Synergies between GNR2020 and UNSCN News #43

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UNSCN has been established as a UN System Standing Committee by ECOSOC Resolution in 1977.

**Mandate**

- Keep under review the overall **direction, scale, coherence and impact** of the UN System response to nutrition problems;
- Be point of **convergence** to harmonize UN policies, activities;
- Provide initiative in development and **harmonization of concepts, policies, strategies and programs** in UN System;
- **Appraise** experience and progress towards achievement of objectives, and lay down **guidelines** for mutually supporting action at UN interagency and country levels.

**Inclusive** and **open** to all **UN agencies** having significant interest or engagement in nutrition.
UN Decade of Action on Nutrition 2016-2025

Aim: to **accelerate implementation** of the **ICN2 commitments**, achieve the Global Nutrition and diet-related NCD targets by 2025 and contribute to the **realisation** of the **2030 Agenda**

- “Leave no-one behind”
- **SDG 2** “End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture”
- **SDG 10** “Reduce inequality within and among countries”
The malnutrition challenge

Globally, 1 in 3 people is malnourished

- Progress **uneven** between countries and among population groups
- Nutrition-related chronic diseases are among the leading causes of **death** worldwide

**Multiple** causes of malnutrition

- Daily living conditions
- Power relations and production systems
- Denial of the right to food and health
- Political, economic, environmental and cultural characteristics of human societies, and their interactions: → **power analysis**
- Underlying norms, values, policies, institutions and processes at local, national and global levels
HLPE Report 12 – Food systems framework

Figure 1  Conceptual framework of food systems for diets and nutrition

- **Biophysical and environmental drivers**
  - Natural resource capital
  - Ecosystem services
  - Climate change

- **Innovation, technology and infrastructure drivers**
  - Innovation
  - Technology
  - Infrastructure

- **Political and economic drivers**
  - Leadership
  - Globalization and trade
  - Conflicts and humanitarian crises
  - Food prices and volatility
  - Land tenure

- **Socio-cultural drivers**
  - Culture
  - Religions & rituals
  - Social traditions
  - Women’s empowerment

- **Demographic drivers**
  - Population growth
  - Changing age distribution
  - Urbanization
  - Migration & forced displacement

**Food supply chains**
- **Production systems**
  - Farmers, indigenous peoples, agribusiness, land and plantation owners, fisheries, financial entities
- **Storage and distribution**
  - Transporters, agribusiness, distributors
- **Processing and packaging**
  - Packing plants, food and beverage industry, small and medium enterprises
- **Retail and markets**
  - Retailers, vendors, food outlet owners, traders, restaurateurs, wholesalers

**Food environments**
- **Food availability and physical access (proximity)**
- **Economic access (affordability)**
- **Promotion, advertising and information**
- **Food quality and safety**

**Consumer behaviour**
- Choosing where and what food to acquire, prepare, cook, store and eat

**Diets**
- Quantity
- Quality
- Diversity
- Safety

**Nutrition and health outcomes**

**Impacts**
- Social
- Economic
- Environmental

**Political, programme and institutional actions**

**Sustainable Development Goals**

**Availability**, **Access**, **Utilization**
“Most people cannot access or afford a healthy diet or quality nutrition care” (2020 GNR)

2020 GNR – Food System framework

- Income
  - Food supply chain
  - Food production systems and input supply
  - Storage and distribution
  - Processing and packaging
  - Retail and marketing

- Food environments
  - Food availability
    - Type and diversity of food on offer
  - Food affordability
    - Food prices, alone and in comparison to income and expenditure
  - Product properties
    - Safety, quality, appeal and convenience
  - Vendor properties
    - Location and type of retail outlets
  - Food messaging
    - Food promotion, advertising and information

- Individual-level filters
  - Economic
    - Income and purchasing power
  - Cognitive
    - Information and knowledge
  - Aspirational
    - Desires, value and preferences
  - Situational
    - Home and work environment, mobility, location, time resources

- Consumer behaviour
  - Food acquisition
  - Preparation
  - Meal practices
  - Storage

- Diets
  - Outcomes
    - Health
    - Nutrition
    - Sociocultural
    - Economic
    - Environmental

- Ethnocity
  - Climate change
  - Globalisation and trade
  - Income growth and distribution
  - Urbanisation
  - Population growth and migration
  - Politics and leadership
  - Sociocultural context

- Power
  - External drivers
    - Geographical
Inequities and inequalities

- **Inequality**: differences and disparities in the living conditions of individuals and groups
- **Inequity**: moral dimension – process to which certain outcomes are produced. It is concerned with *fairness* and *social justice*
- **Intersecting inequalities**: combination of multiple disadvantages that can affect certain groups of people and focuses on opportunities rather than outcomes


“[...] Such an approach should take into account the need for emphasis on poor and vulnerable people who are often excluded from the processes that determine policies to promote food security and the need for *inclusive societies free from discrimination* by the State in meeting their obligations to promote and respect human rights” (art. 19 of the VGs RtF)
“Poor diets are not simply a matter of personal choices” (2020 GNR)

UNSCN News 43 - Advancing equity, equality and non-discrimination in food systems: Pathways to reform tackles the inherent barriers that exist in food systems preventing people from overcoming persistent and intergenerational malnutrition and poverty.

The articles provide a systematic analysis of food system dynamics, while identifying problems but also solutions that lie in the hands of both politicians and social actors

- Persistence of inequalities
- Multisectoral approach to malnutrition
- Power concentration in food chains
- Production methods to support healthy diets
- Food environments for healthy food choices
- Address equity in nutrition research
- The Right to Food to address systemic causes of malnutrition

“It is not just the individual who choses what to buy, grow or eat; often, the food system plays a decisive role in creating an enabling environment. “ (UNSCN News43)
Inequitable processes affect the food systems generating power imbalances that obstruct change and progress...

What are the lock-ins and how can we address them?

Challenges

• Rise of intersecting inequalities
• Growing concentration of power in food chains
• Mutual reinforcing dual consolidation
• Large players vs. small food producers/smallholder farmers
• Unequal access to markets
• Loss of dietary diversity
• Lack of disaggregated data

Opportunities

• Participation & inclusiveness
• Governance & accountability
• Food system approach (all sectors, all actors)
• Production systems to increase diversity & sustainability (agroecology)
• Human rights/Right to food approach
• Equity lens to nutrition research
UNSCN News 43 - Advancing equity, equality and non-discrimination in food systems: Pathways to reform

- Political economies as gears to unlock healthy and sustainable food systems
  - Evidence gaps & bias in understanding the health issue;
  - Framing nutrition as a matter of nutrients rather than of diets and food environments;
  - Influence of the food industry in shaping the conversation,

- Food environments that help shape positive food choices and lifestyles
  Evidence suggests: Effective approaches to reduce levels of overweight and obesity involve tackling the issues of geographical (proximity), financial (affordability) and informational access simultaneously. A right-based approach ensures that everyone has access to adequate food with dignity.

- Approaches to equity in nutrition research
  Concepts like marginalization, intersectionality and power relations can help understanding how nutritional inequalities develop and become intergenerationally entrenched and how inequity can be tackled at source.
“We should address inequities in food systems and make healthy, sustainable food the most accessible and affordable choice for all” (2020 GNR)

Opportunities: Food system approach

- Better understanding of interconnectedness → Biodiversity, climate, push for uniformity, marketing, health, etc.
- Food movements more integrated: new alliances, shifting the power balance
- Participation and accountability (global and local)

“If we are to ensure equal access to nutritious and adequate diets, we have to simultaneously tackle interlinked challenges at the individual, household, community, country, regional and global levels”

(UNSCN News43)
FOOD SYSTEM TRANSFORMATION

Build equitable, resilient and sustainable food and health systems in which all people can enjoy their Right to Food and have access to a healthy diet.

Political momentum

CFS Voluntary Guidelines on Food Systems and Nutrition
Ensuring the progressive realization of the right to adequate food in the context of national food security, the VGFSyN provide a framework to promote policy coherence and to bring various stakeholders who are involved in food systems to work together to ensure healthy diets for everyone.

UN Food Systems Summit 2021
Convened by the UNSG to raise global awareness and land global commitments and actions that transform food systems to resolve not only hunger, but to reduce diet-related disease and heal the planet.
Thank you!

A world free from hunger and all forms of malnutrition is attainable in this generation