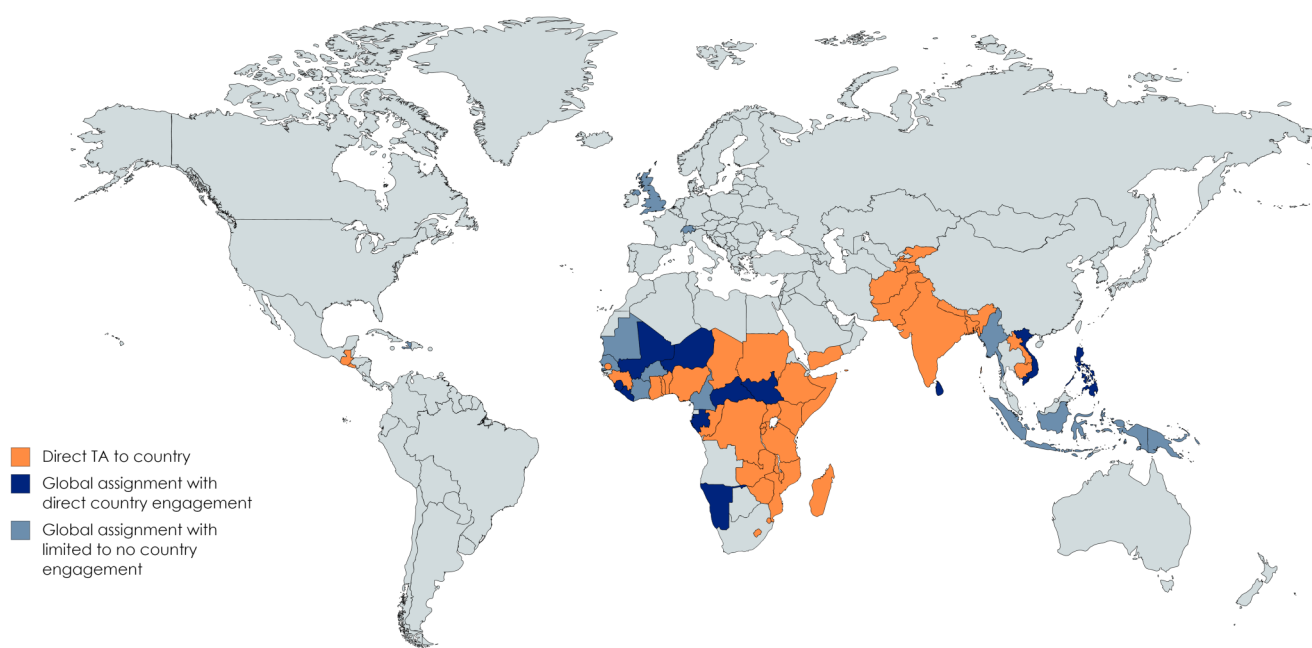
Capacity building

MQSUN⁺ implements an evidence-based capacity-building strategy to support country government teams' understanding and awareness of nutrition interventions and strategies. MQSUN⁺ offers a multi-pronged approach to encourage 'learning-by-doing' and provides remote guidance and support, learning opportunities during country visits, and workshop presentation and formal trainings as requested.

Support to SUN Movement Secretariat

MQSUN⁺ supports countries in understanding and incorporating the global SUN framework and roadmap in their national strategies, policies and programmes. As well, we have supported the SUN Movement Secretariat in the development of guidance notes, checklists, menus of service and other resources to support multisectoral nutrition planning, costing methodology and lessons learned documentation. MQSUN⁺ also contributes to the Monitoring, Evaluation, Accountability and Learning (MEAL) task group to ensure quality data tracking and monitoring of indicators.

To date MQSUN and now MQSUN⁺ has provided technical assistance in 56 countries—both supporting quality evidence generation and use for nutrition programming and policy and working collaboratively with countries to move their SUN agenda forward and build country capacity and ownership to improve nutrition.

- Direct TA to country
- Global assignment with direct country engagement
- Global assignment with limited to no country engagement

MQSUN and MQSUN⁺ technical support to SUN countries to improve nutrition impact

SUN country	Contextual/ situational analysis	Stakeholder mapping / SUN network support	Policy & legal framework review	Common results framework	Multi-sectoral action plan	Costing readiness assessment	Costing	Financial tracking/ analysis	Comms & advocacy	M&E & operational planning
Afghanistan	1	1	1	1	1	1	1			1
Benin				1						1
Burundi							1	1		
Cambodia	1									1
Cameroon			1				1			
Chad	1		1			1				
Congo-Brazzaville			1	1			1			1
El Salvador		1	1					1		1
Gabon			1	1	1	1	1	1		
Ghana	1		1	1		1				
Guatemala										
Guinea	1		1		1		1		1	
Kyrgyz Republic		1	1		1					
Lao PDR			1	1		1				1
Lesotho			1	1			1			
Madagascar			1							1
Mozambique							1			
Nepal				1				1		1
Nigeria			1							
Pakistan		1	1	1						1
Somalia	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1		
Sudan	1	1	1							
Eswatini	1		1							
Tajikistan		1	1	1	1	1	1			
Tanzania		1								1
The Gambia			1							
Togo	1		1	1	1	1	1			
Vietnam		1							1	
Yemen	1		1	1	1	1	1		1	

MQSUN⁺ Resources

How to Estimate the Costs of Nutrition-Sensitive Actions in a Common Results Framework – A Guidance Note: http://docs.scalingupnutrition.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/04/MQSUN_CostEstimationNote_2-0_CS6_ENGLISH_FINALv2.pdf

Planning and Costing to Accelerate Actions for Scaling up Nutrition: http://docs.scalingupnutrition.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/06/150223-Summary-of-Synthesis-Report-MQSUN.pdf

Multi-Sectoral Planning for Nutrition: http://docs.scalingupnutrition.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/04/MQSUN-Mutli-Sectoral-Planning-Guidance-Note.pdf

Checklist on the Criteria and Characteristics of 'Good' National Nutrition Plans (contributing author): http://scalingupnutrition.org/news/the-first-ever-checklist-for-quality-national-nutrition-plans-is-launched/

MQSUN⁺ belongs to the Technical Assistance for Nutrition (TAN) programme with partners Nutrition International and the Emergency Nutrition Network to strengthen the capacity of the 61 countries within the SUN Movement to deliver policies and programmes which reduce malnutrition.

For more information about MQSUN⁺

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Maximising the Quality of Scaling of Nutrition Plus

@MQSUNplus