

# SUN Civil Society Network Advocacy strategy 2026-2028



# Table of Contents



# Context

---

The period 2026–2030 opens at a moment of profound disruption for global nutrition. Progress is far too slow, and the world remains significantly off track to meet the World Health Assembly nutrition targets by 2030. According to the **2025 Joint Child Malnutrition Estimates, 150.2 million children under five were stunted, 42.8 million were wasted, including 12.2 million severely wasted, and 35.5 million were overweight in 2024.** Low birthweight and micronutrient deficiencies also continue to show insufficient progress, with anaemia among women of reproductive age remaining a persistent global concern.

These trends are compounded by a volatile global environment. Climate change is disrupting food systems, livelihoods, diets, and disease patterns at an accelerating pace, with the greatest impacts falling on populations already affected by food insecurity and malnutrition. Geopolitical instability, conflict, and displacement continue to undermine access to essential services across many SUN countries. Deepening social and economic inequalities, together with repeated economic shocks, are further reducing households' ability to afford and access healthy diets. **The 2025 State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World report estimates that 673 million people faced hunger in 2024, while 2.6 billion people could not afford a healthy diet.**



In addition, civic space is shrinking in many contexts, making it harder for civil society to organise, advocate, and hold decision-makers to account. Women and young people in particular continue to face structural barriers to education, services, finance, land, paid work, and leadership roles - due to discriminatory gender and age norms and/or unequal care responsibilities, thus limiting their ability to influence the policies and decisions that directly affect their lives.

Nutrition financing is also entering a period of severe contraction. Development assistance for nutrition has declined sharply at a time when humanitarian needs continue to rise, while many governments face limited fiscal space and fragile and conflict-affected settings face growing barriers to attracting both domestic and external resources. **A 2025 analysis warned that a 44% cut in global nutrition funding could leave 2.3 million children without treatment for severe acute malnutrition and contribute to 369,000 additional child deaths each year.**

In this context, accountability, strategic advocacy, and public-interest safeguards are not optional; they are essential to protect nutrition from being deprioritised. **This requires civil society that is not only present, but well-resourced and sustainably funded** - able to organise, generate evidence, influence budgets, defend public interest, and hold governments and other actors accountable for delivering on their commitments.





## Purpose



The SUN Civil Society Network advocacy strategy for 2026–2028 sets out how SUN CSN will use its civil society mandate to influence policy, financing, and accountability for ending malnutrition in all its forms. It supports the **SUN CSN 4.0 strategy** by connecting community realities, CSA evidence, youth-informed priorities, and cross-country learning to national, regional, and global advocacy.

**SUN CSN’s role is to amplify and connect — not replace — civil society leadership.** Its comparative advantage is not to campaign on everything, but to **connect local evidence and good practices across the network and to the policy spaces where civil society can have the greatest influence.** Rooted in national Civil Society Alliances, the SUN CSN will remain focused and selective. **It will harness its members’ good practices and bring local priorities and community-led solutions into policy spaces, while helping translate global and national commitments into grounded advocacy and accountability.**

This is particularly important for nutrition integration, because local civil society works across the systems that shape nutrition in people’s daily lives, including health, food systems, climate resilience, gender equality, education, and social protection.





## Purpose

This advocacy strategy will also support delivery of **SUN CSN's Nutrition for Growth commitments**, by embedding cross-country learning, youth-led community-informed advocacy, and civil society action on responsible private sector engagement into SUN CSN's core advocacy work.





# Advocacy Priorities



## Priority 1 Accountability for commitments and delivery





# Accountability for commitments and delivery



## Objective

Strengthen civil society's role in tracking, influencing, and demanding accountability for nutrition commitments at national and global levels, including those made through N4G, national nutrition plans, and relevant stakeholder processes. This will include using locally led and youth-led Nutrition Dialogues to generate community evidence on whether commitments are being implemented, financed, and experienced by the people they are intended to serve.





# Accountability for commitments and delivery

## Key messages

- **Commitments must become measurable action.** N4G commitments, national nutrition plans, and other government pledges must be implemented, financed, monitored, and felt by communities.
- **Civil society turns commitments into constructive accountability.** Through progress tracking, community evidence, and Nutrition Dialogues — including youth-led dialogues — CSAs help assess whether commitments are reaching women, children, young people, and marginalised groups, while working with government to identify bottlenecks, improve implementation, and accelerate delivery of national nutrition strategies and plans.
- **Budget analysis is central to accountability.** CSAs can track whether nutrition is reflected in national and sub-national budgets, whether funds are released and spent, and whether financing matches need — as shown by many examples, including from Malawi and Nigeria.
- **Accountability must apply to all stakeholders.** Governments, donors, UN agencies, civil society, and private sector actors must be transparent about commitments, financing, implementation, and results.
- **Private sector engagement requires safeguards.** Civil society helps clarify expectations, identify conflicts of interest, and protect nutrition priorities from power imbalances or commercial influence.





# Accountability for commitments and delivery

## Key activities

- Support CSAs to use **Nutrition Dialogues**, including youth-led and CSA-led dialogues, to gather community evidence on whether commitments are being implemented, financed, and experienced by communities.
- Turn selected Dialogue findings and CSA accountability evidence into a small number of **high-quality advocacy products** — such as briefs, blogs, videos, policy messages, and event inputs — for use at national, regional, and global levels.
- Facilitate a number of **regional advocacy and accountability learning spaces**, including ESA and WCA accountability trainings, the Asia nutrition financing workshop, and cross-regional exchanges on commitment tracking, budget advocacy, and social accountability.
- Support CSAs to engage on **private sector accountability through peer-to-peer learning, webinars, practical guidance, and structured dialogue opportunities** that help clarify expectations, boundaries, public-interest safeguards, conflict-of-interest management, and accountability mechanisms.
- Strengthen CSA **capacity for budget analysis and advocacy through targeted training, mentoring, peer-to-peer exchange, and sub-grants** where available, with a focus on tracking whether nutrition commitments are reflected in budgets, released, spent, and reaching priority populations.
- Coordinate and **amplify CSA evidence** around key accountability moments, including N4G follow-up, WHA, SUN Movement processes, regional financing discussions, and relevant national or regional nutrition review processes.





# Advocacy Priorities



## Priority 2

# Advancing nutrition integration across systems





# Advancing nutrition integration across systems

## Objective

Position civil society as a credible and influential actor in advancing integrated approaches to nutrition across systems, recognising that nutrition integration extends across health, climate, food systems, education, and social protection. Over 2026–2028, SUN CSN will focus particularly on the gender–nutrition–climate nexus as an entry point, while also promoting practical policy areas such as school meals as examples of integrated nutrition action.





# Advancing nutrition integration across systems



## Key messages (1/2)

- **Nutrition must be integrated across the systems that shape people's lives.** Health, food systems, climate, education, gender equality, and social protection all influence nutrition outcomes and must work together.
- **Integrated action is essential to address malnutrition in all its forms.** Stunting, wasting, micronutrient deficiencies, overweight, obesity, anaemia, and diet-related diseases cannot be solved through isolated nutrition interventions alone.
- **The gender–nutrition–climate nexus is a strategic entry point for civil society advocacy.** Women, girls, children, young people, and climate-vulnerable communities are often most affected by malnutrition and climate shocks, and must shape the solutions.
- Launch a **gender–nutrition–climate nexus Community of Practice** and leverage it to share a small number of CSA examples, evidence, and advocacy asks on integrated nutrition action.



# Advancing nutrition integration across systems

## Key messages (2/2)

- **Civil society makes nutrition integration practical and accountable.** CSAs bring local evidence, community solutions, and lived experience into policy spaces, helping decision-makers understand what integration means in practice.
- **School meals show how integrated nutrition action can work.** Well-designed school meals can connect nutrition, education, health, social protection, local food systems, and gender equality in a visible and politically compelling way.
- **Locally led advocacy is essential for meaningful integration.** Policies are more likely to be effective when they are shaped by CSAs, youth leaders, women-led organisations, grassroots actors, and marginalised communities.





# Advancing nutrition integration across systems

## Key activities

- Strengthen CSA capacity for **budget analysis and advocacy** through targeted training, mentoring, peer-to-peer exchange, and sub-grants where available, with a focus on tracking whether nutrition commitments are reflected in budgets, released, spent, and reaching priority populations.
- **Coordinate and amplify CSA evidence around key accountability moments**, including N4G follow-up, WHA, SUN Movement processes, regional financing discussions, and relevant national or regional nutrition review processes.
- **Develop and disseminate advocacy products** such as videos (such as the Viet Nam and Peru videos) or policy briefs showing how nutrition can be embedded in wider systems, including school meals as a practical example linking nutrition, education, health, food systems, and social protection for members and partners to use in presentations, webinars, social media, policy dialogues, and advocacy meetings.
- **Bring selected CSA evidence and examples into targeted regional or global advocacy opportunities** linked to climate, food systems, education, gender equality, and nutrition.





# Advocacy Priorities

## Priority 3 Rights-based nutrition policies and protections





# Rights-based nutrition policies and protections

## Objective

Advance rights-based nutrition action by promoting the right to adequate food and nutrition, protecting breastfeeding, supporting stronger public-interest regulation, and defending the enabling conditions needed for civil society to advocate effectively and hold duty bearers to account..





# Rights-based nutrition policies and protections

## Key messages

- **Nutrition is a human rights issue.** The right to adequate food and nutrition provides a foundation for equitable, accountable, and people-centred nutrition policy.
- **Rights-based advocacy strengthens accountability.** Civil society can use human rights frameworks to clarify government obligations, strengthen policy demands, and monitor whether commitments are reaching the people most affected by malnutrition.
- **Healthy diets and sustainable food systems must be grounded in rights.** Agrifood system transformation should protect people's access to nutritious, safe, affordable, culturally appropriate, and sustainable diets.
- **Breastfeeding protection is both a public health and rights priority.** Stronger maternity protection, workplace support, and BMS Code implementation are essential to protect women, children, and public health.
- **Public-interest safeguards are essential for nutrition.** Nutrition policy must be protected from conflicts of interest, harmful commercial influence, and practices that undermine healthy diets and breastfeeding.
- **Civic space enables rights-based nutrition action.** Civil society, including women, young people, small-scale producers, consumer organisations, and marginalised groups, must be able to participate safely and meaningfully in policy and accountability processes.



# Rights-based nutrition policies and protections

## Key activities

- **Share the FAO right to food e-learning course** with CSAs, regional groups, youth coordinators, and interested members as an immediate, low-burden entry point for strengthening understanding of the right to food and human rights-based approaches.
- **Conduct a short demand-mapping poll** through regional advisors to identify CSA interest in strengthening work on the right to food, human rights-based advocacy, healthy diets, agrifood systems transformation, food councils or platforms, and engagement with small-scale producers and communities.
- **Explore peer-to-peer learning, training-of-trainers, or “right to food champions” approaches** with FAO and selected CSAs, where there is clear demand and alignment with ongoing national or regional activities.
- **Support CSA advocacy on breastfeeding protection, maternity protection, BMS Code implementation and enforcement, and related public-interest safeguards**, drawing on existing CSA examples and policy opportunities.
- **Capture and elevate lessons from structured dialogues on private sector engagement**, particularly on safeguards, sequencing, accountability, and conflict-of-interest management, to inform broader policy and advocacy discussions.





# Partnerships and platforms to leverage

SUN CSN will use partnerships selectively to strengthen the reach, credibility, and influence of its advocacy, while keeping CSA leadership at the centre. Partnerships should help elevate community evidence, improve access to policy spaces, strengthen technical quality, and support collective influence from local to global levels. National Civil Society Alliances and regional groups remain the foundation of this approach: their priorities, evidence, and advocacy experience should shape what SUN CSN amplifies regionally and globally.



## **Framing note on private sector engagement**

Engagement related to the private sector should remain narrowly framed. SUN CSN engages from an independent accountability perspective to promote transparency, safeguards, and public-interest outcomes, not as a partnership modality. Where dialogue takes place, it should support greater clarity on expectations, boundaries, and accountability mechanisms.





# Advocacy Moments



Budget permitting, SUN CSN will engage in selected global and regional policy events where there is a clear opportunity to elevate our SUN CSN advocacy priorities. Participation will be prioritised where SUN CSN can add value by bringing local civil society perspectives into nutrition, food systems, health, climate, gender, or human rights spaces, and where engagement can be linked back to CSA advocacy and learning across the Network.

Please refer to the advocacy moments of 2026 in the table in the next two pages:

- **In Red: In-person attendance secured**
- **In Orange: Prioritised event - online attendance and/or in-person attendance (either from secretariat or sponsoring a member) desired if budget allows.**



# 2026

19–23 January	World Economic Forum (WEF)	Davos
21–22 February	World Health Organization Executive Board	Geneva
February	African Union General Assembly (39th AU Assembly)	Addis
16–19 March	Asia-Pacific Food Security Forum	Manila
March	Foro Económico LAC – CAF	Panama
March	ICF Humanitarian Forum	Geneva
March	ARP Meeting?	
<b>Apr 7, 2026</b>	<b>One Health Summit</b>	<b>Lyon</b>
April	European Humanitarian Forum	
20–24 April	Financing for Development Forum	New York
13–18 April	World Bank / International Monetary Fund Spring Meetings	
<b>27–30 April</b>	<b>Women Deliver</b>	<b>Melbourne</b>
May	AU Nutrition Policy Framework and Investment Target	
<b>18–23 May</b>	<b>World Health Assembly – 79th WHA</b>	<b>Geneva</b>
May	France–Africa Summit	Nairobi
15–17 June	Group of Seven (G7) Summit	Evian

June	GCF / GEF Replenishment Kick-Off (Climate)	
June	London Climate Week	
July	High-Level Political Forum (HLPF)	New York
July	Regional Sustainable Development Fora & Food Systems Convenor Meetings	
August	NEYAG High-Level Summit	Africa
<b>September</b>	<b>Africa Food Systems Forum</b>	<b>Kigali</b>
September	United Nations General Assembly (UNGA)/NY Climate Week	
<b>28 Sep – 1 Oct</b>	<b>7th MNF Conference</b>	<b>Accra</b>
<b>TBC</b>	<b>Global Parliamentary Summit Against Hunger and Malnutrition</b>	<b>South Africa</b>
<b>October</b>	<b>Committee on World Food Security (CFS 54)</b>	<b>Rome</b>
October	World Food Forum	Rome
October	International Congress on Obesity	Mexico
October	Replenishment – GCF / GFF / IFAD	
October	World Health Summit – Regional	Nairobi
<b>October / November</b>	<b>Dakar youth olympics / N4G stocktake</b>	<b>Dakar</b>
12–18 October	World Bank / International Monetary Fund Annual Meetings	Bangkok
November	Group of Twenty (G20) Summit	USA
<b>November</b>	<b>Global Child Nutrition Forum</b>	<b>Zambia</b>
November	IFAD Replenishment (TBC)	
<b>December</b>	<b>United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change COP31</b>	<b>Antalya</b>



# 2027

<u>Date</u>	<u>Event</u>	<u>Location</u>
April	WB IMF Spring Meetings	TBC
<b>May</b>	<b>WHA</b>	<b>Geneva</b>
September	UNGA	New York
September	SDG Summit	New York
October	CFS 56	Italy
<b>TBC</b>	<b>UNFSS+6</b>	<b>TBC</b>
TBC	Annual Meetings	TBC
<b>TBC</b>	<b>United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change COP32</b>	<b>Addis Ababa</b>
TBC	G20 Summit	UK
TBC	G7 Leaders Summit	US

