



United Nations System Standing Committee on Nutrition



19 June 2020

Mr António Guterres
Secretary-General
United Nations
New York

Subject: Merge of the UN System Standing Committee on Nutrition and the UN Network for Scaling-Up Nutrition

Dear Secretary-General,

We are writing to you in our capacity as steering committee of the UN System Standing Committee on Nutrition (UNSCN) and the UN Network for Scaling Up Nutrition (SUN). We would like to inform you about the revitalization of nutrition coordination in the UN system.

The UNSCN was established in 1977 by ECOSOC while the UN Network for SUN was established in 2013 by the principals of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the World Health Organization (WHO), the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the World Food Programme (WFP) in support of the SUN Movement. Initially, the UNSCN dealt with both global policy coherence for nutrition as well as coordination of the UN agencies, funds and programmes with a nutrition mandate. With the initiation of the SUN Movement, the country coordination in SUN countries was left to the newly established UN Network for SUN. Therefore, we had two entities with two separate secretariats, which was neither efficient nor effective when it came to translating global policies into national strategies and vice-versa informing global policies through national realities.

To harmonize our efforts to improve nutrition and food security both at the global as well as the country level, we embarked on a reform process in early 2018. With this reform process we respond to the challenge of achieving SDG2 by 2030 and the ambitions set out by the UN Reform processes you launched in 2017. We have extensively consulted amongst the heads of Nutrition of the involved UN agencies, funds and programmes and were continuously supported by our deputies. We have now concluded the process and have agreed unanimously to merge the UN Network for SUN and the UNSCN in a new body that we would like to name "UN Nutrition".

This merge is fully aligned with and in support of the UN Reform agenda as we believe that UN Nutrition supported by a lean secretariat would lead to smoother collaboration, a stronger voice for nutrition and enhanced impact on the ground. It would also mean a realisation of recommendation 7 of the Framework for Action of the Second International Conference on Nutrition¹.

The current reporting obligation of the UNSCN to ECOSOC will be maintained by UN Nutrition. The attached Terms of Reference for UN Nutrition are fully in line with the current ECOSOC mandate but enhance the scope of the new UN Nutrition to strengthen nutrition governance and coordination not only at the global but also

¹ Recommendation 7: Strengthen nutrition governance and coordinate policies, strategies and programmes of the United Nations system agencies, programmes and funds within their respective mandates

at the country level. The attached TORs are also fully in line with the work of the SUN Movement and the new SUN 3.0. UN Nutrition will cover all of the tasks previously governed by the UN Network of SUN. The SUN Movement Coordinator was consulted during the merger and drafting of the TORs for the new entity.

FAO, the current host of the UNSCN has offered to host the secretariat of UN Nutrition, which was accepted by WFP, the current host of the UN Network for SUN. Working modalities are being finalised this month. In addition, we will send a letter to all Resident Coordinators announcing the inception of UN Nutrition and how it will serve the nutrition-related work at the country level by better coordinating the UN agencies, funds and programmes. UN Nutrition will continue to work with the Development Coordination Office (DCO) to showcase how nutrition can be an integrative force as part of the sustainable development cooperation frameworks.

With this letter we also seek your support to inform the Chief Executives Board for Coordination (CEB) about this positive step. We kindly request, in your capacity as chair of the CEB, to circulate this letter among the CEB Members informing them about the inception of UN Nutrition. Currently many UN agencies beyond our five entities are either members of UNSCN or the UN network for SUN at country level and would benefit from this update at the Principals' level.

We look forward to reinforcing our collaboration in the area of nutrition and count on your leadership and support to move this agenda forward.

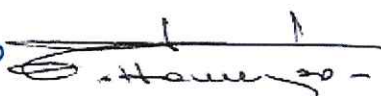
Sincerely,



Qu Dongyu
Director-General
FAO



Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus
Director-General
WHO



Gilbert F. Houngbo
President
IFAD



Henrietta H. Fore
Executive Director
UNICEF



David M. Beasley
Executive Director
WFP

Cc: Ms Amina J. Mohammed, United Nations Deputy Secretary-General
Ms Simona Petrova, Secretary of the Chief Executives Board for Coordination
Ms Gerda Verburg, SUN Movement Coordinator