

ANNUAL REPORT 2020

Global

The GNC, delivering
support for Nutrition
in Emergencies
in the time of
COVID-19

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List of Acronyms & Abbreviations

AAP	Accountability for Affected Populations	IMO	Information Management Officer
COVID-19	Coronavirus disease	IPC	Integrated Phase Classification
CMAM	Community-based Management of Acute Malnutrition	ISC	Intersectoral Collaboration
CVA	Cash for Vouchers Assistance	IYCF	Infant and Young Children Feeding
GNC	Global Nutrition Cluster	IYCF-E	Infant and Young Children Feeding in Emergencies
GNC-CT	GNC Coordination Team	NCC	Nutrition Cluster Coordinator
GHRP	Global Humanitarian Response Plan	NiE	Nutrition in Emergencies
HC	Humanitarian Coordinator	NIS	Nutrition Information Systems
HCT	Humanitarian Country Team	PiN	People in Need
HDN	Humanitarian Development Nexus	OCHA	United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Assistance
HNO	Humanitarian Needs Overview	TST	Technical Support Team
HRP	Humanitarian Response Plan		
IASC	Inter-Agency Standing Committee		

Introduction

2020 was a pivotal year for the Global Nutrition Cluster Coordination Team (GNC-CT) and its technical arm, the GNC Technical Alliance (the Alliance), which was officially launched in December 2020 but active throughout the year. The COVID-19 pandemic had a dramatic impact on the GNC's work and delivery of its strategic objectives (*Strategy 2017-2021*) – to provide operational support, capacity building, and influencing and advocacy for coordinating nutrition in emergencies (NiE). The GNC, as with all humanitarian clusters, faced a huge increase in demand for its services – while at the same time, experiencing a reduction in direct access to the countries requesting support due to COVID-19 travel restrictions.

These challenges called for an innovative, solutions-based approach – and the response from the GNC-CT and the Alliance demonstrated both their commitment and flexibility in adapting to the 'new normal' imposed by COVID-19. This year's annual report (2020) reflects how the GNC rapidly and effectively responded to country demand for timely operational and technical advice on adapting NiE to the pandemic. Rather than decreasing support to countries, the GNC collective stepped up to the challenge to help countries establish or strengthen sectoral/cluster coordination. Through the scaled-up use of virtual platforms and facilitation techniques, the GNC more than doubled the number of countries supported in 2019 – from 29 countries to 65 Global COVID-19 Humanitarian Response Plan (GHRP) countries, which include those without active coordination mechanisms.

The launch of the new GNC and the Alliance websites enabled stakeholders from across the organizations to benefit from a more user-friendly interface for GNC support, including easy-to-access helpdesk support, webinar recordings, mentoring, guidance and resources. The creation of a single request form (accessible via the GNC and Alliance websites) meant that users are now directed to technical or operational support through one portal. As a result of these innovations, GNC Helpdesks fielded 324 requests for support from 38 countries, with 82 per cent of responses answered within 48 hours; 65 countries participated in 41 global or regional webinars on NiE, over half of which focused on COVID-19; 27 deployments (physical and remote) totalling 2624 person days delivered support for cluster coordination, information management and NiE; and 31 staff in 18 countries benefited from one-on-one mentoring from highly experienced humanitarian experts. Information, including guidance and technical briefs developed by the GNC and the Alliance, was regularly updated in a dedicated COVID-19 resource area on both the GNC and the Alliance websites. Further guidance and case studies were developed in 2020 on topics such as cash for vouchers assistance and the Humanitarian-Development Nexus.

Looking ahead to 2021, the GNC-CT has several top priorities such as developing its new strategy (2022-2025), a key focus of the 2021 Annual Meeting that will be conducted virtually (the 2020 Annual Meeting was cancelled due to COVID-19 travel restrictions). Other priorities for the coming year include maximizing opportunities for intersectoral collaboration; supporting national/local engagement and ownership of coordination; further expansion of the mentoring scheme; finalizing the capacity building strategy and development of e-learning modules based on the competency framework; and strengthening evidence generation, knowledge management and advocacy through partnerships with the Alliance, global partners and academia.



Operational Support

01

The GNC's first strategic priority in its current strategy is to provide operational support before, during and after a humanitarian crisis to national platforms to ensure a quality and timely response. In 2020, this support was dominated by the COVID-19 pandemic and meeting country needs and their responses. Closer collaboration with UNICEF's Nutrition Programme Division and UNICEF's regional Nutrition Advisors enabled the GNC to reach UNICEF focal points and national counterparts in 65 countries, including countries that previously lacked a functioning sectoral coordination mechanism. By the end of 2020, 41 Global Humanitarian Response Plan (GHRP) countries had established or strengthened coordination (cluster or sector) thanks to GNC support. The GNC Technical Alliance led the technical support for NiE and COVID-19 (see Box 1).

While in-country deployments were almost entirely suspended during 2020, virtual support was massively scaled up through the expansion of GNC services and products: remote deployments; one-on-one helpdesk requests; country calls; global-, regional-, and country-level webinars on a range of topics; virtual trainings; and the development and curation of technical guidance and materials. Training in virtual support methods improved the capacity of the GNC-CT and the Alliance team in online facilitation skills to meet this increased demand.

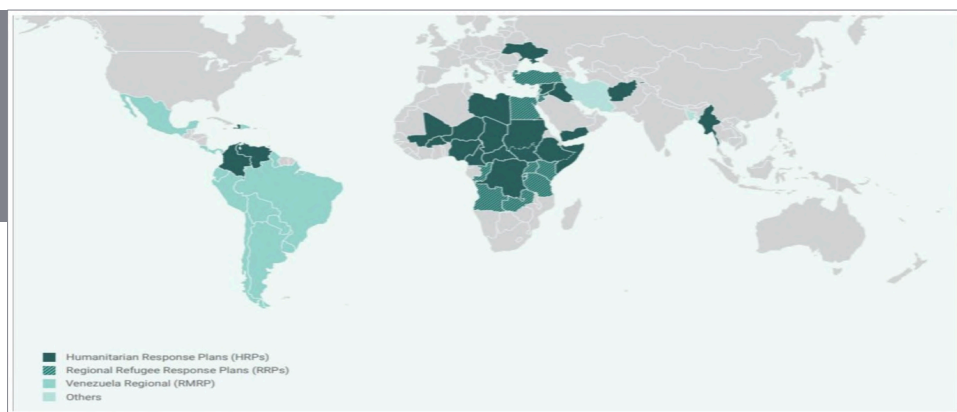
Supporting the Global Humanitarian Response Plan

In March 2020, a United Nations coordinated appeal – the [Global Humanitarian Response Plan \(GHRP\)](#) (April-December 2020) – was launched in response to COVID-19 (with subsequent updates in May and July). The GHRP identified COVID-19-related humanitarian needs in 65 priority countries (see Figure 1). In line with this, the GNC-CT expanded its support from 29 HRP and Flash Appeal countries in 2019 to direct support of sectoral/cluster coordination in the 65 GHRP countries in 2020.

The COVID-19 GHRP came as an addition to the annual Humanitarian Needs Overview (HNO) and the Humanitarian Response Plans (HRP), which are normally developed in September-November every year.

Figure 1:
Expansion of GNC
country support in
2020

Source: OCHA



The GNC-CT played a key role in providing guidance to countries on the GHRP and its objectives, in particular the revision process for adapting their existing HRP to the needs of COVID-19. Informative webinars (to clarify the GHRP) and 11 global and regional calls with 43 countries highlighted the availability of GNC support for the GHRP.

During the GHRP 2020 and the HNO/HRP 2021 development phase, the GNC supported reviews of HRPs for 19 of 27 priority countries (Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Burkina Faso, Burundi, CAR, Colombia, DRC, Ethiopia, Lebanon, Mali, Mozambique, Myanmar, Niger, Nigeria, Somalia, South Sudan, Syria, Yemen and Zimbabwe) to ensure quality and coherence in the response.

An online survey conducted by the GNC showed that 24 country clusters/sectors had undertaken HRP revision to ensure impacts of COVID-19 were addressed in the ongoing humanitarian response; and 21 country clusters/sectors provided inputs to country-level contribution to the national COVID-19 GHRP revision. Cluster/sectors in 26 countries have developed contingency plans to respond to nutrition needs during the pandemic.

BOX 1

Launch of the GNC Technical Alliance

Following a strategic review process, the **GNC Technical Alliance** (formerly GTAM) changed its name to better communicate the relationship to the GNC and the common purpose of both entities. The Alliance aims to improve the quality of nutrition preparedness, response and recovery for nutrition, by delivering three key services to practitioners working in emergency contexts. These include easy access to the most up-to-date technical resources and tools and answers to technical questions; access to more comprehensive technical support – in person or remotely; and expert consensus on how to tackle new and difficult problems, for which there is no global guidance. The Alliance was officially launched in early December 2020 via a webinar attended by over 400 practitioners from country, regional and global levels, which focused on what services practitioners can access and how to request support.

Technical Support Team

GNC support is delivered through a combination of remote helpdesk support and deployment of operations and technical advisors to countries upon request. A major innovation in 2020 was the streamlining of requests for GNC support through a **single request button**, accessible via the GNC and the Alliance websites.

Support is now available in four modalities: 1) quick remote support (response to technical queries, or reference to appropriate resources); 2) in-depth remote support (working remotely with a country-based partner for an extended period with a detailed ToR); 3) in-country technical support, or 4) through the recommendation of consultants. The creation of the Technical Support Team (TST) alongside the Request Form (accessible via the

Alliance website), means that users simply need to enter their request for technical support need in the form, and a member of the TST Coordination will get back to them within 48 hours, and work out how best to support.

Changes to technical support structures

The GNC Technical Support Team (TST) was officially established in December 2020. The TST Coordination (made up of the former Tech RRT Coordination Team, the GNC Coordination Team and representatives from UNICEF Programme Division) aims to meet the specific needs of the nutrition practitioner in a timely, cost effective and sustainable manner, through the coordination of the following resources:

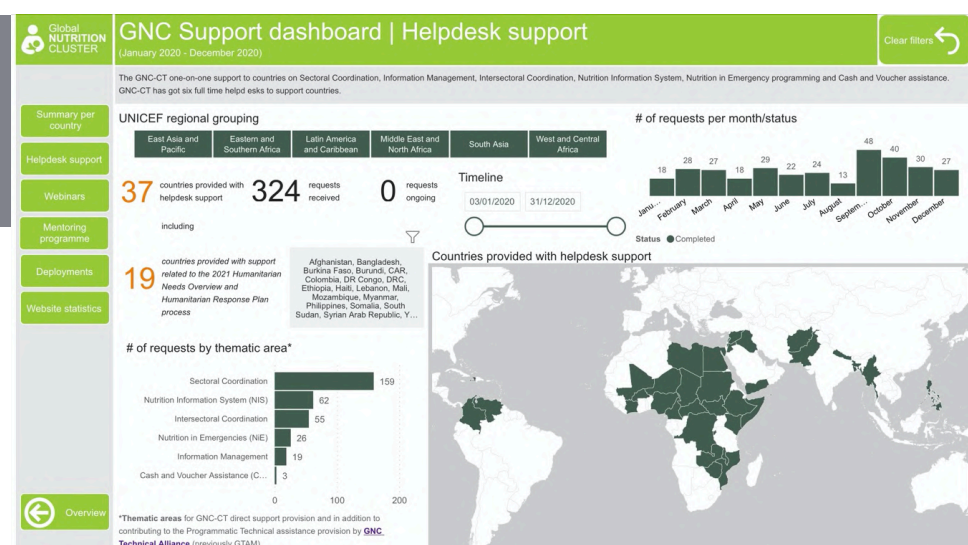
- Former Tech Rapid Response Team (TechRRT) CMAM, IYCF-E, Assessment and SBC Advisors (hosted by Save the Children, International Medical Corps and Action Against Hunger)
- GNC Helpdesks for Nutrition Information Systems, Cluster Coordination, Capacity Development, Information Management and Intersectoral Collaboration
- NiE Helpdesk (hosted by UNICEF)
- GNC Rapid Response Team (Nutrition Cluster Coordinators and Information Management Officers)
- Nutrition Emergency Response Team members (hosted by UNICEF)
- MAMI Advisor (hosted by Save the Children US)
- Technical Support Team (TST) Partners (~20 organizations)

When the TST personnel are either not appropriate or unavailable for a technical support request, the TST can draw on 20 different GNC partners with whom the TST has established partnerships for provision of technical support. In addition, if the requester wants longer-term support, the TST can propose one of over 120 vetted consultants.

GNC Helpdesks

With the suspension of all travel for the majority of 2020, the GNC's Helpdesks became an even more crucial element in direct support to countries (see Figure 2). Helpdesks were on the frontline in providing remote assistance and support for field-based teams via one-on-one calls, webinars, online training and mentoring. Thematic areas covered by Helpdesks included: sectoral coordination; information management (IM); intersectoral collaboration (ISC); cash and voucher assistance (CVA); Nutrition Information Systems (NIS); and Nutrition in Emergencies (NiE).

Figure 2: GNC Helpdesk support



In 2020, GNC Helpdesks received 324 support requests from 37 countries. Queries on national nutrition coordination/sectoral coordination accounted for nearly half the requests (49 per cent). NIS and intersectoral collaboration were other support areas in demand (36 per cent), while country inquiries for NiE and IM comprised nearly 14 per cent (see Box 2). Key concerns for countries focused on adapting coordination mechanisms of cluster core functions (i.e. switching from face-to-face meetings to virtual) and service delivery of nutrition programmes in the context of COVID-19. Priorities were not only how to respond to deepening vulnerabilities associated with the pandemic but also the increased frequency, magnitude and duration of humanitarian emergencies. For NIS, challenges related to the lack of recent, available data (due to COVID-19 mobility restrictions) for the nutrition situation analysis and estimation of nutritional needs.

BOX 2

Spotlight on support for Lebanon and Mali

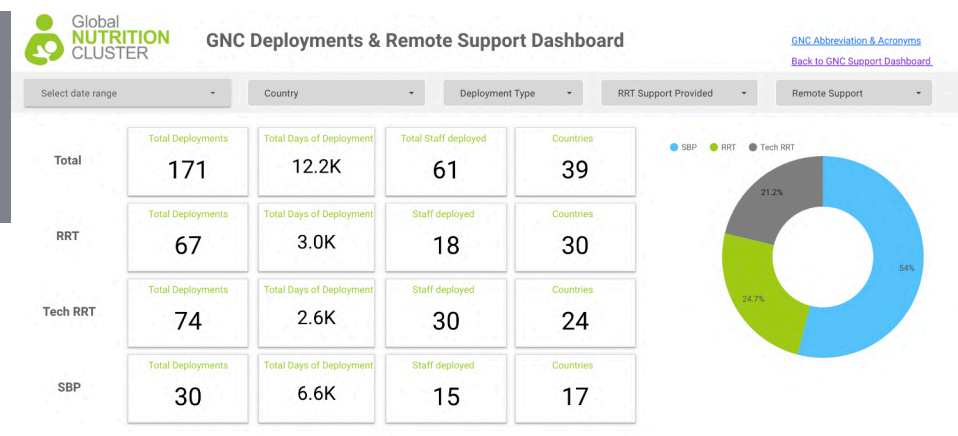
After the August 2020 explosion in Beirut, Lebanon that destroyed large parts of the city, the GNC rapidly deployed a nutrition cluster coordinator (NCC) in-country and remotely, an information management officer (IMO). This support enabled the establishment of a nutrition sectoral coordination mechanism led by UNICEF to help with the timely response to nutrition needs in collaboration with national and international partners, not only for the post-blast response but also for the protracted crisis affecting the country. At the end of the deployment, the Lebanon country office recruited a full-time Nutrition Sector Coordinator.

In Mali, an information management officer (IMO) was remotely deployed for three weeks to strengthen monitoring and reporting activities and to improve information dissemination for the country's Nutrition Cluster. An interactive nutrition dashboard was established that enabled the coordination team to better update, analyse and communicate data such as operational presence and gap analysis to cluster members.

GNC Deployments

As already highlighted, 2020 witnessed a major shift to remote/online support and changes to streamline the GNC's support to countries by bringing together the Technical Rapid Response Team (TechRRT), the GNC RRT and standby partners (SBP) (see Box 3). A total of 27 deployments in 16 countries took place during the year, totalling 2624 person days. These missions involved strengthening capacities for cluster coordination, IM and NiE programming in priority countries including Afghanistan, Burkina Faso, Democratic Republic of Congo, Ethiopia, Kenya, Lebanon, Mali, Myanmar, Somalia, Turkey (Whole of Syria), Venezuela, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

Figure 3: GNC Deployments



Technical support in 2020

Thirteen pieces of in-depth technical support – two in-country, four mixed (in-country and remote) and seven remote – provided by the former Tech RRT were either finished or started in 2020. This included assessment and Community-based Management of Acute Malnutrition (CMAM) deployments to Zambia that began in 2019 and were completed in 2020. Three IYCF-E deployments (DRC, Ethiopia and Venezuela) and one CMAM deployment in Ethiopia were shifted to remote after COVID-19 disrupted travel. From March 2020, all remaining technical support was remote. All support delivered during the pandemic was either specifically COVID-19 related (CMAM support in DRC, SBC support in Somalia and South Sudan, IYCF-E/CMAM/SBC support in Myanmar, CMAM support in Afghanistan), or had aspects related to COVID-19 (nutrition support in Zambia and Zimbabwe, and MAMI support in Afghanistan).

To adapt to this new reality, the former Tech RRT built capacity in online tools and remote facilitation techniques, to provide more effective remote support to country-based partners. Moreover, the TechRRT re-considered the approaches to technical support in IYCF-E, CMAM, SBC and Assessment, adapting activities and support to the remote context.

TST partners delivered two pieces of support, while the rest was fulfilled by TST Project Partners (former Tech RRT partners). Action Against Hunger UK (experts in CMAM and Monitoring and Evaluation) delivered the support to Action For Development in Afghanistan, and the International Rescue Committee provided additional support in CMAM simplified approaches in DRC. Overall, approximately 62 weeks of in-depth technical support (remote or in-country) was provided in 2020.

BOX 3

Creating a GNC Dashboard

One of the exciting new developments for the GNC in 2020 was the development of the [GNC support dashboard](#) launched in March. This is an information management tool that visually tracks, analyses and displays key performance indicators regarding GNC operational support to countries. The dashboard provides real-time monitoring of both direct and indirect support to GNC-priority countries.

Guidance and resources

Developing COVID-19 technical guidance and resources

The Alliance, in partnership with the GNC-CT and with support from other partners, took a leadership role in responding to the urgent need for information on COVID-19 and nutrition, with the provision of guidance and technical resources, webinars and podcasts. The first brief, released by the GNC-CT, on [Operational Guidance on cluster and sector coordination in the context of COVID-19](#) was published in March 2020 (in English, French and Arabic), followed by [Nutrition Information Management, Surveillance and Monitoring in the context of COVID-19](#). Existing relevant guidance for practitioners - Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19) - [Summary of guidance for Nutrition in Emergencies Practitioners](#) - was released and circulated via the GNC, Emergency Nutrition Network (ENN's) website and ReliefWeb. This list was regularly updated as new guidance emerged and was subsequently superseded by a [COVID-19 resource area](#) on the GNC website.

The [GNC Technical Alliance website](#) was fast-tracked and launched in April 2020, providing a platform for practitioners to contact the Alliance for technical support and to access resources. Regular weekly consolidation and review of questions coming from the field into [en-net](#) and the GNC Helpdesks in relation to COVID-19 was also established, which fed into UNICEF-led global COVID-19 coordination meetings, revisions of programme briefs and for escalation to Global Thematic Working Groups (GTWGs). The focus then shifted to more requests for sharing of field experiences and examples of

adapting programmes considering COVID-19 risks and restrictions. The Alliance also rapidly convened webinars to explore the programmatic implications of the guidance using country examples. A series of [podcast conversations](#) with practitioners further supported the sharing of programme adaptations.

A survey (see Table 1) conducted by the GNC on the adaptation of COVID-19 nutrition coordination and programming guidelines in July 2020 found that there was good awareness and application of the guidance developed.

Table 1: Awareness and usage of GNC COVID-19 guidance	GNC Guidance	Aware of Guidance (n =30)	Used Guidance (n=30)
	Infant & Young Child Feeding in the context of COVID-19	80%	73%
	Template for Joint Statement on Infant and Young Child Feeding in the context of COVID-19	63%	47%
	Maternal Diets and Nutrition Services and Practices in the Context of COVID-19	47%	23%
	Management of Child Wasting in the context of COVID-19	73%	63%
	Nutrition Information Management, Surveillance and Monitoring in the context of COVID-19	77%	57%
	Nutrition Sectoral and Cluster Coordination Guidance in COVID-19 contexts	70%	60%

Further guidance to support countries

Although the GNC-CT re-focused its knowledge management efforts on COVID-19 materials for 2020, the team still fulfilled planned activities to improve responses through evidence generation and the capture and application of learning. GNC Helpdesks led the development of key guidance – [Preparedness Guidelines for NiE Coordination](#) and the [Nutrition Humanitarian Needs Analysis](#) – to support country preparation and adaptation of HNOs and HRP to the COVID-19 pandemic. Other key publications in 2020 included case studies and guidance documents on the topics of Cash and Voucher Assistance (CVA), and the Humanitarian Development Nexus (HDN).

Preparedness Guidelines for NiE coordination

The GNC-CT and UNICEF developed [Preparedness Guidelines for NiE Coordination](#), a comprehensive set of tools to enable country-level nutrition clusters, nutrition sector coordination and nutrition working groups to design and implement preparedness and contingency planning in protecting the nutritional status of populations. Webinars on preparedness, conducted in English and French, reached 70 stakeholders from cluster coordination mechanisms in 40 countries.

Nutrition Humanitarian Needs Analysis Guidance

The GNC Nutrition Information Systems (NIS) Helpdesk led global consultations in the first half of 2020 to streamline nutrition indicators for countries to conduct a nutrition situation analysis to inform response planning and GHRP planning. A series of multilingual webinars and individual follow-up calls with countries introduced the contents of the [Nutrition Humanitarian Needs Analysis Guidance](#) and its use. A further webinar was conducted in July 2020 for 45 IMO on how to use the accompanying spreadsheet tool.

Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC) Acute Malnutrition analyses

The IPC Acute Malnutrition (AMN) is a set of protocols to classify areas based on the prevalence of acute malnutrition, identify major contributing factors to acute malnutrition, and provide actionable knowledge by consolidating wide-ranging evidence on acute malnutrition and contributing factors. IPC AMN provides information on the areas most affected by acute malnutrition, the key contributing factors to acute malnutrition, and short- to long-term objectives to decrease acute malnutrition in contexts with Global Acute Malnutrition (GAM) for children under-five $\geq 5\%$. Additionally, together with the IPC Acute Food Insecurity classification, the IPC AMN also provides information on acute food insecurity, making IPC an inclusive classification system to inform both acute food insecurity and acute malnutrition. In 2020, 15 IPC AMN analyses were completed by the countries, supported by the IPC Global Support Unit and GNC. IPC analysis is primarily based on recent data; as most countries suspended surveys during the larger part of 2020, only 10 countries were able to organize the IPC AM analysis (Burkina Faso, Kenya, Madagascar, Mozambique, Nigeria, Somalia, South Sudan, Uganda, Yemen-North and Yemen-South).

This guidance outlines the development and implementation of an annual nutrition assessment plan, a nutrition situation analysis (or aligning it with IPC's Acute Malnutrition results - see Box 4) along with major contributing factors, and calculation of the number of People in Need (PiN) and other key figures, which feed into life-saving response plans whether the IASC Cluster system has been activated or not. At least 18 countries applied this guidance to their needs analysis in 2020 following support from the GNC Helpdesks. In 2021, the GNC-CT plans to revise the guidance based on the feedback from the piloting phase, although the adaptations will be minimal.

Evidence and Guidance Note on the Use of Cash and Voucher Assistance for Nutrition Outcomes in Emergencies

The GNC took a major step in building the evidence base and facilitating partnership work on humanitarian cash transfers by publishing an Evidence and Guidance Note on the [Use of Cash and Voucher Assistance for Nutrition Outcomes in Emergencies](#) in August 2020, which was widely disseminated through a launch webinar. This was a year-long process, made possible thanks to technical support provided by NORCAP / CashCap and feedback from a reference group that included key GNC partners. The process of developing the Evidence and Guidance Note included the documentation of experiences on CVA in case studies from [Nigeria](#) and [Somalia](#), with webinars conducted to inform countries of the findings. A shorter [Guidance Brief on How to Incorporate Cash and Voucher Assistance into a Nutrition Response](#) was developed later in the year and both the Evidence and Guidance Note and the Guidance Brief were translated into several languages.

Lessons Learned and Recommendations from the Humanitarian-Development Nexus for Nutrition Case Studies

The GNC initiated the first joint project with the Scaling Up Nutrition (SUN) Movement Secretariat, focusing on the Humanitarian Development Nexus (HDN). Three case studies ([Afghanistan](#), [Myanmar](#) and [Niger](#)) were conducted on strengthening cluster/sector and SUN collaboration at country level, as part of evidence to inform the creation of global-level guidance on HDN. The case studies were also supported by global-level consultations, including a webinar with GNC partners, cluster-sector focal points and SUN country Focal Points. Final case studies (in English) and a policy brief with key recommendations were published in December 2020, followed by French translations (case studies) and the [Global Report on HDN](#) in early 2021. Three webinars with SUN focal points and cluster/sector coordinators were organized as a first step to roll out the guidance. The GNC and SUN are now working on the development of joint training materials.

GNC Checklists

All cluster coordination teams and partners at global, national and sub-national levels are encouraged to use the GNC checklists, such as the Nutrition Cluster Coordination checklist and the IM checklist, to strengthen cluster performance. New tools were added to the IM checklist and two checklists were developed for addressing nutrition in the inter cluster 2021 HNO and HRP documents. An [IYCF-E checklist](#), covering themes of Acute Malnutrition Management, NIS and micronutrient supplementation, was developed in 2020 by the NiE Helpdesk and the IFE Core Group in the wake of COVID-19. The GNC-CT also started working on development of the NIS checklist and the Alliance is developing a wasting checklist, both to be finalized in 2021.

A selection of GNC publications



HDN Guidance and Case Studies



ISC Case Studies



Other publications

Capacity Building

02

The GNC's second strategic priority is to ensure that relevant nutrition stakeholders (at all levels) have the capacity to coordinate a quality and timely response during an emergency. During 2020, capacity building took various forms with a significant increase in the number of webinars alongside the GNC's mentoring programme and delivery of training, both internal and external.

Webinars

The GNC-CT and the Alliance conducted a total of 41 webinars in 2020, of which nearly half (20/41) were related to COVID-19 guidance. The Alliance supported the delivery of 26 multilingual webinars supporting practitioners' nutrition information in the COVID-19 context (see panel below). Other webinars related to the launch of several guidance documents and the 2021 HPC process were led by the GNC-CT.

Webinars related to the COVID-19 context

- Protecting maternal nutrition;
- Protecting, promoting and supporting IYCF;
- COVID-19 and IYCF + a new tool: the Nutrition in Emergencies IYCF-E checklist
- Learning and Sharing Café: IYCF programming adaptations in the context of COVID-19;
- Child wasting programming in response to and in preparation for COVID-19; Nutrition Information during COVID-19;
- Wasting case detection in the context of COVID-19;
- Adapting treatment and prevention of wasting during COVID-19;
- Nutrition cluster/sector coordination in the context of COVID-19;
- Guidelines for the revision of COVID-19 in-country HRPs.

Mentoring programme

The GNC's [mentoring programme](#) was launched in 2019 to complement other GNC training and in-country support. Experienced nutrition cluster coordinators, information managers and NiE specialists are matched with field-based nutrition staff to explore specific themes or areas of interest to nutrition cluster/sector coordination teams to build individual capacity (see Box 5). A total of 18 countries accessed the mentoring programme in 2020, with the participation of 31 mentees.

GNC mentoring package

The programme uses the GROW mentoring model (Goal, Reality, Options, Way forward) to discuss specific issues, aspirations or challenges that the mentee may be facing. Mentors work as guides to help develop practical solutions to enhance collective nutrition responses over a six-week period. Topics covered in mentoring discussions are regularly reviewed to determine collective needs and areas for further GNC-CT support. At the end of the mentoring process, mentees re-appraise their areas of competence and determine their own progress in meeting goals. They may then graduate as mentors themselves in a specific field/area of competence.

Training

In response to COVID-19 travel restrictions, the GNC-CT conducted Training of Trainers (ToT) for all Tech RRT and GNC-CT staff for online training facilitation. This enabled GNC staff to improve their delivery of webinars and to conduct virtual training for GNC partners. GNC Helpdesks along with the Inter-cluster Nutrition Working Group adapted training materials for virtual delivery. An online ToT on inter-cluster collaboration was conducted in June for Somalia to establish a country roster of trainers on the Inter-Cluster Training Package for nutritional outcomes. Transferring previously outsourced training to the GNC team had other advantages, including savings of about \$200,000 USD per annum in face-to-face trainings, decreased implementation time and an increase in training satisfaction (based on user feedback).

Developing competency frameworks

Cluster Coordination and IM competency frameworks (CFs) were completed in 2020, in both English and French, with the Alliance developing the CF for Nutrition in Humanitarian Contexts. These CFs have now been adapted by the Global WASH, Education and Child protection clusters AoR to ensure that all UNICEF-led clusters are using harmonized CFs. The CFs form the basis for the GNC Capacity Building strategy and the revision of the cluster coordination and information management job descriptions. They also provide the basis for competency-based e-learning modules that the GNC is currently in the process of developing.

GNC capacity building strategy

The GNC has begun implementing its capacity building (CB) strategy to address several challenges identified in the Annual Report (2019), such as high turnover of staff and no/limited capacity mapping and development plans at country level, with any requests for support initiated on an ad-hoc basis. A scoping report and mapping of the global clusters and partners' CB initiatives was conducted to develop a benchmark and to avoid overlaps. The CB framework was finalised following consultations with the GNC partners, the Alliance, NCCs and IMOs, and the GNC developed a complete mapping of required learning for each cluster coordination and information management functional competency, from which 121 module outlines are being developed. The process of storyboarding the modules and developing the online content is ongoing in 2021. In parallel to this, the GNC also commissioned a review of the ICT requirements necessary to establish an effective learning management system. The discussions around implementation have now been enlarged to encompass all UNICEF-led clusters and is expected to be completed in 2021 (as a joint project for all UNICEF-led clusters).

Influencing and advocacy

03

The third 'arm' of the GNC's work is to influence and advocate for improved, integrated and coordinated nutrition response during humanitarian crises. Based on the core member database on the GNC Dashboard, the GNC currently has 37 partners and 15 observers.

Strengthening partnerships at global and country levels

In 2020, the GNC and the Alliance played a crucial role in formulating and delivering information on nutrition and COVID-19. This included joint statements with the IFE core group on Infant and Young Child Feeding (IYCF) in the context of COVID-19, which brought together available recommendations on the topic that were adapted by countries or nutrition clusters and issued at the national level. Another joint statement with UNICEF on COVID-19 and wasting called for the inclusion of children affected by wasting in the list of highly vulnerable groups.

External engagement

In 2020, the GNC-CT significantly strengthened its collaboration with the SUN Movement, jointly working on the development of the guidance and case studies for strengthening joint engagement at country level. This resulted in greater linkages and improved communication between the SUN Secretariat and GNC-CT, with additional plans for engagement in 2021, including development of the joint training materials and GNC Deputy Coordinator participating in operationalizing the SUN 3.0 Strategy.

The GNC-CT is a partner of the Integrated Phase Classification, represented at all levels including in the Steering Committee. In 2020, the GNC-CT supported conducting IPC AM analysis in countries and advocated for stronger inclusion and focus on nutrition in the work of IPC Secretariat (see Box 4). The GNC NIS Helpdesk also supports development of the Joint Inter-sectoral Analysis Framework (JIAF), a joint inter-cluster framework for inter-sectoral needs analysis on the basis of which HNOs will be developed. It was piloted in 2021, but due to additional work required it is now being reviewed. GNC participation in the process ensured inclusion and prominence of nutrition in the JIAF.

In partnership with other UNICEF-led clusters, the GNC has commissioned the second Cluster Lead Agency evaluation (CLARE II) to review the work of UNICEF as a Cluster Lead Agency at global, regional, national and sub-national levels. This evaluation will be finalized in Q2 of 2021 and inform the development of the GNC strategy (2022-2025).

Intersectoral Collaboration

The GNC's inter-sectoral collaboration (ISC) Helpdesk leads on work to generate knowledge on ISC for nutrition outcomes and implementation of integrated projects in Nutrition, WASH, Health and Food Security at global and country levels and to strengthen the capacity of the ISC mechanisms at the country level. The GNC co-led (with the Global Food Security Cluster) the activities on the Joint Inter-Cluster Nutrition Working Group BHA project: [*Strengthening multi-sectoral approaches for integrated nutrition-sensitive programming at country level*](#). In 2020, the ISC Helpdesk developed two case studies (published in English and French): an [*Inter-cluster Strategy to Prevent Famine in Yemen*](#); and an [*Inter-cluster Famine Response Strategy in South Sudan*](#).

At the global level, the GNC is working with other sectors in an Inter-Sectoral Platform (ISP) that encompasses Health and WASH, as well as Food Security, with potential to include more sectors/clusters and areas of responsibility such as Child Protection. Discussions among all four global cluster coordinators on the ISP's priorities and work modalities are ongoing.

Strengthening GNC communications

Another important strand of the GNC's work in 2020 was the strengthening of key communications' tools. The GNC's website was relaunched, with a dedicated section on COVID-19 coordination resources, the development of the GNC Dashboard (see Box 3) and integration with the new GNC Technical Alliance website. The [*GNC newsletter*](#) was launched in April 2020, with weekly publications during the height of the COVID-19 pandemic to ensure subscribers were kept up to date with information and technical guidance.

04

At the global level, priorities for 2021 are focused on continuing to expand support to countries, through the efforts of the GNC-CT and the Alliance, both geographically and in terms of remote support and on-the-ground deployments. The GNC will also focus on the development of its new strategy for 2022-2025, taking into account lessons learned from implementation and NiE sector priorities.

Other key areas for 2021 include: strengthening and expanding the work of the Alliance; strengthening the GNC's knowledge generation and management at all levels, including improving the GNC website, newsletter and social media; launch and further development of the GNC e-learning platform; rolling out the GNC Preparedness Guidance and the Emergency Response and Preparedness platform for key priority countries; supporting intersectoral coordination at global and country levels; adapting and rolling out the Humanitarian Needs Analysis Guidance and supporting countries with its implementation; continuing HDN dialogue with the SUN Movement and other stakeholders at global and national levels and supporting priority countries with implementation of HDN recommendations; and supporting national/local engagement and focus on Accountability to Affected Populations and localization.

GNC Resource Partners



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Rialtas na hÉireann
Government of Ireland



Schweizerische Eidgenossenschaft
Confédération suisse
Confederazione Svizzera
Confederaziun svizra

**Swiss Agency for Development
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Save the Children



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