Review of Nutrition Connect Summary Report

June 2020
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Overview

This summary report is intended to:

• Provide an independent, third-party assessment of Nutrition Connect, and its adherence to its objectives and editorial policies.

• Deliver strategic insights and recommendations to enhance Nutrition Connect’s impact on public private engagement (PPE) in the short- and long-term.
Methodology

FoodMinds applied the following methodology to write this report:

**QUANTITATIVE AUDIT**
Score Nutrition Connect against rubric (see next page) to consistently assess overall quality, impact, adherence to editorial policies, etc.

**QUALITATIVE AUDIT**
Host interviews with three PPE experts spanning diverse areas of food/nutrition expertise and geographies to understand perspectives on PPE and Nutrition Connect.

**DIGITAL AUDIT**
Conduct high-level site review for overall functionality, user experience and Google Analytics performance.

**ANALYSIS**
Synthesize findings across quantitative, qualitative and digital audits. Deliver assessment in final report.

**PPE experts represent:**
- Academic/public health perspective, Nigeria
- Private sector/multinational corporation perspective, USA
- Published public private partnership (PPP) thought leader perspective, USA
Methodology, continued

FoodMinds scored Nutrition Connect’s Priority Areas against the criteria below.* These criteria reflect a holistic view of Nutrition Connect’s objectives, content evaluation guidelines and editorial policies.

* Similar, but slightly streamlined criteria, was used to score all other pages on the site.

Does this Priority Area:
✓ Include a variety of different and relevant PPE models and/or approaches?
✓ Demonstrate the types of risks inherent in PPEs and how to avoid/mitigate them?
✓ Promote transparency about what works and what does not, and why?
✓ Highlight emerging issues?
✓ Include a mix of resources?
✓ Include a mix of authors from across sectors (public, private, etc.)?
✓ Feature content from credible, authoritative organizations/individuals?
✓ Include a mix of examples reflective of geographic or socioeconomic diversity?
✓ Feature current/timely content?
✓ Avoid posing any reputational risk to Nutrition Connect, The Global Alliance for Improved Nutrition (GAIN), or partners, or violate GAIN’s Principles of Engagement?

Assessed using a scale of:
Yes
No
Somewhat
Executive summary
Top strengths

• Nutrition Connect is a highly comprehensive and credible source of information on PPE and related issues. The resources it provides are substantive and robust.

• The PPE vs. PPP framing is unique and provides a clear space of thought leadership for Nutrition Connect. The PPE approach has strong potential to reduce barriers across sectors and build trust that may not always be accomplished through more formalized PPP. There are two considerations here:
  • Build awareness and acceptance for this unique framing by being more explicit in describing the differences in PPE vs. PPP and the value different PPE models can bring to multi-sector relationship-building.
  • Acknowledge that PPE has a different connotation in the era of COVID-19, and may require ongoing clarity/explanation to ensure both the acronym and meaning are clear to users.

• The selection of information and positioning of the site is quite balanced and representative of a variety of stakeholder perspectives across sectors, geographies and resource types.
Top areas for improvement

• More could be done to clearly and visibly present the purpose of Nutrition Connect, and explicitly draw the link between all information presented and its ties to PPE.
• The abundance of information and current site architecture could overwhelm users and make it challenging to find information specific to stakeholder interests and motivations.
• There is an opportunity to move users along the “journey” from visiting Nutrition Connect to learn more about PPE (and related issue areas) to channeling that learning into PPE-oriented actions, leveraging the depth and breadth of information featured across the site.
Top findings from digital audit

- Reconfiguring Nutrition Connect’s homepage could help the user immediately understand:
  - Who is this website for?
  - What is it?
  - Why should I care and why should I explore further?

- The overall information architecture could be improved for user-friendliness.
  - Updating the site’s organization, overall consistency (e.g., consistent sections across Priority Areas) and search functionality could help improve navigation and prevent Nutrition Connect from becoming a crowded knowledge repository.

- Establishing an editorial calendar with consistent posting cadence could be implemented to better attract and retain users.

- Updating the content strategy to streamline the information and simplify the information-heavy pages could better meet the needs of busy users and inspire more visitation and engagement.

- Introducing tracking and measurement of user behavior using Google Analytics is critical for long-term growth.
Detailed findings
Priority Areas ranked by performance

- Advancing partnerships: 9
- Climate and sustainability: 8
- Food fortification: 8
- Supply chains: 8
- Food loss and waste: 7
- Consumer demand: 6
- Policies, taxes & Incentives: 5
- Workforce nutrition: 5

*Number of criteria met by Priority Area*
Overarching observations

**Substantive resources**
Nutrition Connect nicely balances a primary focus on nutrition with adjacent topics that impact health and well-being, such as food safety, environmental sustainability and economic development. The resources shared are insightful, compelling and relevant.

**Credible authors**
Most of the leading voices and organizations relevant to PPE for nutrition are represented on Nutrition Connect. This lends strong credibility and authority to the site. Moving forward, more content could be added from the private sector to diversify the mix of authors.

**Emerging issues**
Nutrition Connect itself is dedicated to a critical and timely topic – PPE to advance nutrition. Effort is also made to stay current (most resources were published in 2015+). But, the latest, cutting-edge thinking around some Priority Areas could be made clearer.
Overarching observations, continued

Geographic reach
While a mix of geographies is featured across the site, global and European examples are most prominent. Including more representation from Latin America, the Middle East and North Africa would improve the balance.

GAIN prominence
The Food Fortification, Supply Chains and Workforce Nutrition Priority Areas prominently feature GAIN resources. Consider whether this presence (or absence on other Priority Areas) might raise questions and whether additional disclosure is warranted.

Content needs
While content is generally robust across Nutrition Connect pages, information gaps exist on the Resource Centre and Events pages. Given the amount of nutrition-oriented events, Nutrition Connect can continue evolving to be a popular and more engaging hub for this information.
Priority area: Advancing partnerships

Topline findings

- Includes variety of PPE approaches
- Demonstrates risks
- Promotes transparency
- Highlights emerging issues
- Features content from credible, authoritative orgs
- Features current/timely content
- Avoids posing reputational risk
- Includes a mix of resources
- Includes a mix of authors

90%

Summary observations

- This page marks the clearest achievement of objectives and editorial policies across Priority Areas.
- There is good reflection of today’s global nutrition dialogue and emerging issues, with resources touching on sustainability and food system challenges and innovations.

10%

Recommendations

- As GAIN’s “bread and butter” and the topic underpinning Nutrition Connect, consider featuring this content more prominently and distinguishing it from the other Priority Areas. See “Vision for Nutrition Connect 2.0” for more ideas on how this page can be evolved.
- Seek out opportunities to feature experiences from Latin America, as it is underrepresented on the page, as well as from small- and medium-size enterprises (SMEs).
Priority area: Climate and sustainability

**Topline findings**
- Includes variety of PPE approaches
- Demonstrates risks
- Promotes transparency
- Highlights emerging issues
- Features content from credible, authoritative orgs
- Includes geographic or socioeconomic diversity
- Features current/timely content
- Avoids posing reputational risk

**Summary observations**
- Resources span multiple topics and approaches relevant to sustainability-focused PPEs.
- The "Why it Matters" section and several resources highlight the risks of not taking action for climate change.
- Most content is global in scope, reinforcing that this is a global, systemic issue to address.
- The resources are timely and current (14 are from 2019 alone), and underscore the urgency of this challenge.

**Recommendations**
- Expand the resource types shown (most are "Advocacy and Policy") by adding more peer-reviewed articles and case studies, given the influx of research on this topic.
- Continue to diversify the mix of resources featured, as a handful of relevant resources are not included and at least six are focused on one report alone.

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- Criteria met
- Criteria not met
- Criteria somewhat met
Priority area: Food fortification

Topline findings
- Includes variety of PPE approaches
- Demonstrates risks
- Promotes transparency
- Includes a mix of resources
- Includes a mix of authors
- Features content from credible, authoritative orgs
- Includes geographic or socioeconomic diversity
- Avoids posing reputational risk
- Highlights emerging issues
- Features current/timely content

Summary observations
- Several resources include data and “lessons learned,” underscoring risks involved and how to improve future fortification efforts.
- Content from Africa, Europe, North America and Asia nicely showcases diverse examples from around the world.
- There is a robust mix of resources from authoritative organizations. However, GAIN is highly prominent and there appears to be a gap in resources from the private sector.

Recommendations
- Add more recent resources and spotlight new innovations. The “Why it Matters” section makes a strong case for fortification going beyond iodine, but it’s not clear what the latest developments are in this space. Additionally, compared to other Priority Areas, fewer resources are from 2015+, indicating a need for new content.
- Continue to diversify multi-sector perspectives represented on this page.
- Diversify the “Initiatives” and “Stories” to show a variety of active stakeholders in this space.
Priority area: Supply chains

Topline findings
- Includes variety of PPE approaches
- Demonstrates risks
- Promotes transparency
- Includes a mix of resources
- Includes a mix of authors
- Features content from credible, authoritative orgs
- Features current/timely content
- Avoids posing reputational risk

Summary observations
- Several topics (nutritious food programs, livestock markets, service delivery/finance, etc.) are represented, and many resources explore how different approaches can be scaled.
- Many sectors and authoritative groups’ perspectives are featured, but private sector is not as apparent on this page.
- Resources demonstrate transparency and risks involved.
- There is strong representation from a global perspective and the African continent, but other regions are less represented.

Recommendations
- Spotlight innovative supply chain developments to better highlight emerging issues in this space.
- Consider adding more resources from SMEs, given their unique perspective in this space – particularly in local or regional food systems.
- Add more resources from the Middle East, South Asia and North America to diversify the geographic mix.
- Diversify the “Initiatives” and “Stories” to show a variety of active stakeholders across supply chains.
Priority area: Food loss and waste

Topline findings

- Includes variety of PPE approaches
- Promotes transparency
- Includes geographic or socioeconomic diversity
- Features current/timely content
- Avoids posing reputational risk
- Includes a mix of resources
- Includes a mix of authors

Summary observations

- The copy on this tab is compelling and action oriented, with several examples of engaging content.
- Risks inherent in PPEs do not appear to be reflected in resources on this page. That topic may be more relevant in other Priority Areas, however, as food loss and waste is generally less controversial across sectors.
- There are several highly engaging resource formats featured on this page, including the food waste calculator, videos and a podcast.

Recommendations

- Explore featuring emerging and cutting-edge issues like circular economy innovation.
- Bolster peer-reviewed resources on this page, especially concerning emerging research on nutrition outcomes, noted in the “Why it matters” section.
Priority area: Consumer demand

**Topline findings**
- Promotes transparency
- Includes a mix of resources
- Features content from credible, authoritative orgs
- Includes geographic or socioeconomic diversity
- Features current/timely content
- Avoids posing reputational risk
- Highlights emerging issues
- Includes variety of PPE approaches
- Demonstrates risks
- Includes a mix of authors

**Summary observations**
- The number of case studies and peer-reviewed papers reinforce transparency around what works, why and how to scale/implement moving forward.
- There is a good mix of resources from several regions, including South Asia, Africa and Europe.
- Not all resources included in this Priority Area page appear to be relevant, and more could be done to document the risks and emerging issues.

**Recommendations**
- Spotlight emerging issues and innovations, as businesses and PPEs are constantly innovating to anticipate demand.
- Add more resources written by the private sector to further diversify the mix of authors.
- Develop clearer parameters for what counts as “Consumer Demand,” given the variety of topics featured on this page.
- Consider swapping in other "Initiatives" and “Top Resources” sections to show the variety of stakeholders active in this space.
Priority area: Policies, taxes & incentives

Topline findings
- Includes variety of PPE approaches
- Promotes transparency
- Includes a mix of resources
- Features current/timely content
- Avoids posing reputational risk

Summary observations
- Examples of risks inherent in PPE are limited and imbalanced in their focus on the private sector (tax evasion, “irresponsible” business practices, food addiction).
- While a variety of policies is included, there is an overemphasis on fiscal policies (taxes, price incentives).
- Latin America is active in implementing progressive food policies, yet few resources reflect this region.

Recommendations
- Broaden risk-based resources to portray a more balanced picture of stakeholders across the food system.
- Include more examples of PPE around emerging issues like nutrient reduction, front-of-package labeling, and marketing and advertising to children restrictions.
- Continue to diversify multi-sector perspectives represented on this page.
- Expand geographic diversity of resources, particularly from Latin America.

Criteria met
Criteria not met
Criteria somewhat met
Priority area: Workforce nutrition

Topline findings
- Promotes transparency
- Includes a mix of resources
- Features content from credible, authoritative orgs
- Includes geographic or socioeconomic diversity
- Avoids posing reputational risk
- Demonstrates risks
- Includes variety of PPE approaches
- Highlights emerging issues
- Includes a mix of authors
- Features current/timely content

Summary observations
- Most resources in this Priority Area describe business-led or self-governed efforts. Few examples of true PPE models appear to be present.
- While resources speak to barriers to implementing workforce nutrition programs, these tend to be related to internal organizational and personal employee challenges rather than PPE.

Recommendations
- Seek out resources that are more current and better speak to emerging technologies and innovations in workforce nutrition.
- Include more resources that provide the public/government perspective on this topic. Look for examples of countries that have included a worksite focus in national nutrition and obesity prevention plans and strategies.
Resource Centre

Topline findings*

- 20% Includes mix of content relevant to Priority Areas
- 20% Includes mix of population group focus
- 60% Includes mix of resource types
  - Includes mix of audiences
  - Includes geographic or socioeconomic diversity

Summary observations

- It is clear that the Resource Centre is a popular destination, as it’s the second most popular page on the site. However, some thoughtful fixes to the drop-down menu options and overall organization could further enhance user experience and impact.
- There is inconsistency between the resources shown on this page and in Priority Area, which could be due to tagging limits.
- When searching, wide variation exists in results by resource type, audience and region. Some searches return an overabundance of results and others show zero-to-few. This highlights the need for better search and tag functionality.

Recommendations

- Define the purpose/objectives for this page to better orient the user, particularly as this page is intended to be the core of the site.
- Bolster resources in regions where few currently exist - East Asia & Pacific, Europe and Central Asia, Latin America and Caribbean, and Middle East and North Africa.
- Reexamine the overall information architecture and search functionality for this page to improve readability and user-friendliness.

*Criteria for this page was streamlined and differed from others, as it was based on drop-down menu options. Criteria used is depicted next to the chart.
COVID-19 Spotlight

Topline findings*

- Includes a variety of PPE models and/or approaches specific to COVID-19 and nutrition
- Demonstrates risks
- Promotes transparency
- Includes a mix of resources
- Includes a mix of authors
- Features content from credible, authoritative orgs
- Includes geographic or socioeconomic diversity
- Avoids posing reputational risk

Summary observations

- The wealth of resources - including those focused on industry- and NGO-led responses - make it easy to find PPE models and sector-specific approaches.
- The original blog series very clearly lays out a wide range of risks involved with addressing COVID-19 and nutrition. The blog series, in particular, is rich in insight and substance.
- There is well-rounded representation across sectors, perspectives and regions.
- PPE decisionmakers agree this is an important area for Nutrition Connect to be focused on.

Recommendations

- This page is a "hub" of nutrition and COVID-19 resources and original perspectives, while also linking to several other "hubs" of nutrition and COVID-19 resources. Creating a "user’s guide" at the top of the page could help users navigate which hubs, platforms, resources, etc. would be most useful and relevant to them. Or, consider organizing by sector (business/industry, NGO, etc.).

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*"Highlights emerging issues" & “features current/timely content” were not included as criteria, given COVID-19 is inherently an emerging and timely issue.
Events

Topline findings*

- Shows events of the appropriate size and scale for Nutrition Connect’s objectives
- Is comprehensive
- Is user-friendly to navigate

Summary observations

- The events and organizers shown are credible and compelling.
- Most events are global in scope, but several are European-based.
- User functionality issues make this page more difficult to navigate than others on Nutrition Connect.
- While there is a diverse range of featured event topics, several notable events through 2021 could be added.

Recommendations

- Add a clear call-to-action for readers to submit events.
- Bolster events through 2020-2021+, and archive or remove 2019 events.
- Diversify the geographic reach of events.
- Consider creating an internal protocol to determine which events are featured.

*Criteria for this page was streamlined and differed from others, given the nature of the content shown. Criteria used is depicted next to the chart.
**Blogs & Views**

**Topline findings**

- 20% Features diverse viewpoints and perspectives
- 60% Includes a variety of different and relevant PPE models and/or approaches for nutrition
- 60% Demonstrates risks
- 60% Reflects all Priority Areas
- 20% Promotes transparency

**Summary observations**

- Perspectives from around the world are nicely represented.
- Overall content is focused on sharing personal experiences and thought leadership.
- Content is limited (fewer than 30 posts) with strong emphasis on COVID-19 (at least 13 posts).
- Four Priority Areas are missing posts (Climate and Sustainability, Consumer Demand, Food Fortification, Food Loss and Waste).

**Recommendations**

- Develop a content calendar and schedule for posting a new blog at least once/month. Focus first on Priority Areas that are not reflected on blog.
- Add a clear call-to-action for users to submit blogs, given the strong interest conveyed in user comments.
- Expand the topics list in the drop-down menu to include non-Priority Area content (COVID-19).

*Criteria for this page was streamlined and differed from others, given the nature of the content shown. Criteria used is depicted next to the chart.*
News
- Recommend removing the "News" page (from both the Nutrition Connect site overall and the “News” section of the COVID-19 page). Instead, simply capture relevant, major articles under Priority Areas and tag as “Blogs/news/opinion.”

Together for Nutrition
- Consider moving this content to be under the “Get Involved” page, as it’s a clear way to channel online engagement into offline action.
- Emphasize the PPE-focus of this unique course, so it’s abundantly clear why it belongs on Nutrition Connect. Based on PPE decisionmaker interviews, they were unclear how this effort explicitly ties to Nutrition Connect’s focus.

Get Involved
- This is an ideal page to provide a clear, direct call-to-action and house site engagement opportunities in one place.
User comments

Recommendations

• Create a single destination (e.g., new tab or page under “Get Involved”) for users to submit comments and questions. Include a general questions/comments form and the “Share Your Work” form here, as well as a button on the blog page to arrive at this common destination.

• Be more clear and direct about who should submit information and why, and include instruction on what information to submit (for a blog, a resource, an event, etc.).
  • This was reinforced during PPE decisionmaker interviews, as there was interest in submitting case studies, content, etc., but uncertainty about how to do so.

• Include word limit parameters on the general questions/comments form to limit spam.

• Consider adding an FAQ page to proactively answer common questions submitted in user comments (e.g., job openings).

• Under “About Us,” post a “Careers” page or button to GAIN’s website to preempt questions about employment opportunities and direct users to the areas of the site they seek.
Future opportunities
A perspective

• As the world now contends with four pandemics – climate change, undernutrition, obesity and COVID-19, PPE is more necessary than ever to achieve meaningful, impactful progress.

• At the same time, PPE around nutrition can be more challenged by issues of trust and funding than PPE in the agriculture, food safety and food technology spaces.

• A focus on action – beyond recognition and making recommendations – is critical when challenges abound and reports are abundant.

• Nutrition Connect could be that catalyst and convener for PPE-oriented action, with an evolved approach that takes key audiences on the journey from:
  • Seeking out information that is credible, relevant and transparent
  • Channeling new knowledge into multi-sector action
  • Informing best practices on PPE moving forward
Vision for Nutrition Connect 2.0

- Work to break down siloes across sectors and move towards driving PPE-oriented actions. This can be done in a number of ways to help better identify and activate new partners. Nutrition Connect can:
  - Facilitate interactive discussion forums for live conversation and resource sharing among users.
  - Host events (e.g., webinars) that feature best-in-class examples, lessons learned, different models for PPEs that advance nutrition, etc. This will help continue to bring the substantive resources on the site to life.

- Provide a perspective on “best practices” in PPE approaches. While audience research can help validate the best approach, this can be scaled in a variety of ways:
  - Make this an ongoing topic of discussion during aforementioned events or live discussions.
  - Evolve the “Advancing Partnerships” page from a “Priority Area” to provide more original guidance/perspective from Nutrition Connect on these approaches.
  - Create an Advisory Board that develops a best practices guide for PPEs for nutrition or meets regularly to identify new/emerging issues in the PPE space.

- Award a prize (grant, recognition, etc.) for the most innovative application of PPE (in various categories to reflect a balance of sectors, geographies and scale) and feature the winners on Nutrition Connect (and beyond).
  - This could evolve into a “PPE Incubator,” led by Nutrition Connect, that provides funding for PPE innovations to test and identify best practices and advance the field.
Contributors
Contributors

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About FoodMinds

FoodMinds is a division of Padilla, an independently operated, globally resourced public relations and communications agency.

We keep our fingers on the pulse of the holistic landscape impacting the food system globally – from nutrition and public health, to environmental sustainability, to food safety and security, among other Food Values – and apply our insights to bring FoodMinds’ unique brand of strategic planning and counsel to the table.

We engage our 20 on-staff registered dietitians, as well as nutrition strategists, scientists and academics, culinary leaders and food experts, public relations and marketing professionals, issues management and consumer insights experts, social and digital media specialists and science writers who embrace challenges and champion evidence-based solutions.

We work with organizations across the food system and around the world, including leading commodities, food and nutrition companies, brands and associations, that recognize positive and sustainable public health change is good business. We are consumed by food.