

SUN Movement Report 2016

Lao PDR

Joint-Assessment by National Multi-Stakeholder Platform

April 2015 to April 2016

Process and Details of the 2016 Joint-Assessment exercise

Participation

1. Did the following stakeholder groups provide specific inputs, whether in writing or verbally, to the Joint-Assessment?

| Group | Yes (provide number) / No (= 0) |
|------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Government | Yes |
| Civil Society | Yes |
| Science and Academia | No |
| Donors | Yes |
| United Nations | Yes |
| Business | No |
| Other (please specify) | |

2. How many people in total participated in the process at some point? 9

Process

3. Was the Joint-Assessment data gathered and/or reviewed during a face-to-face meeting, or via email?

| Step | Format | | | |
|--------------------|---------|--------------------------|-------|-------------------------------------|
| Collection | Meeting | <input type="checkbox"/> | Email | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| Review, validation | Meeting | <input type="checkbox"/> | Email | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |

4. If a collection or validation meeting did take place, please attach a photo of it if possible

Usefulness

5. If a collection or validation meeting did take place, would you say that the meeting was useful to participants, beyond the usual work of the MSP?

Yes / No

Why?

| N/A | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
|---|------------------|----------------|---|--|---|
| Not applicable | Not started | Started | On-going | Nearly completed | Completed |
| Progress Marker not applicable to current context | Nothing in place | Planning begun | Planning completed and implementation initiated | Implementation complete with gradual steps to processes becoming operational | Fully operational /Target achieved/On-going with continued monitoring/ Validated/ Evidence provided |

Process 1: Bringing people together in the same space for action

| DEFINITION | FINAL PLATFORM SCORE | WHAT ACTIVITIES / INTERVENTIONS UNDERLIE EACH SCORE |
|---|----------------------|---|
| Progress marker 1.1: Select / develop coordinating mechanisms at country level | | |
| This progress marker looks at the extent to which coordination mechanisms are established at government level and are regularly convened by high-level officials. It indicates if non-state | 4 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The National Nutrition Committee (NNC), officially established in 2013 and chaired by the Vice Prime Minister, continues to be functional. The NNC meets on six-monthly basis to discuss key policy and programme issues. One high level meeting was convened in July and another on November 20th2015. Major priorities in 2015 were the update of the National Nutrition Strategy to 2025 and Plan of Action 2016-2020 (NNSPA). ▪ The NNC is supported by a Secretariat (chaired by the Vice Minister of Health) and its office, currently staffed with two full -time staff, one Coordinator and one international consultant. The NNC Secretariat met on quarterly basis, including before the meetings of the NNC. In addition, the NNC Secretariat held regular meetings as part of the process to update the NNSPA. The meetings were held under the umbrella of the Government of Lao (GoL) Core Team and multi-sectoral technical working group for nutrition. |

| | | |
|---|----------|---|
| <p>constituencies such as the UN Agencies, donors, civil society organisations and businesses have organised themselves in networks with convening and coordinating functions.</p> | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ SUN country networks are established for UN, CSA and Donor. Convenors/ focal points for these networks are clearly appointed. The CSA was established in early 2014, and has an elected management committee, detailed TOR, and 5 year strategy. It is supported by a small secretariat. Work is underway to identify a business focal point to represent business interests and formalise a country business network. At present there is no Academic representative. ▪ On November 20th the NNC organised the first National Nutrition Forum presided by the Deputy Prime Minister and co-chaired by EU and UNICEF. The Forum brought together the representatives of all SUN networks and was used to disseminate the updated NNSPA and call for urgent multi-sectoral action to scale up nutrition. |
| <p>Progress marker 1.2: Coordinate internally and expand membership/engage with other actors for broader influence</p> | | |
| <p>Looks at extent to which coordinating mechanisms reach out to relevant sectors. It analyses the extent to which local levels are involved in the multi-stakeholder-sector nutrition approach (e.g decentralisation).</p> | <p>3</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The MSP is inclusive of relevant sectors, including nutrition sensitive (e.g. Agriculture, WASH, Rural Development and Poverty Eradication). ▪ Provincial coordination mechanisms are in the process of being established. Provincial Nutrition Secretariats are in place in some provinces since 2014 and are actively being set-up in others. ▪ An informal Development Partners’ Group on food and nutrition security co-convened by EU and UNICEF meet quarterly with active engagement from key UN agencies, donors and SUN CSA. ▪ Members of the SUN Civil Society Alliance meet annually and hold at least two training events for members per year (3 in 2015). Membership of the CSA has increased considerably since 2014, and currently there are 55 INGO and local Civil Society Organisation members. The SUN CSA management committee meets monthly. |
| <p>Progress marker 1.3: Engage within/ contribute to multi-stakeholder platform (MSP)</p> | | |
| <p>This progress marker looks at the actual functioning of the MSP to facilitate regular interactions among relevant stakeholders.</p> | <p>3</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The NNC Secretariat has annual and quarterly workplans and reports against these plans. ▪ Wide sectoral representation (education, health, agriculture and WASH) is ensured through NNC Secretariat with periodic meetings held under the umbrella of GoL Core Team and multi-sectoral technical working group for nutrition. In 2015, this platform enabled the stakeholders to come together via a series of meetings and technical consultations to update the NNSPA (including costing); to conduct Nutrition Finance Mapping (see process 4); and to link with global support system (e.g. SUN Country Network teleconferences). ▪ To ensure the widest possible advocacy and engagement, GoL through NNC and its Secretariat, with support from informal Development Partners (DPs) Group (UN, Donors and CSA) held a National Nutrition Forum on November 20th 2015. This Forum provided a dedicated political space for mobilising key sectors in the Government, Provincial leaders and external DP in support of taking action to eliminate undernutrition in Lao PDR. |
| <p>Progress marker 1.4: Track, report and critically reflect on own contributions and accomplishments</p> | | |
| <p>This progress marker looks at the capacity of the multi-stakeholder platform to be accountable for collective</p> | <p>3</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ As mentioned above, in the 4th Quarter 2015, GoL through the NNC and its Secretariat with support from DP (UN, CSA, Donor) held its First National Nutrition Forum which is to become an annual event. Subsequent Forums will bring together high level Government officials and DPs and help monitor progress against the nutrition targets and commitments as outlined in the NNSPA and as committed in the 2015 Forum. ▪ Findings from the Nutrition Finance mapping (first conducted in 4th quarter 2015 and to be conducted annually – |

| | | |
|---|---|--|
| results. | | see Process 4) will be used to help track financial commitments from all sources to nutrition. |
| Progress marker 1.5: Sustain the political impact of the multi-stakeholder platform | | |
| This progress marker looks at how multi-stakeholder nutrition approach is institutionalised in national development planning mechanisms (Government and agencies) | 3 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The NNC Secretariat linked to existing sector coordination mechanisms (SWG/TWG, National Assembly sessions and the Round Table process) to ensure the best possible integration of nutrition priorities into national policy, plans and budgets. ▪ In 2015, national planning cycles enabled the update of the NNSPA 2016 -2020, 8th NSEDP and other sectoral plans (health, agriculture, education) with inclusion of nutrition objectives and indicators. SUN CSA contributed to the content on gender in nutrition. ▪ Efforts to sustain the political impact of the MSP are made through high level events and forums such as the Nutrition Forum and through inclusion of nutrition on the agenda of high level Round Table Meetings. Key stakeholder groups (UN, CSA, Donor) actively support the process. |

| Stakeholders | Description/ Key contribution of each stakeholder to Process One |
|-------------------|--|
| Government | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - GoL through the NNC and its Secretariat continued to coordinate a MSP which engaged relevant stakeholders. Periodic meetings and high level events (First National Nutrition Forum) were held in 2015 under the chair of the Vice Prime Minister (NNC) and Vice Minister of Health (NNC Secretariat). - Efforts to strengthen coordination mechanisms were made at sub-national level through endorsement of additional Provincial Nutrition Committees. - The NNC Secretariat has annual and quarterly workplans and reports against these plans. - Nutrition has been included into national development planning. In 2015, national planning cycles enabled the update of the NNSPA 2016 -2020, 8th NSEDP and other sectoral plans (health, agriculture, education) with inclusion of nutrition objectives and indicators. |
| UN | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The Country UN network is active and has a focal point appointed (UNICEF) - UNICEF (jointly with EU) convenes regular informal Development Partners meetings (quarterly) on Food and Nutrition Security. The DP Nutrition Group encompasses over 60 representatives of UN, donor and CSA - UN Network provides direct technical and financial support for the nutrition coordination activities of the NNC, Secretariat and its office (UNICEF, FAO) and sub-national co-ordination mechanisms (UNICEF, FAO, WFP, IFAD). - A UNDAF sub-group co-chaired by FAO and WFP ensures coordination with larger UN system and the monitoring and advocacy as part of UNDAF process - UN and WB act as focal agencies under the Chief Executive Board Initiative to coordinate UN system support on nutrition in Lao |
| Donor | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The Country Donor network is active and has a convenor appointed (EU). - EU (jointly with UNICEF) convenes regular informal Development Partners meetings (quarterly) on Food and Nutrition Security - Donors provided support to nutrition coordination efforts at national and sub-national level (for example EU support to NNC Secretariat through UNICEF) |
| Business | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Business Network has not been formalised, however efforts are in progress to mobilise support and appoint a Business liaison person. |
| CSO | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the SUN CSA network is a long-standing and active member of Lao MSP and throughout the reporting period have provided regular and consistent support on coordination of activities at national as well as sub-national levels. The CSO network has a formal structure in place and its steering committee meets regularly. The Network gathers 55 members (28 local NGO, 27 iNGO) who are formally registered with the Alliance. - The Network prepared and conducted a range of knowledge sharing events, such as Workshops on subject areas of basic nutrition concepts and causes, women’s empowerment and gendered approaches to nutrition, ethnicity & nutrition, which were highly attended - The SUN CSA Secretariat has provided regular feedback to its members on issues of coordination for nutrition, both at national and sub-national levels |

| | |
|--|--|
| | - The SUN CSA co-funded the First National Nutrition Forum, and contributed a technical consultant to the mapping exercise jointly undertaken with UNICEF and EU |
|--|--|

OVERALL SUMMARY OF PROGRESS ACHIEVED OVER THE PAST YEAR (APRIL 2015 – APRIL 2016) FOR PROCESS 1: Bringing people together in the same space (i.e. Overall achievements/positive changes/ key challenges and suggestions for improvements/ other relevant activities in the context of scaling up nutrition efforts in country)

Significant achievements include:

- Conduct of the First National Nutrition Forum in November 2015 which provided a dedicated political space for mobilising key sectors in the Government, Provincial leaders and external Development Partners in support of taking action to eliminate undernutrition in Lao PDR. The Forum is to be an annual event which will bring together high level Government officials and DPs; and help monitor progress against national nutrition targets and commitments. Nutrition was also included on the agenda of the High Level Round Table Meeting held in 4th Quarter 2015.
- Nutrition coordination structures are well established at national level and inclusive of key sectors; and are becoming formalised at sub-national level. At the national level, planning and communication mechanisms have been strengthened, such as annual/ quarterly work plans and reports, organisation of Government multi-sectoral core team/ technical working group meetings.
- Technical and financial assistance has been secured to support nutrition coordination in line with the recently updated NNSPA (e.g. from EU/UNICEF, IFAD, WFP).
- The NNC Secretariat linked to existing sector coordination mechanisms (SWG/ TWG, National Assembly sessions and the Round Table process) to ensure integration of nutrition priorities into national policy, plans and budgets. In 2015, national planning cycles enabled the update of the National Nutrition Strategy to 2025, National Plan of Action for Nutrition 2016 -2020, 8th NSEDP and other sectoral plans (health, agriculture, education) with inclusion of nutrition objectives and indicators.

Challenges to multisectoral nutrition coordination in Lao PDR have been identified:

- Multi sectoral coordination at national and subnational levels requires dedicated staff with capacity for coordination, strategic and operational planning across sectors, implementation monitoring, advocacy and communication. A key challenge is the limited capacity at national and decentralised levels and links between the different levels. Increased financial and technical support is however planned from mid-2016 to strengthen National, Provincial and District Nutrition Committees, their Secretariats and offices.
- Absence of a formal multi-sectoral working group involving both Government and Development Partners and Civil Society actors, national and subnational level stakeholders. In order to address this challenge and to better link the Government and Development partners coordination, the National Nutrition Committee established the above mentioned annual Nutrition Forum which provides a dedicated platform for high level policy dialogue on nutrition.
- Country business and academic networks remain to be established. A working group in country has been formed to mobilise support for the Business Network.

Process 2: Ensuring a coherent policy and legal framework

Process 2: Ensuring a coherent policy and legal framework

Progress marker 2.1: Continuously analyse existing nutrition-relevant policies and legislations

| DEFINITION | FINAL PLATFORM SCORE | WHAT ACTIVITIES / INTERVENTIONS UNDERLIE EACH SCORE |
|---|----------------------|--|
| This progress marker looks at the extent to which existing nutrition-relevant (specific and sensitive) policies and legislations are analysed using multi-sectoral consultative processes with representation from various stakeholders | 3 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ In 2015, NNC Secretariat led the process of updating the NNSPA. The updated document which was endorsed by the NNC on November 20th 2015, is the result of a 9-month series of technical consultations involving a number of Government sectors (health, agriculture, education, planning & investment, National Committee for Rural Development and Poverty Reduction) and key Development Partners (UN, CSA, Donor). FAO provided technical and financial support for the NNS and UNICEF/ EU for the Action Plan, costing and baseline establishment. Technical support for the NNSPA costing was provided by MQSUN. ▪ NNC Secretariat was also involved in the review and update of other nutrition relevant policies, such as Agriculture Development Strategy to 2025 and National Strategy and Action Plan for Integrated Services on Reproductive, Maternal, Newborn and Child Health (2016-2025). ▪ The legal framework on the Code of Marketing of Breastmilk Substitutes requires upgrading and strengthening (review done in March 2014 – UNICEF/ WHO/ International Code Documentation Center/ International Baby Food Action Network (ICDC/IBFAN)/ Save the Children). Although this is recognized by the Government, revisions have not yet begun. ▪ Maternity protections require strengthening, despite a recent extension of maternity leave for civil servants as the policy does not reflect global standards. ▪ Discussions have started on the necessity to develop a working framework on food fortification, supported by WFP. |

Progress marker 2.2: Continuously engage in advocacy to influence the development, update and dissemination of relevant policy and legal frameworks

| | | |
|--|---|---|
| This progress marker looks at the extent to which in-country stakeholders are able to contribute, influence and advocate for the development of an updated or new policy and legal framework for | 3 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Nutrition advocacy documents were developed by the NNC Secretariat office with inputs from relevant Government Ministries (Health, Agriculture and Education) and the informal DP' Group on Nutrition. They were disseminated to high level Government officials (Ministry Department Directors and Deputy Directors; Provincial Governors) and DP at the Nutrition Forum on November 20th, 2015; and have since been distributed to technical representatives of key line Ministries at central and provincial level. The briefs aim to inform on the nutrition situation and consequences of undernutrition in Lao PDR; and the role each sector can play, particularly with regard to implementing the NNSPA interventions to reduce undernutrition. They advocate strongly for improved nutrition during the child's first 1000 days and for all Ministries to work together for nutrition. ▪ NNC Secretariat and the MoH with support from Development partners (EU, World Bank, UNICEF, WFP, WHO, USAID Nurture - led by Save the Children, SUN CSA) are developing a multi-sectoral Social and Behavioral Change |
|--|---|---|

| | | |
|--|----------|--|
| <p>improved nutrition and its dissemination (i.e. advocacy and communication strategies in place to support the dissemination of relevant policies).</p> | | <p>Communication Strategic Framework and Action Plan to support the operationalization of the advocacy and behavioural components of the NNSPA 2016-2020.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Ongoing advocacy events have taken place in 2015 on the importance of promoting, protecting and supporting breastfeeding: advocacy briefs on ‘The cost of not Breastfeeding in Lao PDR,’ (Alive & Thrive/ UNICEF), were produced and disseminated during a national level event; in response to a request from National Assembly, all members of Parliament attended a UNICEF-supported meeting on the importance of strengthening legislation around Nutrition; a number of targeted advocacy meetings took place with the Chair of Social-cultural committee and with the Department of Hygiene and Health Promotion (DHHP) of the MoH; The Deputy Director General of the DHHP attended a high level meeting in Geneva and Lao PDR was selected as a pilot country for implementing mechanisms for monitoring the code. ▪ A UNICEF supported awareness-raising session on nutrition was held targeting Lao Front for National Construction. ▪ WHO is supporting the NNC Secretariat to develop an advocacy/ dissemination strategy for the NNSPA. |
| <p>Progress marker 2.3: Develop or update coherent policies and legal frameworks through coordinated and harmonised in-country stakeholders efforts</p> | | |
| <p>This progress marker looks at the extent to which in-country stakeholders - government and non-state partners - coordinate their inputs to ensure the development of a coherent policy and legislation framework.</p> | <p>2</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ As mentioned, in 2015, the NNSPA was updated. This process was led by the NNC Secretariat which ensured that key sectors (health, agriculture, education, planning & investment, National Committee for Rural Development and Poverty Reduction) provided coordinated inputs during a series of technical consultations held during Government Core Group/ TWG meetings. Key Development Partners (UN, CSA, Donor, MQ SUN) provided financial and technical support to the process. ▪ The NNC Secretariat, as a result of its multi-sectoral nature, ensured integration of nutrition priorities into other relevant national policies, strategies and plans. ▪ The legal framework on the Code of Marketing of Breastmilk Substitutes, as well as its monitoring requires upgrading and strengthening. ▪ Partial legislation exists on maternity protection. ▪ Working framework and relevant legislation on food fortification are under review and discussion. |
| <p>Progress marker 2.4: Operationalise / enforce the legal frameworks</p> | | |
| <p>This progress marker looks at the availability of mechanisms to operationalise and enforce legislations</p> | <p>1</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Mechanisms to operationalise and enforce existing legislations (e.g. Code of Marketing of Breastmilk Substitutes, maternity protection) require review and strengthening. |
| <p>Progress marker 2.5: Track and report for learning and sustaining the policy and legislation impact</p> | | |
| <p>Extent to which existing policies and legislations have been</p> | <p>1</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The extent to which existing policies and legislations have been evaluated to document and share best practices and lessons learned remains limited. |

| | | |
|---|--|--|
| reviewed and evaluated to document best practices | | |
|---|--|--|

| Stakeholders | Description/ Key contribution of each Stakeholder to Process Two |
|-------------------|--|
| Government | <p>The National Nutrition Committee Secretariat:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - led the process of reviewing and updating the NNSPA. The updated document which was endorsed by the NNC on November 20th 2015, is the result of a 9-month series of technical consultations involving key Government sectors. - ensured linkages to other sectors thereby ensuring integration of nutrition priorities into other national policies, strategies and plans. - involved in the review and update of nutrition relevant policies, such as Agriculture Development Strategy to 2025 and National Strategy and Action Plan for Integrated Services on Reproductive, Maternal, Newborn and Child Health (2016-2025) - coordinated the development of nutrition advocacy documents, ensuring inputs from relevant Government Ministries (Health, Agriculture and Education) which were disseminated to high level Government officials (Ministry Department Directors and Deputy Directors; Provincial Governors) and DP at the Nutrition Forum on November 20th, 2015; and have since been distributed to technical representatives of key line Ministries at central and provincial level. - NNC Secretariat and the MoH are coordinating the development of a multi-sectoral Social and Behavioural Change Communication Strategic Framework and Action Plan to support the operationalization of the advocacy and behavioural components of the NNSPA 2016-2020. . |
| UN | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - provided major support to NNSPA update process, both by securing technical advice as well as funding the policy development process - maintained focus on the need to mainstream nutrition into national development frameworks and sectoral policies and plans - provides technical and financial support for the development of nutrition advocacy documents and SBCC SAP - continues dialogue regarding the upgrade of the legal framework on the Code of Marketing of Breastmilk Substitutes, as well as its monitoring; and the development of a working framework and relevant legislation on food fortification |
| Donor | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Provided financial assistance in support of the update of the NNSPA, advocacy documents and SBCC SAP. - Ongoing advocacy meetings and dialogue in support of relevant policy and legislation update and/ or development. |
| Business | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Business Network had limited involvement though business representatives have expressed increased interest in participating. MMG provided financial contribution (through UNICEF) to the nutrition advocacy documents disseminated at the Nutrition Forum. |
| CSO | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Actively contributed to DPs Nutrition Group and sectoral working groups which provided inputs for the update and review of the NNSPA 2016-2020. Their voice was particularly strong in advocating for gender as well as community-based nutrition, including provision of evidence based documentation - Provides technical and financial support for nutrition advocacy documents (e.g. Alive and Thrive – cost of not breastfeeding) and SBCC SAP process. - Continuous advocacy regarding the upgrade of the legal framework on the Code of Marketing of Breastmilk Substitutes, as well as its monitoring, as well as on strengthened maternity protections. |
| Others | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - MQSUN provided technical support for the costing of the National Nutrition Strategy Plan of Action. |

OVERALL SUMMARY OF PROGRESS ACHIEVED OVER THE PAST YEAR (APRIL 2015 – APRIL 2016) FOR PROCESS 2: Coherent policy and legal framework (i.e. Overall achievements/positive changes/ key challenges and suggestions for improvements/ other relevant activities in the context of scaling up nutrition efforts in country)

Significant achievements include:

- Review and update of the NNS to 2025 and NNSPA 2016 to 2020.
- Ensured linkages to existing sector coordination mechanisms (SWG/TWG, National Assembly sessions and the Round Table process) to ensure integration of nutrition priorities into other relevant national policies, strategies and plans.
- Continuous advocacy on the upgrade of the legal framework on the Code of Marketing of Breastmilk Substitutes, as well as its monitoring; and development of a working framework and relevant legislation on food fortification.

With regard to challenges, nutrition related legislations such as the National Code on Marketing of Breastmilk Substitutes and maternity protection remain a weak area, requiring review, strengthening with upgraded status (from a few legal provisions to many legal provisions), enforcement and monitoring.

Process 3: Aligning actions around a Common Results Framework

| Process 3: Aligning actions around a Common Results Framework | | |
|--|-----------------------------|--|
| Progress marker 3.1: Align existing actions around national nutrition targets/policies | | |
| DEFINITION | FINAL PLATFORM SCORE | WHAT ACTIVITIES / INTERVENTIONS UNDERLIE EACH SCORE |
| This progress marker looks at the extent to which in-country stakeholder groups take stock of what exists and align their own plans and programming for nutrition to reflect the national policies and priorities. | 3 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ In October 2015, a Nutrition Stakeholder and Action Mapping were conducted by the NNC Secretariat office with support from UNICEF, SUN CSA and EU. The core nutrition actions mapped were the 22 priority interventions of the National Nutrition Plan of Action ▪ Development partners supporting nutrition in Lao PDR aim to do so in line with the updated NNSPA. |
| Progress marker 3.2: Translate policy and legal frameworks into an actionable Common Results Framework (CRF) for scaling up nutrition | | |
| This progress marker looks at the extent to which in-country stakeholders are able to agree on a Common Results Framework to effectively align interventions for improved nutrition. | 3 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ A Common Results Framework, including M&E framework has been developed with inputs from relevant sectors and technical support from UNICEF and MQSUN. It includes a table of expected results, a costed implementation plan and indicates the main stakeholders responsible for each action. ▪ The M&E framework of the Common Results Framework has received technical input from all sectors and requires final endorsement and implementation. ▪ A baseline for new NNSPA was established through the implementation of the nutrition surveys supported by UNICEF, WFP, EU and SDC. |
| Progress marker 3.3: Organise and implement annual priorities as per the Common Results Framework | | |

| | | |
|---|----------|---|
| <p>This progress marker looks specifically at the national and local capability to sequence and implement the priority actions.</p> | <p>2</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ A pilot to test convergent, multi-sectoral approach to nutrition was initiated in 3 target provinces (6 target districts). Following training on microplanning from NNC Secretariat office, provincial and district multi-sectoral plans were developed at sub-national level. DPs (WFP, UNICEF, IFAD, FAO) supported planning and implementation. Interaction between national and sub-national level is ensured by NNC Secretariat. ▪ Strengthening of sub-national coordination and planning will take place as part of multi-sector capacity building under the NNSPA 2016-2020. |
| <p>Progress marker 3.4: Jointly monitor priority actions as per Common Results Framework</p> | | |
| <p>This progress marker looks specifically at how information systems are used to monitor the implementation of priority actions for improved nutrition. It looks specifically at the availability of joint progress reports that can meaningfully inform the adjustment of interventions and contribute towards harmonised targeting and coordinated service delivery among in-country stakeholders.</p> | <p>2</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Given the multi-sectoral nature of the convergent approach to nutrition, partners agreed on a joint monitoring approach. The proposal has been discussed at DPs Task Force and NNC Secretariat meetings. A draft package of monitoring tools, including Concept Note, was prepared by the Office of Sec to NNC. The package was developed using tools developed elsewhere, such as by MDG Fund and UN Joint monitoring program Units. The first joint monitoring visit was carried May 4-7th, 2015, using some elements of the proposed draft package. Efforts to strengthen monitoring are ongoing. ▪ Efforts are also ongoing to strengthen the information systems which are used to monitor the implementation of priority actions for improved nutrition (e.g. HMIS, DHIS2) ▪ In 2015 and 2016, EU supported scoping missions on the establishment of a National Information Platform for Nutrition (NIPN) in Lao PDR. The NIPN aims to bring together existing data from all sectors that influence human nutrition in Lao PDR, both nutrition specific and nutrition sensitive to enable analysis which would contribute to the understanding of factors that cause or prevent malnutrition. The platform would be complementary to current health and food security/ agricultural information systems. Expected NIPN outputs include policy briefs and analytical reports for decision makers |
| <p>Progress marker 3.5: Evaluate implementation of actions to understand, achieve and sustain nutrition impact</p> | | |
| <p>This progress marker looks specifically at how results and success is being evaluated to inform implementation decision making and create evidence for public good.</p> | <p>3</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ In 2015, Lao Bureau of Statistics and MoH on behalf of the NNC Secretariat, with support from UNICEF, WFP, EU, SDC conducted a sub-national Food Nutrition Security Survey (FNSS) in five provinces, a household based survey intended to generate data on nutritional status of children and women, as well as determinants, and programme coverage for priority nutrition-related interventions in health, water, sanitation and hygiene, agriculture/ food security and education. ▪ Given a high demand for new national nutrition data for MDG reporting by the President of Lao PDR, the MoH/ National Institute of Public Health (NIPN), with support from UNICEF conducted a Nutrition tag-on Survey to the National Immunization coverage survey (LCAAS) which generated representative estimates for stunting, underweight and wasting for all the provinces in the country. |

| | |
|--|--|
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Results from both surveys constitute the basis for MDG reporting, policy development advocacy and programming for the 8th National Socio-Economic Development Plan, new five-year sector development plans and the development of the post-2015 agenda for food and nutrition security in Lao PDR. They also help advocate for increased effective coverage of nutrition-specific and nutrition-sensitive programmes. ▪ Findings from the surveys were reviewed during a Technical Consultation held in March 2016 which was led by NNC Secretariat and included technical representatives from key line Ministries, LBS, NIOPH and Development Partners. A Steering Committee, chaired by the Vice Minister of Health took place on May 30th during which the findings and report were endorsed. The national launch of the surveys, which will include wide dissemination of knowledge products and the survey reports, is planned for June 2016. |
|--|--|

| Stakeholders | Description/ Key contribution of each stakeholder to Process Three |
|-------------------|--|
| Government | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - NNC Secretariat coordinated the October 2015 Nutrition Stakeholder and Intervention mapping - NNC Secretariat led the development of the Common Results Framework for the 2016-2020 multi-sectoral nutrition response, ensuring inputs from key sectors - NNC Secretariat led the pilot to test convergent, multi-sectoral approach to nutrition in 3 target provinces (6 target districts). - In 2015, Lao Bureau of Statistics and MoH on behalf of the NNC Secretariat, led a sub-national Food Nutrition Security Survey (FNSS) in five provinces, a household based survey intended to generate data on nutritional status of children and women, as well as determinants and programme coverage for priority nutrition-related interventions in health, water, sanitation and hygiene, agriculture/ food security and education. - In 2015, MoH/ National Institute of Public Health (NIOPN), led a Nutrition tag-on Survey to the National Immunization coverage survey which generated representative estimates for stunting, underweight and wasting for all the provinces in the country. |
| UN | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - As member of the DPs Nutrition Group and Task Force, UN network provided major technical and financial support to conceptualization and initiation of the reviewed/ updated CRF (including Logical Matrix, targets and baselines, outline of Plan of Action and draft M&E Plan). Technical support was operationalized through 3 agencies staff (6 persons, part time; 2 external and national TA specialists contributions) as well as logistical support to meetings, workshops, translations, workshops, etc - UNICEF provided technical support for the Nutrition Stakeholder and Intervention mapping - UN network provides continued financial and technical support to strengthen the information systems which are used to monitor the implementation of priority actions for improved nutrition (e.g. HMIS, DHIS2) - UN agencies provided technical and financial support for the conduct of the 2015 FNSS (UNICEF, WFP) and LCASS surveys (UNICEF), final reports, knowledge products and use of data to enhance evidence-based advocacy and programming on multi-sectoral approaches to nutrition. |
| Donor | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Donor Network's representatives provided significant support at the stage of conceptualizing the update/ review of CRF, re-emphasising the need for it as a pre-requisite to donors-supported multiyear country programs to start in 2016. In particular, EU played a major role in advocacy and as a donor for Nutrition Stakeholders Action and Finance Mapping. - Donors (SDC, EU) provided support to the FNSS/ LCAAS surveys. - In 2015 and 2016, EU supported scoping missions on the establishment of a National Information Platform for Nutrition (NIPN) in Lao PDR. |

| | |
|-----------------|---|
| Business | - The Business Network is less formalized and, therefore, less engaged in MSP, especially, in the area of CRF. |
| CSO | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The Network is most actively engaged through the SUN CSA. Its representatives were assigned to dedicated sectoral Task Forces to support the three main sectors: health & WASH, education and agriculture in contributing to the development of the CRF as well as translating the CRF into sector-specific plans, inclusive of nutrition-sensitive objectives and targets. - The Network also committed national expertise for the Nutrition Stakeholder and Action Mapping - CSA provides support for the monitoring of nutrition actions across the different sectors. |

| | |
|--|--|
| OVERALL SUMMARY OF PROGRESS ACHIEVED OVER THE PAST YEAR (APRIL 2015 – APRIL 2016) FOR PROCESS 3: Common Results Framework for National Nutrition Plan (aligned programming) (i.e. Overall achievements/positive changes/ key challenges and suggestions for improvements/ other relevant activities in the context of scaling up nutrition efforts in country) | |
| <p>Significant achievements include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Review and update of Common Results Framework for NPAN 2016-2020. - Conduct of the Nutrition Stakeholder and Action Mapping - Conduct of the sub-national Food Nutrition Security Survey and Nutrition tag-on Survey to the National Immunization coverage survey (LCAAS) <p>(The implementation of 2015 Nutrition Mapping and two Nutrition Surveys helped set the baseline for the National Nutrition Strategy and Plan of Action and for future impact evaluation of the multisectoral/convergent response in priority provinces).</p> <p>With regard to challenges, these include weaknesses in the information management, monitoring and reporting systems. Efforts are ongoing to strengthen these. CSA should be invited to be more involved in efforts such as provincial level pilots on implementing multi-sectoral approach to ensure more civil society engagement in planning and implementation at sub national level. Participatory monitoring of NNSPA by civil society, as described in PM 3.4 is not currently envisaged or encouraged. Similarly, CSA contributions were not sought in the collection of data for the FNSS or the Nutrition Tag- On Survey. PM 3.5 item “Social auditing of results and analysis of impact by civil society” is not occurring in a systematic manner.</p> | |

Process 4: Financial tracking and resource mobilisation

| Process 4: Financial tracking and resource mobilisation | | |
|--|----------------------|--|
| Progress marker 4.1: Cost and assess financial feasibility | | |
| DEFINITION | FINAL PLATFORM SCORE | WHAT ACTIVITIES / INTERVENTIONS UNDERLIE EACH SCORE |
| This progress marker looks at the extent to which governments and all other in-country stakeholders are able to provide inputs for | 4 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The Lao PDR National Nutrition Strategy (NNS) 2016-2025 and the National Plan of Action on Nutrition (NPAN) 2016-2020 were updated in 2015. As part of the process, the NPAN priority interventions were costed. ▪ The NPAN costing was coordinated by the National Nutrition Committee (NNC) Secretariat office. |

| | | |
|--|---|--|
| costing of nutrition-specific and nutrition-sensitive actions across relevant sectors | | The process involved a series of technical consultations using two approaches (envelope costing and detailed costing). Key Government sectors gave inputs. Support was provided by MQSUN and key Development partners. |
| Progress marker 4.2: Track and report on financing for nutrition | | |
| This progress marker looks at the extent to which governments and all other in-country stakeholders are able to track their allocations and expenditures (if available) for nutrition-specific and nutrition-sensitive actions in relevant sectors. This progress marker also aims to determine whether the financial tracking for nutrition is reported and shared in a transparent manner with other partners of the MSP including the government. | 2 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Nutrition finance mapping was conducted in October 2015 by the Lao PDR National Nutrition Committee Secretariat Office with support from SUN Country Networks - Donor (EU), UN (UNICEF) and CSA. ▪ National level stakeholders were included that met the following criteria – (a) those with a budget of at least US\$100,000 over 2015 for nutrition-related interventions; (b) those with projects / programs assessed by mapping team and each stakeholder as relevant (including nutrition-specific and nutrition-sensitive actions). Out of a reported 77 stakeholders, 48 met final selection criteria and were included. ▪ The Nutrition finance mapping helped to improve the understanding of finances spent on nutrition in 2015 and prospectively allocated to priority NPAN interventions. ▪ The Nutrition Mapping database is held at the NNC Secretariat office. Data and findings are available to Stakeholders involved in the process and supporting the 2016-2020 NPAN. ▪ Financial data are to be collected each year as part of the Annual Nutrition Mapping to assist with financial tracking (to evaluate use of funding relative to the planned amounts in the NPAN). ▪ A number of databases containing information on GoL/ donor funding and expenditure exist in Lao PDR within Ministries. In parallel, Ministry of Planning maintains a database of funding/ partners flows. However, it remains difficult to compile, analyse or track financial information related to nutrition. ▪ On 25-27th April 2016, a Delegation from Lao PDR (GoL, UN, Donor) actively participated in the Public Finance for Nutrition Workshop which aims to strengthen management of nutrition resources. |
| Progress marker 4.3: Scale up and align resources including addressing financial shortfalls | | |
| This progress marker looks specifically at the capability by governments and other in-country stakeholder to identify financial gaps and mobilise additional funds through increased alignment and allocation of budgets, advocacy, | 2 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ One of the main objectives of 2015 Nutrition Finance mapping exercise was to estimate the gap in nutrition financing and to use the information for advocacy to ensure greater targeted funding for nutrition. ▪ Findings from the 2015 Nutrition Mapping show that for the 2016-2020 period, known and expected funding available for nutrition is over half of that required relative to the costing at USD 217 million. Findings also indicate which nutrition actions had the highest and lowest allocations. ▪ The Nutrition Finance mapping will take place annually so that information on the funding gap is |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| setting-up of specific mechanisms. | | <p>available each year. Mechanisms to identify and track gaps in resource allocation to key nutrition interventions outside of the annual mapping require strengthening.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The funding gap identified from the mapping is used for advocacy. Efforts to mobilise resources and strengthen coordination are ongoing. |
| Progress marker 4.4: Turn pledges into disbursements | | |
| This progress marker looks at how governments and other in-country stakeholders are able to turn pledges into disbursements. | 2 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ National budget allocation has increased for some priority nutrition actions: procurement of nutrition commodities, food supplements for Cu5, nutrition promotion, capacity building, maternal and child health services and monitoring & evaluation. ▪ Key donors have contributed to support the NPAN 2016-2020 and allocate funding to nutrition. ▪ Efforts to strengthen disbursement tracking are ongoing. |
| Progress marker 4.5: Ensure predictability of multi-year funding to sustain implementation results and nutrition impact | | |
| This progress marker looks specifically at how governments and in-country stakeholders collectively engage in long-term predictable funding to ensure results and impact. | 2 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Efforts are increasing by GoL and key donors to provide longer term funding for nutrition. However predictability of funding remains a challenge. |

| Stakeholders | Description/ Key contribution of each stakeholder to Process Four |
|-------------------|---|
| Government | <p>The GoL (under the coordination of the NNC Secretariat)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - conducted the costing of priority interventions of the updated National Plan of Action for Nutrition (2016-2020) - led the 2015 Nutrition Finance mapping - increased national budget allocation for some priority nutrition actions - negotiated Development Partner support for nutrition - leading for implementation, monitoring evaluation and coordination |
| UN | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - provided support (technical and financial) to the GoL for the costing of priority interventions of the updated National Plan of Action for Nutrition (2016-2020) and the Nutrition Finance mapping - supported GoL participation at the regional workshop on Public Finance for Nutrition - Many UN agencies have initiated the development of new country programs and carried a wide range of consultations with GoL and partners during 2015. |
| Donor | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - provided support to the costing of priority interventions of the updated National Plan of Action for Nutrition (2016-2020) and the Nutrition Finance mapping - Additionally, major donors such as EU, World Bank, Lux Dev, USAID, SDC and others... announced substantial potential financial support to implement NNSPA 2016-2020. |
| Business | <p>It remains difficult to estimate the actual contribution of businesses to NNSPA. However, some contributions were noted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the Salt Association remains committed to financing the procurement of iodine agent for the Universal Salt Iodisation Programme. - MMG provided financial support for micronutrient supplementation and scaling up of IYCF community based package in selected provinces. |

| | |
|------------|--|
| | - A working group of WFP, iNGOs and local producers are looking into the financial feasibility of food fortification in Lao, which will entail contributions from private companies. |
| CSO | - SUN CSA actively contributed to the 2015 Nutrition Finance mapping, providing technical staff in an advisory capacity and as data collectors. - Increasingly, NGOs are looking into options to integrate and expand nutrition-related projects and attract funds for nutrition. - Significant donor funds have been allocated to CSO nutrition work, with calls by USAID, EU and SDC amongst others in 2016. This is leading to increases in CSO activity in the nutrition sector. |

OVERALL SUMMARY OF PROGRESS ACHIEVED OVER THE PAST YEAR (APRIL 2015 – APRIL 2016) FOR PROCESS 4: Financial tracking and resource mobilisation (i.e. Overall achievements/positive changes/ key challenges and suggestions for improvements/ other relevant activities in the context of scaling up nutrition efforts in country)

Significant achievements were made in 2015 with regard to the costing of the National Nutrition Plan of Action 2016-2020 and the conduct of the Nutrition Finance Mapping. The latter helped Lao PDR to understand the finances allocated to priority nutrition interventions in 2015; to estimate the current gap in funding and to use for advocacy for greater targeted funding for nutrition; to provide a basis for annual review as well as for financial/ disbursement tracking.

Other achievements include increased national budget allocation for nutrition and continued support from major Developments partners to the updated National Nutrition Plan of Action 2016-2020.

Key challenges include:

- ongoing tracking and analysis of financial information (e.g. resource allocations, disbursements, gaps) related to nutrition
- resource mobilisation, particularly long-term/ multi-year commitments and the coordinated reduction of financial gaps

Efforts are ongoing to address these, for example through the participation at regional events to discuss and share experience in Public Finance for Nutrition.

Annex 1: Details of Participants (names of Country Network focal points provided)

| No. | Title | Name | Organisation | Email | Phone | Should contact be included in SUN mailing list? |
|-----|-------|-----------------|---------------------|------------------------------|--------------|---|
| 1. | Dr | Viorica Berdaga | UNICEF (UN Network) | vberdaga@unicef.org | 85 655521231 | Yes |
| 2. | Mr | Koen Everaert | EU (Donor Network) | Koen.EVERAERT@eeas.europa.eu | | Yes |
| 3. | Mr | Eric Seastedt | PSI (CSA Network) | eseastedt@psi.org | | Yes |

Annex 2: Focus Questions:

| | | |
|----|--|--|
| 1. | How many times has your MSP and/or its associated organs met since the last Joint-Assessment? | One high level National Nutrition Committee meeting was convened in July and another in November 2015. The NNC Secretariat met quarterly. In addition, the NNC Secretariat held regular meetings as part of the process to update the National Nutrition Strategy and its Plan of Action 2016-2020 (NNSPA). The meetings were held under the umbrella of the Government of Lao (GoL) Core Team and multi-sectoral technical working group for nutrition. |
| 2. | Is your MSP replicated at the decentralised levels? | Yes, Provincial Nutrition Secretariats are in place in 7 provinces and are being strengthened. |
| 3. | Have you organised any high level event since the last Joint-Assessment? (Yes/No) | The 3 rd national nutrition committee meeting, the 1 st high level Nutrition Forum and High Level Round Table Meeting were organised in November 2015. |
| 4. | Are you planning to organise any high level event in the coming months (April 2016 – April 2017)? (Yes/No) | Yes, the 4 th and the 5 th National Nutrition Committee meetings, a 2 nd high level Nutrition Forum and Round Table meeting are planned for the 3 rd and 4 th quarter 2016. |
| 5. | Do you have identified Nutrition Champions in your Country? (Yes/No) | No |
| 6. | Are Parliamentarians in your country engaged to work for the scale up of nutrition in your country? (Yes/No) | National Assembly endorse government budget execution to each sector to implement the nutrition specific and sensitive interventions. In response to a request from National Assembly, all members of Parliament attended a UNICEF-supported meeting on the importance of strengthening legislation around Nutrition (emphasis placed on promoting, protecting and supporting breastfeeding), increasing national budget allocation and execution for nutrition interventions, using outreach activities of NA members for promoting key nutrition messages and actions with their constituencies. |
| 7. | Are journalists and members of the media involved in keeping nutrition on the agenda in your country? (Yes/No) | Media representatives are increasingly engaged, resulting in design and piloting of a radio community program on health and nutrition (supported by UNDP) |
| 8. | Is there any reported Conflict of Interest within or outside your MSP? (Yes/No) | No |

| | | |
|-----|--|--|
| 9. | Do you have a Social mobilisation, Advocacy and Communication policy/plan/strategy? (Yes/No) | NNC Secretariat and the MoH with support from Development partners (EU, World Bank, UNICEF, WFP, WHO, USAID Nurture, CSA) are developing a multi-sectoral Social and Behavioral Change Communication Strategic Framework and Action Plan to support the operationalization of the advocacy and behavioral components of the NNSPA 2016-2020. |
| 10. | Do you use the SUN Website, | Yes |
| 11. | To support learning needs , what are the preferred ways to: access information, experiences and guidance for in-country stakeholders? foster country-to-country exchange? | - Sharing of information via SUN website; dissemination from SUN Secretariat - Country to country exchange can be fostered via regional workshops and country visits |
| 12. | Would it be relevant for your country to reflect and exchange with SUN countries dealing with humanitarian and protracted crises, states of fragility? | Yes, to some extent. |
| 13. | What criteria for grouping with other SUN countries with similar challenges and opportunities would be most useful for your country? i.e. federal, emerging economies, maturity in the SUN Movement, with double burden, etc. | Emerging economies |

Annex 3: Common Priorities For 2016-2017:

| The Policy and Budget Cycle Management – from planning to accounting for results | Social Mobilisation, Advocacy and Communication | Coordination of action across sectors, among stakeholders, and between levels of government through improved functional capacities | Strengthening equity drivers of nutrition |
|---|---|--|--|
| <p>Specify your country priorities for 2016-17 and if support is available in-country:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Support better management of data (e.g. National Information Platforms for Nutrition - NIPN) ✓ Financial tracking (national and/or sub-national level) | <p>Specify your country priorities for 2016-17 and if support is available in-country:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Developing, updating or implementing multi-sectoral advocacy and communication strategies | <p>Specify your country priorities for 2016-17 and if support is available in-country:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Support with strengthening capacity of individuals or organization to better engage with: sectors (like Business), or groups (like scientists and academics) | <p>Specify your country priorities for 2016-17 and if support is available in-country:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Develop or review mechanisms that address equity dimensions in nutrition plans, policies and strategies. |

