



Civil Society
Alliance
MYANMAR

**Feedback from the SUN CIVIL SOCIETY ALLIANCE on
The MYANMAR NATIONAL PLAN FOR FOOD AND NUTRITION SECURITY
In Response to the ZERO HUNGER CHALLENGE**

In May 2013, the Government of Myanmar signed on to the SUN Global Movement, clearly demonstrating high-level ownership and responsibility for delivering sustainable solutions for addressing the nutrition problems. In 2014, SUN was launched in Myanmar.

To support SUN, SUN CSA received pledged funding to support the formation of a functioning SUN cross-sectoral Civil Society Alliance (CSA). The goal of the Myanmar SUN CSA is to **unite civil society organizations** to ensure a voice is given to a range of small, independent, regional and national organizations, so that they may contribute to the national dialogue and achievement of Scaling Up Nutrition priorities, including supporting rollout of the National Plan of Action for Food and Nutrition.

SUN CSA – now with 43 INGO and CBO members - has been active in providing input into the new National Plan of Action for Food and Nutrition Security. We are pleased to be able to provide the following comments before the plan is finalized.

SUN CSA appreciates the Myanmar Government's commitment to Zero Hunger in Myanmar. **Reducing stunting and malnutrition has the potential to transform lives and improve the economy.** Reducing stunting in Asia could save nearly \$18 billion annually.

President Thein Sein's leadership of the Zero Hunger agenda shows **real commitment to reducing malnutrition, especially stunting.** Reducing stunting requires a concerted effort across all the Ministries (e.g., Health, Agriculture, Rural development, Water and Welfare ministries).

Presidential ownership and leadership has been shown to incentivize cooperation between Ministries and deliver results quickly in other high burden countries, like Brazil. **Extending this ownership across the Ministries in Myanmar will be needed to deliver results.** There is a lot in this document, but there are some key omissions. This includes the critical role in access to finance in increasing agricultural productivity and food security.

The new drafted plan contains many components and activities, many based around agriculture. A wider look at movement and migration within Myanmar would **help to shape the plan for**

those households who hope to move out of agriculture. Shifting from smallholder agriculture to other livelihoods has been shown to raise agricultural productivity overall because less people need to produce more.

It is clear that there is a high level role for Government to play in delivering the public goods and services that improve nutrition, especially across sectors, such as health and education. But to be sustainable, **the private sector needs to be included in rolling out interventions in agriculture and national food fortification** in this dialogue.

The plan is ambitious in scope, scale and timeline. In order to succeed, **priorities could be narrowed in a further round of dialogue** to identify what is possible and what aligns with the evidence base. The plan as presented now, has over 234 priorities:

- 120 require implementation through the MoAg
- 115 Ministry of Livestock, Fisheries and Rural Development
- 90 through MoH
- 20 through Environmental Conservation

However, the **plan does not include information to prioritise interventions** around the evidence base. In fact, some interventions run counter to the evidence, such as school feeding. Some examples of **using the evidence base to prioritize would mean recommending excluding:**

\$1.8 billion for school feeding, which is linked to improvements in school enrollment, but not to improved nutrition

\$90 million forest products program

Distribution of WFP blended food rather than promoting national fortification programs, where the evidence base is sound and the intervention is more sustainable and able to reach more people. With the exception of pregnant/ breastfeeding women and young children, distribution of fortified blended food to specific target groups is unsustainable.

Establishing strategic reserves at \$315 million, without evidence of the need for need for this. Flooding markets drives down price and productivity in later years.

The Lancet recommends 13 interventions (nutrition specific and nutrition sensitive) to reduce stunting, based on the global evidence. A clearer focus on the SUN **First '1000 days'** from conception to two years of old is **the most effective and efficient way to use resources** and tackle stunting. The plan could include a more clear approach too targeting to reach stunted populations.

We recommend using the Lancet's 13 interventions as a prioritization tool. Its key nutrition-specific interventions are globally endorsed and scientifically sound and linked into what can deliver results fast.

In terms of implementation, the plan as it stands would put **additional work onto already heavy workloads** when Ministries are struggling to recruit adequate staff and get a presence on the ground.

There is a lot in this plan which costs and articulates existing programs. It would be useful to lay out what is additional programmatically and what are the additional budget costs associated with Zero Hunger. Building on and leveraging from existing structures, programs and plans (like NAPA) will substantially reduce costs.

The cost of over \$13 billion is extremely high and there is insufficient information on what and how interventions are costed. For example, outcome 1.2 on establishing an enabling environment accounts for over 50% of the total budget (\$7 billion). There is a **high costs to meetings and reporting without a clear articulation of any nutrition and food security benefit.**

In sum, we believe that the plan would benefit from a **clearer articulation of the evidence base** overall, with **funding proportional to the intended impact.**

Our preference is to **use of the Lancet 13 interventions to guide the development of this plan.**

These comments represent the main points that would like to share. We would like to reiterate our **support for the focus on Zero Hunger** in Myanmar, and hope to **engage in a further dialogue** among the stakeholders. We are also very willing to **offer technical support** to develop the plan.

SUN CSA Organizations Represented in This Statement

CBOs/CSOs

1	Rhododendron Integrated Development Association (RID)
2	Zewaka Foundation
3	Thirimay Women's Development Cooperative Society Ltd;
4	May Doe Arr Man
5	Pyin Nya Ta Zaung
6	People Hope Community Development
7	Sympathy Hands Community Development Organization
8	Swan Saung shin
9	Lin Yaung Chi
10	Pin Lae Pyar Yae Phan Tee Shin
11	Myanmar Enhancement to Empower Tribal (MEET)
12	Pann Pyoe Lett Foundation
13	Myanmar Baptist Convention (MBC)
14	Chan Myae Metta Cooperative Society (CMMCS)
15	Khumi Youth Development (KYD)

16	Nomin Woman Development Group (NWDG)
17	Green Kennedy Group
18	Green Network
19	Kyel Sin May
20	Network Activity Group (NAG)
21	Chin Youth Organization (CYO)
22	Kyaukme District Women Development Association (KDWDA)
23	May Myanmar Women's Development Cooperative Society Ltd;
24	Youth Network (Lasio-Northern Shan State)
25	Freeland Organization
26	New Generation
27	Golden Plain Livelihood Development Services
28	Better Life Organization

INGOs

1	FSWG
2	PACT Myanmar
3	Action Contre La Faim (ACF)
4	PSI Myanmar
5	TDH-Itilia
6	PLAN
7	World Vision Myanmar
8	Path
9	HKI
10	SCI
11	German Agro Action (GAA) / Welt Hunger Hilfe
12	IOM
13	International Rescue Committee

Government Representatives

1	Myanmar Nurse and Midwife Association
2	Myanmar Health Assistant Association