



Review of the Nutrition Cluster National Technical Working Groups

Current functioning and recommendations for the way forward

March 2019

Acknowledgments

I would like to thank all those who have contributed to this review by filling the online questionnaire and taking the time to discuss with me their opinions, challenges and proposed solutions. A special thanks to Josephine Ippe who guided me throughout the process and to Mija Ververs for reviewing the methodology and the questionnaires.

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Executive Summary

The Global Nutrition Cluster is in the final process of setting up a Global Technical Mechanism (GTM) whereby a system is in place to address the technical issues and questions in nutrition in emergencies. Part of creating this system entails understanding how the current structures providing technical support function at country level. This review aimed to understand what is the current functioning of nutrition cluster Technical Working Groups (TWGs), what are the main challenges faced by TWGs, and what are the actions that are required at different levels to improve the technical program quality in nutrition in emergencies.

In order to gather the information needed, an online survey questionnaire was developed and answered by 33 National NCCs, IMOs and TWGs lead and members. In addition, 22 key informants were consulted between September and October 2018. A consultation with the wider GNC participants and the NCCs during the GNC annual meeting in Amman in October also helped shape some of the recommended actions.

The results show that the TWGs that were most present in countries are the Assessment, IYCF-E and CMAM TWGs. The main challenges TWGs face are the lack of time or competing priorities of the TWGs members, lack of commitment to the TWG, staff turnover and the lack of leadership.

It was clear that developing and updating national nutrition policies and guidelines with the government is one of the tasks of TWGs that required most time, dedication and patience: a lot of back and forth is needed with the government validating body.

Currently, there is no structured way to request for technical support as a TWG. This process is person dependent and not system dependent, this further highlights the need for the Global Technical Mechanism.

Following this consultation, it is recommended to set up as soon as possible as a preparedness measure the three main TWGs, namely CMAM, IYCF-E and Assessment in prioritised disaster and conflict prone countries. Although all three groups might not be useful in all settings, it is highly recommended to consider having all the groups functioning to keep abreast of changes in the technical arena and be prepared with the right processes and resources before an emergency strikes. Although updating the national nutrition guideline is a crucial step in preparing for an emergency, it is not recommended that TWGs be solely responsible for this time consuming task. UNICEF in country should take the lead and the responsibility to support Governments with the update of National Nutrition Guidelines in crisis prone and priority countries while actively consulting with the TWGs in place.

To address the lack of commitment of TWGs members, more stringent criteria should be in place for choosing members and especially for choosing leads of TWGs as well as diversifying the TWGs membership. A clear work plan needs to be developed for each TWG with deliverables and responsibilities and roles outlined. A systematic evaluation of the country TWGs would need to be incorporated in the yearly calendar-including evaluation of the TWG governance. Actions would need to be put in place to adjust the performance.

Although this review aimed exclusively at exploring how TWGs currently function in country and how the GNC Help Desk can tailor technical support to better fit the current needs, it also contributed to understand what actions need to be in place at global level for optimal technical support to countries.

This review further more underlined the gap in a systematic –not person dependent- support to countries in technical nutrition in emergencies issues and pointed at the need for a systematic mechanism to respond to the collective needs.

Acronyms

BMS	Breastmilk Substitute
CDC	Centre for Disease Control
CLA	Cluster Lead Agency
GNC	Global Nutrition Cluster
GNC-CT	Global Nutrition Cluster – Coordination Team
GNC Collective	GNC-CT, UNICEF as CLA, and global partners
GTM	Global Technical Mechanism
HNO	Humanitarian Needs Overview
HPC	Humanitarian Program Cycle
HRP	Humanitarian Response Plan
HTP	Harmonized Training Package
IFE	Infant Feeding in Emergencies
IMAM	Integrated Management of Acute Malnutrition
IMO	Information Management Officer
INGO	International Non-Governmental Organization
IPC	Integrated Phase Classification
IYCF-E	Infant and Young Child Feeding in Emergencies
MAM	Moderate Acute Malnutrition
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
MUAC	Mid Upper Arm Circumference
NCC	Nutrition Cluster Coordinator
NiE	Nutrition in Emergencies
RRT	Rapid Response Team
ToR	Terms of Reference
TWG	Technical Working Group

SAG	Strategic Advisory Group
SOP	Standard Operating Procedure
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
WFP	World Food Programme
WH	Weight for Height
WHO	World Health Organization

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1.0 Introduction

The Global Nutrition Cluster (GNC) is in the process of setting up a Global Technical Mechanism (GTM), permanently led by UNICEF and for the next two years co-led by WVI. The GTM is a system set up to address the technical needs, issues and questions raised by country clusters in nutrition in emergencies and then provide technical support to the collective whether remotely or in country, including the development of interim consensus driven guidance where gaps on guidance is identified by the field. The establishment of GTM is the fruit of years of reviews and consultations amongst the nutrition community to improve technical quality of nutrition in emergencies. Part of creating this system at global level entails understanding how the current structures that provide technical support function at country level. This review aimed precisely to look into how technical support is currently provided in country and how to best structure technical support through the GNC Help Desk. Although this review was done to better tailor the GNC Technical Help Desk Officer work, it also contributed to understand what are the actions recommended to be in place to build an optimal GTM.

2.0 Objectives

This review aimed at understanding how program quality of nutrition in emergencies can be improved. The specific objectives of the review were to understand what is the current functioning of nutrition cluster Technical Working Groups (TWGs), what are the main challenges faced by TWGs, and what actions are needed by the GNC Technical Help Desk Officer to provide tailored support to countries.

3.0 Methodology

3.1. Documents review

A review of past presentations, reviews on the NiE technical body, ToRs and minutes of TWGs was done. The full list of documents reviewed can be found in **Annex 1**.

3.2. An online survey

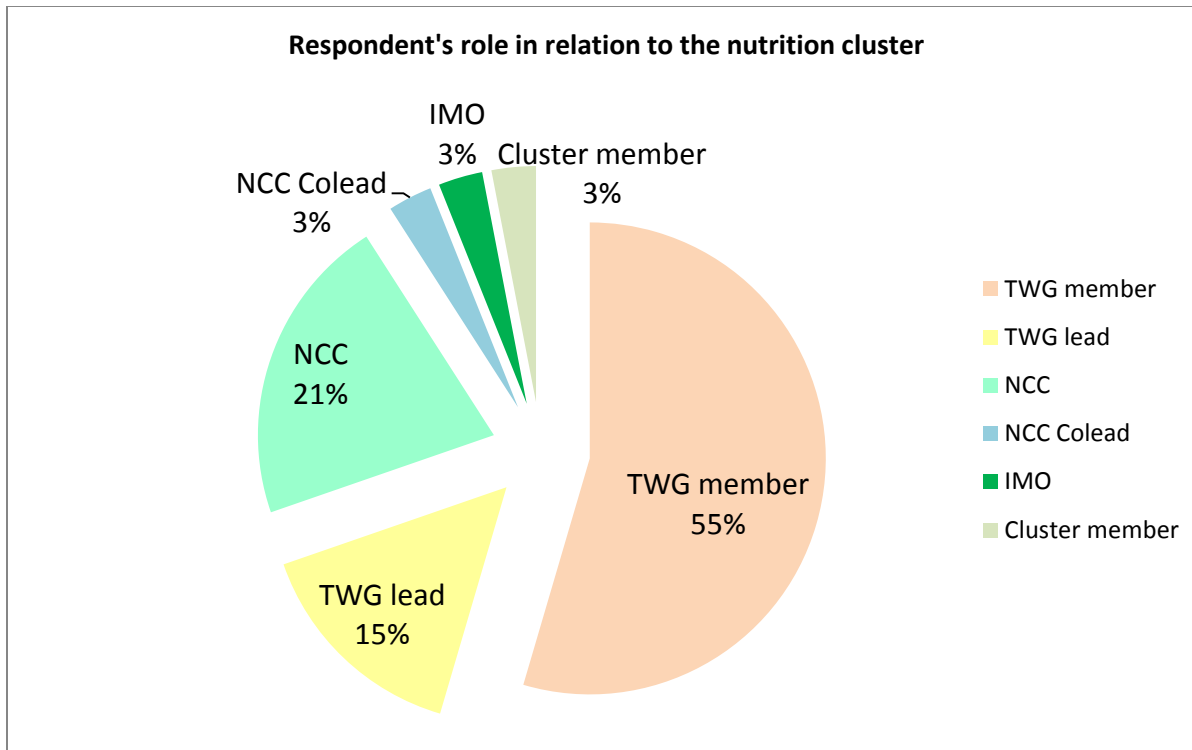
An online survey questionnaire was developed and sent to all the Nutrition Cluster Coordinators (NCCs), Information Management Officers (IMOs), TWGs lead and TWG members. The online questionnaire gathered general information related to the TWGs such as their number, type, structure, working modalities, core functions and outputs. A copy of the online questionnaire can be found in **Annex 2**.

Out of the 35 responses to the online questionnaire, 33 were analyzed as one was a double entry and the second was not complete. The data that was analyzed was from 12 countries and 15 locations. The respondents were from the following countries: Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Democratic Republic of Congo, Ethiopia, Malawi, Mali, Nepal, Sudan, South Sudan, Turkey, Yemen and Zimbabwe. The highest number of respondents came from Bangladesh, Mali, Nepal and Turkey.

The 33 respondents were from 18 different agencies or institutions including notably the Ministry of Health and the WASH cluster. A little less than half of the respondents were UNICEF staff. The partners who responded were from United Nations Children's Funds (UNICEF), PAC, Orient, Assistance Coordination Unit, SHED, Action Against Hunger, Save the Children, World Vision International, Nepal Technical Assistance Group (NTAG), Ministry of Health Nepal, Netherland Red Cross, Cluster WASH, Premiere Urgence Internationale, OXFAM, ACTED Mali, WFP, FHI 360 and Hellen Keller International, which clearly represents a mix of both international and national NGOs as well

Among the respondents, 55% (18) were TWGs members, 15% (5) TWGs leads, 21% (7) NCCs, and 3% (1) for each category IMO, Nutrition Cluster Co-lead and member of the nutrition cluster.

Figure 1 Role of respondents in relation to the nutrition cluster



3.3. Individual key informant interviews

22 key informant interviews were done using Skype between September and October 2018. The informants were mostly based at country level (15) and others working at the global level (7). The list of interviewees can be found in **Annex 4**. A generic questionnaire was developed and adapted for the different types of interviewees. The questionnaire can be found in **Annex 3**. The key informants at country level mainly included: NCCs, TWGs, Rapid Response Team (RRT) members and cluster partner agencies' focal points in nutrition in emergencies. The list at global level mainly included: the previous GNC Help Desk Officer, Donors, Tech RRT Manager, and the current lead of the GTM. Group interviews notably to TWGs members could not be organized as originally planned due to the short timeframe and competing priorities of the NCCs.

3.4. Triangulation of the information gathered

Analysis of the online questionnaire and the notes taken during the key informants interviews were triangulated and analyzed to draw the findings in the three main sections on current functioning of TWGs, challenges and recommended actions.

3.5. Consultation

A consultation with the wider GNC participants and the NCCs during the GNC annual meeting in Amman in October was also done and this helped shape some of the recommended actions.

4.0. Findings

4.1. Current TWGs functioning

From the 33 online respondents and 22 key informants that were consulted for this review, it was clear that there is a wide variation between different contexts on the TWGs, their types, the work modalities, the group's composition, the frequency of meeting, their function, their challenges, etc. Some trends appeared to be recurrent:

Types of TWGs

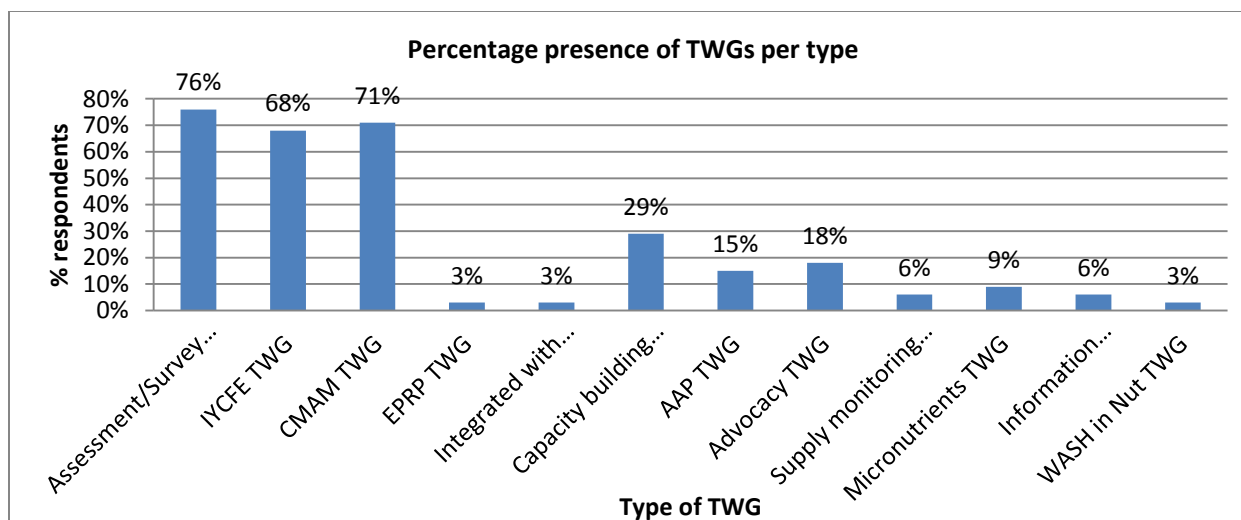
The TWGs that were most present are the Assessment, Infant and Young Child Feeding in Emergencies (IYCF-E) and Community Management of Acute Malnutrition (CMAM) TWGs. The Assessment TWG was at the top of the chart with 76% of respondents indicating the presence of an assessment TWGs in their location. Figure 3 below shows the most frequently present TWGs.

Overall, 12 types of TWGs were listed: **Assessment/Surveys** TWG, **IYCF-E** TWG, **CMAM** TWG, Emergency Preparedness and Response Plan (**EPRP**) TWG, **Integrated with other sector** TWG, **Capacity Building** TWG, **Accountability to Affected Populations (AAP)/ Quality** TWG, **Advocacy** TWG, **Supplies Monitoring** TWG, **Micronutrients** TWG, **Information Management** TWG and **WASH in Nut** TWG.

Note that these working groups were mainly at the **national level but some were also at the subnational level** such as the information management and the supplies monitoring. Although the list is not exhaustive, it gives an idea on **the wide range of possible working groups** that are formed at country level.

It is important to note that those TWGs are a sub-working group of the nutrition cluster. In some countries, TWGs that look at development issues and led by the government also exist.

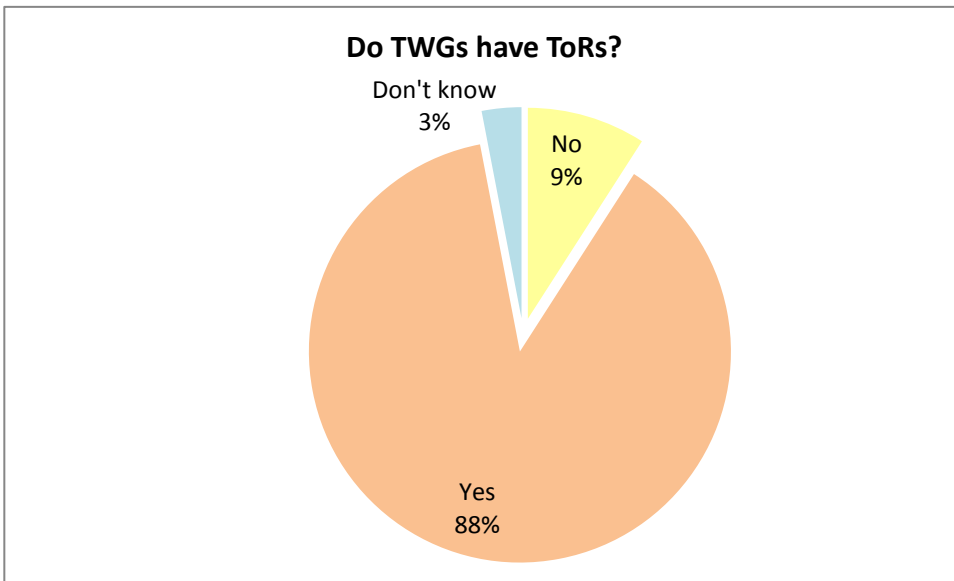
Figure 2 Percentage presence of TWGs by type according to respondents



Presence of TWGs Terms of Reference (ToR)

Most TWGs had a ToR: 88% of the respondents (29) answered yes when asked whether the TWGs had ToRs. Less than 10% said that the TWGs did not have ToRs (3). It seems that most TWGs have ToRs.

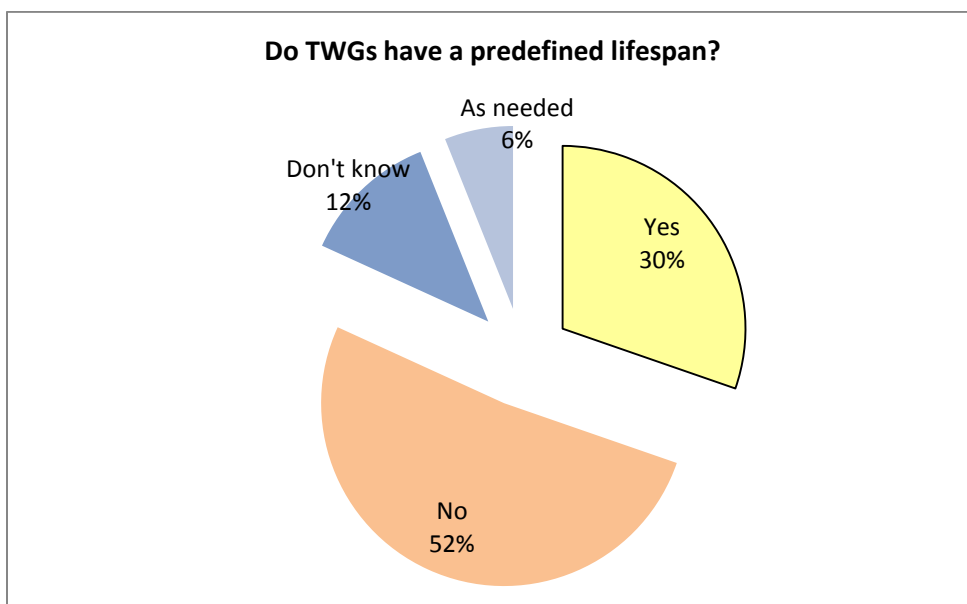
Figure 3 Do TWGs have ToRs?



Lifespan of TWGs

Almost half of the TWGs did not have a defined lifespan, and only 30% did. It seems that most countries took *a flexible approach to the lifespan of TWGs*, however, after discussion with the key informants, in some countries TWGs were kept open or were closed by a government without consultation with the partners, such as in Nepal.

Figure 4 TWGs lifespan



TWGs main tasks

It is interesting to note that 100% of respondents said that *the TWGs are involved in harmonizing the nutrition guidelines* used by partners in the thematic area of the working group, 85% of respondents said that *TWGs are involved in training and capacity building*, whereas 75% of respondents said *that TWGs are involved in updating national nutrition policies as well as remote monitoring the quality of the intervention*.

Other tasks taken up by TWGs are agreeing on strategies, priorities and plans, identifying and developing needed tools, materials and trainings, reviewing data to check program quality and performance, and advocating to improve program quality.

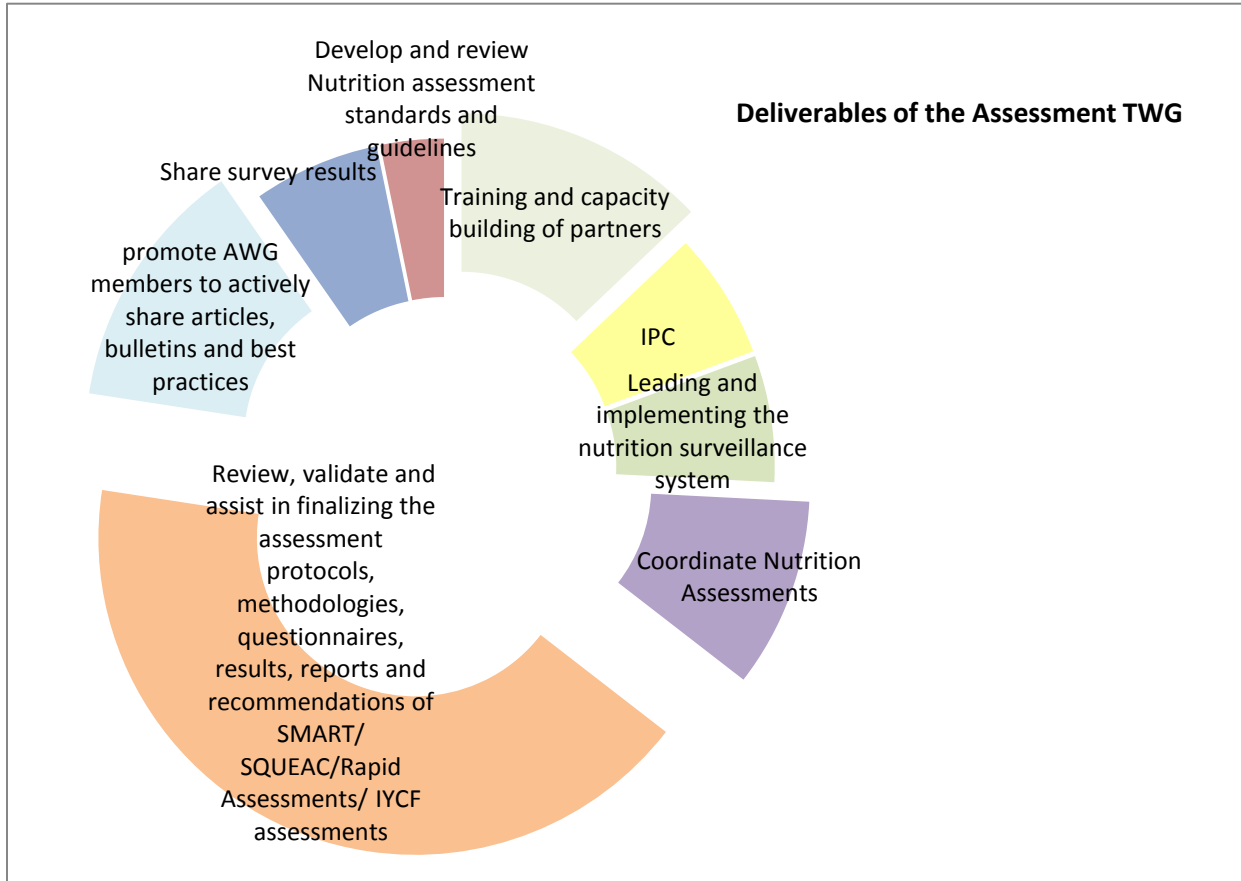
It was clear that developing and updating national nutrition policies and guidelines with the government was a key task undertaken by TWGs and it required time, dedication and patience as a lot of back and forth was needed with the government validating body.

It was also clear that TWGs did not jointly visit programs but remotely checked the progress of each indicator towards the target set and suggested ways to improve program quality. Although they did not jointly visit the field as a group, each member would be involved in monitoring visits within his or her institution as part of his work.

Tasks also performed by TWGs were flagging and dealing with duplication of sites after mapping of services and flagging emergencies at the onset. These tasks were done to support the cluster when it came to services pertaining to the TWGs subject.

Taking a closer look at the ***Assessment TWGs, the deliverable*** cited most frequently revolve around ***reviewing and validating each step of different types of surveys***. Indeed, the main activities of the Assessment TWGS are reviewing, providing constructive feedback, correcting and validating protocols, methodologies, questionnaire, preliminary results and reports of surveys. The surveys mentioned are the Standard Monitoring and Assessment in Relief and Transition (SMART), the coverage surveys, rapid assessments and IYCF surveys. Frequently, this technical support leads to support in coordinating the survey as well. Communicating by sharing survey results and sharing articles are also important activities of this group along with training and building the capacity of cluster partners. The members of the group often led the creation of a nutrition surveillance system at sub-national or national level. They are also the ones who participate in the Integrated Phase Classification (IPC) exercise when it is taking place. It is surprising to note that the Assessment TWG is the least involved in developing or reviewing national guidelines on assessment, a task that takes an overwhelming amount of time from the IYCF-E and CMAM TWGs.

Figure 5 the main deliverables of the Assessment TWG



For the *IYCF-E TWGs*, the *deliverables* cited most frequently were *developing, validating and disseminating standardized tools and resources* as well as *updating or developing IYCF-E related policies or guidelines*. If the main and most time consuming activities revolve around reviewing and developing guidelines and tools, it is not all what the IYCF-E TWGs do and a multitude of other activities are also done by this group. The IYCF-E TWGs are involved throughout the project cycle of the IYCF-E collective programs: from working closely with the Assessment TWG on the IYCF assessments, mapping IYCF-E activities, identifying gaps in IYCF-E coverage, to designing the response plan, and monitoring the performance of IYCF-E programs. In addition, these groups also organize trainings on IYCF-E to cluster partners' staff. The TWGs even find themselves organizing and implementing IYCF campaigns, fundraising for the IYCF-E response plan and advocating to governments to ensure compliance with the Code and to other sectors to include IYCF-E activities in their response plan. This wide range of activities shows us that the groups are trying to step up and address the many issues; it clearly shows that currently there is a lot of work that needs to be done in IYCF during emergencies.

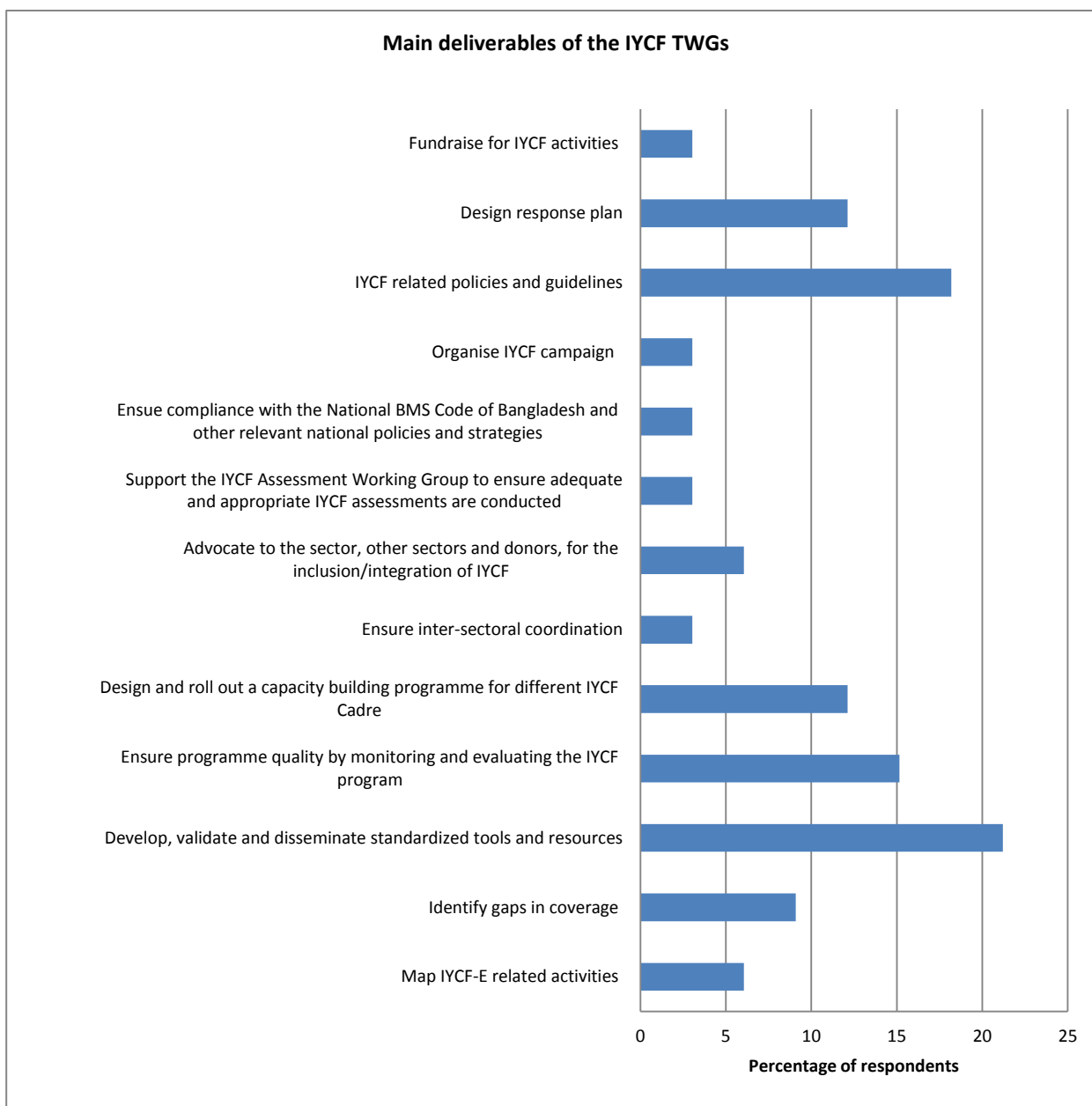
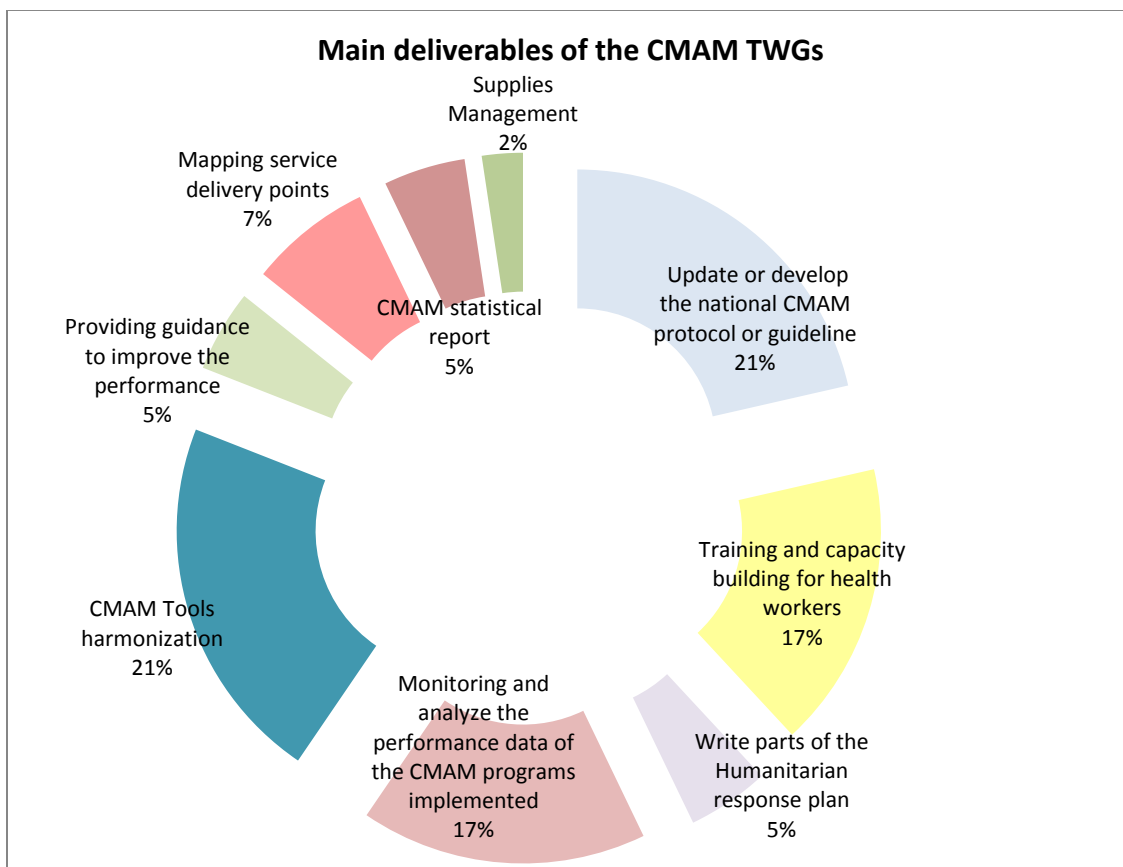


Figure 6 the main deliverables of the IYCF-E TWGS

For the **CMAM TWGs**, the **deliverables** cited most frequently were **developing or updating the national CMAM protocol or guidelines** as well as **harmonizing CMAM tools**. In addition, the CMAM TWGs are involved in monitoring and analyzing the program data, putting together statistical reports to track the performance and when performance is suboptimal, providing guidance to improve the quality of the CMAM programs. The CMAM TWGs also spend a notable amount of time organizing trainings to share knowledge on CMAM with cluster partners. Less frequently, they are also mapping CMAM service delivery points, helping write parts of the Humanitarian Response Plan (HRP) and managing the supplies for the CMAM programs.

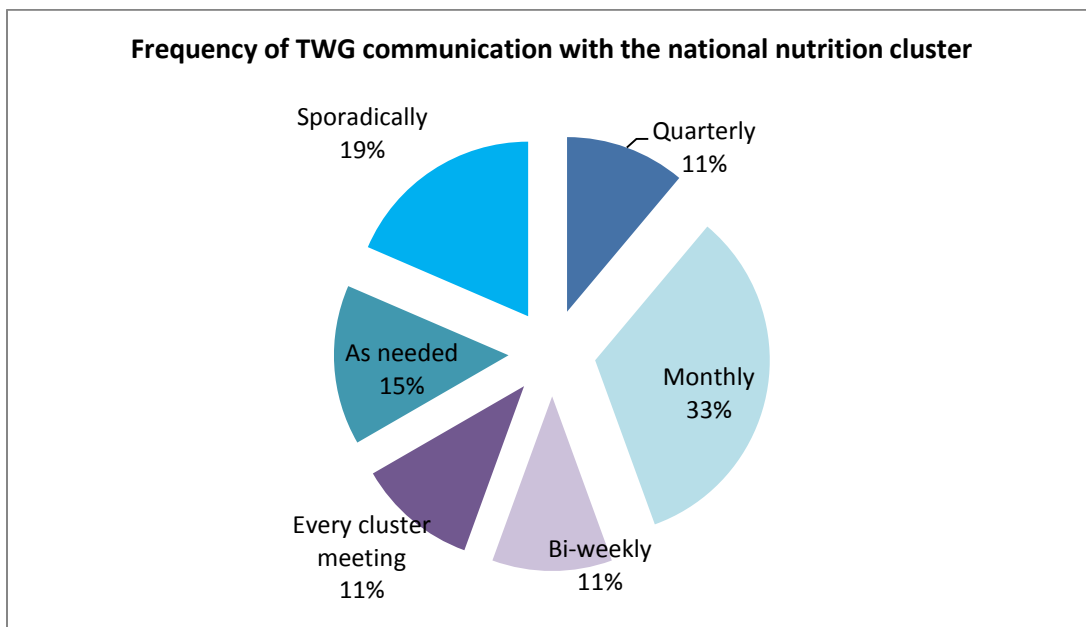
Figure 7 the main deliverables of the CMAM TWGS



TWGs communication with national cluster partners

There is much variation on how frequently TWGs report back to the cluster. Figure 8 below shows that the TWGs reported mainly monthly back to the cluster partners.

Figure 8 TWGs frequency of communication with the national nutrition cluster



TWGs composition

On the technical group composition, it is notable that **NGOs, local NGOs, UN agencies and the Ministry of Health are present systematically in most technical working groups**; however, the presence of an academic institution, a university or the presence of the country's pediatric association was very rare. This prompts the question: are we able to link with, tap into the expertise and involve the country key national human resources in technical discussions during emergencies? Similarly, very few governmental departments other than the Ministry of Health were involved in the TWGs. Among the UN agencies, UNICEF was the most cited member of a TWG followed closely by WFP, then UNHCR and the one least cited among the four UN agencies was WHO. An indication of limited WHO leadership in Nutrition at country level.

On choosing members, the criteria that were the most cited were the following: **the agency is an expert in the technical discussion taken up by the TWG and/or the agency volunteered to be part of the TWG, and/or one of the agencies' staff is an expert in the subject matter.**

The process of setting up a TWG

The process of setting up a TWG under a cluster was not based on a formal process or an assessment; it was rather decided by the collective after the identification of an issue that needs to be discussed further by a smaller more specialized group.

How are issues that TWGs are not able to address escalated?

Some TWGs turned to the lead of the group, the NCC or the Strategic Advisory Group (SAG) for guidance; others turned to UNICEF's Nutrition Section Chief, another focal point person at country level, a regional advisor within their agency or contacted someone they knew at global level. At times the questions go directly to the Global Nutrition Cluster Coordination Team (GNC-CT). Other sources commonly cited were the Emergency Nutrition Network (ENN), the World Health Organization (WHO) and the Global Nutrition Cluster (GNC) website. From these responses; it was clear that there is no structured way to request technical support as a TWG. This **process is currently person dependent and not system dependent.**

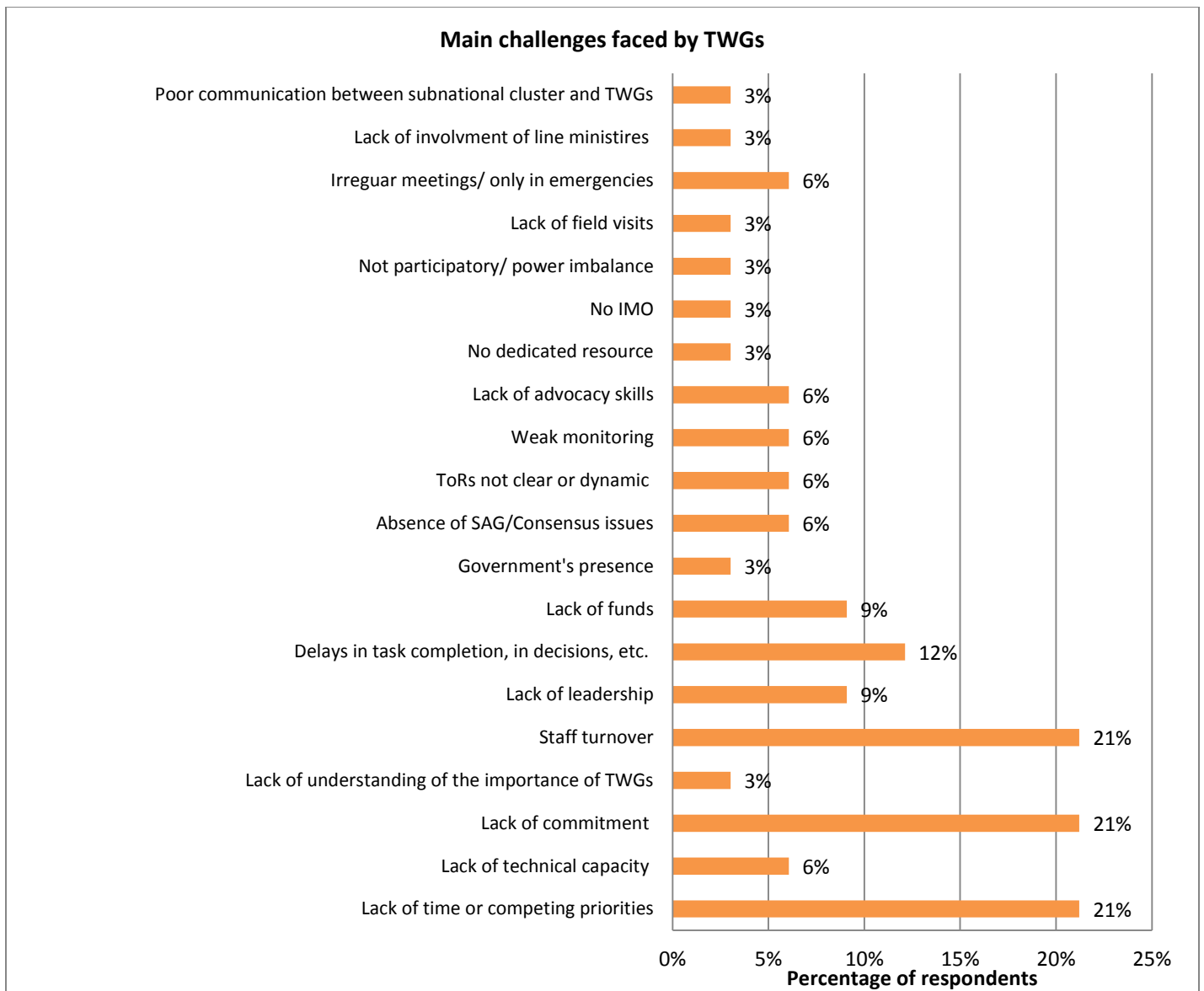
Evaluation of TWGs

According to key informants, there is **no structured way or formalized way to evaluate the performance of the TWGs.**

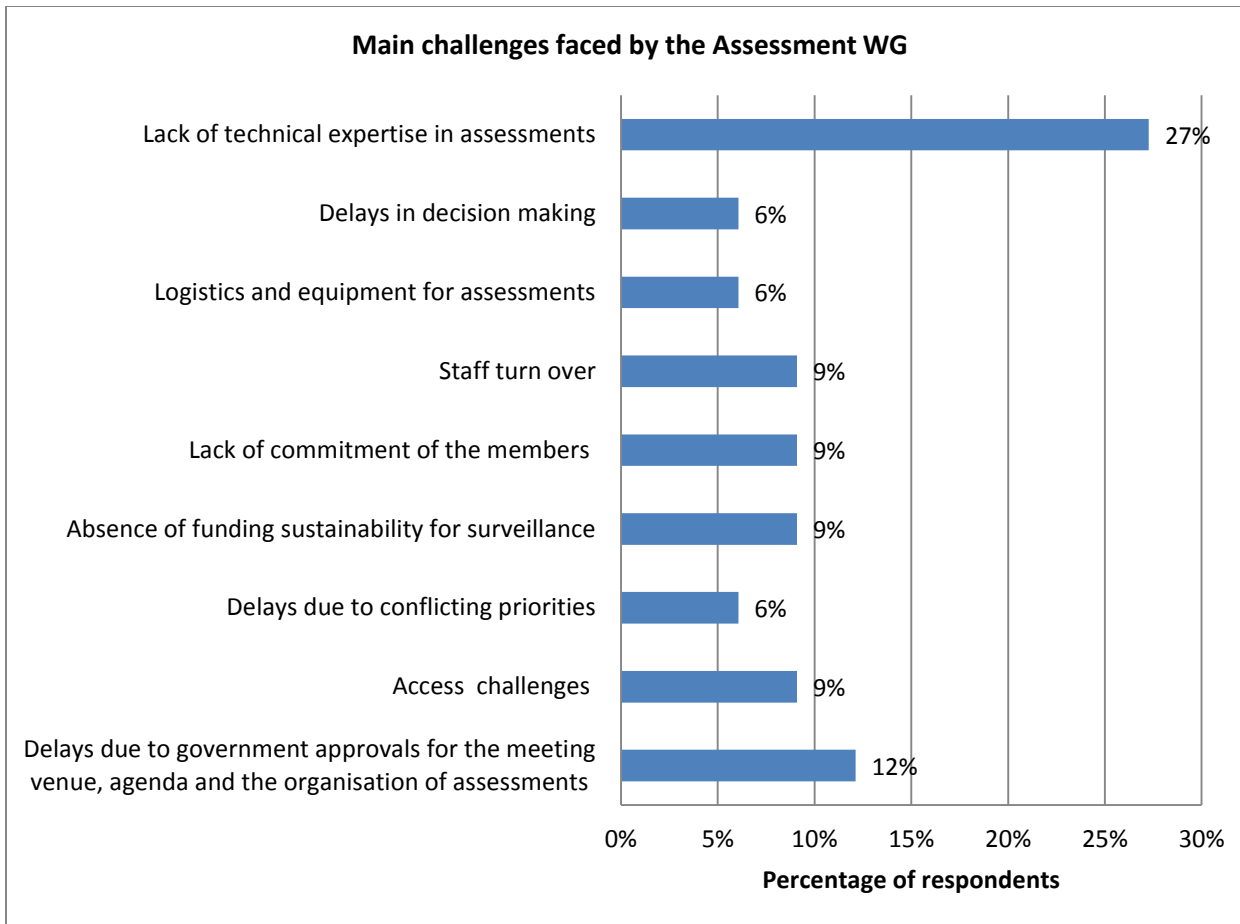
4.2. Challenges faced by TWGs and at different levels

The main challenges all TWGs face are the **lack of time or competing priorities of the TWGs members, lack of commitment to the TWGs and staff turnover.** In addition to those main challenges, the list is long. It seems that TWGs struggle with having an appropriate chair, this translates to leadership issues. The issues with leadership, the lack of time, commitment, the irregular meetings, and the turnover contribute to the delays in task completion which is another important challenge. In addition, the groups at times were not able to reach consensus due to a missing SAG. It seems that groups also suffered from unclear or non-dynamic ToRs. It is somewhat puzzling that at times, the lack of involvement of line ministries is an issue whereas at others, their presence is the issue. Lack of funds and lack of dedicated human resources were also among the many challenges.

Figure 9 the main challenges faced by TWGs

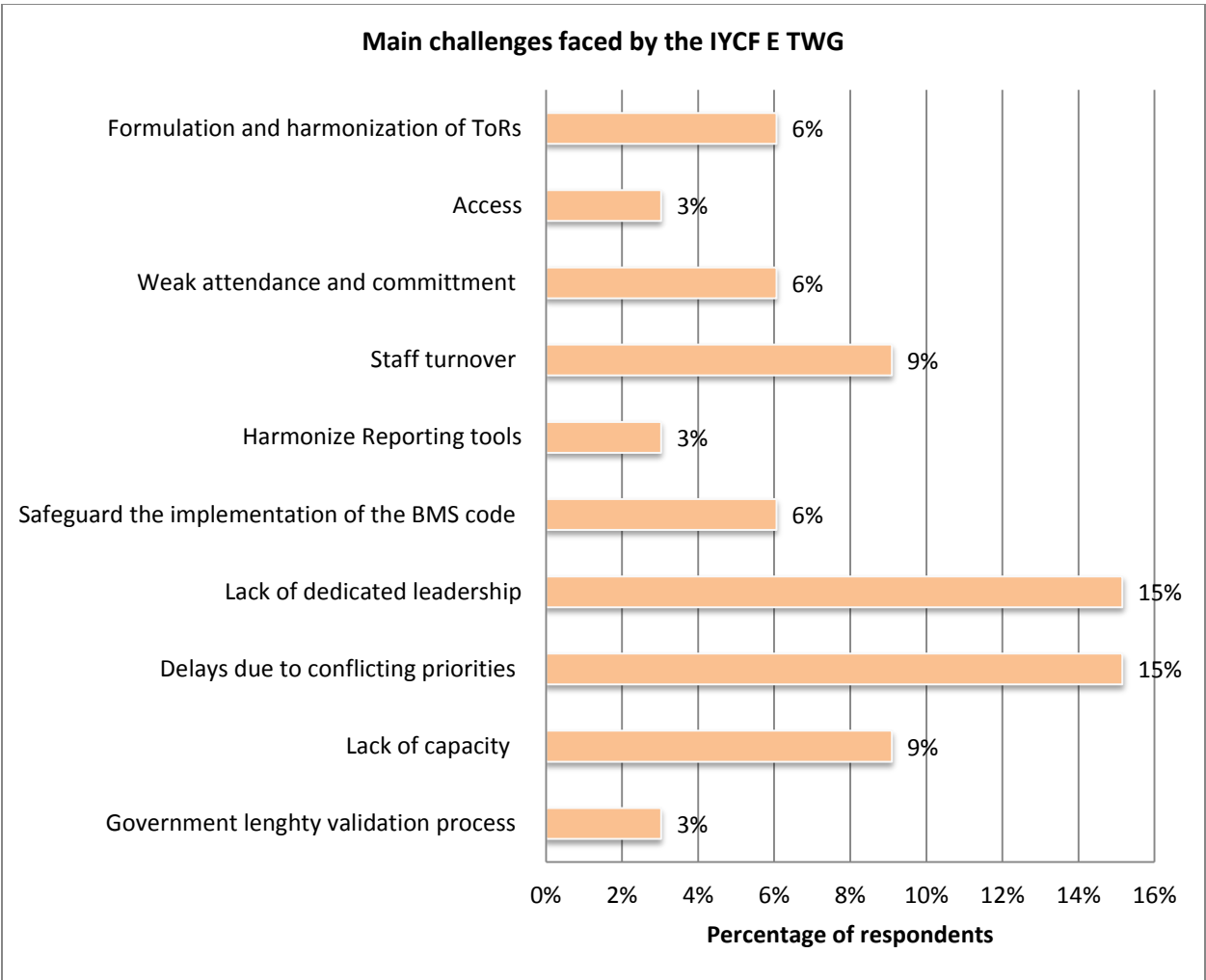


With regards to the Assessment TWG, the main challenge faced by the Assessment TWGs was the lack of expertise of TWG members in assessments. The other challenges were delays related to the government approvals, followed by the staff turnover, the lack of commitment of members, challenges relating to access to certain zones and the lack of funding for surveillance.

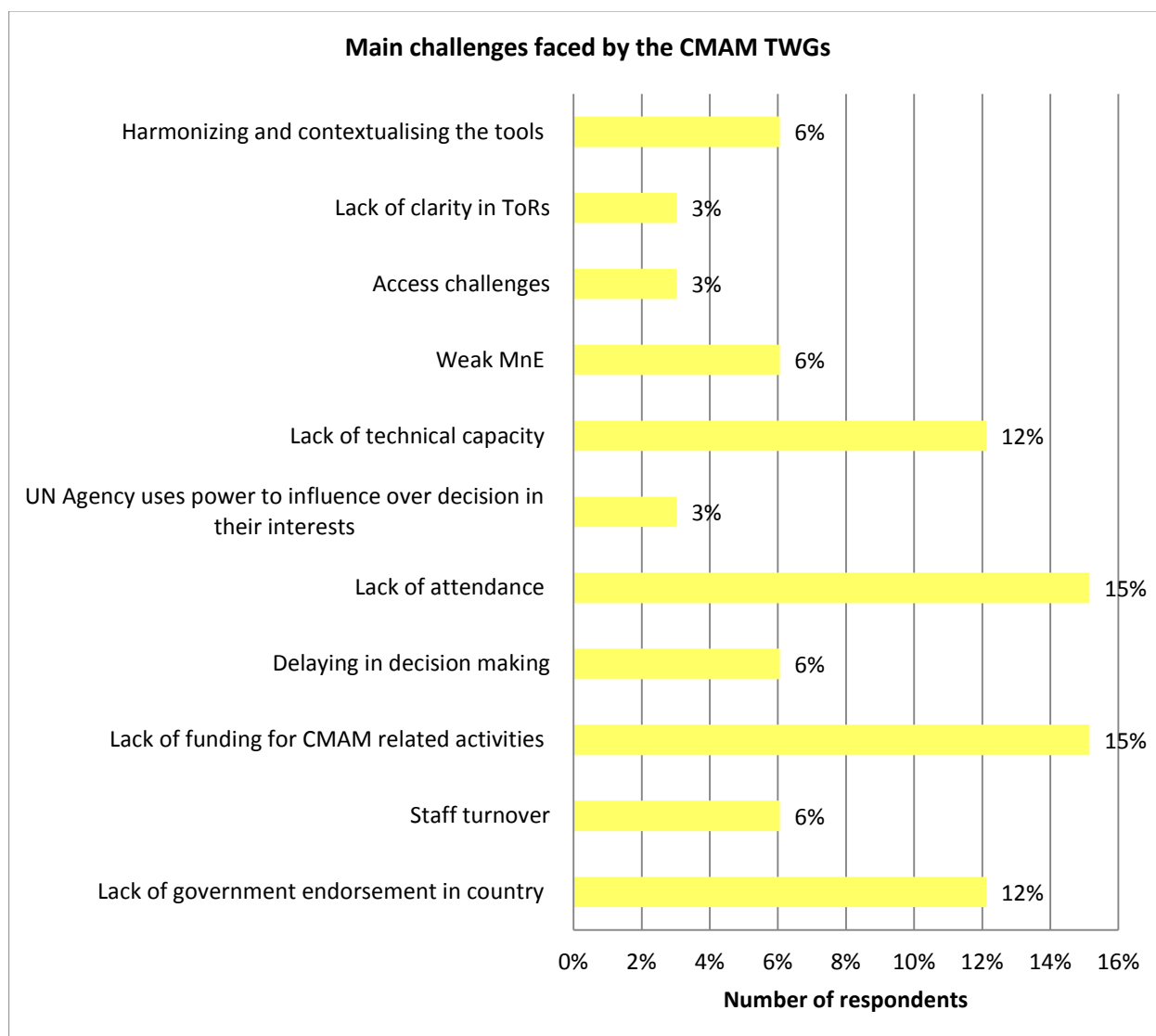


The main two challenges faced by the IYCF-E TWGs were the lack of dedicated leadership and the delays in decision making and task completion due to a lack of time and conflicting priorities. The other challenges were lack of technical capacity in IYCF-E and staff turnover of the TWG members.

Other challenges are the workload of the TWG member as they also have to ensure that IYCF-E programming within their respective agencies is up to the mark, especially because the capacity of partners to deliver a good quality IYCFE program is still very limited. 'It seems that IYCF-E is less structured and less well understood than the other technical areas we work in' says one TWG member.



The main four challenges faced by the **CMAM TWGs** were *the lack of endorsement of the government, the lack of attendance, the lack of funding and the lack of technical capacity.*



The weak commitment of the members was highlighted times and again as a main issue. Since the participation of partners in the TWG is not in their job description, the programmatic related responsibility in line with the instruction of the members' line manager often times takes precedence over their commitment to the work of TWG. The low level of engagement in the TWG is not penalized and has no consequences on the members. The commitment of each member is first to his recruiting agency.

In some cases, the fact that each individual is committed to his or her agency first ***means also that it is a commitment to the interests of the agency in keeping its power, its strategic technical niche, its funding stream*** more so than the commitments to the TWGs or a commitment to improving the quality of the programs delivered to beneficiaries. This can lead to frustration as a key informant asked: are we working to keep the strategic technical niche of our agencies and ensure their supremacy and subsequent continuous funding stream or are we here to find ways to deliver better to populations while engaging all partners? ***There is a lack of accountability to the group by those involved.***

Turnover hampers and delays the work of TWGs as often the discussions have to be restarted with a change in membership. Often times, there are **no handover** notes done on the subject to those coming to replace members or the lead.

The chair of the TWG has a key role in engaging partners, calling for the meeting, setting the agenda, preparing or consolidating the documents that need to be reviewed, following up on the action points, reminding deliverables. The role of the chair is also to ensure impartiality, identify challenges and request for support. If a TWG chair is not taking on this role, due to lack of time, commitment or sometimes a lack of understanding of the role of the chair, then the TWG will not be functioning optimally. **TWG chairs are not stepping up to their role and this makes it very difficult for the TWG to fulfill its ToRs.**

One of the challenges of the TWGs is that they tend to go astray and not to stick to the ToRs, in terms of members, discussions and deliverables. Other challenges mentioned is ***the lack of consensus***, as often times, TWG could be discussing a technical issue but not reaching consensus due to a lack of expertise or the difficulty of the technical question at hand.

TWG member could often end up being ***the same people who are also members of the SAG, they could end up discussing the same issues, thus how can the membership of the TWGs be diversified?***

In many countries, nutrition in emergency response is new and the **knowledge and experience of the local partners in nutrition in emergency response is limited.** The technical capacity of international NGOs members is also often questionable, which in turn results in ***weak knowledge, experience and technical capacities in nutrition in emergencies of members of the TWG***, thus there is a need to clarify ***whose role is it to improve the technical capacity of technical working group members?***

The issue of low or ***weak technical expertise of members often exacerbates an already existing power imbalance:*** whoever does not know better technically is not taken into consideration in the discussions and ends up feeling like the decisions are being taken unilaterally. Although the TWG members are selected on the basis of their expertise in the subject matter, often times, in some contexts, there is no choice but to have members who are not experts.

In addition, some said that it is more difficult to contradict a member in the TWG if this member works for an agency funding the programs of the other members. This is because, for a number of the TWG members, UNICEF is the main funding agency, it appears that sometimes the silence following a suggestion during a TWG meeting is not due to a consensus but to **a balance of powers shifted towards the funding agency or the government.** Since UNICEF also at times funds the government, that balance of power in certain countries is quite pronounced and leave partners feeling as though they do not have the power or the place to contribute. It seems that at times, the partners feel they have no choice but to align with the technical stance of UNICEF.

A related issue that came back a number of times during the interviews is **the fact that the impartiality of the cluster coordinator is questioned as some report to the UNICEF Chief of Nutrition Section in country.** Where it is the Nutrition Section Chief in UNICEF doing the appraisal of the cluster coordinator, it puts the cluster coordinator in a difficult position when having to represent the collective on certain technical positioning that are not in line with the position of UNICEF Chief of Nutrition Section in country.

When the NCC is partly dedicated to the cluster role and partly dedicated to UNICEF nutrition section, it is seen to have advantages as the communication between the cluster coordinator and UNICEF section would be very smooth, however a number of informants have ***expressed concern over double hatting*** saying it is impossible not to get caught up in conflicts of interest using the cluster role or power to fulfill UNICEF related tasks.

Another major challenge the TWGs' time spent working on the national nutrition guidelines. Key informants said that harmonizing the protocols used by agencies to deliver programs is necessary to implement nutrition programs, and as

these guidelines need to be endorsed by the government, then **developing or updating the national nutrition guidelines** becomes essential.

In that sense, reviewing and updating the often unfortunately obsolete national CMAM or IYCF guidelines becomes the first priority of the cluster and this priority is handed over to a TWG. Reviewing or updating national nutrition guidelines, however, takes time. Technical questions need answers and validation from different experts- expertise that is at times lacking. This process also requires commitment and time, both of which are also often lacking during an emergency. ***This process can be extremely lengthy*** and in some contexts becomes the main challenge. ***Is it up to the working groups amidst an emergency to do this work or should this be done as a preparedness measure collectively?***

TWGs also ***do not receive updates as a group on the topic of the group*** or in relation to the discussions they are having ***and the TWGs are not often linked to one another for cross learning***.

Another ***remaining gap is the assessment of the overall nutrition in emergencies response quality at a given time***. TWGs do not take on joint monitoring and visits to programs. In addition, no independent collective monitoring of the nutrition in emergencies program response as a whole takes place. In terms of scale and quality, ***how do we ensure that the needs of the population are being met?***

Assessment numbers are valid and precise but not sensitive; a number of key informant mentioned that as a sector we overemphasized GAM and SAM to the point that, if, in an emergency, the GAM is low but IYCF-E practices are far from optimal and dangerous for the survival of infants- yet because the GAM number is low- funding and programs will not reach this area. The nutrition sector came a long way to have a strong methodology for assessments of SAM and GAM and it is a methodology that is valid and is now rolled out by all partners. ***However, in terms of nutrition sensitive related numbers, there is a lack in both an overall analysis of the nutrition situation and also a proactive analysis of the signs for degradation***. At times it seems to some key informants that the nutrition teams are ***focused on getting the numbers and less on analyzing them***.

Foreseen Global Technical Mechanism challenges

Although this review was done in order to better structure the position of the GNC Technical Help Desk, the feedback received on the GTM was also collected and collated here.

Global discussions on technical issues are seen by country teams as often disconnected from the difficulties and the reality on the ground.

There is frustration on the ongoing discussions regarding a technical direction discussed at the global level. As a key informant puts it: 'if country teams were included in the technical discussion, the debate would have been over much sooner'.

The UN agencies, namely WFP, UNICEF, UNHCR, and WHO are not united in what they see is best for nutrition in emergencies, this lack of alignment is a foreseen challenge for the global technical mechanism mentioned by a number of key informants.

In order to avoid the reproduction of the existing dynamics and seeing the Global Technical Mechanism ***staging the power dynamics and interests of different agency members***, the composition of the Global Technical Mechanism working groups needs to be diversified. A key informant mentioned that if each agency representative will seek only its own interests and try to put forward its program, expertise, niche and not look at this effort as a global effort to improve the global response than this will not be a useful platform.

Different key informants asked: in terms of decision in relation to governments, ***what is the credibility or authority of the GTM in relation to the different governments?***

Also in terms of dissemination and communication: a key informant mentioned that ***each staff is committed to his agencies head of nutrition for guidance and authority***, in a sense all information not issued or endorsed by the agencies head is just information. How will the Global Technical Mechanism make its decisions endorsed or accepted by staff from a multitude of agencies?

A key informant mentioned a fear that if the roles and responsibilities of the Global Technical Mechanism are not clearly defined then ***it could go astray from the role it what originally intended for or it could duplicate or worse diminish the authority and sense of ownership and power of the country teams.***

The ability of the Global Technical Mechanism to listen and adjust to ensure that it reaches its objective will be key to its success.

Another gap highlighted by a key informant was: ***who coordinates operational research for nutrition in emergencies? How will the HD Nexus be tackled? Whose mandate is it to look at inpatient SAM management during an emergency?***

Challenges at the GNC-CT level

Country informants seem to be missing clarity on how discussions at the global level translate into an action plan for the country teams or cluster coordinators, for instance in terms of inter-sectoral work, what is expected from the cluster coordinators? from the TWG members? from the other clusters at country level? Certain orientations at global level leaves country teams wondering how or what actions should be put in place so they could go about implementing or aligning themselves with it. These concerns would be answered by the inter-cluster training package that is currently being piloted.

Foreseen challenges at the GNC-CT level

The GNC Helpdesk Technical Support Nutrition in Emergencies was perceived to be an important role specifically to help track and share the technical issues that are arising from countries.

For the GNC Helpdesk, some informants mentioned that ***this role can potentially be caught in technical debates*** and there might be a need to be prudent and political in what to recommend with regards to certain approaches that are still being debated

A number of key informants mentioned that the ***GNC Helpdesk contact needs to be known and made available to support everyone and not only TWG chair and or NCCs***. A number of reasons were mentioned, one was the decentralization of the reception of technical support in order to speed the process in case the cluster coordinator is overwhelmed or the TWG chair has not been replaced, the second reason mentioned was the counterbalance in the power struggles. Indeed the direct support from a GNC-CT team member will create a shift in the power dynamics of the group and might help a greater number of agencies voices to be heard.

4.3. The actions required for an improved technical quality of the nutrition response

4.3.1. At country level

NCCs to set up the three main TWGs as soon as possible in prioritised disaster and conflict prone countries as a preparedness measure

TWGs that are already existing and active in a country prior to an emergency response under the sector leadership make the emergency response easier. Clearly some discussions on technical issues need to take place and be addressed prior to the emergency. Apart from flagging to UNICEF the need to update the national nutrition guidelines, updating the National Health and Nutrition Information System (NHNIS), preparing contingency plans, harmonizing reporting tools, this group could also help capitalize and map what resources are available in country pre-emergency.

In addition, this group would pre-agree on **an interim protocol** to use if an emergency strikes until the official nutrition protocols are in place.

These preparedness TWGs can also help with the overall analysis of the nutrition situation and putting in place a proactive analysis of the signs for degradation.

CLA to ensure that nutrition guidelines are updated in prioritized disaster and conflict prone countries as a preparedness measure as soon as possible

It is rightly so the job of the collective stakeholders working in the country in nutrition to discuss and agree on the national guidelines with the government relevant authority. The time to update and review those guidelines is ideally before an emergency as a preparedness measure. Although the partners need to participate in this exercise, it would need to be led by the CLA.

The need for an expert for this task could be quite useful but not systematic and depends on the context and needs to be assessed for each country. It is recommended we ensure that country resources are tapped into before requesting out of country support and if out of country support is sent then it is important to send a person who knows and has worked in the context before. For those countries who need this support, it is recommended that dedicated funds from the CLA or a cluster partner could be used to recruit a consultant to work on the update or revision of the national nutrition guidelines.

Dedicated technical support to TWGs

It was also suggested that ***during L3 emergencies or when deemed necessary following an assessment of the TWGs functioning, a technical staff should be dedicated to the national nutrition cluster to support the TWGs*** in the same way the NCC is dedicated to the cluster work. This additional technical person could be recruited from either the CLA or a cluster partner. This support should not be systematic and should be based on a careful assessment of the context and the NCC workload. ***The dedicated technical support could have the double role of supporting on updating and reviewing the national guidelines in addition to leading, working on improving the technical capacity of the TWGs and partners.***

A global MOU could be in place with certain agencies and the UNICEF to deploy dedicated technical support to the cluster at the time an emergency strikes for a longer period of time, this recommendation is also mentioned in the Global Technical Mechanism (GTM) and Global Nutrition Cluster Coordination Team (GNC-CT) actions.

NCC would need to use stricter criteria when choosing the membership and chairs of TWGs

More stringent criteria should be in place for choosing members and especially for choosing chairs of TWGs. If the criteria, tasks, and time to be allocated are clear, then this can be negotiated and included in the job description of the chair and the members. ***There is a need to develop an accountability mechanism to the group.*** If the context is such that using stricter criteria when choosing a member and a chair would result into having a very limited number of

members or chairs to choose from, then it might be worth prioritizing those most committed and investigating the possibility of improving their technical capacity.

NCCs and the TWGs chair need to ensure that the composition of the TWG is diversified

Inviting and including senior pediatricians, local nutritionists, economists, health professionals, other representatives from academia and other sector experts is encouraged if circumstances permit.

ToRs

Although most TWGs have ToRs -and the main challenges are encountered while implementing them- it would still be useful that generic TORs are available for the national and subnational working groups. The generic ToRs would need to be adaptable noting the different contexts and ways that working groups would need to function. This action will be taken up by the GNC Technical Help Desk. The time it takes for NCCs in country to finalize ToRs would then greatly be reduced.

A strong recommendation is also to have a clear work plan for each TWG with deliverables and responsibilities and roles outlined. Despite the difference in the deliverables of national level working groups working on development and those created as a sub-group of the nutrition cluster, it is recommended to link the two types of working group to address some of the issues that would need to be phased out of emergency and into development. Therefore, ***guidance on actions that can be put in place to create linkages and a common action plan between already existing working groups in country with the cluster TWGs would also be useful.***

TWGs documents

Due to the turnover of the group members in certain countries the work of the TWG is often lost after the departure of the lead or a significant member. It is recommended that NCCs choose two chairs systematically for each TWG so that in case one of them leaves, the other can be the memory of the group's work. ***Another recommendation is for the TWG chair to ensure that systematically minutes of the TWGs are recorded and have a national platform where all the technical minutes, recommendations, guidelines and tools of TWGs are uploaded and made available.*** The chair will not have to type the minutes himself but rather ensure that a member is assigned on a rotational basis for this task. This would help avoid repeating the same discussions when there is a turnover of staff. The portal humanitarianresponse.info is already available yet not fully populated. ***Handover reports should be also requested systematically from chairs and uploaded on this platform as well.***

Joint monitoring visits

Some TWGs are analyzing the data to monitor the performance of the program. ***A number of key informants highlighted that although individual members are visiting the programs or even cluster coordinator visits the programs, however, the TWGs rarely if ever do a joint supervision of the program. It was recommended to include in the ToRs of the TWGs the task of undergoing a monthly or quarterly joint visit of the program followed by a workshop and an action plan to address the gaps highlighted during the visit.***

Another suggestion was to address the wider need to assess the overall quality of the nutrition response: ***it was suggested that a TWG is created once a year and solely dedicated to assess the overall quality of the nutrition response***, i.e. coverage, human resources gaps, technical gaps, etc. This group is to regularly visit the program as a small group and then provide feedback to the cluster wider group for discussion on gaps and prompt action to address those gaps. In some cases this group could be created once or twice a year. The fear is that this group would become a sort of

a delegation only pointing at what is negative and not being objective or being critical in the right way, i.e. not helping improve the collective response. Therefore, an orientation and developing tools for this group could help ensure the joint monitoring visits go as intended.

In some cases, this joint monitoring visits TWG can be inter-sectoral and include the government. An inter-sectoral restitution workshop could be done after the visit to programs in order to put together an inter-sectoral action plan to address the gaps pointed. Guidance for this group could also prevent it from derailing.

Evaluation of the TWGs performance

A systematic evaluation of the country TWGs would need to be incorporated in the yearly calendar-including evaluation of the TWG governance. Corrective actions would need to be put in place to adjust the performance.

Balanced power dynamics

A recommendation is that funding and human resources for the GNC-CT, NCCs, IMOs and other cluster work would also need to come from different UN agencies and from the nutrition cluster partners so that the balance of power is better distributed.

Group members would need to be oriented on their role in the TWGs as part of the collective and not only representing their agency or their agencies interests.

4.3.2. GNC-CT

There is a need to advocate at the global level to governments for an update of guidelines and strengthening preparedness. Advocacy would also need to be done when a specific issue arises such as for example, when GAM is low but IYCF-E practices are suboptimal and no funding is provided to the nutrition program in a specific area.

Additionally, in terms of advocacy, the GNC-CT would need to advocate for partners to include in the Job Descriptions of nutrition staff in country the commitment to the cluster and to the TWGs work.

Another recommendation is to institutionalize a conflict of interest statement that partners and NCCs must declare and propose preventative actions accordingly.

The GNC Technical Help Desk would need to help review the status of guideline update and development and provide systematic support as part of preparedness

The GNC Help Desk would need to work on an ***orientation or a webinar to the TWG chair and members to clarify ways of working and roles and responsibilities. This would help improve the functioning of certain TWGs.***

In Addition, The GNC Technical Help Desk would need to have regular calls with NCCs to understand what the technical difficulties are. Regular and ad hoc calls with TWGs should also be set up to be able to address the technical issues as they arise.

The GNC Technical Help Desk would need to work on generic ToRs of the main TWGs, namely IYCF-E, CMAM, and NiS.

The GNC Help Desk would also need to work on an orientation and developing tools for the joint monitoring TWG to help ensure the joint monitoring visits go as intended. In addition, a package for the TWG to self-assess their performance would need to be developed. This package can be rolled out after validation from partners.

It is recommended to reassess the workload of the GNC Help Desk Technical Support in Nutrition in Emergencies in the next 6 months.

4.3.3. The Global Technical Mechanism (GTM) and the Global Nutrition Cluster Coordination Team GNC-CT

The Global Technical Mechanism (GTM) and or the GNC-CT would need to negotiate additional global MoUs with certain agencies to deploy dedicated staff from HQ or regional teams to support the collective response in countries during an emergency.

The GTM and or the GNC-CT would need to map country resources and improve the ability to tap into those in country technical resources.

Creating a pool of technically trained staff at country level in different thematic areas.

As part of preparedness measure, there is a need to start building the capacity and creating a pool of technically trained and experienced country based personnel in the different NiE themes. One example is to link with pre-existing pools of lactating consultants and providing them with additional training on emergencies. ***This pool of trained consultants could start building the capacity of weaker implementing partners.***

The GNC-CT with the GTM would ***need to work on a strategy to improve the technical capacities of weaker implementing partners and monitor the preparedness of country teams. This is especially important for technical capacities in IYCF-E.***

4.3.4. the GTM

It is clear from this review that creating a system dependent mechanism to address technical issues is highly needed. Ideally, groups of experts would need to be formed in the three main thematic areas in NiE, namely IYCF-E, CMAM and NiS in order to speed up the processing of the issues that arise under each category.

It is essential that the UN agencies, namely WFP, UNICEF, UNHCR, and WHO are united in what they see is best for nutrition in emergencies.

The composition of the Global Technical Mechanism (GTM) thematic working groups needs to be diversified

Inviting country and regional team members, different governmental ministries, senior pediatricians, economists, academics and researchers, other sector experts, and other members who will bring a different perspective is highly recommended. The balance of power within the group needs to be carefully studied and balanced in order for everyone to feel like their opinion is truly being considered. Conflict of interests would need to be declared and preventive actions need to be put in place to correct them.

The importance of including the country teams in the global technical debates is crucial to avoid having disconnected discussions.

Clarity in roles and responsibilities

It is clear that for the GTM to be performing, clear roles and responsibilities need to be outlined. This will help ensure that country teams are empowered and that the Global Technical Mechanism does not create a parallel competing system that duplicates their work. While clarifying roles and responsibilities, dotted lines and links between operational

and technical part of the GNC need to be reinforced and maintained as well as creating dotted lines between TWGs and the GTM. The turnaround time would need to be clear from the beginning and the GTM should have a rapid turnaround time.

Create platforms or processes for cross learning.

Additional actions that would help further improve the technical quality of the response are: organizing workshops, events, monthly or quarterly calls where ***cross learning*** can happen. Trainings can also be rolled out to Nutrition Cluster Coordinators and Technical Working Group leads.

Moreso, having a technical forum to exchange among NCCs and TWGs chairs to support cross learning and sharing information would also be a strong recommendation moving forward. There is also a need for the GNC Help Desk Technical Support and or through the Global Technical Mechanism to send updates to TWGs and give them the possibility to join webinars on the technical topics that they are working on.

Knowledge Management

While it is clear that a number of TWGS would need to receive frequent trainings, guidance, updates and information on the subject matter they work on. It was less clear however whether the GTM guidance would be endorsed as is and therefore, ***it is recommended that the information sent out by the GTM be endorsed by the agencies respective head of nutrition and sent to their staff.***

Not shouting it from the rooftops

Partners have stated that they wouldn't feel as comfortable requesting support if the support is not somewhat discreet. This should be taken into account in constructing the support provided via the GTM

Evaluation and adjusting accordingly

A recommendation would be to ***have an evaluation after 6 months to reflect and adjust after the roll out of the GTM. Consultative discussions could also be organized earlier.*** There is a need to develop an accountability mechanism to the group.

Conclusion

The current review shed light on how TWGs function and how can their functioning be improved for an overall increase in technical quality of nutrition in emergency interventions- it is clear that this improvement goes hand in hand with creating a systematic predictable and effective mechanism for technical support. Based on the recommendations of this review the GNC-CT and the GTM will address the main action points in its next work plan.

Annexes

Annex 1: List of documents reviewed

1. GNC (2013), Nutrition Cluster Handbook First edition.
2. GNC (2017) Global Nutrition Cluster Strategy 2017-2020, Final version.
3. GNC (2017) Global Nutrition Cluster Costed Plan
4. Save the Children USA and the GNC (2015) Position of the Global Nutrition Cluster on Providing Technical Support to Country Clusters, Final report.
5. GNC (2014) Global Nutrition Cluster Standard Operating Procedures, Version 3.
6. GNC (2014- 2016) Annual GNC report
7. GNC (2017) Annual GNC report
8. UNICEF (2018) Global Technical Mechanism for Addressing Nutrition Technical Issues Ask Escalate Resolve Learn. PowerPoint Presentation.
9. GNC (2015) Evaluation of the support provided by the Global Nutrition Cluster to National Coordination Platforms report

Annex 2: The online questionnaire

Current functioning of the TWGs Online questionnaire/Fonctionnement actuel des GTTs questionnaire en ligne

English

You are being contacted alongside all Nutrition Cluster Coordinators (NCCs), Information Management Officers (IMOs) and Technical Working Groups (TWGs) members working in country clusters to complete this online survey.

Your answers will remain anonymous and will directly inform the options and recommendations on defining the GNC's role in technical issues in support of national TWGs. The results of this survey will be presented in the next GNC meeting in Amman. Kindly complete it on or before the 10th of October 2018 to allow adequate time for analysis.

The questionnaire has been structured in four short sections: section one: your profile, section two: National Level Nutrition Cluster and TWGs Structure, section three: structure, functions and deliverables of the different TWGs, and section four: Urgent technical issues that require immediate attention.

Note that a TWG as referred to in this questionnaire is a TWG organized via the cluster.

Thank you very much for your time. Your answers are very valuable.

French

Vous êtes contactés en tant que coordinateurs de clusters nutrition (NCC), de responsables de la gestion de l'information (IMO) et des membres des groupes de travail techniques en nutrition travaillant sous le chapeau du cluster nutrition dans les différents pays pour répondre à ce sondage en ligne.

Vos réponses resteront anonymes et éclaireront directement les recommandations sur la définition du rôle du Cluster Global en Nutrition (GNC) dans les questions techniques à l'appui des groupes de travail techniques en nutrition nationaux. Les résultats de cette enquête seront présentés à la prochaine réunion du GNC à Amman. Nous vous saurions gré de le compléter le ou avant le 10 octobre 2018 afin de prévoir suffisamment de temps pour l'analyse.

Le questionnaire a été structuré en quatre sections courtes: la section un: votre profil, la section deux: Structure du groupe cluster nutrition et des groupes de travail techniques en nutrition nationaux, la section trois: la structure, les fonctions et les produits livrables des différents groupes de travail techniques en nutrition nationaux et la section quatre: les problèmes techniques urgents nécessitant une intervention immédiate.

Notez qu'un groupe de travail technique en nutrition auquel il est fait référence dans ce questionnaire est un groupe de travail technique en nutrition organisé via le cluster.

Merci beaucoup pour votre temps. Vos réponses sont très précieuses.

*** Required**

1. Email address *

Section one: Your profile/Section un: votre profil

2. What is your job title?/Quel est votre intitulé de poste? *

3. With which organization are you currently working?/Avec quelle organisation est-ce que vous travaillez actuellement?

*

4. What is your current duty station (City and Country)?/ Quel est votre lieu d'affectation actuel (Ville et Pays)? *

5. How long have you been in your current position?/Depuis combien de temps occupez-vous votre poste actuel?

Mark only one oval.

- Less than one month/moins qu'un mois
- Over one month and less than three months/Plus d'un mois et moins de trois mois
- Over three month and less than six months/Plus de trois mois et moins de six mois
- Over six months and less than a year/ Plus de six mois et moins d'un an
- Over a year/Plus d'un an

6. Are you a/ Vous êtes *

Mark only one oval.

- Nutrition Cluster Coordinator/Coordinateur de cluster nutrition
- Information Management Officer/Responsable de la gestion de l'information
- Technical Working Group Chair/à la tête d'un groupe de travail technique en nutrition
- Technical Working Group Member/membre d'un groupe de travail technique en nutrition
- Other:

Section Two- National Level Nutrition Cluster and Technical Working Groups Structure /Section Deux - Structure du cluster national de nutrition et des groupes de travail techniques

7. What is the Nutrition Cluster activation status in your country now?/Quel est le statut d'activation du Cluster Nutrition dans votre pays maintenant?

Mark only one oval.

- Cluster not activated currently/le cluster n'est pas activé actuellement
- National authority leads the nutrition coordination with support from the nutrition CLA: coleadership model between government with CLA led Nutrition Cluster, double hatting/les autorités nationales sont à la tête de la coordination en nutrition l'appui de la cluster lead agency, model de coleadership/ double casquette
- National authority leads the nutrition coordination with support from the nutrition CLA: coleadership model between government with CLA-led nutrition cluster by dedicated NCC and or IMO/exactement comme le model précédent mais pas de double casquette: un coordinateur cluster dédié
- Coordination established through the Nutrition Cluster: single leadership model, no coordination between government and CLA-led nutrition cluster/ cluster géré par la cluster lead agency uniquement, pas de coordination avec le gouvernement
- Other:

8. Is nutrition a stand-alone cluster or a combined one with another sector? /Le cluster nutrition est-il un groupe autonome ou un groupe combiné avec un autre secteur?

Mark only one oval.

- Stand-alone/autonome
- Combined with another sector/ combiné avec un autre secteur
- Other:

9. If not UNICEF, who is the designated Cluster Lead Agency in your country now?

10. How many nutrition cluster partners are attending the cluster meetings in country?/Combien de partenaires du cluster nutrition assistent aux réunions du cluster dans le pays? *

Mark only one oval.

- Less than five/moins que cinq
- Between five and 10/entre cinq et 10
- Between 10 and 20/ entre 10 et 20
- Over 20/plus de 20
- Other:

11. How many times did the nutrition cluster meet in the last 6 months? /Combien de fois le cluster nutrition s'est-il réuni au cours des six derniers mois? *

Mark only one oval.

- Did not meet/ne s'est pas réuni
- Met once or twice/s'est réuni une ou deux fois
- Met between three and five times/entre trois et cinq fois
- Met between five and 10 times/entre cinq et 10 fois
- Met over 10 times/plus de 10 fois

12. Is there a Strategic Advisory Group (SAG) in place at the national level for the nutrition cluster? /Existe-t-il un groupe consultatif stratégique (SAG) au niveau national pour le cluster de la nutrition? *

Mark only one oval.

- Yes/Oui
- No/Non
- Other:

13. How many times did the SAG meet in the last 6 months? /Combien de fois le SAG s'est-il réuni au cours des 6 derniers mois? *

Mark only one oval.

- Did not meet/aucune fois
- Met once or twice/une ou deux fois
- Met between three and five times/entre trois et cinq fois
- Met between five and 10 times/entre cinq et 10 fois
- Met over 10 times/plus de 10 fois

14. How many sub-national nutrition clusters are in place in country? /combien de cluster sousnationaux sont en place dans le pays?

Mark only one oval.

- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5
- Other:

15. How many national level nutrition Technical Working Groups (TWGs) are in place now? /Combien de groupes de travail en nutrition au niveau national sont en place actuellement? *

Mark only one oval.

- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5
- Other:

16. What type of national level TWGs are in place now? Please tick all that applies/Quel type de groupes de travail technique (GTT) au niveau national sont en place actuellement? Veuillez cocher tout ce qui s'applique *

Check all that apply.

- Assessment/Surveys working group/ groupe de travail technique pour les enquêtes
- IYCF E working group/groupe de travail ANJE
- CMAM working group/groupe de travail PCMA
- Advocacy working group or taskforce/groupe de travail plaidoyer
- Accountability to Affected Populations, perceived Quality working group/Responsabilité envers les populations affectées, perception de la qualité
- Building capacity working group/ groupe de travail renforcement des capacités
- Other:

17. If no national TWGs exist today, did any TWGs exist in the past year?/Si aucun GTT au national n'existe aujourd'hui, existait-t-il des GTTs au cours de l'année écoulée? *

- Mark only one oval.
- Yes/Oui
- No/Non
- Other:

18. If yes, please specify the types of TWGs that existed/Si oui, veuillez préciser les types de GTTs qui existaient *

Mark only one oval.

- Assessment/Surveys working group/ groupe de travail sur les enquêtes
- IYCF E working group/ groupe de travail sur l'ANJE
- CMAM working group/groupe de travail sur la PCMA
- Advocacy working group or taskforce/groupe de travail sur le plaidoyer
- Accountability to Affected Populations, perceived Quality working group/Groupe de travail sur la responsabilité envers les populations concernées, perception de la qualité
- Building capacity working group/groupe de travail sur le renforcement des capacités
- Other:

19. Do the TWGs have a ToR? /Est-ce que les GTTs ont des ToRs? *

Mark only one oval.

- Yes/Oui
- No/Non
- Other:

20. Do the TWGs have a limited lifespan? les GTTs ont-ils une durée de vie limitée? *

Mark only one oval.

- Yes/Oui
- No/Non
- Other:

21. What are the main functions of the TWGs? Please check all that applies/Quelles sont les principales fonctions des GTT? Veuillez cocher tout ce qui s'applique *

Check all that apply.

- Updating national nutrition policies/mettre à jour les politiques nationales en nutrition
- Harmonizing the guidelines used by partners/Harmoniser les lignes directrices utilisées par les partenaires
- Supervising quality of the intervention through audits and field visits/superviser la qualité de l'intervention au travers d'audits et des visites terrains
- Training and capacity building/formations et renforcement des capacités
- Other:

22. How often do the TWGs provide feedback to the Nutrition Cluster partners as a group? /À quelle fréquence les GTTs fournissent-ils un retour d'information au Cluster Nutrition en tant que groupe?

23. How is this feedback provided to the Nutrition Cluster Partners?/Comment ce retour est-il fourni au Cluster Nutrition? *

Check all that apply.

- Via written communication/communication écrite
- Through in person meetings during the Nutrition Cluster meetings/durant les réunions de travail du cluster nutrition
- Other:

24. What are the main challenges faced by the TWGs? Note: this is an important question, please take the time needed to answer it/Quels sont les principaux défis rencontrés par les GTTs? Remarque: il s'agit d'une question importante. Veuillez prendre le temps nécessaire pour y répondre. *

Section three: structure, functions and deliverables of the different TWGs/Section trois: structure, fonctions et livrables des différents GTTs

Assessment- Survey Technical Working Group/ Groupe de travail pour les enquêtes

25. Is there an Assessment TWG in your country?/Existe-t-il un GTT pour les enquêtes dans votre pays? *

Mark only one oval.

- Yes (if Yes, please answer the questions below)/Oui (si Ouui, svp repondez aux questions plus bas)
- No (if No, Skip this section)/ Non (si Non, ne repondez pas aux questions relatives à ce GTT)
- Other:

26. How many agencies are members of the Assessment TWGs?/Combien d'agences sont membres du GTT pour les enquêtes?

Mark only one oval.

- Less than three/moins que trois
- Between three and six/entre trois et six
- Between six and 10/entre six et 10
- over 10/plus de 10
- Other:

27. Which agencies are members of the Assessment TWG? Please write down the names of the agencies/Quelles agences sont membres du groupe de travail pour les enquêtes? S'il vous plaît écrivez les noms des agences

28. What is the criteria for choosing Assessment TWGs member agencies? Please tick all that applies/Quels sont les critères de choix des agences membres des GTT pour les enquêtes?

Veuillez cocher tout ce qui s'applique/Check all that apply.

- Agency is an expert in the technical discussion taken up by the TWG/L'agence est experte dans la discussion technique entreprise par le GTT
- Agency volunteered to be part of the TWG/ L'agence s'est portée volontaire pour faire partie du GTT
- One of the agencies' staff is an expert in the subject matter/un membre du personnel de l'agence est expert en la matière du GTT
- Other:

29. How many times did the Assessment TWG meet in the last 6 months? /Combien de fois le GTT pour les enquêtes s'est-il réuni au cours des six derniers mois?

Mark only one oval.

- Did not meet/aucune fois
- Met once or twice/une ou deux fois

- Met between three and five times/entre trois et cinq fois
- Met between five and 10 times/entre cinq et 10 fois
- Met over 10 times/plus que 10 fois

30. What are the main functions of the Assessment TWGs? Please check all that applies/Quelles sont les principales fonctions du GTT pour les enquêtes? Veuillez cocher tout ce qui s'applique/Check all that apply.

- Updating national nutrition policies/mettre à jour les politiques nationales en nutrition
- Harmonizing the guidelines used by partners/harmoniser les lignes directives en nutrition utilisées par les partenaires
- Supervising quality of the intervention through audits and field visits/superviser la qualité de l'intervention au travers d'audit et de visites terrain
- Training and capacity building/formations et renforcement des capacités
- Other:

31. Are there specific deliverables expected from the Assessment TWG? if yes, please specify:/Existe-t-il des livrables spécifiques attendus du GTT pour les enquêtes? Si oui, veuillez préciser:

32. What have been recent (within 2 years) deliverables from this Assessment TWG? /Quels ont été les résultats récents (moins de 2 ans) de ce GTT pour les enquêtes?

33. What are the main challenges faced by the Assessment TWGs? /Quels sont les principaux défis auquel ce GTT pour les enquêtes fait face?

34. Which nutrition colleagues or institutions do the members of the TWG turn to for technical support? / Vers quels collègues ou institutions nutritionnelles les membres du GTT se tournent-ils pour un support technique?

35. How is the overall quality of work by the Assessment TWG perceived by partners?/Comment la qualité globale du travail du GTT pour les enquêtes est-elle perçue par les partenaires?

Mark only one oval.

- Poor/insuffisante
- Mediocre/médiocre
- Good/bien
- Very good/très bien
- Other:

36. Please explain why (why is the Assessment TWG perceived this way)/Veuillez expliquer pourquoi (pourquoi le GTT pour les enquêtes est-il perçu de cette façon)

IYCF-E Technical Working Group/ Groupe de travail technique ANJE-U

37. Is there an IYCF-E TWG in your country?/Existe-t-il un groupe de travail ANJE-U dans votre pays? *

Mark only one oval.

- Yes (if Yes, please answer the questions below)/ Oui (si Oui, merci de répondre aux questions plus bas)
- No (if No, Skip this section)/Non (si Non, merci de ne pas répondre aux questions plus bas relatives à ce GTT)

- Other:

38. How many agencies are members of the IYCF-E TWGs?/Combien d'agences sont membres des GTT ANJE-U?

Mark only one oval.

- Less than three/moins que trois
- Between three and six/entre trois et six
- Between six and 10/entre six et 10
- over 10/plus de 10
- Other:

39. Which agencies are members of the IYCF-E TWG? /Quelles agences sont membres du GTT ANJE-U?

40. What is the criteria for choosing IYCF-E TWGs member agencies? Please tick all that applies/Quels sont les critères pour choisir les agences membres du GTT ANJE-U? Veuillez cocher tout ce qui s'applique

Check all that apply.

- Agency is an expert in the technical discussion taken up by the TWG/L'agence est experte dans la discussion technique entreprise par le GTT
- Agency volunteered to be part of the TWG/L'agence s'est portée volontaire pour faire partie du GTT
- One of the agencies' staff is an expert in the subject matter/ Un membre du personnel des agences est un expert en la matière
- Other:

41. How many times did the IYCF-E TWG meet in the last 6 months? /Combien de fois le groupe de travail ANJE-U s'est-il réuni au cours des 6 derniers mois?

Mark only one oval.

- Did not meet/aucune fois
- Met once or twice/une ou deux fois
- Met between three and five times/entre trois et cinq fois
- Met between five and 10 times/entre cinq et 10 fois
- Met over 10 times/plus de 10 fois

42. What are the main functions of the IYCF-E TWGs? Please check all that applies/Quelles sont les principales fonctions du GTT ANJE-U? Veuillez cocher tout ce qui s'applique Check all that apply.

- Updating national nutrition policies/mettre a jour des politiques nationales en nutrition
- Harmonizing the guidelines used by partners/harmoniser les lignes directrices utilisées par les partenaires
- Supervising quality of the intervention through audits and field visits/superviser la qualité au travers d'audits et de visites terrain
- Training and capacity building/formation et renforcement des capacités
- Other:

43. Are there specific deliverables expected from the IYCF-E TWG? if yes, please specify:/Y at-il des livrables spécifiques attendus du GTT ANJE-U? Si oui, veuillez préciser:

44. What have been recent (within 2 years) deliverables from the IYCF-E TWG? /Quels ont été les résultats récents (dans les 2 ans) du GTT ANJE-E?

45. What are the main challenges faced by the IYCF-E TWGs? /Quels sont les principaux défis auxquels sont confrontés les GTT ANJE-U?

46. Which nutrition colleagues or institutions do the members of the IYCF-E TWG turn to for technical support? /Vers quels collègues ou institutions de nutrition les membres du groupe de travail ANJE-U se tournent-ils pour obtenir un soutien technique?

47. How is the overall quality of work by the IYCF-E TWG perceived by partners?/Comment la qualité globale du travail du groupe de travail ANNJE-U est-elle perçue par les partenaires? Mark only one oval.

- Poor/insuffisante
- Mediocre/médiocre
- Good/bien
- Very good/très bien
- Other:

48. Please explain why (why is the IYCF-E TWG perceived this way)/Veuillez expliquer pourquoi (pourquoi le GTT ANJE-U est-il perçu de cette manière)

CMAM Technical Working Group/ Groupe de travail PCMA

49. Is there an CMAM TWG in your country?/Y a-t-il un GTT PCMA dans votre pays? *

Mark only one oval.

- Yes (if Yes, please answer the questions below)/Oui (si oui, merci de répondre aux questions plus bas)
- No (if No, Skip this section)/Non (si Non, vous pouvez passer à la section suivante)
- Other:

50. How many agencies are members of the CMAM TWGs?/Combien d'agences sont membres des GTT de la PCMA?

Mark only one oval.

- Less than three/moins que trois
- Between three and six/entre trois et six
- Between six and 10/entre six et 10
- over 10/plus que 10
- Other:

51. Which agencies are members of the CMAM TWG?/Quelles agences sont membres du GTT PCMA?

52. What is the criteria for choosing CMAM TWGs member agencies? Please tick all that applies/Quels sont les critères de sélection des agences membres de GTT PCMA? Veuillez cocher tout ce qui s'applique Check all that apply.

- Agency is an expert in the technical discussion taken up by the TWG/L'agence est un expert dans la discussion technique reprise par le GTT
- Agency volunteered to be part of the TWG/l'agence s'est portée volontaire pour faire partie du GTT

- One of the agencies' staff is an expert in the subject matter/!un du personnel de l'agence est un expert en la matière discuté dans le GTT
- Other:

53. How many times did the CMAM TWG meet in the last 6 months? /Combien de fois le GTT PCMA s'est-il réuni au cours des six derniers mois?

Mark only one oval.

- Did not meet/aucune fois
- Met once or twice/une ou deux fois
- Met between three and five times/entre trois et cinq fois
- Met between five and 10 times/entre cinq et 10 fois
- Met over 10 times/plus de 10 fois

54. What are the main functions of the CMAM TWGs? Please check all that applies/Quelles sont les fonctions principales du GTT PCMA? Veuillez cocher tout ce qui s'applique Check all that apply.

- Updating national nutrition policies/mettre à jour les politiques nationales en nutrition
- Harmonizing the guidelines used by partners/ harmoniser les lignes directrices en nutrition utilisées par les partenaires
- Supervising quality of the intervention through audits and field visits/superviser la qualité du travail au travers d'audits et de visites terrain
- Training and capacity building/formations et renforcement des capacités
- Other:

55. Are there specific deliverables expected from the CMAM TWG? if yes, please specify:/Y at-il des livrables spécifiques attendus du GTT PCMA? Si oui, veuillez préciser:

56. What have been recent (within 2 years) deliverables from the CMAM TWG? /Quels ont été les livrables récents (moins de 2 ans) du GTT PCMA?

57. What are the main challenges faced by the CMAM TWGs? /Quels sont les principaux défis auxquels sont confrontés les GTTs PCMA?

58. Which nutrition colleagues or institutions do the members of the CMAM TWG turn to for technical support? /Vers quels collègues ou institutions nutritionnelles les membres du GTT PCMA se tournent-ils pour un support technique?

59. How is the overall quality of work by the CMAM TWG perceived by partners?/Comment la qualité globale du travail du GTT PCMA est-elle perçue par les partenaires?

Mark only one oval.

- Poor/insuffisante
- Mediocre/médiocre
- Good/bien
- Very good/très bien
- Other:

60. Please explain why (why is the CMAM working group perceived this way)/Veuillez expliquer pourquoi (pourquoi le groupe de travail de la PCMA est-il perçu de cette manière)

Other TWGs/Autres GTTs

61. Please specify the type of the TWG if not named above/S'il vous plaît spécifier le type de GTT si non nommé ci-dessus

62. Comments on the structure, functions and deliverables of this TWG/Commentaires sur la structure, les fonctions et les produits livrables de ce GTT

Section four: Urgent technical issues that require immediate attention/ Section quatre: problèmes techniques urgents nécessitant une attention immédiate

63. Are there currently technical questions or issues that are unanswered and require urgent attention? /Y a-t-il actuellement des questions techniques ou des problèmes qui restent sans réponse et nécessitent une attention urgente? *

Mark only one oval.

- Yes/Oui
- No/Non
- Other:

64. If Yes, please specify in details all technical issues or questions unanswered and that require immediate attention/Si oui, veuillez spécifier en détail toutes les questions techniques ou les questions sans réponse qui nécessitent une attention immédiate

65. Is there a TWG dealing with the questions mentioned above currently? /Existe-t-il un GTT traitant des questions mentionnées ci-dessus actuellement?

Mark only one oval.

- Yes/Oui
- No/Non
- Other:

66. If yes, please specify/Si oui, veuillez préciser

67. If no, how is this question being managed?/Si non, comment cette question est-elle gérée?

68. Any comment or something you would like to share with us/Est-ce que vous avez un commentaire ou quelque chose que vous aimeriez partager avec nous?

Thank you very much for your time!/Merci beaucoup pour votre temps!

Annex 3: Key Informants questionnaire

Current functioning and way forward for the TWGs

The below set of questions are a generic interview guide for the key informant interviews of the country level group of interlocutors listed in the methodology.

Section 1: Introductions, explanation of purpose of the review, overview of the interview main sections and time needed to complete the interview.

Section 2: General Information on the TWGs in country

How many national or subnational level Technical Working Groups (TWGs) are in place now? What type of national or subnational level TWGs are in place now? Do the TWGs have official Terms of References? Please specify if it is the case for each one. Do the TWGs have a lifespan? How many times they are meeting? Currently what are the main functions of the TWGs? How are the TWGs managed? Do they have a chair? How is the chair/s selected?

Section 3: The process of setting up a working group

Can you describe what was the process of starting a TWG? Who and what initiated it? How was it decided? Was there an analysis based on which the decision took place? How are the agencies members of the TWGs chosen? Is there an assessment of the technical skills, knowledge and experience of the participants? If so, would it be possible for you to share. While choosing TWG members, what is taken into account: is it expertise of the individual or that of the agency? How are members replaced?

Section 4: The technical references of the TWGs

Where do individuals in the group go for technical guidance, websites, focal point expert or institution, reference documents, other? Please list all institutions and channels technically supporting the TWGs. Who do working groups turn to when faced with an unanswered or unsure technical issue? What happens in that case? What are the technical challenges faced? What happens in case of lack of technical consensus? Is there an assessment of the support required by the technical working groups? Is there a TWG self-assessment checklist on their own deliverables or performance? Do the TWGs have the legitimacy and back up on the recommendations they propose? Are there currently technical questions or issues that are unanswered and require urgent attention? If Yes, please specify in details all technical issues or questions unanswered and that require immediate attention: Is there a TWG dealing with the questions mentioned above currently? If yes, please specify.

Section 5: The themes that the TWGs work on

Explain that the sections below are divided according to the main themes the TWGs work on and inquire if there are additional main themes they think they would like to add

Theme one: Guidelines

Are there up to date CMAM guidelines, IYCF and IYCFE guidelines, assessment guidelines, supplies storage guidelines, Community Volunteers guidelines in the country where you are based? Has there been a mapping of the guidelines ? has there been a gap analysis done on the existing guidelines i.e. if they are not up to date or they need revising? if so, by who, when? Is there a strategy and action plan to improve or update the guidelines? Is this strategy to be implemented by the TWG? If not, who is leading on this strategy and workplan? Is this work necessary to implementing the nutrition programs? What is the involvement of the TWGs in this work? What is the approximate percentage of time does the

TWGs spend working on this theme, i.e. guidelines? Are TWGs the best platform for making these or whether other options are better potentially? Is the TWG involved in harmonizing the guidelines for a unified way of implementing the nutrition programs? If so, what percentage time does the TWG spend on that theme?

Theme two: Joint quality assessment or a monitoring visit of programs

Is there a quality assessment in the TWGs or is someone else doing it? How does a group ensure quality? Is this part of the ToRs? Is there an evaluation or a gap analysis of technical program needs? If so, by who is this done? Is this done by the TWGs? Is there a strategy to address those needs and a plan of action? Does it include ongoing supervision? If so who conducts those tasks? Are some or all of the above tasks implemented by the TWGs? If not, is it a peer group? Are there tools developed for the joint supervision within the nutrition TWGs? Is there a joint supervision by the TWGs with other sectors? If so, please elaborate. Are there checklists or tools developed for inter-sectoral supervision? If so, would it be possible to share them? Is the TWG solicited for visits with governmental bodies? With visiting donors, other? Percentage of time the TWGs spend on this theme?

Theme three: Joint trainings and on the job coaching for programs

Is there an evaluation or assessment of the technical training needs? Strategy and action plan for trainings and on the job coaching? What is the TWG involvement in this task? Does the TWGs have access to resources for training and on the job coaching? If so, would you please list all sources. Is there an inter-sectoral TWG involved in inter-sectoral trainings? Is there a checklist of partners implementing to self-assess their performance against? what is the percentage of time the TWGs spend on this theme?

Theme four: other core functions

Are the TWGs involved in other themes? If yes, what are they? What is the percentage of time TWGs spend on this theme? Are there things that the TWG is doing that could have been done by someone else at another place at another time? What requires physical presence of RRTs?

Section 6: Where we would like to be: stakeholders opinions on how TWGs should ideally be operating

The below list of questions will be answered by conducting individual interviews of the country and some global level informants.

In your opinion, what type of national level TWGs should be in place now? In your opinion, should the TWGs have official ToRs? In your opinion, what should be the lifespan of a TWG? What should be the core functions of a TWGs? Should some of their core functions be predefined? If so, which ones. In your opinion, how should the TWGs divide their time, i.e. doing which functions? Which theme should they focus on? From the point of view of the interviewee, how should the TWGs be formed? Do you think some TWGs presence should be systematic or based on an assessment of needs? For instance, should some TWGs be systematic for some contexts? Should there be systematically an inter-sectoral TWG? How often should they meet? what type of output and impact should they have? What is your opinion for having a GNC Helpdesk technical support point person to centralize and redirect to the global body technical questions from the TWGs? What are the challenges you foresee in this model?

Section 7: What is missing: determining what are the current gaps and at what level are they manifesting

The below list of questions will be answered by conducting individual interviews of the country and global level informants.

Explain the current mechanism that is in place: what is your opinion of the way the technical support is taking shape via the NiE technical body ? What is missing? For structural view point what should be taken into account ?What support does the GNC Helpdesk technical support should deliver regardless of the presence or absence of TWGs, orientation of TWG chair and/or members? Webinar on key technical approaches, visits? Regular calls? Package orientation upon arrival to position?

From the point of view of the interviewee, in order to attain the desired goal (improve the technical support to NC) what is the gap, what is missing? In terms of process? in terms of tools? In terms of human resources? In terms of institutional endorsement? And at what level? In the TWGs? At the NC partner level? At the NC SAG level? At the NCC level? The NiE technical body level, the CLA level at country, at regional, at HQ? the GNC level at coordination at helpdesk?

Section 8: What are the action required to bring the TWGs to the level of technical capacity desired

As a collective, if we want to get to our desired envisioned TWGs and its relationship to the GNC –CT, the GNC helpdesk technical support and the NiE technical body, then who needs to do what?What are the different actions that need to take place at different levels i.e. at TWG level, at NC level, at NC SAG level, at partners level, at RTT level, at GNC helpdesk level, at Nie Technical body level, at GNC CT level, at CLA country level, at CLA regional, at CLA HQ? What does the support look like? Who should be involved? When should the support be put in place? By whom?

Questions Yes/No answer

In your opinion, should a global level technical structure mirror country level structure? Yes or No

Why? Why not?

In your opinion, should there be a technical staff dedicated to TWGs in clusters in the same way as a NCC or an IMO? Yes or No

Why? Why not?

Section 9: Additional comments

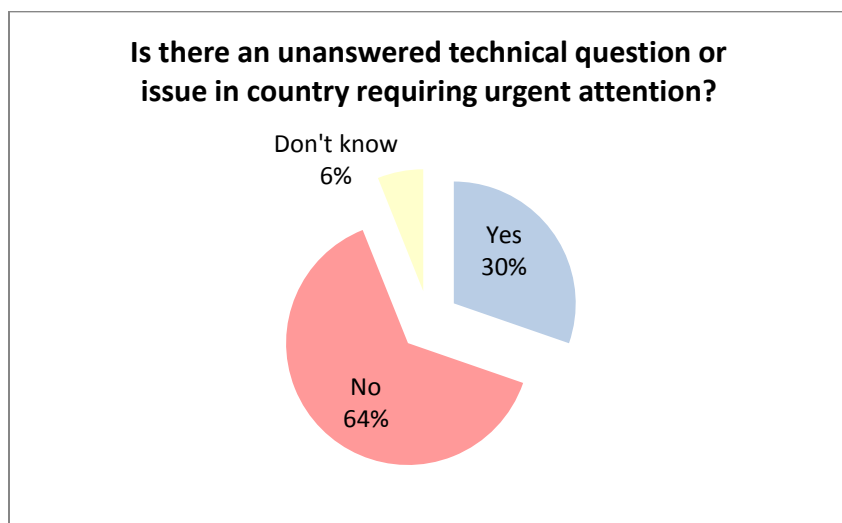
Thank you very much for your time!

Annex 4: List of respondents to the key informants interviews

Name	Position	Organization or initiative	Location
Abigael Nyukuri	Nutrition Cluster Coordinator	UNICEF	Bangladesh
Andi Kendle	Tech RRT Manager	Tech RRT	Global
Anna Ziolkovska	Nutrition Cluster Coordinator	UNICEF	Yemen
Bijoy Sarker	Nutrition Cluster Co-lead	Action Against Hunger	Afghanistan
Christine Fernandes	Nutrition Technical Advisor and WoS Nutrition Co-coordinator	Save the Children	Whole of Syria
Erin Boyd	Erin was in between contracts with OFDA at the time of the call	OFDA	Global
Esther Amasalu	Nutrition in Emergency	Action Against Hunger	Roving
Geraldine Bellocq	GNC Helpdesk Operational Support – Geraldine had taken up another position at the time of the call	GNC-CT	Global
Gwen Garnier	Nutrition in Emergency	WFP	Roving
Kirathi Reuel	Nutrition Cluster Coordinator	UNICEF	Nigeria
Louise Mwirigi	Nutrition Specialist (Information)	UNICEF	Global
Marie Petry	Head of Nutrition and Health Department	Action Against Hunger	Afghanistan
Michele Goergen	Technical Rapid Response Team	Tech RRT	Roving
Montse Escruela	Nutrition Advisor	MSF	Global
Najwa Rizkallah	Nutrition Cluster Coordinator	UNICEF	Whole of Syria
Ruth Situma	Nutrition Speciliast (Maternal and Child Nutrition in Humanitarian Contexts)	UNICEF	Global
Scott Logue	Technical Rapid Response Team	Tech RRT	Roving
Sophie Whitney	Nutrition Expert	ECHO	Global
Sujay Nepali	Head of Nutrition and Health Department	Action Against Hunger	Nepal
Talal Mahgoub	Nutrition Specialist	UNICEF	Soudan
Tariq Mekkawi	Nutrition Cluster Coordinator	UNICEF	Turkey
Victoria Mwenda	Nutrition Cluster Coordinator	UNICEF	Kenya

Annex 5 What technical questions or issues are countries struggling with today?

At the end of the online questionnaire, respondents were asked whether there were any unanswered technical issues that require urgent attention. 64% of respondents said there were none.



Out of those who answered yes (30%) to the previous question, 60% have said that the question is being dealt with at country level by a TWG.

Although this quick assessment gives us a glimpse at what is needed technically, it might not represent the actual trend as key informants **wondered whether truly there is no need for support or there is a reluctance to say publicly that the support is needed. Would it impact negatively on a person's professional image if a person requests for support?** There is also the possibility that due to often missing the level of expertise, the assessment of the gaps have not been done properly at country level, therefore the technical gaps are not highlighted nor is support requested.

Here is the list of issues filled by those respondents who answered yes to the above mentioned question in the online questionnaire

Operational research to define the proportion of kwashiorkor among SAM
What is the correct incidence correction factor that needs to be used to estimate SAM and MAM caseload?
A request for support for a CMAM Coverage Survey
Is it right to be avoiding Folic acid provision as routine drug for SAM cases right when the SMART survey results indicated prevalence anaemia in U5 children is more than 40%?
What is direction of GNC for children without prospect of breast feeding after exhausting option of wet mothers?
Is it possible to use Domeperidone to increase breast milk production (some research shows good results with very low side effects)
Standardization of national nutrition protocols
Developing capacity of Implementing Partners
How to deal with SAM and MAM defaulter cases in southern part and far-western region
Put in place the simplified CMAM protocol with the use of RUTF for MAM and SAM

The two main recurring questions that came back during the key informant interviews were the calculation of the incidence factor to calculate the SAM and MAM caseload - or simply **how to best calculate the SAM and MAM caseload** and **support in standardizing or updating the national nutrition protocol**.