TRACKING GOVERNMENT EXPENDITURE ON NUTRITION IN SIERRA LEONE

2012-2016
1. Two budget analyses were done in Sierra Leone: tracking 2012-2015 investments in nutrition and of 2016.

2. One consolidated analysis/report released each year, inclusive of the government, CSO and development partners’ inputs and validation.

3. Analysis on progress towards Nutrition for Growth commitments analysis was done in 2016.

![Graph showing total public expenditure on nutrition (2012-2016) in billion Le]
Involvement of stakeholders

1. National Consultant (Budget Advocacy Network) hired by Action Against Hunger in consultation with SUN Secretariat
2. Kick off meeting facilitated by the SUN Secretariat at the Office of the Vice President (SUN National Coordinator signs letters for the Accountant General Office at Ministry of Finance and other ministries)
3. Bilateral meetings with SUN Focal points in each tracked ministry
4. Second meeting for the validation of selected activities to be tracked
5. Civil society took part in all meetings (under SUN CSP umbrella)
6. Validation of findings meeting facilitated by the SUN Secretariat
7. Circulating draft report for comments to all stakeholders before finalising
Scaling Up Nutrition (SUN) Secretariat
Office of the Vice President
Tower Hill, Freetown

25th May 2016

The Accountant General
Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning
George Street
Freetown

Dear Sir/Madam,

BUDGET TRACKING OF DOMESTIC EXPENDITURE FOR NUTRITION

On behalf of the Scaling Up Nutrition (SUN) Multi-stakeholder Platform (MSP) in Sierra Leone, the SUN Secretariat in collaboration with Action Against Hunger is conducting a budget tracking of domestic expenditure for nutrition. This exercise is crucial to the efforts in improving nutrition in Sierra Leone.
SUN 3 step approach:

• **Step 1: Identify nutrition activities**
  - Reference to policy and strategy documents;
  - Reference to government budget/expenditure documents (Recurrent and Development Expenditure Estimates for Financial Year 2016 – 2018);
  - Discussions with stakeholders (one opening meeting, bilateral meetings with all tracked ministries, consultation of nutrition experts);

• **Step 2: Assess whether activities are nutrition sensitive or specific**
  - Directly targeting nutrition (specific);
  - Targeting the underlying causes of nutrition (sensitive);

• **Step 3: Allocate a portion of expenditure to activities**
  - 100% for specific;
  - 25% for sensitive (unless there is reason to do otherwise);
How the findings were used?
To advocate for increased funding for nutrition and adherence to financial and policy commitments (1)

Nutrition for Growth Paper (financial, policy, nutrition targets) national launch event

Presentation of findings at SUN Global Gathering in Nairobi (2016)

Presentation of results hosted by SUN Secretariat at Vice President Office

Presentation of results at Food and Nutrition Donors meeting and SUN Global Gathering in Abidjan;

Social media and outreach activities;
Sierra Leone

First steps towards 2020 nutrition targets

Nutrition for Growth commitments*

- Decrease STUNTING in children <2 to 11.7%
- Decrease WASTING in children <5 to 2%
- Increase exclusive BREAST-FEEDING to 70%

Create BUDGET LINES in Ministries of Health and Agriculture

Increase COMMUNITY networks (i.e. Mother Support Groups)

Ratify and enforce the CODE of marketing of breast milk substitutes

Endorse the Five years Food and Nutrition Security COSTED PLAN

Nutritional status

- WASTING in <5
  - 6.9% (2010) 4.7% (2014)
  - 0.9% (2010) 1% (2014)
- STUNTING in <2
  - 25.7% (2010) 26.7% (2014)
- Exclusive BREAST-FEEDING
  - 32% (2010) 58.8% (2014)

What budget for nutrition?

- While spending for nutrition increases...
  - NUTRITION SPECIFIC
    - 2012: $7,000
    - 2015: $59,680
  - NUTRITION SENSITIVE
    - 2012: $30.25m
    - 2015: $47.58m

...GoSL priority for nutrition remains almost the same

As % of GNI (national budget):
- 2012: 3.91%
- 2015: 4.82% (% of national budget)

The Food and Nutrition Security Implementation Plan (FNSIP) costed plan

- Estimated cost 2013-2017: $117.2m
- Funding gap identified: $81m

The Government of Sierra Leone contribution to the FNSIP

- 2013: 37%
- 2014: 28%
- 2015: 32%

Ministries contribution to the FNSIP

- MoSWGCA: $538,000 (2012) $2m (2015)

New nutrition budget lines

- MoHS: Nutrition budget line was created in 2014 for:
  - Promoting Infant and Young Child Feeding and food hygiene
  - Promoting micronutrient fortification and food
  - Improving identification, monitoring and growth systems
  - Advocacy for scaling up nutrition and coordination.

MoAFFS nutrition budget line was created in 2014...

- The annual budget for 2016 planned to triple funding for nutrition-specific activities.
- But as of May 2016, no funds have been released yet for the year.

* The Government of Sierra Leone signed up to these commitments at the Nutrition for Growth Summit in June 2013. However, a year after, the country was affected by the most widespread Ebola outbreak in the virus’s history. It is therefore likely the country’s efforts to scale up nutrition were slowed down by the need for the GoSL to respond to the outbreak as a priority.

Sources:
To track and manage the use of nutrition funds (2)

Government and development partners regularly refer to the tracking tool in various coordination forums when it comes to nutrition financing.

In 2017, the analysis allowed to see the gap between funds budgeted for nutrition and actual expenditures made by the government.

Other ministries expressed interest to be part of this process (Marine Resources, Social and Environmental protection).

Recommendation for the next year – include tracking of development partners’ (UN family and donors) investment in nutrition.

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<tr>
<th>Ministry</th>
<th>2012</th>
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# Tracking tool for routine exercise

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To promote national ownership and advocate for routine tracking activities (3)

SUN Secretariat and government uses the findings in their advocacy

SUN CSP Sierra Leone involved in both budget tracking activities

SUN CSP member presented the findings at SUN GG in 2017

SUN CSP included the replication of the exercise into Nutrition Advocacy Fund proposal for 2018 and donors in country encourage replication of this activity yearly
Lessons learnt

1. There is no wrong strategy of how the results can be used: two different strategies used in two years (social mobilization and vocal advocacy vs. high level lobby and bilateral meetings)

2. Involve wide audiences from the beginning of the project, including design, launch of the project, data collection and dissemination

3. Hire a national consultant or consultancy firm that has already done similar exercises and ask for facilitation of the exercise from a well respected and established nutrition body

4. Develop and maintains a strong relationship (and encourage local civil society to do so) with the Ministry of Finance in order to facilitate similar tracking in the future
Lessons learnt

1. Know when best to use the findings: use international events as well as national processes as hooks for your advocacy (eg. National elections, parliamentary discussions etc.)

2. Develop tools for routine tracking which will make it easier for future, but allow for flexibility in those tools as budget analysis is an evolving process

3. Consider best time of the year when to conduct your analysis depending on the findings you want to achieve and the budget/financial cycles in your country