

GUIDANCE NOTE ON INTEGRATION OF NUTRITION IN THE UNITED NATIONS DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE FRAMEWORK

A Guidance Note for United Nations Country Teams



United Nations System Standing Committee on Nutrition

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The paper is available on the UNSCN website at www.unscn.org.

ACRONYMS

CCA	Common Country Assessment
DRR	Disaster Risk Reduction
DFID	Department for International Development (UK)
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization
GNR	Global Nutrition Report
ICN2	Second International Conference on Nutrition
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MDG	Millennium Development Goal
MIYCN	Maternal Infant and Young Child Nutrition
MSNP	Multi-sector nutrition plan
MQSUN	Maximizing the Quality of Scaling Up Nutrition Programs
NCDs	Non-communicable diseases
NDP	National Development Plan
NSDS	National Sustainable Development Strategies
NRA s	Non-Resident Agencies
PINS	Pakistan Integrated Nutrition Strategy
PRS	Poverty Reduction Strategy
PSG	Peer Support Group
REACH	Renewed Efforts Against Child Hunger and Under-nutrition
RDT	Regional Directors' Team
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
SMART	Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Time bound
SOFI	State of Food Insecurity and Nutrition in the World
SUN	Scaling Up Nutrition Movement
UN	United Nations
UNCT	United Nations Country Team
UNDAF	United Nations Development Assistance Framework
UNDG	United Nations Development Group
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNN	United Nations Network for the Scaling Up Nutrition Movement
UNRC	United Nations Resident Coordinator
UNSCN	United Nations System Standing Committee for Nutrition
UNWOMEN	United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women
WHA	World Health Assembly
WBG	World Bank Group
WHO	World Health Organization

SECTION 1

Introduction to the Guidance Note

- 1.1. Purpose
- 1.2. Structure and scope
- 1.3. Target audience



1.1. Purpose

The purpose of this Guidance Note is to assist United Nation Country Teams (UNCTs) with the integration of nutrition into the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF),¹ using a multi-sectoral approach. It includes how best to reflect the risks and opportunities related to all forms of malnutrition in the Common Country Analysis (CCA)² and the UN Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF).

This is an important and timely endeavour considering the outcome of the Second International Conference on Nutrition (ICN2) and, in particular, the proclamation of the UN Decade of Action on Nutrition (2016-2025). The Nutrition Decade provides a unique window of opportunity for the UN and key stakeholders to provide coherent and intensified support to country-led policy development and programming to accelerate the achievement of global nutrition targets, as well as contribute to the attainment of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

This Guidance Note is organized around a standard methodology, with flexibility for adapting to specific country context, based on existing good practices. It provides the following:

- A brief overview on the relevance of nutrition to the achievement of all the SDGs and national development priorities;
- A practical set of tools that can help UNCTs engage effectively with country and development partners in analysing nutrition situation, and on this basis, to include priority actions for tackling all forms of malnutrition, its causes and consequences;
- Expected performance outcomes related to including nutrition in the UNDAF, along with tools for quality assurance, nutrition core monitoring and evaluation (M&E) indicators for UNCTs, and country partners to consider including.

This Note is part of efforts to ensure an effective response by the UN system to assist Member States to prepare and implement coherent and balanced development policies that effectively tackle malnutrition. It should be used along with the 2017 UNDAF Guidance and related documents available on the UNDG website,³ as well as tools provided by specialized UN agencies and the United Nations Network (UNN) for Scaling Up Nutrition (SUN), including Renewed Efforts Against Child Hunger and Under-Nutrition (REACH).⁴ Together, these resources can be leveraged to support integration of nutrition into country UNDAFs.

¹ The term UNDAF is throughout this guidance note and the same principles should apply to countries developing a One UN Plan in Delivering as One countries.

² According to the UNDG "How to prepare an UNDAF Part I: Guidelines for UNCTs", each UNCT can choose any of the three following Common Country Analysis options: (i) UNCT participation in government-led analytical work and use of government analysis, including sectoral reviews and analyses; (ii) Complementary UN-supported analytical work, with a focus on gaps in the existing analysis; and (iii) A full Common Country Assessment (CCA).

³ United Nations Development Group. UNDAF Guidance and Support Package. "How to prepare an UNDAF (Part I)" and "How to Prepare an UNDAF (Part II)" – technical guidance to UN Country Teams and United Nations Development Group, Programming Reference Guide: Common Country Programming Processes.

⁴ United Nations Network Strategy for Scaling Up Nutrition (SUN), 2016-2020. Rome: World Food Programme 2016, in its capacity as host agency of the UN Network for SUN/REACH Secretariat.

1.2. Structure and scope

The guidance in this Note is structured according to the four steps of UNDAF preparation and implementation, each of which should be adapted to country context. For instance, some entry points, actions and tools for mainstreaming nutrition may be used in parallel or at different stages of the UNDAF cycle, depending on the needs and capacities of the country, UNCTs and other development partners.

Section 1, which is introductory, includes brief statements on the purpose of the Guidance Note, as well as its target audience. Section 2 provides an overview of the rationale for and key elements of mainstreaming nutrition, and opportunities and approaches for UNCTs to coordinate with development assistance partners on mainstreaming activities. Section 3 introduces and expands on the Quick Guide with regards to the 'how' and is thus the core of the Guidance Note. Using the main steps for UN country programming, it describes specific entry points and related actions, tools and resources for mainstreaming nutrition in the CCA and the UNDAF. The focus is on UNDAF preparation. For countries that have just begun UNDAF implementation, or are mid-cycle, the UNDAF annual review is highlighted as an important entry point. Finally, Section 4 presents suggestions for further learning and improving performance in a results-based context.

While the primary focus is mainstreaming nutrition into the UNDAF, and into the specific programmes and projects of the UNCTs and individual UN agencies, it is important to also consider the ultimate goal: namely, that UNCTs effectively support countries in mainstreaming nutrition into their national development policies, strategies and plans, within the context of the SDGs and according to each country's national context and priorities. As such, this Guidance Note is oriented to i) meet the needs of UNCTs, and ii) through support provided by UNCTs, increase national capacity to address nutrition through a multi-sector approach in line with the existing latest global guidelines and framework, as highlighted in the UN Nutrition Strategy/Agenda. Such capacity building must take into account rights-based issues related to gender and societal equity, with a focus on the most vulnerable population groups, such as adolescent girls, pregnant and lactating women, young children, the urban poor, and other marginalized demographics.

The Note is also a response to findings from the UNDG approved "Guidance Note on Integrating Food and Nutrition Security into Country Analysis and UNDAF (Guide for UNCTs, 2011)" and the "UN Country Level Programmatic Guidelines: UNDAF Guidance on Nutrition: Review Study", including feedback from UNCTs regarding their need for updated guidance tools, as well as information on good practices, lessons learned and case studies (UNSCN, 2015).

Plus, it emphasizes the unprecedented global nutrition policy efforts and commitments related to the outcomes of ICN2, the Work Programme of the UN Decade of Action on Nutrition (2016-2025), growing country level experiences related to the SUN Framework of Action (2011), the updated SUN Roadmap and Strategy (2016-2020), and the UN Network for SUN Strategy (2016-2020).

As such, this Guidance Note represents an update on the overall nutrition mainstreaming process to incorporate latest global evidences, commitments, policy guidelines and related developments. It has also drawn from good practices identified in selected Guidance Notes for mainstreaming into UNDAF: non-communicable diseases (2015); gender (2014); climate change (2010); and environmental sustainability (2009).

1.3. Target audience

This guidance note is intended for UN Resident Coordinators and staff, namely:

- UN Country Teams and all programme staff, including UN Network Chairs and Focal Points;
- Regional Directors Teams (RDTs) and UN staff in Peer Support Groups (PSGs) providing quality support and assurance.

Box 1. Functions of the UN system

- **Guidance:** The UN system can assist Member States in prioritizing the appropriate combination of nutrition actions that is required as per the country context.
- **Coordination:** The UN system is well placed to assist with the mainstreaming of nutrition into country action through its coordinated support for national planning processes.
- **Convenor:** The UN system has the mandate to convene and engage with key government and development stakeholders in a given country, in order to advocate for and support including nutrition concerns in national policies, strategies and plans, towards achieving national and global nutrition targets, including the SDGs.

SECTION 2

Malnutrition: Background

This section of the Guidance Note highlights the rationale for mainstreaming nutrition and key elements of the mainstreaming process. It also includes a brief overview of opportunities and approaches for UNCTs, including coordinating with development partners.

- 2.1. Why mainstream nutrition**
- 2.2. The key nutrition mainstreaming elements**
- 2.3. Key opportunities and approaches for UNCTs**
- 2.4. Coordinating with development partners**



2.1. Why mainstream nutrition

Malnutrition affects virtually all countries worldwide, with different manifestations - namely undernutrition, micronutrient deficiencies, and overweight/obesity - often co-existing within the same country, communities and even individuals. Disparities in the severity of malnutrition according to demographic and income level are well documented. Adolescent girls, pregnant and lactating women, young children, rural and urban poor, and other vulnerable and marginalised population groups, especially those facing emergency and fragile situations, are among the most affected, requiring specific and targeted attention.

Unless effectively addressed, malnutrition will have significant impact on countries' capacity for economic growth, poverty alleviation and achievement of all the SDGs. Especially when malnutrition occurs early in life, from conception until two years of age, the consequences are profound, irreversible and life-long. Malnutrition during this critical window leads to increased risk of infections, poor health and ultimately death in young children. Those who survive malnutrition in childhood face a diminished quality of life in adolescence and adulthood due to impaired brain and physical growth. These handicaps lead to poor school performance during school age and reduced productivity and earning capacity in adulthood, as well as increased risk of nutrition related non-communicable diseases such as diabetes. At population level, these effects hamper national economic growth and development.

Without increased efforts to improve the nutrition situation, the burden of malnutrition in all its forms will set back development gains. Attention should be given to improve nutrition of adolescent girls and women, optimal feeding practices of infants and young children, along with tackling the underlying causes of food insecurity, poor access to environmental health, and basic causes including gender and social inequities. Additionally, reform of food systems is absolutely critical to reducing malnutrition, as current food systems in a growing number of countries do not enable healthy diets, and low quality diets are the common denominator across all forms of malnutrition (FAO, 2017). A comprehensive nutrition response will have to be a core component of development policies and planning, if the global goal of elimination of all malnutrition forms is to be realized. The urgency of this need cannot be understated: current estimates indicate that after a long decline, hunger is actually increasing; that undernutrition persists and remains acute in certain population groups; and that overweight and obesity have risen to unprecedented levels (FAO, IFAD, UNICEF, WFP and WHO, 2017). While 1 in 3 people currently suffer from malnutrition, by 2025 projections indicate the number will be 1 in 2 (Global Panel on Agriculture and Food Systems for Nutrition, 2016).

Poor nutrition is further aggravated during humanitarian crises associated with natural and human made disasters. Malnutrition is a cross-cutting issue that has significant impact on and links to development across multiple sectors, including in humanitarian contexts. But, this can also create opportunities to develop coherent and efficient approaches that combine development and humanitarian agendas. Beneficial synergies between nutrition responses and development are also readily apparent with tackling nutrition-related non-communicable diseases (NCDs), for instance, and must be included in the design of interventions to enhance efficiency and avoid duplication.

There is overwhelming evidence showing that the benefits of eliminating malnutrition are enormous (see Box 2). Good nutritional status leads to sharper mental acuity and greater physical productivity thus improving economic performance at the individual level and supporting national societal and economic growth. Above all, addressing malnutrition in all its forms is essential for the fulfilment of human rights, particularly related to the Right to Adequate Food and Health, as well as the achievement of national development priorities. Improving nutrition is considered central to the achievement of sustainable and equitable development.

Box 2. The benefits of eliminating malnutrition in young children

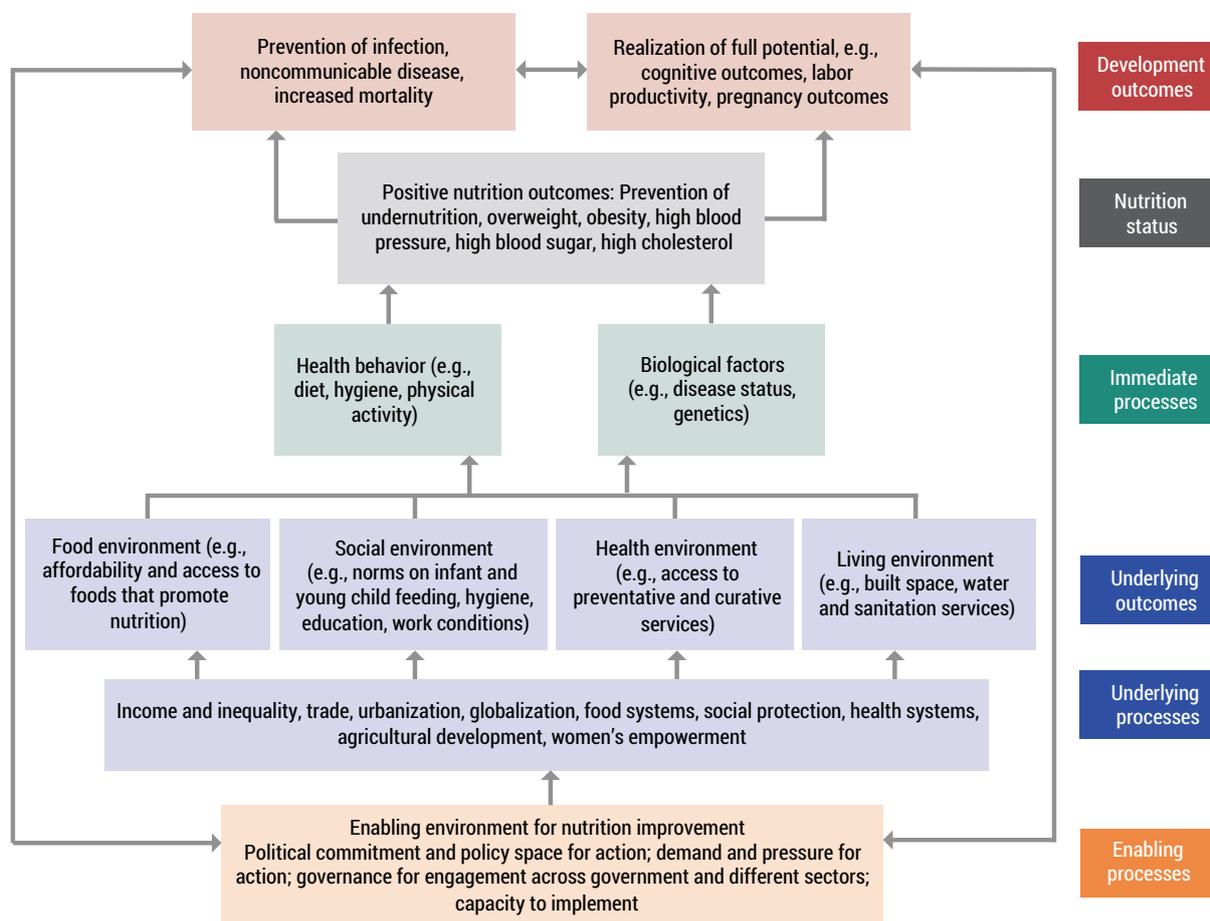
- Boost gross national product by 11% in Africa and Asia;
- Prevent more than 1/3 of child deaths per year;
- Improve school attainment by at least one year;
- Increase wages by 5-50%;
- Reduce poverty as well-nourished children are 33% more likely to escape poverty as adults;
- Empower women to be 10% more likely to run their own business; and
- Break the inter-generational cycle of poverty.

Source: *Haddad, 2013.*

On the other hand, malnutrition in all its forms impairs individual cognitive development and health as well as productivity, which hampers national development and growth. Hence, nutrition is considered both an input to, and an outcome of sustained development (UNSCN, 2014). While it is relevant to all the SDGs, 12 out of the 17 SDGs require good nutrition to achieve their own targets (IFPRI, 2016).

Addressing the immediate, underlying and basic causes of malnutrition in all its forms requires effective nutrition-specific interventions, including community-based programmes, implemented at scale. Nutrition-specific interventions need to be complemented with nutrition-sensitive action across multiple sectors including health and health system strengthening, agriculture and food system strengthening, education, water and sanitation, gender, social protection, trade, employment and labour policies, and poverty reduction, as well as environmental impact.

Figure 1.
The underlying drivers of malnutrition



Source: *International Food Policy Research Institute. 2016. From Promise to Impact Ending Malnutrition by 2030. Figure 6.1. Washington, DC. Reproduced with permission from the International Food Policy Research Institute www.ifpri.org. The original report is available online at <http://ebrary.ifpri.org/utills/getfile/collection/p15738coll2/id/130354/filename/130565.pdf>.*

The UN System is a critical player in the range of stakeholders taking responsibility and being accountable for realizing the nutrition related SDGs. UN agencies are present in a large majority of countries, with significant engagement, expertise and experience. They play collective normative and analytical roles, exercising technical capacity at global, regional, and country levels. With optimally aligned and coherent country level nutrition action, as part of the UNDAF, the UN has immense potential to provide effective support for evidence-based policy formulation and scaling up of nutrition-specific and nutrition-sensitive interventions to address malnutrition in all its forms and in all UN member states. Hence, the reasons why it is now critically important to mainstream nutrition into the UNDAF.

2.2. Nutrition mainstreaming elements

Knowledge and understanding of ‘what’ works is for the most part well established, with evidence-based, effective solutions clearly identified in the 2013 Lancet Nutrition Series. Furthermore, inspired by the UNICEF Nutrition Conceptual Framework, the Compendium of Actions for Nutrition (CAN) has been developed by the UN Network for SUN/REACH Secretariat in consultation with FAO, IFAD, UNICEF, WFP and WHO, as well as academic experts (WFP, 2016). The conceptual framework identified household food insecurity, inadequate maternal and child care practices, poor health environment (related to water, sanitation and hygiene) and inadequate – and often inaccessible – health services as the underlying determinants of malnutrition. Basic causes include human, economic, political and environmental factors. With a view to operationalizing the UNICEF framework, the CAN groups into four main sections: (1) Food, Agriculture and Healthy Diets; (2) Maternal and Child Care; (3) Health; and (4) Social Protection. This compendium can be used as resource to support country teams as they set priorities and take informed decisions for concrete, impact-oriented action on nutrition that address the immediate, underlying and basic causes of malnutrition.

Member States and the international community committed to eradicating malnutrition in all its forms in the ICN2 Rome Declaration on Nutrition. This commitment is reiterated in the declaration of the UN Decade of Action for Nutrition (2016-2025), whose Work Programme is centred on six cross cutting and integrative areas for impact related to the SDGs: (1) Sustainable, resilient food systems for healthy diets; (2) Aligned health systems providing universal coverage of essential nutrition actions; (3) Social protection and nutrition education; (4) Trade and investment for improved nutrition; (5) Safe and supportive environments for nutrition at all ages; and (6) Strengthened governance and accountability for nutrition. While each of these thematic areas inform and frame action, they should not be seen as silos; in practice, policies and programmes should be linked to several areas at the same time. The ICN2, Nutrition Decade, and related initiatives have generated unprecedented momentum for reinvigorating efforts to scale up evidence-based intersectoral solutions to address all forms of malnutrition globally. This momentum is reflected in recent global agreements and frameworks – including the Action Plan on Noncommunicable Diseases (NCDs) – 2013-2020, and the Global Nutrition Agenda 2015.⁵

⁵ The UNGNA will be updated late 2017 to reflect the changes in the nutrition landscape, including the UN Decade of Action.

2.3. Opportunities and approaches for UNCTs

The UNDAF is the strategic programme framework that describes the collective response of the UN system to national development priorities. UNDAFs compliment and support implementation of existing national strategies, actions and networks, including those pertaining to nutrition. As such, each UNDAF preparation cycle can be used to identify opportunities for UNCTs to provide unified support to further advocate for nutrition. This should contribute to the advocacy for and articulation of high quality priorities within the national development framework. Furthermore, as part of the process of developing the UNDAF, UNCT support for country analysis could strengthen country analytical capacities, including the nutrition elements. The UN system should convene national stakeholders to review and discuss existing evidence. On this basis, agreements to include nutrition in national development policies and plans can be brokered. This process may involve helping prepare evidence-informed projects and programmes to address and prevent malnutrition, with strengthened information, monitoring and evaluations systems. This can then serve as an opportunity to leverage financial and technical assistance, in alignment with globally and inter-governmentally agreed nutrition targets and goals.

A key component of the advocacy support provided by UNCTs to Member States should relate to evaluating the costs and benefits of scaling up nutrition compared to inaction. Such estimates can contribute to making specific investment cases for nutrition, and can ensure that nutrition-related measures are reflected in national development plans with adequate budgets allocated for effective implementation. For example, the 2014 Global Nutrition Report (GNR) estimated that every dollar invested in improving nutrition generated an average return of 16 dollars; with returns for some countries projected to be much higher. In Sri Lanka and South Africa, for instance, the ratio was estimated at 56:1 and 53:1 respectively (IFPRI, 2014). The Cost of Hunger in Africa (COHA) studies, led by the African Union Commission, provide an additional example. These analyses calculate economic losses associated with malnutrition for selected countries, highlighting the substantial costs to health, education, and potential productivity that occur when malnutrition is not curtailed (UNECA, 2014).

Including nutrition concerns in the UNDAF process can take place at two levels: (i) as a cross-cutting theme, with nutrition lens incorporated in all relevant UNDAF elements and thematic groups (e.g. Survival and Development or Health; Food Security and Nutrition; Education; Gender; and Emergency Response or Disaster Preparedness and Response); and (ii) as a nutrition-focused thematic pillar with specific outputs and activities contributing to a separate UNDAF outcome. The former can ensure that essential 'nutrition-specific' elements are included in the nutrition and food security related outcome, while 'nutrition-sensitive' aspects are included in other thematic outcomes. The latter helps to ensure that the nutrition issue receives dedicated attention, and that key nutrition-focused activities are included, albeit in close coordination with allied thematic groups and sectors.

Nutrition mainstreaming into UNDAF provides the opportunity to explore joint UNCT programmes and projects addressing malnutrition in all its forms (including under-nutrition, obesity, and micronutrient deficiencies), in line with global guidelines and national policy and context. Mainstreaming can also highlight existing nutrition knowledge and skills held by individual members of the UNCTs and can create the opportunity to combine and strengthen this expertise in a coordinated manner. Most likely, considerable nutrition-related work will have already been undertaken by UN agencies, including through the UN Network for SUN and other partners. However, the UN supported nutrition interventions may not be fully mapped or some ongoing efforts may not be recognised as part of a comprehensive multi-sector nutrition response. Such omissions are especially relevant to 'nutrition-sensitive' actions, such as access to water and sanitation, social welfare, education of adolescent girls, social protection, improved resilience, disaster preparedness and response, and climate change.

A mapping exercise to capture these activities offers an opportunity for countries to work on expanding access to basic nutrition services while at the same time creating a more comprehensive nutrition response that can be scaled up to assist the most vulnerable population groups, including providing human rights guarantees and nutrition integration into social protection programmes, typically via a delivery platform focused on social exclusion or gender issues, urban and rural poverty alleviation, or emergency and/or disaster preparedness and response. In other cases, nutrition actions supported by the UN may be mapped through the UN Inventory and/or REACH stakeholder and Nutrition Action Mapping tools, as highlighted in section one. These products may serve as helpful inputs to the UNDAF development process.

UNCTs should also be aware of nutrition vulnerability assessment and response initiatives, which provide important information regarding the regional dimensions of malnutrition, primarily with respect to emergency or fragile situations. These resources are often issued by specialised UN agencies and development partners. They include Regional and National Nutrition Bulletins, Food Security Bulletins, Vulnerability Assessment and Monitoring systems, and Cluster briefs (UNICEF, WHO, WFP, FAO among others).

These activities include the aforementioned nutrition vulnerability assessments and mapping of ongoing nutrition related initiatives, as well as analyses of agency comparative advantage, cost analyses, and documentation of ongoing nutrition programmes, technical assistance and capacity development for evidence-based nutrition mainstreaming into national development strategies and plans. Including a nutrition pillar also works to secure the allocation of adequate human and financial resources to nutrition-related activities and processes.

The following factors should be considered when choosing the most appropriate strategy for incorporation of nutrition concerns into a given UNDAF process: (i) country context on the magnitude and scope of malnutrition, (ii) existing national capacity for nutrition-specific and nutrition-sensitive programming, including that of UN agencies and development partners, and (iii) opportunities for leveraging resources. Applying either of the two or a combination of both approaches will require an understanding of: (i) the significance of tackling nutrition in relation to national development priorities and the context of the SDGs, (ii) the main causes and actions required to address these, and (iii) country-specific entry points to address nutrition.

2.4. Coordinating with development partners

Taking an inter-sectoral approach to tackling the multiple causes of malnutrition requires collective and coordinated efforts between all relevant actors, including government in relevant sectors, UN agencies and other development partners, and SUN Networks (in view of the SUN Movements in many countries).

It is paramount that the UN system be geared to provide leadership support to countries to set, track and achieve nutrition targets and contribute to achieving the SDGs, in close coordination with other important stakeholders for maximum impact. UN inter-agency work on integrating nutrition into UNDAF can help facilitate joint approaches and actions to achieve greater synergy and effectiveness of UN agency activities in line with global guidelines and agreements, and national development priorities and context.

The importance of UN agencies coordinating and collaborating with other development assistance partners is emphasized in the guidance on thematic mainstreaming provided in the Guidelines for UNCTs and How to Prepare an UNDAF for UNCTs.⁶ This is particularly crucial in the context of supporting national efforts and actions to address nutrition. This will also ensure the development of a comprehensive response involving actors from across areas of expertise, bodies of knowledge, and the mandates and priorities of the key relevant development partners. A well-coordinated, concerted effort is required to mobilize the necessary commitment and resources. Other UN-inter-agency efforts, such as the UN Network for SUN and REACH,⁷ can be leveraged to support mainstreaming nutrition into the UNDAF, building upon existing complementary efforts.

A coordinated approach will help avoid initiatives that are non-coherent, duplicative, fragmented and ad-hoc. It will also help ensure alignment and coherence between related national policies, strategies and plans. Furthermore, a coordinated approach can and should contribute to building a strong national institutional framework for promoting nutrition, led by the government with the involvement of private sector, civil society, the UNCTs, and other development partners.

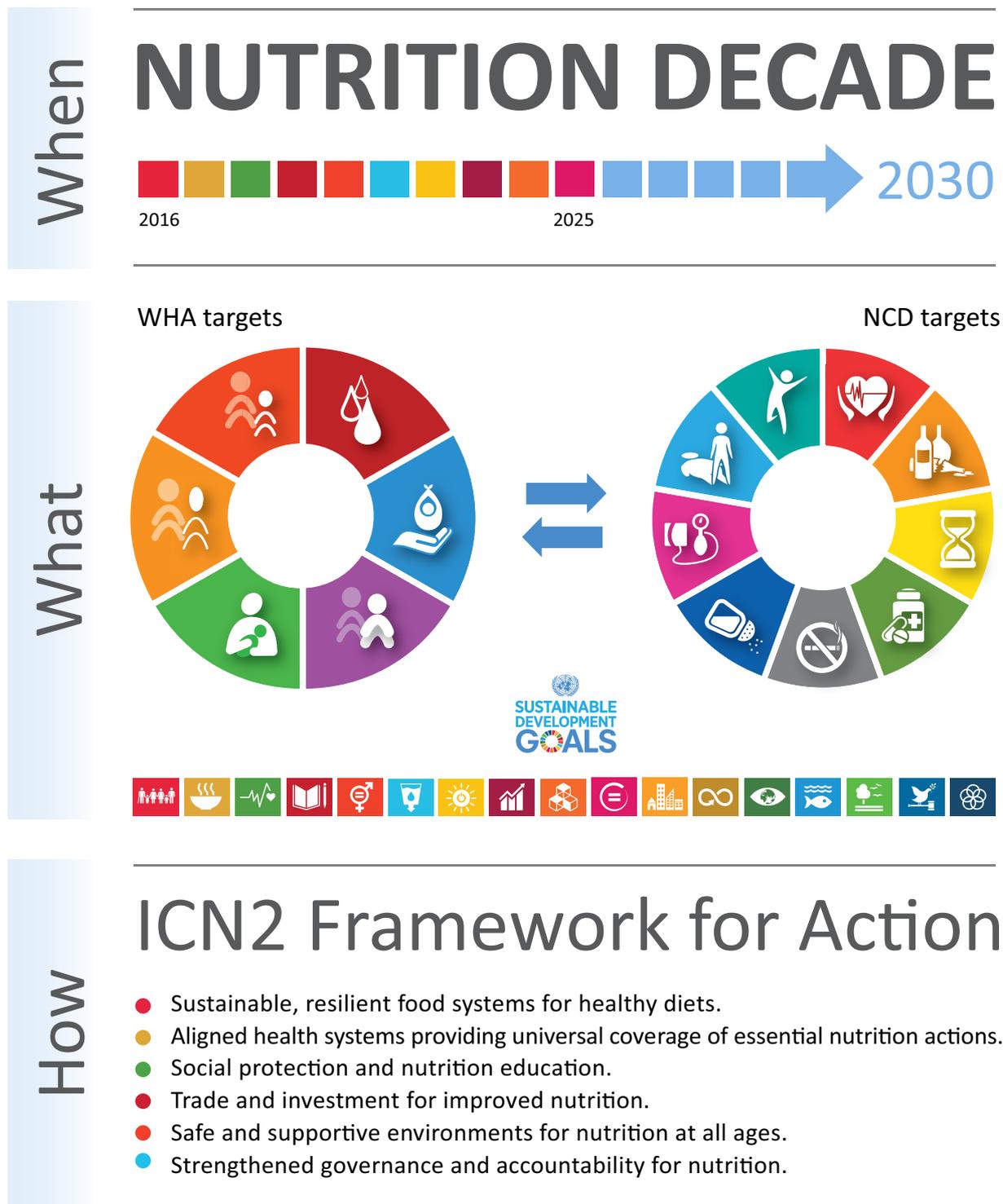
The importance of coordinating efforts to ensure an effective nutrition response in both development and emergency situations is evident. Such coordination between development and emergency assistance improves national and community capacities to recognise risks and to take the necessary action to mitigate the effects of disasters. For example, improving national capacity to undertake nutrition vulnerability assessments and to identify and treat severe forms of malnutrition among vulnerable population groups – especially women and children in emergency or disaster-prone areas - saves lives. In addition, coordination of development and emergency response can enhance community resilience if undertaken through coordinated efforts to simultaneously improve livelihoods and access to social protection services. This would thereby ensure social and economic livelihoods and viability of the affected communities.

⁶ <https://undg.org/document/undaf-checklists-2010-assessing-the-quality-and-strategic-positioning-of-the-undaf>.

⁷ Where it is operational and needed.

Both the Common Country Analysis (CCA) and UNDAF preparation should be used as avenues towards enhanced coordination of the work of country partners. This includes identifying and developing opportunities for joint programming and delivery. The UN is well placed to play a key role in helping governments maximize donor coordination. Furthermore, since multi-sector nutrition in both development, humanitarian and fragile contexts is a relatively new issue facing governments, an important role for UNCTs is to assist in establishing and strengthening internal public sector mechanisms for coordination. Information gathered while mapping the national planning process from a multi-sector nutrition perspective (See Annex A, Entry Point 1.2) will help identify existing and potential platforms and forums that can also promote a coordinated approach, such as the UN Network for SUN.

Figure 2.
By 2030, end all forms of malnutrition and leave no one behind



Source: UNSCN, 2017.

SECTION 3

Getting started

- 3.1. Quick guide to mainstreaming nutrition
- 3.2. Entry Points, Actions & Tools

STEP 1. Building the Road Map for Engagement

STEP 2. Support Country Analysis

STEP 3. Preparing the Strategic Plan and Developing the Results Matrix

STEP 4. Monitoring and Evaluation



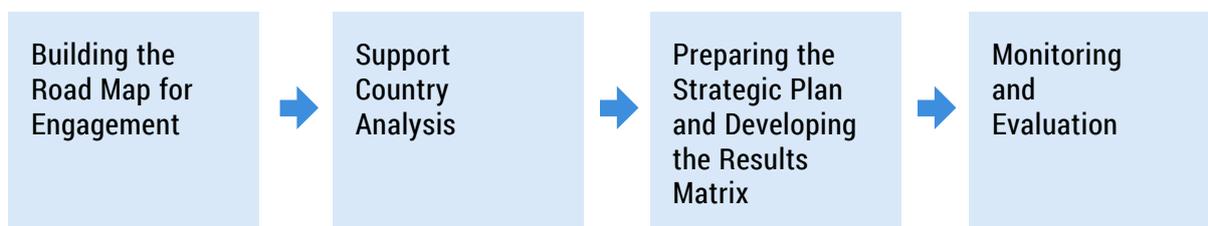
3.1. Quick guide to mainstreaming nutrition

Nutrition mainstreaming is a dynamic process undertaken with country partners to:

1. Understand both the benefits of addressing nutrition and the detrimental impact of all forms of malnutrition on national growth and development;
2. Use this knowledge to strengthen the national development framework and UNDAF priorities;
3. Address nutrition related risks and opportunities in UN-supported programmes and projects; and
4. Track progress towards achievement of UNDAF outcomes, including their contribution to achieving national nutrition targets, in the context of the SDGs.

This Quick Guide uses the four main steps for UN country programming (Figure 3) to describe entry points, actions and tools for mainstreaming nutrition in a Common Country Analysis (CCA) and UNDAF. It is important to note that, while the main steps are sequential, entry points related to a given step can be acted on in any order that fits UNCT circumstances and national priorities.

Figure 3.
Steps in developing an UNDAF



In addition, mainstreaming actions must be tailored to specific country needs and capacities. For this reason, this Guidance Note, including the following Quick Guide, should be used flexibly and with the understanding that it is not always necessary to adhere to the designated four step sequence.

Furthermore, for obvious reasons the Quick Guide does not provide details on the type of nutrition actions or related work and outputs the UNCT is expected to provide. More specific indications, including the types of analyses and other work where UNCT expertise may have to be complemented by other sources, are provided in this section and in Annex A.

3.2. Entry Points, Actions & Tools

There is growing evidence that multi-sector nutrition actions are essential for effectively reducing malnutrition, when implemented at scale with quality and equity. In-depth case studies have documented the processes involved in successfully engaging and mobilizing support from multiple sectors to work towards a common goal of tackling malnutrition (Hachhethu et al., 2017; Shrimpton et al., 2014; World Bank/UNICEF, 2013; Levinson and Balarajan, 2013; Natalicchio and Garrett, 2011). This Guidance Note draws from these existing country-level experiences.

The remainder of this section provides a “how to” overview for mainstreaming nutrition into a given UNDAF, based on specific entry points identified under the four main UNDAF steps.

Table 1 provides a brief description of each of these steps, including some preliminary comments on how nutrition is relevant. Table 2 then introduces the identified entry points for nutrition mainstreaming, along with related key messages and a description of expected outcomes. (Additional information on each entry point, including practical examples of countries where they have already been leveraged, questionnaires to guide the mainstreaming process, and additional resources, are provided in Annexes later in this paper.) The section concludes with a text box which lists possible sources of information on nutrition-development linkages. These resources can be used to inform the approach taken by UNCTS to each of the entry points, and to nutrition mainstreaming more generally.

Table 1.
UNDAF steps

STEP 1. Building the Road Map for Engagement
<p>Building the Road Map is the first step in the UNCT’s efforts to support and strengthen the country analysis and prepare the UNDAF. It builds on three activities, namely:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reviewing existing country analytic work; • Engaging with all relevant stakeholders and partners to map the national planning process; and • Assessing the UNCT’s comparative advantage. <p>Based on these activities’ findings, the UNCT will support further country analytic work to help inform or strengthen a national policy or plan, as required (see STEP 2).</p>
STEP 2. Support Country Analysis
<p>UNCT support for inclusion of nutrition in the Country Analysis is intended to strengthen national analytic processes and products related to nutrition, including reaching consensus on how to prioritize development problems and opportunities, and the requirements for capacity enhancement in order address malnutrition with a particular focus on the most affected and most marginalized population groups. As such, this support lays an important foundation for the ultimate strengthening of national and sectoral development policies and plans that include nutrition, as well as for stronger evidence-based decision-making.</p> <p>In terms of how to provide support, the UNCT and country partners may choose any of the following options:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • UNCT participation in government-led and donor harmonized analytic work, and use of government analysis; • Complementary UN-supported analytic work, with a focus on gaps in the existing analysis; or • A full CCA process. <p>The UNCT’s efforts to include nutrition considerations in any of these options will build on the understanding gained through the mapping activities conducted during STEP 1 on Building of the Road Map.</p>
STEP 3. Preparing the Strategic Plan and Developing the Results Matrix
<p>The prioritization process (Entry Point 2.4) results in agreement on the broad outline of the UNDAF. This consensus provides the basis for inter-agency groups to work with country partners on the draft results matrix for each UNDAF outcome. An UNDAF strategic plan may also be prepared. These documents are then used to guide preparation of more detailed agency programmes and projects. As noted above, while there may be agreement on the need for a specific nutrition-related UNDAF outcome, this should not divert attention away from including nutrition considerations in activities related to all other UNDAF outcomes.</p> <p>Step 3 provides five entry points for integrating nutrition into the UNDAF strategic plan and results matrix. These entry points move progressively from the overall strategic planning level (UNDAF preparation and national planning cycle) through programme preparation to project design and development of an annual work plan, including an evaluation and monitoring framework. At each level, there is significant opportunity to ensure that the negative impact of malnutrition on the sustainability of social and economic development initiatives is minimized, and vice versa.</p>
STEP 4. Monitoring and Evaluation
<p>UNDAF monitoring and evaluation is an important opportunity to assess whether, and how well information about changes in the national nutrition situation as well as information on the effect of those changes on sustainable and equitable development is being used in the planning process and integrated into UNDAF cooperation areas.</p>

Table 2.
Overview of entry points, key messages, and expected outcomes for integrating nutrition in a UNDAF

See **Annex A (Mainstreaming Nutrition Tools)** for a longer description of STEPS 1-2-3-4 entry points, including practical examples, guiding questions and additional resources for implementation.

STEP 1. Building the Road Map for Engagement		
Entry Points	Key Messages	Expected Outcomes
<p>(1.1) Review existing country analytic work using a nutrition lens.</p> <p>(1.2) Engage with relevant stakeholders in mapping the national planning process.</p> <p>(1.3) Provide nutrition perspective on identification of the UNCT's comparative advantages/gaps.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All relevant actors should be included in the development of the UNDAF Road Map, as well as in national steering committees or advisory bodies for UNDAF preparation. • It is imperative to engage with relevant ministries and executive offices as well as legal bodies (e.g. planning and finance, health, agriculture and food security, social welfare, youth, women and development, education) to raise issues and make the case to support integration of nutrition considerations into national and sectoral development planning and priorities. • Increase understanding of how improving nutrition will help achieve the SDGs, which have already been identified in country analytic work, and which are considered relevant to national development priorities and strategies. • Raise UNCT awareness regarding existing nutrition vulnerabilities and associated risks and opportunities, and identify where they may have the comparative advantage to act. • Identify and engage with country partners who can carry out further analysis and help make the investment case for mainstreaming nutrition into national and sectoral planning processes, particularly in terms of human development and sustained economic growth. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Broadened understanding of the main linkages between nutrition and national development in the context of policy-making and planning. This understanding provides the basis for identifying which actions should be prioritized in the UNDAF to tackle major malnutrition problems, at both immediate and underlying causal levels. • Increased UN coherence on nutrition and minimization of duplication of efforts. These mainstreaming activities will help ensure that UNCT support for further country analytic work takes into account nutrition vulnerabilities, the risks and opportunities related to development at the national and sectoral levels, and that plans will give appropriate attention to nutrition and their contribution to sustainable development.

STEP 2. Support Country Analysis		
Entry Points	Key Messages	Expected Outcomes
<p>(2.1) Contributing to government-led analysis.</p> <p>(2.2) Supporting targeted nutrition-related studies to assess country progress and remaining challenges (as required).</p> <p>(2.3) Assessing nutrition-related vulnerabilities, risks and opportunities as part of a CCA.</p> <p>(2.4) Participating in the prioritization exercise for the UNDAF.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Align nutrition considerations with ongoing country analytic work related to various sectors and generate new information about nutrition-development linkages. Assess the scope and implications of malnutrition in all its forms, including i) identification of vulnerable population groups (e.g. adolescent girls, pregnant and lactating women, young children, and other marginalized population groups including those facing emergency and fragile situations), ii) risks (e.g. increased morbidity and mortality from obesity and diet-related non-communicable diseases, rising health costs and increased poverty associated with under-nutrition) and iii) opportunities (e.g. improvements in data collection and analysis, strengthened levels of national and partner commitment for nutrition). Relevant institutions need to assess their capacity to respond to these risks and opportunities. It is essential to reach agreement with country partners on how best to address all forms of malnutrition, as well as on the most appropriate ways to tackle the risks and take advantage of the opportunities. Increase understanding of ways in which improved nutrition influences achievement of national development priorities, in the context of SDG, ICN2 follow-up and UN Decade of Action on Nutrition implementation. Nutrition champions should make the case for country specific nutrition evidence and increased recognition of nutrition as a national development priority. Identify requirements for strengthening institutional capacity to improve nutrition and accelerate progress towards achievement of national sustainable development priorities with equity, with these needs reflected in the UNDAF accordingly. Ensure the importance of improved nutrition in the context of development planning and priority setting is highlighted in background papers and during presentations, particularly the ways in which positive nutrition outcomes can influence the sustainability of development and the relative costs and benefits of initiatives to improve nutrition, especially among vulnerable population groups. Provide key actors in government with targeted information on the ways in which improved nutrition influences the sustainability of development. Ensure that UNCT members make contributions to identifying and formulating possible activities for UNCT assistance to national Government-UNCT cooperation that reflect nutrition related risks and opportunities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased likelihood that national development priorities take into account the links between nutrition and development in the national context. Increased likelihood that UNDAF priorities reflect opportunities for exploiting the opportunities that improved nutrition brings to social and economic development. Include activities that strengthen capacities to undertake priority actions related to nutrition and multi-sector development linkages, including data collection and analysis. Provide evidence of the role played by nutrition in accelerating development progress at across sectors and at several levels national and sectoral levels, and identify opportunities to improve the nutrition situation especially among the most vulnerable population groups for sustainable and equitable development.

STEP 3. Preparing the Strategic Plan and Developing the Results Matrix

Entry Points	Key Messages	Expected Outcomes
<p>(3.1) Selecting 3 to 5 national priorities on which to focus.</p> <p>(3.2) Ensuring UNDAF outcomes provide a collective support system for national development.</p> <p>(3.3) Nutrition mapping of agency programmes and projects.</p> <p>(3.4) Supporting documentation of nutrition impact (as required).</p> <p>(3.5) Including nutrition vulnerabilities, risks and opportunities in the Annual Work Plan (or equivalent).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Opportunities to ensure that development efforts appropriately address major nutrition vulnerabilities in line with national policies, plans and priorities should be identified as early as possible, preferably as part of the country analysis. • While UNDAF outcomes may not refer specifically to enhancing nutrition and reducing all forms of malnutrition, they should be designed in such a way as to address the immediate and underlying drivers of malnutrition to prevent derailments in sustainable national development. • Any enhancements in programme and project design that relate to improving nutrition, including among the most vulnerable population groups, should be based on proven and effective inter-sectoral solutions identified in country analytical work. • Assessment of efforts to improve nutrition and reduce all forms of malnutrition, with a priority focus on the most affected and marginalized population groups, should be measured against WHA and SDG targets and indicators. • It is important to frame the costs of improved nutrition as a sound investment in terms of subsequent health and economic benefits which contribute to national sustainable development efforts. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • During this Step, is it important that relevant UNCT members maintain oversight to ensure that nutrition considerations continue to be reflected in processes and outputs. In so doing, UNCT members should refer to findings from work conducted during previous Steps, including reviewing country analytic work, mapping national development planning and related processes, any more detailed follow-up studies that have been conducted to address knowledge gaps, and identification of capacity constraints and how they might best be addressed. • Another outcome is the integration of nutrition when agencies prepare their detailed cooperation programmes and projects, including UN Network for SUN work plans. This is particularly the case when earlier steps and activities have identified opportunities to enhance the impact and sustainability of development initiatives by improving nutrition, especially among the most vulnerable and marginalized population groups (e.g. adolescent girls, pregnant and lactating women, and young children from the poorest and excluded societal groups).

STEP 4. Monitoring and Evaluation		
Entry Points	Key Messages	Expected Outcomes
<p>(4.1) Assess extent to which UNDAF results contribute to national priorities and improved nutrition.</p> <p>(4.2) Feed back into Country Analysis and Planning.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is important to align the M&E of nutrition-related interventions with the UNDAF M&E plan, and for the latter to acknowledge the links between achievement of national nutrition targets and achievement of the SDGs. • During UNDAF implementation, periodic nutrition assessments (e.g. desk reviews, field visits) will be necessary to review <i>anticipated changes</i> related to the extent to which access to essential nutrition specific and nutrition sensitive actions has been improved, as well as to identify <i>unanticipated challenges</i> due to emergencies, disasters and other unforeseen issues. 	<p>Improved nutrition-relevant monitoring, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Detection of unanticipated changes in the nutrition situation due to emergencies, disasters or other emerging issues that enhance or impede achievement of national nutrition targets and sustainable development goals, despite efforts on emergency or disaster preparedness and response. • Identification of new capacity development needs among implementing partners to successfully address the multiple causes and consequences of malnutrition for all people, especially the most vulnerable population groups (adolescent girls, women, young children from the poorest and marginalized population groups) when preparing and implementing national and sectoral plans and policies. • New information on the effectiveness and relative costs and benefits of integrating nutrition considerations which may require modifications to existing policies, programmes and projects.

Box 3. Possible sources of information on nutrition-development linkages

To generate a rapid understanding of nutrition issues critical to the partner country:

- Global Nutrition Report and country profiles (yearly updates).
- National Human Development Report.
- UNICEF State of the World's Children.
- UNICEF, WHO, World Bank Group (WBG) Joint Child Malnutrition Estimates.
- UNICEF Multiple Cluster Surveys.
- USAID Demographic Health Surveys (DHS).
- WBG country nutrition profiles.
- Joint development partners national nutrition and food security bulletins and/or common nutrition narratives
- Nutrition-related vulnerability assessment and analysis from regional commissions and development banks
- The State of Food Insecurity and Nutrition in the World (SOFI), which includes nutrition statistics and analysis starting in 2017.
- Hunger and Nutrition Commitment Index (HANCI): Ranking governments on their political commitment to tackling hunger and undernutrition.
- Outputs of the UN Network for SUN analytical exercises such as the UN Nutrition Inventory, results from the UN Network reporting exercise, REACH-supported Multi-sectoral Nutrition Overview (including Situation Analysis dashboards) and Stakeholder Nutrition Action Mapping (existing in SUN countries).

To generate a rapid understanding of national nutrition priorities:

- Multi-Sector Nutrition Plans.
- National nutrition strategic plans of actions.
- Comprehensive Implementation Plan on Maternal and Infant and Young Child Nutrition (MIYCN).
- WHO Global Data Base on the Implementation of Nutrition Actions (GINA).

To generate a rapid understanding of international nutrition commitments:

- Global 2025 Nutrition Targets from the World Health Assembly (WHA).
- The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).
- Second International Conference on Nutrition (ICN2) political outcome documents: Rome Declaration on Nutrition.
- Work Programme of the UN Decade of Action on Nutrition (2016-2025).
- Membership in the global SUN Movements, and for these member states – related communication with the SUN secretariat and national progress report.
- Communication with the key UN and development partners (UNICEF, WHO, FAO, UNFPA, WFP, and coordination initiatives such as UN Network for SUN/REACH etc.) on development and implementation of multi-sector nutrition or MIYCN plans.

To understand how nutrition issues relate to/are integrated into national development priorities:

- National agriculture and food security policies, strategies and plans.
- National health policy and plan of action – with a focus on the nutrition specific elements.
- National education policy and plan of action – a focus on the nutrition specific aspects.
- National commitments made within the framework of the UN Decade of Action on Nutrition.
- Other key Sectoral Development Plans.
- National Development Plan or Poverty Reduction Strategy (PRS).
- National Sustainable Development Strategies (NSDS).
- National Emergency Management and Disaster Response Preparedness Plans.
- National reports on adolescents, youth, gender equality, human rights.
- Sub-national development plans.

SECTION 4

Moving ahead

4.1. Learning and improving for results



4.1. Learning and improving for results

Multi-sector nutrition programmes and initiatives are not new and there is growing evidence for their application, based primarily on successful country case studies, including in the context of the UNDAF. And although UN agencies and governments are generally organized according to sectors, thus limiting capacity for taking on a mainstreamed, multi-sectoral approach to nutrition, establishment of the country level UN Network for SUN, including REACH support, has facilitated this strategy in multiple countries. Therefore, to contribute to moving the Nutrition Decade forward, a standardized method for mainstreaming, and systematic managing for results, is paramount on an ongoing basis, involving continuous feedback, learning and improvement.

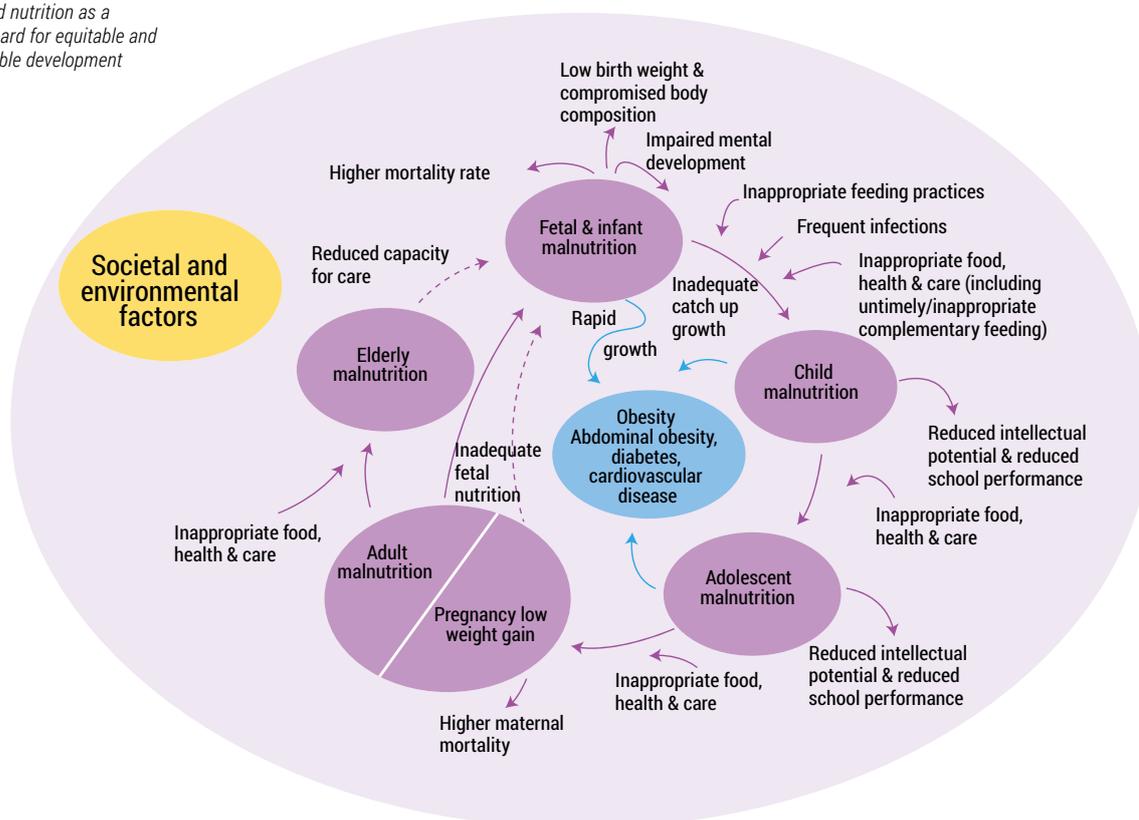
There is growing momentum in support of nutrition programmes and initiatives with 59 countries now participating in the SUN Movement to end malnutrition in all its forms through a multi-sector approach. The UN Network for SUN, including REACH, is an integral part of the SUN Movement, as articulated by the new UN Network for SUN Strategy (2016-2020). Additional momentum has been generated by the ICN2 and its outcomes, with the ICN2 commitments having been adopted by the 170 countries participating in that conference. Today, UN agencies are demonstrating unprecedented initiative to move the nutrition agenda forward, in coordination and collaboration with all key stakeholders and development partners at global, regional and national levels.

Integrating nutrition considerations in the Country Analysis (such as CCA) and UNDAF is an important example of this momentum. To fully leverage its possibilities, programmes, projects and work plans should be modified on a regular basis, based on lessons learned through M&E. The design of new programmes and projects should also be informed by lessons coming from M&E. It is also important to make sure that policies, including non-nutrition policies that nonetheless have an impact on nutrition (e.g. those pertaining to trade, social protection, agriculture, education and health) are progressively formulated or re-formulated based on lessons learned, existing experiences, and evidence generation, in a way that is beneficial to nutrition.

This ongoing process of doing, learning and improving is referred to as the *Results-Based-Management, Life-Cycle Approach* (see Figure 4). Learning not only helps improve results from existing programmes and projects; it also enhances the capacity of an organization and individuals to make better decisions in the future.

Figure 4.
Nutrition throughout the life-course

Improved nutrition as a springboard for equitable and sustainable development



Source: Reproduced from WHO childhood overweight policy brief, based on figure from Darnton-Hill I, Nishida C, James WPT. A life course approach to diet, nutrition and the prevention of chronic diseases. *Public Health Nutr* 2004;7:101-21.

In terms of moving the nutrition agenda forward, UNCTs should also take full advantage of the Work Programme of the UN Decade of Action for Nutrition. Developed through an inclusive, continuous and collaborative process that builds upon and connects independent initiatives of governments and their many partners, this document aims to facilitate and encourage specific country commitments to nutrition that fit within their respective national plans. It also includes stipulations for shared learning and improving for results in its accountability framework, as well as guidance on key areas for priority action; modalities of engagement; roles of Member States and other stakeholders; and action areas and means of implementation.

ANNEXES

A. Mainstreaming Nutrition Tools

STEP 1. Building the Road Map for Engagement

STEP 2. Support Country Analysis

STEP 3. Preparing the Strategic Plan and Developing the Results Matrix

STEP 4. Monitoring and Evaluation

B. Country-specific SMART commitments

A. Mainstreaming Nutrition Tools

STEP 1. Building the Road Map for Engagement

ENTRY POINT 1.1.

Review of existing country analytic work using a nutrition lens

Action

Build on and add value to the review of existing country analytic work by identifying the magnitude and scope of major nutrition problems, and the potential to address them, as well as gaps and opportunities to improve the nutrition situation and to scale up priority nutrition specific and nutrition sensitive actions that have already been highlighted in existing country analytic work.

As part of the review of the existing country analytic work and strategies, members of UNCTs (including the NRAs) could use the questions listed below to guide internal discussions, as well as those with key government counterparts and donor stakeholders. Any review should be limited in scope, depth and time, and should help to identify specific entry points for UN-supported country analysis. A range of information sources that can be used to guide such a review are listed in a text box at the end of this Appendix.

Example

UNCT members in Nepal used outcomes of the multi-sector nutrition sector reviews, the national multi-sector nutrition plan (developed in line with the global SUN Framework for Action), and helped in the gathering of further information and data on nutrition vulnerabilities and mapping of agencies supported nutrition related projects and programmes.

Guiding Questions

The following questions are designed to help focus the review of existing country analytic work with respect to identifying the needs, opportunities and capacities related to addressing major malnutrition problems in the country. The information generated by these guiding questions can then be used to enhance the sustainability of national and other development initiatives. The questions are subdivided into those related to the existing information system, policies and plans in place towards enhancing nutrition, and scaling up nutrition specific and nutrition sensitive actions, and to opportunities that might create synergies between these sets of actions, including in humanitarian contexts.

List of Guiding Questions

1. Magnitude and severity of malnutrition in all its forms

- What is the magnitude and severity of the various forms of malnutrition in the country – under-nutrition, obesity and diet-related communicable diseases, and micronutrient deficiencies?
- What are the immediate, underlying and basic causes of malnutrition, and the public health and social and economic impacts of malnutrition in the country?
- Does the country have a nutrition information system in place to derive national trends in the burden of malnutrition, and their associated risk factors? Is this information analysed, reported and disseminated for informed policy decisions?
- Is risk factor-specific information on under-nutrition, micronutrient deficiencies, obesity and diet-related non-communicable diseases available?
- To what extent are data stratified by age, sex and socio-demographic variables (e.g. income, education, ethnicity, place of residence)?
- What data are available on broader socio-economic determinants?

2. Nutrition response

- What are current and anticipated development interventions that address the social, economic and environmental determinants of health and nutrition (e.g. poverty reduction, education, social protection, gender equity, water and sanitation, and measures of the food environment such as nutrition labelling and regulatory or fiscal instruments promoting healthy diets)? Are there ongoing interventions within nutrition sensitive sectors that have been shown to have demonstrable impact on nutrition and its determinants?
- Within the priority sectors to which UN assistance is being directed for development, have risks and benefits to sustainable development been assessed or addressed? Is there a focus on the essential nutrition actions identified in the 2013 Lancet Nutrition Series? Is there reference to the Compendium of Action for Nutrition action (CAN)? Is the SUN Framework for Action, emphasizing a multi-sector approach with a focus on the first 1,000 days of life, taken into account?

3. Capacities: The ability to respond effectively, in a sustained manner and opportunities to scale up

- What is the current capacity at national and sub-national level for implementing a multi-sectoral nutrition response at scale in a coordinated, coherent, effective and sustained manner (i.e. over the short- and longer-time frame), and how might it be improved?
- Are synergistic opportunities across sectors already being exploited? Are there opportunities to generate evidence on these existing synergies? Have new opportunities been identified explicitly?
- How well-equipped is the country to analyse information on the nutritional status of its population, including associated vulnerabilities and risks, and to use the findings to prepare effective responses to safeguard achievement of the aims of the UN Decade of Action for Nutrition and the SDGs? Is there adequate human technical and analytic capacity in this regard?
- Does existing country analytic work suggest that additional opportunities exist? If so, what needs to be done to take advantage of these opportunities?
- What financial resources are required for climate change adaptation and related initiatives?
- What needs to be done to mobilize these and other resources?

ENTRY POINT 1.2.

Engage with relevant stakeholders in mapping the national planning process

Action

As part of mapping the national planning process, work with relevant stakeholders to identify opportunities for adding value to national development planning and budget cycles by ensuring development initiatives include nutrition considerations. The aim is to build on and add value to the existing understanding of the national planning process by identifying opportunities for more explicit consideration of development initiatives that will enhance nutrition and the significant role that improving nutrition to accelerate progress on sustainable development.

Example

The Government of Peru created multi-sectoral, inter-governmental articulation spaces, with the participation of government and civil society, which helped to facilitate common understanding, visions and goals for joint action to obtain results in chronic child malnutrition (CCM) reduction.

Guiding Questions

Responses to the following questions will help focus the mapping of the national planning process by highlighting opportunities to increase attention paid to reducing malnutrition in all its forms within the context of broader sustainable development goals.

List of Guiding Questions

1. Background status

- Is nutrition taken into consideration in national poverty reduction strategy papers, national development plans, disaster reduction strategy, plans for climate change mitigation and adaption and other sectoral policies and plans (e.g. health, agriculture and food security, education, social protection)?
- Has the country already made SMART policy commitments within the framework of the UN Decade of Action on Nutrition?⁸ Is it a member of the SUN Movement? Are there well-developed coordination processes, mechanisms and platforms to prepare and disseminate country progress reports and national communications, and are they included in the UNDAF process?

2. Nutrition policy planning and implementation

- To what extent has the elimination of all forms of malnutrition through a multi-sector approach been given high priority at country level?
- Is there a national comprehensive plan on maternal infant and young child nutrition (MIYCN) containing priorities, targets, strategies and indicators? Is it multi-sectoral? If so, what are the mechanisms to ensure coordination and coherence between nutrition specific and nutrition sensitive sector initiatives? Is it aligned with the relevant ICN2 Framework for Action Recommendations?

⁸ See Annex B for more details on SMART policy commitments.

- Is there a national plan to implement and scale up the essential nutrition specific and nutrition sensitive interventions? What are these interventions?
- Are there local nutrition plans? If so, are they aligned and coherent with the national nutrition plan? Is there information on how these interventions were identified, progress made to date and gaps in implementation?
- Is there a National Multi-Sector Nutrition Steering or Coordination Committee or equivalent? If so, is it chaired by an individual with the relevant credentials?
- Are opportunities for combining and sequencing financing being maximised?
- What is the level of understanding regarding nutrition linkages with sustained development?
- Is national sustainable development policy considered an entry point for nutrition mainstreaming?

3. Nutrition response system

- Do key sectors collaborate and share information to monitor the nutrition situation and associated risk factors?
- Is the national nutrition response and initiative a collaborative effort? Is it incorporated in national and sector development efforts?
- To what extent do nutrition response plans, in both development and emergency contexts, link to emergency preparedness and response or disaster risk reduction efforts or other longer-term development programmes? Is there a clear pathway for the UN's work on nutrition to be harnessed in case of an emergency?
- Have budget and costing analyses been conducted to identify gaps in the prioritization of key interventions and actions that address the immediate and underlying causes of malnutrition?

When answering the above questions, the following challenges may be identified:

- Although there is a growing recognition for the need for a whole-of-government approach coordinated by Ministries such as Planning and Finance to tackle malnutrition, the focus of government efforts on nutrition is still often delegated to a single line Ministry (e.g. the Ministry of Health, or Agriculture and Food Security, or Social Welfare, Women and Development);
- There may be low awareness and knowledge of the significance of nutrition for human development, poverty reduction and pro-poor economic growth;
- The need to identify the potential costs of malnutrition and associated ill-health may be unmet, similarly the social and economic benefits of scaling up proven inter-sectoral solutions may also be unknown;
- Advocacy and dialogue to increase the political will to combat malnutrition may be weak;
- The critical role played by multiple sectors (e.g. health, agriculture, education, and social protection) and sub-national bodies in reducing malnutrition may not be recognized;
- The implementation challenge (e.g. financing, measuring the impact of policy measures); and
- The need for sustained institutional and capacity strengthening across key sectors (e.g. agriculture and rural development, health, water and sanitation among others) and at the relevant levels.

ENTRY POINT 1.3.

Provide nutrition perspective on identification of the UNCT's comparative advantages and gaps

Action

Ensure that UNCT capacity for nutrition vulnerability assessment, as well as analysis of the risks and opportunities involved in improving nutrition in the context of sustainable development is taken into account in the assessment of the UNCT's comparative advantages and gaps. The increased understanding resulting from this assessment can be used when setting UNDAF priorities and determining where and how to enhance UNCT nutrition capacity.

Example

In Ethiopia, there are regular nutrition thematic meetings, facilitated by the UNCT, in close collaboration with the Government involving the Ministry of Health and other related sectors, donor agencies, with emphasis on coordination of their respective activities.

Guiding Questions

The questions listed below will help ensure that the UNCT's comparative advantage extends to considering the capacity of the wider UN system, as well as the knowledge and skills of the UNCT with regard to nutrition issues and links with human development. Capacity shortfalls will also be identified. These can inform subsequent capacity development initiatives.

List of Guiding Questions

- Does the UNCT have the mandate to assist the government in reflecting nutrition considerations in its development planning and activities?
- Does the UNCT have the capacity to provide such assistance, in terms of expertise and existing and potential resources?
- Does the UNCT have the potential to generate any new resources that might be required, such as for joint UN programming and delivery support?
- In what ways is the UNCT likely to perform better than other development partners in terms of assistance related to a comprehensive nutrition response, in line with the latest global guidelines and framework, as well as national development priorities?
- In relative terms, how well is the UNCT placed to address identified nutrition opportunities, needs and gaps, including those identified in relation to nutrition in the National Capacity Self-Assessment?
- Where does the UN system (covering the entire range of analytical, normative, technical and operational expertise of the UN system) have a comparative advantage to reduce barriers to delivering assistance to address malnutrition in all its forms as per the country context, including exploiting opportunities?
- Where and how does capacity need to be built to maximize these advantages and address bottlenecks?
- Which resident and non-resident agencies, funds and programmes have a comparative advantage to address bottlenecks to delivering assistance to address malnutrition, including exploiting opportunities?
- Which UN-interagency initiatives and frameworks have a comparative advantage to strengthen multi-sectoral nutrition governance processes, including government-led nutrition coordination mechanisms?
- Which resident and non-resident agencies have the greatest potential to generate any new resources that might be required?
- For both resident and non-resident agencies, where and how does capacity need to be built to maximize the advantages and reduce barriers?

Additional Resources for STEP 1

The following knowledge products and learning platforms provide additional information on understanding national planning processes using a nutrition lens, and on assessing the comparative advantages and capacities of the UN system and an individual UNCT.

Resource	Description
<p>Improving Nutrition through Multisectoral Approaches. 2013. Washington DC: The World Bank.</p> <p>Available at: http://documents.worldbank.org/curated/en/625661468329649726/pdf/75102-REVISED-PUBLIC-MultisectoralApproachestoNutrition.pdf.</p>	<p>Provides operational guidance to mainstream nutrition activities across multiple sectors, with a focus on agriculture, social protection, and health. It includes an overview of the link between nutrition and poverty reduction, and represents a first step towards operationalizing a multi-sectoral approach to improve nutrition worldwide.</p>
<p>REACH. 2013. Country Facilitators Manual: UN Network, 2nd edition.</p> <p>Available at: http://www.reachpartnership.org/documents/312104/377b09bd-d84c-445a-a35b-946502feaa9b.</p>	<p>Describes the REACH approach, as part of the UN Network for SUN, including the multi-sector nutrition overview, situation analysis dashboards, policy and plan overview, and stakeholder and action mapping tool. Together these resources can be used to depict the nutrition situation in a given country (these summarized below). The REACH approach also includes facilitation support to engage diverse stakeholders at the country level, including UN partner agencies (FAO, IFAD, UNICEF, WFP and WHO).</p>
<p>UN Network for SUN Strategy (2016-2020). Rome: WFP 2016, in its capacity as host agency of the UN Network for SUN/REACH Secretariat.</p> <p>Available at: http://www.reachpartnership.org/documents/312104/27bdd2f5-43e8-453b-8276-ce7b950d4b05.</p> <p>&</p> <p>http://scalingupnutrition.org/sun-supporters/un-network-for-sun/un-network-for-sun-tools-and-resources/</p>	<p>A guiding framework for United Nations actions to support countries in achieving national goals and making advances in the reduction of malnutrition. The Strategy also provides a comprehensive overview of the relevant tools and resources available to strengthen national nutrition governance capacity and UN network effectiveness, as follows:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (1) The Multi-Sectoral Nutrition Overview: Comprised of visual slides and the Situation Analysis Dashboard(s), this tool assembles and repackages existing nutrition-related data across sectors in order to establish a common understanding of the nutrition situation in a given country (including sex and age-disaggregated data and a gender analysis). Situation Analysis Dashboards summarize key nutrition-related indicators, showcasing the magnitude and severity of nutrition problems as well as their trends over time. (2) Policy and Plan Overview: Comprised of an Excel-based scoring sheet and a visualization analysis template in PowerPoint format, this tool reviews relevant legal, regulatory, policy and strategy frameworks (multi-sectoral, sectoral and sub-sectoral) in an effort to determine the extent to which they reflect nutrition. (3) Stakeholder and Nutrition Action Mapping: Aims to provide qualitative and quantitative information on Core Nutrition Actions (CNAs) by assessing who does what, where, coverage (both beneficiary and geographic), and delivery mechanisms. The mapping may be undertaken at national and subnational levels, and helps coordinate parallel mapping initiatives by engaging multiple stakeholders. (4) UN Nutrition Inventory: Enables United Nations agencies in a given country to take stock of extant UN nutrition support by thematic and geographic area and to compare what is being provided to nutrition needs and challenges. Its aim is thus to identify gaps and opportunities for increased synergy. The UN Nutrition Inventory also ascertains the extent to which UN nutrition support is aligned with the priorities of the country's National Nutrition Action Plan (when one exists). (5) UN Nutrition Strategy/Agenda: Articulates a common UN vision for addressing malnutrition at the country level within the context of the government's national plan. It leverages findings from the UN Nutrition Inventory, and defines how UN agencies will work together to address priority areas and gaps.

Resource	Description
<p>Compendium of Actions for Nutrition (CAN). Rome: WFP 2016, in its capacity as host agency of the UN Network for SUN/REACH Secretariat.</p> <p>Available at: http://www.reachpartnership.org/compendium-of-actions-for-nutrition.</p>	<p>A facilitation tool encompassing both nutrition-specific and nutrition-sensitive actions to help foster multi-sectoral dialogue at the country level, particularly on nutrition-related policy formulation and planning. The actions are classified into evidence-based categories. The CAN includes both narrative guidance (including action sheets) as well as a matrix of potential multi-sectoral nutrition actions.</p>
<p>Nutrition Capacity Assessment Guidance Package - Part I: Guidance Note; and Part II: Tools and Resources.</p> <p>Available at: http://www.reachpartnership.org/documents/312104/dc7e2066-93ab-4a8f-82c7-fba3e4d24163.</p> <p>&</p> <p>http://www.reachpartnership.org/documents/312104/aa2cbe79-3b4e-48c4-9bd6-3a6088554240.</p>	<p>Intended to support countries to comprehensively assess multi-sectoral and sectoral capacity needs for effective scale up of nutrition actions and subsequent design of a capacity development response that is integrated into a broader national capacity development agenda for nutrition.</p>
<p>How to Prepare an UNDAF: Part (II) Technical Guidance for UN Country Teams (2010), Conducting a SWOT exercise, page 15.</p> <p>Available at: https://www.un.org/files/5%20How%20to%20Prepare%20an%20UNDAF%20(Part%20II).pdf.</p>	<p>Provides overall guidance on how to clarify the comparative advantages of a UNCT by identifying its strengths and weaknesses, as well as opportunities and threats in the national development context.</p>

STEP 2. Support Country Analysis

ENTRY POINT 2.1.

Contributing to government-led analysis

Action

Provide qualified UN programme staff or external experts to support relevant government work related to assessing the magnitude and scope of the malnutrition problem in the country, identify the most vulnerable population groups, as well as the risks and opportunities.

Assist in synthesizing and packaging key findings to increase effectiveness of presentations to planning, finance and other key sectoral ministries that make decisions about national nutrition-related development priorities.

Example

The GNR provides case studies of good practices and lessons learned on the use of multi-sectoral approaches to improve nutrition. For example the Maharashtra state government of India-led study on the role of multi-sectoral initiatives to reduce child stunting. These initiatives were targeted to the most vulnerable tribal population groups and poorest segments of society (GNR, 2014).

Guiding Questions

Questions for Entry Point 2.1 aim to identify relevant nutrition vulnerabilities as well as risks and opportunities to improve nutrition for sustainable development progress.

Please refer to the bottom of STEP 2 for the List of Guiding Questions, which is consolidated for this UNDAF step, providing questions on all four entry points.

ENTRY POINT 2.2.

Supporting targeted nutrition-related studies to assess country progress and remaining challenges

Action

Advocate for and support specific studies to inform the UNDAF and facilitate national planning that considers the need to improve nutrition for accelerated achievement of national development priorities. Intersectoral policy coherence for nutrition and investments in the food environment such as nutrition labelling, regulatory instruments and fiscal incentives for healthy diets as well as budget and cost analyses should be considered and prioritized where appropriate.

Example

India, with the support of UNCTs and development partners, conducted studies on nutrition policy including budget and cost analyses. The studies investigated multiple sectors including women and development, health and social welfare, agriculture and food security, and water and sanitation.

Based on the SUN Movement Budget Analysis Exercise, a study undertaken by the UK Department for International Development (DFID) funded the MQSUN project, which analysed variation in nutrition related investments across 24 countries.

Guiding Questions

Studies and assessments should be tailored to the capacities and needs of the UNCT and country partners. Questions for Entry Point 2.2 facilitate this approach by identifying a range of studies whose results can be used for addressing malnutrition and strengthening capacity. For example, comprehensive nutrition related policy reviews, and budget and cost analysis studies of key nutrition programmes and projects.

Please refer to the bottom of STEP 2 for the List of Guiding Questions, which is consolidated for this UNDAF step, providing questions on all four entry points.

ENTRY POINT 2.3.**Assessing nutrition-related vulnerabilities, risks and opportunities as part of a Common Country Assessment (CCA)****Action**

Strengthen the CCA process and reporting by examining the role of nutrition in achieving national and sectoral development priorities. Targeted CCA studies should also identify nutrition vulnerabilities, risks and opportunities relevant to nutrition related SDGs, as well as capacity constraints and ways that they can be overcome.

Example

In Nepal, a nutrition situation analysis was conducted, including classification of children under 5 years of age as a vulnerable population group. This identification process facilitated prioritization of nutrition in Nepal's UNDAF.

As part of the SUN Movement, Multi-Sector Platforms (MSPs) are actively working with scientists and academics in multiple countries to better support evidence-based decision-making and improve coordination between governments and research institutions. This is helping to build linkages and alliances with important partners, recognising the crucial connections between good nutrition, sustainable food systems, women's empowerment, health care, water and sanitation and education.

Guiding Questions

Questions for Entry Point 2.3 aim to ensure that nutrition vulnerabilities are well understood, and that related risks and opportunities are considered at each relevant stage of the CCA. For example assessing how malnutrition might be hampering development goals (i.e. national, sectoral, cross-cutting, rights-based issues), and identifying options for addressing malnutrition in the country context.

Please refer to the bottom of STEP 2 for the List of Guiding Questions, which is consolidated for this UNDAF step, providing questions on all four entry points.

ENTRY POINT 2.4.

Participating in the prioritization exercise for the UNDAF

Action

Ensure that the process to determine national development priorities takes into account both nutrition vulnerabilities and nutrition-related risks (e.g. adverse impacts of all forms of malnutrition on achievement of the SDGs), the aims of the UN Decade of Action for Nutrition, and opportunities (e.g. progress on achievement of the SDGs that can be attributed to improved nutrition outcomes). Participants in prioritization activities should include UNCT members who can speak to the importance of mainstreaming nutrition considerations into development cooperation activities, and who are aware of existing UN capacity, initiatives and experiences.

Example

The UNCT Joint Programme on Nutrition was financed by the Spanish MDG Achievement Fund in response to prioritization of nutrition on the national development agendas of Bangladesh, Brazil and Peru.

Guiding Questions

Questions for Entry Point 2.4 aim to ensure that nutrition vulnerabilities, and related risks and opportunities influence priority setting. Tools such as cost-benefit analysis and multi-sectoral nutrition analysis can also be useful in setting priorities.

Please refer to the bottom of STEP 2 for the List of Guiding Questions, which is consolidated for this UNDAF step, providing questions on all four entry points.

Consolidated Guiding Questions

Nutrition vulnerability assessment, assessment of related risks and opportunities, and prioritization analyses should provide answers to some or all of the following questions, which are based on the four entry points described under this second step of the UNDAF preparation process. Findings should then be used to guide decisions and actions related to undertaking additional work to support the country analysis.

List of Guiding Questions

- What are the potential benefits of nutrition improvements on health, social economic development, and human rights?
- What are emerging nutrition vulnerabilities and risks to the sustainability of existing and emerging development initiatives and plans (i.e. NDP, PRS)? What groups are most affected and what are their concerns?
- What are the anticipated impacts of planned development initiatives on the nutrition status of the most affected (e.g. urban and rural poor, adolescent girls, women, young children and marginalized societal groups)? How can possible positive synergistic impacts be realized and documented for drawing lessons for future policy decision-making?
- Can current legal, institutional and policy frameworks effectively respond to existing or emerging nutrition challenges, risks and opportunities?
- How can emerging nutrition concerns be incorporated into sector policies and plans? What actions can help ensure achievement of national nutrition-related development priorities (i.e. SDGs) and meeting obligations stipulated by the 2025 WHA targets?
- Is there adequate understanding of existing and emerging nutrition vulnerabilities, as well as related risks and opportunities, so as to consider how nutrition might influence priority setting?
- Have national development priorities adequately considered the extent to which existing or emerging nutrition problems will impede efforts to achieve priority development outcomes?
- Is there adequate understanding of the need to give greater priority to specific aspects of poverty reduction, strengthening human rights protections, and improving human health and well-being to tackle the underlying drivers of malnutrition?
- Is there adequate understanding of the opportunities presented by scaling up essential nutrition actions (with a priority focus on the most vulnerable, poor, women and other marginalized groups), in terms of the benefits accruing to increased survival and productivity, ultimately enhancing national sustainable economic growth and development, and justifying the need to give these opportunities adequate recognition in the setting of priorities?

Additional Resources for STEP 2

There are numerous possible assessment and analytical tools and methodologies available that can be tailored to help answer the questions listed above. The following are some of the most frequently used. These resources can also help identify additional nutrition-related work required to support the country analysis. For example, based on the country analytic review (Entry Point 1.1), and stakeholder engagement in mapping national planning processes (Entry Point 1.2), the need for more detailed assessment of climate change vulnerabilities, as well as of the fulfilment of the human rights framework, risks and cross-sectoral linkages may have been highlighted.

Resource	Description
1. Nutrition situation analysis, focus on health-related nutrition issues	
<p>WHO Landscape Analysis on Countries' Readiness to Accelerate Action in Nutrition.</p> <p>Available at: http://www.who.int/nutrition/landscape_analysis/country_assessments/en/.</p>	<p>In-depth, country-specific reviews of challenges countries are facing, opportunities that exist, and actions that should be prioritised to accelerate scale-up of effective interventions and programmes. Main aims are to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Map the country context and readiness as part of developing national strategic action plans and scale-up plans for implementing priority nutrition interventions; • Make recommendations about where and how to best make investments in order to accelerate actions in nutrition; • Establish the current status of nutrition action in a country, thus allowing future progress to be tracked against that baseline.
2. Multiple overlapping deprivation / vulnerability and capacity analyses	
<p>UNICEF Step-by-Step Guidelines to the Multiple Overlapping Deprivation Analysis (MODA).</p> <p>Available at: https://www.unicef.org/videoaudio/PDFs/RFPS_USA_2013_501639_Annex-C.pdf.</p>	<p>Provides a comprehensive approach to the multidimensional aspects of (child) poverty and deprivation. Encompasses a large set of tools used in multidimensional poverty and deprivation analyses, ranging from deprivation headcounts in single dimensions via multiple overlap analysis to multidimensional deprivation ratios and their decomposition. Based on a holistic definition of child well-being, concentrating on access to various goods and services which are crucial for survival and development.</p>
<p>Vulnerability and Capacity Analysis (VCA) tool box with reference sheets, International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies.</p> <p>Available at: http://www.ifrc.org/Global/Publications/disasters/vca/vca-toolbox-en.pdf</p>	<p>A methodology that uses participatory tools that enable communities to identify their own capacities and vulnerabilities in relation to disaster management, developing mitigation strategies and building resilience to cope with future hazards. Widely used by various organisations, including governments, NGOs and the Red Cross/Red Crescent Societies as part of their efforts to make development more sustainable, contribute to disaster risk reduction (DRR) and to assist communities in adapting to climate change.</p>

Resource	Description
3. Dietary diversity assessments / food security and vulnerability analysis	
<p>Minimum Dietary Diversity for Women: A guide to measurement.</p> <p>Available at: http://www.fao.org/3/a-i5486e.pdf.</p>	<p>Defines and describes the Minimum Dietary Diversity for Women (MDD-W) indicator. This indicator has been shown to reflect a key dimension of diet quality: micronutrient adequacy, summarised across 11 micronutrients and assessed via 10 defined food groups. Women who consume at least five of the ten food groups are categorized as having a diet that is adequate in terms of micronutrient content. The indicator constitutes an important step towards filling the need for metrics for use in national and sub national assessments of diet quality. Insufficient nutrient intakes before and during pregnancy and lactation can affect both women and their infants' survival and wellbeing, and poor diet quality is the common denominator across all forms of malnutrition, with diet related non-communicable diseases now associated with more premature deaths among adults than any other risk factor worldwide.</p>
<p>FAO Guidelines for Measuring Household and Individual Food Dietary Diversity.</p> <p>Available at: http://www.fao.org/3/a-i1983e.pdf.</p>	<p>The dietary diversity scores described in these guidelines consist of a simple count of food groups that a household or individual has consumed over 24 hours. Data for both household and individual scores are collected via a dietary diversity questionnaire, although calculation of the score is slightly different in each case. These data can also be analysed to provide information on specific food groups of interest.</p>
<p>WFP Comprehensive Food Security and Vulnerability Analysis (CFSVA) Guidelines.</p> <p>Available at: https://www.wfp.org/content/comprehensive-food-security-and-vulnerability-analysis-cfsva-guidelines-first-edition.</p>	<p>CFSVA are designed to assess the profiles of food-insecure and vulnerable households, identify the root causes of hunger, and analyse risks and emerging vulnerabilities among populations in crisis-prone countries. CFSVA also generate recommendations on the best response options (food or non-food) to reduce hunger, target the neediest and inform preparedness. The Guidelines present recommended procedures and protocols to conduct a desk review, implement a large household survey, analyse quantitative and qualitative data, and conduct risk analysis and response analyses.</p>
4. Evidence-based multi-sector nutrition actions and their prioritization	
<p>Compendium of Actions for Nutrition (CAN). Rome: WFP 2016, in its capacity as host agency of the UN Network for SUN/REACH Secretariat.</p> <p>Available at: http://www.reachpartnership.org/it/compendium-of-actions-for-nutrition.</p>	<p>The CAN was designed to provide an understanding of the breadth of actions needed to combat malnutrition, facilitate multi-sectoral dialogue and spur action at the country level, particularly on nutrition-related policy and planning. The compendium does not prescribe a specific set of nutrition actions, but it does recognize that prioritization is critical. It also recognizes that prioritization must be based on context, drawing upon a robust situation analysis, available evidence and country priorities in consultation with a range of stakeholders.</p>

STEP 3. Preparing the Strategic Plan and Developing the Results Matrix

ENTRY POINT 3.1.

Selecting 3 to 5 national priorities on which to focus

Action

Given the capacity constraints within the UNCT and NRAs, as well as comparative advantage considerations, it is unlikely that the UN will choose to engage in all the social and economic development initiatives designated as national priorities. As a result, the UNCT, in conjunction with the NRAs, should establish its own priorities for supporting national and sector initiatives related to social and economic development. On this basis, ensure that three to five UNDAF priorities take into account nutrition vulnerabilities and related risks and opportunities, in accordance with those outlined by the UN Nutrition Strategy/Agenda if available, as well as taking into account national SMART commitments made by the government, in the context of the SDGs. This entry point provides an opportunity to determine how best to support implementation and achievement of the national commitments, and to ensure that nutrition concerns are given due consideration when making this selection.

Example

Nepal adopted a multi-sector approach aligned with its national multi-sector nutrition plan (MSNP). Through REACH and partners, the UN Network for SUN coordinated support under the leadership of national government to MSNP technical implementation capacity at national, regional and district level. Additionally, the UN Network for SUN supported strengthening multi-sector nutrition information, monitoring and evaluation for regular assessment and evaluation, as well as strategic advocacy and communication activities promoting sustained commitment to address malnutrition with equity.

Guiding Questions

The following questions can be used to strengthen the process of priority setting by the UNCT (including NRAs) by ensuring that risks and opportunities related to nutrition are given due attention. Where results from UNCT-supported country analysis reveal important nutrition-development linkages, it is critical that these links be included and leveraged during the prioritization exercise. The additional resources listed at the end of STEP 3 can be used when responses to the questions indicate that further analysis is required.

List of Guiding Questions

- Is there adequate nutrition-related information available to inform UNCT priorities for supporting national and sector development initiatives?
- Does taking nutrition into consideration suggest the need for the UNCT to change its choice of national and sector development initiatives that it should support as a matter of priority?
- In terms of UNDAF formulation and planned programmes and projects, what should be the focus of efforts related to nutrition response, and how should they be pursued?
- How will the planned programmes and projects affect and/or benefit various groups—including women, children, indigenous populations and the elderly—and will they target or reach them equitably?

ENTRY POINT 3.2.**Ensuring UNDAF outcomes provide a collective support system for national development****Action**

Ensure UNDAF outcomes enhance nutrition status of the most vulnerable population groups and facilitate progress towards sustainable development with equity. This action is designed to ensure that even though UNDAF outcomes, may not relate specifically to improving nutrition, vulnerabilities, related risks and opportunities, will benefit from taking nutrition into consideration.

Example

In Mauritania, implementation of the UNDAF is managed through thematic steering committees for each UNDAF axis. The two axes relevant to nutrition are run respectively by the Ministry of Rural Development (together with FAO), and the Ministry of Health (together with WHO and UNICEF). These committees draft annual joint work plans, and meet every six months to review progress on implementation, expenditures, and resource mobilization.

Guiding Questions

The following questions can be used by all UNDAF outcome groups, with the assistance of UN staff or external experts with expertise in nutrition vulnerability assessment and assistance programming, to guide review of the draft UNDAF results matrix and work plan using a nutrition lens. These questions also support identification and elaboration of performance targets and indicators related to improving nutrition and increasing access to evidence-based nutrition-specific and nutrition-sensitive interventions.

The additional resources listed at the end of STEP 3 will likely be of use in instances where responses indicate that the UNDAF could be strengthened through further consideration of nutrition.

List of Guiding Questions

- Overall, does the draft UNDAF, and especially the results matrix and work plan, take advantage of all appropriate and reasonable opportunities to ensure that the proposed economic and social development initiatives improve the nutrition situation, increase access to essential nutrition specific and nutrition sensitive actions with equity, and enhance the country's nutrition governance for long-term sustainability?
- Does the draft UNDAF identify national nutrition vulnerabilities and related risks to programmes and projects? Does the draft UNDAF identify and address opportunities to improve the nutrition situation, including nutrition governance, in the country?
- Does the draft UNDAF benefit the population spectrum, and identify and address obstacles to benefits and opportunities, especially for the most marginalized populations and in light of their varied nutrition vulnerabilities?
- Have the needs and opportunities to strengthen relevant capacities been identified and addressed by activities included in the draft work plan?
- Does the UNDAF include performance targets and indicators which reflect the need to improve nutrition and scale up the essential nutrition actions in a sustained and equitable manner?

ENTRY POINT 3.3.

Nutrition mapping of agency programmes and projects

Action

Undertake nutrition mapping of all agency programmes and projects, with emphasis on those under formulation. This action may involve modifying or adding planned results, performance indicators and activities in order to strengthen the UNDAF results matrix and work plan in ways that ensure results are better aligned with the need to enhance the synergies and sustainability of nutrition related outputs and/or outcomes. The UNDAF should also include results and activities designed to strengthen country capacity to integrate nutrition indicators into sectoral policies and plans, and monitor and report on progress towards national and sectoral development goals, including the nutrition related SDGs.

Example

A review based on 8 group interviews of country-level UN officers, and one interview of members of a regional Peer-Support Group (PSG), found that UNDAF nutrition content is often prepared by collating existing policies, plans, and negotiation mandates.

For example, in Kenya, the National Nutrition Action Plan 2012-17 was under development at the same time as the UNDAF. As a result, much of the UNDAF nutrition content was taken directly from the Action Plan. Agency mandates and responsibilities were assigned based on existing projects and activities, with nothing new added to strengthen synergies and improve results.

An UNDAF Nutrition Guidance Note - drafted in response to the Review findings - aims to address this challenge through recommendations designed to ensure that actions proposed by individual agencies: i) cohere strategically, ii) leverage the comparative advantages held by various UN agencies in nutrition, and iii) align with mandates assigned to agencies via the UNDAF.

Guiding Questions

The questions below aim to determine whether existing and emerging nutrition problems will impede achievement of agency programme and project outcomes, and whether the desired development outcomes can ameliorate the nutrition situation. These guiding questions can be used by all UNDAF outcome groups, with the assistance of UN staff or external experts with expertise in climate change screening and assistance programming.

The additional resources listed at the end of STEP 3 will likely be of use in those instances where responses indicate that the proposed programmes and projects could be strengthened through further consideration of the human rights framework.

List of Guiding Questions

- Does the proposed programme or project identify and address nutrition vulnerabilities and related risks to the achievement of the planned outcomes?
- Does the proposed programme or project identify and address opportunities to accelerate progress on national nutrition targets, SMART policy commitments on nutrition actions, and scale-up of essential nutrition actions?
- Does the proposed programme or project identify and address existing inequities, especially targeting those at highest risk of malnutrition in all its forms?
- Does the proposed programme or consider the assessment/tracking of impact of the project on improved nutrition and the benefits of improving nutrition for better programme or project outcomes?
- Does the proposed programme or project identify and address potential nutrition responses in development and/or humanitarian contexts?
- Does the proposed programme or project identify and address potential measures to reduce all forms of malnutrition in the population, especially among the most vulnerable and marginalized population groups?

ENTRY POINT 3.4.

Supporting documentation of nutrition impact (as required)

Action

Documentation of nutrition impact is routinely included in agency nutrition specific and/or nutrition sensitive programmes and projects to demonstrate programme/project impact on nutrition. Additionally, documenting the negative impact of malnutrition on sustainable development progress can help inform pro-nutrition advocacy and policy dialogue.

Example

The Global Nutrition Report (GNR) is the only independent and comprehensive annual review of the state of the world's nutrition. It is a multi-partner initiative that both documents progress on commitments made on the global stage, and recommends actions to accelerate that progress.

Guiding Questions

The questions below are designed to help ensure that proposed activities, performance targets and indicators are consistent with the need for development efforts to be appropriately nutrition sensitive where possible.

The additional resources listed at the end of STEP 3 will likely be of use in those instances where the responses indicate that the proposed programmes and projects could be strengthened through further consideration of nutrition, as well as for instances where more detailed documentation studies and impact assessments are required.

List of Guiding Questions

- Will the programme or project contribute to improved nutrition as a result of increasing access to nutrition-specific and nutrition-sensitive interventions (i.e. "Actions) whose impact is well proven?
- Will improved nutrition influence the development programme or project outcomes in a sustained and equitable manner?
- Does the proposed programme or project include all reasonable measures to ensure that development efforts appropriately address the immediate and underlying drivers of malnutrition?
- Will existing or emerging nutrition challenges reduce intended benefits for some populations relative to others, especially with respect to the most marginalized?
- Does the results matrix of the proposed programme or project include performance targets and indicators capable of demonstrating the effect of improved nutrition on programme and project outcomes, or vice versa?

ENTRY POINT 3.5.**Including nutrition vulnerabilities, risks and opportunities in the Annual Work Plan (or equivalent)****Action**

Ensure that actions to improve nutrition are included in annual work and other plans, (for both nutrition specific and nutrition sensitive actions, and including nutrition governance support), and that the costs of taking nutrition into account in programmes and projects are estimated and included in the UNDAF budget. While actions related to earlier entry points will go a long way to integrating nutrition in the UNDAF, the annual work plan should be assessed to ensure that it is consistent with these earlier efforts. For example, the annual work plan needs to include specific actions in response to nutrition vulnerabilities, risks and opportunities, as appropriate.

Example

In Pakistan, development of the UNDAF coincided with development of the Pakistan Integrated Nutrition Strategy (PINS). The latter involved technical and policy consultations at the provincial and sub-provincial levels, a meta-analysis and a national nutrition survey. The timeliness of these exercises and the evidence they generated facilitated prioritization of nutrition and food security in the Pakistani UNDAF. UN collaboration efforts were positive about the potential of flagship proposals for joint actions under Strategic Priority Area 6 of the UNDAF, which was focused on nutrition. These proposals, to be implemented in 11 Districts, stipulated support to i) scaling up of the government's nutrition actions (under the SUN); ii) training and deploying female health workers to support nutrition interventions at provincial level; iii) integrating food security and nutrition programming (with UNESCO and UNWOMEN), and iv) monitoring and evaluation.

Guiding Questions

The questions below are designed to help ensure that all reasonable steps are taken to assure the proposed development initiatives appropriately address the major forms of malnutrition, in a cost-effective manner.

List of Guiding Questions

- Are the main immediate and underlying drivers of malnutrition, including emerging issues, well understood? Have the most vulnerable population groups been identified?
- Does the proposed programme or project include all reasonable measures to ensure that development efforts are appropriately tackling these immediate and underlying drivers of malnutrition? Are these efforts reaching the most vulnerable population groups?
- Are the proposed programmes and projects exploiting all opportunities to contribute to improved nutrition, especially among the most vulnerable population groups?
- Will lack of progress on tackling major malnutrition programmes negatively affect programme and project outcomes?
- Does the results matrix of the proposed programme or project include performance targets and indicators capable of demonstrating effect on nutrition, and vice versa?

Additional Resources for STEP 3

Resource	Description
<p>UN Global Nutrition Agenda: Delivering on the commitment to eradicate malnutrition in all its forms: The role of the UN system (UNGNA v.1.0).</p> <p>Available at: http://scalingupnutrition.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/06/UN-Global-Nutrition-Agenda-2015.pdf.</p>	<p>The UNGA should serve to stimulate dialogue among UN agencies at all levels on how best to align their activities, given their specific mandates and resources, in the context of a changing global development system. Working toward achievement of the joint goals should contribute to more efficient use of resources, less duplication of effort and greater synergy among agency activities. The UNGA proposed outcomes, goals, outputs and activities aim to inform priority setting and work planning by agencies and interagency teams at global, regional and country levels.</p>
<p>Work Programme of the United Nations Decade of Action on Nutrition (2016-2025).</p> <p>Available at: https://www.unscn.org/en/topics/un-decade-of-action-on-nutrition?idnews=1704.</p>	<p>In November 2014, at the Second International Conference on Nutrition (ICN2), Member States and the global community committed to eliminate malnutrition in all its forms and articulated in the Rome Declaration on Nutrition a common vision for global action. They also agreed on a voluntary Framework for Action (ICN2 FfA) to achieve these commitments. The Work Programme for the Nutrition Decade supports country implementation of the FfA; this document describes its aims, added value and guiding principles; key areas for priority action (action areas); modalities of engagement; roles of Member States and other stakeholders; mechanisms and tools for driving action (means of implementation). It also includes an accountability framework.</p>
<p>REACH Nutrition Planning Guidance.</p> <p>Ref: UN Network for SUN Strategy (2016-2020).</p> <p>Available at: http://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/UNN%20Strategy-FINAL-11May2017-EN-LowRes.pdf.</p>	<p>The newly developed guidance materials on Nutrition Planning leverage findings from REACH analytical exercises and tools, including the multi-sectoral Nutrition Overview, Policy and Plan Overview and Stakeholder and Nutrition Action Mapping, so as to inform scale-up and multi-sectoral nutrition planning efforts at national and subnational levels. The guidance is formulated in a visual format (PowerPoint slides/booklet) that is conducive to presentation during planning workshops. It provides an overview of nutrition planning processes, highlighting the importance of bridging national and subnational planning streams. It also helps to contextualize planning discussions within the nutrition situation, including discussing the existing coverage of nutrition actions, and capacity to address the nutrition challenges of a given geographic area. This guidance also prompts consideration of influencing factors, such as a country's nutrition policy framework as well as its broader development frameworks.</p>

STEP 4. Monitoring and Evaluation

ENTRY POINT 4.1.

Assess extent to which UNDAF results contribute to national priorities and improved nutrition

Action

Monitor and evaluate outcomes, focusing on the relevant UNDAF outcomes and outputs; with a focus on how they enhance the nutrition situation of the population, in particular among the most marginalized population groups, and increase access to essential nutrition specific and nutrition sensitive interventions, as well as contribute to national targets and priorities, including those related to commitments made under the UN Decade of Action on Nutrition and the implementation of its Work Programme, including the outcome of ICN2, and the nutrition related SDGs, for the achievement of the 2025 WHA global nutrition and NCD targets.

Example

UNDAF evaluation findings and the lessons learned can benefit nutrition. For instance, in Rwanda, an UNDAF review process highlighted nutrition as an area of strength. It highlighted nutrition as an area of comparative advantage for the UN.

Guiding Questions

Guiding questions are designed to ensure that M&E provides evidence that implementing the UNDAF has improved the nutrition situation, especially among the most marginalized population groups, and also improved access to priority nutrition specific and nutrition sensitive services.

List of Guiding Questions

- Are there plans for regular assessments of progress towards the nutrition-related results in the matrix?
- Will the consequences of improved nutrition for poverty reduction, human rights, gender equality, and human health and well-being be assessed and evaluated?
- Does monitoring and evaluation of programme implementation give adequate attention to assessing whether opportunities to improve nutrition provide tangible benefits to the vulnerable, poor, women and other marginalized groups?
- Are opportunities for improved nutrition that will benefit the most vulnerable, poor, women and other marginalized groups given adequate attention in monitoring and evaluation of programme implementation?
- Is appropriate attention being given to identification of partners' capacity development needs, particularly for data collection, analysis, monitoring and reporting related to addressing the causes and consequences of malnutrition in all its forms, as per the country context?
- Are outcomes related to nutrition included in the results-based reporting on achievements?
- Is there provision for assessing changes in the level of co-operation among UN agencies with respect to addressing nutrition-related risks and opportunities?

- Is the monitoring and evaluation sufficient to make a judgement about the effectiveness and efficiency of the UNDAF strategies and results in terms of improving access to the essential nutrition specific and nutrition sensitive interventions especially among the most vulnerable population groups?
- Is M&E sufficient to make a judgement about the effective use of UNCT resources and comparative advantages, particularly for the development of capacity to address nutrition, including the use of a multi-sector approach, as required?
- To what extent will it be possible to show the improved positioning of UNDAF results and lessons in terms of influencing the national development framework for combating malnutrition, and informing relevant country analysis and planning in the next cycle?

ENTRY POINT 4.2.

Feed back into country analysis and planning

Action

Monitor activities and outcomes to ensure they continue to be responsive to learning on nutrition-related risks and opportunities. This action provides for continuous improvement and learning, which is an important part of UNDAF preparation and implementation.

Guiding Questions

The guiding questions are designed to ensure that the M&E provides an opportunity for learning and continuous improvement as part of UNDAF preparation and implementation.

List of Guiding Questions

- How will nutrition programmes and projects integrate new information on emerging issues, risks, vulnerabilities, costs and benefits, and access to essential nutrition actions?
- Are systems in place to ensure that knowledge gained from M&E is used to inform ongoing and future planning and programming related to nutrition?
- Are systems in place to ensure i) specific monitoring of impacts on various social groups and by gender, and that this information is integrated into evaluations, results assessments and future planning related to nutrition?
- Will lessons from evaluations of programmes, projects and initiatives, and management responses, be available when new outcomes are being formulated or projects or programmes are being identified, designed and appraised?
- Is there assurance that evaluation of pilot initiatives will be completed and reported before such initiatives are replicated or scaled up?

Additional Resources for STEP 4

Resource	Description
<p>Handbook on Planning, Monitoring and Evaluating for Development Results. Evaluation Office, the Operations Support Group, and the Capacity Development Group of the Bureau for Development Policy, UNDP, 2009.</p> <p>Available at: http://web.undp.org/evaluation/handbook/documents/english/pme-handbook.pdf.</p>	<p>Provides guidance on results-based management of programming and performance management, with an emphasis on strengthening the focus on development changes and real improvements in people's lives.</p>
<p>Compendium of indicators for nutrition-sensitive agriculture, FAO, 2016.</p> <p>Available at: http://www.fao.org/3/a-i6275e.pdf.</p>	<p>This simple guide is for those responsible for the monitoring and evaluation (M&E) of investment projects in food and agriculture (including and in addition to value chains, social development, and rural development) that need to demonstrate that they lead to intermediary results toward improved nutrition. This compendium aims to gather the main existing nutrition-relevant indicators that can be used for M&E of food and agriculture investments, and to show which type of investments each type of indicator is most appropriate for.</p>
<p>Nutrition Targets and Indicators for the Post-2015 Sustained Development Goals: Accountability for the Measurement of Results in Nutrition: A Technical Note (UNSCN, 2015).</p> <p>Available at: https://www.unscn.org/files/Publications/Post_2015_Nutrition_Targets_and_Indicators_final_March_2015_website_.pdf.</p>	<p>Proposes global nutrition targets and indicators, embedding nutrition indicators in the SDGs, and intervention coverage indicators for country-level monitoring. It also addresses the issue of accountability, first with regards to ensuring that data collection and national information systems can accurately measure progress in nutrition by providing high quality, timely and disaggregated data; and second with a discussion of national cost estimates and tracking of resources for nutrition.</p>

B. Country-specific SMART commitments

A common vision on global action to eradicate hunger and end all forms of malnutrition was defined by the ten commitments of the Rome Declaration on Nutrition and the accompanying 60 recommended policy options and strategies in its Framework for Action, which were adopted at the ICN2 in November 2014. Following the recommendation in the Rome Declaration, the UN Decade of Action on Nutrition (2016–2025) was declared by the UN General Assembly in April 2016.

The ten commitments are as follows:

1. Eradicate hunger and prevent all forms of malnutrition.
2. Increase investments for effective interventions and actions to improve people's diets and nutrition.
3. Enhance sustainable food systems.
4. Raise the profile of nutrition with national strategies and align national resources accordingly.
5. Strengthen human and institutional capacities to improve nutrition.
6. Strengthen and facilitate contributions and action by all stakeholders.
7. Ensure healthy diets throughout the life course.
8. Create enabling environment for making informed choices.
9. Implement these ten commitments through the Framework for Action.
10. Integrate the Declaration's vision and commitments into the post-2015 development agenda process.

As part of the UN Decade of Action on Nutrition and ICN2 follow-up process, there is a call for governments and all actors to make SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Time bound) Commitments to Nutrition Action to achieve national nutrition targets. This also requires that monitoring systems that permit assessment of progress are in place. There is also a call on all relevant actors to revise or extend SMART and ambitious commitments as part of the 2016 N4G Rio Summit process. Actors in other sectors should specify how commitments in their own sectors can help advance nutrition. In this context, the UN system should assist countries in translating the 60 recommended actions of the ICN2 Framework for Action into country specific SMART commitments for action on nutrition.

Country-specific policy commitments for action will vary across countries based on national priorities and depending on the country's nutrition situation, and current food and health systems.

The implementation of the ten commitments through the use of the ICN2 Framework for Action will contribute to ensuring accountability and monitoring progress in achieving the World Health Assembly Global Nutrition Targets 2025 and the nutrition-related voluntary global non-communicable diseases targets. The UN Decade of Action on Nutrition offers a unique opportunity to all countries and stakeholders to unite around a common framework and to increase the visibility, coordination, efficiency and effectiveness of nutrition action at all levels worldwide.

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GUIDANCE NOTE ON INTEGRATION OF NUTRITION IN THE UNITED NATIONS DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE FRAMEWORK

A Guidance Note for United Nations Country Teams

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