

## UNSCN YEAR REPORT 2018

### Narrative

#### MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

World-wide, all countries have populations that experience multiple forms of malnutrition. For the third year in a row, undernourishment has risen. Today, almost 821 million people are chronically undernourished, 149 million children under the age of five years are affected by stunting and 49.5 million by wasting. While today, 1 in 3 people are currently malnourished, that figure is expected to grow to 1 in 2 people soon. Climate change, conflict and population growth further contribute to people's vulnerabilities. Also, other forms of malnutrition are increasingly effecting people's health and lives. Almost two billion people are overweight or obese, with wide-ranging negative impacts from a crippling of national health systems to the early onset of disease and death. While stagnating, some progress is being made. This past year has witnessed a modest reduction of stunting rates and infants are increasingly exclusively breastfed.

Tackling these challenges requires a multifaceted approach. Here at UNSCN we know that well and, over 41 years, have adapted and innovated with our UN member agencies to continually address new challenges and opportunities. Even as the foundations of multilateralism are put under extraordinary strain, there is daily evidence that progress toward a more just and sustainable world is possible.

The good news is that UNSCN has never been better positioned to be part of the solution.

We are continuously strengthening the synergies between the strategies, work plans and priorities of our members and among intergovernmental processes; helping to build bridges amongst the thematic discussions and stakeholders around the world. This has been most visible through our work to highlight how nutrition is a connecting force between the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and a catalyst to their achievement. Furthermore we have worked together to better understand why and how diets, lifestyles and food systems are changing. We have also challenged ourselves to systematically analyse food system dynamics, as well as the various causes of malnutrition, to assess how issues of equity, equality and non-discrimination are impacted by nutrition.

Our efforts to support consistent and accountable delivery and concerted roll-out in countries has meant closer collaboration with the UN Network for SUN. This harmonized approach allows us to better identify the needs of countries to ensure that UNSCN delivers effective policy guidance that responds accordingly. This alliance also guarantees that important tools, such as the [UNSCN \*Guidance Note on Integration of Nutrition in the UNDAF\*](#) are able to reach intended users for better programme design.

We are proud of UNSCN's ability to convene leading global thinkers and connect ideas from across fields and disciplines to provide insights and, ultimately, to deliver the knowledge needed to take decisive action towards a more just and sustainable world. We communicate this through our knowledge products, our ever-growing social media platforms and our redesigned website, all of which continue to receive greater attention from traditional and non-traditional actors alike.

As Chair of the UNSCN, it has been my pleasure to work with the UNSCN members from around the world as we rise to the new and urgent challenges and opportunities before us all.

Cornelia Richter  
Chair of the UNSCN  
Vice-President of IFAD

## **INTRODUCTION**

The year 2018 was the third year of UNSCN's Strategic Plan (2016-2020) and of the UN Decade of Action on Nutrition. It was also a period in which UNSCN members experienced a new sense of direction under which the UNSCN and UNN for SUN Secretariats could work more closely together, especially in the light of the UN Reform. Cornelia Richter, Vice President of IFAD, became the 13th UNSCN Chair in January 2018 by unanimous vote by the UNSCN Steering Committee and chaired two successful face-to-face meetings during the first year of her term. This past year also served to strengthen the synergies between the strategies, work plans and priorities of its members; helping members and the UNSCN Secretariat to build bridges between the thematic discussions happening around the world and to ensure a continuum of information sharing and progress on each area of work. UNSCN welcomed United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) as a new member in 2018.

## **PRIORITIES 2018**

Considering the strategic direction of UNSCN, the following priorities had been identified in line with the Strategic Plan (2016-2020) and as set out in the 2018/2019 Work Plan: (i) following-up on the outcomes of the Second International Conference on Nutrition (ICN2) and World Health Assembly targets and the 2030 Agenda, respective of UNSCN mandate, in the context of the UN Decade of Action on Nutrition; (ii) ensure coherent UN engagement in global fora, (iii) support interagency and intergovernmental bodies (i.e., Interagency Task Force (IATF) on Non-communicable Diseases (NCDs), Committee on World Food Security (CFS)); (iv) increase accountability through reporting to ECOSOC, the High Level Political Forum (HLPF), and through promotion of the Nutrition Decade; (v) take stock of experiences and the rules of engagement for the partnerships between the UN agencies and the private sector; and (vi) monitor and promote thematic work done in 2017, such as in the areas of climate, schools, NCDs and the uptake of [Guidance Note on Integration of Nutrition in the UNDAF](#), specifically at country level.

These priorities are in line with UNSCN's Strategic Objectives. For example, the first four priorities listed above are in support of ensuring coherent policies and advocacy for nutrition across the UN System (*UNSCN Strategic Objective One: Maximize UN policy coherence and advocacy on nutrition*). A stock-taking exercise of experiences and the rules of engagement with the private sector (*under UNSCN Strategic Objective Two: Support consistent and accountable delivery by the UN system*) was restructured by decision of UNSCN members in 2018 and moved to Strategic Objective Four (*UNSCN Strategic Objective Four: Promote knowledge sharing across the UN System*). UNSCN continued to scale up out-reach to target audiences to maximise knowledge sharing (*UNSCN Strategic Objective Four: Promote knowledge sharing across the UN System*).

## **SNAPSHOT OF THE MAJOR ACHIEVEMENTS OF 2018**

Building on the work done in 2016-2017 to set in motion the UNSCN Strategic Plan (2016-2020), key outcomes for 2018 include:

- UNSCN convened an [EGM Linking Nutrition with the SDGs under Review](#) (June 2018, New York) to highlight how nutrition is a connecting force between the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and a catalyst to their achievement. The results were presented at a Member State Briefing (June

2018), during a plenary session and the joint UNSCN-CFS side event [Moving to sustainable and resilient societies: the food security and nutrition dimensions](#) at the 2018 High Level Political Forum, and fed into the CFS 45 session on *Nutrition: Good Practices and Lesson Sharing* (Oct 2018, Rome).

- The uptake of UNSCN products continued to grow throughout 2018, as was demonstrated in the increased subscription to UNSCN-hosted online platforms and social media channels. This was also apparent in the fact that a wide range of organizations invited UNSCN to submit articles to help increase the understanding of nutrition as an essential component for human health and wellbeing.
- UNSCN was invited to make a formal presentation to the ECOSOC Coordination and Management Meeting (April 2018, New York) to present the work on current global nutrition challenges, including the latest Nutrition Decade developments. An official [2018 Report to ECOSOC](#) was submitted.

## **2018 IN DETAIL**

The achievements in 2018 have been listed according to the UNSCN Work Plan 2018 and its deliverables, and in line with their contribution to UNSCN's four Strategic Objectives as formulated in its Strategic Plan (2016-2020).

### **SO1 - MAXIMIZE UN POLICY COHERENCE AND ADVOCACY ON NUTRITION**

The global nutrition targets as agreed by the World Health Assembly in 2012, the global Noncommunicable Diseases targets and the recommendations of ICN2, provide a clear direction for action to fight all forms of malnutrition. These have been woven into the fabric of the SDGs, where they should be seen as crosscutting and fundamental to the achievement of the 2030 Agenda. The Nutrition Decade (2016-2025) proclaimed by the UN General Assembly (UNGA) on April 2016 amplifies this message by calling for ten years of accelerated, coordinated, global action on nutrition so that the above targets can be reached. Progress will be reported to the world leaders at UNGA, ECOSOC and HLPF so that they can use their political leverage to unlock bottlenecks and ensure that policy development and implementation is steered in the right direction.

Throughout 2018, the UNSCN Secretariat and the members worked strategically to emphasize the interlinkages between the thematic discussions happening at a variety of global fora; breaking down silos, increasing synergies between focus areas and, subsequently, increasingly the likelihood for the achievements of the 2030 Agenda through an integrated and comprehensive approach.

### **2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and nutrition**

The SDGs are profoundly transformative, cutting across technical sectors and providing a united vision for all nations. The 2018 theme of the [High-Level Political Forum](#) '*transformation towards sustainable and resilient societies*' provided a closer look at the underlying conditions and drivers necessary to meet the SDGs, including good nutrition as a building block.

Against this backdrop, [UNSCN convened an Expert Group Meeting \(EGM\) Linking Nutrition with the SDGs under Review](#) (June) in 2018. The event built on the lessons learned at the [SDG2 Expert Group Meeting](#) (June 2017), and more recently, the outcomes of the FAO-WHO-UNSCN event [Actioning Nutrition to drive the 2030 Agenda](#) held a few weeks prior at the [Stockholm EAT Forum](#) (June 2018). Experts from a wide range of disciplines (i.e. academia, research institutes, private sector, UN and civil society) spent one and a half days examining the SDGs from various angles, highlighting how nutrition can be a connecting force between the SDGs and a catalyst to their achievement. After the deliberations, key messages were delivered to Member States at a briefing by the UNSCN Coordinator. The [background document](#) linking

nutrition with the SDGs under review, as well as the [final report](#) with the key messages from this meeting, are available online.

Notably, several of the authors that contributed to the background document eventually published their submissions as standalone publications, giving credit to the UNSCN process. This included [Meeting the nutrition and water targets of the Sustainable Development Goals: achieving progress through linked interventions](#) (2018). Furthermore, the UNSCN Secretariat was invited to provide input into the [Agriculture development, food security and nutrition](#) Report of the Secretary-General to the 73rd session of the UNGA (A/73/293, Aug 2018). The final report acknowledged nutrition as an essential component to achieving sustainable food production systems, revitalizing the agricultural sector, promoting rural development and empowering traditionally excluded groups, in particular, smallholder farmers and small-scale producers within local food systems. The report also highlighted the interlinkages across the SDGs as a means to address key challenges and called for systems thinking and integrated approaches to achieve not only SDG2 but the 2030 Agenda as a whole. As a follow-up to the EGM and the earlier identified list of knowledge gaps, efforts were underway to develop two UNSCN discussion papers: i) Multidimensional linkages between water and nutrition, and ii) The New Urban Agenda: nutrition in urban-rural linkages.

The CFS Secretariat supported the UNSCN EGM event through a video message by the CFS Chair and through joint promotion of the initiative at the FAO event *The Role of the Committee on World Food Security (CFS) in Achieving the Sustainable Development Goals* (Washington D.C., April). Synergies were further strengthened during the joint CFS and UNSCN side event at the 2018 High Level Political Forum [Moving to sustainable and resilient societies: the food security and nutrition dimensions](#). The outcomes of these efforts fed into the CFS 45 session *Nutrition: Good Practices and Lesson Sharing*, which provided an opportunity for CFS stakeholders to focus on good practices and challenges in achieving the food security, nutrition and sustainable agriculture related SDGs. The conclusions further supported thematic follow-up and review discussions at the national, regional and global levels, and provided examples against which to follow progress until 2030. In 2019, UNSCN continues its engagement with the HLPF and with the CFS, lifting the profile of nutrition within the SDGs.

### **Nutrition Decade**

UNGA Resolution 70/259 called on UNSCN's coordinating function to support the Nutrition Decade. As part of the informal secretariat of the Nutrition Decade, UNSCN was instrumental in the progress made in 2018, supporting FAO and WHO in their leading and convening role.

- The UNSCN Secretariat elicited concrete commitments from its members considering their specific characteristics and comparative advantages and produced promotional videos by senior-level representatives of member agencies. This outreach will continue through 2019 and can be found on the [UNSCN website](#), including UNSCN's commitment to the Nutrition Decade.
- Throughout 2018, the [webpages dedicated to the Nutrition Decade](#) on the UNSCN website served as the main online face of the Nutrition Decade, capturing the latest updates and commitments, until the un.org website was launched in the third quarter of 2018. In parallel, the UNSCN Secretariat worked with the communications teams of WHO and FAO to develop the un.org website about the Nutrition Decade. Content was also drafted so that information about the Nutrition Decade would appear on other websites, such as the [SDG2 Hub](#).
- UNSCN staff contributed to the development of Nutrition Decade related products, such as the [Biennial report to UNGA on the implementation of the Nutrition Decade](#) and the [Strengthening nutrition action: a resource guide for countries based on the policy recommendations of the Second International Conference on Nutrition \(ICN2\)](#), which serves to advise countries on how to define, submit and report on SMART commitments to facilitate the commitment-making process.

- UNSCN promoted the Nutrition Decade through presentations made at all events attended in 2018, including by (co)hosting Nutrition Decade specific international events.

### **The Committee on World Food Security**

To ensure full integration of nutrition into the CFS, and to increase the interlinkages between these efforts and the work other international platforms, the UNSCN Secretariat and several of its members served as part of its Advisory Group and as a member of most of its Technical Task Teams (CFS TTT).

In 2017, UNSCN worked in close collaboration with the CFS to help shape the focus of the CFS's work on nutrition. For example, two of the three CFS Nutrition intersessional events that year were based on UNSCN reports - [Investments for Healthy Food Systems](#) and [Impact Assessment of Policies to support Healthy Food Environment and Healthy Diets](#).

UNSCN continued this engagement in 2018 through active participation in the CFS Nutrition Open-Ended Working Group (OEWG) to develop and finalize the Terms of Reference (TORs) for the preparation of the *CFS Voluntary Guidelines on Food Systems and Nutrition*, which were endorsed at CFS 45. The objective is to present a set of global recommendations and guidance to help decision makers better design context-specific policies, strategies, plans and programmes to address all forms of malnutrition with a more solid understanding of the food systems in which they operate. Throughout this process, the UNSCN Secretariat worked to reach consensus among members on common positions and approaches. UNSCN is also helping to soliciting ideas to take the work forward, for example, through the UNSCN-CFS hosted event [Assessing Food Systems For Better Nutrition: Towards The Preparation Of The CFS Voluntary Guidelines](#) at the IFPRI-FAO event [Accelerating the end of hunger and malnutrition](#).

Throughout 2018, UNSCN supported the workstream on Urbanization and Rural Transformation and the one on the SDGs. UNSCN also remained actively engaged in the CFS evaluation process to help strengthen the work of the CFS, including discussions about the CFS multiyear planning (MYPOW) to help shape the CFS plan of work and activities of the HLPE in the coming four years (2020-2023). UNSCN also took part in the organisation of the *Global Thematic Event on monitoring the use and application of the Voluntary Guidelines to Support the Progressive Realization of the Right to Adequate Food* at CFS 45. The efforts of UNSCN contributed to the better integration and coherent addressing of several thematic areas, including nutrition.

During the CFS's 45<sup>th</sup> session, UNSCN helped to ensure that UN members made statements that were aligned to one another, and made statements on behalf of the members who were not able to be present. UNSCN also organized two side events: [Improving Food Security & Nutrition Through Innovative Fish-Based Agri-Food Solutions](#) with the World Bank Group (see [final report](#)) and [Bringing policies to life. Translating global nutrition policy into country practice](#) with the UNN Secretariat (see [final report](#)).

### **The Inter-Agency Task Force on Noncommunicable Diseases**

A greater focus on all forms of malnutrition permeates through UNSCN's intra-member and interdisciplinary efforts. In the fall of 2016, the IATF on NCDs decided to start a thematic working group on nutrition. As convener and member of the group, the UNSCN Secretariat developed a Terms of Reference focusing on improving policy coherence and coordination for nutrition, a work plan and deliverables. The group also intends to integrate nutrition considerations in other areas of the IATF (i.e. environment, physical activity).

In 2018 the [Third High-level Meeting on the Prevention and Control of NCDs](#) took place in the auspices of the UNGA. To support the development of messages and policy statements in the outcome document, UNSCN produced [UNSCN Brief: Non-communicable diseases, diets and nutrition](#). The brief provides short overviews of various technical and policy aspects of the NCDs nutrition nexus, including a condensed

chronology of recent political processes in the areas of nutrition and NCDs, a summary of how nutrition, diet and NCDs are linked, and an overview of key intervention, programme and policy actions. The brief was also used as an input for the side-event organised by UNSCN and the UN IATF on NCDs entitled [Friends of the UN IATF on NCDs event: Supporting Member States to achieve the NCD-related SDGs targets](#) (Sept 2018, UN HQ).

Earlier in the year, the UNSCN Secretariat participated in a country mission that was conducted at the request of The government of the Philippines to enhance the support of UN agencies, individually and through the UN Country Team, to address the NCD challenges. A key element of the mission was to assess the state of national response to the challenge of NCDs in The Philippines, including through exploring the role and the potential of country and regional UN agencies and whole-of-government and whole-of-society approaches in the implementation of the national NCD agenda. Nutrition formed an important part of the mission. The mission included the following agencies: WHO, UNDP, FAO, ILO, UNAIDS, UNICEF, UNFPA, WFP, UNSCN, the World Bank and an NGO, Public Health England. During the mission UNSCN strongly suggested to look beyond the health actors and also pro-actively involve the ministry of agriculture in the attempts to make healthier diets easier accessible to the population. Consequently, the group decided to develop a checklist to help future country missions to integrate nutrition in the mission.

UNSCN joined in support of the Global Week for Action on NCDs through promotional advertising through social media, posters and a lunch event, using the opportunity to underline the nutrition role about NCDs prevention.

### **Accountability to ECOSOC**

In line with UNSCN's accountability towards Member States, UNSCN made a formal presentation to the ECOSOC Coordination and Management Meeting (April 2018, New York) to report on their work and on current global nutrition challenges, including the latest Nutrition Decade developments. The [2018 Report to ECOSOC](#) was submitted as a response to the ECOSOC decision 2018/207 focusing on *promoting the coherence and impact of the United Nations system response to nutrition problems, and to reflect on policy implications for the achieving the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.*" The report detailed the evolution of the nutrition architecture and the role of UNSCN, as well as UNSCN's effort to align its work in support of the Nutrition Decade Action Areas.

### **SO2 - SUPPORT CONSISTENT AND ACCOUNTABLE DELIVERY BY THE UN SYSTEM**

UNSCN works to develop global guidance to promote aligned and coherent action by the UN system at global and country level, in line with the 2030 Agenda. Clear common principles and frameworks should guide the process of developing and implementing local strategies, which can then be applied to specific contexts with an eye to developing locally specific and pragmatic strategies. The work of the UNSCN Secretariat in this area is carried out in close collaboration with the SUN UN Network/REACH Secretariat, which is mobilizing UN action at country level.

**Guidance Note on Integration of Nutrition in the UNDAF:** In 2017, UNSCN developed the [Guidance Note](#) to help UN Country Teams to better integrate nutrition into their planning and programming, and to reflect nutrition-related risks and opportunities in the Common Country Analysis. Early 2018, the Note was published and throughout the year, it was distributed through the SUN networks at country level, as well as the country office of UNSCN members. UNSCN will continue to work with UNDOCO and the UN Development Groups to create consistent messaging for this work to continue to stimulate consistent and accountable delivery by the UN system.

**Schools as a System to Improve School Nutrition:** School meals are known as a vehicle for getting children to school, keeping them there, and ultimately improving their learning. Good nutrition equals

improvements in math, language and cognitive test so school meals are an investment in the future. The UNSCN paper [Schools as a System to Improve School Nutrition](#) (2018) was developed from the expert capacities of the technical staff of eight UNSCN members (FAO, IAEA, IFAD, UNICEF, WFP, WHO and Bioversity International/IFPRI) with input from outside the UN family, including from BMGF, GCNF, PCD, and WB. A final draft was first presented at the [2017 Global Child Nutrition Forum](#) (Sept 2017, Canada). The findings were again presented at the featured at the *School, Food and Nutrition: Lessons learned and new perspectives for the Brazil* in Johannesburg (Nov 2017, Johannesburg), the [International Conference on School Gardens](#) (Apr 2018, The Philippines) and again at the Half-Day Seminar on Nutrition for School-Age Children (May 2018, Washington). This work supported the development of the [Home-Grown School Feeding Resource Framework](#), a knowledge product by the RBAs that harmonizes the existing approaches and tools, and builds on the wealth of expertise and experience with home grown school feeding models, and will serve as a chapter in the book *Schools, Gardens and Agrobiodiversity: Promoting Biodiversity, Food, Nutrition and Healthy Diets* (working title only) to be published in 2019.

**Sustainable food systems for better nutrition:** Food systems have the capacity to produce the food that is needed for good nutrition and human health, potentially reduce rural poverty, improve livelihoods and strengthen resilience, especially for marginalized populations. The [UNSCN Discussion Paper - Investments for Healthy Food Systems](#) describes how policies and investments can foster good nutrition and human health, However, investments in food systems are often disconnected from nutrition policies and programs. Agricultural and food investment policies aim to increase economic rates of return in the sectors rather than the quality of food produced. Therefore, UNSCN reached out to the international financial institutions and hosted, together with IFPRI, [Investment for Nutrition](#) Joint Policy Seminar. The event was well attended by the physical and virtual participation of more than 200 individuals. The discussion about investments for better health continued during the [Global Financing Dialogue](#) event in April 2018 in preparation for the [Third High-level Meeting on the Prevention and Control of NCDs](#). This event emphasized the need to invest in prevention of NCDs through healthier diets.

Another essential goal for food systems is to overcome the inherent barriers in food systems that prevent people from overcoming persistent and intergenerational malnutrition and poverty. [UNSCN News 43 - Advancing equity, equality and non-discrimination in food systems: Pathways to reform](#) (2018) was to explore some of the drivers of malnutrition, how they intersect and overlap, and how this intensifies the exclusion of certain groups of people. This is a contribution to the work to 2030 Agenda pledge to ensure “no one will be left behind” and to “endeavour to reach the furthest behind first”.

Food systems of the future also need to be better able to respond to an ever-changing climate, respectful of limited planetary resources, adaptable to the transformation of urban and rural settings, and alert to competing vested interests, to name a few. [Sustainable Diets for Healthy People and a Healthy Planet](#) was developed by UNSCN in 2017 by a core team of UNSCN experts including the UN Special Rapporteur on the Right to Food, UN Environment, Bioversity with inputs from OCHA, WHO and FAO. The outcomes of this report have featured at several international events in 2018, and is mentioned in the report by the [EAT-Lancet Commission](#) (January 2019). In 2019, UNSCN will work in close collaboration with UN Environment to streamline the findings of this discussion paper into the UN Environment Assembly (Mar 2019).

More generally, UNSCN will continue to support agencies that are developing related frameworks and discussion papers on this theme throughout 2019-2020, such as FAO, UNEP, and GLOPAN.

### **Sustainable Food Systems Programme of the 10-Year Framework for Programmes on Sustainable Consumption and Production Patterns**

Throughout 2018, UNSCN remained active in the [Sustainable Food Systems \(SFS\) Programme of the 10-Year Framework for Programmes on Sustainable Consumption and Production Patterns](#) (10YFP), newly

renamed One Planet Network. As part of its Multi-stakeholder Advisory Committee (MAC), UNSCN worked to integrate nutrition and NCDs concerns into the overall thinking of the network, making the link between sustainable production and sustainable and healthy consumption. As part of the 10YFP SFSP Communications Team, UNSCN works to customise the branding and messaging for the overall efforts of the 10YFP SFSP. A major piece of work for 2018 was the development of the document *Towards a common understanding of Sustainable Food Systems* - a publication on key approaches, concepts and terms in relation to sustainable food systems. This work is expecting to be finalized in the first quarter of 2019. UNSCN also provided extensive input to the UNEP-led *10YFP SFSP Transformative Sustainable Food Systems Framework* and disseminated this work across its membership for greater consistency and uptake.

**Treatment of Severe Acute Malnutrition and Moderate Acute Malnutrition:** Significant progress was made in 2018 to update the 2007 UNSCN joint statement *Treatment of Severe Acute Malnutrition and Moderate Acute Malnutrition*. This work is being done in collaboration with UNHCR, WHO, UNICEF and WFP (forthcoming in early 2019).

The process of developing discussion papers is another excellent example of interagency collaboration and to follow-up on activities – see the UNSCN website section [Connecting the Dots](#) for more detail.

### **SO3 - EXPLORE NEW AND EMERGING NUTRITION RELATED ISSUES**

For the Nutrition Decade to achieve longstanding results, forward thinking and adaptively to the constantly evolving nutrition landscape is essential. UNSCN is playing its part to ensure that current research covered by knowledge platforms, the academic community and the technical teams of UN agencies is sufficient to support the intensification of sustainable actions towards the elimination of all forms of malnutrition by 2030. UNSCN remains fully engaged and aware of ongoing research and pushes these communities to come forward and fill these knowledge gaps.

Knowledge gaps were identified - particularly on water, and on urban-rural linkages - during the UNSCN-hosted *EGM Linking Nutrition with the SDGs under Review*. This came as a result of UNSCN's efforts to bring together a wide-range of disciplines and connect communities that are not often part of the same discussions. This work helped to breakdown thematic silos and increase the understanding of the need for systems thinking and integrated approaches. UNSCN members agreed to develop discussion papers to be made available 2019 to provide additional insight on these themes, see SO1.

In September 2018, the UNSCN Coordinator delivered a key note address during the three day [Tropentag Conference – Food Security and Food Safety](#), calling for trans-disciplinary research to focus on knowledge gaps that had been identified with UNSCN members, such as the interaction between health and food systems; rural transformation and urbanisation and social security and nutrition. The conference gathered researchers from all over the world, working in various agriculture related disciplines and addressed issues of resource management, environment, agriculture, forestry, fisheries, food, nutrition and related sciences in the context of rural development, sustainable resource use and poverty alleviation worldwide.

Upon request, UNSCN contributed to the following publications: [Strengthening nutrition action: a resource guide for countries based on the policy recommendations of the Second International Conference on Nutrition \(ICN2\)](#) (FAO, 2018), the article [Transforming the food system to fight non-communicable diseases](#) (The British Medical Journal, available early 2019), the chapter *Ten Years to Achieve Transformational Change: the United Nations Decade of Action on Nutrition (2016-2025)* in the publication [Sustainable Diets: Linking Nutrition and Food Systems](#) (CABI, available early 2019); [FAO Policy Guidance Note #12: Food systems for healthy diets](#) (FAO, available early 2019). The goal was to increase global recognition that nutrition is an essential building block for sustainable development.

#### **SO4 – PROMOTE KNOWLEDGE SHARING ACROSS THE UN SYSTEM AND BEYOND**

Communication is the vehicle through which nutrition messages can reach wider audiences and additional partnerships and interest can be generated. With the collection of UNSCN products in place, UNSCN outreach continued throughout 2018 according to the objectives set in the *UNSCN Communication Strategy 2018/2019*. Consequently, UNSCN products and news of events regularly appeared in the news briefs of other organizations, including: IFPRI Compact, 10 YFP SFSP, IISD SDG Knowledge Hub, UN Special Rapporteur Newsletter, SDG2 Hub, the SUN Movement as well as UNSCN members. This outreach resulted in an increased awareness of UNSCN publications and several invitations for articles for members' publications and beyond.

Nutrition news and information was shared with UNSCN subscribers through six E-Alerts and four Quarterly Updates. The UNSCN audience grew considerably again in 2018: Twitter followers increasing by 550 (7,000 followers by Dec 2018), 125 on Facebook (3,151 likes by Dec 2018), an additional 450+ individuals from all over the world registering to receive the E-alerts and Quarterly Updates and 95 new followers on LinkedIn. Notable in 2018 was the amount of information forwarded from recipients to other networks.<sup>1</sup> For example, 1130 subscribers opened the email with news about the UNSCN News 43 but, through forwards to others, it was viewed by 8911 individuals. Similar experiences were witnessed with all UNSCN products proving that the content expressed was found useful and not covered elsewhere to the extent that recipients felt that it was important for others. Noteworthy, UNSCN News 43 was selected to be included in the well-recognized research database EBSCOHost, designed mostly for academics. This is additional to the numerous hard copies of UNSCN publications that are collected at international events.

UNSCN's communication products also evolved during the year in response to consumer demand. For example, the website features the news and events that its viewers have come to know and expect but now includes further detail how UNSCN is connecting the dots between the traditional and non-traditional nutrition actors and between the conversations happening across sectors. At the request of our members, E-Alerts pull together the nutrition related events during major events such as WHA70, CFS44 and UNGA to help them and UNSCN subscribers stay on top of the action.

To ensure the greatest level of engagement, UNSCN stands committed to translate its discussion papers into all six official UN languages. Contributions to online discussions and to its Call for Contributions are welcome in this manner as well. The development and publication of the discussion papers as mentioned (see SO2) also contribute to promote knowledge sharing among the UNSCN members and beyond.

In response to the decision by the members of the Steering Committee of UNN4SUN and the members of the UNSCN, the two secretariats worked together to undertake several activities under SO4 jointly. In an effort to present nutrition related news at the global and country level, UNSCN and the UNN Secretariats are teaming up to produce the first two comprehensive overview of recent developments supported and/or coordinated by the UN system: Nutrition News - [November 2018](#) and [December 2018](#). Thematic learning opportunities were also prepared with collaboration by both secretariats during the 45<sup>th</sup> session of the CFS ([Bringing policies to life. Translating global nutrition policy into country practice](#)) and during the joint meetings of members.

Regular exchanges of information by UNSCN members were encouraged throughout 2018. This included two face-to-face meetings in 2018 and well-attended bimonthly calls by all five constituent members and at least four other members and observers such as the CFS Secretariat and the UNN Secretariat. By the second quarter of 2018, these meetings were organised and held jointly with the UNN Secretariat.

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### UNSCN Communities of Practice

As part of its knowledge sharing role, UNSCN has facilitated the following online communities of practice. UNSCN will continue to support these actions in 2019 and is considering the creation of additional online communities of practice.

#### ***AREA Community of Practice***

Mid 2018, SPRING came to a close and moderation of the group was taken over by WHO. The CoP membership continued to grow to 914 members from 76 countries. In 2018, 20 communications took place on a variety of topics and one well-attended webinar was organized on “Changing The Way We Think About Cost-Effectiveness of Addressing Childhood Anemia”.

#### ***The Agriculture-Nutrition Community of Practice***

In 2018, the Agriculture-Nutrition Community of Practice continued to grow. Membership reached 6264 from 124 countries (adding 1164 members and 4 countries since 2017). In its third year, the Ag2Nut-Ethiopia Subgroup has 2526 members from 36 countries (vs. 29 in end 2017). Two new Ag2Nut subgroups were formed: Ghana and Nigeria. Ag2Nut-Ghana currently has 54 members from 12 countries, and Ag2Nut-Nigeria has 69 members from 13 countries.

Ag2Nut held four webinars, the first two hosted by the USAID/SPRING Project and the last two by the ANH Academy. Announcements are disseminated nearly daily including job postings, new publications, events and information requests. To date 1905 contributions have been posted to the global list by 434 members, and 3317 total from 764 members cumulative posts when including the subgroups. Ag2Nut webinars hosted by SPRING are still [available on their website](#), and those hosted by the ANH Academy are [available on their events page](#) by date. They include [Linking Soil Health to Human Health](#) (15 Feb), [Multisectoral Nutrition Governance: Experiences from Uganda and Zambia](#) (2 May), [Ghana, ANH Academy, and Connecting with members](#) (13 June), and [ANH report-back, and how to join Ghana and Nigeria subgroups](#) (19 Sept).

#### ***The Nutrition and Climate Change E-group***

The Nutrition and Climate Change (NutCC) egroup has 870 members from 88 countries. During 2018 the NutCC egroup has provided a forum to share information, resources and contacts of groups addressing the co-benefits of sustainable and healthy diets and nutrition-sensitive climate adaptation initiatives. Members of the NutCC egroup have contributed to the submission of positions to the UN Framework Convention of Climate Change (UNFCCC) Agriculture Koronivia work and to the Talanoa Dialogue Platform. Members of the NutCC egroup co-organized official side events on Solutions for Climate Action, Public Health & Land Use at the UNFCCC Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice (SBSTA) in Bonn, on Food and Climate Strategies at the Global Climate Action Summit in San Francisco, and on Sustainable and healthy diets and urban food procurement at the UNFCCC Climate Change Conference, COP24 in Katowice which have been broadcasted.

#### ***Nutrition and Noncommunicable Chronic Diseases – e-discussion Forum***

The NutNCD e-group, established in 2011, at the end of 2018 reached 919 members from 94 countries. This e-group is mainly an information sharing platform. In 2018, 25 communications took place on a variety of topics: updates on the high-level meeting on NCDs, the publication of interesting papers, sharing of useful tools, announcements of webinars related to the topic, etc.

## HUMAN AND FINANCIAL SUPPORT

The steady increase in membership (currently 14 official members, one associate member and two observers<sup>2</sup>) demonstrates the multi-disciplinary nature of nutrition and the growing number of UN agencies considering nutrition in their policies and programming. UNSCN builds on the mandate and strengths of its members, and works according to a principle of subsidiarity, ensuring maximum impact while avoiding duplication of efforts. The technical teams of the member agencies work to maintain the highest quality standards possible of UNSCN products.

## UNSCN Trust Fund and Budget 2018

In 2018, financial contributions were received from FAO, IFAD, UN Women and UNDESA. Support from IAEA and WFP was received early 2019. In kind contributions were received by all UNSCN members for specific activities, such as the EGM. In addition, in kind support was received from the governments of Switzerland and Germany for the EGM. A financial report will be delivered as separate document.

## UNSCN Secretariat

The Secretariat team consists of a coordinator, an administrative assistant, two full-time and one part-time consultants in 2018. It was also aided by two interns whose main tasks were archiving, helping with the preparation and reporting from meetings, and undertaking desk reviews. Additional consultants were commissioned to draft, edit, translate and design discussion papers and assist with the maintenance of the UNSCN website.

*This journey started in April 1977 when the UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) established the Sub-Committee on Nutrition (SCN). The original ECOSOC mandate (1977) remains valid: focusing on policy coherence and advocacy for nutrition at global level. The main areas of responsibility are to: i) keep under review the overall direction, scale, coherence and impact of the UN System response to nutrition problems; ii) be point of convergence to harmonize UN policies and activities; iii) provide initiative in development and harmonization of concepts, policies, strategies and programs in UN System; and iv) appraise experience and progress towards the achievement of objectives in order to be better able to develop guidelines for mutually supporting action at UN interagency and country levels.*



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<sup>2</sup> Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO), International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), United Nations Special Rapporteur on the Right to Food, UN System Chief Executives Board for Coordination (CEB), UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), UN Environmental Programme (UNEP), United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN-DESA), United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), UN Women, World Food Programme (WFP), World Health Organization (WHO), United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO), and CGIAR (formerly the Consultative Group for International Agricultural Research) through Bioversity International as an associate member. The CFS Secretariat and the UN Network for SUN/REACH Secretariat are observers.