

Nutrition at the Forefront: Mobilizing Civil Society for WHA77

The 77th World Health Assembly from **May 27 to June 1, 2024**, is a significant event for SUN Civil Society Alliances to advocate for the integration of nutrition into global health policies. This event will address key issues like universal health coverage, non-communicable diseases, and climate change. It will also feature specific side-events aimed at showcasing integrated approaches to health and nutrition. Civil society members are encouraged to utilize this platform to engage with global leaders, share insights, and push for comprehensive nutrition policies that support sustainable development goals.

A. SUN key objectives:

1. Advocate for and position nutrition as a key driver of health outcomes and accelerator of achieving the Sustainable Development Goals.
2. Promote mainstreaming of nutrition services through health systems. Essential Nutrition Actions must be fully integrated into national health-sector plans, supported by a strengthened multisectoral approach, and dedicated financing. Essential nutrition services should be part of the standard package of available healthcare services, universally available to all.
3. Encourage SUN Countries to speak up and make statements to include nutrition actions in WHA resolutions (as recommended below).

B. Key WHA Agenda points

The provisional agenda of the WHA is available [here](#) and the most relevant agenda items to advocate for nutrition are listed below:

1. **Maternal, infant and young child nutrition (agenda item 15.2)**
 - o Challenges persist to reach the other five global nutrition targets on stunting, wasting, low birth weight, anaemia and childhood obesity. Investing in nutrition is smart with a very high return on investment with long term impact in public health. Extend the WHA2025 targets to align with SDG2030 including the *Comprehensive Implementation Plan for Maternal, Infant and Young Child Nutrition 2012-2025* to accelerate progress on the targets.

- Update or develop national legislation to protect, promote and support breastfeeding in line with the International Code of Marketing Breast-milk Substitutes and WHO's Guidance on regulatory measures aimed at restricting digital marketing of breast milk substitutes (BMS) to safeguard communities, mothers and babies from dangerous and innovative promotion strategies; and establish monitoring mechanisms to ensure the implementation of the Code.

2. Acceleration towards Sustainable Development Goal targets for maternal health and child mortality (agenda item 11.7)

- Draft resolution proposed by the Federal Republic of Somalia; co-sponsored by Botswana, Ethiopia, Egypt, Kenya, Lebanon, Nigeria, Paraguay, South Africa and Tanzania.
- Based on current trends it is likely that more than 4 out of 5 countries (80%) will not achieve their national maternal mortality target, 63 countries will miss the neonatal mortality target, and 54 countries will miss the under-five mortality target by 2030; and that focused, urgent, and coordinated course-correcting, country-led action is needed in these countries for maternal, newborn, and child survival to achieve the SDGs.
- Significantly reduce maternal, neonatal and child mortality and morbidity and increase access to quality health-care services for newborns, infants and children, as well as all nutrition services provided to women through primary healthcare, before, during and after pregnancy and childbirth.

3. Universal Health Coverage (agenda item 11.1)

- Nutrition care, preventive and curative, must be fully integrated into national health-sector plans, supported by a strengthened multisectoral approach. Essential nutrition services should be part of the standard package of available healthcare services, universally available to all.
- Universal health coverage cannot be achieved unless the capacity of the health workforce is increased. Nutrition is lagging far behind the coverage of traditional health services. The median number of trained nutrition professionals is just 2.3 per 100.000 people, and pre-service nutrition training in the curricula of health workers averages less than 20 hours. As a result, the health workforce is under equipped to deliver high-quality and effective nutrition care.

4. Climate change and health (agenda item 15.4)

- Proposed by Barbados, Fiji, Kenya, Monaco, Netherlands (Kingdom of the), Peru, United Arab Emirates and United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

- Climate change leads to diminished nutrient availability in food, higher food prices, and increased rates of malnutrition globally, particularly among the most susceptible groups such as women and children. From 2030 to 2050, climate change is projected to result in an additional 250,000 deaths annually and an increase of 25 million undernourished children.
- Embed in the proposed Global Plan of Action on climate change and health, vital, life-saving, and proven nutrition interventions that help achieve both climate and health goals.

5. Immunization Agenda 2030 (agenda item 11.4)

- Malnutrition and infectious diseases are major contributors to child morbidity and mortality. Proven immunization and nutrition interventions are also among the most cost-effective approaches to help children survive and thrive.
- Integrating nutrition and immunization services through primary healthcare can help to improve the impact and success of both interventions as malnourished children are also highly likely to be lacking immunization services.

6. Draft fourteenth general programme of work (agenda item 17)

- Mainstreaming of nutrition across the three pillars of the [GPW14](#), which will set a high-level road map for global health and guide WHO's work for the 4-year period 2025-2028 to reinvigorate actions needed to get the health-related Sustainable Development Goals on track. Nutrition is not just a marker but a maker of development and central to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals.
- Nutrition interventions must be core to the three pillars of GPW14 - to promote, provide, and protect. By integrating nutrition services into primary health care and ensuring universal health coverage, we tackle not just the symptoms but the causes of poor health and mortality.

C. Side events

- **May 27th (5.30pm – 7pm) - Roundtable on Scaling up Community Health Workers for Nutrition in Africa**

Co-hosted by the African Union Commission, World Vision International and the SUN Movement. More information will be provided [here](#).

- **May 28th (6.30 -8 pm) - Side event on Maternal, Infant and Young Child Nutrition – with special focus on Digital marketing of baby feeding products**

Co-organised by IBFAN, ILCA, Save the Children and UNICEF. More information [here](#).

- **May 29th (5.30pm – 7pm) - High-level side event on Delivering integrated immunization and nutrition services through primary healthcare.**

SUN with Gavi and the Eleanor Crook Foundation will be co-hosting a high-level side-event on Delivering integrated immunization and nutrition services through primary healthcare on 29 May 2024 that aims to showcase country examples and encourage national policy and financial commitments for integrated services into national health systems. More information [here](#).

- **May 29th (7.30am – 9am) - Health in the climate crisis: from global policy to integrated action**

Co-hosted by Save the Children, World Vision and the Global Climate and Health Alliance.

More information [here](#).

- **May 30th (5.30pm – 7pm) - Initiative on Climate Action and Nutrition (I-CAN) Roundtable**




More information will be provided [here](#).


D. Key messages


- Additional key messages from the SUN Movement can be found [here](#)


E. Spreading the word


Here are several suggested tweets for SUN Civil Society Alliances to use ahead of the WHA77, highlighting key advocacy points and encouraging engagement:


 Join us at #WHA77 to advocate for nutrition as a cornerstone of health and sustainable development! Let's ensure nutrition is central to all health policies.   #SUNCSA #NutritionForHealth


 Mark your calendars! From May 27-June 1, the World Health Assembly addresses urgent topics like maternal and child nutrition, climate change, and universal health coverage. #WHA77 #SUNCSA


 Nutrition is an investment with high returns. At #WHA77, we'll push to extend global nutrition targets to align with #SDG2030. Join us in supporting maternal, infant, and young child nutrition. #InvestInNutrition #SUNCSA

 Call to Action: SUN Countries, let's make our voices heard! Advocate for nutrition in all WHA resolutions to combat malnutrition and ensure health for all. #WHA77 #NutritionAdvocacy #SUNCSA

 Climate change affects our nutrition. We'll push for nutrition interventions in the Global Plan of Action on climate and health at #WHA77. Nutrition is key to meeting climate and health goals. #ClimateAction #SUNCSA

 Integrating nutrition and immunization through primary healthcare can save lives. Discover how at our high-level side event on May 29 at #WHA77. #SUNCSA #IntegratedCare

 Excited that SUN co-hosts a roundtable on Scaling up Community Health Workers for Nutrition in Africa on May 27. Join us to learn how grassroots efforts can make a huge impact! #WHA77 #SUNCSA #CommunityHealth

 Ready to advance health coverage? We advocate for nutrition care as a standard part of health services. No Universal Health Coverage without nutrition! #WHA77 #UHC #SUNCSA

Please tag relevant governments or organisations. Other useful Twitter handles to consider using:

- Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, Director-General of the World Health Organization, @DrTedros
- Afshan Khan, Coordinator of the SUN Movement, @AfshanKhan_
- SUN Movement, @SUN_Movement
- SUN Civil Society Network, @SUNCSN
- UN Nutrition, @UNN

In case you have any questions or comment, or if you are attending WHA and wish to connect, please do not hesitate to contact Barbara Reh binder, SUN CSN Senior Advisor, at b.rehbinder@savethechildren.org.uk