

# Scaling Up Nutrition Civil Society Alliance- Kenya: Feeding Hope and Nourishing Communities

Kenya's Scaling Up Nutrition Civil Society Alliance: **A Network with a Mission**

Malnutrition, in all its forms, can have devastating consequences, hindering both individual and national development. Recognizing this challenge, Kenya joined the Scaling Up Nutrition (SUN) Movement in 2012, a global movement determined to eradicate malnutrition by 2030.

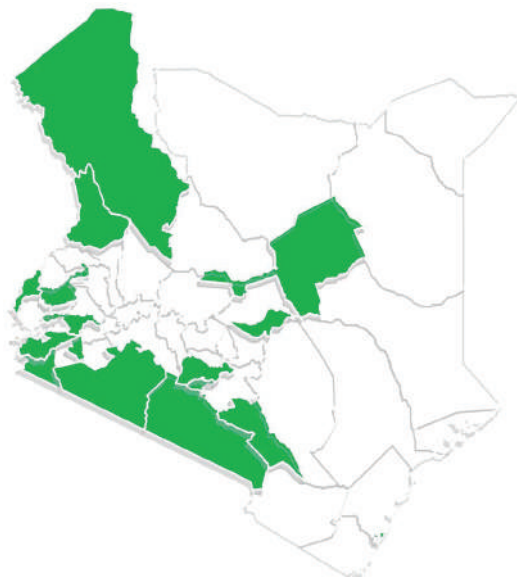
Within the Kenyan SUN movement, a powerful force has emerged: the **Scaling Up Nutrition Civil Society Alliance (SUN CSA)**. Established in October 2013, we are a registered local NGO, wielding legal authority to champion improved nutrition through strategic advocacy, policy engagement, and member coordination.

We officially launched SUN CSA on the first SUN Global Day of Action, on 9th May 2014 and we have made unique contributions to the Scaling up nutrition movement by:

1. **Advocating:** Through social mobilization, advocacy, and campaigning to raise awareness of the impact of malnutrition and to encourage governments to combat it (malnutrition) as a priority.
2. **Capacity building:** At SUN CSA, we primarily undertake capacity building of civil society organizations and other stakeholders to scale up nutrition advocacy at national and county level.
3. **Implementing:** Through programming, we reach out to affected communities and delivers multi-sectoral nutrition-sensitive and nutrition-specific interventions.
4. **Monitoring and Accountability:** From a local to a global level, we track progress by monitoring nutrition expenditure, collecting data to ensure no one is left behind and holding governments accountable for their promises.

We are a network that brings together over 400 civil society groups under one umbrella. This collaborative approach fosters a united front to amplify their voices in the fight against malnutrition.

**SUN CSA Kenya:  
Building Strength, Securing  
Commitments, Achieving Results**



## Where SUN CSA Works

At SUN CSA Kenya, we stand as a shining example of how strategic advocacy, partnerships and capacity building can drive impactful change. Partnering with Civil Society-Scaling Up Nutrition in Nigeria (CS-SUNN), has enabled us to embark on a remarkable journey, strengthening our voice and achieving significant milestones in sexual reproductive health rights and the fight against malnutrition. We underwent a remarkable transformation and we appreciate this partnership since it helped in addressing several key areas in our organization.

Overall, the partnership transformed our organization from a shoestring operation into



a powerful independent force for nutrition advocacy. By fostering collaboration and providing essential resources, the partnership empowered us to significantly strengthen our institutional core, expand our reach, and build the capacity of our members to drive positive change.

Through this partnership, we have realized the following milestones:

#### **A. Journey to independence, building a sustainable foundation:**

**Independence:** Through this partnership, we at SUN CSA have gained independent status which has placed us towards a journey to maximizing our impact and influence. The independent status has enabled us to foster a culture of autonomy and cultivate distinct brand identity separate from any affiliated entities. This agility has allowed us to readily embrace innovation and experiment with novel approaches to complex challenges. This unique brand has made SUN CSA attractive to donors, partners, and talented staff who resonate with our mission and values.

Additionally, the partnership helped us to secure a permanent office space, solidifying our presence and facilitating further collaboration.

**Strengthened Financial Management:** Financially, the partnership enabled SUN CSA to open a dedicated bank account and establish a robust accounting system that has positioned our organization to effectively manage internal and external resources,

fostering transparency and accountability. This newfound stability allows us to manage resources effectively and plan for the future.

**Enhanced Communication and Credibility:** The production of our first annual newsletter and audited accounts demonstrates transparency and increases our ability to attract external funding for crucial initiatives.

#### **B. Expanding the Network and Reach:**

**Strengthening Local Capacity:** The partnership facilitated the creation of 12 new SUN CSA chapters at the county/ sub-national level, a demonstration of our commitment to empowering local communities to engage in critical advocacy activities.

**Membership Growth:** The collaboration with CS-SUNN has fueled a surge in our organizations, membership. The partnership played a crucial role in expanding our reach and influence. Membership grew by over 40% in just six months, growing from 74 to 108 members at national level with an additional 300 joining from county chapters, and this expanded network amplifies our advocacy efforts.

The growth in membership and local capacity empowered us to engage in more targeted advocacy efforts at both national and county/sub-national levels. Furthermore, the partnership facilitated knowledge exchange and capacity building, allowing our members to become more effective advocates for good nutrition practices and increased financing.





Group photo after training of SUN CSA members supported by CS-SUNN staff from Nigeria

### C. Leading the Advocacy Charge

At SUN CSA, we don't shy away from our leadership role. We spearhead most advocacy efforts for nutrition and sustainable food systems in Kenya. Through strategic campaigns, policy engagement, and collaboration with other stakeholders, we push for critical changes that will improve nutritional outcomes for all Kenyans especially through engagement with members of parliament, county first ladies, other policy and budget influencers.



MPs keenly following on the presentations and discussion.



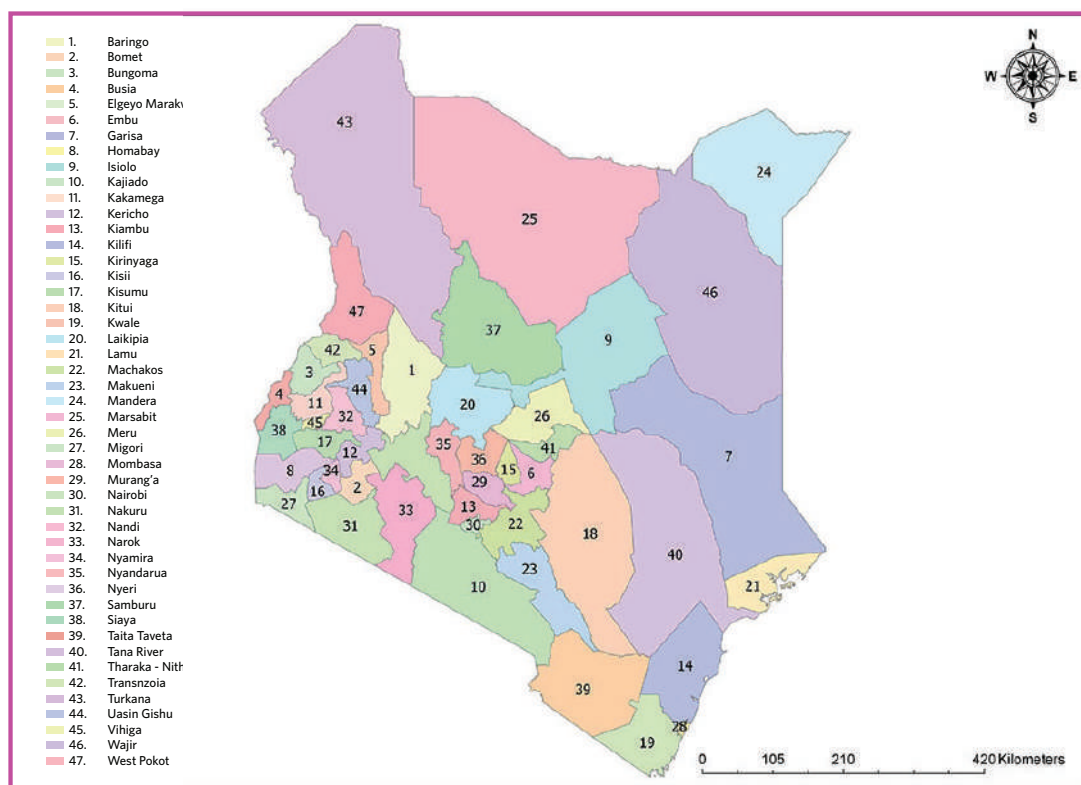


Group photo with members of Parliament, MoH and Partners after nutrition advocacy session.

#### D. A Success Story in Action

At SUN CSA, our impact extends beyond mere advocacy. Our dedication has resulted in tangible improvements. For instance, the work on budget analysis at national and county/ sub-national level has demonstrably influenced government allocations towards nutrition programs. This has translated to more resources reaching communities in need, ultimately leading to a healthier and more vibrant Kenya.

We conducted budget analysis and financial tracking in the following counties:

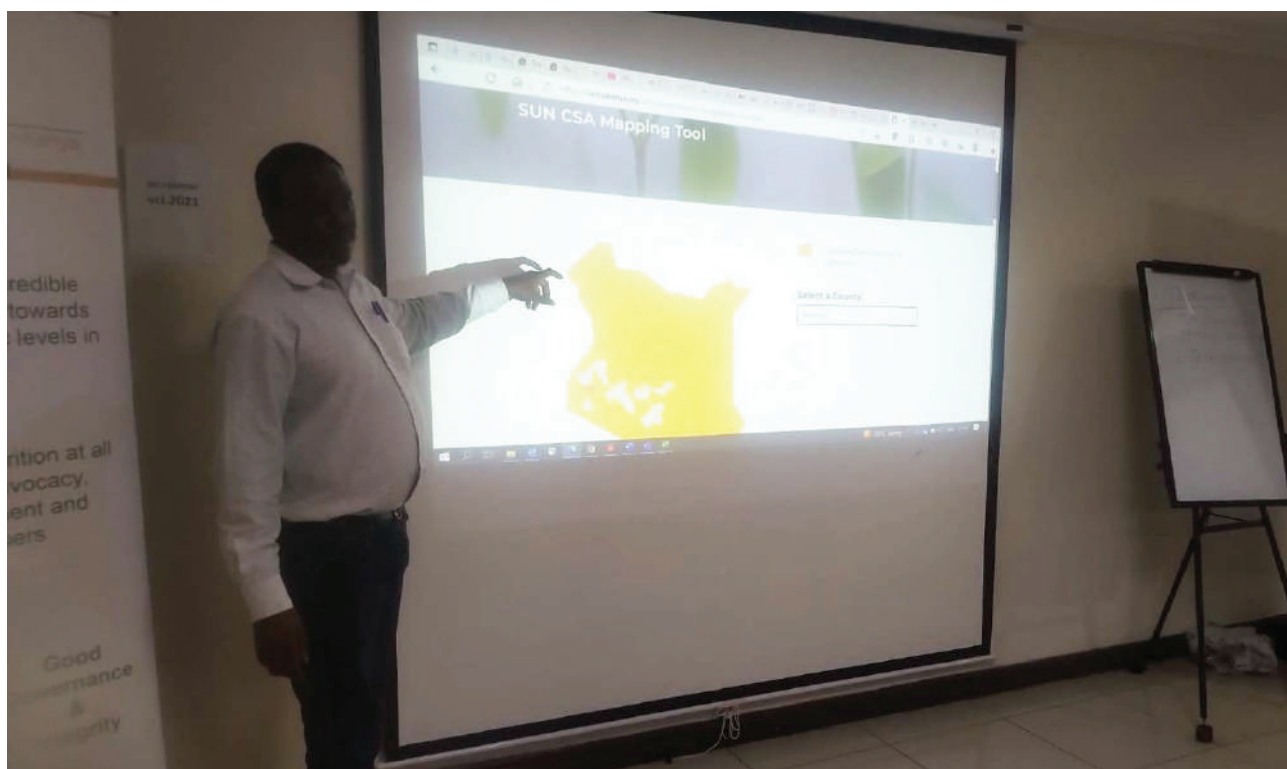


## E. A One-Stop Shop for Nutrition Action

This “one-stop-shop” serves as an invaluable resource for all stakeholders in the fight against malnutrition. One of our most impactful initiatives is the development and validation of a comprehensive mapping tool.

The mapping tool provides easy access to information on Civil Society Organizations (CSOs), and Community Based Organizations (CBOs) working on nutrition and food systems initiatives across all 47 Kenyan counties. This readily available data empowers collaboration and fosters a more coordinated approach to implementing national and county nutrition action plans.

The tool goes beyond just listing organizations. It provides details such as county and sub-county of operation, sector focus, target groups, website information, and coordination membership. This transparency fosters accountability and prevents duplication of efforts across different geographic areas. Additionally, for donors and the government, the tool offers valuable insights into the interventions being undertaken by civil society organizations.



Presentation of a mapping tool of WHO is DOING, WHAT, WHERE by Mr. Edgar Onyango of SUN CSA- Kenya

## F. Empowering for Advocacy and Action:

Over 300 Members Equipped: Through targeted training, we at SUN CSA Kenya have empowered over 300 members with the skills and knowledge to advocate for nutrition policy changes at the subnational level. This creates a powerful force for positive action within communities.





Mr Sunday Okoronkwo (Nigeria) facilitating an advocacy training in Kenya

### G. Securing Political and Financial Commitments:

- i. **Strategic Advocacy:** We at SUN CSA Kenya recognizes the importance of being “at the right table at the right time.” By presenting complex data in a clear and understandable manner, we have successfully secured increased political and financial commitment from policymakers. This is evident in the positive reception of the Cost of Hunger in Africa (COHA) study, which resulted in funding pledges for nutrition interventions.



Hon Abdirashid- majority leader and Hon Lorot- Majority Whip in Isiolo county Assembly signing a political commitment to support nutrition interventions.





H.E Gladys Wanga- Homabay Governor publicly signing commitment to fund the Homabay CNAP

- ii. **Building Relationships with County Assemblies:** Engaging County assembly members is critical for securing political buy-in, as they play a central role in service delivery decisions. This collaborative approach paves the way for long-term solutions.
- iii. **Early Stakeholder Involvement:** Including legislators and policymakers in project advocacy from the beginning fosters stronger political support and ensures solutions are aligned with implementation realities.

## H. Expanding County Nutrition Action Plans (CNAPs):

At SUN CSA Kenya, we have played a pivotal role in assisting 12 new counties in developing their own CNAPs, bringing the total to 40 out of 47 counties in Kenya. These county-specific plans are crucial for addressing local needs and ensuring effective implementation of the national nutrition strategy.

Our dedication goes beyond mere assistance to providing technical and financial support, facilitates dedicated meetings, and bringing together diverse stakeholders like UN agencies, academia, and the private sector, fostering a collaborative approach.

Recognizing the importance of resources, our organization ensured the CNAPs were costed, allowing for effective resource mobilization and tracking of county government allocations. This promotes accountability and fosters successful implementation.

At SUN CSA Kenya, we have been very instrumental in the fight against malnutrition, by ensuring a more targeted approach to tackling local needs. Our efforts go beyond simple assistance; we provide technical and financial support, facilitate collaboration among diverse stakeholders, and ensure the CNAPs are costed for better resource mobilization and implementation. This commitment to comprehensive support is propelling Kenya towards a future with better nutrition for all.

## I. Looking Forward: Building on Success

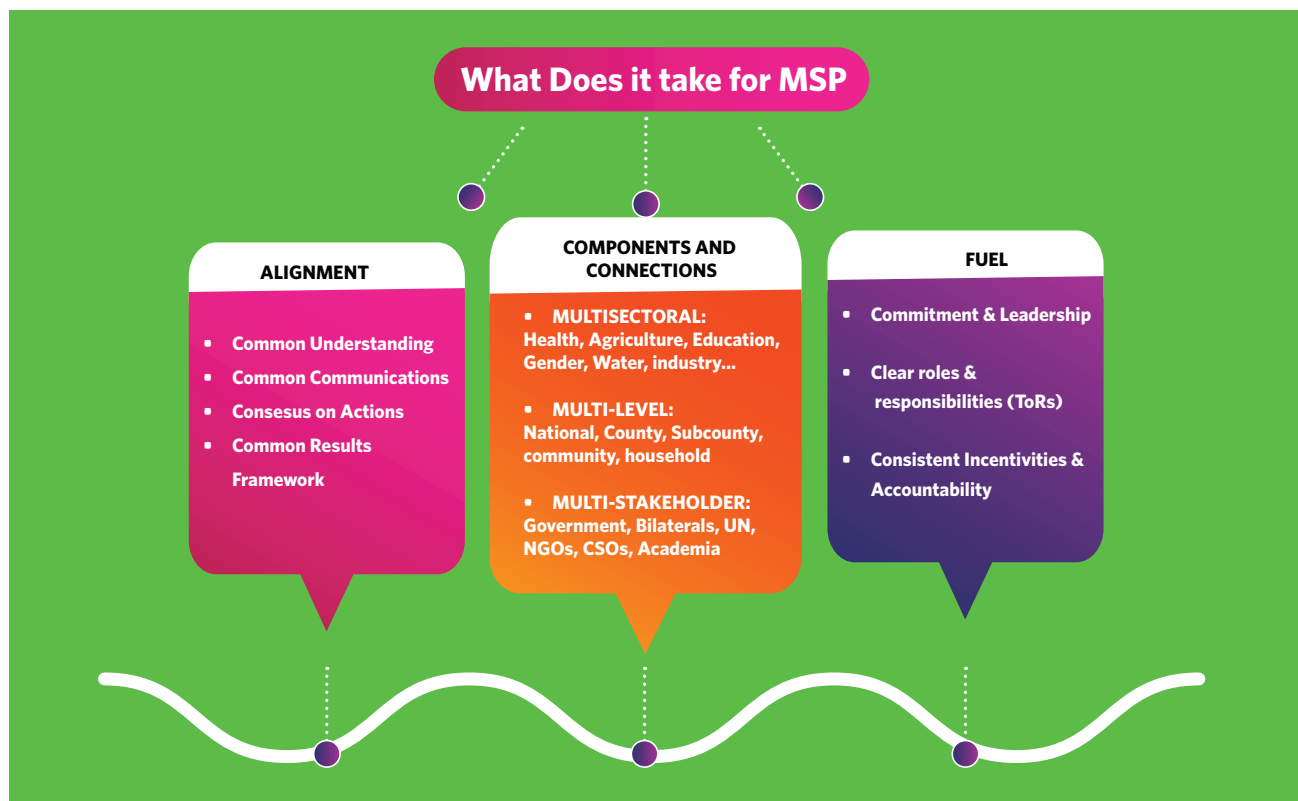
SUN CSA Kenya's commitment to continuous technical assistance and budget tracking for new counties demonstrates our long-term vision with a focus on improving nutrition governance, financing, and multi-sectoral coordination. This holds the promise of a healthier future for all Kenyans. Our success story serves as an inspiration

for civil society organizations around the world, showcasing the power of collaboration and strategic action in overcoming complex challenges.

## J. A Collaborative Force for Food Security: Nairobi County Launches Multi-Sectoral Platform

Nairobi County, a vibrant metropolis with a population of 5million people by day and 4 million by night faces a hidden struggle: food insecurity. A recent survey revealed that 60% of residents in informal settlements grapple with this challenge, spending a staggering 75% of their income on basic staples. This often leaves them vulnerable to malnutrition, with children particularly at risk. Contaminated water sources further exacerbate the issue, leading to diarrhea in 2 out of 10 children.

At SUN Civil Society Alliance (SUN CSA) Kenya, we understood that tackling this complex challenge requires a united front. We spearheaded the formation of a multi-sectoral platform (MSP) in Nairobi County, bringing together diverse stakeholders to work towards a common goal: ensuring food security and improved nutrition for all residents.



The formation of the Nairobi County MSP signifies a commitment to prioritizing food and nutrition security. This collaborative platform fosters a strong advocacy voice, pushing for increased investments and attention to this critical issue. By harnessing the collective power of diverse stakeholders, the MSP holds the potential to create a more secure and healthy future for all residents of Nairobi County.

## K. The Power of Partnership

This MSP acts as a collaborative forum, fostering dialogue and decision-making among various sectors crucial to food security and nutrition. Stakeholders include government agencies, NGOs, UN representatives, the private sector, and community leaders. By uniting these diverse voices, the platform fosters a more holistic approach to addressing chal-



allenges and maximizing available resources towards seeking solution

The inaugural meeting of the Nairobi County MSP focused on identifying solutions and charting a path forward. Key areas of discussion included:

- i. **Improving livelihoods:** Empowering residents in informal settlements through income-generating opportunities and skills development.
- ii. **Sensitizing members on nutrition:** Raising awareness on healthy eating practices and promoting dietary diversity.
- iii. **Mobilizing stakeholders:** Coordinating efforts between different sectors to avoid duplication and ensure a cohesive strategy.
- iv. **Developing a clear roadmap:** Establishing a term of reference for the MSP, outlining roles, responsibilities, and goals.
- v. **Securing donor funding:** Identifying and leveraging resources to support the implementation of crucial interventions.

### **SUN CSA Champions Collaboration: Agreement Reached on the road map for multiple micronutrient supplementation (MMS) in Kenya**

The fight against malnutrition is often hampered by disagreements between stakeholders with different perspectives. This was the case with multiple micronutrient supplementation (MMS), a potentially lifesaving intervention. The SUN Civil Society Alliance (SUN CSA) stepped in to bridge this divide.

Recognizing the roadblock caused by differing opinions on MMS, we at SUN CSA created a neutral platform for open and constructive discussions which brought together government officials, civil society organizations, and other relevant actors, to ensure all voices were heard. Through

facilitated dialogue, the SUN CSA helped identify common ground and fostered understanding. This collaborative approach ultimately led to a significant breakthrough: a clear path forward on MMS.

This outcome is a major victory, with a unified voice and a concrete plan, the country is now prepared to carry out implementation research on MMS. This research will provide crucial data to inform future policy decisions and ensure the effectiveness of MMS in improving nutritional outcomes. The SUN CSA's success highlights the importance of fostering inclusive dialogue and collaborative problem-solving. By bringing diverse stakeholders together, the SUN CSA can break down silos, build consensus, and ultimately accelerate progress in the fight against malnutrition.

### **Amplifying Youth Voices: The SUN Youth Network**

At SUN CSA Kenya, we understand the power of youth as agents of change. We actively supported the formation of the Scaling Up Nutrition Youth Network in Kenya.



**Mr Edgar Okoth from SUN CSA Kenya facilitating a youth engagement.**



**Kenya youth launch the 1.8 billion Young People for change.**

This network empowers young people to become effective advocates for themselves and their peers. The SUN Youth Network connects with communities and policymakers, promoting positive behavior change surrounding food and nutrition. We work to enhance youth capacity to advocate for improved nutrition security and access to healthy food options. SUN Youth Network empowers youth to share personal health and nutrition experiences, inspiring positive behavior change through social media handles, fostering trust and engagement among peers.

### **Building a Sustainable Future**

Our commitment goes beyond training to holding regular quarterly meetings with partners like the Ministry of Health (MOH), UNICEF, and the Organization of African Youth (OAY). These meetings focus on raising youth awareness about the SUN Movement's goals, strengthening network

management, and establishing a strong secretariat for the SUN Youth Network.

By empowering individuals and fostering collaboration, SUN CSA Kenya and SUN Youth Network are charting a course towards a healthier future for children in Busia County. Their success story serves as an inspiration for communities around the world, demonstrating the power of targeted action, youth engagement, and collaborative partnerships in tackling complex challenges like childhood malnutrition.

### **The Fight Continues**

In conclusion, SUN CSA journey is far from over, with our unwavering commitment, collaborative spirit, and strategic leadership, we are poised to continue making a significant difference in Kenyans' lives by addressing malnutrition and fostering healthier communities, thereby ensuring lasting impact on the nation's health.

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