

BACKGROUND

UN-Nutrition is the inter-agency coordination mechanism for the United Nations on nutrition. It was born in 2020 out of the merger of the United Nations System Standing Committee on Nutrition and the UN Network for the Scaling Up Nutrition (SUN) Movement. The merger aligns with the ambitions of the United Nations development system reform process, as it brings together United Nations agencies, programmes and funds with a mandate or interest in nutrition,¹ leveraging their collective strength to effectively address malnutrition in all its forms.

UN-Nutrition is anchored in the Second International Conference on Nutrition's Rome Declaration, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the World Health Assembly targets for nutrition and diet-related non-communicable diseases (NCDs), as well as the global NCD action plan. UN-Nutrition is relevant to all countries and accountable to the United Nations Economic and Social Council. As outlined in the [UN-Nutrition Strategy \(2022–2030\)](#), it aims to maximize the coherence of policies, approaches and positions on nutrition challenges across the United Nations System, while promoting programmatic alignment and harmonized advocacy, leaving no one behind. Communication and knowledge sharing by Member Agencies helps to connect global and country efforts and to ensure that UN-Nutrition covers the full intersectoral breadth of nutrition issues at all levels.

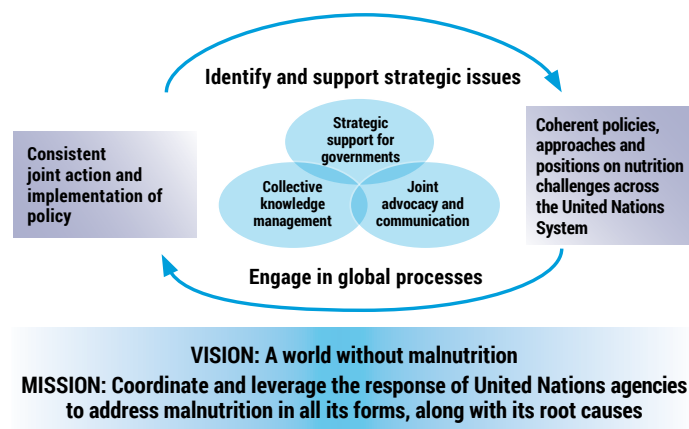
BOX 1. The SUN Movement: bringing multiple sectors and actors together for action on nutrition

As part of its mandate, UN-Nutrition serves as the United Nations support network for the SUN Movement. The SUN Movement is supported by a Global Support System (GSS), comprising the coordinated efforts of the SUN Movement Secretariat and the four SUN networks, including UN-Nutrition, the SUN Civil Society Network, the SUN Donor Network (SDN) and the SUN Business Network (SBN). The GSS provides a platform for aligning global positioning, as well as support for SUN countries, from capacity-development activities to common SUN communications materials that can be adapted to the country context. At country level, the GSS coordinates its support through the SUN multi-stakeholder platforms (MSPs). UN-Nutrition has committed to the implementation of the [SUN Movement Strategy for 2021–2025](#) by working in close collaboration with other SUN networks to support government policy and programming processes, capitalizing on the United Nations System's vast technical knowledge, operational capacity and reach.

¹ UN-Nutrition members include (as of 2022): the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, the Special Rapporteur on the Right to Food, the United Nations Development Programme, the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), the United Nations Human Settlements Programme, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the United Nations Industrial Development Organization, the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, the World Food Programme (WFP), the World Health Organization (WHO), as well as the CGIAR System Organization through the International Center for Tropical Agriculture/Bioversity, as an associate member.

² Examples include the UN-Nutrition Inventory; the Multi-sectoral Nutrition Overview; the Policy and Plan Overview; the Nutrition Capacity Assessment; and the Nutrition Stakeholder and Action Mapping.

UN-Nutrition “working as one” approach



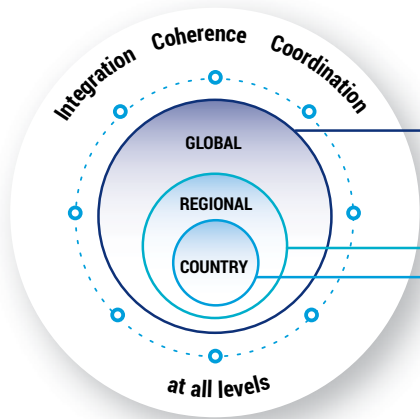
Source: UN-Nutrition (2022).

UN-NUTRITION AT COUNTRY LEVEL

United Nations country teams support government-led priorities with greater efficiency thanks to more integrated and streamlined efforts within the United Nations System. In any given country, UN-Nutrition refers to the collective efforts of its Member Agencies to prevent and address malnutrition. In all countries with a United Nations presence and relevant programmes, UN-Nutrition offers United Nations entities a coordination platform to support the national nutrition agenda. The coordination modalities of UN-Nutrition in a country will vary depending on the context, and United Nations country teams should agree on their preferred way of collaborating.

Where possible, senior United Nations personnel, acting as country convenors or co-convenors, mobilize UN-Nutrition to facilitate coordination and help elevate nutrition to a country's highest political levels. Technical focal points from the various United Nations agencies play a key role in advancing governments' strategic priorities through joint and coherent nutrition work, including technical assistance. This can be complemented by additional support, facilitated by the UN-Nutrition Secretariat, for requests outside the scope of individual agencies in country. The technical assistance offered by the UN-Nutrition Secretariat mainly focuses on providing tools and resources² or facilitating peer-to-peer learning opportunities for United Nations Resident Coordinators and country teams to help address common needs across countries. One such example is the [UN-Nutrition guidance on integrating nutrition into the United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Frameworks \(UNSDCFs\)](#).

Furthermore, UN-Nutrition coordinates its efforts with other in-country stakeholders to increase synergies and impact in all contexts in support of government nutrition-related policies, plans and programmes. Where government-led MSPs for nutrition exist, United Nations country teams can engage collectively through these platforms under the UN-Nutrition umbrella and play an active role in ensuring they function effectively. Should MSPs be lacking or dysfunctional, the UN-Nutrition coordination mechanism can assist government representatives in bringing partners together. The UN-Nutrition team can also play a key role in facilitating coordination and joint action between humanitarian and development actors and between MSPs and the humanitarian clusters (see examples of United Nations collaboration in Box 2).



GLOBAL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • UN-Nutrition Chair • Steering committee • UN-Nutrition Secretariat • Integral part of the SUN Lead Group, Executive Committee and GSS
REGIONAL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regional nutrition advisors of the UN-Nutrition Member Agencies • United Nations regional offices, leadership and other inter-agency bodies • Links to regional political bodies and SUN Regional Hubs
COUNTRY	<p>National nutrition priorities supported by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Resident Coordinator/Heads of United Nations agencies as convenors • Technical focal points • Participation in MSPs

○ UN-Nutrition members (United Nations agencies and entities)

BOX 2. Case studies: UN-Nutrition Member Agencies working together to advance nutrition on the ground

UN-Nutrition in Cambodia includes representatives from FAO, UNICEF, WFP and WHO and is currently convened by WFP. The UN-Nutrition platform supports effective joint engagement with the United Nations Resident Coordinator, the SUN Country Coordinator and the national SUN MSP – the Technical Working Group on Food Security and Nutrition. Furthermore, UN-Nutrition works closely with other SUN networks active in the country, including the Civil Society Alliance, SBN and SDN. According to the SUN Country Coordinator and Secretary-General of the Council for Agricultural and Rural Development, His Excellency Sok Silo, UN-Nutrition is playing a key role in facilitating consultations, resource mobilization and jointly identifying priorities in line with existing national frameworks, such as the Second National Strategy for Food Security and Nutrition (2019–2023) and Cambodia’s Roadmap for Food Systems for Sustainable Development by 2030. H.E. Sok Silo also highlighted UN-Nutrition’s role in the provincial working groups for coordinating food security and nutrition, with each United Nations agency supporting coordination in different provinces. Their collaboration is formalized through an annual UN-Nutrition workplan and terms of reference, and the agencies hold regular meetings to coordinate its implementation. For instance, Cambodia was among the first countries to complete its operational roadmap to implement the Global Action Plan (GAP) on Child Wasting. Thanks to a joint proposal formulated by UN-Nutrition, it has mobilized USD 3.5 million to date for the implementation of the GAP operational roadmap.

Read more about UN-Nutrition in Cambodia [here](#).

The Regional Nutrition Group for Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC) is composed of the regional nutrition teams of FAO, the Pan American Health Organization/WHO, UNICEF, WFP and other partners. Currently convened by UNICEF, the group meets monthly and focuses on four areas of joint action in addition to coordinating the nutrition emergency response in the region. These include: i) evidence generation; ii) advocacy; iii) information/knowledge management; and iv) capacity strengthening, including the provision of technical support to national bodies on thematic areas and for the implementation, monitoring and coordination of the national/local response. The group works in close coordination with the Food Security Cluster, the Health Cluster and the Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) Cluster, as well as the overall intersectoral coordination mechanism in LAC. Some of the deliverables of this group include a series of thematic webinars on the importance of nutrition, advocacy for nutrition in the context of COVID-19, technical support for Haiti in the development of its GAP on Child Wasting and the elaboration of the annual Panorama of Food Security and Nutrition in LAC.

UN-NUTRITION AT REGIONAL LEVEL

The regional level plays an essential role in supporting country progress by providing technical support, capacity strengthening, regional-level coordination and joint advocacy. Furthermore, UN-Nutrition supports regional political integration bodies and regional initiatives involving parliamentarians. UN-Nutrition coordination works by leveraging the existing United Nations regional offices and inter-agency coordinating mechanisms in an effort to support countries. The Regional Nutrition Advisors of the UN-Nutrition Member Agencies are key to supporting UN-Nutrition’s joint work in country and to promoting greater regional inter-agency collaboration under the leadership of their Regional Directors. United Nations regional teams can work together under the UN-Nutrition umbrella, either in person or virtually, depending on the geographical spread of regional offices of the Member Agencies. Furthermore, the UN-Nutrition Secretariat works closely with the SUN Movement Regional Hubs in Bangkok, Dakar, Nairobi and Panama with a view to supporting SUN country coordinators and MSPs.

UN-NUTRITION AT GLOBAL LEVEL

UN-Nutrition is governed by a steering committee, comprised of the five founding members – FAO, IFAD, UNICEF, WFP and WHO – and two members serving on a rotational basis (as of December 2022, IAEA and UNEP). It is led by the UN-Nutrition Chair,³ a senior leader (of at least Assistant Principal level), elected on a two-year rotational basis.

UN-Nutrition is supported by a Secretariat, hosted by FAO headquarters in Rome. The Secretariat facilitates policy coherence and joint engagement by UN-Nutrition Member Agencies on priority areas identified by the steering committee. It also supports an enabling environment for United Nations coordination at country and regional level by engaging United Nations Resident Coordinators and United Nations country and regional teams. The Secretariat convenes steering committee meetings and other global coordination efforts, and regularly liaises with UN-Nutrition focal points at country level to share knowledge and assist them with priorities or issues that are common across countries. The Secretariat also leads UN-Nutrition’s global collaboration with the SUN Movement Secretariat, working as an integral part of the SUN GSS.

³ The first chair of UN-Nutrition (2021–2022) was Dr Naoko Yamamoto, former WHO Assistant Director-General of the Universal Health Coverage/Healthier Populations Division.