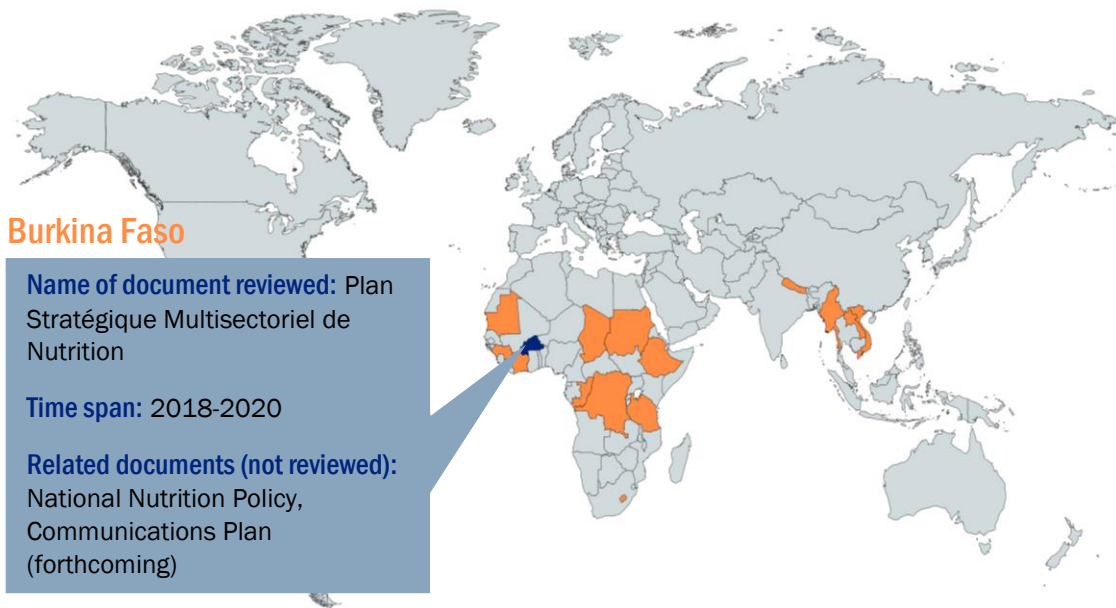


National Nutrition Plan Assessment:

Burkina Faso

In December 2016, the United Nations Network for the SUN Movement and the SUN Movement Secretariat (SMS), with the support of an expert group, developed and launched the [Checklist on the Criteria and Characteristics of “Good” National Nutrition Plans](#) (“SUN Checklist”). In 2018, at the request of the SMS, the Maximising the Quality of Scaling Up Nutrition Plus (MQSUN+) project undertook a systematic assessment of the main planning document of 15 countries’ multisectoral national nutrition action plans, according to the criteria in the SUN Checklist. This brief summarises select strengths (✓) and suggested areas for improvement with recommendations (-) for Burkina Faso, organised by each of the five areas in the SUN Checklist: (1) situational analysis and policy and programming review; (2) stakeholder engagement and high-level political commitment processes; (3) costs and budgetary framework; (4) implementation and managing arrangements; and (5) monitoring, evaluation, operational research and review. A section on gender considerations is also included.



Overview

Burkina Faso’s *Plan Stratégique Multisectoriel de Nutrition* is the operational tool of the country’s National Nutrition Policy. At the time of review, the document was in draft form. The plan aims to improve the nutritional status of the population through multisectoral actions using five general strategies: reducing undernutrition; reducing micronutrient deficiencies; reinforcing nutrition-related, non-communicable disease control; improving food safety; and improving governance and legislation related to nutrition.

Key strengths

The plan highlights how nutrition has risen up in the political agenda leading to its development and to nutrition being stated as an outcome in the country's National Development Plan. Below are a few key strengths that emerged from the review:

- ✓ Provides a review of existing programmes and key gaps of each sector implicated in the plan, and generates a results framework aimed at addressing those identified issues.
- ✓ Includes most of the World Health Assembly nutrition indicators and diet-related, non-communicable disease targets in the key expected results.
- ✓ Estimates costs of the plan (including crosscutting components, such as governance and monitoring and evaluation) and projected budget gaps. The plan also considers existing budget available within different sectors to support those activities.
- ✓ Lists the lead and supporting ministries/partners responsible for implementation of each expected result.

Key recommendations

Area 1: Situational analysis and policy and programming review

- Beyond infant and young child feeding practices, the situational analysis provides limited discussion of risk factors and underlying causes of malnutrition in the country.
 - **Recommendation:** Include further assessment on and details regarding the key risk factors and underlying causes in the situational analysis to highlight the main focus areas for the plan actions.
- The plan does highlight that emergencies are increasingly common in the country. However, proposed improvements to existing emergency preparedness strategies to address this are not noted in the plan.
 - **Recommendation:** Assess emergency planning with respect to nutrition and determine whether gaps in the strategy exist, for example, in terms of human resources at each level or resilience measures for households vulnerable to shocks/catastrophes. If so, consider adding emergency response activities to the plan (other than cash transfers).

Area 2: Stakeholders' engagement and high-level political commitment process

- While the plan notes briefly that it will be accompanied by a communications plan, it does not discuss the processes or specific plans needed to engage stakeholders in understanding the aim and implementation of the plan.
 - **Recommendation:** In the forthcoming communication plan, ensure advocacy with key stakeholders at multiple levels (e.g. politicians, community leaders, plan beneficiaries) to facilitate buy-in and uptake of plan activities. This should be complemented by appropriate governance mechanisms and coordination structures at national and subnational levels.

Area 3: Costs and budgetary framework

- Based on the projected costs and most recently available expenditure figures in the nutrition plan, a financial gap exists. However, the plan does not describe how limited resources will be prioritised and allocated.
 - **Recommendation:** Issue guidance to national and subnational bodies responsible for developing plan budgets on how to prioritise interventions or populations, using available data and transparent criteria. As well, the forthcoming communication plan can support resource mobilisation through advocacy efforts.

Area 4: Implementation and management arrangements

- While the plan does note the responsible sectors and partners for the plan action, it does not describe processes for annual operational planning.
 - **Recommendation:** Develop a process for incorporating the plan’s proposed actions into annual sectoral and regional plans, with clear timelines and sufficient time for the steering and coordination committees to provide input.
- It is unclear from the plan narrative how planned activities will be coordinated. The activities are described as if they will be implemented separately rather than in a multisectoral fashion with multiple stakeholders working together toward common goals.
 - **Recommendation:** Establish mechanisms for coordinated action and joint targeting of interventions, where appropriate, across sectoral activities.

Area 5: Monitoring, evaluation, operational research, and review

- Only particular monitoring and evaluation indicators include targets.
 - **Recommendation:** Review existing programmes to determine the baseline level of reach, and establish realistic targets for the lifetime of the plan, annually if possible (to assist in decision-making during annual reviews). Where data is not available from existing systems, develop a plan to address the data gaps, with clear timelines for finishing the work.
- The plan mentions operational research as an expected result of the plan, but does not explicitly describe a mechanism for coordination.
 - **Recommendation:** Identify a research body to work with the National Nutrition Council to propose and prioritise operational research questions arising from annual, midterm and final evaluations of the plan.

Gender considerations

Beyond the SUN Checklist, all country plans were assessed with a gender lens for their consideration and inclusion of gender dimensions of nutrition. See supplemental [gender brief](#) for the specific factors that were considered.

Burkina Faso’s plan lists gender as one of its principles—“*the interest and contributions of women, men and vulnerable groups in society are taken into account in the formulation and implementation of nutrition-sensitive and -specific actions.*” While gender is clearly acknowledged as an important factor, there is an absence of details on how gender will be mainstreamed across plan actions.

This could be strengthened through the following recommendations. It is acknowledged that some of this may have already been completed or documented in supplemental planning documents.

- **Situation analysis:** Data in the situational analysis should be sex- and age-disaggregated for nutrition-specific indicators and relevant nutrition-sensitive indicators to inform targeted and appropriate interventions. If not already done, a gender assessment could be conducted as part of an updated situational analysis to fully assess gender-related dimensions of nutrition in the Burkina Faso context (e.g. exploring traditional gender roles/norms and how these may influence nutrition).
- **Planned actions:** While several activities incorporate gender dimensions for nutrition, ensure that relevant planned actions consider the unique circumstances of different populations based on the situational/gender assessment, including actions that address underlying inequities and broader harmful gender norms, where possible. As well, establish mechanisms to assess and address the specific needs of men, women, boys and girls across planned actions.
- **Capacity building:** Capacity-building actions should include measures to encourage active participation of both men and women (and address any unique needs or potential barriers to participation). Capacity-building efforts should also broadly integrate gender discussions, where relevant, to address gaps in knowledge and action around gender-related needs and differences.
- **Monitoring and evaluation:** Selection of appropriate gender-related indicators should be based on Burkina Faso's individual situational/gender analysis. Relevant data should also be disaggregated by sex and age, and there should be a documented plan for how sex-disaggregated data will be used to inform decision making. For nutrition-specific indicators, it is recommended that all should be sex-disaggregated, and disaggregation of nutrition-sensitive indicators should be determined based on the country context.

For future nutrition planning at both national and subnational level, the involvement of gender-experienced stakeholders (e.g. Ministry of Women's Affairs, gender representative CSOs, relevant UN agencies/international NGOs) and the discussion of gender norms and differences can strengthen the consideration of gender across nutrition actions.

Moving forward

These recommendations can be applied to either the ongoing implementation process for Burkina Faso's national nutrition plan or to the next iteration of the plan once the time frame of the current plan comes to a close in 2020. Country stakeholders should refer back the [SUN Checklist](#) to consider other areas of improvement. For additional information on how closely this plan aligns with the SUN Checklist, please contact SMS or MQSUN+@path.org to request a full copy of the plan assessment.

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 60 countries within the SUN Movement to deliver policies and programmes which reduce malnutrition.

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