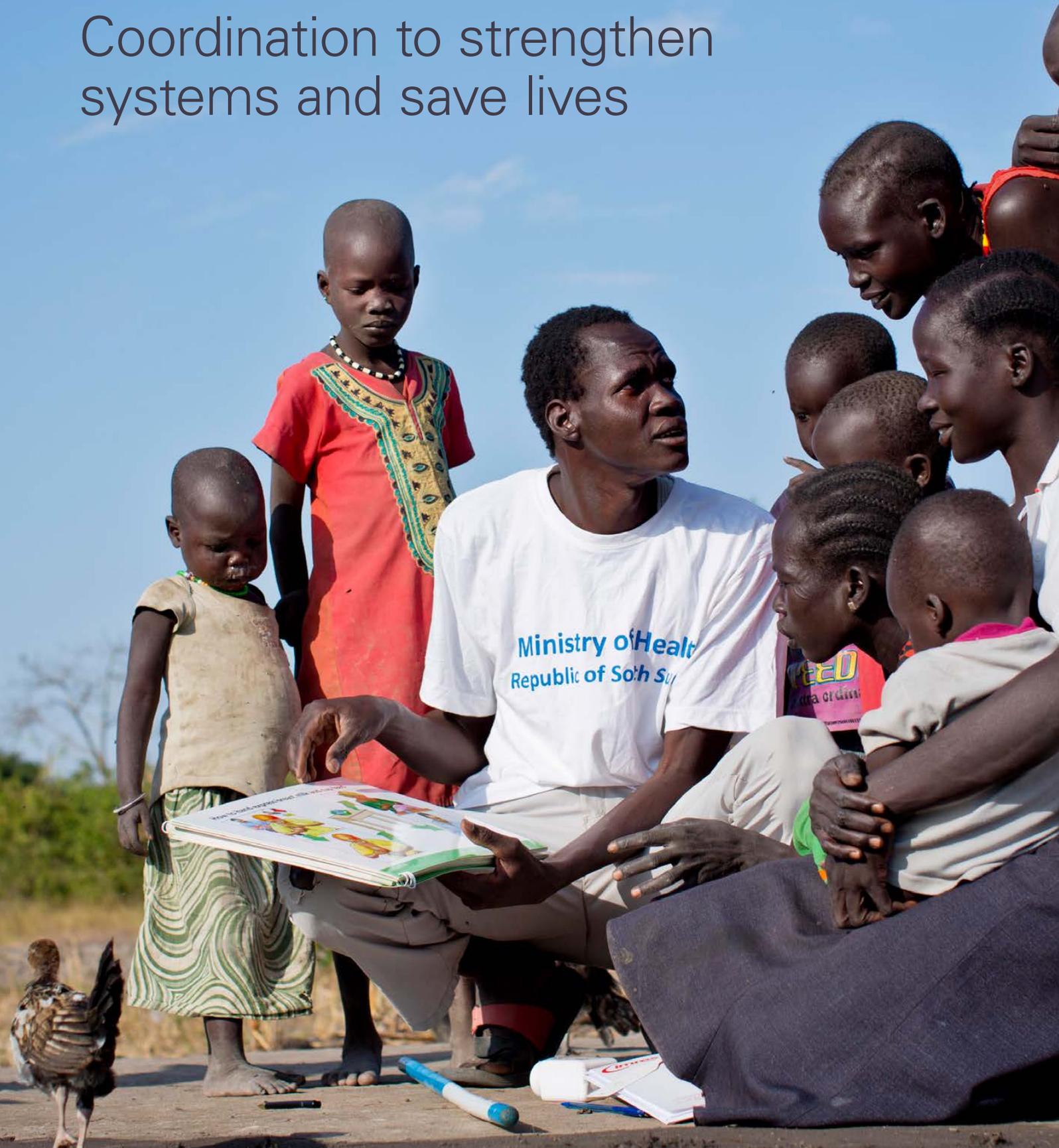


The Global Nutrition Cluster

Coordination to strengthen
systems and save lives



There is global recognition that cluster coordination is vital to effective humanitarian response. It prevents gaps, avoids overlap in services and ensures that the response reaches the populations most in need. Good coordination allows partners to complement one other rather than compete, adding value by driving greater results together.

When it is effective, coordination can also be difficult to 'see'. Much of it occurs behind the scenes, with little fanfare. But that does not mean we can take it for granted. Quality cluster coordination during emergencies requires capacity, commitment, investments and leadership to sustain.

GLOBAL NUTRITION CLUSTER



Uniting to safeguard the nutrition of children and women in emergency response

For more than a decade, the Global Nutrition Cluster (GNC) has been coordinating rapid, high-quality and effective nutrition responses. This coordination protects crisis-affected populations from undernutrition, ensures they receive urgent treatment and care when needed, protects developmental gains, and leaves communities, local organisations and authorities better placed to respond to future crises.

Led by UNICEF, the Cluster Lead Agency for Nutrition, the GNC is a collective of 46 partners and 10 observers, providing support to 23 countries affected by humanitarian crisis. A small elected group of partners serves as a Strategic Advisory Group to guide strategic priorities.

Global Nutrition Cluster Coordination Team (GNC-CT) is established and funded by UNICEF, provides leadership and day-to-day support to countries. When an emergency is declared, the GNC immediately deploys surge staff for coordination and/or technical support. Rapid Response Teams support coordination and information management, while the interagency Technical Rapid Response Team is available to provide rapid, flexible, technical expertise. This surge support complements the work of country Nutrition Cluster Coordinators, Information Management Officers and the cluster partners on the ground. At the same time, a remote 24-hour Help Desk provides country teams with immediate support on coordination, advocacy, normative guidance and a range of other

issues. The GNC Coordinator and Deputy provide overall leadership and strategic guidance for coordination operations.

After years of preparation, the GNC is also launching a new global technical mechanism for addressing and streamlining technical support and communication between country and global level. This includes a technical advisory body poised to respond to emerging technical issues, including addressing capacity gaps to improve programme quality and developing new interim guidance where none currently exists.

The power of global coordination

An effective emergency nutrition response is technically sound and grounded in evidence; it is well-coordinated and supported by adequate human and financial resources; and it is monitored and evaluated to ensure that it is serving populations in need.

Countries in the depths of crisis cannot do this work alone. The power of the GNC is its ability to achieve consensus among partners for scaling up country-level nutrition response and ensuring that standards are translated into actions that uphold human rights and ultimately save lives.



Advocating a response to nutrition needs and gaps

- The GNC, partnering with national clusters, provides a global platform for sharing results from emergency assessments of the situation on the ground, advocating for partners to ensure there are no gaps or duplication in services and that resources are being maximized.



Strengthening national capacities

- The GNC deploys urgent on-the-ground surge support to fill gaps and strengthen the capacities of local actors to better prepare for and respond to crisis.



Monitoring for effectiveness

- The GNC monitors and evaluates the performance of the nutrition response and recommends corrective actions to better reach the populations in need.



Responding with quality and accountability

- The GNC coordinates the actions of multiple partners to deliver an emergency response that is transparent, accountable to affected populations and delivered with quality and equity.



Mobilizing resources and action

- The Global Nutrition Cluster is a powerful advocate for countries in crisis, harnessing global financing and giving country concerns a global voice.

Priority outcomes for 2018

During its most recent meeting in March 2018, GNC partners reviewed their 2017–2021 strategy, including the strategic priorities set to guide their work in the coming years. In the current context of limited funding, partners prioritized immediate outcomes to be achieved in 2018 to have the greatest impact on field coordination and improve the quality of nutrition response.

In terms of operational support before, during and after a crisis, the GNC will prioritize support to national coordination platforms to ensure they can fulfill their role in coordination. The GNC will also work to ensure that the pool of nutrition personnel available to support coordination and information management in humanitarian crises is sufficient to meet the demand.

Advocacy for improved, integrated and coordinated nutrition response during humanitarian crises continues to be critical. The GNC will commit to integrating and monitoring nutrition-sensitive objectives within other cluster plans, including Food Security, Health and Water, Sanitation and Hygiene.

Enhanced partnerships and greater communication, visibility and resources will be critical to achieving these strategic objectives. The need to invest in technical leadership to deliver coordination accountabilities effectively is recognized for the first time in UNICEF's 2018-2021 Strategic Plan, signalling the Cluster Lead Agency commitment to fulfilling its technical leadership role within the GNC mandate.

During the March meeting, cluster partners presented new tools being developed to improve coordination – including a gap analysis and mapping tool and an inter-cluster training package. These new, and other existing tools will allow Nutrition Cluster Coordinators to do their work more effectively and improve the quality of nutrition emergency preparedness and response. The development of such tools by the GNC collective means they can be shared and adapted by countries, thereby improving efficiencies and saving time and resources.

Facing the financing challenge

The GNC is facing unparalleled resource constraints, and the situation is growing increasingly urgent. Indeed today, the Global Nutrition Cluster is experiencing its largest ever funding shortfall – at a time when the need for effective coordination has never been more critical.

Globally, the number and scale of emergencies is greater than ever before, and humanitarian actors are working to prevent and treat undernutrition in increasingly challenging contexts. At the same time, there are greater ambitions to link humanitarian and development systems, to better integrate work across sectors, and to strengthen national and local capacities for emergency preparedness and response.

This work requires long-term investments. Without immediate resources to fund its workplan, the Global Nutrition Cluster will face severe restrictions in its ability to serve countries and ensure accountability to crisis-affected populations.

We know what the lack of coordination looks like – and more importantly, how it affects the individuals and communities to whom we are accountable. It means duplicating services while missing others; it means disorganization and a lack of consensus among partners; and it means a lack of equity for crisis-affected children and families. We have been there before, and we cannot go back.

What will it take?

In 2018 alone, the GNC will require \$US2.5 million to sustain its surge support to countries, to support integration with other key sectors, and to continue strengthening the capacities of partners and Nutrition Cluster Coordinators and their teams at country level. This financial support will translate into a more streamlined, effective and equitable nutrition response for crisis-affected populations, including in refugee settings, while maintaining a global Help Desk for systematic country-level support. Only half of the required resources have been met by UNICEF, therefore more donor contribution is needed.

As the world faces an increasing number of protracted emergencies, greater investments will also allow the GNC to engage in longer-term planning and support country clusters in strengthening preparedness, managing risks and building resilience.



Snapshot of Global Nutrition Cluster Achievements

- **Coordinated nutrition interventions** during emergencies for more than 517 million people through 23 Humanitarian Response Plans and four Refugee Response Plans.
- **Conducted 57 Rapid Response Team deployments** since 2012, to 23 high priority countries totaling 1,923 days with an average deployment duration of 7.3 weeks per deployment
- **Provided real-time support** through a 24-hour HelpDesk to 32 priority countries, responding to requests for support from an average of nine countries each month.
- **Delivered capacity building trainings** to 514 Nutrition Cluster Coordinators, Information Management Officers and cluster partners since 2014.

Global Nutrition Cluster

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