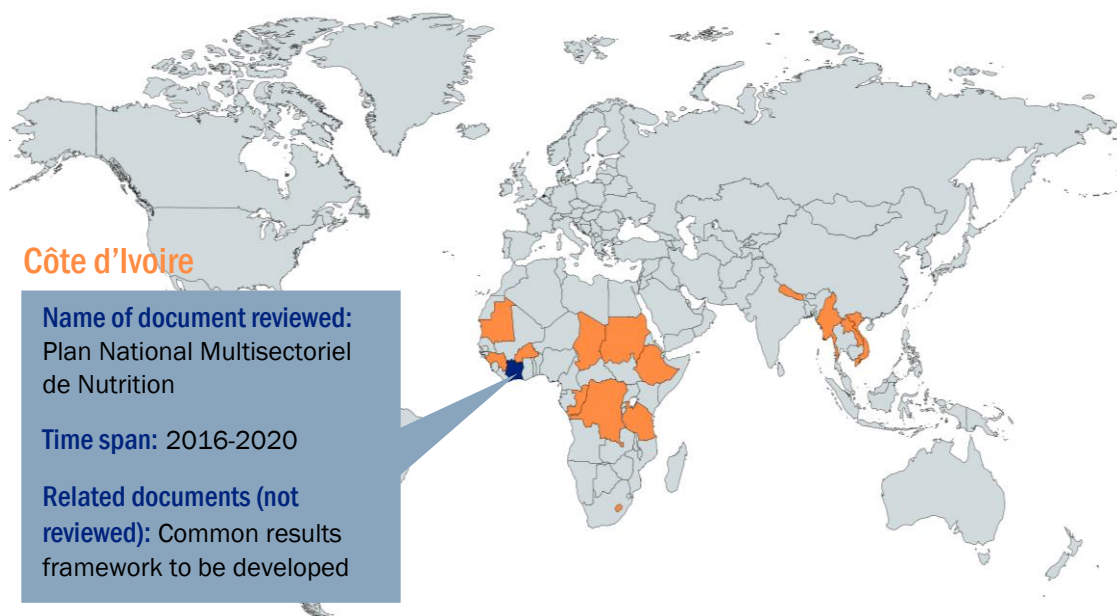


National Nutrition Plan Assessment:

Côte d'Ivoire

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 Côte d'Ivoire, 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

Côte d'Ivoire’s *Plan National Multisectoriel de Nutrition 2016-2020* is the country’s first multisectoral nutrition plan since it joined the SUN Movement in 2013. The plan involves 13 ministries and is organised around seven strategic results: 1) improved nutritional practices and preventative measures; 2) strengthened malnutrition case management; 3) increased availability and access to nutritious and diverse foods; 4) improved food safety; 5) improved resilience to food and nutrition crises; 6) improved access to safe water and sanitation; and 7) strengthened enabling environment for nutrition.

Key strengths

Côte d'Ivoire's plan provides a solid overall picture of the nutrition situation and causal factors in country; and, alongside the identification of current programmatic challenges, leads clearly to the priority actions in the plan. Below are a few key strengths that emerged from the review:

- ✓ Describes the current nutritional status of children and women of reproductive age, and presents the multiple causes of malnutrition according to UNICEF's conceptual framework with country-specific analyses, which also incorporate gender dimensions.
- ✓ Includes expected results that are consistent with all relevant World Health Assembly targets on undernutrition, as well as a target to reduce overweight.
- ✓ Comprises a multi-pronged approach to address nutrition emergencies, including emergency planning (e.g. establishing national and regional committees to assess risk and an early warning system), social protection measures for communities in crisis and long-term development activities (e.g. promoting income-generating activities among vulnerable populations and female literacy); includes a comprehensive strategy towards vulnerable populations in the face of disasters.
- ✓ Contains actions to advocate for mobilisation of funds for the plan from donors and partners; carefully considers risks to implementation.
- ✓ Mentions capacity building of technical nutrition knowledge in several activities, at both individual (e.g. for schoolteachers, social workers) and institutional (e.g. laboratories) levels as well as actions to train all levels of government to incorporate nutrition objectives in their programmes.
- ✓ Proposes conducting annual, mid-term and final evaluations of plan implementation to inform strategies; proposes a central database to ensure consolidation and validation of data.

Key recommendations

Area 1: Situational analysis and policy and programming review

- While the plan includes some emergency response actions, it does not mention strategies to improve the overall emergency response. In addition, the plan does outline certain risks to implementation, but does not provide mitigation strategies to these risks.
 - **Recommendation:** Consider developing mitigation strategies to respond to identified risks to plan implementation. As well, assess existing disaster responses and include emergency plan development and early warning surveillance system strengthening and/or ensure emergency responses are in line with Sphere standards, as appropriate.

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

- While the plan has clear high-level endorsement and mentions advocacy and communication activities at the national level, it does not provide clarity on how these activities will engage nongovernmental partners and those working at the subnational level.
 - **Recommendation:** If not already done, consider developing a corresponding advocacy and communication strategy to ensure advocacy with key stakeholders at multiple levels (e.g. politicians, community leaders, plan beneficiaries) to facilitate buy-in, resource mobilisation 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

- The plan lacks estimates of the cost of the proposed activities and existing levels of financing.
 - **Recommendation:** Assess which activities in the plan need to be initiated or expanded, estimate their costs and communicate the gap to decision-makers in the government and donor community when advocating for resources. In the event of a financial shortfall, 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.

Area 4: Implementation and management arrangements

- The key stakeholders (e.g. government, UN, civil society, etc.)—who have been involved in plan development and are committed to its implementation—are not clearly identified, and responsible parties and detailed timelines for implementation are not allocated for the priority actions.
 - **Recommendation:** Develop a matrix that states the lead and supporting organisations for each activity and includes timelines to support annual operational planning.
- The plan clearly identifies capacity constraints as a major obstacle to past success and outlines activities that will work towards developing capacities. However, it lacks sufficient details on how this will be achieved.
 - **Recommendation:** Ensure capacity-building activities consider the available institutional arrangements for training or available development partner support, and the necessary resources, timeframe and target participation for training.

Area 5: Monitoring, evaluation, operational research and review

- While the targets included in the plan align with the World Health Assembly targets, it does not include indicators of progress for each proposed activity.
 - **Recommendation:** Include outcome and process indicators for each activity, with baseline and targets (final and annual) and sources of information in the common results framework (mentioned but not elaborated on in the plan). In addition, the next plan iteration should contain these basic elements (even if a detailed monitoring and evaluation document is later developed) so appropriate human and financial resources can be planned for as soon as the plan is approved.
- Although the plan includes research as a specific outcome, it does not describe how research priorities will be coordinated or how research findings will be disseminated.
 - **Recommendation:** Identify roles of specific research institutions and how they will work together with *Conseil National pour la Nutrition* to prioritise research topics and disseminate findings.

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.

Côte d'Ivoire's plan mentions gender equality, low education/empowerment of women and lack of time as factors that need to be addressed to achieve better nutrition.

However, it does not include gender equity as a crosscutting principle nor discusses 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.

- **Situational analysis:** While the plan includes sex-disaggregated data on the rates of anaemia and overweight for men and women, data in the situational analysis should be further 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 Côte d'Ivoire context (e.g. exploring traditional gender roles/norms and how these may influence nutrition).
- **Planned actions:** Ensure that relevant planned actions consider the unique circumstances of different populations based on the gender assessment, including actions that address underlying inequities and broader harmful gender norms, where possible. As well, include gender equality as a crosscutting strategic principle or goal, and 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 Côte d'Ivoire's individual situational 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-related 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 Côte d'Ivoire'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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