

Improving Nutrition Programming Worldwide

Maximising the Quality of Scaling Up Nutrition (MQSUN)

Addressing global malnutrition requires a multifaceted approach. The global Scaling Up Nutrition (SUN) movement calls for a twin-track approach: (1) continuing to scale up proven nutrition-specific interventions (such as micronutrient supplementation and food fortification); and (2) ensuring nutrition-sensitive interventions (such as agricultural programmes, water and sanitation, and social protection) have a maximum impact on nutrition outcomes.

TACKLING THE GLOBAL BURDEN OF UNDERNUTRITION

PATH leads the Maximising the Quality of Scaling Up Nutrition project (MQSUN), funded by the United Kingdom's Department for International Development (DFID). In support of the global SUN movement, MQSUN provides technical expertise on the design and implementation of nutrition programmes, drawing on the best available evidence. Made up of a consortium of six non-state organisations leading in the field of nutrition, MQSUN is considered a 'one-stop shop' for nutrition programming expertise. MQSUN seeks to enhance the quality of nutrition-related programmes through:

- Expanding the evidence base on the causes of undernutrition.
- Enhancing skills and capacity to support the scale-up of nutrition-specific and nutrition-sensitive programmes.
- Providing the best guidance available to support programme design, implementation, and monitoring and evaluation.
- Increasing innovation in nutrition programmes.
- Knowledge-sharing to ensure that lessons are shared.

STRENGTHENING THE NUTRITION-ENABLING ENVIRONMENT

MQSUN is collaborating with the SUN Movement Secretariat to support country-level efforts to address malnutrition. MQSUN has worked with more than 16 SUN countries to analyse and compare the costs of national plans. This work has assisted in the identification of financing gaps within and across countries, initiating a dialogue between governments and donors, and creating an enabling policy environment for SUN countries to mobilise resources for reducing undernutrition.

In addition, MQSUN is providing in-country assistance to SUN governments requesting support in the areas of policy, legislation, financial tracking, resource mobilisation, monitoring and evaluation, and capacity-building.

Strengthening the enabling environment for nutrition through policies and legal frameworks has been proven successful for scale-up of nutrition efforts leading to reduced undernutrition.



MQSUN has worked in more than 15 countries on initiatives to expand the nutrition evidence base, support an enabling environment for nutrition, and enhance nutrition capacity.

Photo: PATH/Eric Becker

TESTING INNOVATIVE NUTRITION SOLUTIONS

MQSUN has developed new and innovative methodologies to approach nutrition interventions and improve nutrition programmes around the world.

In Mozambique, MQSUN supported DFID in developing a business case for an innovative programme approach, integrating nutrition-specific interventions into nutrition-sensitive programmes to tackle undernutrition. The business case proposed working directly with the farmers from the DFID-funded Beira Agriculture Growth Corridor project rather than setting up a new vertical nutrition programme. The proposed programme targets 350,000 beneficiaries: pregnant and lactating women and girls, children under five years of age, and adolescent girls 10 to 19 years of age. The potential programme impacts include better-nourished

women and children in the Beira Corridor and increased investment in high-impact nutrition interventions at scale.

FACILITATING HIGH-QUALITY NUTRITION PROGRAMME DESIGN

To facilitate improved nutrition programme design and implementation, MQSUN has completed nutrition audits of DFID's programmes in Ethiopia, Malawi, and Zambia.

In Ethiopia, MQSUN reviewed current nutrition programmes and developed a landscape analysis highlighting the areas of success and recommended areas for growth. DFID Ethiopia is utilising the teams' recommendations to improve the quality of their existing programmes. The improvements in DFID Ethiopia's operational plan have expanded its reach to 3.5 million children under five years of age with nutrition-specific interventions.

In Pakistan, MQSUN completed a scoping study to explore options for food-fortification interventions focusing on regulation, legislation, enforcement, the role of the private sector, and agricultural options. The outcomes of the scoping study will be used to inform future DFID nutrition investments in Pakistan. The results of this scoping study are expected to lead to an improved uptake and impact of food fortification programmes in Pakistan and thus ultimately have a strong influence on the reduction of undernutrition in Pakistan.

IMPROVING NUTRITION CAPACITY

MQSUN strives to build nutrition capacity at every level of our work.

In Zambia, MQSUN developed curriculum programmes that incorporate nutrition concepts into training modules for

adolescent girls, family planning, and community health workers. MQSUN is in the process of conducting training of trainers (TOTs) for the developed modules and in total will train approximately 150 master trainers who will spearhead trainings throughout the country.

In Bangladesh, MQSUN is working with the National Nutrition Services on a comprehensive training plan to build the knowledge and skills of health workers and programme managers so they are better equipped to provide, supervise, monitor, and manage nutrition programmes in their respective localities.

GENERATING EVIDENCE ON NUTRITION INTERVENTIONS

MQSUN has been able to generate evidence for nutrition programming through many of our scopes of work. Notably, in Bangladesh, MQSUN is supporting a rigorous nutrition impact evaluation to assess the integration of nutrition into social programmes. The evaluation will contribute to a gap in global knowledge on the appropriate integration of nutrition-specific and -sensitive interventions. The results of the study will provide empirical evidence on the effectiveness of such programme investments within and outside of Bangladesh.

In Pakistan, MQSUN produced an IDS Bulletin of 12 peer-reviewed papers by local researchers. A second, special-issue journal was produced primarily featuring Zambian authors.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

To access MQSUN's reports, please visit: <http://www.heart-resources.org/about/#mqsun>.

For more information on MQSUN, please contact: mqsun@path.org.



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PATH is an international organisation that drives transformative innovation to save lives and improve health, especially amongst women and children. We accelerate innovation across five platforms—vaccines, drugs, diagnostics, devices, and system and service innovations—that harness our entrepreneurial insight, scientific and public health expertise, and passion for health equity. By mobilising partners around the world, we take innovation to scale, working alongside countries primarily in Africa and Asia to tackle their greatest health needs. Together, we deliver measurable results that disrupt the cycle of poor health.

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