



© Pexels/Nila Racigan

Infant Feeding in Emergencies Core Group

2023 Annual Meeting

13th & 15th November 2023, Virtual Meeting

Contents

Acknowledgements	4
Recommended Citation	4
Meeting overview	5
Day 1	6
Welcome, registration and housekeeping	6
Session 1: Presentation of the findings of the IFE-CG Mid-Term Review	6
Session 2: Feedback from the group on the findings of the Mid-Term Review	6
Wrap up and closing of the day	13
Day 2	14
Welcome, registration and housekeeping	14
Session 3: Recommendations for the IFE-CG moving forward	14
Session 4: Discussion on recommendations and reaching consensus on the next steps for the IFE-CG moving forward	15
Wrap up and closing of the day	22
Appendices	23
Appendix 1: Meeting agenda	23
Appendix 2: Meeting attendees.....	24
Appendix 3: Group work and presentation slides on the MTR findings	26

Acronyms

CBRN	Chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear
DE	Diversity, equity and inclusion
ENN	Emergency Nutrition Network
GNC	Global Nutrition Cluster
IFE-CG	Infant Feeding in Emergencies Core Group
IFE-CG SC	Infant Feeding in Emergencies Core Group Steering Committee
IYCF	Infant and young child feeding
IYCF-E	Infant and young child feeding in emergencies
MAMI	Management of at-risk mothers and infants
MTR	Mid-Term Review
NGO	Non-governmental organisation
OG-IFE	Operational Guidance on Infant Feeding in Emergencies
SOP	Standard operating procedures
TOR	Terms of reference
WHO	World Health Organization
UN	United Nations

Acknowledgements

The annual IFE Core Group meeting was convened by the Emergency Nutrition as the IFE Core Group coordinating body. We would like to acknowledge in particular the efforts of the IFE Core Group Steering Committee in the organisation of this annual meeting, as well as consultant Caroline Abla for her work in conducting and analysing the results of the Mid-Term Review. This meeting was made possible by the generous support of the American people through the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) (Award No. 720BHA23CA00001) and of Ireland (grant number HQPCR/2023/ENN). The ideas, opinions and comments herein are entirely the responsibility of its authors and do not necessarily represent or reflect the views of the donors.



Irish Aid
An Roinn Gnóthai Eachtracha
Department of Foreign Affairs

Recommended Citation

ENN, IFE Core Group (2024). Infant Feeding in Emergencies Core Group. 2023 Annual Meeting Report. Emergency Nutrition Network (ENN), Oxford, UK.

<https://doi.org/10.6084/m9.figshare.25251154>

Meeting overview

The IFE Core Group (IFE-CG) 2023 Annual Meeting was hosted by Emergency Nutrition Network (ENN) and held virtually with remote participation over two days (November 13th and 15th 2023). The meeting was facilitated by the IFE-CG Steering Committee (SC) members. The meeting agenda can be found in [Appendix 1](#). This year's meeting was dedicated to reviewing the findings and recommendations of the Mid-Term Review (MTR) conducted by an ENN consultant, Caroline Abl. The MTR was carried out to assess progress against the IFE-CG strategy, which runs from 2020 to 2024, by examining what activities the IFE-CG has undertaken, with whom and how ("the way we work"), appraising if and the degree to which the IFE-CG as a collective is needed and in what way (relevance), and reviewing and advising on IFE-CG governance and ways of working to deliver on commitments most effectively and efficiently. Since it is halfway through the IFE-CG strategy period, it was deemed a good opportunity to take stock of how the IFE-CG has evolved and moved forward over the last few years and what the priorities are for the remainder of the strategy period.

The main objectives of this year's meeting were therefore to:

- Share the process and results of the MTR and ensure the IFE-CG collective has a clear understanding of the findings
- Share the proposed recommendations and discuss the way forward based on the data collected for the MTR
- Reach consensus on the next steps and the way forward based on the MTR findings

The IFE-CG membership, including the IFE-CG SC members, attended the meeting which was split over two days. Each day consisted of a morning (AM) session and an afternoon (PM) session to accommodate members in different time zones. 10AM-1PM UK time on Days 1 and 2 were for members attending the AM sessions, and 2PM-5PM UK time on Days 1 and 2 were for members attending the PM sessions. The same content was covered in both the AM and PM sessions, although an update was provided in the PM session on discussions that had happened in the AM session to facilitate some continuity between the sessions.

A total of 42 IFE-CG members attended the meeting across the two days (in addition there were two ENN operational staff members who supported with the logistics of the meeting); see [Appendix 2](#) for a full list of participants. Day 1 consisted of two sessions. Session 1 was a presentation of the findings from the IFE-CG MTR by Caroline Abl, and Session 2 involved the membership breaking into smaller groups to discuss the findings and then feeding back in a plenary discussion. On Day 2, there was a recap of Day 1 discussions and a further two sessions. Session 3 involved a presentation of Caroline Abl's recommendations for the IFE-CG moving forward, and Session 4 involved the members breaking into small groups to discuss the recommendations and feeding back in a plenary discussion to inform the next steps for the collective. This report provides an overview of the meeting's proceedings, including key discussion points and the next steps/recommendations prioritised by the collective moving forward. Presentations and materials from the meeting can be found in [Appendix 3](#).

Day 1

Welcome, registration and housekeeping

Facilitator: Dima Ousta

At the start of Day 1, the facilitator opened the meeting by welcoming the participants, running through some general housekeeping, and asking the members to complete the attendance form. Dima proceeded to introduce the meeting's format, objectives, and agenda, as well as thanking the IFE-CG SC members who worked on planning this meeting, and Caroline Abla who led the MTR. She also thanked the donors for their generous funding and support of the IFE-CG.

Session 1: Presentation of the findings of the IFE-CG Mid-Term Review

Facilitator: Caroline Abla

In this session, the facilitator provided an overview of the MTR objectives, timeframe, process, and findings. Both the general findings and more specific findings were presented, including the IFE-CG's ways of working, relevance, governance, and functions.

The detailed findings can be found in the links to the PowerPoint slides in [Appendix 3](#). A summary of the key findings of the MTR includes:

- The IFE-CG is a safe, neutral space to express, respectfully discuss, raise red flags, hold each other accountable, and reach consensus.
- The IFE-CG is relevant and fit for purpose to deliver on IFE but there is room for improvement.
- The IFE-CG strategy is still relevant and fit for purpose but the activities undertaken are not always linked to the strategy.
- There is a lack of understanding of the role of the IFE-CG, who it is, who it serves, and what it should or should not do.
- There are three critical functions that will be compromised or neglected without the IFE-CG's existence: guidance, knowledge, and advocacy.

Session 2: Feedback from the group on the findings of the Mid-Term Review

Facilitators: Karleen Gribble (AM session) and Fatmata Sesay (PM session) – both IFE-CG SC members

In this session, the IFE-CG members in attendance were assigned to breakout rooms. Each group spent 30 minutes discussing the following four key questions on the MTR findings presented in Session 1:

1. ***What are your initial thoughts on the findings presented? Are they in line with what you expected to see?***
2. ***Were there any findings that surprised you and why?***
3. ***Based on the objectives of the MTR, are there any additional areas or aspects that the IFE-CG should consider during the remainder of the MTR?***
4. ***Which do you think are the biggest issues presented that we should focus on discussing solutions for on Day 2 of this meeting?***

The groups were provided with a link to a Google document which one member would use to take notes from the discussion and a second member would act as rapporteur. After 30 minutes, the breakout rooms were closed and the rapporteur from each group provided feedback in a plenary discussion which was facilitated by a member of the IFE-CG SC. Below are the four questions that were discussed in each breakout room and a summary of the key discussion points/feedback. These summaries combine feedback from both the AM and PM sessions. The Google documents with completed notes from each breakout group can be found in [Appendix 3](#).

1. **What are your initial thoughts on the findings presented? Are they in line with what you expected to see?**
 - The majority of the members were not surprised with the MTR findings as most were as they expected.
 - The members felt that the value of the IFE-CG lies in it not being led by one organisation alone since the membership decides the way forward and, as it has a diverse membership and global reach, the IFE-CG as a whole is able to look at the bigger picture and create a greater impact that way.
 - It was highlighted that the IFE-CG needs more advocacy expertise/representation within the membership and this aspect of the IFE-CG needs to be strengthened.
 - Some members thought that it may be worth initiating more discussions on how to make strategy/advocacy a long-term goal rather than immediately taking on an advocacy position.
 - Larger questions were raised around who the IFE-CG is, what the IFE-CG does and who the IFE-CG serves. This highlights the need to clarify the role and priorities of the IFE-CG so that the mission is understood.
 - Approximately 30% of IFE-CG members found the scope/mission of the IFE-CG to be confusing.
 - A point was raised about whether it is the IFE-CG's mission to expand to high income countries – is there a way these gaps can be filled without losing focus on low- and middle-income countries?

- Since the IFE-CG has evolved over time and the needs/priorities have changed, this may have contributed to the confusion regarding why the IFE-CG has been involved in certain projects in the past.
- Members' understanding also depends on the level of engagement or participation of individual members – which sub-groups/task forces have they been involved in and has this affected their understanding of the role of the IFE-CG?
- There was general consensus amongst members that the IFE-CG needs to prioritise streamlining internal communication so that new and existing members are correctly oriented as to the IFE-CG mission and decision-making processes.
 - Some members shared that they did not find the IFE-CG's process of choosing which work pieces to engage with to be transparent, e.g., the decision to lead on the development of the guidance for the Ukraine response, 'Chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear (CBRN) threats in wartime situations: The impact on breastfeeding safety and infant/young child feeding practices'.
 - Members discussed creating a more transparent process when engaging in new work pieces going forward.
 - External communication also needs to be improved so that those outside the IFE-CG are aware of its role. In addition, more emphasis needs to be placed on reaching out to different groups.
 - Members would like to receive updates, if possible, from those working at country level/in the field regarding any Infant and young child feeding in emergencies (IYCF-E) activities being carried out and/or any resources that could be shared with IFE-CG members.
- Several members shared that they were expecting more questions/feedback within the MTR related to the following topics:
 - IFE-CG support at country level
 - The specific responsibilities of partners and members within the IFE-CG
 - The use of member agencies' capacities
 - Links with other United Nations (UN) agencies and the Global Nutrition Cluster (GNC) technical arm

2. Were there any findings that surprised you and why?

- Members were surprised that 50% of the IFE-CG felt that it was not the role of the IFE-CG to support the CBRN guidance development.
 - This is possibly due to a communication issue as the decision to develop this guidance was not explained to the membership – this links to some of the issues raised in the previous question regarding streamlining internal communication.

- There might be a need for more clarity for members on why the IFE-CG was supporting the response since this is an appropriate piece for IFE-CG to take on.
- Some members may not be aware of the history of the development of this document – the IFE-CG had previously asked the World Health Organization (WHO) to develop this guidance but there was no action from WHO. The war in Ukraine caused concerns to again arise about the need for this document so the IFE-CG took on the responsibility of creating the guidance.
- Some members were confused as to why the IFE-CG led on the development of the CBRN guidance because it revolved around Ukraine, a high-income country.
 - A number of members felt that the IFE-CG needs to clarify its position regarding taking on work pieces in high-income vs. low-income contexts.
 - A few members suggested that the IFE-CG should also expand its reach to high income countries and not focus solely on low-income contexts.
 - This is part of a larger question regarding who the IFE-CG serves and what it does.
- A number of members were also surprised at the lack of clarity regarding the roles/responsibilities of the IFE-CG since it does have a workplan and terms of reference (TOR).
 - Some members raised the fact that although the IFE-CG has a workplan and TOR, there is no clear mission or details in writing as to what the IFE-CG does/who the IFE-CG serves.
 - There is a real need to discuss the roles of UNICEF, the GNC, and the IFE-CG itself and how they work together. This was also highlighted in some of the discussion points in the previous question.
 - It was reiterated specifically that UNICEF’s role within the IFE-CG needs to be discussed, and there is a need for a more inclusive discussion when multiple agencies/actors are brought into the conversations regarding an emergency nutrition response.
 - The members were glad to have UNICEF headquarters staff as part of the IFE-CG but shared that it would be great to have UNICEF senior nutritionist regional office staff participating as well.
- The members identified the lack of communications/advocacy expertise within the IFE-CG membership as surprising, and that there is an opportunity for the IFE-CG’s strategy to focus more on communications/advocacy.
- Another statistic that was surprising to members was that 35% of members thought the IFE-CG could be led by another organisation.

- There was discussion regarding the fact that the IFE-CG's independence is important and so being led by UNICEF, WHO, Save the Children or another organisation would take away from this.
- Some members shared that the beauty of the group is that each member can say what they think and that the IFE-CG is a safe space.
- A few members clarified that they meant that specific IFE issues could be led by different organisations but not necessarily the IFE-CG itself.
- A final point of discussion was regarding meetings, with members being surprised that some do not think that meetings are well managed.
 - A suggestion was made that the time spent during meetings could be used to make decisions etc. and any organisational updates could be undertaken by email.

3. Based on the objectives of the MTR, are there any additional areas or aspects that the IFE-CG should consider during the remainder of the MTR?

- Overall, the members thought the MTR was comprehensive and that it was a thorough review of the IFE-CG strategic plan.
 - There could be an additional need to explore some of the findings and next steps to address the differences in some of the views presented.
- Several members stated that the MTR needs to take a deeper look into the IFE-CG purpose (who the IFE-CG is, who does the IFE-CG serve, what does the IFE-CG do/not do).
 - It was also highlighted that as part of this, the IFE-CG could analyse its sub-groups and task forces to ascertain how these operate and if they are aligned with the IFE-CG purpose/mission.
 - There were a few members who suggested including the technical area 'maternal' into IFE-CG activities since it is a dyad and maternal needs cannot be separated from infant and young child feeding (IYCF). Further discussion is needed on this, including the distinguishment between the management of at-risk mothers and infants (MAMI), the maternal technical area and IFE.
- There was some discussion regarding a need for a financial assessment.
 - Members asked if the workplan funding and costings could be reviewed, and it be determined whether there is sufficient budget to execute the workplan.
- There was a discussion about finalising the IFE-CG communications strategy.
 - Internal and external communication issues were raised again, including how the IFE-CG SC communicates to the wider membership more efficiently.
 - The IFE-CG needs to do more to engage with external actors who are not members of the IFE-CG. Questions were raised about how the IFE-CG

communicates effectively with the appropriate actors/stakeholders and if this could be considered in the MTR.

- The IFE-CG also needs to communicate its expectations of the roles /responsibilities and requirements to the GNC as the current structure of engagement between the IFE-CG and the GNC is not clear to members of the IFE-CG.
 - Questions were raised by several members about IFE-CG products.
 - What has the IFE-CG produced, which of these products have been utilised, and how are they being disseminated?
 - Several members thought it would be useful to receive more regular information about IFE-CG products/documents for effective IFE response.
 - Members shared that although the IFE-CG has translations of the OG-IFE which has aided dissemination, there are still a number of resources that have either limited or no translated versions available. This is a big barrier to dissemination of the IFE-CG's supporting resources and there is opportunity to focus on this more as the IFE-CG moves forward.
 - A few members also shared that it would be great to see some of the above issues regarding translation needs featured in the MTR as this did not appear in the summary of findings presented.
 - A brief point on how the IFE-CG measures success was raised.
 - The IFE-CG regularly reports back on activities within the workplan but how is success measured practically? Since the IFE-CG resources/guidance are targeted towards specific audiences, how is their impact measured?
 - For example, the OG-IFE aims to reach policymakers, programmers working in emergency response, NGOs, governments, etc. so how can the success/impact of these pieces of guidance be measured amongst these groups?
- 4. Which do you think are the biggest issues presented that we should focus on discussing solutions for on Day 2 of this meeting?**
- A key issue and priority that was raised by most members was the need to clarify who the IFE-CG is, who the IFE-CG serves, what the IFE-CG does/does not do.
 - Members believe that once the roles and responsibilities of the IFE-CG are clarified, then other questions raised throughout the annual meeting will be more easily answered.
 - Perhaps there is an opportunity for members to explore the IFE-CG identity and mission together in a working session. Once everyone is clear on who the IFE-CG is then there is a chance for members to recommit to the group.

- The scope of the IFE-CG work was questioned as members wanted to know whether the IFE-CG should be providing more direct support to countries and whether the IFE-CG is even entitled to do so.
 - A few members shared their concerns about the IFE-CG being just a workhorse for UNICEF/WHO etc. as its work warrants greater funding and resources.
 - Some questions were raised regarding expectations including what are members' expectations for the IFE-CG and how does IFE-CG membership benefit their organisation?
 - There is also a need to discuss and clarify with members how the IFE-CG links with the GNC.
- Linking to the previous issues and priorities, there is a need for deeper exploration into the IFE-CG ways of working.
 - Some members felt that the selection of the IFE-CG members and IFE-CG SC members could be more transparent.
 - It was suggested that the IFE-CG should have an induction package and orientation for new (and old) members so that everyone understands the processes of how the IFE-CG works.
 - Orientation should include discussing the IFE-CG SC membership process, IFE-CG SC processes and responsibilities, IFE-CG facilitator and member responsibilities, working groups, etc. so that it is clear to all members how the IFE-CG functions.
 - There is a need to address the challenge with time zone differences so that members can better participate – there may be potential to have different subgroups or communities of practice to accommodate time zone differences.
- Another area to focus on in Day 2 was IFE-CG membership and engagement (both internal and external).
 - A priority is for the IFE-CG to better understand member engagement, what the specific challenges regarding active participation are, and how these can be addressed.
 - Some further discussion was had about poor engagement, and questions were raised as to why certain partners do not participate. Are members not actively participating because they feel less engaged in some topics or are there other issues that need to be addressed?
 - A follow on from the previous point was that there is a need to enforce psychological safety for all members; everyone should feel free to share their opinions, and the IFE-CG has a duty to make all members feel that their voice is valued within the group.
 - The IFE-CG should seek new members to diversify the membership so that a variety of voices are active and participating in the group. Here it was highlighted that the IFE-CG needs meaningful membership that is

representative – where are the gaps and which regions is the IFE-CG not reaching with membership?

- Communication and advocacy were further highlighted as areas to focus on.
 - There was some confusion amongst members about the communication strategy, what it is designed to do, and what it is achieving.
 - There is a need for better internal communication within the IFE-CG on what work pieces it is engaging with and why, e.g., the Ukraine CBRN guidance piece.
 - There is a need to define what the IFE-CG’s role is with advocacy and how members can support – should the subgroup on this be reactivated to lead?
 - Members said that advocacy and communications represent a gap that needs to be addressed and strengthened – what needs to be done and what does the IFE-CG need to do more of?
 - Questions were raised regarding budgeting plans for advocacy and communications – the 10 Years of Progress report highlighted the need for this but it was not budgeted for. This should be a priority when communicating about IYCF-E so therefore more planning is required here.
 - Regarding external communication, there was some discussion about how the IFE-CG can better engage countries in the development and implementation of the workplan.
 - It was reiterated that the IFE-CG needs to focus on cross-cutting issues more effectively (e.g., disability, gender, climate, localisation) and coordinate with other groups (Nutrition Core Group, Maternal Nutrition in Emergencies Group, midwives and other practitioners etc.) moving forward.

Wrap up and closing of the day

Facilitator: Dima Ousta

The facilitator closed Day 1 of the annual meeting by thanking Caroline for the informative presentation she shared on the MTR findings, thanking members for contributing to the rich discussion and the IFE-CG SC members for facilitating that discussion as well as thanking ENN colleagues for their support on the technical aspects of today’s meeting. The facilitator gave a summary of a few key points from today’s meeting and shared that the SC would be meeting to prepare for Day 2 discussions based on the feedback delivered during Session 2 today.

Day 2

Welcome, registration and housekeeping

Facilitator: Dima Ousta

At the start of Day 2, the facilitator opened the meeting in a similar way to Day 1 by welcoming participants, running through some general housekeeping, and asking the members to complete the attendance form. She proceeded to run through the agenda for Day 2 before giving a summary of what happened on Day 1 of the annual meeting. The facilitator shared that the IFE-CG SC had met to discuss how Day 1 went and to refine today's agenda/discussion sessions based on this feedback.

Session 3: Recommendations for the IFE-CG moving forward

Facilitator: Caroline Abia

In this session, the facilitator briefly summarised the MTR findings again and provided general/suggested recommendations on three key areas: "how we work", governance and relevance. The suggested recommendations were broken down into different sub-categories within each of the three key areas below. Further detail presented can be found in the links to the PowerPoint slides in [Appendix 3](#). This was then followed by the facilitator talking through the six priority recommendations, also detailed below.

General/suggested recommendations for three key areas:	
<u>How the IFE-CG Works:</u>	<i>General suggestions</i>
	<i>IFE-CG strategy and workplan</i>
	<i>IFE external communication and engagement</i>
	<i>IFE-CG and knowledge products</i>
	<i>IFE-CG and regional entities</i>
<u>Governance:</u>	<i>General suggestions</i>
	<i>Internal communication</i>
	<i>Steering Committee</i>
	<i>Level of participation in the IFE-CG</i>
	<i>Who is missing from the IFE-CG membership?</i>
<u>Relevance:</u>	<i>IFE and the operational guidance</i>

Priority recommendations:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Articulate a clear vision, purpose and mission statement based on what the IFE-CG does and does not do, in addition to detailed roles and responsibilities of the SC and members as it relates to their responsibility on IFE.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ IFE-CG and GNC working relationship needs to be clearly formulated (who does what) and understood by both groups.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Define what localisation means to the IFE-CG and if and how it will engage.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Promote, encourage, and support regional UN/NGO entities to engage with day-to-day IFE work at the regional or country level. Develop a one page TOR for systematic engagement.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Mapping of membership for better understanding of geographic, technical, and emergency representation and assess who should be considered to join the IFE-CG or if the IFE-CG needs to join these other entities.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Strengthen advocacy and communication, review and finalise the communication strategy, include advocacy and communication specialists in the IFE-CG.

The facilitator closed Session 3 by discussing the next steps, confirming that the final MTR report would be completed by December 15th 2023 and that a light implementation plan for the way forward would be developed by December 31st 2023.

Session 4: Discussion on recommendations and reaching consensus on the next steps for the IFE-CG moving forward

Facilitators: Brigitte Tonon and Alexander Iellamo (AM session) and Mija Ververs and Sarah O'Flynn (PM session) – all facilitators were IFE-CG SC members

In this session, the IFE-CG members in attendance were assigned to breakout rooms in a similar way as was done on Day 1 of the annual meeting. Each group spent 30 minutes discussing the following two key questions regarding the priority recommendations presented in Session 3:

- 1. Are there other recommendations that should be added?**
- 2. Are there recommendations that are not relevant or realistic that should be reconsidered?**

The groups were provided with a link to a Google document which one member would use to take notes from the discussion and a second member would act as rapporteur. After 30 minutes the breakout rooms were closed and the rapporteur from each group provided feedback in a plenary discussion which was facilitated by members of the IFE-CG SC. Below

are the two questions that were discussed in each breakout room and a summary of the key discussion points/feedback which combines input from both the AM and PM sessions. The Google documents with completed notes from each breakout group can be found in [Appendix 3](#).

1. Are there other recommendations that should be added?

Key discussion points regarding How the IFE-CG Works recommendations

- Vision and mission
 - Members suggested a collaborative workshop/session where the membership can develop the mission/vision/purpose statement together.
 - Several questions were raised regarding the IFE-CG scope:
 - Should the IFE-CG focus on low-income settings **and** high-income settings? Is the IFE-CG working on all humanitarian emergencies, or only low-income settings where there are emergencies?
 - There may be more of a gap in high-income settings where the nutrition cluster is not activated (e.g., Ukraine) – what is the role of the IFE-CG in future situations like this?
 - Should there be regional groups focused on more specific issues?
- Roles and responsibilities
 - As highlighted in this recommendation, there is a need to clearly define roles and responsibilities so that members have a better understanding of the IFE-CG work/roles and have a manageable workload in relation to the IFE-CG work.
 - There is a need to map the membership and organisations involved in order to raise awareness amongst members of the mandate of other agencies (e.g., UNICEF, UNHCR, WHO, etc.).
 - What it does and does not do in terms of safeguarding IYCF. Some members thought it would be good to add this layer to the “roles and responsibilities” recommendation to aid understanding amongst the membership.
 - A second layer to be added to this recommendation is to then clarify how these members/organisations function in relation to the IFE-CG. This will hopefully reduce confusion about who is responsible and who has the mandate for what.
 - A question was raised regarding whether the IFE-CG needs to clarify with its members what the relationship/role of different agencies is with governments.
 - There was further discussion amongst members about whether the IFE-CG needs a separate priority that provides more clarity on the day-to-day ways of working (standard operating procedures (SOPS)).

- Should this also be linked to actions in IYCF at different levels, including joint statements, country-level SOPs etc?
- Strategy and workplan
 - Members noted the importance of making space for necessary ad hoc activities that divert from the workplan but are urgent and arising (e.g., monkeypox, cholera, CBRN).
 - There was some discussion as to whether the IFE-CG needs to reconsider the role of the roadmap that identifies gaps within IYCF-E and to re-establish this.
- External communication and advocacy
 - Members called for a clear plan on how the IFE-CG disseminates guidance/resources to those who can make changes in IYCF-E at policy level and country level.
 - Questions were raised about whether the IFE-CG has clear communication channels to help to flag issues from countries and facilitate the institution of action. Can this be added to the recommendations regarding external communication?
 - Is there a need to actively communicate and build partnerships with other agencies in the nutrition field and not just IYCF agencies alone?
 - The general consensus amongst members is that the IFE-CG needs to focus on developing and strengthening the communications and advocacy strategy overall. A suggestion was made to pull Output C (communications) out of the workplan and realign it as a support to specific activities in Output A and Output B rather than have it as a standalone output.
- Knowledge product development
 - Some members noted that it would be helpful to have the IFE-CG SC document a process that would identify when the IFE-CG can or cannot endorse a product, and what the criteria would be for IFE-CG endorsement. Should the IFE-CG have a TOR or an instruction document on this?
 - Advertising products and summarising these in IFE-CG monthly meetings is very helpful for many members – a suggestion was made to keep this as a standing point on the monthly meeting agenda.
- Regional entities and localisation
 - How does the IFE-CG address localisation and multi-sector engagement – how can the IFE-CG make this clear for members?
 - There was some discussion regarding Ukraine and Gaza, and that it was hard to identify and fund local responders in those emergencies (e.g., the mothers' group in Ukraine was not known to the cluster, it is not clear who in Gaza can/is supporting IYCF, etc.)

- A couple of members also asked if the IFE-CG's role could be clarified regarding identifying mechanisms that will better find and support partners working at country-level/on the ground.
- Two key questions followed this discussion:
 - Can the IFE-CG add a recommendation under the How the IFE-CG Works section of the MTR about ways in which the IFE-CG can identify local organisations and resources that are supporting IYCF-E at country level?
 - Could the above resources/organisations be compiled into a database for ease of access?
- Some members also suggested specific changes/additions (in blue) to the wording of some of the recommendations under How the IFE-CG Works:
 - Recommendation #3 - *“Review, on a quarterly basis, the workplan and assess where the group is in implementation, any changes to make and why.”* **To have in-country IFE working groups provide feedback on the workplan.**
 - Recommendation #4 - *“Assess any new project/task the IFE-CG is asked to work on as to how it fits into the strategy and the workplan. Determine if the IFE-CG is the best placed to lead on the project/task, or whether others have the mandate for it.”* **Add: “and are willing to do it.”**
 - Recommendation #8 – *“Establish a process for the development of knowledge products, how this relates to IFE-CG workplan or not and, if not, who should produce these/how will the IFE-CG be involved”* **Add: for emerging issues and needs providing it fits within the scope of what the IFE-CG does (and is not something it does not do).**

Key discussion points regarding Governance recommendations

- Internal communication and the IFE-CG SC.
 - The communications priority recommendation is specific to the IFE-CG external communication plan but the IFE-CG needs to create a separate priority for internal communication; this needs to be strengthened.
 - Members discussed whether the TOR need to be clarified to reflect whether the IFE-CG is a consensus decision-making body, or whether the IFE-CG SC makes decisions, with ENN as the veto power when there is no consensus or majority. There is a need for clarification on this within the recommendation.
 - It was highlighted that there is a lack of an appropriate feedback mechanism within the IFE-CG – the IFE-CG SC has a responsibility to highlight feedback and concerns and share these with members so that the conversation is inclusive.
 - Information and decisions made by the IFE-CG SC need to be shared with members so there is consensus on actions as the IFE-CG – there is a need for transparency across the IFE-CG.

- Members requested that the minutes of the IFE-CG SC meetings be shared internally to aid understanding amongst the membership.
 - Members stressed the importance of retaining the monthly newsletter to keep the membership informed.
 - Several members felt it would be relevant to have more reviews/updates on the workplan and what progress has been made on certain activities – something that should be part of IFE-CG monthly meetings.
- Membership application, mapping and gaps
 - Clarification is needed regarding financial membership requirements.
 - Is the written requirement to provide ongoing annual financial support to the IFE-CG a barrier to membership?
 - Is it clear to members that there is an opportunity to participate in the IFE-CG in lieu of a monetary contribution?
 - There is a need for a comprehensive TOR and induction for new members/new representatives of existing organisations which could lead to a better understanding of the IFE-CG's mission/roles.
 - Can the IFE-CG include organisations in its mapping that deliver IYCF-E or influence it but do not necessarily follow the OG-IFE for greater awareness?
 - How are the findings of the mapping exercise addressed and how is it ensured this is a preparedness exercise?
 - The mapping exercise also links to the priority recommendation on roles and responsibilities – what do they do/not do with regard to IYCF-E?
 - There was some discussion about creating a concrete plan to engage with midwives, obstetricians etc., in all countries, to ensure IFE-CG partners are engaging with them.
 - It is critical that the IFE-CG engages with healthcare professionals who are responsible for birth. There is a need to reach outside the nutrition sector and partner with the health sector more.

Key discussion points regarding Relevance recommendations

- The majority of members felt that the recommendations under relevance were comprehensive so there were few additions.
- There is a need for the resources being developed to be translated into all relevant languages and made available to all entities involved in humanitarian emergencies.
- A question was raised regarding whether it might be interesting to undertake further studies on what IYCF-E tools reach the field, how they are being used, and if those at country-level or on the ground find these tools relevant.

2. Are there recommendations that are not relevant or realistic that should be reconsidered?

- Most of the membership shared that they felt the recommendations are relevant but are dependent on the IFE-CG scope of work.
 - The IFE-CG’s mission statement, goals, and vision are what everything else hinges on – once this is clearly laid out for IFE-CG members, everything else will be better understood and there will be less confusion about roles/responsibilities and what the IFE-CG does/does not do.
- IFE-CG strategy and workplan on assessing tasks (Recommendations #3, 4 and 5 – How the IFE-CG Works).
 - Regarding reviewing new projects that come to the IFE-CG, some members felt that this point needs more clarity; how are new projects assessed?
 - How does the IFE-CG ensure there are no delays to new project requests within the existing system(s)?
 - Work pieces that are not in the current IFE-CG workplan should be assessed and decided upon collectively – could there potentially be a vote amongst members?
 - As discussed previously, there is a need to better communicate with members about work pieces – what is the “why” behind the IFE-CG taking on certain work pieces (e.g., the CBRN/Ukraine guidance)?
 - The recommendation suggests that the IFE-CG reviews the workplan quarterly. However, some members shared that it may be best for the IFE Coordinator to review this three times per year with the fourth review being an annual review with all members.
- IFE-CG SC and its role (Recommendation #1 – How the IFE-CG Works; Recommendations – Governance).
 - A few members shared that the structure of the IFE-CG may prevent others from feeling engaged since the IFE-CG SC is a small group making many of the decisions.
 - How can the IFE-CG create an inclusive environment that makes members feel heard and involved?
 - How can the IFE-CG set up a process/feedback mechanism for complaints/concerns about someone involved in the standard complaints review process?
- Identifying members who are not participating (Recommendations – Governance).
 - It was suggested that the IFE-CG expands the membership quota per agency so that regional engagement is not limited.

- There is a need to find a way to survey who is active in a sensitive way – how can the IFE-CG reach those members and encourage more active participation/attendance?
 - With regards to members who do not regularly attend meetings/contribute, how can the IFE-CG assess membership to make sure members are engaged consistently?
 - What is expected of members regarding “active membership” or “active participation”? This needs to be more clearly defined and clarified.
 - Some members are not actively participating in certain topics/discussions because it may not be within their scope of work, they may be more of an active listener in conversations rather than contributing.
 - The IFE-CG should not just include diverse voices as token representation but encourage meaningful membership, engagement and active participation from those members.
- Mapping of membership (Recommendations – Governance):
 - There is a need to go beyond simply identifying who is not part of the IFE-CG – the IFE-CG needs to emphasise diversity in its membership and seek representation from voices in the global south, not just the global north.
 - There was some discussion about making sure the IFE-CG has members who are from a variety of countries/regions so that the conversation regarding IYCF-E is inclusive.
 - Some members were unsure what the end goal of this recommendation is, suggesting that mapping the IFE-CG membership is perhaps not the best starting point.
 - As a possible first step, the IFE-CG should define what to achieve with respect to membership and then determine what would be the best way to do this.
- Regional Entities (Recommendation #9 – How the IFE-CG Works).
 - Some members believe that there are mechanisms (regional clusters, country level clusters, technical working groups) that are better placed or positioned to develop the one-page “TOR for systematic engagement” given their natural engagements at country level.
 - After further discussion, a suggestion was made to clarify the wording of this recommendation so that members know the IFE-CG is not involved in day-to-day work at regional/country level, but it is the role of the IFE-CG membership to support those working at regional/country level to engage in IYCF-E.
 - This recommendation mentions a one page TOR – members would like clarity on how this would become an operational document.
 - Does the IFE-CG first need to map who is doing what and then invite these members to update and share to the wider membership?

- Members used to share updates on their agency’s work regularly – can this be re-incorporated into monthly meetings?
- External communication and collaboration (Recommendations #6 and 7 – How the IFE-CG Works).
 - There is a need for greater collaboration, coordination and communication across/with other sectors and groups (e.g., maternal nutrition in emergency).
 - The IFE-CG must finalise a solid advocacy/communications strategy that would support the “how-to” of disseminating the OG-IFE and other tools/guidance so that those IYCF-E practitioners who can uphold global IYCF-E standards and influence change in their context have access to these materials.
- The relationship between the GNC and IFE-CG (Recommendation #2 – How we work).
 - Members suggest that this is kept simple – during an upcoming monthly IFE-CG meeting the GNC representative could summarise what the GNC is, its scope of work and how it relates to the IFE-CG work.
 - The TOR and update within the meeting could also include a refresher of the already agreed upon ways of working.
 - It was suggested that a short orientation package on the working relationship could be included in the wider orientation for new IFE-CG members.
- Diversity, Equity, Inclusion (DEI) statement (Recommendation #2 – Governance).
 - A few members stated that they were unsure what the purpose of the DEI statement is and that its effectiveness seems questionable and might be counterproductive.

Wrap up and closing of the day

Facilitator: Dima Ousta

The facilitator closed Day 2 of the annual meeting by first sharing the link to the evaluation form for all members to complete, and secondly highlighting a few key discussion points from Day 2 of the meeting. The facilitator then thanked Caroline for sharing her priority recommendations for the IFE-CG moving forward, the members for contributing to another day of great discussions and the IFE-CG SC members for facilitating these. Members were made aware that the calendar invites for the 2024 monthly meetings and SC meetings would soon be sent out. Finally, our ENN colleagues were thanked for their support on the logistics of the meeting, as well as all those who contributed to the planning and execution of another successful IFE-CG annual meeting.

Appendices

Appendix 1: Meeting agenda

					
AM session (GMT) 10:00 AM – 1:00 PM	PM session (GMT) 2:00 PM – 5:00 PM		DAY 1 – Monday 13 November 2023	AM facilitator	PM facilitator
10:00 AM - 10:15 AM	2:00 PM - 2:15 PM	15 mins	Welcome, registration, and housekeeping	Dima	Dima
10:15 AM – 10:30 AM	2:15 PM – 2:20 PM	15 mins	Overview of meeting objectives and agenda	Dima	Dima
10:30 AM - 11:30 AM	2:20 PM - 3:00 PM	60 mins	SESSION 1: Presentation of findings of IFE CG Mid-term Review	Caroline	Caroline
11:30 AM – 11:45 PM	3:00 PM – 3:15 PM	15 mins	BREAK		
11:45 PM – 12:50 PM	3:15 PM – 4:50 PM	65 mins	SESSION 2: Feedback from group on findings of Mid-term Review	SC	SC
12:50 PM - 1:00 PM	4:50 PM - 5:00 PM	10 mins	Wrap up and closing of the day	Dima	Dima

					
AM session (GMT)	PM session (GMT)		DAY 2 – Wednesday 15 November 2023	AM facilitator	PM facilitator
10:00 AM - 10:10 AM	2:00 PM - 2:10 PM	10 mins	Welcome, registration, and housekeeping	Dima	Dima
10:10 AM – 10:20 AM	2:10 PM – 2:20 PM	10 mins	Recap of day 1	Dima	Dima
10:20 AM – 10:50 AM	2:20 PM – 2:50 PM	25 mins	SESSION 3: Recommendations for the IFE Core Group moving forward	Caroline	Caroline
10:50 AM – 11:25 AM	2:50 PM – 3:25 PM	35 mins	SESSION 4 – part 1 (group work): Discussion on recommendations and reaching consensus on next steps for the IFE Core Group moving forward	Brigitte/Alex	Mija/Sarah
11:25 AM – 11:40 PM	3:25 PM – 3:40 PM	15 mins	BREAK		
11:40 PM - 12:45 PM	3:40 PM - 4:45 PM	65 mins	SESSION 4 – part 2 (feedback in plenary): Discussion on recommendations and reaching consensus on next steps for the IFE Core Group moving forward	Brigitte/Alex	Mija/Sarah
12:45 PM - 1:00 PM	4:45 PM - 5:00 PM	15 mins	Wrap up and closing of the day	Dima	Dima

Appendix 2: Meeting attendees

Name	Role, Organisation	Day 1	Day 2
Alessandro Iellamo	Senior Emergency Nutrition Adviser, FHI360	AM/PM	AM/PM
Alexandra Rutishauser-Perera	Head of Nutrition, Action Against Hunger UK	AM	-
Assumpta Ndumi	International Rescue Committee	-	AM
Bindi Borg	Independent member	PM	PM
Brigitte Tonon	Action Against Hunger France	PM	AM
Brooke Bauer	Global Nutrition Cluster Technical Alliance	AM	AM
Caroline Abla	Consultant, ENN	AM/PM	AM/PM
Cecile Basquin	Global Nutrition Cluster (NiE Helpdesk)	PM	PM
Colleen Emary	World Vision International	PM	PM
Deborah Joy Wilson	Independent consultant	AM	AM
Dima Ousta	Emergency Nutrition Network (IFE-CG Coordinator)	AM/PM	AM/PM
Emily Hirata	Adventist Development and Relief Agency	PM	-
Eric Anderson	United States Agency for International Development/ Bureau for Humanitarian Assistance	PM	PM
Fatmata Sesay	UNICEF	PM	PM
Getinet Amenu	World Vision International	PM	-
Gwenaelle Garnier	World Food Programme	-	AM
Hatty Barthorp	GOAL Global	AM	-
Helen Gray	Baby Feeding Law Group UK	PM	PM
Hiroko Hongo	Independent member	AM	AM
Jennifer Nielsen	Helen Keller International	-	PM
Jodine Chase	SafelyFed Canada	PM	PM

Judy Canahuati	United States Agency for International Development/Bureau for Humanitarian Assistance	PM	PM
Julie Tanaka	Samaritan's Purse	-	PM
Karleen Gribble	Independent member	AM	AM
Kelly Marie Hormez	Global Health Manager, Samaritan's Purse	PM	-
Kerstin Hanson	Médecins Sans Frontières	-	PM
Linda Shaker Berbari	UNICEF	PM	PM
Magdalena Whoolery	Maternal and Child Health-IYCF Consultant	PM	PM
Marie McGrath	Emergency Nutrition Network	PM	PM
Mija Ververs	Centers for Disease Control and Prevention & Johns Hopkins University	PM	PM
Nicki Connell	Emergency Nutrition Network	AM/PM	AM/PM
Patti Rundall	International Baby Food Action Network	-	PM
Rachael Menezes	Emergency Nutrition Network	AM/PM	AM/PM
RuthAnna Mather	La Leche League International	PM	PM
Sajia Mehjabeen	Nutrition Adviser, Concern Worldwide	AM	AM
Sarah O'Flynn	Save the Children	PM	PM
Terry Theuri	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees	PM	PM
Yara Sfeir	Independent consultant	AM	AM
Zion Tankard	La Leche League International	PM	-
<u>Logistics support team:</u>			
Holly Ruffhead	Emergency Nutrition Network	AM	AM
Laura Delfino	Emergency Nutrition Network	PM	PM

Note that this list of participants is not comprehensive as it reflects only the names of participants who provided consent to have their names and organisation's name reflected in this report.

Appendix 3: Group work and presentation slides on the MTR findings

Day 1
<p>AM – Group 1: https://www.ennonline.net/attachments/5037/MTR-Feedback-GROUP-1-(AM).pdf</p> <p>AM – Group 2: https://www.ennonline.net/attachments/5038/MTR-Feedback-GROUP-2-(AM).pdf</p> <p>AM – Group 3: https://www.ennonline.net/attachments/5039/MTR-Feedback-GROUP-3-(AM).pdf</p> <p>PM – Group 1: https://www.ennonline.net/attachments/5040/MTR-Feedback-GROUP-1-(PM).pdf</p> <p>PM – Group 2: https://www.ennonline.net/attachments/5041/MTR-Feedback-GROUP-2-(PM).pdf</p> <p>PM – Group 3: https://www.ennonline.net/attachments/5042/MTR-Feedback-GROUP-3-(PM).pdf</p> <p>PM – Group 4: https://www.ennonline.net/attachments/5043/MTR-Feedback-GROUP-4-(PM).pdf</p>
Day 2
<p>AM – Group 1: https://www.ennonline.net/attachments/5044/MTR-Next-Steps-GROUP-1-(AM).pdf</p> <p>AM – Group 2: https://www.ennonline.net/attachments/5046/MTR-Next-Steps-GROUP-2-(AM).pdf</p> <p>AM – Group 3: https://www.ennonline.net/attachments/5045/MTR-Next-Steps-GROUP-3-(AM).pdf</p> <p>PM – Group 1: https://www.ennonline.net/attachments/5047/MTR-Next-Steps-GROUP-1-(PM).pdf</p> <p>PM – Group 2: https://www.ennonline.net/attachments/5048/MTR-Next-Steps-GROUP-2-(PM).pdf</p> <p>PM – Group 3: https://www.ennonline.net/attachments/5049/MTR-Next-Steps-GROUP-3-(PM).pdf</p> <p>PM – Group 4: https://www.ennonline.net/attachments/5050/MTR-Next-Steps-GROUP-4-(PM).pdf</p>

Presentation slides for [Session 1: Presentation of findings of the IFE-CG mid-term review](#) and [Session 3: Recommendations for the IFE-CG moving forward](#)

Emergency Nutrition Network

**2nd Floor, Marlborough House, 69 High Street,
Kidlington, Oxfordshire, OX5 2DN, UK**

Tel: +44 (0) 1865 372340

office@enonline.net

www.enonline.net

