



Scaling Up Nutrition Academia and Research Network Pakistan

Terms of Reference (ToR)



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BACKGROUND

Pakistan is facing a silent crisis of malnutrition that is amongst the worst in the world and has not improved for decades. Results from the 2011 National Nutrition Survey (NNS) indicated diminutive change over the last decade in terms of core maternal and childhood nutrition indicators in Pakistan. In children under 5, 43.7% were stunted as compared to 41.6% in the 2001, 15.1% were wasted compared to 14.3% in 2001 and 31.5% were underweight (no change since 2001). Vitamin A status has deteriorated and there has been little or no improvement in other micronutrients (Anemia - 61.9%, vitamin A deficiency - 54%, zinc deficiency 39.2% and vitamin D deficiency - 40.0%). The only success story was iodine status which improved nationally according to the survey where 69.1% of the households were using iodized salt (kit testing results) as compared to 17% in 2001. This has also led to the inference that sincere efforts done at the policy level with sustained awareness raising campaigns could change the things to a considerable extent.

During the pre-devolution era in Pakistan (before July 2011), key achievements at the federal level included National Plan of Action on Micronutrient Control, adaptation of Global Strategy on Infant and Young child Feeding, Protection of Breastfeeding and Young Child Nutrition Ordinance 2002 and wheat flour fortification with iron. The timing of devolution almost coincided with NNS 2011 report thereby putting a lot of focus on nutrition at provincial levels. Taking advantage of the opportunity, the provinces have developed policy guidance notes on nutrition. Currently, all provincial governments have approved multi-sectoral nutrition strategies and enacted laws of protection and promotion of breastfeeding and finalized National IYCF strategy.

There has been enormous support from the Development Partners for Nutrition (DPN) group led by the World Bank and participated by various other donors, UN agencies and international and national NGOs including Micronutrient Initiative.

The Government of Pakistan sees adequate nutrition as a key ingredient for overall development and the government has agreed with donors and developments partners to develop federal and provincial nutrition plans of action. Pakistan is working to establish multi-stakeholder platforms to address nutrition at both the national and provincial levels. Pakistan has signed the global SUN (Scaling up Nutrition) movement in 2013. SUN is a unique Movement founded on the principle that all people have a right to food and good nutrition. It unites people—from governments, civil society, the United Nations, donors, businesses and researchers—in a collective effort to improve nutrition. Government of Pakistan signalled their commitment to scaling up nutrition; Ministry of Planning Development and Reform is currently spearheading the movement in the country.

Government of Pakistan has established SUN Movement Secretariat in the Nutrition Section of Ministry of Planning Development and Reform which is the coordinating body for all SUN networks. Currently, Civil Society Alliance, Donors and UN networks have been established while Business Network and Academia & Research networks are in process of establishment under guidance of SUN Government focal point and development partners.

Ministry of Planning, Development and Reform with support of Micronutrient Initiative (MI) is in process of establishment of Academia and Research Network in Pakistan which will promote nutrition education and research by organising academicians and researchers on single platform. In this way the network will provide research based evidence for advocating policy and legislative reforms as well as promote linkages to address malnutrition in light of Pakistan Vision 2025.

I. NAME OF THE NETWORK

The name of the body shall be “**Scaling Up Nutrition - Academia and Research Network, Pakistan**” in short “SUN AR, Pak”.

II. AREA OF OPERATION

Nationwide

III. NATURE OF THE NETWORK

This is a non-partisan, non-profit, voluntary, national academia and research network.

IV. VISION AND MISSION:

A well-nourished Pakistan

V. OBJECTIVES

- 1) Mobilize & organize; academic and research Institutions and groups, on a joint platform to promote nutrition;
- 2) Promote multi-sectoral research on nutrition;
- 3) Identify cost-effective, innovative strategies and models for addressing malnutrition;
- 4) Facilitate formulation of national & sub-national policies- by sharing research based evidence;
- 5) Link national and international institutions, academicians and researchers for cross learning, collaborations and capacity development;
- 6) Provide technical support to establish & strengthen Centers of Excellence for Nutrition at National and Provincial levels;
- 7) Coordinate and collaborate with SUN networks through National & Global SUN Secretariat.

VI. MEMBERSHIP

VII.

a) TYPE OF MEMBERSHIP

- i. **Regular Membership** is for registered academic and research institutions that fulfil the membership criteria. Full members can vote for election of Executive Council.
- ii. **Individual/Honorary Membership** can be granted to any person having significant contribution in the field of nutrition education and research. Honorary membership will be conferred by consensus of Executive Council for a duration of 3 years which is renewable. Honorary members cannot vote for election of general council and cannot contest for EC election.

b) ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA FOR ACADEMIC INSTITUTIONS

- Institutions offering bachelor or advanced degree in nutrition, health, food security and other relevant sciences contributing to nutrition

- Institutions must be accredited by federal / provincial governments and recognised by Higher Education Commission of Pakistan, Pakistan Medical & Dental Council, Agriculture Council, Engineering Council or other relevant accrediting authorities
- Transparent functional financial management system

c) ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA FOR RESEARCH ORGANIZATIONS/GROUPS

- Research Institutions/Groups (registered in Pakistan)
- Registration as non-profit research organisation
- Having ethical clearance from accredited Ethics Committee (EC)/ Ethical Review Board (ERB)
- Transparent functional financial management system

d) CRITERIA FOR INDIVIDUAL/ HONORARY MEMBERS:

The Executive Council may, of its own accord, confer Honorary Membership of the network on persons who have made outstanding contributions in nutrition related research and teaching.

Nominations for Honorary Membership can be made through consultative process in the Executive Council. Nominee should fulfill any of the following membership criteria mentioned below;

- Minimum 10 years' experience in the field of Nutrition research and teaching
Minimum 5 Publications published in reputed national and international Journ
- Significant contribution in Policy formulation and nutrition related advocacy

Executive Council will confer or reject membership during EC meeting after review of candidate profile and reputation.

e) RIGHTS OF MEMBERS

- All regular members have equal status and voting rights
- In case of membership termination, members can submit appeal to Executive Council
- Regular updates about nutrition related research and events will be provided to members

f) RESPONSIBILITY OF MEMBERS

- Demonstrate commitment to achieving objectives of the network
- Upgrade nutrition related courses/degrees in their respective institutions
- Participate in network meetings
- Vote for election of Executive Council
- Contribute in planning and implementation of network strategy/operational plans
- Provide regular updates to secretariat about nutrition related activities
- Provide technical feedback in policy papers and research documents etc.
- Facilitate Network for conducting nutrition related researches, seminars/conferences
- Recommending actions which will improve the effectiveness of the Network

g) MEMBERSHIP DURATION

Upon registration a membership of 3 years will be granted thereafter renewable after every 5 years subject to compliance to the standards of the network functioning.

h) DECLARATION OF INTEREST AND TERMINATION OF MEMBERSHIP

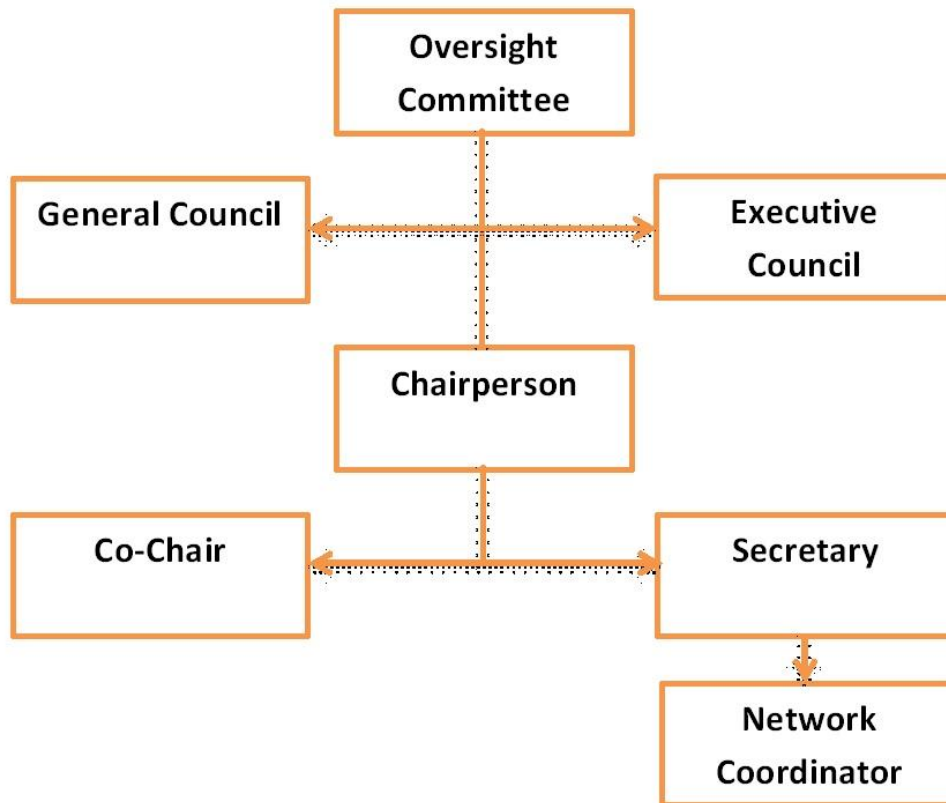
All members should voluntarily disclose any conflict of interest or potential conflict of interest to the SUNAR, Pak Executive Council (EC) as soon as its becomes apparent. In the event of any such conflict or potential conflict the EC at its absolute discretion shall decide on the appropriate course of action and the decision of the EC will be final and binding in this regard.

The EC of SUNAR may reserves the right to determine the appropriate course of action with regard to all actual and potential conflicts of interest.

Executive Council may terminate membership of organization/member after a detailed independent inquiry in case of the following:

- In case of conflict with SUN objectives and principles
- Institutions/Groups receiving grants from violating the Breast milk Substitutes (BMS) code and unethical promotion (including baby food products)
- Involvement in illegal activities i.e. terrorism, fraud, money laundering, trafficking etc.

VIII. GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE/ ORGANOGRAM



a) GENERAL COUNCIL (GC)

- The General Council of the SUN ARN, Pak shall consist of all the voting members
- All GC members will have equal status
- All GC members should have a contributory role to play
- GC meetings will be held on annual basis, however for any important matters GC meeting can be called on short notice

b) ADVISORY GROUP/OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE

As per recommendations of participants during “Launch of Academia and Research Network” on May 15, 2015 an advisory group has been formed to take lead for establishment of SUN Academia and Research Network in Pakistan by encouraging effective engagement from academic and research institutions considering the SUN principles of engagement at national level.

The Advisory Group consists of representative from HEC, representatives of Ministry of Planning, Development and Reform, representative of Ministry of National Health Services, Coordination & Regulations, prominent researchers & academicians, development partners and representative of

Micronutrient Initiative which is lead agency supporting SUN Secretariat for establishment of the Network.

After successful establishment of network, this group will evolve automatically as Oversight Committee (OC) of the Network.

The role of OC will include;

- Ensure that network performs its function as per SUN Movement Principles and national laws/policies
- Ensure transparent elections of the network
- Provide guidance in development and implementation of network strategic plan
- Monitor the work of executive committee and provide strategic direction whenever needed
- Members of the OC cannot contest for EC elections

c) EXECUTIVE COUNCIL (EC)

- The EC is a group of ideally 11 to 13 members with preferably equal representation of academia and research representatives.
- These members will help to develop position papers/responses/etc. for the EC and related bodies.
- The EC has a chair and co-chair and secretary
- The chair is responsible for calling and presiding over meetings of the EC and supporting the activities of the network for SUN, through the Secretariat.
- The Secretary of the EC will run the Secretariat, which will be housed at her/his base organization. The secretary bears the delegated responsibilities and act as the Networks's spokesperson.

ELECTION OF EC MEMBERS

- Any GC member can run for a position on the EC
- EC members will be elected by the GC
- If an EC member leaves their organization during their period of service on the committee, that organization may retain their spot on the EC and appoint another representative.
- If the number of EC members drops below seven, the general council will select a new member per the normal nomination and election process

RESPONSIBILITIES OF EC MEMBERS

- Making decisions on policies and strategies in establishing and maintaining SUN ARN, Pak;
- Working with academic and research institutions to prepare concept notes, policy papers, position statements, briefings, responses, budgets or other documents required for the SUN Lead Group and Global SUN Secretariat;
- Ensuring that the vision, mission and objectives of the network are effectively communicated to all the relevant stakeholders;
- Representing the Network in various meetings (national and international), and sharing feedback with the SUN Focal point & SUN secretariat;
- Advocating for resource mobilization for the SUN Movement at the country level;
- Maintaining close relationships with the SUN Secretariat;

- Acting as a first channel of communication to relay local- and country-level realities to relevant SUN bodies in Pakistan and Globally through the SUN Secretariat and SUN Focal Point;
- Challenging any decisions at the country- or regional- or global-levels that undermine the nutrition-related commitments of SUN Movement;
- Evaluating the EC and individual EC members' performance as per agreed indicators;
- Appointing and guiding a Network Manager for the SUN ARN, Pak.; and;
- Approving the regular and individual members on consensus.

DURATION OF EC MEMBERS

The EC members will serve three years term.

REQUIREMENTS FOR ATTENDANCE

An EC member is likely to lose membership if she/he misses three consecutive EC meetings without proper reasons and/or communications. When the situation of losing membership arises, it is the responsibility of the Chair of the EC to take a final decision and notify the EC member in writing.

d) CHAIRPERSON AND CO-CHAIR

The EC has a chair and co-chair who are elected by the EC members in a transparent manner for a term of three years. In the case of a vacancy, elections to fill the vacant slot may take place at the first Executive Council meeting at which a vacancy exists, or prior to, by correspondence.

The co-chair acts in support of, and in the absence of the chair. The chair is responsible for calling and presiding over meetings of the EC and supporting the activities of the network through the Secretariat. To the extent possible, the chair and co-chair will perform coordination function including setting agendas, allocating time for each agenda item, directing discussions and summing up and disseminating decisions and actions to the SUN focal person & National & Global Secretariat.

Specific Role of Chairperson

- Chair the EC meetings to ensure setting and observation of an agenda and time allocated to each item, directing discussions and summing up decisions and actions;
- Lead the EC members in strategic planning, financial accountability and fundraising;
- Appraise performance of the EC members and individual members;
- Represent the EC on key occasions at national and international level;
- Provide leadership to EC members who set policy; and,
- Serve as an ex-officio member of EC committees and attends their meetings when possible.

The co-chair acts in support of, and in the absence of the chair.

SECRETARY Secretary will be elected by vote of the EC for three years. S/he will be accountable to the EC of the SUN Academia and Research network and general members. The organization of the Secretary should not have any influence over the work plan or ways of working of the staff in the Secretariat who work on behalf of all network members guided by the EC.

The secretary will act as the spokesperson of the Network and will bear the delegated responsibilities.

Specific Role of Secretary:

- Ensure that Network's strategic and financial plans are put in place, periodically reviewed and updated;
- Ensure that network activities are implemented following the target plan;
- Ensure the Cash and Books of Account of the network are maintained in accordance to national laws,
- Ensure that the EC members, especially the chair are kept fully updated of any circumstances that may affect the EC;
- Ensure that necessary policies and procedures are developed and approved by the EC members and applied effectively;
- Facilitate communication with all EC members, Research and academic institutions networks in country and the National & Global SUN and other networks.

e) SECRETARIAT AND NETWORK COORDINATOR

SECRETARIAT

Secretariat will be established in Islamabad which will be run with support of Micronutrient Initiative (MI) initially. However, later on sustainability will be ensured through Higher Education Commission of Pakistan.

The Secretariat of SUN Academia and Research network will be responsible to maintain administrative and financial matters of the network. This includes;

- Documentation of all meeting minutes in collaboration with hosting organization, coordination with all members.
- Ensure coordination with relevant stakeholders in collaboration with National SUN Focal Point, National & Global SUN Secretariat.
- Assist secretary of the network to identify appropriate partner organization/s for implementing and supporting/partnership, and support different activities of the Network through a competitive process under the direct leadership of the Chair and the Secretary.
- Work with the SUN Academia and Research network members, country SUN Focal point, National SUN Secretariat, to make recommendations on different policy and/or other issues when needed. For that it would form need base different subcommittees and arrange regular meetings to work on assigned topic/s.

ACADEMIA AND RESEARCH NETWORK COORDINATOR

The Secretariat will employ a Network Coordinator with no voting rights. S/he will be reportable to the Secretary. By virtue of the Secretariat, the Network Coordinator will perform the following responsibilities under the guidance of EC secretary with decisions made by the EC;

- Assist in development of strategic and operational plan for the SUN Academia and Research network
- Organize, implement and monitor all activities as per plan
- Prepare periodic progress reports and other documents as required
- Mobilize resources to support the implementation of strategic and operational plan of the network

- Ensure effective and transparent management of resources
- Facilitate communications (meetings/teleconferences etc.) among EC members and between SUN Academia and Research network and with representatives of National and Global SUN network
- Communicate about SUN activities and decisions back to the local Academia and Research community, governments and the public in different forum
- Convene meetings of the EC members as and when required
- Attend the meetings, keeping records and circulate minutes of meetings to the research & academia network
- Create database of SUN research & academia platform both at country and global level
- Inform the EC of any vacancy of EC members and facilitate the procedure to nominate any member from SUN Academia and Research network
- Undertake any other pertinent activities/assignments that the EC might ask through the Secretary.

The Network Coordinator should be appointed through a formal and transparent recruitment process. He/ she will be hired based on a performance renewable contract.

MEETINGS

EC Meetings will be held on quarterly basis, with extraordinary meetings called as needed. It is the responsibility of the chair to call the meetings. Unless otherwise agreed by the Executive Council, proposed agenda items for Executive Council, meetings should be submitted to the Secretariat at least 2 weeks in advance of a scheduled meeting. An agenda with related documentation should be circulated to Executive Council, Members by the Secretariat at least one week in advance of Executive Council, meetings. Executive Council, agendas will provide background and rationale for each item. Items for decision will be clearly identified and prioritized. The Executive Council, meeting agenda will be approved by the Executive Council, at the beginning of each meeting. In circumstances where no consensus is reached, the Executive Council, Chair shall determine which items are to be included in the meeting agenda submitted to the Executive Council for approval.

The Chair can also call general meeting according to situation. Notice of the meeting must be given at least two weeks in advance, with an agenda circulated to all members at least one week before the meeting.

Communication between the Secretariat and Executive Council, Members will normally be by email. Both EC and GC meetings will be conducted by the Chair and Co-Chair.

The Executive Council may conduct business only when a quorum is present, i.e., a simple majority (more than half) of Executive Council members.

The Executive Council shall use best efforts to reach all decisions by consensus. If all practical efforts by the Executive Council and the Chair have not led to consensus, any member of the Executive Council with voting privileges may call for a vote. In order to pass, motions require a simple majority of those present. In the event of a tied vote (when there is an even number of EC members), the Chair has an additional, deciding vote.

If, in exceptional circumstances, Executive Council Chair, or Co Chair, determines that a pending issue requires Executive Council input, and the issue cannot wait until the next Executive Council meeting, the Executive Council Chair and Co-Chair will consult the Executive Council. If the Executive Council Chair and Co-Chair are unable to agree on whether such consultation with Executive Council members is required, the Chair may determine whether to do so.

Materials prepared by and/or for the Executive Council including minutes of meetings, shall be in English. In special circumstances, under EC direction, documents may be translated in Urdu for the purpose of wide dissemination of information.

At its discretion, the Executive Council may conduct its business in closed sessions where only the EC members may attend.

The cost of meeting attendance for EC members will be met by the participating organizations to demonstrate their commitment to SUN Movement.

IX. FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

- A separate account will be maintained by the organisation hosting secretariat of Network.
- Secretariat is responsible to conduct Annual Audit of Network by reputable audit firm.
- The Audit report will be available to General Council/ EC, donors and other stakeholders.
- Secretariat is responsible for preparation of annual budget and annual financial reports which should be approved by EC.

X. AMENDMENTS TO THIS EXECUTIVE COUNCIL TOR

Only General Council with 2/3 majority can amend the TOR for the Network. Executive Council ToR may be amended at any time by the Executive Council members.