

UNSCN Quarterly Update - Summer 2017

The Nutrition Decade Work Programme triggers commitments

May 2017 marked an effective milestone in the Nutrition Decade with the release of its [Work Programme](#). In response, [Brazil](#) and [Ecuador](#) became the first countries to make SMART commitments during the [Seventieth World Health Assembly \(WHA70\)](#). “The Decade is meant to intensify nutrition policy development, programming and actions during a time-bound window of 10 years, until 2026” said Stineke Oenema, UNSCN Coordinator from the WHA70. “This intensification of efforts is badly needed to build awareness and sharpen policy commitment and action to ensure the elimination of malnutrition in all its forms by 2030.”

Readers of the UNSCN quarterly updates will be aware of the several rounds of consultations that took place to shape the Work Programme, including with Member States during the WHA70 (May 2017). The Work Programme will also be made available during the upcoming FAO Conference (July 2017) and additional commitments will be sought.

“All UNSCN members have pledged support for the Nutrition Decade [...], and many have announced or declared their intention to announce their specific commitments in support of the Nutrition Decade” says Mrs Oenema. [IFAD](#) became the first to put their commitments in writing, focusing specifically on sustainable, resilient food systems for healthy diets (Action Area 1) and to trade and investment for improved nutrition (Action Area 4).

UNSCN will continue to capture the commitments made under the umbrella of the Nutrition Decade on their [website](#).

CFS OEWG on Nutrition Intersessional events



Two CFS Advancing Nutrition events were held in May 2017 as part of a series of events to “develop common understanding of issues and lay the basis for informed CFS policy convergence work” on nutrition and food systems.

During the first event on [Investment for Healthy Food Systems](#) (9 May) Dr. Rachel Nugent, Vice President, Chronic Noncommunicable Diseases Global Initiative described the purpose of Food System Typology and its aim to move from a categorization of countries solely along productivity indices (i.e. GDP) towards a more nuanced conceptualization of food systems. As explained, food systems have and continue to undergo structural transformations, such as shifts from labour- to capital- intensive production, less diversity in cropping patterns, and longer supply chains that include multiple processing and packaging intermediaries. These changes do not happen quickly, and are not inevitable, but their effects can be observed over time in multiple domains and ultimately determine the outcomes of a given food system. “Each community needs to define what food systems and which

measures are important to them” said Dr. Nugent. “Once communities know what they want their food systems to look like, they can make the right investments and grapple with the complexities beyond mere production and farmer salaries.” Panelists from Brazil, Cote D’Ivoire, Guatemala and Italy provided examples from their food systems in order to further help countries implement the recommendations of the ICN2 regarding their public and private investment. Going forward, work is underway to allow for a similar type of debate during an investment session in Washington where the banks and International Financial Institutions are located.

The first full day discussion segued nicely into the topic of the second event on [Impact Assessment of Policies to Support Healthy Food Environments and Healthy Diets](#) (26 May). In his opening remarks, Dan Gustafson, Deputy Director-General (Operations) of FAO, stated that food systems are increasingly challenged to provide the food necessary to contribute to healthy diets. “Business-as-usual investments are not sufficient. We need a more fundamental rethinking of food systems and governance. That is our challenge.” Dr. Anna Herforth, Research Scientist, Columbia University, and author of the related UNSCN paper, explained that policy engagement starts with trying to understand the impact of policies on nutrition. “In the past, food security and food access had mostly to do with personal factors, such as income, but it also has to do with food environments. Food environments are the interface between food systems and diets, encompassing the range of foods available, affordable, convenient and desirable to people.” Examples were provided from Calcutta, the Nsawam market in Ghana, Rome and Southern Texas showing the percentage of fresh produce available versus processed and snack foods. “If you grow up in Southern Texas, you don’t have chance to prefer a Mediterranean diet so it’s important to understand how diets are changing and mirror dietary transitions” said Herforth. “Food market environments constrain and signal to consumers what to purchase.” As reflected in the [Chair Summary](#), impact assessment tools, both ex-ante and ex-post, can provide decision-makers with analysis of the situation and the potential impact of policies on food environments and diets and nutrition.

Photo by @FAO/Cristiano Minichiello

A Spotlight on the Nutrition Decade

The upcoming issue of UNSCN News, to be published 1 July 2017, serves as a platform for sharing concrete examples on how to enhance coordination and cooperation among all actors, drive integrated action across multiple sectors, and accelerate the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals.

UNSCN News 42 is a collection of papers, from a wide range of authors outside the UN System, but also includes contribution from UNSCN members, such as:

- Maximizing programmatic linkages between nutrition and social protection by FAO
- Systemic drivers of diets, such as changes in food environments and food systems by Bioversity
- Scaling up nutrition interventions and methodology for monitoring progress by WHO
- Food-based dietary guidelines as a communication tool for health and education professionals by FAO
- Improved governance for nutrition reduces stunting among indigenous Adivasi children in Maharashtra by UNICEF
- Accelerating actions from African countries on nutrition through the United Nations Decade of Action on Nutrition by WHO and FAO

UNSCN News 42 will be available [here](#) as of 1 July 2017.

Rural-urban transformation: Connecting the dots



In the 2012 UNSCN Statement [Nutrition security of urban populations: A call for attention and joint action by UNSCN](#), UNSCN acknowledged the unique specificities of urban and peri-urban environments and the many challenges that they face in achieving food and nutrition security. As a result, it called for increased attention, awareness and research on urban nutrition as well as for an effective engagement and intersectoral and multistakeholder collaboration leading to an efficient use of urban

resources. This statement builds on the 2006 Statement [The double burden of malnutrition: a challenge for cities worldwide](#) but considers new challenges such as the effects of climate change on our food systems and livelihoods, the specific needs of women and the importance of promoting sustainable, healthy diets. However, despite the awareness raising, the call to action remains relevant: *“Rural-urban linkages need to be enhanced. Successful urban nutrition initiatives need to be better documented and more widely shared. Cities need to be empowered to do more, better and now.”*

The 2012 statement provided a useful link between these concerns, the Sustainable Development Goals and the recommendations of the ICN2 Framework for Action. Once nutrition had been integrated into the CFS process, rural-urban linkages became a topic of study through the *Addressing food security and nutrition in the context of changing rural-urban dynamics: experiences and effective policy approaches*.

Recently, several events have tried to move the conversation towards innovative solutions. At the events, [Global Forum for Food and Agriculture](#) (January 2016), [Food Security and Nutrition in an Urbanizing World](#) (June 6), [EAT Stockholm Food Forum 2017](#) (12-13 June), and through the [Expert Group Meeting on Progress in Achieving SDGs](#) (with a specific focus on implementation of SDG 11 on 14 June), UNSCN members worked to connect the various discussions. In the first event, UNSCN linked the ICN2 Framework for Action with SDG11 and the 2012 UNSCN statement, whereas in the second event, UNSCN placed urbanization and its impact on nutrition in the context of the Nutrition Decade. At the Expert Group Meeting on Progress in Achieving SDGs, the UNSCN Coordinator provided concrete suggestions of how to include nutrition in the New Urban Agenda (NUA) to ensure shared lessons learned from the CFS process result in real progress rather than mere wording in a text. This meeting was a follow-up from the event held in Quito (October 2016), where FAO emphasized the importance of food security and nutrition in urban and urbanizing contexts.

With more than 50 per cent of the world's population currently living in urban areas, and this is expected to rise to 70 per cent by 2050, particularly in developing countries, the links between rural producers and urban markets need to be strengthened. Only then will food systems be more socially inclusive, environmentally sound and less wasteful. IFPRI's 2017 [Global food policy report](#) looks at the impact of rapid urban growth on food security and nutrition, and considers how food systems can be reshaped to benefit both urban and rural populations. “Change the future of migration. Invest in food security and rural development” will also be the theme of the [2017 World Food Day](#).

Credit: @FAO/Beatrice Giorgi

Eating Better for our Health and for the Climate

UNSCN members are collectively raising awareness about the impact of climate change on nutrition, and the potential healthy diets to mitigate climate change. Under the umbrella of the [Programme on Sustainable Food Systems of the 10-Year Framework of Programmes \(10YFP\) on Sustainable Consumption and Production \(10YFP\)](#), FAO, in collaboration with UNSCN and UNEP, will host the event [Sustainable Diets in the Context of Sustainable Food Systems](#). This technical workshop will take place from 12-13 July 2017 at FAO HQ, and will enhance the understanding of the ways and means to improve current dietary patterns and food consumption trends towards more sustainable food systems for healthy diets.

In addition to this event, FAO has been ramping up its efforts on this theme by informing Member States about the links during an upcoming event during the [40th Session of the FAO Conference](#). The event [Making agriculture and food systems nutrition sensitive and climate smart](#) will be held on 6 July at the FAO HQ. Co-organised with the Netherlands and UNSCN, this event aims to bring attention to the convergence between actions to address climate change and malnutrition. Examples from high-level representatives from Fiji, Uruguay and Rwanda will present options for response through a food systems approach.

If you are unable to participate to these events in person, we welcome you to join similar discussions online by registering for the UNSCN-led Nutrition and Climate Change Egroup – e-discussion Forum [here](#). A series of events and webinars about climate change and nutrition are being organised for 2017 and will be advertised through this group, including the [International Symposium on Food Security and Nutrition in the Age of Climate Change](#), which will gather experts from international organizations, civil society, the private sector and youth groups in Quebec City from 24-27 September.

Additional information about UNSCN’s work on this theme is available [here](#), including the [ECOSOC Panel on Climate change and Nutrition](#) and the event [Ensuring nutritious diets in a climate constrained world](#).

Capturing 40 years of success on film



Those of you who have been familiar with the UNSCN for a while are aware of the significant achievements during our rich 40-year history. To capture some of those memories, UNSCN hosted a photo competition. Several submissions were received; here’s one of our favorites.

High Level Panel of Experts on Food Security and Nutrition 2nd Note on Critical and Emerging Issues for Food Security and Nutrition

At CFS42 (October 2015), the CFS decided that the HLPE “Note on critical or emerging issues in the area of food security and nutrition” should be updated, and released in due time to be used as a starting point for political debates within CFS and for the process of elaboration of the following CFS multiyear programme of work (MYPoW). This [latest version](#) (published 27 April 2017) will be presented during CFS44 Plenary Session in October 2017.

WHO Ambition and action in nutrition 2016-2025

[WHO Ambition and action in nutrition 2016-2025](#) that aims to define the unique value of WHO for advancing nutrition and to focus the Organization on what it does best. The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the United Nations Decade of Action on Nutrition 2016-2025 are giving a new and improved momentum to nutrition. Increasing challenges but more and stronger partnerships and institutions active in nutrition. With the aim to play its leadership role in this rich landscape WHO has developed “an inclusive, multi-level, fit-for-purpose nutrition strategy” with “a vision and mission for nutrition for the next ten years and an agreed set of priorities”.

UNSCN publications now translated

The following discussion papers are now available in six UN languages:

- [UNSCN Discussion Paper - Global Governance for Nutrition and the role of UNSCN](#)
- [UNSCN Discussion Paper - By 2030, end all forms of malnutrition and leave no one behind](#)

UNSCN welcomes you to visit our website for the latest trainings and upcoming events.

Upcoming Nutrition Related Events

- 7-8 July: [G20 Summit](#), Germany
- 3-8 July: [40th Session of the FAO Conference](#), FAO HQ
- 6 July: Side event [Making agriculture and food systems nutrition-sensitive and climate-smart](#), FAO HQ
- 10-19 July: [High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development](#), UN HQ
- 12-13 July: [Technical Workshop on Sustainable Diets in the Context of Sustainable Food Systems](#), FAO HQ
- 12-25 September: [72nd Session of the UN General Assembly \(UNGA 72\)](#), UN HQ
- 17-21 September: [2017 Global Child Nutrition Forum](#), Montreal, Canada
- 24-27 September: [International Symposium on Food Security and Nutrition in the Age of Climate Change](#), Quebec City
- 25 September: CFS Forum on women's empowerment in the context of food security and nutrition, FAO HQ
- 9-13 October: [Committee on World Food Security \(CFS44\)](#), FAO HQ
- 10 October: CFS Plenary – Nutrition Day
- 13-15 October: [2017 Annual Meetings of the World Bank Group and the International Monetary Fund](#), Washington, D.C.
- 15-20 October: [IUNS 21st ICN International Congress of Nutrition](#), Buenos Aires
- 16 October: [World Food Day](#), Global
- 18-20 October: [WHO Global Conference on Noncommunicable diseases: Enhancing policy coherence between different spheres of policy making that have a bearing on attaining SDG target 3.4 on NCDs by 2030](#), Montevideo, Uruguay

