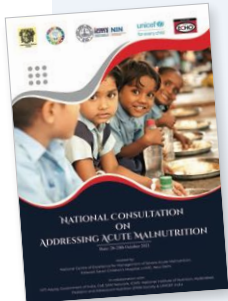


National consultation on addressing acute malnutrition in India



Acute malnutrition in children under five years of age remains a public health concern in India with little progress made towards reducing the prevalence of severe acute malnutrition (SAM) over recent decades. This situation has been exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic as a result of disrupted livelihoods and increased food insecurity, reduced access to health and nutrition services and delays in the supply of food and medicines as well as the deployment of field workers.

The Government of India has been implementing guidelines for the facility-based management of SAM in children under five years of age since 2011. Many states now also provide community-based management of acute malnutrition (CMAM) for infants and children 6-59 months of age. The National Centre of Excellence for Management of Severe Acute Malnutrition (NCoE-SAM) has worked with the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, UNICEF and state governments to strengthen care for children with SAM. Towards this end, a two-day 'National consultation on addressing acute malnutrition' was held by NCoE-SAM in October 2021 in collaboration with key actors, namely the National Institution for Transforming India 'Aayog' (commission), the Government of India, the Centre of Excellence for Management of Severe Acute Malnutrition Network, the Indian Council of Medical Research, the National Institute of Nutrition, Hyderabad, the Pediatric and Adolescent Nutrition Society and UNICEF India. The aim of the consultation was to share experiences from different states and gather recommendations from government representatives and experts.

Presentations and technical sessions during the consultation demonstrated the progress made in SAM prevention and management but also highlighted the need to strengthen existing services through better interdepartmental coordination, continuous training and regular monitoring. Key recommendations from the consultation focused on: (1) intensifying efforts towards the prevention and management of acute malnutrition in infants under six months of age; (2) strengthening growth monitoring and promotion activities for the early identification and timely management of children with SAM; (3) capacity building on CMAM; (4) providing appropriate complementary foods to infants and young children, including those with SAM; (5) scaling up the CMAM programme, targeting high burden areas and ensuring that monitoring platforms are in place; and (6) adopting a multi-sector approach that prioritises the prevention of childhood malnutrition by addressing its various underlying causes.



Health workers reviewing growth monitoring records



Piloting the e-learning platform

Global Nutrition Cluster e-learning platform



The Global Nutrition Cluster's (GNC) online learning platform provides access to e-learning modules related to nutrition cluster coordination (CC) and information management (IM). The development of the e-learning platform began in 2019 to address the needs and constraints identified in the GNC capacity building approach, namely the high demands for capacity development and strengthening across coordination teams and cluster partners supported by the GNC and a need to revise the face-to-face learning approach.

A pilot of the e-learning platform was launched during a webinar held by the GNC in October 2021. The event outlined the features of the platform and the types of content available. GNC Nutrition Cluster Coordinators and Information Management Officers were invited to participate in the pilot between October and November 2021 during which they would provide feedback on the platform's content and functionality while supporting their own professional development and contributing to shaping the GNC learning platform. Feedback from the pilot has since been incorporated into the platform, facilitating its public launch in April 2022.

The CC modules aim to strengthen capacity in nutrition CC and are targeted at individuals and organisations interested in coordinating a nutrition response in a humanitarian context. The IM modules aim to strengthen the capacity of individuals and organisations interested in managing information for a nutrition response in a humanitarian context. In both cases, the e-learning modules are organised into six functional competencies as described in the CC and IM Competency Frameworks. Learners are able to select the modules they wish to take across three levels (introductory, intermediary and advanced) based on their interests and professional development goals. All modules are open access and currently available in English, French and Spanish.

More information on the e-learning pilot launch is available at: <https://www.nutritioncluster.net/node/28541> and the GNC's online learning portal can be accessed at: <https://agora.unicef.org/totara/dashboard/index.php?id=19>