



**International Geneva**  
**Directory of Geneva Global Health Actors**

**United Nations System Standing Committee on Nutrition | UNSCN**

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**BACKGROUND AND MISSION**

The UNSCN is a dedicated platform where UN agencies can have an open, substantive and constructive dialogue on nutrition strategies and initiatives. It is also a place where UN agencies can design joint global approaches, and align their positions and actions. UNSCN was created in 1977 as the administrative coordinating committee, then accountable to the Administrative Committee on Coordination of the UN, through an ECOSOC resolution. Today, several UN agencies work on different nutritional aspects and the role of UNSCN stems from the need for a platform for sharing knowledge and for facilitating coordination in this field to ensure coherent and consistent policies, programmes and advocacy initiatives. The UNSCN approach of fostering communication is through hosting plenary talks that are open to all members. Another important UNSCN principle is the delegation of responsibility to its members to lead or conduct research and policy work on nutrition, on its behalf.

**AREAS OF INTEREST**

- Nutrition
- Trade, nutrition and health
- Non-communicable diseases

**HEALTH-RELATED ACTIVITIES**

- Keeps under review the overall direction, scale, coherence and impact of the UN system response to the nutritional problems of the world, being a point of convergence in harmonizing the policies and activities. It develops guidelines for mutually supporting action at interagency and country levels providing strategic guidance to ensure engagement and investment at the highest level. One area in which coherence is needed is between trade policies and nutrition policies and programmes. This is a controversial area: some people are clearly worried about trade from a nutritional perspective
- Enhances dialogue and linkages, fostering joint nutrition action, partnerships and mutual accountability between UN agencies facilitating knowledge exchange of practices
- Communicates on global trends, progress and results and enhances global advocacy through networks and platforms

**GOVERNANCE AND STAFF**

To ensure both the efficiency and effectiveness of its processes and with a focus on results, UNSCN avails of a steering committee, which is composed of a representative of each constituent member, the UNSCN Secretariat and the UNSCN Chair. The steering committee ensures the oversight of the work of the Secretariat and approves its annual work plan and

budget. It also intervenes to reach closure on any substantive issue, not concluded or resolved in the plenary sessions. The UNSCN Chair (position currently held by Cornelia Richter) is a senior UN official, appointed by consensus amongst the principals of the constituent member agencies. The Chair maintains regular interaction with ECOSOC or any other relevant UN body. The UNSCN Chair is appointed for a term of two years that is renewable once. The UNSCN Secretariat is headed by the UNSCN Executive Secretary who is nominated by FAO. As a support to the Chair and the steering committee, the Secretariat ensures the smooth implementation of the annual work plan and the prudent management of UNSCN funding. It coordinates and oversees tasks delegated to members or other partners and coordinates the plenary talks, the UNSCN website and its products, and produces an annual activity report. The Secretariat is hosted in FAO since 1st January 2016.

#### **FUNDING SOURCES AND BUDGET**

In 2017, UNSCN relied mostly on the second half of the USD 1,000,000 from FAO (as agreed in the transfer letter) and the balance of UNSCN resources transferred from WHO (USD 431,134). With the Trust Fund fully established, financial contributions were received from IFAD, WFP, WHO, UN Women, IAEA and UNDESA. All UNSCN members agreed to support in kind. In 2017, no resource mobilization efforts took place outside of the existing members.

#### **PUBLICATIONS**

All resources are available at <https://www.unscn.org/en/resource-center>

Annual report is available at <https://www.unscn.org/uploads/web/news/UNSCN-Annual-Report-2017.pdf>

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