

Terms of Reference of Civil Society Alliance for Nutrition in Nepal (CSANN)

I. Background

In 2007, the Interim Constitution of Nepal has recognized food security as a basic right of the people for the first time in the history of Nepal. On 19th May 2010, the Supreme Court (SC) of Nepal made a landmark decision in favour of the right to food, in response to a public interest petition filed. However, many Nepalese citizens are deprived of optimal nutrition support with prevalence of hunger, the highest in the hills and mountains of Nepal with hunger indices pointing to an extremely alarming situation.

Malnutrition increases the risk of mortality especially of women and children. It also impairs cognitive function of those who survive, and has a negative impact on national social and economic development goals and the attainment of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), 1 to 6. It is not just a stark manifestation of poverty, it is also the 'non-income face of poverty' and it helps perpetuate poverty. These children are more likely to drop out of school, are less likely to benefit from schooling, and have lower productivity as adults. Improving nutrition can increase GDP in poor countries by two to three percent.

The Nepal Demographic Health Survey 2011 (NDHS, 2011) shows an improvement in child nutritional status with decreasing stunting and underweight prevalence. Nonetheless, **chronic under nutrition (stunting)** is still widespread (41%), and wide disparities exist across socioeconomic groups and ecological regions with children from the poorest households and those living in the mountain and hill areas exhibiting the highest levels of stunting. The child malnutrition levels of Nepal are among the highest in the world. Acute under nutrition (wasting) in children under five was 11%, with some geographic areas exceeding the international threshold of a "nutrition emergency" of 15% **acute under nutrition (wasting)**.

Nepal's children also suffer from vitamin and mineral deficiencies: the prevalence of **anaemia** is 74% in children under two and 37% of households are still not consuming fully iodized salt. Access to health services has improved, including child immunisation, contraceptive prevalence rates, and maternal care practices – both antenatal and postnatal. Almost a quarter of mothers (23 per cent) give birth before 18 years of age, while about half give birth by 20 years of age (NDHS, 2011). They are often involved in heavy manual work including farming, immediately after delivery, plus 13% of these women smoke, and 18% women of reproductive age (15-49 years of age) are thin or undernourished (Body Mass Index or BMI <18.5 kg/m²) (NDHS, 2011). Maternal and infant infections are very common; intestinal parasites constitute one of the major public health problems; prevalence of fevers (19 per cent) are as common as diarrhoeal diseases (14 per cent), while ARI affects five per cent of children which causes children's deaths and malnourishment (NDHS, 2011).

Nutrition awareness is very low throughout Nepal at various levels. This low level of nutrition awareness is a major factor in perpetuating behaviours that currently harm nutritional status, such as nonexclusive breastfeeding, late and inappropriate feeding practices for children, consumption of nutritionally poor food, insufficient eating and rest for women during pregnancy and insufficient health care seeking behaviour.

Policy and Plan

The Government of Nepal has been quick to recognise the impact of poor nutrition on the wellbeing of its population and on the economy and has consequently developed a comprehensive range of policies and strategies to promote nutrition. Moreover, it acknowledges that nutrition is

not only a humanitarian issue but a development issue, requiring long term sustained responses by both donors and the national government.¹ In Nepal, the focus for major nutrition intervention has been on working to improve nutrition for mothers and children during the critical 1,000 days - *window of opportunity* (pregnancy to 2 year age). Nepal is one of eight 'early riser' countries in the **SUN movement**. One of the most powerful examples of the SUN Movement in action can be found in the development of Nepal's multi-sectoral nutrition plan (MSNP)². With leadership from the SUN Government Focal Point, all relevant stakeholders and government ministries³ have been involved in the establishment of this common results framework. This MSNP promotes a cross governmental integrated approach to managing under nutrition, involving action from a range of sectors in long term preventative and treatment strategies. Nepal is also an **UN REACH** country, a global UN initiative, Renewed Efforts against Child Hunger (REACH), and is fully in line with on-going National Planning Commission-led efforts to develop evidence based and coasted multisectoral nutrition plan.

Investments in Scaling-up Nutrition will yield immediate returns. It will save lives, enable children - and their mothers – to have a better future, contribute to livelihoods, reduce poverty and contribute to the economic growth of nations making them more productive.

Rationale for CSANN

The myriad of nutrition problems call for a strong voice from Civil-Society Organizations so that the government takes the right decision to improve the nutrition situation of the general community people. The intention is that Civil Society Alliance for Nutrition, Nepal (CSANN), whenever possible will build on pre-existing arrangements, existing networks or CSO platforms for advocating and co-ordinating civil society within Nepal. The aim is also to advocate for an increased focus on nutritional outcome in national policies and programmes, as well as work to ensure that Civil Society efforts to tackle malnutrition are aligned with national plans.

2. Purpose of the Civil Society Alliance for Nutrition, Nepal (CSANN)

The purpose of the CSANN is to ensure qualitative, extensive and inclusive participation of CSO's in the nutrition movement of Nepal, in order to raise the attention of policy makers in line with multi-sectoral nutrition agenda. It also increases public and relevant sectors awareness on nutrition, ensures increased funding and improved nutrition governance leading to human, social and economic development.

3. Objectives of the Civil Society Alliance for Nutrition, Nepal (CSANN)

- Establish strong, sustainable and influential CSO platforms from all sectors at national and district levels.
- Complement government's efforts in ensuring coordinated SUN activities in Nepal at all levels.
- Strengthen the capacity of the civil society to influence policy design, implementation and monitoring and to build relations with government and the donor community,

¹ Note pg 24 MSNP "GoN is now aware that nutrition is not only a humanitarian issue, but also the right of children, women and society at large as well as an investment of critical importance for the development of human capital."

² The 2009 NAGA outlined the key recommendations to step up progress on nutrition within the country, with a call to establish the national nutrition architecture and to mobilise all the key sectors to tackle the high prevailing rates of malnutrition in a sustained manner through a multi-sector approach.

³ Health, education, urban development, federal affairs and local development, and the agriculture and development sectors

- Provide a platform for regular and systematic follow-up and monitoring the implementation of nutrition commitments by government, development partners, CSOs and private sector at national and district levels.
- Participate and collaborate with multi-sector stakeholders while designing Nutrition policies, strategies and during monitoring and evaluation of nutrition projects managed by the Government and others.
- Raise awareness and advocacy for scaling up high impact nutrition interventions at national, district and community levels.
- Provide technical assistance to government and CSOs for Scaling up Nutrition at national, district, and community levels emphasizing nutrition specific and nutrition sensitive activities.
- Mobilize resources for improving coordinated SUN activities among CSOs.
- Provide a platform for learning, documentation and sharing promising practices and innovations.
- Mobilize CSOs to advocate for and keep vigilance on the response to malnutrition in Nepal, including timely advice and report to the GON to improve the response.

4. Scope of the work

- To establish a strong, sustainable and inclusive civil society alliance on nutrition from all sectors.
- Strategic review and mapping of existing CSOs, alliances, and networks.
- Capturing and disseminating lessons learned on civil society engagement in nutrition including initiatives in other sectors
- Formation of a national alliance for improved nutrition and contribute proactively towards multi-stakeholder platforms and nutrition related processes in support of the SUN activities at the district, national and global levels.
- Self-organise the various CSOs in order to enable better and more effective liaison and coordination with the government, external development partners and other relevant platforms and working groups
- Support government efforts to influence key decision-makers, through national level events for Members of Parliament and other key policy makers
- Participate in the relevant sector working groups (NuTec, NPC) influence nutrition integration in the various strategies
- Regularly reporting (as required) to the SUN Civil Society Network (CSN) and contributing to its efforts and activities.
- Identify relevant CSO activities that should take place throughout 2014 and beyond and establish a "CSO work plan" outlining those activities, identifying resources and responsibilities for their implementation.
- Develop a system that tracks deliverables (including budget), and identify the gap in implementation of various nutrition policies, plans and programs.
- Lobby meetings with parliamentarians, policy-makers and representatives of donors on gradual increased resource allocation and other issues for effective implementation of scaling up nutrition activities.
- Development of advocacy materials for policy-makers, together with advocating and supporting implementation of existing nutrition-related campaigns (nationally and globally).
- Conduct trainings and awareness-raising meetings for District Committees through local partners.
- Monitoring and reporting on the inclusion of nutrition into District Development Plans (where district CSO alliance exists).
- Conduct quarterly review meetings for CSO SUN
- Identify opportunities to raise the profile of the CSANN by stimulating interest through outreach and media campaign.
- Annual disseminations aimed at sharing information and experiences of progress made on Scaling Up Nutrition.

5. Collaboration with different constituencies for SUN Movement and beyond

The CSANN works closely with Government agencies including National Planning Commission - SUN country focal point, the National Nutrition and Food Security Secretariat (NNFSS), UN agencies, donors, academia, private and public sectors aligned with various nutrition policies, plans and programs in a coordinated manner to accelerate the progress in nutritional status of mothers and children. The CSANN will work beyond the SUN movement in coordination with multi sectors government agencies.

6. Membership

6.1. Membership Criteria

The membership to the CSANN is open to local, national CSOs, Community-based organisations (CBOs), INGOs, and other non-profit organisations (such as academia, research institutions and professional associations). Each member has equal status having a contributory role to play.

- contributing towards nutrition focused programs/interventions (Specific and Sensitive),
- legal status of the organisation should be up-to-date and⁴
- operating in Nepal
- should be approved by CSANN Executive Committee⁵

6.2. Membership Termination

Membership is voluntarily and requires respect and tolerance towards different points of views in order to ensure productive and constructive collaboration of the members. The membership in the alliance may be revoked in certain circumstances, such as:

- If the decision of the executive committee and criteria set forth in the membership criteria is ignored or not followed.
- If the member is disqualified or disapproved due to any reasons by the GoN or by its funding agency.
- If it is no longer interested to stay as a member organization of CSANN

However, before disqualification the member shall be given chance to prove their innocence.

6.3. Membership Commitments

- Active participation in activities of the CSANN, including regular attendance in meetings organized by CSANN
- Share best practices, scientific/field evidence and knowledge transfer as per the CSANN and global SUN mandates.
- Potentially work within sub-groups as recommended by the Alliance. This may include activities to create/ collect evidence, monitor and track progress, provide technical assistance for work plan development, project proposal writing, material development, mapping of nutrition activities and advocacy.

6.4. Membership Benefits

It offer members the following opportunities:

- Access to information, good practices, innovative ideas, and resources with other organizations

⁴ In case of network and alliance, this clause will not be applicable

⁵ all right is reserved to CSANN executive committee for providing membership and whether to take membership fee or not.

- Capacity building and technical assistance
- Increased access to decision makers and contribute, as member of a civil society movement, in multistakeholders initiative
- Improved credibility and visibility at national and international level.
- Opportunity to broaden public support and to strengthen the civil society in Nepal as a whole.
- To join the SUN at the national and global level and to improve technical knowledge and capacities through this channel and raise the profile of nutrition in Nepal to international stakeholders
- Getting updated information on latest development (national and global) on nutrition policies, plans and programs.
- Opportunities for better coordination and collaboration of various CSOs.
- Potential for future joint planning of interventions

7. Decision-Making and Structure

The following is the proposed structure for Civil Society Alliance for Nutrition in Nepal (CSA-NN)



- **Appointment of CSANN Secretariat**
- **Strategic Guidance**
- **Fundraising**
- **Monthly meeting of organisation**

- **Coordination of CSANN**
- **Organising and facilitating the activities of CSANN**
- **Liaise with SUN Government focal points, SUN donor conveners and other SUN stakeholders (e.g. private sector actors), in support of the SUN activities**
- **Liaise with the Global CSO Network when required**
- **Capture and disseminate lessons learned on civil society engagement in nutrition and from initiatives in other sectors.**

Executive Committee:

Composition and Appointment

The EC is a group of ideally 11 members. The members of this committee have voting right. Any member can run for the position in the EC. Elections are held where all members participate in voting in a transparent manner. EC members are elected for 2 years. If an EC member leaves its organisation during its period of service on the committee, that organisation may retain its spot on the EC and appoint another representative. The committee will include members from organizations working on different sectors contributing on nutrition including media. INGOs can only be the part of general members.

The EC will have following positions:

- Executive chair: 1,

- Co-Chair:1,
- Member Secretary: 1,
- Executive Committee members 8.

The Executive- Chair will work as “Liaison persons” for specific groups/meetings.

Roles and Responsibilities

- Providing strategic and policy guidance of the CSANN
- Ensuring that the vision, mission and objectives of the CSANN are effectively communicated to all the relevant stakeholders;
- Representing the CSANN in various meetings (national and international), and sharing feedback with the members;
- Collaborating with SUN Government focal points, SUN donor conveners and other SUN stakeholders contributing in multi-stakeholder platforms and nutrition related processes at the national, regional and international level
- Appointing and guiding CSANN Secretariat
- Coordinating lobbying and fundraising activities

The Secretariat

The Secretariat is composed of dedicated staff nominated by the Executive Committee. The Secretariat is accountable to the executive committee, while also reporting to the host organisation for administrative and financial purposes that support effective and transparent grant management. The chair organization works as secretariat for the CSANN. Chairmanship of the alliance would be on a rotational basis.

Roles and Responsibilities

The duties of the Secretariat include:

- Coordination of CSANN
- Organising and facilitating the activities of CSANN
- Liaise with SUN Government focal points, SUN donor conveners and other SUN stakeholders (e.g. private sector actors), in support of the SUN activities
- Liaise with the Global CSO Network when required
- Capture and disseminate lessons learned on civil society engagement in nutrition and from initiatives in other sectors.
- Compiling quarterly updates on SUN activities at the national level (required by the global SUN CSO Alliance) in close consultation with the executive committee and in an open and participatory way by actively eliciting information from the CSANN members.
- Any other relevant support required to accomplish the activities of CSANN.

Hosting organisation

Appointment

After the setup of the alliance, the Secretariat will be hosted by chair organization for 24 months. After the end of period, the hosting organization will be elected by EC members in a democratic and transparent manner.

Roles and Responsibilities

The organization hosting the Secretariat provides an effective operational platform for the Secretariat to function and provides administrative management of the CSANN including budget follow up. The host should not provide undue influence over the work plan or ways of working of the staff in the Secretariat, who work on behalf of all CSANN guided by the Executive Committee.

8. Operation Modalities

- The alliance will meet once a month, ideally.
- Hosting of meetings will rotate among alliance members.
- Planning, timing and agenda of the meetings will be organized by the chair
- The chair and the co-chair will represent the alliance at key meetings at national, regional and global level.
- Review of CSANN activities will be held annually.

9. Communication

- 9.1. A system of communication will be established that allows members to exchange information and ideas quickly and effectively.
- 9.2. Records of all meeting agendas, minutes, and decisions made and actions taken will be collated by the General Secretary and made available to the members.

The Executive Committee (EC) and CSANN Secretariat (INS) will create a communication and advocacy strategy for the alliance.

10. Sustainability of the CSANN

Fundraising will be a permanent concern for all members in order to ensure the sustainability of the CSANN. Therefore members will communicate any identified funding opportunities to the Executive Committee.

The CSANN will discuss with all members the potential setup of a funding mechanism through contributions from individual members.

Annex I

Membership Application Form

I, on behalf of the organization hereby apply for the membership of Civil Society Alliance for Nutrition, Nepal (CSANN). As a member of the CSANN, we will be working together to tackle the current challenges and issues of Nutrition in Nepal. The details of our organization are as follows:

Name of organization:						
Objectives of the organization						
Main activities of organization						
Address:						
House No:		Street:				
VDC/Municipality:				Ward No.:		
District:				Region:		
Country:						
Telephone No.:						
Email address:						
Contact details:						
Contact Person:						
Telephone No.:						
Email address:						
Organizational Management						
Date of Establishment:	Day		Month		Year	
Registration No./District:						
Registration Date:	Day		Month		Year	
Social Welfare Council Affiliation:	Yes		No			
Other Affiliations (If any, please specify):						

DECLARATION
 I, on behalf of the organization undertake to observe the provisions of the Memorandum and Articles of the Alliance (Working Guidelines), the Code of Conduct for members and the rules and regulations.

Signature:
 Name:
 Date: Seal of Organization:

For Official use only

Date Approved:

Membership No.:

Seal of Alliance: