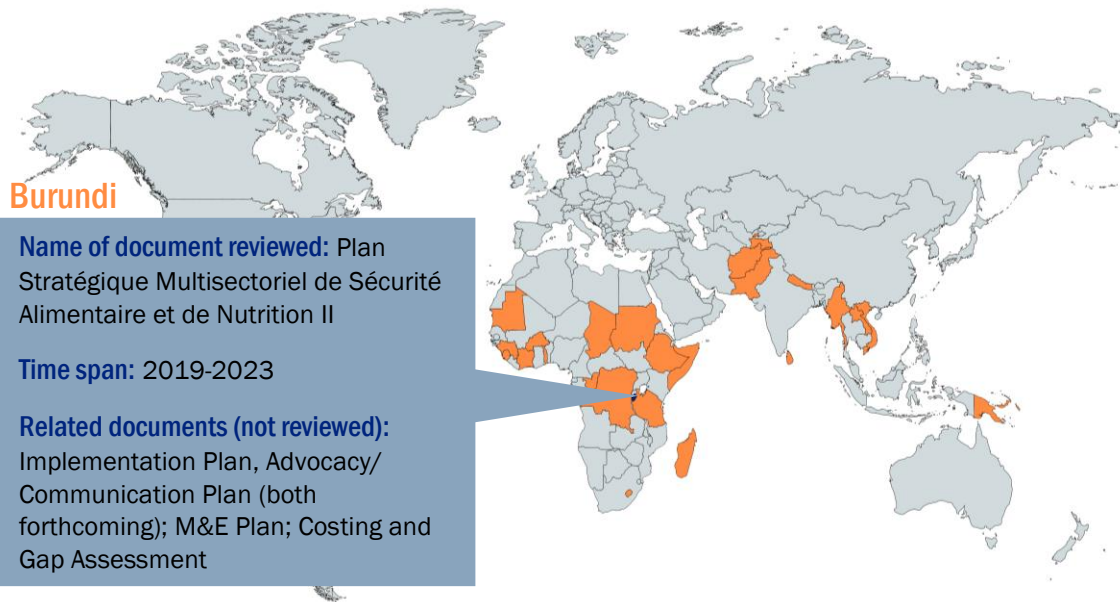


# National Nutrition Plan Review: Burundi

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 and 2020, at the request of the SMS, the Maximising the Quality of Scaling Up Nutrition Plus (MQSUN+) project undertook a systematic review of 26 countries’ multisectoral national nutrition plans, according to the criteria in the SUN Checklist. This brief summarises select strengths and suggested areas for improvement with recommendations for Burundi, 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. Where relevant, specific suggestions for increasing gender sensitivity for the plan are also included (see MQSUN+’s [gender brief](#) for more information).



## Overview

Burundi's *Plan Stratégique Multisectoriel de Sécurité Alimentaire et de Nutrition (PSMSAN) II* is the country's second multisectoral strategic plan for food security and nutrition, which continues and expands upon the first multisectoral strategic plan for food security and nutrition 2014-2017 (PSMSAN I). PSMSAN II aims to improve the nutritional status of the population through multisectoral actions and by strengthening five dimensions of nutrition action: (1) governance and multisectoral coordination; (2) population access and use of health and nutrition care; (3) availability and access to nutrient-rich and diverse foods; (4) social protection, resilience and emergency response; and (5) promotion of good nutrition, hygiene and sanitation practices.

## Key strengths

The plan provides an appropriate combination of actions and strategies to address the nutrition-specific, nutrition-sensitive and governance issues laid within. Below are some of the key strengths that emerged from the review:

- Provides a comprehensive overview of nutritional status, trends, determinants and variations amongst different groups in the country; and reports disaggregated results for males and females along several measures and describes how gender dynamics influence nutrition.
- Provides a review of nutrition action to date, including a strong analysis of gaps across and within sectors, along with details of activities implemented in the previous plan by region; clearly describes the lessons learned and how they will be incorporated and addressed in this plan.
- Highlights gender equality as one of its guiding principles, including specific actions that consider the gender dimensions of nutrition, and promotes the mainstreaming of gender throughout.
- Prioritises areas and communities facing a high prevalence of malnutrition and/or livelihood constraints to ensure equitable nutrition action.
- Describes a robust theory of change and includes detailed planned actions which correspond well to the goals and objectives set out.

## Key recommendations

### Area 1: Situational analysis and policy and programming review

- Several of the actions proposed (e.g. ‘planning’, ‘research and development’) do not specify the target population or responsible parties, and in some cases, what specific steps will be included.
  - **Recommendation:** In the forthcoming implementation plan, ensure that each activity includes sufficient detail, as described above, along with a timeline of when each task is to be carried out.
- Although the plan clearly outlines the roles and responsibilities of the national governance committees, the same level of detail is not provided for the subnational committees.
  - **Recommendation:** If not already defined, develop terms of reference for provincial and lower-level government committees that outlines their responsibilities and describes how they will coordinate with each other and the national-level corollaries.

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

- Whilst the plan clearly describes how stakeholders were engaged in its development, it is not clear whether or how high-level validation has been (or will be) assured.
  - **Recommendation:** If not already achieved, facilitate validation of the plan and ensure that the front page is signed by a high-level government representative, and if possible, include high-level signatories from across sectors to formally document the commitment of the various sectors and the highest level of government.
- Whilst sensitisation and advocacy amongst stakeholders is one of the included actions, no specifications on how this will be accomplished are included.

→ **Recommendation:** Ensure that the noted forthcoming communication plan includes advocacy actions to promote the plan amongst public figures at multiple levels (e.g. national-level politicians, community leaders), to foster buy-in and leadership for the multisectoral approach to nutrition, support and strengthen the roles of nutrition champions and promote implementation by communicating the aims of the plan to subnational level and beneficiaries.

### Area 3: Costs and budgetary framework

- The reviewed plan did not contain cost estimates; however, the reviewers are aware that MQSUN+ recently undertook a costing and financial gap analysis of the planned activities (not included or assessed as part of this review), indicating a near 44% financial gap. However, as yet there is no process detailed on how to prioritise the actions of the Plan should there continue to be a shortfall in funding.

→ **Recommendation:** Noting the current financial gap, ensure a plan is in place to mobilise additional funds and develop criteria for prioritising target groups, geographic areas and/or interventions based on the available financial resources.

- Although the plan includes a section on financial tracking and notes advocating for a nutrition budget line item, it does not reference an existing mechanism to track budget and expenditure data across sectors.

→ **Recommendation:** Review existing sectoral financial tracking mechanisms, and if a sufficient tracking system is not already in place, assess the feasibility of adapting or developing a financial tracking system that includes both on-budget and off-budget funding for planned activities, as well as allocations and expenditures to make disbursement decisions more transparent.

### Area 4: Implementation and management arrangements

- Whilst capacity building is mentioned in the plan, detailed capacity development actions are not included—despite the situational analysis describing low capacity as a key weakness during implementation of the previous plan.

→ **Recommendation:** Consider conducting a capacity assessment of technical and governance abilities amongst stakeholders involved in plan implementation and developing specific steps to address identified gaps. Capacity-building plans should include measures to encourage active participation of both men and women and address any unique needs or potential barriers to participation.

### Area 5: Monitoring, evaluation (M&E), operational research and review

- The plan does not provide an overview of M&E actions to be undertaken, or the coordination mechanism that will oversee M&E processes; however, a separate M&E plan has been developed (not included in this review).

→ **Recommendation:** Ensure that the establishment of the M&E system occurs in the first year of plan implementation and that the M&E plan is supported by adequate resources.

## Moving forward

These recommendations can be considered and applied, as relevant, to either the ongoing implementation process for Burundi'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 2023. Immediate priorities to consider include resource mobilisation or prioritisation planning based on the financial gap and ensuring the forthcoming operational plan includes sufficient details on roles, timeframe and indicators for each action as well as how to engage subnational stakeholders. For additional information on how closely this plan aligns with the SUN Checklist, please contact SMS to request a full copy of the plan review.

For more practical guidance on multisectoral nutrition planning, see the resources included in the [SUN Checklist](#) and refer to the [forthcoming multisectoral nutrition planning toolkit from MQSUN+](#)

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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### Acknowledgements

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