UNSCN KM Survey Results
Summary

United Nations System Standing Committee on Nutrition

December 2020
Objective

This study aimed at collecting feedback on a set of papers published in the last five years and gain insight to what extent they have served the needs of the nutrition community.

A semi-structured online survey was distributed from November 2-25th, 2020 through the UNSCN website and global networks.
Sample

Respondents \((n=106)\) spanned 46 countries across six continents (34.9% from Africa, 27.4% from Western Europe and 20.8% from Asia and the Pacific), 83% of them being subscribers to UNSCN Newsletter. This represents 2.6% of our total subscribers.

The majority of replies came from the Academia/Research sector (39.6%), followed by Non-Governmental Organizations (19.8%) and Government sector (14.2%). We estimate that this reasonably reflects the distribution of our subscribers per their work sectors.

Despite the limited number of replies and the fact that they probably represent our most engaged audiences, the insights are fairly valid not only to hear this group’s perspectives but also to indicate general tendencies.
Overview

Downloading was largely the most used way for accessing the publications (51%), but 32% of the respondents declared they have not read at least one of the 5 selected papers.

From the ones that read the publications (68%), 92% on average considered them fairly or very useful and for 77% the publications change their views on the subject a fair amount or a lot.

The publications were said to be used mostly to inform advocacy and to identify research topics, reflecting the sectors of work of the respondents. The majority of those who have read the publications, indicated these publications had mostly strengthened their knowledge on a certain topic and provided relevant references.

There are also large differences in use patterns for publications depending on work sector.
Overview

In general, there seems to be a high level of satisfaction with the way the publications look (84%), are disseminated (80%) and languages available (86%).

The most cited suggestions for improvement were summaries (73%) and webinars (52%), and overall readers seem to really value the publications, calling for greater interaction with readers and feedback loops through, for example, more frequent Newsletters and e-alerts, and other means to have their voices heard.

Generally speaking, the publications are very well-reviewed, but the number of unread is also quite large. This may be expected and normal, but it could also point to an underlying issue with their presentation or format.
COMMENTS, SUGGESTIONS & INSIGHTS
Respondent’s comments

“Mincing words about the harm being done in so many ways by the food industry will raise suspicions now that the SCN is being exploited to give SUN a UN halo. “

“Regularity of release of publication to subscribers should improve.”

“Worried about going from UNSCN to UN Nutrition: Private sector CoI makes me trust you less. CoI of authors has to be clearly spelled out, not only in last couple years”

“Of course, I will feel elevated. Please this at the end of each report to enable the reader keep you informed.” (I understood this to mean they appreciated the survey and the willingness to collect feedback)

“These are also useful for students' courseworks. Thank you very much!”

“Thank you for your efforts and please keep up the good work.
Respondent’s suggestions

“Kindly promote online discussion groups in near future.”

“It would be a really interesting, though hard effort work, to create a worldwide network of nutritionist in order to have one place where to share experiences, improvements, research in the area and that is only open to nutritionist, where there could even be a pool of jobs or research internships.”

“SCN publications are very good. However, like most publication programs, the products are mainly monologues. Even the so-called discussion papers don’t engage readers by giving them a chance to participate. With skillful moderators, the SCN could promote constructive discussion among broad groups of interested people. The Internet and various softwares open wonderful new opportunities for SCN to host real discussions.
A separate discussion thread could be set up for specific articles in the new UN Nutrition journal. The authors could serve as the moderators.”
Insights

1. Respondents cited technical nutrition science developments as the most critical trend affecting nutrition in the future; opportunity for more publications that go in-depth on technical nutritional information.

2. There is room for a more two-directional form of publication, such as organized discussion panels or AMAs.

3. Publications, there is still a very large number of respondents who declared not to have read many of them. Consider the possibility of regular shorter-form publications that keep readers up to date on latest developments, interest them in the content and direct them to the more in-depth publications and webinars if they want it.
SELECTED GRAPHICS
PUBLICATION ACCESS METHOD

Total publication access methods (%)

- I saw it presented/ got a copy at an event: 5.28%
- Downloaded from the website: 51.51%
- At a library: 5.66%
- Someone forwarded it to me: 4.34%
- Social media: 31.32%

Total publication access methods (sum)

- Downloaded from the website: 273
- Someone forwarded it to me: 166
- I did not access it / Not applicable: 28
- I saw it presented/ got a copy at an event: 23
- Social media: 10
- At a library: 0
How useful did you find the content of this UNSCN publication?

- Very useful
- Fairly useful
- Marginally useful
- Not useful
- I did not read it / Not applicable

- COVID-19 pandemic - The evolving impact on how people meet the food system
- UNSCN Nutrition 44 - Food Environments: where people meet the food system
- UNSCN Discussion paper - Schools as a System to Improve Nutrition
- UNSCN Discussion paper - Sustainable Diets for Healthy People and a Healthy Planet
- Guidance Notes on Integration of Nutrition in the UN Development Framework
USE SCENARIOS OF PUBLICATIONS - AGGREGATE

[Aggregate of all publications] How have you used it in your work? Please indicate all that apply.
IMPACT ON WORK/THINKING - AGGREGATE

[Aggregate of all publications] How has it impacted your work/thinking? Please indicate all that apply.

- Strengthened my knowledge
- Identified new needs / inspired new focus of work
- Provided relevant references
- Did not impact my work
- I did not read it / Not applicable

Bar chart showing the impact on work/thinking across different sectors.
REVIEW OF PUBLICATION EFFICACY

Please indicate how much you believe each publication type achieves its primary purpose, as explained in each statement below:

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- I don't know / Not applicable
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

UNSCN publications are an authoritative source of nutrition information.
UNSCN Nutrition (formerly SCN News) provides a broad overview of an emerging nutrition issue.
UNSCN Policy Briefs are used as an authoritative source for decision-making.
UNSCN Discussion Papers add to the knowledge base of the topic they cover.
UNSCN Guidance Notes provide practical guidance for multiple stakeholders to act.
UNSCN Newsletter keeps me informed about the recent developments in global nutrition.
ADDITIONAL PUBLICATION QUERY

Please indicate whether you have read the following additional publications from the last 5 years:

- [ ] I have read it in full
- [ ] I have partially read it
- [ ] I have not read it

- UNSCN News 45 - Nutrition in a Digital World
- UNSCN Discussion paper - Water and Nutrition
- UNSCN Discussion paper - Urban-Rural Linkages for Nutrition. Territorial approaches for sustainable development
- UNSCN News 43 - Advancing equity, equality and non-discrimination in food systems.
- UNSCN Brief - Non-communicable diseases, diets and nutrition.
- UNSCN News 42 - A Spotlight on the Nutrition Decade
- UNSCN Discussion paper - Global Governance for Nutrition and the role of UNSCN
- UNSCN Discussion paper - Impact Assessment of Policies to Support Healthy Food Environments and Healthy Diets
- UNSCN Discussion paper - Investments for Healthy Food Systems
- UNSCN Discussion paper - Enhancing Coherence between Trade Policy and Nutrition Action
SATISFACTION QUERY

- Are you satisfied with the way UNSCN publications look?
- Are you satisfied with the methods of dissemination?
- Are you satisfied with the languages of the publications?
ADDITIONAL FEATURE SURVEY

Which of the additional features you would like to see added to make knowledge resources more user-friendly? Please indicate all that apply.

104 respostas

- Summaries: 76 (73.1%)
- Accompanying podcasts: 34 (32.7%)
- Accompanying video messages: 33 (31.7%)
- Webinars: 54 (51.9%)
- Other: 9 (8.7%)
UNSCN vision

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