



## Announcing a New Research Prioritisation Exercise for Improving Wasting Prevention

The [ENN](#) are embarking on a Research Prioritisation (RP) exercise, for the UK Department for International Development (DFID) through the MQSUN+ project, on the critical subject of wasting prevention. This short document is intended to provide information about why this is important, what our approach will be and to let you know how you can participate.

### Why this is important

The global burden of wasting (50.5 million children 0-59 months of age)<sup>1</sup> is a major global public health crisis and progress in reducing levels towards WHA targets has been poor. Wasting not only contributes to child deaths but also affects children's subsequent prospects of surviving and thriving in all areas of their lives. The treatment of wasting has expanded beyond humanitarian emergencies, with more services integrated into health systems, however, coverage for treatment remains way below the needs. Expanding treatment capabilities is only part of the solution. An urgent focus is also needed on the prevention of wasting. Understanding of the factors that drive wasting and robust evidence of effective interventions to prevent it are lacking. For this reason, DFID is investing in efforts to support the wider nutrition community to accelerate coordinated action to address this gap.

Prior to this RP exercise, ENN undertook a review of the current thinking and evidence of what works to prevent wasting which culminated in two key documents; A summary of current thinking on '[The Aetiology of Wasting](#)' and report on the current state of evidence and opinion on wasting prevention. This RP will build on these two important pieces of work as well as work undertaken by other organisations.

### What we will do

Over 12 months between August 2018 and July 2019, we aim to contribute to the reduction of the global burden of wasting by identifying and prioritising research investment opportunities. Specifically, we will;

- 1) Compile the research gaps in current knowledge on wasting prevention and,

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<sup>1</sup> UNICEF, WHO, World Bank Group. *Joint Child Malnutrition Estimates: Levels and Trends in Child Malnutrition. Key findings of the 2018 Edition of the Joint Child Malnutrition Estimates*. World Health Organisation, Geneva: World Health Organisation;2018.

- 2) Conduct a prioritisation exercise to establish research priorities for strengthening current approaches to wasting prevention.

## How we will do it

We will form an Expert Group (EG) drawn from international experts in the areas of undernutrition and research, to guide this RP exercise based on the Child Health and Nutrition Research Initiative ([CHNRI](#)) methodology. The stages of the work will be:

- 1) **Compiling and organising research gaps:** This will draw on the reviews mentioned above and previous RP exercises conducted by other organisations and initiatives. The EG will hone down and translate these gaps into specific research questions, ensuring answerability and avoiding overlap.
- 2) **Definition of judging criteria:** The EG will define the criteria against which each question will be judged as well as prepare a list of experts to invite to complete the prioritisation exercise. We will also invite a wider group of stakeholders to rank the judging criteria, and we will use those results to provide weightings in the final analysis.
- 3) **Prioritisation questionnaire:** We will develop a survey tool and guidance sheet which will be circulated to the list of experts. We will then collate responses.
- 4) **Analysis, presentation and discussion** of findings: The project team together with the EG, MQSUN+, and DFID, will review and discuss the findings.
- 5) **Development and submission of paper** on the RP to peer review journal: The ENN team and members of the EG will prepare a manuscript for submission to a peer-reviewed journal.

## How you can participate

- 1) Please share any research reviews or prioritisation exercises (not individual pieces of research) you have conducted or been involved in, which have identified research gaps in wasting prevention. This will help to inform our list of research gaps/questions going into the prioritisation exercise (**contact below**).
- 2) Take part as a key expert in the RP exercise itself. We will invite a select group of highly experienced individual experts to complete the CHNRI questionnaire. If you would like to be considered for this part of the process, please get in touch with us (**contact below**).
- 3) Sign up [here](#) to volunteer to complete a very short survey regarding which criteria are most important for judging research questions in this area. The results of this survey will inform weightings applied to the results of the prioritisation exercise.

**Contact:** Tanya Khara (ENN Technical Director) email: [tanya@enonline.net](mailto:tanya@enonline.net) with cc. Carmel Dolan (ENN Technical Director) email: [carmel@enonline.net](mailto:carmel@enonline.net)

For periodic progress updates on the RP exercise (and other related ENN activities), please visit our [website](#), [Facebook page](#), [twitter](#)

This flyer was produced by ENN and the MQSUN+ programme.

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