



GHACCSSUN Newsletter

GHACCSSUN NEWS - FIRST EDITION

Message from the Coordinator



Indeed this is the defining moment for nutrition. At the global and national level, Stakeholders are working more closely together than ever before, ever united more than before and much more focused than ever to push the nutrition agenda forward. Ghana is not in isolation. Stakeholders in Ghana are more excited in their work than before and SUN has dawned upon us. Indeed there is life under SUN. Today one of the products of the SUN initiative is the national nutrition policy. The policy is now in its final draft and very soon we the Stakeholders shall meet to validate it. As Civil Society Organizations, we want to see this important document with its fine content rolled out into implementation. The strategies and the

objectives are well spelled out and we cannot wait for its implementation. We shall not countenance delays and inaction from any person or institution that may jeopardize the effective implementation of this document. There is much work to be done in Ghana if we are to achieve a well-nourished and hunger-free society and it all begins with this policy and plan of action that shall be prepared in the wake of national consultations.

I am extremely happy that SUN is bringing us closer as Stakeholders to appreciate the gravity of the task ahead of us. Through the existing national structures, some of which were set up quiet recently with the advent of SUN, we are more challenged and determined to make our voices heard and our efforts to rapidly transform the approach and systems set up for tackling nutrition problems in Ghana. Civil Society Organizations shall continue to take advantage of ground-breaking new evidence and are committed to policy and institutional changes to make nutrition a national priority in Ghana. My Colleagues and I shall continue to intensify our advocacy and campaign activities across the country to make Government and the people of Ghana see the value in investing in nutrition.



I have always maintained that good nutrition is a priority for national prosperity, social justice, stability and development and many people share this opinion. We are fortunate that we have the full support of the Ghana Parliamentarians Against Hunger and Malnutrition Caucus. Our Members of Parliament are resolved and challenged to support this effort in a bi-partisan approach. We are going to work closely with them to tackle the problems of nutrition head-on. As we work together to find common solutions for malnutrition in Ghana, we are saving lives today and in the future. We are avoiding premature deaths and securing the foundation for the prosperity of Ghana.

On this note, I wish to express my appreciation to Colleagues and friends, especially to the Co-Chair of Ghana Parliamentarians Against Hunger and Malnutrition Caucus, the Honourable Kwabena Appiah Pinkrah who is the Member of Parliament for Akrofuom, and the National Focal Person for SUN in Ghana, Dr Edith Tetteh, who have worked tirelessly with us for many long months and years. Let me also thank the team at the National Development Planning Commission and Mrs. Mary Mpereh for her support, Mrs. Mina Okwabi and her team at the Ghana Health Service and our friends at the World Food Programme, not forgetting the REACH Facilitator in Ghana, Mrs. Victoria Wise. So far so good. To our Colleagues in civil society and members of GHACCSSUN, you have done exceptionally well. I am confident that if continue to work together in this way, Ghana shall achieve its nutrition targets sooner.

May God continue to bless us all.





Ghana Coalition of Civil Society Organizations for Scaling Up Nutrition launched

The Ghana Coalition of Civil Society Organizations for Scaling Up Nutrition was launched on the 1st of August, 2013 after a long year of planning at the British Council, Accra. Even during its planning stages, the Coalition has used every opportunity to engage the Government of Ghana constructively to push the nutrition agenda forward. The Coalition has been working closely with the National Cross Sectoral Planning Group (CSPG) that was established for SUN in Ghana two years ago to deliberate on sensitive nutrition issues. GHACCSSUN has also contributed to the promulgation of the national nutrition policy which has reached its final stage. GHACCSSUN has supported the formation of the Ghana Parliamentarians Against Hunger and Malnutrition Caucus. Today, this Caucus that initially had 12 Members of Parliament now has 26 Members from both side of the House. So the launch of GHACCSSUN was indeed a rebirth of the Coalition.

Many important dignitaries such as Members of Parliament, Members of the Diplomatic Corps, Policy Makers, Development Partners and Donors graced the occasion. The launch was chaired by Dr Edith Tetteh, the National SUN Focal Person. Other dignitaries included the Representative of USAID, the Donor SUN Convener for SUN in Ghana, the Honourable Kwabena Appiah Pinkrah, Co-Chair, Ghana Parliamentarians Against Hunger and Malnutrition Caucus and Member of Parliament for Akrofuom, Mrs. Mina Okwabi, Director of Ghana Health Service Nutrition Department, Mrs. Magdalena Owusu Morshi who represented the UN Resident Coordinator and UNDP Representative in Ghana, Members of the Clergy, Members of Parliament and the Representative of the Minister of Food and Agriculture.

The launch was well attended and well planned. There were solidarity messages from Members of Parliament, the Business Platform of SUN, Donors and a statement which was read on behalf of the Minister of Food and Agriculture, the Honourable Clement Kumado. In her opening remarks, the National Focal Person for SUN, Dr Edith Tetteh, urged Civil Societies and Ghanaians as a whole to come together and work with joint efforts to produce adequate food to make malnutrition ancient history in Ghana. Dr Tetteh has been working tirelessly with a Cross Sectoral Planning Group (CSPG) to prioritize effective nutrition sensitive

approaches within different sectors to ensure coherent and coordinated action at community and national levels.

Unfortunately, she noted, the task of nutrition advocacy has not gone down very well with the people. As a result, "We need to change our tune" by making sure that "we eat from the three baskets: the red, the white and the green; to ensure that we scale up nutrition in Ghana, and the time is now."

For the Focal Point to work effectively, Dr Tetteh noted that it was important that different groups of Stakeholders, especially women, had to organize themselves so that they could contribute to Government's efforts.

In a video presentation at the programme, David Nabarro, the United Nations Secretary General's Special Representative for Food, Security and Nutrition, indicated that he has been serving as the Coordinator of the Movement to Scale up Nutrition since 2010. According to him, when the UN Secretary General, Ban Ki-Moon called on the world's leaders to embrace his vision for a world without hunger and malnutrition, which Ban Ki Moon described as the "Zero Hunger Challenge", leaders including Ghana responded to the challenge.

He recalled that, in 2008, when the consequences of malnutrition were brought to the world's attention, many national leaders expressed concern that because of malnutrition during pregnancy and early childhood, too many of their people were disadvantaged and unable to achieve their full potential to earn, learn and to remain healthy as they grow up. "These leaders want all their people to be able to enjoy good nutrition," he added.

Nana Ayim Poakwah, Coordinator of GHACCSSUN gave a brief background of the Coalition. According to him, the Coalition has been in existence for one year. During this period they have used this platform to engage Government and key Stakeholders constructively to push a comprehensive nutrition agenda forward and to make it a national priority upon Ghana joining the SUN Movement.

The Honourable Kwabena Appiah Pinkrah, Co-Chairman of the Ghana Parliamentarians Against Hunger and Malnutrition Caucus assured the attendants his Caucus would lobby for increased budget allocations for nutrition programmes in general whilst serving as the ally of Civil Society platform for the intensification of national advocacy to raise the visibility of nutrition in Ghana.

Dr Effah, a representative of the Minister of Agriculture also assured the Audience that her Ministry would support the effort to eliminate malnutrition in Ghana by linking agriculture to nutrition.

**1,000
DAYS**

"Improving nutrition for mothers and children is one of the most cost-effective and impactful tools we have for poverty alleviation and sustainable development."

— May, 2012



GHACSSUN organizes Stakeholders forum on nutrition - June 5th 2013



As part of the effort to raise the visibility of the June World Leaders Forum on Nutrition in London, "Nutrition for Growth", at the national level, the Ghana Coalition of Civil Society Organizations for Scaling up Nutrition (GHACSSUN) organized a Stakeholders forum at the British Council, Accra on the 5th of June, 2013 with the theme, "Nutrition for growth: examining Ghana's preparedness to scale up nutrition." This well-attended forum brought representatives of the various SUN platforms together to renew their commitment to SUN implementation in Ghana. These platforms included the Business platform, Civil Society platform, Government platform led by the National Development Planning, donors led by the USAID Mission in Ghana, development partners and the UN Platform which was represented by REACH. The forum was chaired by Dr Edith Tetteh, National SUN Focal Person. There was also a commitment message from the Ghana Parliamentarians Against Hunger and Malnutrition Caucus which was delivered by its Co-Chair, the Honourable Kwabena Appiah Pinkrah.



The forum was used to re-examine Ghana's preparation towards the implementation of the SUN agenda in Ghana – the successes and the challenges. Stakeholders also used the forum as a platform to incubate new ideas and shared experiences that would move the SUN agenda forward. Ghana indeed is on track towards the attainment of its targets. SUN is connecting people together, working as a team, creating the opportunity to review existing policies and to come up with a national nutrition policy, focusing on appropriate legislation to support the SUN agenda in Ghana, building capacity of key Stakeholders, reviewing policy and institutional approaches to tackle nutrition

problems and guiding the process with appropriate monitoring and evaluation systems to improve nutrition outcomes.

The forum was one of the best platforms to bring SUN implementation in Ghana closer to Ghanaians and the media. Stakeholders highlighted their achievements as SUN platforms all connected to the same goal. Dr Edith Tetteh used the period to stress on unity and hard work. She stressed the need to build strong leadership to drive the SUN agenda in Ghana adding that political will was very central to attainment of the objectives of SUN in Ghana. The Honourable Kwabena Appiah Pinkrah used the occasion to renew the commitment of Members of Parliament to SUN's implementation in Ghana, adding that as Members of Parliament, they would push the nutrition agenda to become one of the central issues for debate in the chambers of Parliament. Stakeholders agreed that there was the need to strengthen coordination and to support the National Development Planning Commission to coordinate various sectors effectively so as to achieve the SUN objectives in Ghana.

GHACSSUN organizes Civil Society Organizations consultation on the National Nutrition Policy

The Ghana Coalition of Civil Society Organizations for Scaling up Nutrition (GHACSSUN) organized a CSOs dialogue on the National Nutrition Policy ahead of the validation of the policy. The rationale for this consultation was to deepen CSOs involvement in the crafting and national consensus-building on the National Nutrition Policy to ensure collective ownership.

By joining the SUN Movement, SUN Ghana is expected to adopt a whole society approach to control malnutrition in Ghana. Four process indicators have been developed by the SUN Secretariat to guide SUN countries, including Ghana, to Scale Up Nutrition. These include bringing people into a shared space for action, ensuring a coherent policy and legal framework for action, rallying around a set of expected results and financial tracking, and resource mobilization to deliver the key outputs as a foundation for scaling up nutrition in Ghana. The Ghana Government through the Cross Sector Planning Group for Nutrition has expanded these indicators with the inclusion of capacity building and monitoring and evaluation. The main deliverables include formation of a multi-sectoral coordinating body (Cross Sectoral Planning Group, CSPG), a national nutrition policy, scaling up the nutrition framework and plan of action, a common results framework and a financial and resource mobilization strategy.

Ever since Ghana joined the SUN Movement, much progress has been made at the national level. Various Stakeholder meetings have been organized for relevant Stakeholders to create opportunities for healthy deliberation on nutrition. Significantly, a national nutrition policy has been developed. The policy set out the modalities for a healthy scaling up nutrition process. Although the

policy has been widely discussed by relevant Stakeholders, further consultation on the document is very critical in order to ensure national participation and ownership in its implementation. With the initial limits of CSO's participation in the national consultative processes for the finalization of the Policy, the policy dialogue with its purpose of building consensus on the policy by CSOs ahead of its validation is timely and essential. The CSOs consultative meeting on the policy is also expected to incubate new ideas about the processes for the implementation of the policy.



The Ghana Coalition of Civil Society Organizations for Scaling Up Nutrition (GHACCSSUN) were expected to bring its members up to par with the implementation of the policy. Members used the dialogue to issue recommendations on how the policy should be implemented including a thorough discussion on the role of Parliamentarians in this process. For the policy to be effective, an appropriate legislative framework to back its implementation is very critical. It was therefore refreshing for us when five Members of Parliament joined us at the opening and group discussions to look at the mechanisms for the implementation of the policy. We must thank the Honourable Kwabena Appiah Pinkrah (Akrofuom), Honourable E.K Badua (Biakoye), Honourable Ursula Owusu (Ablekuma West), Honourable Patricia Appiah Agyei (Asokwa) and Honourable Freda Prempeh (Tano North). They indeed enriched the discussions with new ideas that would see to the successful implementation of the National Nutrition Policy. GHACCSSUN shall continue to monitor the outcome of the policy and team up with Members of Parliament to ensure that appropriate legislation is passed to back the policy.

GHACSSUN COMMISSIONS NATIONWIDE MAPPING OF CSOs INVOLVED IN NUTRITION, BASELINE AND ITS ADVOCACY STRATEGY



GHACSSUN has started working on some of its major activities including a nationwide mapping exercise of CSOs relevant in nutrition and nutrition sensitive actions, a baseline survey and the formulation of its advocacy strategy. Three consulting firms are involved in these exercises. These exercises are over eighty per cent complete. Once finished, the advocacy strategy which is in line with the national nutrition advocacy strategy shall provide the main advocacy tools for CSO advocacy work across the country. Already, over 150 organizations are being mapped across Ghana and these are made up of community-based organizations (CSOs), farmer-based organisations (FBOs), NGOs with nationwide projects, gender-based groups, youth-based groups, and faith-based networks and CSOs. These exercises are expected to end by end of September, 2013.