



Questions for the UN agencies from the FEX60/GAP on Child Wasting Webinar



On 30th June 2020, ENN the [Field Exchange](#) Editors hosted a webinar that appraised the [Global Action Plan \(GAP\) on Child Wasting: A framework for action in the context of the 60th edition of Field Exchange](#) which focused on the continuity of care (CoC) for treatment of children with wasting and highlighted priority areas of action. A panel of UN representatives (UNICEF, WHO, WFP, FAO) contributed to the conversation and shared their plans in the development and finalization of the GAP on Child Wasting. Post-webinar, outstanding questions posed by attendees were addressed to the UN panelists. Responses are given below.

1 How will UNICEF's lead role, identified in the GAP Framework, impact provision of moderate wasting treatment services which has for many years been the mandated responsibility of WFP



The role of UNICEF, as defined in the GAP Framework, is to act as the lead, coordinating agency. In practice this will mean that UNICEF will have the responsibility for ensuring that all key actions to prevent, detect and treat wasting are in place across all contexts. The implementation of those

actions will continue to rely on a range of partners, including governments, civil society and UN agencies like WFP, WFP, UNHCR and FAO. UNICEF and WFP are currently finalizing a new partnership framework that will help strengthen our complementary work in this area.

2 Are there scenarios where WFP could still play a role in moderate/severe wasting treatment, and if so, what are these



The primary responsibility for the treatment of both moderate and severe wasting lies with the government, and our number one priority is to strengthen the capacity of national systems to offer the appropriate support to all the children who need it. There are a variety of contexts where UN

agency support is needed to ensure access and availability of services, and together with WFP and other UN agencies we are currently developing clearer partnership frameworks to facilitate our joint work in these contexts.

3 Where severe and moderate wasting treatment services are provided in a country that involves support from both UNICEF and WFP, will government/international/local NGOs be required to report MAM treatment and supply chain data to UNICEF instead of/as well as WFP



The new UNICEF and WFP partnership framework will address specific opportunities to streamline and improve the availability of data related to the prevention, detection and treatment of wasting. Our

commitment is to focus these efforts in making this information part of national information systems, to continue to reinforce governments ownership and capacity in this area.

4 How will UNICEF's leadership ensure continuity of care between treatment of MAM and SAM



The continuity of care for moderate and severe forms of wasting can only be ensured if national services are designed and implemented with this continuum in mind. The role of UN agencies in support of national governments and their implementing

partners should not determine whether or not this continuum exists. Our efforts to streamline UN support aim to improve the availability of a continuum of care, and no changes in the way we collaborate will negatively impact on this continuum.

5 Is the emerging 'at-risk' narrative and approach (where risk is determined in relation to a broader set of indicators including, for example, weight for age) coherent with the current UN institutional architecture configured around degrees of wasting



The UN institutional architecture to support governments on the prevention, detection and treatment of wasting must be flexible enough to reflect changes in our understanding of the condition. Current efforts to reassess risks amongst children with wasting are but the latest chapter in this constantly evolving

field. It is too early to say how this analysis will change our understanding of what is needed, but we remain committed to ensuring that under UNICEF's overall lead, all UN agencies continue to play a role in addressing the different drivers of wasting and support care and treatment for those who need it most.

6 What is UNICEF's role in maternal nutrition services? Will UNICEF have an operational mandate for maternal nutrition since being identified as the lead agency



The new UNICEF and WFP partnership framework will address specific roles and responsibilities on maternal nutrition.

7 How do you see the GAP Framework & efforts to reduce wasting positioned within the broader multisector nutrition strategies countries have been developing, e.g. the common results frameworks developed through the SUN Movement



The GAP will help articulate the key actions that will improve efforts to prevent, detect and treat child wasting. These actions are likely to already have been identified as being essential to other existing nutrition efforts (e.g. prevention of stunting) as well as key parts of food, health, social protection and

WASH policies and plans across different countries. Our goal is not to create a parallel, stand-alone agenda for wasting, but to ensure that all existing agendas across different systems are better equipped and better informed on how they can contribute to advance progress on wasting.

8 How broad is the 'prevention' lens within the GAP Framework, given the multi-causal nature of malnutrition, including wasting



As broad as it needs to be. Wasting prevention cannot be seen through a single food or even health lens but must go further and acknowledge the essential role that other systems including (but not limited to) social protection and water, hygiene and sanitation play

across different contexts. Our commitment with the GAP is to ensure that we explore a wide range of actions, and to help national governments identify those that in their individual contexts can be realistically implemented to make measurable progress on wasting.

