Global NUTRITION CLUSTER

Global NUTRITION CLUSTER
Technical Alliance

ANNUAL REPORT
2021
Global

Contents

List of Acronyms & Abbreviations

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

Foreword

The COVID-19 pandemic drastically changed the landscape in which we operate and the modalities for supporting our colleagues and partners in the field. The Global Nutrition Cluster (GNC) has embraced the challenge of the rapid increase in the complexity and volume of workload, turning the pandemic crisis into an opportunity to adopt more flexible and innovative arrangements, setting and adapting priorities and enabling greater engagement with and support by all international and local partners.

The approach, developed in early 2020 and consolidated in 2021, has been widely appreciated and used as a model by other clusters and organizations. The GNC led the sectoral realization of the potential direct and indirect impact of the COVID-19 crisis. This involved adopting innovative approaches and shifting the cluster's focus from almost exclusively countries with a Humanitarian Response Plan (HRP) to all countries included in the COVID-19 Global HRP and additional countries that may benefit from the tools, guidance and technical expertise available through the GNC. This was primarily done through stronger collaboration with global and regional partners to provide greater support and follow-up at the country level, and by shifting support modalities from in-country and/or face to face to remote/online revitalized platforms.

The innovation and change required during the past year has been challenging, requiring a substantial revision of priorities and practices. However, the strong support from all partners, in particular the GNC Strategic Advisory Group (SAG) members, has enabled substantial progress to be made in the quality of support provided to an unprecedented number of partners in more countries, and via more sustainable and resilience-building modalities. An alignment of Nutrition in Emergencies (NiE) coordination and programming components under the scope of the 2022 – 2025 GNC Strategy provides the vision and structure for a more harmonized way of working in the years ahead. Through the involvement of over 145 individuals, representing more than 40 organizations and independent experts, GNC partners continue to demonstrate their commitment to work together for an improved NiE response.

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Introduction

In 2021, the Global Nutrition Cluster (GNC) consolidated the significant expansion in its direct support to over 60 countries through close collaboration with key partners at the regional and country level, increasing the scope and breadth of technical assistance, through the GNC Technical Alliance (the Alliance) and major improvements in capacity building and knowledge management. The newly developed GNC strategy for 2022-2025 capitalises on the key achievements of 2020 and 2021 in strengthening the quality, coherence and consistency of nutrition coordination, prior to, during and after a crisis.

Key GNC achievements in 2021 involved operational support provided to 57 country nutrition sectoral coordination mechanisms, including one-on-one support via GNC Helpdesks to 43 countries and 40 deployments (remote, in-country or a mix) with an average of 41 days (or about seven weeks) per deployment. The GNC's shift to remote support, which began in response to COVID-19 travel restrictions, remained the predominant support mode in 2021 and has proved itself to be effective and cost-efficient. Thirty-four countries provided data on their end of year achievements for NiE coordination mechanisms (*see GNC 2021 Country report*).

In terms of capacity development, the GNC further strengthened its work in building coordination and information management (IM) skills via its mentoring, webinar and training programmes. Thirty-three mentees from 20 countries benefited from one-on-one mentoring support; 24 webinars delivered by the GNC's Technical Support Team (TST) were attended by stakeholders from 55 countries; and 34 trainings were delivered to 131 in 19 countries. *GNC Learn* is a new open-access e-learning platform with more than 120 self-paced online courses in English, French and Spanish developed by the GNC team. Eighty-five people from 28 countries had accessed and completed 136 courses following a pilot launch at the end of 2021. Furthermore, users from 190 countries visited the *GNC website* and its open access resources.

BOX 1

The Alliance response to technical requests in 2021
A key priority for the Alliance in 2021 was to ensure the availability of technical assistance resources and facilitate the demand for technical services from any partner in the field. This was achieved through a variety of means, including the release of an *explanatory video* and the launch of its social media channels. The *Alliance website* is the primary platform for submitting requests for support and finding up-to-date information on Alliance activities. In 2021, the website had over 7000 visitors from 162 different countries. Between January and December 2021, 56 different countries across nine regions submitted 210 support requests. Of these requests, 158 were fulfilled in 2021, and 30 pieces of work were completed for in-depth technical support, in 22 different contexts.

Advocacy and communications along with Knowledge Management (KM) were prioritized over the last 12 months. The appointment of a KM and Communications consultant built on increased demand for the timely development and dissemination of NiE guidance and KM products via the *GNC Newsletter*, *website* and social media; and the

creation of an *Advocacy Working Group* signalled the prioritizing of this workstream. Working with Food Security, Health and WASH clusters, the GNC led advocacy efforts on intersectoral collaboration through the publication of a *joint statement on famine and food crises.*

The first *GNC Annual Meeting* for two years (and the first to be held virtually) took place in June 2021 and was attended by over 180 participants, with GNC partners engaged in shaping the collective's new strategy and revised structure.
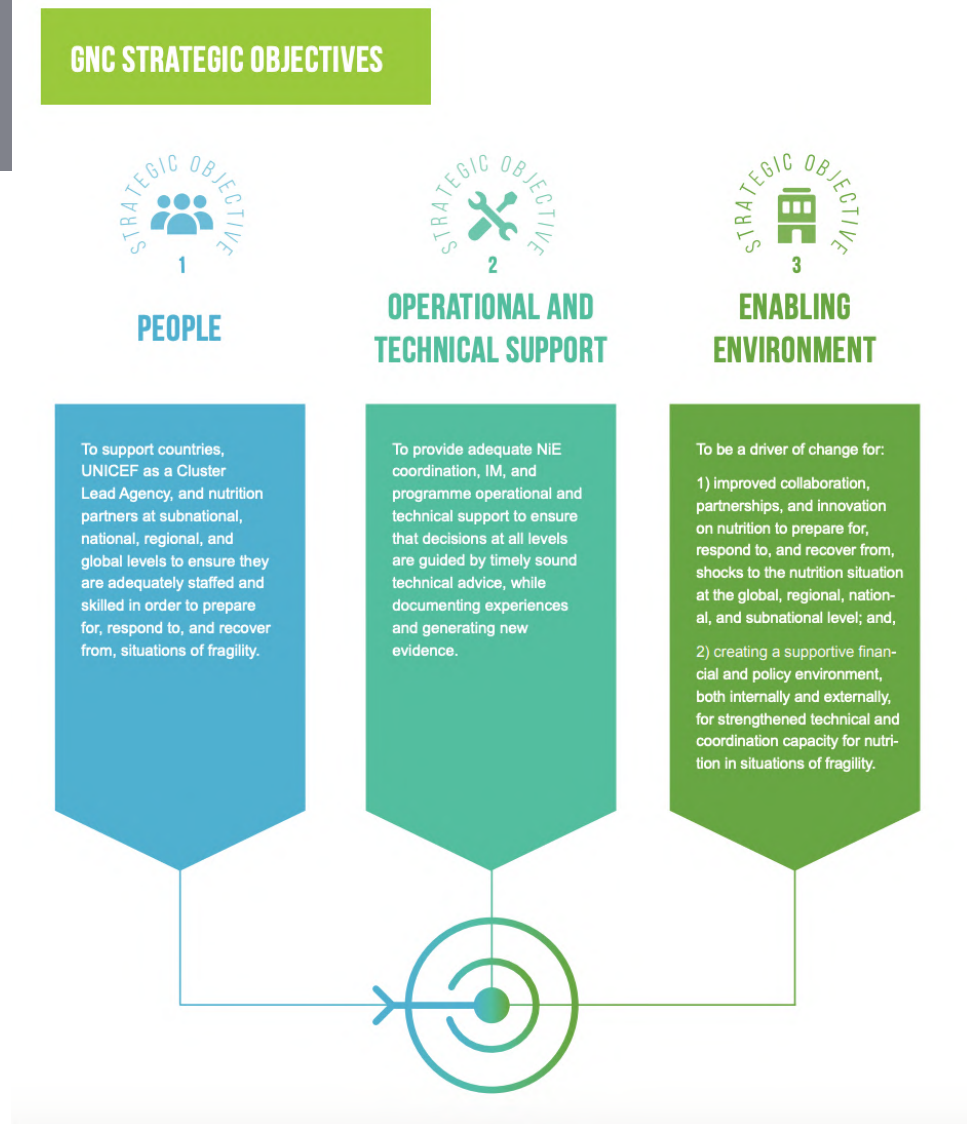
New Strategic Direction

The development and launch of the new *GNC Strategy (2022-2025)* were pivotal events for the GNC in 2021. This is the guiding strategic document for both the GNC Coordination Team (GNC-CT) and the Alliance for the next four years and provides the vision and structure for more harmonized ways of working. The collaborative process to define new strategic objectives involved engagement with partners and stakeholders via online surveys, and group work at the GNC's Annual Meeting. The new Strategy was endorsed by partners and launched in October 2021. Both the *2022 GNC Work Plan* and a revitalised structure (see Figure 3) are also in place through which to realise the new vision, goal and mission as defined in the GNC Strategy (2022-2025).

Figure 1:
Vision, Goal and Mission from GNC Strategy (2022-2025)

GNC VISION

By the end of 2025, the nutritional status of the most vulnerable people is protected in countries at risk of, or with, ongoing situations of fragility.

GNC GOAL

By the end of 2025, 80 countries with ongoing, or at risk of, situations of fragility will benefit from regular support[1] from the GNC collective to develop or strengthen national and subnational technical and coordination capacities for nutrition.

GNC MISSION
(ADDED VALUE)

The GNC exists to collectively strengthen the technical and coordination capacities for nutrition in countries, based on the needs of affected populations. This is to enable countries to forecast nutrition trends and prepare for, respond to, and recover from, shocks to the nutrition situation, thereby contributing to global efforts to prevent and treat malnutrition in all its forms.

[1] A country benefits from the regular GNC support if it receives direct operational or technical support from the Technical Support Team (including, but not limited to, helpdesks, rapid response team deployment, NiE technical advisors deployment, mentoring, capacity development activities, and webinars). Countries may receive indirect operational support if, for example, they use resources from the GNC website.

The new strategy outlines the expanded scope and range of support provision for both coordination and programme delivery by the GNC collective; an additional support phase – preparedness for humanitarian crises; increased support for national and subnational coordination platforms and partners; and maximising support for national, regional and global platforms. This mandate is embedded within new strategic objectives (People; Operational and Technical Support; and the Enabling Environment – see Figure 2).

GNC STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 1

PEOPLE

To support countries, UNICEF as a Cluster Lead Agency, and nutrition partners at subnational, national, regional, and global levels to ensure they are adequately staffed and skilled in order to prepare for, respond to, and recover from, situations of fragility.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 2

OPERATIONAL AND TECHNICAL SUPPORT

To provide adequate NiE coordination, IM, and programme operational and technical support to ensure that decisions at all levels are guided by timely sound technical advice, while documenting experiences and generating new evidence.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 3

ENABLING ENVIRONMENT

To be a driver of change for:

1) improved collaboration, partnerships, and innovation on nutrition to prepare for, respond to, and recover from, shocks to the nutrition situation at the global, regional, national, and subnational level; and,

2) creating a supportive financial and policy environment, both internally and externally, for strengthened technical and coordination capacity for nutrition in situations of fragility.

Revision of GNC Ways of Working and Structure

Governance of the GNC is structured around the GNC-Coordination Team (GNC-CT), the Leadership Team of the GNC Technical Alliance (the Alliance LT) and the Strategic Advisory Group (SAG), with UNICEF as the Cluster Lead Agency (CLA) for nutrition. To reinforce the new strategic direction set out in the Strategy (2022-2025), key changes were made to the GNC structure including a review of GNC partnership engagement; membership and role of the Strategic Advisory Group (SAG) and its interaction with partners; and the development and engagement of focal points for cross-cutting themes (see Figure 3).

Further details of these updates and procedures for how the GNC operates were outlined in the revision of the *GNC's Standard Operating Procedure (SOP)*, which was finalized and presented to partners in November 2021. The new GNC structure reflects closer alignment between the GNC-CT and the Alliance, and UNICEF as CLA.

Figure 3:
Organogram of
GNC structure

Source: GNC Strategy
(2022-2025)
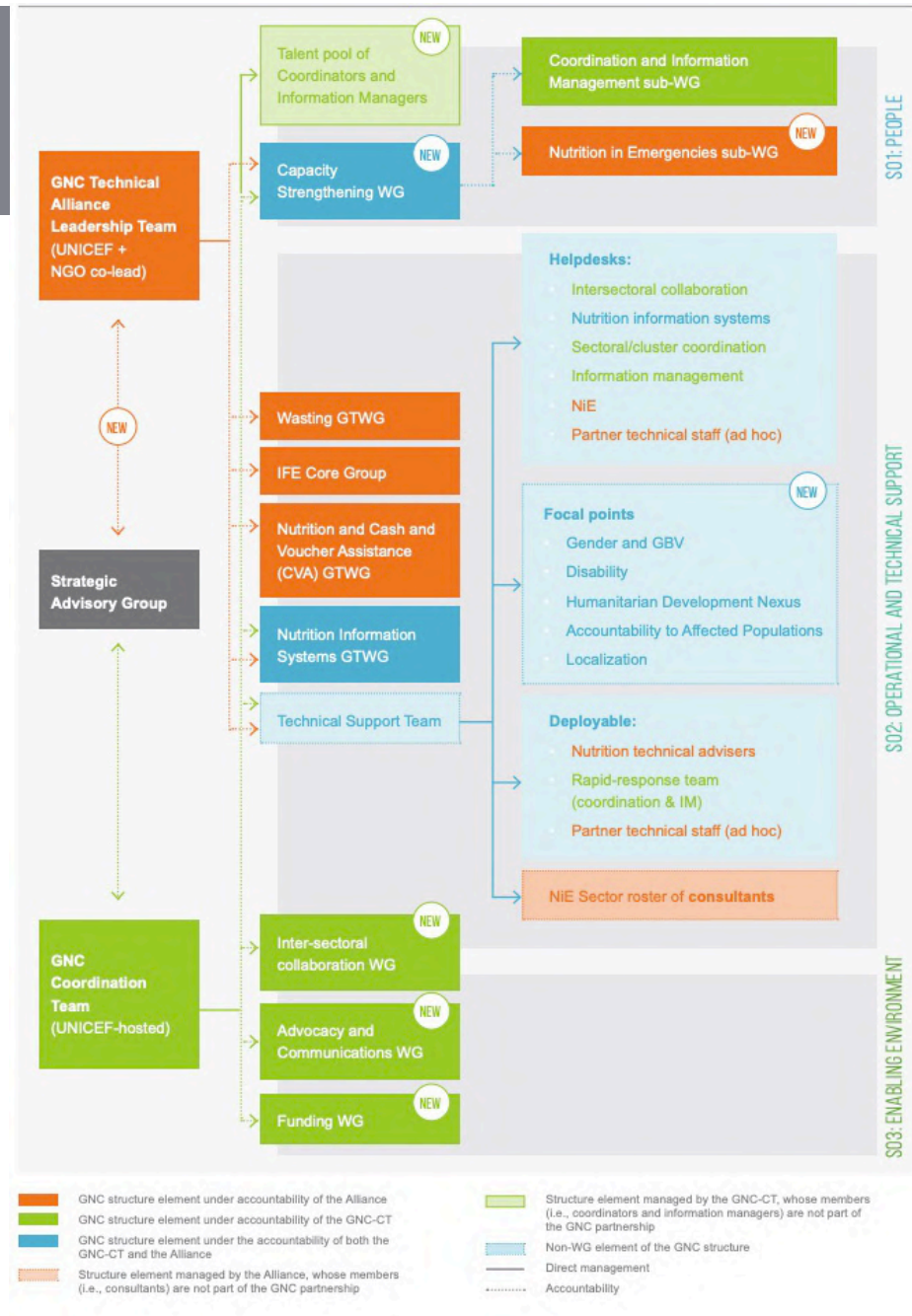
New partners

Three new partners – FHI360, Nutrition International and the West African Institute Public Health – joined the GNC in 2021. As defined in the updated SOP, GNC partners are entities (organizations, groups or individuals) working in NiE who respect humanitarian principles. At the global level, the GNC currently has 37 partners and 13 observers representing International Non-Governmental Organizations (INGOs), research and development groups, academic institutions, UN agencies, donors and individuals. The Alliance has over 40 partner organizations.

In addition to these partners, local authorities, national NGOs and community-based organizations are an integral part of each Nutrition Cluster at a country level. The GNC plans a review of its current engagement with partners, particularly vulnerable communities and local NGOs as well as private organizations and academia in the NiE sector, to develop recommendations for better engagement at all levels.

Role of the Strategic Advisory Group

The **_Strategic Advisory Group_** (SAG) provides guidance on the delivery of the GNC's strategy by the GNC-CT, the Alliance-LT and their respective partners, and supports monitoring of progress on workplans. Part of the SAG's updated role, as underlined in the SOP, is to ensure that GNC partners benefit from strategies that are consistent with the public interest of Nutrition Cluster members and the vulnerable populations served. SAG members are further encouraged to actively seek interaction with GNC partners and represent their issues and concerns to other SAG members, the GNC-CT and the Alliance LT. SAG membership has been expanded to include two Nutrition Cluster Coordinators (NCCs) and one NGO.

Cross-cutting issues

The new Strategy addresses the importance of strengthening the collective's engagement with cross-cutting issues (see Figure 4). Current workstreams within the GNC's Technical Support Team (TST) include Anti-racism and Localization, and Gender and Gender-Based Violence (GBV) risk mitigation. Collaboration with colleagues on these issues resulted in the development of relevant guidance in 2021, including toolkits on Gender and GBV and Localization (see more below). Further workstreams to be strengthened are Accountability for Affected Populations (AAP), disability and the Humanitarian Development Nexus (HDN) to be addressed through GNC working groups on global and national level initiatives (see Figure 3: GNC Structure).

Figure 4:
Cross-cutting issues

Source: GNC Strategy (2022-2025)

CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES

1. ACCOUNTABILITY TO AFFECTED POPULATIONS
2. DISABILITY
3. GENDER MAINSTREAMING
4. HUMANITARIAN-DEVELOPMENT NEXUS
5. LOCALIZATION
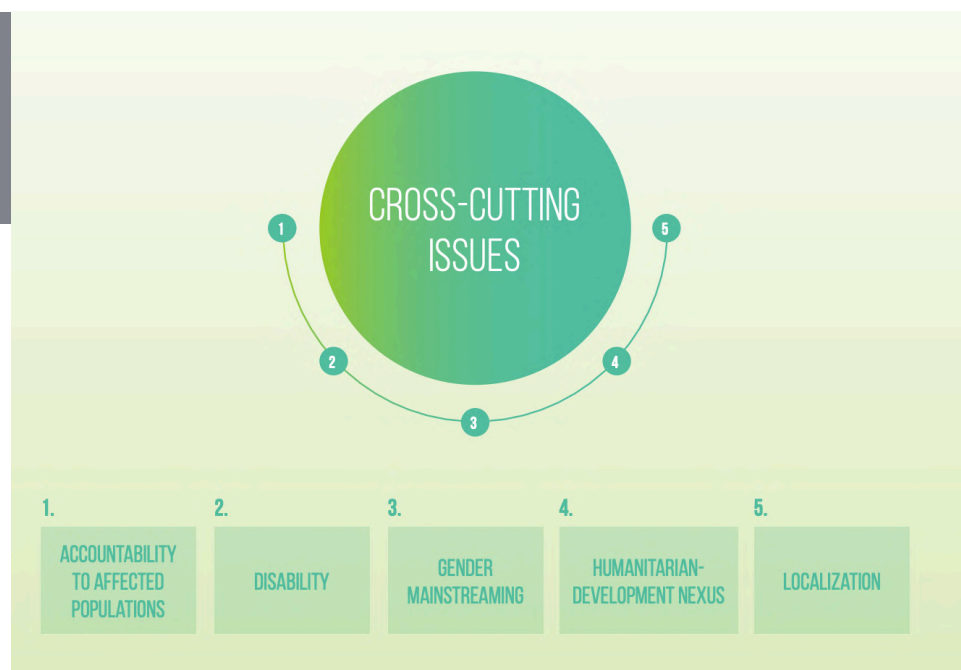
Working Groups

Working Groups comprising GNC partners and external experts are an essential part of the GNC structure, set up to address specific issues of importance to the GNC and its partners within the NiE sector. Groups that were active in 2021 include the **_Inter-sectoral Collaboration (ISC) working group_** and the newly-formed **_Advocacy working group,_** both managed by the GNC-CT. The **_Nutrition Cluster Coordination and IM Capacity Development Taskforce_**, also chaired by the GNC-CT, contributed to the strategic direction and oversight of the GNC's capacity development strategy. The taskforce provided input to the development of e-learning modules, implementation of the e-learning platform, organisation of the pilot and review of the generic NCC and IMO job descriptions.

Financing for the nutrition sector was identified as a specific focus area within the new GNC Work Plan, and a working group is currently being created.

The four *Global Thematic Working Groups* (GTWGs) overseen by the Alliance continue to play an important role in providing consensus-driven, stop-gap guidance in the absence of normative guidance. The groups include: the Management of Wasting; Nutrition and Cash and Voucher Assistance (CVA), which was launched in 2021; Nutrition Information Systems (NIS); and Nutrition for Infants and Young Children, for which the existing Infant Feeding in Emergencies (IFE Core Group) fulfils the role. This year has seen extensive engagement by GNC partners in GWTGs – 176 members (73 in the IFE Core Group, 44 in the Wasting GTWG, 35 in the NIS GTWG, and the CVA GTWG has 24 members).

There was also increased collaboration across the GTWGs through quarterly cross-chair calls and work on joint products, such as developing standardised technical guidance for assessing IYCF (Infant and Young Child Feeding) practices in humanitarian contexts, jointly produced by the IFE Core Group and NIS GTWG (see more in Guidance and tools below).

A number of working groups, including the IFE Core Group, the ISC WG, NIS GTWG, Nutrition and CVA group held *satellite events* during the GNC Annual Meeting, which provided an important opportunity to discuss key priority areas and work plan activities.

Finally, several taskforces were established in 2021, such as the Nutrition Guidance for Ebola treatment units, and two country specific taskforces, Yemen NIS Taskforce and Ethiopia NIS Taskforce under the NIS GTWG; and a process for funding GTWGs was developed and launched.

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Operational support objectives for 2021 were to continue providing high-quality support to the expanded range of countries, with a total of 57 out of 62 priority countries receiving direct support from the GNC in 2021 (see Figure 5). The Technical Support Team (TST – see more below) provided operational and technical support to national-level nutrition coordination mechanisms and partners, for improved cluster coordination and NiE programming, via remote and in-country deployments and helpdesks.

Figure 5:
GNC priority countries in 2021

Source: GNC Strategy (2022-2025)
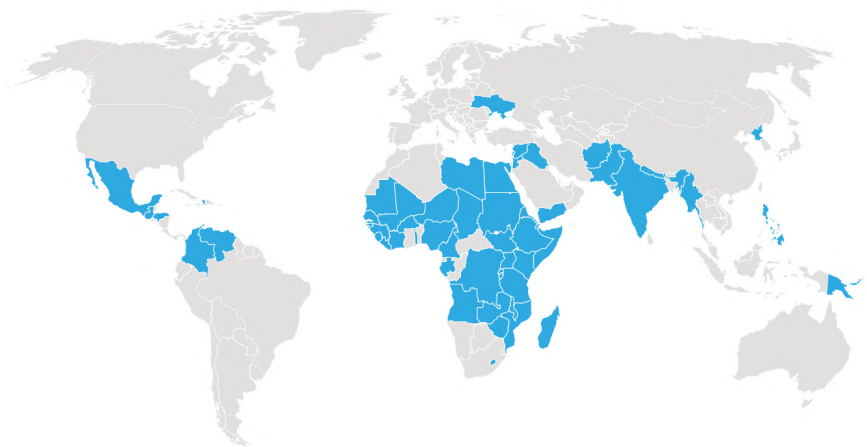
AFGHANISTAN	CONGO	GUINEA-BISSAU	LEBANON	MOZAMBIQUE	PHILIPPINES	TOGO
ANGOLA	DJIBOUTI	HAITI	LESOTHO	MYANMAR	RWANDA	TURKEY
BANGLADESH	DR CONGO	HONDURAS	LIBERIA	NEPAL	SENEGAL	UGANDA
BURKINA FASO	EGYPT	INDIA	LIBYA	NIGER	SIERRA LEONE	UKRAINE
BURUNDI	ERITREA	IRAN (ISLAMIC REP. OF)	MADAGASCAR	NIGERIA	SOMALIA	VENEZUELA
CAMEROON	ETHIOPIA	IRAQ	MALAWI	NORTH KOREA	SOUTH SUDAN	YEMEN
CAR	GABON	IVORY COAST	MALI	OPT	SUDAN	ZAMBIA
CHAD	GUATEMALA	JORDAN	MAURITANIA	PAKISTAN	SYRIA	ZIMBABWE
COLOMBIA	GUINEA	KENYA	MEXICO	PAPUA NEW GUINEA	TANZANIA	

GNC priority countries are those in *INFORM Severity Index* categories 4 and 5 (i.e., high and very high), and in category 3 (i.e., medium) for wasting (more than 10 per cent), overweight (more than 10 per cent) or stunting (more than 20 per cent). Countries may be

added when there is increased risk of humanitarian situations or malnutrition, and existing country capacity is considered when determining the level of support to be provided by the GNC.

GNC Operational and Technical Support

The *__Technical Support Team (TST)__* comprises 20 experienced personnel that provide countries with support for cluster/sector coordination, cluster/sector information management (IM) and NiE technical support. The TST, which is an amalgamation of the former Technical Rapid Response Team (Tech RRT), the GNC-CT and UNICEF, further strengthened efforts in 2021 to align requests via the multi-lingual *__Request Support'__* *__button__* and monitor country asks for technical support with the Alliance Support Request Dashboard.

The TST offers different types of technical support, depending on the nature of the request. This includes quick remote (or helpdesk) support for technical queries or signposting to relevant resources; deployments working with country-based partners for an extended period either via remote support or in-country; and consultant recommendations.

Helpdesk Support

Five Helpdesks provided remote assistance and support for field-based teams across a range of themes: coordination, IM, intersectoral collaboration (ISC), NiE and NIS. Last year, Helpdesks responded to 371 requests from 43 countries (an increase of almost 15 percent compared to 2020). Support on sectoral coordination accounted for nearly half of these requests (48 percent), with 19 percent demand for NIS support the next highest (see Figure 7).

Coordination Helpdesks

The Coordination Helpdesks (one anglophone and one francophone) provided support to 57 countries globally. This support was proactive, reaching out to support coordination mechanisms with their annual outputs, reactive to requests received, and passive through participation in global capacity strengthening initiatives. Proactive support was provided to all (27) countries with nutrition coordination mechanisms (cluster or other) where the *__Humanitarian Programme Cycle__* (HPC) is activated; and to non-HPC countries that faced a deterioration in their situation due to conflict, natural disaster or other factors, such as India and Bangladesh. Direct support covered cluster activation and establishment, needs assessments, response plans and cluster coordination performance monitoring (CCPM). Needs-based support included responding to 181 requests from 33 countries, such as requests for coordination-related guidance and tools to support advocacy efforts to address coordination-related staffing concerns in-country, through to requests for support with Humanitarian Response Plan (HRP) processes, such as costing guidance.

Additional support was provided through participation in global GNC-led webinars, one on Emergency Response Preparedness (ERP) and a second on the development of Humanitarian Response Plans (HRPs) (see more below in Section 2). Furthermore, Coordination Helpdesks supported the rollout of new GNC-specific ERP tools to 10 countries globally, with country-level discussions and webinars, and support with online tools or tailored support. The Helpdesks also supported on capacity strengthening initiatives, including orientation sessions to five newly recruited Nutrition Cluster Coordinators (NCCs), one-on-one support as required with the GNC's newly developed e-learning platform, GNC Learn, and support with the GNC mentoring programme (see more below in Section 2).

Cluster Coordination Performance Monitoring Exercise

In 2021, 21 countries conducted 23 Cluster Coordination Performance Monitoring (CCPM) exercises (two countries, Bangladesh and Whole of Syria, conducted two CCPMs each – at national level and in Cox's Bazar, and Damascus and Gaziantep, respectively). Almost all HPC countries with a standalone nutrition cluster (excluding Yemen and Pakistan) and a number of HPC countries with an alternative coordination arrangement (e.g., Colombia and Guatemala where nutrition and food security form a joint cluster) completed the exercise. Thus, 92 percent of HPC countries with standalone nutrition clusters finalised CCPMs in 2021, the highest completion rate since the exercise was introduced in 2014. Furthermore, an analysis of CCPM reports identified that 2021 had the highest weighted scores to date, indicating that country-level partners perceived coordination mechanisms to have been strengthened since the previous year (88 percent indicated an average performance score of 'good' across all domains).

Figure 6:
GNC CCPM report

Source: GNC Dashboard
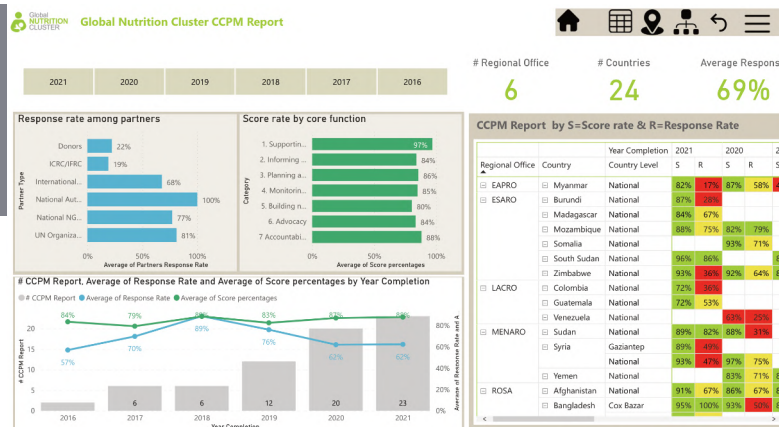
Information Management Helpdesk

The IM Helpdesk responded to 27 requests from 14 countries, in addition to one-on-one support to countries with limited IM capacity. The majority of requests (67 percent, or 18/27) came from countries within the West and Central Africa, and Eastern and Southern Africa regional office groupings. Orientations for IM were conducted in 10 countries to review the cluster performance in fulfilling its IM functions using the *GNC IM checklist*, and to develop action plans to improve IM systems in their respective countries.

In addition, the IM Helpdesk led efforts to support countries with limited skills through development of the GNC's IM Operational Support Framework, which outlines the minimum package (knowledge areas, skills and products) and key activities for each priority level. Countries are categorized based on the level of priority (1 and 2) with consideration to IM capacity (high, medium and low) in priority 1 countries. An IM webinar for non-IM personnel was organized in December, in both *French* and *English*, to brief participants about IM tools and practices that require simple IM skills, and to highlight the GNC support available to countries with limited IM capacity.

Intersectoral Collaboration Helpdesk

The GNC's support for ISC at global and country level was further consolidated in 2021, via the Helpdesk's efforts in building linkages, capacity development and documenting learning to strengthen multi-sectoral approaches in NiE. Closer collaboration was achieved by the establishment of an *ISC working group* at the GNC, and an ISC platform at global level where four cluster coordinators (Nutrition, Food Security and Agriculture, Health and WASH) can jointly address ISC issues and respond to specific country needs. Fruits of these efforts were seen in a *joint advocacy statement on famine and food crisis* published in September 2021, where the four clusters urged for a multi-sectoral response in countries with famine-like conditions.

At the country level, the ISC Helpdesk responded to 35 requests from NCCs, in addition to regular one-on-one support to nine priority countries (Burkina Faso, DRC, Ethiopia, Mali, Niger, NE Nigeria, Somalia, South Sudan and Yemen), including monthly calls to discuss ISC in-country processes. As a result of such support, all nine priority countries now have a multi-sectoral programming strategy included in their latest Humanitarian Response Plans (HRPs). The Helpdesk led efforts to support the field in developing four country case studies; *South Sudan* and *Yemen* (translated into French in 2021) and Burkina Faso and Democratic Republic of Congo (to be published in 2022). The case studies were a collaboration between Nutrition, WASH, Health and Food Security clusters in these countries to document key ISC approaches such as the Integrated Famine Prevention Response.

Furthermore, the development of ISC e-learning materials has ensured integration of ISC coordination and ISC technical principles into the GNC's new e-learning platform and capacity strengthening efforts. A new module on *Inter-Cluster Collaboration for Nutrition* is now available on GNC Learn.
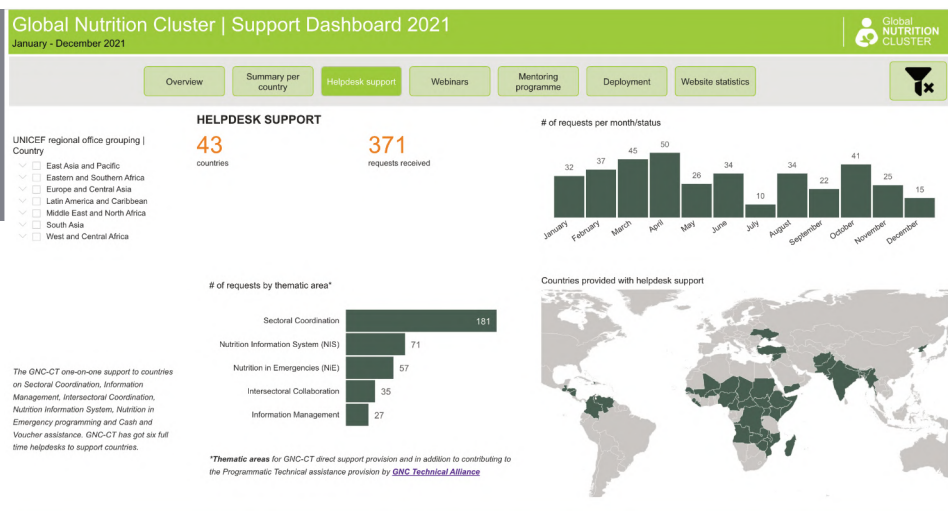
Nutrition Information Systems Helpdesk

Demand for NIS one-on-one remote support was the second highest for GNC Helpdesks in 2021 after coordination queries, with 71 requests on all aspects of NIS. The Helpdesk also proactively reached out to countries at key moments during the year, such as the preparation of annual nutrition assessment plans and during the Humanitarian Programme Cycle (support for developing countries' HNOs and HRPs). Key NIS documents to support the 2022 HPC process were shared via a series of multilingual GNC-led webinars in September. The Helpdesk, in conjunction with the NIS WG, was also involved in finalizing the *NIS checklist* and the revision of the Nutrition Humanitarian Needs Analysis Guidance following piloting (see more below in Guidance and Tools). With GNC support, over 20 countries used the NIS checklist and Nutrition HNA Guidance in their needs analysis, including nutrition situation analyses and People in Need (PiN) calculations.

At the global level, the NIS Helpdesk represented the GNC in high-level discussions with external groups, such as the Joint Inter-sectoral Analysis Framework (JIAF) working group and the Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC) Acute Malnutrition analyses technical advisory group and IPC Roadmap Taskforce (see more below on both initiatives).

Figure
GNC

Figure 7:
Overview of GNC
Helpdesk support

Source: GNC Dashboard

Global Nutrition Cluster | Support Dashboard 2021
January - December 2021

Overview | Summary per country | Helpdesk support | Webinars | Mentoring programme | Deployment | Website statistics

HELPDESK SUPPORT

UNICEF regional office grouping | Country
- East Asia and Pacific
- Eastern and Southern Africa
- Europe and Central Asia
- Latin America and Caribbean
- Middle East and North Africa
- South Asia
- West and Central Africa

43 countries

371 requests received

# of requests per month/status
January 32, February 37, March 45, April 50, May 26, June 34, July 10, August 34, September 22, October 41, November 25, December 15

# of requests by thematic area*
- Sectoral Coordination 181
- Nutrition Information System (NIS) 71
- Nutrition in Emergencies (NiE) 57
- Intersectoral Collaboration 35
- Information Management 27

The GNC-CT one-on-one support to countries on Sectoral Coordination, Information Management, Intersectoral Coordination, Nutrition Information System, Nutrition in Emergency programming and Cash and Voucher assistance. GNC-CT has got six full time helpdesks to support countries.

Countries provided with helpdesk support

*Thematic areas for GNC-CT direct support provision and in addition to contributing to the Programmatic Technical assistance provision by GNC Technical Alliance

Nutrition in Emergencies Helpdesk

In 2021, the NiE Helpdesk received a total of 210 requests for technical support, among them 101 for quick remote support (QRS) for technical queries or signposting to relevant resources. Of these, 30 QRS requests were in relation to IYCF-E programming, 14 for wasting and 12 for NIS. The rest of the QRS requests were divided between cross cutting themes and/or a mixture of NiE themes.

The NiE Helpdesk presented a summary of requests to the respective GTWG members during each of the GTWG monthly calls to keep the global groups up to date with the latest needs from country colleagues. Among the QRS requests, 10 were escalated in 2021: three to the Wasting GTWG, three to the IFE CG, one to the NIS GTWG and one to both the NIS and IFE Core Group GTWGs. These escalations led to the development of three pieces of work: a technical brief on *Way forward for Wasting programming in light of evolving COVID-19 situation*; and Compilations of lessons learned from the post-earthquake response of 2010 and a WHO updated version of the SAM and Cholera job aid (awaiting WHO internal approval before being made widely available). By the end of 2021, five escalated questions have been answered and five more are in progress or on standby. Also, five calls with chairs of in-country technical working groups (TWGs) took place to update the TWGs on the latest documents and tools available, and to hear from the chairs about the lessons learned, challenges and needs faced.

Deployment Support (remote and in-country)

The GNC provides expertise in coordination and NiE technical areas to countries in need of dedicated full-time support. Advisors are drawn from the TST as well as from a roster of 150 technically vetted consultants from 45 different countries (and speaking 49 languages) or TST partners–NGO partners available to provide technical support. Key thematic areas include cluster coordination and IM, Community-based Management of Acute Malnutrition (CMAM), Infant and Young Child Feeding in Emergencies (IYCF-E), Management of At-risk Mothers and Infants (MAMI), nutrition assessments and social behaviour change (SBC). All advisors are ready to be deployed to provide technical support to activities in acute and protracted nutrition emergencies as well as preparedness work. These experts also have access to the other technical advisors and the GTWGs for additional support.

During 2021, there were 40 deployments (remote, in-country or a mix) with an average of 41 days (or about seven weeks) per deployment. These assignments ranged from a few days (e.g., MAMI support to the International Rescue Committee) to 127 days (e.g., cluster IM support to Somalia). A total of 23 countries (Afghanistan, Angola, Burkina Faso, Chad, Ethiopia, Haiti, Honduras, India, Madagascar, Malawi, Mozambique, Myanmar, Nicaragua, Nigeria, Occupied Palestinian Territories, Somalia, South Sudan, Sudan, Turkey, Venezuela, Vietnam, Yemen and Zambia) and two regions (East Africa and LACRO) benefited from deployment support (remote and in-country) during 2021.

Figure 8:
GNC Deployments overview

Source: GNC Dashboard
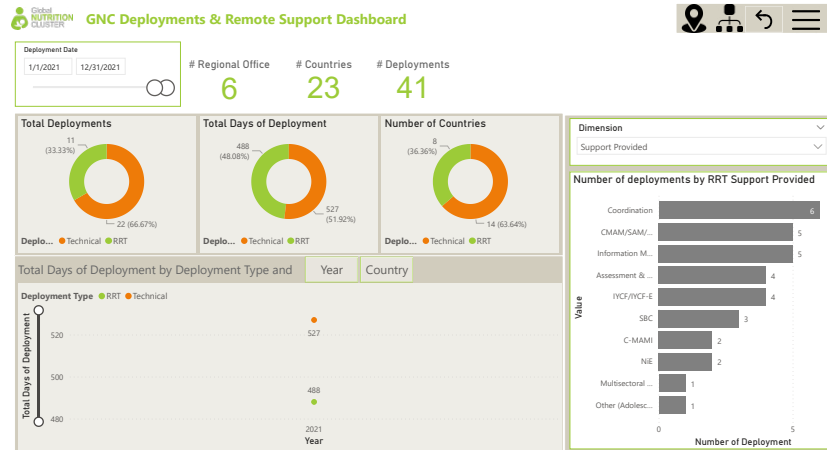
Cluster Coordination

Capacity support for cluster coordination was provided to three countries in 2021 through in-county and full-time remote deployments, enabling them to sustain a timely and effective coordinated nutrition response. These missions included eight weeks of in-country support to the Ethiopia cluster and the Sudan Nutrition Sector, respectively and a four-week in-country deployment to the South Sudan nutrition cluster at the end of 2021. In-country support for seven weeks was also provided to the UNICEF field office in ***Mozambique's Cabo Delgado*** province to build capacity within the nutrition cluster to respond to a worsening humanitarian situation driven by conflict. Myanmar's Nutrition Sector was supported remotely for 12 weeks from mid-April to mid-July. The mission was to provide an effective coordinated nutrition response and formulating an ERP plan to develop partner capacity for an immediate response following the military takeover in February 2021 (see Box 4 below).

IDP families (from armed conflicts in Cabo Delgado) prepare food on Ibo Island, Cabo Delgado Province, Mozambique.

@UNICEFMozambique/ Bisol/2020

Information Management

Six country coordination platforms benefited from 48 weeks of IM support (remote and in-country) deployment to strengthen the overall emergency nutrition response and coordination through the improvement of nutrition IM. Information Managers supported Chad (four weeks), Ethiopia (eight weeks), Haiti (six weeks), Madagascar (nine weeks), Somalia (18 weeks) and Sudan (three weeks). The mission's objective in Chad was to provide relevant support to nutrition cluster coordination with the humanitarian needs analysis for the 2022 HNO and response planning for the 2022 HRP exercise.

Humanitarian partners faced security and logistical challenges in the aftermath of Haiti's 2021 earthquake.

@UNICEF Haiti/Haro/ 2021

BOX 3

Help for Haiti
Following the earthquake in Haiti on 14 August 2021, the GNC received an urgent request from the UNICEF Haiti country office for both IM support and in-depth support to develop the Infant and Young Child Feeding in Emergencies (IYCF-E) response. Two TST advisors provided vital in-country support at the start of the response: in establishing the IM system through developing IM tools and an interactive dashboard and setting up a comprehensive and sustainable IYCF-E response that could be delivered by partners, respectively. Both technical advisors also provided ongoing remote support to the Haiti cluster coordination team (Read ***Haiti Story from the Field)***.

Assessment/Nutrition Information Systems
Assessment or NIS support was provided in five different contexts. The Assessment Advisor provided remote support to Welthungerhilfe in Turkey and was also deployed to Angola to support UNICEF and the World Food Programme (WFP). Action Against Hunger Canada provided in-country support to the Tigray response in Ethiopia and the Nutrition Cluster in Mozambique, as well as some remote support to the Nutrition Sector in Myanmar. Finally, an NIS Advisor (consultant) supported UNICEF India remotely.

Community-based Management of Acute Malnutrition
CMAM support was provided on five separate occasions. Action Against Hunger UK (a TST Partner) delivered remote CMAM support to Action for Development in Afghanistan and the CMAM Advisor to African Relief Development Initiative (ARDI) in Somalia. A CMAM Advisor (consultant) provided remote CMAM support to UNICEF Nicaragua and the Nutrition Cluster in Venezuela, as well as some mixed modality (remote and in-country) support to Save the Children in Honduras. Some CMAM support was also provided to UNICEF Palestine (by the CMAM Advisor).

Infant and Young Child Feeding in Emergencies
IYCF-E support was provided to seven different countries either remotely (two) or a mixed modality (five). The IYCF-E Advisor supported the Northeast Nigeria Nutrition Sector as well as the Nutrition Sector in Sudan. IYCF-E Advisors from Save the Children supported UNICEF Nicaragua remotely, the Haiti Nutrition Cluster and UNICEF Palestine (also remotely). The IYCF-E Advisor supported Burkina Faso and an IYCF-E Advisor (consultant) supported Save the Children Honduras.

Management of At-risk Mothers and Infants

MAMI support was provided on three different occasions, all remotely by the MAMI Advisor. These included a short piece of support to multiple country offices of the International Rescue Committee, and more extensive pieces to GOAL Ethiopia and ADRA Yemen.

Nutrition in Emergencies and Nutrition-sensitive

Technical support was also provided on general NiE, all remotely. This included NiE support to the UNICEF Latin America and Caribbean Regional Office to remotely train frontline workers responding to the migration crisis and another piece to support in the development of a regional NiE advocacy strategy. Finally, consultants were employed to provide nutrition sensitive support to Building Foundation for Development in Yemen, Irish Aid in Malawi, and UNICEF Vietnam.

BOX 4

Assistance for Emergency Response Preparedness in Myanmar
The TST's nutrition cluster coordinator was deployed to Myanmar to support the country coordination team and partners in formulating a contingency and early-response plan to anticipated deterioration in the humanitarian situation due to the country's political crisis. As part of a 10-week deployment, the GNC team remotely led a three-day workshop to develop the ERP plan, alongside strengthening partner capacity for an immediate response to the impending crisis. A total of 72 partners comprising government authorities, UNICEF ROSA, UN agencies, national and international NGOs, development partners and donors participated in the workshop and contingency planning exercise. The GNC's support enabled partners to put in place a comprehensive **Myanmar ERP plan** and subsequently, to initiate a timely response (Read **Myanmar Story from the Field**).

Social and Behaviour Change

SBC support was provided on four separate occasions, all remote except for one deployment (India), and all by the SBC Advisor. Support was provided to Save the Children across East Africa (with more in-depth support to Somalia and Zimbabwe country offices) and Action Against Hunger, India. The SBC Advisor also supported the Jesuit Centre for Theological Reflection in Zambia and Building Foundation for Development in Yemen, both national NGOs.

Ethnic Kachin Girl and her mother pray before eating lunch in their shelter-room at IDP camp, Kachin, Myanmar.

@UNICEF Myanmar/ Minzayer/2021

GNC Guidance and tools

Two new GNC checklists or capacity assessment tools were finalised in 2021 as part of a broader set of NiE checklists or tools designed to strengthen cluster performance through helping NCCs review and self-assess the quality-of-service delivery in the nutrition response before, during and/or after a crisis. The *Wasting management checklist* was developed to support nutrition clusters and/or in country wasting TWGs in the review of capacity under this theme. After a piloting process, the final *NIS checklist* was disseminated to countries at the end of October. All checklists are available in English, French and Spanish. The existing *IYCF-E checklist* has been merged with a complementary UNICEF tool to create one recommended IYCF-E capacity assessment tool that is currently being piloted in three countries. The checklists will be revised once additional countries begin using them, with the intention that checklists are used for their capacity assessments at least annually. The Alliance will support the revisions and use of the capacity assessment tools.

These checklists should be used in conjunction with the NiE Coordination checklist, which supports country-level nutrition coordination mechanisms to adequately meet the key outputs of clusters or sectors (primarily related to delivery of the HPC). This is currently being revised by the GNC and will be available in the first quarter of 2022. Following its launch in 2020, several updates were made to the *Nutrition for Humanitarian Needs Analysis* guidance during 2021, based on feedback from the piloting phase and revision of the Excel spreadsheet formula to include the latest updates on calculating numbers of children with wasting. A technical brief was developed by the Alliance and a sub-group of the Wasting GTWG on the *Way forward for wasting programming in light of the evolving COVID-19 situation*. Another GTWG, the IFE core group, was a key partner in work to revise the WHO *Operational guidance on breastfeeding in emergencies* and developed *an infographic series on IYCF-E*.

The Alliance updated the *Competency Framework for Nutrition in Humanitarian Contexts*, which reflects and promotes current and emerging best practice. The framework aims to improve nutrition outcomes by providing a standardized, inter-agency set of competencies required by people working in nutrition in humanitarian contexts.

With a view to making its products more widely accessible, the GNC focus in 2021 was on translating all its existing guidance, checklists and toolkits into French and Spanish. This project is now complete, including the translation of all e-learning modules in GNC Learn (see more below).

BOX 5

District Health Information Systems 2 project

The GNC's project to customise existing District Health Information Systems 2 (DHIS2) features for NiE configuration, development and deployment has been ongoing since January 2021.

This *DHIS2 instance or online system* is now configured to provide the tools that are needed at country level for nutrition response frameworks. At its core, this is a database with 13 datasets encompassing all the different types of nutrition interventions, from screening and in- and out-patient management to cash and AAP. Additional tools and features are also being developed as part of the project, such as humanitarian needs analysis, calculation for populations reached, supply calculation and case management. Most of the milestones were achieved in 2021: the instance is now operational, and the other applications have reached the final development stage. In early 2022 IMOs and other stakeholders will be trained on the DHIS2 functionality and features, and the metadata will be packaged for download and installation at country level.

Other guidance and tools

During 2021, GNC participation in the development of other technical and cross-cutting guidance ensured the inclusion of nutrition in the *Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC) Mapping Tool*, revision of the *Joint Intersectoral Analysis Framework (JIAF) methodology and tools* including an NIS addendum, a *GBV HPC toolkit* and an Inter-Agency toolkit on Localization in Humanitarian Coordination (forthcoming).

The GNC continued its partnership with the IPC multi-partner initiative for improving food security and nutrition analysis and decision-making, represented at all levels including the IPC Technical Advisory Group and Working Group, and the IPC Acute Malnutrition (IPC AM) Mapping Tool taskforce. The mapping tool was launched in September 2021, and the NIS Helpdesk will be supporting countries with GAM >5% in developing a nutrition situation analysis following IPC AM protocols (Scenario 1 of the GNC Nutrition Humanitarian Needs Analysis guidance) for HNOs in 2022.

The NIS Helpdesk also supports development of the JIAF, ensuring the prominence of nutrition in the inter-sectoral needs analysis. The JIAF tool was piloted in 2021 but following an independent review by Yale University, further strengthening and adaptation of the methodology is currently ongoing. The next version of the JIAF (JIAF 2.0) will be rolled out with the Humanitarian Programme Cycle in 2024.

The GNC, along with other UNICEF-led clusters, participated in a stocktaking exercise on GBV during 2021. This involved a review of all 2020 HNOs and HRPs in terms of GBV, and a four-day workshop with the participation of country-level cluster coordinators from all UNICEF-led clusters and UN Areas of Responsibility (AORs). These two exercises resulted in a *GBV HPC toolkit* to support country-level nutrition coordination teams to address this theme across the Humanitarian Programme Cycle.

In 2021, the GNC had an opportunity to join the Localization Advisory Group responsible for working on an Inter-Agency toolkit on localization in humanitarian coordination. The toolkit, developed by Save the Children in partnership with the Child Protection AoR, is now being finalised and will be published in 2022. Funding is currently being identified to support the piloting of this toolkit in a number of countries. The Advisory group will contribute towards the piloting methodology and next steps.

Capacity Development

02

The GNC's shift to providing remote support was evident in 2021 in its capacity development strategy with the delivery of 24 webinar events (an average of two a month) and 33 remote training packages across 15 countries. To facilitate the increased scope of its work to support platforms from subnational through to global level, the GNC continued to expand its blended learning programme to build capacity for nutrition coordination, IM and NiE programming. This comprises the GNC mentoring programme, which recruited a further 33 mentees in 2021, and the soft launch of GNC Learn, an online learning platform with more than 120 courses.

A key challenge at country level for the nutrition cluster is the high turnover of staff and no/ limited capacity mapping and development plans, with any requests for support initiated on an ad-hoc basis. To address these issues, capacity strengthening within the GNC has been supported through various initiatives. These include webinars (of particular importance during the switch to virtual modalities following the start of the pandemic in March 2020), face to-face training packages, the mentoring programme and development of an e-learning platform. The *GNC's Capacity Strengthening Framework* was finalised in 2021 to further guide work in this area.

Webinars

As in the previous year, webinars were a key communication tool in 2021. A total of 24 webinars in English, French and Spanish were conducted by the GNC and the Alliance and attended by participants from 55 countries. To kick-start its work on *strengthening ERP planning*, the GNC conducted multi-lingual webinars to familiarize participants on the IASC ERP approach and to discuss required country-level actions. Another webinar series supported the *2022 HPC process*, in particular developing HNOs in light of updated guidance and assistance available from the GNC. Other webinars included an *overview of ISC* and a *partners call on the emergency response in Ethiopia and Madagascar* in May, attended by over 60 participants. The NCC from Ethiopia and UNICEF Nutrition Specialist in Madagascar presented strategic nutrition priorities and key asks of GNC partners in their respective countries.

The Alliance organized five webinars with a combined total of 650 participants. The Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) Nutrition Cluster and PRONANUT (Le Programme National de Nutrition de la RDC), in collaboration with the Alliance, shared their experiences of *integrating nutrition into the COVID-19 response*. This was an insightful webinar with contributions from DRC, Burkina Faso and Mali and attended by over 300 people. A series of 'Sharing and Learning' cafes covered key IYCF-E including shared responsibilities for IYCF-E with reflections on experiences in implementing the *IYCF Multi-sector Framework for Action*; *WHO/UNICEF IYCF Indicators: challenges and opportunities in humanitarian contexts*; and *Preventing and managing inappropriate donations - breastmilk substitutes products*. Finally, a webinar was delivered demonstrating how provision of *remote support by the TST strengthened a nutrition and food security assessment in Turkey.*
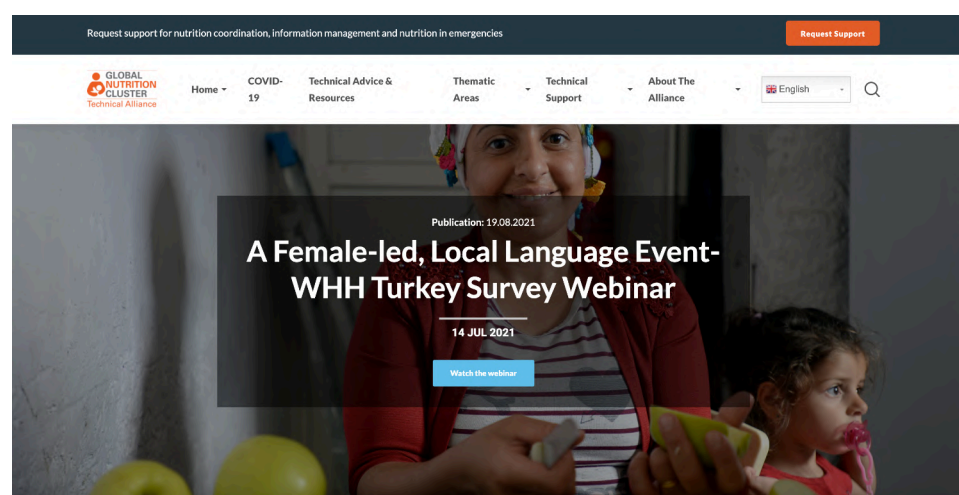
Trainings

Trainings delivered by the TST in 2021 were a combination of remote and in-country, and delivered in multiple languages. The TST carried out 34 trainings, including nine for CMAM, six on NiE, five each on nutrition assessment and SBC, four on IYCF-E, three on ERP and one each on general nutrition and MAMI. There were 1316 participants from across 19 countries (Afghanistan, Angola, Chad, Côte d'Ivoire, DRC, Ethiopia, Haiti, Honduras, Kenya, Mozambique, Myanmar, Nicaragua, Niger, Somalia, South Sudan, Uganda, Yemen, Zambia and Zimbabwe), and 59 percent of those that reported were from a national organisation.

UNICEF Latin America and Caribbean (LAC) Regional Office identified a need for training on for nutrition partners responding to the Venezuelan migrant crisis. The TST developed and delivered a series of six trainings (in English and Spanish) on *NiE in the context of COVID-19 and migration*. The MAMI workshop was attended by participants from six countries (Chad, Ethiopia, Kenya, Somalia, South Sudan and Uganda) and two regional nutrition advisors from East and West Africa.

The TST supported a two-day online training in French for 26 sector partners in Côte d'Ivoire. The objectives were to define a roadmap for the preparedness, immediate response and adaptation and scaling up of current nutrition programmes where necessary in areas affected by humanitarian crises or at risk of humanitarian crises. Several other ERP trainings took place in 2021, including one in Myanmar with 72 participants (see Box 4 above) and a three-day training in Niger with 25 participants. Finally, a MAMI training was attended by participants from six countries (Chad, Ethiopia, Kenya, Somalia, South Sudan and Uganda).

Mentoring programme

The **_GNC mentoring programme_**, which provides tailored support to meet the professional development needs of NCCs and IMs, was further extended in 2021. There were two rounds of enrolment, in April and September, and GNC mentors worked with 33 mentees from 20 countries. Since its inception in 2019, a total of 84 mentees have participated in the programme, which matches experienced NCCs, IMs and NiE specialists with field-based nutrition staff to explore specific areas of interest to build individual capacity. There are currently 15 approved mentors mainly from the GNC-CT with support from regional and country level teams based on availability. In 2022, more trainings for new mentors are planned to increase the pool of mentors, and the programme will be expanded to include components of NiE alongside its current focus on coordination and IM competencies.

Periodic monitoring and feedback from participants indicate that the programme has been beneficial in supporting coordination teams to establish the required skills, knowledge and experience in their current work, as well as taking up new challenges that have aided career advancement. In 2022, the GNC is planning an independent review to generate evidence on the programme's results and constraints. This will enable reflection on the lessons learned, assessment of the programme's success in meeting its goals, and provide recommendations to the GNC on making improvements and developing mentoring best practices.

E-learning programme

In 2021, the GNC finalised its e-learning platform and online courses, which marked a significant step from face-to-face training to self-paced tailored learning experiences. The development, storyboarding and uploading of the online learning package on cluster coordination (CC) and information management (IM) was part of the 2021 roll-out of the GNC _capacity development strategy_. Learning content for a total of 108 modules (62 modules for CC and 46 modules for IM, with 10 joint IM and CC modules) was defined to align with the relevant competency frameworks for _CC_ and _IM_. The GNC also developed a specific learning management system (LMS) to host its e-learning package, **_GNC Learn_**, which is divided into a module catalogue, short courses and learning pathways. COVID-19 considerations were mainstreamed throughout the learning package, and the modules have all been translated into French and Spanish.
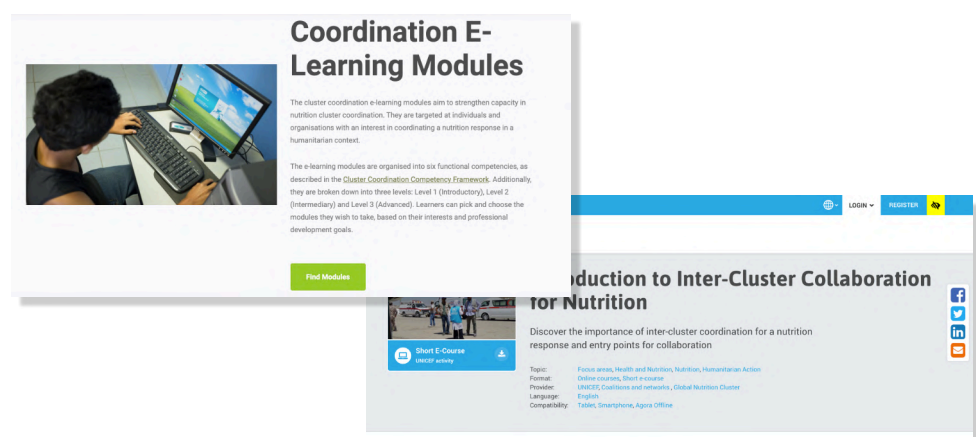
GNC Learn was piloted from October to December 2021, with findings on module content and platform design currently being incorporated into the LMS ahead of a full launch planned for early 2022. The GNC has also developed a learning dashboard at both national and sub-national level to track the number of users connecting to the platform

according to country course type and course name. This will help to inform the analysis of how and where to target new learning resources and to track demand. By the end of 2021, 85 people from 28 countries had accessed and completed 136 courses.

There is also ongoing work led by the Alliance to include NiE training and training on cross cutting or related fields on GNC Learn to include capacity strengthening for NiE practitioners as well as CCs and IMs. A mapping exercise completed in 2021 matched existing trainings to competencies in the NiE competency framework and will guide discussions with GNC partners on priority trainings for 2022.

Unifying online learning across UNICEF-led clusters]
The e-learning project also provided the impetus for the UNICEF Global Cluster Coordination Unit (GCCU) to align their capacity development approach with that of the GNC. To cost-share and reduce inefficiencies, the scope of the e-learning platform development was extended to the whole of the GCCU with a core component of generic content (i.e generic modules based on common competency frameworks for cluster coordinators and IMOs for use across clusters). Going forward, the other UNICEF-led clusters will duplicate the gains made by the GNC in the development of its online content and LMS (including the learning generated by its pilot). The project has also enabled the GNC to have a more structured approach to capacity development within its own team, with consistent content and resources shared with colleagues, according to a competency-based approach.

Influencing and advocacy

03

The GNC made progress in several key areas under this objective in 2021, with advocacy for new clusters and better funding and support for human resources as well as strengthening ISC, knowledge management and communications, and partnerships with others. The formation of Advocacy and Finance working groups (see below) indicates a greater emphasis on a more strategic approach towards advocacy as emphasised in the GNC Strategy (2022-2025). GNC advocacy objectives are also aligned with recommendations from two important UNICEF reviews, the 2020 Humanitarian Review and the Cluster Lead Agency Review Evaluation (CLARE II) finalised in 2021 (see below).

BOX 7

Findings from CLARE II
Global findings from CLARE II were that the clusters had matured with UNICEF as CLA (since the CLARE I evaluation in 2013). Cluster coordination capacity and tools are in place with all clusters having multi-year strategies, clear structures, a range of cluster products (e.g., guidance), helpdesk functions and rapid deployments. However, 'old' or perennial issues remain a source of confusion and tension, with issues related to accountability, definitional questions (POLR); confusion between cluster partners/members and the concept of implementing partner; clusters operating as silos; and the interface of clusters with other coordination models. In terms of country findings, interviewees confirmed that nutrition sometimes faces challenges in activation as an IASC stand-alone cluster. Efforts are being made to strengthen inter-cluster work, although there is a recognition that more needs to be done at the global level.

Advocacy for Activation of New Clusters and Human Resources

Advocacy efforts to UNICEF country offices are focused on the need to raise the profile of coordination and IM posts, including promoting cross fertilization between coordination and programming roles. A substantial amount of time and resources in 2021 were allocated to advocating to address UNICEF internal gaps, including inadequate prioritization of coordination in both CCCs and CLA commitments, inadequate funding of coordination and IM capacity, and regular recruitment gaps. Since 2017 the number of countries with dedicated support teams has remained stable, with the GNC aiming to increase these numbers in the next strategic period (see Figure 7). Work has already

begun on this objective with the development of guidance by the GNC with other UNICEF-led clusters on the *recommended good practices for the minimum structure of coordination teams at country level* that includes a human resources decision tree for national and subnational levels. With support from UNICEF management and regional offices, the guidance will be rolled out in 2022.

Advocacy has been further strengthened by the development of generic job descriptions with key functions for NiE coordinators and IMs at national and subnational levels. These are approved by UNICEF as CLA and are now available in at least four languages. The GCCU is also finalizing its talent management strategy that should further contribute to the availability of appropriate human resources in countries.

Figure 7: Dedicated support for coordination and information management

Number of countries with dedicated support for coordination/information management
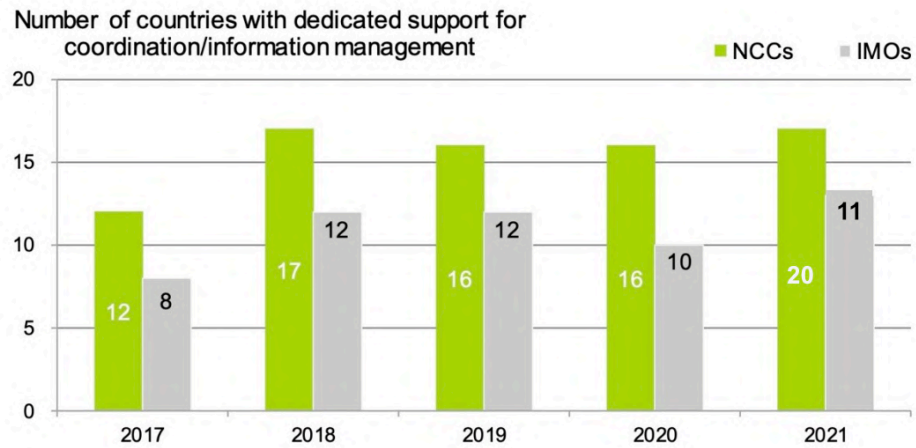
Strengthening GNC Advocacy

Following the formation of the GNC Advocacy Working Group (WG), work is currently ongoing to finalise the GNC Advocacy Strategy (2022-2025), which is intended as a strategic framework for a coordinated approach to deliver GNC advocacy. It will complement the GNC Strategy (2022-2025), directly relating to Strategic Objective 3 — Building an enabling environment— and cutting across other objectives to support the advancement of all the GNC's strategic priorities. To implement the strategy, the GNC will strive to ensure coordination with other sectors and relevant advocacy initiatives to jointly influence the global narrative on NiE, building on engagement with the Scaling Up Nutrition (SUN) Movement and intersectoral platforms for Global Food Security, Health, Nutrition and Water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) Clusters.

Working across the humanitarian development nexus (HDN), the GNC also contributed to global and national efforts to draw attention to the problems and solutions in addressing hunger and malnutrition in fragile and conflict-affected countries, and to leverage policy and financial commitments for nutrition at the *2021 Tokyo Nutrition for Growth Summit* in December. *Key messages* were drafted to support nutrition clusters and nutrition partners' advocacy efforts at national and global level in the run-up to the Summit, and the GNC delivered final remarks during the session dedicated to addressing malnutrition in crisis-affected countries on the second day of the summit. These efforts highlighted the need for humanitarian, development and peace actors to work together more effectively, overcoming silos and supporting resilience-building efforts.

Finance Working Group
The GNC's two new working groups for Advocacy and Finance, consisting of key GNC partners and donors, have already identified key challenges in a reduction in nutrition funding to be addressed in the next 2-4 years. The Finance WG aims to map current and prospective NiE resource partners, funding opportunities and entry points for increased advocacy for NiE funding. It will also develop a communications strategy (lobbying) and narrative around NiE for global and country-level financing, including how to demonstrate the impact of NiE programming, coordination and IM.

Knowledge Management and Communications
GNC communications were strengthened by the appointment of a Knowledge Management specialist in January 2021 to deliver key documents such as the GNC Annual Report (2020) and *Mid-year report (2021)*, and to support the GNC virtual Annual Meeting and development of the GNC Strategy (2022-2025) and updated SOP. A new KM product, 'Stories from the Field', was developed to capture GNC and Alliance operational and technical support and to document TST deployments in countries (*Burkina Faso*, *Haiti*, *Lebanon* and *Myanmar*). These stories have been published as news on the GNC website and featured in the GNC newsletter.

The *GNC newsletter*, launched as a weekly publication in April 2020 to provide COVID-19 updates, news, events and job vacancies, was re-designed and changed to a monthly publication, with additional mail blasts on specific topics. It now has over 1600 subscribers (via a merger with the Alliance data base) and has evolved into a key communications' tool for both the GNC-CT and the Alliance, with an average of 30%+ opens and 10% clicks (above average for the sector).

The Alliance Knowledge Management strategy was developed in 2021 to define the knowledge management objectives, processes, activities and outcomes of the Alliance. As part of the Alliance learning process, monthly learning review meetings provide an opportunity to look at emerging trends and potential KM needs. KM products developed this year included *learning on how the Alliance can support local NGOs and a COVID-19 response learning review.*

GNC social media engagement saw a 15 percent increase in followers on Twitter since January 2021, and there was high engagement during the GNC Annual Meeting in June 2021, the launch of the GNC Strategy (2022-2025) and publication of the Inter-cluster Famine Advocacy note. The *GNC website* was visited by users from 190 countries in 2021, including those from 60 GNC priority countries. The Alliance launched its own social media platforms in 2021 and has made progress in establishing these with Twitter (192 Followers, 35K Tweet impressions, and a 3.25 percent engagement rate); LinkedIn (251 followers, 23.6K post impressions and an engagement rate of 8.3 percent) and Facebook (280 Followers, 19.7 post impressions. The *Alliance website* had over 7.3K users from 162 countries in 2021.

Partnerships
As mentioned above, the GNC collective currently has 37 global partners and 13 observers including INGOs, academic institutions and UN agencies, with three new partners joining in 2021, while the Alliance has over 40 partner organizations. Work continued to ensure an inclusive multi-sectoral response, linking development and humanitarian actors and other sectors for an NiE response, with ongoing engagement with the SUN Movement Secretariat and intersectoral platforms of the Global Food Security, Health, Nutrition and WASH clusters. Based on their joint global report on

__Lessons learned and recommendations from the humanitarian-development nexus__
(HDN), the GNC and the SUN Movement developed a module on 'Supporting humanitarian-development linkages within the nutrition cluster' for GNC Learn and there are plans for further training materials. The intercluster joint statement on famine and accompanying social media campaign was the product of closer collaboration for ISC at global level, with more initiatives planned once ISC Helpdesks are on board in the other clusters. The GNC has spearheaded efforts for clusters to work together in developing joint situation analyses, advocacy and convergence of programme implementation to achieve greater and longer lasting impact.
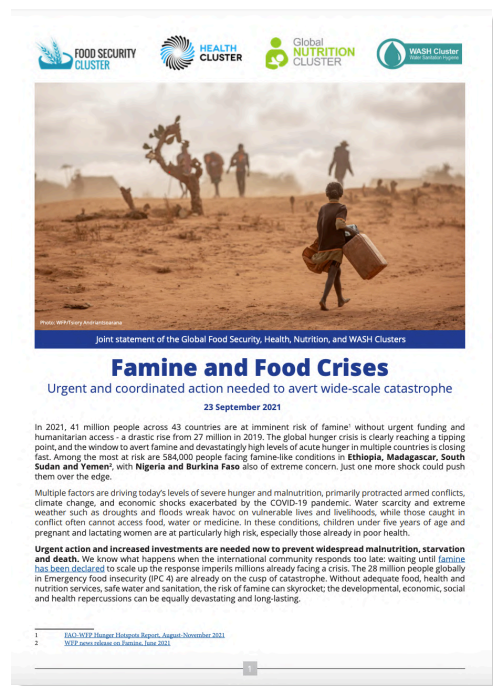
The GNC also worked with several external partners during 2021 to strengthen collaboration in priority areas, such as the IPC and JIAF (see more above). As a partner in the IPC collective, GNC advocacy with ACF, WFP and UNICEF for a greater nutrition focus resulted in the development of IPC Mapping tool for Acute Malnutrition launched in September 2021.

Global Report on Food Crises

The **_Global Report on Food Crises_** (GFRC) is an annual publication that highlights the high severity and numbers of people in crisis or worse (IPC/CH Phase 3 or above). The report is produced by the Global Network against Food Crises (which includes the GNC), and the GRFC 2021 was the result of months of collaboration among members of the international humanitarian and development community. The NIS Helpdesk participates in the GRFC's technical team, providing nutrition status data consolidated from assessments and HNO analysis and reviewed the draft reports of the country briefs in the GRFC's nutrition section. The GFRC is a platform for multiple partners at global, regional and national levels to share food security and nutrition data, analysis and valuable insights. The numbers identified in the 2021 edition are the highest in the report's five-year existence.

Key Challenges, Opportunities

04

Challenges constraining GNC output in 2021 were similar to those from previous years, primarily limited financial resource allocation for cluster and sectoral coordination capacity at country level, including for large scale crises. Funding constraints are frequent, but insufficient prioritization of NiE functions was also evident. The formation of two working groups, one for Advocacy and another for Finance (see more above), is an opportunity to address specific issues through strategic advocacy and enabling access to long-term, sustainable funding. The widespread adoption of recommendations from the Humanitarian Review and CLARE II review would be a catalyst for more effective collaboration and synergy of the GNC collective, better fundraising and greater attention to the welfare and job satisfaction for NiE stakeholders in the field.

COVID-19 travel restrictions continued to cause delays and/or limited field support travel to priority countries into 2021, although in-country deployments did resume. However, the GNC's shift to virtual support with remote deployments, webinars, online training and the GNC e-learning platform has overcome many of these barriers.
The Alliance also reported ongoing challenges with the impact of COVID-19 on NiE programming and technical support provision. This has led to opportunities in accessing the most local support available, by utilizing country and regional level expertise through TST partners. There is also an ongoing need to generate awareness of the Alliance's services at the country level, including sub-national level, which is being addressed through greater social media presence and products such as the GNC explanatory video.

Next Steps

The GNC Strategy (2022-2025) and related Workplan set out priorities for next steps. Key areas of focus include the launch of the GNC e-learning platform and the finalization and sharing of the GNC Advocacy Strategy (2022-2025) with cluster partners. Based on the development of its online courses, the GNC is now looking at the next steps of professional development, centered on simulation and blended learning. Building on the vast GNC online learning catalogue developed in 2021, the approach combines online theoretical learning with interactive virtual sessions to work on case studies and practical exercises. Different learning cohorts for this blended learning package have already been established at regional level (West Africa) and country level (Madagascar), with training underway since February 2022. The approach is being run as a pilot before further roll-out to other regions and country offices.

The Advocacy workplan will be developed in collaboration with Financing and ISC WGs as well as with the Alliance and HDN workstreams to ensure alignment. Cross-cutting issues are on track to move forward in 2022, with an emphasis on workstreams for AAP, Anti-racism and Localization, Disability, Gender and GBV and HDN.

Next steps for the Alliance are to continue providing demand-driven technical services for requests, while improving systems and the quality of support. This goes hand in hand with a need to generate demand for Alliance services, particularly with focused outreach at the national and sub-national level.

GNC Resource Partners

USAID
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

unicef

Eleanor Crook
Foundation

Irish Aid
Rialtas na hÉireann
Government of Ireland

Schweizerische Eidgenossenschaft
Confédération suisse
Confederazione Svizzera
Confederaziun svizra

**Swiss Agency for Development
and Cooperation SDC**

Save the Children

Department
for International
Development

GNC >   nutritioncluster.net

Technical Alliance >   ta.nutritioncluster.net