

BACKGROUND

From 2009 to 2014, Alive & Thrive (A&T) demonstrated that infant and young child feeding (IYCF) behaviors could be improved at scale using a comprehensive approach. Today, A&T is sharing its programmatic framework with other countries through the SUN Movement support system. Since 2014, A&T has been providing technical support to SUN Movement countries in Southeast Asia to enhance local capacity to deliver social and behavior change programs at scale. A&T also supports policy advocacy initiatives in eight countries throughout the region, including utilizing regional platforms such as ASEAN and the Inter-Parliamentary Union to promote harmonized legislation.

TECHNICAL LEADERSHIP STRATEGIES

In response to requests through the SUN Secretariat, A&T provides strategic technical assistance by:

- Guiding governments, multilateral organizations, NGOs, civil society, and the private sector in the development of multi-stakeholder plans based on the [A&T framework](#) for social and behavior change;
- Increasing local capacity by conducting in-country workshops on social and behavior change;
- Supporting each step of the formative research process, from planning and hiring a research firm to analyzing and applying the results;
- Building tools and capacity for strategic [national-level advocacy](#) for improved nutrition policies; and
- Engaging with the SUN Business Network to support and encourage workplace lactation programs.

A&T also promotes knowledge exchange through regional learning mechanisms such as study tours, regional workshops, and dissemination of briefs, guides, and other materials.

SUCCESSES

A&T's support and leadership on social and behavior change communications have contributed to:

- Four countries agreeing to multi-stakeholder social and behavior change plans focused on improving nutrition during the first 1000 days.
- Social and behavior change workshops conducted in Myanmar and Lao PDR to build the capacity of local participants to develop high-quality social and behavior change communication interventions. The workshops were attended by a diverse group of stakeholders from governments, UN agencies, civil society, and academia.
- A five-day study tour from Lao PDR to Viet Nam focused on social and behavior change programming. The delegation, including the Vice Minister of Health, government officials, and development partners, learned [about Viet Nam's successful IYCF interventions](#) through site visits, presentations, and discussions.



The delegation from Lao PDR observes a group counseling session on breastfeeding at a Little Sun Franchise in Quang Nam, Viet Nam.

A&T's approach and technical assistance for formative research contributed to:

- Collaborations with in-country stakeholders and local research agencies to develop formative research plans in Myanmar and the Philippines. Data collection is planned for 2017.

Policy and advocacy successes have included:

- A regional partnership for IYCF advocacy in Southeast Asia that helped strengthen maternity protection policies in five countries and enact and enforce BMS codes in three countries. Two countries have draft legal measures pending approval in 2017. A&T has supported these efforts through [evidence generation](#), policy dialogue, and strategic communications.
- [A&T's workplace lactation toolkit](#) was disseminated at the regional SUN Business Network conferences for Eastern and Southern Africa and Asia. We are supporting the set-up of workplace lactation programs in Cambodia, Laos, and Myanmar.



A participant from World Alliance for Breastfeeding Action (WABA) asks a question during a panel on the International Code of Marketing of Breastmilk Substitutes at the IYCF Policy Change Workshop in Bangkok, Thailand in April 2016.

FUTURE PLANS

- A&T will continue to serve as a knowledge partner for social and behavior change and IYCF advocacy in SUN countries in the ASEAN region, convening multi-stakeholder partnerships and providing technical backstopping for shared activities under national plans. A&T will also respond to requests from countries and partners in the region to replicate and expand the impact of proven approaches, tools, and materials.
- A&T will provide technical assistance to train and guide research firms in Myanmar and the Philippines to collect and analyze formative research data. A&T will work with each country to use the formative research results to design interventions and communication plans to improve IYCF practices.
- A&T will continue to support Lao PDR as they plan and implement their social and behavior change strategy.
- In response to a request for support by stakeholders in Indonesia, A&T plans to conduct a scoping mission to define the approach and scope of technical assistance requested.