



Scaling Up Nutrition (SUN) Civil Society Alliance in Tanzania

JOINT STATEMENT GIVEN BY THE CIVIL SOCIETIES ORGANISATION UNDER THE UMBRELLA OF THE PARTNERSHIP FOR NUTRITION IN TANZANIA (PANITA) ON 6TH APRIL 2016

The statement has been formally adopted during the 4th PANITA Annual General Meeting held on 5th April 2016 and officially released on 6th April 2016.

We PANITA Members recognize the efforts of the government of Tanzania in fighting malnutrition. The efforts having begun in the early 70's; supported by leadership commitment and the establishment of systems and structures which include but not limited to: Establishment of the Tanzania Food and Nutrition Centre (TFNC) in 1973 through act of parliament; the development of both short and long-term policies and strategies, including the Tanzania Development Vision 2015; Tanzania Poverty Reduction Strategy, Tanzania Food and Nutrition policy as well as the Tanzania Agricultural and Food Sector Policy, Agricultural Sector strategy , National Nutrition Strategy, and within the region, the Comprehensive African Agricultural Development Plan. This commendable policy environment has contributed to gains in nutrition indices as substantiated by national nutrition survey 2014.

Within the global arena, Tanzania has actively participated in positive actions to reduce malnutrition exemplified by: Actively Participating in the global movements to fight malnutrition like Scaling up Nutrition (SUN); signing and implementing various international

treaties such as Maputo and Malabo declarations, aiming to reduce malnutrition (stunting to 10%; underweight to 5%) and to end hunger by 2025; endorsement of global targets such as World Health Assembly(WHA) targets for improving maternal, infant and young child nutrition by 2025 and there is strong commitment to monitoring progress. These targets included 40% reduction of stunting, 50% reduction of Anemia and 30% reduction of low birthweight by 2025.

The above mentioned efforts have so far contributed to reduction of Malnutrition as shown by key indicators from National nutrition survey 2014: Stunting from 48% in 1999 to 34.7% in 2014, underweight 25% in 1999 to 13% 2014 while wasting declined from 6% to 4% on the same period.

Despite the notable progress to fight malnutrition, still some challenges remain:

- Approximately, more than 2,700,000 children under five years of age are stunted in Tanzania in 2015. Out of the stunted children, 58% live in 10 regions; most of these regions are not benefiting from key nutrition interventions. About 435,000 children less than five years of age suffers from acute malnutrition including more than 105,000 severely acute malnourished. These children are at high risk of dying if they do not receive appropriate attention. Added to that indicators of Infant and young feeding (IYCF) practices have not improved between 2010 and 2014
- Slow progress in nutrition spending compared to estimates as given by five year costed plan for National Nutrition Strategic plan (ending in 2016). For example according to PER Nutrition 2014, Tanzania spent about 0.022% of its national budget on interventions that are geared or specifically designed to improve nutrition in the country. Whereas,

recent estimates show that spending has been approximately 30% of the National Nutrition costed plan by the end of 2015.

- Inadequate allocation and disbursement of funds approved for nutrition by government, as evidenced by PER Nutrition 2014; only 12.9% committed government funds was actually disbursed.
- Uncertainty, where High levels of political commitment in Tanzania is not guaranteed; as evident in the most recent Hunger and Nutrition Commitment Index (HANCI) report. Tanzania's ranking dropped from 7th in 2014 to 19th in 2015; the greatest drop for any country in the index. Additionally, the October election saw a key politician and nutrition veteran champions her seat in the current parliament.

On the same note, even for those children who make it past the age of 5, chronic malnutrition permanently impairs their physical and cognitive development. This means they will never reach their full potential. Poor nutrition perpetuates the cycle of poverty and impairs economic growth by impeding human productivity. It also costs the economy of developing countries as much as 2-16% of GDP each year. Specifically in 2014, it was estimated that Tanzania lost about TZS 800 billion from its GDP (approximately equivalent to 2.67% of its GDP) as result of malnutrition.

Important to note is that, currently the country is not on course to meet most of World health assembly (WHA) targets if the pace remains the same; the Global Nutrition report 2015 is testimony to this.

Now, as countries mobilize and march towards Rio for the Second Nutrition for Growth summit in August 2016; the Civil Societies that are engaging under nutrition sector in Tanzania under the umbrella of PANITA, calls upon the Government of the United Republic of Tanzania to do the following:

- To increase domestic spending on Nutrition interventions based on the estimated cost of \$8.5 per child to reach the WHA targets by 2025
- The Government to participate in the upcoming Rio summit and pledge for increased political commitment for sustainable leadership and provision of resources from its domestic sources as this is necessary for improved nutrition status of the country

It is our sincere hope that the fifth term Government under the strong leadership of the President Dr. John Pombe Magufuli and Chama Cha Mapinduzi (CCM) motivated towards giving a voice to the voiceless, will without fail hear the voiceless numbed by malnutrition, particularly the cries of 2.7 million children on the verge of malnutrition and take concrete actions; joining other great leaders and countries fighting this noble cause. We and our great leaders have to come together, join forces and be part of the global movement in fighting malnutrition at the Rio Summit in Brazil.

We PANITA members, we remain committed to continue working for the voice less 2.7 million children who succumb to malnutrition in their daily lives. This is reflected through our programs that aim to contribute towards improvement of the nutrition situation in the country. This is

commitment is attached with the larger domain of stakeholders; that are joining forces to fight malnutrition under the coordination of the government through Prime Ministers Office within the wider framework under the SUN movement that encompasses the multi-sectoral approach to fight malnutrition in Tanzania.

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EDITORS NOTE

The Partnership for nutrition in Tanzania (PANITA) is the official SUN CSO network in Tanzania. Established in 2010 and registered as an independent organization in 2013; followed by the formation of Board of Directors. This was coupled by institutional capacity strengthening of the secretariat to manage both administrative, financial and programs for the network. Recently has been fully accredited by Molly's network.

Currently it has over 300 CSO members across Tanzania; it has a seat in various national multi-stakeholders for a e.g. High level nutrition steering committee, Development partners group in nutrition and nutrition multi-sectoral technical working group. Additionally it has a strong track record in engaging in high level advocacy aiming to influence nutrition policy adoption and implementation. Key successes include:

Advocate for prioritization of nutrition at different levels and through different avenues example: Strategic engagement with key and influential leaders: PANITA develop strategic relationships with 50 members of the parliament who were members of the parliamentary group on child rights, food security and nutrition. The parliamentary group recommended that PANITA focus on getting nutrition into the political parties' manifestos. a set of nutrition recommendations were developed for adoption by political parties into their manifestos. In the lead-up to 2015

elections, PANITA engaged in advocacy to encourage incorporation of recommendations into the manifestos of key political parties.

PANITA has long term engagement with journalists through TAJOC (Tanzanian Association of Journalists on Children) and individual journalists, who have attended trainings on nutrition and regularly report on key nutrition issues.

Capacity building of its members on various aspects related to nutrition and various interventions will be vehicle to fight malnutrition in Tanzania

Also, about 70 of its members participate in the district nutrition steering committees as one of the government multi-stakeholder fora to fight malnutrition in the country.