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## **Stories of Change in Nutrition**

A Tool Pool

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## ABSTRACT

In recent years, the discourse around nutrition has, at a global level, gained major political momentum. Yet although there is substantial evidence on *what* is needed to improve nutrition outcomes, less is known about *how* to achieve it: how to operationalize actions effectively across sectors, at the appropriate scale, in line with local contexts, and in ways that link nutrition-specific and nutrition-sensitive interventions.

To fill this knowledge gap, we need more *experiential* learning—that is, learning based on the experiences of policymakers, implementers, and nutrition leaders in formulating and implementing nutrition-relevant policies and programs. The Stories of Change (SoC) initiative, under the auspices of the Transform Nutrition research consortium, seeks to help strengthen this evidence base by developing case studies that will capture experiential learning in six countries. These countries—Bangladesh, Nepal, India (Odisha), Senegal, Zambia, and Ethiopia—all have high burdens of undernutrition, but they have achieved notable results in improving nutrition outcomes in recent years. SoC focuses on documenting factors and processes that influence nutrition-relevant policy and practice at different levels, with the objective of improving their formulation and implementation and ultimately their impact.

This paper—which draws on inputs to, and discussions at, a methods development workshop—highlights the various concepts, methods, and tools that SoC researchers are considering to measure nutrition-relevant change in their respective countries. The focus is on nutrition-relevant policy and practice. These tools apply to 11 subthemes, which are to some extent sequential within policy/programming cycles: (1) assessing the nutrition problem, (2) stakeholder and institutional analysis/mapping, (3) understanding enabling environments for nutrition, (4) agenda setting and political commitment for nutrition, (5) policy formulation and policy processes, (6) multisectoral coordination, (7) implementation and vertical coherence, (8) scaling up, (9) assessing capacity, (10) assessing finance, and (11) monitoring, evaluation, and accountability. Examining these various methods and tools together allows for a holistic consideration of the processes that—while challenging to document and measure—play a key role in improving nutrition-relevant policy and practice, which, in turn, drives national achievement in reducing malnutrition.

**Keywords:** nutrition policy, program implementation, commitment, scaling up, stories of change

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# 1. INTRODUCTION

Nutrition's star is in the ascendant. Recent milestones include the Lancet Nutrition Series in 2008, the launch of the Scaling Up Nutrition (SUN) movement in 2010, the second Lancet Nutrition Series and the Nutrition for Growth summit in 2013, and the inaugural and second annual *Global Nutrition Reports* in 2014 and 2015.<sup>1</sup>

And yet, despite this political momentum, we still do not know enough about how nutrition actually improves. A recent multicountry review of scaling up impact on nutrition undertaken by the Transform Nutrition research consortium<sup>2</sup> summed up the challenge as follows: “Relatively strong consensus exists on what needs to be done, but much less is known about how to operationalize the right mix of actions in different contexts, how to do so at a scale that matches the size of the problem, in an equitable manner—and how to do so in ways that link nutrition-specific and nutrition-sensitive interventions” (Gillespie, Menon, and Kennedy 2015, 440).

Many countries within the SUN movement and beyond are now voicing a demand for a different type of knowledge and evidence—namely, evidence on *how* nutrition improves, and how to (proactively) improve nutrition outcomes. It is a call for experiential learning that draws upon the experiences of policymakers, nutrition leaders, program managers, and implementers in making decisions on what to do in real time, in different country contexts. How should multisectoral nutrition plans be designed, coordinated, and implemented? How do policymakers decide upon the right mix of programs for a given context and implement them effectively? How do they move beyond asking “what has worked?” to understand *why* it worked? This goes beyond knowledge generation per se, as the ultimate goal is to help countries learn from each other and share ideas and approaches.

To meet this growing demand, the Transform Nutrition consortium developed the Stories of Change (SoC) initiative, which involves the development of a set of in-depth case studies of countries that have achieved significant progress in nutrition in recent years. SoC uses a structured, systematic, and comparative approach to document change in nutrition-relevant policy and practice at different levels, with a strong emphasis on facilitating shared learning across countries.

This type of study has rarely been undertaken in a comprehensive manner. Various country case studies of progress in addressing undernutrition have been developed in the past (see Gillespie, Mason, and Martorell [1996] and the UN Standing Committee on Nutrition [SCN] case studies of the early 1990s and mid-2000s).<sup>3</sup> But there are now three advantages. First, there is a new global political momentum to address malnutrition (a momentum that now needs to be fueled by experience of positive change). Second, there have been significant advances in the development and use of a variety of methods and tools for analyzing the political economy of nutrition and change processes; no longer are political and policy processes locked into black boxes beyond the purview of nutrition professionals. And third, there are more data and more experience than ever before.

Successfully undertaking the SoC research, using both secondary and primary data sources, involves the application and adaptation of a set of analytical tools, frameworks, and methods to assess and analyze changes and challenges in the case study countries. This paper provides an overview of the various analytical tools, frameworks, and methods that were considered for use by SoC teams to examine nutrition-relevant change in these countries. In the next section we discuss the importance of stories and storytelling and provide an overview of the SoC initiative. We subsequently outline the various

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<sup>1</sup> Information on these publications and events can be found at [www.thelancet.com/series/maternal-and-child-undernutrition](http://www.thelancet.com/series/maternal-and-child-undernutrition) (2008 Lancet Maternal and Child Nutrition Series), [www.thelancet.com/series/maternal-and-child-nutrition](http://www.thelancet.com/series/maternal-and-child-nutrition) (2013 Lancet Maternal and Child Nutrition Series), <http://scalingupnutrition.org/> (SUN movement), and <http://nutrition4growth.org/> (Nutrition for Growth 2013). The *Global Nutrition Reports* for 2014 and 2015 can be found in the references section under IFPRI (2014) and IFPRI (2015).

<sup>2</sup> Transform Nutrition is a six-year research consortium funded with aid from the UK government. Transform Nutrition aims to transform thinking and action on nutrition and strengthen nutrition-relevant evidence to accelerate undernutrition reduction in South Asia and Africa south of the Sahara. For more information, see [www.transformnutrition.org](http://www.transformnutrition.org).

<sup>3</sup> For more information on these, see [www.unscn.org/en/publications/country\\_case\\_studies/](http://www.unscn.org/en/publications/country_case_studies/).

frameworks and tools available for measuring nutrition-relevant change, according to the following 11 sequential subthemes: assessing the nutrition problem; stakeholder and institutional analysis/mapping; understanding enabling environments for nutrition; agenda setting and political commitment for nutrition; policy formulation and policy processes; multisectoral coordination; implementation and vertical coherence; scaling up; assessing capacity; assessing finance; and, finally, monitoring, evaluation, and accountability. The final section of the paper summarizes the discussion.



## 2. STORIES OF CHANGE

### The Power of Stories

In recent years, the potential of stories and storytelling to promote change has increasingly been recognized across different fields.<sup>4</sup> Stories can motivate and inspire as well as inform action through enhancing or changing perceptions. Stories enable a leap in comprehension so that the audience intuitively grasps *what* the change involves, *why* it might be desirable, and *how* an organization or community might change. Stories allow listeners to extrapolate from a scenario simply, quickly, and in a nonthreatening way, and they invite them to see analogies from their own backgrounds and experiences. Research has shown that stories can catalyze change, as they are a natural way to communicate and they show connections between things, cut through complexity, and bypass defense mechanisms. Furthermore, they are memorable, nonadversarial, and nonhierarchical, and because they engage feelings, they inspire, motivate, and energize people (Denning 2002).

In their bestselling book *Think Like a Freak*, the architects of FREAKONOMICS, Steven Levitt and Stephen Dubner (2015), devote a chapter to how to persuade people and why you should tell stories. A story is different from an anecdote, they suggest; an anecdote is a snapshot, a one-dimensional piece of the big picture that lacks scale, perspective, and data, while a story fills in the bigger picture, uses data to portray a sense of magnitude, includes the passage of time, and lays out a chain of events to show causes that lead up to a particular situation and the consequences that result from it. A story can thus have deep resonance and capture and hold attention. “Stories help us live our lives,” say Levitt and Dubner (2015).

### Objectives

The ultimate objective of Stories of Change is to improve agenda setting and the formulation and implementation of nutrition-relevant policy and planning at the national and subnational levels in countries with high rates of undernutrition. The initiative will develop six case studies of countries that have high burdens of stunting but have committed to addressing the problem and have recently documented improvements in outcomes. Three of these countries are in South Asia (Bangladesh, Nepal, and India [the state of Odisha, specifically]) and three are in Africa (Ethiopia, Zambia, and Senegal). The overarching challenge in these case study countries is to better understand the drivers, pathways, and challenges that influence political commitment, policy and program coherence, and the implementation of nutrition-relevant actions, as experienced by governments, nongovernmental organizations, international institutions, and local communities.

### Methods

A Stories of Change (SoC) methods development workshop was held in Brighton, UK, in January 2015, for SoC partners (see Appendix). The primary goal of the workshop was to establish consensus on the scope of SoC work, the approach and methods to be used, the expected outputs, and the timeline of work. In addition, the workshop aimed to further develop approaches for the dissemination of findings, research uptake, and cross-country learning. One of the key outputs from the workshop was a “meta-protocol” that reflects the core ideas from the workshop and serves as the overarching structure to guide country studies. This will permit both cross-country comparisons and synthesis, as well as local adaptation to context (Table 2.1).

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<sup>4</sup> See [www.storytellingcenter.net/](http://www.storytellingcenter.net/) for examples.

**Table 2.1 Stories of Change meta-protocol summary**

	<b>Change (2000–present)</b>	<b>Challenge (present–2025)</b>
<b>Commitment</b>	How has commitment for nutrition, in its broadest sense (including system commitment), been generated?	How will commitment be sustained in the face of current or likely future challenges or threats?
<b>Coherence</b>	How has policy and program coherence been developed and ensured—both horizontally (across sectors) and vertically (national to community levels)?	What current and future challenges are faced in ensuring policy and program coherence?
<b>Community</b>	How have the lives of nutritionally vulnerable communities changed in the last 15 years?	What do communities perceive as the most significant challenges to progress in nutritional and health well-being?

Source: Authors.

The columns in the summary of the meta-protocol represent the temporal axes, distinguishing between “change” (what has happened since 2000) and “challenge” (the key challenges now and likely up to 2025). The rows show the different levels at which change is examined: commitment (political commitment, system/institutional commitment, and budgetary commitment); coherence (horizontal [intersectoral] policy and program coherence and vertical [intrasectoral] policy and program coherence, scaling, and implementation); and community (consensus on nutrition and local perceptions of changes and challenges).

SoC case studies use two core complementary methodological tracks. The first is quantitative, aimed at statistically determining the drivers of improved nutrition—building on Headey et al.’s work in Bangladesh, Nepal, and Ethiopia (Headey et al. 2013) and extending this approach to more countries. The second track draws upon mixed methods (qualitative and quantitative) and applies the meta-protocol to assess and analyze the dynamics and processes of change. The final country-level “stories of change” will examine the drivers and pathways of change over the last 15 years (since 2000). The challenges and opportunities in each country are distinct and provide an opportunity to increase understanding of enabling environments across a number of typologies. In addition to this focus on change, SoC will also examine the challenges, now and in the next 10 years (up to 2025). The time span is thus 25 years, or one generation, incorporating both summative (looking back) and formative (looking forward) aspects of the nutrition “stories” (Table 2.1).

SoC is intended to be complementary and supportive of SUN national monitoring. The SUN movement employs a “dashboard” of indicators to monitor progress across its member countries, yet this does not clarify *how* progress occurs—whether it was purposive or emergent, and what decisions and actions underpinned change. Quantitative, statistical analyses and qualitative, process-oriented research can, combined, generate a powerful narrative of change. The research will assess what determines whether nutrition is a development priority, what drives nutrition-relevant policy formulation, and, crucially, what determines whether such priorities and policies are actually reflected in effective implementation on the ground. A new challenge or idea may rise to the surface of development discourse, but what makes it stick, and how does it get folded into regular practice? How is the idea “institutionalized” or internalized as part of core business? Can we identify the triggers, catalysts, and/or processes that drive such an institutionalization (or mainstreaming)?

## **Outputs and Expected Outcomes**

SoC envisions two main outputs from the country case studies. First, a set of “stories of change” that synthesize experiential learning from different contexts on how to foster “enabling environments” for nutrition. This will comprise the documentation of factors and processes at the national and organizational level that affect agenda setting, policy formulation, program design, implementation, scaling, and sustainability—along with the factors and processes at the district, community, and household level that affect demand and utilization. The second output is a learning process, linked to existing communities of

practice (for example, SUN), to support countries in applying successful tools and approaches to inform policy formulation and implementation.

Expected outcomes of SoC include changes to behaviors and capacities. First, policy and practice communities (governments and other stakeholders) will be better able to incorporate new experiential knowledge into policymaking and multisectoral approaches to scaling up impact on nutrition. A second outcome is expected to be the improved capacity of governments, civil society, and donors to use evidence and information and apply tools, methods, and approaches to strengthen nutrition-relevant policy and practice. Such outcomes are intended to contribute to wider impacts in terms of increased and sustained political commitment and policy coherence for nutrition in selected countries and countries with similar typologies—and more evidence-informed and “pro-nutrition” policies and programs. In turn, over time, these efforts are intended to contribute to accelerated rates of reduction of undernutrition in these and other high-burden countries.

### 3. MEASURING CHANGE IN NUTRITION-RELEVANT POLICY AND PRACTICE

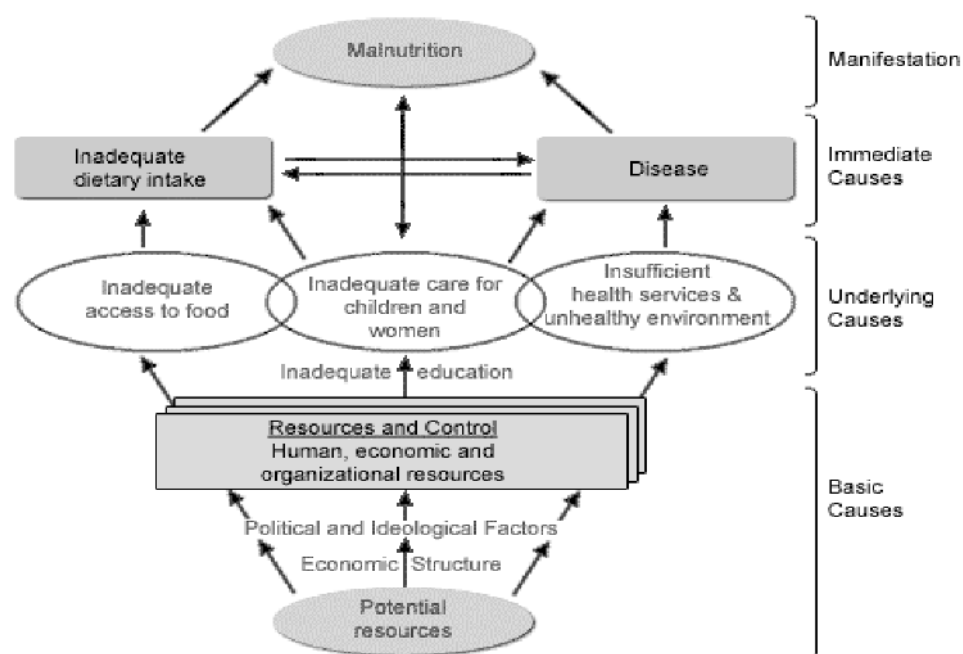
Over the past ten or so years, a variety of frameworks and tools have been developed to assess nutrition-relevant policy and programming processes as a way to, for example, map out policies and stakeholders that have a bearing on nutrition-relevant policy, measure political commitment and agenda setting, assess the impact of research on policy, and more broadly conceptualize the factors that are key to successful nutrition-relevant governance. In this section we describe some of the tools that were highlighted in the January 2015 methods workshop.

There are several approaches to measuring nutrition-relevant change at different levels, drawing on qualitative and quantitative data. These range from statistical decomposition analyses of the underlying drivers of changes in stunting rates (as performed by Headey et al. [2013], for example) to the development of life histories that include the perceptions of individuals at the community level about key changes in their lifetimes, or even over generations (for example, Davis 2011). While recognizing this plethora of approaches, our focus for this paper is on tools and frameworks for measuring changes in *nutrition-relevant policy and programming/practice*.

#### Assessing the Nutrition Problem

For 25 years, the UNICEF (United Nations Children’s Fund) conceptual framework has been the de facto gold standard in conceptualizing the multiple drivers of undernutrition that operate at different levels (UNICEF 1990). The framework sets out three levels of determinants. First, disease and inadequate dietary intake directly contribute to malnutrition in an individual (immediate determinants). These are, in turn, affected by a set of underlying determinants that comprise household food insecurity, inadequate maternal and child care, a lack of a hygienic environment, and insufficient access to health services (referred to by the shorthand of “food, care, and health”). These tend to operate at the level of households and communities. Underpinning these drivers lie a set of structural or basic-level drivers that essentially relate to policy, politics, power, and capacity (including the quantity, quality, and accessibility of human, financial, social, physical, and political resources).

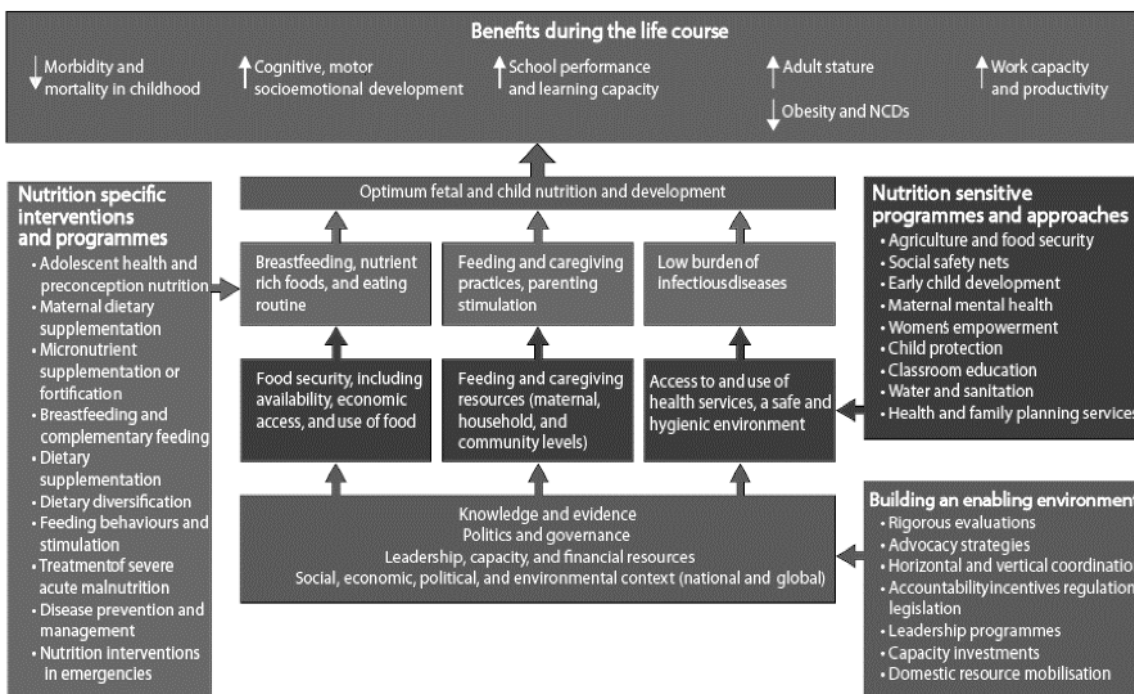
**Figure 3.1 The 1990 UNICEF nutrition framework**



Source: UNICEF (1990).

Since 1990, the UNICEF framework has been widely adopted and adapted (see Pelletier [2003] for a discussion of the ways in which this has happened in different contexts). The latest stage in its evolution is the framework developed for the 2013 Lancet Maternal and Child Nutrition Series. This version of the framework retains the three core levels but expands upon the content of certain drivers. It places additional emphasis on governance, knowledge and evidence, and leadership and capacity as key features of a basic-level enabling environment for nutrition. Lastly, it includes a set of interventions or responses that apply to the three levels: nutrition-specific, nutrition-sensitive, and enabling environment (Figure 3.2).<sup>5</sup>

**Figure 3.2 Lancet Nutrition Series framework (2013)**



Source: Black et al. (2013).

These types of frameworks help conceptualize the various factors and processes that impact nutrition outcomes through different pathways, at different levels, and in different contexts. They need to be populated by sound data that relate to such drivers and their outcomes in order to characterize the nutrition situation (status, causes) at a given time, and to monitor trends over time. The most comprehensive source of such data, following its launch in 2014, is the *Global Nutrition Report*, which serves as a repository of global, regional, and national-level nutrition data (IFPRI 2014, 2015). The report identifies countries’ progress on nutrition as well as gaps, and aims to empower nutrition champions at the country level to improve evidence-informed policy decisions. In addition, the Scaling Up Nutrition (SUN) movement has established SUN country profiles that provide basic nutrition and health statistics derived from the Nutrition Landscape Information System (NLIS) and FAOSTAT (SUN 2013a).

<sup>5</sup> Ruel and Alderman (2013) define nutrition-specific interventions as “interventions or programmes that address the immediate determinants of fetal and child nutrition and development—adequate food and nutrient intake, feeding, caregiving and parenting practices, and low burden of infectious diseases” (Ruel and Alderman 2013, 537). Nutrition-sensitive interventions are those that “address the underlying determinants of fetal and child nutrition and development—food security; adequate caregiving resources at the maternal, household and community levels; and access to health services and a safe and hygienic environment—and incorporate specific nutrition goals and actions” (Ruel and Alderman 2013, 537). Gillespie et al. (2013) define an enabling environment as the “political and policy processes that build and sustain momentum for the effective implementation of actions that reduce undernutrition” (Gillespie et al. 2013, 553).

## Stakeholder and Institutional Analysis/Mapping

Following a situation analysis of nutrition insecurity and a mapping of its drivers, along with landscaping of policies and politics (discussed later), it is important to identify the key institutions and individual actors (or stakeholders) who are influential and/or supportive of nutrition. Who are they, where are they, and how are they connected? Who listens to whom, and who advises or influences whom?

Stakeholders are individuals who have interest in the issues being addressed, whether they are actively or potentially involved in *affecting* nutrition outcomes or passively *affected by* them. They may include key officials in ministries of nutrition-relevant sectors, and other development partners (UN agencies, civil society organizations, donors, private-sector groups, or community-based organizations). Stakeholder analysis seeks to identify, assess, and compare stakeholders' sets of interests, examine inherent conflicts and/or compatibilities, and describe and explore trade-offs (Grimble and Chan 1995; Grimble and Wellard 1997). Identifying and exploring the ideological positions of key stakeholders and individuals of influence in a policy arena can help policymakers and program planners map the diffusion of ideas, knowledge, and policy solutions. Stakeholder identification tools such as Power Mapping (Schiffer 2007) and Net-Mapping (Schiffer and Waale 2008) can be used to explore the relationships and power dynamics of stakeholders involved in nutrition-relevant policy processes. Examining these questions improves understanding of who has influence in changing policies in the sector of study, and subsequently provides insights for building strategic engagement strategies. Such mapping may be undertaken at the national and subnational levels (regional or districts) and is usually done in a participatory manner.

Net-Map is an interview-based tool for mapping stakeholders. It allows users to (visually) map the relationships between and influence of different actors; capture how actors are linked within different social networks; and assess their goals, their levels of influence, and the social networks' strengths and bottlenecks. It helps determine who, what, and where influence is needed to effect change, and even how to prioritize strategic actions (Box 3.1).

### Box 3.1 The Net-Map method

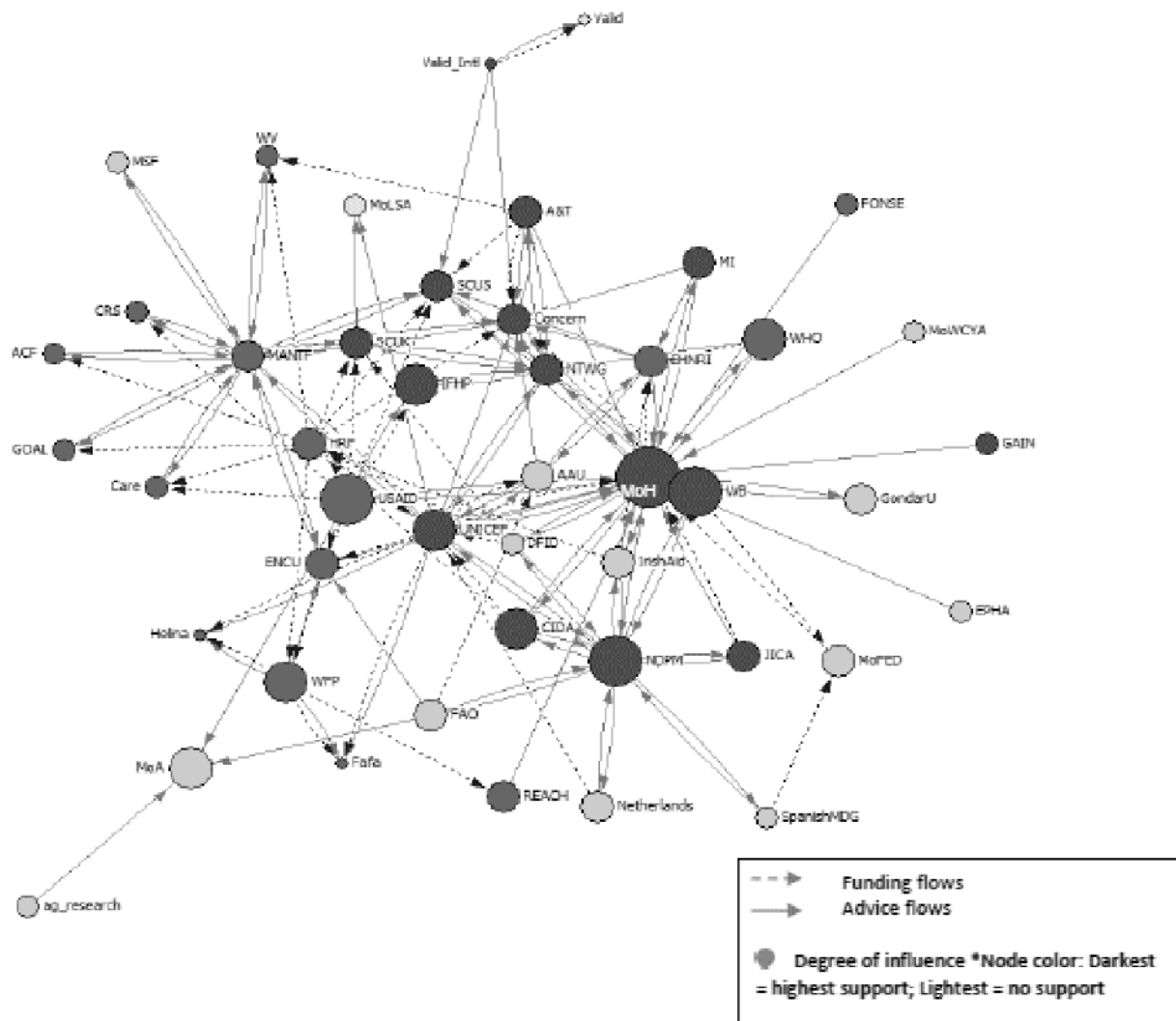
Net-Map is a participatory interview technique that combines social network analysis (SNA), stakeholder mapping, and power mapping. Net-Map helps people understand, visualize, discuss, and improve situations in which many different actors influence outcomes. By creating maps, individuals and groups can clarify their own view of a situation, foster discussion, and develop a strategic approach to their networking activities. It can also help outsiders understand and monitor complex multistakeholder situations. Net-Map allows stakeholders to examine not only the formal interactions in the network but also the informal interactions that cannot be understood by merely studying documents concerning formal policymaking procedures. Actors meet to exchange information and lobby for certain policy goals; local and international initiatives contribute by adding funds or research; and all these interactions contribute to shaping the content and process of policymaking. To gain a realistic understanding of these formal and informal links and how the actors use them to influence the policy process, empirical fieldwork is crucial (as only the formal links can be deduced from government documents). To understand how the actors interact with each other in the process, SNA approaches are especially suitable, as they allow for a complex representation of a system, putting the actions of individuals and organizations into perspective. SNA explains the achievements of actors and the developments within groups of actors by looking at the structure of the linkages between these actors. Thus, while traditional survey-based approaches collect data about attributes of actors, network analysis focuses on gathering information about the network through which these actors connect. In the Net-Map approach, respondents can be asked the following questions:

- Who plays a role in shaping nutrition-relevant policy and program decisions, across sectors, in your country?
- Who is advocating and/or advising whom? Who is providing funds and/or technical information to whom?
- How strongly can each actor influence the shaping of nutrition policy and program decisions in your country?
- What level of *active* support for nutrition does each actor have over other competing priorities?

Source: Schiffer and Waale (2008).

Institutional analysis (or mapping) is intended to achieve a similar purpose with regard to institutions or key organizations that may be (potentially or actually) influential in shaping nutrition-relevant policy. Both formal and informal institutions can be mapped. Formal institutions include, for example, government agencies that have a legally defined role, structure, and, in some cases, sets of procedures. Informal institutions, for example, include businesses or social/family networks or associations, which also have a structure and sets of procedures, though these may have no legal or written basis. In both cases, institutional analysis describes and analyzes structure and procedures by addressing questions such as: What are the rules? Who decides, and how (that is, process and decision criteria)? Who implements, and how is this done? How and when is progress assessed? What are the relationships between different institutions (formal and informal)? Figure 3.3 is an example of such an institutional Net-Map that was undertaken for Transform Nutrition.

**Figure 3.3 An example of an institutional Net-Map**



Source: Transform Nutrition (2012).

## Understanding Enabling Environments for Nutrition

An enabling environment for nutrition has been defined as the “wider set of political and policy processes that build and sustain momentum for the effective implementation of actions that reduce undernutrition” (Gillespie et al. 2013 p83). In relation to the Lancet (2013) framework, these are basic, structural-level factors that are considered to be important for everything that happens above it in the framework (Figure 3.2)—that is, for enhancing the effectiveness of nutrition-sensitive interventions and for improving the quality and coverage of nutrition-specific interventions. Based on a literature review of nutrition-relevant policy processes, Gillespie et al (2013) developed a framework to help assess, analyze, and monitor such environments (Table 3.1).

**Table 3.1 Framework for assessing enabling environments for nutrition**

Creating and sustaining momentum for nutrition- and health-sensitive policy	Converting momentum to impact on nutrition and health status
<b>Framing, generating, and communicating knowledge and evidence</b>	
<i>Rationale:</i>	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Undernutrition is a multisectoral challenge, open to multiple interpretations (e.g., as a health issue, an economic growth issue, an intergenerational rights issue, or a humanitarian issue). Each context requires its own enabling narrative or framing. This multisectoral nature also raises challenges for nutrition-relevant program implementation and increases the premium on quality implementation and impact assessment research.</li> <li>2. Undernutrition early in life is irreversible. This means that there is a high return to timely and reliable information on nutrition status and its determinants in programmatic contexts.</li> <li>3. Rigorous research is needed to capture the long-term, intergenerational benefits of <i>preventing</i> undernutrition, with evidence communicated clearly to generate pressure on politicians to act.</li> </ol>	
<i>Specific issues and challenges:</i>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Framing and narratives</li> <li>• Evidence on outcomes and benefits</li> <li>• What works?</li> <li>• Advocacy to increase priority (civil society)</li> <li>• Evidence on coverage, scale, and quality</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Implementation research (what works, why, and how)</li> <li>• Program evaluation (impact pathways)</li> <li>• Generating demand for evidence of impact</li> </ul>
<b>Political economy of actors, ideas, and interests</b>	
<i>Rationale:</i>	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. A number of actors and agencies, each with different and frequently competing agendas (especially in decentralized systems of governance), need to work together.</li> <li>2. All but the most extreme manifestations of undernutrition are invisible, and thus open to neglect, so even well-meaning governments may underinvest in nutrition.</li> <li>3. Nutrition trend and program impact data are often out of date or virtually absent, allowing unsubstantiated political narratives to be sustained in an evidence vacuum.</li> </ol>	
<i>Specific issues and challenges:</i>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Incentivizing and delivering horizontal coherence (multisectoral coordination)</li> <li>• Building up accountability to citizens</li> <li>• Enabling and incentivizing positive contributions from the private sector</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Delivering vertical coherence</li> <li>• The role of civil society and the private sector in delivery and impact</li> </ul>



**Table 3.1 Continued**

Creating and sustaining momentum for nutrition- and health-sensitive policy	Converting momentum to impact on nutrition and health status
<b>Capacity (individual, organizational, systemic) and financial resources</b>	
<i>Rationale:</i>	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Human and organizational capacity needs to reflect not only nutrition know-how but also a set of soft-power skills to operate effectively across boundaries and disciplines, such as leadership for alliance building and networking, communicating the case for collaboration, leveraging resources, and being able to speak truth to power.</li> <li>2. Both strategic and operational capacities of different actors at several levels are key.</li> <li>3. Additional financial resources and much better budget data are required if undernutrition efforts are to be scaled up, with innovation required from governments and donors to maximize investment.</li> </ol>	
<i>Specific issues and challenges:</i>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Leadership/championing</li> <li>• Systemic and strategic capacity</li> <li>• Making the case for additional resource mobilization</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Delivery/operational capacity</li> <li>• New forms of resource mobilization</li> <li>• Prioritization and sequencing of actions</li> <li>• Implementation and scaling up</li> </ul>

Source: Gillespie et al. (2013).

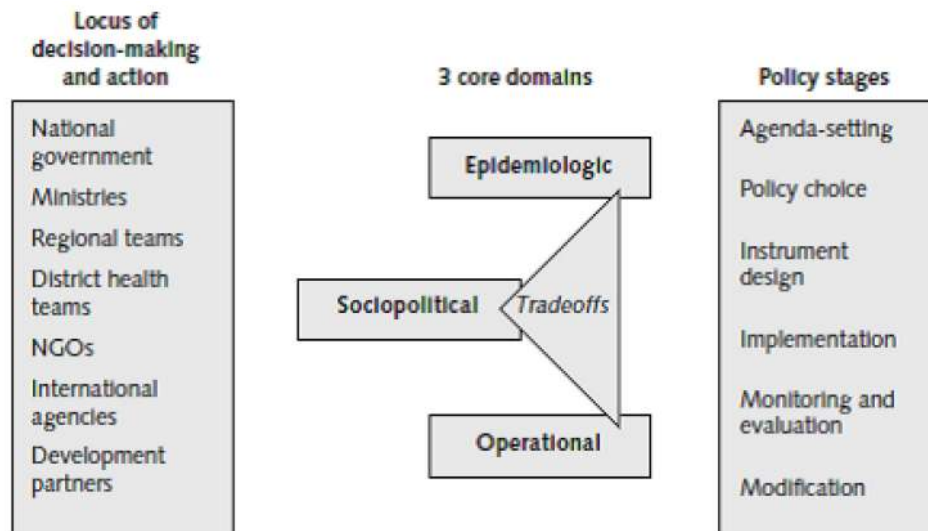
The review highlighted three domains of an enabling environment—knowledge and evidence, politics and governance, and capacity and financial resources— as being important for two different stages: developing and maintaining political momentum, and translating momentum into implementation and impact. The first domain, knowledge and evidence, refers to how the framing of an issue; timeliness and credibility of data on coverage, quality, scale, and outcomes; and strategic communication of the benefits of malnutrition reduction are used as ways to build momentum. Implementation research, program evaluation, and generating demand for evidence are ways in which this momentum is subsequently translated into impact. The second domain, politics and governance, consists of positive contributions from the private sector, multisectoral coordination (horizontal coherence), and accountability to citizens, as well as vertical coherence and involvement of both civil society and the private sector in service delivery. The third domain covers individual, organizational, and systemic capacity and financial resources, which involves leadership and champions, strategic and systemic capacity, and resource mobilization, as well as delivery and operational capacity, new forms of resource mobilization, and prioritization and sequencing of action on nutrition (Gillespie et al. 2013). Researchers have found the framework to be useful for characterizing key factors (or gaps and weaknesses) relating to nutrition-sensitive agriculture in South Asia and Africa south of the Sahara (see, for example, van den Bold, Kohli, and Gillespie [2015] and Gillespie, Menon, and Kennedy [2015]).

Several other frameworks have been developed to analyze nutrition governance in a holistic way. Meija-Acosta and Fanzo (2012) lay out a framework for assessing why some countries that are committed to reducing malnutrition are able to successfully do so, while others are not—examining in particular the roles and motivations of key stakeholders. The framework consists of four pillars: intersectoral (horizontal) cooperation between stakeholders, vertical coordination in the government (from the national to the community level), financing mechanisms, and countries’ level of commitment to monitoring nutrition and using data to measure progress.

In the Mainstreaming Nutrition Initiative, Menon et al. (2011) propose a conceptual framework for defining strategic actions for nutrition, which comprises three interlinked domains: biologic and epidemiologic (relating to the nutrition context, effectiveness of nutrition interventions, and when in the life cycle to deliver them), operational (pertaining to quality, coverage, cost, and use of nutrition-related programs), and sociopolitical (relating to the political, sociocultural, and organizational factors that may improve or inhibit the policy and program environment for nutrition) (Figure 3.4). The domains are

interlinked; the authors highlight critical questions for each domain and methods for addressing them. Key issues in the epidemiologic domain, for example, include major nutritional problems, affected groups, and geographical areas; assessment methods include literature reviews, secondary data analysis, and key information interviews, and the authors provide a variety of examples of data sources. The framework is useful for highlighting aspects from the nutrition policy agenda that otherwise may not have been considered and developing “actionable nutrition strategies that are grounded in epidemiologic, operational, and sociopolitical realities” (Menon et al. 2011, S108).

**Figure 3.4 Mainstreaming Nutrition Initiative assessment framework**

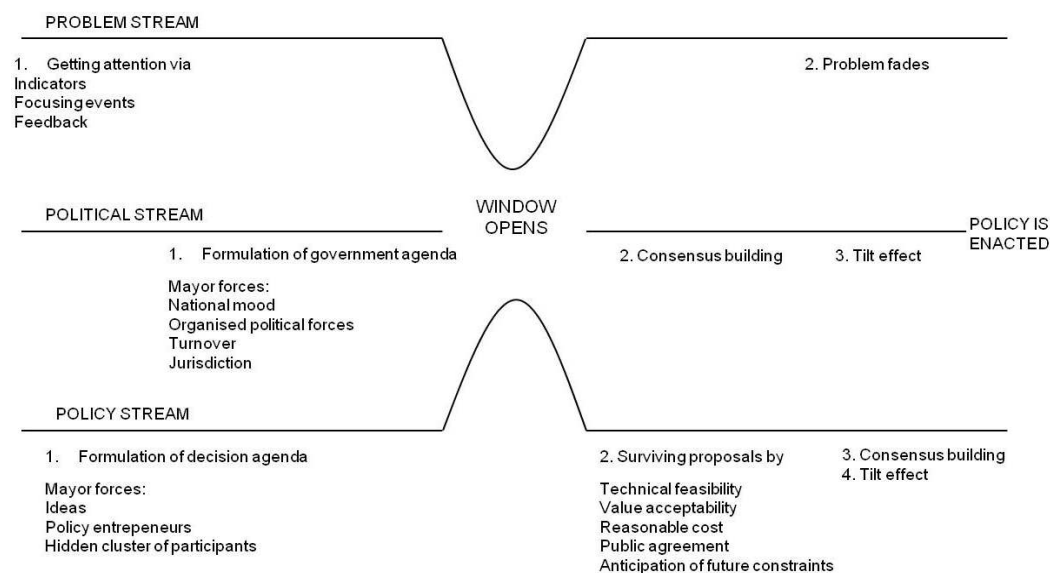


Source: Menon et al. (2011).

### Agenda Setting and Political Commitment for Nutrition

Within the broader realm of policy processes and politics, the more specific issue of agenda setting and issue salience has increasingly gained attention. With a primary concern for how issues first come to the attention of decisionmakers, Kingdon (1995) distinguishes between two types of agendas: the political agenda (the list of issues that receive attention) and the decision agenda (the list of issues up for a decision). He argues that three streams define the agenda: the “problem” stream (based on regular monitoring of events, planned events, or an unexpected dramatic event), the “politics” stream (such as election results, campaigns, public dispositions, and changes in administration), and the “policy alternatives” stream (policy alternatives that have been worked out and are ready to be adapted to a particular issue). While the problem and political streams are driven by visible actors such as nongovernmental organizations, government representatives, and the media, the policy alternatives stream is driven by more “hidden” actors such as researchers or communication professionals. Events in the problem or political stream can lead to windows of opportunity for particular issues to come onto the decision agenda (Figure 3.5).

**Figure 3.5 Kingdon's framework on agenda setting**



Source: Kingdon (1995).

Shiffman and Smith proposed a framework in 2007 to help assess what determines the national or international political priority attached to global health initiatives. The framework comprises four core ingredients: actor power, ideas, political contexts, and issue characteristics (Box 3.2). While not all factors need to be present for an issue to gain political priority, each factor improves the *likelihood* of it receiving priority.

**Box 3.2 Framework on determinants of political priority for global health initiatives**

- 1. Actor power:** The strength of the individuals and organizations concerned with the issue
  - Policy community cohesion: The degree of coalescence among the network of individuals and organizations that are centrally involved with the issue at the global level
  - Leadership: The presence of individuals capable of uniting the policy community and acknowledged as particularly strong champions for the cause
  - Guiding institutions: The effectiveness of organizations or coordinating mechanisms with a mandate to lead the initiative
  - Civil society mobilization: The extent to which grassroots organizations have mobilized to press international and national political authorities to address the issue at the global level
- 2. Ideas:** The ways in which those involved with the issue understand and portray it
  - Internal frame: The degree to which the policy community agrees on the definition of, causes of, and solutions to the problem
  - External frame: Public portrayals of the issue in ways that resonate with external audiences, especially the political leaders who control resources
- 3. Political contexts:** The environments in which actors operate
  - Policy windows: Political moments when global conditions align favorably for an issue, presenting opportunities for advocates to influence decisionmakers
  - Global governance structure: The degree to which norms and institutions operating in a sector provide a platform for effective collective action
- 4. Issue characteristics:** Features of the problem
  - Credible indicators: Clear measures that show the severity of the problem and that can be used to monitor progress
  - Severity: The size of the burden relative to other problems, as indicated by objective measures such as mortality levels
  - Effective interventions: The extent to which proposed means of addressing the problem are clearly explained, cost-effective, backed by scientific evidence, simple to implement, and inexpensive

Source: Shiffman and Smith (2007).

With regard to conceptualizing and establishing indicators for measuring political *commitment* to nutrition, four approaches and tools have been found to be particularly useful in recent years. First, Heaver (2005) presents a methodological guide to conceptualize, develop, sustain, and monitor political commitment to nutrition. Heaver describes several reasons why commitment to nutrition has been weak in the past (pre-2005): not only does political support need to be mobilized, but the issue needs to be treated and funded as a key development activity. Building political will to commit more resources, involving all relevant stakeholders, influencing politicians and organizational staff through strategic communication, partnership building, and managing implementing organizations are all critical actions for improving commitment to nutrition. Further, it is important that, at the country level, nutrition “champions” be involved in building local partnerships, getting nutritional status accepted as an outcome measure in national planning documents, strengthening the capacity of implementing organizations to motivate staff and encourage beneficiaries to use services, and identifying gaps in countries’ ability to build and monitor commitment.

Second, Pelletier, Frongillo, et al. (2011) reflect on lessons from the Mainstreaming Nutrition Initiative, which sought to develop approaches to make nutrition a permanent instead of a marginal policy agenda item. Building on previous work by Clark (2002), Heaver (2005), and Shiffman and Smith (2007), the authors assess findings from studies in five different countries in relation to challenges in policy processes and ways to overcome them. They make an important distinction between three forms of commitment: political attention, political commitment, and system commitment. They find that (1) political commitment necessitates sustained support by champions; (2) capacity constraints, varying levels of nutrition literacy, and disagreements over roles and interventions inhibited mid-level actors in translating political opportunities into operational plans; and (3) human and organizational capacity constraints impeded implementation quality. Systemic capacity (especially management and strategic capacity), they conclude, is critical for ensuring effective implementation of nutrition interventions.

Third, the Hunger and Nutrition Commitment Index (HANCI) ranks 45 national governments on their political commitment to tackling hunger and undernutrition, measures government achievements, and assesses whether improved commitment leads to reduced hunger and undernutrition (te Lintelo et al. 2014). The 22 HANCI indicators comprise those that measure commitment to hunger reduction (10 indicators) and those that measure commitment to addressing undernutrition (12 indicators). Both sets of indicators are grouped according to spending (public expenditure), policies (government policies and frameworks), and laws (legal frameworks), and span both curative and preventive measures. Indicators in the “policies” grouping for undernutrition reduction, for example, include the existence of a national nutrition policy, plan, or strategy; access to sanitation; and the existence of a multisectoral coordination mechanism. Hunger reduction indicators in the “policies” grouping include security of access to land, access to agricultural extension services, and the status of safety nets. The index thus permits the differentiation of factors required for hunger reduction from those needed for undernutrition reduction.

Fourth, the Rapid Assessment Tool for Measuring Political Commitment for Food and Nutrition Security (PCOM-RAT) is a rapid assessment approach established in 2013 by representatives from the UN and governments of ten low- and middle-income countries, which helps analyze political commitment and identify opportunities for improving nutrition-relevant policies and programs. PCOM-RAT consists of a questionnaire that assesses political commitment and the prioritization of food and nutrition policy, policy windows of opportunity, and stakeholder and institutional settings (Table 3.2) (Reich and Balarajan 2012).

**Table 3.2 Different components of PCOM-RAT**

Political commitment and prioritization of food and nutrition policy	Social commitment Institutional commitment Budgetary commitment
Policy windows of opportunity	Problem stream Policy stream Politics stream Others factors: external influences
Stakeholder and institutional analysis	Stakeholders and institutions Existence of powerful proponents or opponents Ideological character of government Number of veto players

Source: Reich and Balarajan (2012).

Note: PCOM-RAT = Rapid Assessment Tool for Measuring Political Commitment for Food and Nutrition Security.

### **Policy Formulation and Policy Processes**

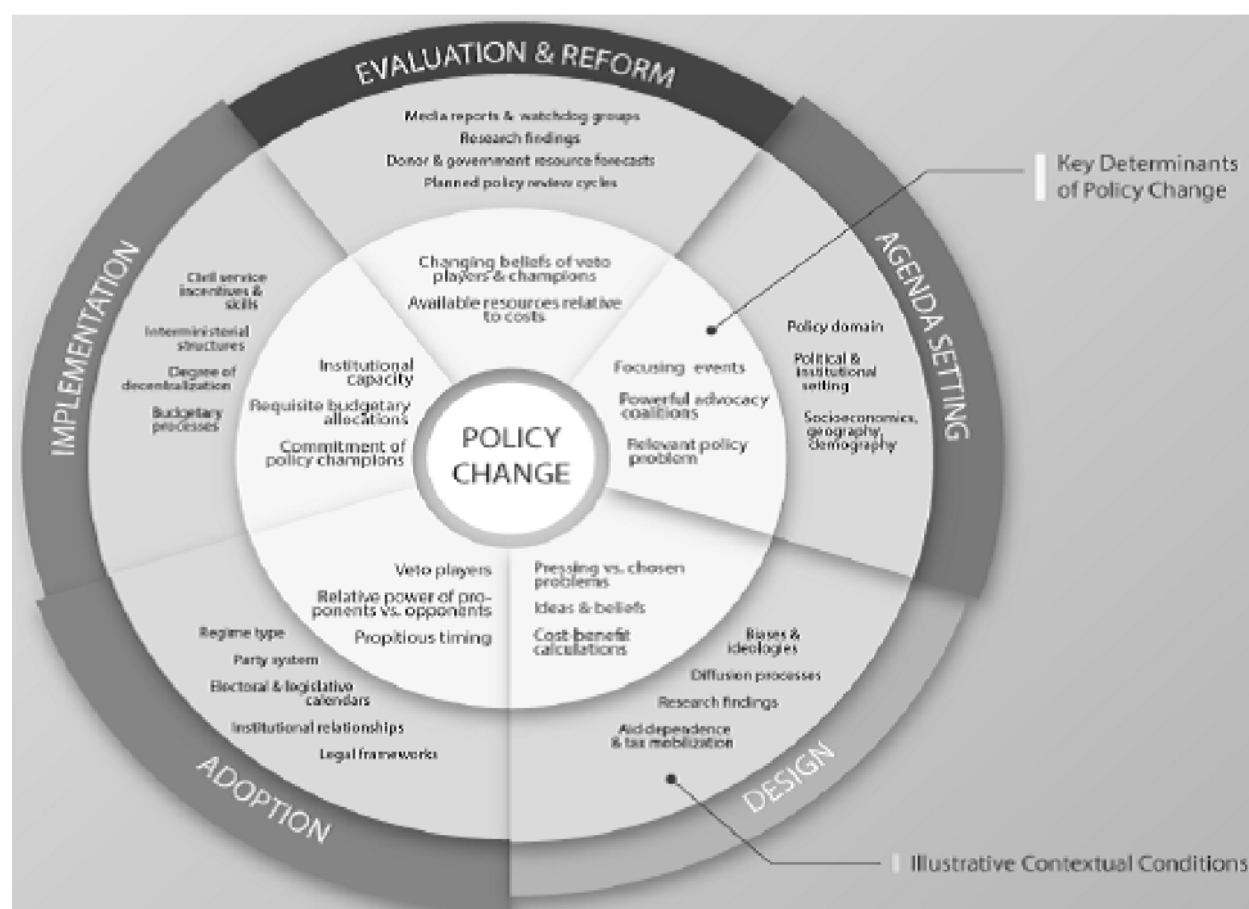
We now move from considering tools and approaches for measuring agenda setting and political commitment to assessing how best to understand and monitor the processes through which nutrition-relevant policies are actually formulated. Policy formulation is rarely simple, and the policy process is a dynamic and shifting process whereby issues are debated and lobbied, and policies are negotiated, created, implemented, and reviewed in an iterative and sometimes messy manner. Within this process, however, it is possible to identify specific stages that are seen in the formulation and implementation of most policies.

Many of the frameworks for assessing policy processes build on earlier work by Lasswell (1971) and Clark (2002) on policy sciences. Clark (2002) applies the policy sciences framework to the US environmental policy agenda. This policy sciences framework sets out five stages: agenda setting, policy formulation, legitimation, implementation, and monitoring and evaluation. It includes several decision-related processes for policymaking, as well as social processes that influence this decisionmaking, and outcomes of the interactions between decisionmaking and social processes, all set within various social, political, and cultural contexts.

Many other models have been developed in recent years. For example, Sumner et al. (2011) disaggregate policy change into changes in framing, agenda setting, content, resource allocation, and, crucially, implementation, while Resnick et al. (2015) have recently developed the “kaleidoscope model” of policy change in agriculture, nutrition, and health (Figure 3.6).

Table 3.3 summarizes different policy process models (Babu 2013), while Table 3.4 shows some of the drivers of policy change.

**Figure 3.6 Kaleidoscope model of policy change**



Source: Resnick et al. (2015).

**Table 3.3 Summary of policy process models**

Policy process models and principle authors	Disciplinary approach	Description of policy process	Major assumptions of the model
Classical linear model (Nakamura 1987)	Political science / policy studies	Decisionmakers seek and use information generated by research/analysis in policymaking	Demand for evidence exists; information supplied is based on analysis; information is used in policymaking
Interactive model of policy process (Stone 2002; Stone, Maxwell, and Keating 2001)	Policy science / policy entrepreneurship / policy-research linkages	Several actors and stakeholders interact and debate policy options that could result in a variety of policy outcomes	Government is open to debate and dialogue; actors and players are well informed about policy problems; allows better ownership by the stakeholders
Multiple stream approach (Kingdon 1984)	Political science	Three streams of problem, policies, and politics operate together to produce policy outcomes	The policy solution depends on the presence of all three streams; policy entrepreneurs are assumed to play a key role in connecting the problems to policies, bringing political realities into consideration

**Table 3.3 Continued**

<b>Policy process models and principle authors</b>	<b>Disciplinary approach</b>	<b>Description of policy process</b>	<b>Major assumptions of the model</b>
Institutional development and rational choice model (Ostrom 1986, 2011)	Institutional development / collective action	Policy and intervention programs can be developed in response to a crisis situation at the local community level	Self-governing institutions exist, and the players are capacitated to identify solutions after analysis of the problem
Policy learning and diffusion model (Berry and Berry 1992; Gilardi 2010; Baumgartner and Jones 1993)	Political science	Policymakers learn from policy solutions developed by neighboring districts, states, regions, or countries and adapt them to their situations	Policymakers have access to a knowledge base on what worked in similar policy situations in other settings
Advocacy coalition framework (Sabatier and Jenkins-Smith 1993)	Policy science	People / groups of people with a similar ideology could form coalitions to promote a specific policy agenda	Policymakers can be persuaded through advocacy; the policy process environment allows for coalition formation

Source: Babu (2013).

**Table 3.4 Differentiating drivers of policy change**

<b>Type</b>	<b>Hypothesis</b>	<b>Operational examples</b>
Monte Carlo	Changes in the payoff matrix influence the likelihood and direction of public investments and policy change.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Policy lending, 1960s</li> <li>• Structural adjustment programs, 1980s</li> <li>• CAADP investment plans, since 2000</li> </ul>
Sherlock Holmes	Better empirical evidence leads to better policies.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• IFPRI</li> <li>• HIID</li> <li>• ReSAKSS</li> <li>• UN—HLPE, HLTF, SCN</li> <li>• Transform Nutrition</li> </ul>
Contagion Inoculation (or Policy Diffusion)	Policy inoculation, by showcasing prominent policy “success stories,” can spur international emulation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SUN initiative</li> <li>• Abuja Fertilizer Summit</li> </ul>
Frank Lloyd Wright	Institutional architecture matters. Open, transparent, evidence-based policy processes improve policy outcomes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CAADP peer-reviewed country investment programs</li> <li>• Joint sector reviews</li> <li>• GAFSP</li> <li>• New Alliance</li> </ul>
Hercules	<p>1. Champions of policy change can overcome flawed institutional architecture to effect policy change.</p> <p>2. Dark Knight’s Dilemma: Concentrated pecuniary gains motivate powerful, self-interested policy advocates.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Africa Lead Champions for Change program</li> <li>• AGRA policy champions</li> <li>• Transform Nutrition champions</li> <li>• Powerful vested interest groups lobby for favorable treatment in opaque policy systems</li> </ul>
Masters of the Universe	Top-down negotiations and high-level commitments can enable and enforce policy change.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• New Alliance agreements</li> <li>• CAADP regional compacts</li> </ul>

Source: Resnick et al. (2015).

Note: AGRA = Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa; CAADP = Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme; GAFSP = Global Agriculture and Food Security Program; HIID = Harvard Institute for International Development; HLPE = High Level Panel of Experts; HLTF = High Level Task Force; IFPRI = International Food Policy Research Institute; ReSAKSS = Regional Strategic Analysis and Knowledge Support System; SCN = Standing Committee on Nutrition; SUN = Scaling Up Nutrition.

As highlighted by Resnick et al. (2015), there are often strong interrelationships between policy agenda and design elements, with discussions over the latter often determining whether a policy issue remains on the agenda (Shiffman and Smith 2007; Box 3.2). Moreover, policy advocates who advance an issue onto the agenda frequently do so with a specific idea of the type of policy instrument or modality that they believe is best suited to achieving a particular policy goal. Similarly, decisions over policy design might be influenced by realistic assessments of implementation challenges. Resnick et al. (2015) suggest three factors that explain why and how policies are designed: (1) a focusing event that initially drives an issue onto the agenda;<sup>6</sup> (2) ideas and beliefs that are central to the choice of policy instruments; and (3) cost-benefit calculations of advocates, which may use financial or nonfinancial metrics, for example, winning votes.

In earlier work, Pelletier, Menon, et al. (2011), using a policy sciences–based conceptual framework, outline the main factors that influence nutrition policy processes, based on data from six African countries, observations of policy processes, and interviews with nutrition practitioners at national and international levels (building on Clark 2002). They identify three overarching factors that influence policy processes toward reducing undernutrition: (1) societal conditions (longer-term events such as economic crises, social movements, decentralization) and catalytic events (such as food crises, sector reform windows of opportunity, conferences); (2) points of contention (technical disagreements on food and nutrition-related programs and strategies, coordination and credit-claiming disputes); and (3) structural factors, strategies, and tactics (such as the institutional context, trends in funding, alignment of donor agendas, commitment to and accountability for nutrition). Both societal conditions and catalytic events have presented opportunities for countries to advance the nutrition agenda and widen policy discourses in which to strategically place nutrition, often with “policy entrepreneurs” at the helm who are able to seize opportunities. However, in some cases such conditions and events have also led to nutrition being subsumed in food and agriculture policy discussions, risking neglect of issues related to health and care. Second, points of contention, primarily among midlevel professionals and due to differences in institutional mandates, are commonplace in countries with varying levels of commitment to undernutrition reduction. Third, the lack of an institutionally sound multisectoral coordination mechanism is a challenge in many countries. To address these various challenges, many (often nonstate) nutrition actors have used a multitude of strategies to overcome structural challenges and strengthen commitment, consensus, and coordination. More often than not, structural factors have impeded progress on moving the nutrition agenda forward; however, the authors emphasize that strategic action (agency, intentionality, and informal power) has the ability to overcome challenges presented by future structural factors (Pelletier, Menon, et al. 2011).

Spratt (2013) addresses the specific issue of how priorities are set in terms of policy instruments (this relates to the earlier discussion of agenda setting but goes deeper into policy formulation). He examines the impacts that nutrition-sensitive interventions can have on nutrition outcomes, and proposes an evidence-based framework for setting priorities for the nutrition-sensitive interventions that are most likely to have the biggest impacts on nutrition outcomes. The approach is based on criteria for four steps: the location of the intervention, the sector, the impact pathways (for example, through agriculture), and the effectiveness (including cost-effectiveness) of the actual intervention and country capacity for implementation.

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<sup>6</sup> Hirschman (1981) has made a distinction between *pressing* versus *chosen problems*, whereby the former are forced on policymakers due to crises and external circumstances, while the latter are related to policymakers’ own preferences and perceptions of a problem situation.

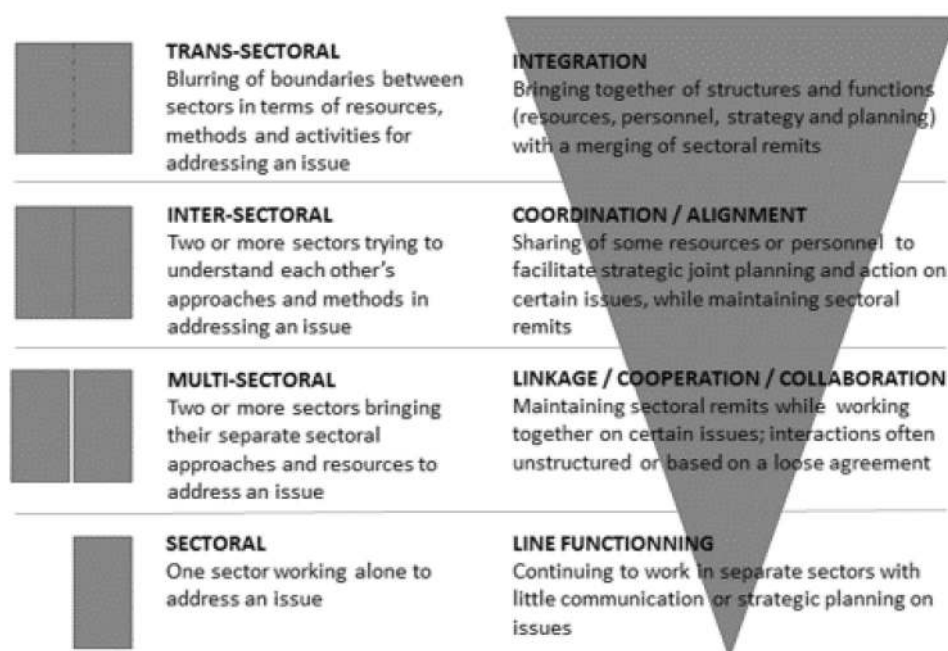


## Multisectoral Coordination

Successful collaboration between sectors that have a bearing on nutrition outcomes is of critical importance. In their discussion of scaling up nutrition interventions, Gillespie, Menon, and Kennedy (2015) describe multisectoral coordination, or “horizontal coherence,” as a process “whereby different sectors embark upon different types of nutrition-relevant action within their sectoral purview, with adequate coordination, integration, or simply colocation” (Gillespie, Menon, and Kennedy 2015, 447).

Various researchers have examined the extent to which horizontal coherence and multistakeholder decisionmaking processes have been successful. Harris and Drimie (2012), for example, based on a review of the literature on integration (with regard to health system responses to communicable disease) developed the figure below (Figure 3.7), to outline the different levels and types of involvement by sectors.

**Figure 3.7 Differentiating types of intersectoral engagement**



Source: Harris and Drimie (2012).

Garrett and Natalicchio (2011) ask how horizontal (as well as vertical integration and collaboration, discussed later) can take place successfully to reduce malnutrition. They examine two case studies of multisectoral coordination for nutrition, in Senegal and Colombia, and identify factors that contributed to successful horizontal convergence (see Figure 3.8). These include support from political leaders and technical staff, processes that brought together a wide variety of stakeholders, and “effective management approaches combined with operational flexibility” (Garrett and Natalicchio 2011, 206).

**Figure 3.8 Conceptual framework: working multisectorally**

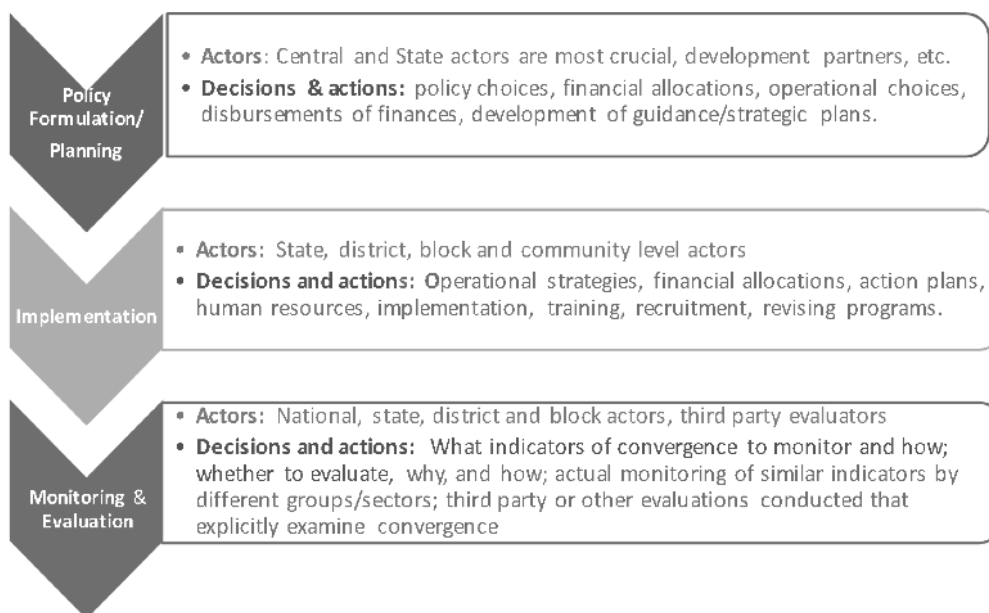


Source: Garrett and Natalicchio (2011).

Hill, Gonzales, and Pelletier (2011) propose a framework for multistakeholder decisionmaking processes. They suggest that a well-functioning multistakeholder decisionmaking process consists of five principles: the right people, the right way, clear procedures and objectives, common interest, and transparency and accountability.

Ved and Menon (2012) put forward a framework for assessing the extent and nature of cross-sectoral convergence in nutrition-relevant policy and practice (Figure 3.9; Box 3.3). This comprises three main steps within policy processes when convergence is particularly important: policy formulation and planning, implementation, and monitoring and evaluation. For each of these steps, specific actors and decisions/actions are described. For example, central and state actors are considered most important for policy formulation and planning, and decisions at this level need to be made around policy choices, finances, and guidance documents. But for implementation, state-, district-, block-, and community-level actors are key, and decisions hinge around training, operational strategies, human resources, and implementation. For monitoring and evaluation, national, state, district, and block actors, as well as third-party evaluators, are the main actors who make decisions regarding which indicators should be monitored and used for evaluation, and how this can be done. The authors also point to several key questions to ask when assessing convergence. In applying the framework to the Indian context, they find several key barriers: convergence is not addressed in policy formulation, and there are no institutions to ensure convergence nor monitoring mechanisms to determine whether it is happening. They find that supervision, joint accountability, intensive capacity strengthening, and shared vision are key for convergence (Ved and Menon 2012).

**Figure 3.9 Framework for assessing extent and nature of intersectoral convergence**



Source: Ved and Menon (2012).

**Box 3.3 Measuring cross-sectoral convergence in policy and planning**

Following Ved and Menon (2012), and based on an understanding of the key sectors that are important for a given policy goal, the context of the policymaking process (whether central, state, or district), and the various issues related to convergence, the following questions need to be considered to assess the extent to which the policymaking process and the policy outcomes and instruments display features of convergence:

**Actors**

- What were pre-policy debates like? Did they draw on an intersectoral set of actors? Which sectors had greater representation? Did the actors involved include government, external donors, civil society, and media?
- Who were the key actors in policy formulation? And in decentralized policy formulation mechanisms, which actors were included at which levels?
- What features of the policy and the resultant policy instruments might shift power relationships and hierarchies?
- To what extent does the inclusion of convergent action disturb the status quo? Who wins and who loses?
- What is the nature of leadership that drives policy convergence, and what is the level of engagement of high-level leaders?

**Decisions and actions**

- What components need alignment or harmonization of policies?
- Does the policy envisage the establishment of a high-level committee for guidance, oversight, and review of implementation?
- Is there recognition of and an articulated commitment in the policy to the desired outcome of the convergent action?
- Does the vision statement of an overall policy or strategy document related to the issue reflect the fact that convergence with other agencies is an integral part of achieving the goals of the particular objective under consideration?
- Do the goals of the sectoral policies also include goals related to the convergence issue?
- Are there specific strategies with the objective of harmonizing the policy toward the objective(s) under consideration?
- To what extent are policies that need convergent action supported by financial commitments for actions related to convergence?
- How has each sectoral policy been modified to accommodate the interest of the outcome for which convergence is critical?

Source: Ved and Menon (2012).

## Implementation and Vertical Coherence

Vertical coherence refers to the strength of the links between national-level policy and community-level implementation. In Vietnam, for instance, the role of provincial planning for nutrition has been highlighted as a significant bottleneck to translating national policy intent and frameworks into plans and actions at the provincial level (Lapping et al. 2011). In the CAADP (Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme) Nutrition Capacity Development Initiative, a lack of vertical coherence also emerged as a major issue (Dufour, Jelensperger, and Uccello 2013). From one side, achievements in terms of strategy development and coordination at the central level do not always filter down to the field level. On the other, challenges faced by workers at the grassroots level (for example, determining how to integrate nutrition education in extension services, or understanding how to overcome societal and cultural issues on the ground) do not filter up to the political level, nor do successful initiatives that could be scaled up. Field research is essential to disentangle these challenges, to identify opportunities for scaling up good practices, and to assist governments in bridging policymaking and program implementation. Greater investments in capacity development at the district and community level will be essential to achieve progress on the ground (Dufour, Jelensperger, and Uccello 2013). Others have referred to this as the “missing middle”—the district-level management layer that is often neglected in discussions of policy (Foresti, O’Neil, and Wild 2013).

Again, this lays emphasis on the need to think of policy as “what it does” (Clay and Schaffer 1984). Focusing on the contents of policy and its stated intent is not enough, as however well-formulated the policy is on paper, it cannot be judged a success unless and until it is implemented, and significant change on the ground begins to manifest itself. This was reiterated in the fourth paper of the second Lancet Nutrition Series (2013), where three core themes—knowledge and evidence, politics and governance, and capacity and resources—were found to be key both for momentum building and for implementation, as per the framework shown above (Gillespie et al. 2013).

As discussed earlier, Pelletier, Frongillo, et al. (2011) make the distinction between political attention (nutrition in high-level speeches, but not much else), political commitment (begins to be taken on board in terms of policy), and system commitment (actual change in what is done and how it is done from the national to the district level). Many policies fail because they are not linked to implementation plans and there is little or no real accountability. With accountability comes a greater emphasis on implementation, monitoring and evaluation, and achieving measurable results (see the subsection on monitoring, evaluation, and accountability).

In the first Lancet Nutrition Series (2008), two papers focused on the issue of implementation and what was needed for effective actions to be taken. At the global level, Morris, Cogill, and Uauy (2008) propose a framework in which organizations working to reduce undernutrition should work together in four key areas: (1) human and institutional resource strengthening; (2) provision of nutrition services following a natural disaster or conflict; (3) stewardship (goals, legislation, guidelines, gathering evidence); and (4) mobilization of financial resources. Reviewing data from nearly two dozen evaluations and commentaries as well as key informant interviews, the authors conclude that several key challenges need to be addressed in order to develop such cohesion: the lack of an evidence base, institutional inertia, failure of coordination between parallel sectors on important issues, and fragmentation. They assess the problems that are causing these challenges and make recommendations on how to overcome them, outlining five priority actions for developing a new institutional architecture: a new global governance structure (that more effectively represents different stakeholders and facilitates dialogue), a more effective UN, fewer parallel organizations and fewer mandate gaps, more investment in capacity strengthening in high-burden countries, and better research leadership in key areas. This paper was highly influential and was cited in many of the original documents behind the launch of the SUN movement in 2010.

The second paper, by Bryce et al. (2008), focused on national-level action. Based on analysis of systematic reviews and best-practice reports, the authors identified seven key challenges to addressing undernutrition at the national level: getting nutrition on the priority list, keeping it there, doing the right things and not doing the wrong things, acting at scale, reaching those in need, data-based decisionmaking, and building strategic and operational capacity. The authors highlight the importance of the first 1,000 days; gathering and formalizing available expertise and resources in-country to build commitment, implement programs effectively, and scale up; scaling up effective interventions; smart use of nutrition resources in different contexts; and investing in nutrition-sensitive interventions.

We can return to the Ved and Menon (2012) framework to consider the degree and type of convergence across sectors in implementation, and pose the following questions:

#### ***Actors***

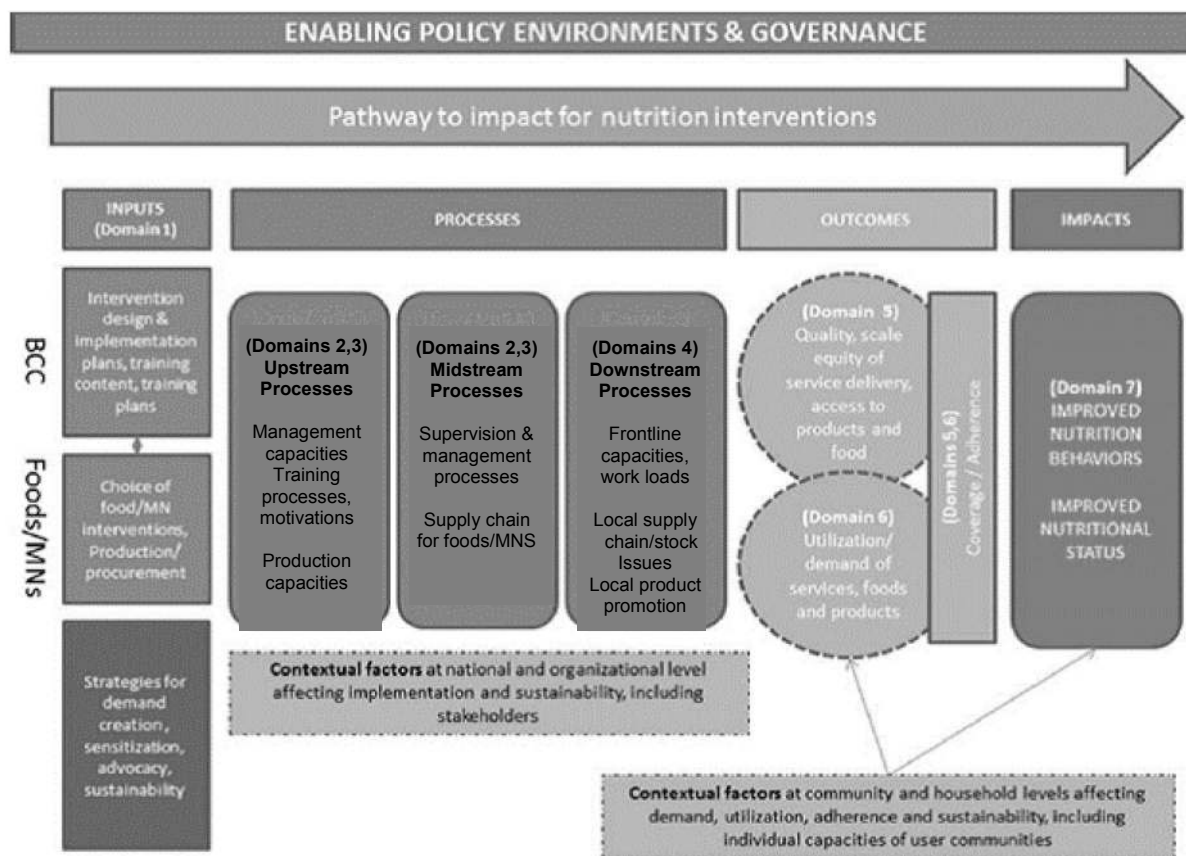
- Is there an understanding of the issue, its causal determinants, and the rationale for convergence among staff in various agencies/ministries in central and state governments?
- Is there a shared understanding at the state and substate levels of the need for convergent action to achieve the outcomes of interest?

#### ***Decisions and actions***

- What organizational modifications have been proposed to accommodate convergence action?
- Are these modifications backed by policy and funding commitments?
- Do the implementation plans of the various line departments adequately reflect the actions for convergence that are outlined in policy documents?
- Is there provision for building capacity or competency in individual domain areas and for convergent action?
- Do job descriptions and human resource plans include training, incentives, and the like for actions that relate to convergence?
- Has scaling up of convergent action been considered?

With the goal of improving implementation and scale-up of evidence-based nutrition interventions, Menon et al. (2014) propose an implementation-focused nutrition framework (Figure 3.10). The framework was designed to help identify which issues need most attention in a particular context. The authors use behavior change communication, micronutrient interventions, and infant and young child feeding programs to demonstrate the framework's applicability. The core domains within the framework include (1) planning and inputs to implement and strengthen nutrition programs (implementation design and plans, micronutrient/food interventions, production and procurement mechanisms, training), (2) and (3) upstream and midstream processes (management, training, supervision, and workforce motivation), (4) downstream processes of frontline capacities and supply chain issues, (5) utilization and outcomes (coverage, implementation quality, service delivery), and (6) outcome-level aspects (use of nutrition services and practices). Further research is needed, the authors suggest, on program planning and implementation choices; program management; frontline provider and facility capacities; client demand, uptake, and utilization of interventions; and development of indicators to assess impact and unpack client factors influencing program impact.

**Figure 3.10 Framework to assess implementation of nutrition interventions**



Source: Menon et al. (2014).

Note: BCC = behavior change communication; MN = micronutrients.

Lastly, Process Net-Map is an adaptation of the Net-Map tool that focuses on mapping consecutive steps of a process (as opposed to the more static network connections between actors).<sup>7</sup> The tool is particularly useful for understanding implementation process details, visualizing how a process might be different from formal procedures, identifying where a process suffers because of overlapping responsibilities or concentrations of power, and understanding where there may be entry points for corruption and leakage. The tool consists of various stages to get to these understandings, including describing the process step-by-step, setting up influence towers, identifying possible challenges to implementation, and digitalizing the process map. The suggested benefits of the Process Net-Map are that it allows for actors to see every step at the same time and hence identify issues that would not be clear by looking at one step after another. The structure moreover provides a safer space in which to discuss sensitive issues such as corruption, and the tool helps users gain more detailed insights into what is involved in implementation.

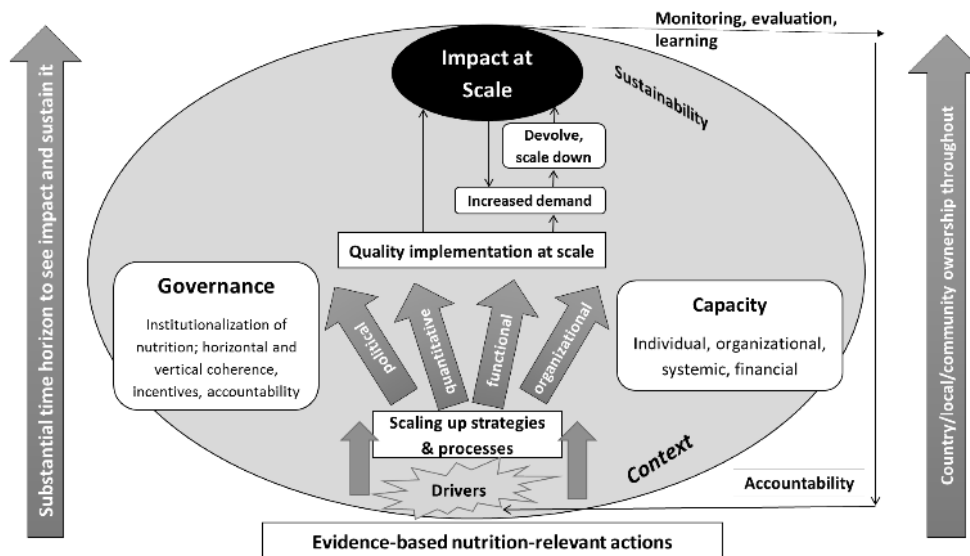
### Scaling Up

Scaling up nutrition has gained significant traction in recent years, and various initiatives have been launched to support scaling up, including the Scaling Up Nutrition (SUN) movement.

<sup>7</sup> For more information on Process Net-Map, see <https://netmap.wordpress.com/process-net-map/>.

The notion of “scaling up” has become a mantra, and yet it often means different things to different people. Gillespie, Menon, and Kennedy (2015) define scaling up as “a process aimed at maximizing the reach and effectiveness of a range of nutrition-relevant actions, leading to sustained impact on nutrition outcomes” (Gillespie, Menon, and Kennedy 2015, 441) and identify nine elements essential for impact at scale. Depicted in Figure 3.11, these are (1) a clear vision or goal for what impact will look like; (2) clarity on what should be scaled up (the characteristics of interventions); (3) a conducive policy/political, implementation, household, and community environment/context; (4) clarity on factors that drive or constrain scale-up (such as actors/stakeholders, political support, local ownership, and incentives); (5) strategies and pathways for scaling up that are in line with the local context; (6) sufficient operational and strategic capacities at the individual, organizational, and systemic levels; (7) flexibility, adequacy, and stability of financing, including costing of interventions but also of coalition building and advocacy; (8) adequate governance structures such as horizontal and vertical coherence and coordination; and (9) mechanisms for monitoring, accountability, and learning. These elements, taken together, provide a useful way in which to conceptualize successful scale-up; it is important that these elements be considered not only in nutrition-specific interventions but also in nutrition-sensitive initiatives and in the development of an enabling environment.

**Figure 3.11 Theory of change for scaling up impact on nutrition**



Source: Gillespie, Menon, and Kennedy (2015).

In 2012, to support broader scale-up of national nutrition-relevant action, the World Health Organization (WHO) published its *Landscape Analysis on Countries' Readiness to Accelerate Action in Nutrition*, which described typologies of country-level “readiness” (in 36 high-burden countries) to accelerate undernutrition reduction, based on in-depth country assessments and drawing upon the Nutrition Landscape Information System (NLIIS) (a web tool based on nutrition data) and other sources (WHO 2012). The SUN movement itself has also developed a simple tool for assessing readiness for scaling up nutrition in different country contexts, as shown in Figure 3.12.

**Figure 3.12 Stages of preparedness for scaling up (SUN framework)**

	<b>Stage 1: Taking stock and starting out</b>	<b>Stage 2: Ready for scaling up</b>	<b>Stage 3: Scaling up rapidly to deliver results</b>	<b>Sustaining impact</b>
<b>Enabled Environment</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Confirming executive level political endorsement</li> <li>Engaging line ministries and multiple stakeholders</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Embedding of active executive level political leadership</li> <li>Strengthening of multi-sector/stakeholder platforms to enhance alignment</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Championing by executive level political leadership</li> <li>Effective multi-sector/stakeholder platform to deliver at scale</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Enduring executive level political leadership</li> <li>Reinforcing high performing platforms to innovate and improve efficiency</li> </ul>
<b>Shared Practices</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Updating or reviewing policies, plans and strategies</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Finalizing of coherent policy and legal framework</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Performing, coherent policy and legal framework well established</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Refining of policy and legal framework to cement cross-sectoral alignment</li> </ul>
<b>Integrated Action</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Taking stock of alignment between nutrition specific interventions and nutrition-sensitive programs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Agreeing to a Results Framework to align nutrition-specific and relevant sectoral programs, set targets and milestones</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Using agreed results framework performance-manage the scale up effort</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Expansion of results framework as needed to sustain impact, accommodate new interventions etc.</li> </ul>
<b>Increased Resources</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Taking stock of financial resources available and required</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Aligning and mobilizing funds behind a set of agreed priorities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Flowing of financial resources required for agreed gaps based on a functioning financial tracking system</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensuring no fall off in the financial resources</li> </ul>

Source: SUN (2012).

SUN has also produced a wealth of resources on scaling up. Its “Country Perspectives on Scaling Up Nutrition in Practice” are a series of briefs that share experiences of SUN countries in scaling up nutrition based on multisectoral coordination. In addition, “SUN Countries: Policies and Plans” are a repository of SUN countries’ investment plans and food and nutrition action plans. Lastly, REACH has developed a number of fact sheets on multisectoral nutrition-related actions in relation to specific thematic areas (such as food and agriculture, social protection, and health), in order to make nutrition knowledge more accessible across multiple sectors and provide a clear idea of what types of actions can be taken (REACH 2013).

### Assessing Capacity

In 2004, Potter and Brough, in response to narrow definitions of capacity building within the health systems field, set out a hierarchy of capacity-building needs, as well as nine interdependent components of systemic capacity building, and applied these to the Indian health sector context (see Box 3.4). Their notion of capacity building allows for a conceptualization of capacity beyond the simplistic idea of “more training” and makes it clear how various forms of capacity are interdependent.

Gillespie and Margetts (2014) build on Potter and Brough’s and other frameworks and argue that in order for national and international actions on nutrition (the scale-up of nutrition-specific interventions, the maximization of the nutrition-sensitivity of nutrition-relevant interventions, and the development of an enabling environment for nutrition) to be successful, there is a need for capacity strengthening to ensure that political commitment translates into actual implementation and impact. The authors review various definitions of capacity and highlight the central notion of the capacity to act, to perform certain tasks in order to achieve certain objectives (Gillespie and Margetts 2014).



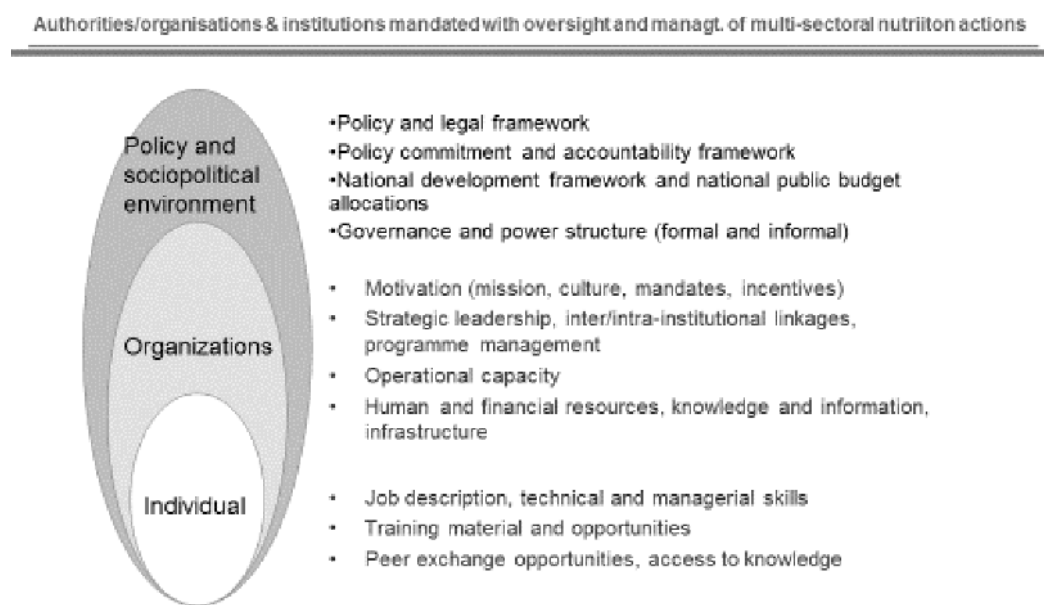
### Box 3.4 Key issues and core elements of nutrition-relevant capacity

<p><b>Individual capacity: Tools and skills</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Performance capacity: Are the tools, money, equipment, etc., available to do the job?</li> <li>• Personal capacity: Are staff sufficiently knowledgeable, skilled, and confident to perform properly? Do they need training, experience, or motivation? Are they deficient in technical, managerial, interpersonal, or specific role-related skills?</li> </ul> <p><b>Organizational capacity: Staff and infrastructure</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Workload capacity: Are there enough staff with broad enough skills to cope with the workload? Are job descriptions practicable? Is the skill mix appropriate?</li> <li>• Supervisory capacity: Are reporting and monitoring systems in place? Are there clear lines of accountability? Can supervisors physically monitor all staff? Are effective incentives and sanctions available?</li> <li>• Facility capacity: Are training centers, offices, and workshops big enough, with the right staff in sufficient numbers, to support the workload?</li> <li>• Support service capacity: Are there training institutions, supply organizations, building services, administrative staff, research facilities, and quality control services?</li> </ul> <p><b>Systemic capacity: Structure, systems, and roles</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Structural capacity: Are there decisionmaking forums / multistakeholder platforms where intersectoral discussion on nutrition may occur, and where consensus is generated, collective decisions are made and recorded, and individuals are called to account for nonperformance?</li> <li>• Systems capacity: Do flows of information, money, and managerial decisions occur in a timely and effective manner? Are proper filing and information systems in use? Can private-sector services be contracted as required? Is there good communication with the community? Are there sufficient links with nongovernmental organizations?</li> <li>• Role capacity: Have individuals, teams, committees, etc., been empowered to make decisions to ensure effective performance (for example, regarding schedules, money, staff appointments, etc.)?</li> </ul>
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Source: Adapted from Potter and Brough (2004).

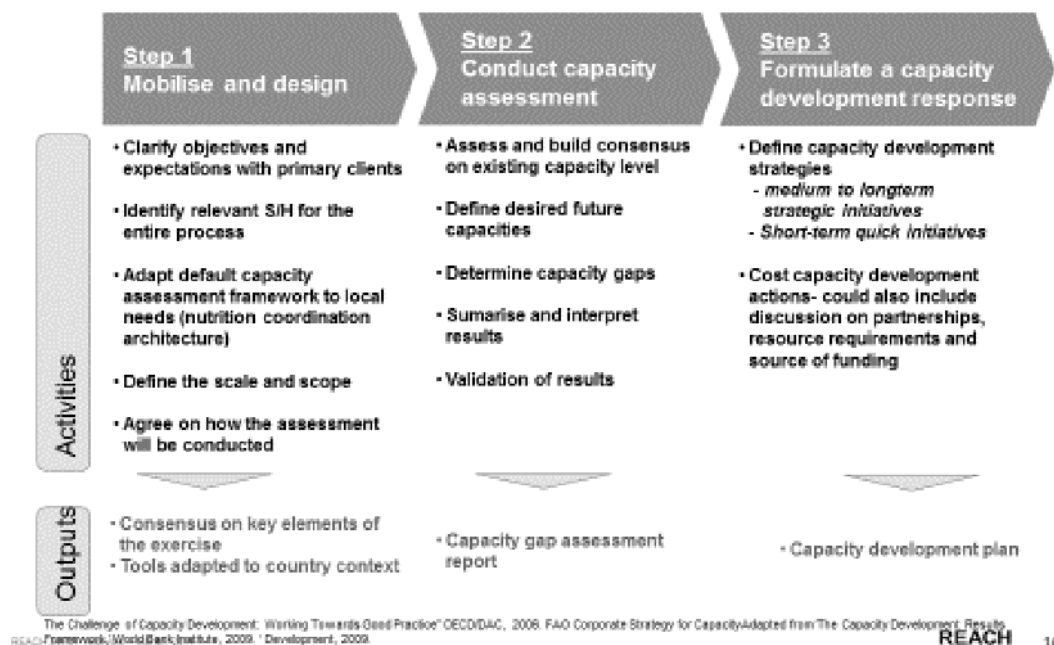
The REACH initiative uses a similar structure (individual, organizational, and policy capacity), as shown in Figure 3.13, with the steps of capacity assessment and analysis shown in Figure 3.14.

**Figure 3.13 Ingredients of capacity at different levels (REACH framework)**



Source: WFP et al. (2013).

**Figure 3.14 Approach to and methodology of capacity gap assessment and planning**



Source: REACH (2013).

Pelletier, Menon, et al. (2011) outline several policy implications based on the findings of the Mainstreaming Nutrition Initiative. First, the strategic capacity used to overcome structural challenges (planning and agenda formation, molding/adapting to institutions, and leadership and strategic capacity) is critical to strengthening commitment, consensus, and coordination. This includes capacity at the institutional level (spaces and processes to facilitate dialogue and strategize), as well as the individual level (for example, leadership, communication, and management skills). It is these types of capacities that are frequently lacking and should be a priority for future efforts. The authors appeal for the integration of evidence, contextual knowledge, and stakeholder values to overcome institutional disagreements and strengthen strategic capacities at different levels.

### Assessing Finance

Sufficient resources are needed for the planning, implementation, and monitoring and evaluation of nutrition-relevant actions. Evidence suggests that relatively small investments in nutrition can have large benefits in terms of reducing morbidity and mortality—for about US\$100 per child, along with better diet quality and care behaviors and practices, chronic undernutrition in developing countries could be reduced by 36 percent (Hoddinott, Rosegrant, and Torero 2012). Although nutrition financing continues to be a barrier to reducing undernutrition, it has recently started to gain more attention, as exemplified by the 2013 Nutrition for Growth (N4G) event in London, where various development partners committed an additional US\$4 billion to scale up nutrition-specific interventions by 2020 and an additional US\$19 billion to improve nutrition through nutrition-sensitive interventions.

In order to strengthen the case for increasing nutrition financing, Gillespie et al. (2013) suggest that improved understanding is needed in three key areas: the cost of reducing undernutrition, the current resources allocated to nutrition, and cost-benefit ratios for nutrition at national levels. In the past few years, several studies have estimated nutrition financing gaps and needs and have set out ways in which nutrition plans and interventions can be costed. In 2010, Horton et al. estimated that an additional US\$11.8 billion per year would be needed, at least, to ensure proper resourcing of 13 essential nutrition

interventions at scale in the 32 countries with the highest undernutrition burdens. The Aid for Nutrition series by Action Contre la Faim found that investments by major donors for essential nutrition interventions between 2005 and 2009 represented only 1 percent of the required resourcing (Mutuma, Freymont, and Adebayo 2012). Spratt (2012) built on Horton et al.'s work to assess how much donor and host governments as well as multilateral organizations would need to invest in 36 high-burden countries in the coming ten years to achieve the SUN objectives for nutrition-specific interventions, and suggested financing mechanisms for donors. In the 2013 Lancet series, Bhutta et al. (2013) estimated that scaling up access to ten essential nutrition interventions in 34 countries would require an additional US\$9.6 billion per year.

Several frameworks and methods have been developed to estimate costs for scaling up nutrition interventions and to track progress on nutrition financing. The SUN movement has contributed to this significantly. One of the SUN movement's objectives is to "mobilize resources directed towards coherent, aligned and country-led approaches to scaling up nutrition." The indicator for this objective focuses on financial tracking and resource mobilization and is composed of assessing financial feasibility (costing nutrition-specific and nutrition-sensitive expenditures by sector), scaling up and aligning resources (by increasing domestic and external contributions), honoring commitments (turning financial pledges into disbursements), tracking and accounting for nutrition-specific spending, and ensuring predictability of long-term funding to sustain impact (SUN 2013b).

In 2010, SUN countries worked together to outline the key elements that are required for developing costed national nutrition plans, such as, for example, defining the target population, defining clear nutrition targets, obtaining accurate estimates of unit costs for developing interventions, and incorporating the costs of existing nutrition actions. These countries also outlined several observations about how national nutrition plans can contribute to synergized efforts by various actors, how scale-up can be effectively implemented, how national nutrition planning and costing processes should be based on key principles, and how the ability of costed plans to scale up nutrition can be improved (SUN 2014). SUN countries started to cost their national nutrition plans in 2013 using the common results framework (CRF), through which countries analyzed their national plans by classifying line items according to nutrition-specific, nutrition-sensitive, and nutrition governance categories. The CRF Planning Tool offers a way to compare nutrition planning across countries, by collecting various data on countries' nutrition plans in an Excel database (SUN 2015a).

As part of its efforts to improve nutrition financing data, SUN also developed a three-step approach to budget analysis in order to assess investments in nutrition across sectors in different countries. The aim of this approach is to support SUN country governments in making evidence-based decisions for nutrition spending and to ensure transparency regarding resource flows to nutrition-related activities. In 2013, a literature review commissioned by SUN outlined what actions could be taken to track spending, and online budget reviews were carried out in 2014 for 28 SUN countries. Based primarily on the SUN Donor Network Methodology, the SUN three-step approach comprises (1) identifying nutrition-relevant budget allocations by using a keyword search; (2) assessing which budget allocations are nutrition-specific, which ones are related to nutrition, and which ones are not related to nutrition; and (3) weighting the budget allocation to those specific to nutrition (for example, a national nutrition program) and those related to nutrition (for example, early childhood development programs). Although this method does not necessarily fully capture all nutrition-related spending, and it may not be easily compared across countries, it does provide governments with a way to assess where investments can be improved (SUN 2015b). The SPRING project subsequently updated the three-step approach and created a mixed-method, country-specific style of budget analysis to estimate donor and government nutrition commitments. Based on data generated in-country and validated with key stakeholders, these analyses have so far been conducted in Nepal and Uganda and are informing future SUN budget allocation assessments (USAID 2015).

Lastly, RESULTS UK (2014) examined the global architecture for nutrition financing in order to provide some guidance as to how additional pledges in nutrition financing can be used most effectively, based on a literature study and interviews with key stakeholders in financing. The report describes three

newly proposed innovative financing mechanisms: (1) the Catalytic Fund for Nutrition, set up at the Nutrition for Growth Conference in London in 2013, which aims to raise US\$400 million to US\$1 billion for nutrition (Milken Institute 2013); (2) the Global Financing Facility, set up by the World Bank, which aims to mobilize up to US\$3.2 billion for health and nutrition; and (3) UNITLIFE, a UNITAID project aiming to raise millions for at least eight African countries. The report also provides several recommendations regarding new types of financing structures (for example, taking into account “aid orphans,” balancing nutrition-specific versus nutrition-sensitive interventions, and improving monitoring and evaluation) and the raising of new funds (for example, from nontraditional donors and increasing domestic expenditures).

## **Monitoring, Evaluation, and Accountability**

Assessing how research influences nutrition-relevant policies and processes is challenging. The Overseas Development Institute (ODI) has developed several approaches for assessing policy engagement and influence. In 2004, the organization developed the Research and Policy in Development (RAPID) framework to help structure an assessment of how, when, and why research informs policies (ODI 2012). The framework is based on four core areas: context (political and institutional structures and processes), evidence (approach and credibility), links (networks, relationships between stakeholders, influence, and legitimacy), and external influences (political, economic, and cultural influences). A few years later, factoring in outcome mapping concepts, ODI developed a second framework—the Rapid Outcome Mapping Approach (ROMA) (ODI 2014). Outcome mapping is an approach focused on results that fall within the realm of a program’s influence; it involves the use of a set of tools to navigate teams through a step-by-step process to highlight desired change and work toward it. ROMA consists of three overarching steps: diagnosing a problem, developing a strategy, and developing a monitoring and learning plan. Overall, the tools associated with these steps help an organization diagnose a problem, understand the types of impact an organization’s work could have on policymaking, set objectives for policy influence, and monitor and learn from progress made. Similarly, the RAPID Outcome Assessment (ODI 2011) also draws on outcome mapping and is a learning methodology that helps users assess and map a project’s contribution to a specific change in a policy or the policy environment by focusing on the actors a project influences and their progressive changes. The assessment approach consists of three stages: preparation, a workshop to define key policy change processes, and a follow-up to refine stories of change and identify policy actors and events as well as their contribution to a particular change. Taken together, the ODI frameworks thus provide ways to assess how research or a specific program contributes to policy and policy change.

Monitoring and evaluation are also about learning and accountability. Lessons learned from monitoring and evaluation outputs can be fed into policy dialogue, planning, and improved management of implementation. Decisions on what (indicators) to monitor and use for evaluation of the effects of policy change should be derived from a theory of change addressing how the policy change was *intended* to improve food and nutrition security impacts. A theory of change is a mechanism for making the change process explicit in a collective and participatory manner. It involves the specification of a number of “change domains” linked by a set of hypotheses and critical assumptions that make up a causal pathway of change (roadmap). Hypotheses are “if-then” statements between different levels of the change pathway. A domain of change may, for example, be a relationship between groups of people, a behavior and/or structural change in a system or institution, or laws and policies related to a specific issue.

Again, to assess the degree and type of cross-sectoral convergence in systems of monitoring and evaluation, the framework and process developed by Ved and Menon (2012) can be used, with the following checklist of questions:

### *Actors*

- Do frameworks for monitoring and evaluation take into consideration the broad spectrum of convergent actions required to address undernutrition?
- Is there broad acceptance of monitoring frameworks among policymakers and implementers?
- Is there an understanding of the critical nature of convergence action among nonimplementing actors such as researchers, civil society, and media that shape public opinion?

### *Decisions and actions*

- Have common frameworks for monitoring been developed that have the buy-in of and ownership by convergent departments?
- Have indicators that measure nutrition-linked outcomes been drawn up across sectors?
- Are the monitoring processes designed to allow for feedback and accountability?
- Does the monitoring process capture issues of gender and social inclusion?
- Are there clear, measurable indicators for processes and outcomes related to convergence?
- Do the monitoring and evaluation frameworks include indicators to assess convergent actions?
- What mechanisms are built in for accountability in relation to the process of convergence?
- Is there specific assignment of monitoring for convergence as a key responsibility?

In terms of monitoring, the SUN movement uses a simple four-indicator system to track country-level progress, including the existence of a multistakeholder platform, a coherent legal and political framework, alignment of policies and programs around a common results framework, and mobilization and tracking of financial resources, as shown in Table 3.5.

Evaluation is often viewed as a summative process to assess the results achieved in relation to the intended output indicators. But evaluation can also be used as a formative or mid-program tool for iterative learning, to inform program development and reassess the strategic direction. There are multiple reference documents for structuring approaches to evaluating the effects of nutrition-relevant actions.

**Table 3.5 SUN's core monitoring indicators**

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<b>Process 1: Bringing people in the same space</b>
1. Strengthen coordinating mechanisms at the country level
2. Coordinate internally and broaden membership
3. Engage with multistakeholder platforms
4. Track and report on own contribution
5. Sustain the impact of the multistakeholder platform

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<b>Process 2: Coherent policy and legal framework</b>
1. Analyze existing policies and programs
2. Mainstream nutrition into policies and strategies
3. Coordinate inputs into new policy framework development
4. Support new policy and legal framework development
5. Disseminate the policy and enforce the legal framework
6. Sustain the impact of a country's policy and legal frameworks

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<b>Process 3: Program alignment around the common results framework</b>
1. Align programs around national nutrition policies, goals, and targets
2. Translate policies and legal frameworks into common results frameworks
3. Organize implementation of common results frameworks
4. Manage implementation of common results frameworks
5. Track and report on implementation and results

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<b>Process 4: Financial tracking and resource mobilization</b>
1. Assess financial feasibility
2. Scale up and align resources
3. Honor commitments by turning financial pledges into disbursements
4. Track and account for spending
5. Ensure predictability of multiyear funding to sustain impact

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Source: Adapted from SUN (2013b).

As well as the *effects* of policy change, it is also possible to monitor and evaluate attempts to *influence* policy. While it is challenging to conduct rigorous quantitative evaluation of such efforts, Jones (2011) posits that strategic actions can shape and impact the policy change process, and monitoring and evaluation systems can be developed to capture these outcomes. He suggests that monitoring and evaluation systems should ensure that information collected can have multiple uses and is integrated with, or draws upon, information or knowledge produced while planning a project. Developing a theory of change as early as possible is important to set the overall framework for the monitoring and evaluation to be undertaken in any initiative.

## 4. CONCLUSION

The motivation for developing this “tool pool” is the Stories of Change (SoC) initiative, initiated by the Transform Nutrition consortium. SoC seeks to capture and convey experiential learning from policymakers and implementers regarding *how* nutrition-relevant policy and programming can be best implemented in different contexts. In this paper, we set out to discuss the factors and processes that are important in the formulation and implementation of nutrition-relevant policies and programs—and the methods and tools by which these processes can be conceptualized and measured. Researchers involved in the SoC initiative are using select combinations of these tools to undertake a series of country case studies. The paper highlights different tools or frameworks as they apply to the following stages of nutrition-relevant policy/program processes:

1. **Assessing the nutrition problem:** This subsection primarily discusses the key frameworks used to conceptualize the different levels of nutrition determinants (immediate, underlying, and basic), as well as interventions/responses appropriate to each level. It also outlines some of the primary sources of up-to-date nutrition data.
2. **Stakeholder and institutional analysis/mapping:** This subsection discusses tools such as Net-Map, used to map out stakeholder or institutional networks that either have the power to influence or are influenced by changes in nutrition outcomes.
3. **Understanding enabling environments for nutrition:** This subsection examines frameworks that highlight the domains of an enabling environment for nutrition and considers ways in which nutrition governance can be assessed.
4. **Agenda setting and political commitment for nutrition:** This subsection reviews literature on frameworks that assess issue salience and the ways in which political commitment to nutrition is generated, maintained, and measured.
5. **Policy formulation and policy processes:** This subsection reviews the various models that have been developed to assess the stages of the policy formulation process and identify the drivers of policy change.
6. **Multisectoral coordination:** This subsection examines conceptual frameworks on intersectoral engagement (horizontal coherence).
7. **Implementation and vertical coherence:** This subsection examines the links between national-level policy and community-level implementation, and the challenges that come with achieving such vertical coherence—before reviewing the literature on implementation, including how issues that need the most attention can be identified and how challenges to effective implementation can be overcome.
8. **Scaling up:** This subsection operationalizes the concept of scaling up, highlighting drivers and preconditions for an effective scaling up of nutrition-relevant action and national readiness for scale-up.
9. **Assessing capacity:** This subsection similarly operationalizes the notion of capacity, its different levels (individual, organizational, systemic), and how capacity gaps can be assessed.
10. **Assessing finance:** This subsection focuses on assessing the resources that are needed for scaling up nutrition-specific and nutrition-sensitive interventions, and how knowledge of the cost-benefit ratios of undernutrition reduction can help improve financing. It also reviews frameworks that have been developed to estimate costs for scaling up nutrition and track progress on nutrition financing.
11. **Monitoring, evaluation, and accountability:** This subsection examines how research informs policy, how policy engagement and influence can be assessed, and the importance of developing theories of change to clarify the change envisioned, along with the indicators that need to be monitored.

Ultimately, we hope that highlighting these options will facilitate the adoption of more systematic and comprehensive approaches to measuring nutrition-relevant change. Using such tools in the six SoC study countries—India (Odisha), Bangladesh, Nepal, Senegal, Zambia, and Ethiopia—will help in the development of stories of change that can be used to facilitate experiential learning across countries and regions, as well as enhancing the knowledge base on how nutrition improves.



## **APPENDIX: STORIES OF CHANGE METHODS DEVELOPMENT WORKSHOP AGENDA (JANUARY 14–15, 2015)**

*Objectives: To reach consensus on the scope of the Stories of Change (SoC) studies; the approach, methods, and tools that can be utilized; expected outputs; and timeline. Further develop approaches for dissemination, uptake, and cross-country learning.*

### **January 14, 2015: Objective: Sharing methods, tools, approaches**

9:00	Introduction	Stuart Gillespie
9:45	Quantitative analyses of drivers	Lawrence Haddad
11:00	Policy: commitment, agenda setting	Dolf te Lintelo, Nick Nisbett
11:30	Policy processes / enabling environment	Stuart Gillespie
12:00	Policy: multisectoral coordination (horizontal coherence)	Jody Harris
13:30	From policies to programs to impact at scale (vertical coherence)	Purnima Menon
14:00	Capacity, leadership	Namukolo Covic, Nick Nisbett
14:30	Accountability	Lawrence Haddad
15:30	Methods overview	Various (tbc)
17:00	REACH country assessments	Nicolas Bidault

### **January 15, 2015: Objective: Putting it all together—country studies, synthesis, dissemination, learning**

9:00	Summary of Day 1 and suggested country study process	Stuart Gillespie
9:30	Odisha (India)	Purnima Menon
10:00	Zambia	Jody Harris
11:00	Ethiopia	Andrea Warren
11:30	Bangladesh	Peter Davis
12:00	Nepal	Diplav Sapkota
13:30	Dissemination, uptake, and learning (including links to CIFF advocacy case studies)	Stuart Gillespie, Sam Reddin Tom Barker, Tara Shyam
14:30	Next steps and any other business	Stuart Gillespie

### **Participants**

International Food Policy Research Institute: Stuart Gillespie, Lawrence Haddad, Jody Harris, Purnima Menon, Aparna John, Neha Kohli, Mara van den Bold, Nancy Johnson

Institute of Development Studies: Nick Nisbett, Dolf te Lintelo, Tom Barker, Kat Pittore, Karine Gatellier, Tara Shyam, Jessica Meeker, Jessica Gordon, Samantha Reddin, Julia Powell.

Consultants and partners: Namukolo Covic (North-West University, South Africa), Diplav Sapkota (Nutrition Innovation Lab–Asia, Nepal), Nazneen Akhtar (independent researcher, Bangladesh), Peter Davis (Social Development Research Initiative coordinator and research fellow, UK), Ed Frongillo (University of South Carolina, USA), Andrea Warren (University of South Carolina, USA), Anna Kotenko (Children’s Investment Fund Foundation, UK), Nicolas Bidault (REACH, Italy), Kenda Cunningham (independent consultant, UK)

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