POWER TOOL

Multi-stakeholder Alliances for Policy Change

A multi-stakeholder alliance brings together stakeholders from different sectors, including the private and public sector and civil society actors, to advocate for the same purpose. Unlike a coalition which generally consists of like-minded NGOs, a multi-stakeholder alliance consists of members with differing expertise, strengths, resources and relationships that can be leveraged. Collaboration amongst different types of organizations and actors can produce previously unimagined solutions and have an immense transformational power, especially when they are purpose-oriented, inclusive, participatory and energized with enthusiasm and commitment.

There are many opportunities where multi-stakeholder alliances can make a difference. For example, they can incorporate the voice of civil society in public policies, advocate for resources for specific activities in the national budget, jointly implement pilot projects to demonstrate how a certain policy change may work in practice; mobilize the public; campaign for a legislative reform, etc.

This brief draws upon several examples of CARE's experience in the Caucasus, Zambia, and Peru to identify good practices in strategic multi-stakeholder alliances that have advanced food and nutrition security policy. These experiences are discussed further in the *Case Studies* section.

Implementation Section

The following section provides guidance on developing an effective multi-stake holder alliance based on CARE's experience in the Caucasus, Zambia, and Peru. There is no one size fits all approach. These are general good practices, to be adapted to specific contexts.

Key steps for the successful formation of a multi-stakeholder alliance include:

1. Identify the purpose
2. Map the political landscape and identify members
3. Invite members to join with clarity on the alliance's (general) purpose
4. Agree on the specific purpose of the alliance
5. Establish an organizational framework
6. Meet only when needed and always have an agenda
7. Identify and build off existing resources
8. Work with the government, when appropriate
9. Invest in relationship building with alliance members
10. Assess the results

1. Identify the purpose

An alliance can be born in different ways: One organization might decide to influence a certain policy, do a rapid assessment of key players in the sector, and contact relevant players to generate buy in to strengthen the advocacy effort. In other cases, an alliance may emerge organically as several organizations already working together realize they share a common goal and decide to form a group and invite others.

Regardless of how the alliance is formed, any collaborative effort must be driven by a **policy-related purpose**. Working together with other organizations from different backgrounds requires a lot of effort and time, and it can include some risks. It is critical to first consider the added value and intended purpose of your potential alliance and weigh it against possible risks. The purpose must be **SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Time-bound)**:

- Purposes which are not **clear and specific** enough to lend themselves to a well-articulated strategy with actionable tactics should be avoided;
- The more **specific and measurable** the initial purpose of the alliance is, the better;
- It should be achievable in a reasonable length of time and with a reasonable amount of financial, human and technical resources, recognizing that success in an advocacy effort may take several years and can shift or evolve as your advocacy progresses;
- It is better to **avoid overly controversial topics** where the alliance may not only confront overwhelming opposition from interest groups but also expend more energy on responding to the controversy itself than on actively seeking policy change. This can make it unrealistic to pursue – and achieve – desired changes. CARE often advocates on issues that spark some controversy. Ultimately, it's important to weigh the risk of engaging as well as the risk of remaining silent.

The purpose should center around a policy issue, including the absence of a policy, a harmful or inadequate policy, or the improper enforcement of a policy (including inadequate funding). Some examples of possible policy-related purposes include:

- Adoption of a policy that aims to prevent gender-based violence, including child marriage
- Reforming legislation which is detrimental to small-scale food producers and the rural poor
- Inclusion of pro-poor perspectives and priorities in a government's health strategy or working plan
- Increased funding in the national budget for primary education
- Advocating for the implementation of an existing policy
- Partnering with the government to inform the implementation of a new or existing policy
- Undertaking concerted campaigns for awareness raising on reproductive health rights (note: campaigns should align with policy-related purposes)

2. Map the political landscape and identify members

The purpose of this collaborative effort is to solve a significant policy issue. Therefore, a basic level of consensus on the importance of addressing the issue and *how* the issue will be addressed must be in place. It is important to be as **inclusive and representative** as possible in defining or fostering membership. When considering who should join the alliance, include others beyond the usual suspects in order to represent a broad base of members and increase the legitimacy of the alliance, making its voice more representative, and often more powerful. Begin by mapping out the relevant players. This should include those who agree with your policies, as well those who are "unlikely suspects:" organizations generally assumed to be against the policy but who may in fact support this policy (such as religious leaders or the private sector). When possible, consider including individuals who have influence over the actors that the alliance is trying to influence. Depending on the context, private sector, multi-lateral donors, and religious leaders may be strong influences for the government. The context differs by country and sector, but some potential types of candidate organizations to consider are:

Local and International NGOs are crucial players. NGOs might include development, humanitarian, environmental, human rights, or religious or faith-based organizations. Local NGOs are exposed to the problems at the grass-roots level and have intimate relationships with communities as well as interactions with donors and government. Larger INGOs can also play a convening role because of their access to resources and decision-makers.

Member-based organizations (large/national organizations and local groups) are important because they represent the interest of the final stakeholders. For instance, organizations that represent small-scale food producers or community health service workers.

Women's rights and feminist organizations can ensure that gender equality is at the core of all discussions and that the alliance sees the reality through a gender lens.

Donors (multilateral, bilateral, foundations, etc.) devoting substantial financial resources and having a long-term vision and strategy for the sector should also be considered for membership.

Academic and research institutions can be powerful allies in promoting policy changes by providing evidence-based research and leveraging their professional expertise.

Organizations from other sectors can enrich the alliance. For example, an economic think-tank can help to integrate the macroeconomic debate in the policy discussions; bringing an environmental organization can reinforce the sustainability perspective.

Private sector organizations can in some cases be valuable in a policy-focused alliance if they share the agenda. In some countries, the private sector has a lot of influence over the government and their involvement can increase the likelihood of success. Making profit and fighting poverty are two distinct objectives which may coincide or may clash. Much will depend on the national context and the purpose of the alliance. The analysis of positions or potential conflicts of interest is extremely important in this case.

The **Government** will usually be the target of the alliance's advocacy, but in some cases, it may also be a valuable member in its own right. For instance, if the goal is to implement a policy that the government already endorses, such as to reduce malnutrition through implementation of a national nutrition policy, the government may welcome such an alliance. See the Zambia case study below.

Once a preliminary set of potential members is ready, there are two key questions the conveners of the alliance should consider: **(a)** Does the preliminary mix of potential members provide a holistic, fair, representative and diverse representation of the different interest groups, skills and perspectives existing in the sector? and, **(b)** do they all share a common vision for the sector and are ready to endorse the alliance's purpose, despite their differences?

Consider inviting a few key trusted partners to brainstorm the initial list of potential alliance members. This exercise should not be done by CARE alone, although you want to limit the number of people involved at this stage in order to keep the process and discussion manageable.

3. Invite members to join with clarity on the alliance's purpose

Now that the initial list of alliance members has been identified, invite the potential alliance members to join. It is important to be clear early on about the overall purpose of the alliance. Invite the potential alliance members for an initial brain storming session, where the more specific purpose of the alliance and the basic working arrangements will be discussed and agreed on. The doors of the alliance should remain open for like-minded organizations wiling to join later (again, provided they share the same core values and goals of the alliance). If key players are missing from diverse sectors, the alliance may want to proactively engage them along the way.

4. Agree on the purpose of the alliance

Identify the purpose of the alliance as well as potential disagreements among actors and address these with the entire multi-stakeholder alliance. Agree on basic principles as well as non-negotiables, such as 'the policy must include a, b, and c in order for us to support it'. These should be written and circulated to the full alliance once finalized as it will form the basis of your advocacy. If relevant, agree on key activities as well.

5. Establish an organizational framework

A mix of formal and informal systems is important for a multi-stakeholder alliance: formalities provide structure to align various actors and ensure accountability while informal systems offer flexibility, which allows the alliance to adapt when necessary. The multi-stakeholder alliance should decide which elements are formal and which elements must be flexible and informal. Examples of formalities include signing a memorandum of understanding, developing a terms of reference, or registering as a legal personae. Finding agreement on these formalities may be too onerous to justify the effort, particularly if an alliance is aiming to attract diverse members. However, some arrangements, such as a basic terms of reference or "ways of working" document, may help create clarity and predictability in how the group will operate and in the roles and expectations of members. Maintaining a balance between informal and formal process and being comfortable with flexibility can attract more members and enable unique contributions as opposed to a pre-defined strategy or heavy legal structure.

a. Set clear basic functioning principles

Some basic principles for how alliance members will collaborate with each other should be agreed upon to provide an over-arching vision and mission for the group. The Jemez Principles[1] provide an excellent blueprint for this:

Be inclusive by embracing diversity in planning, membership, and coordination. This requires discussion and patience, which may delay progress and involve moments of conflict and disagreement, but ultimately can lead to better ways of working together.

Emphasis on bottom-up agenda-setting to ensure that the agendas are defined with the participation of those ultimately affected, including grass roots organization.

Let people speak for themselves, so relevant voices of people directly affected are heard.

Work together in solidarity and mutuality, respecting and reflecting everyone's shared values and vision and supporting each other's work. Good communication, common strategies and resource sharing are critical to help members see the connections and build on them.

Build just relationships that include clarity about decision-making, sharing strategies, and resource distribution.

Commitment to self-transformation by shifting from operating on the mode of individualism to community-centeredness.

b. Nominate co-chairs

Once the final purpose of the alliance is decided and a sufficient and diverse number of members are ready to engage, alliance members should nominate co-chairs. The co-chairs should represent different organizations and their responsibilities should be clearly defined. The co-chairs are usually responsible for organizing and leading the meetings, proposing the agenda, and ensuring the alliance remains purpose-driven.

c. Someone must do the 'dirty' job

It is preferable to keep a light structure in an alliance, but there are inevitable administrative tasks (producing the minutes of the meetings, keeping e-records, calling for meetings, drafting joint statements, etc.). Identify which member organization and/or specific person will support administrative needs. One of the main reasons why informal alliances fail is because of the lack of responsibility for administrative tasks. A rotation system can also be established to share the sense of ownership amongst all members.

d. Establish working groups to tackle specific issues

Alliance members can identify and establish Working Groups (WGs) to address a specific issue or topic within the overall alliance's purpose. WGs can be established at the beginning of an alliance or on an as-needed basis. Examples of WGs include both crosscutting topics (such as *sectorial public budget tracking*, or *relations with the Parliament*, or thematic topics (for example, *extension policy group* in an alliance in the agriculture sector). The WG will require separate coordination and will undertake its own activities in coordination with other WGs and under the umbrella of the alliance. The WG system should be flexible but also strategic: some members may join more than one WG or none at all, while other members may be a natural leader in a WG due to their resources or background. There is no need to create WGs for all purposes. As biologists say, the need creates the organ.

e. Clearly identify tasks and responsibilities

No action should be agreed on without clear responsibilities: an activity should be disregarded if alliance members aren't prepared to invest time and resources in a proposed activity. There is nothing more demotivating than planning things that will never happen. Discuss and assign the basic tasks for successful implementation of an activity, so that there is clarity and agreement on the deliverables and the process. Once responsibilities are assigned, the alliance should not micro-manage the implementation. Every organization has its own style and as the Jemez Principles recommend, the alliance is 'united in the diversity'.

6. Meet only when needed, and always have an agenda

It is important to agree on the frequency of the meetings. Bi-monthly meetings are usually a good start, although the frequency may change depending on the intensity of the advocacy moment, the size of the alliance, the role of the working groups, etc. Although face-to-face interaction is a critical way to strengthen relationships, meeting is just a medium to reach an objective so be sure there is an agenda that aligns with the alliance's objectives. Meetings without a clear purpose creates frustration and demotivates people. Meetings should only happen when there is good reason to meet, such as agreeing on a strategy, exchanging updates and agreeing on next steps after changes in the policy landscape, presenting results of reports or studies commissioned by the alliance, discussing topics which require consensus and decision, etc.

7. Identify and build off existing resources

It is important to identify the existing human, technical and financial resources available to reach the alliance's goal. The diversity of resources that members bring is a significant benefit to working in an alliance. Consider these resources and related strategic activities before considering complex activities that may require extra resources. Alliance members may also be able to re-purpose their internal resources to meet the alliance goals. For instance, a think-tank may adapt a study to align with the alliance aim; or a NGO can allocate time from project staff to support the administrative needs of the alliance. Tapping existing resources might also include leveraging research, policy analysis, budget assessments, or program evaluations to support evidence-based advocacy.

The Innovation Network developed a 'Coalition Assessment Tool' that assesses the capacity and impact of the coalition. Although the tool is developed for a traditional coalition, the tool can be used to identify the strengths and gaps of the alliance. The Coalition Assessment Tool can be found [HERE](#).

8. Work with the government, when appropriate

Influencing the government is key to promoting a policy change. There are many ways to do so, including outsider tactics of public mobilization and insider tactics of lobbying behind the scenes. There is no one size fits all approach, each context will require different tactics. In general, a multi-stakeholder alliance will opt for a constructive and engaging attitude, instead of a confrontational position.

Some important issues to keep in mind:

- Government officials are not necessarily always the 'power holders'. Identify the key 'power holders' that will be the alliance's target through a stakeholder power analysis. Sometimes technical staff in governmental institutions can be more influential in policy making than high profile officials or ministers. A stakeholder map such as the one below can be used to identify key stakeholders and their position on an issue:
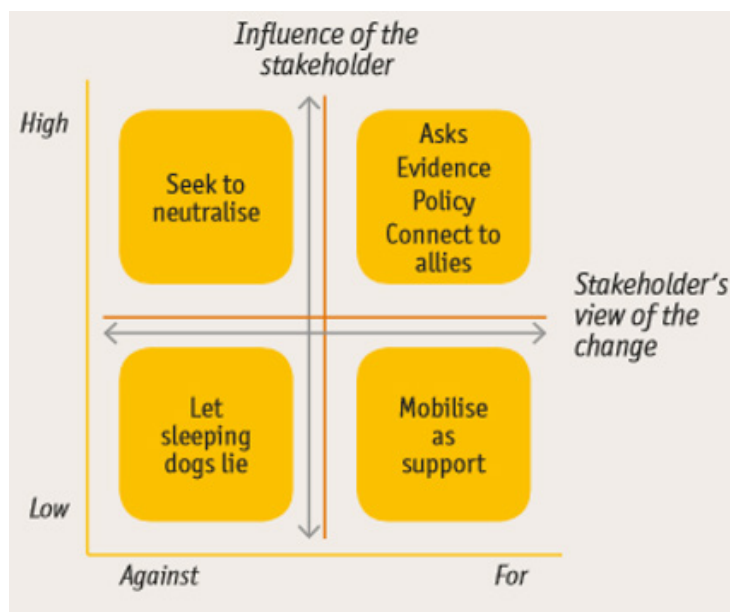
- In decentralized administrations, it is also important to engage local authorities.
- Government resistance to change can be based on (mutual) mistrust. Notify the government about the alliance, its membership and purposes and invite government officials to relevant events and meetings for relationship building. In general, maintain a line of communication to build mutual trust and confidence.
- Not all alliance members may be equally placed to influence the government, so in some cases the alliance may prefer to access the authorities using its best positioned members. In these cases, it will be important to make sure that the message is delivered on behalf of the whole group.
- Even if trying to avoid confrontational positions, there may be difficult situations when the alliance will want to clearly stand-up and openly oppose a government stance. However, there may be members who prefer to stay silent, and the alliance needs to come to an agreement based on the alliance's purpose.

9. Invest in relationship-building with alliance members

For an alliance to be transformational, it requires trust and respect across the membership. Besides regular meetings, it is extremely useful to undertake activities that not only advance the aims of the alliance, but also promote relationship building. For example,

- Cross-organizational visits to field projects of alliance members to get first-hand insight on the members' work
- Pooling experts and staff from various members for joint reports, surveys, etc.
- Joint celebrations of related advocacy moments including, but not limited to: Earth Day, International Women's Day, and other events
- Social events
- Co-organize workshops, conferences, seminars and similar activities
- Establish periodic space for feedback and to surface challenges to strengthen trust across members, ensure transparency and equitable relationships. One way to do this is to circulate periodic anonymous surveys which are co-created by alliance members and distributed by the co-chairs, followed by immediate review, follow-up and open discourse to discuss the survey results.

10. Assess the results

Monitoring and evaluation is essential to assess if the alliance fulfilled the purpose, and to evaluate the quality and effectiveness of the alliance's efforts. Ideally, this evaluation should be conducted by a non-member (e.g. a company or consultant to be contracted for this purpose), but an evaluation committee can be created in the alliance if time or resources are limited. This evaluation will require interviewing the alliance members and the different partners the alliance engaged. The evaluation should include concrete recommendations and a timeframe for implementation of recommendations. In the absence of funding for a formal evaluation, it is important to set aside time to discuss how well the alliance is or is not working. A facilitator could be brought in to help the group go through an evaluation exercise. Individual alliance members may also want to monitor and evaluate the impact of the alliance on their specific advocacy goals. These learnings can be leveraged by the alliance.

Potential Challenges and Risks:

Challenges and Risks	Contingency Measures
Unrealistic expectations. There is a trend in the development community to be unrealistic on what is achievable.	Alliances must be extremely careful when selecting their purpose, activities and tactics. It is important to define the purpose and activities, and ensure the resources for successful implementation are/will be available. Be clear and transparent about what is possible, and what is not.
Overshadowing by INGOs. INGOs usually have more technical and financial resources than local NGOs or non-NGO members. Although it may be unintentional, INGOs may overshadow other members and this can create uneasy situations (others may see the alliance as an 'NGO club').	INGOs should be ready to intentionally restrain their profile when appropriate, leave space in the alliance for the voices and ideas of the other members, and redirect resources to smaller NGOs or non-NGO members.
Lack of representation from civil society/the affected population. Member-based organizations can sometimes be less representative than what they claim and lack members from grassroots organizations and representatives from the affected population.	As organizations grow into larger establishments, it is common for them to become disconnected with civil society and the affected population they work to support. Smaller grassroots organizations or civil society actors can bring an important added value due to their close relationship with the community. While large organizations with a large membership base (or large pool of resources) is an added-value, it should not be a requirement for joining the alliance, otherwise actors and smaller organizations with close links to the affected population will be discouraged from joining.
Political bias. It is common to for member-based organizations to mirror the political divisions present in the country. In certain contexts, civil society organizations are organized along partisan lines.	This should not be a problem since diversity in political stances can strengthen your alliance by showing the issue is important to various political parties. However, it is important to ensure awareness of biases, so that a balance is kept and the various associations with different ideological or political orientations are equally represented.
Lack of resources by local CSOs. Frequently, CSOs lack the financial resources, expertise and staff required to actively participate in the alliance. This can affect their motivation and engagement.	INGOs and donors in the alliance may consider ways to help CSOs to afford mobilization and other costs related to the alliance membership. INGOs must be careful to ensure transparency on this front from the beginning, so as not to create false expectations.
Limited participation. Alliances can become dominated by a few members, so other members may feel there is no space to participate. In other cases, some members are participating in the alliance without active engagement.	It is important to give the opportunity to those organizations which are less active to engage further. This usually requires fostering understanding of their motivation or rationale for joining and/or (not) participating and making an explicit effort to incorporate those who feel left out

Key Lessons Learned:

- **Each member brings something unique.** Each organization brings something special to the alliance, and these differences should be embraced through the tactics. The beauty of a multi-stakeholder alliance is the immense amount of knowledge, expertise, capacities and influence that it brings together. Brainstorming sessions where every alliance member can propose its contributions towards achieving a shared purpose are more useful than outlining lists of potential activities and assigning them to members. INGOs can bring advocacy know-how and project experience, universities and research centers contribute evidence-based research and data; CSOs bring the voice of the people; and donors have direct access to government... and all this, collectively, can create colossal synergies to produce real changes.

- **Personal bonds are important.** Organizations are made up of people. Building a relationship of trust and mutual confidence amongst the alliance members is not just about approaching the organizations, but also building bonds among the very people that form them.

- **Be transparent.** Transparency is extremely important in alliance-building, particularly when members' interests and aims may conflict or when resource levels and power levels differ amongst members. Every member should have access to all information relevant to the alliance. It is useful to develop a system for regular information-sharing amongst the members (update briefs, shared folders for resources, blogs, etc), and to produce and circulate the meeting minutes, alliance plans, reports, etc. Transparency within the alliance helps avoid impressions that only some members have all the information and/or are in control.

- **Re-assess your value.** Don't feel obligated to maintain the alliance if its value has diminished. If interest or utility is gone, it is better to end the alliance. Alliances are purpose-oriented so, if the purpose is achieved and no additional purposes are identified, or if the initial purpose is no longer possible, there is no reason to keep it running. With that said, the re-assessment may identify a new purpose for the alliance or decide to re-convene at another point when an opportunity surfaces.

- **The power of enthusiasm and partnership.** It is not only accomplishments that matter in an alliance, but also the sense of enthusiasm that the alliance can generate. Enthusiasm is contagious, and knowing you have a network of people to rely on is empowering. At the end of the day, the ultimate goal of a multi-stakeholder alliance is two-fold: to achieve common interests, and to increase members' performance (individually/jointly). A strong sense of enthusiasm will directly contribute to achieving those goals.

Case Studies:

1. Agriculture multi-stakeholders' co-ordination group in Georgia

Bringing smallholders back to center of the policies

In 2009, the agriculture sector in Georgia was in a complete stage of abandonment. 98% of farmers were smallholders, and most of them were producing for self-consumption, while the country was importing 80% of the foodstuffs required to supply urban areas. The State was allocating only 0.3% of the budget to agriculture. The economy was growing, but agriculture was declining.

In 2010, a small group of motivated agriculture practitioners from donor organizations and NGOs (including CARE) started meeting regularly, under the informal facilitation of the European Union and the Food & Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, in what later became the **Donor Coordination Group** (**DCG**). They decided to join efforts to change the policies that were impeding small-scale farmers from gaining access to economies of scale and markets. The members of this loose alliance agreed to advocate jointly for the enactment of an agriculture cooperatives law, which would remove the barriers that were impeding farmers to sell together and pool production resources, enabling these business-oriented farmer groups to trigger the revitalization of the sector. Soon the group realized the importance of including other perspectives and bringing new allies, so farmers' associations, environmental NGOs, academic institutions and Government agencies were invited to join. By 2011, the DCG was consisted of nearly 40 organizations. Seven thematic WGs were created (on *cooperatives; agriculture education and extension services*; *access to finance*; *agriculture infrastructures*; *gender in agriculture*; *natural resources management policies*

and *rural development*), and various information tools were developed. Despite the growth, the DCG maintained its informal structure, operating in a highly flexible way. In-depth discussions on policy and technical topics were conducted regularly and research papers were presented and discussed. A set of advocacy activities were approved by the DCG such as learning events on agriculture policies for members of Parliament of the Agriculture Committee of the Parliament, presentations for the media on specific agriculture policies, or conducting research papers on specific policies and new legislation. Each member assumed leadership of a specific tactic. CARE led the rural development agenda, and organized the first-ever conference on rural development in the country, where local policy makers could get firsthand advice from world-class experts.

By 2012, the policy tide had begun to change. Triggered by the DCG activities (including monthly articles by CARE in the local news), the media started discussing the problems of the agriculture sector, and politicians finally realized that something should be done. For the first time in 15 years, the budget of the Ministry of Agriculture adjusted the budget massively, increasing budget allocation from 0.3 percent of the budget to 4 percent. A sector strategy was prepared (with inputs from the DCG) and the draft law on farmers' cooperatives was introduced in the Parliament for discussion.

In 2013, a new administration came to power. Members of the alliance were nominated for key political positions in the sector, including the new Minister of Agriculture (a former INGO director) and 2 of the 5 new Deputy Ministers. Largely due to the sustained efforts by the DCG, the new government decided to make agriculture a top priority for the country's development. The law on cooperatives, as well as the agriculture sector strategy and action plan, were approved, and an extension system was established. All these processes were coached by the DCG. In 2014, the donor-coordination functions of the DCG were officially transferred to the Ministry of Agriculture. In parallel, the **Georgian Alliance for Agriculture and Rural Development** (**GAARD**) was established, founded by Oxfam, CARE, Mercy Corps and People in Need. GAARD, which now unites 29 NGOs and farmers' organizations, took over DCG advocacy activities and has become the driving force in promoting the smallholders' agenda.

Beyond the measurable deliverables that the DCG helped to reach, perhaps its main legacy was the working style it facilitated, based on the notion that real improvement only happens when those enthusiastically motivated to change the reality for the better, work hand-in-hand.

2. Scaling Up Nutrition in Zambia

A vibrant partnership of public institutions, donors and civil society organizations

Chronic malnutrition remains a fundamental threat to the sustainable economic development of Zambia. The government recognizes the importance of investing in nutrition as an integral part of national economic development and thus was among the first countries to join the Scaling Up Nutrition (SUN) Movement in early 2011. SUN is a global initiative that aims to boost policy attention and increase resource allocation to nutrition. It is composed of governments, intergovernmental organizations, NGOs and the private sector.

The same year that Zambia joined SUN, the government and other key stakeholders created the **National Food and Nutrition Multi-Stakeholder Committee,** a governance framework coordinated by the National Food and Nutrition Commission (NFNC) in order to address the multi-sectorial dimension of malnutrition. This platform consisted of senior officials from implementing agencies from various institutions including the key line ministries, bilateral agencies, UN agencies and NGOs. The Multi-Stakeholder Committee has been instrumental in bringing together partners across sectors to support Zambia's First 1000 Most Critical Days Programme, creating multi-sector synergies for effective nutrition response. Given the multi-dimensional factors that need to be tackled to improve nutrition (food production, health systems, safety nets, WASH, and many more), the collaboration of multiple sectors was a very important and rare achievement. The Committee has also provided a common platform for resource mobilization such as the SUN fund, which is a formal pooled funding mechanism for donors' contribution to nutrition. The pool fund allowed for aligning donor priorities and improving the coherence and effectiveness of the investments. CARE and its partners, Concern Worldwide and the Nutrition Association of Zambia, are the management agents for the SUN Fund, supporting evidence-based initiatives.

3. Child Nutrition Initiative in Peru[2]

Strong political commitment and measurable, time-bound goals

In a global context where the battle to reduce chronic child malnutrition has produced slow and uneven results, Peru's relatively quick success in reducing child malnutrition is an exception that breaks the rule. A fundamental part of their success was the role of the international aid system and civil society organizations in the formation in 2006 of the Child Nutrition Initiative (**CNI**), an informal advocacy coalition formed by sixteen agencies, including the World Food Program, the U.S. Agency for International Development, CARE, and Action Against Hunger. CARE played a significant leadership role in the creation and facilitation of the CNI.

CNI recognized the multi-causal nature of malnutrition and sought to influence government policies to make nutrition the principal component in the government's fight against poverty. The CNI established an informal coordination mechanism to channel technical and financial contributions from different cooperation agencies, and served as a platform to disseminate and review government efforts in the fight against malnutrition and secure future political commitment from elected politicians. In 2006, the CNI took advantage of a pre-electoral political window to gain political commitment on a clear and concrete target: CNI worked to help ensure that 10 Presidential candidates signed a public commitment to reduce chronic malnutrition in children under five by 5 percent in five years, a goal that was effectively accomplished. In 2006, the national malnutrition rate was 29.5% and in the rural areas it was 46.3%. By 2016, the national malnutrition rate went down to 14.4% and in the rural areas it went down to 27.7%.

This model of a pre-electoral advocacy campaign was later adopted by a group of alliances and coalitions working on child rights in Peru. The alliances and coalitions joined forces and developed a shared agenda for child rights and a joint advocacy initiative ('Todos con la Infancia. Vota por la Niñez Ahora' – Everyone for childhood: Vote for children now) for Peru's 2011 national elections.

Additional Resources:

General Resources:
- The CARE International Advocacy Handbook (2014)
- The CARE International Inclusive Governance Wikipage (2016)
- Putting policy-making into practice at CARE International (2013)
- Jemez Principles for democratic organizing (SNEEJ, 1996)

Case Studies:
- Donor Coordination Group functions on agriculture officially transferred to the Ministry of Agriculture (ENPARD Georgia, 2014)
- Georgian Alliance on Agriculture and Rural Development (BRIDGE, 2017)
- Analyzing Success in the Fight against Malnutrition in Peru. (Mejía Acosta, A. , 2011)
- Effectively Engaging Multiple Stakeholders (Scaling Up Nutrition, 2014)

(Endnotes)

1   The Jemez Principles for democratic organizing were adopted by the participants on the Working Group Meeting on Globalization and Trade in Jemez (Mexico), in 1996 hosted by the Southwest Network for Environmental and Economic Justice (SNEEJ). They became a model of basic principles for how partners in development should relate to one another.

2   This case study is a summary of the analysis by Mejia Acosta (2011)