WHO/UNICEF TECHNICAL EXPERT ADVISORY GROUP ON NUTRITION MONITORING (TEAM)
Terms of Reference - Draft 24 February 2015

1. Background

Despite considerable progress in reaching the Millennium Development Goal on poverty and hunger, several regions of the world will not be able to achieve it in 2015. The discussion over sustainable development has therefore considered this unfinished agenda, while acknowledging a greater complexity of global nutrition challenges. The World Health Assembly (WHA) Comprehensive Implementation Plan on Maternal, Infant and Young Child Nutrition and The 2nd International Conference on Nutrition called for greater action and investment in nutrition. Several global initiatives such as the Scaling Up Nutrition Movement and Nutrition for Growth stimulated commitments from multiple actors. All these initiatives call for stronger monitoring and accountability frameworks for nutrition - a gap highlighted by most actors in the international nutrition community.

WHO and UNICEF have a longstanding collaboration on the development of standard indicators and data collection methods for global monitoring and reporting on nutrition, collection of data on different nutrition indicators, as well as the production of annual joint estimates on wasting, stunting and overweight in children under 5 since 2011. Establishing a joint WHO/UNICEF Technical Expert Advisory Group on Nutrition Monitoring (TEAM) is a natural next step of this collaboration which could serve to fill the gap for guidance and norms in this technical area. In addition, several UN Agencies, civil society organizations, foundations and technical groups in public institutions have indicated their interest to support such an undertaking.

These terms of reference will detail the purpose, structure and membership of a Technical Expert Advisory Group on Nutrition Monitoring and also outline a proposed work plan for 2015.

2. Purpose

The TEAM will advise WHO and UNICEF on how to improve the quality of nutrition monitoring efforts at all levels. The group will achieve this through the facilitation of shared learning and the development of harmonized standards, tools and approaches in several relevant sectors such as health, social protection, agriculture. The TEAM is also expected to identify emerging research questions and needs related to the implementation of monitoring initiatives and to communicate these to appropriate partners. A more specific immediate focus of this group will be to complete the development of the extended set of indicators to monitor the comprehensive implementation plan on maternal, infant and young child nutrition as related to the WHA global nutrition targets.

3. Roles and responsibilities of the Technical Expert Advisory Group on Nutrition Monitoring

The Technical Expert Advisory Group on Nutrition Monitoring will be asked to

- assess existing indicators to monitor nutritional status, the implementation of nutrition programmes and policies, the description of policy environment in countries
- develop frameworks to describe inputs, outputs and outcomes linking underlying risk factors, policy and programme responses to nutrition outcomes
• analyse constraints in the collection of data for different types of indicators
• assess methods for data quality control
• assess new technological approaches for data collection, processing and analysis
• assess methods used to produce national, regional and global estimates using data from routine and survey sources
• recommend priority indicators for monitoring global nutrition challenges and policy frameworks aimed at addressing them
• recommend methodologies for data collection, analysis and presentation
• recommend methodologies about integration of data collected by various sources
• recommend methodologies for estimating progress at national, regional and global levels
• recommend procedures for the interpretation of the indicators to trigger actions
• recommend research priorities for existing and new indicators

A workplan will be developed by the TEAM with the assistance of the Secretariat.


The TEAM will be jointly convened by WHO and UNICEF and will bring together technical experts, including key and influential thinkers in the global nutrition arena with a specific focus on monitoring. This includes experts on:

• Nutrition epidemiology
• Nutrition surveillance in the field
• Statistics
• System science
• Medicine and biology
• Public health
• Food security
• Implementation science
• Economics
• Nutrition biomarker specialists

The TEAM will be comprised of up to 15 members who shall serve in their personal capacities and represent a broad range of disciplines relevant to the mandate. In the selection of the members, consideration will be given to attaining an adequate technical distribution of expertise, geographical representation and gender balance.

Members of the TEAM, including its Chairman, will be selected jointly by WHO and UNICEF and will be appointed either by WHO or UNICEF.

Representatives from inter-governmental organizations, as well as nongovernmental organizations in official relations with WHO and UNICEF, may be invited to participate in TEAM meetings as observers. Upon invitation of the Chairman, they may present the views of their organizations and contribute to the discussions.
Experts will normally convene in person at least once a year, and virtually when required. If the need arises for additional expertise on specific topics, the TEAM may decide to establish time limited, task oriented sub working groups which can draw on additional expertise. Such additional experts will be drawn from academia, multilateral and bilateral agencies, donor and recipient countries and non-governmental organizations on the basis of their expertise.

The TEAM will have a Chairman, or alternatively, two co-Chairs depending on the breadth of expertise possessed by any individual member. The Chair(s) will be responsible for providing intellectual and technical leadership on a broad range of nutrition monitoring topics and perform functions including Chairing of meetings. The Chair(s) will be appointed by WHO and UNICEF.

The Chair(s) and TEAM members shall be appointed to serve with a minimum commitment of two years and membership shall be subject to periodic review by WHO and UNICEF.

Members must respect the impartiality and independence required of WHO and UNICEF. In performing their work, they may not seek or accept instructions from any Government or from any authority external to the Organization. They must be free of real, potential or apparent conflict of interest. To this end, proposed members/ members will be subject to WHO’s policy on conflicts of interests and will be required to complete a declaration of interest (DOI) form. Their initial appointment and extension thereof, will be subject to the evaluation of completed DOI forms by the WHO Secretariat, determining that their participation would not give rise to a real, potential or apparent conflict of interest. TEAM members have an ongoing obligation throughout their tenure to inform WHO of any changes to the information that they have disclosed on the DOI form. In addition, and in accordance with WHO’s policy on conflicts of interest, the names and short biographies of selected TEAM members will be made available on the WHO web site for public notice and comment prior to their appointment.

5. **Operation**

TEAM members will normally convene in person at least once a year, and virtually when required.

TEAM members will not be remunerated for their participation in the TEAM; however, reasonable expenses such as travel expenses incurred by attendance at TEAM meetings will be compensated by WHO and/or UNICEF as appropriate and in accordance with the applicable rules and policies of the appointing organization.

Membership in TEAM may be terminated by WHO or UNCEF as appropriate, including, for any of the following reasons:

a. failure to attend two consecutive TEAM meetings;

b. change in affiliation resulting in a conflict of interest;

c. a lack of professionalism involving, for example, a breach of confidentiality.
Reports of each meeting will be submitted by the TEAM to WHO and UNICEF. All recommendations from the TEAM are advisory to WHO and UNICEF, who retain full control over any subsequent decisions or actions regarding any proposals, policy issues or other matters considered by the TEAM. WHO and UNICEF also retain full control over the publication of the reports of the TEAM, including whether or not to publish them.

Information and documentation to which members may gain access in performing TEAM related activities will be considered as confidential and proprietary to WHO and UNICEF and/or parties collaborating with WHO and UNICEF. TEAM members shall not purport to speak on behalf of, or represent, the TEAM or WHO or UNICEF to any third party. All proposed members will be required to sign an appropriate confidentiality undertaking and provisions related to ownership of TEAM intellectual property.

6. **Joint Secretariat**

As joint conveners of the TEAM, WHO and UNICEF will serve as the joint Secretariat of the TEAM. General roles and responsibilities of the Secretariat include:

- Support to the development of the TEAM annual workplan
- Identification and appointment of Members as well as appointment of Chair(s)
- Coordination and organization of activities in collaboration with the Chair(s)
- Planning and organisation of meetings (rooms, conference call facilities etc.)
- Preparation and public dissemination of meeting minutes/reports
- Development of a forum for communication, mutual learning and discussion of emerging and topical issues
- Implementation of the annual workplan including coordination of activities undertaken by sub Working Groups
- Other supporting functions as appropriate (e.g. assist in identifying experts for carrying out sub Working Groups tasks and propose financial resources to fund those tasks)
- Agreeing on any TEAM publications