

# ANNUAL REPORT 2022

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## *Netherlands Working Group on International Nutrition*

### Introduction

In 2022, Arine Valstar (ETCNL) succeeded Ans Eilander (Unilever Foods Innovation Centre Wageningen) as incoming co-chair, while Leonie Barelds (UNICEF NL) continued as other co-chair. Arine was the only NWGN member who volunteered for the function of co-chair in December 2021 and all members approved her application. The coordination of the secretariat switched back to GAIN, which will be explained in more detail in the following paragraph. Linda Engelbrecht (GAIN NL) has taken over this role of Marjolijn van Leeuwen (UNICEF NL). The year 2022 was for a big part a transition year, with the external evaluation and the strategy review process based on the outcomes of the evaluation, both facilitated by New Foresight, a strategy consulting firm. Our way of working was also part of the evaluation, but remained mostly unchanged in 2022 for execution of the other activities within the NWGN. Also in 2022 it was possible to organize live meetings again. In March we organised an in person only strategy workshop which included a brainstorm session to prepare a new long term strategy for the network. Also explained in more detail further in this report. In addition to the workshop we organised 4 regular meetings, three hybrid with both the possibility to join physically as well as online and the fourth was fully online.

### External evaluation

In 2021 the official 5 year funding period by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs through both GAIN and UNICEF NL for the NWGN management and secretariat ended. As agreed with MFA in the past, both UNICEF NL and GAIN NL will host the NWGN secretariat for a new period. GAIN NL has received confirmation for a new funding round for 2022-2026 and is therefore able to take over the NWGN secretariat from UNICEF NL and allocate budget for both the secretariat and the activities from January 2022 till mid-2024. We also received confirmation from UNICEF to host the network from 2024 to 2026 to fulfil the new 5yr time period.

To successfully round up the 5 year period and get some insights to review our long term strategy for a new funding period, the management team proposed to set up an external evaluation. Strategy consultant [New Foresight](#) was hired to conduct a formal evaluation and to support us in the process towards the development of a new strategy based on the outcomes of the evaluation. New Foresight has great experience in developing strategies and new programs also within the agri food sector, as well as with both GAIN and UNICEF NL. Based on some desk research, but mainly interviews with different key stakeholders, from outside and inside the network they formulated recommendations clustered in four main topics. You can find the full report [here](#).

1. Vision/Mission: The overall vision to improve global nutrition was clear and widely supported. NWGN consists of a group of highly motivated and knowledgeable members working on nutrition security. However, the exact mission and objectives of NWGN were too broadly defined. Internal objectives have been achieved over the past 5 years, but external influence was more difficult to assess.
2. Strategy: There is a lack of focus in NWGN's scope, making it difficult to formulate a clear intervention logic and measure the strategy's impact. Activities with an internal focus –

strengthening efforts through collaboration and knowledge exchange – have been most successful.

3. **Effective organisation:** NWGN has the right group of members on board to reach its mission and NWGN has grown significantly over the past 5 years, which is a proud point but also comes with difficulties. There is sufficient funding, but relatively limited time available to achieve NWGN's broad mission
4. **Value:** Overall, NWGN is perceived as a unique organization in the Dutch landscape on international nutrition. The value to members is clear and the incentives for members to be part of NWGN are in place. Some members are proud of the external impact NWGN has made, while others think it could have been higher

### Renewed 5 year strategy

Based on the recommendations and outcomes of the evaluation and the strategy workshop, the management team of the NWGN proposed a couple of changes in our way of working and suggestions to adjust our mission and statutes accordingly. Also, we proposed a stepwise process to further look into the outcomes and determine how to best revise our strategy to be proof with the new reality from both inside and outside the network. All was discussed and agreed in the general meetings. Below you can find a summary of the proposed changes and process:

1. We revised/sharpened our mission to provide more clarity and common agreement on the terms used in the mission and added an explanatory paragraph for more details. The NWGN website will be updated based on the sharpened mission, the explanatory paragraph and the revised strategy.
2. Regarding our strategy we determined to focus on two main routes to build on the expertise of our platform: Strengthen nutrition related efforts and Knowledge & Information exchange. To further decide on the most impactful and potential activities we proposed a three step approach: (1) run a gap analysis per stakeholder group to better understand the added value of the network to support each stakeholder group to transit from their current situation to what we see as the ideal situation in accordance to our vision; (2) prioritize from the different gap analyses results where NWGN has the most added value taking into account the limited resources in time availability, expertise and sphere of influence of the members; (3) monitor nutrition achievement, by making use of existing tools in relation to our own work, for example if applicable and relevant we can publish (part of) the outcomes of the gap analyses for external awareness, but at least internally to be able to prioritize wisely and create more focus.
3. **Organization:** With the expansion of the network by welcoming different new organizations in the last years, we noticed that it's difficult to get every member involved and actively participating in our activities. To accommodate better to everyone's wishes and capacity we proposed a more tiered membership structure. In this set up, knowledge and information exchange is open to all members and our work around providing nutrition related expertise will be set up in smaller working groups with specific interested members to be able to organize more focused meetings. An overall workplan will be shared to provide the overview of ongoing and new activities based on the prioritized activities and appropriate timings. Members will be updated on progress via the general meetings and internal newsletters. Members will be asked to actively participate in the knowledge sharing and for that we also created a new spotlight item in the general meeting agenda, for individual organizations to provide a more broad nutrition update iso of a specific topic update which we do in the knowledge exchange sessions, more info on this can be found later in this report.

4. Value: with a more focused strategy as well as a more effective organization the management team hopes to provide additional value to all members. We have the right expertise from all the different stakeholder groups on board, but we can probably be more impactful when we create more focus in our activities and deal with process matters in email correspondence.
5. Because of the proposed changes in our mission and way of working, we also had a look at the current statutes (by-laws) and made a few changes to adapt accordingly. We have updated the mission and vision, the main objectives and activities as well as the secretariat and members list. Members can receive the updated version on request.

### Intermediate update on the gap analyses

The first proposed step to determine which changes might be necessary in our long term strategy and activities was a gap analysis per stakeholder group. This gap analysis looks at the current situation and the desired situation from our mission and provides insights in the possible opportunities to reach that new situation. A follow up prioritization needs to provide clarity on what the role of the NWGN can be in closing this gap based on the expertise, capacity and sphere of influence of the members within the network. To conduct this gap analysis in more or less the same way for all our different stakeholders and to provide more clarity on what the desired situation would be, we developed a TOR to determine a framework and methodology. Members Herbert Smorenburg (PWP) and Inge Verdonk (consultant) responded positively to our call. The four stakeholder groups that we identified are NGOs, government, private sector and knowledge institutes. Foundations can be added as a fifth group as this seems relevant at a later stage. We decided to look at multi-stakeholder initiatives within the different stakeholder groups, not separately.

A first exploration by Herbert and Inge showcased that it is difficult to find one uniform method as the stakeholders are different from each other. They decided to focus on the NGO group as a first example which could also inspire the other groups. Their approach consists of the following steps:

1. Quick scan consisting of a desk research and interviews to identify relevant stakeholders, including from related fields besides nutrition; existing policies and interventions in place
2. To determine where we can improve nutrition impact based on interest from the stakeholders a gap analysis should describe the current situation (validating the quickscan) and desired situation and determines the gap in between. It should be seen as an interactive process with the stakeholders involved
3. Activity analysis and prioritization: determine what can be done to close the gap through activities, capacity building, advocacy, etc taking into account NWGN mandate, feasibility, time, resources, impact, interest, etc
4. Report on the findings and documentation of the analysis and outcomes.

### Strengthen nutrition related efforts

A couple of our activities, ongoing or new opportunities coming up, were more related to our strategy to strengthen nutrition related efforts.

In spring the Ministry on Foreign Trade & Development Cooperation (BHOS in Dutch) opened an online consultation welcoming inputs for the new BHOS strategy. A subgroup coordinated by co-chair Arine Valstar was formed to answer the 10 consultation questions. After all NWGN member had the chance to comment on it this was submitted online. First scheduled for July but later rescheduled for September was a debate in Parliament on the new strategy of the Minister on Foreign Trade & Development Cooperation, 'Doing what the Netherlands is good at' that incorporated some of the BHOS consultation results. Arine Valstar (co-chair) reviewed the policy with our advocacy workgroup to determine to what extend nutrition impact was well captured in the new strategy taking into account the input we provided

earlier in the consultation for the new policy. They reiterated the key points of the NWGN position in a pitch during a briefing that NFP organised after the strategy was published and provided similar content as input for Members of Parliament in their preparations for the debate. Another pitch was made by the same co-chair at the NFP debriefing after the debate. The NWGN blog on the first pitch can be found [here](#).

Secondly, we received the opportunity from our collaboration with [Netherlands Food Partnership](#), to participate in their event on World Food Day (Oct 12) organised around the theme Nutrition in a climate smart way. We could host a lunch table in which we could further discuss with relevant stakeholders the outcomes and way forward for our [PPP](#) report in which we reviewed Dutch public private partnerships in food and nutrition security on their possibility to include nutrition impact. For this table discussion we could link the outcomes further to sustainable diets, food systems and climate. Ans Eilander (Unilever) volunteered to coordinate this project. Outcomes in short were that PPPS could be a valuable instrument to address nutrition at the COP agenda, if carefully chosen and designed. It would require a holistic approach open to real dialogues.

Finally we were able to create two new publications based on our [Urban Learnings project](#) (2021) in which we reviewed the key elements, facilitating factors and barriers of implementing an integrated approach to tackling childhood overweight and obesity in Dutch municipalities. A big part of the study was focusing on the JOGG approach and the first publication that draws attention to this report is one from the JOGG community. You can find that one [here](#). The second one was in a more scientific magazine 'Voeding NU' which you can find [here](#) and which focuses more on the role of the dietitian.

### Knowledge and information exchange

In 2022 Iris Bollemeijer (IMC) coordinated three knowledge exchange sessions with the subgroup. The first exchange in January was a session around the UN Food System Summit and N4G. Reflections were given by Mieke van Reenen (GAIN), Saskia Osendarp (MNF), Mark Wijne (ATNI) and Frits van der Wal (MFA). During the session it was discussed what the outcomes of the UNFSS and N4G could mean for the NWGN. The second KES was in May on nutrition-sensitive food security. In this session Miet Gielens (The Hunger Project), Marijke de Graaf (RVO) and Monique Beun (SNV) provided us with insights on the topic from their own experiences and programs. In the third session in September Saskia Osendarp (MNF) and Saskia de Pee (WFP) presented the impact of the Ukraine war on nutrition worldwide.

In addition to the exchange sessions on specific topics we introduced the spotlights during the regular meetings in which a specific member can provide a more general update on their organization, not focused on a specific nutrition topic. We received an update in the last two meetings from Marijke de Graaf (MFA), Yvonne Bakken (DSM), Greg Garrett (ATNI) and Nieke Westerik (Yoba for Life).

Linda and Mieke (secretariat) did a great job in setting up a google drive place where we can store and access all the relevant NGWN documents which is really enabling for the information exchange.

### Communication strategy

In 2022, the NWGN communication subgroup was put on hold until we formulated the new long term strategy, to be able to accommodate communication in line with the new strategy.

Still, the NWGN newsletter introduced in 2020 was our means to stimulate information exchange between all NWGN member organizations and to inform members on general international nutrition updates, such as new publications and relevant upcoming events. In 2022 we shared four newsletters.

Also we continued our meetings with the Netherlands Food Partnership (NFP), to coordinate activities and discuss opportunities for collaboration. Towards the end of the year monthly calls with MFA started in order to facilitate more regular communication and information exchange.

## New members

In 2022 no new members joined the NWGN.

## Finance

In 2022 the NWGN spent a total of € 69,010 (€ 38,695 from the GAIN NL 2022 budget + € 30,315 from the remaining UNICEF NL 2021 budget).

Expenditures consisted of:

- Co-chairs and secretariat
- General supporting costs (e.g. website, meetings, hospitality)
- External evaluation by New Foresight
- Input from New Foresight during the strategy refresh process

The remaining budget of € 45,279 (€ 27,305 GAIN NL 2022 + € 17,974 UNICEF 2021) will be added to the 2023 budget and used for:

- Co-chairs and secretariat
- Development framework gap analysis + lead NGO stakeholdergroup analysis (*assignment delayed in 2022, invoice to be paid in March 2023*)
- NWGN activities to be decided on in 2023
- Support to the MNF Conference in Oct 2023

## Reflection by the co-chairs

Due to the time taken by the evaluation and strategy review combined with a slow start with the gap analyses (due to various reasons), the number of externally focused NWGN activities was low in 2022. However, we experienced the external evaluation and process for a new strategy as very useful. It was good to reflect on the past 5 years and to notice that the NWGN is still a very valuable network to its members and a couple of external collaboration partners which were also included in the interviews. In addition it provided useful insights in how to further optimize our impact by sharpening our mission as well as rethinking our way of working.

The workshop as kick off for the new strategy process was valuable to share the insights from the evaluation and make a start with the development of our future strategy and plans. It was quite difficult to get members really involved in the follow up for this process which comprised of conducting a gap analysis for each of the different stakeholder groups. As co-chairs we therefore had to put more effort in this process, but besides that we're happy with the outcomes so far and will finalise this early next year. The useful insights will then be taken up in the prioritisation of activities for the 2023 workplan. We do recommend to include a specific evaluation of the strategy review process in the reflection of the final gap analyses report for future strategy reviews.

We recommend to conduct an external evaluation every 5 year, along with the funding period. But, although it provides valuable information, we do need to think of a more pragmatic way in which we can capture the perspectives and ideas of all the different members.

## Annex 1 Progress against the NWGN workplan

This workplan was based on the NWGN objectives, taking into account the process on the new strategy and agreed and updated by the NWGN members during the year. Our progress against the agreed activities is listed in the table below.

Strategy	Activities	Subgroup members	2022												
			Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	
1. Collaborate together as members of the NWGN to achieve the NWGN's purposes as described in the statutes	a. Conduct at least one face-to-face meeting in 2022. (depending on COVID-19)			█	█		█						█		
	b. Conduct (at least) five online meetings in 2022		█			█				█		█			
	c. Agree on new members for the executive committee of the NWGN (if applicable)		█				█								
	d. Build and implement NWGN 5-year strategy (incl. workshop with New Foresight)			█		█								█	
	e. Conduct external evaluation of NWGN (by New Foresight) as moment of reflection, to measure effect and progress on what we have done so far and to serve as input for new 5-year strategy						31-5-22								
	f. Annual report 2021 written and where necessary adapted and agreed						31-5-22								

	<p>g. Create and agree on the NWGN workplan for 2022 and 2023 taking into account the lessons learned from 2021 and the outcomes of the external evaluation and strategy workshop</p>												
	<p>h. Secure budget for secretariat, chairs, and activities from July 2024 and beyond</p>												
	<p>i. Reflect on development of the NWGN (balance of contribution by members, portfolio of memberships, collaboration with other organisations and platforms)</p>												
	<p>j. Further implementation NWGN communication strategy</p>	<p><b>Co-chair involved:</b> Leonie Barelds <b>Members involved in subgroup:</b> Herbert Smorenburg (PWP), Annegré de Roos (Save the Children), Mieke van Reenen (GAIN), Marjolijn UNICEF</p>											
<p>2. Knowledge &amp; information exchange</p>	<p>a. Promote internal knowledge exchange through the organisation of dedicated sessions. First topic in 2022 is 'Reflections of UNFSS and N4G. Second topic Nutrition Sensitive Food Security. Third topic Ukraine. <i>Further topics discussed throughout 2022; interest indicated in topics: food safety, "Sugar tax" evidence - or broader: proven food environment measures for sustainable healthy diets, link nutrition &amp; health, update from last year on sustainable diets/food systems&amp;environment&amp;climate</i></p>	<p><b>Co-Chair involved:</b> Leonie Barelds <b>Members involved in subgroup:</b> Iris Bollemeijer (IMC) (lead), Cindy van den Boom (MFA), Heleen Bos (Rijk Zwaan).</p>											



<p>b. Dissemination of Urban Learnings report + follow-up to further explore translation of findings to LMIC-contexts.</p>	<p><b>Co-Chair involved:</b> Leonie Barelds <b>Members involved in subgroup:</b> Mieke van Reenen (GAIN), Coosje Dijkstra (VU), Alida Melse (WUR), Regien Biesma (UMCG), Herbert Smorenburg (PwP)</p>	<div style="background-color: #90EE90; width: 100%; height: 100%;"></div>								<div style="background-color: #90EE90; width: 100%; height: 100%;"></div>			<div style="background-color: #FFD700; width: 100%; height: 100%;"></div>
<p>c. Validation and follow-up activities of PPP's report, e.g. workshop; include other (new) sources (f.e. GAIN PPP lessons learned and RVO FDOV reflections)</p>	<p><b>Co-Chair involved:</b> Arine Valstar <b>Members involved in subgroup:</b> Ans Eilander (Unilever) (Lead), Mieke van Reenen (GAIN), Mark Wijne (ATNI), Marijke de Graaf (RVO), Cindy van den Boom (MFA), Herbert Smorenburg (PwP), Heleen Bos (Rijk Zwaan), Yvonne Bakken (DSM),</p>									<div style="background-color: #90EE90; width: 100%; height: 100%;"></div>			<div style="background-color: #FFD700; width: 100%; height: 100%;"></div>
<p>d. Dissemination of FNS Recommendations d.1. Intensify contact NWGN vs. LNV / VWS to discuss how we can collaborate on these recommendations. Discuss their possible engagement in NWGN – how can policy consistency be achieved: both on international and national level. d.2. Organize 3 webinars (1. Nutrition in general (incl. promotion of our manual); 2. Nutrition sensitive agriculture; 3. FNS indicators) to be used for different stakeholders. d.3. Follow up with Ministry of Foreign Affairs on recommendations (within the different departments DDE, IGG, BIS) <i>Activities will be further refined after the 5-year strategy workshop!</i></p>	<p><b>Co-Chairs involved:</b> Leonie Barelds, Arine Valstar <b>Members involved in subgroup:</b> Cindy van den Boom (MFA), Heleen Bos (Rijk Zwaan), Marijke de Graaf (RVO), Diane Bosch (WCDI-WUR), Inge Brouwer (WUR), Saskia Osendarp (MNF)</p>												<div style="background-color: #FFD700; width: 100%; height: 100%;"></div>



	<p>g. Advocacy activities to ensure policies of the new cabinet will include nutrition sensitive and specific interventions, e.g. letters, hearing, expert session etc.</p>	<p><b>Co-Chair involved:</b> Leonie Barelds, Arine Valstar  <b>Members involved in subgroup:</b> Annegré de Roos (Save the Children), Heleen Bos (Rijk Zwaan); Saskia Osendarp (MNF), Laurien de Vos (Max Foundation), Iris Bollemeijer (IMC)</p>													
	<p>h. Follow up on outcomes of major summits in 2021 (UNFSS, N4G, COP26) <i>To be further refined after the 5-year strategy workshop!</i></p>	<p><b>Co-Chairs:</b> Leonie Barelds and Arine Valstar  <b>Members involved in subgroup: tbd</b></p>													
	<p>i. Quarterly update meetings with the Netherlands Food Partnership to stay informed, be aligned where necessary and potentially collaborate on activities. Select other relevant networks to connect for future collaboration   <i>To be further refined after the 5-year strategy workshop!</i></p>	<p><b>Co-Chairs:</b> Leonie Barelds and Arine Valstar</p>													

Green	Activity is on track
Orange	Activity is delayed and needs extra attention to be executed
Red	Activity stopped and will not happen
Blue (incl. date)	Activity completed

## Annex 2 List of current members

Name	Organisation	Name	Organisation
Alida Melse	Wageningen University & Research	Leen Nolte	Max Foundation
Anat Cassuto	The Hunger Project	Leonie Barelds	UNICEF NL
Anne Dorst	Rijksdienst voor Ondernemend Nederland	Linda Engelbrecht	GAIN NL
Annegré de Roos	Save the Children NL	Maaïke Groot	East-West Seed
Ans Eilander	Unilever	Marianne Hangelbroek	Amref Flying Doctors
Arine Valstar	Independent	Marijke de Graaf	RVO / MoFA
Babs Ates	Access to Nutrition Initiative	Marinka van der Hoeven	Vrije Universiteit
Cindy van den Boom	Ministry of Foreign Affairs	Marjolijn van Leeuwen	UNICEF NL
Diane Bosch	WUR CDI	Mark Wijne	ATNI
Dorieke Kuijpers	Amref Flying Doctors	Mieke van Reenen	GAIN NL
Eline Minneboo	Rijksdienst voor Ondernemend Nederland	Miet Chielens	The Hunger Project
Esther Busquet	International Medical Corps	Mona Dhamankar	KIT
Evelijne Bruning	The Hunger Project	Monique Beun	SNV
Florentine Oberman	DSM	Nieke Westerik	Yoba4Life
Frits van der Wal	Ministry of Foreign Affairs	Nina Leus	HAS Hogeschool
Heleen Bos	Rijk Zwaan	Regien Biesma	Universitair Medisch Centrum Groningen
Herbert Smorenburg	Choices International Foundation	Romy Harkx	Amref Flying Doctors
Hinke Haisma	Rijks Universiteit Groningen	Sandra van den Berg	HAS
Inge Verdonk	Independent	Saskia de Pee	WFP
Inge Brouwer	Wageningen University & Research	Saskia Osendarp	Micronutrient Forum
Iris Bollemeijer	International Medical Corps	Stineke Oenema	FAO
Laura Trijsburg	ATNI	Suzan van der Wilt	Max Foundation
Laurien de Vos	Max Foundation	Yvonne Bakken	DSM