



## UNN PEOPLE

UNN Champion  
shares his tips on  
how to spark collective  
success in nutrition



REFLECTING ON EXPERIENCES IN CHAD

*Tale 1*

Mohamed Cheikh Levrac was recognized for his remarkable efforts as the Chad International UNN-REACH Facilitator during the SUN S/Heroes Reception at the 2019 SUN Global Gathering. He dedicated his distinction to his fellow colleagues in Chad, reminding the audience that the achievements were collective gains. The message was clear: every stakeholder’s contribution counts. The UN Network (UNN) Secretariat’s follow-up interview shed additional light on his inspiring work.



Mohamed Cheikh Levrac, Chad International UNN-REACH Facilitator, is honoured at the SUN Global Gathering, November 2019

UNN Secretariat/Sarah Cruz

**Question 1: Your colleagues in Chad commended your ability to put nutrition actors from different stakeholder groups at ease, to create a pleasant working environment and to help actors reach consensus. What characteristics enable you to do so? Which tools and tactics do you draw upon?**

A UNN-REACH facilitator must have certain skills and know-how, be able to work in a team and have professional leadership. The facilitator must be tactful, remain neutral and flexible, be accepted and trusted by their collaborators and partners, and be able to bring the different parties to a consensus (win-win). In the context of multi-sectoral work, everyone must have a role to play. The facilitator must recognize that role and highlight it, as this will motivate the actor or sector concerned and help them feel like they are making a valuable contribution to the process.

The use of scientific evidence and UNN-REACH tools increases awareness among stakeholders about the issue and the need for a solution. The facilitator should also act as a point of reference/resource, providing information and facilitation support to all stakeholders, as needed.

**Question 2: *Given the multisectorality of nutrition, nutrition is everyone's business but we find that it can be challenging to make it everyone's responsibility. What words of wisdom do you have for others in the nutrition community?***

**Y**es, multisectorality is everyone's business and no sustainable result or impact can be achieved without everyone's contribution. Even if we act at the sector level, we must think multisectorally. We must remember that we are pursuing a noble objective that can only be achieved with everyone's help—including ourselves. This is why each stakeholder must feel accountable, involved, and like a key actor in the process.

**Question 3: *Today, multi-sectoral nutrition actions and the coordination thereof at sub-national levels is a topic of great interest within the SUN community. In your experience, what are three ingredients for success for countries aspiring to pursue this (and three challenges) that you think they should be aware of as they embark on this task?***

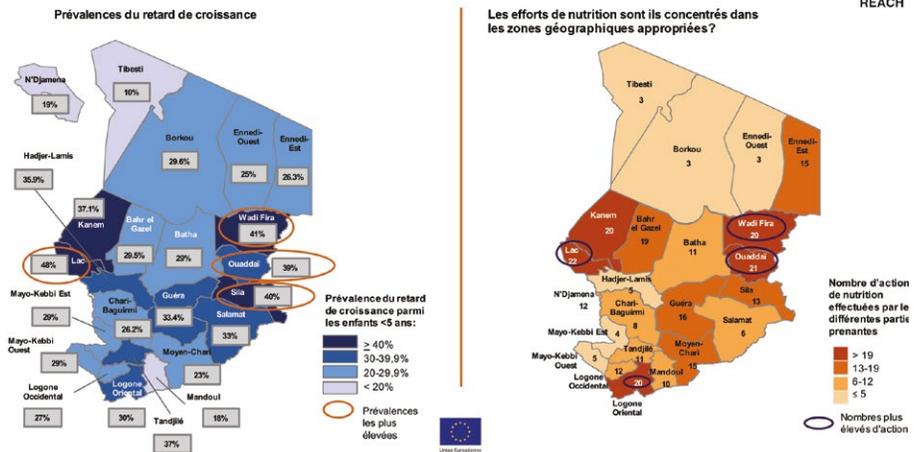
**T**his approach is inevitable if we are looking to obtain results and have an impact on indicators. At least three elements must be taken into account: (1) the *functional coordination capacities*; (2) the *involvement of local authorities and stakeholders*; and (3) *funding*. Policies, strategies and

action plans aim to scale up interventions on the ground, which requires good coordination at the sub-national (provincial) level, functional capacities, budgetary allocations and joint programming. By combining these elements, and many others, we can advance nutrition. It will not be easy because we are trying to promote a new way of working— to change habits and to motivate key sectors to give up their own flag in the name of joint efforts. It must be done in a participatory manner, and thus with the actors themselves. An effort must be made to bring stakeholders to a consensus and tools, such as the Multi-sectoral Nutrition Overview, the dashboards and the mapping exercise can help convince them and raise awareness on the issue.

**FIGURE 1.**  
Excerpt from the Nutrition Stakeholder and Action Mapping (2019) conducted through UNN-REACH

**Combien de provinces reçoivent chaque action?**

Les provinces du Lac, Logone Oriental, Ouaddai et Wadi Fira reçoivent le plus grand nombre d'actions dont deux ont également les prévalences de retard de croissance les plus élevées



With that said, the multi-sectoral approach is still new, especially at sub-national levels. Some of the major challenges we face, besides reaching a common understanding, are sustainability and empowerment. In other words, it's a question of who is going to take over, as the results documented thus far were mostly achieved through external support and expertise, which will disappear eventually. It is imperative that the mechanisms put into place are embedded into and administered by national structures with independent funding and management, thereby enabling further development and sustainability of the approach.

**Question 4: *What strategies/efforts do you recommend taking to bridge the central and decentralized workstreams to ensure coherence and maximize impact?***

**A**lthough coordination mechanisms are necessary at all levels and coordination at the central level is essential, a platform must be established in Chad's regions as activities are implemented at the field level. It is therefore necessary to strengthen capacities at the regional level, including to support regions in formulating their own inter-sectoral action plan and having autonomy in planning, implementation and monitoring. The central level must ensure continuous monitoring and support for the sub-national level, with a focus on capacity development, communication and training on decentralized planning.



**Question 5: Your colleagues captured a long list of achievements at the SUN S/heroes Reception. Which achievement are you most proud of and why?**

All of these achievements are close to my heart and were made possible thanks to the engagement of the colleagues you mentioned. What I would like to highlight here is our experience in nutrition governance at the provincial (sub-national) level.

It's a challenge that we care deeply about and on which we have been working for some time. The idea came from the UNN-REACH approach pursued in Niger, based on the convergence of activities in geographic areas. We first launched a pilot project covering five regions [in Chad]. After one year, we expanded to eleven regions and we are currently planning to establish four more provincial committees in the coming months to reach a total of fifteen regions. The convergence approach is starting to gain momentum in Chad, where nutrition actors are attending monthly meetings of multi-sectoral platforms under the Governors' authority, and where some provinces already have an Inter-sectoral Nutrition Budgeting Plan in place. Joint work is beginning to have a concrete impact at the field level.

